

RESILIENCE AND CHRISTIAN VIRTUES

**What the Psychosocial Sciences Offer
for the renewal of Thomas Aquinas'
Moral Theology of Fortitude
and Its Related Virtues**

by

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Introduction

Although suffering and challenge demoralize some humans, others cope and construct instead. Rather than grinding to a halt, certain people hurdle the obstacles or creatively maneuver around them. They even make something positive out of the negative situation. In the face of crisis, they not only survive but also thrive. “Resilience” is a concept used to shed light on these phenomena. It underlines preventive and therapeutic approaches that reinforce the resources of children and adults, families and communities. Resilience capacities involve coping well with difficulty, actively resisting destructive pressures and rebuilding positively after adversity. However, we do not exercise these capacities in equal measure. Humans faced with similar situations end up in diverse spots. Some people manage destructive life events more efficaciously. Others lose a sense of meaning or emotional stability. Certain humans find a positive outcome to the negative situation. Others become aggressive and abusive, or drug or alcohol dependent. What initiates and sustains a resilient use of human resources? What renders some individuals and groups more resilient than others? These questions are not only pertinent for the psychosocial studies that instigated the use of the resilience concept, but also for moral approaches.¹

In this book, I make the case that ethics and moral theology² can employ the resilience concept and research to refocus moral analysis. They can thus better integrate the potential personal and social resources available for building character in the midst of vicissitude, trial and loss. I shall address the following questions, in

1 By “psychosocial sciences,” I group together the social sciences, evolutionary theory, psychology and developmental theories. Later, I shall differentiate their methods and contributions.

2 When I speak of morality or ethics in general, I posit the basis for philosophical ethical theory as well as moral theology, Christian ethics or theological ethics. I prefer “moral theology” of the latter three. The substantive is “theology” in contrast to the other two whose substantives are “ethics.” I would place both Christian ethics and moral theology as a sub-set of theology, as I explain in chapter two. I would further specify that this work is moral theology. I draw from the Catholic Tradition as a principal and determining source. This Christian project is a fitting partner for ecumenical dialogues. Cf. S.-Th. Pinckaers 2001d.

particular: how does resilience research contribute to a renewal of St. Thomas Aquinas' virtue theory and moral theology? Specifically, how does it deepen our comprehension of moral development? Particularly, how does it enhance our understanding of fortitude and its related virtues?

This book's title employs three disciplines: psychosocial sciences, ethical theory and moral theology. I put them into interdisciplinary dialogue. On the one hand, I engage in an active exchange of ideas between resilience research and Aquinas' moral theory. This discussion is philosophical. It employs psychosocial studies on human resilience to revitalize Aquinas' moral anthropology and to understand the virtues associated with fortitude. On the other hand, I extend this conversation to a theological dimension. In particular, I attempt to deepen moral theology from a Roman Catholic perspective. This renewal of moral theology requires not only the properly theological sources of Scripture and Tradition, but also insights found in normative and descriptive sciences, that is, philosophical ethics and psychosocial sciences. It reflects upon the presence, action and influence of God in human agency and society. I have chosen to revisit Thomas Aquinas' ethical theory and moral theology, since his approach to virtue anthropology serves as a valuable model for moral theory in interdisciplinary dialogue with the findings of not only philosophical and theological sciences, but also psychology and social sciences.³

Aquinas' experiential and realist metaphysical teaching on the virtue of fortitude contributes to understanding how we act in difficult situations. Authors translate Aquinas' term *fortitudo* as either "fortitude" or "courage" in English.⁴ Contemporary philosophers, who

³ Later I study significant aspects of Aquinas' anthropology, his use of Scripture and Tradition, as well as the way in which he integrates insights from other disciplines. I thus reflect from within a tradition that is a living and growing reality. At the same time, I also recognize other valuable traditions of moral theology within the Tradition of the Roman Catholic Church.

⁴ In the compilation of English translations of Aquinas' works found in the *Past Masters*, "Fortitude" is found 653 times; while "courage" is used 93 times, and only for other Latin expressions (i.e. not for "*fortitudo*"). English-speaking contemporary philosophers and theologians split on the use of fortitude and courage. The following authors use "fortitude": R. Cessario (1991), J. Porter (1990, 1995a), the *ST* translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican

discuss this cardinal virtue, tend to employ more readily the term “courage,” which etymologically finds its origin in old French *cuer* and Latin *cor* (heart). Nonetheless, other philosophers and theologians employ “fortitude,” which finds its roots in the Latin *fortis* (strong). In this work, we shall primarily use “fortitude” in translating Aquinas’ *fortitudo*; yet we shall also use “courage” as its synonym, as well as “courageous” and “courageously.” Among the virtues, fortitude is the most obvious dialogue partner with resilience research.

In chapter one, I investigate the resilience perspective per se. Physicists have long used the term “resilience” to refer to a material’s quality to resist deformation or destruction. This limited usage has inspired a more expansive approach in the psychosocial sciences, which employ it to describe the individual and social capacities to face vicissitude. How do humans successfully face challenges and threats, suffering and sorrow, confusion and loss? The psychosocial sciences analyze human resilience as having three related facets: first, to cope with hardship; second, to resist the possible deformation of the competencies and integrity of one’s community, family and self; and third, to achieve a new proficiency out of the unfavorable experience. Each domain involves an opportunity for positive growth in different ways. The three main strengths of the psychosocial resilience perspective are that it focuses on the resources on hand, instead of on pathology per se;⁵ it seeks to identify promotable patterns of coping, constancy and construction; and it recognizes the import of life-goals. Resilience outcomes indicate that developmental and resilience tutors (aids that promote resilience) require, more often than not, growth through affective, intellectual and spiritual trials. They involve keeping in contact with our larger goals, while grappling with intermediate ones.

Province (1947 and 1981). Others use “courage,” such as D. N. Walton, (1986), Y.-M. Congar (1974), A. Ross and P. G. Walsh (1966, Blackfriars translation of *ST*).

⁵ The tendency to focus on illness, disease, deficiency and the like, has been prevalent in certain disciplines: e.g. the deficiency model in the history of western medicine; the primary interest in pathology in psychology; the focus on sin and vice in moral theology manuals, reconciliation (confession) and spiritual direction; and so forth.

I also review resilience studies in order to identify input for virtue-based philosophical anthropology. What are the factors and processes that strengthen resilience outcomes? Which ones weaken them? Chapter one synthetically presents the resilience insights in the domains of human temperament and emotions, as well as cognitive and volitional processes. On the social level, it examines correlations in and outside the family. Throughout, it distinguishes physical, psychological, social and spiritual types of resilience. Resilience insights can be counter-intuitive. They can serve to break simplistic stereotypes. However, in order to appreciate their potential, we need to respect this simple resilience typology.

In chapter two, I address the challenges and promises that resilience research offers for the enhancement of virtue theory and moral theology. First, I introduce Aquinas' virtue-based moral theory. Then I examine the way in which the psychosocial sciences' resilience findings can renew virtue theory and moral theology. This section investigates some past and current models of collaboration. The methodologies of the psychosocial sciences, moral philosophy and theology differ. The former grouping is more observational and analytical. The latter is more reflexive and synthetic. Nonetheless, both groups require supporting anthropological theories that at a philosophical level can join each other. I make a case for a method inspired by Aquinas. It is a model for the critical appropriation of current scientific insights and human experience from within a faith perspective that incorporates anthropological and theological insights from Sacred scripture and Catholic Tradition.

In the light of human resilience in adversity, I then analyze Aquinas' position on moral theory and flourishing. He asserts that human flourishing serves as the foundation and guide for virtue theory and moral theology. Indeed, Aquinas' understanding of human flourishing is key for understanding his virtue approach to finality and human agency, duty and obligation, and more generally, his moral anthropology. Without exhaustively discussing Aquinas' philosophical anthropology, I nonetheless furnish its major features concerning human inclinations and emotions, nature and grace, human finality and flourishing. This basis permits me to ask: how can the resilience perspective and findings benefit a virtue-based theory? Resilience

findings contribute content-charged experience and hypotheses. They offer narrative and theorized observations. They both challenge and confirm aspects of philosophical anthropology and virtue theory, especially about human practices in hardship. In turn, virtue theory can deepen the resilience perspective and offer a deeper moral anthropology. In particular, it enriches reductionistic notions of resilience with insights into the connaturalization of knowledge and the development of human character.

In the second and third parts of the book (chapters three through eight), I bring resilience research into dialogue with the three virtue groups that confront difficulty: namely fortitude, and the related virtues of initiative-taking and endurance. I illustrate how these virtues are structurally akin to the three resilience domains. First, the exercise of each virtue confronts the adversity itself. Second, it resists loss of acquired competencies. Third, it builds something positive out of the negative situation. These parts make a rapprochement between the resilience findings and each of these virtues through a renewed reading of Aquinas' virtue anthropology. I proceed with this dialogue between Thomas and resilience findings in two stages and two distinct methods.

In Part Two (chapters three, four and five), I address Aquinas' view on the natural virtues that manage situations of danger and difficulty. This philosophical effort offers a fitting discussion partner for the psychosocial sciences, even though it outstrips them in its normative and moral competency. On the natural level, we revisit the virtues in terms of resilience research for several reasons. Particularly when facing hardships, it is not always personally evident which tack to take. Aquinas thus affirms we each need to develop prudent discernment. The development of virtue requires time and experience. Studies of actual situations of risk and danger inquire how people have resiliently succeeded. What do we learn from the resilience outcomes for the present and future? How might we strengthen basic human capacities in order to promote resilience and diminish vulnerability? At this level, I speak of moral, constructive and resisting types of resilience.

In Part Three (chapters six, seven and eight), I examine the theological dimension of these virtues and the resilience input. This level is admittedly moral theology. It uses psychosocial insights,

without co-opting their scientific pretensions. It employs its own anthropological reflections on the meaning of these findings. This theological standpoint involves separating the efficacy of virtues neither from their sources in natural inclinations and capacities nor from their sources in God's constant presence. It identifies how both human and divine sources collaborate in particular challenges and are present in the resilient results manifest in Christian virtues. At this level, I speak of a spiritual resilience, which involves the divine support offered in the midst of human agency.

PART ONE.
THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF
RESILIENCE AND VIRTUE THEORIES

Chapter One

The Resilience Perspective and Virtue-Based Anthropology

“Bad things can turn into good things.” Helen (age 10)¹

1.1. The Resilience Perspective

At every level of society, particular situations make or break the lives of children, adolescents and adults. Situations of violence, loss, indifference and hatred. Some human beings cope well when faced with them and others do not. Specialists call this capacity to do well in adversity “resilience.” Psychosocial research has documented three types of resilience phenomena: good outcomes in the midst of high-risk (coping), sustained competence under stress (constancy) and recovery from trauma (constructing).² In order to track these resilience phenomena, researchers have changed their perspectives and methods.³ Moral theologians can benefit by adopting insights of these sciences on how humans avoid pathology and develop positively.

Although specialists must in some way conceptualize resilience in relation to human disease, resilience is of interest beyond the context of pathology. It aids us to understand and promote the positive development occasioned by negative situations and potentially destructive challenges. The psychosocial sciences’ resilience perspective has two major axes. First, it does not concentrate exclusively on human problems and pathologies. Rather, it principally

¹ L. Murphy (1987, 104) quoting one of her subjects.

² Cf. Consortium on the School-based Promotion of Social Competence 1994, 268-316, esp. 272.

³ Resilience as an approach in the human sciences has meant a triple paradigm shift: from single causes to multiple cumulative dynamics; from simplistic models to complex processes; and from static studies to longitudinal investigation of interactional processes. On how the history of resilience research has seen a triple enrichment see: Susan Gore and John Eckenrode 1994, 25. On the importance of such paradigm shifts for science see: Thomas S. Kuhn 19702, and Kopfensteiner 1998, 80-88.

focuses on the personal and communal resources on hand. Second, it seeks patterns of human coping, constancy and constructing and how we might promote them in the interactional context of the individual, family and society.⁴ In this section, I shall concentrate on the insights that resilience research offers on human action and development, especially concerning human resilience in adversity.

This chapter outlines key resilience research in the psychosocial sciences. It provides a basis for a later dialogue with Thomas Aquinas on a renewed understanding of moral agency in hardship and difficulty. First, I shall address the resilience perspective, its origin, breath and definition, as well as its basic conceptual components. While addressing the history and development of the concept, I shall identify the principal actors and their respective disciplines. This introduction will prepare the interdisciplinary dialogue of the next chapters. Second, I shall draw together the input that resilience research offers to a virtue-based philosophical anthropology. It makes a meta-analysis of resilience findings concerning the domains of temperament and emotion, cognitive and volitional processes. It likewise examines the social domains of family, friends, peers and so on. The next chapters will put these findings into dialogue with Aquinas' treatment of the virtues related to fortitude.

1.1.1. Origin and Breath of the Resilience Concept

The reality of human resilience is as old as humanity itself, even though its conceptualization in psychosocial sciences dates to the 1970s. The resilience approach attempts to unearth an aspect of human experience that medical and social sciences often have placed solely in the context of disease. The search to understand human resilience requires a shift in perspective. We must correct research models that over-emphasize pathology in order to identify the sources of human resilience. We need to look afresh at human experience.

⁴ Studies on human resilience have focused on interrelated dynamics of life that can be identified as *individual factors* (temperament, age, gender, cultural background; including volitional, cognitive and emotional processes); *family processes* (relationships); *extrafamilial processes* (concerning peers, extended family, workplace, school, and neighborhood). Cf. E. Mavis Hetherington and Elaine A. Blechman 1996, viii.

Resilience, as a research concept, lies at the juncture of several disciplines. It is of special interest for moral theology. It provides the basis for dialogue and a further philosophical synthesis. In order to understand such a use of resilience, a short history is in order. After having laid this foundation, I situate the resilience concept in physical, psychosocial and spiritual domains. Then I present the three major aspects in human resilience: coping, resisting and constructing.

1.1.1.1. A Brief History of Resilience: Cultural Origins, and Disciplinary Lines

The human capacities to cope with adversity, resist being deformed by hardship and construct further hardiness from the experience are as old as humankind. Their thematization, however, is a contemporary trend whose early roots are found in Anglo-American research on children and families in difficulty. Emmy Werner has been described as the mother of resilience, because of her longitudinal study of disadvantaged children and youth on the Island of Kauai.⁵ One of the earlier definitions of resilience is that of Norman Garmezy (1976) who describes resilient people as having “worked well, played well, loved well and expected well.”⁶ According to M. Rutter (1998), an English Child psychiatrist, the mental health sciences have applied the concept of resilience progressively in five steps. First, they construe it solely as an individual characteristic; what the individual did under stress. Second, “resilience” integrates the individual’s interaction with the environment, involving also what happened before, during and after the stress. Third, certain specialists deem it a balance of good and bad experiences. Fourth, in a medical analogy, it is seen as a type of immunization, where we attain strengthened health by exposure to natural or induced infections. Fifth, researchers recognize that psychological challenges and a certain level of stress are useful and even necessary for human development; this focus includes emphasis on how to aid children weather adversities actively and successfully.⁷

5 Cf. E. E. Werner and R. S. Smith 1986 and 1992.

6 N. Garmezy 1976.

7 Cf. Rutter 1998: 47.

The research into resilience has been international and pluridisciplinary.⁸ This brief history of the scientific study of resilience should mention the application of the resilience perspective to efforts to aid local communities confront their own difficulties, drawing as much as possible on local resources. Both developed and developing regions benefit from use of the resilience perspective.⁹ Lastly, numerous efforts to popularize the concept have also enriched medical and epidemiological models.¹⁰

Next, it can be asked: what disciplines are involved? Who are the primary actors? And how do they use the resilience concept? In the resilience research done in the human and social sciences, there are at least five interrelated models: the genetic model, the personality model, the cognitive model, the developmental model, and the human relationships model. The genetic model implies the search to understand how human personal and social capacities are grounded in genetic coding, (as distinguished from the external and internal influences of family, society and environment). This approach involves sociobiology or evolutionary psychology.¹¹

The personality model investigates how negative and positive outcomes can be attributable to temperamental traits and developed characters: e.g. irritability or shyness, sensitivity or adaptability. This model draws from psychoanalytical traditions and attachment theory.¹²

8 There are numerous European (non-Anglo-American) counterparts and a host of parallel, preparatory efforts and figures. European figures in resilience research include: F. Lösel (Germany), S. Vanistendael (Belgium, Switzerland), M. Manciaux (France), B. Cyrulnik (France), M. Tousignant, (Canada), M. Perrez (Switzerland), A. Antonovsky (Israel), and so on. Some of the predecessors to the resilience include epidemiological efforts, and risk calculations (from the insurance industry), which we shall discuss later.

9 Cf. E. Grotberg 1995. Non-governmental aid agencies like the International Catholic Child Bureau, Van Leer Foundation, and so forth.

10 Cf. S. Vanistendael and Lecomte 2000, B. Cyrulnik 1998, 1999, 2001.

11 Its actors include: E. O. Wilson 1976 (*Sociobiology*), Richard Dawkins 1976 (*The Selfish Gene*). They hypothesize that evolutionary pressures on the natural selection of genes aid their possessors to survive better in given environmental histories.

12 Some of its principal researchers are: John Bowlby 1969, 1973, 1988, Mary D. Ainsworth 1978, and Jerome Kagan 1979, 1990, and 1994. Bowlby was the first to develop attachment theory, which can be considered a control-systems theory of behavior, or an evolutionary-ethological approach. Ainsworth further enriched it.

The cognitive model, based on developments in cognitive psychology, considers emotions as the result of the meaning a person attributes to particular interactions with the environment.¹³ It seeks resilience insights based on cognitive resources, linked for example to problem-solving capacities.

The developmental model identifies phase specific reactions to developmental challenges over the life span. This approach can be found in developmental psychology and developmental psychopathology, and is often based on the research of Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg.¹⁴

The social relationships model researches how changes in important family, religious and other social relationships either contribute to the challenges we face or help us overcome them.¹⁵ In the pages that follow we shall identify the insights into human resilience offered by these five models, drawing from each to the extent that it helps us grasp more deeply the role of resilience in human action.

1.1.1.2. Three Resilience Domains: Physical, Psychosocial, and Spiritual

The disciplines of physics and engineering employ the term resilience to refer to a material's capacity to return to its original form after being bent, compressed or stretched.¹⁶ For example, after

¹³ These studies have been mainly conducted by: Arnold 1960; Richard S. Lazarus 1968 and 1991; Meinrad Perrez 1994a; Hamilton I. McCubbin and Anne I. Thompson, *et alia* 1998.

¹⁴ Cf. L. Kohlberg, 1971, 1976, 1980; L. Kohlberg, J. Lacrosse and D. Ricks, 1972. Its key resilience researchers are: Norman Garmezy 1976, 1994; Michael Rutter 1981, 1994; Ann S. Masten 1990; Thomas M. Achenbach 1990; Dante Cicchetti 1983 and 1990; Dale F. Hay 1988; Albert F. Osborn 1990; Jon Rolf 1990. Viktor Frankl can also be counted among thinkers in a developmental perspective.

¹⁵ Its principal researchers include Emmy E. Werner and Ann R. Smith 1986 and 1992; Arnold J. Sameroff and Ronald Seifer 1993; Michel Tousignant 1997 and 1998; Clifford Geertz 1968.

¹⁶ This meaning of resilience is the first identified in popular dictionaries. For example, *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary*, (1989) says "1. The power or ability to return to the original form, position, etc. after being bent, compressed, or stretched; elasticity;" and *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, "1. The capacity of a strained body to recover its size and shape after deformation caused especially by compressive stress." *The Oxford English Dictionary* (19892) gives it as the second definition: "2. Elasticity; the power of resuming the original

compressing an iron bar either it returns to its original shape or it does not. The iron bar's resilience is its quality to flex under pressure, and return to its original form.¹⁷ When the stress exceeds the iron bar's elastic limit, however, the bar remains bent; its resilience capacity was surpassed. Furthermore, a certain type of pressure has a "steeling" effect on metal.¹⁸ Stretching or heating hardens metal. In sum, the literal sense of resilience refers both to a material's quality to resist deformation and to be strengthened through contact with certain type of stress.¹⁹

The human sciences²⁰ employ the concept of resilience to describe the physiological and psychosocial resources for facing personal and communal challenges.²¹ This second type of resilience has three aspects:²² (1) good outcomes despite actual risk, (2) resistance to

shape or position after compression, bending, etc.; *spec.* the energy per unit volume absorbed by a material when it is subjected to strain, or the maximum value of this when the elastic limit is not exceeded." It gives the following formula: "resilience per cubic inch in direct tension or compression may be expressed in the form $f^2/2E$, where f is the intensity of stress induced and E is the modulus of elasticity" (J. A. Cormack, *Definitions Strength of materials* 1965, iii:67).

¹⁷ Metal might nonetheless analogously have a "memory" of its minor past stresses (cf. metal fatigue and aging; or entropy—the dissipation of energy). If it did have a memory, metal would then be an even more helpful illustration in what follows concerning the human psychosocial application of the resilience concept.

¹⁸ The "steeling" image of resilience has been employed by Anthony 1987, 180; Felsman and Valliant 1987, 305 (who quote studies done on children of schizophrenics by Bleuler 1978); Rutter 1994b, 354.

¹⁹ It should be noted that the term "resilient" has Latin roots meaning "to jump, leap or bounce back": *resiliens, resilire, re-salire*.

²⁰ According to the perspective of M. Radke-Yarrow there are three levels to successful coping (or resilience) behaviors. 1. Biological level: "contribute to one's chances of physical survival and health, and the continuation of the species." 2. Social level: "contribute to the survival and well-being of others." 3. Psychological level: "contribute to the well-being of one's self" (Marian Radke-Yarrow and Tracy Sherman 1990, 100). Rutter says that in order to understand the processes involved in stress and coping three complementary levels—social, psychological, and neuro-chemical—need to be addressed (cf. Michael Rutter 1994b, 356).

²¹ Werner and Smith (1986) did a longitudinal study of disadvantaged youths on the Island of Kauai. F. Lösel *et al.* (1990) conducted their study in Germany.

²² Concerning this second level of meaning, *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary*, (1989) says "2. ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity or the like; buoyancy," and *Webster's New Collegiate*

destruction and (3) positive construction.²³ It is possible not only to resist the disordering of the integrity and skills of a human person, family or community; but also to achieve a new kind of competency, turning the negative experience into an opportunity for positive growth. The psychosocial sciences observe a resilience-effect rooted in human physiological and psychosocial capacities; they attempt to identify the various internal and external (personal and communal) factors, mechanisms or processes that strengthen or weaken the resilience effect.²⁴ This second level of physiological and psychosocial resilience is of a different nature than the first. It is organic and psychic. For example, at the biological level, muscles not only perform physical labor, but also resist self-disintegration and become stronger through the effort.²⁵ At cognitive, volitional and emotional levels, likewise, we overcome challenges by solving a particular problem, as well as by resisting personal and social de-structuring. We gain

Dictionary, “2. An ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change.” *The Oxford English Dictionary* (1989) gives it as the third one: “3. *fig.* Of persons, their minds, etc.: Rising readily again after being depressed; hence cheerful, buoyant, exuberant.”

23 F. Lösel (1992, 8) identifies three resilience phenomena, from a developmental psychopathology perspective, resilience “refers to: (1) good outcomes despite high-risk status, for example, overcoming cumulated stressors and strains; (2) sustaining competence under threat, for example, effective coping with divorce; and (3) recovering from trauma, for example, child abuse. All three phenomena may be present simultaneously in cases with multi-level problems.” Cf. A. S. Masten, K. M. Best and N. Garmezy 1990, 2:425-444.

24 Rutter (1994b, 373-4) has identified an extended range of possible mechanisms: “(1) possible neural effects, as are evident in studies of visual deprivation in infancy (Blakemore, 1991); (2) neuroendocrine effects as have been shown in animal studies of acute physical stress (Hennessy and Levine, 1979); and (3) linkages by which one form of adversity predisposes to another (Quinton and Rutter, 1988) (4) cognitive variables such as self-esteem, self-efficacy, and internal working models of relationships (Bretherton, 1987, Harter, 1983; Rutter and Rutter 1993). Certainly it is clear that all of us think about the experiences that we undergo and develop mental sets about them. It is quite plausible that these cognitive sets play a major role in the carry forward of experiences.” (cf. Rutter 1994b, 356; Garmezy and Masten 1994; Clark and Clark 1992). In this regard, Wilson and Gottman (1996, 204) hold that the underlying physiological processes (like those important for attention—the vagal process and cardiovascular reactivity) are malleable and strongly influenced by the environment and family.

25 Muscle growth also depends on the organism’s overall health, which requires proper nutrition and rest and so forth, as well as freedom from oppressive circumstances.

something from the effort as well; we acquire understanding, problem-solving skills, self-confidence and so forth.

A third type of resilience depends on spiritual resources. It metaphorically extends and transcends the original literal meaning of resilience, as well as its physiological and psychosocial insights. At the philosophical and theological levels, we employ skills, resist destruction and positively construct in the face of difficulty. In order to understand spiritual resilience though, we must employ different methods of analysis. Indeed, we need to explore deeper levels of personal experience, relational assistance and divine support. However, we can confuse the meaning and extent of insights drawn from different levels. These disciplines have different scopes and foci. The carry over of insights from the physiological and psychosocial sciences demands that we consider the limits and tentative nature of their research. In order to discern and appropriate their spiritual significance, we must evaluate an insight's import, based upon a philosophical anthropology. The difficulties of observing and evaluating spiritual resilience though should not deter us from seeking to understand it.

1.1.1.3. Three Aspects of Resilience: Coping, Resisting and Constructing

A resilient act is a whole. It is not however understood without analyzing its three facets: coping, resisting and constructing. In the rest of this section, I shall analyze descriptions and definitions of resilience found in the scientific literature. My goals are two in number. First I would like to illustrate the three dimensions of resilience: good outcomes despite risk, human resistance to destruction and positive construction. The contrary dimensions involve risk, stress and vulnerability. These facets and elements are ambiguous when taken outside of a personal and social whole, which leads to the second aim: to establish a composite definition that includes the physiological, psychosocial and spiritual resilience of individuals and communities. N. Garmezy's early description of resilient people, as having "worked well, played well, loved well and expected well,"²⁶ sets a positive goal

26 N. Garmezy 1976.

for human living and dying. It gives wide parameters for understanding resilience research. The general and vague breath of this definition makes it only a starting point. Nevertheless, it enables us to establish the basic meaning of resilience as “doing well in adversity.” I shall formulate a more composite definition after exposing the resilience perspective and research.

Most researchers construe resilience as the individual and social capacity to cope positively with stress and adversity, as a good outcome despite risks and stress. The resilience-pioneers Werner and Smith describe resilience as follows: it is the “capacity to cope effectively with the internal stresses of vulnerabilities (such as unstable patterns of autonomic reactivity, developmental imbalances, unusual sensitivities) and external stresses (such as illness, major losses, and dissolution of the family).”²⁷ Psychology often interprets coping as successful behavioral adaptation. Masten *et al.* say: “Resilience refers to the process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances. Psychological resilience is concerned with behavioral adaptation, usually defined in terms of internal states of well-being or effective functioning in the environment or both.”²⁸ Some researchers describe resilience as a

27 Werner and Smith 1986, 4. M. Rutter (1990: 181) uses the notion of resilience “to describe the positive pole of the ubiquitous phenomenon of individual difference in people’s responses to stress and adversity.”

28 Masten, Best and Garmezy 1990, 426. There are also other researchers, in studies grounded in a meticulous study of strengths and weaknesses, express optimistic views about the human capacity for change and adaptation. Pilling (1992, 88) says, “there is always the possibility of an individual change, improving in intellectual and personality characteristics.” On the more cautious side, Rutter (1994b, 356) says that while it used to be assumed that “because negative life events provoked or precipitated the onset of psychiatric disorder, they necessarily involved an increase in developmental discontinuities. It is now clear that this assumption is unwarranted. The biological “norm” is neither continuity nor discontinuity, neither change nor stability (Rutter, 1994a). Both are expected and both require explanation. Depending on circumstances, negative life experiences may either accentuate preexisting psychological characteristics, be they adaptive or maladaptive, or alter them. However, the former is more common than the latter (Caspi and Moffit, 1993).” Likewise according to Sameroff and Seifer (1990, 52), developmental psychopathology assumes neither continuity (as does developmental psychology) nor discontinuity (as do the clinical psychiatrists). Rather, developmental psychopathology is “concerned centrally with both the connections and lack of connections between normality and disorder.”

“generally resourceful” composite of characteristics.²⁹ Others speak of a sense of coherence,³⁰ manifest social competence, the integration of cognitive, affective and behavioral levels,³¹ or more simply as an active attempt to manage stress.³² In spite of various disciplinary accents, coping is a universal resilience characteristic.

Second, resilience defies destructive pressures. It protects our health and skills. It resists ruptures to basic relationships. It does more than simply maintain our integrity, as if it were a static object. Indeed when we call upon our skills and resources in adversity, we must not exceed the limits of our health and strength. We need to maintain equilibrium, reestablish it, or find a new one. Rutter thus defines resilience as: “the phenomenon of maintaining adaptive functioning in spite of serious risk hazards.”³³ This aspect of resilience does not promote an illusion of invincibility. It does not construe resilience as an extreme competence or limit it to exceptional achievements. Instead, it underlines how we avoid failure or pathology,³⁴ and how we minimize or prevent negative outcomes.³⁵

29 Radke-Yarrow (1990, 99) for example says: “to show more ‘*umweg*’ [roundabout] solutions when faced with a barrier, to be able to maintain integrated performance under stress, to be able to process simultaneously two or more competing stimuli, to be able to resist sets or illusions, to be able to both ‘regress in the service of the ego’ when task requirements favor such a form of adaptation and, conversely, to be able to become adaptively obsessive and even compulsive under certain other environmental pressures.” They attribute the origin of the notion of resilience to Lewinian, Wernerian, Murphian and psychoanalytic concepts. Cf. Block and Block 1973, 5.

30 According to A. Antonovsky (1998a, 8), the “sense of coherence” construct distills the core of coping and resistance resources, which are based on one’s sense of comprehensibility (ability to understand situations in life), manageability (capacity to manage demands), and meaningfulness (ability to find meaning in life). Cf. McCubbin *et al.* 1998.

31 According to the Consortium on the School-based Promotion of Social Competence (1994, 275), “social competence [also] involves the capacity to integrate cognition, affect, and behavior to achieve specific social tasks and positive development outcomes. It comprises a set of core skills, attitudes, abilities, and feelings given functional meaning by the contexts of culture, neighborhood, and situation. Thus, social competence can be viewed in terms of ‘life skills for adaptation to diverse ecologies and settings.’” Cf. Masten, Best and Garmezy 1990, 236-256.

32 Cf. F. Lösel 1994, 9.

33 M. Rutter 1990, 209.

34 Albert F. Osborn (1990, 62:24) rightly points out the importance of definitions: “Decisions about the definition of competence can also result in a

Third, resilience describes how strengths, resources and skills not only enable us to cope with hardship or to defy ruin, but also to adapt positively in hardship. Resilience involves not only holding the line, but also making headway. Garmezy notes “the actualizing power of stressful experiences via the ameliorating force of identifiable ‘protective factors.’”³⁶ He describes them as patterns of both positive potential and adaptive outcomes. They involve increased fitness and vigor. For Cowan *et al.*, resilience describes: “the idea that some individuals or families possess physiological strengths, psychological resourcefulness, and interpersonal skills that enable them to respond successfully to major challenges and to grow from the experience.”³⁷ Bloom discusses growth-producing experiences in the midst of stress, and resilience as a balance of strength and stress.³⁸ Especially in the developmental perspective, researchers note that resilience is not a fixed attribute; indeed changes in circumstances and risks alter our resilience.³⁹ Murphy nonetheless describes it as a type of learned

different concept of resilience if the focus is on avoidance of failure rather than the achievement of an exceptional level of success. When competence is defined in terms of avoidance of failure, it is usually the case that a greater proportion of vulnerable children, with respect to a given pathology, are resilient than actually develop the pathology.” I believe that most resilience studies have a wider notion of resilience, conceived as the capacity to avoid failure and pathology, or build something positive in spite of the adversity. Resilience is needlessly restricted if focused either on success in face of exceptional difficulties (addicted, psychotic or depressed parents, survivors of war, genocide, concentration camps, the abandoned and orphaned), or on those who have achieved an exceptional level of success.

³⁵ According to E. Grotberg (1995, 7), “Resilience is a universal capacity which allows a person, group or community to prevent, minimize or overcome the damaging effects of adversity.”

³⁶ Cf. N. Garmezy 1994, 10.

³⁷ Philip A. Cowan, Carolyn Pape Cowan and Marc S. Schulz 1996, 14-15.

³⁸ According to Martin Bloom (1996: 98) resilience finds important roots in the concept of *strens* and in the salutogenic perspective: “Many years ago, Hollister (1967, 197) introduced the terms *strens* to mean growth-producing experiences. It was a term that was intended to be parallel to the concept of stress. Poser and King (1975) introduced the term salutogenesis. Both these terms refer to the same important phenomenon, that there exist in nature and society many growth-promoting experiences, some of which may be intentionally introduced to target groups. [...] Resilient children may be hypothesized to have more *strens* than stresses. There needs to be a balance between *strens* and stresses.” Werner and Smith (1986, 136) and M. Rutter (1998: 47) also use this image of balance.

³⁹ As Michael Rutter (1990 183; cf. 184) specifically points out, “resilience is concerned with individual variations in response to risk factors.”

optimism about our capacity to manage problems and turn the bad experiences into something good.⁴⁰ Individual differences draw attention to how we develop resilience in the midst of suffering and adversity.⁴¹ This facet of resilience highlights the steeling effect of trials that render us more able to master life's challenges.

1.1.2. Risk, Stress, and Vulnerability versus Protection, Coping and Buffering

Although some humans do well despite their at-risk status, resilience is not absolute. No one is simply resilient. Resilience researchers seek to explain why some humans neither acquire disorders nor under-develop when faced with a common threat. This approach draws upon but outstrips an epidemiological focus on risk, stress and vulnerability. The resilience perspective considers specific challenges that humans have mastered, the actual context of their stress and protection, as well as their personally or socially accumulated vulnerability and protection (buffering). We need to address the contrasting concepts of risk and protection, stress and coping, vulnerability and buffering in order to explain departures from epidemiological-oriented statistical calculations. I shall briefly investigate these concepts here, but wait to expand the notions of causality, health and development until the next chapter.

1.1.2.1. Risk and Specific Outcomes

Risk research finds its roots in epidemiology, as well as in the calculations of commerce and insurance.⁴² Epidemiological studies of risk originally attempted to document health and disease patterns and the factors associated with them. Who gets sick, who does not, and

⁴⁰ L. Murphy (1987, 104) quotes one of her subjects, Helen (age 10) as saying: "Bad things can turn into good things."

⁴¹ Although certain resilience qualities might be based on or closely connected with predispositions, other related skills and qualities are lost or acquired, diminished or bettered. As Wills *et alia* (1996, 108) say: "resiliency effects are based on the development of coping skills among children." Cf. F. Lösel 1994, 9.

⁴² In the eighteenth century, merchants' efforts to determine the risk of losing their cargo at sea gave birth to the insurance industry (cf. Cowan *et alia*, 1996, 2-3).

why? The question of “why” addresses issues of causality, originally the causes of mortality and physical disease. Researchers had to adapt the meaning and measure of causality and risk when they applied these concepts to mental health and illness.⁴³ From dichotomous definitions of risk—the ship returned to port or it did not; people developed typhoid or they did not—investigators have concerned themselves with a wider notion of outcomes: not merely the presence or absence of disease, but also issues of a disorder’s duration, and the number and severity of symptoms.

Psychosocial approaches have construed risk to involve both individual and social hazards, which increase negative developmental outcomes. Risk researchers identify factors that accentuate or inhibit disease and deficiency states. They also examine the underlying processes.⁴⁴ They observe that risks predispose individuals and groups to specific negative outcomes.⁴⁵ M. Rutter nonetheless resists a

43 According to Musick *et al.* (1987, 230) in psychiatry, the term “‘risk’ denotes a statistical concept indicating that a child of a parent with a major psychiatric disorder (e.g. manic-depressive illness or schizophrenia) has a greater probability of subsequently developing mental disorder than the child of a well parent. For example, 10-15% of the offspring of schizophrenic parents become schizophrenic, while 30-35% have some form of emotional disturbance.”

44 The study of risk identifies factors, processes and mechanisms that both accentuate and inhibit disease and deficiency states, and their related underlying processes. In a perspective of prevention, this research has become bipolar: on the one hand, seeking to identify what accentuates disease and disorder, i.e. vulnerability; and on the other hand, seeking the risks that may be overcome and even lead to positive adaptive behavior, i.e. resilience. Cf. Garnezy 1994, 9; cf. 9-12; Werner and Smith 1992, 3.

According to Garnezy (1994, 9-10), risk research has embraced a wide range of studies “emphasizing potential biological and behavioral precursors; personality predispositions of both positive and negative attributes, including genetic and environmental predisposing factors; the actualizing power of stressful experiences via the ameliorating force of identifiable ‘protective factors’; the study of coping patterns, including their origins and developmental and situational contexts; and the evaluation of outcomes ranging from signs of severe biobehavioral and social deficits to patterns of resilience and adaptation amid disadvantage.”

Researchers have identified specific risks, for example, in the case of adolescent drug use and other forms of antisocial behavior: “physiological factors, early and persistent conduct problems, alienation and rebelliousness, attitudes favorable to drug use or crime, and early onset of drug use or crime” (Consortium 1994, 271).

45 According to Cowan *et al.* (1996, 9): “Risks predispose individuals and populations (identifiable groups of people) to specific negative or undesirable

simplistic outlook. He observes that risks also involve the opportunity to overcome the difficulty and to develop adaptive behaviors.⁴⁶ Rutter argues first that risk factors do not produce a direct result; and second that they do not have the same high rate of effect when one factor is present alone, as when two or more risk variables operate together.⁴⁷

Risk is risk for a specific outcome, and a particular risk can be defined only in terms of an outcome. Rutter illustrates that the same variable functions differently in dissimilar circumstances. For example, shyness may be a *risk* for depression, but *neutral* concerning academic achievement, and *protective* in regards aggression and delinquency. Thus we should not define shyness as a risk in abstraction; it is only a risk for depression. In general, “at risk” children or adults are not simply at risk, they are at risk for something.⁴⁸ Further studies suggest that strategies that work for one high-risk group will not necessarily work for a low-risk group. For example, family policies of restrictiveness tend to function successfully in homes when there are patent risks that are understood by both parents and children.⁴⁹ On the contrary, restrictiveness is not operative as pervasively in successful families that are in low-risk situations.

Researchers often correlate risk with stress or stressors. According to Norman Garmezy and Ann Masten, the presence of a stress stimulus event modifies our equilibrium; it has neuropsychological, cognitive and emotional consequences, which can

outcomes.” Concerning the statistical measuring of risk, he states: “The magnitude of risk is measured as the probability of a specific negative outcome in a population when the risk is present, compared with the probability when it is absent, or as a correlation between risk and outcomes measured as continuous rather than categorical variables.”

⁴⁶ Cf. N. Garmezy 1994, 9-12.

⁴⁷ Cf. M. Rutter 1990, 184; and 1979a. D. Pilling (1992, 95) has found that we experience more difficulty to manage or to escape from multiple risks or disadvantages. According to Felsman and Valliant, (1987, 307), “it is the multiplicity of stress factors that most determines a child’s psychiatric risk. With only one major stress factor present (even if chronic), a child’s psychiatric risk remained at the same level as that of the control group. However, with two or three stress factors operating simultaneously, the level of psychiatric risk increased fourfold.”

⁴⁸ In this perspective, “risk is not an accumulation of life stressors in which negative life events are associated with any manner of diseases or disorders” (Cowan, Cowan and Schulz 1996, 10).

⁴⁹ Cf. Baldwin, *et al.* 1990, 277-9.

disrupt our adaptation.⁵⁰ Although the danger of such a disruption to a person's adaptation can hinder his development, it can also promote development. Indeed in the midst of crisis, we find opportunity as well as danger.⁵¹ This ambiguity—the negative and positive potential of stress—complicates research efforts. Stress in general is difficult to quantify, contextual stress even more so, and stress-related opportunity the most.⁵² Stress and risk studies nonetheless provide a basis for promoting health and resilience. They contrast positive targets for educative and social interventions. For example, better knowledge of adolescent problem behavior identifies one hurdle to overcome on the way to promoting health.⁵³ Furthermore, as we shall see, some research

50 Cf. Garmezy and Masten 1990, 462-3; cited in Yule 1992, 190.

51 Ernst Kris's (1950) discussion of "optimal stress" highlights "the notion that stress can promote as well as hinder development. The two-part Chinese symbol of 'crisis' is represented by 'danger' and 'opportunity,' suggesting that recovery from the threat of defeat and resignation can deepen an individual's wisdom and resolve" (cited in Felsman and Valliant 1987, 307). But at the same time, other researchers consider that in ordinary circumstances "stress" leads to maladaptive outcomes (cf. M. Rutter 1990, 185; Werner and Smith 1992, 5).

52 Empirical researchers continue to struggle with problems of conceptualization and measurement as well as the generation of empirically-based models for "contextual stress." Pianta *et alia* (1990, 231-3) claim that researchers should not consider stress as a "nonspecific entity subsuming any and all experiences requiring coping or adaptation," which would lead to heterogeneous measures of stress (total scores). Stressors in any given populations overlap and share variance among each other. For example, significant relations exist between specific stressors such as family violence and chemical dependence. An alternative approach identifies the rational relations between types of stressors, giving more specific, gender-related outcomes. More lucid specification of stressors "can assist in a clearer conceptualization of the processes underlying the predictive relation by identifying a class of events that could meaningfully fit into existing theories of development in a way in which general, nonspecific notions of stress cannot."

53 Social-psychological theory (Bandura 1977; Jessor and Jessor 1977) and etiological research on adolescent problem behavior (Perry and Kelder 1992) have suggested "three levels of social-psychological risk factors that serve as the targets of intervention. These include environmental risk factors (such as role models, norms, opportunities, and social support), individual risk factors (such as levels of knowledge, values, self-efficacy, and functional meanings), and behavioral risk factors (such as social skills, intentions, existing repertoire, and reinforcements). The creative modification of these risk factors provides the basis for the content of health promotion programs" (Consortium 1994, 297). For example, the impact of risk can be reduced by changing its meaning, as when a child who has been prepared for a hospital stay can reduce the felt stress in evaluating the situation differently (cf. Cowan, Cowan and Schulz 1996, 33; Lazarus 1991; Lazarus and Folkman 1984).

has gone beyond the original conceptions of risk as individual adaptation to analyze family adaptation.

1.1.2.2. A Continuum of Vulnerability?

The notion of vulnerability complements that of risk. It does not constitute a statistical analysis of risk indicators, but rather an underlying process that functions only in the presence of a stressor.⁵⁴ It increases the probability of negative outcome and becomes apparent only under the influence of a specific risk.⁵⁵ But the result is not determined beforehand. The study of vulnerabilities leads to questions like: How can we decrease susceptibility to risk? How can we promote development and resources that diminish vulnerability?⁵⁶

Resilience researchers have defined vulnerability as: “an individual’s susceptibility to a disorder;”⁵⁷ “an amplifier of the probability of negative outcomes in the presence of risk.” Vulnerabilities are of internal or external sorts.⁵⁸ Inner vulnerabilities include: genetic predispositions or constitutional factors, as well as conditions such as low self-esteem and depression. External conditions include: ineffective parenting, socio-environmental hazards, as well as the internal frailties of those in the surrounding. Vulnerability accounts for how the negative effects of some variables are only precipitated by a degree of risk.

54 Furthermore, investigations of risk and vulnerability have developed from tending to focus on attentional and cognitive capacities, to notions of competence, including developmentally appropriate measures of childhood adjustment, interactive behavior and motivation for learning (cf. Musick *et al.* 1987, 230-1; Anthony 1974; Garmezy 1974).

55 According to Cowan, Cowan and Schulz (1996, 11; cf. 14), “In the statistical language of analysis of variance, the influence of a risk is a main effect, whereas the influence of a vulnerability depends on an interaction with another variable—it makes a difference to outcomes only at high levels of risk.” Werner and Smith (1992) say that “*vulnerability* ‘denotes an individual’s susceptibility to a disorder,’ while *risk factors* are ‘biological or psychological hazards that increase the likelihood of a negative developmental outcome in a group of people.’”

56 Cf. Petit *et alia* 1996, 3044.

57 Werner and Smith 1992.

58 Cowan, Cowan and Schulz 1996, 14. According to Rutter (1994b, 373), vulnerability can also take the form of a persistence of psychopathological effect.

Vulnerabilities spell creative potential as well. On the one hand, vulnerability can spell the occasion for positive growth. When we overcome risks or crises, we develop a further strength and reduce future vulnerability. On the other, what has been a resource can become a vulnerability, when pressed too far or developed *in extremis*.⁵⁹ For example, a premature child's capacity to support pain can lead to not resisting dangerous limits.

Vulnerability can be understood as a non-static continuum. It is the opposite pole of protection,⁶⁰ rather than of invulnerability. During the mid 1970s, the language of "vulnerability" gave rise to that of "invulnerability" and even of "invincibility" to describe children who had managed to achieve emotional health and high competence despite adversity and stress.⁶¹ These terms however were abandoned for the more relational concepts of resilience and stress-resistance.⁶² Most people perform with a checkerboard of weaknesses and strengths. To view vulnerability and protection as a continuous dimension of behavior displays their extension to cognitive, volitional and emotive phenomena. This perspective is more suggestive than viewing them as

59 A psychodynamics perspective accents these personal interactions in a complex system of relationships. Vulnerability is thus conceived as a lack of adaptation and flexibility in the passage from one system to another, from one relationship to another. The opposite of this vulnerability is the healthy flexibility of psychic functioning, which permits an active attitude of adaptation (cf. Petit *et alia*, 1996, 3045-6).

60 According to M. Rutter (1990 185), "It will be appreciated that in this regard vulnerability and protection are the negative and positive poles of the same concept, not different concepts" Cf. Murphy and Moriarty 1976, 202-203.

61 Anthony (1974) describes his attraction to "invulnerability" as two fold. First, since "'invulnerability' makes the point of psychological invincibility much more strikingly than the term resilience" (Anthony and Cohler 1987, xi). Second, because "the ideal of invulnerability, like the idea of immortality, has haunted the human race through many and varied interpretations of mysteries appertaining to origin and extinction, to the relationship of the natural to the supernatural order, and to the apparent immunity from the disasters of illness and injury granted to certain individuals" (Anthony 1987 41-2). He gives the examples of the Greek heroes Achilles and Hercules; Scandinavian god Balder; Indian man-god Krishna.

62 As M. Rutter (1985) notes, this phenomenon is relative and not as absolute as the terms invulnerable or invincible would lead one to believe. The degrees of resistance vary over time and in accordance with circumstances and are both personal (constitutional) and social (environmental). Cf. Werner and Smith 1992, 4; Luther and Zigler 1991; Masten and Garmezy 1985; Werner and Smith 1982.

threshold phenomena. For a threshold perspective would mean that we expect either a massive breakdown in the individual's behavior from confronting a certain level of stress, or stable perfection if it is overcome. Such threshold cutoffs are unstable grounds for judging what is healthy or acceptable, according to Radke-Yarrow.⁶³ However, a continuum perspective on behavior entails that we move developmentally between more and less successful adaptations to stress.

1.1.2.3. Protection, Coping and Buffering

The triad—protection, coping and buffering—offers counterparts to risk, stress and vulnerability. Protective mechanisms modify our responses to stressful situations. Risk and vulnerability produce new limitations to internal equilibrium, social integration and life-goals. They provoke obstacles to learning and expectations of negative outcomes. For example, when we fail to overcome a risk environment, we develop blockages to adaptation, learning and hope.⁶⁴ Yet, protective processes, like a catalyst, modify our responses to risk; they counter the risk, or change our life path toward adaptation.⁶⁵

Protection in general is more than a passive or defensive idea. It involves proactively employing our skills and stretching them in new applications. Research suggests that prevention-mediating processes reduce the impact of risk and negative chain reactions; they promote self-efficacy and self-esteem, and initiate new opportunities.⁶⁶ First, we can reduce risk by altering the risk itself. For example, we can neutralize a threat to our self-image through humor. We can alter its impact by putting distance between the bad situation and ourselves. Sometimes though, we must confront the source of risk. Second, in

⁶³ Radke-Yarrow (1990, 98) explains that “when investigation involves a search for mechanisms or processes, threshold models lose a tremendous richness of information and may conceal as much as or more than they reveal.” Cf. S. Gore and J. Eckenrode 1994, 55-6.

⁶⁴ Cf. Murphy and Moriarty 1976, 202-203.

⁶⁵ Cf. M. Rutter 1990, 209.

⁶⁶ According to M. Rutter (1994b, 373), resilience entails changing, overcoming or getting out of the situation, rather than becoming simply accustomed to it. We acquire resilience through planning, good school experience and success, which can all give the sentiment of personal efficacy and capacity. Cf. N. Garmezy 1985.

similar ways we can reduce negative chain reactions, such as vicious circles of coercive or anxiety-producing exchanges. Third, we can maintain self-esteem and self-efficacy through supportive personal relationships and successful task accomplishment. Finally, the way in which we handle the key turning points in life can reduce a risk trajectory to a more adaptive path.⁶⁷

Protection pertains to an individual's genetic temperament, acquired character, communal support, and the interaction between all three. The developmental psychologists Chess and Thomas analyze protective interactions in terms of "fit." Goodness of fit entails the compatibility of an individual's temperament, character and abilities with the demands and expectations of the social environment. Such a fit should lead to "healthy development and resiliency." Poorness of fit, however, involves that these demands and expectations are excessive or incompatible with the individual's resources. A stress-producing fit can jeopardize our healthy development. We can nonetheless increase or reduce fit through felicitous or infelicitous interventions, of both external and internal sorts.⁶⁸

Coping and adaptation are key aspects of resilience. A more detailed typology of coping operations completes the definition previously provided. First, Perrez and Reicherts identify three coping orientations: situational, representational and evaluational.⁶⁹ Situation-oriented coping involves a person's response to the stress-inducing situation itself (by changing it, fleeing it or putting up with it). Representation-oriented coping concerns the person's relationship to information about the situation, whereby the individual either seeks or suppresses pertinent information. Lastly, evaluation-oriented coping

67 Cf. M. Rutter 1990, 203-10 and 1989; Maughan 1988, 214; Werner and Smith 1992, 5. There are also studies that establish a conceptual and empirical foundation for preventive intervention programs and prevention science. Cf. Coie, *et alia* 1993, 1013-1022. For pedagogical insights see: B. Hamburg 1990. For evaluations of training programs see Masten *et al.* 1990, 251-3; Grotberg 1995.

68 Chess and Thomas (1992, 73) give the following examples of change of fit: parent guidance, unpredictable adventitious influences (death of parent), emotional distancing (in the wake of unhealthy parent-offspring interaction), self-insight (anger control). They also note that a similar concept is "match / mismatch," which is found in other developmental psychologists.

69 Cf. Perrez and Reicherts (1992: 29).

entails reevaluating one's goals or one's initial judgment of the situation. These specialists evaluate the adaptive adequacy of these coping processes in terms of: (1) how realistically the individual perceives the relevant stressor factors; (2) how adequately he or she converts these perceptions into effective coping practices; (3) how available are appropriate instrumental beliefs or "behavior rules;" and (4) how effective is the coping practice in the short-term, and what is its long-term relationship to well-being.⁷⁰ This evaluation of coping should recognize its social dimension. As Werner and Smith assent, optimal adaptive development entails a balance between a people's capacities and their influences on the social environment.⁷¹ This balance is dynamic: if families that adapt their behavior to cope with disadvantaged circumstances are not able to change their aspirations quickly when circumstances change, they will not be able to seize new opportunities.⁷²

Specialists also describe resilience in terms of competency. Resilience competencies are multivalent. They involve personal and social levels, as well as internal and external foci. On the personal level, emotional competencies engage a person's ability to express and regulate his or her emotions. This ability is present at birth,⁷³ but must develop throughout an individual's emotional history. This development always occurs in the context of family and friends, social standards and cultural practices.⁷⁴ Volitional resilience competencies involve attentional processes, self-efficacy, self-worth, an internal locus of control, as well as guarding or re-establishing emotional homeostasis and serving higher goals.⁷⁵ Intellectual resilience

⁷⁰ They also give examples of adequate and inadequate coping behavior; the former of which includes: (1) palliation of strong emotions; (2) active influence on stressors perceived as controllable; (3) reevaluation of the stressor, or evasion when possible, if the stressor is uncontrollable. Cf. Perez and Reicherts 1992, 35.

⁷¹ Cf. Werner and Smith 1986, 136.

⁷² Cf. D. Pillings 1992.

⁷³ Cf. K. Durkin 1995, 296, 256, 315.

⁷⁴ On the related cognitive factors, see: Consortium 1994, 276; Clarke and Clarke 1992, 153. For the

⁷⁵ Cf. F. Lösel 1994, 9; M. Rutter 1990, 206; Werner and Smith 1986, 59.

competencies involve problem-solving capacities, especially being able to handle cognitive complexities, as we shall later see.⁷⁶

On the social level, pro-social support systems reinforce personal skills.⁷⁷ First, our sense of well-being and satisfaction with family life underlie coping competencies.⁷⁸ Second, emotional and cognitive supports from others aid our efforts to manage stress and difficulty. They serve to establish and practice social skills; they also compensate for deficits when they provide role models and cooperate in coping activities.⁷⁹

1.1.2.4. Positive Stress and Stress Buffering

To define resilience in terms of those who thrive on stress is an exaggeration. Even though some humans display resilient ways to face stress, not all stresses are the same nor are all forms of stress management. “Good stress” mobilizes and motivates people. Good stress and bad stress are two distinct neurological happenings. The brain functions differently when stress presents a positive challenge, versus when it involves an overwhelming or demoralizing threat. The two kinds of stress parallel the operation of two distinct biological systems. When faced with good stress, the brain chemistry generates enthusiasm for a challenge. It produces a level of catecholamines, adrenaline and noradrenaline that is proper for concentration and action. Good stress even promotes a sort of peak performance, which D. Goleman describes as “a balance point when the sympathetic nervous system is pumping (but not too much), our mood is positive, and our ability to think and react is optimal.”⁸⁰

Bad stress, however, triggers a different neuro-chemical response (cortisol). The amygdala, the brain’s alarm, signals the alert. A lack in the prefrontal inhibitory circuitry means we let impulses run free. In this case, resilience demands that we reestablish balance

76 Cf. H. Reich 1995. Significant intellectual capacities include: observation-analysis, memory and judgment-discernment.

77 Cf. M. Rutter 1990, 182; 189-202; N. Garmezy 1985.

78 Cf. M. Perrez 1994b, 11.

79 Cf. Clarke and Clarke 1993, 149; F. Lösel 1994, 9; M. Tousignant 1998, 67.

80 D. Goleman 1998, 89; who cites Salvatore R. Maddi and Suzanne C. Kobasa 1984.

between the opposing neural systems that initiate action and those that inhibit it. Stress resilient and stress vulnerable people coordinate differently these two counter-poised tendencies.⁸¹ Brain imaging research demonstrates that resilient individual's start to inhibit the distress during the initial stressful event. By inhibiting the amygdala's alert, the prefrontal lobes are able to preserve clarity of thought and steady action.⁸² I shall investigate the other factors of this type of self-regulation in the next section. Here it suffices to note that one type of resilience involves recovery from (bad) stress, and another, an optimized concentration and clarity in action when faced with (good) stress.

Although researchers do not fully understand how we acquire psychosocial resilience against stress and adversity, they describe the acquisition of protection as a type of stress buffering or immunity, which decreases the probability of a negative outcome in the presence of a risk.⁸³ Stress buffering should not be confused with conditions of low risk. A buffer variable reduces the severity of anticipated undesirable outcomes in the face of risk; it works on the risk before, during or after we experience it.⁸⁴ M. Rutter has observed that negative

⁸¹ Goleman (1998, 77-8, 88-9) describes these two groups as follows: "one identified as highly resilient to life's ups and downs, the other easily upset by them. [...] The resilient people had a remarkably rapid recovery from stress, with their prefrontal areas starting to calm the amygdala—and them—within seconds. The more vulnerable people, by contrast, saw a continued escalation of their amygdala's activity, and their distress, for several minutes after the stressful activity ended."

⁸² D. Goleman (1998, 78) says in this regard that: "This inhibitory circuit between prefrontal lobes and amygdala underlies many of the self-regulation competencies, especially self-control under stress and the ability to adapt to change, both of which allow calm in the face of those existential facts of work life: crisis, uncertainty, and shifting challenges." Goleman, without citing it, refers to Richard Davidson's brain-imaging research at the University of Wisconsin's Laboratory for Affective Neuro-science.

⁸³ M. Rutter (1990, 186) speculates that stress buffering may happen like the adaptive changes produced through immunization to acute physical stress, for example: through electric shock that structurally and functionally alters the neuroendocrine system and through parachute jumping which induces anticipatory hormone changes.

⁸⁴ For example, in the case of women who have had insecure working models of early attachment (the risk), a buffering mechanism may be a secure working model of attachment with a husband (who has secure working models), which may forge another behavioral pathway (warm and structuring relation with children), thus avoiding the potential negative outcome (repeated insecure

experiences can either sensitize or steel us; they can increase or decrease our vulnerability to future stressors.⁸⁵ The medical metaphor of resilience as immunity or buffering illustrates that we acquire enhanced competency through managing successfully challenges, through engaging small doses of potential risk.⁸⁶ M. Rutter employs a medical metaphor of immunization to describe how involvement with real (instead of fabricated) trials can serve to strengthen humans through active engagement in the risk. He suggests that active immunization efforts are more efficacious than facing artificial risks, or simply avoiding them. Confronting risks demands pro-active construction of new competencies, rather than simply holding on to existing ones. Success, even in small trials and difficult initiatives, can thus lead to a kind of immunization to the risks involved. Through such mastery experiences, life may not become less difficult or painful, but we become more apt to live well in the midst of it because we can successfully manage the challenges.⁸⁷ Successful adaptation may mean avoiding, changing, or overcoming the difficulty rather than simply becoming accustomed to it. A warning is in order as well: just as we can acquire resilience competencies, so can we acquire contrary vulnerabilities.⁸⁸

working model of early attachment). Cf. Cohn, Silver, Cowan and Pearson, 1992; Cowan, Cowan and Schulz 1996, 14.

⁸⁵ In order to understand more fully this sensitizing and steeling, M. Rutter (1994b, 354) explains that we need to comprehend resilience on social, psychological and neurochemical levels.

⁸⁶ In discussing the search for protective processes, M. Rutter (1990, 186) says: "like medicines that work, these are often of the type that tastes bad! Thus immunization does not involve direct promotion of positive physical health. To the contrary, it comprises being exposed to, and successfully coping with, a small (or modified) dose of the noxious infectious agent. Protection in this case resides not in evasion of the risk but in successful engagement with it." According to Cowan *et al.* (1996, 15): "resilience can be enhanced by mastery experiences that develop and refine new coping skills, or can be eroded by cumulative adverse circumstances or developmental failures." They furthermore say (1996, 33), "Rutter (1987) suggested that the best protection for individuals at risk is to help them cope with small doses of the potential risks so that they can become more resilient by dint of their own efforts. That is, the best preventive effort may involve some degree of 'inoculation' with a 'live risk virus.'" Cf. Garmezy, 1985.

⁸⁷ Cf. M. Rutter 1990, 186 and 1987; Cowan, Cowan and Schulz 1996, 15; N. Garmezy 1985.

⁸⁸ We can acquire vulnerabilities in two ways: either cumulative adverse circumstances or developmental failures can erode existing coping skills, or we

Researchers have described stress-buffering processes and factors in various ways,⁸⁹ such as competence or mastery,⁹⁰ and hardiness, including family hardiness.⁹¹ This last point highlights the social nature of buffers, which can give a sense of control over hardship, the possibility and benefit of change, and direction in active stress management. A. Masten has suggested however that stress immunity is not a general quality, but rather depends on a stress response's adequacy in regards to context, circumstances and developmental stage.⁹² A buffer-related phenomenon is the "neutralizing" event, which negates or counteracts the negative impact of earlier threatening events. M. Rutter confirms this insight, adding that we may compensate for a lack in one life-domain by a relevant experience in another. For example, school and relationship-sources of self-esteem and self-efficacy can serve to complement a person who has not received adequate support from home.⁹³

1.1.3. Religious and spiritual resilience

Resilience research and literature rarely refer to spirituality and religion. In the next chapter, I shall explain why. As we shall see, there are the methodological, cultural and historical reasons. Here, however, I suggest that spiritual resilience stands at the intersection between applied and academic perspectives. It stands between preventing problem behaviors and promoting optimal development. Even though

can acquire tendencies to fall prey to later stress and adversity; cf. Cowan, Cowan and Schulz 1996, 33; N. Garmezy 1985; M. Rutter 1994b.

⁸⁹ E. J. Anthony (1987, 13; cf. Redl 1969) distinguishes four types of buffer; there are: first, protection from stimuli that can be overwhelming; second, the internal management of threatening stimuli; third, social protection (like a caregiver for a child, an elderly or ill person); fourth, ego-resilience (both resisting pathogenic pressures and recovering from temporary collapse).

⁹⁰ T. A. Wills 1996, 127; Cowan, Cowan and Schulz 1996; M. Rutter 1990.

⁹¹ H. I. McCubbin (1998, 54) says, "Hardiness functions as a mediating factor or buffer, mitigating the effects of stressors and demands and facilitating family adjustment and adaptation over time. Family hardiness specifically refers to the internal strengths and durability of the family unit."

⁹² Ann Masten (1990, 249) notes two patterns: first an internalizing pattern of stress response (disengaged but not disruptive), which is more common to girls; and second an externalizing pattern of stress response (disengaged but disruptive), which is more common to boys.

⁹³ M. Rutter (1990, 197) points out that not all positive events are "neutralizing."

spiritual and religious resources are not standard psychosocial resilience research categories, they play a role in overcoming difficulty; several psychosocial studies establish a positive correlation between human well-being and religion/spirituality.⁹⁴

First, several empirical studies indicate that religion is a positive factor. It provides protection inasmuch as religious practices facilitate coping with difficulty.⁹⁵ It conserves protective resources and aids one to build in the wake of difficulty. However, empirical research also indicates that religion can serve as a source of risk. For example, fundamentalist religious notions of fate lead to indifference about the outcome of one's actions.⁹⁶

Second, theoretical psychology recognizes potentially positive⁹⁷ and negative⁹⁸ associations between religion and health. It

94 As a wider backdrop for more specific resilience research, general literature on religion and mental health includes: J. F. Schumaker 1992; Hood *et al.* 1996. Furthermore, Chamberlain and Zika (1992) raise the question of relationship between religiosity and psychological well-being.

95 For other empirical studies which link human well-being and religious foundations, see: Lösel 1994; Chamberlain and Zika 1992; Ellison *et al.*, 1989; George and McNamara 1984; Wright *et al.*, 1993; cited in Garbarino and Bedard 1996, 468.

96 Andersen (1991, 375-398) has observed that girls can become indifferent to the possibilities of pregnancy, and boys to the effect of violence (such as war and gang activities).

97 J. F. Schumaker (1992, 3) presents a number of positions claiming that religion is beneficial to health, because it: (1) orders chaotic world by offering cognitive structures and pacifying narratives; (2) offers hope, meaning, and purpose with a sense of emotional well-being; (3) provides a reassuring fatalism that makes suffering and pain bearable; (4) affords solutions to conflicts; (5) solves the problem of mortality through afterlife beliefs; (6) gives a sense of control through an omnipotent force; (7) establishes self-serving and other-serving moral guidelines; (8) promotes social cohesion; (9) unites people around shared understandings; and (10) provides cathartic rituals.

98 J. F. Schumaker (1992, 3-4) also claims that some types of religion are potentially detrimental to mental health, because religion can potentially: "(1) generate unhealthy levels of guilt; (2) promote self-denigration and low self-esteem by way of beliefs that devalue our fundamental nature, or aspects of our nature; (3) establish a foundation for the unhealthy repression of anger; (4) create anxiety and fear by way of beliefs in punishment for 'evil' ways; (5) impede self-direction and a sense of internal control, while acting as an obstacle to personal growth and autonomous functioning; (6) foster dependency, conformity, and suggestibility, with a resultant over-reliance on forces or groups external to oneself; (7) inhibit the expression of sexual feelings, and pave the way for sexual maladjustment; (8) encourage the view that the world is divided into camps of mutually exclusive 'saints' and 'sinners' which, in turn, increases hostility and

illustrates a diversity of positions. Indeed some extreme empirical, clinical and theoretical psychosocial critiques directly address spiritual and religious teaching, resources and practices. Nonetheless a substantial well-reasoned middle ground maintains that religion is potentially positive. Its effects on mental and physical health depend on the content and appropriation of beliefs at personal and social levels.⁹⁹

In order to further introduce this section of the empirical findings and the theoretical positions, I shall highlight several difficulties that resilience research has in integrating human spiritual resources. General semantic snags include conflicting psychosocial notions of religion and spirituality. They also involve the ways in which resilience findings correlate to contrasting types of religious orientation and practice. I shall argue for a type of spiritual resilience that widens reductionistic conceptions. This spiritual resilience integrates sociological observations on religious practice. But it appropriates theological reflections and narratives as well.

1.1.3.1. Semantic Issues

Numerous semantic difficulties underlie the disparity between psychosocial notions of religion and spirituality. The meaning of religion and spirituality often differs in theoretical, clinical and experimental psychology, and sociology. The conception of religion and spirituality is important not only in searching for their relationships with resilience and health or normality and normativity, but even more fundamentally with human flourishing and happiness.

In empirical research, I have found five semantic tendencies. First, secular philosophical notions tend to override religious and spiritual ones. For example, the “spiritual” and “faith” are defined solely in altruistic or humanistic terms, without reference to divinity or

lowers tolerance toward the ‘other’; (9) instill an ill-founded paranoia concerning malevolent forces that threaten one’s moral integrity; and (10) interfere with rational and critical thought.”

⁹⁹ Cf. Garbarino and Bedard 1996; Masters and Bergin 1992; J. F. Schumaker 1992; Pargament *et al.* 1990; Levin and Markides 1986.

religion.¹⁰⁰ Gina O'Connell-Higgins conceives of spirituality and faith in terms of a "benevolent kingdom," a "faith in a larger future." It is thus that she identifies two overarching resilience themes, which are more philosophical than theological: "faith in surmounting and faith in human relationships as the wellspring of overcoming."¹⁰¹

Second, there is a propensity to conceptualize uncritically religion or spirituality and related data. Thus what is said about "prayer and faith" tends to be statistically analyzed without further distinctions in religious typology.¹⁰² E. Werner and R. Smith's research has identified faith and prayer as one of three major sources of support for the resilient children as adults;¹⁰³ they also note a certain correlation between mental illness and fundamentalist religion.¹⁰⁴

Third, psychosocial empirical research that does explicitly focuses on spirituality and religion tends to be minimalist, selective

100 An example of a secular philosophical spirituality is found in Nye and Hay's (1996, 3:145-151) set of three interrelated categories of spiritual sensitivity. These are: (1) awareness sensing: Here and Now, Tuning, Flow, Focusing; (2) mystery sensing: Awe and Wonder, Imagination; (3) value sensing: Delight and Despair, Ultimate Goodness, Meaning. These categories have certain parallels with resilience themes. Cf. John Bradford 1994.

101 Gina O'Connell-Higgins (1994, 171-2) sees faith as not depending on religion, thus following R. Niebuhr (1972, 39), who says, "So wherever and whenever we see [persons] giving themselves for that which is greater than themselves and greater than all the particular forces impinging upon them, there we meet the faithful human being." O'Connell (1994, 175) furthermore follows Sharon Parks perspective: "Faith isn't something that only religious folks have; it's something that all human beings *do*." Cf. Werner and Smith 1992, 207.

102 Concerning the scope of Werner and Smith's methodology (1992, 251-256), the questionnaires used to interview the cohort at age 31/32 shows a lack of reference to religious or spiritual realities. Although the research conclusions note that faith and prayer were significant protective factors, there are no specific questions that would systematically question the cohort on this issue. This is surprising since specific questions focus on the other factors (stressful events, relationships and protection), while the only passing reference to this domain is the inclusion of "minister" in a list of sources of aid when having a problem (cf. 1992, 256).

103 Concerning prayer, Werner and Smith (1992, 71) report "nearly half of the resilient women and one out of five among the resilient men relied on faith and prayer as an important source of support in times of difficulties" (M: 17.4%; F: 41.2%).

104 In regards to faith and prayer in Werner and Smith's (1992, 138-41) study, they noted that a significant minority of the sub-group with mental health problems as teenagers turned to "fundamentalist religions" for a sense of meaning in life in adulthood, particularly, to Jehovah Witnesses.

and incomplete. This bias is due to the nature of experimental studies; in particular, their observation-based methods and statistical analysis lend themselves to reductionistic findings. For example, researchers commonly correlate attendance at a religious service to health or behavior outcomes.¹⁰⁵ Attendance at religious services is an inadequate experimental factor; it does not consider intention or faith considerations. However, recent studies have introduced corrective nuances; they illustrate a greater awareness of the depth and breath of the subject. They thus render the insights on resilience and religion more valuable.¹⁰⁶

Fourth, the spiritual and physical realms are often opposed in order to affirm the multidimensionality of existence. The researcher intends to acknowledge that humans have a non-materialistic, spiritual dimension, which has a certain primacy. The danger is to compartmentalize human experience using dualistic conceptions of spiritual and physical realms.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Other empirical literature makes the following correlation between religion and health: fear of death negatively associated with religious faith; sleep disturbance negatively associated with identification of the church as a major source of support; higher self-esteem and less emotional upset (and depression) when patients reported God in control of their lives; lower levels of reported pain and greater flourishing; more favorable evaluations of coping with death of a loved one; prayer as coping response to difficulty; positive change as result of crisis; support in the face of the trauma of the death of a loved one (cf. Pargament 1990, 797-8).

¹⁰⁶ Levin and Markides (1986: 31-38) have recognized two problems in sociological studies relating religious attendance to health: (1) The multidimensionality of attending religious services relates to the multitude of reasons for attendance, which vary by gender, stage of the life cycle, generation and/or cohort. In some research it is used as a one-dimensional operational construct. (2) Religious attendance has frequently been used in uncontrolled analyses. They suggest the need to control for: social support, physical capacity, social class and subjective religiousness. In order for health-related research to find meaningful relations concerning religious attendance (and not just statistically significant ones), they make three suggestions: (i) add variables like: subjective religiousness, belief in God, belief in an afterlife, and frequency of private prayer; (ii) control for confounding influences; (iii) consider complementary measures representing differences in religion.

¹⁰⁷ Garbarino and Bedard (1996, 470) suggest that "the core of spirituality [and addressing the problem of trauma, suffering, and evil] is the recognition of oneself as being more than only a physical being, i.e. as a multidimensional person with a physical as well as spiritual identity or existence. This recognition includes awareness of the primacy of spiritual existence."

Fifth, in the name of neutrality or objectivity of empirical science, some researchers neglect or reject the possibility of religious and spiritual significance.¹⁰⁸ As I argue in the next chapter, theoretical and clinical psychologies (and experimental ones to some degrees) are mixed disciplines that have religious, spiritual and ethical presuppositions and dimensions.¹⁰⁹ These terms' definitions orient a good deal of how research correlates resilience, health, normativeness and so on. These five semantic issues highlight the challenges for considerations of religion and spirituality in empirical studies and theoretical reflections. Nonetheless, these considerations aid us to identify the resilience resources found in religion and spirituality.

1.1.3.2. "Religion" and "Spirituality"

Psychosocial specialists tend to agree that "religion"¹¹⁰ is not a homogeneous or one-dimensional construct. The multifaceted nature of religious experience causes problems for analysis. Indeed psychological research needs to address "whether" people are religious. However, it must also specify "how" they are religious.¹¹¹

The composite notions of religiousness satisfy more readily than simple definitions. C. Y. Glock,¹¹² King and Hunt have generated

108 This positive methodology not only concerns a Comtean critique of religion, but it also involves to some extent empirical psychology, as well as clinical and theoretical psychology. For example, Freud is well known for associating religion and obsession neurosis. This association is not a diagnosis resulting from his psychoanalytical practice, but rather a result of his theory of religion and interpretation of culture. Freud has had great influence on both secular and religious culture through his "scientific myth" about how religions developed in terms of: an archetypal Father, collective life, fraternal pact, sexual energy, ego, id, and superego. Although clinical and psychoanalytic movements have also drifted into the realm of religio-ethical judgments, they have not always followed Freud's particular negative interpretation of religion (cf. F. Watts 1997).

109 Browning (1987, 8) makes a noteworthy analysis of modern psychologies and their ethical-religious foundations. His thesis is that "significant portions of the modern psychologies, and especially the clinical psychologies, are actually instances of religio-ethical thinking. They are, in fact, mixed disciplines which contain examples of religious, ethical, and scientific languages."

110 The etymology of the word "religion" is found in the Latin *religare* (to be tied to, to fasten or bind).

111 Cf. Masters and Bergin 1992.

112 In a social psychology perspective, C. Y. Glock (1962; cited in Watts and William 1988, 10) employs a five-facet model of religion, as having

two of the more complete conceptions of religion;¹¹³ in simplified form, they propose the following religious domains: belief (a person's faith—confessional or ideological religion); intellectual (information, knowledge and meaning concerning faith, scripture and tradition); motivational (volition, goals and commitment); emotional (affectivity as passive and active, implicit and explicit judgments); ritualistic and prayer (signs, symbols and sacraments); social and cultural (community environment and interactions); experience (direct knowledge of ultimate, spiritual reality); consequential (related behavior and moral action).

This collection of interacting facets offers an extensive, even though unordered working notion of religion. It aids in evaluating the psychosocial findings. At the theoretical level, they approach the richness of religious and spiritual phenomena. At the empirical level, however, we cannot expect definitive conclusions from psychosocial studies because of the methodological difficulties faced in observing and measuring the inter- and relational-domains of religion.¹¹⁴ For these reasons experimental approaches tend make to more modest analyses.

Typologies of religious orientation¹¹⁵ provide another way to investigate “how” we appropriate religion. First, one of the most useful typologies distinguishes intrinsic from extrinsic religious orientation.¹¹⁶

theological (beliefs), ritual (practices), intellectual (knowledge), experiential (emotion) and consequential (effects) dimensions.

¹¹³ King and Hunt (1975) develop a 21 factor analysis of religiosity. A fine summary of this and other definitions of religion are found in Schumaker 1992, 4-6; cf. Hood *et al.* 1996.

¹¹⁴ Instead of completeness, there is a modest, but helpful, constellation of variables relating religion to resilience and health. Cf. J. F. Schumaker 1992, 11.

¹¹⁵ J. F. Schumaker (1992, 7-9) gives an overview of typology of religious orientation:

- (a) healthy / unhealthy. William James (1902) “healthy-mindedness” and the “sick soul,” Pruyser (1977) healthy versus neurotic;
- (b) mature / immature. Allport (1950); Batson and Ventis (1982) adding “quest” type = open minded and questioning;
- (c) serious / neutralized. Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford (1950);
- (d) humanistic / authoritarian. Erich Fromm (1950);
- (e) committed / consensual. Allen and Spilka (1967);
- (f) functional / dysfunctional. Spilka (1989).

¹¹⁶ This distinction is generally attributed to Allport and Ross (1967). Over the last thirty years it has given rise to numerous discussions and changes in research parameters; some of the most important publications include: Batson and

Belief and sincere commitment guide intrinsic religious orientation, which in turn serves as a person's most fundamental source of motivation. Intrinsically motivated people internalize their beliefs and attempt to live by them regardless of the consequences. On the other hand, extrinsic religious orientation is a "utilitarian," pragmatic and more self-centered approach. Some people thus use religion to obtain status, security, self-justification and sociability.¹¹⁷

A wide range of research supports the thesis that intrinsic religiousness and mental health positively correlate.¹¹⁸ According to Schumaker, for example intrinsic religiousness has been shown to positively correlate with seven sets of mental health criteria: "appropriate social behavior, freedom from worry and guilt, personal competence and control, and open-mindedness and flexibility;" while extrinsic religion has a negative relationship to them.¹¹⁹ The intrinsic-extrinsic typology furthermore has served both to dispel the "uniformity myth," that all religious beliefs and practices have equal

Ventis 1982; M. Donahue 1985; Pargament *et al.* 1990; Masters and Bergin 1992; J. F. Schumaker 1992; Meyer and Lausell 1996; F. Watts 1997. After experiencing criticism of and finding incoherencies in the original bipolar typology conceived as a continuum, Allport expounded a fourfold typology by adding *indiscriminately pro-religious* and *indiscriminately antireligious* types.

¹¹⁷ According to research by Kirkpatrick (1989), extrinsic religious orientation may take two orientations: "(1) extrinsic-social (i.e., using religion toward social gain); and (2) extrinsic-personal (i.e., using religion toward gaining comfort, security, and protection)" (Masters and Bergin 1992, 222). M. Donahue (1985, 416) construes extrinsic religious orientation to represent the type of religion that gives it a bad reputation.

¹¹⁸ They have loosely organized this research into the following two major categories: freedom from pathology, and positive mental health (competent perception and expression of feelings; freedom, autonomy and responsibility; integration and coping; self-awareness and personal growth; mature frame of orientation). Cf. Masters and Bergin 1992, 224-226. Using this same typology Meyer and Lausell (1996, 123-4) have identified some gender specific findings concerning adolescents. They say that: "Boys were more likely to have beliefs and attitudes about religion that viewed religion as a set of rules and guidelines that one followed to achieve particular rewards. Benson *et al.* refer to this as 'extrinsic' religious belief. ... In contrast, girls were more likely to see religious belief as an end in itself, to find more of a sense of freedom in their beliefs, and to report a more intimate relationship to God and others through their faith. This type of belief the authors refer to as 'intrinsic' religious belief." The researchers view intrinsic belief as indicative of greater maturity (cf. Donahue 1985).

¹¹⁹ J. F. Schumaker 1992, 15.

impact on psychosocial processes.¹²⁰ It also corrects over-simplified or erroneous interpretations in experimental and theoretical psychology.¹²¹

A second current typology analyzes the social dimension of religion and spirituality regarding their “control” and “support” functions. Researchers argue that we misconstrue the influence of religion and spirituality if these complementary social dimensions are not both utilized.¹²² The “control” and “support” typology corrects narrow-sighted research.¹²³ Thomas and Carver use this typology to help assess religious influence upon social competence. They critique a good part of the existing research on the influence of religion as focusing almost exclusively on the control construct (described as social control theory) to the detriment of the support and motivational one.¹²⁴ These two typologies will be employed in further analyses later in this section.

120 Cf. R. Payne 1991; J. F. Schumaker 1992; Masters and Bergin 1992.

121 For example, Batson and Ventis’ (1982) study of religion and mental health posits a third type of fundamental religious orientation, namely a “quest,” open-minded, non-dogmatic orientation (their Deweyan philosophical perspective establishes religious maturity in terms of final acceptance of the ambivalence in life). Their study found in turn that religion has positive effects, when mental health is defined in the traditional sense as an absence of psychological symptoms, and conversely that religion is more likely to be associated with negative effect (impaired psychological functioning), when mental health is defined according to “(1) personal competence and control; (2) self-acceptance or self-actualization; and (3) open-mindedness and flexibility.” (Cf. Batson and Ventis 1985) Several researchers have questioned this interpretation of religion and health (cf. Donahue 1985, 411-14). In critique of Batson and Ventis’ position, Master and Bergin (1992) have offered another interpretation of the data, based on a conceptual framework for the intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientation that employs another notion of finality. For Batson and Ventis, intrinsic religious orientation is not the final stage of development, but rather an intermediate stage, on the way to the “quest” mode. For Master and Bergin on the contrary the “quest” mode is only a transitional stage between extrinsic and intrinsic religious orientation. This example demonstrates that the flux in semantic fields (not only of religion, but also of health, etc.) is cumulative in effect.

122 Cf. Meyer and Lausell 1996; Thomas and Carver 1990.

123 The more popular one-sided emphasis has been on the control function of religion, which is the problem for example in the otherwise interesting research by R. Jessor and S. Jessor, (1977).

124 Thomas and Carver (1990, 202) report that “virtually all of the extant research that sees religious involvement as inversely related to antisocial behavior is best described as social control theory. ... One searches almost in vain for analyses of the possible role of religion as socially supportive, motivational, or

The term “spirituality,” like “religion,” has numerous interpretations. It is popular, even fashionable, to speak of spirituality. But it is difficult to understand. Indeed there is no universally recognized definition, and many approaches to spirituality exist. Inasmuch as spirituality is positively associated with religion, many, if not all, of the above-mentioned comments about religion apply to spirituality as well. Nonetheless, in order to appropriate better the richness of spiritual experience, and to avoid problems in empirical and theoretical psychosocial studies, we can identify definitions and developmental perspectives on spirituality.

Meyer and Lausell propose a tripartite definition of spirituality. First, spirituality implies a belief in the existence of a higher power that provides inspiration, guidance, replenishment and comfort. Personal experience with “a personal deity or an impersonal force” supports belief. Second, spirituality provides a cognitive framework for answering life’s major questions regarding: origin, identity, and relationships to others and to the world itself. Third, it involves a code for personal and collective attitude and behavior. The knowledge of and ability to uphold this code relies on surrendering to the higher power.¹²⁵ They claim that empirical studies, which do not take all three of these levels into account, will produce anomalies.

Developmental perspectives on spirituality (and religiousness) describe spirituality in terms of a spiritual search for meaning. Viktor Frankl, for example, interrelates spirituality with the somatic and the psychological dimensions of life.¹²⁶ He calls the spiritual quest for meaning the noetic dimension, which has roots in childhood, but primarily develops in adolescence. Reason and conscience exist in the noetic realm, through which we go beyond particular influences (including parental and societal influences) and transcend training; we

facilitative.” In a balanced fashion they also describe the positive aspect of control in terms of restricting and guiding.

¹²⁵ Meyer and Lausell 1996, 119. I recall here that these three levels relate to the other domains of religion.

¹²⁶ According to Frankl, the somatic (physical) dimension is the instinctual level of motivation, which helps the individual and species to survive. It exists throughout life. The psychological dimension underlies the personality, which begins to form at birth and develops throughout as a result of instincts, drives, capacities, and interactions with the environment. (Frankl 1967; found in Dacey 1992, 585-6).

thus aspire to higher levels of spiritual thought and behavior. In addition to Frankl's views, other theories address how and why spirituality develops with age.¹²⁷ The sociobiology perspective of E. O. Wilson, for example, explains spirituality and religious practice as enhancing the gene-survival of its practitioners.¹²⁸ Religion in itself, according to Wilson, is not an absolute value however, since not all religions have survived, e.g. the Shakers (who practiced complete celibacy). Spirituality or religion has two roles in Wilson's perspective. First, it reaffirms and renews the community's moral values. Second, through early learning it subverts natural self-interests to the interests of society, which require that the majority of people be "controllable." The genes that favor both the willingness to be controlled and the potential for self-sacrifice have been favored by natural selection, according to Wilson's theory.¹²⁹

What challenges do psychology and sociology's approaches to religion and spirituality pose for theology? They often identify religion with extrinsic religious orientation and spirituality with intrinsic religious orientation, or religion with its control function and spirituality with the function of support and guidance. Spirituality is also opposed not only to religion but also to ethics. The relationship of both religion and ethics to spirituality depends on how we define and articulate religion, spirituality, and ethics.

In the midst of these challenges and nuances, how can we treat spirituality and religion in this section? First, I shall try to make apparent the coverage of the terms in the research. Terminological clarity should permit us to avoid confusing observations made on

¹²⁷ Spiritual development views of psychology include those the Viennese psychoanalyst Carl Jung, the sociobiologist E. O. Wilson, and the theologian James Fowler (cf. Dacey 1992, 585-6).

¹²⁸ E. O. Wilson (orig. 1975—1978, 188; cited in Arnould 1996, 233) illustrates his positive vision of the role of religion in human adaptive efforts for survival when he says: "The highest forms of religious practice, when examined more closely, can be seen to confer biological advantage. Above all they congeal identity. In the midst of the chaotic and potentially disorienting experiences each person undergoes daily, religion classifies him, provides him with unquestioned membership in a group claiming great powers, and by this means gives him a driving purpose in life compatible with his self-interest. His strength is the strength of the group, his guide the sacred covenant."

¹²⁹ Cf. E. O. Wilson 1978, 179. S. J. Pope 1998a has judiciously critiqued Wilson's work.

different levels. Second, I shall use religion and spirituality more or less interchangeably in my analyses, recognizing their rich domains mentioned above. This attempt to recognize the spiritual basis for religion will not out of hand favor amorphous spirituality to institutional religion.

1.1.3.3. Spiritual Resilience

Based upon these discussions of resilience, religion and spirituality, we can now ask: what is spiritual resilience? As a third level of resilience, spiritual resilience does not simply involve a separate domain that has no commonality with the first two. Indeed, while it relates metaphorically to the resilience of inanimate material, it has a closer relationship with the psychosocial type. It is a human reality. In order to understand spiritual resilience, we need to understand human nature and agency. Psychosocial sciences and philosophical studies aid in this regard. Yet while the spiritual-religious domain extends human experience, it is in continuity with it. To understand this type of resilience, the following chapters address the correlation of nature and grace. At present, we can say that spiritual resilience concerns the ethical, religious and spiritual dimensions of human resilience.

Beyond the psychosocial observations of human sciences, to recognize spiritual resilience requires two changes in perspective. First, we need to not merely study the weakness of individuals and groups, but concentrate on their resources, practices and potential. This enables us to identify the strengths rooted in human spiritual character and community. These are the qualitative levels of human experience: ethical, spiritual and religious, as well as emotional, cognitive, motivational and social.¹³⁰ Second, we should investigate the effect of

¹³⁰ Religion and spirituality serve in forming additional resilience competencies or vulnerabilities. On the positive side, certain “intrinsic qualities” of religious beliefs are: mindfulness of other people and of oneness with creation, or an internalized code of behavior involving firmer control, higher maturity and greater acceptance of personal responsibility for one’s own behavior (cf. Meyer and Lausell 1996, 125-6). Such intrinsic qualities contribute to increase personal strengths and to reduce vulnerability to risky situations (cf. Meyer and Lausell 1996, 125-6; Masten, Best, and Garmezy 1990, 425). Religious conceptions and support contribute to competency or vulnerability through their involvement in

what we teach and express, which involves personal contacts, institutions and culture. A concern for resilience-effects goes beyond a simple scrutiny of external behavior.¹³¹ Consequently, spiritual resilience does not merely concern those who live in “at risk situations.” It involves each human being. We all inevitably face challenges due to maturation, change and loss, cycles of which humans continually pass throughout our lives.

We tentatively define “spiritual resilience” as the capacity, when faced with hardship and difficulty, to cope actively using religious resources, to resist the destruction of one’s spiritual competencies and to construct something positive in line with larger theological goals. This abstract definition finds more concrete expression. For example, according to the French Child Psychiatrist Michel Manciaux, spiritual resilience is empowered by a life-project, which serves to orient our life.¹³² Empirical studies, theoretical reflections and intervention efforts,¹³³ furthermore, address spiritual resilience processes in terms of meaning, motivation, hope, friendship and caring; these realities also have both religious and secular senses. In this section, I have introduced the forms of spiritual resilience. The next section’s treatment of the research findings and theoretical considerations integrate spiritual and religious considerations in regards: temperament and emotion; cognitive and volitional processes;

appraisal and coping processes. They are part of the coping process, either as contributing to it or as a product of the coping process (cf. Pargament *et alia*, 1990, 796-7, and 813).

¹³¹ How is or is not the teaching, counseling, or preaching being translated into a person’s whole life? For example, do the lived expressions of faith, hope and love make people spiritually resilient? In this perspective, resilience is a qualitative criteria (albeit a metaphorical one) for judging our efforts in virtue education.

¹³² Cf. M. Manciaux 1995 and 2001.

¹³³ Addressing the spiritual dimension of risk and trauma, as well as accessing and developing spiritual resources are important, not only for the affected individuals and groups, but also for those responsible for intervention. In this regard, Meyer and Lausell (1996, 130) suggest two strategies: (1) “allow and support a dialectic in which youth can critically examine and explore their belief systems;” and (2) “provide adolescents with opportunities to develop their personal spiritual belief systems and supportive relationships with others who have similar values.” Cf. Garbarino and Bedard 1996, 474-475.

and social support and resources.¹³⁴ However, before starting the more in-depth investigation, I shall draw some conclusions.

1.1.4. Conclusions

1.1.4.1. Resilience's limitations

Before I venture a composite definition of resilience, it is fitting to mention the confines of its psychosocial conceptualization. The constructive and promising nature of the resilience concept does not override its limits and dangers. Several restrictions correlate to the use of positivistic methodology. Nonetheless, correctives are possible; the next chapter will highlight them. Current research sometimes lacks a trans-situational systematic exploration of resilience and coping; this constraint is inherent to an inductive method applied to a complex reality—human individuals interacting with social groups.¹³⁵ Furthermore, the popularity of the concept of resilience constitutes a fourfold peril. First, we can simplistically construe it as invulnerability¹³⁶ or to mean that everyone can succeed in fame and wealth when faced with difficulty, like the so-called “American dream.”¹³⁷ Second, some might mistake resilience as a replacement for

134 Garbarino and Bedard (1996, 468) trace similar aspects of religious resilience: human well-being; personal control against problem behavior; sense of meaningfulness and depression-buffer; positive coping with stress; and recovery from trauma.

135 It is not unusual for resilience researchers to highlight the limits of resilience and coping research; for example N. Garmezy (1990, 532) says: “But coping as a construct leaves much to be desired. Its limitations reside in the quality of the instruments for measuring coping, their lack of sound psychometric properties, the failure to develop adequate standardization data, and the questionable assumption of transitional generalizations that can be drawn from test responses to hypothetical or eventual situations.”

136 Felsman and Valliant (1987, 304) say, “While the term ‘invulnerability’ as metaphor captures much of the enthusiasm and spirit of this inquiry, it is all too easily seized upon as myth, especially by the popular press. One repeatedly reads and hears misguided reports of ‘superkids’ and references to ‘invulnerability.’ [...] If unqualified, our vision becomes myopic; human vulnerability is equated with weakness and invulnerability equated with strength.” They (1987, 310-11) limit the term “invulnerability” to metaphorical use, as a lifelong adaptive process.

137 One notable version of the American dream is the Horatio Alger legend, inspired by the Unitarian Minister (1834-99) who wrote numerous juvenile

social change (at policy and intervention levels). Thus the question: “If some disadvantaged people have been able to develop healthily and be happy, why cannot everyone?” Facile answers do not withstand scrutiny. Third, we risk forgetting the hidden costs paid for successful survival.¹³⁸ Psychological scars often if not always accompany the resilience that individuals attain in the most difficult situations; indeed even when we integrate and accept a harsh event, it does not disappear as if it never happened; and we need also to face dangers of relapses under stress. Fourth, resilience research cannot content itself with only focusing on positive features (e.g. social competence), without also addressing the absence of negative ones (emotional and volitional disturbance).¹³⁹

1.1.4.2. A Composite Definition of Resilience

In summary, I propose a definition of resilience with three interrelated but non-exclusive axes, which each traverse the physiological, psychosocial and spiritual dimensions of human life and society. First, resilience is the ability to cope in adverse conditions; it endures, minimizes or overcomes hardships. Second, it consists in resisting destructive pressures on the human person’s physiological, psychosocial and spiritual life; that is, it maintains capacities in the face of challenges, threats and loss. Third, resilience creatively constructs and adapts after adversity; it implies recovering with maturity, confidence and wisdom to lead a meaningful and productive life. This composite definition emphasizes not only the coping and constancy aspects of the patterns of resilience amid disadvantage, but

novels, in which the characters attain fame and wealth through practicing virtues such as honesty, diligence and perseverance. This “American mythology” can take on an individualist flavor, that one is solely responsible for one’s own progress and success. Cf. Felsman and Valliant 1987, 304; N. Garmezy 1994, 13.

¹³⁸ The idea of “hard growing,” according to Radke-Yarrow (1990, 114) comes from the “extra challenges and developmentally inappropriate demands embedded in [children’s] special valued traits. Furthermore, in aspects of their styles of coping, we suggest that there are hidden costs that continuing life stresses or the tasks of normal developmental transitions may make manifest.” Felsman and Valliant (1987, 304) highlight that sometimes the psychological pain (to the individual, family and community) is simply accepted as an inevitable aspect of such individual triumph.

¹³⁹ Cf. M. Rutter 1994b, 359-60; S. S. Luthar 1991, 600-16.

also the constructive outcomes expressed in growth, strength and increased adaptation in personal and social domains.

After having established a basic understanding of resilience, as well as some of its underlying conceptual components, I now turn to address the resilience research itself. In so doing, I recall that the status of this research is tentative, a consolidation of hypotheses of differing certainty, which nonetheless lead to helpful insights into human nature and agency.

1.2. Resilience Input for a Virtue-Based Philosophical Anthropology

In this section, I investigate further research on protective and risk processes.¹⁴⁰ I interpret the insights within a classic anthropological schema: temperament and emotion, cognitive and volitional processes, and familial and social contexts.¹⁴¹ At the same time, I employ an overlapping division that differentiates natural characteristics from religious and spiritual ones. This meta-analysis of the resilience findings inductively identifies resources that make some difference in resilience outcomes. It examines resilience research per se. The following chapters put these resilience insights into dialogue with Thomas Aquinas' virtue-based anthropology and moral theology. In particular, they seek to enrich his theory of moral agency and virtue

¹⁴⁰ Some of the studies are gender-specific. Sometimes the gender-related findings seem contradictory. For example, some of them show more disadvantage to girls than to boys in families with difficulties. (Cowan, Cowan and Schulz 1996, 31); while others find that boys exposed to serious disorder in the family are more likely to develop emotional or behavioral disturbances (Rutter 1990, 189).

¹⁴¹ Although I do not outline Thomas' anthropology until chapter two, it already serves as the basis for the division of this present section. One of the more complete attempts at structuring resilience findings is S. Vanistendael's (1995) who analyzes the resilience research-action findings as follows: social networks and unconditional acceptance; the capacity to discover some order and sense and meaning in life; a variety of skills (competencies); self-esteem; humor; contact with nature. He recognizes the importance both to care for elementary material needs, and to be ready to add other undiscovered experiences to this list. Furthermore he regroups these elements in a useful pedagogical model, the "casita." Other attempts at resilience summaries include F. Lösel (1992) and E. Grotberg (1995).

development in hardship: how we act before, during or after stress and difficulty.

1.2.1. Temperament

This section addresses temperament. What temperament characteristics have researchers posited as more readily fostering human resilience? It presents a general definition of temperament, and discusses the debate on whether temperament traits originate in nature or nurture. It then identifies the correlations between temperament, resilience, context and gender.

1.2.1.1. Temperament: definition and origins

In general, “temperament” and “personality”¹⁴² are used to identify what differentiates human beings at the level of psychosocial make-up and activity,¹⁴³ or mood.¹⁴⁴ Although definitions vary in this field, researchers generally agree that personality differences exist at an early age and that they influence development in character and social involvement. Following Allport,¹⁴⁵ most psychologists concur that temperament is a dynamic organization of behavioral, attitudinal, emotional and cognitive patterns.¹⁴⁶ Kagan has identified four primary

¹⁴² We should not confuse “personality” and “person.” The former is a psychological term, while the later is theological and philosophical. I shall use “temperament” and “personality” and “personality features” interchangeably throughout this section, as do researchers such as Rutter (1990, 182).

¹⁴³ A standard dictionary defines temperament as: “n. 1. the individual peculiarity of physical organization by which the manner of thinking, feeling, and acting of every person is permanently affected; natural disposition” (*Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language* 1989, 1461). Ancient physiology considered temperament to be due to an individual’s particular proportion of the four cardinal humors (or bodily fluids: blood, phlegm, black bile and yellow bile), which determined physical and mental constitution.

¹⁴⁴ According to Paul Ekman (1992), emotions, moods, temperaments and emotional disorders all interrelate as a nuclear core to its derivative expressions; emotions (the various families of emotions) are the basic emotional core that are expressed in moods, temperaments and emotional disorders. Cf. D. Goleman 1995, 215 and 290.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. G. W. Allport 1937/1961; K. Durkin 1995, 71.

¹⁴⁶ A widely accepted typology temperament distinguishes: easy, slow and difficult temperaments. (1) “easy” infants adapt well to novel experiences, are cheerful and easily pacified when distressed; (2) “slow to warm up” infants adapt slowly, cry and fuss more, are irregular in daily routines; (3) “difficult” infants

temperament types: bold, timid, upbeat and melancholic.¹⁴⁷ For example, by temperament some humans are more choleric than others; they must live with a propensity to be wrathful, testy, irritable, impatient and touchy. We do this in different ways, through acquired personal strategies or skills, and more or less successfully at personal and interpersonal levels.

The inequality of personality qualities at an early age and throughout the life cycle poses questions about the origin of and influences on temperament. Researchers attribute some aspects of individual differences to the “raw material” (Allport 1961: 33), or “inherited basis” (A. H. Buss 1992) that infants and children first bring to their interaction with the social world. The running debate concerns: What is the extent of the genetic origin? What is the influence of primary caregivers? In other words, to what extent is temperament hereditary? How stable is it? And to what extent can it be changed?¹⁴⁸

Non-deterministic research indicates that both nature and nurture contribute something; that is, both genes and individual neuro-psycho-social factors. This latter one includes influences of family, educators, media and the surrounding environment. Most researchers recognize an interaction between endogenous attributes and environmental factors without naively distinguishing each one's contribution.¹⁴⁹ Moreover, they cautiously affirm that temperament qualities translate into behavior or action, which in turn further shapes

withdraw in front of novelty, have more negative moods and intense reactions, as well as irregular sleeping and eating habits (Thomas and Chess 1989; cited in K. Durkin 1995, 71). Another common temperament typology identifies four tendencies to interface with environmental experiences: activity, reactivity, emotionality, and sociability (McCall 1987).

¹⁴⁷ J. Kagan (1994; cited in Goleman 1995, fn. 14.1) also associates various patterns of brain activity with temperamental moods.

¹⁴⁸ This running debate about the interaction of nature and nurture on temperament has extreme positions that attribute the developmental outcome to biological factors (temperament theorists, cf. J. Kagan, 1994; Kagan *et al.* 1990) or to environmental factors (e.g. Behaviorists, cf. B. F. Skinner). Twin studies demonstrate the inheritability of temperamental characteristics, by showing higher correlations between monozygotic twin's temperaments than that of fraternal twins. The study of stability and mutability of temperament is also rather complicated by the proximity of temperament, with emerging competencies and self-organization (cf. K. Durkin 1995, 72-3).

¹⁴⁹ Cf. K. Durkin 1995, 97, who cites L. A. Sroufe 1985.

the development of temperament and future behavior in the form of character.

1.2.1.2. Resilience, Temperament and Context

Resilience researchers posit various relationships between particular temperament qualities and resilience outcomes. They analyze these qualities at different levels. First, some temperament qualities elicit positive social responses from parents, peers, teachers and the like. These resilience engendering personality traits include: a certain culturally appropriate level of activity, sociability and emotionality;¹⁵⁰ responsiveness to others and an outgoing nature;¹⁵¹ flexibility and approach orientation (inasmuch as they favor effective coping);¹⁵² attitudes such as optimism, problem-solving confidence, and perceived control;¹⁵³ autonomy, self-esteem and a positive social orientation.¹⁵⁴

Children with an “outgoing nature,” for example, express a more pleasant, positive mood to their caregivers. These children tend to be quicker with a smile and laughter, or to be engaged in and maintain eye contact. They more readily join in activities and take on

150 In other words, researchers describe these characteristics in terms of: “dispositional attributes that elicited positive responses from family members and strangers, such as robustness, vigor and an active sociable temperament” (Werner and Smith 1992, 192); “attractiveness to peers and adults” (Masten, Best and Garmezy 1990; cf. Garmezy 1994); “sociability, problem-solving ability, and planning ability, leading gradually to an internal locus of control. Such children are likely to attract the positive attention of teachers in school; to acquire self-esteem and self-confidence; and to believe in their own ability to adapt to changing circumstances and in their ability to change circumstances themselves” (Clarke and Clarke 1992, 153).

151 Cf. Booth and Booth 1997, 113.

152 Cf. F. Lösel 1994, 9.

153 Here we include what are considered “basic” attitudinal dimensions of coping that are more a basis or overall approach to coping rather than a mechanism or process per se. Wills (1996, 128) formulates the hypothesis that “an important factor lies in basic attitudinal dimensions that influence the course of the coping effort. There are several good candidates, including optimism (Scheier and Carver, 1987), problem-solving confidence (Heppner, 1989), and perceived control (Wills, 1994). Some evidence for each of these mechanisms is available in retrospective or prospective research, and leads to the prediction that efficacy orientation or generalized outcome expectancies are a crucial factor in predicting the course of the coping effort.”

154 Cf. M. Rutter 1990, 182; N. Garmezy 1985.

responsibilities. Such temperamental qualities may elicit not only positive responses from the care-giver, but also facilitate stronger attachment relationships, which in turn can be significant for one's self-image and confidence; they can particularly aid us to face difficulty and challenges even from an early age. Temperament can play a more central role in certain early childhood activities, while interpersonal characteristics become more predominant in adolescence and afterwards. In particular, infants moderate stress using more constitutional factors, they count more on interpersonal interactions, such as play, later in life.¹⁵⁵ These indications of resilience promoting temperamental qualities need further investigation: How do they interact with the development of emotional, volitional, cognitive and spiritual resources, as well as interpersonal relationships?

Secondly, some temperament characteristics elicit negativity and aggression.¹⁵⁶ Such characteristics explain in part individual differences in risk exposure, and how in the same situation people have varied experiences, some positive and others negative. For example, less interactive children may tend to be less stimulated and socialized by their care-givers, who must put more time and effort into engaging the child in visual, verbal, or play contact; such children have as a result weaker attachment bonding.¹⁵⁷ Clarke and Clarke hypothesize that growing up in large, chaotic, discordant families promotes temperamental irritability and lack of sociability.¹⁵⁸ In general Rutter notes that difficult children's temperaments can cause individual risk, since they tend to be scapegoated; for example they attract the

¹⁵⁵ Cf. W. Yule 1992, 189.

¹⁵⁶ Researchers note that underlying physiological factors can contribute to antisocial behavioral problems, such as drug and alcohol abuse (Consortium 1994, 271), as well as to depressive behavior (cf. S. J. Pope 1998).

¹⁵⁷ There is a whole range of such interactivity (the lower range being caused by various disabilities). The Spangler study (1990, a longitudinal study of 24 German mother-child pairs) showed that the mothers who perceived their infants as difficult became less responsive to them by 24 months. Furthermore, reduced interactivity in turn negatively effects the attachment between mother and infant, according to Bowlby 1969 and 1973 (cf. Durkin 1995,99).

¹⁵⁸ Clarke and Clarke (1992, 153) speculate that in this situation children do "not have the opportunity to gain an understanding of social cause and effect, nor to develop planning ability or knowledge of the desirability of delayed gratification and an internal locus of control."

hostility, criticism and irritability of a depressed parent.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, aggressive or anti-social children tend also to elicit negative responses from people outside the family: from neighbors, educators and venders. Such behavior and responses can bring about a vicious cycle of negative experiences.¹⁶⁰ It can also explain further how in the same situation people have varied experiences, and how concrete behavior is continuously involved in shaping such experiences.

Research demonstrates the context-specificity of resilience outcomes. The De Vries African famine study illustrates that particular, temperamental characteristics put a group of children at risk in one situation, but rendered them more resilient in another. In particular, the difficult and demanding temperamental characters survived (alive) an extreme draught in Zimbabwe. Because of their persistence (in crying and demanding food), they received the scarce food that existed. The temperament that elicits negative outcomes in one situation, might promote survival in another.¹⁶¹ This counter-intuitive insight suggests that we need to delineate resilience findings, as well as prepare for context-specific outcomes.

Researchers have also identified a variety of temperamentally risky or protective relationships that seem gender-specific.¹⁶² Pianta *et al.* have noted differences in the way in which children relate to their parents and the home environment when confronted with stress. Boys' competence and coping skills were especially linked to their relationship with their mother and home environment. Girls' competence however was distinguished by their mother's positive

¹⁵⁹ Cf. M. Rutter 1990, 189-202.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. M. Rutter 1994b, 371-2.

¹⁶¹ Cf. The De Vries study on child survivors of the Zimbabwe famine (cited by M. Rutter 1998, 48).

¹⁶² As with a good deal of resilience research, we must employ these findings in other cultural and age contexts with care. Conflicting gender-specific findings in violent environments invite caution in extrapolating from one high-risk setting to another. Nonetheless, given that certain risks are perhaps more normal than one might think, we look to the high-risk examples as sometimes counter intuitive insights about human nature and culture, that might bear fruit in pedagogical applications. According to M. Rutter (1990, 189-202), males are more vulnerable to a number of physical hazards; discord impinges on them more directly, and they have biological susceptibility to psychosocial hazards. Females on the contrary might have a lesser exposure to risk factors in violent environments.

social and problem-solving characteristics. More specifically, they observed that: “‘protective’ environments for boys were structured, organized, emotionally supportive, and distinguished by good teaching by mothers.”¹⁶³ Girls conversely did not need the same active environmental support to develop competently within a stressful household; for them, it appears as minimally important that the mothers’ characteristics shield the girls, foster their independence, and be transmitted through observation and identification. Werner and Smith moreover noted that in high crime settings the tendency for shyness of unaggressive boys acts as a protective factor against delinquency and crime, while the opposite is the case for aggressive boys.¹⁶⁴ The identification of such a factor itself does not directly correspond to a universal psychological or sociological process for avoiding delinquency. Such a single-variable analysis leaves open questions that demand the consideration of other variables, in this case, aggressiveness. This example suggests that a temperament disposition (e.g. shyness) in one type of situation protects one boy while leaving another boy vulnerable, because of further differences in temperament (e.g. aggressiveness).

1.2.2. Emotions

Are human emotions disruptive and irrational? Or are they also functional and in some way rational? Theories vary. Much of contemporary culture promotes an inherited dichotomy between emotion and reason. Its proponents, both philosophers and psychological theorists, construe emotions as inherently irrational, as disruptive and maladaptive. However, other classical thinkers offer a more positive view; and some current psychological theories emphasize emotions as functional and adaptive.¹⁶⁵ Indeed emotions

¹⁶³ Pianta, *et al.* 1990, 232.

¹⁶⁴ Werner and Smith (1992) employed the Cambridge Study of Delinquent Development (Farrington 1983, 1987, 1989), a longitudinal survey of working class males from London’s inner city, born in the early 1950s. They judged success by the nature of employment history and family relations, and the absence of criminal convictions and deviant behavior.

¹⁶⁵ Recent psychological theories (e.g. cognitive psychology and attachment theory) emphasize the cognitive and functional value of even negative emotions, e.g. anger, sadness, guilt and disgust. Nonetheless, emotions are not

demonstrate a rapid appraisal of the situation. They can facilitate adaptive responses. Both trying and uplifting emotions contribute to human experience. Yet they are not the whole of it. Sadness, fear and disgust, as well as joy, peace and love tell us something about reality. But what? In order to avoid a false dichotomy in emotional analysis and to understand the role emotions play in promoting resilience, we need to acknowledge the way that emotions interplay with cognitive and volitional processes; and we need to insist on the basic unity of human experience and agency.

In order to understand the relevance of emotions for resilience outcomes, I examine them at four levels: first, as types of judgment; second, as influences on perception and action; third, as tied to social bonds, fourth as in need of training. This fourfold foundation prepares our presentation of divers perspectives on religious emotions and the role that religion plays in emotional management strategies.

1.2.2.1. Emotional Judgments, Perceptions, and Social Bonding

First, according to some thinkers, emotions are judgments. They provide us ways to perceive the situation in terms of its meaning and future action. Cognitive psychologists construe attraction or aversion-eliciting emotions to result from human perception and appraisal processes. They describe emotions as the felt tendency toward anything intuitively appraised as good or beneficial, or away from something sensed as bad or harmful.¹⁶⁶ The attraction and repulsion of emotion entails a judgment about the organism and the environment, or response to meaning at felt (conscious) and unfelt (unconscious) levels.¹⁶⁷ On the one hand, as a type of unconscious judgment, emotions identify meaning as an instinctive, automatic, non-

always rational, probably because “maladaptive assumptions and excessive sensitivities” distort the appraisal of the situation (F. Watts 1997, 252). Major schools of psychology have been less than generous in their study of human emotions. For example, Piaget’s studies focus almost exclusively on cognitive development (cf. K. Durkin 1995, 20).

¹⁶⁶ Cf. M. Perrez 1992, 182; who refers also to Arnold 1960, Lazarus 1968, 1991.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. R. Lazarus 1968, 1991a; 1991b; J. Bowlby 1969; M. Ainsworth, *et alia*, 1978, 19.

intellectual appraisal of the situation.¹⁶⁸ As conscious judgments, or a result thereof, on the other hand, emotions imply a more deliberate and conscious appreciation of meaning.

We are more or less aware of the sources of our emotions. Confronted with the suffering of refugees, we might not know why we are angry. Anger unconsciously arises from the suffering found in the situation; we empathize with others in their hunger, illness, separation from family and homeland. But we also experience a conscious level of emotional awareness when we attribute the suffering to particular historical, political, and economic causes. Rational deliberation about the situation alters the felt anger, which then no longer simply springs from general empathy, but is also generated by conscious adjudication about the source of suffering and injustice. This type of emotion is not simply a passive reaction to stimuli, even though these emotions may unfold in experiences that we encounter more as a passive than as an active subject. As emotive situations advance, our emotions constantly interrelate with preceding and consequent perceptions, thoughts, decisions and actions.

Second, emotions alter our rational and volitional processes. They can facilitate or hinder the perception itself, as well as contiguous thoughts, judgments and action. For example, an experience of justified anger, when moderate, can aid us to think through a situation. It pushes us toward a concrete corrective action. Blinding wrath, on the contrary, deforms our perception and confuses our decisions and behavior.

Emotions are stepping-stones to action. Etymologically, emotion, which comes from *motere*, involves a movement or change in the person's "action readiness;" we approach or withdraw from an object.¹⁶⁹ Attachment theory explains these movements. The affective appraisal process first interprets personal and environmental information. It then compares internal "set points" (established by

168 A. Damasio (1994, 17) has found neurological links between unconscious emotional judgments and conscious decisions. His research concludes "that observing social convention, behaving ethically, and making decisions [...] require knowledge of rules and strategies and the integrity of specific brain systems" underlying the emotions (cf. Wallwork 1999, 174).

169 Cf. Paul Ekman 1992, 6:169-200.

similar or related past events) in order to select certain behaviors and prepare action. Feelings—both “positive” and “negative,” pleasant and unpleasant—correlate with behavior.¹⁷⁰ Our appraisal processes, including emotions, prepare and condition resulting coping responses.¹⁷¹ Furthermore, following an evolutionary psychology perspective, D. Goleman defines emotions as impulses to act according to plans that evolution has instilled in us. He also discusses their source in “the emotional mind,” which involves a system of knowing.¹⁷²

Third, networks of affectional support fashion emotional behavior,¹⁷³ and conversely, emotions underlie our social bonding. In particular, feelings of attachment and competency, of self-esteem and efficacy promote emotional proficiency and social resilience. On the one hand, according to the social development model, social bonding to family and positive groups provides protection; it regulates behavior and motivates us to live by social standards.¹⁷⁴ Protective developmental processes, such as opportunities for participation, participation-facilitating skills and group recognition, support social bonding.¹⁷⁵ Resilience research has found that substitutes can supplement the loss of primary attachment figures. Resilient

170 Cf. J. Bowlby 1969; M. Ainsworth, *et alia*, 1978, 19.

171 Cf. M. Perrez 1994a 347.

172 Goleman refers to two minds: an emotion (feeling) mind and a rational (thinking) mind. He says that: “these two fundamentally different ways of knowing interact to construct our mental life. One, the rational mind, is the mode of comprehension we are typically conscious of: more prominent in awareness, thoughtful, able to ponder and reflect. But alongside that there is another system of knowing: impulsive and powerful, if sometimes illogical—the emotional mind” (D. Goleman 1995, 8; cf. 1995, 6). Concerning the influence of evolution on human emotions, Goleman (1995, 6) adds: “In our emotional repertoire each emotion plays a unique role, as revealed by their distinctive biological signatures.”

173 Cf. Clarke and Clarke 1992, 153.

174 The Consortium (1994, 300) claims that four elements of social bonding that inhibit drug use and delinquency are: “strong attachment to *parents* (Brook, Brook, Gordon, Whiteman, and Cohen 1990; Hundleby and Mercer 1987; Jessor and Jessor 1977); a high degree of commitment to *schooling*; active involvement in *church activities* (Schlegel and Sanborn 1979; Wechsler and McFadden 1979); and belief in the standards and norms and values of *society* (Akers, Krohn, Lanza-Kaduce and Radosevich 1979). In the social development model, attachment or emotional closeness, commitment or personal investment, and belief in the values of the social unit are seen as elements of the social bond.”

175 Consortium 1994, 301-2.

adolescents, for example, overcome the risk of lost access to parental bonding through enforced attachment to an aunt or uncle, a friend or neighbor. However, they face danger if they bond with unresilient or destructive figures.¹⁷⁶ Since attachment with others brings heightened identification with their behavior, vulnerable youth multiply their risks through negative modeling.

Specific resilience research identifies the resilience-value of self-esteem, self-efficacy¹⁷⁷ and confidence,¹⁷⁸ as well as the contrary risk related to a sense of incompetence.¹⁷⁹ Positive self-esteem can enable motivation and action, while negative self-images can underlie difficulties in emotional processing. When we feel worthwhile—that our actions make a difference, that our participation in a particular social setting brings added value—then our motivation and acts are more likely to withstand external and internal negative pressures. M. Rutter finds it difficult to identify the source of self-esteem and self-efficacy; emotional processes have two bases: emotional predispositions (temperament), and acquired dispositions (conscious and unconscious). Each feeling results from this dialogue. Researchers have furthermore found a source of felt self-esteem in each successful event. We gain this sense not only in hard won achievements but also in minor feats. As children grow their accomplishments in emotional management and other social experiences tend to give rise to stronger

176 Tousignant (1998, 65-66, 68-69) has found that street children after the age of twelve become less adaptive once they enter into criminality. Key ingredients in effective interventions are the promotion of self-esteem and self-efficacy through responsabilization. He has found that giving age appropriate responsibilities to children and youth has many positive effects, such as helping youth: become responsible for themselves and others; feel self-confidence, pride, and find a sense of meaning and purpose in life, motivate their actions (instead remaining passive); commit to family and community. They can develop their sense of responsibility through giving themselves in committed volunteer activities, part time employment, extra-scholastic activities and so forth. Cf. Werner and Smith 1992, 5, 205, and 255; Cowan and Schulz 1996, 32; Coie *et al.* 1993, p. 1013; Petit *et alia* 1996, 3045.

177 Cf. M. Rutter (1990, 197-207) and W. Yule (1992, 191) highlight the research findings that suggest the importance of feelings of self-esteem and self-efficacy.

178 Cf. F. Lösel 1994, 9.

179 Cf. W. Yule 1992, 191.

feelings of self-efficacy and higher self-esteem.¹⁸⁰ Such felt confidence appears to be a central component that enables resilient children and adults to cope effectively. Werner and Smith say this source of coping pertains not to a vague confidence, but rather a confidence that we can surmount the odds, that difficulty does not spell defeat.¹⁸¹

1.2.2.2. Emotional Management Strategies

Do we necessarily gain control of our emotions with time? Emotional competency develops with our capacity for emotional expression and regulation. At an early age, humans express emotions.¹⁸² Some quickly gain competence in expressing them; others struggle with emotional composure for the rest of their lives. At the neuro-physical level, emotional development relates to the supporting brain regions and synapses which grow and whither according to emotional experience and intensity. Although emotional development continues throughout life, according to J. Kagan, critical stages punctuate the rest of our emotional life.¹⁸³ The abilities involved in managing our focus of attention are fundamental to emotion regulatory processes.¹⁸⁴ Moreover the emotional styles of primary caregivers leave an impact especially during the “formative years.” Indeed emotional competency develops not only through an individual’s ways of experiencing and expressing feelings, as well as through interactions with mother, father, siblings and peers, and with social norms and cultural practices. Both cognitive and social factors help fashion emotional behavior.¹⁸⁵

180 Cf. T. A. Wills (1996, 115) has found an interrelation between family emotional support and their communication experiences. He says: “In a family where emotional support is high, youths participate in communication experiences that boost their sense of self-esteem and validate the acceptability of their feelings.” Cf. Wilson and Gottman 1996, 220.

181 Cf. Werner and Smith 1992, 207.

182 A straightforward example is cross-culturally recognized infant facial reactions to water, and sugary, salty and sour tastes. These facial displays of emotion are so universal that they are thought to be a genetically encoded trace left by the evolutionary pressures of natural selection. Cf. K. Durkin 1995, 296, 256, 315.

183 Cf. J. Kagan 1994; D. Goleman 1995.

184 Cf. Wilson and Gottman 1996.

185 “These factors include the encoding of relevant social cues (as in attending to others’ facial expressions and to the norms of a social context); the

Research has identified that certain strategies are effective, especially in palliating strong emotions. One strategy of regulating emotion involves “self-talk,” through which an individual can soothe negative affect and focus on problem solving. Labeling emotions shifts attention away from the physiological arousal associated with the event in order to perceive it better and then cope with it. Positive uses of humor also serve as tools in managing emotions.¹⁸⁶ Negative “self-talk” and destructive humor, on the other hand, distract people from their particular goals and impede their performances.¹⁸⁷ In general, inadequate coping behaviors, when faced with strong affect and emotion, include simple passivity, self-blaming or other-blaming.¹⁸⁸ In order for behavior to be adequate (responsive to our goals and criteria), we must learn to master emotions, at least to palliate the strong ones.

Research has identified that promoting feelings of self-esteem and self-efficacy is a prime strategy for resilience interventions.¹⁸⁹ No easy recipes exist though. Having to face age and capacity appropriate responsibilities and challenges can have positive effects on children and youth, including increased feelings of self-confidence, pride, a sense of meaning and a purpose in life. On the contrary, negative emotional effects emerge when we are forced into crushing situations or left alone in the face of overwhelming tasks. Protectionist and isolationist policies can reinforce these phenomena. What effects can positive emotions have on human agency? They strengthen motivation

accurate interpretation of the encoded social cues (as in perspective taking, reading intentions and empathy); the generation of effective solutions to interpersonal problems; the realistic anticipation of consequences of, and potential obstacles to one’s actions (as in delaying immediate gratification for long-term rewards and in understanding that some behaviors might have negative consequences for oneself or others); the translation of social decision into effective behavior (as in being able to approach and converse with peers and adults, showing appropriate eye contact, using an appropriate language); and the expression of a positive sense of self-efficacy (as seen in a general optimism about outcomes of one’s personally initiated actions).” Consortium 1994, 276; which cites Dodge 1986; Dodge and Feldman 1990; Elias 1990; Kendall 1991; Jason *et al.* 1992; McFall 1983; Weissberg Caplan, and Sivo 1989.

186 Although humor has a strong cognitive component, it is also considered an emotional reaction and a judgment. Cf. Berger 1997; Vanistendael and Lecomte 2000.

187 Cf. Wilson and Gottman 1996, 216.

188 Cf. M. Perez 1994.

189 Cf. Maughan 1988, 214.

for action instead of simple passivity or discouragement when confronted with challenges. They facilitate commitment to family, community and one's own self.¹⁹⁰

1.2.2.3. Religious Emotion

The previous two sections highlight four levels of emotion's relevance for resilience outcomes: as a judgment of meaning; as facilitating or hindering perception and action; as drawing from and establishing social bonds; and as more or less trainable, adaptive and rational. As in the case of emotion in general, personal and social input shape religious feelings.¹⁹¹ What do the theories and findings of psychosocial science tell us about the role religion plays in managing emotions?

Several modern thinkers establish a link between religion and emotion. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) places the essence of religions as the feeling of absolute dependence.¹⁹² William James' (1842-1910) psychology of religion emphasizes the biological aspect of religious emotion.¹⁹³ Rudolph Otto for his part adds a cognitive counterpart to Schleiermacher's notion of a sentiment of dependence.¹⁹⁴ Social constructivist views of emotion moreover pay special attention to emotion's social aspects, in particular to how social relationships

¹⁹⁰ Trousaint (1998: 68-9) speculates that these positive effects are not so much a change in personal temperament (character development), but rather a result of deeper commitment in a concrete milieu. He describes how this can happen with adolescents through committing themselves through volunteer activities, part-time employment and extra-scholastic activities.

¹⁹¹ F. Watts (1997, 246-251) investigates emotion as a model for religion.

¹⁹² See his *Addresses on Religion to Its Cultured Despisers* (orig. 1799).

¹⁹³ According to William James, biological changes associated with emotion produce religious feelings. He effects a sort of biological reductionism (cf. *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, "Religion and Neurology," Lecture I, 1907, 1-26). He notes the variety of emotions involved in religious intention and tied to the unconscious: "religious fear, religious love, religious awe, religious joy, and so forth." He (1907, 31) nonetheless defines religion (or more specifically the "personal religion" that he treats there) as "the feelings, acts, and experiences of individual men in their solitude, so far as they apprehend themselves to stand in relation to whatever they may consider the divine."

¹⁹⁴ Rudolf Otto (1923) recognizes the "tremendous and fascinating," the "wholly other" aspect of the Holy. Such analyses of the cognitive aspects of emotion suggest that religious emotion mediates a new type of knowledge.

give rise to religious emotions.¹⁹⁵ Gordon W. Allport's influential psychological view on religious sentiment holds that all positive sentiments involve a sort of "belief," and that specific "faith" in God carries an even warmer affection than bare "belief."¹⁹⁶ It can also serve several functions including: producing consequent conduct and research to discover good and truth that issue from faith.¹⁹⁷ According to Burhoe, religion's role in evolution and social cohesion passes through religious sentiment, which serves a selective and adaptive role in the appearance and development of human societies.¹⁹⁸

This incomplete survey provides a foundation for a further typology. We can categorize attitudes and approaches towards religious emotions, and especially strong emotions, according to three main trains of thought: (1) strong emotions are a sign of strong religious life; (2) emotions need to be controlled; and (3) sensibility to emotions should be refined.¹⁹⁹ The first position construes strong emotions as a hallmark of robust religious life. The Hebrew Bible thus positively appraises early Israelite prophecy and dancing to ceremonial music. Christianity likewise supports emotive outpouring in the charismatic movement, and in spiritual exercises and devotions.

195 James R. Averill (1980) represents this view of emotion.

196 As for religious orientation, Gordon W. Allport (1950, 1967) distinguishes types of religious emotion: immature or mature, extrinsic or intrinsic. Religious emotion takes differing forms, from a preliminary desire of fear, curiosity or conformity, through question and doubt, to mature self-differentiated religious sentiment. Furthermore, Allport (1950, 10-11; cf. 141) notes that the development of religion is reflected by an individual's: "(1) bodily needs, (2) temperament and mental capacity, (3) psychogenic interests and values, (4) pursuit of rational explanation, and (5) response to the surrounding culture." He recognizes that for most psychologists, religious sentiment is more the intentional focusing of the experience, than the characteristic of the religious experience itself (a divergent set of experiences that may be focused on a religious object).

197 According to Allport (1950, 161; cf. 141), "a man's religion is the audacious bid he makes to bind himself to creation and to the Creator. It is his ultimate attempt to enlarge and to complete his own personality by finding the supreme context in which he rightly belongs."

198 According to Burhoe (1986, 469), religion is the missing link in evolution. But in addition to the universal source of harmony and cooperation in society; religion—in sectarian and fanatical forms—threatens peace.

199 Freud focuses more on a lack of awareness of emotions, although he has been interpreted as supporting uncontrolled expression (cf. F. Watts 1997, 254).

The second position, sometimes alongside the first, emphasizes calming the emotions. The Hebrew Bible, and Buddhist and Christian contemplative traditions promote this position, which nonetheless has two approaches to calming the emotions. On the one hand, we need to repress emotions. They endanger spiritual development. They tempt us toward a voluptuous style of life. According to St. Paul, the flesh seeks to override the spirit.²⁰⁰ Thus, Watts and Williams label Henri Suso and John of the Cross' works as repressive approaches to the passions.²⁰¹ On the other hand, a more positive approach to calming emotions exists.²⁰² It holds that we need neither to repress nor necessarily to release emotions. It opposes a common notion that emotion is a kind of energy that we need to discharge. Energy models of emotions misconceive emotional states as homeostatic. Indeed, expressed feelings often increase instead of decrease the desire to express them again. Expressing emotions neither always makes us feel better nor does not doing so always make us feel worse. Psychological research has shown for example that anger does not normally reduce in intensity when we express it.²⁰³

Third, a mild ascetic perspective draws upon religions resources to refine emotions. This perspective requires a greater emotional sensitivity and awareness, instead of a simple forced-control of strong emotion.²⁰⁴ The positive side of emotions illustrates that religious life can heighten emotional experiences. We can positively express joy and sorrow.²⁰⁵ The goals of heightened emotional

200 See St. Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter 8.

201 Cf. Watts and Williams 1988, 79-85.

202 According to Watts and Williams (1988), constructive approaches to calming the emotions include those of Augustine Baker (a 17th century Benedictine monk); and Rudolf Steiner (founder of Anthroposophy).

203 Cf. Watts and Williams (1988, 83).

204 Stocker and Hegeman (1996, 1-2) argue for the value of emotions using psychological and philosophical insights, and affirm that: "An absence of deficiency of affect is a characterizing feature of many neuroses, borderline conditions, and psychoses, as well as such maladies of the spirit as meaninglessness, emptiness, ennui, *accidia*, spiritual weakness, and spiritual tiredness." Cf. Watts 1997, 255; Averill and Nunely 1992; D. Goleman 1995.

205 Watts (1997, 255) suggests that emotional sensitivity can enhance the religious person's awareness of God. He highlights the positive approach of Jonathan Edward's *A Treatise Concerning Religious Affections* ([1746] 1959). Watts quotes Cherry's (1966, 167) analysis of Edward's theology of emotion:

sensitivity and focused emotion expression are compatible with emotional composure and enhanced powers of concentration. A first step in educating emotional reaction involves self-observation. To name a troubling emotion can make it less troubling.²⁰⁶ The purpose of religious techniques for emotional control and refinement has been to develop knowledge of and commitment to the “divine,” to know and love God better. How do emotions hinder or help access to the divine? According to Watts and Williams, both religious meditation and psychotherapy can aid in obtaining a right balance of emotional distance and engagement, and of cognitive receptivity, which not only can alter the quality of attention to the divine object, but can also change the way in which it is known and loved.²⁰⁷

These non-systematic indications of the correlation between emotion and resilience provide a foundation for our later study. In chapter two, they will return in our discussion of Aquinas, emotions and moral development. In chapters three through five, they will serve throughout the discussions of fortitude and its related virtues inasmuch as through virtues, we manage emotions in natural and religious perspectives.

1.2.3. Cognitive Processes and Meaning

How do evaluative, planning and problem-solving skills aid resilience? A large segment of resilience research focuses on cognitive processes and meaning. In the midst of vicissitude and ambivalence, we decipher information; we plan for goals; we solve problems; and we seek meaning. Cognitive and developmental psychologies are the main research protagonists in this domain. Nonetheless social psychology and the situation-behavior approach offer other important insights. Although native intellectual capacities differ,²⁰⁸ we acquire

“Religious man is not one who subjects passions to the rule of reason but one whose reason is passionate and whose affection is intellectual.”

²⁰⁶ Watts and Williams (1988, 90) offer examples from the Buddhist practice of “mindfulness” and clinical techniques for creating space to cope with problems.

²⁰⁷ Watts and Williams 1988, 90.

²⁰⁸ We should not simplistically equate intellectual capacity with school attainment. But Yule’s (1992, 194) studies indicate that lower attainment correlates with a high risk, and higher attainment with protection. Furthermore,

dispositions and practices that extend or diminish our cognitive resilience resources. These theoretical and empirical studies link meaning with emotional health;²⁰⁹ and unsurprisingly, they correlate at least average intelligence with resilience outcomes.²¹⁰

Without presenting a full developmental social psychology of cognition, I shall highlight cognitive factors that resilience researchers hypothesize play significant roles in resilient action. Resilience cognitive factors include: (1) strategies to manage and appraise information; (2) ways to construct and adapt meaning in family and other social groups; and (3) approaches to religious causal attributions and meaning.

1.2.3.1. Information Management and Appraisal

How do styles of information management and appraisal affect our resilience? Stress challenges our capacities to manage our attention and cognitive processes. Proper measure is warranted. In order to act with foresight, we need not only to receive information, but also to seek and process it. Hardships and stressors can short-circuit our thought processes. Especially when under pressure furthermore, we need to suppress as well as collect information in order to attain our goals. Without restrictions on stimuli, we are overwhelmed and distracted.

How do we use cognitive processes to interpret and overcome a quandary? Perrez and Reicherts, in a situation-behavior approach, employ stimulus-response chains to reconstruct the process of encountering stress. They observe four steps: perceptions of change, emotions, cognitions and coping responses.²¹¹ The initial stimulus of a micro-episode alters the subject's internal or external world. We

we acquire vulnerability, by limiting the employment of our cognitive capacities. The way that we cognitively appropriate and manage experiences, especially risky ones, renders them more or less a source of vulnerability or protection.

²⁰⁹ According to Chamberlain and Zika (1992, 139), V. Frankl (1967) held that "the will to meaning was an essential human motive, and that when a person's search for meaning was blocked, existential frustration occurred, leading to the pathological condition he called 'noogenic neurosis.'"

²¹⁰ Cf. Werner and Smith 1992, 192; Werner 1989; F. Lösel 1994, 9.

²¹¹ This process in turn forms a new situation and a sequence of segmented behavioral units. M. Perrez and M. Reicherts (1992, 19) base their method on the research of Lazarus 1982, 1984; and Lazarus and Smith 1988.

perceive change by processing information stimuli. What we first passively receive, however, cannot be left as such. We need to muster reliable coping responses. Our emotions serve as initial judgments. We must nonetheless analyze the situation in order to evaluate the object involved and determine how to act. What are the pertinent circumstances? What similar situations have we faced in the past? What alternatives exist? What consequences will come from acting or not acting? How does the present situation relate to significant goals and larger contexts of meaning? The way that we employ our cognitive (and volitional) processes to resolve difficulties serves our resilience or on the contrary renders us vulnerable.²¹²

We limit resilience outcomes by either oversimplifying cognitive analyses or neglecting pertinent information and emotions.²¹³ According to Reich, we hamper our capacity to understand cognitive complexity, by restricting ourselves to classical logic that posits only bivalent notions of truth. We need complementary logics and cognitive skills. Cognitively complex thinking—including analogical, dialectical and metaphorical thinking,²¹⁴ and relational and contextual reasoning—complete limited cognitive applications.²¹⁵ The ability to manage

212 Masten, Best and Garmezy (1990) include “problem-solving abilities” in their summary of the protective factors. Cf. T. A. Wills 1996, 110. A fuller description of problem-solving should also include other unobservable events: motivation or emotional support and hindrances, self-perception (in terms of self-image, efficacy, control), in addition to the subjective appreciation of meaning (focusing on the positive dimension of the situation and minimizing distress), social influences (family, peers, community and society), and so on.

213 The effects of nuanced intellectual capacities, and emotional integration have been investigated in the context of teaching philosophy to children at risk (cf. Sharp and Splitter 1995) and learning “relational and contextual reasoning” (cf. Oser and Reich 1987; Reich 1995).

214 H. Reich (1995, 13-14) says, “*Cognitively complex thinking* involves differentiation (bringing out differences of fact, of possible interpretations, and valuing) and integration (attempts at linking various elements in order to arrive at an overall assessment). [...] *Analogical thinking* help to connect the unknown and the known. [...] *Dialectical thinking* is called for when a situation needs to change in order to come to a solution.” On metaphor see: A. G. McGrady 1994; P. Ricoeur 1981. A bivalent notion of truth entails that everything is either right or wrong—A or B—*tertium non datur* (cf. H. Reich 1995).

215 “Relational and contextual reasoning” (RCR) involves ways of addressing seemingly incompatible aspects of reality. H. Reich (1995, 14-15) reasons that “Complementarity (RCR) always involves two or more descriptions, explanations, “theories,” acts, etc. ... In all cases at least two classically “incompatible” aspects need to be considered in order adequately to describe,

cognitive complexity favors resilience outcomes not only in academic settings, but also in everyday interactions.

Second, resilience researchers do not agree on the sources of meaning. Do we create or discover meaning? Or both? On the one hand, some researchers focus on the subjective aspect of meaning. In order to cope with stress, we attribute meaning to events.²¹⁶ We even construct shared-meaning in families and other groups.²¹⁷ On the other hand, certain researchers concentrate on the objective aspect of meaning. They claim that humans have the capacity to discover meaning. Thus humans call upon the order and meaning inherent in situations, relationships and life. We rally objective meaning to confront and overcome difficulty.²¹⁸ The resilience research and theory that places value on the subjective side emphasizes human development. It is an individual person whose understanding grows. Emphasis on the objective side posits a reality outside the individual. It assumes that we can discover external sources of meaning and goals that constitute human fulfillment, well-being and happiness. I shall adjudicate this debate in the next chapter, but suggest here that at different levels both insights are true.

Third, what cognitive strategies for coping, consistency and construction exist? I mention three here: goals, planning and self-esteem. The integration of life-goals underlies resilience efforts. However not all goals are of equal value. Goals can range from the most all-embracing ones (well-being and happiness) to the more

understand or deal with the situation in question, for instance the wave-like and the particle-like behavior of light, emotional acts and their moral justification by the person concerned, [...] In these cases of strong complementarity, the complementary aspects come into view successively. In contradistinction, in the case of weak complementarity aspects are perceived simultaneously (at least in principle). Instances are: [...] moral demands explained as resulting from absolute principles and an individual's capacities, etc."

²¹⁶ Friedrich Lösel (1994, 9) identifies as a resilience process "the assignment of subjective meaning to stress and coping within the framework of one's own development."

²¹⁷ D. Hay's (1988, 245-54) developmental model posits that children and parents "construct" together shared meaning for a life event. He describes five constitutive periods in constructing shared meaning: past history, immediate antecedents, the event's occurrence, its immediate consequences, and subsequent outcomes.

²¹⁸ Cf. S. Vanistendael 1995, 20-22 and Vanistendael and Lecomte 2000; cf. Post-White (1998, 281-87) who links meaning with hope.

specific and proximate ones. Researchers have identified “planfulness and aspiration” as protective factors for goal achievement.²¹⁹ Werner and Smith’s research has found a particular resilience effect when youth establish realistic educational and vocational goals by age eighteen.²²⁰ M. Rutter furthermore documents the resilient effect of positive planning styles in regards to marriage (choice of spouse) and work situations. When we plan well, we avoid some risky situations.²²¹ Planfulness has allies in manifest cognitive competencies,²²² problem-solving skills and self-esteem; it is rooted in a goal orientation.²²³ The enemies of aspiration however involve under and over-protection²²⁴, as well as “learned helplessness.”²²⁵

The cognitive aspect of self-esteem promotes resilience. Resilience researchers use various terms: manifest competence and perceived efficacy,²²⁶ a positive self-concept²²⁷ and self-esteem.²²⁸ Research demonstrates that humans establish and maintain awareness of self-esteem and self-efficacy through supportive personal relationships, successful task accomplishment, and so on.²²⁹ How does

219 Cf. Masten, Best and Garmezy 1990; N. Garmezy 1994. On planfulness see: Clarke and Clarke 1992, 153.

220 Cf. Werner and Smith 1986, 59.

221 Cf. M. Rutter 1990, 189-202, esp. 195-6.

222 Such competencies include communication competencies. Cf. Werner and Smith 1986; F. Lösel 1994, 9; Masten, Best and Garmezy 1990.

223 In chapter four, I discuss further the relationship between goals and hope; cf. Snyder *et al.* 1991a; Post-White 1998; Erickson *et al.* 1975; Stotland 1969; Frankl 1963.

224 Cf. M. Tousignant 1998, 69-71.

225 Learned helpfulness produces a mindset in which we believe that success and failure is completely independent of our skilled actions, as M. E. P. Seligman’s (1975, 38) research demonstrates (cf. Murphy 1987).

226 Cf. A. S. Masten, Morison *et alia* 1990, 236-256; Masten, Best and Garmezy 1990, 2:425-444; Werner and Smith, 1992, 205; cf. 255.

227 Cf. F. Lösel, 1994, 9.

228 Werner and Smith (1992, 205; cf. 1986, 9) say that: “The promotion of self-esteem and self-efficacy in a young person is probably the key ingredient in any effective intervention process.” They (1992, 185-186; cf. 1986) establish the importance for high risk girls to have “a strong internal locus of control and high self-esteem.” For other research on self-esteem, see: Rutter 1990, 182; Garmezy 1985. We discuss the limits of self-esteem interventions in chapter four.

229 According to M. Rutter (1990, 206), available evidence suggests that two types of experiences are most influential in the development of self-esteem and self-efficacy: “(a) secure and harmonious love relationships and (b) success in accomplishing tasks that are identified by individuals as central to their

this work? On the one hand, successful task accomplishment, such as positive school experiences, can either reinforce or develop self-esteem.²³⁰ On the other hand, the presence of relevant experiences in one domain (e.g. school) can compensate for a lack in another domain (e.g. family).²³¹ Although the mechanisms are not fully understood, Rutter suggests that we carry forward cognitive sets of negative and positive events, which relate to self-esteem and self-efficacy, as well as to internal working models of relationships.²³²

1.2.3.2. Constructing Social Meanings

Personal cognitive activities are not devoid of social context. In particular, the family can play an integral part in an individual's coping, constancy and construction. In the face of difficulty, our social groups influence our adaptive appraisal, deliberation and decision-making processes. We can illustrate the construction of social meanings in two ways. First, family members come to certain perceptions, thoughts and decisions together. These shared family meanings reduce ambiguity, and contribute to group stability and identity. Secondly, our family influences our own cognitive processes, inasmuch as each of us comprehend things through social interaction.²³³

interests.” I have already cited the importance of attentional processes in the functioning of self-esteem (cf. Wilson and Gottman 1996, 1991).

230 Rutter studied two groups of adolescent girls: an ex-institutionally cared for group and a control group. He conjectures that the experiences of pleasure, success, and accomplishment at school help in the acquisition of knowing one's own worth and ability to control what happens. He finds a difference between the two groups. In the ex-care group, the school experience created self-esteem. But the control group already had ample sources of reward and support in the family; therefore the school experience simply reinforced their self-esteem.

231 Conjectures about the mediating mechanisms relating task accomplishment and school experience to the construction or intensification of self-esteem abound. Is it the social success, the opportunities to take responsibility, the benefit of self-knowledge, or the feeling of one's own self-worth? Cf. M. Rutter 1990, 197 and 206-7.

232 Furthermore Rutter suggests other possibilities for later investigation: neural or neuroendocrine effects; linkages through which one type of adversity might predispose someone to another type. Cf. Rutter 1994b, 373-4; Bretherton 1987, Harter 1983.

233 Berger and Luckmann's classic *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966) provides theoretical grounding for the premise that social interaction creates and maintains meanings (cf. Patterson and Garwick 1998, 80-1).

Family meanings emerge when family members interact. Shared experience and dialogue shape understanding.

Researchers speculate that family types²³⁴ influence meaning under stress.²³⁵ Patterson and Garwick hypothesize that families construct and share meanings according to three levels:²³⁶ the family's situational meanings, identity, and worldview.²³⁷ These meanings undergo adaptive pressures in the face of crisis, confusion and conflict. For example, research has found that families with a medically fragile child first undergo a process of adjustment when the demands of the situation surpass their capacities. They need to adapt, to balance the demands and their capabilities. In observing the situation, they

234 Patterson and Garwick (1998, 79-80) distinguish two family types: (1) consensus-sensitive families, which are high on coordination and closure; (2) environment-sensitive families, which are high on configuration and low on closure.

235 The cognitive factors have been present in most family stress theories. The earliest family stress model was Reuben Hill's ABCX Model: A-stressor; B-family resources; C-family's definition of stressor; X-crisis (1949, 1958; cf. Double ABCX Model of McCubbin and Patterson 1982, 1983a; 1983b, which adds the layer of perception of each element, as well as the concept of coping, and the more generalized meaning construct (cf. McCubbin *et alia* 1998).

236 McCubbin *et alia* (1998, 43-9) outline a helpful conceptualization of various levels of family meaning, as a part of his Resiliency Model of Family Adjustment and Adaptation. They recognize a five-level hierarchical ordering of family appraisal processes in resiliency and adaptation. *Level 5. Family schema*: a family structure of shared values, beliefs, goals, expectations and priorities. Here meaning is assessed through the processes of: classification; spiritualization; temporalization; and contextualization. *Level 4. Family coherence*: the motivation and cognitive bases for the family's transforming of potential resources into actual ones. This process involves feeling confidence that the world is comprehensible, manageable and meaningful. *Level 3. Family paradigms*: patterns of functioning around specific family domains (work, communication, spiritual / religious orientation, child-rearing). *Level 2. Situational appraisal*: family's shared assessment and management of stressors, hardships and demands for adaptation. *Level 1. Stressor appraisal*: initial family definition of stressor and its severity.

237 Patterson and Garwick's (1998, 83-6) Family Adjustment and Adaptation Response (FAAR) Model (Patterson) emphasizes adjustment in terms of family and individual resilience and a salutogenic perspective. The FAAR Model differentiates two levels of family meaning: situational and global meanings. *Situational meaning* concerns the family and individual subjective meaning; while *global meaning* concerns transcending the situation, a more stable cognitive set encompassing beliefs about the family and relationship to larger community. FAAR Model comprises five dimensions: shared purpose; collectivity; frameability; relativism (context); shared control (cf. 1998, 72-5)

inevitably attribute meaning to the illness. They ascribe meaning at three levels.

First at the situational level, shared meanings emerge through the family adaptation process. Family members influence each other's appraisals of the situation; they may find a common definition of the crisis.²³⁸ The family also develops expectations about who is responsible to manage the illness. They employ internal and external resources.²³⁹ In response to a chronically ill child, parents frequently report positive outcomes: growth and development of oneself or the family unit in response to the challenge.²⁴⁰ Second at the family identity level, they may redefine external and internal boundaries; reassign roles for family tasks; and reestablish rules and norms for interaction, in order to more effectively manage the illness. Third concerning the family worldview,²⁴¹ some parents modify their goals and global meanings (sense of purpose) to fit their behavioral and emotional investment in their child. Their search for the cause of the illness also influences and is influenced by their worldview, as well as by situational meanings and family identity. Further effects evolve from such a crisis. On the one hand, some families break down when members no longer agree on the purpose of their relationships. On the other, some families restructure with added strength; through shared social coping and adaptation, their unity is hardened as steel under pressure.²⁴²

238 Even though there are independent acts (and situational definitions), when a coordinated family behavioral response is needed for effective functioning, sometimes agreement on the situational definition is more necessary.

239 Cf. Patterson and Garwick 1998, 84.

240 Cf. Patterson and Garwick 1998, 75-76.

241 Patterson and Garwick (1998) focus on the worldview construct as the process of relating or orienting to others, rather than about the content of beliefs.

242 According to Patterson and Garwick (1998, 86), "Disastrous events shatter expectations, goals, and even world views, resulting in uncertainty and ambiguity. Individuals turn to their significant others in search of emotional comfort and an explanation for what is happening. The loss of a sense of personal control leads to joining more closely with others. Steinglass and Horan (1987) reported that families often pull together, giving up individual worldviews for a shared one. Support groups also serve this function for persons experiencing major illness." Perhaps a preexisting synthetic worldview enhances such adaptation to chronic stress; or perhaps the nature of this stress is such that some families change their worldview. Research on the place of worldviews needs to

Studies on children facing family hardships illustrate the impact of family meaning strategies on its member's cognitive processes. Tousignant (1998) finds that the perceived injustice of parental favoritism is a cumulative factor that renders already vulnerable children more so. Injustice demonstrates the dissimilarity of experience within the same family; one child receives more, and another is "under cared for." Children are inevitably nurtured differently, perhaps in terms of affection, education, or social opportunities. Given temperamental, affective and cognitive differences, parents treat children in non-identical ways. Such equity is more adapted than unnuanced equality. However, children interpret differently both measured diversity and outright favoritism. Nonetheless, they can even find meaning even in the latter. Tousignant identifies that some children recognize co-suffering as a source of coping.²⁴³ Simply not suffering alone can give a sense of meaning; they feel solidarity with others, by realizing "the world is not hard on me alone." Tousignant finds therein the unfolding of morality, a sort of common meaning.²⁴⁴ He posits that a sense of morality can render people more resilient, strangely enough in the face of injustice.

1.2.3.3. Religious Causal Attributions, Meaning and Spiritual Resilience

How might cognitive bases of spirituality and religion enhance resilience? In general, spirituality and religion involve a worldview and direction in life, as well as purpose and criteria for action. They provide a basis for moral action and attributions of good and evil.²⁴⁵ In

be done to understand why some families develop positive, adaptive beliefs and meanings and others do not.

²⁴³ Cf. M. Tousignant 1998. Rutter (1990, 206) adds that "the reality of the bad experiences and less desired attributes as well as the presence of the good qualities and happenings" serves the adaptation and coherence of self-concepts.

²⁴⁴ M. Tousignant (1998, 61-72) recognizes similar findings in the study of Norma Haan (1989), namely that children who have a sense of morality are more resilient. Tousignant's analysis of moral action is limited by a Kohlbergian reductionistic identification of morality with justice; it nonetheless at least employs a conception of justice as a constitutive aspect of morality.

²⁴⁵ Cf. F. Lösel 1994; and A. Osborn (1994), who says that faith "can" play an important role in determining that which is normatively acceptable for society.

particular, resilience research suggests that religiosity and well-being correlate through meaning.²⁴⁶ Especially in trauma and difficulty, religion enhances resilient outcomes by contributing meaning and coping strategies. This correlation involves two aspects: belief's intellectual facet (information, knowledge and meaning) and its consequence (moral aspect). However, we should not forget how the other aspects of religion and spirituality (emotion, motivation and social dimensions) interrelate with them. What in particular does resilience research say about religious causal attributions, meaning and spiritual resilience?

Studies suggest that the type of religious cognitive causal attribution of negative or evil events predicts resilience outcomes. Such attributions sometimes overlap. We attribute the cause of the event to: God (in terms of God's plan or will, anger, love or lack thereof); external causes (economic or social factors); family (its member's personalities or acts); self (temperament, character, choices); chance and so on. For example, Shortz and Worthington's study of young adults' recall of parental divorce highlights the role that religion plays in such attributions, related behavioral activities and coping outcomes.²⁴⁷ Two of their findings concern the effect of religious individuals' attributing negative events to God. First, ascribing the negative event to God's anger significantly predicted both "religious discontent" and pleading coping activities, such as "asking for miracles."²⁴⁸ Secondly, attributing the events to God's plan or will was the clearest contributor to predicting spiritually-based activities and positive acceptance of the events, such as "trusting God for protection

In the next chapter, I shall also discuss the foundational level on which religion provides the framework to define resilient behavior and well-being.

²⁴⁶ According to Chamberlain and Zike (1992, 146, 141), well-being has three major dimensions: life satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect. In addition to the affective bases, they consider life satisfaction a cognitively based (rational) evaluation of well-being. We need to include the three dimensions in order to study well-being, religiosity and meaning. One problem remains: how to distinguish spiritual from non-spiritual well-being; religious well-being from existential well-being.

²⁴⁷ Shortz and Worthington 1994, 178; cf. Pargament *et al.* 1990.

²⁴⁸ Pleading activities were a general effect related not only to attribution to God's anger, but also in a lesser degree to God's will or God's lack of love, according to Shortz and Worthington (1994, 178).

and turning to God for guidance.”²⁴⁹ This research identifies one aspect of the relationship between an individual’s “concept of God” and the resiliency of human agency.²⁵⁰

Theorists and researchers recognize that religion and spirituality serve in discovering meaning, purpose and life goals. They emphasize differently nonetheless religion’s role in the creation or discovery of meaning. On the one hand, they refer to religion and the inner spiritual life as “the cradle for a construction of meaning;”²⁵¹ and faith as involving meaning making,²⁵² in terms of convictional knowledge²⁵³ and the use of imagination.²⁵⁴ They also say that individuals construct their own sense of order out of their choices, achievements, commitments, and relationships.²⁵⁵ On the other hand, they affirm that we discover meaning through religious experience and practice, which give reference to spiritual order and other facets of life and the universe.²⁵⁶

249 In this case, Shortz and Worthington (1994, 178) assume that, “those who viewed the divorce as being part of God’s plan seemed to use religion to cope actively.”

250 On the concept of God in the psychology of religious cognition, cf. Watts and Williams 1988, 128-150.

251 Garbarino and Bedard 1996, 467.

252 Gina O’Connell-Higgins (1994, 172) uses “faith” in a more philosophical sense. She says: “whether it is found in religious or secular forms, faith development theory invites us to recognize that faith is the activity of meaning-making in its most ultimate and intimate dimensions—finding pattern, order, and significance to our lives.”

253 O’Connell-Higgins (1994, 173) uses Sharon Parks’ (*The Critical Years: Young Adults and the Search for Meaning, Faith, and Commitment*, San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1986) idea of faith as “a unifying pattern that organizes a person’s deepest convictions about him—or herself and others—an individual’s firmest core understanding of what is true.”

254 O’Connell-Higgins (1994, 177) furthermore says: “Park stresses that ‘to adequately understand and sponsor the journey toward mature adult faith, we are compelled by the reflections of [Samuel Taylor] Coleridge and his inheritors to attend to the significance of the process of imagination in the composing that is faith. For collectively these persons teach us that [...] existence is transcended by means of the imagination. We reach for ‘the gates of heaven’—the ‘ideal’—by means of images, which infused with spirit have the power to give unifying form to the disparate elements of existence. By means of imagination, human beings grasp a transcendent wholeness that was the Promise.’” Following Fowler, she attributes to imagination the job of creating coherent “master narratives.”

255 Cf. Baird 1985; cited in Chamberlain and Zika 1992, 146.

256 Cf. Yalom 1980; Reker and Wong 1988; cited in Chamberlain and Zika 1992, 146.

How do faith development and a religious based meaning provide protective potential?²⁵⁷ A spiritual belief system addresses questions of purpose and meaning in life. It explains one's origins above and beyond name, ethnicity, family and history. It can contribute to self-esteem; inasmuch as it affirms one's uniqueness (as creation) and purpose, and one's potential to overcome the difficulty, it confronts degrading pressures.²⁵⁸ It aids people to set goal and cope with fundamental questions, especially about suffering and death. Yet religion and spirituality also have negative potential. Researchers highlight the risks that they bring to meaning and cognitive processes: close-mindedness and identity foreclosure;²⁵⁹ a sense of spiritual superiority, blind and unquestioning loyalty, as well as intolerance (e.g. wars, ongoing oppression, politicization of religion);²⁶⁰ fundamentalist notions of fate;²⁶¹ risk for mental health;²⁶² and unreasonable behavioral expectations.²⁶³

The cognitive side of more-than-cognitive realities has been examined through developmental questions about faith, religion and spirituality. From a dialectical perspective, Meyer and Lausell argue that the open discussion of values, beliefs and faith best promotes personal belief systems.²⁶⁴ It emphasizes subjective valuation as a counterbalance for excessive stress on objective values. They claim

257 Cf. F. Lösel 1994, 8-12.

258 Meyer and Lausell 1996, 120.

259 Identity foreclosure "happens when an adolescent makes a commitment to a sense of self without exploring alternatives," according to Meyer and Lausell (1996, 120).

260 Meyer and Lausell 1996, 129.

261 Andersen (1991) speculates that a fundamentalist religious notion of fate might render a girl to become indifferent to the possibilities of pregnancy. Andersen, E. 1991, 375-398; found in Haggerty *et al.* ed. 1994, 168.

262 In the context of specific sects, F. Lösel (1994, 10) has found that religious orientation may become a risk to mental health; cf. Werner and Smith 1992.

263 O'Connell-Higgins (1994, 192) says that the Catholicism of 1950s in the United States has been experienced by some as promoting "nearly unattainable, thus unreasonable, behavioral expectations. Particular thorns include the [negative] virtues of infinite self-sacrifice and unreflective compliance, unfounded accusations and guilt-engendering admonitions, the tenet of original sin, and the perception of sex as sin."

264 This includes moral development. Cf. Meyer and Lausell 1996, 118; Haan 1989; Kohlberg 1976.

that without such a dialectical process youth may not only “lose out on the value of hearing the viewpoints of others, they may determine that being value-free is optimal and never develop their own spirituality.”²⁶⁵

Emphasis on narrative also highlights the development of resilient capacities. According to Garbarino and Bedard, a

growing body of evidence [links] the ability to tell a coherent and *meaningful* account of one’s life to the crucial variable of resilience in the face of adversity (Cohler, 1991). Indeed, this evidence offers support for the proposition that the emergence of this ability in children and youth is *the* most important foundation for resilience.²⁶⁶

This view is supported by Robert Coles (1990, 100), who finds that children for example not only ask questions about what is happening to them, but also want to understand why. When young people ask such questions, they call upon their experiences of religious life and spiritual values in addition to other potential explanations.

Trauma and difficulty—especially when experienced first-hand—defy the adequacy of cognitions about life’s spiritual and religious dimensions. Trauma is even more disturbing for children. Garbarino and Bedard have observed that “the experience of childhood traumatization functions as a kind of ‘reverse religious experience,’ a process combining overwhelming arousal and overwhelming cognitions that threatens core ‘meaningfulness’ for the child.”²⁶⁷ Trauma can make evident both human vulnerability and our capacity for evil. It can shatter expectations of divine protection. Such experiences challenge meaningfulness especially for youths, because they have not yet had the time necessary to build a solid framework of meaning. They need time to develop the cognitive skills employed in

265 Meyer and Lausell 1996, 118.

266 Garbarino and Bedard 1996, 469 (*emphasis* in the original).

267 According to Garbarino and Bedard (1996, 469; cf. 467), “Initially, we can see trauma is the reverse of what could be called a positive spiritual cognition, the experience of darkness rather than enlightenment, a plunging into the shadows of life, coming face-to-face with the capacity for evil in human nature, with human vulnerability in the natural world, with the reality of the dark side (Herman, 1992). We say ‘initially,’ because upon closer inspection of the great spiritual masters we come to see that these experiences of the dark side need not be spiritual dead-ends, but rather can serve as the beginning of an even deeper spiritual awakening.”

making sense of such events.²⁶⁸ In extreme cases like trauma, but also in more everyday challenges, we employ cognitive processes related to experiences of religion and expressions of spirituality to cope and make sense out of life. They provide stability in both troubling and comforting changes.²⁶⁹ Inasmuch as sense aids coping, the way in which we employ cognitive processes can be weighed in their resilient effects.

In lieu of a conclusion, let us simply highlight some suggestions that have surfaced from this research about how humans employ cognitive processes in reducing the impact of risk. First, we alter the riskiness of an event by altering its cognition. For example, we can neutralize or counteract the damaging alteration in our self-concept:²⁷⁰ by putting the situation in its larger context, by not blaming ourselves for what is unforeseeable or for other people's failures, by pardoning self and others, and so forth. Second, we can cognitively alter our exposure to risk or modify our involvement in it. We can take distance from risk through the cognitive sets associated with humor²⁷¹ or through finding alternatives such as physical distance from the situation. Furthermore, resilience support can come for the cognitive elements of religion and spirituality's capacity to aid: in establishing cognitive perceptions and attributions, including in adjudicating between good and evil; and in discovering and creating meaning and goals, especially when coping with trauma and difficulty.

1.2.4. Volitional Processes: Attention and Competency

Can we choose to be resilient? Do volitional processes underlie resilience and vulnerability? Researchers address the volitional dimension of resilience and vulnerability in terms of: attention

²⁶⁸ Cf. Garbarino and Bedard p. 471.

²⁶⁹ Werner and Smith (1986, 105) say that for their cohort "religion provided stability in the midst of change."

²⁷⁰ M. Rutter (1990, 197) claims that although "the concept of 'neutralizing' life events (Tennant, Bebbington, and Hurry, 1981) [...] postulat[es] an effect that relies on a quality that substantially negates or counteracts the impact of an earlier threatening event or difficulty," not all positive events are neutralizing; cf. Brown and Harris 1978, also cited in Rutter 1990, 204.

²⁷¹ Cf. Vanistendael and Lecomte 2000; Berger 1997.

management and concentration competency, experiences of self-efficacy and the ability to cope with difficulty. First, they examine internal and external sources of motivation. How do we motivate ourselves? And what external factors motivate people? Second, we need to ask how do motivation, religion and resilience correlate? The responses depend on types of motivation and religious experience and expression. Third, what do researchers say about spiritual competency in coping? How might religious belief aid us to confront difficulty, resist destructive pressures and construct a positive outcome?

1.2.4.1. Managing Attention and Motivation

First, let us ask: how do humans manage attention and concentration in difficulty? Then, what role does motivation play in resilience and risk outcomes? B. J. Wilson and J. M. Gottman (1996, 189-228) suggest that the human capacity to manage attention is basic to a number of risk and resilience factors. By “attentional processes” they mean a fundamental aspect of human agency: How do we direct our mind to an object? What state of consciousness accompanies this concentration?²⁷² Attentional processes provide a group of executive roles. They organize experience by “shuttling” between the perceptions, emotions and cognitions.²⁷³ This interaction is elemental to the extension, shaping and modification of temperament and character in general. In particular, researchers have found that attention correlates to the following resilience qualities: active and social responsiveness, flexibility, both positive mood and low levels of negative emotions, feelings of self-esteem and self-efficacy,²⁷⁴ mastery

272 In this case, it seems that the term “attention” or “attentional processes” is not identical to “intention” in the technical sense of classical ethics, where it means the end of the agent (*finis operantis*). Neither is it strictly synonymous with the faculty or act of “volition” or “will” as a desire or appetite for the perceived good, nor as the efficient intending and enjoying of that good. Nonetheless, it illustrates an important aspect of volition. Later on in the discussion on Aquinas’ anthropology, I shall examine the similarities and differences between such a conception of human agency, in terms of attentional, cognitive, and emotional processes from that of will, intellect, and passions.

273 Cf. M. W. Eysenck 1982.

274 In particular, Wilson and Gottman (1996, 190-1, and 220) claim that we gain feelings of self-efficacy and high self-esteem when we successfully manage emotional and social experiences. Cf. Lösel 1994, 9.

of basic interpersonal skills (e.g. turn-taking, mutual regulation, sharing internal states) and establishment of interpersonal relationships.

Attention affects agency according to personality type. From Wallwork's psychodynamic perspective,²⁷⁵ whether we are obsessive, hysterical, borderline, narcissistic (and so on) influences our conscious attentional processes. Such personality types also shape our interpretation of the world and our replies to it. Given the plethora of stimulus and possible interpretations, attention selectivity is inevitable. Nonetheless, we interrogate, narrow or widen it, through our sensitivity and self-directional capacities.²⁷⁶

Attentional processes manage emotion regulation, a core risk variable according to Wilson and Gottman.²⁷⁷ Emotional arousal alters performance through changing our selectivity and distractibility. In general, increased attentional selectivity may result from moderate and, in some cases, high levels of arousal; it may aid active coping by focusing attention on a primary task. However, not all arousal stimuli affect performance equally. Incentive and anxiety types of arousal influence us differently. For example, high levels of "incentive arousal" increase performance on primary tasks, and do not for the most part decrease performance of subsidiary tasks. While high levels of "anxiety arousal" tend to narrow attention to the primary task at the detriment of secondary ones (by decreasing parallel cognitive processing), and may lead to greater susceptibility to distraction from internal and external events.²⁷⁸

²⁷⁵ The psychodynamic approach attempts to integrate the explicit and implicit workings of the mind. Implicit thought is more than the unconscious memory; it includes emotional responses and procedural skills (mental and motor) involved in "perception, information processing, thought, evaluation, choice and action" (cf. Wallwork 1999, 170-1).

²⁷⁶ Cf. Wallwork 1999, 180.

²⁷⁷ Wilson and Gottman (1996,193) claim that most current theories in cognitive psychology only inadequately treat the interrelation between emotions, motivation and attention. They highlight the importance of past experience and present goals in directing attention, as well as the detrimental affect of anxiety (negative cognitions like self-doubt and fear of failure) on performance.

²⁷⁸ Cf. Wilson and Gottman 1996, 194-5. The background for this theory is found in the Yerkes-Dodson law (1908), which predicts an inverted-U function between arousal and performance. This law foresees that performance is maximal with moderate levels of arousal, but lowest with very low and very high levels of

The intensity of emotion demands two types of attention and processing. We effortlessly process some emotions, while others require exertion.²⁷⁹ In the case of strong, disruptive or distracting emotions, we must consciously focus attention away from the emotion-arousing event. The need to redirect attention finds partial explanation in two opposite physiological abilities of the autonomic nervous system, which are a basis for attention demanding cognitive and emotional processes and aid in reestablishing internal homeostasis. They are the sympathetic “accelerator” of the sympathetic nervous system and the vagal “brake” of the parasympathetic nervous system.²⁸⁰ On the one hand, in the face of emotional stimulation and intellectual interest, the sympathetic accelerator mobilizes the body and increases the heartbeat; this self-activation prepares us to meet emergency situations (e.g. to affront or flee danger). In turn, we need to be able to calm the accelerator effect through self-soothing or emotion regulation strategies. On the other hand, the vagal brake conserves and maintains bodily resources. Since the effort of maintaining attention requires a great deal of energy, the organism seeks to decelerate and stabilize heart rate during periods of peak attention; this self-calming enables longer concentration.²⁸¹ Indeed physiological relaxation helps sustain attention and aids the arousal-lowering process.²⁸² In the face of high levels of anxiety, the inability to manage either of these two physiological aspects can lead to reduced attention and performance levels, heightened selectivity and the negative effects of

arousal. This law has since been nuanced, for it has been found that different types of arousal affect performance differently.

279 Research indicates a close relationship between attention demanding processing and physiological arousal. Physiological signs of attention include the measure of pupil diameter, heart rate and skin conductance, all of which increase during input and processing of information; cf. Kahneman *et al.* 1969 and 1973; Wilson and Gottman 1996, 195-7.

280 Both parasympathetic tone and the capacity to self-soothe from sympathetic activation are involved in controlling internal organs such as the heart and glands. Wilson and Gottman, 1996, 195.

281 The heart would beat at 100 RPM (its intrinsic pacemaker rhythm) if it were not inhibited by the vagus nerve. “Vagal input to the heart is interrupted on a rhythmic basis with each successive respiratory cycle. Heart rate increases during inspiration and decreases during exhalation,” according to Wilson and Gottman (1996, 198-9); cf. Lacey 1967.

282 Cf. Watts and Williams 1988, 78.

distractibility.²⁸³ In general, such a double failure (increased cardiovascular reactivity and low vagal tone) may correlate with reduced resiliency,²⁸⁴ while inversely effective attention management underlies multiple resiliency strategies.

Second, the psychosocial sciences sometimes consider motivation as synonymous with volition or the human will. They thus distinguish motivational from cognitive, emotional and temperamental sources of resilience. What are the most prevalent models of motivation? And what do the resilience studies suggest about the role of motivation in human agency?

In order to understand the resilience research, we need to differentiate two approaches to motivation: the homeostasis and growth models. The former conceptualizes humans as motivated only in order to find a balance, to fulfill a need. We eat because we feel hungry. We sleep because of fatigue. The growth-oriented framework construes motivation as a human capacity underlying our progressive growth toward an aim. We act for reasons and for goals. Contemporary psychology grants a central place to motivation in individual's goal-directed agency.

In his humanistic psychology, the American Abraham H. Maslow (1908-1970) uses motivation to replace or at least integrate notions of instinct, reflexes, behavior and stimuli-response conditioning; he thus attempts to explain human conduct, its constituent needs and goals.²⁸⁵

283 Attentional problems are linked to various sources: Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (the most severe example), intrauterine exposure to alcohol and nicotine (cf. Wilson and Gottman 1996, 191).

284 Research indicates that even at the age of 5 months infants handle stress differently in terms of their vagal tone, cardiovascular reactivity and emotion regulation strategies. Wilson and Gottman (1996, 221) suggest, as an area for further research, that this variability might be related to individual differences in nutrition, exposure to stress, or caregiver behaviors. They also note that highly reactive infants may be at particular risk of failing to learn strategies for regulating emotion and attention because of how quickly they are over-aroused. Over-reactivity may increase the risk of social problems throughout development, as with children and adults who have difficulty in tolerating frustration and controlling private behavior, which adversely affects their social behavior.

285 A. H. Maslow (1971/1987 and 1962) devised a six-level hierarchy of motives that cause an organism to act and through which an individual progresses from basic needs like food, oxygen and sexual expression to the highest needs concerning self-actualization (the fulfillment of one's greatest human potential).

Some research seeks to find the roots of operative resilience that we derive from the efficacy of our volition. It focuses on human motivation and its sources. It asks: how does motivation serve coping, self-conservation and constructive competency in hardship?

Human motivation has various dimensions. When asking: “what moves a human being?” responses include not only personal but also relational motivations and goals. When asking: “what is moved?” answers encompass our own internal states, impulses and resources, including our thoughts, decisions and choices.

Human motivation involves self-control efforts that keep disruptive emotions in check, delay gratification or stifle impulsiveness. It demands conscientious efforts to take responsibility for personal performance and social events. It also involves maintaining and being maintained by our goals and standards of life. This perspective has various names: Maslow calls it self-realization; virtue theory calls it flourishing or happiness; we shall address the differences between these perspectives in the next chapter.

Self-motivation involves harnessing cognitions, choices and emotions behind an aim. Goal orientation is essential for paying attention, self-mastery and even creativity. Mindfulness of goals gives the context for the self-control needed to accomplish large and small tasks. D. Goleman describes a successful and sustained, intentional and attentional focus as a state of “flow.”²⁸⁶ This goal-driven state of excellence enables outstanding acts and performances, and even contributes to the development of high-quality dispositions.

On the personal level, positive self-esteem support self-motivation and action, just as negative self-images undercut them, according to Rutter.²⁸⁷ Other research indicates that feelings of self-assurance and pride, as well as a sense of purpose in life, can strengthen motivation for action and appropriate attention skills, while

He ranks these needs as follows: (1) physiological; (2) security and safety; (3) love and feelings of belonging; (4) competence, prestige, and esteem; (5) self-fulfillment; and (6) curiosity and the need to understand. Using group therapy, Maslow promoted a humanistic psychotherapy aimed at aiding individuals to progress from the basic needs to the higher ones of self-actualization. Cf. Diel 1947.

²⁸⁶ Cf. D. Goleman 1998, 26, 43, 105-129.

²⁸⁷ Cf. M. Rutter 1990, 197-207; W. Yule 1992, 191.

the contrary promote passivity, distractibility and discouragement.²⁸⁸ According to the social development model, social bonding underlies a protective type of motivation. Feelings of attachment and solidarity with family and groups regulate behavior; they motivate us to live up to the group's standards.²⁸⁹ Participation in social groups can promote feelings of self-worth and strengthen personal resistance to external and internal negative pressures.

1.2.4.2. Motivation, Religion and Resilience

The spiritual and religious domain brings further light to motivation and resilience. What role does belief and religion-based motivation play in the resilience outcomes?

Theoretical psychosocial science and resilience researchers have focused on the importance of religion in motivation. The two types of theoretical approaches offer distinct observations about religious motivation. The homeostatic approach affirms that activity follows a felt need. We seek a balance, a state without stimulation. In this perspective, religion is a response to human fear, anxiety, guilt or deprivation. Religion manages these needs.²⁹⁰ Although the homeostatic model of motivation usefully describes physiological belief and religion, we need to inquire about the adequacy of reducing religion to emotional stimuli.

A growth- or realization-oriented research relies on cognitive theories of motivation. It claims that humans seek to optimize rather than minimize stimulation. This approach explains the human desire for variety, aesthetic experience and curiosity. In this perspective, religious activity seeks overall growth and self-realization, which involves motivational and cognitive growth. In particular, religion serves as the basic motivation, which is the human quest for meaning.²⁹¹ Nonetheless, both these perspectives highlight the motivational relevance of meaning and control, as well as mastery and self-esteem.

288 Cf. Maughan 1988, 214.

289 Cf. Consortium 1994, 300.

290 Cf. Hood *et al.* 1996, 17-20.

291 V. Frankl (1963) speaks of this motivation in terms of a "will to meaning."

Resilience researchers have found that one aspect of the role of religion and spirituality in competency and motivation is the intrinsic quality of religious beliefs that reduce vulnerability to risky situations. This research distinguishes intrinsic and utilitarian bases of belief. Intrinsically religious people have a sincere belief and commitment; they thus find their most fundamental source of motivation in the principles and standards of their religion. In contrast, a utilitarian, pragmatic or self-centered approach to religion is motivated from non-religious operative principles, e.g. the advancement of one's own status, security and self-justification.²⁹² Meyer and Lausell note that positive resilience outcomes correlate to intrinsic religious qualities like mindfulness (of other people and of oneness with creation) or an internalized code of behavior (involving firmer control, higher maturity and greater acceptance of personal responsibility for one's own behavior).²⁹³ Masten, Best and Garmezy's research suggests that religious practice (the participation in a church community and belief in a higher power) builds protective resources in the form of "competence and educational attainment."²⁹⁴ These indications of motivation and competence are more than simply descriptive; they offer pedagogical insights concerning growth.

The motivational and control function of religion offer an important typology. What is the role of religion in motivating and controlling behavior? Religious principles and standards, parables and narratives promote personal control and motivation. In the control function, we obey law as coming from another (from God, God's ministers and representatives, or another authority). The law is not internal to the agent except as blindly willed. We obey the law, because it is the law. In the motivational function, we internalize law.

292 Cf. Masters and Bergin 1992, 222; Kirkpatrick 1989; Donahue, 1985, 416.

293 Meyer and Lausell (1996, 125-6) establish these theories from a meta-analysis of research.

294 According to the research of Haggerty *et al.* (1994, 168), "Participation in a church community and belief in a higher power were particularly important in the lives of rural youths, although religion has been identified as a protective factor for African-American youths in diverse settings. Reviewing the function of religion as a protective factor, Brown and Gary (1991) and Masten, Best and Garmezy (1990) report that religion is associated with competence and educational attainment."

We do not simply obey it as God's command or because it is law, but we accept it for further reasons: the common good, the kingdom of God, and so forth. Motivation and control are sometimes seen as opposing dichotomies. While distinguishable, the control and motivation functions of religion can complement each other.²⁹⁵

In sum, religion can assist to motivate coping activities. Spiritual goals, meaning and hope move people to seek to overcome hardship. Inasmuch as religion serves coping processes, successful coping can in turn enforce religious engagement. In the growth model of motivation, religion strengthens basic motivation by supporting the human quest for meaning²⁹⁶ and flourishing.

1.2.4.3. Spiritual Competency in Coping?

Another question. Is there a volitional basis for spiritual coping and resiliency? Resilience research has identified religion's input on how we acquire spiritual competency through coping. They suggest that religion promotes resilient efforts. Religion offers us means to cope according to the type of: participation the religion plays in coping; religious variables, which promote positive or negative outcomes; and religious hope, commitment and planfulness.

According to Pargament *et al.*, our religious beliefs affect the appraisal of and the coping with negative events in three ways.²⁹⁷ First, we can involve religion, faith or spirituality as a part of a coping. A stressful event can be religious in nature; or we can appraise it as such: we can attribute the cause of an event to the plan, wrath or uninvolvement of God. Spilka, Shaver and Kirkpatrick claim that religious concepts highlighting orderliness, benevolence and justice in the universe aid us to manage negative events.²⁹⁸ Coping activities

²⁹⁵ Cf. Thomas and Carver 1990, 202; D'Antonio, 1983, 81-108; D'Antonio and Aldous, 1983, 15-16.

²⁹⁶ Cf. Frankl, 1963.

²⁹⁷ Pargament *et al.* (1990, 796-7) say: "Religious appraisals, coping activities, and resources and constraints may serve a number of functions important to the resolution of problems."

²⁹⁸ Cf. Spilka, Shaver and Kirkpatrick (1985). In this regard, Pargament *et al.* (1990, 799) posit the efficacy of religious beliefs in dealing with dimensions of situations that escape personal control and problem solving efforts. Concerning religion and coping with stress see Shortz and Worthington 1994 (esp. p. 172).

likewise offer religious bases; e.g. prayer, confession or support from religious people and clergy. Religious resources, motivation or constraints operate in belief systems, norms and congregational support. A desire for ultimate happiness or a closer relationship with God may guide coping efforts. Second, religion contributes to coping, inasmuch as religious involvement decreases the likelihood of complicating negative factors like drug and alcohol abuse, non-marital sexual activity, and so on. Lastly, it can be a product of a coping process, for example because of successful events we may experience increased fervor or commitment.²⁹⁹

Pargament *et al.* correlate positive coping outcomes with four religious variables.³⁰⁰ The first variable is “belief in a just benevolent God.” They have observed that positive coping outcomes correlate to “appraisals of events as reflective of God’s will, images of a loving God, and orthodox beliefs in a just and merciful personal God.” Inasmuch as the religious concepts and practices are well integrated, and emphasize order in the universe and fairness in the world, they serve psychological functions regarding not only meaning, but also self-esteem and an external framework of control. On the contrary, they have found that negative coping outcomes relate to appraisals of the event as a punishment from God or as a threat, which accompanied feelings of anger and distance from God and church members. Beliefs in an angry unfair God can threaten meaningfulness, self-esteem and control in life. A second variable is an “experience of God as a supportive partner in coping.” This relationship with God is intimate, emotional and problem-focused. It involves both personal effort and recognition of limits to personal agency. It is an interactive relationship, neither simply passive nor simply active. A third variable is “involvement in religious rituals,” which includes aspects of: church attendance; prayer; “avoidance efforts” like—Bible reading or focus on after-life; attempts to lead more loving, less sinful lives; support from

299 This religious coping can also be analyzed according to the forms of religiousness involved in the coping: (1) Interactional. Supportive interpersonal relations with others and with God; (2) Behavioral. Good deeds, pleading and religious avoidance; (3) Emotional. Feelings of love or anger; (4) Motivational. Spiritual purpose, self-development, problem resolution, sharing, restraint (cf. Pargament 1990, 813).

300 Cf. Pargament *et al.* 1990, 793, and 814-6.

church members and clergy. A fourth variable is the “search for spiritual and personal support through religion.” Here an intrinsic spirituality is found to seek closeness with God who secondarily is a guiding force for problem resolution. An extrinsic spirituality and utilitarian approaches in contrast use religion primarily for its usefulness.³⁰¹

Religious competency (appraisal and coping) is fundamentally intertwined with the dynamics of motivation and guidance. For example, we can derive hope from a sense of competency, insofar as the experience of overcoming difficulty spawns hope for doing likewise in the future.³⁰² Werner and Smith claim “the experience of the resilient children in coping with and mastering stressful life events by their actions, appeared to build immunity against ‘learned helplessness,’ and an attitude of ‘hopefulness’ instead—even in the midst of material poverty.”³⁰³ Such hope-based experiences can be shared with others.³⁰⁴ Motivation moreover springs from the force of spiritual goals and meaning that provide guidance and support, especially when facing obstacles. Meyer and Lausell suggest that spiritual goals underlie resilience, and that to become attached to them demands more than individual effort; they implicate communal and intergenerational goals and collaboration.³⁰⁵

Thomas and Carver positively correlate religious commitment and social competence,³⁰⁶ in terms of increased prosocial skills like:

³⁰¹ Pargament indicates that an extrinsic approach still can have positive coping outcomes, even though its primary interest is not closeness to God.

³⁰² Concerning hope, see: Y. Danieli 1994; C. R. Snyder *et al.* 1991a and 1991b; M. E. P. Seligman 1991 and 1995; S. Breznitz 1986.

³⁰³ Werner and Smith 1986, 157; cf. Seligman 1991 and 1975.

³⁰⁴ Werner and Smith (1992, 209; cf. 202) furthermore promote the sharing of this everyday hope. They say, “from odds successfully overcome springs hope—a gift each of us can share with a child—at home, in the classroom, on the playground, or in the neighborhood.”

³⁰⁵ As Meyer and Lausell (1996, 125) suggest that “if adults assist youth in identifying their spiritual goals, youth may be better able to uphold their personal standards when they are challenged.”

³⁰⁶ Thomas and Carver’ (1990, 195ff.) study conceived of social competence using the following assumptions. First, social competence consists of a socially valued dimension defined by characteristics such as self-esteem, academic achievements, intellectual development, creativity, moral behavior or an internal locus of control. In contrast, negative social developments include

self-esteem, social commitment, academic achievement; and a decrease in the tendency to develop negative attitudes and participate in activities devalued by society such as: suicide, truancy, delinquency, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy and sexual permissiveness.³⁰⁷ Moreover, religion's positive effect on social competence is illustrated through the quality of planfulness. Socially competent adolescents are characterized by their ability to plan ahead. Instead of only living in the present, they anticipate coming stages of life. They make active plans for the future concerning education, occupation, family, and so on. They also integrate religious values as goals for the future.³⁰⁸ Negative effects of religion, on the contrary, include misconceived or unhealthy notions of self-sacrifice that lead to the self-abnegation within minority groups.³⁰⁹

In sum, psychosocial theory and resilience research findings enlighten human volition's role in resilient and vulnerability outcomes. The way that volitional processes relate to resilience involves the personal dialogue between sources of stress and attentional processes; goals, self-control and motivation; extrinsic and intrinsic motivation; and religious law, instruction and spirit. Research suggests that we can

characteristics such as deviance, aggression, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, learning disabilities, or other attitudinal and behavioral problems.

307 Thomas and Carver (1990, 205) were unable to draw firm conclusions about these correlations. They propose a Durkheimian formulation according to which "integration into social orders is the critical element in preparing people to 'live better.'" This focus on social processes, rather than the dimensions of personality and individual attitudes assumes "that as the individual becomes integrated into the religious social sphere and accepts the set of values surrounding those social relationships, he or she becomes more sensitive to interpersonal expectations from significant others, finds it easier to develop goals, and more readily identifies personal abilities needed to achieve those goals. We see such interpersonal skills as being transferable to an educational setting, which assists the religious person in becoming a better student." In these correlations, they highlighted religion's two functions: providing limits and norms, and providing support, guidance or motivation.

308 Thomas and Carver's (1990, 212) research findings highlight "the supportive and facilitative function that religion provides informing a set of values around which the adolescent is then able to create a set of specific goals for the future."

309 A healthy notion of self-esteem, according to Don Browning (1987, 160), can "save such groups as women and minorities from suffering oppression and exploitation in the name of appeals that they should sacrifice themselves for the sake of others--appeals which sometimes lead to self-abnegation rather than to truly appropriate forms of self-sacrifice."

develop volitional competencies that underlie a spiritual coping, self-conservation and positive construction. Religious coping activities offer a unique framework for dealing with the limits of personal knowledge, control and resources. For the religiously involved, religious coping-constructs offer an additional, non-repetitive source of potential resilience.³¹⁰

1.2.5. Family Interactions

Finally I shall directly address the resilience input of family relationships (in this section) and other social networks (in the next). What family dynamics operate when facing challenges to our understanding, physical health and faith? A recourse to sociology will enrich the intercultural and experiential breath of the study. This section will investigate: (1) the role that a family's internal harmony can have on managing stress; (2) issues that confront families, like family dissolution and socio-economic pressures; and (3) the positive and negative influences of religion and spirituality on family resilience.

This search for the social context of resilience moves beyond a focus on the individual's internal sources of protection and risk, and beyond a narrow focus on the mother's influence on the child.³¹¹ It includes the larger environment, the social world. A systems approach offers some insights into social relationships; however it has its limits as well. We cannot simplistically translate concepts from the individual to the family or other social systems. A collective characterization is not independent of its individual members, but at the same time it is

³¹⁰ Pargament *et al.* (1990, 816-8) argue that religious coping constructs can make additive (related but not redundant) contributions to nonreligious coping constructs.

³¹¹ A dominant pre-1970 view was that child development is largely explained by whatever it is that mothers do to children: (1) mother is principal (even sole) influence in the family; (2) there is a direct causal relationship between her child-rearing practices and child behavior; (3) early experience impacts later personality characteristics and behavior. Bowlby's (1969) concept followed this line. His monotropism entails that children can form but one emotionally meaningful attachment, which is normally with the mother, based on feeding situation. This view was not supported by empirical data. Children from the beginning are embedded in a network of social relationships, diversity of individuals with differing influences: fathers, siblings, grandparents, peers, daycare and teaching staff, neighbors, and so forth (Cf. Schaffer 1992).

not a simple aggregate of them. We cannot simply consider families, schools or neighborhoods resilient in terms of attribution of collective meaning or competency, as we would an individual.³¹² Furthermore, psychological studies and theories attain less certainty when analyzing social dynamics than intrapersonal ones. Last, the social realm is not without its ambiguities. For example, some resilience studies demonstrate that certain people exhibit a rather antisocial resilience.³¹³ These challenges demand a deeper analysis of the observations, empirical studies and underlying psychosocial theories.

1.2.5.1. Family Resilience Interactions

Specialists have observed four types of family³¹⁴ resilience interactions: (1) family fit and harmony; (2) family stress management; (3) family disruption; (4) family socio-economic status. First, researchers have observed the effects of the family interactional styles in terms of fit and harmony. How does the family fit together at temperamental, emotional and functional levels? How do they complement each other, one's strength serving the other's weakness? In the midst of routine growth opportunities and challenges, as well as more poignant but less usual crises, parent-child fit and harmony

312 Sagy and Antonovsky (1998, 222) highlight the limits of a systems approach: "however, empirical application of systems principles in family research has been found to be very complex and to date has produced no adequate measures (Jahoda 1989). [...] A family collective characterization is not independent of its individual elements, but it is also not a simple aggregation of these elements. [...] A collective orientation is an abstract concept, which cannot be examined or observed as clearly as an individual orientation (Steinglass 1987). The family as perceiver, thinker, or possessor of a cognitive orientation is, in the last analysis, a concept only in the mind of an observer."

313 According to Werner and Smith's (1992, 69) "career and job success was the highest priority on the agenda of the resilient men (39.1%) and women (64.7%), but the lowest priority on the agenda of their peers with problems in adolescence. Also high on the priority list of the resilient individuals were self-development and self-fulfillment (M: 34.8%; F: 38.2%). The more traditional goals of a happy marriage, children, and having a home of one's own were mentioned by only about one out of four in the group. The lowest item in priority among their life goals was close relationships with family and friends (M: 8.7%; F: 2.9%)."

314 The diverse uses of "family" have caused much ink to be spilled. It is not always clear that the studies analyzed have the same understanding (assumptions about the functioning) of the family. We shall note when possible the conception of family used in the different studies.

underlie the resiliency of the family and its members. A good family fit does not necessarily mean an idyllic, picture-book family or the possession of all desirable temperament and character qualities.³¹⁵ It does mean however that a family establishes balanced goals that promote the well-being of its members.

Protective qualities for families facing difficulty include: “family cohesion, warmth, and an absence of discord;”³¹⁶ “stability and security;”³¹⁷ reliable care and identification with competent roles models encouraging constructive coping;³¹⁸ “an open, supportive, and controlling educational climate [and] dosed social responsibilities and achievement demands,”³¹⁹ as well as friendship promotion among siblings.³²⁰ The notion of family support regroups a good deal of these qualities and processes; it includes but should not be restricted to emotional support. Wills has predicted that parental support leads children “to more adaptive coping, less maladaptive coping, and development of academic and social competence.”³²¹ His study of

315 Simply composing such a universal list would sidestep the difficulty of applicability (and verifiability) across socio-economic and cultural environments. We are only able to make limited observations about some of the more evident resilience findings. Nonetheless, according to Jerry Lewis and Robin Skynner (1993, 29) exceptionally healthy families exhibit the following characteristics: affirmative attitude, respect of the individuality and difference of others, open communication based on acceptance of the negative and the positive, balance between freedom and order, high level of spontaneity, fun and enjoyment, capacity to cope with loss and change, a sense of meaning and purpose (based on a transcendent value system: religious commitment or humanitarian philosophy).

316 N. Garmezy 1985; cited in Rutter 1990, 182.

317 In the context of parents with disabilities, Booth and Booth (1997, 113) assess these qualities in the following ways: *warmth and mutuality* (shown, for example, by feelings of having been loved as a child and of having done things together as a family), *stability* (shown, for example, by having at least one parent alive throughout childhood and an absence of separations or the loss of a close relative), and *security* (as provided, for example, by having grandparents who live near, a supportive uncle or aunt at home, parents who can manage money).

318 Masten, Best, and Garmezy (1990), quoted by Garmezy, 1994.

319 F. Lösel 1994, 9.

320 J. Dunn (1988, 233) identifies that family friendship or friendliness can help in various difficult, but normal life transitions, for example the birth of a sibling. She notes “certain features of the mothers’ behavior at this time were systematically linked to the development of a particularly friendly relationship between the siblings.”

321 T. A. Wills 1996, 117. Such competencies, qualities or skills need to be considered as more inclusive and complex than simple cognitive judgments (cf. Consortium 1994, 275).

family support has found that families expert at coping through effective information exchange were perceived by adolescents as supportive, and promoted their competence through emotional affirmation (boosting the youth's sense of self-esteem and validating their feelings); through disposing of challenge- and transition-coping assistance; and through modeling useful support and communication skills (attitudes and expectations). He affirms that supportive family environments promote successful adolescent integration in larger communities³²² and deter negative life events. Thus, strongly bonded families exhibit clear standards and norms for behavior, which reduce the incidence of problem behavior. For example, this helps to diminish "precocious sexual activity, leaving school early, interpersonal violence, criminal activity, and tobacco, alcohol, or other drug use by children and adolescents."³²³

A good mother-child relationship during the first year of life is one of the key environmental factors in developmental resiliency among children at risk.³²⁴ According to Werner and Smith, teenage girls especially find a benevolent role model in the type of competent mother, who holds a steady job and delegates household responsibilities to the daughter.³²⁵ In high delinquency-risk environments, they also found that buffers against criminogenic stresses seemed to include the father's esteem for the mother, the mother's self-confidence, education and maternal affection, while paternal aggressiveness and maternal permissiveness coincided with higher levels of youth criminality.³²⁶ When the mother is unable to provide this good relationship herself, Musick *et al.* note the value of

322 Wills' (1996 115-6, 127) study claims to have shown that the higher levels of coping and competence in children correlate with family support, and that "this relationship is not attributable to a third factor (socioeconomic status)."

323 Consortium 1994, 300-1. The social development model hypothesizes the same role for standards and norms in schools and larger communities. Furthermore, Werner and Smith (1992, 185-87, and 198-200, 1986, 134-135) have found that shared values, a sense of coherence, structure and rules in the household serve to support resilience.

324 Cf. Anthony (1983); Musick *et al.* (1987, 249).

325 Cf. Werner and Smith 1992, 185-186; also see Werner and Smith 1986.

326 Cf. Werner and Smith (1992, 9) base their conclusion on the Cambridge-Somerville Project (McCord 1979, 1982, 1986), a 30-year follow-up of 506 children identified between the ages of 8 and 15 as "predisposed to delinquency."

her enabling her child to use a “growth-enhancing alternative care-taking environment.”³²⁷ Other studies—less numerous, though growing in number—highlight the importance of the father or another male role model.³²⁸

Second, family support and competency underpin family stress management styles. Researchers define “family stress” as a macro-event, as a critical life episode disturbing the homeostasis of the family.³²⁹ Nonetheless, they emphasize differently the individual’s part in coping with family stress. In the previous section on cognitive processes, I presented the position of Patterson and Garwick (1998) on the cognitive processes underlying the appraisal of family stress. Now in a larger context, I shall call upon a stimulus-response approach to understand stress-management better in the midst of troubled family homeostasis.

Perrez (1994b, 7-8) identifies coping as the adaptive responses produced by an individual, in terms of perceiving a stressor, appraising it, and expressing related emotions and coping behavior. When family members coordinate their coping reactions, the coping effect is more efficacious. Bodenmann and Perrez (1993) illustrate how couples and families manage stress. First, inevitably one partner’s stress touches the other.³³⁰ Someone living in a couple thus will have more exposure to stress. However, an intimate relationship also offers resources to

³²⁷ Musick *et al.* (1987, 250) describe this “second chance” through which the child appropriates the benefit of good parenting from a surrogate.

³²⁸ “For high risk boys, it was the presence of a male mentor or role model and the advantage of having been a first born son” that seem to be noteworthy, according to Werner and Smith 1992, 185-186; cf. 1986.

³²⁹ On the history of family stress analysis see Perrez 1994b, 7-8.

³³⁰ Studies document the typology of support within the couple. Werner and Smith’s (1992) research identifies it as one of the three major sources of support for resilient children as adults, (M and F: more than one third); Rutter (1990, 189-202) finds that the adult status of institutionally raised girls correlates with their marital situation at the time of risk. These researchers suggest that different family styles emphasize different centers of strength under pressure. Single-parent families underline the importance of its hardiness, which means “having a sense of control, commitment, confidence, and challenge over and above that of positive problem-solving communication.” This phenomenon is perhaps based on the need for self-sufficiency of a single adult in charge of the family. While the two-parent household “underscores the importance of family problem-solving communication over and above family hardiness” (McCubbin *et al.* 1998, 64). These differences translate into different educational opportunities.

better manage the stress together. Studies of dyadic stress resolution positively correlate satisfaction of the couple and the way in which one partner communicates stress to the other.³³¹

Family styles of cohesiveness and adaptability correlate to coping efficacy. Not every type of dyadic management of stress is as effective as others.³³² Bodenmann and Perrez (1993) make the following theoretical assumptions concerning coping with risk in families. The objective intensity of stressors and the members' personal qualities (e.g. hardiness) influence family stress. Coping competence also affects family stress. In the second case, capacities to reestablish emotional homeostasis and to move forward to solve problems and achieve goals build upon one's satisfaction with family life and one's sense of well-being.³³³ The style of emotional causal attribution influences the quality of emotional reactions and coping. Emotional bonding can be a possible positive result of shared stress; so can emotional estrangement when stress is poorly managed.³³⁴

1.2.5.2. Family Disruption and Socio-economic Status

Research hypotheses and findings suggest that family disruption is detrimental to support and competence processes, and

³³¹ According to Bodenmann and Perrez (1993, 3-4; also 1991), "While love and positive sentiments that one feels for the partner correlate with conjugal satisfaction and signify a protective factor, the level of stress and its inadequate management do the opposite." According to Hansen (1992, 191), when the couple is committed to each other, the spouses are more likely to better manage their stress.

³³² Dyadic stress management can take different forms: 1. common stress management; when the two partners manage the stress together; 2. support from the other partner; i.e. emotional and practical support from one partner for another; and 3. delegation of stress management from one partner to the other. Cf. Bodenmann and Perrez 1993, 7.

³³³ Common activities (such as family rituals, cf. M. Morval 1986) build up inner family resources, according to the hypothesis that "positively experienced common activities correlate positively with the parameters of individual and familial well-being" (Perrez 1994b, 11).

³³⁴ Limited complexity and specificity negatively influence individual and familial social well-being. For example, anger is a more frequent response of families with external causal attribution (e.g. blaming other family members, scapegoats); while internal causal attribution (blaming self) relates more to anxious and depressed emotions (cf. M. Perrez 1994b, 11).

may contribute to other adverse outcomes.³³⁵ Common sense tells us as much. However, empirical research provides needed details, according to types of disruption. Early parental loss favors vulnerability to psychiatric disorders, especially when accompanied by a serious lack of affectionate care in childhood and other direct risk variables, like a cognitive set of helplessness and a related concept of low self-esteem.³³⁶ Effects associated with marital conflict include a child's lower self-esteem, negative self-images and troubled relationship with the custodial parent.³³⁷ Unfair parental treatment of children causes imbalances to the family environment; for example, Touseignant has found parental favoritism is a cumulative factor that renders already vulnerable children more so.³³⁸ Although seeming obvious, it has been found that good parent-child relationships can decrease risk associated with family discord.³³⁹ An important social resource has proved to be a stable emotional relationship with at least one parent, or another adult.³⁴⁰

The family disruption experienced in divorce demonstrates more evident risks. Empirical studies correlate divorce with numerous important stressors, many of which are associated with increased risk of psychological problems for children. Parental divorce during preadolescence is additionally linked with serious difficulties involving social and parental relations, as well as scholastic and emotional adjustment.³⁴¹ For the most part, children identify feelings of distress, if not disturbance, as a result of their parents' divorce. Children's social development can be impaired, in particular peer relations can be limited in terms of: intimacy, satisfaction, reliable alliance, conflict, affection and companionship.³⁴² According to Emery, on the average,

335 Cf. T. A. Wills 1996, 127.

336 Cf. M. Rutter 1990, 200.

337 Cf. N. Watt *et al.* 1990, 300.

338 Cf. M. Touseignant 1998, 64.

339 According to Rutter (1990, 189-202), there are two directions of causation. Family discord can cause further problems for parent-child relationships; and negative parent-child relationships can cause further family discord. On the contrary family harmony and good relationships can contribute to more extensive harmony and good relationships.

340 Cf. Lösel 1994, 9; Muscick 1987, 250; Werner and Smith 1992.

341 Cf. N. Watt *et al.* 1990, 297.

342 Cf. M. Rutter 1983; N. Watt *et al.* 1990, 297-8.

children function competently after divorce.³⁴³ This competency finds its roots in numerous protective processes. Preadolescent girls tend to find support in peer friends; boys on the contrary do so less than girls.³⁴⁴ A good rapport with the custodial parent furthermore has been associated with positive self-esteem and social relations at school, while a bad rapport was associated with poorer peer relationships.³⁴⁵ Indeed non-parental substitutes and other reference persons can provide important social resources.

Other risks correlate with the family's specific socio-economic status (SES). Yet risk cannot simply be conflated though (as it sometimes is) with lower SES per se. On the one hand, evidence indicates that greater affluence and improved living conditions accompany increases in certain forms of psychosocial disorder. Young people in higher SES groups suffer a greater prevalence of suicide, an increase in crime rates, and higher incidences of drug and alcohol problems.³⁴⁶ Questions about the correlation of risk and higher or lower SES need to address the constituent components of the SES linked to actualizing or escaping from risk. Issues related to lower SES include: overcrowding, inadequate nutrition, poor health care, the absence of positive role models, the compounding of anxieties;³⁴⁷ while those for higher SES concern: parental absence, lack of participation in meaningful household work and family activities, over-protection, over-abundance (including availability of abusable substances).³⁴⁸

343 According to R. Emery (1994, 93), "Resilience, not risk, is what most clearly characterizes children whose parents divorce.' Such a counter intuitive statement or observation is common to resilience research. The human spirit is such that it can overcome a good deal of obstacles, which are not promoted simply by the fact that we know that we can for the most part overcome them."

344 This social factor may account for why preadolescent boys are more vulnerable under the stress of parental divorce. Cf. N. Watt *et al.* 1990, 298.

345 Cf. M. Tousignant 1998, 64.

346 To this list, M. Rutter (1994b, 355-63) adds depressive disorders.

347 According to Rutter (1994b, 363), poverty itself is a risk factor rather than the risk mechanism, which is the family disorganization and breakup associated with poverty. Cf. Garnezy 1990, 530.

348 Significant social and economic changes in the family, school and neighborhood contributing to increased health and behavior problems for children and youth (USA) are: increased poverty, breakdown of traditional neighborhoods and families, reduced support from positive role models, inadequate housing and unsafe neighborhoods, economic and educational disadvantage, health-damaging media messages, societal attitudes and behaviors

1.2.5.3. Family, Religion and Spirituality

The resilience influence of family, religious and spiritual input has been found: (1) to be rooted in faith and moral education and modeling; (2) to be important for marital adjustment and happiness; and (3) to correlate to a balance between the control and support functions of religion and family. First, research has widely recognized that values transfer is more effective when parents act congruently and offer a warm, supportive atmosphere at home and in church. Several studies have identified the importance not only of consistently demonstrating values, but also discussing them in order for this transfer to occur.³⁴⁹

Second, the level of family religiosity positively correlates to marriage adjustment, understood as marital quality, satisfaction and happiness. According to Hansen (1992: 189), in 50 years of this research “religion has consistently been identified as a factor associated with adjustment.” Religion mediates adjustment through a meaning-structure, which includes a normative system with specific ideals about marital relationships.³⁵⁰ Although secularization has weakened the general link between religion and family, the relationship is thought to depend on whether the family has a high or low level of religiosity. There are reasons why. Highly religious couples report higher levels of marital satisfaction and adjustment than less religious ones.³⁵¹ This correlation also occurs when comparing same-faith and interfaith marriages. Hansen explains the reports of higher satisfaction and adjustment through the greater faith-social network, and the greater consistency both in faith education with children and in family faith practices. Mixed marriages, on the

that hurt ethnic minorities (Cherlin 1988; National Commission on the Role of the School and the Community in Improving Adolescent Health, 1990). Cf. Consortium 1994, 270.

³⁴⁹ Cf. Meyer and Lausell 1996, 124. Masters and Bergin (1992) also stress the importance of synchrony between belief and behavior for beneficial mental health consequences (cf. Williams 1989; Pargament *et alia* 1979).

³⁵⁰ “According to Berger (1967), whatever else it may be, religion, from a sociological perspective, is a humanly constructed universe of meaning. As such, it is a normative system that includes specific ideals about the structure of marriage and marital interaction” (G. L. Hansen 1992, 190).

³⁵¹ Cf. G. L. Hansen 1992; Thomas and Cornwall, 1990; Filsinger and Wilson 1984; Wilson and Filsinger 1986.

contrary, may have a secularizing effect, or be the result of lower religiosity.³⁵²

Third, several factors affect the relation between the control and support functions of family and religion. The level of doctrinal certitude influences the control impact of the doctrines and related actions. When families doubt faith-based doctrines, these teachings have less of a control effect. At the same time, a cultural context that embodies such a doctrinal critique without proposing a meaningful solution leads to an even greater need for the support function of religion.³⁵³ For example, clergy have traditionally served a caring function, which is all the more needed when families suffer from cultural disturbances (challenges to religious meaning).³⁵⁴ According to D'Antonio and Aldous (1983: 15-16), although there can be a struggle over the primacy and focus of the social control and social support functions of religion and families, the way in which family and religion collaborate in these functions strengthen each other. A separation, on the contrary, tends to weaken each of them.³⁵⁵

1.2.6. Interactions Outside the Family

After having treated issues of relationship and resilience in terms of familial interactions, I now turn to extra-familial interactions.

³⁵² Previously some social scientists ignored this positive relationship, they thought that it was explainable in terms of marital conventionalization or social desirability (cf. Hansen 1992, 191).

³⁵³ J. Aldous (1983, 63) identifies some of these difficulties as concerning sexuality, separation, divorce, abortion, and contraception. Furthermore, hedonism and materialism has weakened the control function of religion. She has found that because of longer lives (and less contact with death), people have less of a sense of the fleetingness of life and less call upon the churches (religion and clergy) for comfort in times of grief and for aid in finding meaningfulness in loss. Aldous (1983, 68) says, "Thus the hold on people religion once possessed, because of their fear or hope of what followed death, the control function, has been weakened. Long life leads people to look for happiness in this world and to discount warnings of how their present conduct will affect their fate after death."

³⁵⁴ These difficulties concern the areas of: sexuality, separation, divorce, abortion, and contraception. Aldous (1983) notes that the search for religious comfort amidst these conflict areas can also include "non-traditional" organizational approaches to these problems such as: charismatic movements, Bible study groups, and support groups (for the divorced).

³⁵⁵ In the case of particular historical emphasis on religious control (e.g. in the United States), D'Antonio (1983, 106) highlights the need to develop further the love and caring features of religious teachings.

The overlap between these two social influences renders inevitable certain gaps on one side and repetitions on the other. Nonetheless, this section addresses resilience and risk qualities specifically associated with relationships outside the home. How does involvement in the wider community and environment render one more or less resilient? I shall address two interlacing circles of support: first, friends and peers; and second, care givers, adult substitutes, the wider community, as well as play opportunities and contact with nature. Lastly, I shall address the resilience and vulnerability influences that religion has on social relationships.

1.2.6.1. Friends and Peers

Friends and peers influence us positively in numerous ways. Resilience research often makes at least fleeting reference to them.³⁵⁶ Studies on the development of friendship and friendliness include the genetic and environmental factors that interrelate in the formation of social networks. As discussed in relation to temperamental qualities, an individual's social support progresses in a dialogue between genetic and environmental factors.³⁵⁷ Prosocial temperament characteristics include: affability, attractiveness (physical, emotional and psychological), sociability, outgoingness, and so on, while negative social qualities include higher levels of irritability, timidity, depression and melancholia, and so forth.³⁵⁸ Moreover, friendship networks protect against depression, while lack of such support can lead to it.

According to a study conducted in Washington, DC, highly competent youth tend to put friendships to good use. Their friendships help them to acquire a deeper understanding of themselves and to clarify their career possibilities. They share information and pool their skills. They face academic and interpersonal challenges together by

³⁵⁶ Cf. Bahr, Hawks and Wang 1993; Bainbridge 1992; Clarke and Clarke 1992; Dunn 1988; Gottlieb 1998; Meyer and Lausell 1996; Rutter 1994b; Tousignant 1998; Watt *et al.* 1990; Werner and Smith 1992; Wills 1996. However, we have not found any extensive studies on the resiliency and risks associated with friends and peers. Related, more detailed psychosocial studies on friendship include: Kon and Losenkov 1978; Berndt 1981.

³⁵⁷ Neither genetic nor environmental factors determine the outcome of friendship development, according to M. Rutter (1994b, 367-8).

³⁵⁸ Cf. J. Kagan 1994.

drawing from each other's strengths and complementary points of view.³⁵⁹ Moreover, J. Dunn suggests that friendship mediates resilient outcomes in various difficult but normal life transitions, such as the adjustment to school.³⁶⁰ Wilson and Gottman suggest that friendship networks help transform failure experiences, which frequently occur in a peer context. In effect friendships provide the resources needed for regulating negative arousal of moderate failure experiences and thus may lead to greater resiliency.³⁶¹ Certain studies have found that resilient women are more eager than resilient men to help friends who encounter problems. Although strongly career oriented, the women (in the study) found more sustenance through networks of social relationships that included family, friends and coworkers.³⁶²

There is also a dark side to friendships. Friends and peers do not unconditionally provide a positive influence to each other. They may offer a source of risk for adolescent drug use and other forms of antisocial behavior, especially when combined with the negative modeling from drug using or delinquent peers, more general peer rejection in the elementary grades³⁶³ and a low level of adult support.³⁶⁴ In the context of high risk, Werner and Smith have found that a fairly high proportion of resilient males acknowledged: being loners, not having much interaction with friends, tending to focus on their own work and withdrawing from other's problems.³⁶⁵ Conversely, their less resilient peers depended more often on friends for emotional support in adulthood. The low levels of friendship for the resilient group and higher levels for the non-resilient suggest that certain friendship environments correlate with risk and vulnerability. This correlation

359 Werner and Smith (1986, 104-105) refer to the studies of Hamburg and Adams 1967 and Hamburg *et al.* 1974.

360 Concerning adjustment to school, J. Dunn (1988, 236) speculates that: "it seems likely that friendship and support from other children will be of significance during the period of adjustment to school."

361 Cf. Wilson and Gottman 1996, 216.

362 Cf. Werner and Smith 1992, 68-69.

363 Cf. Consortium 1994, 271.

364 T. A. Wills (1996, 121) has found that without adult support youth may be more vulnerable to modeling effects of peer substance use.

365 Werner and Smith (1992, 68-69; and cf. 46) found that "while more of the resilient women (63.6%) were eager to help their friends who encountered problems, the majority of the resilient men (66.7%) tended to withdraw from others' troubles."

does not mean that on a larger scale resilience negatively correlates with friendship. Nonetheless the ambivalence of friendship networks indicates the need to evaluate the quality and specificity of a resilience factor (in terms of normativity, health and happiness) and the presence of risk factors.

1.2.6.2. Care Givers and Beyond

Caregivers and adult substitutes outside of the nuclear family offer resilience support that the family sometimes cannot provide. Numerous researchers identify that they can instrumentally build up an individual's resilience and aid in adulthood recovery. They compensate for deficits in the family's emotional and cognitive support, and promote social competency through serving as role models.³⁶⁶ A primary resilience support involves the interaction of children with a non-parental adult, who supplements deficiencies in guidance, nurturance, knowledge, and even cognitive, social and affective support.³⁶⁷

The care-giving environment can include extended family members (such as grandparents, or cousins), relatives of a close friend, or teachers and ministers.³⁶⁸ These people can foster trust and a sense of coherence, give "second chance" opportunities to acquire competence and confidence, and provide emotional support encouraging autonomy and initiative.³⁶⁹ Involvement with the wider community provides support in other forms, such as: schools that value children and encourage them to learn; teachers who act as role models assisting the youths with realistic educational and vocational plans; involvement in employment and local clubs and societies; and participation in a close-knit neighborhood.³⁷⁰ On the contrary, risk variables include:

³⁶⁶ Cf. Clarke and Clarke 1993, 149; Fisher 1987, 226-7; Lösel 1994, 9; Tousignant 1998, 67.

³⁶⁷ Cf. Vanistendael (19953); Musick *et al.* (1987, 249).

³⁶⁸ Werner and Smith (1986, 97) found "The resilient youth, however, sought and received help from a great number of informal sources of support. Peer friends (35%), including siblings and cousins; and older friends (30%), including older relatives and parents of boy- or girlfriends, ... parents (25%), ministers (11.5%) and teachers (11.5%)."

³⁶⁹ Cf. Werner and Smith 1992, 185-87, 192, 198-200; and 1986, 134-135.

³⁷⁰ Cf. Clarke and Clarke 1992, 153; Werner and Smith 1986, p. 97; Booth and Booth 1997, 113.

experiences of academic failure, low commitment to school, low expectations from teachers; availability of abusable substances, extreme neighborhood deprivation and disorganization;³⁷¹ and larger problems underlying particular cultures.³⁷²

We face another serious matter: play. As mentioned earlier, Eisen has found that play serves serious roles in the lives of children and adults.³⁷³ Playful activities aid in information processing, problem solving, coping, learning survival techniques and parent-child contact.³⁷⁴ In extreme and normal situations, play serves in adaptation (for suffering loss-death) and promotion of survival.³⁷⁵ Moreover, D. W. Winnicott posits that play positively correlates with a sense of self. He hypothesizes that the “relaxation in conditions of trust based on experience [gives way to] creative, physical and mental activity manifested in play [so that finally there is a] summation of these experiences forming the basis for a sense of self.”³⁷⁶ Numerous

371 These are risk factors for adolescent drug use and other forms of antisocial behavior (cf. Consortium 1994, 271).

372 For example, Garmezy notes the prevalence of major problems found in the USA such as: depression as a widespread mental disorder, family break up, racial disharmony, limitations in treating chronic childhood illnesses, effects on behavior of social class variations, school difficulties in insuring children's later well-being through education and socialization (cf. Garmezy, 1994, 6-7).

373 G. Eisen (1988, 7) has studied children at play in the Shoah. He noted that a unique set of rules governed children's play. He observes that play displays a higher order than seriousness, since it can include the latter, but seriousness cannot include play.

374 In difficult situations, these activities can aid us to understand the absurd, forget hunger, face fear, relieve stress and find a person-environment balance (cf. Eisen 1988, 98).

375 Survival behavior learned through play can include: resistance, protest and defiance. Cf. Eisen 1988, 11 and 88f.

376 D. W. Winnicott 1971, 56. MacIntyre argues that the unqualified trust of a caregiver can serve in releasing the creative physical and intellectual powers that we express in forms of play and result in a larger sense of self-sufficiency and independence in practical reasoning. In addition, he demonstrates that play permits us to explore reality. Play releases us from the pressures of felt need. It enables the pursuit of a range of activities that are worthwhile, pleasant. It allows the exercise and expansion of one's intellectual capacities. A. MacIntyre (1999, 85) says that “play is important because it is exploratory, because it releases those who engage in it from the pressures of felt need, because it extends both the range of activities found worth pursuing for their own sake and the range of pleasures that can be taken in such activities, and because in moving from the kind of playfulness exhibited both by human and dolphins to more sophisticated forms of

anecdotal indications suggest that play and contact with nature positively correlate to mental and physical health. They also serve as a psychological buffer and reestablish social stability and order in the face of crisis.³⁷⁷

1.2.6.3. Social Relationships and Religion

Several questions aid a more direct treatment of the social dimension of spiritual and religious resilience.³⁷⁸ How do religious groups offer support or motivation (social bonding and relationships), control or guidance (religious and moral principles and codes)?³⁷⁹ How does religious belief correlate with social competence and planfulness? What contributions do ritual and prayer make to social interaction?³⁸⁰ These questions invite a closer look at the religious dimensions of community, peer and family contexts.

Fundamental issues for social support and resources in resilience concern the principles and processes of social relationships that engender the religious community. According to Meyer and Lausell, a spiritual belief system provides a sense of community among believers, as well as principles that direct and govern not only personal behavior, but also relationships with others and joint efforts.³⁸¹

play we move from animal intelligence to specifically human reasoning.” Cf. D. W. Winnicott 1987.

³⁷⁷ Cf. G. Eisen 1988, 41. Eisen (1988, 60) tells of how children, deprived of contact with the city parks in the Warsaw Jewish ghetto, expressed a keen desire for contact with plants, flowers and animals; even on their death-beds. For a philosophical approach to drug-abuse rehabilitation using nature (through: pilgrimage, mountain climbing, and desert survival) and ritual, see Albrecht and Zermatten 1994.

³⁷⁸ In various ways, resilience research has found that faith and spiritual resources are relational, social matters; this relational quality is perhaps clearer for “religion,” which by definition more often than “spirituality,” includes relationships with other people and with God. According to G. O’Connell-Higgins (1994, 175): “From its inception at a person’s birth, when the most fundamental meanings about life are shaped within early care-taking relationships, convictional faith is forged with others.” Fowler and Parks also interrelate faith and relationships.

³⁷⁹ Cf. D’Antonio and Aldous 1983; D’Antonio and Cavanaugh 1983.

³⁸⁰ In the section on cognitive processes and meaning, we already outlined the roles of religious rituals and religious social support concerning positive coping outcomes, cf. Pargament *et al.* 1990, 814-6.

³⁸¹ Notions like “the Christian concept of brothers and sisters in Christ,” or the Hindu Ashram can build up that sense of community; while principles like the

These principles sometimes conflict through diverse interpretations of religion's control and support functions.³⁸² These foundational relationships and principles of action have special import when adolescents seek support from beyond the family.

The religious influence in society or culture has been found to: (1) strengthen the "moral community;" (2) contribute to overall (average) mental health; and (3) deter delinquency and criminality. First, sociologists have found that religion significantly strengthens the moral community, both in terms of moral and social integration. It facilitates unity through shared beliefs and social bonds.³⁸³ Second, sociologists have identified a relationship between mental health and the strength of a community's cohesion. Naroll calls this the "moral net," which is mediated through social bonds, shared religious beliefs and rituals.³⁸⁴ Third, studies positively correlate moral-religious society to the deterrence of delinquency and criminality; they distinguish between the roles of religious belief and social bonds, as well as different types of criminality. Sociologists posit religion's social basis for deterrence in the social bonds of the community context (society

Ten Commandments of the Judeo-Christian tradition and the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism underlie religious agency. Meyer and Lausell (1996, 121) have investigated these issues regarding adolescent violence prevention and optimal development.

³⁸² As a control, religion offers direction for human action through divinely legislated law. As motivation, religion offers support, while leaving the interpretation to one's conscience. According to D'Antonio and Aldous (1983, 15-16), there is a struggle over the primacy and focus of the social control and social support functions of religion that manifests itself differently depending on particular cultures. According to D'Antonio and Cavanaugh (1983, 160), American Catholics have switched the emphasis for moral and religious guidance from dependence on legislation from above, to dependence on the personal conscience.

³⁸³ Sociologists following Emile Durkheim (1898, 1915) have postulated that religion contributes significantly to the strength of moral community. Cf. Stark 1989, 202; Bainbridge 1992, 207.

³⁸⁴ Concerning religion's place in a society's moral net, according to Schumaker (1992b, 66), "Naroll (1983) demonstrated that average mental health varies greatly from one society to another. He explained this in terms of his concept of the "moral net," and theorized that societies with intact moral nets should have better mental health, on average, than societies in which this net is weakened. According to Naroll, socially sanctioned religious beliefs and rituals are an important feature of the moral net. Consequently, erosion of conventional religious systems serves to unravel the moral net, one effect being lessened psychological health in all members of that society."

and city, neighborhood and family). When a community is highly religious, certain crimes (assault, robbery, burglary, and larceny) are deterred, although no statistically significant deterrence correlates with others (murder and rape).³⁸⁵ In “irreligious” cities (where there are low rates of church attendance) this deterrence functions to a lesser degree.³⁸⁶

In high-risk homes, studies have found that participation in a faith-community is a feature of success and resilience. According to Baldwin *et al.*’s (1990) research on stress-resistant families and children, the successful families put particular importance on the religious community in their lives. In a psychosocial perspective, they conjecture that the church community contributes to the stress-resistance of children by reinforcing parental policy and providing peer influences consonant with parental values.³⁸⁷ Anthony has furthermore found that intense religious affiliations can aid in overcoming disadvantage. This effect occurs most prevalently when the religious community wholeheartedly accepts individuals who are extremely vulnerable or alienated from society at large.³⁸⁸ However, Meyer and

³⁸⁵ This latter observation is thought to hold since it is a crime of “passion.” W. S. Bainbridge (1992, 205-7) tries to distinguish hedonistic and larceny types of deviance. He (1992, 203) says “to deter larceny and similar crimes, individual religiousness must be immersed in a religious community, while it can deter hedonistic deviance even in communities where religion is weak.” Problems exist in establishing the social difference between the two types of deviance. The hedonistic deviance studies were all social (drug and alcohol use, extra-marital sexual intercourse), while larceny was not necessarily so. Although religion is an important factor in determining crime rates, it needs to be controlled for geographic mobility, poverty, social discrimination, and divorce, which all have some correlation with crime (especially larceny).

³⁸⁶ Bainbridge (1992, 208) also found both that religious individuals in irreligious communities contribute to crime rates, and on the contrary that individually irreligious people embedded in moral communities may be somewhat deterred by the religion of the people with whom they have social bonds.

³⁸⁷ Cf. Baldwin, *et alia* 1990, 277-8. These findings need to be put in the context of the study on different social standings and the impact of religion.

³⁸⁸ E. J. Anthony (1987, 38) found in the St. Louis Risk Research Project (1984), “where several children who seemed at risk within a disadvantageous milieu climbed to success and health through intense affiliations with religious groups, especially those on the fringe of established religions. In the more esoteric sects, eccentricities and vulnerabilities seem more acceptable, more tolerated, and better supported by the faithful community; furthermore, purpose

Lausell have found negative correlations with church involvement. For example, it leads to the avoidance of dialogue under certain conceptions of the separation of church and state.³⁸⁹

Other studies concentrate specifically on the religious and spiritual dimensions of friends and peers. As in the earlier observations, here both positive and negative correlations between friendship and religiosity are found. This ambivalence highlights the need for further nuances,³⁹⁰ two of which concern the operative social process and the individual's interior affiliation with the religious beliefs. The first point stresses the influences of friends. According to Stark and Bainbridge, since religious beliefs are not automatically salient for human action (behavior), the influence of friends can reinforce or undermine the moral import of these beliefs.³⁹¹ The second point however is the crucial issue: whether religion becomes internalized. Indeed its impact on human agency occurs only when someone freely brings religious beliefs into one's own motivations and decisions.

In sum, resilience researchers primarily focus on the availability and quality of external support systems. How do these

and meaning are added to lives that are lived somewhat tenuously." Cf. Watt et al 1990, Anthony *et al.* 1984; Murphy and Moriarty 1976, 37-8).

389 Cf. Meyer and Lausell 1996, 129.

390 Thomas and Carver's (1990) study positively correlates resilient behavior with religious peers and mentors, while Bahr, Hawks and Wang (1993) found a negative correlation between religious friendship and deviant behavior. In particular, their study focused on substance abuse, the influence of friends, and the bonds of religion; it found no relationship between "religious conformity" and drug use. However, it has been considered inconclusive in that it did not adequately treat the influence of religion in regards to friends and peers. According to Meyer and Lausell (1996, 123), Bahr *et alia*'s conceptual error is two-fold. First, they conceptualized religion only in terms of a code of behavior and as a sense of identification, without including the intrinsic value of spirituality as a personal experience concerning one's relationship with a "higher power." Second, they in effect also left out study of the motivational, support element in religion and the friendship relationships.

391 According to Stark (1984) and Bainbridge (1992), the major influence of friends and peers is a significant force in deterring or promoting delinquency. Bainbridge (1992, 201) says: "if a majority of a juvenile's friends are religious, then religion will become a part of their shared experience and deter delinquency. But if a majority are not religious, then the personal beliefs of the individual will not be rendered salient, and religious individuals will be as likely as others to commit delinquent acts (Stark, 1984)" (Cf. Stark and Bainbridge 1985, 325-45).

systems: encourage and reinforce our coping efforts and competency; open instead of close opportunities at life's turning points;³⁹² communicate a sense of optimism and trust in interpersonal relationships; and provide a spiritual framework of meaning and motivational support?³⁹³ These researchers describe sources for social resilience as: a stable, emotional relationship; supportive relationships outside the home; and involvement in an external support system which rewards competence and provides a sense of coherence. On the other hand, they describe social risk in terms of: family discord and conflict, a lack of emotional security and strong affective ties;³⁹⁴ and negative influences (e.g. criminal) from family, neighborhood and environment, and socio-economic status.³⁹⁵ The interrelated social systems and the physical environment give another dimension of meaning to the term resilience. They suggest a sort of ecological theory composed of pertinent individual dispositions, social and religious support, as well as the physical, historical and cultural environment.³⁹⁶

392 Cf. M. Rutter 1990, 182; 189-202; N. Garmezy 1985.

393 According to T. A. Wills (1996, 128), "With respect to social aspects of coping, there are many questions about how basic schemas of the self and social relationships develop. In research on resilience, the anecdotal reports emphasize how some children in adverse life circumstances nevertheless emerge with a sense of trust in interpersonal relationships; the assumption, bordering on a generalized expectancy, is that people (or at least some people) are trustworthy and that being involved with and relying on other people will lead to positive things (Sarason, Pierce, and Sarason 1990)."

394 Cf. Clarke and Clarke 1992, 153.

395 A summary of the risk factors in the family environment and interactions for adolescent drug use and other forms of antisocial behavior are: "poor and inconsistent family management practices, family discord and conflict, drug behaviors and substance abuse—supportive attitudes of family members parental criminality, and low bonding to family" (Consortium 1994, 270-1).

396 M. Bloom (1996, 102) claims that according to the general model of Albee, any significant social behavior is some function of the following: "the strengths of persons, primary and secondary groups, the society, and subcultures, as these operate in some physical environment and historical time, and as these strengths are reduced by the weaknesses of persons, primary and secondary groups, the society, and subcultures, as these operate in some physical environment and historical time."

1.3. Transition: Resilience Insights for Philosophical Anthropology

As a transition to the upcoming dialogue with Aquinas' understanding of the emotions and virtues that arise in response to difficulty, we should now summarize the key insights from the representative sampling of psychosocial theories and resilience research. At the same time, we can start to ask: what is the significance of the resilience insights for a philosophical anthropology? How do these analyses help us to understand better human perception, emotion, intellection and agency in adversity?

First, the developmental nature of temperament makes it difficult to define. Temperament is the product of both our genetic heritage and our social interactions. In turn, temperament contributes to our character, which includes emotional, cognitive, volitional and spiritual resources. Thus we should resist seeing temperament as the product of only one factor. Indeed, human action involves personal unity and social context. In this vein, contemporary temperament studies can serve a virtue-based anthropology and moral theory to understand better the unique characteristics of each individual in society. When the individual becomes aware of his own temperament, particularly his own strengths and weaknesses, resources and shortcomings his behavior becomes more personally responsible. This knowledge contributes to his freedom and success. Nonetheless, empirical studies surprisingly suggest that a person's individual situation alters resilience outcomes related to temperament. In the face of a specific type of adversity, temperament traits that promote resilience in another situation can on the contrary open us to a new vulnerability. Difficulty does not affect each temperament type uniformly.

Second, psychosocial approaches evoke the significance of emotions for resilience. Emotions involve a type of judgment about meaning, insofar as they express emotional intelligence or contain cognitive content. They thus can either facilitate or hinder further perception and action. In a routine situation, they serve to appraise meaning. In a strenuous challenge, they can either help or hinder the tripartite coping, self-protective and constructive responses. How do emotions serve resilience and risk outcomes at the social level? Studies

demonstrate that social bonds (which are emotionally, as well as volitionally based) reinforce behavioral modeling and emotional competency. For example, well-attached people exhibit greater confidence under certain kinds of stress.

One key question is: How can we manage or train emotions? Studies suggest that the physiological reactions underlying emotions are more or less educable. Through rational behavior and social support, we can train to some degree our emotional reactions. However, differing perspectives on the value and management of emotions give diverging resilience and risk prognoses. Thus, various religious and spiritual perspectives evaluate emotions as either benevolent or malevolent. They promote different strategies for managing emotions; some encourage the expression of emotions, others the calming or refining of them. The upcoming chapters will discuss how particular resilience insights on emotions help to evaluate and nuance classical stances on emotion and moral agency. In particular, emotions are significant for a virtue-based moral theory that attempts to engage emotional energies for moral ends. Emotions are pertinent when either an adverse or favorable situation elicits them; they are partners with our reflections and choices in human agency.

Third, we ask: how do cognitive processes underlie human resilience? They serve our search for meaning and purpose. In order to appraise ways to overcome risk or to solve problems, we rely heavily but not exclusively on cognition. Challenges of all kinds engage our comprehension of meaning. More serious ones even threaten our understanding of life-goals and fulfillment.

Cognitive strategies and skills involve conscious appreciation of our self-esteem and self-efficacy, the exercise of planfulness and problem-solving competencies, as well as avoidance or modification of risk. They often demand the aid of other social actors. They invite the participation of families and peers, culture and society in order to understand a situation and plan a solution. We experience both stress and loss in a social context; we construct and adapt meaning with the help of family and friends. The cognitive capacities of our social environment help us to overcome adversity. Likewise, religious and spiritual resources offer insights into ultimate meaning, purpose and flourishing; they provide cognitive foundations and support to face

difficult questions concerning evil and suffering. These psychosocial insights offer complementary observations and reflections for a Thomistic framework that acknowledges not only functional, but also moral and spiritual roles for cognitive capacities in overcoming hardship.

Fourth, resilience outcomes draw tangibly from volitional processes, such as attention, motivation and coping. Research indicates that the type of attention contributes either to resilience or vulnerability. Attention processes do not only involve physiological influences (lowering physiological arousal and acquiring a capacity for sustained concentration), but also positive and negative interactions with cognitive and emotional processes. Studies suggest that we can acquire attention-related stress regulation strategies and both promote homeostasis and serve higher goals, including human flourishing and social relations. Coping and motivation are other key aspects of resilience and risk. Religion can play a resilience-promoting role, when it serves as part of coping processes. In turn, successful coping can strength religious engagement. Religion motivates human beings and communities, insofar as spiritual goals, meaning and hope move them to act. Unfortunately, religious sentiments and associations can be manipulated. Recognizing the resilience value of attention, motivation, coping and other volitional processes sheds complementary light on a virtue-based understanding of human nature, agency and competency. Other resilience insights involve how these competencies are not single deeds, but dispositional patterns acquired through past acts and ready for future use.

Fifth, in regard to family interactions, contrasting family styles combine with individual distinctiveness to make for a diversity of resilience pathways. Intersections of culture, family tradition and personal history form a particular family fit. Family support and acquired coping-competency constitute elements of effective family stress management. However, the dangers that family disruptions or socio-economic status represent do not determine individuals to failure. Nonetheless, they may occasion vulnerability or resilience outcomes. Furthermore, the effects of religion and religious communities on families are particularly salient for facing hardship. Religious commitment, practice and instruction in the family can

provide its members with spiritual and ethical support. They can also supply control and guidance in developing social-awareness competence and planfulness, in addition to a sense of satisfaction and well-being.

How does our social environment influence our actions? The way in which friends and peers at certain periods of life take on greater importance than family indicates something of their potential as agents of protection and vulnerability. Without denying the potential of accentuated risk, an individual's interaction with the wider community and environment provides opportunities for positive development and sources of strength in difficulty. The larger community can aid to strengthen the moral and religious resolve of individuals and to deter delinquency. However, without moral and religious criteria and support, humans interact in ambivalent ways. Social groups ingrain their resilience or vulnerability in individuals. We need to consider their moral and spiritual context in order to evaluate how communities influence human flourishing. Aquinas' philosophical anthropology promises several benefits for resilience research; it provides a nuanced moral and spiritual framework, as we shall see.

Psychosocial research in turn offers practical considerations that are pertinent for moral reflection. Multidimensional, socio-religious insights complete more one-dimensional (philosophical, sociological or theological) treatments. This input contributes to a Catholic perspective that already has a coherent doctrinal and moral tradition, and a deep theological anthropology. The interplay of doctrine and practice is not unimportant for Church members' spiritual and moral development and their spiritual resilience. Typically social virtues, such as justice and fortitude, charity and piety, exemplify such resilience that is formed through faith and family practices.

The interrelation and unity of resilience processes express parallels to the doctrine of the unity of the virtues. Protective and risk factors and processes are not independent from each other. They require a whole range of linked processes overtime. A single cause or operation is inadequate. They interrelate on social and personal levels. Social resources can strengthen personal ones; and personal factors and processes may trigger constructive reactions from support networks. For example, the "easy-tempered" child can elicit positive reactions

from her family. Nonetheless, certain resources and processes are more central to facing danger and difficulty. Some researchers and theoreticians emphasize stable emotional relationship(s), which express acceptance and care. Others put a priority on experiences of structure and meaning, including religious and spiritual purpose. Still others accentuate human competencies, particularly the capacity to control our attention processes and to cope with hardship. In any case, this tripartite backbone of resilience processes adds observations that are significant for comprehending the unity of Christian virtue.

Sixth, what can we say about promoting individual and communal resilience? The two sides of the coin involve risk reduction and protection promotion. In the case of crisis or simple difficulty, when we restore balance or attain a goal, we establish an increased capacity for future adaptation and goal pursuit. We resiliently adapt to a situation by either decreasing our exposure to risk and stress, or increasing personal and social protection. To reduce risk, we need to break the link between stressors and adverse outcomes. We can influence environmental, individual and behavioral risk. To increase protection, we can promote rehabilitation and preventive policy and practices, at social and cultural levels. Prevention efforts cannot eliminate problematic outcomes or risk however. Even if they could it may not be wise to do so. Indeed human development depends upon challenges. Nonetheless, by preparing to face challenges, we can reduce potentially destructive effects and facilitate the incidence of potential outcomes, like personal, moral and spiritual development. The promotion of protective factors and processes likewise cannot eradicate risk. It can nonetheless reduce its impact and related negative chain-reaction, which contribute to human dysfunction. It can open up positive opportunities as well. Both risk reduction and protection concern personal and communal dimensions, as well as physical, psychosocial and spiritual ones. These issues contribute to understanding the development of and education in virtue, as we shall see.

Lastly, a major question in resilience and vulnerability research concerns the staying power of these qualities. If either or both of them are acquirable, how do we account for subsequent change? If there is change, is any acquisition a stable life pattern? A common

position in this research is that neither resiliency nor vulnerability are absolute. Both change, although we can expect stability. Nonetheless, both change and stability in resiliency and vulnerability need explanation. Negative experiences do not inevitably precipitate negative outcomes. According to M. Rutter (1994b, 356; 1994a), negative life events have a tendency to accentuate rather than redirect human characteristics. Adaptive characteristics tend to persist, maladaptive ones as well. What resilience and vulnerability therefore do have in common is that we acquire them in the face of difficulty. Resilience entails that we acquire emotional, volitional, cognitive and social competencies that are won in the midst of the challenge, threat or loss. While the contrary entails that we acquire a tendency to carry forward vulnerability to later stress and adversity.

Some vulnerabilities and resilience persist for a short time; others are long-term. Most youth resolve their transitory problems without profound consequences for their lives. However, an individual's chronic stress and disorder or persistent resource deficits can contribute to a long-term burden of distress and dysfunction. Such susceptibilities correlate with the early inability to develop adequate protective resources. These factors enhance our exposure to stress and vulnerability to dysfunction, which we acquire through acts and events over time. Psychosocial explanations of the staying power of resilience and vulnerability bring both support and challenge to Aquinas' theories on how humans acquire and develop, as we shall see concerning fortitude and its related virtues.

These resilience findings concentrate on human nature and society. What does the study of humans under stress tell us about their hardiness? What are the origins of human resources that aid our response to difficulty? This chapter has offered a systematic, yet open-ended psychosocial synthesis. It portrays empirical research that awaits correction, confirmation and completion. It contributes towards a renewed anthropology. In this chapter, we have laid a foundation for a dialogue, which leads to the following questions. How can we philosophically and theologically treat resilience insights? How might resilience research enrich Thomas Aquinas' moral anthropology and virtue theory, in general? And how can it deepen our understanding of fortitude and its related virtues, in particular?

Chapter Two.

Renewing Moral Theology:

Aquinas' Virtue Theory and Resilience Research

In order to contribute to the renewal of moral theology, I shall assess, contrast and integrate two views on human agency: a resilience perspective and Thomas Aquinas' virtue theory. Previously, we saw how resilience research offers insights to enhance philosophical anthropology. These scientific and descriptive approaches of the psychosocial sciences propose insights on human nature and agency. They treat extreme cases of adversity, as well as more typical development. In this chapter, I widen the focus. Aquinas' virtue anthropology and moral theology offer a qualitative vision of human agency that incorporates further reflections on its origin and finality. They also involve a philosophical psychology and social theory that need to integrate contemporary reflections.

My approach differs from historical approaches to Thomas' moral theory. Although more limited in its study of his sources, it is more expansive in its exchange with contemporary sciences. In order to establish a dialogue between Aquinas' virtue-based moral theology and the resilience findings, in this chapter, I shall address two types of questions: on method and on anthropological content. First, methodological concerns raise questions like: How does Aquinas' approach to moral theology draw resources from descriptive, normative¹ and theological sciences? And how can the various domains of resilience research—psychology, evolutionary and developmental theories, and social sciences—contribute to develop ethical theory and moral theology? Second, on the anthropological level, we shall ask: What is the status of pleasure and happiness in the virtue-approach? What is the place of emotion and virtue in moral development and anthropology? And how can resilience findings and theory enhance our understanding of them? Through this investigation, I seek to establish

¹ I should distinguish the duty or obligation-based perspective from normative ethics. Some normative ethicists construe their project as reevaluating and developing norms (as well as exceptions to them) in order to treat contemporary moral quandaries (cf. Todd Salzman 1995; L. S. Cahill 1980).

the methodological basis of this study, to enrich Aquinas' moral anthropology and to contribute to the renewal of Catholic moral theology. At the same time, I intend to prepare the following chapters' more specific dialogue concerning human responses to difficulty.

2.1. Aquinas' Moral Theology and Resilience Research

How can a virtue approach aid to renew moral theology? Without giving an overview of all the currents working toward this renewal, I presently revisit Aquinas' sources and method to establish the import of a constructive virtue theory.² This approach finds its roots in a tradition within the larger Catholic Tradition. The task here is not apologetic, but expository. I intend to present the assumptions and principles used to forge this thesis. These assumptions and principles underlie a non-exclusive Thomistic model.³ It does not however deny that other methods use some of the same assumptions and fit into the larger Tradition. I shall interrogate Aquinas' texts and teachings in the light of contemporary critiques and resilience research. This dialogue with psychosocial research on human agency in hardship aims to contribute constructively to ethical theory and moral theology.⁴

We need to recognize that both virtue theory and resilience research are mixed disciplines. They each contain scientific, ethical and religious concepts and language. Nonetheless, each has its own specificities.⁵ First, they have distinct primary focuses for research: one external, the other internal. Second, they generate two types of

2 Pinckaers (1993, 439) suggests *first* reading the sources of Aquinas' thought, beginning with Scripture, while employing the historical method. This positive method consists "in interpreting his text, no longer by materials that came after him in time, but rather by what came before; not so much by consulting his commentators, in a chiefly speculative reflection, but rather by reading his sources, beginning with Scripture, thus using the historical method."

3 Throughout this book, unless the context dictates otherwise, I use Thomist to refer to the person and work of St. Thomas Aquinas himself, not to a particular Thomist or Thomistic school.

4 A comprehensive, systematic, historical study of Aquinas would require me to address as well: (a) the university context of his day, (b) development of doctrines in twelfth and thirteenth centuries, (c) Aquinas' progress through his successive works. I shall not do this here.

5 Cf. D. Browning 1987, 8.

knowledge: one a-personal, the other personal.⁶ Each human science attains a particular dimension of human agency's complexity and depth. It is "limited" or "focused," however, inasmuch as its methods inhibit it from adequately approaching human agency's moral, religious and spiritual dimensions. They are reductionistic however, only when the method denies the relevancy of the other dimensions.⁷ I intend to approach these deeper dimensions as much as possible through resilience research, ethical theory and moral theology. Aquinas beneficially provides a theoretical, ethical and theological standpoint to integrate insights found in other human and psychosocial sciences, especially concerning resilience. The wisdom of his approach involves the capacity to integrate the truth and relevance of apparently divergent positions.

6 See S.-Th. Pinckaers' (1993, 48-82) section on "The Difference Between Moral Theology and the Behavioral Sciences."

7 Lumsden and Wilson (1981, 381) define "reductionism" as an "oversimplification in the explanation of a complex system owing to the attempt to account for the system solely on the basis of the properties of its components. Usually ascribed by social scientists to biologists, by biologists to chemists, and by chemists to physicists." G. Cottier (1980, 164-5) says that when a scientific method leads to an ever more precise delimiting of the object, "scientific" becomes synonymous with a restricted field of investigation. This limitation leads to a reductionist tendency because of (1) this specialization; (2) one insight becoming *the* all-encompassing key to interpretation; and (3) the imperialism of *one* method. According to James Blachowicz (cf. Byers 1986, 126), reductionism is "the effort to treat phenomena at one level as explainable in terms of a lower level." E. O. Wilson (1996, 128) says: "To coin a phrase, 'Reductionism is the opiate of the scientist.' The triumph of science has come largely through the reductionist enterprise. It has always been accompanied by resynthesis. [...] Reductionism works extremely well as a methodology, especially if combined with a resynthesis that takes into account positive effects. On the other hand, reductionism fails as philosophy, especially when defined strictly. [...] A strict reductionism holds that everything can be explained by simple reference to the constituent units studied on their own terms, without reference to the higher systems into which they can be assembled." Steven Rose (1998, 273), besides demonstrating the inadequacy and seduction of reductionist explanations, critiques 'reductionism as ideology,' which is "the tendency, very marked in recent years, to insist on the primacy of reductionist over any other type of explanation, and to seek to account for very complex matters of animal—and above all human—behavior and social organization in terms of a reductionist precipice which begins with a social question and terminates with a molecule—often a gene." Rose (1998, 295) goes so far as to say that "by its very nature, reductionism [as ideology] is all or none, while an eliminative reductive philosophy fails to account for the new meanings of phenomena which emerge at each successive level of organization of matter."

First, I examine Aquinas' virtue-based ethical theory and moral theology. This exploration demands that I investigate briefly the nature and method of his theology in general, and moral theology in particular. Then I ask: What is the theological and pedagogical import of his moral theory? And can a dialogue with resilience research enrich it? Finally, I suggest several opportunities and challenges that resilience research offers.

2.1.1. The Specificity of Aquinas' Virtue-Based Ethical Theory

In order to tighten the focus of this research, we shall identify the specificity of moral theology in general, and Aquinas' approach in particular. Does moral theology, for Aquinas, have its own proper nature and specificity, sources and methods? And how can it dialogue with resilience research and incorporate psychosocial insights? Aquinas neither gave a definition of moral theology nor used the term resilience. Theology was not yet so subdivided as to require such a definition, and the human reality of resilience was not yet conceptualized as such. Nonetheless, the *Secunda pars* of his *Summa theologiae* harbors the method and content of his moral theology. At the same time, it addresses the deeper issues of human resilience.

The structure of the *Secunda Pars* expresses the order of discipline that Aquinas uses in morality, which we need to understand as a dynamic whole rather than as disjointed parts.⁸ It is both faithful to the tradition and original in its approach to human agency.⁹ It emphasizes movement: the human movement of being created in the

⁸ The prologues in the *Prima secundae* introduce the structure and content of his moral study (*moralis*): *ST* I-II 1 prol., 6 prol., and so on. Aquinas also refers to *moralis* in other prologues of his *Summa theologiae*: *ST* I 22 prol. and *ST* I 84 prol. In addition to *scientia moralis*, he uses other phrases to denote moral science: e.g. *philosophia moralis*, *doctrina moralis*, *consideratio moralis*, *moralia* (cf. Jordan 1994, 82-3).

⁹ In the *Prima secundae*, Aquinas offers a fourfold innovation in textual arrangement and emphasis; he: presents the soul's powers in a differentiated way; places beatitude up front; treats extensively the passions; and postpones the treatment of law and grace until the end (cf. M. Jordan 1994, 84-91). In the *Secunda secundae*, he innovates by applying a philosophical structure to a rather unruly theological tradition of *sententiae*, exhortations, *exempla* and *pastoralia* (cf. Jordan 1994, 91-95).

image of God (*ad imaginem Dei*).¹⁰ Aquinas announces the depth and extent of this movement, when he identifies the heart of his moral teaching, which treats “of the rational creature’s advance towards God.”¹¹

Aquinas starts the *Prima Secundae* with a treatise on happiness or flourishing that we can only understand in the context of the evangelical Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7).¹² His masterful analysis of human acts and voluntariness, goodness and evil, and the emotions prepares the way for him to treat human *habitus*, virtues and vices. More rationalist approaches have taken his treatment of law and natural law, which follows, as the heart of morality. But this sub-treatise and the whole treatment of morality are incomplete without their apex: the New or evangelical law. The New law is an interior law (the grace of the Holy Spirit) that serves as the unifying element in the *Summa*.¹³

In the *Secunda Secundae* (the larger and more detailed of the two parts), he addresses the particular virtues. He gives preeminence to

10 For an intelligent creature, growing into this image involves free will and self-movement. The movement involved in being created “*ad imaginem Dei*” is not always evident in translations of and commentary on Aquinas’ text (I-II prologue). In order to understand his teaching, we need to recognize that he distinguishes two types of image (I 35.2 ad 3): first, an image of the same specific nature, or second, an image of a different nature. While Christ alone is properly the Image of the Father (first sense), a human is an image of God only in an imperfect way (second sense). Although imperfect, this image present in a human person expresses a dynamic movement of its tendency toward its perfection, who is God. As Aquinas says: “*Et ideo ad designandum in homine imperfectionem imaginis, homo non solum dicitur imago, sed ad imaginem, per quod motus quidam tendentis in perfectionem designatur.*”

11 English Dominicans for the Prologue to the second question of the *ST*: “*de motu rationalis creaturae in Deum.*” The Blackfriars edition translates it as: “of the journey to God of reasoning creatures.”

12 S.-Th. Pinckaers (1997, 24-6) goes so far as to say that the *Secunda Pars* as a whole is a theological commentary on the Sermon on the Mount. Cf. St. Augustine “*De Sermone Domini in monte*,” CCC 1965-70.

13 Cf. *ST* I-II qq. 106-108. As Pinckaers (1993, 434-5) says: “Behind the natural law the treatise on the New or evangelical Law, that brief masterpiece composed by St. Thomas [can be seen] as the capstone in the vault of his edifice. To its definition all the lines of the *Summa* converge: the New Law understood as an interior law, as the grace of the Holy Spirit received through faith in Christ and working through charity. The Sermon of the Lord on the mountain provides the text of the law, like a summary of the Apostolic catechesis. It is purveyed through the sacraments.”

faith, hope and charity as the roots of Christian moral action, and considers the other virtues in their theological dimension.¹⁴ While ethicists commonly recognize that Aquinas is a theologian, many do not comprehend the significance he grants to the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the Beatitudes in moral theology. The way that he links them to each major virtue illustrates that, for Aquinas, Christian moral action involves a spiritual, even mystical quality. Aquinas thus anchors Christian morality in grace, charity and justice.

As *sacra doctrina* or theology in general, morality has two dimensions: connaturality (habitual and practical knowledge and judgments) and science (separated, abstract knowledge of judgments and principles).¹⁵ How are these two dimensions of morality sources of resilience? They offer us sources of resilience inasmuch as they involve our practical and speculative capacities and dispositions. First, through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we connaturally judge about divine things through wisdom, counsel, piety, reverence, fortitude, and so on. Aquinas speaks of an *instinctus* of the Holy Spirit, which firmly and surely establishes our moral judgment. We employ this type of practical morality like an art (*ars*) that requires our intimate involvement. Although to act precisely depends on our participation and mastery, we can act accurately without manifesting technical cognitive precision (*scientia*). Second, through the study of the principles identified in revelation and nature, we gain knowledge of moral judgments. We discover a source that we need to apply in moral acts. We discern this second aspect of the two-fold nature of moral knowledge and judgment through the study of morality (ethical theory), where we gain knowledge of right and good judgments and principles. We acquire the first aspect of moral knowledge however in the virtues, through which we have connatural knowledge and inclinations to judge well.¹⁶

¹⁴ B. Ashley (1996, 34) explains that, while the virtue of faith, hope and charity have the Triune God as their direct object (he calls them “theological” virtues), the other virtues can also be “theological” in their scope and development, and as an object of theology.

¹⁵ Cf. M. Jordan 1994.

¹⁶ Cf. *ST I* 1.5 ad 2. Study does not suffice in itself, for two reasons: first, because one needs to be able to judge rightly and not simply know about a subject matter; second, the virtue that we acquire through personal virtuous

Without analyzing a host of Thomistic definitions of moral theology,¹⁷ we shall content ourselves with a summary definition given by S.-T. Pinckaers. He says that moral theology “is the branch of theology that studies human acts so as to direct them to a loving vision of God seen as our true, complete happiness and our final end. This vision is attained by means of grace, the virtues, and the gifts, in the light of revelation and reason.”¹⁸ Pinckaers highlights Aquinas’ notion that theology is speculative or contemplative, not as opposed to being practical, but as the basis for the relationship with God that underlies the practical life of believers. To behold the face of God is the final end of the moral life. This communion is the reason and goal for human life. Inasmuch as we love, we act for someone and seek to be united to him or her. God’s love empowers all other true loves.

In the widest sense and at different levels, Thomas’ moral theology offers a model that draws upon a plethora of sources. They include philosophical, scientific and properly religious sources. Each offers us information and perspective to understand our acts. These

experience can serve abstract knowledge, and vice versa; and both can serve theology. For example, charity implies first a graced relationship with and experience of other persons (including God), through which we receive the form of connatural knowledge that is living charity and friendship. From such an experience, we can even more fully understand the theology of charity.

¹⁷ In passing we can quote the following definitions. *Veritatis Splendor* (1993, no. 29): “moral theology’ [is] a science which accepts and examines Divine Revelation while at the same time responding to the demands of human reason. Moral theology is a reflection concerned with ‘morality,’ with the good and the evil of human acts and of the person who performs them; in this sense it is accessible to all people. But it is also ‘theology,’ inasmuch as it acknowledges that the origin and end of moral action are found in the One who ‘alone is good’ and who, by giving himself to man in Christ, offers him the flourishing of divine life.” J.-L. Bruguès (1995, 26) says: “*La théologie morale se propose de parvenir à une connaissance pratique de la vie humaine et une considération régulatrice de l’agir humain dans le mystère du Dieu révélé, au sein de son projet créateur et sauveur.*”

¹⁸ Pinckaers 1995a, 8 (cf. pp. 8-13, 44). He extensively explains this definition calling upon its Scriptural foundations. His more complete definition (1985, 55) is: “*La théologie morale est cette partie de la sagesse théologique qui étudie les actions humaines, pour les ordonner à la vision aimante de Dieu comme au bonheur plénier et à la fin ultime de l’homme, sous la motion des vertus théologiques et morales, en particulier de la charité et de la justice, avec les dons du Saint-Esprit, à travers les expériences de la condition humaine comme la souffrance et le péché, avec l’aide des lois morales et des commandements qui nous indiquent les voies de Dieu.*”

sources play complementary roles in his ethical theory and moral theology. Aquinas uses these sources in to complete his ethical theory and moral theology, while trusting that faith and reason give harmonious witness to the unity of truth. The properly religious sources encompass Scripture and Tradition. They include not only Conciliar, magisterial, Patristic and explicitly theological Tradition, but also less thematized personal and communal religious experience and *sensus fidelium*. Through these interior sources, Aquinas recognizes that morality is more than making judgments and applying external principles. It demands an internal knowledge, experience and involvement. Aquinas' not-specifically-religious sources involve philosophical approaches to human nature and agency. In the spirit of his pursuit of truth, we furthermore can embrace contemporary disciplines such as psychosocial sciences, history and literature, including resilience findings and narratives. In their own domains, each of these theological and philosophical sources has its own particular principles and methodologies, types of knowledge and competency. These sources (scientific, philosophical and theological; external and internal) account for human resilience in their own ways.

Treating the nature and method of Thomas' theology in general within a work of moral theology may surprise people. First, this method may seem curious in contrast to a current tendency in Christian ethics that restricts itself to normative issues: what is right and wrong; what is allowed and forbidden. Because of this tendency I need to confirm and explicate the theological nature of moral teaching in the Catholic Tradition. Second, this approach may seem curious in contrast to much of the resilience research that is silent or minimalist in regard to spiritual resources for resilience. If there is a spiritual-religious component to human resilience, how can we investigate it? In order to explore spiritual-religious resilience, I propose to use Aquinas' approach to *sacra doctrina* (theology), in the context of his moral theology. He provides a model (albeit theological and moral) through which we can appropriate and account for resilience experiences in general, and in particular their spiritual dimension.

2.1.2. Resilience Research: Opportunities and Challenges for Moral Theology

Although Aquinas did not have access to the psychosocial sciences as conceived today, we shall ask whether and how his model of moral theology can assimilate this research. The psychosocial sciences have brought important insights on human experience (e.g. concerning human resilience). At the same time, they have brought challenges for theology (e.g. concerning its relevance and normativity). We shall ask: what are the potentials and limits of the psychosocial sciences in the context of moral theology?

In order to employ resilience research in moral theology, we should be aware of the psychosocial sciences' evolution and distinguish their various methods. However, we do not have the space in this study to execute this task fully. At present, resilience approaches are riding the crest of an anti-reductionist wave, as we shall see. What are some of the principle elements of this movement? First, this scientific renewal recognizes that scientific laws have limited depth and applicability. A search for scientific laws, factors or mechanisms using a scientific method (or rather the various scientific methods according to particular disciplines) itself cannot explore the whole of the human person and society. The positivist method cannot approach the very origin of life and spirit. When specialists restrict the term "science" and "objective knowledge" to the realm of natural and social sciences, a triple misunderstanding occurs: (a) they exaggerate these sciences' comprehensiveness (due to sort of determinism or materialism);¹⁹ (b) they overstate their scope (attempting to be a-subjective through external observation, detached from presupposed theories, feelings, and creative imagination); and (c) they deny "scientific" status to the interior, reflective, moral and spiritual aspects of human life and society.²⁰

¹⁹ Cf. S. Rose 1998.

²⁰ C. Osiek (1989, 275-7), for example, has reservations concerning the use of social analysis in Biblical hermeneutics. Social analysis in itself poses questions about: (1) the historical distance between the present and the target group; (2) the uncertainty of the sampling; (3) the purpose of the Biblical texts (not sociological data, but faith documents); (4) the problematic of using modern categories in a comparative way; (5) reductionism and determinism; (6) problems of objectivity and subjectivity (text and interpreter).

Second, this renewal acknowledges that a method based on external observation alone implies several limits. The very process of observation exerts an effect on the object. Physicists now commonly hold that on the sub-atomic level we can “accurately” study either velocity or position (of an electron, for example), but not both at once.²¹ Critical and post-modern perspectives transfer this finding to philosophy and social sciences. They seek to bolster claims that human observers cannot be absolutely “objective;” they can abstract or escape neither from their own presumptions, ideas and emotions, nor from effects of the observation process on the observed person or community.²² Moreover, statistical analysis further reduces observation in order to correlate particular phenomena. Difficulties arise when attempting to find and interpret statistically supported patterns in behavior (by using constants, variables, factors, mechanisms, laws and so on). Nevertheless, researchers seek to overcome various types of determinism that inevitably linger.²³

Finally, certain approaches attempt to compensate for these weaknesses. For example, narrative and evocative approaches to resilience in its various manifestations can enrich social science statistical research and psychological clinical observations.²⁴ We should therefore neither equate the resilience perspective with

21 This theory is known as the Heisenberg indeterminacy or uncertainty principle. In contrast to the confident worldview spawned by Newtonian physics, Quantum Mechanics introduced a degree of uncertainty into knowledge about the physical world (cf. Heisenberg’s principle, and wave-particle dualism). Three interpretations of the nature of the uncertainty intrinsic to theories of physics involve the source of uncertainty, which is either rooted in: (1) temporary human ignorance (Einstein, Bohm); (2) unavoidable experimental or conceptual limitations (Bohr); or (3) the uncertainty of nature itself (Heisenberg; cf. Mannoia 1980, 109-111; M. Polanyi 1958; J. Puddefort 1998, 1076-77). Nonetheless, specialists still seek a unified theory for all the fundamental interactions of matter that would amend Newtonian physics by Quantum Mechanics and Relativity Theory and even incorporate Chaos Theory better to describe the tendencies of ordered systems to breakdown (cf. George Gamow, 1995).

22 See K. Popper’s *Objective Knowledge* (1972) for a realist, fallibilist theory of scientific knowledge, which grows through critical selection and seeks an objective theory of essentially conjectural knowledge.

23 Cf. S. J. Gould 1980/1996; S. Vanistendael and J. Lecomte 2000; S. Rose 1998.

24 Cf. S. Vanistendael and Lecomte 2000; M. Manciaux 2001; F. Rüegg (in press).

statistical psychosocial research on resilience nor all resilience findings with reductionistic or deterministic approaches. Thus, complementary efforts in resilience research attempt to remain more open to spiritual-religious experience. Although they attempt to provide “thicker” accounts of human experience,²⁵ the unobservable or unquantifiable aspects of spiritual-religious experience will continue to escape the measurements of the psychosocial sciences.

The limits and opportunities of resilience research will become clearer when we identify the insights that the psychosocial sciences offer moral theology and philosophical anthropology. Nevertheless, we do not intend to contrast two approaches simply: one that more adequately appropriates spiritual-religious experience (theological reflection, narrative observation and so forth), the other that reductionistically compartmentalizes theology and its primary sources of Scripture and Tradition, theological reflection and religious experience. Rather, our inquiry centers on how to identify (and control) the limits of each method, and how to integrate psychosocial science insights in theological reflection, without importing reductionistic effects.

What opportunities and challenges does resilience research offer to ethical theory and moral theology? As we mentioned earlier, moral theory seeks to explain rational human agency. Resilience research concurs, at least partially, by exploring the cognitive dimension of human coping, self-conservation and positive construction in difficulty. On the theological side, sacred doctrine involves religious purpose and meaning, and moral theology explores

25 Clifford Geertz for example enriches the tradition of Weberian sociology. He re-opens science to semiotic/semantic, “thick descriptions” found in narrative, religion, literature and art in order to understand better such cultural systems. He (1973, 30) says that: “to look at the symbolic dimensions of social action—art, religion, ideology, science, law, morality, common sense—is not to turn away from the existential dilemmas of life for some empyrean realm of de-emotionalized forms; it is to plunge into the midst of them. The essential vocation of interpretative anthropology is not to answer our deepest questions, but to make available to us answers that others, guarding other sheep in other valleys, have given, and thus to include them in the consultable record of what man has said” (cf. Geertz 1973, 87-125; Rüegg, in press). Geertz cites Gilbert Ryle as the source of “thick description,” which is found in two of Ryle’s essays: “Thinking and Reflecting” and “The Thinking of Thoughts” (reprinted in vol. II of his *Collected Papers*).

theologically based normative and motivational goals and meanings in human agency. However, the unresilience of certain people of faith raises a piercing question: how can we affirm the role of religious meaning, when we cannot externally observe or independently verify religious faith? Another challenge arises from theological sources of meaning. The normative and descriptive sciences pose questions about how reasonable a moral theory is that accords a normative place to faith, and sources such as sacred Scripture and sacred Tradition, as does Aquinas'.²⁶

Indeed, the fuller meaning that sacred doctrine draws from its first principles (God's action in creation and promises of happiness and redemption) counts on faith and not on knowledge acquired through "scientific method."²⁷ Nonetheless, a more reflexive approach to sacred doctrine and moral theology cannot neglect scientific, philosophical and even metaphysical domains.²⁸

A long-standing Catholic practice in moral theology ascribes an important place to philosophical sources, their reflections and findings.²⁹ To confirm this insight, we shall call upon further nuances

26 Another challenge involves how we can employ non-theological theories, findings and insights within moral theology. We shall treat other more precise questions in the next section on collaboration between moral theology and psychosocial sciences.

27 If one does not believe in their veracity (through theological faith), such principles hold no sway, and theology can only attempt to answer difficulties posed by the non-believer. But for those who believe, we can offer further "demonstrations," as when St. Paul argues for belief in the general resurrection from belief in Christ's resurrection. These demonstrations include indicating how revealed truths do not conflict with human reason and experience (Cf. *ST* I 1.8; 1 Cor 15:12ff).

28 Aquinas would underline the pride of place that divine reason and grace play in moral adjudication, without ignoring the importance of metaphysical and (philosophical) anthropological, epistemological and psychological domains (cf. *ST* I-II 91.1, concerning divine reason—*divina ratio*). Not all of these domains are necessarily addressed in certain contemporary approaches. For example, W. Schweiker (1996, 77) recognizes (only) three domains concerning how philosophy participates in "theological ethics": (1) *epistemological / the nature of moral knowledge*: the relation of self and others in an account of human understanding and meaning; (2) *axiological / the source of moral value*: how to account for the source of moral value; and (3) *anthropological / how one defines the moral agent*: using hermeneutics to interconnect human self-understanding and to search for meaning by interrelating value, self and others.

29 This tradition is traced to St. Paul, for example, who employs Epicurean and Stoic wisdom to attract the Athenians to believe in the Gospel of Jesus

from Aquinas. Indeed, while scientists employ reason in non-theological searches to understand the human person and society, not every rational perspective on moral anthropology or agency has the same compatibility with theology. We risk two extremes: (a) a suspicion that reason cannot have any role in Christian faith,³⁰ and (b) an over-zealous affirmation of reason's capabilities in the realm of faith.³¹ While affirming the superiority of reason illuminated by faith,³² various magisterial teachings highlight the place of reason in seeking to understand the Church's deposit of faith and moral teaching.³³ What

Christ; Acts 17:16-34. The encyclical *Fides et Ratio* (*FR*) gives a history of the use of wisdom in seeking God (in OT, NT, Justin, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Dionysius, Augustine, Tertullian, Anselm, Aquinas, as well as magisterial teaching, in addition to a host of modern and contemporary philosophical schools). *FR* nonetheless does not directly address the place of reason in moral theology.

30 St. Paul expresses a suspicion concerning a type of Greek "wisdom" that judges the Christian message of the cross as "folly" (cf. 1 Cor 1:22ff.). This view of natural reason's limits and weakness finds its roots in the Fall, one of the consequences of which is ignorance (cf. Augustine, *De nat. et grat.* 21, 403). Protestant thought (for example, Luther, Calvin and their followers) generally has harbored a hostility to natural theology, preferring a theology organized around revelation. There are notable exceptions, especially in more recent Protestant theology, which has shown an interest in fundamental theology (e.g. E. Brunner, W. Pannenberg, W. Joest). Cf. J-Y. Lacoste 1998, 973-4.

31 For example, in the spirit of the Enlightenment, "rationalist" models have proposed that reason alone measure valid science to the detriment of revelation and limiting theology to purely human bounds of reason.

32 The *credo ut intelligam* of Augustine furthermore implies that faith provides a light, an intellectual light, in understanding human life and salvation. In an Augustinian (and Thomistic) perspective, Scripture has a special role in belief and understanding. When believing what is proclaimed by the Gospel, and by the Scriptures at large, one is lead by the superior light which is God's self revelation in human history.

33 The First Vatican Council affirms that "the one and true God, our Creator and Lord, can [...] be known certainly by the natural light of human reason" (in its negative form: "Si quis dixerit, Deum unum et verum, creatorem et Dominum nostrum, per ea, quae facta sunt, naturali rationis humanae lumine certo cognosci non posse: anathema sit," *Denzinger* 3026). Various nineteenth and twentieth century Roman declarations affirm that natural reason can know, for example, the soul's existence, immortality and freedom (*Denzinger* 2766, 2812); and the natural moral law (*Denzinger* 2866, 3875). The antimodernist oath goes so far as to affirm that the existence of God is "demonstrable" to reason alone (*Denzinger* 3538). More recently *VS* and *FR* have made important contributions; *FR* opens by saying: "Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth—in a word, to know himself—so that, by knowing and loving

does Aquinas have to say about the use of reason in moral theology? And what difference does it make for understanding resilience theologically?

Thomas' approach to faith and reason provides us several bases for integrating resilience insights. First, it advocates a unified theory of truth and wisdom (whose one source is God—divine *ratio*). Aquinas affirms that reason and faith have the common foundation of truth, and that the Holy Spirit serves a unitive role as source of all truth.³⁴ One's perspective on truth, as we shall discuss, is significant for the meaning dimension of resilience.

Second, Thomas views reason as "perfective" of faith. Reason aids faith to uncover a further level of understanding, knowledge or science, and in turn to expound a theological measure. *Sacra doctrina* benefits from the clarity brought by other sciences as handmaidens (*ancillae*), in particular by philosophical reflection.³⁵

God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves (cf. Ex 33:18; Ps 27:8-9; 63:2-3; John 14:8; 1 John 3:2)."

³⁴ "Omne verum a quocumque dicatur a Spiritu Sancto est." *ST* I-II 109.1 ad 1; (quoting Ambrosiaster, *In Prima Cor.* 12:3; PL 17, 258.). In his commentary on 1 Corinthians (*In 1 Cor.* Ch. 1, lect. III, no. 43), Aquinas puts truth, in all its sources, into the service of the faith: "Utitur autem sapientia verbi qui suppositis verae fidei fundamentis, si qua vera in doctrinis Philosophorum inveniatur, in obsequium fidei assumat." Aquinas finds three levels of truth and wisdom taught by the Holy Spirit: wise teaching acquired through philosophical and theological study (intellectual virtues), and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Cf. *ST* II-II 45.1 ad 2; and 45.2; *FR*, 44. On the unity of truth, the *Declaration on Christian Education* (*Gravissimum Educationis*, no. 10) promotes the investigation of the different sciences, which have their own proper principles and methods, in order "to promote an ever deeper understanding of these fields, and as a result of extremely precise evaluation of modern problems and inquires, to have it seen more profoundly how faith and reason give harmonious witness to the unity of all truth." Cf. *SC*, art. 68.

³⁵ Aquinas says: "*sacra doctrina [...] accipere potest aliquid a philosophicis disciplinis, non quod ex necessitate eis indigeat, sed ad maiorem manifestationem eorum quae in hac scientia traduntur. Non enim accipit sua principia ab aliis scientiis, sed immediae a Deo per revelationem. Et ideo non accipit ab aliis scientiis tanquam a superioribus, sed utitur eis tanquam inferioribus et ancillis*" *ST* I 1.5 ad 2; see also the rest of article especially the *corpus*. Aquinas says that reason's role does not prove faith but clarifies it in three ways: (1) to demonstrate the preambles of faith that natural reason enlightens, e.g. that God exists, and is one; (2) to manifest or gain understanding of the faith through analogies; and (3) to resist or refute attacks on faith (cf. *ST* I 1.8 ad 2; Geenan 1952, 115; (1) *De Trin.* 2.1 ad 5 (persuasive reasoning); *SCG* I.8-9; *ST* II-II 1.5 ad 2; *ST* II-II 2.10 ad 2; (2) Aquinas' theological use of analogy

Third, Aquinas' approach considers faith as "perfective" of reason. In their collaboration, *sacra doctrina* perfects philosophy (normative and descriptive sciences) as grace perfects nature.³⁶ Faith can inform both fundamental presuppositions and rational investigations, as we shall see.

Fourth and lastly, Thomas explores a conception of reason that finds its prime analogate in divine reason. Through this metaphysical conception, he examines the meaning of ultimate happiness, moral finality, human agency, liberty, virtuous and vicious acts, nature and grace. According to Aquinas, reason more broadly conceived as including divine reason (*ratio*) and grace constitutes the criterion for adjudicating whether an action is good, done for a fitting purpose and in a suitable way. It exposes and establishes the meaning of the act. If the action diverges from right reason it is judged an evil act, even if it promotes short term, "resilient" survival.³⁷ A dialogue with resilience insights offer hope to renew Aquinas' virtue-based ethical theory and moral theology. However, we have not yet addressed the challenges it presents concerning the types of resilience input that can enrich his philosophical anthropology and the adequacy of models of collaboration between descriptive, normative and theological sciences.

2.2. Employing Psychosocial Resilience Findings in Moral Theology

At what level can the psychosocial science resilience findings collaborate in the project of moral theology? The breadth of the social sciences requires a nuanced response to this question.³⁸ At the risk of over-simplifying a complex field, I shall first identify samples from

advances according to causality, negation and supereminence; (3) *De Trin.* 2.3; Persson, 1970, 230-232.

³⁶ "*Cum enim gratia non tollat naturam, sed perficiat, oportet quod naturalis ratio suberviat fidei; sicut et naturalis inclinatio voluntatis obsequitur caritati*" (*ST* I 1.8 ad 2; cf. *De Trin.* 2.3). This insight relates and reconciles "the secularity of the world and the radicality of the Gospel, thus avoiding the unnatural tendency to negate the world and its values while at the same time keeping faith with the supreme and inexorable demands of the supernatural order." (*Lumen ecclesiae*, Apostolic letter, 20 Nov. 1974, 8; quoted in *FR* 43).

³⁷ Cf. *ST* I-II 4.4, and *ST* I-II qq. 18-20; W. Woods 1998, 315.

³⁸ For a treatment of how moral theology can collaborate in the social sciences, see: P. J. Philibert 1980.

key types of resilience research that behavioral (social) science, sociobiology, psychology and developmental theories contribute. Within each, differing schools of thought offer challenges as well as opportunities for dialogue. While addressing the way in which these psychosocial sciences contribute to the project of moral theology, secondly, I address how moral theology can incorporate resilience research. In particular, how can resilience findings enrich our understanding of natural virtues? And what is the scientific status of such enrichment? Thirdly, I ask: what normative relevance do resilience findings harbor? This issue involves the problem of “normativity,” the “naturalistic fallacy” and in turn leads to a last question on the role of prudence in normative sciences, moral theology and resilient acts. Throughout this section, I identify a collaborative method that enhances Aquinas’ moral anthropology mustering insights concerning human nature, agency and society.

2.2.1. Types of Resilience Input from the Psychosocial Sciences

What resilience input do the various psychosocial sciences offer? As I already stated in the earlier critique of reductionistic approaches, psychosocial science’s goals of precise observation and statistical analysis of human behavior operate at a different level than moral theology’s observations and reflections. The former seek the factors that underlie resilience and vulnerability, health and illness, social support and isolation, and so forth, while the latter refers also to finality and flourishing, norms and virtues, nature and grace, which outstrip the psychosocial sciences.

How can this radically different approach contribute to moral theology? In this section, I do not go into the content of resilience research (presented in chapter one) but outline simply the distinctive methodological characteristics of several of these sciences. I seek to identify their convergences and complementarity in regards to moral theology. Although other important domains exist, I shall focus on: (1) social or behavioral sciences, (2) sociobiology, (3) psychology and (4) developmental theories.

Social or behavioral science (sociology) supplies concepts, data and narratives about behavior and institutions, gender

relationships and class structure. They provide us opportunities to apply these insights in moral theology.³⁹ Sociological research offers particular resilience insights concerning the family: harmony, stress management, disruption and socio-economic status. It also investigates interactions outside the family: the quality of the larger environment, in particular relationships with friends and caregivers. The study of social support and resources tells us something about how we interact in social and religious relationships. What behavioral patterns surface in regards to friends, peers and the faith-community, or the family and its members' religion and spirituality? Notwithstanding their limitations, these types of insights concerning human society can enrich moral theology with thematized observations. They at least aid us to reconstruct a "thicker" moral anthropology.⁴⁰

Behavioral biology, evolutionary psychology and sociobiology claim to provide insights about human nature's biological ends. They seek to answer questions about the evolved constitution of human emotions and the place of humanity in the midst of other living beings.⁴¹ How can this type of account contribute to moral theory? Although E. O. Wilson has conflated sociobiology accounts and normativity,⁴² other specialists tend to differentiate between the descriptive and normative domains. They distinguish the biological ends of human nature from its properly moral ends.⁴³ What do studies

39 According to C. Osiek (1989, 278) social analysis when employed "in conjunction with historical, literary and liberation methods, [...] promises to yield good fruit for the harvest of Biblical interpretation." Cf. J. M. Gustafson 1971, 122-137.

40 Cf. G. Cottier 1980; S. J. Pope 1994, 1996; C. Geertz 1973.

41 According to Arnould (1996, 223): "Evolutionary biology in general and sociobiology in particular can [...] aid theology in giving to humanity a renewed comprehension of the place it occupies in the midst of living reality, as well as concerning its nature—finite, limited and created." Cf. S. J. Pope 1996, 177.

42 Wilson's earlier work entitled *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis* (1975, 53) offers a biological theory of morality; he goes so far as to say that "genes hold culture on a leash;" in this work, he claims to establish a code of ethics that is "genetically accurate and hence completely fair" (Wilson 1975, 575; cf. Rose 1998, 278).

43 According to S. J. Pope (1996, 177; cf. 179) while behavioral biologists and evolutionary psychologists need to distinguish the biological from moral ends of human nature, we can only discern the properly moral ends of human nature through moral and religious reflection. In this regard he quotes J. M. Gustafson (1994, 104): "we look to an ordering of nature as one basis, but not a

of natural human constitution offer for moral theory? According to MacIntyre, it is an error to suppose that an ethics independent of biology is possible. On the one hand, accounts of the good, rules and virtues need to consider the way in which human beings are biologically constituted and progress. On the other hand, we can better understand human development when we compare it with other intelligent animal species and, perhaps surprisingly, with human vulnerability and disability.⁴⁴

Psychology and developmental theories address other issues related to moral agency and norms, as well as to happiness, fulfillment and well-being.⁴⁵ We cannot correlate psychology, which generally employs rigorous observation, with the narrower reductionistic approaches.⁴⁶ The various types of psychology (modern experimental and clinical psychologies, as well as philosophical psychologies)⁴⁷ are mixed disciplines. They all contain more or less explicit instances of

sufficient one, for deciding what goods, for whom, and for what, ought to be pursued.” Furthermore, while evolutionary biology aids in understanding human reality, “the capacity of the human brain for reflective self-consciousness adds a new dimension that can accent either the destructive or the redemptive possibilities of biological directedness,” according to Nesson, (1998: 444). The human being is capable of “bottom-up” behavior based on drives and instincts, as well as “top-down” behavior, based on conscious intention and decision. The latter involves a reflective self-consciousness that integrates self-awareness, awareness of other human self, symbolic language, culture, religion (myth and ritual), art and so on.

⁴⁴ Cf. MacIntyre 1999, x.

⁴⁵ Cf. Gustafson 1971, 122-137.

⁴⁶ A more complex notion of scientific method acknowledges three processes of scientific activity: discovery, prediction and confirmation. The logic and character of each of these three processes are distinct: (1) discovery confronts a particular problem with abductive logic in order to find (or create) a general theory; (2) prediction puts the general theory to a particular test/experiment through deductive logic; and (3) confirmation is an inductive (cyclical) exercise where particular experiments either confirm or disprove a general theory (cf. V. J. Mannoia 1980, 5-29). This conception of science relies on a balance between the scientist’s careful observation and imaginative thinking. It highlights the personal and social factors that figure in all science (both natural sciences and humanities).

⁴⁷ These three kinds of psychology are an amalgam of observation and theory. Empirical psychology tries to restrict itself more than others to the findings of experimental observations. The psychoanalytic or clinical schools that follow Freud for example are less strictly positivistic, even though they can be reductionistic because of the limitations imposed by their foundational theories. Lastly, philosophical psychology draws upon metaphysical and anthropological theories to describe the human psyche and its agency. Cf. Dent 1984.

scientific, ethical and religious languages. They resemble ethical theory and moral theology, not only in this way, but also inasmuch as they each provide concepts and techniques for ordering the interior life,⁴⁸ and in using hypotheses, imagination and heuristic models in their research and explanations.⁴⁹ Psychologists no longer claim to completely induce their science from experimental observations;⁵⁰ and those that still attempt this approach tend to use more reductionistic methods.⁵¹ We can recognize the compatibility of psychotherapy and moral support, when psychosocial health—or its reestablishment

48 Browning (1987, 3-8) distinguishes modern (experimental or clinical) from philosophical psychologies. Philosophical psychologies are philosophical in accounting for a rather wide range of human experience. Clinical psychologies seek concepts to account for their clinical observations, without achieving the predictive levels that experimentalists do. Experimental psychologies aspire to derive their concepts from controlled observations, isolating variables, statistically analyzing causes or correlations, and approaching publicly repeatable verification.

49 Sciences of all types, including psychology, do not differ from ethics and moral theology in using imagination, assumptions, hypotheses and heuristic models for conceptualizing research, findings and therapies. Such models can include metaphors and analogies, which imply important cognitive processes for scientific, ethical and theological thinking. According to Ian Ramsey (*Models and Mystery*, Oxford, 1964): “neither scientific models nor religious analogies are just useful fictions. They are taken seriously as a pointer to the truth, though they are not accepted as literally true. However, this assumed similarity between religious and scientific “analogical” thinking clearly cannot be pressed too far before it breaks down.” (cited in Watts and Williams 1988, 52).

50 Models that claim to be founded entirely on external observation have lost credit. For example, the behaviorism (in the mold of B. F. Skinner) that dominated American academic psychology during the middle decades of the twentieth century held that we could study only externally observable behavior with scientific accuracy (cf. D. Goleman 1995, 40).

51 Although such psychologies may have some predictive value, they tend to have less therapeutic utility. In distinguishing scientific from non-scientific aspects of psychological theory, Vitz (1997) identifies three different conceptual levels. At the first level, terms and categories are closely tied to observation, such as those of clinical psychology (e.g., extroversion/introversion, separation anxiety). At the second level, he distinguishes conceptual and theoretical concepts for the various theories (Oedipus complex, Jungian archetypes—persona, shadow, animus/anima). At the third level, general presuppositions, which are often religious, metaphysical or ethical in nature, underlie the theory. Because of the importance of levels two and three for most psychological theories, they involve more an applied philosophy of life than the result of a scientific investigation. According to Vitz (1997, 20-21): “in general, there is little reliable scientific evidence for any Level Two concept.” Furthermore, Level Three concepts are clearly assumptions, neither provable nor disprovable by empirical science.

through some therapy—is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for the capacity to choose good and to avoid evil,⁵² and to develop moral virtue. Among the schools of moral development rooted in psychology,⁵³ let us now turn to cognitive development models, which provide input for both resilience and virtue perspectives.

Cognitive theories of developmental psychology, based on the groundbreaking work of Jean Piaget, have influenced schools of moral and faith development.⁵⁴ They provide a basis for enriching our understanding of virtue theory, especially human development in virtue. Lawrence Kohlberg's structural-developmental approach, for example, proposes a six-stage theory of development, based on philosophical studies (Kant and Rawls), as well as intuitions and empirical studies. Kohlberg's sixth and highest stage concerns "universal, ethical principles," in particular justice understood as "equality and reciprocity,"⁵⁵ as respect for other persons as ends, not means.⁵⁶ Notwithstanding its potential for aiding our understanding growth in virtue and resilience, Kohlberg's approach draws critiques.⁵⁷ The critiques raise questions about the way in which developmental

⁵² Cf. Höffe 1983, 162.

⁵³ Cf. Durkin (1995, 463-503) identifies four such schools of moral development: (1) Biological Theories of Morality/Sociobiology: Wilson; (2) Social Learning Theory and Morality: positive reinforcement, punishment, observation and modeling; (3) Cognitive Development Theories of Moral Development: Piaget, Kohlberg, Gilligan, Damon; and (4) Social Contexts of Moral Development and Behavior: family, gender ideology and culture.

⁵⁴ James Fowler (1974, 1975, 1981, 1982) has established a developmental theory of faith; cf. Crossin 1985, 94-100.

⁵⁵ Kohlberg claims that "no principle other than justice has been shown to meet the formal conception of a universal, prescriptive principle." Kohlberg 1971, 221; cited in Crossin 1985, 86.

⁵⁶ Kohlberg's structural criteria, which are more general than truth-value or efficiency, are "increased differentiation and integration." Kohlberg 1980, 42; cited in Crossin 1985, 85.

⁵⁷ P. J. Philibert (1975, 455-479) compares and contrasts Kohlberg's approach to classical Aristotelian-Thomistic traditions of virtue ethics. According to Crossin (1985, 87-91), Kohlberg's approach is limited by its invariant sequence of stages, its over-reliance on Kantian deontology, and its segregation of the religious dimension. Crossin also critiques its inadequate treatment of human affective, behavioral and symbolic capacities, and its oversimplified focus on logic. He critiques its inadequate treatment of human affective, behavioral and symbolic capacities, and its oversimplified focus on logic. C. Gilligan (1982 and 1992; cf. M. J. Larrabee 1992) notably critiques its lack of appreciation of the experience of women and other cultures.

theories, and psychosocial science in general, can collaborate with moral theology, which is our next question.

2.2.2. Models of Collaboration and Scientific Pretensions

To formulate a model of collaboration, we need to establish the standards that accredit its scientific character. What goals and principles authenticate our use of psychosocial science insights in moral theology? Previously, I mentioned that Aquinas' approach to moral theology calls upon the probable authority of experience and observation, philosophical reasoning and science in seeking to understand moral life more fully.⁵⁸ In this perspective, the sciences' accounts of human nature, agency and society serve, as does "strictly" philosophical reflection, to deepen our theological understanding of moral anthropology.⁵⁹ Nonetheless, we need to ask further questions. Inasmuch as grace perfects nature, how might moral theology employ the insights provided by these sciences? Does a theological interpretation of insights found through non-theological sciences do violence to these findings?⁶⁰

Aquinas' thought sustains a natural law approach, which asserts a critical realism about knowledge of moral agency and affirms

⁵⁸ Philosophical-scientific sources are the third source for *sacra doctrina*. According to Aquinas, there are: first, the authority of canonical Scripture as "proper and necessary" arguments (*proprie, ex necessitate argumentando*); second, the authority of doctors of the Church "as proper, but probable" arguments (*quasi arguendo ex propriis, sed probabiliter*); and third, the authority of philosophers as "extrinsic and probable" arguments (*quasi extraneis argumentis, et probabilibus*). Cf. *ST* I 1.8 ad. 2; Geenan 1952, 128; Waldstein 1994, 81.

⁵⁹ Gustafson suggests that the empirical sciences can assist moral understanding in the following four domains: the nature of persons as moral agents; the context in which decisions and actions occur; the potential consequences of action (and their predictability); and the identification of moral norms; cf. Gustafson 1971, 122-137.

⁶⁰ For a worthwhile study on interdisciplinary models of science and theology, see Van Huyssteen (1999 and 1998), who attempts to avoid relativism and foundationalism (universalism), proposing a "postfoundationalist" way of interpreting the claims of science and theology, rationality and tradition. He bases this interdisciplinary dialogue in human rationality's deep and significant biological origins, which he explains in terms of evolutionary epistemology.

God's collaboration in it.⁶¹ Thomas conceives the natural law as the "rational creature's participation in the eternal law."⁶² In following his method, we can turn to science for insights about human nature and behavior.⁶³ We need to examine how we can ground our ethical reflection in knowledge of fundamental human goods and in the proper ends of human life, intelligently grasped through human natural inclinations, intuition and reason.⁶⁴ In this regard, what scientific authority do psychosocial resilience findings bring to moral theology in a critical realist tradition? Specialists have employed various models: consequentialist models,⁶⁵ disclosure models,⁶⁶ bricolage

61 Concerning different interpretations of natural law and the relevancy of medieval notions of natural law for contemporary Christian Ethics see, R. Cessario 2001, J. Porter 1999, S. J. Pope 1998b.

62 *ST I-II* 91.2.

63 For example, S. J. Pope (1998b, 551) argues that evolutionary psychology (cf. Buss) can provide material for ethical reflection inasmuch as it assesses and orders (a healthy expression of) the full range of natural desires in the project of a good moral life. Pope says that "theologians might associate Buss's observations about the relatively indiscriminate nature of sexual desire in males, for example, with the sensitive account of 'concupiscence,' or disordered sexual desire, classically depicted in Saint Augustine's *Confessions* [1992, trans. Chadwick, Oxford, pp. 24-34]."

64 S. J. Pope (1996, 180) holds that through the exercise of the virtue of prudence (*phronesis*), abstract knowledge of universal human goods is complemented in the concrete. He says: "the content of the more general kind of moral reflection no doubt includes various beliefs about which aspects of our natural human inclinations and our inherited behavioral repertoire ought to be approved of, acted upon, and promoted, and which ought to be inhibited, sublimated, or closely monitored."

65 For example in L. S. Cahill's (1980/1989, 551-562) consequentialist model, the behavioral sciences (as well as personal narratives) contribute descriptive and normative accounts of human experience that, along with Scripture and Tradition, compose the primary sources of moral theology. Cahill's (1980/1989, 551) interdisciplinary approach calls for correlating the interdependent reference points with the goal of attempting "an appropriate and critical hermeneutic of each in relation to all;" that is of Scripture, Tradition, descriptive and normative accounts. She (1980/1989, 557) generalizes the narrative contributions and behavioral studies and seeks a consensual adjudication of ethical issues.

66 Disclosure models relate scientific and religious knowledge as analogies pointing toward truth, giving "insights" about truth: (1) scientific insights entail discovery; (2) psychotherapeutic insights impact and transform the emotions and motivation (feeling and commitment); (3) religious insights illuminate truth, as well as arouse feeling and commitment (more often than science). Cf. Watts and Williams 1988, 151-2.

models,⁶⁷ as well as concordat ones.⁶⁸ I shall focus on the critical appropriation model of S. J. Pope.

In the context of dialogue with evolutionary theory and sociobiology on the altruism and the ordering of love, S. J. Pope offers a model for the critical appropriation of current scientific insights.⁶⁹ He relies on arguments from scientific authority, as a theologian and not as a scientist.⁷⁰ For example, he recognizes that his employment of provisional scientific findings gives only tentative “nonscientific conclusions,” which are modest in scope and open to revision in light of new findings and theories. He attempts not to confuse speculative hypotheses with more definitive explanations. In interpreting the virtue tradition, he recognizes that sociobiology provides insights or hypotheses rather than axiomatic truths because of its own methodological restrictions.⁷¹ Following J. M. Gustafson, Pope holds

67 Cf. J. Stout 1988, 74-77; P. A. Lewis 1991, 6-9.

68 S. Gould's (1999, 9) principle of NOMA (Non-Overlapping Magisteria) advocates “a respectful, even loving, concordat between the magisteria of science and religion.” In short, he (1999, 6) specifies that: “the net, or magisterium, of science covers the empirical realm; what is the universe made of (fact) and why does it work this way (theory). The magisterium of religion extends over the questions of ultimate meaning and moral value. These two magisteria do not overlap, nor do they encompass all inquiry (consider, for example, the magisterium of art and the meaning of beauty). To cite the old cliché, science gets the age of rocks, and religion the rock of ages; science studies how the heavens go, religion how to go to heaven.”

69 His “common conversation” with these sciences seeks to better understand the foundations of human nature and matters of utmost importance for Christian ethics, such as the ordering of love (*ordo amoris*) and its roots found in the evolution of human altruism (cf. S. J. Pope 1994 and 1996). Others who use an appropriation model include: P. Philibert 1980.

70 S. J. Pope (1996, 167) holds that science is only one of numerous sources needed to support ethical positions; science itself is not sufficient for ethics. His position “is that moral claims tend to be supported as part and parcel of a complex and interdependent “web of beliefs” (cf. Quine) rather than as moral conclusions produced by a self-contained, logical system or by simple and straightforward procedures of deduction or induction.”

71 S. J. Pope's (1994, 9) philosophical anthropology recognizes the complexity of the human person and society, and therefore can draw upon sociobiology in order to investigate how in “human life, genetic influence and biological inclinations are always mediated, for example, through culture, intelligence, and personality.” He recognizes “functional equivalences” between evolutionary theory's ordering of attachment and assistance giving, and the thought of Aquinas on the ordering of love. While vindicating Aquinas' method of dialoguing with the best current science, Pope (1994, 77-98) does not however retain outmoded scientific formulations and related theological parallels. At the

that we can make a stronger or weaker claim. Either we claim to employ the “scientific” authority established by the source (such as Freud or Skinner),⁷² or we make a weaker claim, that the findings of science serve as sources of “insight” about human nature and behavior. In the second case, the authority depends on the moral theologian’s use of the sources and the coherence of his own arguments, implicit empirical reference⁷³ and anthropology. Pope advocates the second model. He neither opposes nor identifies Christian ethics and the human sciences. Rather he considers these disciplines as mutually interdependent; his approach contrasts with others that reduce morality to a human adaptive capacity, or that construe morality as independent of evolutionary developments.⁷⁴

In order to integrate resilience findings into virtue theory and moral theology, I shall employ S. J. Pope’s critical appropriation model⁷⁵ as a guide throughout this work. Space does not allow us to explore more of the contrasts and collaboration between ethical and psychosocial sciences (on human agency and knowledge, for example) implied by this model. Nevertheless, we shall attempt to demonstrate that the tasks and visions of the empirical scientist and the moralist

same time, he (1994, 99-105) criticizes current shortcomings in sociobiology and evolutionary theory, especially when applied to ethics in reductionistic or deterministic ways.

⁷² In this case, we must put forward scientific grounds for such employment as well as adjudicate between the differences of the various sources used. Cf. J. M. Gustafson 1981, 251-279.

⁷³ J. M. Gustafson (1971/1989, 430-1) says that the choice of sources and perspectives is rendered more difficult, since “it involves not only some selection of empirical data, but also the selection of certain concepts and principles of explanation.” Moreover, each author’s position (inasmuch as it is coherent) systematizes the data, concepts and principles of explanation, which entails the isolation of data considered significant and the ruling out of other findings. Cf. S. J. Pope 1994.

⁷⁴ From the perspective of theological ethics, S. J. Pope (1998b, 545) rejects reductionistic and independent approaches to relating evolutionary theories and morality. He supports an interdependence approach through which “morality reflects the influence of evolution to the extent that the latter shapes human emotional capacities and predispositions.” This approach, he says, can account for how “natural desires can be ordered to serve morality.”

⁷⁵ S. J. Pope (1996 and 1994) discusses three important issues: (a) whether ethics can seek ethical justification in science; (b) the types of warrants possible in scientifically established facts; and (c) the degree and type of ethics’ epistemological dependence on science.

enrich each other; each needs the other to sharpen its specific method. They both contribute to a fuller understanding of the richness of human agency. A constructive effort seeks to master both the wealth of observations and reflections though, as well as their limitations. We shall neglect neither the richness of personal observations about human action found through statistical analyses nor their limits. Likewise, we shall neglect neither the “thicker” narrative descriptions of internal aspects of human nature and moral agency nor their imprecision. Even if these scientific methods focus on different specific domains of human action, we need an overarching perspective, which integrates and synthesizes the others. This method does not mean however that the overarching approach assumes the accumulated “scientific” prerogative of the others. Indeed, moral science attempts to examine human agency through these tools, while integrating a deeper reflection on the moral life.

How do these different sciences examine an act, for example, a robbery? Psychosocial specialists can study the pick pocketing of the unsuspecting pedestrian, through theoretical observations and clinical analyses. Artists can describe and re-represent the event in evocative ways. The agent (thief) himself can recount his choices, motives and the circumstances that led up to the robbery. Moralists however attempt to draw together these accounts to understand the moral dimension of the act. They need to know about them all, including the account of the agent and his underlying dispositions. Nonetheless, they must go further. As an engaged-observer, moralists (and other non-reductionistic thinkers) also reflect upon their own internal personal and communal experience. In addition to the specifically moral realm, the moral theologian recognizes the influence of communion and grace. He considers theological virtues and gifts, especially knowledge, understanding and wisdom. Our next question asks how Aquinas’ theological approach elevates and completes psychosocial observations, information and explanations.

2.2.3. Resilience Findings, Ethical Normativity and Moral Theology

What normative claims can the psychosocial sciences in general and resilience findings in particular make in regards to moral

anthropology and theology? Even if (as I do hold) we cannot derive moral norms from the psychosocial sciences, one can ask whether their concepts and findings contribute to understanding better the normative dimensions of human anthropology, goals and society. In order to employ psychosocial sciences in Thomas' virtue approach and moral theology, at least three problems remain: (1) how do we determine the relevancy of the data and concepts; (2) how do we adjudicate the "scientific" authority of the psychosocial sciences; (3) how do we identify the normative and value biases of particular studies.⁷⁶ A fuller treatment of these questions would demand that we address the place of finality and norms in moral theory, which I shall do shortly. In this section, I shall illustrate briefly the debate on the normativity of psychosocial sciences. We shall start with some pertinent issues raised by the resilience perspective, and then in the next section suggest that Aquinas' approach to prudence and norms offers a normative framework to incorporate resilience findings and explorations of spiritual resilience.

Each resilience approach employs notions of normality or normativity in order to establish whether an individual has exhibited resilience or not. When can we affirm that a person or group has coped well in difficulty, resisted self-destruction in a fitting way or constructed in an acceptable fashion? What are the standards or norms

⁷⁶ Gustafson (1971/1989, 437) identifies these three major problems involved in employing the empirical sciences in moral thought. First, ethicists have problems judging the relevancy of data and concepts. For how can we delineate what is empirically at issue? How does the moral theologian translate empirical studies that were not designed to resolve moral questions? And what relevant issues have been foreclosed by the way the research was conducted? Second, questions arise concerning the principles of interpretation. A moralist cannot judge an empirical science study's scientific adequacy, unless it is evidently inconsistent or internally incoherent. However, on the basis of understanding man and society, they can identify which research is "adequate, accurate, or at least plausible." This perspective then must philosophically justify the research chosen and why it would be more adequate than other types of research. Moreover, "eclectic moralists," based on what makes "sense" to them, use "empirical research for sources of 'insight' into the nature of man and society." Such moralists must assume the full responsibility for their arguments, without claiming the authority of the research. Third, ethicists have difficulties identifying the normative or value biases in empirical studies. For ethical principles and arguments, rather than empirical studies, serve as the deepest foundation for resolving moral issues.

for survival or human flourishing? Without such notions, resilience would mean “survival at all costs.” If norms were simply a function of convention, then the sole criteria for inclusion or exclusion would be ideological or pragmatic agreement. And if statistical analyses were to provide a normative understanding of human resilience, then the psychosocial sciences would establish norms directly from observation-based calculations.

In order to adjudicate whether or not these sciences can determine a normative framework, we shall outline the two main positions in the running debate. On the one hand, E. O. Wilson claims that science, sociobiology in particular, can identify the norms behind human behavior based on the explanatory power of causal chains.⁷⁷ Critics have found fault with Wilson’s headlong fall into a “naturalistic fallacy.” He claims in *Sociobiology* that social facts can establish social norms, and in *Consilience* that natural science methods can obtain unified knowledge.⁷⁸ S. J. Pope criticizes this type of

77 Wilson (1975, 201) construes this causal basis of law (including normative laws) in terms of scientific materialism and evolutionary theory: “The core of scientific materialism is the evolutionary epic. Let me repeat its minimum claims: that the laws of the physical sciences are consistent with those of the biological and social sciences and can be linked in chains of causal explanation; that life and mind have a physical basis; that the world as we know it has evolved from earlier worlds obedient to the same laws; and that the visible universe today is everywhere subject to these materialist explanations. The epic can be indefinitely strengthened up and down the line, but its most sweeping assertions cannot be proved with finality.” Furthermore, as regards sociobiology and religion, Wilson holds that science and religion are of two different realms, each with their own values and purposes. Religion has motivational importance for human survival (even if there is no transcendental foundation for it). The roles of religion and science differ and converge in most areas of moral reasoning. He (1987, 89-90) furthermore claims: “The role of religion is to codify and put into enduring poetic form the highest moral values of a society consistent with empirical knowledge and to lead in moral reasoning. The role of science is to test remorselessly every conclusion about human nature and to search for the bedrock of ethics—by which I mean the material basis of natural law. Science faces in religion its most interesting challenge, while religion will find in science the necessary means to meet the modern age.”

78 E. O. Wilson first expressed his unabashed advocacy of sociobiology’s ability to provide norms for moral agency in *Sociobiology* (1978). Afterwards he retracted this position, and then reaffirmed it in a more glaring form in his *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge* (1998). His (1998, 8) theory of consilience is “an integration, literally a ‘jumping together’ of knowledge by the linking of facts and fact-based theory across disciplines to create a common groundwork of

sociobiology in general when it moves simplistically from factually describing behavior to a normative approval of it. This reductionistic tendency in some cases construes human behavior exclusively in organic, chemical and genetic terms, and reduces culture to an expression of genetic influences.⁷⁹

On the other end of the spectrum from Wilson, the English social scientist Albert F. Osborn claims that resilience cannot be a good in itself: that is, simple coping, self-conserving or constructing cannot be an uncontrolled norm. Otherwise one would have to praise and promote “resilient” survival due to thievery, murder or terrorism, as well.⁸⁰ He says, on the contrary, “the means by which an individual avoids the potential consequences of adversity must be socially acceptable. [...] Survival itself is not sufficient. It must be socially approved survival.”⁸¹ What can the psychosocial sciences tell us of what is “socially acceptable”?⁸² Osborn claims that to determine social normativity is not the role of the social sciences, whose task stops at the level of discipline, specific theories and explanations of observations.⁸³ As mentioned earlier, he is not alone.⁸⁴ Other specialists

explanation.” According to Van Huyssteen (1999, 25), this project exhibits Wilson’s “massive and reductionist scientism.”

⁷⁹ According to Pope (1998a, 281), sociobiology attempts to observe the “opinions of good and evil” and falls into the naturalistic fallacy (neglecting the fact-value gap), while further applying itself to the domains of law, psychology and sociology.

⁸⁰ Here we distinguish thievery and murder from: (1) taking food in order to survive when someone has no other viable options; and (2) an act of self-defense which incidentally (non-intentionally) involves the death of the unjust aggressor.

⁸¹ A. F. Osborn 1992, 13.

⁸² According to the report of the Consortium on the School-based Promotion of Social Competence (1994, 275): “Social competence can be viewed in terms of ‘life skills for adaptation to diverse ecologies and settings.’ This perspective incorporates the possibility that in certain cultures, neighborhoods, and situations, so-called undesirable behaviors (e.g. aggressiveness, selfish, or passive behaviors) may be required if one is to be perceived as ‘well adjusted’ or to avoid being subject to harm.”

⁸³ As a social scientist, Osborne (1992, 13) has nonetheless recognized that religious faith *may* play a significant role in establishing what is socially acceptable. The French Neurologist, Bernard-François Michel (1998, 91-108) moreover holds that it is for ethics, moral theology and religion to provide the normative and spiritual framework for resilience. Geertz (1973, 30) furthermore expresses a similar view.

recognize that empirical observation cannot provide such standards. These researchers hold that empirical resilience studies, which employ notions of adjustment, survival and fulfillment, need further justification, preliminary presuppositions or foundational theories.⁸⁵

To concede that the ethical framework must come from elsewhere than external observation denies a “naturalistic” solution. It does not however so simply solve the problem of naturalism in ethics and moral theology. The “naturalistic fallacy” or the “is/ought” controversy surfaces due to confusions between fact and value, between what *is* and what *ought* to be.⁸⁶ First, terminological and technical issues arise. On the one hand, specialists use the word “good” differently in “good economics” and “good ethics.” On the other hand, within morality, terminological and metaphysical differences emerge when we seek to adjudicate between moral goods.⁸⁷

84 For instance, according to the Swiss psychologists Perrez and Reicherts (1992, 163-4), coping behavior is “adequate or appropriate if it corresponds to several criteria of rationality.” They state that the means we use to cope and to reduce stress must be “ethically acceptable” and effect, and must positively correlate the cost with the benefit. American psycho-sociologist Lois Barclay Murphy (1987, 101), for her part, adjudicates resilience in terms of recovery over a shorter or longer time, which “involves global aspects of the whole child—growth and growth drive, equilibration after disequilibrium.” She envisions resilience as “an evaluative concept” that we need to understand in the context of more fundamental psychological notions, which are not empirical but which provide a normative setting for understanding her conception of resilience.

85 Cf. Wolin and Wolin 1993 (on resilience and morality); Stinnet and Defrain 1985 (on resilience, faith, values, and community consciousness); Benson 1994: (on resilience, pro-social, non-hedonistic orientation).

86 Concerning the debate about the “is-ought” question in moral philosophy, see: D. Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 1888; G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica* 1903, Hudson et al. 1969; Gustafson 1971/1989; Bruening 1978; A. Flew 1978, A. MacIntyre, 1983. Concerning the naturalistic fallacy and theology, see: S. J. Pope 1994, 1998a, 1998b; Arnould 1996 (esp. 230-232); J. Porter 1999.

87 For instance, some proportionalists (B. Schüller, F. Böckle and others) differentiate the categories “morally right” from “morally good,” and premoral, ontic or physical good from moral good; they argue that these distinctions permit them to derive a moral claim by “weighing” the goods involved. This approach to distinguish goods seems to fall into a naturalistic or physicalistic error inasmuch as it claims that we can simply adjudicate moral rightness by optimizing premoral goods. This issue is beyond the scope of my treatise. I merely pose the question of whether foundational insufficiencies of such proportionalist systems lead to mistaken and overly technical notions of morality. The following critiques also attest to problems with these positions: VS, Pinckaers 1995b. According to Rhonheimer (2000, 365-400 and 582), the proportionalist systems of B. Schüller

Second, problems arise in statistical methods, such as those that attempt to develop scientific notions of what is “statistically human.”⁸⁸ What limits do they face in studying normality? Serious reasons inhibit us from simply elevating statistical averages of externally observed human behavior and social patterns to the level of moral and spiritual norms. The psychosocial sciences study people and societies in the past. They cannot say more than the research has already demonstrated. Epistemological (and metaphysical) problems arise concerning our relationship to the future; that is, if life projects, goals and finality can motivate moral acts. Much psychosocial research cannot appropriate the future-tending dynamic inherent to a person or community’s action.

The resilience testimony expressed in narrative, on the contrary, highlights how humans build toward the future, in view of past experience and present convictions. According to Child Psychiatrist Stanislas Tomkiewicz, scientists can never forget that they (as scientists using the model of positivist science) do not know the future.⁸⁹ Specialists sometimes do project statistical analyses into the future; they thus predict rates of suicide, mental health and illness, and so on. Yet on the individual level, we cannot clearly predict the future of a particular person. Even though a sociological survey might quantify personal opinions concerning good and evil, it neither establishes norms nor creates a normative framework. It can also tend to evaporate the notion of the human person in its richness; that is, unless the specialist compensates for methodological limitations in the analysis and provides more comprehensive reflection.

and F. Böckle fall into the “naturalistic fallacy” when attempting to “optimize” premoral goods. They attempt nonetheless to establish a foundation in value (Böckle) or a love ethics (Schüller), which remain unsatisfactory frameworks inasmuch as they do not provide the way to hierarchize adequately actions and values, nor to correlate moral rectitude and goodness.

88 Gustafson (1971/1989, 433-5) says for example that we cannot equate economic science and policy with morality; good economics in contemporary usage is not necessarily equivalent to good morals (that is, when “good economics” refers to success from a particular point of view, but devoid of distributive justice). Furthermore, he identifies problems related to statistically developed notions of normality, especially when used as norms to employ life-taking measures (abortion, infanticide) or to stop life-prolonging treatments.

89 Cf. S. Tomkiewicz, 2001.

Resilience researchers, thus, can neither establish norms nor create a normative framework through psychosocial empirical studies *per se*. Nevertheless, we need moral norms in order to be resilient and to adjudicate resilience phenomena. Although Aquinas' moral theory does not attempt to extract moral norms from scientific findings, it does philosophically investigate the normative input that we rationally attain through prudent adjudication, which offers the means to integrate resilience insights in moral anthropology and action.

2.2.4. Prudence, Norms and Resilience

How does Aquinas' virtue theory and method help us to understand the ways in which, prudence and moral norms offer a moral framework for resilience research and motivate resilient lives? As we already stated, resilience findings cannot create moral norms; but can they aid to identify or ameliorate them? I shall offer a few suggestions to these questions and will complete them in the upcoming chapters.

Thomas argues that the norm of human action is prudence, through which we use practical reason in a free moral act to apply the goals of the virtues and precepts to personal action in concrete circumstances.⁹⁰ Prudence perfects practical reason either through acquired or infused means. He affirms that humans need to develop the virtue of prudence in order to face challenges with intellectual and moral fidelity and creativity. Prudence especially helps us to act resiliently when we meet acute complexity in evaluating the nature of the act's object and the applicability of moral principles.⁹¹ Prudential

⁹⁰ As an intellectual virtue the seat of prudence is the practical intellect, in terms of "rectified judgment about things to be done" (I-II 56.4), while as a moral virtue its seat is "practical intellect charged with good will" (I-II 56.3). Westberg (1992, 290) argues convincingly in this regard that "prudence was described by St. Thomas as the perfection of practical reason, requiring the development of other moral virtues, but not a notion of law as obligation." He furthermore stresses that Aquinas' understanding of law is such that it does not introduce "the concept of obligation into the motivation for action." Likewise, the moral paraclesis of the New Testament is a word of encouragement, that is not spoken in the imperative mode, as one would command servants, but as an exhortation as when speaking to a friend or sibling, cf. John 15:15; Pinckaers 1997, 25-6.

⁹¹ Aquinas describes how practical reason attends to human action's contingent matters, which lack the necessity of speculative matters. Furthermore, in matters of action, all humans do not arrive at the same rectitude; practical reason risks defects as we enter into practical details. He says: "*In operativis*

judgment entails a global act that transforms the agent in his decision to act. It comprises intelligence, experience, effort and vigilance, which involves human reason and will (including faith-informed reason).

While Aquinas recognizes intrinsic and extrinsic principles in prudential agency,⁹² the key to human morality is that intelligent agents act for an end.⁹³ At both internal and external levels, providence (and divine law) provides the ultimate source and goal of this intelligent ordering.⁹⁴ A commonly supposed dichotomy between practical reason and law (especially providential law) is resolved if we understand that humans choose freely to participate in divine providence;⁹⁵ this participation involves practical reason in the form of virtue. Through a virtuous disposition, as an interior principle of action, we develop our natural inclinations and their related capacities, so that we can act with more spontaneity, ease and freedom. Law, for its part, serves two roles.⁹⁶ As an external principle of action, law leads us to attain goals

autem non est eadem veritas vel rectitudo practica apud omnes quantum ad propria, sed solum quantum ad communia: et apud illos apud quos est eadem rectitudo in propriis, non est aequaliter omnibus nota.” ST I-II 94.4.

92 The intrinsic principles are potency and *habitus* (cf. dispositions, virtues, character). The extrinsic principles of action include law, which is “the rule and measure of actions, according to which someone is led to, or drawn away from, the doing of something” (ST I-II 90.1). Furthermore Aquinas says that “law is in all things which are inclined to something from some law” (ST I-II 90.1 ad 1).

93 “*omnia agenta necesse est agere propter finem*” ST I-II 1.2. It is necessary to refer to flourishing as the human *telos* when involved in practical reasoning (cf. A. MacIntyre 1999, 111-112).

94 Cf. ST I 22.2 corpus and ad 4. And as Westberg (1992, 288) confirms: “The function of law then is to inform the mind with principles by which to judge particular actions, so that they are correctly directed to the ends. This right ordering of action to an end implies correctness in counsel, judgment, and execution; and since they are all required for the right ordering of action, they come within the purview of providence.”

95 A law/practical reason dichotomy is rooted in contradictory approaches to ethics and moral theology. It depends on whether the ethical foundation is based on law or practical reasoning (cf. Westberg 1992, 279ff). Aquinas’ correlation between practical reason (using Aristotle) and theology of law (using Augustine) is difficult to understand completely, since he treats these themes in different places; and his vocabulary of law does not enter into his description of the psychological processes of agency. Cf. Pinckaers 1978b, 105-6.

96 Aquinas defines law, as “*definitio legis, quae nihil est aliud quam quaedam rationis ordinatio ad bonum commune, ab eo qui curam communitatis habet, promulgata*” ST I-II 90.4. This definition is supple enough to apply to natural and eternal law, human and divine law, as well as the Old and New Law.

and avoid extremes. The New Law, on the contrary, demands that we internalize the principle. Or rather, it is the presence and action of the Holy Spirit that transforms the believer's heart according to the principle.

How can a law—especially the New Law—become an internal source of human agency? How can it promote human freedom and spiritual resilience? Aquinas defines the New Law (*lex nova*) precisely as an interior law, which the Holy Spirit writes in the hearts of the faithful and works through love.⁹⁷ The full array of law crowned by the New Law moves us to participate in God's plan of wisdom.⁹⁸ Through these laws, God reproduces the image of his Son in human beings. However, does God's involvement in our inner lives conflict with our freedom? Aquinas' view of the New Law neither exaggerates human autonomy nor overrides it. The eternal law is the source in which

It is only from within such a wide spectrum of law and moral norms that we can adequately formulate Aquinas' teaching on natural law (as well as the New Law). Nonetheless, such a simple distinction inadequately resolves disputes concerning natural law *per se*, and nature in general. These terms have undergone numerous mutations, dismissals and reformulations. Confusion concerning natural law and its interaction with practical reasoning cause a good deal of the contemporary crisis in moral theology. In general, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas give the classical teaching on natural law. Marked developments have come from: Grotius, Pufendorf, Hobbes (*De Homine*), and Locke. Outright dismissals have been given by: Sextus Empiricus (c. AD 200, and other ethical sceptics); D. Hume (1740. *A Treatise of Human Nature*); Reformulations include: the "new classical natural law theory" (G. Grisez 1965; G. Grisez, J. Boyle and J. Finnis 1987, J. Finnis 1997;). Of particular interest in the revival of moral theology are the contributions of Pope John Paul II's *Veritatis Splendor* and the CCC (no. 1950-52, which considers moral law, according to its species, including natural law and the New Law, as modes of divine pedagogy). Cf. J. Porter 1999; R. J. Dougherty 1999. Furthermore, movements such as positivism and nihilism deny long standing notions of "nature." On counter resurgences in notions of nature and natural law, see: Dougherty 1999, 582; S. J. Pope 1997.

⁹⁷ The New Law is the perfection of charity (cf. *ST* II-II 23.2 ad 1; *I*/S 45). In the human active participation in the New Law, Thomas offers a coherent vision of how through the acquired and infused virtue of prudence we actualize natural and divine law. Aquinas' teaching on the New Law permits us to appreciate more completely how humans participate in, and God contributes to, morality (cf. Pinckaers 1989, 1978b). It highlights how nature correlates with grace, how we put natural and divine law into practice.

⁹⁸ According to Aquinas, natural law participates in the eternal law, serves as a foundation for civil law, corresponds to the Decalogue (the epitome of the Old Law), and is fulfilled in the New Law of Christ taught in the Sermon on the Mount (cf. *ST* I-II qq. 106-108, esp. 108.3 *sed contra* and *corpus*; Matt 5:1-7:27; Luke 6:17-49; S.-Th. Pinckaers 2000b).

human beings freely participate through the use of reason. God is the author of this law, which sets the norms and goals for true freedom and resilience. The human mind goes on to make new rules (norms), because it is first ruled.

This participation in a higher norm is the standard human condition and the basis of a freedom for excellence. For Aquinas, human beings can direct themselves only because they are first directed.⁹⁹ In this context, we can construe (1) conscience more as a witness to natural law (as participating in the eternal law) than to human power, and (2) liberty, more in terms of excellence, than indifference. In a parallel way, a spiritual resilience will bear witness in action to natural law as participating in eternal law, and will have a qualitative dimension (excellence), rather than merely a quantitative one (survival).

In order to understand how the natural law and the New Law's participation in the eternal law correlates with human virtue and resilience, we shall examine the normativity of law, precepts and virtue—and whether they can serve as norms for spiritual resilience. For lack of space, I shall focus on two questions: in Thomas' virtue theory and moral theology, what roles do moral norms play? And how might moral norms serve human resilience?

First, we shall not equate the employment of norms with an obligation perspective, which would posit that the duty to fulfill norms is the most basic aspect of moral life.¹⁰⁰ In Aquinas' view, morality is not simply a science of obligations, duties or norms. Nonetheless both rules and virtues are an integral part of morality.¹⁰¹ Secondly, the need

99 John Paul II speaks of this idea of natural law as “theonomy, or participated theonomy, since man’s free obedience to God’s law effectively implies that human reason and human will participate in God’s wisdom and providence” (*VS* 41.2). His position recalls the Scholastic adage, “the human reason is a measuring measure (*mensura mensurans*) only insofar as it is first a measured measure (*mensura mensurata*),” as relayed by Hittinger (1999, fn. 48).

100 For example, Aquinas does not construe obligation as the ultimate basis of motivation, or the *imperium* to act. Love, in particular friendship-charity, moves us to act. Cf. *ST* I-II 99.2; Pinckaers 1995a, 14-17.

101 According to MacIntyre (1999, 109-111), a community (network of givers and receivers) needs both virtues and rules. “The types of action required by a particular virtue can never be specified exhaustively by any list of rules. But failure to observe certain rules may be sufficient to show that one is defective in some important virtues.” In particular virtues (e.g. truthfulness), no rule delivers

for prudent (wise) application of principles and norms causes us neither to discredit moral norms nor to deny intrinsically evil acts nor to promote moral relativism. Rather a rational study of the way in which the moral law unfolds through time explains how the underlying norms remain true in substance while needing to be specified in the light of historical circumstances.¹⁰² Inasmuch as norms help us to build desirable self-attending and social-behavior, they promote resilience. We shall explore this idea in the upcoming chapters.

According to Thomas, we make prudent judgments inspired by the primary precepts of natural law and the Decalogue,¹⁰³ the normativity of Gospel narrative and New Testament *paraclesis*, and the myriad variables in practical actions. These norms play a pedagogical role. They aid us to actualize virtuous dispositions and acts. On the one hand, through prudence, we employ reason to unite the moral life under right judgment, employing operative principles (norms) of right practical reason such as: do good and avoid evil. Infused prudence, on the other hand, offers a further rational measure that is informed by faith and its operative principles such as; forgive others as you would have them forgive you; aid the poor; do not lead astray one of these little ones, and so on.¹⁰⁴ Thomas' pedagogical approach seeks to identify, establish and promote moral norms that are useful for mature Christian lives, for growth in virtue. If Scriptures (as spiritual narrative and moral *paraclesis*) and the living Tradition of the Church serve as a source of virtue narratives and moral-spiritual norms

an answer in particular situations; rule following is only a part of what we need for virtuous activity.

102 John Paul II takes such an approach to norms in *Veritatis Splendor* (no 53), where he says: "The truth of the moral law, like that of the "deposit of faith," unfolds down the centuries. The norms expressing that truth remain valid in their substance, but must be specified and determined in the same sense and the same meaning (*eodem sensus eademque sententia*) in the light of historical circumstances by the Church's Magisterium, whose decision is preceded and accompanied by the work of interpretation and formulation characteristic of the reason of individual believers and of theological reflection."

103 Cf. *ST* I-II 97.4 ad 3; and 100.8.

104 In order to master fear with the virtue of fortitude in the face of mortal danger, we: rationally measure the situation, find guidance in Scripture and tradition, and call upon examples of Christ and the movement of the Holy Spirit. This guidance includes the following: "Greater love has no man than to lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13); turn the other cheek; the example of the martyrs, and so on.

then both the content and the motivation of moral theology will differ from moral philosophy; that is, if the latter excludes these theological sources.¹⁰⁵ Likewise, the content and motivation for parallel sorts of resilience will differ. Spiritual resilience will differ from philosophical or psychosocial resilience, if the latter do not support a spiritual framework, content and motivation.

In concluding this section, I recall that we have rejected a naturalistic approach that would directly draw a normative framework from the psychosocial sciences, from any aspect of the tripartite resilience findings: coping with difficulty, resisting destruction or promoting construction. We cannot derive ethics (and core ethical principles) in a direct way from nature (from a scientific description of human behavior or natural ends). Rather we need a basis of anthropology, ethical theory and reflection in order for normative science to integrate descriptive observations.¹⁰⁶ Aquinas' thought on prudence and law aids us to understand better reason's role in both moral theory (and natural resilience) and moral theology (and spiritual resilience). Although resilience studies need such a larger normative framework, in turn, they offer poignant observations about human frailty and strength that can aid us to understand moral action and anthropology. In order to understand the way in which resilience and Aquinas' virtue approach can collaborate further toward an enriched moral anthropology, we shall next explore the role that flourishing plays in human action and resilience.

¹⁰⁵ Aquinas' virtue approach claims to add more than motivation to secular norms. In this perspective, we establish and identify our fundamental goals (beatitude and virtues) and the means to achieve them (concrete moral norms and guidelines) through contact with the basic Christian sources of Scripture and Tradition (including magisterium and contemporary ecclesial experience, liturgy and prayer, and so forth), which both serve in establishing personal goals and moral standards.

¹⁰⁶ While avoiding the "naturalistic fallacy," S. J. Pope's (1996) position on the relation of descriptive and normative sciences is nuanced and cautious about the descriptive generalizations that can underlie normative judgments and vice versa.

2.3. Flourishing in Aquinas' Moral Theory and Resilience Theory

Flourishing fascinates everyone. Goals for fulfillment and happiness attract and motivate human lives. We ask: What will make me truly happy? How can I attain a fulfilled life after a major loss or disaster? How can society aid individuals in their flourishing, and vice versa, how can individuals contribute to the flourishing of others and society? These questions also interest human psychosocial researchers, ethicists and theologians. They are anthropological questions, questions about being human. Concerns for flourishing, fulfillment and happiness traverse resilience research and a virtue-approach to morality. To understand and enrich this principal part of Aquinas' moral theology, we contrast and complete it with some historical commentary and resilience research on health, normality and flourishing. In this section, I first explore the places that incomplete and complete flourishing play in Aquinas' virtue-based moral theory. Second, I examine his virtue approach, which does not only concern natural human flourishing, but also complete graced beatitude. Lastly, I explore the approaches that the human sciences (medicine, psychology, sociology, cultural anthropology) take towards human flourishing. I draw from the insights of these sciences in order to suggest ways to enrich Aquinas' virtue-approach to flourishing, and to appraise how it might serve as a standard and larger framework to promote a fuller type of resilience.

2.3.1. The Goal for Virtue Ethics: Flourishing

Although space-limits prohibit us to revisit Aquinas' moral anthropology systematically, we have good reason to give an overview of the place of flourishing or happiness, as a foundation and capstone, in his virtue-based moral theory. Aquinas starts his specifically moral treatise in the *Summa theologiae* (the *Secunda Pars*) with a question neither about what is law, conscience and freedom, nor about what is right or wrong. Rather, he first inquires about the finality of moral agency. He demonstrates that a person's ultimate goal is complete flourishing or happiness (*beatitudo*). However, many candidates pretend to make us happy. Aquinas explores different variants on the ways through which humans seek fulfillment.

First, Thomas establishes that humans seek flourishing as the primary goal of their moral acts. Understandings of what makes us happy differ though. According to Aquinas, the ultimate goal that enlightens and motivates moral acts is the virtue of love (friendship-love with God) and the flourishing that it engenders and promises. The relationship of friendship-love and flourishing is based upon the human person being created in (toward) the image of God (*ad imaginem Dei*).¹⁰⁷ Aquinas devotes his first moral treatise in the *Summa* to human flourishing. He structures the discussion as follows (I-II qq. 1-5).¹⁰⁸ Question One considers the human being's last end (*ultimus finis*),¹⁰⁹ which Aquinas identifies as happiness in God.¹¹⁰ In Question Two, he considers a rather exhaustive list of objects as candidates for human happiness. Does it consist in: wealth, honor, fame or glory, power, any bodily good, pleasure, any good of the soul or any created good (aa. 1-8)? He finds that none of these goods can provide complete and lasting human flourishing. Question three treats of the nature of

107 Aquinas makes such a claim while drawing from classical philosophical, theological and Evangelical sources as well as from current discussions on flourishing and moral agency. In his prologue to the *Prima Secundae*, he bases his treatment of the human capacity for moral acts on our being created in the image of God (*ad imaginem Dei*), which implies "an intelligent being endowed with free-will and self-movement." This insight, which he borrows from St. John Damascene (cf. *De Fide Orthod.* ii.12: PG 94, 920 B, cited in his prologue to the *prima secundae* of the *Summa theologiae*), will also be important later for understanding the type of friendship possible between God and a human being (cf. *ST* II-II 23.1).

108 Other texts where Aquinas addresses the question of flourishing and beatitude are: *Com. on Matthew* (concerning the Sermon on the Mount, especially the Beatitudes); *Exposition on the Nicomachean Ethics* (esp. books I and X); *Compendium of Theology* (which connects the question of flourishing with the virtue of hope, expressed in the "Our Father"); *Sermon 12, for the feast of All Saints* (which is in the process of being published in Leonine edition). Cf. S.-Th. Pinckaers 1998b, 34-5; M. Jordan 1994.

109 St. Thomas addresses (I-II 1.1-8): the fittingness of human finality (a. 1); its necessity for rational beings (a. 2); how it specifies action (a. 3); the uniqueness and globality, universality and efficacy of a last end for humans and other creatures (aa. 4-8).

110 Aquinas structures his arguments around the insights of Aristotle, Augustine and others. Thomas (I-II 1.7 sc) cites Augustine's *De Trinitate* (xiii.3: PL 42, 1018) claim "that all men agree in desiring the last end, which is flourishing."

flourishing (from its subjective side).¹¹¹ Thomas distinguishes the incomplete flourishing of this life from the complete flourishing that is only possible in the vision of God, with the company of the saints and angels in the coming new creation. Questions four and five successively treat what we require for complete flourishing,¹¹² and how we attain it.¹¹³ He says that the perfection of charity is essential to the happiness found in loving God; he describes this perfection of charity in Johannine terms, as friendship.¹¹⁴

Notwithstanding Aquinas' striking clarity, his exposition raises questions concerning the place of incomplete and complete *beatitudo* in moral theory and theology. What major transmutations has *beatitudo*'s etymology undergone?¹¹⁵ First, when Thomas or the

111 Thomas asks (I-II 3.1-8): Is it something uncreated (a. 1), or an operation of human sensitive or intellective faculties, of intellect or will, or of speculative or practical intellect (aa. 2-5)? Is it the consideration of speculative sciences (a. 6), the knowledge of separated substances (a. 7) or finally the vision of the Divine Essence (a. 8)?

112 Aquinas asks (I-II 4.1-9) whether it is necessary to have: delight (a. 1), vision (a. 2), comprehension (a. 3), rectitude of will (a. 4), the body and its perfections (aa. 5-6), external goods (a. 7), or the fellowship of friends (a.8)? None of these constitute the essence of human flourishing, although they pertain concomitantly to flourishing.

113 St. Thomas asks (I-II 5.1-8): Can a man attain flourishing (a. 1), or be happier than another in this life (a. 2)? Can flourishing be attained in this life (a. 3) or lost once found (a. 4)? Can a human obtain flourishing through his own powers (a. 5) or with the help of some higher creature (a. 6)? Are good works required to receive flourishing from God (a. 7)? Does everyone desire flourishing (a. 8)?

114 Cf. *ST* I-II 4.8 ad 3; *ST* II-II 26.3; John 15:15.

115 According to the *OED* (1989, vol. VI, p. 1097), "happiness" or "the quality or condition of being happy" can mean: "1. Good fortune or luck in life or in a particular affair; success, prosperity. 2. The state of pleasurable content of mind, which results from success or the attainment of what is considered good. 3. Successful or felicitous aptitude, fitness, suitability, or appropriateness; felicity." This complex definition highlights happiness in terms of: an external, objective, desirable situation (n. 1); its subjective appreciation (n. 2); as well as a quality that seems more active in promoting the good (n. 3). Happiness and happy have the Middle English root of "hap," meaning fortune, or "hap"-pening by chance. Nussbaum's (1994, 15 footnote 5) reflections on Aristotelian "eudaimonia" is pertinent here: "*Eudaimonia* is often rendered happiness: but this is misleading, since it misses the emphasis on activity, and on completeness of life, there is (as Aristotle cogently argues) present in ordinary use of the Greek term, and wrongly suggests that what is at issue must be a state of feeling of satisfaction. (Pre-Utilitarian English-language uses of "happiness" had much of this breadth; but in

ancients speak of “*beatitudo*,” they mean flourishing as a reality of nature. Human beings naturally seek to flourish. The mature Aquinas used the word “*beatitudo*” to cover both the notions of complete and incomplete flourishing.¹¹⁶ For him “*beatitudo*” can have objective and subjective as well as passive and active sides. I have resisted translating “*beatitudo*” as “happiness” when referring to the incomplete state and flourishing when referring to the complete one. By employing the term “flourishing,” I hope to safeguard the unity and correlation between incomplete and complete states of “*beatitudo*” so important for Aquinas and for a fuller understanding of this reality.¹¹⁷

A fuller notion of flourishing (in the sense of complete “*beatitudo*”) does not always hold a central place in moral theory. Since Aquinas’ time, in different circles, “happiness” has undergone three substantial modifications. First, some thinkers no longer construe morality in terms of a natural tendency of the will toward flourishing. Second, others hold that flourishing is a matter of personal choice—one can choose to be, or not to be, happy. Third, writers have restricted flourishing to involve a subjective, egotistical motivator—the happiness of one person is thus pitted against that of others. Even though Kant’s critique of eudemonism (moral theory based on flourishing) does not directly address the moral theory of Aquinas (or Aristotle and Plato), it has permeated moral discussions across the

our time the word is unavoidably colored by Utilitarian associations.)” Nussbaum thus translates *eudaimonia* as “human flourishing.”

¹¹⁶ While this usage holds true for the *ST*, it does not for the *SCG*, where Aquinas was seemingly searching for the appropriate vocabulary. In the *SCG*, he distinguishes between human incomplete flourishing (*felicitas*) and complete flourishing that originates in God (*beatitudo*). However in the treatise on *beatitudo* found in the *ST* (I-II qq. 1-5), he employs “*felicitas*” only in the quotes of Aristotle’s Latin translation (I-II 2.2 obj. 1; 3.2 sc; 3.6 obj. 1; 4.1 obj. 3; 4.5 obj. 4) or in direct discussions of Aristotle (I-II 4.5; 4.5 ad4; 4.7; 4.8; 5.4). In general he uses *beatitudo* concerning both incomplete and complete flourishing, in this way he is able to better safeguard the unity and interrelation of the types of flourishing. Cf. R. Busa, *IT*; J. Pieper 1998, 112, fn. 3. Furthermore, in antiquity and throughout the Middle Ages “*felicitas*” was also used, often as a synonym for “*beatitudo*,” for example see: Augustine *De Trinitate* VI.10; *PL* 42.932.

¹¹⁷ English writers translate “*beatitudo*” as “happiness” in ethical discussions, even though because of restricted notions of happiness, many prefer “flourishing.” Writers, in other languages, have tended to shift discourse concerning “*beatitudo*” to keywords with different roots: e.g. “*bonheur*” in French, “*Glückseligkeit*” in German. Cf. F. Nef and J.Y. Lacoste 1998, 148-153.

board. Since writers now often focus “happiness” on the subjective psychological aspect of ethics as well, we need to use the term “happiness” with care, and recall that Aquinas uses *beatitudo* more comprehensively.

Now let us discuss more in depth the challenges that changes in the meanings of flourishing pose to virtue theory and human resilience. While addressing particular aspects of Thomas’ notion of the role of flourishing in moral theory, we need to ask whether his thought can escape not only the Kantian, but also the positivist and postmodern critiques.

Aquinas builds his treatment of finality in human flourishing upon his understanding of human rationality, which is anything but pre-modern rationalism (although it is sometimes taken as such).¹¹⁸ The notion of finality has suffered transformations since Aquinas. On the one hand, strains of pre-modern or Enlightenment rationalism have exaggerated the capacity of human rationality. On the other hand, positivist sciences have rejected finality, and certain postmodern critiques have radically questioned rationality itself. Forms of determinism and materialism have in certain cases replaced final causes.

In order to understand how Aquinas’ moral theory fares in front of these critiques, a question needs to be asked: what does he mean by “finality” and “reason”? Thomas claims that we are able to act for an end (a goal) thanks to our capacity to reason. However, this finality is continuous. It is not simply the finality occasioned by a particular act. In contrast to positivist science’s notion of finality (an occasional finality), Thomas holds that human beings can order even personal acts. We aim our desires and loves (through virtues of charity-friendship and prudence) at one single and ultimate end (a continuous finality). This movement grants an access to the end. Aquinas thus does not consider the end a disposable means or

¹¹⁸ Aquinas acknowledges the limits of his own notion of finality: e.g., the analogous nature of knowledge concerning the last end (God); cf. *ST* I 1. He treats the issue of finality in human flourishing in *ST* I-II q. 1.

instrument. Rather, we participate in the end (God as source of ultimate flourishing) through knowing and loving.¹¹⁹

Aquinas' approach distinguishes, yet actively interrelates, two dimensions of flourishing: that in which human flourishing consists (from the human side), and what makes us flourish (the external source).¹²⁰ This realist, metaphysical approach once again flies in the face of contemporary emphases on "subjective" flourishing, which often recognizes God's influence on humans only according to a person's subjective appreciation of it. With the advances of genetic sciences, some thinkers tend to identify happiness-states with related genetic predispositions and hormone levels.¹²¹ This approach opens the way to attempts to chemically induce states of "happiness and well-being."¹²²

119 Aquinas' approach does more than distinguish between "secondary end and means." He does not use "means" without a specific relationship to the end. His expression "*ea quae sunt ad finem*" affirms a participation in the ultimate end, while distinguishing between: (1) the acquisition (*adeptio*) of the end (what he sometimes refers to as "secondary ends"); these real ends pertain to the order of the love of friendship, for example; and (2) the use (*usus*) of the end (what he sometimes calls "means"); these instruments pertain to the realm of utility, although they involve a sort of acquisition (*ad consecutionem finis*). Cf. *ST* I-II 1.8; Pinckaers 1998b, 38.

120 Using Aristotle's principle, Aquinas introduces (I-II 1.8 corpus) a twofold distinction about the ends concerning flourishing: the end "for which" (*finis cuius*) humans seek flourishing; and the end "by which" (*finis quo*) humans seek flourishing: "*Sicut Philosophus dicit in II Physic. [C. 2, 194a95-6; S. Th. Lect. 4.8] et in V Metaphys. [De anima ii.4, 415b2-3; S. Th. lect. 7.316; cf. Met. xii.7, 1072b2-3; S. Th. lect. 7.2528], finis dupliciter dicitur, scilicet cuius, et quo: idest ipsa res in qua ratio boni invenitur, et usus sive adeptio illius rei.*" On the one hand, human flourishing *finis cuius* is the end as the very source of flourishing (*loquamur de ultimo fine hominis quantum ad ipsam rem quae est finis*). On the other hand, human flourishing *finis quo* is the way in which we participate in flourishing. Through knowing and loving, human beings partake in the source of flourishing, who is God (cf. *ST* I-II 2.7 corpus and ad 3). He treats that in which flourishing consists in *ST* I-II q. 2, and what flourishing is in *ST* I-II q. 3.

121 The *Courier de Genève* (July 1996) reports a study, which claims that the person's genetic (standard) level of dopamine determines about 50% of how we appreciate human flourishing.

122 The list is too long to cite extensively. We simply note that certain experts explain that heroin charges the body with a massive dose of endomorphine, which so suppresses the organism's pains that it induces a radical sense of well-being. Cf. François Nussbaum, *Courrier de Genève* 3 November 2000, 16.

How can Aquinas' approach face such challenges? He defines *beatitudo* in a twofold way: "Flourishing, itself, since it is a perfection of the soul, is an inherent good of the soul; but that which constitutes flourishing, viz. which makes humans happy, is something outside one's soul."¹²³ The second, or ontological dimension (*beatitudo ut res*), involves goods, which merit and demand that we love them for themselves. When seeking these goods, we attempt to fulfill the basic human desire for flourishing.

After reviewing all the major candidates for human flourishing, Aquinas rejects all created things as inadequate for ultimate fulfillment—here we can add all parallel human processes, such as temperamental and emotional, genetic and hormonal, and chemically induced ones. He concludes: "God alone constitutes man's fulfillment."¹²⁴ From the standpoint of *beatitudo ut adeptio rei*, he asks what human actions make a person happy; he recognizes that flourishing corresponds with the good (*bonum*). Following Augustine, Thomas holds that the term *bonum* itself inseparably contains the ideas of good and flourishing. What is good will make one flourish; and what is evil makes one wretched.¹²⁵ Aquinas places a primacy on the role of the intellect, the speculative intellect (a. 5), and the vision of the Divine essence (a. 8) in ultimate flourishing. His emphasis on the beatific vision does not however distance the whole person from the search for and participation in that flourishing that already finds partial

¹²³ "*beatitudo ipsa, cum sit perfectio animae, est quoddam animae bonum inhaerens; sed id in quo beatitudo consistit, quod scilicet beatum facit, est aliquid extra animam.*" *ST* I-II 2.7 ad 3; cf. *ST* I-II 2.7; *ST* I-II 1.8.

¹²⁴ "*In solo igitur Deo beatitudo hominis consistit*" *ST* I-II 2.8. In establishing this principle, Aquinas call upon Psalms 143:15 and 102:5, and Augustine *De Civ. Dei* XIX.2: 252, b, 26-27; cf. *ST* I 12.1; *SCG* IV.54. Augustine and Aquinas give a new accent on the object in beatitude and love; the pagan emphasis is on the human subject and his activity (e.g. Aristotle). Without separating the two points of view, the thing (object) is of primary importance to specify the desire of flourishing and love of friendship, which has as an end its object loved for itself (in the case of other humans and God). As Pinckaers (1998b, 40) observes: "here, then, is a new aspect of Christian asceticism: that intellectual and spiritual detachment produced by the desire of truth, which urges us firstly to transcend sensible perceptions, then to transcend the ideas formed by our reason, then finally to transcend the intuitions of our mind, in order to allow the development within us of that contemplation, at once obscure and luminous, intelligent and unknowing, which is proper to faith in this life."

¹²⁵ Pinckaers 1998b, 37.

fulfillment in the present through prayerful meditation, contemplation of beauty and study of truth.

This defense of the role and content of flourishing in moral theory and theology has implications for resilience. Later this study will ask further how our present participation in divine *beatitudo* and the attraction of flourishing can serve resilience in facing difficulty, either in the extreme situations that threaten life and limb, or the more mundane situations requiring efforts at creating initiatives or enduring hardships. But before these more detailed studies, we shall address other questions that concern how complete and incomplete flourishing correlate.

2.3.2. Fulfilled Human Flourishing and Graced Flourishing

Aquinas' notion of complete flourishing calls for an explanation of its relationship with the incomplete or partial components of human happiness.¹²⁶ What is the good (happiness-effect) found in the beauty and orderliness of created things, and the fulfillment of human faculties that do not directly compose ultimate human happiness? Aquinas' moral theory, which concerns developing the full range of human powers,¹²⁷ employs analogous senses of flourishing. First, human flourishing takes shape in the excellence of the natural virtues. They specify fulfilled aspects of life at natural level. Second, these natural (excellent though imperfect) types of flourishing have a certain order toward graced flourishing. We employ our body and the active life of moral virtue as a means of contemplation.¹²⁸ However, we need to ask, what roles do natural desire, will and intellect play in the ordering between incomplete and complete flourishing? And how do they contribute to the development of virtue and resilience?

¹²⁶ Cf. *ST* I-II q. 4.

¹²⁷ A. MacIntyre (1999,64) reminds us that we need to understand "flourishing" in its analogous sense, in terms of developing "the distinctive powers that it possesses qua member of that species."

¹²⁸ It is the fullest notion of flourishing that orders and serves as the major criterion in the development of virtue. Cf. *ST* I-II 1-5; S.-Th. Pinckaers 2001a.

Aquinas conceives of the ordering of love (natural desire and will) as an integral part of rational moral activity.¹²⁹ The foundational natural desire to see or know God as the Source of Truth¹³⁰ directs not only the intellect toward complete flourishing, but it also inseparably motivates the will toward God as the Universal Good.¹³¹ Throughout his moral theory, Aquinas intertwines the desire for flourishing with (1) the knowledge of truth that moves the intellect, and (2) the love of goodness that moves the will towards the action that is an integral part of coming to flourishing.¹³² Aquinas puts these issues at the top of his treatment of morality (I-II 1-5) and of charity (II-II 23.1).¹³³ Flourishing and friendship supply the backbone for his whole virtue theory.

¹²⁹ Cf. S. J. Pope, 1994.

¹³⁰ An affirmation of this teaching on the natural desire to see God is found in the opening lines of the encyclical *Fides et Ratio*: “Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth—in a word, to know himself—so that, by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves (cf. Ex 33:18; Ps 27:8-9; 63:2-3; John 14:8; 1 John 3:2).”

¹³¹ Cf. *ST* I.2.8; *ST* I.2.7; *ST* I.5.1.

¹³² Aquinas’ thought progresses on the question of a natural desire to see God. In the *Sentences* and the *De Veritate*, Thomas conceives of this natural desire as a movement of the will towards *beatitudo*. Later in the *Summa theologiae* and the *SCG*, he clarifies its metaphysical foundation, and considers it above all as the intellect moving toward truth. He asks whether such a natural desire can be vain, and answers in the negative, by affirming that there is a special capacity for beatific vision rooted in the human spiritual nature (however not as a simple obediential potency). The beatific vision is both *supra naturam animae rationalis* and *secundum naturam ipsius* (*ST* III 9.2 ad 3). The supernatural is firmly rooted in the human as created in the image of God. Humans are *capax Dei* (fit for God), but not *idoneus* (sufficient) concerning the beatific vision (cf. Pinckaers 1976, 255-273; Bujo 1984). Theologians at present continue to debate whether such a natural desire to see God is a natural desire for flourishing (*beatitudo*).

¹³³ These manuals divide the study of moral theology into two parts: (1) fundamental moral theology which treats of: human acts (and liberty), laws, conscience and sins; and (2) special morality which studies the laws and their application to concrete cases, what is permitted and forbidden. Even some authors who expressly desire to follow Aquinas’ moral teaching lack a treatment of *beatitudo*, for example, the work of Juan Azor S.J. (1536-1603). In his *Institutiones morales*, which became the model of such manuals, he expresses the intention to follow Aquinas, yet starts with the study of moral acts instead of flourishing and finality. In his fundamental theology, Alphonsus Liguori (1696-1787) likewise studies human acts in terms of conscience and law, but does not accord a foundational place to finality and flourishing. Cf. Pinckaers 1991, 39-49; 1995a, 298-300.

A discussion of flourishing inevitably must respond to the Kantian critique of intuition, desire and happiness. Kant claims that only a good will is a fitting foundational moral criterion. How can a Thomistic teleological approach, dominated by flourishing as its ultimate end, avoid the critique that it is hedonistic, egocentric and leads to utilitarianism? Aquinas' response would recall that the root of the desire for flourishing and the heart of charity is friendship-love (love of friendship), which permits this type of morality to avoid getting bogged down in calculations of utility and pleasure, or duty and obligation.¹³⁴ A key question here is: what is the place of friendship-love in flourishing? For Aquinas, the love of friendship (with God essentially, and with neighbors concomitantly) is the most primal and final element in flourishing.¹³⁵ It serves as the true basis for the desire for flourishing, which beyond temptations and deviations is the desire to come to love God and neighbor in truth.¹³⁶ The desire for flourishing is an inchoate perception of the perfection of this love. This desire is

134 The Kantian critique receives a threefold response. First, Aquinas construes the desire of flourishing as spiritual in its central core. As part of our higher sensibility, it makes us react to and appreciate moral realities: good and evil, truth and deception (untruth), virtues and vices, joy and pain. Beyond the purely sensible appearances (phenomena), through this spiritual capacity we are attracted by goods and can perceive their deep nature. Secondly, this desire is open to others; it is not egocentric. The desire of flourishing, rooted in love of friendship, makes us search the good of the other, as our own good, as well as the common good. Thirdly, this desire goes beyond utilitarianism's focus on limited human capacities of pleasure, and the maximization of pleasure. The desire of flourishing, as grounded on the love of friendship, seeks the Good, which is desirable in itself as well as useful, but not useful in the same way as that which can be purchased with money; we can only attain it through sacrifice, as S.-Th. Pinckaers (1989, 185-9) reminds us.

135 In the complete flourishing of the Fatherland (*patria*), the perfect love of God is essential, while the love of friendship (of neighbors) is concomitant. Cf. I-II 4.8 ad 3.

136 For Aquinas, friends are real ends (albeit secondary ones) in the order of the love of friendship. They are not "means" to final beatitude, as a disposable instrument pertaining to the realm of utility. Thinkers are sometimes confused when speaking of Aquinas' use of the expression "*ea quae sunt ad finem*." The "*ea*" share already in the nature of the end. They already begin to attain the end, of which they already express an imperfect fruition. Aquinas does not conceptually separate the "*ea*" and the "*finis*" in the ways that most contemporary ethical discussions separate "means" and "end." The good of the end is present in the "*ea*," which we need to understand in a certain unity, since the "*ea*" participates in the "*finis*." For these reasons, Thomas' term "*ea*" covers two separate English terms "secondary ends" and "means."

not egocentric, but rather polycentric (including neighbors and other creatures). It is certainly theocentric.

Given the primal place accorded to complete flourishing, what function does it play in the rest of Aquinas' moral theory of virtue? As the last end and final cause, flourishing provides the higher criteria governing the principal treatises. In the treatise on human acts, imperfect flourishing serves to direct human actions and passions through practical intellect.¹³⁷ Imperfect flourishing is inadequate or conflictive unless ordered to perfect and complete flourishing. For Aquinas, the virtuous dispositions (as efficient causes of good acts) direct humans to flourishing. Virtuous acts (and dispositions to act) in effect are the formal causes of flourishing. Through the moral, intellectual and theological virtues, we flourish according to specific capacities and sources of strength and wisdom.¹³⁸ The type of flourishing (natural and graced) specifies a hierarchy among of virtues according to their final cause.¹³⁹ Furthermore, Aquinas contrasts true flourishing with sin and its effects, chiefly mortal sin.¹⁴⁰ Flourishing is only complete and sure with the support of the grace of the Holy Spirit in the New Law. This Law of love also perfects the acquired virtues. Through charity and prudence, we collaborate in truly human and Christ-like acts.¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ Aquinas says that "the last and perfect flourishing, which we await in the life to come, consists entirely in contemplation. But imperfect flourishing, such as can be attained here, consists first and principally, in an operation of the practical intellect directing human actions and passions, as stated in *Ethic.* x, 7,8." *ST* I-II 3.5; cf. *ST* I-II 6, prologue; *ST* I-II 69.3.

¹³⁸ Concerning *moral virtues* see: *ST* I-II 60.1 obj.3 and ad 3. Concerning *intellectual virtues* see: *ST* I-II 57.1, where Aquinas cites Aristotle: "flourishing is the reward of virtue" *NE* i.9: 1099, b, 16-18; cf. *ST* I-II 3.7. Concerning *theological virtues* see: *ST* I-II 62.1; where Aquinas cites 2 Peter 1:4, indicating that through Christ we are made "partakers of the Divine nature;" and *ST* I-II 62.2: "the theological virtues direct man to supernatural flourishing in the same way as by the natural inclination man is directed to his connatural end."

¹³⁹ Cf. *ST* I-II 5.5 and 5.7.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. *ST* I-II 72.5; *ST* I-II 85.6.

¹⁴¹ Cf. *ST* I-II 107.1; 108.3; Pinckaers 1998b, 35.

2.3.3. Health, Normality and Flourishing: Resilience Research Contributions

Psychosocial sciences have developed evaluative notions in order to promote “optimal development” and adjudicate between health and disease, and between normality and deviancy.¹⁴² In this context, resilience theory and findings raise questions for Aquinas’ virtue-approach to flourishing: How might psychosocial resilience research’s underlying notions of flourishing, normality and health enhance Aquinas’ approach to complete and incomplete flourishing?

First, few people would equate physical health with human flourishing (even though we might on rare occasions, as when we are in severe pain or close to death). Nonetheless, physical well-being contributes to human flourishing. Notions of physical health are important because of the perspective that they assume and promote. On the one hand, the tendency to define health as an absence of physical disease involves a pathogenic perspective that concentrates on disease, illness or abnormality.¹⁴³ On the other, the tendency to define health in terms of personal and social capacities to cope with and overcome physical challenges involves a resilience perspective that focuses first on healing and well-being. This second approach concentrates

¹⁴² The World Health Organization defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (14 May 2002; www.who.int/aboutwho/en/definition.html). The *Webster Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary* (1989, 653) defines “health” first of all as “the general condition of the body or mind with reference to soundness and vigor;” and secondly as “soundness of body or mind; freedom from disease or ailment: *to have one’s health; to lose one’s health.*” The primary reference in both cases is soundness or wholeness, which is often taken as a static notion. The OED (1989, VII: 53) defines health as follows: “soundness of body; that condition in which functions are duly and efficiently discharged.”

Furthermore, the meaning of disease simply indicts the opposite of being whole. In regard mental health, “sane” according to *Webster* (1989, 1266) is defined as: “1. free from mental derangement; having a sound, healthy mind: *a sane person.* 2. having or showing reason, sound judgment or good sense: *sane advice.* 3. sound, healthy.”

¹⁴³ The nineteenth century doctrine of specific etiology held that a single microbial agent causes each infectious disease. Dubos (1959) has questioned this approach, since he observed that microbial disease is the exception rather than the rule, and that pathogens often fail to cause disease after becoming established in the tissues. Cf. Moberg 1991, 32; Schumaker 1992, 9.

primarily on the resources for and dynamics of physical healing, and in a secondary sense on causes of disease.

Second, psychological health perspectives offer complementary considerations for human flourishing. In particular, they consider subjective flourishing. Descriptions of psychological health include: “positive mental health” (Jahoda 1958); “self-actualization” (Rogers 1961; Maslow 1971); “optimal living” (Rosenhan and Seligman 1984); psychological well-being;¹⁴⁴ successful (physiological, psychological and social) adaptation and survival;¹⁴⁵ overall functioning;¹⁴⁶ or coping well with stress.¹⁴⁷ Of particular interest is a continuum model of health that identifies neither with any one definition, nor with the popular notion of health as a static state. Instead it views health as a continuum or composite of sensation and perception, cognition and emotion, which forms an overall healthy pattern of experience and behavior.¹⁴⁸ This model might offer a way to

144 According to Perrez and Reicherts, (1992, p. 137), “one way of understanding mental health is as a complex, stable characteristic for describing psychological well-being and the realistic and adequate functioning of the individual.” According to Chamberlain and Zika (1992, 141), “well-being” has been seen to have three major dimensions: life satisfaction, positive affect and lack of negative affect.

145 Cf. Brooks 1998, 229; Cicchetti, 1990.

146 Dubos’ definition of health is not so much a state of vigor, well-being, long life, or even being disease-free. Rather health “means that you can function, do what you want to do and become what you want to become.” Dubos, 1959; cited in Moberg 1991, 37.

147 Perrez and Reicherts (1992, 137) note some of the researchers who make an explicit connection between mental health and coping behavior include: Platt and Spivack (1974), Ilfeld (1980), Becker (1984a), Fisher (1986). Moreover, Schumaker (1992, 10) associates health with degrees of personal attributes such as: “personal growth and development, autonomous functioning, self-love, environmental competence, degree of insight and wisdom, the exercise of rationality, the realization of one’s potential, the joy derived from life, and so forth.”

148 Health as a continuous dimension of experience and behavior moves between more and less successful adaptations to stress (Radke-Yarrow 1990, 98) and contains “healthy” and “unhealthy” elements (Schumaker 1992, 10). In this perspective, Allport (1967, 83) observed that being “mentally healthy” does not deny inevitable and ongoing psychological struggles and adjustment problems in the midst of human life’s complexity. Antonovsky (1998a, 6; 1987) furthermore conceives of health as a manifest level of systemic order of the human organism, in terms of an ease/dis-ease continuum, focusing on what underlies the movement toward health and order and what are the “negentropic” forces at work. According to Antonovsky, stressors are ubiquitous and open-ended in their

appreciate competing aspects of human flourishing, such as intermediate human goals (some attained, some thwarted) and fluctuating experiences (joy and disappointment; pleasure and pain).

Thirdly, notions of social health address another dimension of human well-being and being human. On the one hand, some social science approaches employ reductionistic, empirical and statistical methods to identify human, moral and social normality or health as resilience phenomena. What can these approaches tell us about flourishing? We need to resist facile attempts to equate statistical calculations of empirical normality with moral normativity, for example: (1) the range of efforts to bestow a moral status on the statistical analysis of the "*homme moyen*" (Quetelet),¹⁴⁹ (2) the "average type" (Durkheim),¹⁵⁰ and (3) the is/ought problematic in the more properly ethical realm. Furthermore, there are limitations imposed by realist and normative claims of the social facts identified by nomic methods (Comte, Mill),¹⁵¹ evolutionary theories (Buss,

consequences. The primary question in his "salutogenic" perspective is no longer "what causes this or that disease, or even what leads to dis-ease, but rather what underlies the movement toward health." (Antonovsky 1998a, 6) The continuum notion of health can also be understood in terms of how adaptive and maladaptive behaviors are not so much dichotomous, but rather overlapping (cf. Achenbach 1990, 4; Rolf et alia 1990; Garnezy 1994).

¹⁴⁹ Quetelet's aim was to apply "figurative reasoning" (numerical reasoning) to the moral realm, arriving at means or averages, including a notion of the average human, the "*homme moyen*." Quetelet presumes "that human nature, in its aberrations, has not a tendency to deviate from the mean in one sense in preference to another, as those who aim at a mark might have a tendency to shoot always too high or too low." (Quetelet (1842, x; Cited in Turner 1986, 70-71; cf. 64-69).

¹⁵⁰ Building on Quetelet's notion, Durkheim defines the "average type" as "the hypothetical being which might be constituted by assembling in one entity, as a kind of individual abstraction, the most frequently occurring characteristics of the species in their most frequent forms" (Durkheim 1982, 91-92; cited in Turner, 1986, 111). He holds that the normality of a social fact is no more than its presence in the average society at the corresponding stage of its development; "normal" means consistent with the law of development for a particular type of society (cf. Durkheim 1982, 91-97; Turner, 1986, 112-3). Accordingly, Durkheim discusses these social facts, which have a certain generality and obligatory character, as a paradigmatic area for morality (cf. 1982, 56, 142-44; Turner, 1986, 124 ff).

¹⁵¹ Both Comte and Mill were reticent to give an important place to statistical methods in identifying empirical laws in social science. Comte's historical method was inimical to empirico-statistical social science approaches, which he described as "sheer empiricism, disguised under a vain mathematical

Wilson) and more skeptical reductionistic approaches (Pearson, Gould).¹⁵²

In what way can Aquinas' approach to flourishing (virtue theory and moral theology) appropriate these insights on human well-being? First, studies on physical health and resilience in the face of disease concern every human inasmuch as we are mortal and vulnerable. Likewise, they concern Aquinas' treatment of the virtues, which need to revisit such experiences in regards to each particular virtue. Furthermore, research on the neurochemical support for human *habitus* can help develop our understanding of moral virtues and vices.¹⁵³ They can offer insights not only into corporal, but also emotional and cognitive development that can enrich Aquinas' approach to flourishing and virtue theory. In turn, Thomas' anthropology offers a theological framework in which we can evaluate these insights. Through this larger perspective, we can better understand the role of physical health and resilience in spiritual development and flourishing. Likewise, research on human disease contributes to understanding obstacles to human flourishing. We can incorporate these insights into Aquinas' virtue anthropology in order to differentiate physical, psychosocial and spiritual obstacles. We should not, for example, confuse bio-chemical malfunction with the effects of ignorance, social injustice or sin, which in their own ways hinder flourishing.

Second, can psychological descriptions of health and resilience enrich Aquinas' moral anthropology? A moral anthropology needs to adjudicate the adequacy of pertinent insights from psychological descriptions of health. As mentioned earlier, we must evaluate such psychological insights in the context of their underlying anthropological theories. We can pose the following diagnostic questions: In what way does a particular psychological notion of health

appearance" (trans. in Virtanen, 1960, p. 60; cited in Turner, 1986, 59). Comte for example thought that social science, through theories and reflection on the facts instead of statistics, would be able to rationally foretell human action.

¹⁵² Pearsons' skepticism limits statistical claims to "probability" (cf. Pearson 1911, 113; cf. 152). Likewise, Gould (1996) criticizes statistical approaches that overstate their findings.

¹⁵³ We treat the development of *habitus* and neurochemistry more in the next major section (cf. Pope 1998b, 552; Damasio 1994, 182-3).

and flourishing appropriate sources beyond the human psyche? For example, does it restrict itself to simple peak experiences (e.g. Maslow)? L. S. Cahill, for her part, finds that “the underlying definition of human ‘health’” employed by empirical science is inadequate for use as such in Christian moral theory, inasmuch as it does not include basic Christian norms (‘suffering, self-sacrifice and self-denial for others’). Such norms depend neither on statistical frequency nor on psychological and physical standards alone.¹⁵⁴ Because of these sciences’ self-imposed, methodological limits, we cannot expect results concerning phenomena outside of their competency, or a larger vision of meaning.

Third, how can social theories of health, normality and resilience enhance Aquinas’ view of flourishing? Social science approaches (e.g. cultural anthropology or ethnology) can apprehend or translate an extra dimension of the diversity in cultural and human experience. Nonetheless, we must interpret this data in terms of an anthropological and moral framework, in order to discern its value for “thicker” notions of human flourishing. In the empirical approach, classical ethnology uses digital-descriptive analyses to report human, social, moral and religious practices in an “objective” and abstracted way. Moreover, analogical-evocative methods try to provide “thick” reports of “mentalities” and cultures.¹⁵⁵ Through art, literature and writing, this latter approach uses analogy and metaphor to recreate and communicate its object.¹⁵⁶ As an art form, narrative expressions can evoke social experiences and “mental behavior.” They can thus provide Aquinas’ moral anthropology with insights into the importance of cultural heritage for human behavior, moral agency and religious practice. Nonetheless, we must evaluate the limits of statistical approaches to social analysis and public opinion, lest such accounts of

154 Here Cahill (1980/1989, 557) identifies the empirical sciences’ definition of health as “analogous to that pertaining to plant and animal life: the successful self-preservation and self-maintenance of an organism in its environment.” As *Veritatis Splendor* (no. 112) says, “the behavioral sciences, like all experimental sciences, develop an empirical and statistical concept of “normality,” faith teaches that this normality itself bears the traces of a fall from man’s original situation—in other words it is affected by sin.”

155 Cf. Geertz 1968, and 1973; Rüegg (in press).

156 Cf. G. E. Marcus and M. Fischer 1986.

normality take hostage morality and notions of flourishing. Otherwise, we risk taking the “normality” of social happenings (such as murder, rape, pederasty or child abuse) as morally acceptable, or public opinion about them as normative. This risk is especially great when adjudicating statistical analyses of human satisfaction and flourishing.

Social science research moreover cannot directly access spiritual resilience and vulnerability, which we can only more directly see through personal reflection in a community that supports, affirms and challenges the work of the individual. Inasmuch as we can narratively report and statistically analyze personal experiences of meaning and purpose, these sciences can approach something more of the reality of spiritual resilience. However, we should only expect that each of these disciplines offers a partial view of human individuals, societies and cultures.¹⁵⁷ Christian moral theology, while drawing on the insights of these disciplines, will need to employ them in the context of a philosophical anthropology,¹⁵⁸ and moral theology framework that also draws its principles, content and experiences from a Scriptural and patristic, magisterial and theological tradition. In this richer approach, Aquinas’ moral theology purports to understand and promote better flourishing, as well as support growth in prudence and elaborate moral principles and norms.

In conclusion, Aquinas specifies human finality and flourishing as central elements of his moral theory and virtue approach. However in the present intellectual arena, writers do not always

¹⁵⁷ Pope Paul VI expresses this idea: “*chaque discipline scientifique ne pourra saisir, dans sa particularité, qu’un aspect partiel mais vrai de l’homme; la totalité et le sens lui échappent*” (*Lettre au Cardinal Roy*, no. 40, cf. no. 30; cited in Jullien 1982, 481-497). On the nature of truth, see: *ST I-II* 109.1 ad 1; *FR* 44; *GE*, 10.

¹⁵⁸ The major problem with accumulated scientific data is the *meaning* to give or find there present. This data is already in some way wrapped in ideology. Philosophical anthropology’s task is to unwrap this meaning. Human sciences implicitly or explicitly are based upon a philosophical anthropology, which give them their full meaning (philosophical anthropology serves a hermeneutical role for the human sciences). Theology likewise calls upon philosophical anthropology to find the full import and meaning of the human sciences. Indeed, faith seeking understanding can employ the critical control of philosophy in order to differentiate ideology from meaning in the human sciences. According to G. Cottier (1980, 167): “*c’est donc avant tout de la médiation de [l’anthropologie philosophique] que la foi a besoin pour rencontrer les sciences humaines.*”

appreciate this perspective. The problems are numerous. Happiness and flourishing are not univocal terms. Thomas supposes a different basis and finality when speaking of flourishing than do some contemporary psychosocial theorists and practitioners. We need to attend to the presuppositions imported in language, theories and practices concerning flourishing in order to understand how research and theory might converge. The revival of Aquinas' virtue ethics demands exploring the place of incomplete and complete flourishing both in moral anthropology and theology. His approach inhabits a larger moral domain than that delimited by psychosocial approaches. It implies going beyond a duty-based framework (of what is right and wrong), simply identifying norms (and their exceptions), or promoting human physical, mental or social health and well-being. Nonetheless, his approach inherently seeks empirical and theoretical input. It can take into account insights from resilience findings, which serve to enrich Aquinas' understanding of human flourishing and his contribution to spiritual resilience. However, in this section, I have simply outlined human flourishing in Aquinas' moral anthropology in order to advance our study on the virtues related to difficulty and initiative in the upcoming chapters. Now we shall examine the role of emotions in Aquinas' virtue theory and resilience studies.

2.4. Aquinas on Emotions and Moral Development

We have set the stage with psychosocial resilience research and Aquinas' virtue theory on health and flourishing. We can now constructively revisit Aquinas' teaching on emotion and morality in order to understand related aspects of human agency and resiliency. The present section queries how Aquinas' moral anthropology can appropriate resilience insights on emotions. A preliminary study on Aquinas' general view of emotions and on the primary philosophical approaches to emotions in ethics will situate Thomas in his context. Then we shall ask: How do his and psychosocial approaches consider emotions as intelligent? Do they maintain that we need emotions for responsible agency? We shall then examine Aquinas' understanding of the role of natural inclinations and emotions in the development of moral character. For example, neurochemistry offers us insights about the role of the emotions in moral decision-making. This dialogue

prepares for the following chapters, which treat the emotions associated with resilience and fortitude: fear and daring, hope and despair, as well as suffering and pain.

2.4.1. The Appreciation of Emotions in Moral Agency

Before we compare Aquinas' and other ethical approaches to human emotions, we shall situate his teaching on emotions in general. Aquinas follows the Aristotelian tradition in acknowledging that the human composite has five faculties or powers:¹⁵⁹ the intellective, the motive (volitional), the appetitive (emotional), the sensitive and the vegetative.¹⁶⁰ He uses the word *passio* or *passiones*¹⁶¹ to refer to what contemporary psychology calls human emotions, feelings, affections or sentiment.¹⁶² While contemporary usage distinguishes emotions and

¹⁵⁹ These powers of the soul interrelate as a teleological hierarchy of powers. Aquinas discusses them earlier in the *Prima Pars* (*ST* I qq. 77-81). The first four of these powers are subdivided in two intersecting ways: (a) as pertaining to the intellective or sensitive part of the soul, and (b) as being either cognitive or appetitive. Thus the intellective principle has two powers: (1) the *intellect* itself, the cognitive part of the intellect, performs thinking and reasoning; and (2) *will*, the appetitive part of the intellect, is responsible for volition and choice. The sensitive part also has two powers: (3) *sensing*, the cognitive principle in sensation, involves sensation and perception; (4) *passion*, the appetitive principle for the sensitive part, is sub-divided as eleven passions that we discuss later on. Cf. Aristotle, *de Anima* II.3 (414a29-32); Pinckaers 1990, 382, 384; Jordan 1986a, 87-96; King 1999, 101. While Aquinas could have given a helpful reminder of this hierarchy of the human powers in order to better understand the discussion of passions in the *Prima Secundae*, he did not. As noted elsewhere, the pedagogical focus of the *Summa theologiae* leads he to avoid repetition.

¹⁶⁰ The vegetative part of the soul for a medieval thinker like Aquinas involves psychological experiences founded solely on physical reactivity: hunger, thirst, sexual urge, and so on. As more primitive motivational forces, both medieval thinkers and modern psychologists distinguish them from the passions of the soul, or emotions; the latter call vegetative movements "urges" or "drives." Cf. P. King 1999, 101.

¹⁶¹ Aristotle uses the terms *πάθη* and *πάθος*. Other terms used by Aquinas' sources to translate the Greek include *motus animi* (St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei* ix, 4), *perturbationes*, and *affectiones* (Cicero, *Tusc.* iv, 5). Cf. *ST* I-II 22.2 sc; Brachtendorf 1997, 290.

¹⁶² See chapter one for our more extensive discussion on the modern conception of emotions, their impact on perception, and the influence of attachment, solidarity and emotional competency.

passions,¹⁶³ often reserving the later for negative, vehement or overpowering feelings (e.g. anger or love), I use the term “passions” in a larger sense, as synonymous with emotions and feelings.¹⁶⁴

In his philosophical psychology, an emotion in general is: (1) a movement of a passive power, as acted on by an agent; and more precisely (2) a movement of an appetitive power; and more properly still (3) a transmutation of an appetitive power having a bodily organ. The passions related to evil, such as fear and sorrow, specifically also involve (4) “some deterioration” (*aliquod nocumentum*) of the organ, inasmuch as an evil overcomes a particular good.¹⁶⁵ This last seemingly derogatory reference properly concerns how evil overcomes some emotions. It does not however eradicate the positive potential of the emotions, even of those related to evil, as we shall see later.

Thomas distinguishes the concupiscible and irascible appetites as two general emotive powers, which involve sub-layers of interrelated human capacities, or passions of the soul (*passiones animae*).¹⁶⁶ Both of these appetites appraise good and evil. The

163 The *OED* (2nd ed. 1989, IV.309-10) defines “*passion*” as “any kind of feeling by which the mind is powerfully affected or moved; a vehement commanding, or overpowering emotion; in psychology and art, any mode in which the mind is affected or acted upon (whether vehemently or not).” In a psychological sense, the *OED* (2nd ed. 1989, V:183) defines “*emotion*” as “a mental “feeling” or “affection” (e.g. of pleasure or pain, desire or aversion, surprise, hope or fear), as distinguished from cognitive or volitional states of consciousness. Also “feeling” is distinguished from the other classes of mental phenomena.”

164 For an extensive treatment of the relation between “passion” and “emotion,” see S. Leighton’s (1980, 203-237) article on Aristotle and the emotions.

165 Cf. *ST* I-II 41.1; *ST* I-II 22. In the *Prima Secundae*, Aquinas treats fear as a human emotion, its objects, causes and effects (*ST* I-II 41-44). Although in this treatise on the passion of fear, Aristotle is the more often cited authority (*NE*, *Rhetoric*, *Metaph.*, and *De Problem.*), Aquinas also draws from the following—in order of appearance: Damascene (*de Fide Orthod.*), Augustine (*De Civ. Dei*, *Tract.*), Dionysius (*Div. Nom.*), Romans (4:18), Gregory of Nyssa (Nemesius, *De Nat. Hom.*), Psalm (33:10), Isaiah 54:2, Cicero (*Quest. Tusc.*), Gal. 5:10.

166 Aquinas takes this distinction from Aristotle’s *de Anima* III, which divides the soul’s powers as rational (*logistikon*) and non-rational (*orexis*); then within the non-rational he divides the sensory *orexis* (*aisthetike*) into (*epithumetike*) and (*thumike*), which Aquinas refers to as *appetitus concupiscibilis* and *appetitus irascibilis* following Moerbeke’s translation of the Greek (cf. E. d’Arcy 1967, xxv). Aquinas distinguishes these powers further according to the various subjects and objects. The specific passions (subjective

concupiscible appetite's object is sensible good or evil considered absolutely; while the object of the irascible emotions are sensible good or evil in hardship. Both of them are integral for human efforts of fortitude and resilience, since the difficult is rooted in what precedes it, and drawn on by the good that finalizes it.

Aquinas outlines and describes the concupiscible appetite in a six fold way, in two sets of three symmetrically opposing emotions: (1) *amor* (love); (2) *desiderium* or *concupiscentia* (desire); and (3) *delectatio* (pleasure) or *gaudium* (joy); and their contraries: (1) *odium* (hatred); (2) *fuga* (avoidance) or *abominatio* (dislike); and (3) *dolor* (pain) or *tristitia* (sorrow).¹⁶⁷ Once human beings know a good object, their first concupiscible movement is love (*amor*) for it. Thomas says that: "a good produces in an appetitive faculty an inclination towards the good, a sense of affinity, a connaturality towards the good; this is the emotion called love."¹⁶⁸ His application of this conception of love surpasses pure sensuality; he raises it to include delight, charity and friendship. In order to understand the depth of love, Aquinas distinguishes love as an emotion from love as an act of the will.¹⁶⁹ Next, through desire (*desiderium*) the appetite further inclines toward the good loved. It continues what love starts, moving toward union with the beloved.¹⁷⁰ Finally delight or joy (*delectatio* or *gaudium*)

matter) relate to different objects with which they are primarily and secondarily concerned (cf. *ST* I-II 23.1 and 23.2).

¹⁶⁷ Cf. *ST* I-II 23.2; 35.2. He treats these emotions in *ST* I-II qq. 26-39. *Concupiscentia* or *desiderium* (pleasure) gives its name to this group of passions, since it is the one most strongly felt (cf. *ST* I-II 25.2 ad 1).

¹⁶⁸ "*Bonum ergo primo in potentia appetitiva causat quamdam inclinationem seu aptitudinem seu connaturalitatem ad bonum, quod pertinet ad passionem amoris*," *ST* I-II 23.4. The emotion of love has two sources of connaturality: one source being found in the lover, its connatural affinity to the beloved; the other source being found in the beloved, whose manifest goodness must be fitting or connatural to the lover (cf. *ST* I-II 26.1).

¹⁶⁹ Cf. *ST* I-II 25.3. As the most basic passion, *amor* not only encompasses particular expressions, but also prepares for Aquinas' treatment of the virtue of charity, which finds its perfection in friendship with God (cf. *ST* II-II 23.1). In this regard, Aquinas distinguishes concupiscible love from the love of friendship (cf. *ST* I-II 25.4); and describes the effects of love employing the language and experience of Christian mysticism (cf. *ST* I-II 28; where he cites Dionysius' *De divinis nominibus*; cf. Pinckaers 1990b, 382).

¹⁷⁰ "*Appetitus enim cuius que rei naturaliter movetur et tendit in finem sibi connaturalem; et iste motus provenit ex quadam conformitate rei ad suum finem.*" *ST* I-II 62.3. In the case of those things connatural to us according

involves that our appetite rest in the loved-good that we have reached, attained or joined. Connatural union with the loved object brings pleasure¹⁷¹ and joy.¹⁷²

In contrast, three concupiscible passions relate to evil: hatred (*odium*) disdains the evil; dislike (*abominatio*) or aversion (*fuga*) seeks to avoid and flee from it; while the presence of evil causes pain (*dolor*), sorrow and depression (*tristitia*). Temperance and its related virtues govern this group of emotions, which we need to direct through the good of reason.

The object of the irascible appetite is sensible good or evil, but as difficult or arduous. Aquinas differentiates the irascible appetite in a fivefold way: *spes* (hope) and its contrary *desparatio* (despair); *timor* (fear) and its contrary *audacia* (daring); and *ira* (anger) which has no opposite.¹⁷³ Aquinas says that “the irascible passions are not all of one order, but are directed to different things: for daring and fear are about some great danger; hope and despair are about some difficult good; while anger seeks to overcome something contrary which has wrought harm.”¹⁷⁴ He considers fortitude as the cardinal virtue for the irascible appetite. The root *ira* (anger) only lends its name to this particular human capacity. Anger is the greatest of the passions related to this

to the life of the senses, e.g. food, drink and sexual urges, one is moved to procure and consume or employ them by a certain connatural desire. The establishment of a *habitus* is a consequent step. As in the case of the study of *amor*, which leads to the virtue of charity, Aquinas’ study of *desiderium* prepares for the virtue of hope.

171 “*amor et concupiscentia delectationem causant. Omne enim amatum fit delectabile amanti, eo quod amor est quaedam unio vel connaturalitas amanti ad amatum.*” *ST* I-II 32.3 ad 3. Aquinas describes two types of connatural pleasure: one that has a stable basis in our nature, the other that entails a development by *habitus* or custom usually growing off this stable basis, as we shall see later.

172 Aquinas distinguishes between the corporeal pleasures (*delectatio*), which proceed from sensation, and spiritual joys (*gaudium*), which proceed from reason.

173 Cf. *ST* I-II 23.2; 23.3; 35.2. These emotions are treated extensively in *ST* I-II 40-48. *Ira* (anger) gives its name to this group of passions, since it is the one most readily perceived of the group (cf. *ST* I-II 25.3 ad 1).

174 “*Sed passiones irascibilis non sunt unius ordinis, sed ad diversa ordinantur: nam audacia et timor ordinantur ad aliquod magnum periculum; spes et desperatio ad aliquod bonum arduum; ira autem ad superandum aliquod contrarium quod nocumentum intulit*” (*ST* I-II 60.4; cf. *ST* I-II 25.1; *ST* I-II 40-48).

power, in the sense that it manifests itself more vividly than the other emotions do.¹⁷⁵ Nonetheless, Aquinas does not construe it as the principal focus of the irascible appetite, since the fear of death is the strongest of its emotions.¹⁷⁶

In order to illustrate Thomas' viewpoint on emotions, we shall ask: how does his ethical view of the passions¹⁷⁷ correlate with other approaches to emotions and morality? Identifying diverse schools of thought on emotions and moral agency will help us to situate Aquinas and lead into a dialogue with contemporary psychology. I divide the major positions on human emotions into three groups.¹⁷⁸ The first group views the emotions as irrational and evil (or at least always inclined to evil). For example, the Stoics teach that the passions are disturbances to reason that the sage suppresses through the practice of *apatheia*.¹⁷⁹ Post-Tridentine moral manuals construe emotions as

175 Cf. *STI-II* 25.3 ad 1 and 25.2 ad 1; *STI* 59.1 ad 2; *STI-II* 46.1 ad 1.

176 As Aquinas says: "*Similiter inter passiones irascibilis, praecipuum est quod pertinet ad timores et audacias circa pericula mortis, circa quae est fortitudo: unde fortitudo ponitur virtus cardinalis in irascibilis; non mansuetudo, quae est circa ira, licet ab ira denominetur, propter hoc quod est ultima inter passiones irascibilis; nec etiam magnanimitas et humilitas, quae quodammodo se habent ad spem vel fiduciam alicuius magni*" (*de virt. com.* 12, 26).

177 Aquinas' extensive treatment of the passions includes: whether the passions are good or evil; how they are differentiated; the subject and object, cause and effect of the eleven major passions, and so on (*I-II* qq. 22-48). For recent discussions of Aquinas on the passions in the context of habituation and virtue, see: M. Jordan 1986a, 71-97; S.-Th. Pinckaers 1990, 379-391; G. S. Harak 1993, 71-98, D. Fritz Cates 1997, 16-30; P. King 1999, 101-132.

178 If space permitted, I could add another group, the Epicureans, who search flourishing at the level of the passions, seeking to increase their pleasures and abstain from pain. If even more space were granted one could compare Aquinas to four major psychological perspectives on emotions: the Darwinian, Jamesian, cognitive, and social constructivist perspectives (cf. R. R. Cornelius 1996). The neurological research discussed throughout this study, nonetheless, traverses this fourfold division of the evolutionary, physiological, cognitive, and social-construct dimensions.

179 A. A. Long (1987) questions whether Stoic *apatheia* maintained a limited place for emotions, which might not have been called passions once under the guidance of virtue. According to J. Brachtendorf (1997, 290), the Stoic view—also held by Cicero—was not a simplistic stimulus-response theory. Rather an intermediary evaluative intellectual activity (a practical syllogism) gives forth a reasonable movement of the soul when the objects are real goods (or real evils), whereas passions precipitate when the object only seems to be good or evil. Cf. M. Nussbaum (1994) who speaks of the Stoic "extirpation of passion."

enemies of voluntariness and obstacles to freedom.¹⁸⁰ The casuist approach moreover often focuses exclusively on the dangers of emotions for moral action.¹⁸¹ A second position holds that passions are suspicious or ambiguous in themselves; at best, emotions are morally relevant inasmuch as reason and will succeed in controlling them. The Platonic,¹⁸² Kantian¹⁸³ and socio-biology traditions in various ways fit here.¹⁸⁴ A third position construes the passions as (neutral) energies that can become morally good or evil by participating in reason.¹⁸⁵ The distinction between this and the previous two positions is a fine one, and has important consequences for the way in which passions interact with reason in a moral act. To recognize passions as trainable neutral

180 Post-Tridentine manuals of moral theology most often give negative attention to the passions. Obligation is the central element in this casuist morality focused on law, which directs moral action through moral imperatives. Passions are understood as obstacles, which diminish liberty, and nature (emotional inclinations) is seen as redundant, contrary or unreliable. It is for these reasons that such manuals (e.g. P. Vitrin, S. J.) do not have any chapter on passions. Even within the Thomist tradition (a virtue tradition), authors, like D. M. Prümmer (1953), interpret human emotions as obstacles to freedom.

181 This approach is even based on a particular reading of Aquinas' texts that need interpreting in their larger context. See *ST I-II* 24.3 and *de Veritate* 26.7, which will be discussed below.

182 Plato, for example, uses the image of two unruly horses representing the irascible and concupiscible passions. We can also mention here the cognitivist tradition of psychology, including L. Kohlberg.

183 Kant distrusts emotions since neither are they always fitting and reliable, nor always a positive motivation for action. While emphasizing the authority of autonomous reason and good will in morality, nonetheless Kant insists that we must cultivate emotions in order to act from principle with right affective engagements (cf. *The Doctrine of Virtue* 386-7, 456; cited in N. Sherman 1997, 142-3, cf. 6, 141-158).

184 Socio-biology ascribes a "profound moral ambiguity" to "evolved natural emotional proclivities," which might no longer be adaptive and fitting. Emotions may motivate bad character and lead to wrong behavior; in any case they have their origin in natural selection rather than ethical principles or a larger view of an ordered creation (cf. E. O. Wilson 1978; and critique by S. J. Pope 1998a, 288 and 1998b, 551).

185 "*Si igitur secundum se considerentur, prout scilicet sunt motus quidem irrationalis appetitus, sic non est in eis bonum vel malum morale, quod dependet a ratione*" (*ST I-II* 24.1; cf. *ST I-II* 18.5). The passions are neither morally good nor bad considered absolutely (*ST I-II* 24.1 ad 3). They are moral according to their usage. An expression of a passion is adjudicated according to the rationality of its moral object as the way it participates in reason, which serves as Aquinas' standard for moral agency.

energies affirms both their positive potential in responsible action, but also their capacity to render someone their prisoner.¹⁸⁶

This third view is more properly Aquinas' position. Here emotions concern the whole range of emotive states that interrelate with the other human powers of sensation, volition and intellection. They are more than felt reactions. They are both object-directed, and pre-rational attractions or repulsions. On the one hand, as object-directed, they first arise from the appetitive rather than the apprehensive (cognitive) part of the human being (soul), since they relate and are ordered to things in themselves and not merely to human apprehensions.¹⁸⁷ On the other hand, as pre-rational movements of soul, evaluative-thought-contents (cognitive, intellective and even unconscious ones) constitute and interact with our emotions.¹⁸⁸ For example, perceiving a quickly moving dark object, we can experience fear. And the recognition of a person in need can stir mercy towards him.

The emotions however do not remain the initial affective-appraisal. Through our practical intellect, we rationally adjudicate the adequacy of the initial perception made through the senses; thus we further identify good and/or evil aspects of the object.

Aquinas' account of the emotions becomes clear in terms of his doctrine of habituation, virtue and vice. Misconceptions of his

186 One needs to focus (educate, refine) them in order to remain the *master of the object of one's desires*. The energy is so strong, if one is not careful, one can become prisoner of the object of one's desire. The desire can take the place of master instead of the person; the emotion can overwhelm the will. We need to distinguish the focus on the object (at attentional level—cognitive, volitional and sensory levels) from the desire or the object of desire (emotional level). Cf. *ST I-II* 24.3; *ST I-II* 10.3.

187 Drawing upon Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (vi.4, 1027b25-29), Aquinas says: "*Nam per vim appetitivam anima habet ordinem ad ipsas res, prout in seipsis sunt*" (*ST I-II* 22.2).

188 The sensitive appetite is a power of a corporeal organ, whose acts depend not only on the disposition of that organ but also on the soul. Thus, cognition influences the presentation of the object. When the apprehension of the senses or of the imagination (which are regulated by the command of reason and informed by intelligibles) presents objects to the sensitive appetite, the bodily passion can: react according to its dispositions (the law that has been inscribed through nature, *fomes* and habituation); or act according to the command of reason (when reason precedes and when the passion obeys). Cf. *ST I-II* 17.7; J. Barad 1991, 397-403.

position on how emotions increase or decrease the goodness or malice of an act often involve a simplified temporal reading of the “antecedent” and “consequent” distinction. Aquinas does not hold that every emotion that precedes intellectual adjudication of the situation decreases goodness and voluntariness. Particular emotions, which spring from virtuously shaped emotive capacities, first prepare and point us toward acting in a way which we have habitually done in the past. In a second intellectual step, we rationally evaluate the situation and the felt emotion. For example, our initial feeling of mercy does not deprive us from rationally and freely choosing an act of charity.¹⁸⁹ It serves rather both as a sign of the intensity of the will, and as a chosen self-motivator to act; it renders us more attentive to the plight of our neighbor.¹⁹⁰ It needs further intellectual involvement. We need to evaluate rationally and choose freely to act. Thomas follows Aristotle in holding that virtue involves both actions and passions. If our passions come to participate in our reason, then we habituate them to become in some way even more fine-tuned, object-directed and reasonable (without saying rational) movements of the soul. On the contrary, adverse and uncontrolled passions can attenuate an act’s voluntariness and an agent’s moral responsibility.¹⁹¹ In either case, emotions are part and partial of human agency.

189 A locus of misinterpretation is Aquinas’ article on “whether passion increases or decreases the goodness or malice of an act” (*ST* I-II 24.3). The prior two articles of the *Summa theologiae* affirm that passions can be good insofar as they participate in reason and will; this principle must serve in interpreting article three. The heart of the problem concerns (1) whether passions are good prior to, or only posterior to a movement of the reason and will, and (2) whether the antecedent / consequent distinction is simply temporal, or also causal in nature. The first response reads: “*Uno modo, anteceder. Et sic, cum obnubilent iudicium rationis, ex quo dependet bonitas moralis actus, diminuunt actus bonitatem: laudabilius enim est quod ex iudicio rationis aliquis faciat opus caritatis, quam ex sola passione misericordiae*” *ST* I-II 24.3 ad 1; cf. *ST* I-II 77.6.

190 Cf. *ST* I-II 24.3 ad 1. On the contrary, Aquinas explains that it is less laudable to act simply from the passion of mercy without a judgment of reason.

191 Cf. *ST* I-II 6.6 and 6.7. “Passion”—as a violent emotion that inhibits clear reasoning or willing—is classically identified as a circumstance attenuating moral responsibility. For example, civil law has become more lenient in regard “crimes of passion” inasmuch as they are not premeditated.

2.4.2. Can Emotions be Intelligent? Do We Need Emotions to Act Morally?

Recent neurological research has renewed the debate on how emotions support moral judgments. Neurological specialists have posed two questions of vital interest for morality and the emotions. First, can emotions be intelligent? Second, do humans need emotions to act morally? These questions will lead us to ask how a reevaluation of emotions might enhance Aquinas' moral anthropology, and the critical dialogue between resilience research and his virtue theory.

While juxtaposing rational intelligence with "emotional intelligence," neurological specialists hypothesize that emotions sometimes exhibit a cognitive content.¹⁹² This "emotional intelligence" involves expressing a certain control over emotions. Daniel Goleman (1995, 34) says that emotional intelligence involves "abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and delay gratification; to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathize and to hope." This approach sets rational intelligence in parallel with "emotional intelligence," and even speaks in terms of two minds—one rational and the other emotional. It recognizes the cognitive element of the emotions and their social dimension. In what way do these researchers construe emotions as intelligent? They observe that human emotions involve intuitive signals, gut feelings and the emotional wisdom that we garner through experience.¹⁹³ Humans express emotional intelligence when we intelligently manage emotions, when we recognize their cognitive content and then use them for larger personal and social purposes. For these researchers, emotional

¹⁹² The question of how we can consider emotions intelligent has been neglected by many, but also revived in the recent past. For example, two Yale psychologists Robert Sternberg (1985) and Peter Salovey have made significant contributions. Notably Salovey was the first to propose the model of emotional intelligence (Salovey and Mayer 1985), and did extensive mapping of the way in which humans can bring intelligence to their emotions. Their predecessor, E. L. Thorndike, in 1920s and 1930s promoted social intelligence, "the ability to understand others and 'act wisely in human relations'" (cf. Goleman 1995, 42ff.).

¹⁹³ This statement builds upon our previous discussions on affect and emotion as "appraising processes," which we find for example in Bowlby's (1969) general control-systems theory of behavior (cf. Ainsworth 1978).

intelligence means that we can employ our emotions in intelligent ways, but also that emotions affect the way in which we reason with our rational mind. A. Damasio's research (1994) goes so far as to suggest that without emotions we cannot act rationally (that is, we cannot act according to our rational principles and goals), as we shall see shortly.

To acknowledge the potential intelligence of emotions leads us to ask how emotion and rationality correlate. How can we rationally manage our emotions? According to Goleman, the "emotional mind" exercises a range of control over emotions: "the more intense the feeling, the more dominant the emotional mind becomes—and the more ineffectual the rational."¹⁹⁴ In particular, certain emotions (such as anger and fear) are more than just initial reactions; they do more than give a first impression of the situation.¹⁹⁵ They also press the agent to act. A seemingly simple emotion-charged perception quickly puts the body into flight or fight postures. Nonetheless, except in extreme cases, emotions do not involve a fixed response.¹⁹⁶ The internal emotional manager (the prefrontal neocortex) regularly acts to control emotions.¹⁹⁷ We shall discuss this further in chapter three's study on

194 Goleman (1995, 8-9) suggests that "this is an arrangement that seems to stem from eons of evolutionary advantage to having emotions and intuitions guide our instantaneous response in situations where our lives are in peril—and where pausing to think over what to do could cost us our lives."

195 Certain emotions (anger and fear for example) employ the limbic neural circuitry directly involving the amygdala. D. Goleman (1995, 17; cf. 18 and 21) explains, "Those feelings that take the direct route through the amygdala include our most primitive and potent: this circuit does much to explain the power of emotion to overwhelm rationality." The amygdala leads us to act, while the slightly slower and more informed neocortex develops a more refined plan. The emotional arousal produced by the amygdala seems to imprint more strongly these moments in memory. Evolution's way of ensuring vivid memories of what threatens or pleases, but they can be faulty guides to the present (i.e. without the analysis of the neocortex and informed judgment).

196 For example, emotional hijacking can result from two dynamics: (1) the amygdala functions, while the neocortex processes fail to be activated (i.e. there is no balance); and (2) the neocortical zones collaborate with the amygdala in the direction of the "emotional emergency" (Goleman 1995).

197 When the emotional and rational minds interact well, "emotional intelligence arises—as does intellectual ability. This turns the old understanding of the tension between reason and feeling on its head: it is not that we want to do away with emotion and put reason in its place, as Erasmus had it, but instead find the intelligent balance of the two. The old paradigm held an ideal of reason freed of the pull of emotion. The new paradigm urges us to harmonize head and heart"

neuro-biological interaction between the power of emotion and that of rationality in the case of fear.

Lastly, emotional intelligence extends to the social domain in at least two regards, according to Goleman. On the one hand, to exhibit emotional intelligence, we must recognize emotions in others. Goleman conjectures a twofold social utility here: (1) empathizing with others enkindles altruism toward them. This empathy can start us on the way to an altruistic act. And (2) when we catch subtle social signals of the needs of others, we can more competently convey to them our own emotional signals and verbal communications.¹⁹⁸ On the other hand, we display emotional intelligence when we are capable of handling other people's emotions. This art of relationships involves not only recognizing their emotions, but also acquiring competence to help manage them.¹⁹⁹ Social emotional competence concerns more than just taking the emotional temperature of the social group. It involves how group members manage their emotional lives together. How they employ emotions in larger projects of meaning. How emotions motivate us to act in tune with an intelligent life. On the contrary, it describes also how emotions can lead us to act against our goals.

This notion of "emotional intelligence" offers us several insights on and challenges to understanding human resilience and Aquinas' anthropology. An emotional intelligence approach marks a positive turn in the recent history of how specialists correlate intelligence with emotion. To manage emotions intelligently in difficult situations involves a type of emotional resilience (resilience-producing use of emotional energy). In a group furthermore, it constitutes an element of social resilience. Indeed, social interactions aid us to manage our emotions, and an individual's emotional

(Goleman 1995, 28-9). The corrective side of the emotional brain can put a damper switch on the amygdala's surges. It is the prefrontal lobes (of the neocortex) behind the forehead that seems to stifle or control feelings of rage and fear in order to deal more effectively with the situation at hand, for example when through reappraisal one finds a more analytic and appropriate response (cf. Goleman 1995, 24-5). Except in emotional emergencies, the prefrontal cortex governs emotional reactions.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. Goleman 1995, 96-110.

¹⁹⁹ We cannot address all the related questions here, such as: how can one aid in calming the anger of an other person, or in calling forth their courage? See Goleman (1995, 111-26) for suggestions.

intelligence (intelligent use of emotions) influences human rationality and social agency.

Goleman describes the neural workings that underlie emotion, but his construal of an “emotional mind” causes us to think. Indeed, the functioning of the human brain and nervous system do not spell the whole of emotion for Aquinas nor do they constitute a separate mind (in classical terms). For Thomas, the intellect (reason and will) operates through the senses and through emotion. However, reason and will are distinct from senses and emotion, as we stated earlier. Aquinas addresses the interplay of emotion and intellect in his theory of moral habituation, as we shall see in the next section. Nevertheless, Goleman’s work on “emotional intelligence” offers insights for Aquinas’ approach to emotions and morality. He enhances Aquinas’ view with parallel and complementary observations about intelligent personal and social uses of emotion. He presents ample reflections and examples of pedagogical implications of the intelligent management of emotions. Aquinas’ position, however, outstrips Goleman’s treatment of “emotional intelligence,” especially concerning how the virtues instill intelligence in emotions so that we act with practical wisdom. Aquinas’ teaching on finality and motivation provides a larger framework and depth of insight as well.

Thomas deems that emotions participate in reason by command and by habituation.²⁰⁰ Reason and will, in his developmental-pedagogical sense, inform the emotions. In turn, emotions inform human reasoning about the situation on hand. First, as commanded by reason, human emotions participate in a political (non-despotic) type of rule.²⁰¹ Second, as participating in reason by habituation (i.e. through acquired virtue), human emotions become principles of well-ordered human action. Through virtuous habituation of human emotions, we confirm the emotion’s “natural aptitude to obey reason,”²⁰² and correct emotional disordering.²⁰³ Aquinas recognizes that we need well-formed

²⁰⁰ Aquinas’ approach to the pedagogy of virtue can be found in *ST* I-II 56.4.

²⁰¹ Cf. *ST* I-II 24.1 corpus and ad 3; 24.3 ad 1; and 56.4 ad 3; in this Aquinas follows Aristotle’s *Pol.* i.3, 1254b4-5.

²⁰² Cf. *ST* I-II 56.4.

²⁰³ In Aquinas’ terms, we thus correct the infection of the *fomes*. He says, “*irascibilis et concupiscibilis ex se quidem non habent bonum virtutis sed magis*

emotions in order to act morally. Such emotions render our acts more praiseworthy and help us to complete good acts.²⁰⁴

Antonio Damasio poses a second, innovative question, on whether we need emotions to act morally. Often classic moralists treat only the culpability of emotions; at most, they exonerate emotions from negative influence. Conversely, Damasio's neurological research construes emotions as vital for morality. His research claims that emotions are indispensable for moral evaluation and behavior.²⁰⁵ Through observing neurologically impaired subjects, Damasio has found that a person's higher level intellectual abilities (such as attention, perception, memory, language, intelligence) can remain intact while their moral judgment and decision-making is impaired by the disturbance to lower level emotion-related neurological activities.²⁰⁶ Damasio construes this connection of absent emotions and immoral behavior as meaning that (1) higher-level intellectual activities do not suffice for moral action, and (2) we need emotions to reason and act morally.²⁰⁷ This approach goes further than Aristotle and other thinkers

infectionem fomitis; inquantum vero conformantur rationi, sic in eis adgeneratur bonum virtutis moralis" ST I-II 56.4 ad 2. According to Aquinas, the "*fomes*" of sin inclines the sensual appetite against reason (cf. ST I-II 82.3; ST I-II 91.6; ST I-II 93.3 ad 1; ST III 15.2; and ST III 27.3).

204 Cf. ST I-II 17.7 ad 2; ST I-II 17.9 ad 3; ST I-II 22.2 ad 3; ST I-II 24.2 ad 2. On praiseworthiness and emotions, see ST I-II 24.3; *De Veritate* 26.7. McDermott (1999, 37) argues: "that Aristotle and Aquinas bring out the moral significance of the emotions by making them part of moral actions as such, and not simply felt reactions to which an agent, if she is to flourish well, must dispose herself virtuously just as she disposes herself virtuously to right action."

205 For example, Damasio (1994) has identified that significant meaning is embedded in affects and behaviors, below the level of conscious awareness: "To summarize this line of research and clinical findings, it appears that only a small amount of the information and emotionally significant interpretations that we employ in arriving at moral decisions reach consciousness." Wallwork 1999, 177; cf. p. 173.

206 The site of damage that causes this impairment is the "prefrontal-amygdala circuitry that links higher level cognition with emotional responses made possible by the cortex-to-amygdala neural pathway. [...] Damasio concludes from this research 'that observing social convention, behaving ethically, and making decisions [...] require knowledge of rules and strategies and the integrity of specific brain systems' that have to do with the emotions," according to Wallwork (1999, 173-174).

207 According to Damasio (1994, 53 *italics* in original): "*Reduction in emotion may constitute an equally important source of irrational behavior*. The counterintuitive connection between absent emotion and warped behavior may

who hold that through dispositions, our emotions can serve moral judgments. Damasio furthermore accounts for the personal historical component of habitual agency by what neurophysiology calls “somatic markers.” He maintains that neurochemical profiles facilitate decisions, and extend past predispositions and choices.²⁰⁸

Although Damasio cannot demonstrate the way in which emotions and somatic markers directly contribute to reasoned decision-making, his research does convincingly show that disturbances to the emotional neurological circuitry precipitate problems in moral judgments. His research opens the way for further reflection on the importance, and even necessity, of emotions for moral life.²⁰⁹

What do these observations, findings and theories offer in rapport with Aquinas’ anthropology and virtue theory? Damasio neurological research demonstrates that emotions do not simply accompany, but rather, are indispensable for moral evaluation and behavior. This work goes further than Aquinas,²¹⁰ insofar as it involves a scientific discovery that damage to, or lack of emotional neural-circuitry can impair moral agency. It provides a scientific neurological foundation for acknowledging that emotions constitute necessary, even positive, elements in moral agency. This insight, which correlates morality and emotion, nonetheless needs a larger theory of moral

tell us something about the biological machinery of reason.” Damasio furthermore claims that the human rationality demands the regulation not only of neocortical, but also subcortical structures.

208 S. J. Pope (1998b, 552.) says that “Neurophysiology also alerts us to the dangers of bias. “Somatic markers” facilitate decisions in complex social situations, but they can be disordered as well, as in uncritical “obedience, conformity, [and] the desire to preserve self-esteem” (Damasio 1994, 191). Bias can be felt “in the bones,” as when, for example, a person experiences unpleasant body states when encountering those he or she finds repulsive, be they mentally ill, homeless people asking for aid or an affluent interracial couple on a date. The body’s neurally based drive to reduce unpleasant body states can and sometimes does act as a counter-moral force that needs to be held in check.”

209 There is certainly more to say on the relation of emotion and moral reasoning. For a more complete treatment, one could investigate the moral impact of Freud’s theory of pulsions (life pulsions and death pulsions—*thanatos*), or Cognitivist theories on the biopsychic schemas that relate to the interplay between the biological movements (emotions) and cognitive ones.

210 Aquinas, nonetheless, already holds the principle that fully perfect human agency springs from well-formed will *and* passion (cf. *ST* I-II 24.3).

agency and finality, and in particular, of the development of moral *habitus* and virtue education.

According to Stocker and Hegeman (1996), moreover, an act done without emotion is not only less than perfect, but can be a sign of illness, either psychological or spiritual.²¹¹ This position concurs with an aspect of Aquinas' position. Neuro-biological and psychological studies on the necessity of emotions in moral reasoning and the development of emotional intelligence confirm the importance of emotions in morality, but also something of their function and trainability. Nonetheless, these sciences lack in themselves a larger view of human flourishing and normativity. The evolutionary researchers leave a vast field of meaning and purpose untouched, when they set it aside from their investigation. In the upcoming section, we shall return to the insights and challenges of these sciences in our constructive re-visiting of Aquinas's work. In the meantime, we shall now turn to his understanding of moral habituation and natural inclinations, in order to put it into dialogue with resilience insights.

2.4.3. Moral Habituation and Natural Inclinations

We cannot adequately revisit Aquinas' treatment of moral agency without also addressing moral habituation (*habitus*) and its relationship to natural inclinations. *Habitus*²¹² is the developmental

²¹¹ According to Stocker and Hegeman (1996, 1-2), "an absence or deficiency of affect is a characterizing feature of many neuroses, borderline conditions, and psychoses, as well as such maladies of the spirit as meaninglessness, emptiness, ennui, accidie, spiritual weakness, and spiritual tiredness."

²¹² Aquinas' thought on *habitus* develops from a sketch in his *Commentary on the Sentences* of Peter Lombard to a full treatise in the *Summa theologiae*. After discussing the faculties as sources of action in the *Prima pars* of the *Summa theologiae* and the goal of flourishing and the passions early in the *Prima Secundae*, he presents his treatise on *habitus* in questions 49-54 of the *Prima Secundae*. He first discusses *habitus* in terms of acquired particular qualities relating to action (q. 49), then of how they differ when found in the body *per se* or also in the soul, intellect and will (q. 50). Afterwards he inquires whether *habitus* are innate, caused by one or several human actions or infused into human beings by God (q. 51). Finally he treats the nature of *habitus*' growth and decay (qq. 52 and 53). Only after the building blocks of *habitus* are explored does Aquinas more fully address how moral *habitus* applies to virtue (I-II 55-67) and to vice in general, (I-II 71-80) as well as to particular virtues and vices in the *Secunda Secundae*.

backbone of Aquinas' moral thought. It serves his virtue theory in three ways. First, a *habitus* integrates the moral building blocks: the goal of flourishing, basic inclinations and emotions. We develop a *habitus* through goal-directed, rational interaction with our natural inclinations and emotions. Second, it permits the continuity and creativity in moral acts. Third, a *habitus* serves as a psychological foundation for understanding virtue and vice, as well as sin, law and grace. In the next section, I shall ask how neuro-biology and resilience research can enrich Aquinas' treatment of habituation.

Aquinas defines *habitus* as an acquired quality that we alter only with difficulty. It is a disposition to act that has become second nature (*connaturalis*).²¹³ Aquinas uses *habitus* to cover the full range of mental, sensory and organic states. He follows Aristotle in distinguishing a *habitus* of the body or entitative *habitus*,²¹⁴ from a *habitus* of the mind or operative *habitus*.²¹⁵ Operative *habitus* cover three closely related domains: (a) temperament or character traits, such as shyness and kindness; (b) acquired stable dispositions to act, that is, the virtues and vices; and (c) single acts.²¹⁶ Operative *habitus* are hard to change qualities, connatural dispositions. They aid us to act with

²¹³ "*habitus autem est qualitas difficile mobilis* (Aristotle, *Cat.* 6, 9, 3, 10-13.), *inde est quod incontinens statim poenitet, transeunte passione: quod non accidit de temperato, quinimmo gaudet se peccati est sibi facta connaturalis secundum habitum*" (*ST* II-II 156.3 ; also see 4 *Sent.* d. 49, q. 3, a. 2; *ST* I-II 78.2, and *De verit.* 20.2). Aquinas employs Aristotle's definition: "*Habitus dicitur dispositio secundum quam bene aut male disponitur dispositum, et aut secundum se aut ad aliud, ut sanitas habitus quidam est*" *Metaphysics* 1022b10-12; quoted by Aquinas at *ST* I-II 49.1. He also cites Aristotle, and the Philosopher's medieval commentators, as primary sources in explicating *habitus*. Aristotle (*Categories* 6.8b26-7) describes *habitus*, one of his ten categories, as a quality that is difficult to change. Of the four types of quality, only *habitus* modifies a subject's nature. Such a modification either agrees or disagrees with the progressive development involved in one's nature.

²¹⁴ Entitative *habitus* includes health, sickness, beauty and the like. They are like a disposition without fully being a disposition, since by their nature they are impermanent: *ST* I-II 50.1; also see *ST* I-II 49.2 ad 1; *ST* I-II 49.3 ad 3; and *ST* I-II 49.4.

²¹⁵ Cf. *ST* I-II 50.1. Although Aristotle uses health to exemplify the changeableness of *habitus*, Aquinas thinks that Aristotle does not include health (and other *habitus* of body) as this type of quality, which is the proper place of the operative *habitus*.

²¹⁶ Thomas thus identifies three types of operative *habitus* as temperament traits, dispositions and acts.

three key characteristics: ease, promptness and joy.²¹⁷ Among operative *habitus*, Aquinas distinguishes cognitive or intellectual *habitus*, (*ST* I-II 50, 3) from orectic or moral ones.

The contemporary use of the word “habit” is inadequate to render the richness of Aquinas’ use of its cognate (especially in regard moral and intellectual *habitus*).²¹⁸ The term *habitus* does not focus on external, non-voluntary acts, e.g. the habit of scratching one’s nose. Furthermore, unlike a habit, a *habitus* is not an uncontrolled or involuntary motor-reaction that impedes the freedom needed for moral action; e.g. in the habit of smoking, an involuntary compulsion slavishly drives one to light up a cigarette.²¹⁹ Aquinas views *habitus* as a disposition towards a chosen goal. They aid us to act knowingly, freely and firmly.²²⁰

The place of volition in moral *habitus* is critical. For Aquinas, we choose to exercise our *habitus*.²²¹ A *habitus* not only pertains to the

217 Aquinas gives three characteristics of such acquired connatural *habitus*—pleasure, promptness and ease—while explaining how the idea of connaturality relates to that of *habitus* using Aristotle’s definition of *habitus* as “a quality which is hard to change;” Aquinas says: “*Tunc vero recipitur per modum habitus, quando illud receptum efficitur quasi connaturale recipienti; et inde est quod habitus a Philosopho dicitur qualitas difficile mobilis; (Cat. 8,9b30) inde est etiam quod operationes ex habitu procidentales delectabiles sunt et in promptu habentur et facilius exercentur, quia sunt quasi connaturales effectae*” *De verit.* 20, 2. Also see *SCG* 3, 150, nr 7.

218 *The Oxford English Dictionary* (OED 1993, vol. V.5) for example says that a “habit” is “1. some external deportment, constitution, appearance, [...] or behavior; [...] or 2. a settled disposition or tendency to act in a certain way, especially one acquired by frequent repetition of the same act until it becomes almost or quite involuntary. [...] 3. The way in which a person is mentally or morally constituted; the sum of the mental and moral qualities; mental constitution, disposition, character.”

219 The involuntary automation entailed by habit conflicts with what is needed for moral acts, since automation evaporates (or diminishes) the moral dimension, which requires that acts proceed from a well-reasoned decision, from freely engaged consent. S.-Th. Pinckaers 1979, 144-147.

220 For example, in the *habitus* of generosity, one freely gives good gifts to others. Thomas says: “*Aliud principium est habitus inclinans, secundum quem benefacere fit aliqui connaturale. Unde liberales delectabiliter dant aliis*” *ST* I-II 32.6.

221 In this regard, Aquinas draws support from his main Patristic mentor Augustine, who says that *habitus est quo aliquid agitur cum opus est.*” (*De Bono Coniugali* 21, 25. PL 40, 390; cited in *ST* I-II 49.3 sc.); and from Averroes who indicates “*quod habitus est quo quis agit cum voluerit*” (Commentary on *III de Anima*, 18; cited in *ST* I-II 49.3 sc).

nature of the possessor, but also to the action that is either “the goal of the nature or something leading to the goal.”²²² Therefore moral *habitus* do not become “almost or quite involuntary,” but rather they allow us to act more voluntarily. They constitute an element of creative liberty, through which we fulfill our well-formed will.²²³ One who has the virtue of piano playing can creatively interpret a musical score, or write a new one. Inasmuch as a faculty or power’s nature correlates with action, then the disposition will direct us to act in new ways. In this classical worldview, the *habitus* of the will thus affects our being and consequent operation, since our action follows our nature (being).²²⁴

The need to acquire moral *habitus* seems more obvious when we comprehend the diversity of uses to which humans can put rational faculties. We can approach our goals through different means, and we can more or less develop our moral skills. Aquinas says that: “every faculty which can be exercised in more than one way needs a *habitus* to ensure that it is exercised in the right way.”²²⁵ *Habitus* help us know more clearly and act more surely. But how do they do this? How do we acquire moral skills that aid our moral discernment in the long haul?

Aquinas for his part uses the notion of act and potency to analyze how we acquire *habitus*. We can habitually dispose a faculty only if it is not naturally determined, but rather open to further specification. Two critical open faculties are reason and will. In particular, to adapt a rational power according to its nature, operation or goal requires three conditions. *First*, the possessor of the power needs to have a potentiality. The related action must neither be

222 “*Unde habitus non solum importat ordinem ad ipsam naturam rei, sed etiam consequenter ad operationem, inquantum est finis naturae, vel perducens ad finem*” ST I-II 49.3.

223 At the physical level, one might stop the habit of smoking, since it is against the nature of the human person inasmuch as it causes health problems. At a social level, one might stop it since it is unpleasant for some other people. At a religious level, one might stop it for a spiritual or religious reason, e.g. as personal reordering (mortification) of the passions to focus on one’s own conversion to Christ during Lent.

224 This view is formulated as “*agere sequitur esse*” (cf. R. Cessario 2001, 23).

225 “*Omnis potentia quae diversimode potest ordinari ad agendum indiget habitu quo bene disponatur ad suum actum*” ST I-II 50.5.

impossible, nor in conflict with its nature, nor previously determined. *Second*, the rational agent must have alternatives to realize the potential. *Third*, the rational faculty seeks to analyze and synthesize complex elements.²²⁶ In sum, in order for us to acquire a rational *habitus*, we must have as yet undetermined potential, different possibilities and the ability for rational investigation.

According to Aquinas' anthropology,²²⁷ human nature itself inclines a person toward good *habitus*, toward virtue.²²⁸ We have what he calls the "seeds of virtue."²²⁹ These natural or spiritual inclinations are preparatory principles or inclinations toward a proper object (e.g. the principles of natural right). Such inclinations belong to their respective powers, which serve as the basis for developing *habitus*. Casuist approaches have much misunderstood or neglected Thomas' position on the natural inclinations. They have simply seen in them the effects of original, if not also social, sin. Furthermore, contemporary psychological theorists have sometimes neglected the input of such inclinations (at least at non-rational levels, e.g. in cognitive theories). They have treated instincts in a descriptive or therapeutic, but non-moral framework.²³⁰

²²⁶ Cf. *ST* I-II 49.4.

²²⁷ Aquinas' optimism is of course tempered by the acknowledgement that this "connatural inclination" toward good is lessened through sin. Habitually disordered acts are not merely isolated incidences of sin, but stable patterns of vice. He affirms that: "*Unde cum peccatum sit contrarium virtuti, ex hoc ipso quod homo peccat, diminuitur bonum naturae, quod est inclinatio ad virtutem*" *ST* I-II 85.1.

²²⁸ He says: "*Inclinatur autem unumquodque naturaliter ad operationem sibi convenientem secundum suam formam, sicut ignis ad calefaciendum. Unde cum anima rationalis sit propria forma hominis, naturalis inclinatio inest cuilibet homini ad hoc quod agat secundum rationem; et hoc est agere secundum virtutem*" *ST* I-II 94.3. Furthermore he says: "*Ipsa autem inclinatio ad virtutem est quoddam bonum naturae*" *ST* I-II 85.1.

²²⁹ "*In appetitivis autem potentiis non est aliquis habitus naturalis secundum inchoationem, ex parte ipsius animae, quantum ad ipsam substantiam habitus: sed solum quantum ad principia quaedam ipsius, sicut principia juris communis dicuntur esse seminalia virtutum*" *ST* I-II 51.1; cf. *ST* I-II 63.1. In his *Commentary on the Sentences*, Thomas says: "*seminaria virtutum quae sunt in nobis, sunt ordinatio voluntatis et rationis ad bonum nobis connaturale*" 3 *Sent.* d. 33, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 3, co. Such seeds of *habitus* can also be seen when one admires virtue in other people's actions, even though not being virtuous oneself (cf. *ST* I-II 27.3).

²³⁰ For example, Freud's notion of death instinct (*thanatos*) fixes a primal human interest in death, and his life instinct is excessively sexual-erotic. While

Aquinas' treatment of *habitus* and natural inclinations distinguishes between cognitive and appetitive faculties, as well as between their rudimentary states. First, rudimentary cognitive or intellectual *habitus* belong by nature to the soul itself;²³¹ e.g., the principle of non-contradiction.²³² Second, the cognitive faculties possess natural inclinations that order humans to their connatural ends. Such an inclination, according to Aquinas, "starts from first universal principles known to us through the natural light of reason both in speculative and in practical matters."²³³ These first principles tend reason toward conclusions, which aid us form intellectual *habitus*. Reason in turn moves the appetitive powers, which likewise can develop corresponding appetitive *habitus*, that is concerning human passions and volition.²³⁴ Third, the appetitive faculties have preparatory principles, certain inclinations, which direct the faculties toward their objects. As Aquinas says: "a thing's appetite naturally is moved and

there are many valid and interesting aspects of Freud's observations of human life and death instincts, Thomas' approach offers a more well rounded regard on human natural and spiritual life in a dynamic moral theory.

231 "*Secundum quidem naturam speciei ex parte ipsius animae: sicut intellectus principiorum dicitur esse habitus naturalis*" ST I-II 51.1.

232 Such principles are not *habitus* properly speaking but rather only in a derivative sense. As Aquinas says: "*Sicut etiam principia indemonstrabilia in speculativis non sunt ipsi habitus principiorum, sed sunt principia, quorum est habitus*" (ST I-II 94.1). The nature of the human soul makes evident such first principles of understanding through its contact with reality in sense experience. For example, once one understands *p* and the idea of negation, one grasps the principle of non-contradiction (not both *p* and *non-p* at the same time in the same way). "*Et ideo primum principium indemonstrabile est quod non est simul affirmare et negare, quod fundatur supra rationem entis et non entis; et super hoc principio omnia alia fundantur, ut dicit Philosophus in IV Meta. [3, 1005b29. St. Thomas. lect. 4 and 6]*" (ST I-II 94.2). Following Aristotle, Aquinas holds that we gain sense experience of reality by using mental species received through phantasms.

233 "*per naturalem inclinationem ordinatur homo in finem sibi connaturalem. Hoc autem contingit secundum duo. Primo quidem, secundum rationem vel intellectum inquantum continet prima principia universalia cognita nobis per naturale lumen intellectus, ex quibus procedit ratio tam in speculandis, quam in agendis*" ST I-II 62.3. Humans naturally know the first principles in practical matters through a *habitus* called *synderesis* (ST I 79.12).

234 "*Nam actus appetitivae virtutis procedunt a vi appetitiva secundum quod movetur a vi apprehensiva repraesentante objectum: et ulterius vis intellectiva, secundum quod ratiocinatur de conclusionibus, habet sicut principium activum propositionem per se notam*" ST I-II 51.2.

tends towards its connatural end.”²³⁵ The human rational appetitive faculty has a natural inclination, which orders us to our connatural ends, “from the rightness of will tending naturally to good according to reason.”²³⁶

Aquinas says that such seeds of intellectual and moral virtues are naturally present in human reason, in that humans have a “natural desire for good in accordance with reason.”²³⁷ According to Thomas, the natural inclinations toward seeking the truth, pursuing the good, and living in community give direction to derivative moral action.²³⁸ These inclinations are based on the first principle of practical reason: “that good is to be sought and done, evil to be avoided.”²³⁹ Aquinas analyzes human natural tendencies in three aspects of human nature: basic existence, animality and rationality. First, in common with all substances, humans tend to the good of our nature. In particular, each human being has “an appetite to preserve its own natural being.”²⁴⁰ We maintain and defend the basic needs of human life, for example, when

235 “*Appetitus enim uniuscujusque rei naturaliter movetur et tendit in finem sibi connaturalem*” ST I-II 62.4. Also, “*Amor naturalis est inclinatio quaedam, indita rebus naturalibus ad fines connaturales*” De Car. 1, 9; cf. ST II-II 141.1 ad 1.

236 “*per naturalem inclinationem ordinatur homo in finem sibi connaturalem. Hoc autem contingit secundum duo. [...] Secundo, per rectitudinem voluntatis naturaliter tendentis in bonum rationis*” ST I-II 62.3.

237 “*Utroque autem modo virtus est homini naturalis secundum quamdam inchoationem. Secundum quidem naturam speciei inquantum in ratione hominis insunt naturaliter quaedam principia naturalitater cognita tam scibilibus quam agendorum: quae sunt quaedam seminalia intellectualium virtutum et moralium, inquantum in voluntate inest quidam naturalis appetitus boni, quod est secundum rationem*” (ST I-II 63.1; cf. ST I-II 51.1). It is only in the *Commentary on the Sentences* that Aquinas calls these inclinations “natural virtues”: “*Unde quaedam inclinationes virtutum sive aptitudines praeexistunt naturaliter in ipsa natura rationali, quae virtutes naturales dicuntur*” 2 Sent. d. 39, q. 2, a, 1, co.

238 Aquinas’ account of these natural inclinations (ST I-II 94.2) is strikingly like that of Cicero (cf. *de Off.* 1, 4), although his systematization and analysis is more complex than that of the Roman philosopher. However, it is uncertain that Aquinas directly saw Cicero’s text, for even though Aquinas frequently refers to this work, he never cites this passage. Cf. Pinckaers 1995.

239 “*Hoc est ergo primum praeceptum legis, quod ‘bonum est faciendum et prosequendum, et malum vitandum’*” ST I-II 94.2.

240 “*Inest enim primo inclinatio homini ad bonum secundum naturam in qua communicat cum omnibus substantiis, prout scilicet quaelibet substantia appetit conservationem sui esse secundum suam naturam; et secundum hanc inclinationem pertinent ad legem naturalem ea per quae vita hominis conservatur, et contrarium impeditur*” ST I-II 94.2.

we eat healthily, and protect ourselves from social and environmental threats. Secondly, the social aspect of human nature, which we have in common with other animals, teaches us “the coupling of male and female, the bringing up of the young, and so forth.”²⁴¹ Thirdly, humans have “an appetite for the good of our nature as rational,” which inclines us to seek to know truths about God, and to live well in society.²⁴² Given human spiritual nature, Thomas maintains that these inclinations are both natural and spiritual. This third level pertains to human nature as rational. Nonetheless, all three levels of natural inclinations underlie the orientations of our innate emotional reactions, and volitional and rational principles.

Even though they are under-specified and surrounded by the effects of original, personal and social sin, these inclinations involve inchoate goals. They are a first step: to conserve our health and being, to commit ourselves to the marriage union and the educating of children, to live in society, as well as to know truth, and to love the good known. We must however rationally investigate these inclinations and goals. In order to pursue the underlying goals more thoroughly, Aquinas establishes his moral framework of flourishing and excellence. The inclinations demand further habituation. It is not enough to recognize intellectually a moral order. We need to construct *habitus* (virtues) that positively make these inclinations more than mere promptings.

Since native dispositions and social environments differ, however, humans do not all develop these inclinations in an identical way. For example, since natural individual intelligence differs according to the condition and use of sensory organs, we do not understand the first principles of understanding with the same clarity. Other dissimilarities spring from corporeal and appetitive

241 “*Secundo inest homini inclinatio ad aliqua magis specialia secundum naturam in qua communicat cum caeteris animalibus: et secundum hoc dicuntur ea esse lege naturali quae natura omnia animalia docuit, ut est commixtio maris et feminae, et educatio liberorum, et similia*” ST I-II 94.2.

242 “*Tertio modo inest homini inclinatio ad bonum secundum naturam rationis quae est sibi propria: sicut homo habet naturalem inclinationem ad hoc quod veritatem cognoscat de Deo, et ad hoc quod in societate vivat; et secundum hoc ad legem naturalem pertinent ea quae ad huiusmodi inclinationem spectant, utpote quod homo ignorantiam vitet, quod alios non offendant cum quibus debet conversari, et caetera huiusmodi quae ad hoc spectant*” ST I-II 94.2.

differences.²⁴³ According to Aquinas, some people's bodily constitution disposes them to chastity or mildness of temper, and so on.²⁴⁴ Aquinas even astutely observes that being naturally disposed to one virtue, such as fortitude, might well render a person less disposed to a contrary virtue, such as meekness. Indeed, we employ conflicting tendencies when pursuing arduous goods (courage) and restraining irascible emotions (meekness).²⁴⁵ However, he notes that reason inclines humans to all virtues, counterbalancing initial dissimilarities in natural dispositions. Although the inclinations as "seeds of virtue" direct us, we can develop them in multiple ways.²⁴⁶

2.4.4. Nature and Nurture: the Development of *Habitus*

Like Aristotle and other researchers involved in temperament, character and virtue studies, Aquinas asks whether interior mental and moral qualities of *habitus* are innate or acquired. He queries about how much we can know and do by nature, and how much by experience. We shall now inquire whether we can enrich Aquinas' approach with studies on genetic influences, neurochemical circuitry and evolutionary reactions. How might these studies help us to understand fearful events, reactions to pain, and so on? Can they also aid us to distinguish better between nature and nurture?²⁴⁷

With the exception of extreme sociobiology theories (e.g. E. O. Wilson), contemporary researchers on genetic heritage admit that nurture or human experience and environment in some way influence our genetic emotional make-up. Sociobiology and evolutionary

²⁴³ "*Sed ex parte corporis, secundum naturam individui, sunt aliqui habitus appetitivi secundum inchoationes naturales*" ST I-II 51.1.

²⁴⁴ "*Fines autem recti humanae vitae sunt determinati, et ideo potest esse naturalis inclinatio respectu horum finium. [...] quod quidam habent ex naturali dispositione quasdam virtutes, quibus inclinantur ad rectos fines; et per consequens etiam habent naturaliter rectum iudicium de huiusmodi finibus*" ST II-II 47.15. "*Et ideo illi qui carent aliis virtutibus, oppositis vitiis subditi, non habent temperantiam quae est virtus, sed operantur actus temperantiae ex quadam naturali dispositione, prout virtutes quaedam imperfectae sunt hominibus naturales, vel per consuetudinem acquisitiae*" ST II-II 141.1 ad 2. Also see ST I-II 63.1.

²⁴⁵ Cf. *de virt. com.* 8 ad 10.

²⁴⁶ On how natural inclination is perfected in virtue: cf. ST I-II 51.1; ST II-II 108.2 and ST II-II 117.1, ad 1.

²⁴⁷ Cf. S. J. Pope 1994; F. de Waal 1997 and 1999.

psychology suggest that the emotional “predispositions” selected by nature’s evolutionary pressures do not overpower our thoughts and choices. They stand, nonetheless, in need of cultural instantiation, training and habituation.²⁴⁸ As these sciences indicate, and Aquinas concurs, the human emotions, as well as the natural inclinations, need shaping and do not start in a pure, passive state (a *tabula rasa*).

Neuro-biological studies promise to reveal at least some of the mechanisms that underlie habitual dispositions and emotions. According to Damasio, cognitive processes and neurochemical substances stimulate each other. On the one hand, our repeated or habitual acts shape emotions and their neurochemical profiles (somatic markers). On the other hand, emotions and their neurochemical profiles form our habitual action or dispositions to act.²⁴⁹ Habitual dispositions to act have a historical, personal neurochemical profile that interacts with cognitive, volitional and emotional processes.

Although they cannot approach the spiritual center of intelligent and volitional activity, human neurochemistry and evolutionary psychology offer insights concerning certain aspects of moral progress and growth in virtue. As S. J. Pope suggests, “moral conversion, moreover, might lead to not only a modification of thoughts, words, and deeds but also, by the repeated physiological effect of appropriate action (to some extent perhaps) even a reordering of this neurochemistry, particularly in the prefrontal cortices.”²⁵⁰ The question becomes: how can neurochemical profile (personal historical component) for habitual action, which neurophysiology calls “somatic markers,” facilitate our moral discernment and choices in complex social situations, or on the contrary promote counter-moral decisions?²⁵¹

In order to respond to this question and to evaluate this research and reflection further, let us differentiate the types of *habitus* and recall the larger context of virtue theory. According to Aquinas, human agents develop *habitus*, either vices or virtues, in active and receptive ways. We both cause these changes, and are the subject of

248 Cf. Pope 1994, 154.

249 Cf. Damasio 1994, 149-150.

250 Pope 1998b, 552; cf. Damasio 1994, 182-83.

251 Cf. S. J. Pope 1998b, 552; Damasio 1994, 191.

them.²⁵² In particular, we produce moral *habitus* in our own appetitive faculties (with their neurochemical circuitry) through the repeated use of reason. We produce intellectual *habitus* (scientific and practical knowledge) in the mind when we reflect on human experience and investigate primary propositions.²⁵³ While entitative *habitus* and sensory faculties are primarily instinctual and only indirectly capable of rational influences,²⁵⁴ the interior cognitive sense faculties of memory and imagination on the other hand have an innate basis that we rationally control and develop (at least to some extent). The *habitus* that inform these latter faculties bring rational (non-despotic) control to the non-rational parts of the soul: to the concupiscible and irascible parts through the virtues associated with temperance and courage respectively.²⁵⁵

For Aquinas, intellect itself, in our reasoning and willing capacities, is by nature both determined and malleable. Human reason is naturally adapted (determined) to truth in general as its object. Although we are receptive to the variety of things that we perceive (sense knowledge), we also actively think, critique and recall knowledge. We acquire intellectual *habitus* through such rational activities.²⁵⁶ Will, as an intellectual faculty, naturally inclines to the good in general. Nonetheless, its natural inclination for the good *per se* is under-specified for particular moral choices. We need additional volitional dispositions to ensure sure and prompt action toward particular goods.²⁵⁷ We must have further *habitus* to direct us mediately

252 “*Unde ex talibus actibus possunt in agentibus aliqui habitus causari, non quidem quantum ad primum activum principium, sed quantum ad principium actus quod movet motum. Nam omne quod patitur et movetur ab alio, disponitur per actum agentis; unde ex multiplicatis actibus generatur quaedam qualitas in potentia passiva et mota, quae nominatur habitus.*” ST I-II 51.2; cf. *de virt. com.* 1, 9.

253 Cf. ST I-II 51.2.

254 Nonetheless, entitative *habitus* can be morally significant to the extent that the physical state and sensory faculties influence human mental activity; cf. ST I-II 50.2 and 50.3; Zagar 1984, 187.

255 Aristotle, *NE* iii.13, 1117 b 23-4; and Aquinas, ST I-II 50.3 sc.

256 Cf. ST I-II 50.4.

257 “*Voluntas ex ipsa natura potentiae inclinatur in bonum rationis. Sed quia hoc bonum multipliciter diversificatur, necessarium est ut ad aliquod determinatum bonum rationis voluntas per aliquem habitum inclinetur, ad hoc quod sequatur proprior operatio*” ST I-II 50.5 ad 3.

toward our final goal and particular human goals, concerning which conflicting concrete goods often present themselves.

If any of these capacities are at first undetermined, or underdetermined, then we can actualize their potency through a *habitus*.²⁵⁸ Aquinas explores the reasons for this habituation. In an acquired *habitus*, our faculty, such as the will, becomes connaturalized through a gradual transformation. An innate inclination to love the good, on the contrary, involves an immediate union of the appetite with the good object. When we repeat acts, the *habitus*' potencies adapt to the object. Choices become easier through experience. This acquired connaturality functions differently than does an innate one. Through acquired connaturality, we can order ourselves to have right judgment.²⁵⁹ In the case of good moral *habitus*, or virtue, we qualitatively alter a power or nature through repeated acts.²⁶⁰ We do not, however, acquire *habitus* through simple repetition of external acts. Rather, we attend primarily to the interior quality of the acts, while not neglecting their external qualities. Instead of a life of unrelated singular acts, *habitus* supposes moral continuity as well as conversion in a moral history that becomes our character.²⁶¹

Such *habitus* are principles for further action. As a result of *habitus*, we can use the connaturalized power at will.²⁶² Aquinas judges

258 "*Sed ea quae sunt ad utrumlibet non habent aliquam formam ex qua declinent ad unum determinate; sed a proprio movente determinantur ad aliquid unum; et hoc ipso quod determinantur ad ipsum, quodammodo disponuntur in idem; et cum multoties inclinantur, determinantur ad idem a proprio movente, et firmatur in eis inclinatio determinata in illud; ita quod ista dispositio superinducta est quasi quaedam forma per modum naturae tendens in unum. Et propter hoc dicitur quod consuetudo est altera natura. [...] et ista dispositio sic firmata est habitus virtutis*" de virt. com. 1, 9.

259 Aquinas says, for example: "*rectitudo autem iudicii potest contingere dupliciter: [...] alio modo, propter connaturalitatem quamdam ad ea de quibus jam est iudicandum. [...] per quaedam connaturalitatem ad ipsa recte iudicat de eis ille qui habet habitum castitatis*" (ST II-II 45.2; cf. ST I 1.6 ad 3). Conversely people can disorder themselves toward vice, as in the case of continuous incontinent acts (cf. ST II-II 156.3).

260 Aquinas says that: "*Nihil autem est aliud habitus consuetudinalis quam habitudo acquisita per consuetudinem, quae est in modum naturae*" ST I-II 56.5.

261 Cf. Zagar 1984, 183.

262 "*Et ideo oportet quod similitudo superiorum potentiarum imprimatur et quasi sigilletur ut forma quaedam in inferioribus potentii, et tunc inferiores potentiae etiam ex se ipsis habent determinationem ad actus ad quos movent superiores. Et sic illae actiones efficiuntur eis connaturales et non accidunt*

it necessary to acquire such *habitus* concerning the particular principles of actions and their ends. In prudence, for example, a human being “needs to be perfected by a certain *habitus*, through which it becomes, as it were connatural to him to judge rightly about an end.”²⁶³ Such a connaturalization or transformation demands an identity of end and person. Aquinas makes no qualms about following Aristotle’s principle: “such as one is, such does the end seem to one.”²⁶⁴

We should not undervalue the spiritual nature of human beings, as an impetus to act (from a deeper level). The human soul’s power to influence human agency is more than a mere parallel to basic genetic and neural-biological wiring of natural inclinations. Nonetheless, human rational and volitional powers influence the whole person. We should not reduce these spiritual powers to evolutionary pressures on the species, nor the physical body with its myriad of interrelated sensate, biological and neurological systems. This discussion of the spiritual soul raises further questions. If we can acquire intellectual and moral *habitus*, then how can we shape them in ways that promote (spiritual) resilience and decrease vulnerability? In Aquinas language, how can we promote education in good *habitus*?²⁶⁵ Aquinas offers a nuanced and extensive response that we can apply in due course to the resilience perspective. *Habitus* in general have a multitude of sources. They can originate either strictly from nature, or partly from nature and partly from agents (and their environments).

impedimentum nec error in perficiendo dictos actus, sed subito et delectabiliter perficiuntur. Et hae formae sunt habitus.” 3 *Sent.* d. 33, q. 1, a. 1, from a previously unedited text of St. Thomas (cf. P.-M. Gils 1962, 618).

²⁶³ “oportet quod perficiatur per aliquos habitus secundum quos fiat quodammodo homini connaturale recte judicare de fine” *ST* I-II 58.5.

²⁶⁴ “qualis unus quisque est, talis finis videtur ei” (Aristotle in the *NE* iii.5, 1114a32, as quoted by Aquinas in *ST* I-II 58.5).

²⁶⁵ Related questions concerning innate qualities include: What is the part of genetic heritage? Does the human soul and mind have its own predispositions? Does genetic and spiritual heritage determine us? Moreover, related questions concerning acquired qualities include: How can we change our agency that is influenced by our genetic condition? What is the influence of our will and grace in acquiring virtuous *habitus*?

Concerning this second kind, we acquire some *habitus* through human effort, while God infuses others.²⁶⁶

In conclusion, to seek progress demands that we extend basic inclinations, the seeds of virtue, to more fully specified dispositions. As Aquinas says, “besides these natural principles, the *habitus* of virtue is required for the perfection of a human being according to the mode connatural to him.”²⁶⁷ It is in free and intelligent acts aimed towards temporal and eternal goals while employing instrumental goods, that we actualize virtue in ourselves. A problem arises however when one thinks that an automation of morality is possible and even desirable.²⁶⁸ Moral acts involve principled and loving adaptation, rather than blind repetition. Another problem arises when we neglect human animality, or forget the indications about the resilience and risk effects of our acts, dispositions and social relationships. It is important to recall the essential place of human animality (the body) in virtue, as has been remarkably done by A. MacIntyre (1999) and the psychosocial sciences. Nonetheless, we need to supplement these sources with a doctrine of the natural inclinations that involves ontological, animal and rational qualities (cf. *ST* I-II 94.2). Aquinas’ teaching on natural-spiritual inclinations offers several pertinent correctives. It recognizes: (1) that human action finds a vital principle in inclinations to preserve our existence, to develop life in family and society, to seek actively truth and goodness; (2) that these inclinations are of a spiritual order (we cannot reduce them to evolutionary pressures on the human species); and (3) that we should not too

266 A more detailed treatment of infused virtue is found in chapter five, in regards to the infused virtue of fortitude its associated virtues and their correlation with the gift the Holy Spirit.

267 “*Et sicut praeter ista principia naturalia requiruntur habitus virtutum ad perfectionem hominis secundum modum sibi connaturalem*” (*de virt. com.* 1, 10).

268 This setback comes from conceiving that virtue’s goal is to gain by repetition all the needed automations (a series of actions materially identical) to always act in agreement with the obligation dictated by an external moral law. In this idea of virtue, one can permanently conform one’s actions to the moral law and avoid those actions prohibited by the same moral law by repeating exterior acts to measure up to this standard. But Aquinas teaches the contrary, saying that one needs to repeat the same interior acts of quality (not exterior acts *per se*) in order to build virtue.

sharply separate them from each other, when we seek to understand how virtues develop and correlate.

2.5. Aquinas on Virtue, Education and Resilience

To make moral progress, we train our emotional and intellectual capacities. We promote moral behavior as well as avoid conditions that tend to activate “undesirable aspects of our evolved ‘incentive systems.’”²⁶⁹ We can develop both rational and emotional intelligence, as D. Goleman has put it. Aquinas, for his part, describes the way we instill intelligibility in virtuous *habitus* of emotions, will and reason. His brand of emotional intelligence does not confuse or collapse the *habitus* of the emotions with simple intelligence, reason or will. As intelligent, appropriate and virtuous as an initial emotional judgment might be, we must rationally adjudicate the situation in order to act morally. We shall now investigate Aquinas’ approach to virtue education in dialogue with the psychosocial approach to resilience. First, we explore Aquinas’ virtue pedagogy as a model for acquiring moral and spiritual resilience. Then we examine the import of internal and external sources for instruction and learning. Finally, we investigate what type of experience is at the basis of moral knowledge, virtue and resilient agency.

2.5.1. Virtue Education

The relationship between human agency, reason and resilience raises difficult questions, when we consider the moral complexity and immoral compromises often expressed in everyday action. What is the origin of the virtues? Even in the post-lapsus human condition—with all the disordered effects on human individuals and society—Aquinas claims that, “the seeds of virtue, which are in us, are an ordering of the will and reason to the good connatural to us.”²⁷⁰ This innate starting point not only directs our will and reason to the good (moral and

²⁶⁹ Pope 1998b, 552. This moral behavior is called “social ecology” by Bellah, et alia (1986, 284).

²⁷⁰ “*seminaria virtutum quae sunt in nobis, sunt ordinatio voluntatis et rationis ad bonum nobis connaturale*” 3 *Sent.* d. 33, q. 1, a. 2, sol. 3, co; cf. *ST* I-II 51.1; *ST* I-II 63.1. *ST* I-II 27.3.

spiritual goods), but it also directs them away from evil.²⁷¹ Nonetheless these seeds are inadequate in themselves for responsible moral action or for understanding growth in resilience and virtue.

‘Virtue’ has many meanings in contemporary language.²⁷² Different cultures and times have established diverse lists of virtues.²⁷³ We can only understand Aquinas’ technical use of the term “virtue” in the context of his typology (study of the types) of *habitus*. Virtue and its contrary, vice, are operative *habitus*; they differ according to their rapport with reason. Thomas says: “virtuous deeds are connatural to reason, but vicious acts are contrary to it.”²⁷⁴

Aquinas’ treatment of virtues is one of the masterpieces of medieval, scholastic moral theology. It was the fullest study of human agency to date, and established several novelties as it developed.²⁷⁵ The

271 In his *Sentences*, Aquinas states also that “*nec aliquid male vult, ostenditur esse connaturalis, quia mala sunt contra naturam*” 4 *Sent.* d. 49, q. 5, a. 5, sol. 3, ex.

272 “Virtue” has numerous contemporary meanings that we should not confuse when approaching Aquinas’ treatment of *virtus*. First, the *OED* recognizes that the Latin word *virtus* has the following senses: “valour, worth, merit, moral perfection;” and that its root, *vir*, means “man.” Furthermore, the *OED* defines “virtue”: “1. As a quality of persons. 1. The power or operative influence inherent in a supernatural or divine being. [...] 2. Conformity of life and conduct with the principles of morality; [...] 3. With a and pl. A particular moral excellence; a special manifestation of the influence of moral principles in life or conduct ME.” Furthermore the *Webster’s Unabridged Encyclopedia Dictionary (WUED)* lists the following senses of “virtue”: “1. moral excellence; goodness; righteousness. 2. conformity of one’s life and conduct to moral and ethical principles; uprightness; rectitude. 3. chastity, esp. in a girl or a woman [...] 4. a particular moral excellence. 5. a good or admirable quality.” The list goes on.

273 The following recent studies illustrate the variety of virtue approaches: cf. A. MacIntyre 1981; 1988; S.-Th. Pinckaers 1985/1995a; J. W. Crossin 1985; J. Porter 1990; A. Comte-Sponville 1995. In these studies, the divergences in the lists of virtues are rooted in differing beliefs concerning human nature and its potential. The list we gave earlier can complete these ones.

274 “*virtutum opera sunt connaturalia rationi, opera vero vitiorum sunt contra rationem*” *ST* I-II 70.4 ad 1.

275 As in the case of *habitus*, Aquinas’ thought on virtue changes in its organization and deepens in its content between his *Commentary on the Sentences* and his *Summa theologiae*. In the earlier work he follows Peter Lombard’s approach of addressing virtues in terms of whether Christ had them, while developing major reflections on virtue that go beyond the Lombard’s structure and content. For example, to the Lombard’s framework of whether Christ had the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, Aquinas adds a treatise on virtue in general; (3 *Sent.* d. 23, q. 1) and after the Lombard’s short treatise on the four principle virtues, Aquinas adds an extensive treatment of the

richness of Aquinas' virtue doctrine demands that he establish several definitions of virtue. In the *Summa theologiae*, the most basic philosophical definition asserts that: "virtue denotes a determinate perfection of a power."²⁷⁶ This perfection involves the way in which the power correlates to its end or proper act. In this section, we focus on the type of virtue produced in rational powers, without neglecting emotional ones. Human rational powers are not determined to one act. Such specifically human virtue entails a good operative *habitus*, which, as a perfection of a natural human power, is good by definition.²⁷⁷ This good not only correlates to the basic ordering of nature, but it is also directed by the order of human reason.²⁷⁸

Concerning the potency and internal causes of virtue that exist in the moral agent, Aquinas does not stop with the standard definition of virtue, but rather argues that all acquired virtues (intellectual and

common moral virtues, the cardinal virtues and the parts of the moral virtues. (3 *Sent.* d. 33, q. 1-3) In his *Summa theologiae*, Aquinas develops the topic further while employing a novel structural organization. He lays the foundation for understanding virtue by explicating the goal of flourishing, the nature of human acts, the principles of morality, the passions and *habitus* (ST I-II 1-54). This preparation then leads to his progressive elaboration of the virtues, which addresses the nature and seat of virtue, the intellectual virtues and their difference with the moral virtues, the cardinal and the theological virtues, the cause and mean of virtue, the reciprocity among virtues, as well as their comparison and duration (ST I-II 55-67).

²⁷⁶ Aquinas says: "*virtus nominat quamdam potentiae perfectionem*" (ST I-II 56.1). We shall discuss later the classic definition of infused virtue cited in ST I-II 55.4.

²⁷⁷ Thomas says: "*Ultimum autem in quod unaquaeque potentia potest, oportet quod sit bonum, nam omne malum defectum quandam importat*" ST I-II 55.3.

²⁷⁸ Aquinas draws from both Scriptural and Ciceronian authority in this regard. Concerning acquired virtue Aquinas cites Cicero: "*Sed nihil aliud virtus est quam quaedam facilitas et inclinatio per modum naturae ad bonum rationis, ut dicit Tullius II De Inventione c. 53.*" 3 *Sent.* d. 33, q. 1, a. 2, sed c. 2. Also see, ST II-II 58.3, and ST II-II 58.12 sc. This definition of virtue, as being according to the good of reason, not only belongs to *wisdom*, "a correct judgment made through rational investigation" (ST II-II 45.2) or to *prudence*, a stable disposition to judge by right reason to find the virtuous means to an end (ST II-II 47.7), but even to virtues like *temperance* which brings reasonable disposition to our concupiscible appetite, lest we stray from reason because of some powerful yet inappropriate sense of attraction (ST II-II 141.1-2) and to *courage* which makes the irascible power participate in reason (ST I-II 56.4).

moral) “arise from certain natural principles pre-existing in us.”²⁷⁹ The early or preliminary stages of virtue are natural to human beings in two ways: according to our specific nature, and according to one’s individual nature. First, virtue is natural inchoatively, since through experience nature instills in human reason naturally known principles of knowledge and action. Along with the will’s natural appetite for good in accordance with reason, these principles serve as seeds for intellectual and moral virtue.²⁸⁰ Nonetheless, we must actively develop these principles.

Secondly, our individual bodily dispositions affect the way in which we are disposed to virtue. The dispositions of bodily sensory powers and emotions consequently aid or hinder the rational powers that they serve,²⁸¹ as we already saw in our study of emotions and temperaments. At this level, humans have unequal natural aptitudes: either for science, or for fortitude, or for temperance, and so on. As previously discussed, for Aquinas, the virtues build upon two natural bases. On the one hand, we extend the basic human inclinations to know truth, to love the good known, to conserve oneself in health and being, to commit oneself to the marriage union and the educating of children, and to live in society.²⁸² On the other hand, we use and amend the natural dispositions (such as kindness, friendliness, courageousness, and so on). We develop these initial aptitudes for

279 “*Omnes autem virtutes tam intellectuales quam morales, quae ex nostris actibus acquiruntur, procedunt ex quibusdam naturalibus principiis in nobis praeexistentibus*” *ST I-II* 63.3; cf. *ST I-II* 51.1; *ST I-II* 63.1; and especially *ST I-II* 63.2 on “whether any virtue is caused in us by habituation.”

280 “*virtus est homini naturalis secundum quamdam inchoationem. Secundum quidem naturam speciei in quantum in ratione hominis insunt naturaliter quaedam principia naturalitater cognita tam scibilium quam agendorum: quae sunt quaedam seminalia intellectualium virtutum et moralium, in quantum in voluntate inest quidam naturalis appetitus boni, quod est secundum rationem*” *ST I-II* 63.1.

281 “*ex corporis dispositione aliqui sunt dispositi vel melius vel pejor ad quasdam virtutes. Prout scilicet vires quaedam sensitivae actus sunt quarundam partium corporis, ex quarum dispositione adjuvantur vel impediuntur hujusmodi vires in suis actibus, et per consequens vires rationales, quibus hujusmodi sensitivae vires deserviunt*” *ST I-II* 63.1.

282 Cf. *ST I-II* 94.2.

virtue into virtue through virtuous acts. To acquire virtues, we need to actualize what we have as potencies.²⁸³

Virtues have different natural and supernatural causes. The efficient causes of the virtues involve human intelligent and divine sources. At the natural level, reason and will produce virtuous acts and the formation of the underlying dispositions. For Aquinas, inasmuch as any natural good action correlates with the Source of goodness, God is also the efficacious cause through a help (*auxilio Dei*) that is typical of the goodness endemic to nature. At the supernatural level, God efficaciously produces the infused virtues, but not without human graced collaboration, as we shall discuss in chapter five. Aquinas moreover holds that God is the first cause of the virtues, since in Him exist the exemplar virtues.²⁸⁴ The final cause of the virtues, moreover, directs and motivates human beings. The perfect virtues of Christ and the saints in glory spell out the content of promised complete happiness, and thus serve to direct and motivate human efforts.²⁸⁵ Lastly, the formal causes of the virtues constitute the reasons that make the act and disposition virtuous. In this regard, human social nature informs natural virtue according to our emotional, rational and volitional capacities, while the grace of the Holy Spirit and graced charity molds all Christian virtue.²⁸⁶

The process of acquiring virtue is based in human potencies and demands time. According to Aquinas, it traverses steps as well. He distinguishes three stages, although he does not construct a strict developmental stage theory. He describes three degrees of charity,

283 Since in searching for flourishing we can use and habituate the powers proper to the human soul in various ways, the seeds of virtue grow according to the way one chooses: towards good, compromised good or an evil mistaken for good. In our experiential pursuits of flourishing and goods, we develop *habitus* that build upon our basic human inclinations, which through extension in *habitus* become an even more particularized and forceful directive within ourselves.

284 Aquinas draws from Platonic sources through Macrobius in discussing how the cardinal virtues can be divided into social, perfecting, perfect and exemplar virtues (cf. *ST* I-II 61.5). Nonetheless Augustine is the key for explaining the Christian vision of God as being the exemplar, whom humans follow in order to “live aright” (*bene vivimus*). In God pre-exist the types of all good things, for Aquinas.

285 Cf. *ST* I-II 1-5; *ST* I-II 61.5.

286 Cf. *ST* II-II 23.8; *ST* I-II 61.5. See also Aquinas’ discussion of the “perfecting virtues” (cf. *ST* I-II 61.5).

which might serve as a model for the development of the other virtues (cf. II-II 24.9). The first stage involves beginners, the second progressives, and the third the mature. Aquinas does not order them according to chronological age, but to maturity in experienced, knowledgeable and discerning judgment. They advance toward firm and constant dispositions. First, these three steps of virtue parallel three stages in human development. They illustrate how we progress from childhood to adolescence, and finally to adulthood. Second, they resemble three qualities of moral development. To begin with, we need discipline in order to act morally. Then we make progress in virtues. And finally we become capable of mature action in freedom. Third, they correlate with three sources of morality in scripture: the precepts of the Decalogue, the encouragement of the Beatitudes, and the inspiration of the New Law. Fourth, these stages of growth in virtue involve three aspects of the mystics' spiritual progress. They advance from the purgative stage, to the illuminative, and finally to the unitive stage.²⁸⁷

Although in this section I cannot address other pedagogical ramifications of this model of virtue development, we should highlight its perspective on charity, and on the roles of the teacher and of law therein. Although the theological nature of the experience of charity is not exactly parallel to moral virtues, it nonetheless manifests other similarities, especially in developmental trajectory.

First, charity illustrates how virtue develops as a process of connaturalization with the end, the good that attracts us. Charity is more than the natural inclination or feeling of attraction for a good. For Aquinas, in charity, we acquire a sort of connatural knowledge through an experience of the Good (ultimately God, who is the source of all good). The experiential basis for acquired knowledge of the Good serves in turn as the basis for contemplation and for action. Since charity plays the primary role in this perspective, the connatural knowledge affected by experiential charity enlivens the whole range of

²⁸⁷ These stages can be put into diagram form (cf. *ST* II-II 24.9; Pinckaers 1995a, 354-378):

(stages)	(human dev.)	(moral qualities)	(Scripture)	(mystics)
Beginners	childhood	discipline	Decalogue	purgative
Progressives	adolescence	progress in virtues	Beatitudes	illuminative
Mature	adulthood	maturity in freedom	New Law	unitive

our action. It serves as the foundational source for the other virtues. It is expansive, rather than restricted by norms. The highest form of mature charity spontaneity exceeds the normative and conventional demands.²⁸⁸ In the upcoming chapters, these three degrees of virtue serve as a point of convergence with the behavioral sciences and a contrast with Kohlberg's developmental model.²⁸⁹

Secondly, the roles of the teacher and of the law are to aid the student in such self-actualization and maturity. Aquinas emphasizes that a natural aptitude for virtue is inadequate. Humans must acquire virtue by means of some kind of training.²⁹⁰ We must apply ourselves. Yet a human being cannot train himself alone. We need training from another, in order to attain to the perfection of virtue in both disposition and act. In every case, we need paternal/maternal training. But when we are prone to vice and unamenable to instruction, it is useful that law restrain us from evil by force and fear.

Human law disciplines us. Through fear of punishment, it causes us to do what virtue would freely dictate, at least minimally. Aquinas follows Aristotle in this understanding of our capacity for the heights of virtue and the depths of human depravity.²⁹¹ Human law's purpose is to establish peace and harmony. It aims to create a culture for advancing not only virtuous acts, but even virtuous dispositions. Aquinas' Christian understanding of the Decalogue, the Beatitudes and the New Law of the Holy Spirit goes further than the natural level. Yet in order to understand it, we need to distinguish further the internal and external sources of growth in virtue and spiritual resilience.

288 Cf. S.-Th. Pinckaers 1995a, 365.

289 Cf. P. J. Philibert 1975, 1980.

290 He treats the need for training in the question: "whether it was useful for laws to be framed by men?" *ST* I-II 95.1.

291 In *ST* I-II 95.1, Aquinas cites Aristotle (*Polit.* i.2) as saying: "'as man is the most noble of animals if he be perfect in virtue, so is he the lowest of all, if he be severed from law and righteousness'; because man can use his reason to devise means of satisfying his lusts and evil passions, which other animals are unable to do."

2.5.2. Internal and External Sources of Learning and Instruction

What internal and external sources underlie human moral agency, virtue and resiliency? How do the active correlation of learning and instruction underlie moral and spiritual agency? In order to exemplify virtue education, Aquinas correlates the way we acquire virtue and knowledge. He uses two principal images—the student and teacher, and the arts, especially the art of building—in order to demonstrate the act of teaching (*docere*) and learning.²⁹² Aquinas borrows insights from the Greek philosophical tradition of *paideia* (*παιδεία*). He renews them through his Christian treatment of the relationship between master and disciple.²⁹³

Aquinas constructs his approach to teaching and learning neither on Averroes' theory of the direct transfer of phantasms, nor on Plato's theory of reminiscence.²⁹⁴ Rather led by Aristotle's mediate position, Thomas argues that we learn through interior and external causes²⁹⁵ that advance us from potency to act. What are these internal and external sources?

The internal sources occupy a primary place in both moral agency and theory. They involve the emotional, intellectual and spiritual sources that constitute natural and supernatural feelings, knowledge and love. They entail personal and communal experience. Aquinas does not confuse moral virtue and moral knowledge. Nonetheless, in order to study moral science, we need moral

292 Cf. Pinckaers 1995a, 359-374; 2000c; and Verbeke 1994.

293 For Aquinas, the Master or Teacher par excellence is Christ (cf. *ST* III 7.7), who is followed in this role by the Apostles, Bishops and the masters of theology who teach and comment on sacred Scripture. In this perspective, Aquinas regroups the gifts of the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Co 12) around the teacher, since through instruction one human can act upon another on the spiritual level (cf. *ST* I-II 111.4; Pinckaers 2000c).

294 Aquinas critiques these two theories in *ST* I 117.1 and *De verit.* 11.1.

295 His scriptural commentaries add further reflections on the acquisition of virtue as well. For example in his *Commentary on Philipians* (Sct 4-1; on verse 4:8), Aquinas discusses how one can be moved to good action (excellence)—in accordance with St. Paul's admonition—in two ways. First, an internal virtue can provide the impulse from within oneself to do what is true, honorable and pure. Second, discipline or instruction learned from others can lead one to such action. However, receiving a doctrine must lead to thinking about it and then assenting to it, in order that the teaching bear fruit in a personal act.

experience. In his general discussion of science, Aquinas notes that, in order to elaborate a science (including *sacra doctrina* or theology and moral theology), we need related personal experience.²⁹⁶ On the one hand, mathematics and physics require that we abstract principles and knowledge from sensible things. Counting apples aids us to understand addition. Moral wisdom, on the other hand, requires moral practice and experience. Aquinas says that its “natural principles, which are not abstracted from sensible things, are known through experience, for which a long time is required.”²⁹⁷ We understand principles of practical prudence better because of experiences of others’ and our own prudent acts.

Aquinas emphasizes however that an ethicist is not made by raw experience alone. Experience is insufficient, unless we acquire freedom from slavery to the emotions. Moral character aids us study morality.²⁹⁸ Aquinas insists that the virtues correlate with each other. Moral virtue (temperance, courage, justice and prudence) assists intellectual virtue (understanding, science and wisdom; and prudence and art); and vice versa. In ethics, we speculatively examine practical moral experience, our own and that of others. In moral theology, we examine the experiences communicated in Scripture, Tradition and the faith-community (liturgical and non-liturgical prayer), as well.²⁹⁹

296 This view was not uncommon. Aristotle states it in his *NE* (i.3, 1095a2-11). In his *Metaphysics* (A 981a14-15) he acknowledges our need for experience as well as reason: “We see that the experienced are more effective than those who have reason, but lack experience” (cf. Aquinas, in *Meta*, A 981a14-15. In his commentary *In Lib. Causis* (lect. 1, ed. Saffrey, pp. 1-2; in Mauer 1963, 91), Aquinas lists the order of learning the sciences as follows: first, logic; second, mathematics; third, natural sciences; fourth, moral science; and fifth, metaphysics and divine science.

297 “*Sed principia naturalia quae non sunt abstracta a sensibilibus, per experientiam considerantur, ad quam requiritur temporis multitudo*” (*In VI Eth.* lect. 7 n. 1209; cf. *NE* i.3, 1095a2-11 and *In I Eth.* lect. 3.38-40).

298 “*Quatro in moralibus quae requirunt experientiam et animum a passionibus liberum*” (*In VI Eth.* lect. 7 n. 1211). Here Aquinas speaks in the negative; that the ethicist cannot be a slave of passion or continually seeking the pleasures of unvirtuous passion. “*Ad actus autem virtuosos non perveniunt, qui passiones sectantur. Et sic nihil differt quantum ad hoc, an auditor hujus scientiae sit juvenis aetate, vel juvenis moribus, idest passionum sectator*” (*In I Eth.* lect. 3 n. 40; cf. *NE* i.3, 1095a2-11).

299 Cf. S.-Th. Pinckaers 1993, 439-441.

A study of moral and spiritual resilience includes how these sources address human suffering and failure, aspirations and efforts. Theological reflection involves a regular movement back and forth between experience and speculation in order that the one aids to interpret, guide and rectify the other. We construct a personal synthesis born of re-examining the text (e.g. Scripture) and significant events (such as personal experience of good and evil, as well as other events open through to history and faith, such as the exodus, Christ's Passion, Auschwitz, Hiroshima). We revisit these texts and events neither *qua* historical text nor *qua* historical event. Rather we examine them to better understand their import for contemporary audiences and ourselves. They aid us to meet the challenges that we face concerning meaning and commitment, coping and constancy, and constructing something good out of human suffering and failure.

Indispensably, external sources for moral agency, theory and theologizing involve those events and persons that help us to better understand the pleasures and pains of the human journey toward happiness. Aquinas' analysis of teaching and learning emphasizes both internal and external sources.³⁰⁰ He explains how we learn from our joy-filled, painful and innocuous experiences through the master and disciple archetype. We use the light of the intellect (personal reason and will), and various sources of light (both outside teachers and God).³⁰¹ The master (exterior principle) leads the disciple (interior principle) to acquire personal knowledge. Aquinas emphasizes that an external teacher does not directly cause us to learn. Yet we depend upon a teacher's aid in order to appropriate human experience personally. External masters can involve non-formal interactions with unlikely teachers: the poor and weak, young and old alike. They lead us from things unknown by us to those known by them, in a twofold

300 Cf. *ST* I 117.1, *ST* II-II 181.3 corpus and ad 2, and parallel places: *II Sent.* dist. 9.2 ad 4; dist. 28.5 ad 3; *SCG* II.75; *De verit.* 11.1; *Opusc.* XVI, *de Unit. Intell.*, 5.

301 For Aquinas, the Holy Spirit accomplishes the goal of Scripture, which is human instruction and learning (*eruditio*), through the Saints' scriptural commentaries. "*Contra, ad eundem pertinet facere aliquid propter finem et perducere ad illum finem. Sed finis Scripturae, quae est a Spiritu Sancto, est eruditio hominum. Haec autem eruditio hominum ex Scripturis non potest esse nisi per expositiones Sanctorum. Ergo expositiones Sanctorum sunt a Spiritu Sancto*" *QDL* 12.17 sc.

way. First, the master provides instructive aids (*auxilia vel instrumenta*) in order that our intellects can acquire knowledge (*scientia*). Secondly, the master strengthens our intellects by proposing the order of proceeding from principles to conclusions. We need such demonstrations until we can continue on our own.³⁰²

St. Thomas highlights a correlated and non-conflicting interior principle. We might call it an external-internal principle—an external principle that becomes internal. In addition to the interior light of the intellect, which is a principal cause of knowledge and virtue, God is also a principal cause of light, knowledge and virtue.³⁰³ Thomas identifies the second interior source not only as an interior source of light (the Word through faith) but also as an interior inclination to act (grace of the Holy Spirit through hope and charity).³⁰⁴ He recognizes it as the evangelical or New Law that the grace of the Holy Spirit inscribes in the believer's heart. The Spirit, as a unique external-interior source and Master, actively provides the understanding of Scriptures and knowledge of Providence. He is more fully associated

302 “*Ducit autem magister discipulum ex praecognitis in cognitionem ignotorum, dupliciter. Primo quidem, proponendo ei aliqua auxilia vel instrumenta, quibus intellectus eius utatur ad scientiam acquirendam: [...] Alio modo, cum confortat intellectum addiscentis; [...] inquantum proponit discipulo ordinem principiorum ad conclusiones, qui forte per seipsum non haberet tantam virtutem collativam, ut ex principiis posset conclusiones deducere*” (*ST* I 117.1). “*Virtus collativa*,” according to R. Deferrari (1960, 1090), involves either reason or sense evaluation.

303 In this regard, Aquinas quotes the Psalms while commenting: “*E ideo sicut de Deo dicitur [...] ‘Qui docet hominem scientiam’ [Ps. 93.10], inquantum ‘lumen vultus eius super nos signatur’ [Ps. 4.7], per quod nobis omnia ostenduntur*” (*ST* I 117.1 ad 1). In *SCG* (II.75 ad 3), Aquinas says: “*Et quia exterior operatio docentis nihil operaretur nisi adesset principium intrinsecum scientiae, quod inest nobis divinitus, ideo apud theologos dicitur quod homo docet ministerium exhibendo, Deus autem interius operando*.” God acts not only on human intellect, but also on the will, which God can move directly as the cause of creation and of universal good (cf. *ST* I-II 9.6, where Aquinas draws from Phil 2:13).

304 In this way Aquinas’ *sacra doctrina* centers itself on the person of Christ as the Teacher *par excellence*. He thus reads Scripture according to three spiritual senses: allegorical (the Old Law signifies the New Law of Christ, cf. *Secunda pars*), moral (how things done in Christ signify what we are to do, cf. *Tertia pars*), and anagogical senses (how things relate to eternal glory, cf. the whole *ST*). Aquinas discusses these three spiritual senses and the literal sense in the following places: *ST* I 1.10; *Ad Gal.* ch. 5, lect. 7; and *QDL* 7.6 art. 15. Cf. H. de Lubac 1964, 2:272ff; Pinckaers 2002, 11.

with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit that accompany the virtues, as we shall discuss later. The Spirit endows us with strength for action.³⁰⁵ Christian moral theology thus takes as its basis the experience of the new resilient life in the Spirit.³⁰⁶ The twofold light of truth (human and divine reason) shines through the summit of the human mind to the depth of his heart. It permeates our judgments about the true goodness and good truth that we discern in the thoughts and action of other people and ourselves.³⁰⁷ The Teacher empowers us. He instructs us in this fuller path, and enables us to attain our goals through the presence and gift of the Holy Spirit. The pedagogical insight here involves the internalizing effect of law, especially the New Law. The goal is full maturity in the virtues of faith, hope and charity, which constitute freedom for a life of excellence. How might Aquinas' teaching serve as a source of resilience, especially spiritual resilience?

2.5.3. Moral Experience and Knowledge as Sources of Resilience

Practical reflections on both ethical theory and resilience have a common starting point: resilient moral experience and virtue. How do another person's and our own successes and failures serve moral reflection? How do personal and communal resources contribute to the moral journey in terms of happiness, in developing virtuous and vicious characters, and in good and evil acts? What difference for resilience does it make if we acknowledge faith experiences as authoritative, or if we secularize the basis of reflection? Aquinas' approach to personal, social and divine sources would inseparably intertwine morality and resilience. He would not make resilience a standard for human agency, unless it was integrated with morality.

³⁰⁵ *ST* I-II 106.1 ad 2. In this domain, compared to his contemporaries, Aquinas marks a threefold originality, which Pinckaers (2002, 11) finds: "in his definition of the New Law as an interior law identified with the grace of the Spirit; in his definition of the gifts as dispositions to receive spiritual inspirations; and, finally, in his construction of morality around the virtues and the gifts that perfect them."

³⁰⁶ St. Paul describes this type of resilient life of the Spirit in his letter to the *Romans* (Rm 7:21-8:11). This new life entails living (and longing to live) by the Spirit, instead of the flesh.

³⁰⁷ Cf. Pinckaers 2002, 10.

We need to avoid two extremes when correlating moral experience, knowledge and virtue to resilience.³⁰⁸ One side of the dichotomy favors a rational study of moral norms, while neglecting experiences of responsibility, virtue and excellence. Moral norms, as *a priori* principles, would simply need application, a rational step; knowing would produce doing, e.g. Socrates. Likewise, resilience would simply mean learning to apply resilience rules. The other extreme overshadows moral norms in favor of personal experience, which then would serve as the only criteria in the moral domain. Unfortunately, this extreme could involve abuses to liberty.³⁰⁹ Resilience would then be experience *per se*, even normless experience.

Aquinas forges a middle ground between these extremes. His approach accords a basic priority to the moral experience (virtuous character) that grows through virtue and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Herein of course, he reserves an important, but subservient place for establishing norms and prudent decision-making. A parallel type of resilience would draw upon experience, norms and virtuous dispositions. It would demand a complete type of action.

How can we understand experience in moral and theological frameworks? "Experience" etymologically finds its roots in the practical knowledge, skill or competence (*peritia*) that we draw from a trial or danger (*periculum*) once overcome.³¹⁰ However, not all experience exhibits overcoming difficulty in the same way. What are the different sorts of experience? Even though a basic unity underlies being human, we have: emotional and psychological experiences; sensual and intellectual ones; and moral and spiritual ones. We need to reflect upon experience in order to gain moral science, virtue and resilience. However, not all experiences will serve as a basis for moral or resilient knowledge, judgment and action in the same way.³¹¹

Interior experience is particular. We amass it developmentally in at least two ways.³¹² First, each of the two interior dimensions

308 Cf. Pinckaers 1995a, 91.

309 St. Paul warns of such abuses of liberty in *Romans* ch. 8.

310 Cf. Bruguès 1995, 33; *WUED* 1989, 501.

311 For there are specifically shallow, immoral experiences; cf. Pinckaers 1995a, 91-94.

312 Cf. Philibert 1975.

(human and divine) of Christian experience is progressive. We acquire both only with time and in function of our own particular genetic heritage and personal history, gender and relationships, culture and society,³¹³ and so on. *Gratia praesupponit naturam*.³¹⁴ Second, when we develop moral theology and virtue, the utility of our personal and social context manifests itself in dialogue between our personal experiences and those of others: not only other theologians or ethicists from similar backgrounds, but also those who are young or inexperienced, weak or sick, dependent or crippled, who all have their lessons to offer.³¹⁵ Beyond its particularity, each person's experience has a certain universality, and for the better part, resilience.

The dialogue between our own experience and that of others is made possible through: (1) being in relationship with others; (2) understanding the other person as another self; (3) having confidence that other human beings' experiences are real and can be critically integrated to serve as a source for one's own moral judgments; and (4) believing that we share a common humanity between people of all genders, cultures and times. Thus we can learn from another person's and other people's experience, and how theorized sciences (including both the theological and psychosocial sciences) can gain insights into human resilient experience through that of particular individuals and communities.³¹⁶

³¹³ The limitations and universality of human experience arise in the debate about the contextualization of theology. Although each theology is in a special relationship with the identity, origin and experience of its author(s), specific theologies have attempted to translate and to inculcate Scripture and Tradition for particular contexts; e.g. liberation theology (addressing the situation of the oppressed; cf. Juan Luis Segundo, or Jon Sobrino) and feminist theology (integrating the experience and perspective of women; cf. Ann E. Carr).

³¹⁴ Concerning the like parallel between faith and natural knowledge, with explicit reference to grace and nature, Aquinas says: "*fides praesupponit cognitionem naturalem, sicut gratia naturam, et ut perfectio perfectibile*" *ST* I 2.2 ad 1; and "*gratia non tollat naturam, sed perfeciat*" *ST* I 1.8 ad 2; cf. *De verit.* 14.10 ad 9.

³¹⁵ Cf. A. MacIntyre 1999, 6-7; Pinckaers 2000a.

³¹⁶ The moral theorization of experience considers insights both from one's personal experience as well as those gleaned through the observations of the social sciences (cf. *VS*, n. 111 and 112; Bruguès, 1995, 32-36), which analyze aspects of the diversity and richness of human experience and narrative in order to refine a moral anthropology in terms of spiritual-religious experience and

What type of moral knowledge can we attain through these different sources? In the light of Aquinas' example, ethical theory and moral theology involve the rational elaboration of moral experience and sources: we reflect upon human experiences of successful and failed resilience; and we call upon different sciences—literary and human sciences, philosophical and theological ones. Moving from outside appearances to inner sources, to levels that we cannot measure,³¹⁷ moral theology takes the point of view of the responsible-faithfilled person³¹⁸ and his origin of knowledge and volition, affect and action. According to Pinckaers, it involves four types of knowledge: basic, intuitive, reflective and systematic. These types of knowledge incorporate the resources available through our own person and gifts, friends and family, music and art, nature and environment, in differing ways.³¹⁹ This involves a progressive appropriation of particular sources of resilience in virtuous dispositions.

First, through our basic (fontal or causal) knowledge, although hazily, we grasp a whole action. The origin of knowledge—our basic self-awareness—grows out of the experience.³²⁰ We encounter a deep

philosophical, sociological, psychological, neurophysiological and biological data, as we shall see more fully later.

317 The immeasurable inner sources include: conscience and will, as well as the movements of grace and the Holy Spirit. We should note that moral conscience is an interior nexus where a human person meets and interprets the meaning of his relationships: forms of friendship and love with members of family and society; relationship with nature and the cosmos; friendship with God and activity of the Holy Spirit. The conscience is the fontal point, the voice of God (cf. *VS* 54-64; *GS* 16; S.-Th. Pinckaers 1995a).

318 We can deem Christ as the prime analogue for the “responsible” person. Moreover, every person inasmuch as he is “responsive” to the grace of the Holy Spirit can serve as a model of “responsibility.” A human being is called to be responsible *to* himself, *to* his neighbor and *to* God; and responsible *for* himself, *for* his neighbor and *for* the world. Both aspects of responsibility need to be understood in terms of a graduated ordering that is determined in practice by love and prudence.

319 We follow the fourfold division of knowledge as developed by S.-Th. Pinckaers (1995a, 49-55). Moral knowledge is gained through patient reflection upon human action, experiences and theories, both one's own and those of others. Moral science pursues not only theoretical or speculative knowledge, but also practical and normative knowledge.

320 This origin of knowledge (and experience) is described in different ways (which are not all equivalent): as the heart (Biblical conception, cf. 1 Cor 2:11; Rm 8:16); as subconscious (Freud); as pre-moral good and evil (Curran,

unity of intellect and sensation, acts and goals, intentions and circumstances. This deepest level of knowledge is direct, dynamic and creative, an encounter of human inclinations and motives with grace and the Holy Spirit. It is inexhaustible. We cannot adequately express it in words. It precedes both ideas and words. *For example, it is the foundational, existential aspect of an encounter with a care-giving friend or a peaceful sonata that as a basic experience nourishes human resilience and serves as the origin for reflection.* This origin of knowledge underlies later more developed types of knowledge.

Second, when we develop moral reflection and seek self-understanding, we acquire a reflex or intuitive knowledge. Here we observe experience and ourselves. Rather than an action itself, this type of knowledge involves speculative self-vision. Such intuitive knowledge entails a reflection of human action and basic knowledge in our conscience. Language can articulate some of this event. It cannot however entirely express the basic knowledge, just as words can only partially express the movements of the heart. *This reflex knowledge involves for example, an intuitive glimpse of the cognitive and affective resilience-significance related to the contact with the friend, or listening to the sonata.*

Third, when we ask the questions “why” and “how,” we attain more specified, reflective knowledge. We produce a practically oriented knowledge, which starts to establish a process of generalization, but not yet systematization. Through this reflection, we seek the goals, motives, circumstances and consequences of the act.³²¹ We express reflective knowledge in narrative, instructive and wisdom literature, as well as in precepts and laws. *For example, it describes and recounts the resilience wisdom and guidance, or support and love that we gain through the friend; it communicates the comfort and sense of order that we receive when listening to the music.*³²²

McCormick, Cahill); as superconscience, “fontal” or causal knowledge (Pinckaers); and so on.

³²¹ It attempts to “explain, justify, critique, or improve it” as well as to “draw lessons, resolutions, practical advice, and directives for living,” employing memories of past experiences. Pinckaers 1995a, 53.

³²² We find examples in the sapiential and moral teaching of Scripture and of spiritual works, inasmuch as they are written in concrete and ordinary language.

Fourth, in theoretic or systematic knowledge, we attempt scientific discourse. We employ reason and logic to transform, generalize and universalize reflective, reflex and basic knowledge. We even attempt to predict and verify the relevance of the way in which we theorize this knowledge. Parts of the New Testament exhibit this process of theoretical organization and systematization. More developed expressions include scholastic and contemporary theology. *Thus we provide theories in order to explicate the resilience and existential significance of friendship and beauty.*

Language in some way always remains inadequate to explain moral experience, virtue and resilience. Nonetheless, actually resilient lives and virtuous individuals provide a rich source for reflection on resilience and morality. In order to appropriate deeper dimensions of spiritual experience and resilience, we shall resist the secularization of knowledge and reductionistic methods. In this spirit of renewal, Aquinas' moral anthropology proves to be a resilient model. We have confirmed and adapted his virtue theory and moral theology. They constitute a framework and provide insights into how moral experience aids us acquire and understand resilience.

This chapter's dialogue has served as a methodological, theoretical and anthropological introduction to the following chapters on fortitude and its related virtues. In the upcoming chapters, I shall revisit Aquinas' thought and psychosocial resilience research. Although Aquinas remains important both historically and as a contemporary master and dialogue partner, I do not wish simply to list his insights. Nor do I wish simply to report resilience findings. Rather, I seek to employ constructively both Aquinas and resilience research in order to enhance and renew virtue theory and moral theology.

PART TWO. APPLICATIONS

Chapter Three.

Resilience and Aquinas' Virtue of Fortitude

3.1. Introduction: Philosophical dimension of Fortitude and Resilience

Fortitude is necessary since each person is both vulnerable and has emotions. If any of our communities, families or selves were invulnerable, we would have neither emotions like fear, hope and daring, nor virtues like fortitude. Human vulnerabilities extend from physical to psychological, from economic to social, and from moral to spiritual levels. Even in the most protected environments, we rightly experience fear when faced with real and potential deformation, destruction or loss of life, limb and loved ones. The ultimate vulnerability of mortality produces manifold expressions of fear. Can we prevent such fear from causing deeper anxiety? Can we prepare ourselves in order to control better fearful situations? Can we resist fear without foregoing what is good, right and true? Courage and its related virtues offer responses to these questions. As the British analytic philosopher P. T. Geach says: "Courage is what we all need in the end; we all have to die, and for none of us can the possibility be excluded of dying nastily: in great pain, or after a long disabling illness."¹ Fortitude, like the other virtues, is only understandable in the context of the whole of our lives and in face of threats: our desire for flourishing, our relationships with others and our life projects.

Human beings moreover need to act courageously to recover from and rebuild after less serious losses. Courage is also about the daring necessary to overcome danger and toil. For example, after a youth has lost a leg because of a land mine, he requires fortitude and patience. Whether the loss is due to heroic service or to an accident, he needs courage to rebuild courageously. In the midst of this arbitrary, violent and destructive event, he requires renewed perseverance, hope and confidence.

¹ P. T. Geach 1977, 150.

Fortitude entails that we avoid going to extremes when faced with extreme situations. Its associated virtues—which Aquinas calls magnanimity, magnificence, patience and perseverance, but which I prefer to call the virtues of initiative-taking and resisting—bring balance and focus to our actions in the difficult situations of ordering everyday life.

Having already examined Aquinas' virtue approach and the resilience research as resources for the renewal of anthropology and moral theology in general, I now address two more particular questions. What is Aquinas' understanding of fortitude? And how does resilience research help to renew our understanding of moral development and fortitude? Can it even specify a type of moral resilience? I present Thomas' experiential and realist metaphysical foundation and teaching on fortitude in dialogue with resilience theory and research. In doing so, I attempt to extend Aquinas' contributions in an active conversation with psychosocial sources.

First, why place Aquinas' virtue of fortitude in dialogue with resilience research? Other virtues are also pertinent—such as hope, prudence and justice—as mentioned in chapters one and two. Assuredly, fortitude is not a one-dimensional virtue, nor does it function alone. It engages different domains, which go beyond physical strength. As a moral virtue, fortitude involves moral strength, both in terms of rational, volitional and affective commitment.² It parallels resilience as the center for overcoming difficulty. Second, why chose resilience to dialogue with the virtue of fortitude? Can we honestly study “resilience” in Aquinas and the virtue tradition? Thomas does not have a strictly synonymous term for “resilience.” Yet he does describe the reality also through other individual virtues such as patience, perseverance, magnanimity and magnificence, as well as through his description of virtue in general.

In what follows, we shall revisit Aquinas' treatment of fortitude and its related virtues. They offer us a means to understand

² According to Y.-M. Congar (1974, 336-7), “Courage is a moral reality. A physically weak man can exercise more courage while demonstrating in the act less energy or resistance (cf. *III Sent.* 34, 1, 2 ‘*secundum quantitatem suarum virium.*’) Non-violence is a form of resistance that supposes eventually more true courage than violent attack or resistance.”

moral resilience, insofar as they help humans: (1) to cope with and master fear; (2) to resist the forces that threaten our goals and self-integrity; and (3) to handle the daring needed to defend life, to recover from injury and to rebuild after suffering loss. Ultimately, fortitude involves an active resistance. It requires that we are patient and perseverant in the face of suffering and death. In the virtue tradition, fortitude is the most obvious primary dialogue partner for resilience.

3.2. Aquinas on the Virtue of Fortitude

Without giving a history of fortitude³ or Aquinas' contribution thereof, in this section, we establish an anthropological context for our later in-depth treatment of fortitude. We concentrate on Aquinas' philosophical anthropology and his insights on how fortitude helps us to manage fear and daring. Furthermore, we highlight the way that resilience input enriches our understanding of this virtue.

³ We can nevertheless recall a number of historical points in order to understand Aquinas' synthetic account of fortitude. The ancients (taken cumulatively) hold to the following; characteristically courage: (1) is undeniably tied to the good, which distinguishes "true fortitude" from semblances thereof; (2) has a constitutive social dimension; (3) manages fear and affronts the greatest dangers of life; (4) demands patient suffering and firm resistance in the face of adversity, as well as (5) employs daring to confront danger in order either to overcome it, or to manifest truth and defend justice, even in the face of an inevitable defeat. Modern and post-modern discussions have introduced new questions, tendencies and distinctions, which have had a decisive and altering impact on contemporary conceptions of courage. Some thinkers challenge the basic characteristics that typify the ancient worldview and Aquinas' Christian synthesis. Modern philosophical approaches more often than not severe or weaken the bond between fortitude and the good. They sometimes maintain that courage is not a virtue (because we can abuse or wrongly use it), or is outdated and misplaced (because we no longer need the courage of epic heroes). In its place, they claim that other more pertinent virtues need cultivating such as imaginative compromise, ironical detachment and political adeptness (to avoid situations that would otherwise need courage). Furthermore, they replace magnanimity and magnificence with generosity. Other transformations include (1) a shift away from courage as the mastery of fear to focus on daring or despair as the motor for courage; and (2) a denial or skepticism of the need for or possibility of heroic courage. This brief overview of diverse views on and critiques of courage sets the philosophical stage for a constructive treatment of courage in the light of Aquinas. Nonetheless, it does not pretend to be complete. Several recent works ably recount the history of fortitude: R. Gauthier 1951; M. Canto-Sperber 1996b. Attempts at addressing Aquinas' treatment of fortitude in historical context include: O. Lottin 1942-60; R. Gauthier 1951; Y-M. Congar 1974.

3.2.1. Types of Fortitude

Aquinas makes an extensive study of the types (typology) of fortitude and its related virtues.⁴ He establishes that fortitude can be a general or a specific virtue. He identifies integral and potential parts of fortitude, virtues related to it and its analogues. Moreover, he distinguishes acquired and infused virtue,⁵ and the fortitude that is a gift of the Holy Spirit (we shall return to the theological dimensions in chapter seven). Thomas' typology of fortitude aids us to discuss fortitude⁶ philosophically and to avoid confusing its various senses. It also allows us to identify how resilience resembles this virtue in certain ways.

Fortitude is not a question of simple physical strength or brash daring. As a moral virtue, truly courageous and good acts and dispositions are in accord with reason.⁷ For Aquinas, the rational faculty serves as a primary reference in managing efficaciously all aspects of life including our emotions, as discussed in chapter two. Emotions are a significant aspect of the virtue of fortitude. Difficult obstacles can disincite the will to follow reason. Hardship often excites an emotion like fear, daring, hope or sorrow. "In order to remove this obstacle fortitude of the mind is requisite, whereby to resist the aforesaid difficulty even as a man, by fortitude of body, overcomes and removes bodily obstacles,"⁸ as Aquinas says.

4 St. Thomas uses *fortitudo* frequently, 2228 times in his collected works and in different ways; cf. R. Busa's *Index Thomisticus*.

5 Infused virtues have two specifications. As virtues, they strengthen our faculties in order to act in a way that is proportionate to our ultimate end and calling. As infused, God produces them in us, although their development depends on our deliberately exercising them. Cf. *ST* I-II 62.3; E. D. O'Connor 1974, xv. Furthermore, Aquinas holds that graced fortitude is both an act (specific graced act) and an infused virtue (a strengthened power of operation).

6 According to Deferrari (1986, 417), Aquinas employs *fortitudo* in four different ways: "(1) *strength, firmness*; (2) *strength, firmness of soul*, in the sense of a general virtue; (3) *fortitude, courage of soul* in the sense of a particular virtue; (4) *feat of strength, trial of strength*."

7 In reference to the goodness of acting in accord with reason, Aquinas cites both Aristotle (*NE* ii.6) and Dionysius (*Div. Nom.* iv, 22) as authorities.

8 "*Alio modo, per hoc quod voluntatem repellit ab eo quod est secundum rationem, propter aliquid difficile quod incumbit. Et ad hoc impedimentum tellendum requiritur fortitudo mentis, qua scilicet huiusmodi difficultatibus resistat: sicut et homo per fortitudinem corporalem impedimenta corporalia*

In order to study the treatise on fortitude (*Summa theologiae* II-II 123-140),⁹ we shall distinguish between St. Thomas' analysis of: (1) fortitude as a specific virtue (and its integral related virtues) when it specifically faces the fear of death,¹⁰ and (2) fortitude as signifying secondary and connected virtues (potential parts of fortitude), as when the matter is some lesser difficulty,¹¹ or as when it is a condition for all virtues (fortitude as a general virtue).¹² Fortitude, as a specific virtue has no subjective parts (different types of fortitude),¹³ since according to Aquinas, we cannot differentiate it further according to another object, or break it down into distinct species. He construes fortitude to have such a unity that it has no higher universal concept that could collect distinct types of fortitude.¹⁴

Aquinas divides fortitude into four (quasi-) integral parts: magnanimity, magnificence, patience and perseverance.¹⁵ He

superat et repellit. Unde manifestum est quod fortitudo est virtus, inquantum facit hominem secundum rationem esse." *ST* II-II, 123.1.

⁹ The treatise on fortitude was most likely composed in 1272 in Paris; the commentary on the *NE* was done in 1271-72 (cf. Torrell 1996, 146-7, 227-8, 333; Congar 1974, 333). In distinguishing the parts of the virtue of fortitude in the *Summa theologiae* (II-II 128), Aquinas uses Cicero, Aristotle, Macrobius and Andronicus as his principal philosophical sources. He uses these same sources also in his treatment of the virtue of fortitude in his *III Com. Sent.* 33, 3, 3.

¹⁰ This complete act of fortitude confronts the fear of death. In an objection (*ST* II-II 123.2 obj. 2) against fortitude as a special virtue, Aquinas quotes Ambrose as saying (*De Offic.* i.39, n. 192: PL 16, 80 BC): "*Non mediocris animi est fortitudo, quae sola defendit ornamenta virtutum omnium, et iudicia custodit; et quae inexpiabili praelio adversus omnia vitia decertat. Invicta ad labores, fortis ad pericula, rigidior adversus voluptates, averitiam fugat tanquam labem quandam quae virtutem effeminiet.*"

¹¹ "*aliae virtutes adiunctae vel secundariae ponuntur partes cardinalium, [...] cum habeant materiam determinatam et actum proprium; sed quasi partes potentiales, in quantum particulariter participant, et deficienter medium quod principaliter et perfectius convenit virtuti cardinali.*" *de virt. com.* 12, 27.

¹² Cf. *ST* II-II 128.1 ad 5.

¹³ The other cardinal virtues on the contrary have subjective parts, cf. *ST* II-II 143.1.

¹⁴ We might ask why fortitude has no subjective parts. Has Aquinas so precisely conceived of fortitude's object that he limits different types of fortitude: domestic, economic, political, military, and so on (cf. *NE* iii.11, 1116a16-1117a28). Aquinas responds by saying that we might best construe these divisions as modes of fortitude rather than parts, since they lack the true notion of virtue (*ST* II-II 128.1 ad 5). Aquinas divided the virtues according to the faculties, as a perfection or *habitus* of a power (*potentiae perfectionem*).

¹⁵ Cicero divides fortitude into four (quasi-) integral parts according to its four inclinations (*appetitiones* and *contemptions*). Cicero considers these

recognizes two acts of fortitude: initiative-taking (*aggredi*) and endurance (*sustinere*).¹⁶ The act of initiative-taking (aggressiveness) underlies the virtues of magnanimity and magnificence that either combat or undertake some enterprise; these virtues employ and moderate aggressiveness.¹⁷ The act of endurance lies beneath the virtues of patience and perseverance that resist death and destruction; these virtues master endurance. Aquinas argues that patience and perseverance are more uniquely characteristic of fortitude. These four virtuous acts or dispositions are quasi-integral parts of fortitude when they apply to the proper matter of fortitude, namely the fear of death. They are potential parts, or secondary virtues related to, yet distinct from fortitude, when we apply them to another kind of hardship. Aquinas identifies longanimity and constancy as two other potential parts of fortitude.

A diagram of the way Aquinas sub-divides the virtues and passions related to fortitude demonstrates the structure through which he articulates his philosophical psychology. This diagram displays how Aquinas relates fortitude and its associated virtues to their objects, emotions (proximate matter), remote matters and opposing vices.¹⁸

inclinations to involve passions, feelings or emotions, rather than being abstracted or separated, as merely intellectual components. Aquinas, however, prefers magnanimity, rather than Cicero's "confidence" (cf. *ST* II-II 128.1; Cicero *Rhet.* II, 54). Aquinas was not alone in following Cicero's quadruple division of fortitude. Others who did the same include: Abelard in his *Ysagoge* (c. 1150); William (Guillaume) of Auxerre in his *Summa Aurea* (c. 1220); John de la Rochelle in his *De virtutibus*; Albert the Great in his *Com. super sententiis* (cf. Lottin 1960, III: 187-194). Nevertheless, we should note that Aquinas distinctly assigns Aristotle a central role in structuring this treatise. Aquinas is also original in his synthesis of Aristotelian and prevailing Abelardian conceptions of courage and associated virtues.

16 Aquinas draws from the Stoic division of courage, but not from its content. He follows Philip the Chancellor in holding that the parts of courage are integral parts, but he uses a different conception than Philip, who thought that courage has one act with six parts. Aquinas holds that it has two acts: *aggredi* and *sustinere*. Cf. Gauthier 1951: 360-3.

17 Cf. *ST* II-II 123.3 and 123.6; *ST* II-II 128.1.

18 As mentioned earlier, this chapter focuses on the virtue of fortitude *per se*, while the following chapter focuses on the two groups of virtues associated with fortitude: virtues of resisting (patience and perseverance), and virtues of enterprise or initiative-taking (magnanimity and magnificence).

The Virtue of Fortitude and its principal parts*

<i>Virtue</i>	<i>Object</i>	<i>Proximate Matter</i>	<i>Remote Matter</i>	<i>Opposing Vice</i>
Fortitude	persisting in the good of reason	fear and daring	dangers of death	Cowardice Fearlessness
<i>(Virtues of initiative-taking)</i>				
Magnanimity	attaining greatness in good	hope	being worthy of great honors	Presumption (works) Ambition (honors) Vainglory (praise) Pusillanimity
Magnificence	attaining greatness in deeds	hope	great spending	Profusion Meanness
<i>(Virtues of resisting)</i>				
Patience	remaining in the good	sorrow	afflicting evil	Unresponsiveness Weakness / Cowardice
Longanimity	knowing how to wait	hope	delays, length of time from the goal	Lack of enthusiasm / inconsistency Discouragement
Perseverance	persisting in the effort	fear	duration of time needed, delay	Hard-headedness Weakness, softness
Constancy	continuing the	sorrow	toil / renewed obstacles	Stubbornness

This sketch outlines Aquinas' typology of fortitude. I shall now inquire: how might particular types of fortitude serve as functional equivalents to resilience? And how can resilience insights enrich our understanding of the virtues related to difficulty?

3.2.2. The General Virtue of Fortitude and Resilience

Aquinas depicts how truly courageous actions accord with reason and resist difficulty in two ways, with two virtue-types of fortitude. First, as strength of mind, affection and action, fortitude is a general virtue. It is a quality necessary for all the virtues. In this regard, I shall suggest latter this section that we can construe fortitude as a type of or, at least, a source for moral resilience. Second, fortitude is the special capacity to control fear and daring when resisting or overcoming some life threatening danger. I shall investigate the resemblances between resilience and the specific virtue of fortitude in the next section.

In claiming that fortitude is a *virtus generalis*, Aquinas affirms that the virtues interrelate. As a general virtue, fortitude qualifies the other virtues, which, inasmuch as they are specific virtues have their own proper object. In other words, the general virtue of fortitude involves the strength or resilience that is one of the universal qualities of every virtue. The exercise of the other virtues involves consistency, truth and stability, which are necessary conditions for every virtue or act of virtue.¹⁹ Otherwise, a virtue would be transient or simply a singular act. Indeed, each excellence must stand firm in its own matter.

According to Aquinas, this first sense of fortitude, which applies in general to all virtues, involves: "the power of resisting

¹⁹ In this general sense, Aquinas transfers the quality of fortitude to temperance and vice versa: that temperance is strong and fortitude temperate. "*dicitur quod temperantia debet esse fortis, id est firmitatem habere; et fortitudo debet esse temperata, id est modum servare.*" *Qu. disp. de virtutibus* 1, 12, 23. "*fortitudo temperans est, et temperantia fortis.*" *Qu. disp. de virtutibus* 5, 1, 1. In this later quote Aquinas is commenting on Gregory's use of fortitude as a general virtue.

corruptions,”²⁰ “all constancy of soul,”²¹ “the principle of action [as] a *habitus* whereby someone acts well,”²² the “firmness of mind in face of assaults of all kinds,”²³ “a disposition whereby the soul is strengthened for that which is in accord with reason, against any assaults of the emotions, or the toil involved by any operations,”²⁴ the common formal principle, which “strengthens the mind,”²⁵ or the firmness of mind “required both in doing good and in enduring evil, especially with regard to goods or evils that are difficult.”²⁶ The general sense of fortitude makes fortitude a constitutive element of each virtue. It is the cement which, when added to other ingredients (a specific matter,

20 “*uno modo potentia naturalis secundum quam aliquis potest resistere corruptentibus.*” *ST II-II* 123.2 ad 1.

21 “*omnem firmitatem animi ad fortitudinem,*” as Aquinas says in his commentary on the *NE*: *In Eth.* 2, 8, 337. Aquinas names Cicero and Seneca as having such a general notion of fortitude as a virtue. Aquinas uses the authority of Aristotle in saying that “fortitude” can simply denote “*Uno modo, secundum quod absolute importat quandam animi fortitudinem. Et secundum hoc est generalis virtus, vel potius conditio cuiuslibet virtutis: quia sicut Philosophus dicit, in II Ethic., ad virtutem requiritur firmiter et immobiliter operari.*” *ST II-II* 123.2; cf. *NE* ii.3, 1105 a 32 - b 5; and *In Eth.* 2, 4, 283. He makes this same argument in *ST I-II* 61, articles 3 and 4. In the cited passage, Aristotle (*NE* ii.4, 1105b1) claims that in performing all virtues, a person, in addition to having knowledge and choice, “must proceed from a firm and unchangeable character.”

22 “*est principium agendi [...] quam habitus quo quis potest bene operari.*” *ST II-II* 123.2 ad 1, which he takes from Aristotle’s *Rhet.* i.9, 1366a36-b1. Aquinas develops this argument using Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* V, 12: 1019a15-20; *In Meta.* 14, 955.

23 “*animi firmitatem respectu quorumcumque impugnantium.*” *ST II-II* 123.2 ad 2 and “*firmitas animi*” *ST I-II* 65.1, *In Eth.* 2, 8, 336-7. Thomas also employs the insights of St. Ambrose, who speaks of fortitude in this general sense as a strength of mind which renders us strong in doing good when faced with all difficulties: vice, toil, danger, lust and covetousness. “*Non mediocris animi est fortitudo, quae sola defendit ornamenta virtutum omnium, et iudicia custodit; et quae inexpiabili praelio adversus omnia vitia decertat. Invicta ad labores, fortis ad pericula, rigidior adversus voluptates, averitiam fugat tanquam labem quandam quae virtutem effeminiet.*” (*De Offic.* i, 39, n. 192: PL 16, 80 BC) found in *ST II-II* 123.2 obj. 2.

24 “*fortitudo vero sit quaedam dispositio animae per quam firmetur in eo quod est secundum rationem, contra quoscumque impetus passionum vel operationum labores.*” *ST I-II* 61.4; cf. *ST I-II* 61.4 ad 3.

25 “*secundum communes rationes formales. [...] et omnis virtus quae facit firmitatem animi contra quascumque passiones, dicatur fortitudo.*” *ST I-II* 61.3.

26 “*haec quidem firmitas animi requiritur et in bonis faciendis et in malis perferendis, et praecipue in arduis bonis vel malis.*” *ST II-II* 139.1. Other examples of fortitudo used as a general virtue include: *ST II-II* 123.3 obj. 1, where St. Gregory is quoted.

action or faculty), becomes a solid foundation for the life of excellence.

Evoking the description of general resilience in chapter one, I would like to suggest that general fortitude (the general virtue of fortitude) is a functional equivalent to the resilience quality identified as general strength in difficulty. It manifests coping, resisting and constructive supports. Later, I shall develop the correlation between fortitude as a general virtue and resilience. For the time being, I also recall that studies on “emotional intelligence” provide parallel insights into what Aquinas would call moral virtue in general and the general virtue of fortitude.²⁷ In conclusion, fortitude as a general virtue recalls the steeling aspect of resilience. Seen as a quality of all virtues, it also resembles an analogue for acquired and ingrained qualities that underlie more than singular instances of resilience.

3.2.3. The Special Virtue of Fortitude and Moral Resilience

When Aquinas further specifies the virtue according to its matter, his notion of courage offers added interest to the resilience dialogue. First, we shall investigate how Thomas delimits the special virtue of fortitude as an act and as a disposition of human character. What makes this virtue different from the others? Then, we shall examine how the specific virtue of fortitude correlates with resilience. How does it constitute an aspect of moral resilience?

In addition to concerning the good of reason (like the other virtues), fortitude concerns danger and labor. As a specific or special virtue, “fortitude may be taken to denote firmness only in bearing and withstanding those things wherein it is most difficult to be firm, namely in certain grave dangers.”²⁸ Aquinas does not stop at this

²⁷ Cf. D. Goleman 1998 and 1995.

²⁸ “*Alio modo potest accipi fortitudo secundum quod importat firmitatem animi in sustinendis et repellendis his in quibus maxime difficile est firmitatem habere, scilicet in aliquibus periculis gravibus.*” ST II-II 123.2. To add support to this affirmation, he quotes Cicero, St. Gregory the Great and Aristotle. Cicero’s *Rhetoric* (II.54) affirms that “*fortitudo est considerata periculorum susceptio et laborum perpessio*” (as cited in ST II-II 123.2).

general definition though. His philosophical project proceeds by progressive nuances, which examine specific phenomena of fortitude.

Aquinas demonstrates that, even as a specific virtue, fortitude procures a general strength in resisting destruction to our dispositions and our person.²⁹ Aquinas holds that a natural power involves both a capacity to resist corruptions and a principle to act. As the extreme activity of a power, he identifies the second (a principle to act) as the more common determination of virtue in general. But the first (being a power to resist corruptions) indicates an indispensable quality of virtue, and a particular quality of the specific virtue of fortitude. Aquinas says, “even as a special virtue with a determinate matter, it helps to resist the assaults of all vices. For he that can stand firm in things that are most difficult to bear is prepared, in consequence, to resist those which are less difficult.”³⁰

Fortitude helps us to resist in accordance with how we have become ordered to our ultimate goal, flourishing. Aquinas does not construe goods to be all of the same level or importance. Rather, he argues that human beings will more fully attain flourishing by seeking it through a definitely ordered hierarchy of goods. For example, holding firmly to the good of reason (*bonum rationis*) is more important than either avoiding bodily evils or seeking bodily goods, which by themselves are patent sources of attraction or repulsion. If the will’s courageous disposition to the good of reason holds in the most fearful situations, it should do so in less fearful ones. This rationale gives Aquinas the basis for identifying the specific nature of the virtue of fortitude. He claims that: “fortitude of soul must be that which binds the will firmly to the good of reason in face of the greatest evil.”³¹

²⁹ Thomas’ argument (*ST* II-II 123.2 ad 1) builds upon, yet outstrips, two Aristotelian principles (cf. *De Caelo* i.116; and *Metaphysics* v.12).

³⁰ “*est specialis virtus habens determinatam materiam, coadiuvat ad resistendum impugnationibus omium vitiorum. Qui enim potest firmiter stare in his quae sunt difficillima ad sustinendum, consequens est quod sit idoneus ad resistendum aliis quae sunt minus difficilia*” (*ST* II-II 123.2 ad 2; cf. ad 1).

³¹ “*ad virtutem fortitudinis pertinet ut voluntatem hominis tueatur ne retrahatur a bono rationis propter timorem mali corporalis. Oportet autem bonum rationis firmiter tenere contra quodcumque malum: quia nullum bonum corporale aequivalet bono rationis. Et ideo oportet quod fortitudo animi dicatur quae firmiter retinet voluntatem hominis in bono rationis contra maxima mala:*

Thomas' hierarchy does not only specify the types of fear, but also the types of rational truths and volitional goods.³²

Aquinas' argument deepens. He contends that fortitude is more precisely about fear and daring (*ST II-II 123.3*), the fear of death (*ST II-II 123.4*), and most specially death in battle (*ST II-II 123.5*). While building upon the basis of a natural virtue, he widens the cultural context and extent of its application. Thomas pushes beyond the notions of courage's fulfillment as identified by Aristotle and Cicero. According to Aquinas, the highest form of fortitude is more than death in battle to defend the polis (Aristotle), or in a political effort for the common good (Cicero), as we shall see in a later section.

Fortitude's place in the hierarchy of virtues further illuminates Aquinas' conception of this specific virtue. Even though fortitude concerns difficulty, Aquinas emphasizes the ordering due to excellence and the good, rather than difficulty *per se*. He says "simply speaking, that virtue is more excellent, which has the more excellent object,"³³ and "virtue essentially regards the good rather than the difficult."³⁴ Thus, intellectual virtues are more excellent than moral virtues (*I-II 63.3*); and among moral virtues, prudence and justice are more so than the other cardinal virtues, because they concern the perfection of reason itself and establishing this good of reason in human affairs.³⁵

quia qui stat firmus contra maiora, consequens est quod stet firmus contra minora, sed non convertitur;" *ST II-II 123.4*.

³² Later, I shall discuss the way in which Aquinas prioritizes the goods of reason that culminate in a faith-informed reason. In parallel, the hierarchy of the goods of the will culminate in the goods of charity that order other human desires and loves, and ultimately our relationship with fears.

³³ "*Unde, simpliciter loquendo, illa virtus nobilior est quae habet nobilius obiectum.*" *ST I-II 66.3*.

³⁴ "*ratio virtutis magis consistit in bono quam in difficili.*" *ST II-II 123.12 ad 1*.

³⁵ Cf. *ST II-II 123.12*. Aquinas also explains the division of these four virtues as "hinges" (*cardines*), since they are a foundation on which rests the other virtues. (cf. *de virt. card.* I, ad 12, ad 13; Gauthier 1951, 363 fn. 1; Lottin 1960, III:174-180.) For Aquinas, the cardinal virtues are virtue-types because they completely fulfill the four general modes (formal principles) of virtue: rational determination of the good; rectitude in managing its operations; solidity preventing the emotions from dissuading us from the good; and moderation preventing the emotions from turning us to evil (cf. *ST I-II 61.2*; *In Eth.* Book 2, lect. 8; Gauthier 1951, 361). We reach these 4 modes in three degrees: (1) in all virtues, since each act of virtue needs discernment, rectitude, solidity, moderation and so forth; (2) more particular actuality in certain classes of virtues (concerning

This hierarchy of virtues by no means belittles the place and utility of the moral virtues though.

Evidently, other factors differentiate the four cardinal virtues and their associated virtues, including their necessity for flourishing.³⁶ One of the virtues without the others leads to situations that can no longer be considered virtuous. Fortitude in particular needs the virtue of justice lest we put it to bad use. Aquinas integrates the notion of justice in true courage. Aquinas thus cites Ambrose, who says: “fortitude without justice is an occasion of injustice; since the stronger a man is the more ready is he to oppress the weaker.”³⁷ In the fuller sense, specific fortitude has a general utility in safeguarding justice, temperance and the other virtues.³⁸ As a specific virtue, fortitude involves the capacity to cope with difficulties and resist the destruction of our dispositions. This moral resilience especially aids us to act according to our reasoned commitments and long-term projects when facing the danger of death.

We can find analogues of fortitude in related domains such as altruism, generosity and self-sacrifice, which contrast self-preservation and egotism. Individuals and groups confront and overcome threats to life, truth and goodness with natural and acquired reactions,

intellect, will, emotions); and (3) in determined matters. It is only in this last regard that one speaks strictly and not improperly of the four cardinal virtues. Thus, Aquinas can say that fortitude is a strength of soul that manifests itself above all when facing mortal dangers (cf. *ST* I-II 61.3 and 61.4).

³⁶ Aristotle (*Politics* 1323a23) says, “no one would maintain that he is happy who has not in him a particle of courage or temperance or justice or practical wisdom, who is afraid of every insect which flutters past him, and will commit any crime, however great, in order to gratify his lust for meat or drink, who will sacrifice his dearest friend for the sake of half a farthing, and is as feeble and false in mind as a child or a madman.” He applies this same reasoning to the state, so that the happy state is the one the exercises excellence: wise, courageous, temperate, prudent, just activities; see *Politics* 1323b20-1323b35.

³⁷ Aquinas (*ST* II-II 123.12 ad 3) thus cites Ambrose’s *de Offic.* (I.35.176: PL 16.75A): “*fortitudo sine iustitia iniquitatis est materia: quo enim validior est, eo promptior ut inferiorem opprimat.*” Aquinas and Ambrose follow Cicero in this regard, who holds a reserve concerning those who exhibit fortitude without yet having proved their general moral equilibrium. The Roman statesman and philosopher warns that “a courageous spirit in a human who has not attained perfection and ideal wisdom is generally too impetuous” (*Off.* I.46; cf. I.7, 62-3, 66; II.33-34, 38).

³⁸ *ST* II-II 123.12 *corpus* and *ad* 5; *ST* II-II 142.3 ad 1; *De verit.* 1, 12, 23; and 5, 1, 1.

dispositions and strategies. For example, seeking to protect other individuals and social groups or ourselves involves an intellectual, volitional and emotional tenor in order not to be distracted from these goals, and to overcome the challenge actively. On the contrary, the inclinations to self-preservation coupled with selfish tendencies can undercut generous and altruistic acts. We shall address these topics further in the section on managing emotions of fear and daring.

Second, how can the resilience findings and perspective enrich a study of fortitude? Even though the language of “courage” or “fortitude” *per se* is not particularly central to the social sciences, researchers employ related terms when treating the management of emotions, especially fear and daring.³⁹ Synonyms of fortitude or related concepts that lend themselves to this investigation include: hardiness, dauntlessness, intrepidity, pluck, spirit, heroism, daring, gallantry, bravery, valor, bravado, security, self-confidence and self-efficacy. Contrasts to fortitude aid the illustration of its content and dynamics as well. Psychosocial researchers demonstrate the disruptive nature of extreme emotions, which would oppose this virtue: (1) fear, anxiety, fright, terror, cowardice, timidity, and the pathologies of hypochondria, panic and phobia; and (2) fearlessness, aggression, audacity, rashness, recklessness and indifference.⁴⁰

Fortitude and its related virtues are most evident when we need to cope with stress-filled, difficult or dangerous situations. This virtue group parallels major aspects of resilience. For example, the situation-behavior (psychology) approach has investigated the dynamic of coping, as an aspect of resilience.⁴¹ It theorizes that courageous, resisting and initiative-taking acts are types of coping responses to different kinds of stress. Building upon a detailed taxonomy of

39 Cf. Lazarus and Lazarus 1994.

40 Cf. D. Goleman 1995, 289-90.

41 According to R. S. Lazarus (1992), the situation-behavior approach to coping, which is “transactional, contextual and process-centered, began to appear in the late 1970’s stimulated by cognitive-relational theories of stress and emotion, which were a part of the broad cognitive movement in psychology.” This work is contrasted with an earlier “psychoanalytical ego-psychology outlook in which the emphasis was placed on coping as a personality style” e.g. defensive strategies (repression-sensitization). (Perrez and Reicherts 1992a, 5).

coping,⁴² Perrez and Reicherts⁴³ hypothesize that one type of stress producing situation (type I) promotes more passive (hesitate and wait) and evasive (escape and avoid) reactions.⁴⁴ Another (type II) tends to promote more active and instrumental reactions and interventions.⁴⁵ They conjecture that these situations promote different emotions. Type I situations engender more depressive emotions and ones that aid in disengaging the agent from the danger or difficulty.⁴⁶ Type II situations involve more positive emotions which favor active engagement in the environment and direct confrontation with the stressor. Perrez and Reicherts suggest that this second type of stressful events, which humans interpret as controllable and not likely to reoccur, activates the agent positively to influence the stressor. I suggest that the first type of situation-oriented coping response can enrich our understanding of the virtues of resistance (patience and perseverance), while the second can do so with the virtues of courage (as a whole) and initiative-taking (magnanimity and magnificence). We shall demonstrate these relationships in the sections that follow.

Resilience phenomena, in general, and coping with stress, in particular, involve an important range of the cognitive, volitional and emotional dynamics related to situations of hardship. At the anthropological and psychological levels, resilience research can

42 M. Perez (1992, 5-8) develops an extended coping taxonomy, which involves the following classifications: (1) coping with a situation can demand instrumental, passive or evasive action; (2) the agent can cognitively relate to (represent) the situation either in seeking or suppressing information; and (3) the agent can opt to either chose to re-evaluate the situation or change his goals. Insights into these "coping responses" involve the way in which they distinguish between objective parameters and subjective perceptions.

43 We should associate Perrez and Reicherts' (1992a, 29) "situation-oriented" approach with two other types of coping operation: (1) the representation-oriented type of coping that searches for or suppresses information; as well as (2) evaluation-oriented coping, which changes intentions and goals, or re-evaluates the situation.

44 The Type I coping situation is characterized as follows: "If a stressful event is perceived as of low controllability and with high expected probability for reappearance, subjects react with rather negative emotions and with stronger evasion, passivity and disengagement" (Perrez 1992, 13). This type of stress situation can have a tendency to promote a depressive emotional pattern.

45 Cf. Perrez 1992, 6 and 13; Folkman and Lazarus 1986.

46 Cf. Perrez 1992, 6; Klinger 1977; Lazarus, Kanner and Kolkman 1980; Fridja 1987, 295, 298.

deepen our understanding of fortitude and the virtues of initiative-taking and resisting. Psychological approaches, neuro-physiological sciences and social-evolutionary theory offer insights that enhance a philosophical conception of fortitude. They add observations and reflections on the relationship of emotion to human strengths, and on the analogues of fortitude. They aid to “thicken” our anthropological synthesis. Conversely, Aquinas’ virtue approach to fortitude and its management of fear and daring provides a philosophical basis to approach moral resilience. His typology of fortitude aids us to comprehend moral responsibility and agency. In the next section, I shall examine the way in which the disposition of fortitude involves managing the emotions of fear and daring and, in turn, how resilience insights can enhance this perspective.

3.3. Managing Human Fear

How do humans experience fear? How can we manage it in ways that are creative and consistent with our life-goals? How do we morally adjudicate the place of fear in human agency? In order to enhance our Thomist anthropology and understanding of the emotions related to fortitude, we shall first examine some neuro-physiological and psychosocial input on fear and anxiety. These sciences portray fear phenomena in terms of natural fear reactions’ utility, timid temperament and psychosocial anxiety. We then put these findings and theories into dialogue with Aquinas’ teaching on the emotions related to fortitude. After an examination of his teaching on emotion, we shall explore his typology of fear. His understanding of fear and timidity aid us to comprehend the way in which he morally adjudicates human agency in fear. These domains illustrate both the matter of fortitude and serve to understand the correlation of human, moral and social vulnerabilities and resilience more fully.

3.3.1. Neuro-physiological Science on Fear and Timidity

In order to understand fear-related moral phenomena and dispositions, we need to observe how humans experience fear. The contemporary neurological and physiological sciences offer detailed analyses of fear and timidity, as well as daring and boldness (the latter of which we treat in the next chapter). In this section, we ask: what can

we observe about fearful emotions? What do these sciences tell us about timid temperaments?

To chart the phenomena of human fear at neurological and physiological levels offers us a further tool to know and manage fear. For example, we can log the trajectory of a fear-evoking sound. What spontaneous neurological and physiological reactions does a fear-inspiring noise precipitate in us? Through our ear, brainstem and thalamus, we first sort out the physical sound wave. With the amygdala and hippocampus, we compare it with other sounds. Finally with the auditory cortex, we analyze it in order to determine its origin. This process startles us into alertness.

If we cannot pinpoint the source and meaning of the sound, then we start a more in-depth analysis; we use the amygdala, hippocampus and prefrontal cortex, which at the same time heighten our uncertainty and fix our attention on the sound's potential sources. If this process fails to resolve the query about the noise's origin, the amygdala sounds an alarm that activates the hypothalamus, brainstem and autonomic nervous system. We then experience apprehension, subliminal anxiety and edginess. The body prepares itself for movement as the autonomic nervous system (through the emergency-response hormone—corticotrophin-releasing hormone) charges the cardiovascular system, muscles and gut to act. The muscles of the vocal cords tighten, giving a higher-pitched voice. Norepinephrine (noradrenaline) heightens the sensory circuit's receptivity. At this point, unconscious anxiety pierces consciousness and we start to feel fear.

We experience other related fear-reactions, such as: a blanched face and fearful facial expression; tensed muscles; an increased heart-rate and heightened blood pressure; slower breathing; focused attention on the source of fear; and a racing of the mind that seeks to resolve the fear-dilemma or to respond to the related danger.⁴⁷ This neuro-physiological description is not the whole story of human management of fear. In the next section, I shall ask: how do humans rationally and volitionally manage fear? And how might Aquinas' virtue-based moral

47 Cf. Goleman 1995, 6; 297-300 and Kagan 1994.

theory integrate the neuro-physiological sciences while proving further input for moral action.

At a second level, temperament traits involve fearfulness and timidity. Kagan (1994) identifies timidity and its contrary, boldness, as two of the four major temperament types.⁴⁸ As mentioned in chapter one, according to Allport and a wide consensus of psychologists, temperament is a dynamic of behavioral, emotional and cognitive patterns.⁴⁹ Temperament is a collection of types of personality differences, which we can detect at an early age. It influences how we develop our characters, involve ourselves socially and manage fearful situations. Its impact is due to underlying physiology and neurochemical levels of reactivity, which we can educate to a certain extent.

Having an easily aroused neurochemistry (and neural circuitry), timid personalities tend to avoid the unfamiliar, shy away from the uncertain, talk less to strangers and more easily suffer anxiety. Timid children have higher levels of reactivity across the range of sympathetic nervous system indices (resting blood pressure; pupil dilatation; norepinephrine markers). From birth, their hearts beat faster than other infants when faced with novel or strange situations. This easy arousal seems to underlie their timid temperament, which means they are more likely to react to new people or situations as if they were threats.⁵⁰

These indicators suggest why we should consider an individual's acquired vulnerability and resilience in the context of temperament and character developments. Not that our temperament is our destiny, but temperament types can heighten risk or protection for an individual in a particular situation. An individual's neurological reactivity, with which he is born, serves as the basis for learning to

48 J. Kagan (a University of Harvard researcher) posits at least four temperamental types: timid, bold, upbeat, and melancholy. Each type involves a particular pattern of brain activity. These types nonetheless are involved in further innumerable differences in temperamental endowment. On the dimension of temperament that ranges from boldness to timidity, cf. Kagan 1994, esp. 155-57.

49 Cf. G. W. Allport 1937/1961; K. Durkin 1995, 71.

50 Furthermore, Goleman (1995, 216-8; 221-3) notes that they have been found to be at higher risk for developing: anxiety disorders, such as panic attacks.

cope in social interactions or to build on it as a strength.⁵¹ This second factor aids us to understand further fear and timidity. As for the neurological effects of fear, considerations of an individual's temperament are necessary but insufficient to explain the moral quality of human agency and character.

3.3.2. Psychosocial Sciences on Fear and Attachment

The emotion of fear is more than its neuro-chemistry, physiology or its relation to temperament traits. Other important domains involve its relationship to attachment, its utility, its purpose and its evolutionary origin. In this section, we investigate input from socio-biological and attachment theories. These considerations widen the basis for our dialogue with Aquinas, in the next section, on moral development and courageous acts.

As mentioned in chapter two, socio-biologists and psychologists deem fear a survival-promoting tendency;⁵² it responds in the face of certain “natural clues to an increased risk of danger.”⁵³ Without having to learn how to formally assess the particular risks involved, an individual has survival advantages based in his ingrained capacities to respond appropriately with avoidance, flight, resistance or the like.⁵⁴ J. Bowlby identifies some natural clues of danger for

51 As in chapter two, timid temperaments has been shown to be a protective dynamic in situations demanding violence avoidance and intellectual/academic achievement; cf. Consortium 1994, 275.

52 By natural tendency, they mean a disposition that: (1) promotes the survival advantage for the individual, his/her genes, or related gene pool (species); (2) that has been acquired through natural selection and is passed on through genes and / or conditioning. Cf. E. O. Wilson 1975/1978; S. J. Pope 1994.

53 Bowlby's attachment theory (1969) is embedded in a general theory of behavior employing several trends from biology and social sciences: psychoanalytic orientation; biological discipline of ethology, which views behavior in a evolutionary context; psychobiology; control-systems theory; Piaget's structural approach. Cf. Ainsworth et al. 1978, 3-4, 20.

54 D. Goleman (1995, 297) efficaciously summarizes contemporary psychosocial theory (in an evolutionary perspective) on the utility of fear: “The emotional mind is our radar for danger: if we (or our forefathers in evolution) waited for the rational mind to make some of these judgments, we might not only be wrong—we might be dead. The drawback is that these impressions and intuitive judgments, because they are made in the snap of a finger, may be mistaken or misguided. [...] Fear, in evolution, has a special prominence: perhaps more than any other emotion it is crucial for survival. Of course in modern times

humans: strangeness (unfamiliarity), sudden change of stimulation, rapid approach, height and being alone.⁵⁵ He correlates fear and attachment, which are not simply opposites. When we feel secure (well-attached), we are not fearful. Inversely, when we feel afraid, we are not secure. The same circumstances often activate fear and attachment behavior together. When feeling afraid, people not only exhibit fear behavior, but also attachment behavior. For example, infants cling to their mother or father; children run for peer or adult protection; adults find shelter in the tried and true sources of support, such as spouses and friends. Likewise, when people feel secure they are more apt to explore potentially fearful, new situations. Infants momentarily distance themselves from a parental source of attachment and security, while probing a new surrounding.⁵⁶

What implications for resilience and courage arise from this correlation between fear and attachment? And how might courage be rooted not only in attachment to an affective source, but also to rational meaning? First, the “survival advantage” (evolutionary resilience) and disadvantage (vulnerability) of fear reactions depend upon the situation and individual. For example, the short-term advantages of being reactive to real danger can become a lasting problem when the brain resets its reactivity according to an experience of trauma. In this case, the brain’s predispositions react “like a car stuck in perpetual high gear;”⁵⁷ we then need to re-establish emotional calm.⁵⁸

misplaced fears are the bane of daily life, leaving us suffering from frets, angst, and garden variety worries—or at pathological extreme, from panic attacks, phobias, or obsessive-compulsive disorder.”

55 Bowlby also notes the tendency to respond more strongly when two or more natural clues are simultaneously present (cf. M. Ainsworth 1978, 20).

56 Cf. Ainsworth 1978, 22.

57 D. Goleman (1995, 206) notes that there can be excessive fear or hypersensitivity to it, when the amygdala and its connected regions fix a new setpoint during the moment of trauma.

58 In emotional relearning, as when overcoming the learned fear of a post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the neocortex is critical in redressing the amygdala in having an appropriate, milder reaction to objects related to the trauma. Natural relearning occurs when we encounter the feared object without truly scary consequences. However in a PTSD, this spontaneous relearning fails to occur. According to Goleman (1995, 207-8), “but given the right experiences, even PTSD can lift; strong emotional memories, and the patterns of thought and reaction that they trigger, can change with time. This relearning, Charney proposes, is cortical.”

When inadequately attached, moreover, we can exhibit an increased flight-tendency. Bowlby's research suggests that when humans have no personal attachment, we more readily exhibit a flight, rather than a fight movement. To flee a dangerous situation is necessarily neither inappropriate nor uncourageous. However, we need to counter such a tendency when the situation involves a cause worth defending. Likewise, the lack of attachment security in the face of fear can disrupt our attention,⁵⁹ self-confidence and self-efficacy.⁶⁰ This situation can incapacitate the rational analysis we need to adequately assess what is appropriate, what is courageous. In the next section, we shall consider the importance of fear, attachment and attention for moral adjudication.

Second, in terms of resilience, security-producing attachments can contribute to the strength we need to assess the situation calmly and rationally, in order either to flee or to fight in a free and fitting way. We might also extend these reflections on attachment-based security to the emotional and affective (and not simply intellectual) attachment to sources of meaning and truth. If feeling attached includes a secure sense of meaning and finality, then attachment involves a source of strength to control fear and to more readily confront its source.⁶¹ In summary, fear and attachment correlate in both uncourageous vulnerability and courageous resilience. Ill-adapted fear reactions and inadequate attachment can accentuate vulnerability.⁶² On

59 As was illustrated earlier (Wilson and Gottman 1996, 201), the high levels of arousal, such as when we are deeply under the influence of fear, can have detrimental effects on attentional process and in turn on our resiliency.

60 Cf. Bandura 1986; M. Rutter 1990.

61 Cf. Ainsworth, 1978: 20-22; Bowlby 1969.

62 Certain existential and psychoanalytical insights further illustrate the dynamics of fear and anxiety. In particular these approaches widen the domain of fear beyond considerations of death and physical danger. According to Paul Tillich's existentialist approach (1952/2000), fear and anxiety have three objects: first, physical dangers and death; second, doubt and meaninglessness; and third, guilt and condemnation. Tillich illustrates the need for courage to assume the existential (irresolvable) anxiety that constitutes the way that human beings must face not only death and physical dangers, but also threats to meaning and social participation (including salvation). This insight has value and application beyond the limitations of his existential project. It suggests distinguishing two basic types of fear: (1) an everyday fear whose concrete object threatens physical life and meaning, and (2) an ultimate fear whose object concerns at least a moral order. This ultimate fear also refers to a revealed moral order and our relationship with

the contrary, emotional, willed and intellectual attachment to sources of meaning and truth and to stable and solid relationships can serve resilience.

3.3.3. Enhancing Aquinas' Analysis of Fear and Timidity

Now we turn to Aquinas' anthropology and analysis of the emotions of fear and daring and the temperament of timidity. We shall revisit his anthropology in dialogue with the aforementioned neuro-physiological and psychosocial insights. How might they enrich his conception of the way in which we manage fear and adjudicate moral resilience?

In spite of his archaic theory of the movement of body heat and vital spirits, Aquinas makes pertinent phenomenological observations about the physiological and psychological effects of fear.⁶³ For example, we experience a chilling and a loss of spirit, speechlessness and trembling, blushing (from shame as a type of fear) or turning pale (when facing the fear of death), as well as attack-wariness and heightened flight-readiness, to name but a few.⁶⁴ While retaining some relevance, these insights are incomplete and his physiology is outdated. We can renew Aquinas' anthropology through integrating neurobiological and physiological observations on the effects of fear and daring, and contemporary temperament theory on

God. This discussion will continue later in the context of Aquinas treatment of acquired and infused virtues of fortitude, in chapter five.

E. H. Erikson, furthermore, in his psychoanalytical approach, construes anxiety to influence the three human processes: the somatic processes inherent to the organism, the ego processes that organize experience and the social processes that involve interpersonal roles and activities. At the somatic or biological level, we experience pain and tension. At the psychological level, ego undergoes a type of anxiety that puts pressures on self-individuation. Finally, at the social science level, we face the panic emanating from a group. Cf. E. H. Erikson 1985, 34-37. According to Erikson (1985, 24-5), the psychotherapist "deals above all with human anxiety," which is based in conflicts that are present already in young children. This emphasis on conflict finds its origin in Freud's first focusing on mental disturbance.

⁶³ We should further specify Aquinas' physiology of emotions: e.g. fear involves the sensitive appetite, accompanied by a transmutation; Aquinas in this regard takes his leads from Aristotle and from Damascene, the latter of which uses the image of contraction (*sustolen*) to speak of fear (*De Fide Orthod.* III.23; cf. *ST* I-II 41.1 sc and obj.1).

⁶⁴ Cf. *ST* I-II 44.2 obj/ad 1; 44.2 obj/ad 2; 44.3; 44.2 obj/ad. 3; *ST* II-II 125.

timidity. In their well-defined domains, these contemporary sciences help us to understand fear and timidity more fully. Yet, we need a moral context, which Aquinas can provide, in order to understand better how fear and timidity influence our moral acts and dispositions.

Aquinas' interest in how human animality interrelates with moral and spiritual life leads him to pay searching attention to how human emotional capacities relate to moral acts and dispositions. In chapter two, we treated Aquinas' theory of emotions and virtue. Here we need to specify the roles that fear and daring play in his approach to the virtue of fortitude.

While aiming to integrate pertinent neuro-physiological observations on fear phenomena, we need to look beyond these phenomena for a rational and moral domain. For Aquinas, fear is an emotion of the soul (*passio animae*).⁶⁵ Through it, we relate to an evil that seeks to overcome a particular good.⁶⁶ Through the virtue of fortitude, we master such fear, as a special emotion whose object is "a future evil, difficult and [almost] unavoidable."⁶⁷ Fear and daring, although of key importance for us to understand resilience, are only a part of the emotional picture. In general, the irascible or contending emotions help us to manage sensible good and evil that are arduous to attain or avoid.⁶⁸ Fear and daring face some great danger. However, these emotions are supported by the other irascible emotions: hope and anger.⁶⁹

We cannot understand human fear however without reference to love of particular goods. Love underlies all human agency. Likewise, resilience studies cannot simply focus on the emotions

⁶⁵ Aquinas treats fear as a passion (cf. *ST* I-II 23.4; *ST* I-II 41-44) and as a gift of the Holy Spirit (cf. *ST* II-II 19.1-12).

⁶⁶ "Et importat etiam habitudinem ad malum, secundum quod malum habet quodammodo victoriam super aliquod bonum." *ST* I-II 41.1co.

⁶⁷ "Ita obiectum timoris est malum futurum difficile cui resisti non potest." *ST* I-II 41.2; cf. *ST* I-II 42.1. Aquinas sometimes speaks of the evil as being irresistible or unavoidable (cf. *ST* I-II 41.2; 41.4; and so on) and at other moments as being *almost* unavoidable (cf. *ST* I-II 41.2 ad 3; 42.3; 42.4; 43.1). The second seems to be the general meaning since he explains that when the evil is *absolutely* unavoidable that even fear is lost in despair; for fear requires hope of escaping the future evil. Cf. *ST* I-II 42.2; and *Rhet.* ii.5 where Aristotle claims that those who are on the scaffold, facing immanent death are not afraid.

⁶⁸ Cf. *ST* I-II 60.4; cf. *ST* I-II 25.1; *ST* I-II 40-48.

⁶⁹ Cf. *ST* I-II 23.2; 23.3; 35.2; *ST* I-II 40-48.

directly rooted in difficulty. Our emotions and efforts in hardship find their sources in the love that motivates and sustains us.⁷⁰ Aquinas recognizes that our two major emotional capacities—the concupiscible and irascible appetites—collaborate in morality. The concupiscible appetite aims at sensible good or evil *per se*. The irascible, on the contrary, perceives the good or evil in hardship. Aquinas says that the passions of the irascible faculty relate primarily, if not exclusively to the two movements of *aggredi* (initiative and attack) and *sustinere* (resistance and endurance).⁷¹

He does maintain that neither anger nor hope⁷² (nor their related virtues—meekness and magnanimity or humility) are the cardinal points of the irascible power, since, as he observes, “anger and hope do not move men as does fear of death.”⁷³ The irascible appetite concerns an ordered configuration of the passions of fear and daring, hope and despair, and anger, which respectively relate to the virtues of fortitude, magnanimity and meekness, in addition to the other virtues related to fortitude.

The clarity of Aquinas’ philosophical psychology is admirable, but how useful is it for moral theory confronted with contemporary psychology and neuro-physiology? We find its pertinence in his theory of moral habituation and virtue, where (as suggested in chapter two) Aquinas’ views cast needed light on the way in which we can employ human emotions to confront and overcome human difficulties. We

⁷⁰ We need to recall also that Aquinas distinguishes love as emotion from love as an act of the will. His understanding of love outstrips sensuality, since we find fulfillment in the joy of charity and friendship. Cf. *ST* II-II 23.1; *ST* I-II 25.3 and 25.4; *ST* I-II 28.

⁷¹ *ST* I-II 25.1; 25.3. We should not confuse the division between movement and rest, when Aquinas divides the virtues of the irascible power according to those that attack (*fidencia* / *magnanimitas* and *magnificentia*) and those that resist (*patientia* and *perseverantia*) in the *Secunda Secundae* of his *ST*. We need to construe such virtues of resistance in the context of movement toward a good to be obtained and not simply holding one’s ground.

⁷² In one sense, we can hold that hope (the human passion) is the greatest of human passions since through it we attain all of our human projects. Hope is an effect of the arduous desired good on the human person. Human action is a result of working toward the hoped for future good. Unless one is plagued by constant fear or anger, hope is the motor for the majority of human action (cf. *ST* I-II 25.3).

⁷³ “non enim ita movent hominem ira et spes, sicut timor mortis.” *de virt. com.* 12, 26.

shall now put Aquinas into dialogue with neuro-biology's particular insights on the subject of fear and timidity.

Aquinas considers the natural temperaments or psychosomatic forces toward being courageous,⁷⁴ without the neurological and biochemical nuance possible through contemporary research and theories. However, his moral teaching provides relevant lessons and a larger moral framework. In particular, his moral theory resists confusing natural character traits (or neurological reactions) with the virtue (acquired disposition) of fortitude. It also offers a basis to counter reductionistic tendencies, which assert that natural temperaments render this virtue redundant or disprove its existence. For Aquinas, character traits (temperaments) are in some way natural, although given in unequal measures—one person has more or less than another. Even though these traits correlate with the virtue of fortitude (forming its material basis), we acquire this virtue through courageous acts, and we diminish it through contrary ones. Although a natural temperament toward courageousness may make the further acquisition of that virtue easier, fortitude is not assured.

The natural inclinations, which are on a different level than temperament, serve as a basis for Aquinas' virtue theory. They establish a dynamic foundation for the virtue of fortitude and for understanding emotional phenomena of fear and temperamental timidity.⁷⁵ We can find reasons to be courageous and to master fear, at different levels, in the inclinations toward self-preservation, family and social life, goodness and truth, and flourishing.⁷⁶ These inclinations provide a formal cause for fortitude. They indicate a larger framework for managing emotions.

The natural desire to know truth, for example, leads us to seek not only to extend our knowledge, but also to communicate and even

⁷⁴ See *ST* II-II 123.1 ad 3. "ex naturali complexione aliquis habeat naturalem inclinationem ad virtutem," as he also says in *ST* I-II 63.1. In this regard, Aristotle distinguishes natural virtue from virtue in the strict sense, cf. *NE* vi.13 1144b3, 1144b34-1145a1. Aquinas discusses natural or innate: *dispositio* (*ST* II-II 141.1 ad 2; *ST* I-II 63.1), *inclinatio* (I-II 6.5 ad 2), *habitus* (I-II 51.1), *potentia* (*ST* II-II 4.1; *ST* I-II 18.2).

⁷⁵ Aquinas does not neatly distinguish natural from rational inclinations. An excessively definite split results from later philosophical and theological developments. Cf. B. Kent 2000.

⁷⁶ Cf. *ST* I-II 94.2.

courageously defend it when fear weakens us. Truth's effusive effect drives us to overcome timidity and fear through particular acts of fortitude. When a friend is slandered, our inclination to truth predisposes us to defend the truth that we have come to know (and love). Our fear of others and our natural timidity might hinder our efforts. Yet the thirst and quest for truth serves as an efficient cause of the courageous defense of particular truths. An inclination is already a movement towards action. However, we each need to expound a reasoned response and even strategies in order to overcome fear and to prevent similar situations in the future. Admittedly, in the case of calumny against a friend, we rely on more than an inclination to truth. In this example, our will is engaged because of our friendship (and our inclination to the good of social life), which provide further efficacious causes for action.

Although aspects of Aquinas' discussion of the physiological transmutations related to fear are outdated, his understanding of the formal element, the movement of the appetitive power of the soul remains pertinent,⁷⁷ though misunderstood. While needing further defense, Aquinas' hylomorphic principle provides a deeper philosophical basis on which to graft contemporary insights of neurobiology and temperament theory. The human soul, as principle for human agency, interacts with our emotions. As we have argued in chapter two, Thomas' explanation of emotion and bodily changes, at least at one level, sounds contemporary.⁷⁸ However, we cannot understand Aquinas' insights unless we take them in the context of the existence of a human soul and its rational capacities for moral judgment; that is, we must employ a realist metaphysical framework. He uses the notion of the human soul to explain the rational movement involved in moral agency and emotions. This conception of the soul, which needs further explication, can assure a unity and depth to morality that is not evident in neurological and physiological theories *per se*. Aquinas' framework for and understanding of the deeper

⁷⁷ Cf. *ST* I-II 44.1; and *ST* I-II 28.5.

⁷⁸ He says, for example, "*in passionibus animae est sicut formale ipse motus appetitivae potentiae, sicut autem materiale transmutatio corporalis: quorum unum alteri proportionatur. Unde secundum similitudinem et rationem appetitivi motus, sequitur corporalis transmutatio*" *ST* I-II 44.1; cf. *ST* I-II 28.5.

rational (cognitive and volitional) roots of fear-provoking phenomena thus provide additional explanatory power concerning human responsibility for actions done in or from fear. In effect, his anthropology and moral theory allow us to analyze another level involved in managing hardship, a moral resilience.

3.3.4. Aquinas' Typology and Moral Evaluation of Fear

Neuro-physiological, psychological and social insights on fear, timidity and anxiety contribute a better understanding of different types of fear and resilience. We shall now analytically and constructively address Aquinas' typology (study of the types) and moral evaluation of fear. We need to consider fear in terms of how it not only promotes or hinders human survival (resilience and vulnerability), but also moral agency and flourishing (moral resilience). We can, in Aquinas' perspective, weigh survival-promoting tendencies in the context of other natural tendencies that give us a fuller context—in particular, the tendencies to family and social life, goodness and truth, flourishing and ultimate goals.

Thomas distinguishes fear according to its object, causes and effects, which are in turn relevant for adjudicating the morality of acts done in or from fear. Aquinas bases his moral evaluation upon the act's rationality, voluntariness and goodness.⁷⁹ He notes that fear can influence voluntariness for the better and for the worst.

Aquinas distinguishes natural from non-natural emotions and fears by the diversity of their objects.⁸⁰ He calls a movement in general and a passion in particular “natural when nature inclines us thereto, either with or without the apprehensive faculty. In the case of the natural emotions of love, desire and hope, natural inclinations lead us to pursue what is good and to avoid what is evil. Thus, we naturally fear death, as a *malum naturae*.⁸¹ We naturally shun and fear a life-

⁷⁹ Aquinas requires that the intention and the object be good and the circumstances be favorable (cf. *ST* I-II 6-21).

⁸⁰ Cf. *ST* I-II 41.3.

⁸¹ Cf. *ST* I-II 42.2. In other passions however, the natural inclination is not sufficient, for we need perception or knowledge for pleasure and sorrow; cf. *ST* I-II 31.1, 31.3; 35.1.

threatening evil, because we naturally desire to exist.⁸² On the other hand, we exhibit a material and non-natural fear of painful evil when we shrink from fighting evil, simply because of the pain involved.⁸³ These intuitive and non-intuitive insights underlie his more developed theory and typology of the emotions.

Thomas defends a typology of fear, which has enduring features and resembles cognitive theory. He argues that humans exhibit six types of fear: “laziness, shamefacedness, shame, amazement, stupor and anxiety.”⁸⁴ Aquinas explains that we experience them according to the diversity of the objects of fear and certain special reasons. Fear can have either an internal or external object: the evil in our own action or in some external thing. On the internal level, humans fear the toils that burden our capacities. Thus laziness (*segnities*) arises when we back away from an effort for fear of the labor involved. We also fear disgrace in the sight of others, which involves disgrace from future (shamefacedness—*erubescencia*) or past deeds (shame—*verecundia*). On the external level, evil overcomes the human rational capacity of resistance. Dumfounded amazement (*admiratio*) arises when the magnitude of the evil surpasses our ability to rationally master it. Unusual and rare evil stupefies us (*stupor*). Lastly, anxiety (*agonia*) concerns an unforeseen or unforeseeable evil, which surpasses our capacity to resist it; for example, when unpredictable misfortunes cause us anxiety.

Significantly, love is the primary cause of fear, as already mentioned. How can love engender fear? Aquinas confirms that love serves as the basis of human emotions and moral agency. It causes fear

82 Aquinas (I-II 41.3) follows Aristotle (*Rhet.* ii.5 1382a22) in distinguishing painful and corruptive evil, the latter of which involves death.

83 Since this fear of pain opposes the natural inclination for self-preservation, Aquinas deems it non-natural. The fact that we experience pain in attempting to prevent our own death is not a natural deterrent, when we understand the severity of the threat. Shunning pain demands an inclination toward, knowledge of and commitment to a higher goal; cf. *ST* I-II 41.3.

84 He follows St. John Damascene, who “assignet sex species timoris: scilicet segnitiam, erubescenciam, verecundiam, admirationem, stuporem, agoniam.” *ST* I-II 41.4 (cf. obj./ad 1 and sc); *De Fide Orthod.* ii.15: PG 94.932C. Here Aquinas delicately declines from following Aristotle, who divides the species of fear according to four species of sorrow (cf. *Rhet.* II.5 1382a22).

either as an efficient cause or as a material disposition.⁸⁵ Cognitive, volitional or affective objects inform fear, which as a passion of the soul takes its species from both natural and artificial objects. The efficient cause of the object of fear inflicts the feared evil (on the part of the person feared). While our material disposition to be fearfully affected by such an object causes fear inasmuch as it disposes the thing to be an evil for us. Therefore, love causes fear, both since the evil of losing or not attaining the loved-good is fear's object, and since loving that good is the basis for our fear of being deprived of it.

According to Aquinas, human beings do not fear what we can control (what is within our power and will). He applies this principle to whether a human can fear sin or even fear fear itself. Since a human being can normally control his own will,⁸⁶ we do not, properly speaking, fear the evil of sin. Sin involves a voluntary act and at a natural level, we abhor evil; the basic inclination of the will moves toward good rather than evil. In a secondary sense, however, we fear sin insofar as an external cause can attract our volition toward sin.⁸⁷ Furthermore, we fear fear itself through a natural reaction, which we can nonetheless overcome by intelligent choice.⁸⁸

These ontological and psychological types of fear prepare for further moral ones. Aquinas distinguishes praiseworthy and blameworthy fear. As a general avoidance tendency (*universaliter fugam*) however, it contains neither the notion (*ratio*) of moral good

85 In order to illustrate the role of love in fear, Aquinas (*ST* I-II 43.1 sc) cites St Augustine: "*nulli dubium est non aliam esse metuendi causam, nisi ne id quod amamus, aut adeptum amittamus, aut non adipiscamur speratum*" *OQ.* 83, qu. 33; PL 40.23. BA 10.97.

86 Weakness of will and the acquired internal dispositions to vice are not the free voluntary acts that Aquinas refers to here. See his reflections on vice: *ST* I-II 71-89.

87 Aquinas holds that external causes (such as association with wicked people) can incline the will to sin; cf. *ST* I-II 42.3 Furthermore, we should fear the evil of sin as regarding the effect of sin (such as separation from God, cf. *ST* I-II 42.3 ad 1).

88 An emotion first arises from an external cause (an imminent evil) that incites our imagination. In this sense, we fear the necessity of fearing the threat of such a great evil. However, as subject to the will, the lower appetite obeys reason in driving away inordinate fear. Indeed, we do not normally will to fear "fear itself." Cf. *ST* I-II 42.4. This insight recalls the modern expression of F. D. Roosevelt "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself" (*First Inaugural Address*, 4 March 1933).

nor of moral evil.⁸⁹ It is natural.⁹⁰ For Aquinas, we adjudicate fear as praiseworthy (good) or blameworthy (evil) only when it concerns ordinate or inordinate reason and behavior. The good of human agency consists in its being duly ordered; evil acts consist in the opposite. Accordingly, we need to duly dispose the emotions (and will) through the rule both of human reason and of eternal law or God's reason.⁹¹ Human reason acts as the proximate and homogeneous cause of the action, while divine reason acts as the primary cause of rectitude. This due ordering demands that we subject the emotion to reason's rule (a loving rule), indicating that we should shun (*fugienda*) some things and pursue (*prosequenda*) others. Thus, inordinate fear involves shunning what reason adjudicates that we need to endure. Ordinate fear, on the contrary, involves shunning what reason requires us to shun.⁹² We morally evaluate detrimental or constructive effects of fear in terms of how fear correlates with reason, volition and action; we must furthermore rationally weigh even fear that surfaces from pre-conscious or unconscious levels.

Aquinas reports a number of ways in which fear can hinder action. It can disturb reason, upset the imagination (promote failure in concentration-demanding tasks) and deflate motivation (inhibit action through fear of toil).⁹³ Since bodily members instrumentally cause

⁸⁹ Aquinas says: "*timor communiter dictus secundum suam rationem importat universaliter fugam: unde quantum ad hoc non importat rationem boni vel mali. [...] sed qui circa hoc aut ordinate aut inordinate se habent*" (ST II-II 125.1 ad 1; ST I-II 24.1 and 24.3). Aquinas follows Aristotle in this regard (cf. NE ii.4, 1105b31-1106a2).

⁹⁰ This aspect of the emotion of fear is natural according to Thomas and Aristotle (cf. NE iii.10 1115b26-8; cited in ST II-II 125.1 obj. 3). As natural, fear cannot be the matter of sin according to St. John Damascene (cf. *De fide orth.* II.4 and II.30: PG 94.876A and 976A; cited in ST II-II 125.1 obj. 3).

⁹¹ Cf. ST I-II 71.6. Examples of this rule (*ordo*) of reason include: (1) the good constituted by the order (*bonum consistat in ordine*) of truthfulness (cf. ST II-II 109.2); and (2) the "becomingness of order" (*convenientiam ordinis*) towards others as observed in the virtue friendliness (*amicitia sive affabilitas*); cf. ST II-II 114.1. Aquinas draws from Augustine's understanding of good as consisting of order (cf. *De Nat. Boni* III: PL 42.553; cited in ST II-II 109.2).

⁹² It is interesting to note that while Aquinas calls inordinate fear "sinful," he simply says that ordinate fear is not "sinful": "*quando vero appetitus timendo refugit id quod est secundum rationem fugiendum, tunc appetitus non est inordinatus, nec peccatum*" (ST II-II 125.1).

⁹³ Cf. ST I-II 44.4.

external actions, fear can perturb an act by hindering the bodily members through disturbances to human reason, imagination or motivation.⁹⁴ The correlation of fear and counsel illustrates this point. Aquinas says: “when a human is affected [...] by a passion, things seem to him greater or smaller than they really are: thus [...] to him that fears, what he fears seems more dreadful. Consequently owing to the want of right judgment, every passion, considered in itself, hinders the faculty of giving good counsel.”⁹⁵ He affirms that a certain type of fear unravels reason, insofar as it “drives away all thought and dislocates the mind.” In particular, the stronger the passion the more detrimentally it sways us. In extreme cases of fear, even though we seek counsel, we are even unable to use it appropriately.

Aquinas resists, however, the opinion that every type of passion or fear “disturbs repose” and hinders reason.⁹⁶ Fear does not hinder human agency always or in every way. Thomas affirms that we need fear “so as to shun what reason requires to be shunned.”⁹⁷ Such positive types of fear move us to take council and to pay greater attention (work with solicitude). According to Aquinas, fear can be conducive to action “insofar as it inclines the will to do that whereby a man escapes from what he fears.”⁹⁸ Especially in the face of a great, proximate or difficult to overcome evil, moderate fear that does not disrupt reason can incite us not only to work well and to employ our own rational guidance, but also to seek counsel.⁹⁹ Aquinas highlights

94 Aquinas’ principle is sound, although he explains its function in an outmoded physiology; for example, he says that the bodily members are unable to act appropriately since fear deprives them of their “heat” (cf. *ST I-II* 44.4).

95 “*Quia homini affecto secundum aliquam passionem, videtur aliquid vel maius vel minus quam sit secundum rei veritatem. Sicut amanti videntur ea quae amat, meliora; et timenti, ea quae timent, terribiliora. Et sic ex defectu rectitudinis iudicii, quaelibet passio, quantum est de se, impedit facultatem bene consiliandi.*” *ST I-II* 44.2 corpus (and ad 2). Aquinas draws support from Cicero (cf. *De Quaest. Tusc.* IV.8.).

96 Cf. *ST I-II* 44.2 obj. 1 and corpus.

97 Cf. *ST I-II* 125.1.

98 “*Sed timor qui est de aliis rebus, intantum adiuuat operationem, inquantum inclinatur voluntatem ad operandum ea per quae homo effugit id quod timet*” *ST I-II* 44.4 ad 3.

99 “*Sed ex parte animae, si sit timor moderatus, non multum rationem perturbans, confert ad bene operandum, inquantum causat quandam sollicitudinem, et facit hominem attentius consilium et operari*” *ST I-II* 44.4. Furthermore, Aquinas recognizes that hope makes a human a good counselor

how this moderate fear can help us to apply ourselves with greater attention and carefulness.¹⁰⁰ For example, an ordinate fear can aid servants to not neglect their service and to work more carefully.¹⁰¹ This insight parallels those on positive types of anxiety that promote focused attention, as found in resilience research (chapter two), which aids task accomplishment and overcoming fear.¹⁰²

In conclusion, Aquinas recognizes four characteristics of positive fear: (1) we realistically fear what is fearful; (2) it motivates us to seek counsel and social support, (3) it does not gravely disturb our reasoning, but rather (4) it even heightens our attention, reflection and carefulness. Intense fear, on the other hand, blocks adequate reflection and leads to compromised choices. For example, when fear limits our considerations to what can go wrong, it robs our confidence to do what is good and right;¹⁰³ furthermore, when it focuses our attention on a real but lower level evil, it hinders us from freely pursuing larger considerations and more important projects.

Reflections on resilience and human attention furnish phenomenological and neurological descriptions of the anatomy of fear. Aquinas furnishes a moral theory that enlarges these observations and reflections to include considerations of normative agency and human flourishing. The above-mentioned distinction between praiseworthy and blameworthy fear in action ultimately evolves around the degree to which we do an action voluntarily or not, which we shall discuss in the following section on the virtue of fortitude.

We have argued that we can enrich Aquinas' analysis of fear through a dialogue with neuro-physical, evolutionary and psychosocial sciences. These latter sources provide insights on the utility and purpose of fear, the relationship of fear, attachment and attention. Our analysis of fear and moral agency here is only a propaedeutic. Next we

inasmuch as he does not despair about the difficulty on hand (cf. *ST* I-II 44.2 ad 3). Aquinas quotes Aristotle as saying "fear makes men of counsel" (*Rhet* II.5, cited *ST* I-II 44.2 sc).

¹⁰⁰ Cf. *ST* I-II 44.2 ad 2; J. Bowlin 1996.

¹⁰¹ We need not restrict St. Paul's insight about service to mundane matters; see Eph 6:5, which Aquinas cites (*ST* II-II 125.1 obj./ad 2). Cf. *ST* I-II 44.2 ad 2 and ad 3.

¹⁰² See Chapter one's study on "Volitional Processes and Attention." Cf. Wilson and Gottman 1996.

¹⁰³ Cf. D. DeMarco 1996, 45.

shall examine other aspects of the emotion of fear, including the characteristics and context of the virtue of fortitude, as a type of moral resilience. Afterwards, we shall examine growth perspectives on managing fear and developing fortitude.

3.4. Fortitude: Characteristics and Context of Moral Resilience

The previous discussion on the emotion of fear serves as a prelude to the present dialogue on the virtue of fortitude: its definition, characteristics and context. Indeed, in this chapter we have not yet fully addressed Aquinas' definition of fortitude. In order to do so, we need to examine the inclination and emotion of daring, as well as further moral and social issues concerning fear. We shall consider the common good and justice, which are intimate parts of courageous acts and dispositions for Thomas. However first, we shall put his approach into dialogue with physiological and neurological sciences and philosophy on resilience as courageous coping with fear and daring.

3.4.1. Resilience as Courageous Coping with Fear and Daring

The various types, means and social dimensions of fear raise questions about how humans can best manage fear phenomena. How can we creatively and consistently handle fear, whose object tends to take on larger than life proportions? Triggered by impending pain, danger, evil, illness and separation, a simple fear reaction can lead to bouts of worrying or inactivity. In extreme situations, such fear can become chronic or pathological.¹⁰⁴ Without blurring the spectrum of fear phenomena, I shall examine resilient coping with fear and daring. What strategies for coping with fear do the psychosocial sciences offer?

Before addressing strategies and optics on managing fear and daring, I shall reiterate neuro-biology's findings on positive and

¹⁰⁴ Pathologies related to fear include: phobias, obsessions and compulsions, panic attacks, obsessive-compulsive disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, fright neurosis, and so on. Cf. Freud 1922/1955, 27; Anthony 1987, 13; Goleman 1995, 65-9.

negative types of fear. Neuro-biology situates fear's survival advantage in a tendency to be alert to dangers. As a vigilance response, it can serve as a type of buffer against difficulty. Fear triggers the emotional brain to focus its attention on the source of worry, ignoring any other concerns for a time, until a viable solution surfaces.¹⁰⁵ When having trouble finding straightforward solutions to the source of fear, we find a further survival advantage in a constructive reflex to mull over a problem at hand; this mulling is called worry. Furthermore, fear or anxiety can serve in protecting us against an experience. According to Freud, a non-neurotic type of anxiety can signal in advance a disturbing encounter, and thus protect a person, as would a shield.¹⁰⁶ Researchers have shown that worry can protect the subject from certain effects of anxiety.¹⁰⁷ To keep in mind fear's positive basis and effects is important in order to understand the negative side to fear and its management as well.

The danger of fear, from the resilience perspective, is that it can lead into a vicious circle, where worry, anxiety and fretting distract and debilitate us. Vulnerabilities increase when failure leads to fears of failure, which in turn lead to beliefs that we shall continue to fail.¹⁰⁸ M. Rutter's research (1990) suggests that resilience-processes reduce fear-failure chain reactions. But how can we stop vicious circles of anxiety producing interchanges? Indeed, researchers have suggested that self-soothing, game playing and self-confidence can help us manage fear and control anxiety.

Emotion researchers demonstrate that self-soothing is one of the basic life skills in question. According to psychoanalytic thinkers,

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Goleman 1995.

¹⁰⁶ It can protect one from the stimuli, which could otherwise be damaging. This insight follows Freud's theory that protection from stimuli is almost more important than the reception of stimuli. Cf. Freud 1922/1955, 27; and Anthony 1987, 13; who cites Redl 1969 in this regard.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Roemer and Borkovec 1993; Goleman 1995, 68.

¹⁰⁸ There are other risks involved with disordered fear and anxiety. According to Murphy and Moriarty (1976: 202-203), "Increases in vulnerability are seen when the interaction between the child and the environment results in new limitations or difficulties, new threats to homeostasis and to integration, new obstacles to learning, increased difficulties in mastering anxiety, or negative expectancies." According to Garmezy (1990: 530), the compounding of anxieties might constitute a component of low social class status that relates to the actualization of risk and inhibits escape from it.

such as J. Bowlby and D. W. Winnicott, the art of soothing oneself in the face of fear is a fundamental skill. They even hold that it is one of the most important psychic tools, whose strength comes from our primary attachments; these attachments serve as the basis for handling fear, as well as daring.¹⁰⁹ L. Roemer and T. Borkovec (1993), psychologists from Pennsylvania State University, have studied fears and phobias in order to identify strategies for calming vehement emotions. They have found that insomnia patients' anxiety surfaces in cognitive and somatic forms. The cognitive form (worrisome thoughts) disrupts sleep more than somatic arousal (sweating, a racing heart, and muscle tension). One solution involves shifting attention away from the worries in order to break the cycle of fear, or to uproot its persuasive power. Roemer and Borkovec offer a twofold analysis of this solution. On the one hand, we must become mindful of the fear and evaluate its causes. Through self-awareness, we attempt to recognize as early as possible the start of a worry episode. Then we can actively challenge the worrisome thoughts through self-talk and investigation: Are they well founded? Are there other possible outcomes than the one we fear? What constructive steps can we take? And so on. This activity can decrease the neural activation (limbic drive) underlying low-grade anxiety. On the other hand, inducing a relaxed state can counter our anxiety signals. Once aware of anxiety, we can exercise relaxation efforts to calm the body so that we can better handle sources of stress.¹¹⁰ Researchers have found that children's play serves as a coping tool. Eisen (1988) has studied play as a strategy for managing fear. His interdisciplinary study has demonstrated how children's play aids them to understand and manage otherwise unbearable situations. Indeed, children's play can promote information processing (even in the face of the absurd), problem solving (proximate and long-term solutions) and coping (facing fear and finding balance "in both spiritual and physical realms" in the midst of

109 Cf. J. Bowlby 1969, 1973, 1992; D. W. Winnicott 1971, 1987. D. Goleman (1995, 57) explains: "The theory holds that emotionally sound infants learn to soothe themselves by treating themselves as their caretakers have treated them, leaving them less vulnerable to the upheavals of the emotional brain."

110 In more extreme cases, phobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder or panic disorder, Goleman (1995, 69) suggests that medication might be used to interrupt the anxiety cycle, while a therapy is still needed to lessen its recurrence.

threats and hardships). It can even function as a survival technique in extreme cases. Play can make such contributions at both conscious and unconscious levels. At a conscious level, the skills that we acquire through complex problem solving games, in playing chess or other strategic games for example, can aid us to resolve or at least not be overwhelmed when we have to face complex situations, unexpected events or even chaos. At the unconscious level, through play, the mind can find a balance. For example, when faced with trauma, play facilitated distraction can allow the mind time to decipher the situation and to settle itself.¹¹¹ These insights on children's play give hints for similar benefits that certain types of games (and recreation) might have for people of all ages.

Psychosocial researchers have shown that hope, self-confidence, self-assertiveness and initiative-taking aid us to confront, to counter and to correct difficulties. They can help us manage the obstructive and debilitating nature of fear. Belief in our own self-efficacy, according to Stanford psychologist A. Bandura, underlies our sense of optimism or hope, and how we use our capacities. Those who do not believe in their own self-efficacy have a greater fear of failure, and fear of seeming inept.¹¹² R. S. Lazarus maintains that hope is an expression of intellectual intelligence, which resists anxiety and depression.¹¹³ Timid and pessimistic temperament traits however need not impede positive emotions and dispositions. According to J. Kagan, natural timidity, for example, does not obstruct humans from becoming self-confident, hopeful and even bold in practice.¹¹⁴ Assertiveness

111 G. Eisen (1988: 98) says: "Looking beyond the external, we must also consider a subconscious drive, a constant striving on the part of the human organism to reestablish an equilibrium in an utterly irrational and unpredictable universe. Techniques of opposition, coping, and survival were reflected in children's play—not unexpectedly—for play practices and behavior became compensatory agents in relieving stress and providing a process for accommodating the painful and traumatic existence of that time."

112 Cf. A. Bandura 1986. According to Rutter (1990, 206-7, 197), evidence suggests that the establishment or maintenance of self-esteem, self-confidence and self-efficacy through supportive personal relationships or successful task accomplishment serves as a protective process when facing difficulty (cf. Bowlby 1969 and 1973; Wilson and Gottman, 1996: 190-220; Yule 1992: 191; Maughan 1988, 214; Consortium 1994, 276).

113 Cf. Goleman 1995, 87; Lazarus 1994, 74.

114 Cf. Kagan 1994; Goleman 1998, 68-72.

training for passive or impulsive individuals can promote balanced responses, rather than passive or aggressive ones.¹¹⁵ These preliminary remarks will suffice to set the stage for treating the virtue of fortitude; later we shall focus more on the development of hope and optimism, self-confidence and self-efficacy, and the like.

In conclusion, the management of fear is critical for short and long-term coping in the midst of adversity. We can manage fears in conscious, unconscious and pharmaceutical ways. Some basic skills and communal practices that support human well-being through managing fear, including: self-soothing techniques, play, hopefulness and self-confidence. This account of observations about courageous coping with fear and, inversely, about fear-vulnerability does not address the larger context of the management of both fear and daring through acquired human dispositions and virtues. It nonetheless provides a basis for opening this dialogue with Aquinas.

3.4.2. Seeking a Mean Between Fear and Daring

In order to understand moral resilience and to enrich Aquinas' approach to the development of fortitude, we shall now outline further his analysis of this virtue's object and dynamics. Aquinas utilizes the philosophical tradition of Aristotle to establish that fortitude is a mean between fear and daring.¹¹⁶ Fortitude is a mean, a middle ground where reason manages the proper use of fear and of daring—each with its own benefits, drawbacks, opportunities and threats.¹¹⁷ We search for a mean between fear and daring for various reasons: situations differ; not everyone acts (perceives, feels, thinks, and chooses) the same way

115 Cf. Bloom 1996, 99-100.

116 The Philosopher discusses fortitude as a type of mean or just measure in regards to both fear and daring or confidence (as Barnes translates it). It is a just means between the extremes (*mesotes*) of fearlessness or rashness and cowardliness. Thanks to well-established dispositions and well-engaged rational, volitional and affective management, the courageous person experiences fear and confidence when he should, how he should and where he should (cf. *NE* iii.6, 1115a12-13). Aquinas refers to chapters two and three of Aristotle's *NE*, in which the Philosopher gives a rich explanation of fortitude. Aquinas' own commentary on the *NE* on these chapters is also very illuminating (*In Eth.* 2, 8, 341; 3, 14, 529 and 3, 18, 583).

117 In particular, Aquinas says: "*fortitudo est circa timores et audacias, quasi cohibitiva timorum, et moderativa audaciarum*" *ST* II-II 123.3.

when faced with the same dangers and labor; we neither realize the gravity of the situation nor feel fear or daring in equal measure.¹¹⁸

Aquinas argues that this just mean has a particular tenor. Fortitude primarily concerns fear and flight from the impending evil, and only secondarily concerns daring and fighting the difficulty, “for it is more difficult to allay fear than to moderate daring, since the danger which is the object of daring and fear, tends by its very nature to check daring, but to increase fear,”¹¹⁹ as Thomas says. In between fear and fearlessness, we experience security, in which we hold firm in the face of fear. Fortitude calls immediately upon security in order to overcome fear or at least hold it at bay.¹²⁰ Through this virtue, we establish security, based on confidence, hope, and the other pertinent virtues.

Although fortitude directly regards fear and security, it indirectly regards hope and confidence inasmuch as fortitude makes use of daring. This collaboration of fear (or security) and daring (or confidence) highlights two aspects of fortitude. In addition to managing emotions (an internal dimension), the virtue of fortitude draws upon skills and dispositions needed in posing related external acts. Thus, we employ a social dimension that goes beyond the acts themselves.

Personal skills and our sense of self-efficacy are not insignificant, when we face danger.¹²¹ Indeed, the internal dimension of fortitude is necessary, but not always sufficient, to resolve the situation. Fortitude (as managing emotions of fear and daring, of flight and fight tendencies, of security and confidence) will not of itself

118 Cf. Aquinas’ *Commentary on the NE*, and Aristotle’s *NE* iii.8, 1116 a 16.

119 “*Difficilius enim est timorem reprimere quam audaciam moderari: eo quod ipsum periculum, quod est objectum audaciae et timoris, de se confert aliquid ad repressionem audaciae, sed operatur ad augmentum timoris*” (*ST* II-II 123.6). Also see Aquinas’ *Commentary on the NE: In Eth.* 3, 18, 583. He follows Aristotle (*NE* iii.9) in holding that fortitude concerns more fear than daring.

120 Cf. *ST* II-II 129.7; and *ST* I-II 45.2.

121 According to Stanford University Psychologist Albert Bandura, who pioneered studies in self-efficacy (1986), self-confidence positively correlates with self-efficacy—the belief we have about our own capacity to perform. Skill alone is not enough, we have to believe in our skills and the way that they can develop. Especially in resolution of a difficult task, those who doubt themselves perform less efficaciously than do those who believe in their abilities (their self-efficacy).

overcome the difficulty and danger. Nor does it necessarily accompany prudence, or skilled navigating, or temperance, which are all needed in situations such as storms at sea. Bravery is only part of the picture; other skills in the end will save the day (and the ship). Likewise, other virtues will complete fortitude. To overcome fear, courage employs audacity or confidence, which has its source in hope inasmuch as it is the mother of daring.¹²² Hope and confidence always have important roles to play in courage and its related virtues.¹²³ Later we shall examine how fortitude moderates fear of failure and how initiative-taking virtues bolster hope and confidence. Why does fortitude need to correct fear more than daring? Fear inclines us to withdraw from a menacing evil. If we calm fear, then our volition will not be disinclined from following reason; we can apply reason to resolve the situation on hand; in turn, we can more clearly adjudicate the type of initiative to employ in order to overcome the difficulty.

Aquinas argues that fear in a certain way is more primary to the virtue than daring or confidence because of the centrality and universality of the fear of death.¹²⁴ Like the other virtues, fortitude is built upon natural human inclinations. It is natural to love one's own life, and to fear and resist the loss of it.¹²⁵ In the hierarchy of goods, nonetheless, the goods of family and society are even more important than one's own life. The undeniable social dimension of these natural inclinations inhibits an egotistical reading of fortitude. Fortitude of soul assures that no fear of the loss of a bodily good or the facing of a bodily evil—the loss of one's own life being the greatest—will deter

¹²² M. Labourdette (1961, 23-40) says *spes mater audaciae*.

¹²³ In chapter five, we treat the correlation of courage, hope and confidence in a theological context.

¹²⁴ Since fortitude for Aquinas preeminently concerns the danger of death, it principally concerns fear. He says, "*Sicut ergo virtus fortitudinis, de cujus ratione est firmitatem praestare, praecipue consistit circa passionem pertinentem ad fugam corporalium malorum, scilicet circa timorem, ex consequenti autem circa audaciam, quae aggreditur terribilia sub spe alicujus boni*" (ST II-II 141.3). For these reasons, he holds that fortitude is chiefly about managing fear of danger and difficulty (cf. ST II-II 123.3; ST I-II 45.1 corpus and ad 2).

¹²⁵ Cf. ST II-II 123.4 ad 2.

us from following the greater goods of reason.¹²⁶ This vision of fortitude has several practical ramifications.

First of all, Aquinas argues that if we stand firm in the most fearful of situations (the danger of death) then we should be able to stand firm in the lesser ones.¹²⁷ However the opposite is not necessarily the case. Aquinas is not simply identifying the logical divisions of a virtue and its determinate matter here. Rather, there are pedagogical implications concerning how we develop our own self-image and attachments; how we judge what holds the greatest value in life; and how we foresee our own death.

Secondly, although the virtue pertains to an extreme (*ultimum*), we should not confuse fortitude with the lesser instances where humans also need to manage fear bravely.¹²⁸ Other virtues also deal with the fear of failure or losing different lovable things: such as money (generosity, magnificence), pleasure (temperance) and the like. The specific virtue of fortitude more properly concerns the danger of death, which is the most fearful and most inevitable extreme. Fear, rather than daring, has a certain priority in fortitude,¹²⁹ because human beings are mortal, and must pass through the experience of death. Ultimately neither daring nor skills, neither medical treatment nor wisdom and the like can liberate us from the inevitability of death. Because it is more difficult to allay fear when faced with danger than to move to attack, endurance is the chief act of fortitude,¹³⁰ as we shall discuss more in the context of the endurance found in patience and perseverance, and the capacity for attacking or enterprise found in magnanimity and magnificence (in the next chapter).

Aquinas argues that properly speaking, fortitude concerns the fear of the fatal danger, rather than every kind of constancy, when

126 In this context, Aquinas once again quotes Augustine to insure that the discussion remains on a spiritual level: “*in libro de Moribus Eccle. (i, 15: PL 32, 1322) quod fortitudo est amor facile tolerans omnia propter id quod amatur*” (*ST II-II 123.4 ob. 1*).

127 “*quia qui stat firmus contra maiora, consequens est quod stet firmus contra minora, sed non convertitur*” *ST II-II 123.4*.

128 Aquinas (*ST II-II 123.4 ad 1*) continually affirms other, restricted senses of bravery as well: “*Ex aliis autem dicitur aliquis fortis secundum quid.*”

129 Cf. *ST II-II 123.3*.

130 Cf. *ST II-II 123.6*. Here Aquinas seems to use the principle that what is more difficult is more worthwhile.

facing difficulty.¹³¹ Fortitude as a special or specific virtue, “strengthens against dangers of death,”¹³² moderates “fear and daring in connection with dangers of death,”¹³³ and endures “not any kind of hardship, but only those connected with the danger of death.”¹³⁴ This further specification of the special virtue of fortitude does not diminish Aquinas’ or our interest in a whole range of levels and types of fear and daring. It rather focuses on intense passions that concern unavoidable situations.

We shall finish this section with the question about false fortitude, which raises important issues for resilience in general, and moral resilience in particular. The tradition of distinguishing true fortitude from its semblances predates Aquinas. Although his full definition of fortitude admits a larger range of acts, it denies the status of “true fortitude” to acts that merely resemble it.¹³⁵ Semblances of courage are inadequate in several ways. Two people might perform the same external act, without having an adequate goal, motive, understanding or intention. The moral quality of their acts can also differ because of significant circumstances. Aquinas enumerates five semblances of fortitude; they are acts that we do: (1) since we have miscalculated the danger involved because of our ignorance, (2) since we have already escaped from similar situations, (3) since we count on own capacities or skills; (4) since emotions have moved us, such as

131 See Aquinas’ *Commentary on the NE: In Eth.* 2, 8, 339. Thomas says that it is with “better reason” that fortitude refers to the act concerning its special determinate matter and its diverse object. “*Alii vero, et melius, accipiunt has quatuor virtutes secundum quod determinantur ad materias speciales [...] manifestum est quod praedictae virtutes sunt diversi habitus, secundum diversitatem obiectorum distincti*” *ST* I-II 61.4. Aquinas uses this argument to support the distinctness of the four cardinal virtues.

132 “*fortitudo, quae firmat contra pericula mortis*” *ST* I-II 61.3.

133 “*altera autem moderatur timores et audacias circa pericula mortis, quod etiam secundum se difficile est*” *ST* II-II 137.1.

134 “*ad fortitudinem, secundum quod est specialis virtus, non pertinet perferre quascumque molestias, sed solum illas quae sunt circa pericula mortis*” *ST* II-II 147.2 ad 3.

135 Aquinas associates true virtue (*vera vertus*) and true fortitude (*vera fortitudo, integra fortitudo*), which he distinguishes from counterfeit fortitude (cf. *ST* II-II 123. 10 ad 3; *ST* II-II 123.1 ad 2; *ST* II-II 128 ad 7; *ST* II-II 64.5 ad 5; *ST* II-II 23.7 sc and corpus; *ST* II-II 61.4 obj; *ST* I-II 65.1 corpus). In addition to Aristotle, he draws upon St. Gregory (*Moral.* xxii.1), St. Augustine (*De Civ. Dei* 22.23; *PL* 41.36-37).

sadness or anger; and (5) since we seek egotistical self-interest, personal honor, pleasure or profit.¹³⁶ For Aquinas' perspective, fortitude is more than standing steadfast in the face of danger. This insight offers correctives for reductionist approaches to resilience theory and ethics. It gives us the basis for understanding Aquinas' contribution to moral resilience. Yet to understand it further, we need to investigate how Thomas specifies true fortitude in terms of social context and finality.

3.4.3. Social Dimension: Human Struggles and the Common Good

Aquinas addresses the social dimension of fortitude more clearly in the context and finality of courageous acts and dispositions. Fortitude *per se* is neither instinctive optimism nor firm confidence in our natural or acquired abilities. It is more than fighting fitness, or brute resilience.¹³⁷ It demands an ordered social resolve. In this section, we shall undertake a more philosophical inquiry about fortitude and resilience. How does the social dimension of fortitude aid us to comprehend moral resilience? In particular, how does Aquinas' treatment of human struggles and the common good offer insights for resilience efforts?

Not every fear-producing object is of equal value. Since some are more worthwhile, useful and socially fitting, Aquinas seeks the most worthy object for true fortitude. Thus, he explores the social dimension of fear and this virtue. St. Thomas affirms (to a certain extent) Aristotle's position that courage in battle is more honorable than courage at sea. To allay the fear born of human vulnerability in battle-ready fortitude is more honorable because of its social import. How do morality and the social value of our acts correlate? Aquinas employs Aristotle's definition that "fortitude is chiefly about death in battle"¹³⁸ in order to explore the social hierarchy of fortitude. The

¹³⁶ Aquinas comments directly upon Aristotle's analysis (*NE* iii.2: 1116a16-1117a27); cf. *ST* II-II 123.1 ad 2; *In Eth.* 3, 16, 557-560; and 3, 17, 571-582; *de virt. com.* 6 ad 4; *de virt. card.* a. 2; *ST* I-II 58.4 ad 3.

¹³⁷ Cf. Pieper 1966, 117-121 and 126-7.

¹³⁸ "*Sed contra est quod Philosophus dicit, in Ethic. (iii.9, 1115a,34-35), quod maxime est fortitudo circa mortem quae est in bello*" (*ST* II-II 123.5). Both

notion of battle, for both these thinkers, is not primarily synonymous with alleviating fear, but rather with protecting and promoting the common good.

While employing Aristotelian social thought on fortitude, Aquinas goes beyond it in the ways in which he construes both battle and the common good. Thomas, on the one hand, enlarges Aristotle's notion of battle. Aristotle argues that not just any risky business deserves the highest and most proper name of fortitude, but only that concerning military warfare.¹³⁹ Although Aquinas follows Aristotle in his *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*,¹⁴⁰ he nuances and expands his own position later in the *Summa theologiae* to include the danger of death in different types of struggle and effort.

Aquinas widens the notion of what type of action we fittingly call fortitude, from the narrow category of military battles, to a broader category including private (non-military) struggles that aim at a higher good. Aquinas affirms not only that fortitude involves voluntarily putting ourselves in danger of death, but also that it results from having directly chosen some higher good. Thomas also specifies that true fortitude involves only the dangers that ensue "directly on account of some good," as when defending "the common good by a just fight."¹⁴¹ We can draw at least two conclusions: true fortitude for Aquinas is found (1) neither in unjust battles, (2) nor in just battles, in which we

thinkers agree that fortitude most properly concerns the danger of death in battle, inasmuch as "*quia in tali negotio ut frequentius homines sustinent mortem propter bonum*" *In Eth.* 3, 14, 537; cf. 540.

¹³⁹ The dangers of death due to sickness, storms, journeys and the like do not concern fortitude strictly speaking for the Greek philosopher. For Aristotle the truly brave person is the citizen-soldier, not the professional soldier. The former is brave not because of compulsion, nor profit, nor thinking his side is stronger, but rather because it is noble, virtuous to be so. Such a citizen-soldier does not flee from the post in the face of danger, but prefers death to disgrace. Cf. *NE* 1116a15-1116b2 and 15-22.

¹⁴⁰ "*Bonum est enim quod homo vitam suam exponat pro bono communi. Sed in praedictis corruptionibus, scilicet morte quae est in mari vel in aegritudine, nec est fortitudo laudabilis, neque ex morte aliquod bonum sequitur. Unde audacter aggredi talia pericula, non pertinet ad virtutem fortitudinis*" (*In Eth.* 3, 14, 542). In his commentary, Aquinas affirms Aristotle's teaching and does not go beyond or refute Aristotle as he does later in *ST* II-II 123.5.

¹⁴¹ "*Sed pericula mortis quae est in bellicis directe imminet homini propter aliquod bonum: inquantum scilicet defendit bonum commune per justum bellum*" *ST* II-II 123.5.

have engaged for reasons other than the common good. Contemporary writers have taken up these issues, while often denying that they need to tie fortitude to the common good, or good *per se*.¹⁴²

For Aquinas, defending the common good through a just battle or struggle can take military or non-military forms. The judge or private person who does not waver from a just judgment because of death threats illustrates this latter case. Aquinas construes such situations to include personal assaults, struggles or battles.¹⁴³ He can thus, unlike Aristotle, affirm that humans express true fortitude when (1) we attend to a sick friend, while fearing a deadly infection, or (2) we labor to support a family or accomplish a pious action, which involve facing the danger of death during a journey, e.g. on business trips or on pilgrimages, which were particularly tiring and perilous in Aquinas' time.¹⁴⁴

On the other hand, Aquinas widens Aristotle's notion of the common good as well. He holds that fortitude is concerned not only with the greatest dangers (i.e. threats to life) but also with the noblest of dangers, defending the common good with one's own life.¹⁴⁵ Although, they agree here, and Aristotle's notions of fortitude

¹⁴² Cf. J. Porter 1998b; S. B. Cunningham 1985; R. Davies 1998; G. Schedler 1997; M. Canto-Sperber 1996b; N. Dent 1981; and G.H. von Wright 1963.

¹⁴³ Aquinas refers to: *particulares impugnationes* (ST II-II 123.5); *personales impugnationes* (idem ad 1); or *particularia bella* (idem ad 2).

¹⁴⁴ "*Sed et circa pericula cuiuscumque alterius mortis fortis bene se habet: praesertim quia et cuiuslibet mortis homo potest periculum subire propter virtutem; puta cum aliquis non refugit amico infirmanti obsequi propter timorem mortiferae infectionis; vel cum non refugit itinerari ad aliquod pium negotium prosequendum propter timorem naufragii vel latronum*" ST II-II 123.5; Cf. Congar 1974, 338.

¹⁴⁵ Aquinas, in his *Commentary on the Nic. Ethics*, explicates the relevance of the end (goal) involved in facing death. He makes the following comments on Aristotle, who "*Dicit ergo primo, 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. Et eadem ratio est de quacumque alia morte, quam quis sustinet propter bonum virtutis.*" In *Eth.* 3, 14, 537. In commenting on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aquinas says that "*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, ut in principio dictum est (n. 30)*" In *Eth.* 3, 14, 538.

(ἀνδρεία), honor (καλός), virtue (ἀρετή), flourishing (εὐδαιμονία) and common good¹⁴⁶ are parallel in key ways to Aquinas', Thomas outstrips Aristotle's notions, especially that of the common good. In particular, Aristotle's notion of the common good does not extend to all mankind, and it seems to be culturally and historically bound.¹⁴⁷

Aquinas uses both Cicero and the Christian tradition to expand this notion of common good. First, Cicero extends the notions of common good and fortitude beyond that of a State at war.¹⁴⁸ This movement is developed in the Ciceronian and Stoic consideration that fortitude deals with all descent matters (*honestas*) when we face fear and daring.¹⁴⁹ They also maintain that we must use this virtue in service of the common good (*salute communi*) and not only for one's self.¹⁵⁰ Stoics were the first in the Greco-Roman world to hold systematically that justice concerned humanity as such, irrespective of the *polis*.¹⁵¹

146 Aristotle says: "Those, then, who busy themselves in an exceptional degree with noble actions all men approve and praise; and if all were to strive towards what is noble and strain every nerve to do the noblest deeds, everything would be as it should be for the common good, and every one would secure for himself the goods that are greatest, since excellence (ἀρετή) is the greatest of goods" *NE* ix.1169a10-11.

147 Aristotle's use of the notion of the common good has been critiqued because of its limitations to the particular realm of family, friends and the *polis* in which one lives. Some critiques admonish Aristotle for his limiting the application of virtue, in particular justice. Although he had rather extensive knowledge of other States—he studied some 159 different constitutions in his *Politics*—he remained provincial in his view of justice and the common good, according to MacIntyre 1988 and 1966, and Randall 1960.

148 Aquinas quotes Cicero's *Off.* (I.22) in his *ST* II-II 123.5 obj. 2

149 Cicero says: "*Virtutem nullo tempore reliquendam; vel dolorem, si is timeatur, vel mortem, si ea formidetur, dedecore et infamia leviores esse; [...] virtuti vel ultra mortem proficisci esse praeclarum.*" *Rhet. ad Her.* III, iv, 9.

150 Cicero affirms, "the Stoics correctly define courage (*fortitudo*) as 'that virtue which champions the cause of right.'" *Off.* I.62. It is not enough to avoid doing injury to others, but the courageous person must prevent injury (*Off.* I.65). One strives to be virtuous in deed and not simply to be thought virtuous.

151 However the Stoic account of justice and law did not prevail against the dominant practices of Greek and Roman polities. According to MacIntyre (1988, 149, also see 150-152): "Any conception of justice which not only had a scope which extended beyond the citizens of those polities to all mankind but also provided a standard for evaluating them independently had to come from elsewhere." But far from disowning the *patris*, Stoic thought recognizes both the homeland and the universe. As said by Marcus Aurelius Antoninus: "My *polis* and my *patris* is Rome *qua* Antonine, but *qua* human being is the cosmos." *Quod sibi ipsi scripsit* VI, 44 (cited in MacIntyre 1988, 147).

The basis for this widening of justice and the common good was the Stoic vision of the universality of the supreme law that binds all rational creatures to obey it, and human nature through which we recognize the humanity of others.¹⁵²

Aquinas takes inspiration from these philosophers to establish an ordering of types of fear and responsibility in fortitude. However, he nuances such movements (acts and dispositions) with a notion of the ordering of love that finds its inspiration and definition in the Christian tradition. Indeed, the philosophical fortitude that Aquinas promotes involves moral standards that offer the foundation for moral resilience. In the next chapter, we shall ask how Aquinas transposes and widens further this social dimension through his treatment of the virtues of initiative and resisting; in chapter five, we shall explore how he extends human sociality through theological considerations. In the meantime, we shall address the way in which we progress or fail in fortitude and moral resilience.

3.5. Progress and Failure in Fortitude

In this section, I shall focus on developmental perspectives, without which fortitude might seem a static definition or an intellectual exercise. A series of diagnostic questions on the resilience of fortitude-building and fear-management strategies will guide our dialogue with Aquinas. What can failed fortitude teach us about moral vulnerability? How can the resilience perspective aid us to understand developmental matters and educative strategies related to fear and difficulty?

At the moral level, Aquinas' input on fear and fortitude enriches psychosocial resilience approaches with insights on finality, normativity, cognition and motivation. First, I shall investigate the parallel between failed fortitude and vulnerability. This analysis permits us to examine the moral efforts concerning fear in practice of

¹⁵² Nonetheless, their hierarchy of responsibilities involves: family, city and then universe, notably foreigners fall in this latter category. Cicero explains that we owe foreigners a very limited fare: water, fire, and honest counsel—whatever is common property. Private property is not owed to others, since “the resources of individuals are limited and the number of needy is infinite, this spirit of universal liberality must be regulated [...] in order that we may continue to have the means for being generous to our friends.” *Off.* I.52.

fortitude; it also prepares us to explore fortitude as a key factor in moral resilience. Then I shall complete this chapter with Aquinas' developmental and educative insights concerning fortitude.

3.5.1. Failed Fortitude, Failed Resilience

According to Aquinas, we learn fortitude not only through positive experiences of managing fear and daring, but also through experiences of failed fortitude. How is failed fortitude a type of failed resilience, at moral levels? In order to treat failed fortitude and resilience, I shall address Aquinas' moral evaluation of fear in fortitude and his understanding of the vices opposing fortitude: timidity and cowardliness, rashness and recklessness. Then I shall ask: what does failed fortitude teach us about failed resilience and moral vulnerability?

Through cowardliness or rashness (in act or *habitus*), we at least temporarily override or dismiss a higher good for the sake of a disordered attachment to a lower one. We do not always face two viable and equal options. When we do not abide in the good prescribed by reason (a reasonable good) because of excesses of fear or aggression, we miss the mark of courage. We do not persevere in the goals and mediate ends (means) that we have conceived as good and fitting. We might cede to the threat of losing external goods: prestige, reputation, honor, power, wealth, bodily integrity and even physical life. We can fail to courageously manage our emotions when faced with dreadful bodily ills, especially death.¹⁵³ We can even fail because of more mundane dangers, toil or assaults.

We can unsuccessfully express fortitude either in a single act or an ingrained vice (*vitium*). Aquinas distinguishes vicious dispositions from virtuous ones according to their rapport with reason.¹⁵⁴ Both are operative *habitus*; yet both do not have the same relation to cognition and volition. In failed fortitude, we redirect a primary inclination in a way contrary to the common good, our flourishing and ultimate goals. We acquire a bad *habitus* when we

¹⁵³ Cf. *ST* II-II 123.4.

¹⁵⁴ As Thomas says, “*virtutum opera sunt connaturalia rationi, opera vero vitiorum sunt contra rationem*” *ST* I-II 70.4 ad 1.

have connaturalized ourselves to an activity that contradicts reason, human nature and the virtue.¹⁵⁵ For Aquinas, fortitude entails that we manage, in a just mean, the two emotions of fear and daring.¹⁵⁶ We seek a just measure involved in situations that inspire confidence and fright.¹⁵⁷

Properly speaking timidity or fearfulness (*timiditas*) is the opposite of fortitude. The danger of death¹⁵⁸ and, in a secondary way, other difficulties cause us to act without due confidence or without proper estimation of the stakes at hand. Aquinas chiefly adjudicates human acts according to their end,¹⁵⁹ which allows him to hold that bravery is not found in dying (or killing oneself) in order to avoid disagreeable situations such as poverty, lust or slavery.¹⁶⁰ Inasmuch as fortitude involves daring or audacity that draws upon hope, inordinate fear of death (or other objects) tends toward despair and undercuts the movement of this disposition.¹⁶¹ His conception of fortitude is not physical resilience at any cost. The moral dimension leads human

155 Therefore, a bad *habitus* is not a *habitus* in the same way as good *habitus*, since a good *habitus* is a connaturalization according to nature, according to human reason—while a bad one is a deformation, or a connaturalization against the ends proper to human nature. A bad habit can be further differentiated from an evil *habitus*, the former of which lacks freedom and could be caused by bad environment, culture, family upbringing, and so on, while the later of which involves voluntary choice for evil. Vices have three characteristics. They involve acting: wrongly, badly or evilly, (2) connaturally, with the pleasure of habitualization, and (3) without resistance of reason (I-II 78.3 ad 1).

156 Aquinas follows Aristotle, for whom courage is an intermediary disposition between the vices of cowardliness and rashness. Aristotle says: “With regard to feelings of fear and confidence courage is the mean; of the people who exceed, he who exceeds in fearlessness has no name (many of the states have no name), while the man who exceeds in confidence is rash, and he who exceeds in fear and falls short in confidence is a coward.” (Ross-Urmson trans. *NE* ii.7, 1107a33-1107b3. Cf. *NE* iii.6, 1115a6; *EE* 1228a38; *EE* 1228b4.

157 Cf. *NE* iii.7, 1116a10; iii.6, 1115a27-28; iii.8, 1117a30. The moral virtue of courage for Aristotle involves disposing the irrational part of the soul to participate in the principle of reason in order to develop further our virtuous dispositions and to act concretely in situations that inspire confidence and fear.

158 Cf. *ST* II-II 125.2.

159 Cf. *ST* I-II 1.3; *ST* I-II 18.6.

160 Cf. *ST* II-II 125.2 ad 2. Here he once again follows Aristotle.

161 Cf. *ST* II-II 125.2 ad 3; *ST* I-II 45.2. The sin of fear (the act of inordinate fear) is the beginning of despair: cf. *ST* I-II 40.4; *ST* I-II 45.2; and *ST* II-II 20.1-4. We shall discuss the relationship of hope and daring further in chapter five.

agency toward a particular type of resilience that involves normative standards.

The distinction between praiseworthy and blameworthy fear in action hinges on how voluntarily we act.¹⁶² How responsible and how resilient can we be when under the influence of fear?¹⁶³ A person can be responsible for an act done when experiencing fear, if the inordinate fear has not simply remained a passive emotive response to the fearful object (that is, if the fear remains on the level of sensate appetite and not rational appetite). In most cases, we can and must intentionally rectify our relationship with the person or thing that produces fear in us. Otherwise, we conform ourselves to the fear; we accept or even will the effect of fear (which opposes our rational good). That we will the effect of fear (e.g. being immobilized by a fearful situation) does not simply concern that we experience a real cause for fear. Rather, it specifically involves that we handle the cause of fear in an unreasonable way. According to Aquinas, fear's inordinateness is due to the will inasmuch as we "deliberately shun something against the dictate of reason."¹⁶⁴ In order to override the inhibitive effect of fear we need to act with reasoned daring or patient perseverance.

The question remains: when does fear excuse us from sin and willed moral vulnerability?¹⁶⁵ For Aquinas, acting from fear (*ex timore fiunt*) involves an admixture of voluntariness and involuntariness (*involuntarium*).¹⁶⁶ Fear-precipitated acts extenuate our responsibility (sin—*peccatum*) to the degree that we are under the necessity of an imminent fear. Nonetheless, Aquinas also distinguishes between levels of voluntariness and responsibility. He says that "the evils of the souls

162 Aquinas also uses a number of Scriptural quotes in bolstering his arguments on sin and fear in *ST* II-II 125 (in order of citation): Ps 18:8; Eph 6:5; Matt 10:28; Ez 2:6; Ps 127:1; Matt 27:44; Judges 7:3; Deut 20:8; Rev 21:8; Ps 18:8.

163 Aquinas (cf. *ST* II-II 125.3) even asks: when is fear a mortal sin?

164 "*Quandoque vero huiusmodi inordinatio timoris pertingit usque ad appetitum rationalem, qui dicitur voluntas, quae ex libero arbitrio refugit aliquid non secundum rationem*" *ST* II-II 125.3. It is a mortal sin when the fear (of death or any other evil) disposes us to do something grave that is forbidden or to omit what Divine law commands.

165 Cf. *ST* II-II 125.4.

166 Cf. *ST* II-II 125.4, where Aquinas cites Aristotle's *NE* (iii.1, 1110a4-19).

are more to be feared than the evils of the body; and evils of the body more than evils of external things.”¹⁶⁷ These three levels prioritize fearful objects. We rightfully fear most the evils of the soul that underlie moral vulnerability (the contrary of good and virtuous acts that underlie moral resilience). We should not fear such evils any less than the others, since love presses us to cling to good. Even though the second and third types of object are truly fearful, they should not cause us to renounce the good of virtue.¹⁶⁸ Whenever we adjudicate the dangers and evils of the body or external things as more fearful than the losing of the goods of the soul, we improperly order our loves and fears. Although fears may weaken our voluntary capacities, the virtue of fortitude constitutes the way to remain firm in the more fundamental goods and truths, even in the face of really dreadful evils.

How do misdirected passions and acts create *habitus* (vices) of timidity and cowardliness, fearlessness and recklessness? Let us recall that through fortitude, we cope well with the emotions of fear, daring¹⁶⁹ and pain when facing threats, especially to our own life; we discern, choose and act in ordered, intelligent and loving ways. We fail in fortitude on the contrary when we voluntarily let disordered passions of fear and daring affect our thought, will and action. We can understand this later case more fully in dialogue with the psychosocial sciences on issues such as learned helplessness and aggressiveness, as mentioned in chapter two. Voluntary accord with disordered passions leads to acquired dispositions (at psychological and neuro-biological levels) that prolong their effect of vulnerability. We thus acquire a moral weakness. We accept distraction (even relishing in it) instead of concentrating our energies on more important goods, even those that we have identified as priorities for ourselves. We ingrain in ourselves patterns of fearful reserve and overbearing aggressivity.

When asking whether blameworthy fear (*peccatum timoris*) opposes fortitude, Aquinas recalls that all fear arises out of love.¹⁷⁰

167 “*Sunt autem magis timenda mala animae quam mala corporis; et mala corporis quam mala exteriorum rerum*” *ST* II-II 125.4.

168 Augustine, the Peripatetics and Aquinas concur on this. Cf. *ST* II-II 125.4 ad 3.

169 Cf. *ST* II-II 129.1 ad 2; *ST* II-II 123, articles 4 and 5.

170 Fear springs from love, in that we only fear the opposite of what we love. “*omnis timor ex amore procedit: nullus enim timet nisi contrarium eius*”

While we find the general source of every virtue in ordinate love, every sin (disordered act) likewise finds its general source in inordinate fear—our inordinate fear of losing money (covetousness), pleasure (intemperance), and so forth.¹⁷¹ In this extreme and exaggerated sense we even fear fear itself.

Fearlessness is another way in which we fail in fortitude. We can bring disaster, in seemingly heroic acts, through shortsighted audacity. We do not reasonably estimate the danger present to one's self or the community. We manifest fearlessness in unreflected recklessness from three sources.¹⁷² According to Thomas, we can act fearlessly when we do not love one's self, others or God in due measure.¹⁷³ We can also, through pride, err by favoring ourselves, while despising others. Lastly, we can act without due fear through a defect in reason. Through fearlessness, we neither fear what we ought to fear nor as we ought to fear it.¹⁷⁴

Neurological, physiological and psychological descriptions of these vicious dispositions add further nuance to the underlying biological and psychic interactions. They enrich our understanding of human anthropology. Nonetheless, they are not enough to comprehend the entirety of the moral act, neither as a disordered moral *habitus*, nor as failure in moral resilience. From Aquinas' moral analysis, fortitude fails when we act without a fitting and possible response, albeit at intellectual (reason and will) or emotional levels. Such failure can be a single happening. However, we form a moral *habitus* or vice in

quod amat." *ST* II-II 125.2. This "opposite" includes the loss of what we love. Aquinas finds a source for this principle in St. Augustine (*Octoginta trium Quest.* q. 33: PL 40, 22), whom he quotes in *ST* II-II 19.3: "*Timor autem ex amore nascitur: illud enim homo timet amittere quod amat: ut patet per Augustinum.*" *ST* I-II 43.1.

¹⁷¹ Cf. *ST* II-II 125.2 corpus and ad 1.

¹⁷² Cf. *ST* II-II 126.1.

¹⁷³ Thomas recalls this fearlessness in regards to the unjust judge that feared neither God nor other people. Cf. Luke 18:2; *ST* II-II 126.1 sc. In the *corpus* of the response, Aquinas also quotes St. Paul's letter to the Ephesians (5:29). For Aquinas, although the vice of fearlessness mitigates our natural inclinations to love self, others and God, it can never erase these natural inclinations, even in the case of suicide, through which someone seeks liberation from present stress, pain and suffering, rather than being cutting off from these sources of love.

¹⁷⁴ Cf. *ST* II-II 126.2.

proportion as we repeat disordered acts. In turn, such an acquired vice disposes us to act more readily in similar ways. It makes us more vulnerable to the risks that fearful situations involve.

3.5.2. Aquinas' Developmental Perspective on Fortitude

What does Aquinas' developmental approach offer in the light of psychosocial reflections and research on managing fear and daring? In this section, I shall analyze Thomas's developmental insights and perspective in terms of: the causes that ward off fear, and the place that the natural inclinations and emotions have in the development of fortitude. His perspective illustrates a type of connaturalization that occurs through experiences of fear and difficulties, in the context of our quests for flourishing.

Before attempting a response to our opening question, I would like to note that some thinkers have criticized Thomas' approach for its psychological shortcomings regarding human and social development. According to J. Porter, although his account of the virtues remains fundamentally sound and normative, it needs reformulation since, as she says, he "has no sense of the dynamic development of the psyche, and, perhaps more importantly, he also has very little sense of the significance of social forces in shaping individual identity."¹⁷⁵ This critique, while expressing a valid concern to advance Aquinas and the tradition's reflections on virtue, seems overstated. There is no reason to defend Thomas for not having foreseen contemporary debates (and

¹⁷⁵ J. Porter 1995a, 167. Porter (1995a, 168) "reformulates" an education perspective on virtue, based on "how the prudent and virtuous person [...] is capable of rational self-criticism and transformation of her individual and cultural ideals for virtue, precisely in and through her continued reflective practice of the virtues." In particular, she (1995a, 169) identifies "that the formation of a sense of individual identity, and the awareness of oneself as one human being among others, are both dependent on a capacity for empathetic identification with others. This capacity for identification begins to emerge as the child is taught to observe the norms of her society, to participate in its rituals, and, not least, to talk, and it continues as she tries on the roles and the recurrent narratives of her community through role-playing." A practical commitment to life and to being good (in whatever language it might take) is a basic condition for virtue education (including self-education). Porter expounds a framework (and ordering of the questions of morality) that emphasizes the interaction between individual persons and their wider communities. Concerning "the difficulties" in Aquinas' account of human faculties she refers us to Anthony Kenny (1993, 145-160).

advances) concerning human individuation and socialization. However, we need to look deeper in order to examine the developmental insights that Aquinas expresses through his moral anthropology.

Aquinas cites Aristotle in identifying a number of causes (some of which are social) that drive fear away. The Philosopher says: “wealth, strength, a multitude of friends, and power drive fear away.”¹⁷⁶ From this quote, Thomas draws on two psychological insights for warding off fear. First concerning the material disposition to fear, he says: “some defect is, of itself, the cause of fear: for it is owing to some lack of power that one is unable easily to repulse a threatening evil.” For example, we lack confidence of victory, when we fear not to have ample personal strength. Second, concerning the efficient cause of fear (of the person feared), he says, “it is owing to the fact that the cause apprehended as harmful is powerful, that its effect cannot be repulsed.” For example, when the opponent is strong, or when we face an evil beyond the measure of fear (when in the throws of being executed, for example).¹⁷⁷ In this context, the place and utility of hope stand out; they become even more apparent when understood in the context of how we acquire virtue. In both extremely fearful things and to more mundane ones, fear diminishes inasmuch as hope increases. According to Aquinas, whatever increases a person’s power (*potestas*), such as experience (*experientia*), fosters a person’s agency; it thereby strengthens our hope and weakens our fear.¹⁷⁸ These causes provide insights into personal development within a social context (friends, battles, society).

The natural inclinations, which serve as the formal basis to establish virtue, serve fortitude in a particular fashion.¹⁷⁹ For Aquinas, the expression and development of the virtue of fortitude involves the interaction of several natural inclinations: the natural inclination to preserve one’s own life; as well as the natural inclinations to pursue

176 “*divitiae, et robur, et multitudo amicorum, et potestas, excludunt timorem.*” *Rhet.* ii.5, 1383b1-3; cited in *ST* I-II 43.2 sc.

177 Cf. *ST* I-II 43.2.

178 Cf. *ST* I-II 42.5 *corpus* and *ad* 1; *ST* I-II 40.5

179 As already mentioned, in the case of fortitude, Aquinas adapts Aristotle’s doctrine of virtue as a mean between extremes. Cf. *ST* II-II 123.3.

what is good and true, family life and social interaction. We need to prudently seek a just mean; in the case of danger and toil, especially concerning death in battle or for the common good, we need to develop proper relationships between these inclinations and more explicit personal and social goals. We must ask: how do these tendencies aid or hinder our more explicit personal and social aims? How can we further train and employ our natural inclinations and emotional, volitional and rational capacities in order to serve our goals and flourishing?

In particular, the danger of death for a just cause demands that we adjudicate between the natural inclination to preserve one's own life (and perhaps to support our family), as opposed to the natural inclinations toward the good, the true and the common good (and the ultimate good). Does such a situation involve a conflict between inclinations? In discussing fearlessness, Aquinas clearly speaks of this potential ambiguity of the natural inclination to self-love and protection: "And every man has it instilled in him by nature to love his own life and whatever is directed thereto; and to do so in due measure, that is, to love these things not as placing his end therein, but as things to be used for the sake of his last end."¹⁸⁰ His placement of the doctrine of human inclination in a larger framework of finality demands further pedagogical efforts. It demands that we nurture and educate such loves and inclinations in order to arrive at a "due measure." As we shall explore later, Aquinas modifies the Aristotelian doctrine of the mean with Ciceronian teaching on natural inclinations, but also with Christian teaching on the place of community and the ordered relationship of human ends and flourishing.

While clinging to and pursuing good, and resisting or avoiding evil are difficult, we develop fortitude through understanding, feeling and acting well for difficult good ends, by employing good mediate ends. We make such efforts only within the larger perspective of the other virtues and the whole gambit of human social potential. Aquinas uses the concept of connaturality to explain how the acquired virtue of fortitude entails a certain mental and emotional firmness, which does

180 "*Inditum autem est unicuique naturaliter ut propriam vitam amet, et ea quae ad ipsam ordinantur, tamen debito modo: ut scilicet amentur huiusmodi non quasi finis constituatur in eis, sed secundum quod eis utendum est propter ultimum finem*" ST II-II 126.1.

not lack a sense of development and finality. A human being “can achieve this steadfastness in a way which is connatural and peculiar to him, so that he does not abandon the good because of the difficulty of either fulfilling some strenuous task or enduring some oppressive ill.”¹⁸¹ This mental and emotional steadfastness entails a connaturalization of the emotions so that we use reason to guide our actions even in the face of oppressive difficulties. Aquinas holds that the actions that virtue produces resemble the actions that produce virtue. He says, “We become brave by accustoming ourselves to despise and endure terrors, and having become brave we are very capable of enduring terrors.”¹⁸² As discussed earlier, Thomas promotes the role of parents, teachers and the law in the growth of virtue;¹⁸³ his conception of good dynamically leads from self-love, to common good, to ultimate good.

Pleasure and pain (*delectatio et tristitia*) play a special role in fortitude and in its associated virtues.¹⁸⁴ Love and the natural inclination to preserve one’s own life serve human motivation and action. Fortitude concerns loving some present or future good that an impending danger and difficulty threatens. However, it is not about pleasure and pain as its proper matter, which is rather fear and daring. Nor is it about a false bravery, through which we do what appears to be brave, when really seeking some temporal good—pleasure, honor,

181 “*Homo autem secundum proprium et connaturalem sibi modum hanc firmitatem in utroque potest habere, ut non deficiat a bono propter difficultatem vel alicujus ardui operis implendi, vel alicujus gravis mali perferendi.*” *ST* II-II 139.1.

182 *In Eth.* 2, 2, 264 (cf. *NE* 1104b1-3). In his commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aquinas says that Aristotle demonstrates the similarities between actions that virtue produces and actions that produce virtue.

183 According to Aquinas, civil law’s purpose is to serve as a discipline so that humans become able to do freely, what the undisciplined do out of fear of punishment (cf. *ST* I-II 95.1; *ST* I-II 63.1; *ST* I-II 94.3).

184 As was demonstrated earlier, Aquinas’ position on education in virtue in general and fortitude in particular is marked by Aristotle, who promotes a right education (*paideia*) of moral excellence that trains human pleasures and pains in order to “to delight in and to be pained by the things that we ought.” *NE* Book II.3 1104b7-8. Aristotle’s three definitions of courage as an acquired disposition help to illuminate education in courage. Cf. Smoes 1995, 210-12. On the place of pleasure in morality, see A. Plé 1980.

gain—or avoiding some disadvantage—pain, blame, loss.¹⁸⁵ In moral virtues, pleasure and pain serve as mediate ends, through which we acquire a good end or avoid an evil one. Fortitude however is more complicated than some incidences of moral virtue, whereby pleasure accompanies but also characterizes the virtuous activity.¹⁸⁶ It involves difficulty and therefore a mixture of pleasure and pain.¹⁸⁷

Thomas' focus on the philosophical physiognomy of fortitude does not spell forgetfulness about finality and flourishing. Flourishing is the continual motive and dynamic end that animates human life, especially when we face fear.¹⁸⁸ It involves a cognitive, motivational and emotional coping tool. A contemporary question is whether we necessarily need to tie fortitude with flourishing (and goodness). Aquinas affirms that brave persons do what is fitting to the virtue of fortitude, while they seek, at the same time, eternal and human flourishing and goodness.¹⁸⁹ Fortitude itself is good. Yet it loses its fullest meaning and power to move us, when we abstract it from our love, desire and pursuit of complete flourishing (including its social dimension, the common good and ultimate good).

In order to complete Aquinas' position on fortitude and to identify its relevance for moral resilience, we need to treat the architectonic position that anger (and the other passions) plays in the operation of this virtue, especially regarding the daring, enterprise and aggression that comprise it. In the practice of virtue, moderate anger is instrumentally useful to reason. Particularly in regards fortitude, inasmuch as anger cooperates with reason, it renders action more

¹⁸⁵ *ST* II-II 123.1 ad 2; *In Eth.* 3, 18, 583 and 587; see also Aristotle, *NE* 1116a15-1117a28.

¹⁸⁶ For example, Aquinas (*ST* II-II 58.9 ad 1) citing Aristotle (*NE* i.8, 1099a18-22) says that in the case of justice “*non est iustus qui non gaudet iustis operationibus*.”

¹⁸⁷ Cf. *ST* II-II 123.8; see also *ST* I-II 31.3-5.

¹⁸⁸ In his discussion on whether brave people act for the good of this *habitus*, Aquinas gives a striking example of how flourishing serves as a motivation (cf. *ST* II-II 123.7).

¹⁸⁹ On the goodness of fortitude, Aquinas cites Aristotle (*NE* iii.10, 1115b21-24). On the relationship between fortitude and flourishing, Aquinas (*ST* II-II 123.7 obj. 3) quotes St. Augustine (*De Trin.* xiii.8: PL 42, 1022-1023, and *De Morib. Eccl.* xv, i, 15: PL 32, 1322).

prompt and more resistant.¹⁹⁰ These considerations of the development or employment of fortitude lead to others on education in this virtue.

3.5.3. Education in Fortitude

What does Aquinas more specifically say about education in the virtue of fortitude? Thomas' developmental perspective becomes clearer through an investigation of his counsel concerning how we prepare ourselves for fearful situations. It suggests a narrative method that employs imaginative foresight and self-calming efforts. In Aquinas' virtue theory, the courageous disposition is informed by reason and rendered more obedient and docile to reason through our successive experiences of mastering fear. We can draw from previously ingrained dispositions, which we formed through formally similar experiences and actions.¹⁹¹

To prepare oneself for the unforeseen is an integral, yet progressively acquired, characteristic of the virtue of fortitude.¹⁹² Aquinas explains that courage involves both what is foreseen and unforeseen. How can we expect to foresee the unforeseen? Although fortitude concerns action in the face of sudden occurrences and unexpected dangers, it nonetheless involves that we prepare ourselves through imaginative and narrative efforts. For example, in choosing to ponder courageous people and stories, we progressively prepare ourselves for unpredicted events. Aquinas draws upon Saint Gregory the Great in this regard, when he says:

190 Aquinas affirms, "*quia appetitus sensitivus movetur per imperium rationis ad hoc quod cooperetur ad promptius agendum, idcirco ponebant et iram et alias passiones animae assumendas esse a virtuosis, moderatas secundum imperium rationis.*" *ST II-II* 123.10.

191 Aquinas draws heavily from Aristotle's insight on the acquisition of courage. In particular, Aristotle says that we become brave or cowardly "by doing the acts that we do in the presence of danger, and being habituated to feel fear or confidence, we become brave or cowardly" (*NE* ii.1, 1103b17-18). Just as humans are usually strengthened through eating and physical exertion, so likewise in the case of fortitude, Aristotle argues that by "being habituated to despise things that are terrible and to stand our ground against them we become brave, and it is when we have become so that we shall be most able to stand our ground against them" (*NE* ii.3, 1104a28-1104b3).

192 Cf. *ST II-II* 123.9, where Aquinas once again cites Aristotle's *NE* (iii.9, 1115a32-35).

the brave man chooses to think beforehand of the dangers that may arise, in order to be able to withstand them, or to bear them more easily: since according to Gregory, “the blow that is foreseen strikes with less force, and we are able more easily to bear earthly wrongs, if we are forearmed with the shield of foreknowledge.”¹⁹³

We should choose to prepare ourselves for a good number of dangerous and toilsome things and in so doing become at least remotely prepared for them. Such mental planning and narrative imagination is important: we can forecast some dangers and toil in life’s great projects (involving family and education, business and politics, personal and ecclesial life); all people can expect to die and we cannot exclude beforehand a painful or violent death.¹⁹⁴ The need for preparation has significant pedagogical implications, even concerning sudden events or surprises.¹⁹⁵

Fortitude as a *habitus* is “made manifest chiefly in sudden dangers,”¹⁹⁶ according to Aquinas. To confront bravely unpredicted dangers (including dangers of death) without weakening or disorientation demonstrates we have become disposed for courageous acts. Being prepared to be surprised is part and parcel of this virtue. Indeed, surprise exacerbates efforts to repulse evil in two ways. First, fear can overcome our capacities, when the magnitude of the evil startles us. Aquinas affirms that we can diminish such fear by premeditation. We train ourselves by thinking about possible situations

¹⁹³ “*iacula quae praevidentur minus feriunt: et nos mala mundi facilius ferimus, si contra ea clipeo praescientiae praemunimur*” Hom. xxv in Evang. I: PL 76, 1259 c; cited in ST II-II 123.9, where Aquinas also cites Ambrose, who indicates how the brave person encounters future events through forethought (cf. *de officiis* I, 38, 189; PL 16, 79 C)

¹⁹⁴ “*quamvis pericula mortis raro immineant, tamen occasiones horum periculorum frequenter occurrunt: dum scilicet homini adversarii mortales suscitantur propter iustitiam quam sequitur, et propter alia bona quae facit*” ST II-II 123.11 ad 3.

¹⁹⁵ If someone is a fireman, policeman, politician, soldier or journalist by profession, then he might well be more often than the average confronted with sudden dangers, including that of a violent death. In these cases especially, it seems fitting they prepare themselves for surprises. But whether we have such a profession or not, we must keep our efforts at foresight (including foreseeing a sudden death) in the context of our ultimate goal (*summum bonum*) and the strength that God assures us.

¹⁹⁶ “*secundum Philosophum, in Ethic. (iii.11, 1117a17-22), in repentinis periculis maxime manifestatur fortitudinis habitus*” ST II-II 123.9.

of evil, even sudden, great or long-lasting ones. Preparation helps us to correct emotion's tendency to exaggerate threat.¹⁹⁷ Secondly, a fearful surprise can further weaken us, when for lack of time it deprives us of the remedies and strategies that we might have mustered otherwise. In both these cases, suddenness can aggravate our vulnerability to fearfulness, while premeditative preparation for sudden fearful difficulty can aid us to master it rationally with emotional composure and a firm will.

The fact that we cannot know exactly when or how we shall die raises an epistemological-moral question: how can we be sure to exercise real bravery, that is, fortitude, in the fullest sense? It is only when we are actually faced with the danger of death that we shall know whether we shall be truly courageous or not. A similar query concerns whether we are really and fully resilient, before the final test. Aquinas uses a principle that is reasonable, yet difficult to verify. It concerns facing real and not imagined near-death situations. He claims that if we are able to do what is more difficult, then we shall be capable of what is less so.¹⁹⁸ A well-disposed capacity, though, does not guarantee we shall use it well; extreme situations have their ways of uprooting our best-laid plans. Not everyone furthermore has faced a real, sudden or immanent danger of death, nor should we purposely put someone into such a situation. Imaginative proximity is another story. Those who have bravely faced a sudden danger of death, on the contrary, cannot count on their laurels. Nonetheless, given the nature of *habitus* and remote preparation, we can face real and imagined situations of death with relative confidence, according to Aquinas.

In conclusion, Aquinas recognizes that we master fear through practicing fortitude, which demands that we attempt to foresee threats and hardship, especially mortal ones. Education and development of this virtue, though, is not simply an exercise in human imagination. It demands that we actually learn to allay fears and worries, so that we can adjudicate accurately and efficiently the threat and our response. Our personal and communal engagement toward progress in excellence, including courageous justice, provides Aquinas a program

197 Cf. *ST* I-II 42.5 corpus and ad 3; *ST* I-II 42.6.

198 "*quia qui stat firmus contra maiora, consequens est quod stet firmus contra minora, sed non convertitur*" *ST* II-II 123.4.

to acquire fortitude and master fears. This program outlines an important aspect of moral virtue and resilience.

3.6. Concluding Remarks on Fortitude and Resilience

St. Thomas develops a philosophical notion of moral fortitude that contains the following characteristics. Due to the virtue of fortitude, we firmly, rationally and deliberately face dangers and bear toil. We find a mean between the extremes of fear (principally) and daring (secondarily). We confront the difficulty of death and death in struggles, in the context of a just war or political engagement for the common good. His comprehension of fortitude and its contribution to moral resilience is richer than it might seem from this slim characterization. From Aquinas' moral, developmental and relational approach to fortitude, we can extrapolate a moral resilience and a resilient fortitude.

Some other characteristics of fortitude underscore the contributions (enrichment) offered by resilience research. Resilience research has well illustrated that resilient individuals should not rest on their laurels or social supports. They need to apply themselves diligently in each situation that tests their acquired strengths. The virtue of fortitude, as an acquired strength, involves a dynamic interaction between perception, emotion, reason and will. Neither do humans resiliently strengthen a virtuous disposition, like fortitude, by blindly copying a previous external act. Nor do we do so in isolation from other dispositions. Courage demands that we act creatively in a new situation that endangers us and causes fear. Courageous coping with conflict draws upon the expertise of virtues like prudence, justice and temperance. How can we courageously stand firm, if we misconstrue the adversity, or sacrifice the rights of others in our place, or cede instead to a desire for comfort? According to Aquinas, the principal virtues support each other. We can understand reasons for fortitude only in the context of our deeper goals, loves and moral norms. Our courageous character shapes our irascible capacity, which serves not only our loves, but also the whole range of inclinations and emotions, cognitions and volitions. Aquinas' doctrine of the unity of the virtues does not involve static perfection. It suggests a type of pedagogy toward growth and completion, which draws on internal and

external collaboration and support. Psychosocial resilience research has highlighted the sociobiological and physiological working of fear and aggression, attention and concentration.

This study has highlighted fortitude-related resilience promoting strategies: self-soothing techniques, self-efficacy and confidence, and so forth. A Thomistic anthropology can integrate these elements while offering a larger framework and guidance. Indeed Aquinas provides a basis to promote a moral type of resilience. Not that the other bases are immoral. Yet the sciences, according to their own methods, either admittedly depend on moral assumptions or make fallacious moral inductions or ignore the issue. Admittedly, this Thomistic moral appreciation of resilience is neither modern nor post-modern in the limited sense of both terms. Rather, it represents a tradition that resists rationalistic and voluntaristic movements. In particular, it makes its own contribution to a moral type of resilience through its insights on ultimate finality, cognitive orientation and normativeness, affective motivation as well as emotional and intellectual dispositions.

St. Thomas contributes his own insights regarding educational strategies as well. Courageous response demands self-knowledge and information about the origin of fear. It draws from our intended goals and commitments to norms, in addition to cognitive, motivational and emotional dispositions to act courageously. We increase courageous outcomes when we imaginatively foresee events, such as physical and social difficulties, as well as moral and spiritual challenges. This type of virtue encourages self-preparation, vigilance and practiced-emotional control. It suggests the educational significance of literature and the arts that project difficult experiences that humans encounter. Our efforts, at a controlled practice of emotions concerning hardships and trials, demand that we do more than passively observe the situation. Rather, with active discernment, we select the objects of our attention and evaluate their effect on our society and selves.

In addition to the foreseeable events for which we can and should prepare ourselves, Aquinas recalls that sudden occurrences can surprise us. In the latter, we must mobilize our moral and intellectual virtues and other resources in creative ways. In order to continue on a virtuous developmental trajectory, such as a resilient type of fortitude,

we prepare for the foreseeably unforeseeable future. The unexpected event calls us to apply our intellectual, moral and emotional skills to new terrain; we need our wits to do so. We can learn from our successes and failures, from our good decisions and mistakes. We need to be vigilant in order to continue to do the truth in love.

As rich as this philosophical study of Aquinas and resilience research on the dispositional and emotional range of courage might be, it is incomplete. It needs to treat the philosophical dimension of the virtues of initiative and resisting, in the next chapter, and the theological dimension of these virtues and related emotions in the last one.

Chapter Four.

Constructive Resilience and Aquinas' Virtues of Initiative

Hope and foresight are vital for constructive resilience. According to L. B. Murphy, “the resilient child is oriented toward the future, is living ahead, with hope.”¹ Through individual and communal resilience resources, we muster hope, confidence and generosity toward initiatives that have a twofold effect. Not only do they promote personal flourishing, they also promote community. Constructive resilience entails rebuilding in the wake of disasters. It empowers us to face the challenges present in worthwhile but difficult projects. It enables us to build something positive out of destructive events.

In this section, I shall employ the concept of constructive resilience to deepen our understanding of Aquinas' treatment of initiative. For Aquinas, besides what is specific to the virtues of courage and patience, there are the initiative-taking virtues of magnanimity (*magnanimitas*) and magnificence (*magnificentia*). Magnanimity, as a natural virtue of hope, regulates our hope (emotion) of attaining possible goods, while it also strengthens us through the hardships involved in pursuing them. We can attain such goods only by investing ourselves in life's project and by drawing upon the resources of others. The dynamics of human hope in initiative serves in the coping, resisting and transformative effects active in the other virtues as well. We shall investigate how the insights of resilience research strengthen Aquinas' vision of hope-filled initiative.

4.1. Introduction: The Virtues and Passions of Initiative-Taking

An analysis of Aquinas' notion of *magnanimitas* and *magnificentia* can help us to understand the dynamics of facing difficulty, in rebuilding life in the aftermath of destruction and in generous acts that require confident risk-taking to accomplish an

¹ Murphy 1987, 101. M. Manciaux (2001) also claims that having a life project facilitates overcoming hardships.

important good. For Aquinas, these virtues are the key movements in the act of initiative-taking or enterprise (*aggredi*).² They pertain to self-preparation for and execution of excellent deeds.

Through *magnanimitas*, we mentally and emotionally prepare ourselves for an undertaking. For Thomas, the mind and will (*animus*) need to be assured and hopeful in great and honorable undertakings.³ We prepare our mind and whole person (*ad animi praeparationem*) by measuring and imagining the efforts and risks involved. Magnanimity, unlike other virtues, does not simply search a virtuous mean among a single set of extremes (*in medio stat virtus*). Rather, it implies three matters: hope (being capable of excellent works), honors (being worthy of significant distinctions) and praise (regarding praise and glory properly).⁴ First, magnanimity's proximate or internal matter concerns the passions of hope and despair. We shall ask whether this virtue is *the* natural virtue of hope. Furthermore, although the passion of daring is an internal matter of fortitude as well (along with the passion of fear), in this chapter, we investigate the daring and initiative necessary in human agency. Second, its external matter concerns honors, which serve as goals and sources of motivation. Third, the end or goal of doing great actions involves not only magnanimity, but also *magnificentia*. The interplay of honor and greatness causes many questions about the priority, interpretation and application of each; it leads us to ask whether in this regard magnanimity is rather a virtue of self-absorption or of excellent action in the world.

Magnificentia involves not only the start, but also the development and the completion of the act. It engenders external, generous acts of making or doing. We imagine magnificence's stages in the first moments of magnanimity (seen as a more general virtue),

2 We already discussed Aquinas' notion of the irascible faculty in chapter three on fortitude.

3 Aquinas borrows this key notion of magnanimity from Cicero's (*Rhet.* ii: 10-12) understanding of "confidence": "*fiducia est per quam magnis et honestis rebus multum ipse animus in se fiduciae cum spe collocavit*," cited in *ST* II-II 128.1.

4 Cf. *ST* II-II 129.1; *ST* II-II 129.8; *ST* II-II 131.2 ad 1; *ST* II-II 17.5 ad 4; Gauthier 1951, 316-7, Labourdette 1962, 28-29.

but need actually to execute the act without wavering from our initial confidence and purpose.⁵

For Aquinas, magnanimity and magnificence ready our mind to start and accomplish enterprising action. They entail either facing the dangers of death (as quasi-integral parts of fortitude) or involve lesser hardships when seeking to accomplish some difficult good. They depend upon giving of oneself and one's resources. We should not separate them from considerations of being worthy of great honor, as the completion of great projects (as potential parts of fortitude, and as its secondary virtues).⁶ As for the virtue of fortitude, Aquinas transforms philosophical definitions of the initiative-taking virtues, which he further specifies in terms of hope, honor and excellence.

The emotional and intellectual energy that drives us to excellence can confront different obstacles. Aquinas analyses various pitfalls as excesses in striving for magnanimity's end (hoping to do great deeds and to use one's great abilities), its matters (hope and doing what is worthy of honors) or its effect (praise and glory).⁷ These pitfalls concern the vices of presumption, ambition and vainglory. A deficient exercise of magnanimity is called *pusillanimitas*, which we shall illustrate later in terms of insecurity, sloth and timidity.

I have structured this chapter on Aquinas' approach to the virtues of *magnanimitas* and *magnificentia*.⁸ We shall also argue however that resilience research—which addresses human resources in coping with difficulty, reconstructing one's life in the aftermath of conflict, and in undertaking enterprising-action—has a specific relevance for the practice of these virtues of initiative. In particular,

5 Aquinas here borrows Cicero's description of magnificence, which is "*magnificentia est rerum magnarum et excelsarum cum animi ampla quadam et splendida propositione cogitatio atque administratio, idest executio, ut scilicet amplo proposito administratio non desit*" *ST* II-II 128.1; cf. Cicero *Rhet.* ii: 7-10.

6 Concerning magnanimity, see: *ST* II-II 128.1; 129.1-8; Aristotle *NE* iv.10, 1125a34-35; S. Th. lect. 11, 791. Concerning magnificence, see: *ST* II-II 128.1; 134.1-4; Aristotle *NE* iv.4, 1122a21-23-b2-6; S. Th. lect. 6, 708, 712-713; and *NE* ii.7, 1107b18-21; S. Th. lect. 8, 344.

7 Cf. *ST* II-II 131.2 ad 1.

8 The purpose however is not a simple commentary on his *Summa theologiae*, which contains his major treatises on these virtues and the emotions that they manage. Rather throughout, I shall integrate other of Thomas' texts while putting his insights into dialogue with resilience research on these phenomena.

resilience studies offer insights on generosity and self-esteem, concentration and competency, motivation and optimism. The antitheses of these resilience components also enrich our work: pessimism and despair, helplessness and immobility, as well as a lack of generosity and related vulnerabilities. Such concepts need careful treatment, since the psychosocial sciences employ them from within difference schools and with some fluidity. Nonetheless, we shall demonstrate that they add further depth to Aquinas' approach to initiative.

4.2. Arduous Activity: Confronting Difficulty with the Energy of the Passions of Hope and Daring

4.2.1. Aquinas on *Arduum*: the difficult good

The difficulty involved in human initiative, especially magnanimous efforts, invites an initial study of what Aquinas calls *bonum arduum* (the difficult good).⁹ In fact, his complex notion of magnanimity seems to concern all the difficulties included in seeking flourishing, which he and classical thinkers purport to be life's major project. Thomas associates *magnanimitas* or *fidentia* with the disposition that prepares our minds for action in the face of the dangers of death (as a quasi-integral part of fortitude) or in any lesser hardship (as a secondary virtue related to fortitude).¹⁰ Indeed the virtue of magnanimity includes the range of difficulties involved in the passion of hope (defined in terms of a difficult good)¹¹ and in the notions of greatness and excellence, as well as in honor itself.

Thomas construes virtue in general to concern the difficult and the good (*difficile et bonum*).¹² Indeed, we face continual challenges and opportunities in establishing the rational mean of the intellectual

9 Aquinas says: "*spes et desparatio ad aliquod bonum arduum*" *ST* I-II 60.4; "*obiectum spei est arduum [...]: bonum autem cuius iam inevitabilem causam habemus, non comparatur ad nos in ratione ardui*" *ST* I-II 67.4 ad 3; cf. *ST* I-II 40.1 ad 1; *ST* I-II 30.2 ad 3; *ST* II-II 161.1.

10 Cf. *ST* II-II 128.1; 123.4-5; 129.1 ad 2.

11 Cf. *ST* II-II 129.1 ad 1 and ad 2.

12 Cf. *ST* I-II 60.5; *In Eth.* 2, 3, 278. In this regard, he follows Aristotle: cf. *NE* iii.2, 1105a9-13.

virtues and justice.¹³ Because of the specific adversity in managing the passions in a rational way, we need the other moral virtues.¹⁴ Even at the level of the sensitive appetite, which as a natural inclination is naturally subject to reason, both the passions themselves and their objects (when they are complex) resist reason.¹⁵ Rational failures are even more widespread when we aspire to an object that contains an aspect of greatness. Magnanimity involves a rational way of hoping for something great. Aquinas addresses the correlation of reason and great efforts time and again. Magnanimity saves the good of reason in: managing our hope of greatness (I-II 60.4) or our desire for greatness (*De malo* 8, 2); putting a just measure in our aspiration for greatness (*In II Sent.*, 42, 2, 4); and imposing a rational mode in these aspirations (*ST* II-II 129.3-4).

As mentioned earlier in regards to fortitude in general, the irascible faculty is in charge of managing difficulties,¹⁶ even though its passion of hope is entrenched in the concupiscible faculty. That is, hope concerns something we love that is difficult to attain.¹⁷ This insight opens the door for reappropriating Aquinas' understanding of *arduum*, in which the object of hope involves not only difficulty, but above all an attractive good, a good capable of drawing us toward itself. Often writers take the Latin terms *arduum* and *difficile* as synonymous.¹⁸ According to R.-A. Gauthier, we should however translate *arduum* as "great" (*grand* in French),¹⁹ rather than "difficult."

¹³ Cf. *ST* II-II 129.2.

¹⁴ Aquinas (*ST* II-II 129.2), drawing from Dionysius (*Div. Nom* iv, 4), holds that the passions can resist reason. Sometimes passions even resist reason in a way that requires two moral virtues: one for the extreme object, the other for the common case.

¹⁵ Without overshadowing the ease of the natural and spiritual inclinations, nor the connaturality of the virtues and gifts of the Holy Spirit, we must emphasize the effort involved in achieving life's greater goals.

¹⁶ We are drawn to the good in hope; or withdraw from it in despair. Moreover in regards to evil, through fear we recognize the presence of evil, in audacity we attack it, and in just anger we are moved to resolve injustices. Thus the irascible is not only involved with the good, i.e. the passions of hope and despair, but also connected with evil, i.e. the passions of fear, audacity and anger.

¹⁷ Cf. *ST* I-II 40.1; *ST* I-II 23.1; *ST* I-II 25.1; Gauthier 1951, 331-2.

¹⁸ Cf. Deferrari (1983) defines *Arduus*, *a*, *um*, (adj.) as arduous or difficult, and *Arduitas* as arduousness.

¹⁹ Gauthier thinks that the term *arduum* is foreign to Greek philosophy, and that it was introduced by 12th century masters, the *quidam* or *aliqui* as Aquinas

This distinction helps us to understand Aquinas' psychology of the irascible appetite. While linked to the notion of *difficile*, *arduum* is not always simply synonymous with it. Rather, as was the case for his contemporaries, *arduum* refers first of all to greatness and excellence.²⁰ Thomas uses the following terms to express the meaning of *arduum*: *magnum*, *altum*, *elevatum*, *excellens*, *meloiora*; it is the opposite of *parvum*.²¹ When thus associating the great and the difficult, *arduum* becomes what is great in two senses: objectively great, and great relative to our faculties. *Arduum* does not necessarily surpass our capacities, but it surpasses their easy exercise, their normal use. It demands a concerted effort. The greatness of hope is thereby not simply external to our greatness, for it entails personal involvement and personal difficulty. Inversely, what is difficult for our faculties implies that it is great, at least for us.

In Thomas' understanding of *arduum*, hope is based on an instinct, appetite or power (*potentia*) of initiative, enterprise and conquering aimed at the difficult good. It entails a twofold movement. On the one hand, the concupiscible appetite—as the instinct of possession, pleasure and joy—finds difficulty repulsive. On the other hand, the irascible appetite²² involves the instinct of assertiveness, combat, conquest and domination to overcome the difficulty involved in seeking the good (or avoiding evil). For the instinct of assertiveness, nothing is more moving than something great and difficult. But it does not focus on the difficulty in itself or as a source of suffering, but rather on the great in its aspect of being difficult to attain. This *arduum* is greatness not as source of difficulty, but as source of dominating the

refers to them (cf. *In de Anima*, bk. III, Lec. 14; Gauthier 1951, 321, n. 1; and n. 2). He notes that there were diverging conceptions of *arduitas*, e.g. the Salamanican Carmelites; Duns Scotus for his part struck *arduitas* from his theology of hope.

²⁰ Aquinas' contemporaries use *arduum* in the following ways: Alexander of Hales: *arduum* is above one's powers to undertake; St. Albert: *arduum* is that which is high and elevated; St. Bonaventure: *arduum* equals *magnum*, great, *excellens*, eminent, superior, and so on. Cf. Gauthier 1951, 322-3 and 325-7.

²¹ See: *In III Sent.*, d. 26, qu. 1, obj. 1; *ST* II-II 136.5; Gauthier 1951, 323, n. 3; 324-5. In *ST* II-II 129.2 (on whether magnanimity concerns great honors), Aquinas says that *difficile* and *magnum* pertain to the same thing.

²² Cf. *ST* I-II 23.1 ad 3.

difficulty.²³ Thomas thus considers the irascible under both the aspects of struggling and fighting, as well as victory and domination,²⁴ which seem to be elements in resilience efforts. His thought on hope and greatness in achieving the difficult good needs further exploration.

4.2.2. Great Attention and Firmness of Mind

Human efforts of struggle, accomplishment, enterprise and conquest demand concentration. Aquinas highlights the importance of great attention (*magna attentio*) and firmness of mind (*firmitas animi*) in magnanimously managing difficulty. Before exploring Thomas' ideas in this regard, we shall turn to resilience (and neurobiology) research on attentional processes that serve in overcoming adversity and hardship. As extensively discussed in chapter two, the human capacity to manage attention is basic to a number of risk and resilience factors.²⁵ Important, complex or urgent human initiatives can tax our basic skills; they demand maximal use of our personal and social resources. In order to organize these resources, we need to control our capacities, direct our mind to the goal and remain conscious of pertinent surrounding issues.

Our attention shuttles between perceptions, emotions and cognitions in order to manage resiliently our responses to the situation, our moods and feelings, and our social relationships. An abundance of stimuli can distract us. We must focus our attention and calm ourselves in order not to be captured by the latest stimulus. In this regard, Wilson and Gottman distinguish two types of arousal and performance. On the one hand, high levels of "incentive arousal" as an active coping response aid in motivating and focusing attention on a primary task, while keeping contact with secondary ones, and even lowering levels of effort and energy dispensed. On the other hand, high levels of "anxiety arousal" tend to affect performance detrimentally because of anxiety's negative cognitions such as self-doubt and fear of failure.²⁶

23 As Gauthier (1951, 329; and 329-30, n. 1 and 2) says "*c'est le grandeur même du bien qui nous domine et qui domine les difficultés qu'implique sa conquête.*"

24 Cf. ST I-II 32.6 ad 3 (*vincere*).

25 Cf. Wilson and Gottman 1996; Wallwork 1999; W. Eysenck (1982).

26 Cf. Wilson and Gottman 1996, 194-5.

Wilson and Gottman furthermore claim that attentional styles and processes are influenced by (1) personality type and past personal experiences, (2) past and present physiological arousals, our capacities and emotional states, surroundings and relationships, and (3) present goals for the future. In turn, effective attention management underlies resiliency strategies.

The parallels between this research and virtue theory raise a question and invite a dialogue with Aquinas' thought on the great attention and firmness of mind needed in magnanimity. How do these attentional styles enhance Thomas' approach to great objects of hope, which involve difficulty and stress in attaining them? First, Aquinas for his part draws from insights retrieved in Aristotle, whose version of this quality of strong attention might well be found in the magnanimous person's lack of interest in anything that is not great, and conversely his piercing interest in what is noteworthy. According to Aristotle, the magnanimous man's "gait is slow, his voice deep, and his utterance calm."²⁷ This description might at first glance seem irrelevant or even an inside joke. Critiques of Aristotle's thought have attacked his magnanimous man's aloofness and self-absorption, and have found his characteristics no more than humorous.²⁸

Aquinas nonetheless finds meaning in the phenomenon of focused attention, which he cites twice in treating magnanimity, as well as elsewhere regarding learning.²⁹ He says that "the magnanimous

27 *NE* iv.3. In the *Physiognomics* (809b15- 36 p. 1244), which Barnes (1983) judges as spurious, Pseudo-Aristotle's conception of the lion, "moves slowly with a large stride, rolling his shoulders as he goes. Such in is bodily appearance, and in soul he is generous and liberal, proud and ambitious, yet gentle and just and affectionate to his comrades."

28 Critics claim that Aristotle's *μεγαλοψυχος* "does not command our modern sympathy" (J. A. Stewart 1892), is "unpleasing" and "offensive" (W. D. Ross 1964), or is a "product of his time" which modern readers find repulsive (Hardie 1978). B. Russell (1946) goes so far to say that Aristotle's whole system is "unduly smug and comfortable," and A. MacIntyre (1966, 79) says in insult that the *μεγαλοψυχος* "is very nearly an English gentleman." According to M. Nussbaum (1988), furthermore *μεγαλοψυχία* is the "relativists" favorite target.

29 Aquinas draws upon the insights of St. Augustine (*Soliloq.* I.12.21; PL 32.880) and Proverbs (2:4-5) when discussing the need for attention in learning. A focused attention is necessary and depends on the quality of our love. Pain can distract us even from what we have previously learned. Nonetheless, love makes the difference. Aquinas observes that the stronger our love, the more it retains the attention of our mind, and overcomes the distractions of pain: "[*amor*] quanto

person is intent only on great things; these are few and require great attention (*magna attentione*) or firmness of soul (*firmitas animi*), wherefore they call for slow movement.”³⁰ Such great attention and firmness of mind is necessary in every virtue, but especially magnanimity and fortitude, both of which employ this mental attitude or psychological stance aimed at formidable deeds and overcoming hardship.³¹ Thus, magnanimous people stretch forth their minds to great things, exemplified basically in accomplishing great and difficult acts.³²

Aquinas’ complementary insights on solicitude, moral responsibility and human social nature help him to avoid the critiques leveled at Aristotle’s notion of magnanimity. First, Thomas highlights the importance of the magnanimous person’s solicitude, which is neither slowness nor disinterest per se. Rather through solicitude we focus on the things that truly need counsel and watchfulness, while trusting in regards to other secondary things, when it is fitting to do so.³³ Second, according to Aquinas, free and moral agency demands control of our attentional focus, which is so important for proper knowledge, intelligent willing and loving. Although the type of desire that follows reason and will (*passio consequens*) increases moral responsibility, a second type of desire that inhibits knowledge and voluntariness by limiting attention can distract us and diminish our moral responsibility.³⁴ Thus, for Aquinas, human agents must master their attentional focus on fitting objects, while resisting distraction in

maior fuerit, magis retinet intentionem animi, ne omnino feratur ad dolorem” (I-II 37.1).

³⁰ “*sed magnanimus intendit solum ad magna, quae pauca sunt, quae etiam indigent magna attentione; et ideo habet motum tardum*” ST II-II 129.3 ad 3. Aquinas discusses the more culturally dependent properties in ST II-II 129.3 ad 5.

³¹ The virtue of fortitude however demands more firmness of mind than magnanimity, since its object is more difficult. Cf. ST II-II 129.5; ST II-II 139; ST II-II 123.2; ST I-II 61.3.

³² Cf. ST II-II 129-1-2; Horner 1998: 428.

³³ Cf. ST II-II 47.9 ad 3.

³⁴ The reason and will manage to resist excessive diminishing of attention when they resist the belittling effect of sensual desire. Thomas discusses these types of distraction in his article on moral responsibility and the sensitive appetite (I-II 77; see especially articles 1, 2, 6 and 7). For Aquinas, we are responsible for our desires and their objects, with two exceptions: (1) antecedent passion that diminishes attention, knowledge and voluntariness; and (2) the desire that renders someone crazy (*in amentibus*).

order to exercise their full moral responsibility. Third, Thomas' notion of magnanimity involves giving one's whole attention (*tota ejus intentio*) to the good of others.³⁵ This type of attention is a long way from the purported self-absorption charged of Aristotle's version, and demonstrates that in important regards, Aquinas' notion of greatness has less to do with Aristotle's than is commonly thought.

With these three aspects of attention and strength of mind, Aquinas illustrates a type of effort that constructively elicits movement toward a goal. Rather than a demobilizing fear and anxiety, it involves an active attraction toward some good. Indeed at the very center of this virtue of great deeds and his virtue theory in general, Aquinas specifies an attentional style that is of the incentive rather than anxiety type, according to neurobiological typology. This aspect of virtue underlines another noteworthy characteristic of constructive resilience.

4.2.3. Daring, Aggressiveness and Initiative: Temperament and Emotion

The arduous good interacts with our emotions and temperaments, and captures the human intellect. The temperaments and emotions related to daring and aggressiveness can serve or hinder our initiatives to attain the difficult good. According to Thomas, we use raw aggressiveness or assertiveness (*aggredi*) for building up or tearing down. Hope gives rise to daring, which as an emotion or temperament trait we further use for good or evil. For Aquinas, the rational mastery of personal temperament and the passions of hope and fear are at the heart of turning simple assertiveness into well-reasoned initiative.³⁶ While entering into a fuller treatment of Thomas' thought, we shall demonstrate how we can advance his insights through a dialogue with contemporary sciences: physiology and neurochemistry on aggressiveness, daring and the bold temperament; evolutionary psychology (sociobiology) on the utility and purpose of "natural" daring and aggressive reactions; and psychosocial studies on boldness,

³⁵ When commenting, "*sed tota ejus intentio est circa bona communia et divina*" (*In Eth.* 4, 10, 779), Aquinas widens the import of the Philosopher's thought.

³⁶ Congar (1974) calls this side of fortitude's *aggredi* its "*aspect d'entreprise généreuse et d'attaque*."

daring and aggression. Enhancing chapter three's study on fear, timidity and anxiety, we illustrate another aspect of fortitude's genesis: the dimension where action is necessary and decisiveness advantageous.

Before going further, I should clarify the terminology of daring and aggressiveness. For Thomas, *audacia* (daring) refers to three things: a basic passion, an underlying natural temperament and an acquired disposition.³⁷ We employ *audacia* both when we make a quick response (*operatio festina*) that we moderate with reason (*moderata ratione*), and when we quickly act without adequate reflection and counsel.³⁸ This second aspect can involve a culpable act. Contemporary English discussions likewise attribute positive and negative senses to human daring. As an emotion and an act, the terms daring, assertiveness, boldness and audacity have positive or neutral connotations, while aggression, rashness, recklessness, fearlessness and indifference connote a negative extreme. For example, the term "aggression" is commonly used only in reference to violent and unreasonable emotion or action. Although daring, assertiveness, boldness and audacity can also indicate a negative extreme, I have chosen to use them in the positive sense, akin to fortitude and courageousness, unless otherwise indicated by the context.³⁹

Contemporary sciences track the physiological and neurochemical bases of daring and aggressive phenomena involved in the cognitive and emotive appreciation of a threat as something to be overcome through confrontation and in the motivation to do so. This tendency is the fight aspect of the basic human flight or fight reaction. The apprehended threat precipitates a physiological arousal, hormonal secretion and neurological activity. The limbic system (the amygdala

³⁷ I need also to note another sense, which is more the lack of this quality. Aquinas uses the term *pusillanimitas* to indicate the absence of due daring. Later we shall discuss this inordinant act. Cf. *ST* II-II 133.1-2.

³⁸ Cf. *ST* II-II 127.1 *corpus* and *ad* 2. Aquinas affirms the value of daring, calling on the authority of St. Gregory the Great (*Moral.* XXXI.24 al. 11, in vet. 19, n. 43; PL 76.597B) and Aristotle (*NE* vi.10, 1142b4-5). He calls upon Ecclesiasticus (8:18) to denote the sin of audacity.

³⁹ For example, the *WEUD* (1989) defines "daring" as: *n.* (1) adventurous courage; boldness, --*adj.* (2) bold; intrepid; adventurous. Its synonyms count: (1) audacity, bravery. (2) dauntless, undaunted, venturesome, audacious, brave, courageous.

and septum lobes) activates these emotions, while the neocortex can intervene in managing them according to higher goals. Primordial, evolutionary responses to the situation are not the last word; humans dialogue with them through acquired temperament, emotion, volition and cognition as well as memory and imagination. A person, moreover, consciously and unconsciously employs a web of family, socio-economic and religious dispositions and resources in eventually producing an act of daring.⁴⁰

Fearful and timid temperament types (as discussed in chapter three) react quite differently than bold and daring ones, which again differ from aggressive ones. A bold temperament can be characterized as involving a nervous system that is calibrated for a higher threshold of amygdala arousal. This type of personality results in the individual being not only less easily frightened, but also more naturally outgoing. It can mean that the individual will more easily explore new places and meet new people. It offers some obvious resilience advantages.⁴¹

Aggressive personality types, on the contrary, entail an extreme form of reactivity, in which learned experience is an important determinant, according to D. Goleman. They involve a perceptual flaw, which assumes that the other human or animal, or the situation is hostile. Aggressiveness is more than a normal cautionary limbic reaction when faced with a potential threat. It goes to an extreme in nurturing and acquiring a mental appreciation that presumes others are malevolent rather than innocent. Furthermore, aggressiveness is clear in another reactional flaw, where the individual tends to “aggress” automatically the other, instead of exercising self-control and employing communication, negotiation or compromise to clarify and adjudicate the situation. The aggressive reaction can take the form of accusations and personal insults, as well as other learned behaviors involving the use of weapons and physical force.⁴²

40 As C. Nesson (1998, 50) observes, the complexity of human daring and aggression is such that “a complete taxonomy of human aggression and violence would require examination of physiological, evolutionary, developmental (family and socialization), emotional, cognitive, cultural, socio-economic, and religious factors.”

41 Cf. Goleman 1995, 196-7, 234-9.

42 The related problems are numerous: impulse control and coercive style, learning disorders, hyperactivity and academic failures, as well as more gender-

Recalling again the psychosocial discussion on resilience and temperament in chapter two, different styles of aggressiveness can expose an individual to risks or can promote resilience. In contrast to a bold temperament, it would seem that in most cases, an aggressive temperament lends itself to further risk and vulnerability, both for the individual and the social group. According to M. Rutter's findings, anti-social aggressive behavior can in turn elicit aggressive and negative responses from other people. A chain of such behavior and responses can create a vicious cycle of negative experiences.⁴³ Nonetheless, in extreme situations like famine or emergencies, one's aggressiveness turns into a resilience factor, when because of a more demanding attitude, someone prevails in acquiring limited resources, like food or medical aid.⁴⁴ Furthermore, in everyday life, one can accomplish more typical situations and ordinary goals aided by a daring temperament or the reasonable management of our emotional drives.

In order to put these insights into dialogue with Aquinas' on daring, we must, first, include his understanding of natural inclinations and physiological reactions, second, consider the relationship of the emotion of daring with fear and hope, and finally study the related virtues, especially magnanimity.

Thomas recognizes that the movement of daring involves our taking the offensive (*in invadendo*) against what opposes us. We are inclined by nature to attack the source of opposition, insofar as we are free from fear and mobilized by a hope of overcoming the threat.⁴⁵ The lack of reasonable aggression or daring is timidity or cowardliness; the excess of reasonable aggression is audacity and fearlessness.

specific violence in adolescent boys, and unplanned pregnancies in adolescent girls. In general, aggressiveness can be the result of emotionally inept parenting, and can be modeled through violent behavior among friends and in gangs. Nonetheless, it can in some cases be tamed through mentoring situations. Emotionally inept parenting is arbitrary and harshly punitive. The parents of aggressive children typically alternate neglect with extreme and capricious punishments resulting in making the children somewhat paranoid and combative. Cf. Goleman 1995, 196-7, 234-9; Jensen 1995; Wilson 1978.

⁴³ Cf. Rutter 1994, 371-2.

⁴⁴ Cf. The De Vries study on child survivors of the Zimbabwe famine (cited by M. Rutter 1998, 48).

⁴⁵ Cf. *ST* II-II 127.2 ad 3.

Aquinas draws his sources' insights on aggressiveness or assertiveness (*aggredi*) into his architectonic structure of the irascible emotions, which are charged with energy for action when faced with the difficult good that appears possible to overcome.⁴⁶ While Aquinas' notion of hope strictly speaking involves the difficult good (*bonum arduum*), his notion of daring (*audacia*) concerns the overcoming of some great danger (*periculum imminens*) through the virtue of fortitude, which manages fear and daring.⁴⁷

Daring and hope creatively and positively interact. Firstly, daring can support hope. It is the emotional power horse in magnanimity to overcome the difficulty involved to attain the *bonum arduum* as well as to avoid the *malum arduum*.⁴⁸ Both hope and daring involve movement toward (*accessus*) the object,⁴⁹ hope to embrace the good aspect, and daring in order to overcome an evil aspect (through the virtue of fortitude) as well as to obtain the difficult good (through magnanimity).⁵⁰ The irascible appetite is the gateway for the passions

46 St. Thomas' synthesis of ideas concerning magnanimity does not shy away from Stoic and medieval contemporary (his references to *quidam* and *aliqui*) insights on hope, daring, aggressiveness and initiative. In particular, the thought of both Cicero and Peter Abelard are important for Aquinas' understanding of hope in daring action, as well as of confidence and security in magnanimous initiatives. In interpreting Cicero's fourfold division of the virtue of fortitude, Aquinas inserts "magnanimity" in the place of Cicero's "confidence," while appropriating confidence as an aspect of the virtue of magnanimity. Peter Abelard (1079-1142) and this current maintain that the first degree of courage is initiating difficult projects in a spontaneous and reasonable way. This virtue undertakes an initiative in a way capable of completing it. Abelard's thought was passed on through the *Moralia dogma* and Philip the Chancellor, as mentioned earlier. It is important to note here that St. Albert did not integrate these insights in the same way as Aquinas, since he was even more set on finding inspiration in Aristotle (cf. M. Dixsaut 1996).

47 Cf. *ST* I-II 45.1-4; *ST* I-II 40-44; *ST* I-II 23.2-3; *ST* I-II 35.2; *ST* I-II 59.4 ad 3.

48 At the end of summarily describing the movements of the emotions of the irascible faculty, Aquinas (*ST* I-II 23.2) says that "*malum arduum [...] habet etiam rationem ut in ipsum tendatur, sicut in quoddam arduum, per quod scilicet aliquid evadit subiectionem mali, et sic tendit in ipsum audacia. Invenitur ergo in passionibus irascibilis contrarietas secundum contrarietatem boni et mali, sicut inter spem et timorem: et iterum secundum accessum et recessum ab eodem termino, sicut inter audaciam et timorem.*" Cf. *ST* I-II 23.1 and *ST* I-II 23.4.

49 Cf. *ST* I-II 45.1 ad 2; *ST* I-II 23.2; *ST* I-II 40.4.

50 While maintaining that daring pertains, strictly speaking, to overcoming evil through the fortitude, Aquinas also construes magnanimity as employing daring to obtain good. Cf. 129.6 ad 2.

of motion and the foundation for human initiative.⁵¹ This enterprising side of magnanimity is a companion and corrective for the movements related to patience, which can tend toward passivity and play into helplessness.⁵² Magnanimity mobilizes our resources, calms the fear of failure and converts us in natural hope.

The presence of hope and the lack of fear in the face of difficulty, secondly, produce daring action.⁵³ Aquinas explains that daring ensues from the emotion of hope, “since it is in the hope of overcoming the threatening object of fear, that one attacks it boldly.”⁵⁴ Hope puts aside fear and incites us to daring acts, but only when hope is strong enough.⁵⁵ Thomas analyses the working of fear, daring and hope in terms of the corporeal effects of the passions (bodily transmutations and appetitive movements) that can participate in virtue.⁵⁶ He does not balk at the physical aspect of the energy of daring that arises when an object grounds hope or banishes fear.⁵⁷ Such an understanding of readiness to act encompasses all aspects of the human

51 Cf. *ST* I-II 25.1. The irascible passion concerns movement, motion (*ad motum*).

52 Patience is also endangered by a certain dryness, which meekness or humility corrects. Later in this chapter, I extensively examine the virtue of patience.

53 In chapter three, we discussed the way in which banishing fear gives rise to daring. Cf. *ST* I-II 45.3.

54 “*Unde sequitur quod audacia consequitur ad spem: ex hoc enim quod aliquis sperat superare terribile imminens, ex hoc audacter insequitur ipsum*” *ST* I-II 45.2; cf. *ST* II-II 123.3 ad 3.

55 Cf. *ST* I-II 45.2 ad 2; *ST* II-II 125.2 ad 3.

56 Thomas quotes Aristotle as an authority on how hope causes daring, and how daring ensues from hope. The Philosopher notes that “those [who] are hopeful are full of daring” (*NE* iii.8); and that daring “is caused by the presence in the imagination of the hope that the means of safety are nearby, and that the things to be feared are either non-existent or far off.” (*Rhet.* ii.5, 1383a17-18; cited in *ST* I-II 45.3. “Daring” is also translated as “confidence” by McKeon 1941, 1391.) Aquinas, however, goes further than him in recognizing the very corporeal effects of the passions in works of virtue.

57 “*Quia vero timor et spes, et etiam audacia, cum sint passiones quaedam, consistunt in motu appetitus et in quadam transmutatione corporali; dupliciter potest accipi causa audaciae, sive quantum ad provocationem spei, sive quantum ad exclusionem timoris: uno modo quidem, ex parte appetitivi motus; alio vero modo, ex parte transmutationis corporalis*” *ST* I-II 45.3. [Does *in motu appetitus* refer to hope (as a sensitive appetite or *voluntas*--rational appetite)? Does *transmutatione corporali* refer to hope as the sensitive appetite alone?]

person.⁵⁸ Daring is not concerned only with the emotions of hope and fear, but also the content of one's virtue and character.⁵⁹

Thomas' view of the larger teleological purpose of the emotion and acts of daring contrasts certain views from evolutionary psychology. In an extreme form of sociobiology, R. Dawkins measures animal behavior (including that of humans) according to what most efficiently propagates the individual's genes. In particular the human "survival machine" employs the aggressive drives and instincts for self-preserving purposes.⁶⁰ These insights, while explaining an aspect of animal instinct, do not however adequately integrate the whole of human moral agency and purpose. C. L. Nesson corroborates this critique. He argues that the human being is not only capable of "bottom-up" behavior based on drives and instincts. It also employs "top-down" behavior, based on conscious intention and decision. Observations of human agents demonstrate that they can override certain basic instincts for a consciously chosen end.

What does a virtue-based moral approach contribute to this debate? According to Nesson, the human brain's capacity for reflective self-consciousness integrates self-awareness, awareness of other human selves, symbolic language, culture, religion, art, music, and so

58 As J. Pieper (1966, 129-30) says in regards to the bravery and confident hope in aggressive human acts. "The brave man not only knows how to bear inevitable evil with equanimity; he will also not hesitate to "pounce upon" evil and to bar its way, if this can reasonably be done. This attitude requires readiness to attack, courage, self-confidence, and hope of success; "the trust that is a part of fortitude signifies the hope which a man puts in himself: naturally in subordination to God." This aspect of virtue is sometimes quite foreign to contemporary Christian views of ethics, which is partly due, according to Pieper, to an evident mistrust of passions in ethics. There is an intellectual Stoicism that is actually more Kantian, in associating ethics with duty, rather with such brazen acts of courage and magnanimity.

59 Aquinas says that "*et fortitudo, quae non solum est circa timores, sed etiam circa audaciam et spem*" (ST I 95.3 ad 2), in the context of discussing the primitive state of human beings. Fortitude already existed then, since it is useful, not only in moderating sorrow and fear (as is necessary now) but in moderating daring and hope.

60 Self-preservation is so central for Dawkins (1976, 2 and 71ff.) that his reasoning verges on either reducing all other inclinations to self-preservation or making it the key inclination that orders all others. Dawkins' mind-experiments attempt to demonstrate that cost-benefit calculations of fighting and aggressiveness; their statistical basis however does not permit a non-reductionistic inclusion of deeper aspects of empathy, altruism and benevolence.

forth.⁶¹ We need to consider the proclivity for aggression, as an adaptive behavior, in liaison with human “reflective self-consciousness,” which humans can put to rational use either for violence or for “empathy and altruism.” Human beings can employ their intellectual capacity to plan ever more sophisticated forms of violence, such as verbal and physical abuse, spouse and child abuse, rape and torture, slavery and capital punishment, murder and war. They even make weapons for non-ritualized violence and routinely regard watching violence as recreation.⁶² On the contrary, human beings can employ reflective self-consciousness in developing empathetic and altruistic alternatives to primordial violence.

One of the greatest human struggles, according to Nesson, is to master violence, using models for resolving conflict and building human community without violence. Thus we employ our energy to promote positive interactions and constructions.⁶³ Ambiguities will remain, however, since local cultures can also promote the survival function of certain undesirable behaviors.⁶⁴ A Thomistic virtue perspective furthermore takes these insights to a deeper personal and communal level, to involve human dispositions and history in order to

61 Religions can use symbols, myths and rituals for either partisan support or elimination of violence. The human capacity of knowing how our actions affect others establishes the moral dimension to human activity that is not immediately incumbent on animal instincts (cf. Nesson 1998, 445-6, 451). Thomas and Carver's (1990, 195) findings suggest that religion can significantly reduce negative social types of aggression. We need to contrast this position though with a fundamentalist promotion of aggression, for example, in the form of planned terrorism.

62 Nesson (1998, 451) notes that as the inflicted psychological or physical harm that imposes an individual's or group's will on others through nonverbal, verbal or physical means, violence is a uniquely human potential.

63 Human beings can use their intellectual functioning in relation to their sociobiological phenomena (sex, aggression, pain) to “either direct humans toward ever more destructive ways of perpetuating the self or redirect them toward the betterment of human community. [...] Human beings demonstrate their fallen condition insofar as they fail to realize their capacity to *redirect* sociobiological inclinations for the sake of their neighbor” Nesson 1998, 453; cf. 450-1; S. Rose 1998, 277; 290-291; and footnotes 20 and 21.

64 According to research (Consortium 1994, 275), social competences adapt sometimes-negative ways. “This perspective incorporates the possibility that in certain cultures, neighborhoods and situations, so-called undesirable behaviors (e.g. aggressiveness, selfish, or passive behaviors) may be required if one is to be perceived as “well adjusted” or to avoid being subject to harm.”

focus human energies toward creative and peaceful activities. While we recognize aggression or assertiveness as a necessary survival instinct, human beings can couple aggressiveness with intellectual capacities to create or to avoid violence, to dissimilate or to promote peace. In addition to the extreme cases, humans muster assertiveness and daring in mundane initiatives. Aquinas' position is consistent with Nessan's corrective critique of a raw evolutionary perspective. Thomas though insists that we need to train temperaments through well-disposed virtues in order to harness daring and aggressiveness for the common good. Aquinas takes this discussion further when addressing the place of daring in confident action.

4.2.4. The Harnessing of Daring: Aquinas on Confident Action

Aquinas distinguishes the person who has acquired the virtuous dispositions of fortitude and magnanimity from the one moved by the emotion of daring alone. Those moved by these virtues face danger according to the judgment of reason, with due deliberation and foresight, and "on account of the good of virtue which is the abiding object of their will. Whereas men of daring (*audaces*) face the danger on account of a mere thought giving rise to hope and banishing fear;"⁶⁵ or according to an evolutionary perspective, on account of an aggressive instinct based on a genetic drive to reproduce or protect one's gene pool (as R. Dawkins would say). Through a stable intention, disposition and rational adjudication, courageous and magnanimous people master both fear and daring. They are misdirected neither by one nor the other emotion. Aquinas sets demanding standards. A merely daring person aims at an object that calls forth hope and banishes fear, and may even accomplish a good effort. His act is nevertheless shortsighted insofar as it lacks some

65 "*Vel etiam quia propter bonum virtutis pericula aggrediuntur, cuius boni voluntas in eis perseverat, quantacumque sint pericula. Audaces autem, propter solam aestimationem facientem spem et excludentem timorem*" ST I-II 45.4. Aquinas draws upon Aristotle's observations and reflections. The Philosopher views hope and optimism as negative elements. He notes that the mercenary, the optimist, and the rash person resemble each other in having too much confidence. Cf. NE iii.7, 1116a7-9; Smoes 1995, 227-234.

measure of correct rational judgment, due to deliberation and foresight.⁶⁶

A discussion of daring, raises questions about the Gospel dictum to turn the other cheek. Are Christians who follow such messages more vulnerable to aggression than others. Indeed, Aquinas and the Christian tradition's attempts to temper aggressive behavior towards strangers and to instill benevolence toward hostile enemies have attracted extensive critiques.⁶⁷ Aquinas' position on just wrath, however, provides a partial rebuttal to claim that Christians are under-protected from natural hostility. Indeed, just wrath serves to overcome the injustices that lay-way our personal and social projects by positive use of assertiveness. Anger is especially helpful in attack and in establishing justice, when it pounces upon evil and acts to right a wrong. Aquinas' vision of the positive potential of anger is strikingly different from that of the Stoics and offers, an at least partial, response to contemporary critiques.⁶⁸

Further questions arise though. Can we harness aggressive instincts for positive endeavors? And can we turn "negative" aggression toward positive efforts? We find Aquinas' response to these questions in the way in which he construes that basic human inclinations motivate self-confidence, self-efficacy, and so on. Thomas associates confidence (*fiducia*) with the virtue of fortitude and identifies it with magnanimity.⁶⁹ Confidence qualifies the strength of hope that serves "magnanimity [which] is chiefly about the hope of something difficult,"⁷⁰ according to Thomas. As an integral part of

66 On daring and attack arising from hope see: *ST* I-II 45.2; *ST* II-II 123.3 ad 3; and *NE* 1116b 23. On the precepts relating to hope and fear see: *ST* II-II 22.

67 We shall address the critiques of F. Nietzsche and S. Freud in the following theological section.

68 On how fortitude and wrath work directly upon each other, see: *ST* I-II qq. 46-48; J. Pieper 1966, 130; W. Mattison 2002.

69 Aquinas follows Cicero's quadruple division of fortitude with this exception. Thomas replaces *magnanimitas* with Cicero's *fiducia*, while guarding the content of the latter's teaching. Cf. *ST* II-II 128; 129.6 ad 3; Horner 1998, 428.

70 Aquinas furthermore claims that we can be confident when this hope is strengthened *ex aliqua firma opinione* (by a strong opinion). "*Magnanimitas proprie est circa spem alicuius ardui. Et ideo, quia fiducia importat quoddam robur spei proveniens ex aliqua consideratione quae facit vehementem*

fortitude, confidence is not a separate virtue. But when identified with magnanimity, as fortified hope,⁷¹ it strengthens us to obtain a difficult good.

When hope causes a daring confrontation of difficulty and evil, confidence contributes both to magnanimity's overcoming despair, and to fortitude's harnessing daring and banishing fear.⁷² Confidence relates not only to hope but also to faith (*fides*), from which it takes its name; and as such, it believes something or believes in someone. Insofar as human beings are not self-sufficient, we need the assistance of others, in whom we must put our trust.

According to Thomas, internal and external sources can rouse us to confidence and hope for victory: to recognize our own strengths and resources, and to observe friends' capacities and other sources of help.⁷³ First, we find confidence in our own abilities and correct appreciation of them. We can also undermine it by our lack of a proper sense of self-efficacy, which we learn through observing our own accomplishments. We establish self-assurance by recognizing how we are successful agents with some degree of control over the positive outcomes we have experienced, as resilience research has affirmed. Observing our past achievements can give us a self-confidence that nonetheless depends upon self-correction.

Second, we find confidence when we observe the availability of resources of friends and relatives. We need to recall past occasions of their aid and when we have aided them; such cases give us reason to believe that reciprocity will continue. Furthermore, it is advantageous (even a point of excellence for Aquinas) to have people willing and able to render us service (not only friends and relatives, but colleagues, employees and servants). Even with this experience though, we still must "believe" or "have faith" that they will help us again when we are in need. Likewise, we may reasonably assume that public resources will be attributed to us in strict distributive justice, although it does not

opinionem de bono assequendo, inde est quod fiducia ad magnanimitatem pertinet" ST II-II 129.6; cf. ST II-II 129.6-7; ST II-II 129.1 ad 2.

⁷¹ Aquinas specifically follows Cicero's (*Rhet.* II, 54) usage here (cf. ST II-II 129.6 ad 3; ST 128).

⁷² Cf. ST II-II 129.6 ad 2; cf. ST II-II 129.7; ST I-II 45.2.

⁷³ Cf. ST I-II 45.3; ST II-II 129.6 ad 1.

always happen. History illustrates the “unexpected” in economic and civil crises, wars and disasters. Therefore, we need here also to have careful confidence, lest we be debilitated by mundane worries. For Aquinas, a person must trust not only in himself, but also in other human beings and in society.

Security collaborates indirectly with magnanimity in calming fear, despair and anything that perturbs the mind.⁷⁴ Fear not only can cause despair, but it destabilizes hope, as we mentioned earlier. Security, on the contrary, “denotes a perfect freedom of the mind from fear,”⁷⁵ as well as the process of attaining it. Such security involves neither oblivion to fear nor its denial. Rather, it results from a person taking counsel and acting in order to find a way to avoid, remove or overcome the cause of fear. In the fears that arise from human resistance, intrigue and bad fortune (*mala fortunae*),⁷⁶ magnanimity brings about security by overcoming fear and banishing despair, through its efforts that establish a confident hope of attaining the difficult to attain good. Each virtue in its excellence, as a difficult to obtain good, must overcome the resistance of human intrigue and bad fortune. The firmness and certitude of hope depends on the removal of such fear, which acts as an obstacle to hope and action.⁷⁷

In conclusion, when one is faced with trying circumstances, natural inclinations can produce an initial assertiveness which can form the first step toward: acting to protect the well being of one’s society, family or self; defending a child in need of protection; speaking out for justice in a community, and so forth. When the virtuous person can do something to overcome the danger or achieve the difficult good, he does not simply endure the difficulty and wait. Rather the person of virtue attempts to surmount the barriers and to combat the danger. Indeed, not every attack or effort is appropriate. The person of virtue reasons and deliberates. Consequently, beyond our natural inclinations, we seek to acquire dispositions to aid us to move quickly once we have

⁷⁴ Cf. *ST* II-II 129.7.

⁷⁵ “*securitas importat quandam perfectam quietem animi a timore*” *ST* II-II 129.7.

⁷⁶ Aquinas cites Cicero *Off.* I.20 as the authority in *ST* II-II 129.7 sc.

⁷⁷ Cf. *ST* II-II 128.1 ad 6; *ST* I-II 40.4 ad 1. Aquinas also adds pertinent insights concerning failure in managing daring and initiative.

taken counsel. Like fear and anxiety, daring and audacity can be well-founded and appropriate emotions; yet they can also be disproportionate reactions to the situation at hand. We need to make a distinction. Through audacity, we deviate from the aim and measure of fortitude. The audacious person is presumptuous. He mistakenly adjudicates his own capacities and the difficulties entailed in the effort. He errs about himself and the nature of the enterprise. On the contrary, through assertiveness, the positive sense of *aggredi*, we employ careful strength and disdain for obstacles in a good initiative related to fortitude and magnanimity.

This analysis of the energy we draw from the emotion of daring will be completed by the following studies of magnanimity and magnificence, in which we shall treat more extensively of the emotions of hope and optimism, and of the qualities of self-efficacy and self-control. Taken together, these sections serve to illustrate the dynamics of human and social vulnerabilities and resilience in initiative-taking. Before treating hope and *magnanimitas* more extensively, we shall investigate *magnificentia* as a virtue of generosity in constructive action.

4.3. *Magnificentia* as the virtue of making and generosity?

As we have seen in the previous section, magnanimity and magnificence are intertwined. They both depend on related notions not only of greatness, but also of nobility and morality. *Magnificentia* has undergone many mutations, which we could chart from the conceptions of Greek and Roman nobility to medieval codes of chivalry, Aquinas' philosophical-theological synthesis, the Cartesian reaction against the concept of nobility of his time and Kant's exclusive turn to the universality of the good will. In modern conceptions, magnificence has been narrowed to the concept of "generosity." Nietzsche furthermore reduces this generosity, as well as greatness, to an illusion (or at least reverses the values of generosity and greatness, giving them an extra-moral sense), and thus plays a decisive role in undermining modern notions of heroic morality and

virtue ethics.⁷⁸ Nonetheless, after recent critiques of modernity and the resurgence of philosophical virtue theory, contemporary scholars have initiated a wider treatment of magnificence that re-appropriates the richer tradition has started. What is the interest of Aquinas and resilience research in this regard? What does a treatment of constructive resilience offer for understanding the virtues related to making and doing, spending and giving?

4.3.1. Aquinas on Projects of Quantity, Value and Dignity

For Aquinas, *magnificentia* concerns making or doing something great, realizing projects of “quantity, value or dignity.”⁷⁹ It involves a sort of self-efficacy and excellence in agency. It includes but is distinct from the excellence and greatness in acts that belong to the very notion of virtue.⁸⁰ More specifically, *magnificentia* concerns excellence in bringing about great external acts,⁸¹ which secondarily involve great expense. While it is not an art itself, it is nonetheless a virtue of art.⁸² Given Thomas’ social context and personal experience, as well as the diversity of his sources, we must ask to whom does his notion of magnificence refer. Is it for monastic procurators, medieval cathedral builders and aristocratic philanthropists? Does it apply to the business community and venture capitalists? Does it have anything to

78 On the history of the concept of *magnanimitas*, see: M. Dixsaut 1996, 596 and 598-9; R-A. Gauthier 1951. It is telling to observe how Dixsaut amalgamates magnificence and magnanimity in her conception of generosity.

79 “*in quantitate, pretiositate vel dignitate*,” ST II-II 134.2.

80 “*operari aliquid magnum, ex quo sumitur nomen magnificentiae, proprie pertinet ad rationem virtutis*” ST II-II 134.1.

81 Both Cicero and Albert consider magnanimity as a part of the virtue of magnificence. Albert defended Cicero’s classification of the four parts of fortitude found in his *De inventione rhetorica*: magnificence, confidence, patience and perseverance. Furthermore, for Albert (as for Cicero) magnanimity is a potential part of magnificence, which has two parts: (1) to confront difficulty with greatness of soul (*magnanimitas*), and (2) to bring these sentiments into act, i.e. to do great things. Thus, magnificence concerns both achieving great works, but also initiative-taking (enterprise). (Cf. Gauthier 1951, 306-7)

82 “*sicut Philosophus dicit, in VI Ethic. [5, 1140b22; S. Th. lect. 4, 1172], oportet artis esse quamdam virtutem, scilicet moralem: per quam scilicet appetitus inclinatur ad recte utendum ratione artis. Et hoc pertinet ad magnificentiam, Unde non est ars, sed virtus*” ST II-II 134.1 ad 4.

say to those who altruistically give themselves and their possessions towards any worthwhile project?

The etymology of magnificence (*magna facere*: to make great things) directs Aquinas in developing a comprehensive definition, involving both strict and broader senses. In a broader sense, *magnificentia* concerns the *habitus* or disposition behind the deed. We can be magnificent without actually accomplishing great projects, if we do not have the financial means or a fitting opportunity. Someone who has even the most meager of means can nurture the disposition of *magnificentia*; even the poor person can be magnificent, for Aquinas. In this sense, he says that the virtue of *magnificentia* is at the heart of the generous person (*liberalitas*) either through a proximate disposition or through the interconnection of the virtues.⁸³ Thomas' conception integrates a Stoic notion of the self-sufficiency of virtue.⁸⁴ He even says that the poor person who is magnificent can accomplish an act which is proportionately great, "although little in itself."⁸⁵ Thus, we can count the widow's mite as great, in terms of merit and efficacy.⁸⁶ Magnificent people have a virtuous inclination of the irascible appetite to make good use of the rule of art in regards to things to be made, especially in situations that press their resources to the limit.⁸⁷ On the contrary, obstacles that inhibit us from engaging our resources in a "great work" (projects, gifts and expenditures) involve inordinate attachment to our money and other resources.⁸⁸

83 Cf. *ST* II-II 134.1 ad 1; *ST* I-II 65.1 ad 1; *ST* II-II 129.3 ad 2. D. Fritz Cates' (1997, 229) insights on compassion are pertinent here, since it serves as cognitive, volitional, affective and pedagogical bases for liberality.

84 In *ST* II-II 134.3 obj. 4, Aquinas takes his cue from Seneca's *De ira* (ch. 9) and *De vita beata* (16.28-9): "*virtutes non ex necessitate indigent exteriori fortuna, sed sibi ipsis sufficiunt.*"

85 Since the chief act of virtue is the inward choice (*interior electio*), even the poor person can be magnificent. Aquinas explains: "*pauper [...]: sed forte in his quae sunt magna per comparisonem ad aliquod opus quod, etsi in se sit parvum, tamen potest magnifice fieri secundum proportionem illius generis*" *ST* II-II 134.3 ad 4.

86 Aquinas esteems the widow's act of giving her two copper coins (cf. Mk 12:43; Lk 21:3) to be proportionately great; this greatness relates to the merit due (good deeds, cf. *ST* I 95.4) and the spiritual efficacy (almsgiving, cf. *ST* II-II 32.4 corpus and ad 3).

87 Cf. *ST* II-II 134.1 ad 4; and *ST* II-II 134.3 ad 4.

88 Cf. *ST* II-II 134.3 ad 2. An ordinate affection is necessary lest one err through prodigality or covetousness.

In a strict sense, *magnificentia* concerns actually great deeds and the disposition that underlies them.⁸⁹ This virtue, as a disposition or habitus, entails a mean in the order of reason concerning a certain extreme quantity of an external work (*in aliquo opere factibili*).⁹⁰ As a virtue of making, we acquire it through art and external deeds. Thomas considers a work of art magnificent inasmuch as the work produced (*factum*) is something great in goodness (*ratio bonitatis*) in terms of “quantity, value, or dignity.”⁹¹ He claims that the strict sense of magnificence concerns both inward intending (*ad interiorem intentionem*) and outward accomplishment (*ad exteriorem executionem*) of “great and lofty undertakings.”⁹²

While magnanimity concerns greatness in every matter (*in omni materia*), magnificence concerns more specifically external works (*in aliquo opere factibili*). *Magnanimitas*’ primary focus is on the sole aspect of greatness,⁹³ whereas *magnificentia* is a special virtue of doing and tending to do great things.⁹⁴ Magnificence prolongs magnanimity in material realizations, in artistic and technical orders, in all that is done (*faire*).⁹⁵ But this extension does not stop at the quantity of the material project; rather it reaches beyond to the project’s

⁸⁹ Aquinas contrasts the strict with a broader sense of making or doing (*facere*) something great, which applies to any action, both external action as well as activities which remain in the agent, on the level of intellect and will (cf. 134.2). Thus, there is a type of greatness (excellence) in each virtue, in which there is the excellence due to its genus. Each virtue’s primary focus is on its principal object. For example, an excellence in the virtue of temperance manages the concupiscible appetite according to right reason (cf. *ST* II-II 141). In this broader sense, he escapes a narrower reading of Aristotle’s virtue of magnificence.

⁹⁰ *ST* II-II 134.1 ad 2.

⁹¹ “*In cuius quidem usu potest attendi una specialis ratio bonitatis quod ipsum opus factum per artem sit magnum, scilicet in quantitate, pretiositate vel dignitate: quod facit magnificentia*” *ST* II-II 134.2.

⁹² Aquinas cites Cicero (*Rhet.* ii.54) concerning *magnificentia*, “*magnificentia est rerum magnarum et excelsarum, cum animi quadam ampla et splendida propositione, cogitatio atque administratio*”; *ut cogitatio referatur ad interiorem intentionem, administratio ad exteriorem executionem*” *ST* II-II 134.2 ad 2; cf. *ST* II-II 128.1; where Aquinas adds “*id est executio, ut scilicet amplo proposito administratio non desit*.”

⁹³ As Thomas says, “*respicit solam rationem magni*” *ST* II-II 134.2 ad 2.

⁹⁴ Aquinas says: “*Ad magnificentiam vero pertinet non solum facere magnum secundum quod facere proprie sumitur, sed etiam ad magnum faciendum tendere animo*” *ST* II-II 134.2 ad 2.

⁹⁵ Cf. Labourdette 1962, 26.

purpose and effect, in terms of self-flourishing and social benefit. We shall treat these further considerations first through examining the impact of great projects on the human flourishing and resilience involved in self-esteem and self-efficacy, before addressing the social and theological implications in the following sections and chapter.

4.3.2. Self-esteem and Resilience in Taking Initiatives

The present focus on great projects should not sidetrack us from considering the place of self-knowledge and self-worth in accomplishing initiatives. In particular, recent studies focusing on the place of self-esteem in resilient actions present both promises and problems that we face in creative projects. Resilience research highlights the importance of self-esteem as a motivating factor in human action. As the on-going debate demonstrates, however, we can make further nuances. As mentioned in chapter two, researchers have contrasting views of self-esteem: some conceptualize it as a means to an end, others as an end in itself. Some researchers correlate self-esteem with how someone is doing in life. It is a simple indicator. Other researchers construe self-esteem as of primary importance for one's self-realization and resilience.⁹⁶ In the present section, we shall introduce the typology of self-esteem and distinguish the import of diverse self-valuation styles on social interaction and moral agency.

Pro-social self-esteem as a temperament trait, according to numerous researchers, tends to elicit a positive response from family and community.⁹⁷ As a feeling furthermore, self-esteem has resilience value, when it aids motivation and action that resist external and internal negative pressures.⁹⁸ However other researchers have discovered that unwarranted self-esteem can lead to problems and vulnerability. Important questions arise: what are the bases of cognitions and feelings of self-worth? And in turn, what are the effects of different types of self-esteem?

⁹⁶ Cf. Seligman 1998/1991, vi-vii; Baumeister et al. 1996.

⁹⁷ Cf. Rutter 1990, 182; Garnezy 1985.

⁹⁸ Emotional processes underlying self-esteem seem to spring from both emotional predispositions (temperament) and acquired dispositions (both conscious and unconscious ones). Cf. Rutter 1990, 197-207; Yule 1992, 191.

According to M. E. P. Seligman, the basis for our self-esteem influences the way that we react in strenuous efforts. He posits two types of foundation for self-worth: one is unfounded in a realist evaluation of one's capacities and acts, and the other is based on an overly positive evaluation. He speculates that teaching unwarrantedly high self-esteem to children can lead to problems such as violence and depression, which tend to surface when a person's unrealistic self-esteem conflicts with strenuous challenges and personal failures.⁹⁹ On the contrary, research suggests that realistic evaluations of personal accomplishments increase feelings and cognitions of self-efficacy¹⁰⁰ that serves as a basis for coping. M. Rutter conjectures that the cognitive dimension of self-esteem functions through the carry forward of cognitive sets concerning positive events and their relation to self-esteem and self-efficacy.¹⁰¹ Personal attentional capacities, which aid us to manage emotional and social experiences, also seem to contribute in forming feelings and cognitions of self-esteem and self-efficacy. Negative or low self-images however increase vulnerability and inactivity. These sources are multiple and difficult to analyze: a history of personal failures, being crushed by external events, being abandoned in front of overwhelming tasks, and so on. The repetition of such events can lower our self-image leading us to depression, underachievement and a sense of incompetence.

Since the notion of self-esteem is not independent from social interaction, another important question arises. What kind of resilience impact on agency results from social relationships? In addition to the social influence on self-evaluation, a person's self-efficacy is shaped through feelings and relationships of social solidarity.¹⁰² A social network can supply affectional, intellectual and practical support that models not only external behavior but also internal emotional competency.¹⁰³ Family influences the types of self-esteem that we practice. Some families model constructive self-esteem through fitting

99 Cf. Seligman 1998/1991, vii; Lösel, 1992, 9.

100 Cf. Werner and Smith, 1992, 185-186, and 207; Maughan 1988, 214; Werner and Smith 1986; Seligman 1998/1991, vi-vii; Baumeister et al. 1996.

101 Cf. Rutter 1994, 373-4.

102 Cf. J. Bowlby 1969, and 1973; Ainsworth 1978.

103 Cf. Clarke and Clarke 1992, 153; Rutter 1990, 203-10 and 1989; Maughan 1988, 214; Werner and Smith 1992, 5.

emotional support and effective communication.¹⁰⁴ Family disruption and marital conflict can conversely produce cognitive sets of helplessness and low self-esteem leading to psychiatric vulnerability.¹⁰⁵ In certain cases nonetheless, we can compensate for inadequate family support by relevant experiences in another domain (e.g. other relationships, schools, communities and society).¹⁰⁶

This typology suggests that interrelations between self-esteem and resilient self-efficacy are complex. We need to affectively apply ourselves in order to perform well. We draw upon cognitive, affective and social elements in planning and executing acts. As was argued earlier, Aquinas' virtue theory favors considering the affective, cognitive and volitional aspects of human agency with reference to larger purposes. He would deem that proper self-evaluation needs realistic external references, without neglecting the internal ones. Aquinas' notion of the virtues of magnificence and generosity, especially when understood in relation to other pertinent virtues like prudence, temperance, hope and love, enrich these considerations of agency, resilience and vulnerability. In the upcoming section on the virtuous management of hope and daring, we shall further treat the typology of self-esteem, and the way that a type of self-esteem tends toward more resilient human agency.

4.3.3. Conspicuous Consumption or Generosity at the Service of Survival and Flourishing

A dialogue with a cultural anthropology perspective that investigates how types of generous and status-building initiatives measure-up as survival-tendencies can enhance Aquinas' understanding of magnanimity and generosity in great and small projects. In this section, we shall first raise two questions that are foreign to Aquinas' treatment of generosity and magnificence. How can socioeconomic status serve human survival in crisis? Can altruistic generosity (involving resources, wealth, time, energy and talent) with non-family members be squared with the need to pass on wealth to

104 Cf. Wills 1996, 115; Wilson and Gottman 1996, 220.

105 Cf. Watt 1990, 300; Rutter 1990, 200; Tousignant 1998, 64.

106 Cf. Rutter 1990, 197.

one's own children? The research of James L. Boone (1998) investigates the evolution of generosity and magnificence.¹⁰⁷ He advances a Darwinian explanation of conspicuous consumption (wasting time and energy on risky or decorative ventures) as a form of adaptive energy expenditure that reinforces social status and in turn brings fitness benefits. Boone uses a form of "optimization theory" from human behavioral ecology to explain the interaction of variations in fitness affecting behaviors (such as foraging or conspicuous consumption) with environmental conditions. He relates human subsistence and reproductive strategies in function of the time or energy expended (cost) and the energy or fitness acquired (benefit). Then, he predicts the optimal behavior that maximizes the net fitness gain (energy, surviving offspring and so on).

Boone's evolutionary theory observes that conspicuous consumption is omnipresent in rich and poor alike (Veblen 1973), in the forms of nonessential or elaborate decorations, clothing, housing and recreation. What benefit does wasting time, energy and resources on such things bring? He hypothesizes that conspicuous consumption is advertising; it is a costly signaling of an unobservable phenotypic quality in the sender.¹⁰⁸ The quality that one advertises is social status.¹⁰⁹ But what are the short and long-term reproductive benefits of reinforcing social status? He identifies fitness benefits; conspicuous consumption increases the "probability of survival through relatively infrequent, but recurrent, demographic bottlenecks by determining individual or familial priority of access to resources accumulated, produced, or defended by the social group during infrequent but

107 His article is entitled "The Evolution of Magnanimity" (in *Human Nature* 9, 1998:1-21). We should note that the article title takes "magnanimity" in a contemporary sense to mean magnificence or generosity, as a "costly helping behavior," in contrast to "non-altruistic costly displays" (1998, 15). This use of "magnificence" means "conspicuous consumption" rather than a Classic notion of great-souledness. Boone is a cultural anthropologist (University of New Mexico) who does research on behavioral ecology and the archaeology of complex societies.

108 Boone (1998, 9; cf. 2-5) says, "The key idea in strategic handicap theory is that a signal is effective and reliable because it lowers one component of a signaler's fitness while raising another through the production of the display. I have argued above that social power is an underlying, usually unobservable quality that must be signaled or advertised in order to be effective."

109 Cf. Boone 1998, 5-9.

serious shortages.”¹¹⁰ But why and under what evolutionary ecological circumstances does status competition take altruistic rather than violent forms? He argues that competitive altruism prevails over violence and against rivals in social groups for two reasons. First, aggression and violence are more costly and less successful. Second, costly helping behavior is more likely to attract collaboration (supporters, mates and so forth), thus allowing dominants to stay so, and demonstrating a capacity to rally defense against outsiders.¹¹¹

One of the major problems in this type of analysis is uncertainty (not only for the scientist, but for the individual) in tracking the long and short-term effects on survival and fitness needs of altruistic conspicuous consumption.¹¹² In the long-term, humans need to be ready for infrequent, unpredictable demographic bottlenecks (such as famine, economic crisis or war) that put personal and lineage survival in jeopardy. He argues that social status has the primary evolutionary *raison d'être* of promoting survival in such risky situations. Nonetheless, shorter-term needs related to fitness also expend time and energy: nutrient acquisition, avoidance of environmental hazards and pathogens, parental investment, mating efforts and so forth.¹¹³ He concludes that social status reinforcement is an adaptive, state-dependent strategy that involves short and long-term costs and benefits.¹¹⁴ These theories provide theoretical and

110 Boone (1998, 10) analyses strategies that favor fewer offspring and more offspring in the short-term. He compares survival during two nineteenth century famines (in India and Ireland) over the long-term. He (1998, 11-12) observes a higher population (higher survival rates, i.e. less deaths in famine-crises) in the first instance. It seems to me that he uses two extreme cases, which seem to prove his point; but which in a larger analysis might not.

111 Boone (1998, 15-16) argues furthermore that altruistic generous displays “as distinctive, emergent, group-level characteristics” are complex because: (1) they involve economic transactions—problems of interpreting history, or effect; and (2) a transfer of good or service reduces the fitness differential (at least in the short-term).

112 Another problem would be if political propaganda or social studies would promote the contrary. For example, that aggression and violence are less costly and more successful for survival. Thus, we need moral norms.

113 Boone (1998, 18) assumes, contrary to popular opinion, that socioeconomic status and fitness is not isomorphic, that it is not simply definable in terms of total annual income or some measure of total accumulated wealth.

114 Boone (1998, 18) says that: “It seems at least possible that a group of individuals or families that have identical annual incomes or accumulated wealth

observation-based support promoting generous altruism rather than egotistical miserliness as a survival strategy. They offer constructive insights concerning the utility of altruistic generosity for oneself and one's offspring as well as for the social whole.¹¹⁵ This evolutionary approach comes to some conclusions similar to Aquinas', but for different reasons and with different import.

Aquinas holds that the virtues of magnificence and generosity have personal and social import. Magnificence is primarily about accomplishing great ventures, but secondarily about the expenditures needed to complete these works.¹¹⁶ It concerns the emotions involved in such feats. First, the context of the virtues of magnificence and generosity is explicitly moral and social; we must explicitly intend and plan to bring benefit to others through our ventures and expenditures. They both involve a larger social impact. Neither generous, nor magnificent people are egocentric, but rather they recognize that "one's person is little in comparison with [...] the affairs of the community at large."¹¹⁷ Aquinas affirms that excess of riches is meant to be generously distributed, without impoverishing the giver.¹¹⁸ This view gives us indications of the larger social context and the related virtues, such as justice and prudence.

might expend widely variable proportions of income on (a) conspicuous consumption and other status reinforcement displays, (b) the production and rearing of offspring (Kaplan 1996), and (c) conservation of resources that can be passed on to offspring in the form of bequests (Rogers 1990)." He leaves for future research more detailed hypotheses about the relationship between socioeconomic conditions, wealth allocation and other components of long- and short-term fitness.

¹¹⁵ However, he makes what I judge to be an inconclusive argument about the tradeoff between social status and fertility. Cf. Boone "More Status or More Children?" 2002.

¹¹⁶ Cf. *ST II-II* 135.1.

¹¹⁷ "*Quod autem pertinet ad personam uniuscuiusque, est aliquid parvum in comparatione ad id quod convenit rebus divinis vel rebus communibus*" *ST II-II* 134.1 ad 3.

¹¹⁸ Aquinas (*ST II-II* 117.1 ad 1) says: "*suberabundantia divitiarum datur aliquibus a Deo ut meritum bonae dispensationis acquirant*," citing Ambrose (Serm. 81 *de Temp.*: PL 17.593-4) and Basil's (Hom. 6 in Luc xxi.18: PG 31.264C, 276 C) commentaries on the Gospel of Luke (12:18) in order to define the context and purpose for excess riches. In addition to the function of distributing wealth, Aquinas speaks in terms of the merit due the person that gives to those in need. He follows Aristotle and Ambrose in affirming that generosity is not meant to despoil the giver (*ST II-II* 117.1 ad 2).

Secondly, Aquinas attends to how our emotions and intellects interact in these virtues. He identifies great expenditure and the love of money as the critical points of magnificence. He compares and contrasts this virtue with generosity. Generosity or liberality (*liberalitas*) extends to all riches, money and possessions (*pecunia, bona possessa*). It immediately concerns the concupiscible passions of loving, desiring, pleasure and sorrow, which we experience when we liberate (*liberat*) things from our ownership. Generosity in effect demonstrates that our mind is free from attachment to these things.¹¹⁹ It moderates our love of money. Magnificence, in contrast, addresses these same two objects at different levels.¹²⁰ First, it relates to the difficulty concerning monetary transactions and possessions that are properly proportioned to great works. A magnificent person directs his efforts, using reason to find a proportion of expenditure fitting for the great works at hand. Second, humans must efficaciously manage the related passions—the love and desire for these great means—amidst the project’s difficulty. The passions are more strongly influenced since these great goods and works confront risks; we may incur great loss.¹²¹ For these reasons, the irascible passions are more central than the concupiscible. We need to hope that we can complete the project and not be dispossessed of our property in the process.¹²² Although the proportions differ, both generous and magnificent people spend their money and give their possessions readily and with pleasure.¹²³

The outlay needed for a great project is a secondary aspect of the virtue of magnificence. It concerns both intellectual planning and emotional engagement. Only once we have adjudicated that a venture is a fitting end, can we set about to find appropriate means to accomplish it. We must calculate the details in terms of their suitability and cost. Through magnificence, we seek to maximize the quality of

¹¹⁹ Cf. *ST* II-II 117.2.

¹²⁰ Cf. *ST* II-II 134.3.

¹²¹ Thomas says: “*nisi diligens consideratio adhiberetur, immineret periculum magni damni*” *ST* II-II 134.4 ad 3

¹²² Cf. *ST* II-II 134.4 ad 1.

¹²³ “*magnificus convenit cum liberali in hos quod prompte et delectabiliter pecunias emittit*” *ST* II-II 135.1 ad 3.

the work for the expense.¹²⁴ Through waste or meanness however, we can derail this effort.

Meanness or stinginess (*parvificentia*) involves several problematics. First, on the level of the passions, it entails an inordinate attachment to our own goods. The possibility of failure related to great projects produces greater fear of being dispossessed and thus exasperates tightfistedness. Second, in the measure of the end, the miserly person intends something little (*parvum*), where it is fitting to aim higher, and where magnanimous people intend something great. The latter tend to great projects, because of the good involved; then they calculate and accept the expense in turn. While the stingy person first measures the expense, looking to minimize his outlay; then he intends to do a small work.¹²⁵ He fails by aiming below the mark, by not even considering other goods (*bonum*), except in the optic of their material expense. Inhibited by love of possessions, he will not spend for a project of philanthropic or entrepreneurial value. Third, he “does not regulate his affections according to reason, but, on the contrary, makes use of his reason in pursuance of his inordinate affections.”¹²⁶ Such greedy and ungenerous people only spend with sadness and delay.¹²⁷

Conversely, when one is wasteful (*consumptio*), one spends more than is reasonable for a project. One over-estimates the value of the venture. Thomas recognizes that a particular work (*opus*) calls for a proportioned expenditure (*sumptus*).¹²⁸ Thomas uses the Latin term

124 At least twice (in *ST* II-II 134.3; and *ST* II-II 135.1), Aquinas quotes Aristotle saying, “*magnificus ab aequali sumptu opus facit magis magnificum*” *NE* iv.4, 1122b13-18; S. Th. lect. 6. 718. This idea concerns the proportion—a more adequate relationship between cost and the quality of the project. It involves reason applied in art—the virtue of art in relation to the cost of the work.

125 Cf. *ST* II-II 135.1.

126 “*non dirigit affectum suum secundum rationem, sed potius rationis usum applicat ad inordinationem sui affectus*” *ST* II-II 135.1 ad 2.

127 “*magnificus convenit cum liberali in hoc quod prompte et delectabiliter pecunias emittit, ita etiam parvificus convenit cum illiberali sive avaro in hoc quod cum tristitia et tarditate expensas facit*” *ST* II-II 135.1 ad 3.

128 “*excedat proportionem quae esse debet sumptus ad opus secundum regulam rationis*” *ST* II-II 135.2.

consumptio, since this type of spending acts like a fire that consumes all for no good purpose.¹²⁹

How does the evolutionary approach on altruistic conspicuous consumption and survival compare with Aquinas' virtue approach to magnificence and generosity? Both approaches promote an altruistic type of generosity. We find a major difference though in the moral and social dimension. Inasmuch as cultural anthropology involves an abstraction from moral adjudication and does not attend to important aspects of an act's intentionality, it seems to neglect a deeper analysis of personal involvement in promoting not only the physical survival but also the moral flourishing of one's self, family and society. We need to incorporate fuller notions of justice and common good, unless we accept leaving the quality of survival to the invisible hand of altruistic conspicuous consumption to distribute basic goods to those in need. Aquinas' fundamental definitions of magnificence and generosity, on the contrary, cannot be separated from their larger context, which specifies a moral and just type of survival and resilience. In this case, we must correlate the difficulty of using money and possessions with the other virtues that direct them to the common good, the good of others and to one's own excellence. In particular, the virtues of justice, prudence, fortitude and temperance necessarily underlie works of magnificence and generosity, and weigh them with a different measure than pure physical survival.¹³⁰ In the end, they involve the physical and moral flourishing of individuals and society. Magnificence and generosity interrelate with the natural virtues of magnanimity and hope, which we shall now address more fully.

4.4. *Magnanimitas* as the Natural Virtue of Hope

We can now return to examine the way that humans confront adversity with the energy of the emotions through the disposition that Aquinas calls *magnanimitas*. By following Thomas, we can avoid a narrow concept of the emotion, disposition and act of hope. He

¹²⁹ Cf. *ST* II-II 135.2. Such waste can be caused by another vice, like the pursuit of vainglory (cf. *ST* II-II 135.2 ad 3). Moreover, in regards to the virtue of generosity or liberality (*ST* II-II 117) Thomas treats the related vices of covetousness (*ST* II-II 118) and prodigality (*ST* II-II 119).

¹³⁰ Cf. *ST* II-II 117.6.

associates magnanimity with the management of honor, great deeds and excellence. Here resilience is of particular benefit again; it analyzes the roles that human hope and optimism play in temperament, attitudes and behavior. In this section, we shall thusly ask three intertwining questions: How can resilience studies enrich Aquinas' virtue approach, in particular concerning hope? Can we construe *magnanimitas* as "the natural virtue of hope"? And how does Aquinas' version of this virtue manage honors, great deeds and excellence? But before addressing these queries, I shall broach two etymological issues.

The internal complexity of Thomas' notion of *magnanimitas* and the emotions it manages are entrenched in an obscure historical evolution and etymology.¹³¹ How might one best translate his notion of *magnanimitas* today? Is 'greatness of soul' or 'great-souledness' more illustrative than 'magnanimity'? The problems of *magnanimitas* is well exemplified through the history of its Greek forbearer *μεγαλοψυχία*, which is etymologically concerned with greatness of soul, and by definition it concerns great things (*περὶ μεγάλα*).¹³² Seeking to avoid coloring the interpretation of this virtue with anyone of its numerous facets (and thereby either infelicitously limiting it, or unjustly overcharging the definition), some English translators of Aquinas have literally translated *magnanimitas* as "magnanimity."¹³³ I shall follow

¹³¹ History has seen numerous debates, opinions and transformations of the meanings of *magnanimitas*.

¹³² Cf. *NE* 1123a34. Before Aristotle, *μεγαλοψυχία* was a part of common language that signified successively clemency, magnificence, heroic courage, grandiose ambition, pride, and finally impassivity when faced with bad fortune. Aristotle's specifically ethical treatment attempts to reconcile the vestigial Homeric values of greatness and grandeur with the newer values of moderation and the mean. For example, a heated debate among Aristotle's commentators exists about the meaning and relevancy of his definition and description of *μεγαλοψυχία*. Its meaning has perhaps elicited more divergent interpretation in recent scholarship than any other of his virtues. Some people reject it as culturally irrelevant, and others hold it as Aristotle's highest, synthetic virtue. Some of the difficulty is expressed in the way in which different thinkers translate *μεγαλοψυχία* (cf. Curzer 1990, 532, and 518; Gauthier 1951, 37-41, 52, 55-118, 273; Smoes 1995; Somme 1999).

¹³³ Besides its literal renderings of magnanimity (Horner 1998; Rackham 1983; Curzer 1990 and 1991; Gauthier 1951; Tricot 1959; Gauthier and Jolif, 1970; Somme 1999), great-souledness or greatness of soul (Thomson 1953; MacIntyre 1966; Dalimier 1992; Smoes 1995, 267), other translations include: pride or proper pride (Ross 1923, McKeon 1941); high-mindedness (Ostwald; Greaves 1963.), superiority (Thomson 1953), and dignity (Joachim 1951).

this practice, while trying both to highlight the abundant richness of the concept and not to stray too far a field from its associations with resilience.

Other etymological problems arise concerning hope. We need to distinguish the emotion of hope and optimistic temperament from the virtues that bear the same name. Etymologically, the English language is poor in this regard. We use “hope” both for the theological virtue, as well as for everyday wishes, desires and expectations: such as an optimistic attitude or our hopes at work, in child-raising and so forth.¹³⁴ Although lacking a clear terminological distinction in English, I shall contrast everyday hopes (in the plural), rooted in the natural passion of hope, from the fundamental theological hope (singular) that also involves grace and divine initiative.

Aquinas identifies magnanimity as the virtue that manages the passions of hope and despair. Yet he also discusses it in terms of managing honor and excellence. Even though he deems that the passion of hope is the proximate matter of magnanimity,¹³⁵ we need to ask whether his notion of the virtue of magnanimity entails *the* natural virtue of hope?¹³⁶ I shall investigate the import of such a claim through his etymology of hope, his notion of the passion of hope, and the other emotions and virtues concerned with it. Fed by resilience research and Aquinas’ reflections, we shall develop a typology of hope starting with considerations of temperament traits, attitudes and emotions, before discussing related emotions and natural dispositions. In the following

¹³⁴ English like Latin (*spes*), German (*hoffnung*), and Italian (*speranza*) have only one noun for hope. French on the contrary has the advantage of possessing two separate words (*espoir* and *espérance*) that are sometimes used in order to distinguish a natural virtue with its everyday hopes (*espoirs*), from a fundamental or theological virtue (*espérance*). For other reflections on this distinction between everyday or ordinary hopes and fundamental hope, see B. Schumacker (2000) who distinguishes “*espoir*” or “*espoirs ordinaires*” from “*l’espérance fondamentale*,” J. Pieper who differentiates *die “Alltags-hoffnungen*” from *die “fundamentale” Hoffnung* (1967, 24-8); or J. B. Brantschen who distinguishes *die vielen “vorletzten Hoffnungen*” from *die “letzte Hoffnung*” (1992, 24-33).

¹³⁵ Cf. *ST* I-II 60.4; *ST* II-II 17.5 ad 4; *ST* II-II 21.1; *ST* II-II 128.1 ad 6; *ST* II-II 129.

¹³⁶ One counter indication of the claim seems to be that the passion of hope involves not only an aspect of magnanimity but also of magnificence (cf. *ST* I-II 60.5).

section, we shall extend this research to include the accent that Aquinas puts on honor and excellence.

4.4.1. Optimism and Resilience: Attitudes, Emotions and the Virtue of Hope

Aquinas recognizes that individuals' natural dispositions differ. As for timidity and boldness, some humans are more hopeful, others more pessimistic. But such innate differences are not static. Through our actions, we modify not only our way of experiencing such emotions, but also our temperaments and basic dispositions. That is, we can acquire the virtue of hope or its contrary. How might psychosocial insights on optimistic attitudes and hope enrich this Thomistic virtue anthropology?

As mentioned in chapter two, the psychosocial sciences widely consider optimism or hopefulness as a temperament trait that tends toward acting with the expectation of attaining a good result.¹³⁷ For example, L. B. Murphy conceives of optimism as "a bias evoking resilience;"¹³⁸ C. R. Snyder defines it "as a generalized expectancy that good things will happen;"¹³⁹ and Lazarus and Lazarus describe it as "a positive expectation about what will happen."¹⁴⁰ Such a temperament quality elicits positive social responses from the human environment. While involving human genes, these sciences recognize that humans can develop a temperament disposition like hopefulness in diverse fashions through interaction with one's surroundings throughout life. In both individual and social domains, they construe optimism as one of the basic attitudinal dimensions of coping.

¹³⁷ Cf. Wills 1996, 128; Murphy 1987; Rutter 1990, 182; Garmezy 1985; Seligman 1991; Goleman 1995. It is one of the "basic" attitudinal dimensions of coping described by Scheier and Carver 1987 (cited by Wills 1996).

¹³⁸ Lois Barclay Murphy 1987, 104.

¹³⁹ Snyder et al. (1991, 571) also cite Scheier and Carver (1985) who "argue that optimists maintain positive expectations that are not limited to a specific domain or class of settings."

¹⁴⁰ Lazarus and Lazarus (1994, 73) say: "Optimism is having a positive expectation about what will happen. In optimism one is primed for a good outcome. This is sometimes imprudent because one may have risked too much, and, when things go sour, it is all the more dismaying, costly, and even disillusioning. Mostly, one hopes a bad situation will improve."

Cognitive psychologists construe the hope as an emotional or sentimental reaction to a situation that one senses as beneficial, yet associated with something unfavorable. Lazarus and Lazarus (1994) deem hope an emotion with coping value, since it seldom involves a cool detachment, but rather brings emotion to action.¹⁴¹ They say that:

People generate the feeling of hope as a way of *coping* with the trouble because it is better than giving into despair. The personal meaning is that there is some chance, either by virtue of what one does or merely as a result of good luck, that the outcome we dread—and hope against—will not be as bad as was feared, or that despite what we dread, everything will ultimately turn out okay.¹⁴²

The feeling of hope forcefully sustains us in the midst of difficult conditions. They emphasize moreover that hope is not simply a positive state of mind. Rather, as rooted in some difficulty, it is “essentially an antidote to despair.” Since hope precedes a positive outcome, we need to anticipate it, without falling into “false hope.”¹⁴³ They emphasize though that even vain hope gives people a footing against despair. The danger of this kind of hope, however, according to Lazarus and Lazarus “is that the person will continue to seek what is denied and, therefore, fail to redirect his or her thoughts and energies toward a more realistic outcome.”¹⁴⁴

This discussion of the attitude of optimism and the emotion of hope leads to further queries about learned optimism and resilience, that is, about an acquired virtue of hope. Today’s difficult encounter might render a different emotional result than yesterday’s. Beyond emotive reactions, hope serves as a basis for further action. When it involves an operative disposition, a virtue for creative action, hope

141 Lazarus and Lazarus (1994, 73) describe the emotion of hope as: “a wish for better conditions of life in an ambiguous but difficult situation. Other words, such as faith, trust, security, conviction, confidence, all seem too positive and secure to carry the more tentative meaning of hope.” They maintain that promise, expectation and anticipation are synonyms for hope (Lazarus 1994, 72).

142 Lazarus and Lazarus 1994, 74.

143 Lazarus and Lazarus 1994, 72. Furthermore they (p. 71) say: “To the extent that hoping sustains our ability to cope actively with the way things are and to maintain a positive outlook on life, any claim about its falseness seems to lack wisdom.”

144 Lazarus and Lazarus 1994, 74.

entails more than its associated acts, according to Aquinas. In order to understand hope-filled human agency, we need to examine emotional reactions and attitudes in the context of a person's experiences, acts and dispositions (at social, intellectual, volitional, emotional, genetic levels), as well as the present situation.¹⁴⁵

As an acquired tendency for creative action, hope is more than a temperament trait or an emotional experience or even a judgment. According to both Thomas and resilience researchers, temperament and emotional styles form a natural basis for acquired qualities that we can only more fully understand in terms of cognitive and volitional input, in a more global perspective on the human person. Having or not having an optimistic temperament is not the last word. If we can learn hopefulness, then we can extend or correct to some extent genetic patrimony and personal history.¹⁴⁶ A person can learn to knowingly and willingly act in the expectation of attaining a goal, and can thus: ingrain such an optimistic tendency in emotion, imagination, thought and will;¹⁴⁷ or correct contrary tendencies as a sort of recovery, therapy, or conversion.¹⁴⁸ Learned helplessness, in contrast, as a "failure to

145 In certain cases, researchers call hope an emotion, even though they conceive it in a very complete way, even including: intellectual perception and complex judgments about possible future solutions; volition involvement in goal acquisition. For example Post-White (1998, 281) say: "Hope is an emotion in human experience that entails finding meaning in a situation, perceiving a possible solution, envisioning a future goal, and participating to achieve that goal (Lynch 1965; Stotland, 1969). Hope is a situational, learned response that motivates the individual to achieve realistic, important goals (Mowrer, 1969)."

146 For example, L. B. Murphy (1987, 104) describes the basic roots and early development of acquired optimism; she says: "I have shown here that the roots of early coping skills lie in the baby's active protests and selectivity, and the young child's capacity to accept substitutes and restructure experiences of gratification of needs, of being able to count on life feeling good. The optimism and hope that come from the earliest satisfying, restorative experiences are reinforced in the next few years when separations are followed by reunions, frustrations bring support in coping, pain is followed by comfort, initiatives are backed, and the child develops confidence that he and the environment will be able to manage any problem. There are ups and downs, downs and ups, and the growing child begins to feel that he can get out of the downs and help to make his life good. As Helen said at the age of 10, 'Bad things can turn into good things'."

147 See T. Damasio (1999a and 1999b) on the relationship between human consciousness, emotions, and genes.

148 For example, L. B. Murphy (1987: 101) construes "learned hopefulness" in the perspective of resilience, as recovery involving aspects of the whole person.

escape traumatic shock” can reinforce early pessimistic attitudes or reorient a hopeful temperament.

Martin E. P. Seligman takes a cognitive and attribution approach to understanding optimism, pessimism and their related effects on human capacities to confront difficulty.¹⁴⁹ He defines optimism as a habit of the mind that enables those who face misfortune to think of it as temporally limited, as having an external cause and as being restricted in its import.¹⁵⁰ Confronted with setbacks and frustrations, optimism means expecting that, in general, things will turn out well. Attitudes and cognitive narrative styles are of utmost importance for optimism, which is not a static attitude. Rather Seligman conceives of it as a flexible quality that aims to increase our control over the way we think about adversity.¹⁵¹ He theorizes that optimistic explanatory styles not only decrease the down time after a defeat, but also promote renewed activity.¹⁵²

Besides his empirical approach to studying optimism, Seligman draws from several theoretical and experimental sources, namely control theory and attribution theory. The first theory identifies control as the psychological process of harnessing events and circumstances. We strive to appreciate the world’s causal texture in function of our own self-efficacy: which events we can master, and which ones we cannot. To be able to meaningfully harness ongoing events and direct our activity lends itself to optimism for the present and future. However, Seligman highlights risks from two extremes: an unresponsive world, and expecting too much control. If our situation is truly unresponsive, perceived control could be counterproductive. It cannot only lead to depression, but also to alternative strategies like an

149 In addition to his notable work on optimism, M. E. P. Seligman is perhaps best known for his research and theories on helplessness; cf. Seligman 1975; Garber and Seligman 1980; Peterson, Maier and Seligman 1993.

150 M. E. P. Seligman (1998/1991, 4-5) says that optimists and pessimists think about their hard knocks in opposite ways. The optimists “tend to believe defeat is just a temporary setback, that its causes are confined to this one case. The optimists believe defeat is not their fault: Circumstances, bad luck, or other people brought it about. Such people are unfazed by defeat. Confronted by a bad situation, they perceive it as a challenge and try harder.”

151 Cf. Seligman 1998/1991, 208, and 281 ff.; Goleman 1995, 88.

152 Cf. M. E. P. Seligman 1998 and 1995.

energy saving, coping strategy of limited “helplessness.”¹⁵³ On the contrary, expecting exaggerated responsiveness and “personal control” in internal and external forums can make us more vulnerable to crushing defeats.¹⁵⁴ Since our beliefs about our own capacities affect how those capacities are used, our performances can vary according to our sense of self-efficacy in bouncing back after failure and managing the situation positively instead of seeing defeat before starting.¹⁵⁵

The second and perhaps most important theoretical aspect of Seligman’s theory of learned optimism involves attribution theory. He describes it as the “explanatory style” which individuals use in attributing causality to their actions, successes and failures.¹⁵⁶ Seligman’s theory involves styles of explanation, instead of single narratives for single failures.¹⁵⁷ He proposes three dimensions of explanation (permanence, pervasiveness and personalization), which vary according to optimistic or pessimistic narrative styles. First, optimists attribute good events as having permanent causes; negative events as having temporary ones. He warns that: “permanent

¹⁵³ Peterson, Maier and Seligman (1993, 306; cf. 305) say that, in this case: “helplessness may be less a deficit than an alternative way of operating, a way of laying low and keeping one’s eyes open when the world becomes unresponsive.” Cf. Seligman 1975; Garber and Seligman 1980.

¹⁵⁴ According to Peterson, Maier and Seligman (1993, 307-9), the “era of personal control” can promote various problems: depression in young adults (a disorder of personal control); the seduction of technology (preferring the immediate but shallow responsiveness of technology, instead of person to person interaction); the rejection of the social world, and the promotion of egotism and special interest mentalities (a lack of interdependence and common-good orientations in society).

¹⁵⁵ Cf. Goleman 1995, 89; A. Bandura 1977.

¹⁵⁶ Seligman takes his inspiration from Bernard Weiner, a social psychologist, who at UCLA in late 1960s developed attribution theory. Weiner sought the factors to which people attribute their successes and failures—why some are high achievers and others not. Attribution theory runs against the Skinnerian theory about achievement, demonstrated (in 1930s) by the partial reinforcement extinction effect (PREE). Attribution theory postulates that human behavior is controlled not only by an external environment-based “schedule of reinforcement,” but also by an internal mental state, which is seen through the explanations that people make for why the environment has scheduled their reinforcements in this particular way (cf. Seligman 1998/1991, 40-1).

¹⁵⁷ In this regard, Seligman’s theory differs from Weiner’s. Other differences include: a third category of explanation (pervasiveness), not included by Weiner; and a focus on achievement, while Weiner studied mental illness and therapy (cf. Seligman 1998/1991, 43-4).

explanations for bad events produce long-lasting helplessness and temporary explanations produce resilience.”¹⁵⁸ Second, pervasiveness contrasts universal versus specific explanations. He says: “The optimist believes that the bad events have specific causes, while good events will enhance everything he does; the pessimist believes that bad events have universal causes and that good events are caused by specific factors.”¹⁵⁹ Thirdly, personalization identifies the target of blame for the difficulty. Optimists externalize the cause, blaming other people and circumstances; pessimists internalize the blame on themselves.

While Seligman’s paradigm is in many ways convincing, it raises several questions. First, is his vision of optimism based in reality? Does it rest on an explanatory theory that promotes self-delusion instead of truthfulness? We can establish one rebuttal to this charge in his approach to self-esteem. He opposes the promotion of groundless self-valuation, and provides striking counter-indications of educational practices that attempt to promote self-esteem without any basis in personal worth. Unmerited self-esteem correlates with violence, aggression and depression, when the individual confronts a harsh experience.¹⁶⁰ Seligman does not promote empty self-esteem, but rather concentrates on skill acquisition in overcoming defeat and misfortune. Self-esteem follows then as a natural consequence.¹⁶¹

The second question is: In promoting external blaming-strategy (blaming other people and circumstances, rather than our own shortcomings), does Seligman at the same time encourage an egotistical orientation and an anti-social mentality? Elsewhere, he attempts to provide a social context to his theory of optimism

¹⁵⁸ Seligman 1998/1991, 47.

¹⁵⁹ For Seligman (1998/1991, 47-8), hope depends on both the pervasiveness and permanence dimensions of explanatory style: “Finding temporary and specific causes for misfortune is the art of hope.”

¹⁶⁰ Baumeister et al. (1996) indicate that self-esteem can be a factor that causes violence in criminals. Seligman’s conclusion is that: “if you teach unwarrantedly high self-esteem to children, problems will ensue,” such as violence and depression (Seligman 1998/1991, vii). On the importance of self-esteem for resilience, see Lösel, 1992, 9.

¹⁶¹ Seligman recognizes that achievement is a function of talent, as well as the capacities of explanatory style that withstand defeat. Cf. Peterson, Maier, and Seligman 1993, 310; and Goleman 1995, 89.

promoting narrative style. For example, he claims that “becoming an optimist consists not of learning to be more selfish and self-assertive, and to present yourself to others in overbearing ways, but simply of learning a set of skills about how to talk to yourself when you suffer a personal defeat [...] from a more encouraging viewpoint.”¹⁶² Seligman’s approach to learned optimism offers merit, and illustrates facets of acquired resilience. Its close proximity to a virtue approach on hope invites a more in-depth investigation. Likewise, Aquinas’ virtue approach to hope in difficulty might well be enriched through the typology of hope and optimism, through insights on learned hopefulness and helplessness, and from pedagogical input from control and attribution theories, as we shall see.

4.4.2. The Virtue of Hope: Goals, Agency and Developmental Pathways

Psychosocial studies on goal-directed behavior aid us to further differentiate hope from optimism. They have distinguished goal perception from goal attainment and desiring an outcome from efficacious behavior.¹⁶³ These studies have made advancements. Previously, a predominant view associated greater hope (as a goal orientation) with positive outcomes, and exceptionally low expectancies for goal attainment with somatic disturbance and psychopathology.¹⁶⁴ More recent research however attempts to identify the means through which hope renders human acts adaptive; it draws on goal concepts to elucidate hope’s cognitive sets.¹⁶⁵ Within this goal-setting framework, C. R. Snyder proposes two intertwining elements of hope: agency (efficacy expectancies) and pathways (outcome expectancies). This perspective invites a dialogue with Aquinas’ virtue theory of hope.

¹⁶² Seligman 1998/1991, 207.

¹⁶³ Researchers often contrast hope with optimism. According to Snyder et al. (1991, 571), “Hope is similar to optimism in that it is conceptualized as a stable cognitive set reflecting general rather than specific outcome expectancies. Hope and optimism differ, however, in the hypothesized relationship between outcome and efficacy expectancies and the role that this relationship plays in the prediction of goal-directed behavior.”

¹⁶⁴ Cf. Post-White 1998; Erickson et al. 1975; Stotland 1969; Frankl 1963.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Snyder et al. 1991a; Pervin 1989; Lee et al 1989.

Snyder defines hope “as a cognitive set that is based on a reciprocally derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-directed determination) and (b) pathways (planning of ways to meet goals).”¹⁶⁶ First, our sense of “agency,” including our will to accomplish our goals, increases hope. We gain a sense of positive agency through individual participation in goal attainment. We successfully motivate ourselves and gain a feeling of resourcefulness in front of the challenge. Second, the perceived availability of successful “pathways” to a goal bolsters hope. We seek to generate successful projects, to break down formidable tasks into manageable pieces and to modify plans when the goals are unattainable. We employ cognitive capacities related to problem solving, but also to resisting anxiety, defeatist attitudes or depression when faced with setbacks. Both agency and pathways involve more than single acts. They constitute “an enduring disposition” of hope, which we subjectively construct as we set goals for ourselves and attempt to attain them.¹⁶⁷

Snyder’s theory expects that a person’s levels of facility and motivation in dealing with goals correlate with one’s behavior and achievements. His study confirms that people with a higher level of hope not only undertook a larger number of goals than people with a lower level, but also set more difficult goals.¹⁶⁸ Nonetheless, while the

166 Snyder et al. (1991, 570-1). C. J. Snyder is a University of Kansas psychologist, who furthermore posits that “the two components of hope [agency and pathways] are reciprocal, additive, and positively related, although they are not synonymous” (Snyder et al. 1991a, 571). Snyder et al. integrate two dominant theories (that of Bandura and that of Scheier and Carver), while disagreeing with both Bandura’s emphasis on efficacy expectancies and Scheier and Carver’s reliance on outcome expectancies. Snyder et al. (1991a, 572) argue that “if self-related cognitions pertaining to goal-directed behavior are the sum of the reciprocal action of efficacy expectancies and outcome expectancies, as we have posited in the present hope model, then focusing on either type of expectancy alone will not completely tap the cognitive set.”

167 Snyder et alia (1991, 571) distinguish the emotion of hope from this disposition of hope. They say that “the cognitive emphasis of the present model does not imply that emotions are irrelevant, but rather that emotions are the sequelae of cognitive appraisals of goal-related activities. The quality of emotion for a particular goal-related setting depends on the person’s perceived hope in that setting.” Cf. Goleman 1995, 87.

168 Snyder et al. (1991, 581-2) were surprised to find no gender differences in the level of reported hope. They speculate however “that gender differences in hope may emerge when different goals are explored in subsequent research.”

higher hope people were “more certain” to attain their goals, the lower hope people were found to be equally likely to attain their own goals, although these were objectively less challenging and fewer in number.¹⁶⁹ Snyder’s health-as-an-adaptive-human-behavior perspective construes hope as relevant insofar as “health-related matters are easily conceptualized in terms of people’s goals.”¹⁷⁰ His extrapolations on this study suggest a positive correlation between hope and health levels.

What can Snyder’s research and theory on hope in agency and pathways offer to enhance Aquinas’ approach to the passion and virtues of hope? For Aquinas, the natural passion of hope is rooted in human love (*amor*) and desire (*passio*) and is manifest in the longing for flourishing (*beatitudo*) and the natural inclinations of the will toward the good and communion, of the intelligence toward the true and the beautiful, of the whole person toward love, family and life in society. Thomas’ perspective attends to both human origins and finality. Goals and their attachment are of ultimate and mediate importance. In his philosophical psychology and philosophical anthropology, a person loves and desires some good thing because of the nature of the good object to attract us. In this natural dimension, we move from loving a certain good, to desiring it (if we have not attained it), to hoping for it (if it is difficult but possible to achieve) and finally to experiencing joy (when we are united with it).¹⁷¹ Although the

169 Cf. Snyder et al. 1991a, 582.

170 Snyder et al. 1991a, 583; Snyder et al., 1991b. Another suggestive study on the relationship of hope and health is that of Janice Post-White (1998), which indicates a probable correlation between hopefulness, quality of life and a strong SOC (sense of coherence). The SOC (discussed in chapter two) is seen as reducing tension and improving health by modulating the psychological, neurological, hormonal and immune systems. Positive effects in terms of immune function, cancer outcome and quality of life—cognitive, psychological and social levels—are expected, based on the three coping-related effects of stress on the immune function: 1. Poor coping skills decrease natural killer (NK) cell activity, while good coping skills and a positive attitude increase NK and neutrophil function. 2. Social support buffers stress and contribute to increased NK function. 3. “Negative emotional states that result from the psychological response to stressors may explain how psychosocial events produce immuno-suppression (Kiecolt-Glaser and Glaser, 1991) and contribute to the increased incidence of infections, autoimmune disease, and cancer.” (Post-White 1998, 280)

171 Aquinas puts it thus: “*Primus affectus in aliquid est motus amoris [...]; qui quidem motus in desiderio includitur sicut causa in effectu; desideratur enim aliquid quasi amatur. Ipsa vero spes desiderium quoddam importat cum quadam*

underlying passion of hope relates most directly to everyday hopes, it also relates to fundamental human hope and longings. What can Snyder's approach to agency and pathways tell us about the natural level—the emotion and the virtue of everyday hopes?

Hope, as the central passion for the virtue of *magnanimitas*, tends to expect great goods, according to Thomas.¹⁷² This hope in the midst of action, moving toward an end is intrinsically teleological. It is not simply an optimistic attitude or temperament. Thus initiative-taking, in the larger sense of *aggredi* mobilizes human activity, including our own and other resources toward a difficult goal. In order to complete acts of maximal intensity, we muster a battery of personal energy and social resources. For Aquinas, magnanimous people have the power to focus their emotional and intellectual energies on life's important tasks.¹⁷³ This attentional and effective capacity involves natural and acquired emotional (*modum affectionis*) and bodily dispositions, and moral and intellectual character.

Through magnanimity, we employ the stimulus of hope as well as daring, in addition to justified fear of failure and related passions. What is great and difficult can elicit hope, just as it can elicit despair. It can mobilize action, just as it can freeze human initiative.¹⁷⁴ The difference between hope and despair is found in the possibility of attaining the object. More than a logical possibility, the agent must possess the needed physical power, psychological energy, intellectual plan, and necessary external assistance.¹⁷⁵ Desire confronted with difficulty is transformed into hope only when we judge that we can attain the desired object.¹⁷⁶ Snyder's typology of high and low levels of

animi erectione, quasi in quoddam arduum tendens" *De verit.*, 28, 4; cf. *ST* I.5 ad 1; *ST* I-II 40.8; *NE* i.1, 1094a3; Pinckaers 1976, 266-271; Pieper 1994, 20-24.

¹⁷² Cf. *ST* II-II 129.5 obj.3 and ad 3.

¹⁷³ "*magnanimitas facit quod ad perfecta opera virtutis tendat*" *ST* II-II 129.3 ad 4.

¹⁷⁴ According to Aquinas, the difficulty and greatness at which hope aims precipitate repulsion and frightened retreat. Cf. *ST* I-II 23.2; *ST* I-II 25.3. ad 2; *ST* II-II 161.1.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. *ST* I-II 40.3 ad 2; Gauthier 1951, 327-8.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. *ST* I-II 40.1. We recall also Breznitz' interesting insight into a psychology of hope, despair and hopelessness. He describes despair as having anything left to loss (but something to gain through the involved risk). The risks involved in an act of desperation are extreme because of the extreme situation. According to Breznitz (1986, 303), the "opposite of hope is not despair, but the

hope usefully illustrates the power of great goals to attract us and the immobility that comes when we do not have the agency or pathways of attaining the goal. His speculation about the connection of hope and health is suggestive not only for everyday hopes but also our fundamental hope. Nonetheless, Thomas offers a deeper philosophical anthropology concerning the natural movement of hope in terms of finality and the development of magnanimity as an operative disposition. In order to demonstrate this point more fully, we shall now examine how personal and social resources motivate hope.

4.4.3. Hoping in Oneself and in Assistance

The emotion and the natural virtue of hope do not simply aim at goals that are within the reach of a person's attainment. Hoping can pertain to oneself and to others. Its pathways are not only personal, but also social and theological. Thomas makes an important distinction between hoping in our own personal capacities (*sperare tantum*) and hoping in the assistance of another (*expectare*). Medieval thinkers understood *expectare* (to look at, to consider) and *expectatio* (consideration) as the cognitive act preceding the movement of the passion of hope. This cognitive process considers both a hoped-for great good, and another person, through whom we obtain it. Through this kind of hope, we keep our eyes not only on the sought after good and our personal capacities, but also on the other (*ex alio spectare*). Thomas considers *sperare tantum* (hoping in one's own capacities) as pure human hope, and *expectare* or *expectare* as hope linked to the expectation of needing the help of others.

On the one hand, the object of a human hope is a good we can attain by ourselves, through our own means and strength, our own planning and execution. This hope is the primal form (archetype) of the passion of hope as *sperare tantum*, which, according to Aquinas, the virtue of magnanimity manages.¹⁷⁷ Resilience research has

absence of hope. Whereas, in despair there is nothing to lose; in the absence of hope, there is nothing to gain. Despair may yet act as a motivating force for acts of despair, whereas, in the absence of hope, there is no energy left." One can reasonably ask, whether such acts have only tragic results (e.g. suicide terrorism) or also surprisingly good ones (altruistic death-defying acts).

177 Cf. *ST* I-II 40.2 ad 1; cf. Gauthier 1951, 341 fn. 3.

demonstrated that competency can breed hope inasmuch as our experiences of overcoming difficulty give rise to hope for future successes. When we cope with hardship, for example, we build up a type of immunity, which involves a situational mastery and learned hopefulness. This immunity counteracts learned helplessness and past experiences of failure.¹⁷⁸

Human expectation on the other hand is involved in a second kind of hope. We derive it from the first type, which always serves as the basis of pure impetus—the simple movement of the appetite, since it has but one object. When in certain cases we need the help of others in order to attain the sought after goal, we feel hope in our own capacities as well as a confident expectation in the help of another. The other (person or group) supplies a second object to hope.¹⁷⁹ This type of *expectare* does not mean delay, immobility or simple possibility however. It implies neither pure receptivity of hoped-for-goods nor a lack of an effort to reach for them. Rather here, we consider the good in terms of the means of attaining it, which establishes confidence in oneself and the other.¹⁸⁰ Aquinas employs one underlying psychological structure for both types of hope (*sperare* and *expectare*): a good object (which is future, great and difficult), and the accompanying confidence (in another and in oneself).

Aquinas identifies three characteristics of the virtue of *magnanimitas* that illustrate how it is a type of constructive resilience. First, magnanimity concerns the passions of hope and despair concerning doing great things.¹⁸¹ It manages extremes in both directions concerning future goods that are difficult but possible for us to obtain. Second, it has two sources of efficacy. It tends to something that is within one's own power properly, and secondary only with someone's assistance.¹⁸² Third, the object desired is a good. This

178 Cf. Werner and Smith 1986, 157; Werner and Smith 1992, 209; Meyer and Lausell 1996, 125.

179 Cf. *ST* I-II 40.2 ad 1; *ST* I-II 40.7; *ST* I-II 42.1; *ST* I-II 43.1 ad 1 and ad 2; *ST* I-II 62.4; cf. Gauthier 1951, 342, fn. 2.

180 Concerning *fiducia*, see *ST* II-II 129.6; Gauthier 1951, 344.

181 "*spes et desperatio ad aliquod bonum arduum; [...] magnanimitas circa spem et desperationem*" *ST* I-II 60.3; cf. *ST* I-II 60.4.

182 Aquinas says: "*magnanimitas tendit in arduum sperans aliquid quod est suae potestatis. Unde proprie respicit operationem aliorum magnorum*" *ST* II-II 17.5 ad 4; cf. *ST* II-II 17.1.

emotional aspect demonstrates why magnanimity is the virtue of hope (as a natural passion) for Aquinas.¹⁸³ His notion of magnanimity however is not so simple; this virtue also manages honor and excellence in human agency. Before treating honor and excellence and the way in which resilience research enriches them, we shall first confront failed magnanimity in terms of false hopes, presumption and despair.

4.4.4. Sidetracked by False Hopes, Presumption and Despair

Because of false hopes, presumption, despair and faintheartedness, we fail to accomplish fitting ventures. These unresilient dispositions represent a vulnerability to fail in constructive initiatives. But before treating St. Thomas' approach to these psychological and moral weaknesses, we shall examine psychosocial insights on the functional advantages or pseudo-resilience of non-hope phenomena, such as despair, denial and depression.

Empirical research on hardship has observed not only the efficacy of hope, but also the utility of denial and despair in certain situations. Breznitz says: "even an ineffective coping mode is better than none at all" and denial and despair can be psychological "vital signs" in an individual's struggle to cope.¹⁸⁴ He argues that the opposite of hope is not despair, but rather the absence of hope. He continues: "whereas in despair there is nothing to lose; in the absence of hope, there is nothing to gain. Despair may yet act as a motivating force for acts of despair, whereas, in the absence of hope, there is no energy left." The energy that drives acts of despair may well exist, but the moral and resilience question involves where we direct such deeds. Breznitz' understanding of despair moreover guards an element of hope and thus differs from that of Aquinas.

Researchers likewise argue that depression can have positive consequences. Pelham's survey of psychosocial studies suggests "that depressed people react to their acute distress by engaging in self-

¹⁸³ The following scholars also hold that Aquinas' notion of magnanimity is the natural virtue managing the passion of hope: Gauthier 1951; Horner 1998, 430; Schumacher 2000.

¹⁸⁴ Breznitz 1986, 303.

serving biases and striving to develop positive self-views.”¹⁸⁵ He argues that the use of compensatory self-enhancement can offset losses in one dimension of the self-concept by boosting self-perceptions in another.¹⁸⁶ Once again moral and resilience questions arise. What is the reality behind our self-concepts, especially when we “enhance” them? And how long can we consciously deceive ourselves with false-hope? If artificially enhanced self-concepts serve as short-term tools to overcome depression, we can include them in a larger context of health, realism and finality. Aquinas’ notions of presumption and other failures in constructive resilience illustrate this broader vision, but should integrate (in a developmental perspective) the manner that self-serving bias (enhanced self-concepts) may aid a long term goal.

Presumption as an excess of hope implies an immoderate expectation of what we can accomplish through our own powers. According to Aquinas, we cannot attain all arduous goods through human power. Moreover, not all humans can equally do what others can. Exceptionally gifted people tend to make others marvel by their great deeds. But humans are unique in background, training, native gifts, social network and so forth. And while we need each other’s strengths to attain our goals, it is presumptuous to think that each human can do the same job as well as another. However, presumption is not simply the sin of the weak, of those who are incapable of great things.¹⁸⁷ We can presume too much of our capacities for several reasons. We mislead ourselves by a false appreciation of our capacities (lack of self-knowledge or mistaking riches with ability or self-worth). A type of false bravery also comes through over-estimating the skills acquired through experience. Such false-hopes spring from the anger that blinds us to the larger context and to what we really need in order to resolve the situation. They also hope that we shall triumph merely because we have succeeded before, not because of any personal skill acquired through experience.¹⁸⁸ A desire for inordinate honor, glory,

¹⁸⁵ Pelham 1991, 670-1.

¹⁸⁶ Pelham (1991, 670) furthermore points out that most depressed people manage to escape by themselves (with their own personal and local resources) from their depression without psycho-medical interventions.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Gauthier 1951, 354-5.

¹⁸⁸ As Aquinas says in his *Commentary on the NE*, “*confidunt etiam nunc victoriam obtinere, non propter aliquam peritiam, quam per experientiam sint*

money or success can mislead us.¹⁸⁹ When we press such ventures beyond due measure, we doom them to failure.¹⁹⁰

In addition to false hopes and presumption, Thomas considers the ways that despair, insecurity and faintheartedness sidetrack hope and initiative. Fear produces despair and causes one to conclude that the future arduous good is impossible to attain.¹⁹¹ Such fear overrides hope, which is also weakened by laziness, impurity and depressive sadness, according to Aquinas.¹⁹²

In hoping to accomplish great deeds, we can also err through insecurity. When insecure we lack due confidence in our own excellence and abilities. We misapprehend our external resources and ourselves. Through lack of proper self-esteem, we overly criticize and thereby undercut our own efficacy. In addition to having a relationship with our genetic constitution, environmental support and interpersonal attachments, sustainable self-esteem is rooted in skill-acquisition rather than empty ego-inflation. The negative side of flattery-based self-esteem mirrors the positive traits of authentic competency-based self-esteem. The former favor violence and aggression, while the latter bolster pro-social motivation. Security, according to Aquinas, counts on an intertwined web of personal and social resources. Errors in self-inspection and evaluation of past deeds can make us fearful, even to the point of despair. Insecurity can demobilize us or, less severely, simply present undue barriers to action: e.g. as when we do not even hope for the things that are within our reach. When insecure, we do not strive for the great deeds of which we are capable; we are overcome by fear of failure or immobilized in despair.¹⁹³ This point recalls the insights of J. Bowlby and attachment theory concerning the importance of bonding relationships, as well as Aquinas' account of security and

adepti (hoc enim pertinet ad secundum modum fortitudinis), sed propter solam fiduciam, quam ex frequentibus victoriis acceperunt in *Ethics*, 1, 3, 17, 577.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. *ST* II-II 130.2 ad 3.

¹⁹⁰ In the context of theological hope, Aquinas distinguishes two types of presumption, one of which concerns the virtue of magnanimity, when we immoderately hope in our own capacity to attain an arduous good (cf. *ST* II-II 21.1).

¹⁹¹ Cf. *ST* I-II 40.4; *ST* I-II 45.2; and *ST* II-II 20.1-4.

¹⁹² Cf. *ST* II-II 20.4.

¹⁹³ Cf. *ST* II-II 129.7.

confident action that build upon an intertwined web of personal and social resources.

In the face of impressive difficulty and opportunities for excellence, we can show ourselves to be great or timid, even in minor things. Aquinas calls the latter littleness of soul or faintheartedness (*pusillanimitas*), by which we deem ourselves unworthy of things within our grasp.¹⁹⁴ In this vice of unused strength, we are discouraged by pride, fear or a lack of self-confidence. Through pride, we can cling too resolutely to a false opinion about our incompetency.¹⁹⁵ We can desist from fittingly taking on a great project, either because of fear (*ex parte appetitus*) or ignorance (*ex parte intellectus*).¹⁹⁶ Fear of failing in matters that we falsely judge beyond ourselves can cause us to shrink from the great things of which we are worthy and capable. Ignorance of our true capacities can be caused by laziness (*pigritia*) when we consider neither our own ability nor accomplish what is within our power.¹⁹⁷

Aquinas holds that we have a natural inclination to act commensurately with our capacities (*potestatae*). While presumption exceeds what is proportionate with our capacities, faintheartedness falls short of this measure. We are timid inasmuch as we have abilities, natural disposition, knowledge and external fortune, but fail to use them for excellence.¹⁹⁸ He illustrates this extreme through the parable of the slothful servant who out of fear, faintheartedly buries instead of trades with the money left in his charge.¹⁹⁹ In timid acts, one errs not

¹⁹⁴ “*pusillanimus ex animi parvitate se retrahit a magnis*” *ST* II-II 133.2; cf. *NE* iv.7, 1123b9-13; S. Th. lect. 8, 740; cited in *ST* II-II 133.1 obj. 2 and obj. 4. Faintheartedness takes various forms, which oppose the exaggerated greatness found in presumption, ambition or vainglory.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. *ST* II-II 133.1.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. *ST* II-II 133.2.

¹⁹⁷ Cf. *ST* II-II 133.2 ad 1; cf. *NE* iv.9, 1125a23-24; S. Th. lect. 11, 786. This sloth is opposed to solicitude (cf. *ST* II-II 47.9).

¹⁹⁸ “*Vel potest dici quod pusillanimus est dignus magnis secundum habilitatem ad virtutem quae inest ei, vel ex bona dispositione naturae, vel ex scientia, vel ex exteriori fortuna: quibus dum recusat uti ad virtutem, pusillanimus redditur*” *ST* II-II 133.1 ad 2.

¹⁹⁹ Aquinas refers to Mt. 25:14-30 and Lk 19:11-27 in *ST* II-II 133.1.

only by leaving our potential undeveloped, but also by not doing what benefits (*iuvare*) others.²⁰⁰

A natural moral virtue of hope (magnanimity), according to Aquinas, specifically assures a rational mean in hoping for a future good. It seeks avoiding the extremes of false-hope, presumption, despair and weakness.²⁰¹ Its finality involves truth and realism, although we may make slow progress in approaching them through well-developed virtue. Indeed the mediate steps involved in attaining everyday hopes are necessarily complex. For example, an object of hope might motivate an action that has become possible to hope for only because competing objects have been wrongly abandoned through despairing their possibility or through indiscriminate choice. Natural hope-phenomena, as illustrated by Breznitz' example, are not always normative; they can prove to be maladapted. We must rectify human hopes in terms of our mediate and ultimate goals. Aquinas offers a metaphysical, moral and psychological foundation for a further analysis of such phenomena of failed and resilient hopes.

By way of a transition to the next section, we recall that initiative taps into the emotional, psychological and intellectual resources that we find around and within us. Aquinas demonstrates that the virtues of fortitude, magnanimity and hope put these resources to work. However, other content and motivational considerations fit within the larger normative, moral and social framework. In particular, we need to consider the type of rewards, honors or excellence that drive the human pursuit of natural hopes.

4.5. Accenting Honors or Excellence?

Hope, optimism and their contraries do not explain the whole of initiative. At least Aquinas' notion of *magnanimitas* recognizes that honors and excellence play constitutive roles in human agency as well. The practical question though is: what accent does he accord honor and excellence in hope-filled action? And how do pursuing excellence and honors relate to constructive resilience?

200 In *ST* II-II 133.1 ad 1, Aquinas calls upon both Aristotle *NE* iv.9; 1125a18-19; S. Th. lect. 11, 784; and St. Gregory *Pastorali* I, 5: PL 77, 19 C.

201 On the need for a mean in moral virtue, cf. *ST* I-II 60.4.

In treating magnanimity, Aquinas borrows the structure from Aristotle, who has two readings of magnanimity. The first gives primacy to the idea of greatness; here magnanimous people consider themselves as worthy of great things; through excellence, they only do what is great. The second gives primacy to the idea of honor; here magnanimous people act properly concerning the object of honor. We need to ask whether Aquinas' conception of magnanimity is a virtue of greatness (doing great deeds) or of honor (hoping to be worthy of honor) and whether this consideration makes any difference for resiliency.

I shall start this section by addressing three questions about honors: (1) how does Thomas employ reward and honor in human agency? (2) How can honor serve as a motivator for resilient acts and dispositions? (3) How does honor relate to excellence in agency? These questions prepare us to examine the role of excellence in initiative and in magnanimity. Finally, issues related to misplaced honors and excellence will contrast Aquinas' view of excellence with failures in the virtue of hope and constructive resilience.

4.5.1. Aquinas on Virtue Guiding Honor

St. Thomas emphasizes magnanimity's rational management of natural hope. Why then should he concern himself with saving a place for honor in his treatment of this virtue? This question might not trouble one, since Modern and Postmodern disregards for honor minimalize this concept.²⁰² Honor is nonetheless one of the gateways to exploring the magnanimous person's sociability for Aquinas. Any but the most individualistic evaluations of human efforts raise questions about honor. What place of honor does Thomas accord to human efforts? Can an honor-seeking motivation be unambiguous? We miss the full depth of these questions and Aquinas' perspective if we construe honor as self-centered reference to a non-social ideal of the human being.

Studies in cultural anthropology remind us that conceptions of honor define the value that we have in our own eyes, but also in those

²⁰² P. Berger (1983, 172-81) outlines the violent abuses that people have perpetrated in the name of honor.

of others. In regards to both the ancient, medieval and modern Mediterranean worlds, cultural anthropologists have found that honor is a “pivotal value” expressed in a general honor code as well as local ones.²⁰³ They suggest that social forms of honor have varied according to cultural influences, in particular, according to a given culture’s dominant values, such as veracity, self-renunciation, loyalty or military courage.

Ancient and medieval worldviews are intent on archetypal and hierarchically ordered social roles, practices and institutions in which honor has a particular regulatory function. Both modern and Post-modern conceptions of the self on the contrary define self-worth in terms of human dignity, instead of public recognition and honor. Thus, Martha Nussbaum can re-appropriate magnanimity by simply grounding its “attitudes and actions with respect to one’s own worth” without acknowledging the place that a hierarchical system of goods play in self-valuation.²⁰⁴ Nonetheless, the social aspects of honor, as being integral to related notions such as self-worth, are essential for understanding Aquinas’ magnanimous person.

Thomas’ notion of *magnanimitas* synthesizes the rich doctrines of Aristotle, Cicero and Scripture on the finality and function of honor in human agency, especially in great and difficult deeds, but also in more ordinary experience. Does his synthesis have anything to offer us today? Following Aristotle, Aquinas identifies two virtues concerned with honors. The first involved with ordinary honors is nameless; while its extremes are called *philotimia*, love of honor, and *aphilotimia*, lacking love of honor. The second is *magnanimitas*, which like other moral virtues manages that which is great in a passion, in this case great honors.²⁰⁵ It is curious that a whole philosophical

203 According to J. Neyrey (1998, 5-8), honor and shame are the key concepts for understanding Sacred Scripture. In a historical-critical perspective, he contends that we correctly understand Scripture only by taking into consideration the local culture. In particular, we understand the culture of honor and shame through a study using the models and efforts of modern cultural anthropology in dialogue with ancient rhetorical theory (i.e. Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian), which in practice influenced the elite and the non-elite, the rural and urban populations, males and females, although in different ways.

204 D. McInerny (1997, 78-9) makes this charge concerning M. Nussbaum’s “Non-Relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach” (1988, 32-53).

205 Cf. *ST* II-II 129.2.

tradition lacks a name for the virtue that manages the ordinary honors. Does this absence mean that every honor is conceptualized in relationship to great honors, that even the unsung glory of a normal life finds motivation in great ideals?

This perspective on honor is that of the ancient world and Aquinas, who target nothing less than flourishing through human acts. In particular for Aquinas, the search for flourishing is not only great in itself, but also informs the relatively great difficulties in virtuously managing more mundane honors and shame. Thomas claims that the mode of reason observed in virtuously employing and seeking great honors is much more difficult than for normal honors.²⁰⁶ What is great serves as a training ground for lesser trials of honor and shame. People who make good use of great honors are more able to make good use of lesser honors, as well as being well-ordered in regards to dishonor or shame. We must resist the ways honor can mislead us, and avoid extreme relationships with honor.

Aquinas holds that honor has several purposes. In general, it serves as a source of motivation (as a final cause), for in order to attain honor and avoid shame, people set aside all other things.²⁰⁷ It aids in focusing one's attention, efforts and even affections. Furthermore, it has a social function (an efficacious causality), for he considers that excellent qualities should be praised in order to benefit others.²⁰⁸ We should use honor to benefit others. For example, one can translate the honors that come with a position of dignity into assistance for others. Although human honor is not the ultimate source of good, it is a useful good.²⁰⁹

Even though an ordinate desire of honor can hearten people to do good and to avoid evil, humans can abuse honor.²¹⁰ Aquinas follows Cicero in holding that the inordinate desire for honor tends to lead us

206 Cf. *ST* II-II 129.2 ad 1.

207 Cf. *ST* II-II 129.1.

208 Aquinas says, "*secundo considerandum est quod id in quo homo excellit, datur homini a Deo ut ex eo aliis prosit. Unde intantum debet homini placere testimonium suae excellentiae quod ab aliis exhibetur, inquantum ex hoc paratur sibi via ad hoc quod aliis prosit*" *ST* II-II 131.1.

209 Cf. *ST* II-II 131.1 ad 3.

210 Cf. *ST* II-II 131.1 ad 1.

to unjustly dominate others.²¹¹ Such tests of the social dimension of magnanimity contrast Aristotle's self-absorbed magnanimous person. Aquinas' sense of overall goodness does not focus exclusively on interior or personal goods or autonomy.²¹² Rather this conception of the virtue of magnanimity involves an other-regarding tension. As the crown of the virtues, it is the fulfillment of the other virtues. For Aquinas as for Aristotle, contrary to the position of Nietzsche, a person cannot be both wicked and magnanimous.²¹³ Rather, magnanimous people focus their attention totally on the goods of community and God in actions that are "beneficent, generous, and grateful."²¹⁴

According to Thomas, while we should not care disproportionately for honors, we should not care too little for them either. Reason should regulate such desires for good.²¹⁵ A deficiency in appreciation for honor can lead a person to asocial habits: not avoiding what is contrary to honor, not seeking to be worthy of honor, not honoring the good that others do, that is, a slothful inertia. A deficient sense of honor can lead us to inappropriate levels of shame as well. In general, shame functions to dissuade us from doing what is base.²¹⁶ Not only honor, but also shame depends upon social networks. According to Thomas, anonymity can weaken a sense of shame, while proper levels and types of shame on the contrary encourage us to act aright when peers support us.²¹⁷ According to Aquinas, the perfectly virtuous person does not experience shame, since he does not even imagine

211 Cf. *ST II-II* 131.2 sc.

212 Nonetheless, Aquinas does consider magnanimity as overall goodness, with a certain priority on the interior life, since the magnanimous person is fully concerned with the internal goods, which are truly great. As Thomas says in his *Commentary on the NE*, "*quia tota sua vita versatur circa interiora bona, quae sunt vere magna*" (*In Eth.* 4, 10, 777).

213 Cf. Horner 1998, 431.

214 In his *Commentary on the NE*, Thomas affirms the social import of the magnanimous person, "*Sed tota ejus intentio est circa bona communia et divina*" *In Eth.* 4, 10, 779. Cf. *ST II-II* 129, 4, ad 2.

215 Aquinas demonstrates similarities to Stoic teaching in this regard; cf. *ST II-II* 131.1 ad 1.

216 Cf. *ST II-II* 144 articles 1-4. Aquinas cites St. John Damascene (*De Fide Orth.* ii, 15) and Nemesius (*De Nat. Hom.* xx) in *ST II-II* 144.2 sc. He cites Aristotle throughout his discussion, see especially *NE.* iv, 9 (cited in *ST II-II* 144.4 sc). Cf. *ST II-II* 72 on reviling; and *ST II-II* 74 on derision.

217 Aquinas finds support for this insight from Aristotle; cf. *Rhet.* II.6, cited in *ST II-II* 144.3.

doing what is evil. In the meantime, for those developing in virtue, it serves a pedagogical function.

How do these indications on the finality and function of honor and shame relate to those previously mentioned concerning hope, despair and resilience? When Aquinas says that magnanimity is primarily about the emotions of hope and despair (rather than the emotions of honor and shame),²¹⁸ he does not discredit honor. While he defines magnanimity as immediately concerning the passion of hope (as its proximate matter), honor on the other hand is placed as the mediate object of magnanimity.²¹⁹ Even though Aquinas provides us with a key to understand how hope and honor correlate, we need to ask how he saves a place for honor.

First, although Aquinas places such importance on honor, it is a secondary object for the virtue of magnanimity. As the greatest external object of the passion of hope, honor “tends to the difficult good.”²²⁰ Even though it is not the greatest difficulty, which involves the danger of death and concerns directly the virtue of fortitude,²²¹ magnanimity strengthens the mind in hope against challenges of being worthy of honor. He says: “magnanimity by its very name denotes stretching forth of the mind to great things.”²²² This stretching forth of the mind, soul or spirit can relate to many objects and acts, including the best use of the greatest goods; it concerns, all virtues and being honored for virtue. Honor is the greatest of external things, that is, honor as an attestation of virtue, in particular concerning great and

218 Cf. *ST* I-II 60.4.

219 Aquinas says that “*honor, etsi non sit passio vel operatio, est tamen alicuius passionis obiectum: scilicet spei, quae tendit in bonum arduum. Et ideo magnanimitas est quidem immediate circa passionem spei, mediate autem circa honorem, sicut circa obiectum spei*” *ST* I-II 129.1 ad 2; cf. *ST* I-II 60.5. Aquinas’ original insight is an innovation in regards to Aristotle’s position, which despises hope inasmuch as it implies weakness.

220 “*quod honor, etsi non sit passio vel operatio, est tamen alicuius passionis obiectum: scilicet spei, quae tendit in bonum arduum. Et ideo magnanimitas est quidem immediate circa passionem spei, mediate autem circa honorem, sicut circa obiectum spei*” *ST* II-II 129.1 ad 2. On the passion of hope, cf. *ST* I-II 40.1; *ST* I-II 45.1; *ST* I-II 60.5.

221 Cf. *ST* II-II 129.5.

222 “*magnanimitas ex suo nomine importet quandam extensionem animi ad magna*” *ST* II-II 129.1.

difficult matters.²²³ Honor is positive contact with a social realm, inasmuch as the latter can appreciate the level of honor due. Second, Thomas' correlation of hope and honor becomes clearer when we look more deeply at how they interact in his treatment of excellence in great and difficult action.

4.5.2. *Magnanimitas* as a Life of Excellence?

To seek to be worthy of honor leads one to pursue excellence. The ordering of honor toward excellence, however, is not so evident. Different schools of thought have tried to work excellence into the notion of magnanimity. Although Aristotle defined magnanimity solely in terms of a person's being worthy of honor (because of their excellence), one can legitimately ask whether honor provides sufficient matter for a virtue. Indeed, scholars have debated this issue for centuries. Abelard, for example, defined magnanimity in terms of initiative-taking and great action. Although St. Albert follows closely Aristotle's emphasis on honors, St. Thomas seems more conscious of the limitations inherent in this view. He seems to attempt a synthesis between Aristotle and Abelard.²²⁴ I shall now explore Aquinas' typology of initiative and greatness in action.²²⁵ This study sets the stages for understanding further the way that initiative-taking virtues involve a lifestyle marked by a particular type of excellence and moral resilience.

Aquinas' *Commentary on Aristotle's NE* emphasizes initiative-taking concerning great actions and enterprising aspirations,²²⁶ offering a triple correction of Aristotle. First, while Aristotle says that magnanimity implies the extension of our desire to great things,

223 *ST II-II* 129.1; *ST II-II* 103.1 ad 2; *ST II-II* 129.4 ad 1. We should not forget that for Aquinas honors are also important because they are given to God and to the best. This view of honor rectifies a disregard of virtue.

224 This synthesis can be said to find its formula in Aristotle, and its "soul" in the Abelardian current (via Philip the Chancellor and the *Moralium dogma*); cf. Gauthier 1951, 282 and 310.

225 According to Horner (1998, 433), "Aquinas, filling out Aristotle's account, manages to preserve both the minimal requirements of ordinary virtue and the maximal requirements of extraordinary virtue. The maximal is rooted in the minimal; in going beyond it does not replace, subvert, or compete with it."

226 Gauthier (1951, 315) esteems that Aquinas takes this tack only after a few hesitations about the importance to give to honors in magnanimity.

Aquinas adds a gloss to the effect that the magnanimous soul (*animus*) focuses on *accomplishing* a great action.²²⁷ Secondly, while Aristotle's magnanimous people judge themselves to be worthy of great things, Aquinas' gloss describes a type of self-esteem that comes from being worthy of *doing* great things.²²⁸ Thirdly, Aristotelian magnanimous people seek what is great in each virtue, which Thomas explains as magnanimity inclining us to *do* what is great in each virtue.²²⁹ Aquinas emphasizes a type of agency, greatness in action.

We need to ask whether Aquinas is treating only extraordinary excellence in the context of magnanimity. Some scholars affirm this interpretation both for Aquinas and Aristotle's conception of magnanimity.²³⁰ Aquinas, however, explains that "an act may be called great in two ways: in one way proportionately, in another absolutely. An act may be called great proportionately, even if it consists in the use of some small or ordinary thing, if, for instance, one makes a very good use of it: but an act is simply and absolutely great when it consists in the best use of the greatest thing."²³¹ Concerning external things, honor is simply the greatest, since it is most akin to virtue. Although it is integrally related, it is nevertheless secondary to human flourishing.

This response leaves the question of how becoming worthy of honor depends on having requisite means at our disposal and on human action. We need to have a certain security of means in order to attain great honor (*ad materiam*) or accomplish something great (*ad finem*). Aquinas describes such means not only as the good of fortune (*bona*

227 "Consideratur autem habitudo virtutis ad duo: uno quidem modo, ad materiam circa quam operatur; alio modo, ad actum proprium, qui consistit in debito usu talis materiae. Et quia habitus virtutis principaliter ex actu determinatur, ex hoc principaliter dicitur aliquis magnanimus quod animum habet ad aliquem magnum actum" ST II-II 129.1; cf. NE, 1123a 34-5.

228 Cf. *In Eth.* 4, 8, 736.

229 Cf. NE 1123b30; ST I-II 66.4 obj. 3; ST II-II 129.4 ad 1; ST II-II 134.2 ad 2; *de virt. card.* 1, obj. 15; in Boet, *De Trin.* qu. 3, ad 2; cited in Gauthier 1951, 315, n. 4 which includes references to the *In Sententiarum*.

230 Cf. Horner 1998, 436-7.

231 "Aliquis autem actus potest dici dupliciter magnus: uno modo, secundum proportionem; alio modo, absolute. Magnus quidem potest dici actus secundum proportionem etiam qui consistit in usu alicuius rei parvae vel mediocris: puta si aliquis illa re optime utatur. Sed simpliciter et absolute magnus actus est qui consistit in optimo usu rei maximae" ST II-II 129.1.

fortuna), riches or power, but also friends.²³² As in the case of virtue in general, which involves a level of self-sufficiency,²³³ magnanimity employs external means and engages human relationships in order to act more expeditiously,²³⁴ remaining nonetheless detached from these external goods. The magnanimous person is unwavering by their presence or absence, neither rejoicing at obtaining them, nor grieving at losing them, except in the case of friendship. He esteems them as useful for accomplishing virtuous deeds and living a virtuous life.²³⁵

The magnanimous person tends toward doing great deeds in regards to any virtue,²³⁶ in seeking all human goods,²³⁷ thereby he tends to what is worthy of great honors. For Aquinas, since honors are due to every virtue, magnanimity concerns all the virtues.²³⁸ He in effect holds that a magnanimous person tends toward what is excellent and shuns what is defective.²³⁹ One does acts of beneficence, generosity and gratefulness,²⁴⁰ because they are excellent things to do; one disdains the contrary because they are not fitting to true excellence and greatness.

Aquinas also distinguishes magnanimity, as a general virtue,²⁴¹ which has a certain priority in a sphere of human agency. The cardinal

²³² “*quia per divitias et potentiam et amicos datur nobis facultas operandi*” ST II-II 129.8; cf. Aristotle *NE* i.9, 1099a32 - b7; *S. Th. lect.* 13 n. 163; ST I-II 4.7-8.

²³³ Aquinas’ source here is Seneca, *De Ira* i: *De vita beata* xvi.

²³⁴ “*Indiget tamen his exterioribus bonis ad hoc quod expeditius operetur*” ST II-II 129.8 ad 1.

²³⁵ Cf. ST II-II 129.8, ad 2 and ad 3.

²³⁶ “*Et inde est quod magnanimus intendit magna operari in qualibet virtute: inquantum scilicet tendit ad ea quae sunt digna magno honore*” ST II-II 129.4 ad 1. As such, it is a special virtue as establishing the mode of reason in a determinate matter of honors.

²³⁷ Cf. *De malo* 8, 2; ST I-II 84.2; ST II-II 162.2. ad 4.

²³⁸ He says: “*Sed quia honor est cuiuslibet virtutis praemium, ut ex supra dictis patet: ideo ex consequenti, ratione suae materiae, respicit omnes virtutes*” ST II-II 129.4; cf. ST II-II 103.1 ad 2.

²³⁹ “*magnanimus tendit ad magna, consequens est quod ad illa praecipue tendat quae important aliquam excellentiam, et illa fugiat quae pertinent ad defectum. Pertinent autem ad quandam excellentiam quod aliquis bene faciat, et quod sit communicativus, et plurimum retributivus*” ST II-II 129.4 ad 2.

²⁴⁰ “*beneficent, generous, and grateful*” ST II-II 129.4 ad 2; cf. Horner 1998, 433.

²⁴¹ There are three general virtues of the moral life that serve the highest goals of the natural order: the greatness of man (magnanimity), the good of the community (justice) and the honor of God (religion). Each embraces harmoniously all the other virtues and directs them to its end, in the order of

virtues have neither an absolute priority nor primacy in all regards. Rather, repeatedly Thomas introduces the case of magnanimity in order to show that other virtues can be greater in different ways.²⁴² Being a general virtue is one such distinction of greatness that he gives to magnanimity.²⁴³ It might well entail an aspect of constructive resilience. When discussing general virtues, Aquinas differentiates between three types of generality: genre, cause and effect.²⁴⁴ He specifies that magnanimity is a general virtue as a universal cause of other virtues. It is like the sun, which is the general cause of all that grows. Such a general virtue extends its influence over the whole moral life. This extension is possible for the virtues whose ends are high enough to embrace the ends of other virtues. They thereby command the other virtues to serve this higher end.²⁴⁵ Beyond this ordinary sense of magnanimity, Aquinas remarks that magnanimity has a universal effect, inasmuch as it needs many other virtues to operate in fulfilling its condition. As a universal effect, it adds an extra allure to the beauty of all the virtues. The virtue of magnanimity confirms the mind in “hoping for or obtaining the greatest goods.”²⁴⁶ Such firmness of mind is a quality present in every virtue, but chiefly in virtues tending to a difficult good (*arduum*). This firmness concerns both magnanimity and fortitude, the latter of which serves as a virtue-type

acquired virtue. At the level of grace, the infused virtue of magnanimity is completed by theological hope and charity. Charity is the general virtue par excellence for the Christian. It orders the whole life to its goal of God as Father and as Friend, and leads infused magnanimity to seek greatness by friendship with God. Cf. Gauthier 1951, 370-1.

242 Cf. *ST* I-II 61.3; see list Gauthier 1951, 364, footnotes 1 and 2.

243 According to Gauthier (1951, 364-67), before Aquinas, medieval theology used the following notions as more or less synonymous: “principal” (from Chrysippus), “general” (from the Stoic school) and “cardinal” (used after St. Ambrose). Aquinas distinguishes these terms in his *Summa theologiae* in order to indicate different sorts of primacy, which can apply to the same virtue: (1) Cardinal Virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. (2) General Virtues: prudence, justice, magnanimity, obedience, religion, and so on.

244 Cf. *ST* I-II 46.1.

245 This general virtue must then be a special (or proper) virtue with its specific end, to which it then orders a large number of other virtues (cf. *ST* II-II 58.6; cf. *in III S.*, d. 9, qu. 1, a. 1 qle 2).

246 “*in maximis bonis sperandis vel adipiscendis, ad quae confirmat animum magnanimitas*” *ST* II-II 129.5.

for the former.²⁴⁷ These qualities entail general aspects that also constitute a person's moral resilience.

In brief, natural magnanimity tends toward obtaining a great good (*attingere ad magnum bonum*) and demands focused concentration. It is a virtue of intensity whereby we give our whole potential by mobilizing personal and social resources using the movement of hope for action. Magnanimity accepts not only the risk of death, but more generally the risk inherent in seeking greatness in all virtue, in every initiative of both major and minor scale. It has the hope of triumph or success.²⁴⁸ Through ordinary magnanimity we have the *habitus*, even while not having the opportunity for a great act (which would in turn make one worthy of great honor). Thomas' interpretation of magnanimous hope is the hope of being honored for excellence in virtuous action. This view construes magnanimity as a disposition aimed toward more than singular acts, but rather toward a life of excellence and resilience.²⁴⁹

4.5.3. Misplaced Excellence: Vainglory and Ambition

Misplaced excellence is a danger endemic to worthy projects. The emotional and intellectual energy that drives us to excellence can lead us to impasses, excesses and vulnerability. Such failed-resilience is as much a social issue as it is an individual and moral one. Thomas identifies the classic pitfalls to initiative-taking as the vices of vainglory (*inania gloria*), ambition (*ambitio*) and false-humility (*pusillanimitas*). We can enrich his understanding of the possible failings in human initiative with resilience insights both on individual and social planes.

Competency and excellence ordinarily call forth praise. We receive rightful praise as a result of individual or joint efforts: in completing a worthwhile project (achieving peace in the midst

247 Fortitude needs strength of spirit in the face of death, while magnanimity needs strength of spirit in the face of the difficulty of the task and the greatness of the good to be conquered. They both actualize the same type of virtue, but fortitude in a more complete way, making it the virtue-type and magnanimity the lesser image of this model (cf. *ST II-II* 129.5; and *ST II-II* 129.6 ad 3).

248 Cf. *ST II-II* 128, ad 3, Labourdette 1962, 25-6.

249 Cf. Labourdette 1962, 29.

conflict), in overcoming major difficulty (rebuilding after disaster) or in attaining noteworthy qualities (breakthroughs in science and medicine). Morally and socially speaking should we long for such praise? What good purpose can it serve? And what are the risks associated with it?

Glory itself is an effect of honor and praise, which make known the excellence of a person, according to St. Thomas.²⁵⁰ Being glorified means being brought into the light (*clarificari*),²⁵¹ which makes known one's qualities either to the multitude, to a few or to oneself. It involves social recognition as well as self-knowledge. Aquinas both illustrates the positive side to glory and investigates the means by which we should seek it.

First for Aquinas, glory is basically good, true and useful. Glory's utility does not degrade its true-value or goodness. It should be sought for the good of others. Indeed, glory can edify others, who see the effect of the excellent things done by the person who receives it. Second, glory serves to motive one's own actions, to better oneself and to strive one's utmost.²⁵² Although both true glory and vainglory can motivate good works, Thomas nonetheless considers the works of vainglory not to be truly virtuous. The aim of the latter is vacuous self-pleasure.²⁵³ All told, Aquinas affirms that we should not primarily seek human praise and glory in themselves nor strive for the pleasure that they bring; they nonetheless aid us to persevere in goodness, seek to better ourselves and edify our neighbor.²⁵⁴

According to Aquinas, seeking praise and glory for our own excellence can go astray in two extremes that he calls vainglory or ambition and false-humility (*pusillanimitas*), the latter of which was

250 Cf. *ST* II-II 132.1-2; *ST* II-II 103.1 ad 3. In *ST* II-II 132.4 ad 2, he says that honor and praise cause glory (as their end) as a renown (*notitia*) in the knowledge of others.

251 Aquinas (cf. *ST* II-II 132.1) quotes Augustine's Commentary *super Joan.* tracts: 82, 1 (re: 15:8); 100, 1 (re: 16:13); 104, 3 (re: 17:1) *PL* 35, 1842-43, 1891, 1903.

252 In this regard, Aquinas (*ST* II-II 132.1 obj. 2) cites Cicero: "*omnes ad studia impelluntur gloria*" (*de Tusc. Quest.* I, 2).

253 Thomas follows Augustine (cf. *De Civ. Dei* 5, 12, 4; *PL* 41, 156) whom he cited in *ST* II-II 132.1 ad 2 and ad 3; cf. *ST* II-II 103.1 ad 3 on the distinction between honor, praise and glory.

254 Cf. *ST* II-II 132.1 ad 3.

discussed earlier. In vainglory, we err in manifesting excellence²⁵⁵ and precipitate instead related vices. Aquinas outlines three types of desire for vainglory: one concerns unworthy things (when we overestimate the value of something frail and perishable), another comes from uncertain sources (when we overrate judgments from fallible human sources) and the third lacks a due end (when it does not also reflect its ultimate source and contribute to the common good).²⁵⁶

Secondary (but important) risks accompany a desire for glory. First, a disordered passion for vainglory might enslave our minds.²⁵⁷ We can ask, what is the long-term resilience of the human glory acquired through non-truth and injustice? When politicians fall because of wrongdoing, through which they acquired popularity at the polls, we see that once revealed misdeeds bring dishonor and vulnerability at individual and social levels. Second, we run the risk of developing a disposition toward other vices, especially pride, self-complacency, presumption and over self-confidence.²⁵⁸ In this tradition, pride (*superbia*) denotes an “inordinate desire of excellence,”²⁵⁹ and is considered an utmost danger. Aquinas enumerates vainglory as one of the seven capital vices (or as the queen of all the vices) and identifies seven other vices relating to it: boasting (*iactantia*), love for novelties (*praesumptio novitatum*), hypocrisy (*hypocrisis*), obstinacy (*pertinacia*), discord (*discordia*), contention (*contentio*) and disobedience (*inobedientia*).²⁶⁰ These dangers pertain to every effort, which we can do well and which can occasion public recognition.

Aquinas distinguishes vainglory from ambition (*ambitio*). The ambitious person seeks honors for excellent qualities that he does not

255 “*Finis autem inanis gloriae est manifestatio propriae excellentiae*” ST II-II 132.5; cf. ST II-II 132.1; and ST II-II 132.4.

256 Cf. ST II-II 132.1.

257 Aquinas quotes Cicero who says that: “*cavenda est gloriae cupiditas: eripit enim animi libertatem, pro qua magnanimis viris omnis debet esse contentio*” Off. I.20; cited in ST II-II 132.2 sc.

258 Cf. ST II-II 132.1 ad 1; ST II-II 132.4; ST II-II 132.3 ad 3.

259 “*Superbia enim [...] importat inordinatum appetitum excellentiae*” ST II-II 132.4; cf. ST II-II 162.1-2.

260 ST II-II 132.5. Thomas finds support here from St. Gregory the Great, as he does in regards to the analysis of other failures in virtue. Aquinas cites Gregory’s *Moralia in Job* (chapter 31: PL 76, 621 A); cited in ST II-II 132.4 sc and *corpus*, and ST II-II 132.5 sc.

possess or deeds that he did not do. We might seek recognition for superior knowledge through plagiarizing an essay or cheating on an exam. We might seek honor from inappropriate sources or for compromising reasons. Aquinas is however quite aware that honor and glory motivate people both in doing good and in avoiding evil. In this regard, he quotes Cicero who says that: “honor fosters the arts.”²⁶¹ We can nevertheless rightfully wonder about the disproportionate (blind or shallow) honor that society and the media sometimes give to entertainers, sports stars and politicians who indeed have certain excellent qualities, and can symbolize the hopes and dreams of youth and nations. Aquinas would consider that the honor attributed because of artistic, technical, popular or financial success is unworthy of being desired, unless it is rooted in virtue and used toward higher goals.²⁶²

In order to avoid such pitfalls and acquired vulnerabilities, magnanimous people glory neither in little things (as true as they may be) nor in human opinion (truth is of the utmost importance) nor in an excess of glory in rapport with their desserts and certainly not in contending for vainglory.²⁶³ Rather the magnanimous are solidly rooted in honesty and flee self-complacency. For this reason, they shun not only false-humility (which concerns the intellect) and vainglory (concerning social recognition), but also isolationism and individualism. According to Aquinas, we should use glory in moderation and only for good ends. Indeed through being acknowledged by others, one “acquires clarity” (*redditur clarus*),²⁶⁴ which one must in turn reflect on its sources. This social dimension of resilience and vulnerability is more profound and extensive than at first sight. It entails a social dimension of virtue, which consists of the person’s proper relationship to reality and social networks, as well as the way that the social entourage gives recognition to its members in order to motive their growth in excellence.

²⁶¹ *De Tusc. Quest.* 1; cited in *ST* II-II 131.1 obj. 3. He also quotes Aristotle and Sallust in this regard.

²⁶² Cf. *ST* II-II 131.1 ad 3.

²⁶³ Cf. *ST* II-II 132.2 ad 1, ad 2 and ad 3.

²⁶⁴ “*ex hoc enim quod aliquis laudatur, vel quaecumque reverentia ei exhibetur, redditur clarus in notitia aliorum*” *ST* II-II 132.2.

4.6. Conclusion: Constructive Resilience and Virtues of Initiative

Courage and resilience entail more than the management of fear in the face of danger. They empower us to overcome the obstacles involved in constructive human acts with concentration and hope, as well as a drive for flourishing. By doing something rather than nothing, we expose ourselves to the risks of failure. Likewise, when pursuing excellence in great and small projects, we multiply the need for resilience in the face of opposition. We demonstrate another facet of fortitude and another facet of resilience: constructive resilience and virtues of initiative.

Considerations of constructive resilience have enriched our study of Aquinas' approach to the initiative-taking virtues of magnificence and magnanimity. Placed in dialogue, resilience research and his virtue theory aid us to understand how humans build life in the face of difficulty and face the difficulty of building. In order to accomplish endeavors, we employ our emotional and intellectual dispositions. We engage our emotions of hope and assertiveness. We manage our desires for excellence, honor, confidence and security. At the same time, we overcome the counter-forces found in insecurity, presumption, timidity, meanness, vainglory and ambition.

Resilience research enhances Aquinas' conception of magnanimity through its insights on optimism and hope. Through initiative-taking virtues, we mobilize hope and daring in an active and constructive resilience. These virtues are more than simple coping responses to different kinds of stress, challenge or loss. We can differentiate them according to their sources of motivation: the quality and finality of goals, competencies and dispositions. Social support from family, friends and society can also make us optimistic and trusting in people's assistance. Hope and motivation underlie human agency. Our motivation increases with hopefulness and more hopeful people are motivated to attain more challenging and more numerous goals. On the contrary, when friends and family fail us, we acquire a sense of pessimism and distrust. Social and personal insecurity can also hinder our endeavors.

The efficacy, purpose and resilience of another type of initiative revolve around generosity and magnanimity in Aquinas'

language. Evolutionary psychology offers insights on the impact that resource management styles—such as generosity, sharing and status-promotion—can have on human development and survival. It offers benefits such as returned energy, acquired fitness and offspring survival. Aquinas, in contrast, situates generosity and magnanimity in the larger framework of truth, goodness, honor and excellence. He measures the use of resources in terms of their contribution to the common good, personal flourishing and a veritable search for honor that depends on the verity of the excellence sought. This perspective might or might not serve the survival advantage of individuals (and their gene-pools) in a particular historical-cultural crisis. It demonstrates that virtue theory and resilience theory do not always have the same norms. Indeed, the measure of success determines outcome appraisals.

Aquinas offers insights into the misplaced searches for excellence, like vainglory, ambitiousness and false-humility that counteract constructive resilience. He promotes a type of initiative (magnanimity and magnificence) that finds its roots in a truth-seeking estimate of our own resources and need for assistance. This type of initiative promotes resilience in several ways. It avoids the vulnerability endemic in false self-esteem, timidity and other-blaming. It involves a social relationality that seeks human flourishing while building up the common good. It discerns our own capacities and limits, as well as the assistance offered through social circles. A magnanimous disposition courageously stretches us from strength to strength, while it resists overstepping rational limits. It maximizes the investment of time and energy in great and seemingly little things. It focuses collaborative human agency on necessary goals, while recognizing that lesser goals might not be achieved.

Aquinas' approach to the natural virtues of initiative finds challenges and enhancement from input on constructive resilience. The latter offers useful insights especially concerning the management of stress and daring, as well as the effects of coping, hope and optimism in human agency. Thomas for his part offers a stable yet flexible framework, which demonstrates a capacity to assimilate insights from the psychosocial sciences. For Aquinas, we act resiliently when we enact a moral good or avoid an evil. In this context, great initiatives are

synonymous with a lifestyle that seeks moral excellence and employs constructive resilience. This synthesis contributes a positive psychology that involves moral parameters for human initiative.

Chapter Five.

Resistant Resilience and Aquinas' Virtues of Endurance

5.1. Introduction: The Virtues and Emotions of Resisting and Enduring

In order to resist the destructive effects of adversity, we need to master the emotions and dispositions that underlie endurance. As mentioned previously, for Aquinas, the soul employs two distinct but interrelated types of action in confronting difficulty. The initiative-taking virtues (*aggredi*) clearly involve action. The virtues of enduring and resisting (*sustinere*) nonetheless also require action and a disposition to act. In the latter case, humans are not passive. We endure the difficulty, hold firm in the good, resist self-destruction and persist until we accomplish our goal. Thomas clarifies these movements as belonging to two distinct virtues: patience and perseverance.¹ These virtues are key elements in his virtue theory and in understanding moral and spiritual resiliency and vulnerability.

We need to pose several questions in order to identify how resilience research enhances Aquinas' thought on these virtues. When do patience and perseverance signify vulnerability and unresilience? On the one hand, when do they denote resilience? In this chapter, I first focus on the types of emotion and action related to resistance and endurance in Aquinas' virtue theory and resilience research. I examine their analyses of the emotions of sorrow and suffering and the actions related to waiting and standing firm. Secondly, I explore the typology of the enduring virtues and resistant resilience. The virtues concern primarily patience and perseverance, and in a secondary way longanimity and constancy. The psychosocial research offers observations and insights on the anatomy and management of pain, sorrow, suffering and loss. In dialogue, these two perspectives enrich each other. Lastly, I investigate strategies for managing sorrow and pain, and Aquinas' notion of virtuous sorrow. The bottom line is: how do moral virtues of patience and perseverance enable us to actively

¹ Cf. *ST* II-II 128; *III Sent.* 33, 3, 3.

endure hardship and wait for the accomplishment of the good? And how does resilience research enrich this understanding?

5.2. Emotions related to Sorrow, Suffering and Waiting

How do the virtues of patience and perseverance manage the emotions related to suffering, waiting and loss? In order to answer this question, I shall identify the typologies of pain and suffering supported by Aquinas and the psychosocial sciences. We shall attempt to enhance Thomas' view of patience, perseverance, long-suffering and constancy with psychosocial analyze of the emotional component of resilience and vulnerability phenomena.

5.2.1. Resilience and Social Sciences on Pain and Suffering and Loss

What do resilience research and the psychosocial sciences, in particular psychoanalytical theory, and neurochemical and developmental sciences, indicate about human reactions to pain, suffering, waiting and resistance? As discussed in chapter two, pain, suffering and loss can have destructive as well as steeling effects on humans. E. J. Anthony has documented this phenomenon in regards to children who seem to have become capable of mastering life and its obstacles in the midst of painful episodes.² We need to differentiate the sources of human pain and suffering, as well as the risks and opportunities that spring from them. Without being limited to it, I shall structure resilience phenomena using E. Erikson's typology of human suffering, which purports three levels: physical pain, psychological anxiety and social panic.³ How can suffering and pain prove to be sources of risk or opportunity for resilience at these three levels?

On the organismic plane, experiences of physical suffering can lead to heightened thresholds of pain. This adaptation can have several effects. It can aid us to not be distracted from more important goals by physical pain and discomfort. It nonetheless can open us to

² Cf. E. J. Anthony 1987, 180; Wills et al. 1996, 108; Lösel 1994, 9.

³ Cf. E. Erikson 1985, 36. This psychoanalytical perspective is based on his conception of a human being in terms of three continuously interrelating processes of organization: as a physical organism, as a psychological ego and as a member of society. We discussed this more extensively in chapter three.

vulnerability when pushed too far. This capacity is detrimental when, for example, a premature baby's ability to support pain leads him to unresilient behavior, including not avoiding excessive amounts of physical pain and the bodily damage and danger that accompanies it.⁴

The types of psychological suffering are numerous: anxiety, phobias, loneliness, loss and so on. Resilience research has found that personality types and developed emotional styles present themselves as added risks or protection for certain kinds of suffering, as discussed earlier. First, timidity, for example, involves added risk of suffering anxiety due to having an easily aroused neurochemical circuitry, to avoiding unfamiliar situations and to shying away from uncertainty. However, timidity can be a source of resilience when shy behavior protects someone from marked dangers of a violent neighborhood or from contact with dangerous strangers. It can aid someone in focusing to accomplish tasks that are more amenable to their personality strengths. In a pacific ambience on the contrary, it can however spell isolationism and missed opportunities.⁵ According to D. Goleman, timid children are at higher risk for developing anxiety disorders, like panic attacks.⁶

Second, the emotion of fear can have positive and negative effects on human psychological well-being. Fear is crucial for survival, aiding our perception of dangers, as well as avoiding and even overcoming them. Misplaced fears on the contrary are counter-resilient. According to Goleman, they involve the more ordinary suffering of daily frets, angst and worries, as well as pathological extremes of phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorders and the like.⁷ Lastly, types of psychological suffering come from a heightened threshold of psychological discomfort. They can open us to vulnerabilities, as when co-dependent persons unnecessarily abide excessive psychological suffering.⁸ However, resistance to

4 Cf. C. Petit et alia, 1996, 3045-6.

5 Cf. Cowan, Cowan and Schulz 1996,10; Consortium 1994, 275.

6 Cf. D. Goleman 1995, 218.

7 Cf. D. Goleman 1995, 297.

8 This vulnerability is only one aspect of dependent and co-dependent people's suffering. Cf. M. Beattie 1987; P.-Y. Albrecht and J. Zermatten 1994;

psychological suffering also gives us endurance in pursuing a difficult good.

We also confront social sources of suffering, like parental favoritism, family violence, discrimination, social injustice and so forth. According to N. Watt, children of divorced parents suffer from immediate disruptions and parental hostility (violence), and further progressive costs from latent psychological insults, such as: loss, estrangement or tarnishing of primary identification figures, disintegration of family structure, sentiments of social stigma and isolation, and excessive challenges like prematurely imposed self-reliance.⁹ Social injustices produce suffering and vulnerability at family and extra familial level, as when parents display favoritism among children, or when children suffer prejudices in school. M. Tousignant estimates that such phenomena are cumulative factors for already vulnerable children becoming even more so.¹⁰ An added risk arises from excessively supporting pain through social passivity.

The capacity to persist in difficulty can be risky *in extremis*; it can also promote resilience when rationally measured for a good end. In the second regard, we can avail ourselves to numerous fitting pathways to a goal. Yet it might be more resilient to take another tack or even to stop for sometime, before taking up a difficult pursuit. Researchers demonstrate that strategies of rest, humor, and play facilitate long-term effects of coping with a difficult situation, task or goal. These strategies actually contribute to solving problems that cannot be resolved in more conventional ways.¹¹ Furthermore, attachment researchers have positively correlated attachment and confidence in challenges. Lutkenhaus' experiment on the tower building performance of three-year-old infants who were securely or insecurely attached found that securely attached children tended to speed up under pressure, whereas insecurely attached children tended to slow down. According to M. Rutter, this tendency implies that "secure attachments led to a sense of confidence in their ability to meet

9 According to N. Watt (1990, 300), divorce spells the opportunity for both acquired vulnerability and resilience.

10 Cf. M. Tousignant 1998, 64. According to E. Erikson (1985, 36), as members of society, humans are susceptible to the group's panic.

11 Cf. G. Eisen 1988.

challenges, whereas insecurity was followed by a tendency to give up under pressure.”¹² These findings suggest that the quality of our perseverance finds roots in our strategies, not only conventional cognitive goals and volitional approaches, but also those underestimated resources found in rest and humor, play and interpersonal attachments. Once again these strategies and resources show themselves to be important for the quality of life and efficacious goal achievement.

I shall put this typology of suffering and persisting, and their correlation with resilience into dialogue with Aquinas’ approach to the management of suffering through the virtue of patience, and of active waiting through the virtue of perseverance. These strategies will also return in the upcoming section on strategies of treating pain and suffering in patience, and managing waiting and resisting in perseverance and other resilience techniques.

5.2.2. Aquinas’ Typology of Sorrow and Suffering

What are Aquinas’ framework, conception and typology of sorrow and suffering? How does the preceding psychosocial analysis complete his typology of related emotions? First, I shall outline Thomas’ analysis of sorrow and suffering. His approach to the genesis and development of sorrow (*tristitia*) aids us to explore this emotion’s causes and potential for risk and resilience outcomes further. Secondly, it prepares the way for a minor comparison with the preceding psychosocial research, as well as for the upcoming analysis of sorrow’s management through the virtue of patience.

In order to understand Aquinas’ conception, we shall distinguish *tristitia* (sorrow) from *dolor* (pain). In a general sense, we might translate his term *tristitia* as both sorrow (or sadness) and pain (or suffering). Thomas identifies sorrow or *tristitia* as one of four principal passions, inasmuch as it arises from all the other passions when an evil is present or a good is absent.¹³

¹² Rutter (1990, 200) cites the research of Lutkenhaus et al. 1985.

¹³ The other principal passions are joy (*gaudium*), hope (*spes*) and fear (*timor*). In his question on whether there are four principal passions (I-II 25.4), Aquinas supports this division of the passions with the authority of Boethius’ *De consolation* (I, 7, PL 63, 657A-658A). Augustine’s list of the four principal

In his more frequent and technical use however, he defines *tristitia* as a species of *dolor*.¹⁴ Nonetheless, he then differentiates *dolor* as bodily pain, from *tristitia* as the internal suffering of the soul (*anima*).¹⁵ Pain and sorrow are the counterparts of pleasure (*delectatio*) and joy (*gaudium* and *laetitia*) respectively.¹⁶ Two things are requisite for the experience of pain in general: the encountering of some evil and the perception of this event. Sorrow, on the contrary, is the pain that is caused by an interior apprehension of the intellect or imagination. This inward pain—sorrow, sadness and grief—is both greater and more universal than the exterior or bodily pain.¹⁷

We cannot understand sorrow and suffering in Aquinas' conception unless we relate them to the good and seen in the context of the other concupiscible emotions. Indeed, while a type of sorrow is managed by patience in the irascible faculty, sorrow and suffering in general arise from the concupiscible emotions: from loving something that is good (*amor*), through desiring it (*desiderium* or *concupiscentia*), to the pleasure of being in union with the good (*delectatio* or *gaudium*).¹⁸ This series in turn has its contraries: hatred of an evil object or the rejection of a good (*odium*), the avoidance or dislike of it (*fuga* or *abominatio*), and finally pain or sorrow when a good is not attained or an evil is present (*dolor* or *tristitia*).¹⁹

Sorrow on the occasion of contact with evil is both an evil, inasmuch as one experiences something that is evil (even if only imaginary, an *ens rationis*), and a good, since being pained or saddened at the presence of evil is a sign of the goodness rooted in the

passions contains *tristitia*, but replaces *spes* with *cupiditas* (*De Civ. Dei* xiv.3.2 and 3.7; PL 41.406 and 410; which Thomas cites in *ST* I-II 25.4 obj. 1). Comparable divisions can be found in Cicero *Fin.* III, x, 35; and St. Jerome *In Ezechiel* I, i, 7, PL 25, 23 BC.

¹⁴ Aquinas says, "*sic igitur tristitia est quaedam species doloris, sicut gaudium delectionis*" *ST* I-II 35.2.

¹⁵ Thomas (I-II 35.2) cites Augustine's *De Civ. Dei* (xiv.7; PL 41.411) and Aristotle's *NE* iii.13, 1118a16-23. Cf. *In Eth.* 3, 19, 610-11, and 3, 20, 613-4.

¹⁶ Cf. *ST* I-II 35.3; Deferrari 1986, 1051-52.

¹⁷ Aquinas (*ST* I-II 35.7) supports this insight from one sole authority, that of scripture, Ecclesiasticus 25:17.

¹⁸ Cf. *ST* I-II 23.1-3; and *ST* I-II 35-39.

¹⁹ Cf. *ST* I-II 23.2, and *ST* I-II 35.2. Thomas extensively treats the concupiscible virtues in *ST* I-II 26-39 drawing from Aristotle and other philosophers, St. Augustine and Patristic sources, as well as Scriptural texts.

ordering of the faculty.²⁰ Aquinas affirms that sorrow can be good and righteous (*bonum honestum*), when it involves a proper disposition to evil. The right relationship with evil depends on the proper use of reason and will, and takes emotional form in righteous expressions of sorrow and anger, and virtuous form in patience and perseverance principally. Sorrow is caused most properly by the presence of an evil,²¹ which does not just involve the simple absence of good. Indeed, the apprehension of evil focuses on the undue and undesired absence of the particular good.²² Aquinas claims that the proper cause of sorrow is the personal experience of evil, which triggers a certain repulsion of the appetite.²³ Aquinas identifies four different types of sorrow: pity, envy, anxiety and apathy.²⁴ Each of these types of sorrow involves applying the notion of sorrow to its cause (object) or effect. This simple causal typology should not be read outside of Aquinas' realism, which includes not only physical, psychological and social realms but also the underlying moral, metaphysical and spiritual ones.

Through pity or mercy (*misericordia*), we consider the evil experienced by another as our own. In the archetype of mercy, friendship-love impels us to act on behalf of the other as another self.²⁵ In a second type of pity, we feel sorrow for the other person, because we might fall into the same predicament.²⁶ Such empathetic expressions are deeply social in nature.

Through envy (*invidia*), we consider the good experienced by another as our own evil. Strictly speaking, envy contradicts charity, which should rejoice at our neighbor's good. This vice engenders risks

20 Thomas says: "*tristitia est bonum secundum cognitionem et recusationem mali*" (ST I-II 39.2).

21 Aquinas finds support for this insight in quoting John Damascene, saying (*De Fide Orth.* ii, 12): "*expectum malum timorem constituit, praesens vero tristitiam*" ST I-II 36.1 sc.

22 Cf. ST I-II 36.1; ST II-II 136.3.

23 Cf. ST II-II 34.6; ST II-II 136.3.

24 Cf. ST I-II 35.8 corpus and obj 3, where Aquinas refers to the division of sorrow presented by Nemesis (mistakenly attributed to Gregory of Nyssa), *Nemesis*, 1; PG 40, 688A.

25 Aquinas supports his arguments with insights drawn from St. Augustine (*de Civ. Dei*, ix.5; PL 41.261), St. Paul (Rom 12:15) and Aristotle (*NĒ* ix.4, 1166a7-10).

26 Cf. ST II-II 30.1 and ST II-II 30.2.

to the social order when we seek to denigrate the good of the other or to emulate evildoers who unjustly cumulate material wealth.²⁷

Through anxiety, distress or perplexity (*angustia*), we have a certain burden on the mind, making escape from the evil seem impossible,²⁸ for example, when future unforeseen fears surpass our capacity to resist them.²⁹ The larger the source of fear and its social consequence, the more troubling the anxiety will be.

Through torpor, apathy or depression (*acedia*), we are so weighed down by the evil as to be rendered motionless, speechless and closed in on ourselves. Inasmuch as it hinders the will from enjoying some good, the presence of evil is repugnant to our movement and thus depresses or burdens the soul. The hindrance to the soul can even express itself through bodily paralysis. The strength of the sorrow depends on whether and to what degree we continue to hope to evade the evil, as will be clarified in the upcoming section on patience and hope. Aquinas adds that, in general, pain and sorrow hinder action that they produce; nonetheless, pain and sorrow serve as a type of cause when we attempt to overcome them.³⁰

How can psychosocial research and Aquinas' typology of sorrow enhance each other? Resilience research observes the emotional phenomena and their developmental trajectory. How do they lead to a positive self-organization and self-construction? Erikson's tripartite division of sources of pain, anxiety and panic from the physical, psychological and social spheres benefits from a further metaphysical and moral analysis of the structure of fear and evil. Although the immediate ramifications for Thomas' analysis of these emotions are psychological, they extend to deeper moral issues. His virtue theory is more than a phenomenology of emotional states; nevertheless it benefits from a realist, metaphysically based phenomenology, especially one focused on the resources that we need to overcome and

27 On envy, see *ST* II-II 36.1-2.

28 On anxiety or perplexity, see *ST* I-II 37.2.

29 Aquinas refers to this aspect of anxiety as *agonia* (*ST* I-II 41.4) and *anxietas de futuro* (*ST* I-II 35.2 obj 2). It is also found in the way that he (*ST* I-II 67.1) discusses fortitude's work of overcoming anxiety of evil (*molestia tolerandorum malorum*), a phrase he borrows from Augustine's *De Trin* (XIV.9; PL 42.1046).

30 Cf. *ST* I-II 37.3, and *ST* I-II 37.2.

to resist adversity. Aquinas' approach to virtues leads us to inquiry into the way that humans can develop dispositions to act more responsibly. Psychosocial insights about how humans can be resistant to acquiring vulnerability and to external destructive pressures must be read in a normative project: the goal of human growth in excellence its contribution to a more just society. These reflections serve as a propaedeutic for discussing the resilience of the virtues of patience and perseverance and the vulnerability of their contraries.

5.3. The Virtues of Patience and Perseverance in a Resilience Perspective

In order to suggest some ways that resilience findings enrich Aquinas' understanding of the virtues and acts of patience and perseverance, I shall explicate his philosophical conception and typology of these virtues, and their contraries. In the next section I shall integrate some resilience insights, especially in terms of the developmental trajectory of these virtues.

5.3.1. Aquinas on the Virtue and Act of Patience

In establishing patience as one of the four parts of fortitude (*ST* II-II 128), Aquinas analyses how it principally involves enduring (*sustinere*) hardship or suffering in order that good be achieved or evil avoided. He employs the definition of patience that Cicero gives in his *Rhetorica*: "patience is the voluntary and prolonged endurance of arduous and difficult things for the sake of virtue or benefit."³¹ To this moral definition of patience, Aquinas adds the notion of managing sorrow. As introduced in chapter three on fortitude, for Thomas, patience (and perseverance) relates to fortitude either as one of its potential parts, when we deal with any minor adversity, or as an

³¹ "*Patientia est honestatis aut utilitatis causa rerum arduarum ac difficilium voluntaria ac diuturna perpessio*" *Rhet.* II.54. This text is used in the *ST* II-II 128.1, and *III Sent.* 33, 3, 3, co. In following the Ciceronian fourfold division of fortitude, Aquinas brings certain changes to the contemporary currents of thought on this virtue. Philippe the Chancellor (*Summa de bono*), for example, followed the Abelardian (*Moralium dogma*) division of fortitude in six integral parts or hierarchies dispositions (not virtues *per se*), which included patience; cf. Gauthier 1951, 272-277; and O. Lottin 1942-1960, III:160ff. and 180ff.

integral part of fortitude, when we deal virtuously with the greatest danger, specifically death for the common good.³²

Aquinas furthermore establishes that patience concerns the mind remaining strong when faced with the sorrow and suffering that comes from withstanding evil. Aquinas extensively treats suffering and pain in his moral theory.³³ We can best understand this emphasis on suffering in the context of the importance his virtue theory places on flourishing. He says that the role of the virtue of patience is to assure that “the mind be not broken by sorrow, and fall away from its greatness, by reason of the stress of threatening evil.”³⁴ The object and act of patience entail safeguarding the good of reason from the sorrowful impulse of the passions, that arises from bearing evil. Aquinas goes so far as to claim that we can develop sorrow as a virtuous good (*bonum honestum*).³⁵ Indeed, we have to wait for the possession and enjoyment of longed-for goods (especially the ultimate good). One can only understand patience’s object and act in relation to the difficulty of the good and the passion of sorrow.

The philosophical framework and foundation for Thomas’ explication of patience involves a natural virtue that raises many theological questions in the next chapter. However, for the time being, in order to dialogue with resilience insights better, I shall focus on its philosophical and psychological dimensions. Thomas’ analysis of how patience resists the disturbance of sorrow is unique and important enough that he modifies (see italics) the classic definition from Augustine’s *De Patientia*: “human patience is whereby we bear evil with an equal mind, *i.e. without being disturbed by sorrow*, lest we abandon with an unequal mind the goods whereby we may advance to better things.”³⁶ Evil and difficulty firstly produce sorrow, then anger,

32 Cf. *ST* II-II 128, ad 4, and *ST* II-II 136.4.

33 Thomas devotes 25 articles to sorrow and pain (cf. *ST* I-II 35-39), as well as the questions on courage, patience, perseverance and the gift of fortitude (cf. *ST* II-II 123-140).

34 “*quorum primus est ne difficultate imminentium malorum animus frangatur per tristitiam, et decidat a sua magnitudine*” *ST* II-II 128.

35 Cf. *ST* I-II 39.2 corpus and sc.

36 Aquinas’ insert is not in italics: “*patientia hominis est qua mala aequo animo toleramus, idest sine perturbatione tristitiae, ne animo iniquo bona deseramus per quae ad meliora perveniamus*” (*ST* II-II 136.1). Cf. St. Augustine, *De Patientia* ii; PL 40.611.

hatred, and unjust injury; we employ other virtues to manage the later three directly.³⁷ However, since sorrow itself has different sources, patience thus demands the aid of different virtues: temperance to manage the pain (as opposite of physical pleasure) that comes from the alimentary and sexual abstinence and fortitude to manage the sorrows (evil, suffering and pain) that are inflicted by other people through deeds or words.³⁸ Even so, patience has a certain perfection or excellence; thus, Aquinas interprets the letter of *James* (1:4) “Patience hath a perfect work,”³⁹ as illustrating how patience bears hardships and plucks up (*extirpat*) any related inordinate sorrow.⁴⁰

The act of patience involves not only bearing evil and not giving into sorrow, but also holding fast with a calm spirit. Patience serves all the virtues (as a general virtue) through its calming effect on the soul.⁴¹ It indirectly serves as a foundation and protection for the virtues inasmuch as it manages (*evellit*) the passions that are precipitated by adversity and disturb the soul.⁴² Patience allows us a certain undisturbed self-domination, control or ownership.⁴³ Lastly, he

37 While the virtue of patience manages and moderates feelings of sorrow, meekness does so for anger, charity, for hatred and justice, for unjust injury (cf. *ST* II-II 136.2 ad 1).

38 Cf. *ST* II-II 136.4 ad 2; *ST* II-II 72.3.

39 “*Patientia opus perfectum habet*,” as quoted in *ST* I-II 66.4 ad 2, *ST* II-II 136.2 obj. 1 and ad 1, *et alia*. Aquinas quotes often the letter of James (1:4) to illustrate the importance of patience. The RSV translation of the full verse is: “And let steadfastness (*ὑπομονή*) have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” Unfortunately, Thomas did not write a commentary on the letter of James.

40 Indeed, sorrow causes emotions like unjust injury, hatred and anger (cf. *ST* I-II 66.4 ad 2; *ST* II-II 136, 2 ad 1). Patience also has a certain perfection in being an effect of the abundance of charity, through which one bears hardships patiently (cf. *ST* II-II 184.1 ad 3). It is in this context that Aquinas quotes Rom 8:35: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? or distress?”

41 In this regard, Aquinas (*ST* II-II 136.2 obj 3) quotes St. Gregory the Great (*Hom. xxxv in Ev.* n. 4: PL 76, 1261 D), who says: “*patientia est radix et custos omnium virtutum*.” Gregory bases his homily on Luke 21:19, “By your endurance you will gain your lives.”

42 Thomas says: “*patientia, ut non perturbetur per tristitiam immoderatam; [...] patientia non permittit propter tristitiam discedere ab aequanimitate mentis*” *ST* II-II 136.2 ad 2; cf. *ST* II-II 136.2 ad 3; *III Sent.* 33, 3, 3 ad 1.

43 Aquinas (*ST* II-II 136.2 obj 2) supports this idea by quoting the Gospel of Luke (21:19): “*In patientia vestra possidebitis animas vestras*.” The RSV reads: “By your endurance (*ὑπομονή*) you will gain your lives.”

claims that patience produces pleasure as a fruit that helps in overcoming sorrow and calming the soul.⁴⁴

While patience concerns not being broken by the sorrow of the difficult effort at hand, longanimity⁴⁵ or long-suffering (*longanimitas*) describes the dimension of waiting, how we must remain and endure.⁴⁶ Longanimity relates to waiting in a way different than does hope. The expectation implied in hope does not emphasize the delay (*delatio*) of what we hope for, as does long-suffering.⁴⁷ Indeed, longanimity describes how we tend to something a long way off. In facing difficulty, it participates in the dynamic of hope as a passion (instead of the passions of sorrow, daring or fear *per se*). In this way it is like magnanimity, which participates in the passion of hope while daringly confronting adversity.

Longanimity relates to patience insofar as waiting causes difficulty, suffering and sorrow. It describes how we need strength to endure over time some difficulty for the sake of good. As it is less difficult to endure the same trial for a shorter time, so we need more strength, longanimity or long-suffering, if the trial lasts a longer time. Delay itself causes sorrow. Indeed, a delay in overcoming evil or in waiting for the good entails a certain suffering.⁴⁸ Longanimity bears the sorrow of not only facing and resisting evil but also the delay needed before enjoying the good.

⁴⁴ Cf. *ST* II-II 136.1 ad 3.

⁴⁵ I have chosen to use longanimity as the translation of *longanimitas*. This translation parallels the use of magnanimity for *magnanimitas*, in the previous chapter.

⁴⁶ Aquinas in *III Sent.* 26, 2, 2, ad 3, when addressing whether hope is a theological virtue, notes the different ways that patience and longanimity participate in the expectation of hope: “*expectatio patientiae est expectatio divini auxilii in periculis; expectatio autem longanimitatis est expectatio divini auxilii in laboribus actionis tendentis in aliquod bonum arduum obtinendum. Unde patet ex praedictis quod expectatio patientiae et longanimitatis est per participationem expectationis a spe, secundum quod virtutes posteriores participant aliquid a prioribus.*”

⁴⁷ Aquinas says: “*expectatio quae ponitur in definitione spei non importat dilationem, sicut expectatio quae pertinet ad longanimitatem: sed importat respectum ad auxilium divinum, sive illud quod speratur differatur, sive non differatur*” *ST* II-II 17.5 ad 3.

⁴⁸ In this regard, Aquinas (*ST* II-II 136.5) quotes *Proverbs* (13: 12): “Hope deferred makes the heart sick.”

In the context of his analysis of patience, Aquinas distinguishes longanimity from constancy: longanimity concerns the waiting or delay in the patient effort, and constancy concerns the involved toil. Constancy precisely refers to the toil needed in persistently confronting some evil for the sake of good, or in accomplishing some good while resisting evil.⁴⁹

This framework sets the stage for a discussion of the development of patience and resilience (later in this chapter), as well as the theological dimension (in the next one). Before continuing with a more in depth analysis however, a short summary of the virtue of perseverance will round out this introduction to Aquinas' treatment of the virtues of resisting.

5.3.2. Perseverance, the Virtue of Active Waiting

Aquinas' treatment of perseverance is akin to patience, in philosophical and psychological framework. He explores perseverance as the virtue that aids us to not weary, for we need to stay attached to the future good and to resist evil when difficulty persists.⁵⁰ Aquinas reasons that a virtue may concern difficulty or goodness, either by its object or by a special difficulty. He deems the length of time, that is, persisting for a long while, a special difficulty that demands a specific virtue: perseverance.⁵¹ He stresses the attainment of the goal, for we must "persist in good for a long time until the end."⁵² He distinguishes this perseverance from the general quality of very virtue to persevere inasmuch as it is a quality difficult to change.⁵³

Following Cicero (*Rhet.* II, 54), Aquinas annexes perseverance to fortitude as a secondary virtue, as they both do for patience.⁵⁴ Thomas construes fortitude, as a specific virtue, to outstrip

⁴⁹ He finds this notion in Cicero's (*Rhet.* ii.54) definition of patience, which concerns arduous things (cf. *ST* II-II 136.5).

⁵⁰ Cf. *ST* II-II 128.1.

⁵¹ Thomas says (*ST* II-II 137.1): "*Et ideo diu persistere in aliquo bono usque ad consummationem pertinet ad specialem virtutem.*"

⁵² "*diu persistere usque ad finem in bono*" *ST* II-II 137.1 ad 3.

⁵³ Cf. *ST* II-II 137.1 ad 3; Aristotle, *NE* ii.4 1105a 32 b 5.

⁵⁴ Aquinas borrows from, yet enriches, classical definitions of perseverance found in Cicero, Andronicus (Chrysippus) and Augustine. He (*ST* II-II 137.1 obj 3) employs Cicero's definition: "*perseverantia est in ratione bene considerata stabilis et perpetua permansio*" *Rhet.* II.54.

perseverance in the order of difficulty and the way of handling it. He subordinates perseverance, as the “endurance of difficulty arising from delay in accomplishing a good work,”⁵⁵ to the difficulty addressed in fortitude, concerning the fear of fatal danger. These virtues interrelate since both perseverance and fortitude are in the irascible appetite. In particular, perseverance moderates the passion of fear as related to weariness or failure because of the length of delay entailed.⁵⁶

Aquinas’ own definition adds, or puts an emphasis on the duration of time in a way different from classical philosophers.⁵⁷ He says: “perseverance is a special virtue, since it consists in enduring delays in the above [temperance and fortitude] or other virtuous deeds, so far as necessity requires.”⁵⁸ He notes that we shall have more occasions to persist for a certain time concerning matters of moderating pleasures (of touch) rather than the fear of death. Indeed, most often the fear of the danger of death is not endured for a long time.

Aquinas remarks that a virtue sometimes also has the same name as its act, which is the case for perseverance.⁵⁹ Thomas’ distinction between the habit and the act of perseverance is a useful heuristic tool. As a *habitus*, perseverance refers to the human tendency to complete a task, to achieve a goal or to persist in it. But we fulfill or not a *habitus* in a particular act. As an act, Aquinas specifies two types of perseverance, according to two different types of ends: a work and a life. Some acts cannot find completion until the end of life. This distinction allows Aquinas to explain Augustine’s dictum that “no one can be said to have perseverance while living, unless he persevere until

⁵⁵ “*Sustinere autem difficultatem quae provenit ex diuturnitate boni opere*” ST II-II 137.2.

⁵⁶ “*Sed perseverantia secundum quod ponitur virtus, moderatur aliquas passiones: scilicet timorem fatigationis aut defectus propter diuturnitatem. Unde haec virtus est in irascibili, sicut et fortitudo*” ST II-II 137.2 ad 2.

⁵⁷ For example, Cicero and Andronicus do not emphasize duration. Cf. ST II-II 137.1 sc.

⁵⁸ “*perseverantia est quaedam specialis virtus ad quam pertinet in his vel in aliis virtuosus operibus diuturnitatem sustinere prout necesse est*” (ST II-II 137.1). The reference, “*in his*,” is to temperance and to fortitude.

⁵⁹ Cf. ST II-II 137.1 ad 2.

death,”⁶⁰ as we shall discuss in a theological context in the next chapter. Thomas does not construe perseverance as merely a human natural virtue related to completing acts important for this life, such as building, planting and familial and friendship relationships.

Aquinas says that constancy relates in a special way to perseverance, since both refer to the same end, persisting firmly in some good (*ST* II-II 137.3). But they differ in regards to what makes it difficult to persist in this way. Perseverance specifically pertains to the delay itself, while constancy pertains to other difficulties that come from external hindrances. According to Aquinas, the delay itself is more intrinsic to virtue than the external matters considered in constancy. As mentioned before in relation to longanimity, constancy is also a matter of moderating sorrow, since it handles difficulties. In this regard, it is also associated with patience. In concerning delays and duration, both longanimity and constancy resemble perseverance, which adds the notion of completing the act, of arriving at the end.

Not much commentary on resilience is perhaps necessary here. Perseverance serves as a synonym to resilience efforts that demand completion over time: coping, conserving and constructing. Can everything that is said about perseverance be said about persisting resilience? Once again, context and finality are important to fix comparative standards. Aquinas discusses perseverance in a moral context, which can serve to expand reductionistic notions of resilience.

5.3.3. The Vices in Opposition to Perseverance

In order to expand Aquinas' treatment of perseverance and to enhance resilience research, we shall examine counter examples of failed perseverance. Aquinas recognizes two vices that oppose perseverance, as extremes to a rational mean: softness or moral weakness (*mollities*) and pertinacity (*pertinacia*). He uses a tactile image to illustrate moral weakness. Thomas deems people as *mollities*, if they are “ready to forsake a good on account of difficulties which he cannot endure. This is what we understand by *softness*, because a thing

60 “nullus potest dici perseverantiam habere quandiu vivit, nisi perseveret usque ad mortem,” *De Persever.* i; quoted in *ST* II-II 137.1 obj. 2.

is said to be “soft” if it readily yields to the touch.”⁶¹ This softness or weakness does not find its corrective virtue in indestructibility. The resilience research has demonstrated the dangers of such an exaggerated extreme.

Indeed even a strong wall will fall to the battering ram, as Thomas says. Rather this type of weakness refers to the person who does not resist or struggle in order to stand firm.⁶² Thomas claims that in this soft condition a lack of pleasure causes sorrow, when one tends to withdraw from the difficult pursuit of some good, in order to pursue a bodily pleasure. Both the intended good and the specified pleasure vie for our limited time, memory, attention and so on. According to Aquinas, a higher good or more complete goal requires a well-ordered mind, heart and affections. Pleasure, although good in itself, is sometimes desired inordinately or from unfitting sources, which would mean desiring and pursuing a lower pleasure instead of accomplishing a more important good with its accompanying, but delayed joy.

Aquinas says that softness or moral weakness can be caused by natural disposition or custom, by nature or by nurture. First, he remarks how temperamental frailties can make the mind less persevering.⁶³ We have examined such genetic or natural weaknesses, for example, in terms of attention deficiency disorder. Aquinas, following Aristotle and the anthropology of their times, judges that women are more delicate and weaker than men and therefore demonstrate a natural frailty making them less fit for toil and less

61 I offer “softness” as a modified translation, since the English edition renders *mollitiei* as “effeminacy,” which is rightly to be avoided. I prefer “moral weakness” in general, and “softness” here because of the literal context. The original reads: “*Cui directe opponi videtur quod aliquis de facili recedat a bono propter aliqua difficilia, quae sustinere non potest. Et hoc pertinet ad rationem mollitiei: nam molle dicitur quod facile cedit tangenti*” ST II-II 137.1. Aquinas cites Aristotle’s analysis of pain in terms of softness and perseverance: NE vii.7, 1150a24ff.

62 He (ST II-II 138.1) quotes Aristotle (NE vii.7, 1150b6-16), as saying: “*si quis a fortibus et superexcellentibus delectationibus vincitur vel tristitiis, non est admirabile, sed condonabile, si contra tandat.*”

63 Aquinas (ST II-II 138.1 ad 1) says, “*ex naturali dispositione: quia videlicet habent animum minus constantem, propter fragilitatem complexionis.*”

persevering.⁶⁴ Aristotle and Aquinas must be corrected in this regard, for while males may in general have more brute physical force, women demonstrate physical stamina, as well as perseverance not only in their efforts of child-bearing and rearing, but also in efforts at justice, compassion and so forth.

Second, we become accustomed to enjoy pleasures to the extent that it becomes difficult to stand lacking them.⁶⁵ Our imagination and memory are permeated with the attraction to pleasure in such a way that a greater good is either disregarded or considered out of its full context. We may still recognize the greater good as more important than the particular pleasure, but the distraction unsettles our concentration. Aquinas notes that indulgence in such pleasure diminishes the actual participation in the good. Moreover, he illustrates several types and causes of moral weakness. Some people are delicate (*deliciosi*) and cannot support toil, since it diminishes pleasure. Others inordinately seek play, relaxation or rest and are thus unable to endure toil.⁶⁶

The opposite extreme of softness is called pertinacity, in which we inordinately hold on to the good in the face of sorrow.⁶⁷ This inordinate perseverance entails a disordered consideration for the importance of oneself or one's opinion. In holding on to some good in order to seek our own glory (vainglory), pertinacious people disorder their pursuit of good.⁶⁸ In exaggerating the significance of their own views or opinions (*sententiae*), the pertinacious err. Lastly, in

64 Cf. *ST* II-II 138.1 ad 1; *NE* 1150b15. Aristotle curiously claims that these traits of weakness are hereditary with the kings of the Scythians. Aquinas additionally quotes *Dt* 28:56 in a similar regard (cf. *ST* II-II 138.1 ad 2).

65 He says in regards such customs: "*Uno modo, ex consuetudine: cum enim aliquis consuetus est voluptatibus frui, difficilius potest earum absentiam sustinere*" *ST* II-II 136.1 ad 1.

66 Thomas speaks of inordinate *ludus, remissio vel quies*; cf. *ST* II-II 138.1 ad 2 and ad 3.

67 Aquinas (*ST* II-II 138.2) quotes Isidore as saying, "*pertinax dicitur aliquis qui est impudenter tenens, quasi omnia tenax*" *Etymol.* x, ad litt. P, nn 213, 211: PL 82, 390 A, 389 C.

68 St. Gregory says that pertinacity arises from vainglory; Thomas (*ST* II-II 138.2 obj. 1) quotes his *Moral.* xxxi.45 al. 17, in vet. 31.88: PL 76.621A. Gregory is especially important support for Aquinas in regards to the theological dimension of virtues in contrast to their vices.

persisting in something against difficulties, they inordinately desire the consequent pleasure and shun the opposing pain.⁶⁹

In this chapter, I have so far outlined Aquinas' thought on patience and perseverance. We shall treat the numerous parallels with resilience and its contraries in the context of the development of patience and perseverance, focusing on the natural level in the next section and on related theological issues in the following chapter.

5.4. The Development of Patience, Perseverance and Resistant Resilience

In the previous section, I have presented Aquinas' notion of patience and perseverance, comparing and enhancing them to some extent with resilience research. I shall now address his educative strategies underlying how patience and perseverance develop as types of resisting and persisting resilience. I shall investigate resilience findings on suffering and waiting. How might this approach enhance our understanding of virtue theory and moral development in the context of patience and perseverance? Recalling Aquinas' anthropological perspective, we shall ask: What is the relationship between the desired goal, the sources of strength and the measure of our limits in these virtues? How can we develop related inclinations and emotions? Aquinas did not devote a systematic treatise to education. Nonetheless, he has pertinent insights on the development of patience.⁷⁰ He is especially astute in his strategies for managing sorrow and waiting. However, before returning to Aquinas, I shall examine the resilience research concerning suffering and loss.

5.4.1. Resilience Findings on Suffering and Resilient Patience

What do resilience approaches suggest for overcoming pain, suffering and loss through patience-like attitudes, activities and character traits? The term "patience" is infrequently found in resilience

⁶⁹ Cf. *ST* II-II 138.2 ad 2.

⁷⁰ Various questions in the *ST* relate more or less directly to patience (including the questions on sorrow that we address below) and others relate more or less directly to education (including most pertinently *De verit.* 11, 1, and *ST* I 117.1; as we discussed earlier).

findings. Although it does appear occasionally, we do find patience-like phenomena in discussions on managing pain, suffering, loss, distress and so forth. Indeed, a focus on patience-like phenomena needs to search transversally across the three resilience aspects of coping, resisting and constructing, through different schools of psychology. Here I shall focus primarily on cognitive and evolutionary psychology.

Cognitive psychologists, like R. Lazarus, M. Perrez and M. Reicherts, identify a type of coping reaction that I construe as paralleling the notion of patience. They establish a phenomenological taxonomy that systematizes coping in regards to the function and temporality of the stressor (past, present and future). The coping response functions to alleviate our discomfort by reestablishing homeostasis. This process may involve choosing high levels of discomfort in order to obtain long-term goals.⁷¹ As discussed earlier, cognitivists identify a situation-oriented (type I) coping operation in which coping reactions involve either active influence on the situation or passive (understood as a standing firm or waiting reaction) and evasive strategies.⁷² I suggest that the coping activities of evasion or withdrawal and passivity parallel patience in noncomprehensive ways. In this schema, these activities are served by representation-oriented (type II) and evaluation-oriented (type III) coping operations, as prudence, knowledge and wisdom serve patience in virtue theory. These researchers confirm that coping sometimes needs to involve what they call passive or evasive activities. This first observation starts to assemble elements for patience strategies.

In addition to evasive and passive coping operations, patience functions in cognitive appreciations to aid us to bear or to overcome suffering. In the midst of physical and psychological pain, we find that a sense of solidarity and justice (moral order) serves as anchoring experiences, which give us strength to weather the difficulty. According M. Tousignant's findings,⁷³ children who have faced the injustices of parental favoritism find it easier to cope when their siblings show compassion or suffer with them. Understanding that

71 Cf. Perrez and Reicherts 1992, 28.

72 Cf. Perrez and Reicherts 1992, 28-9.

73 Cf. Tousignant 1998, 64.

suffering is not limited to themselves, that it is pervasive in the world, permits an opening to understand that others suffer as well. This experience establishes a basis for understanding morality. Tousignant thus suggests that resilience is born out of perceptions of solidarity and a larger moral order in hardship. M. Rutter likewise finds that bad experiences as well as good ones can serve in promoting adaptive behavior and coherent self-concepts.⁷⁴

Efforts to establish appropriate types of patient relationships to pain and to our neighbor demand that we manage sociobiological inclinations. As mentioned earlier, we need to develop sociobiological inclinations involving sexuality, aggression and pain. From the evolutionary perspective, the biochemical alarms (the pain caused by particular objects) provide incentive to an organism with self-awareness to correct the painful relationship with an object, as well as to plan to avoid it in the future. According to A. Damasio, self-awareness of these alarms and avoidance of painful objects rewards us with survival advantage.⁷⁵ C. Nesson however goes further. He argues that humans can employ their intellectual functioning in order to direct sociobiological phenomena either toward destructive expressions of self or toward the bettering of human society.⁷⁶ He holds that humans demonstrate their fallen condition or moral weakness when they fail to redirect sociobiological inclinations for the sake of neighbor and instead have unreflective and simply self-serving reactions to pain. More needs to be said on this topic, especially on human efforts at putting a reasoned order between pain and altruistic projects.⁷⁷

Resilience researchers suggest that optimism and hope also help us to cope with pain and to build something positive out of hardship. They have identified some processes used by optimists to overcome suffering. First, optimism is conducive to flexibility, intentional adaptation and hope for restoration of normalcy. It involves the acquired capacities to accept substitutes, to restructure our

⁷⁴ Cf. Rutter 1990, 206.

⁷⁵ Cf. Damasio 1999b, 79.

⁷⁶ Cf. C. Nesson 1998, 451–453.

⁷⁷ S. J. Pope (1992) examines the complexity of this task, which must consider community and neighbor, family and self in an ordered ethical way. He discusses the differentiated way that humans express an *ordo amoris* (an ordering in their loves) and an *ordo caritatis*.

expectations of need gratification and to count on comfort following pain. According to L. Murphy, these roots of optimism support not only coping skills, but also the capacity to transform bad situations into good ones, to build something positive out of what is negative.⁷⁸ Secondly, according to the research of M. E. P. Seligman, a key skill of optimists is the active and acquired capacity of talking to themselves when suffering personal challenges.⁷⁹ They encourage themselves in the midst of pain and suffering; they project new goals and imagine other desirable outcomes when temporarily defeated. Optimistic strategies spell active ways to face suffering and hardship; they involve a sort of confidence that eventually we shall manage the problem at hand. This confidence in the midst of challenge, threat or loss can be rooted in different sources such as being securely attached,⁸⁰ compensatory self-enhancement⁸¹ or existential hope.

Optimist or not, one of the major sources of suffering is related to loss or bereavement of a loved one. According to C. C. David, protective factors related to facing death include: anticipation of death, a clear concept of death and previous experience of a loved one's death.⁸² These factors can help us to mourn and to recover from the feelings of grief. According to Eisen's findings, play activities aid us to adapt after suffering the death of someone as well. They promote survival by including resistance, protest and defiance behaviors.⁸³ These insights might well enlighten experiences like disability, loss of friendship or employment, and so on.

Research and experience differentiate, yet interrelate developmental tutors of patience and resilience tutors of patience⁸⁴

⁷⁸ Cf. L. Murphy 1987, 104.

⁷⁹ Cf. M. E. P. Seligman 1998/1991, 207.

⁸⁰ Cf. M. Rutter 1990, 200; Bjorck and Klewicki 1997.

⁸¹ Cf. Pelham 1991, 671. He has found that we can compensate for losses in one dimension of our self-concept by enhancing another area.

⁸² Cf. C. C. David 1994, 101 and 133. Early parental loss, however, has been found to create vulnerability to psychiatric disorders, especially when associated with risk variables like cognitive sets of helplessness and low self-esteem (cf. Rutter 1990, 200).

⁸³ Cf. Eisen 1988, 11 and 88f.

⁸⁴ B. Cyrulnik during a lecture in Geneva (HUG, 9/2001) discussed tutors of resilience, which involved mostly extreme cases—he defined resilience in terms of extreme loss, difficulty or suffering. In turn, I extend the idea of tutors to include to a type of everyday growth as well.

First, developmental tutors for patience or perseverance involve the telltale ways in which we acquire patterns of resisting and persisting attitudes, behaviors and characters through everyday situations. This process includes facing the suffering and pain, distress and waiting that come in birth, growth and death: for example, the unavoidable difficulty involved in individuation, separation, seeking justice and moving residences. From early on, temperament traits, like robustness in the face of suffering and pain, can elicit positive social responses. Such temperamental bases aid us to face adversity and to establish strong attachment relationships that in turn serve as a social safety net.⁸⁵ However, even without optimal temperament traits, social interaction and support from social groups can promote self-worth and strengthen personal resistance to external and internal negative pressures and suffering.⁸⁶ These are just examples of more ordinary developmental pathways toward patterns of resilience and resisting in the face of suffering and waiting.

Second, resilience tutors of patience and perseverance involve the more extreme situations in which we have to prove ourselves resilient through suffering and pain, separation and threats of death. “Extreme” might be “everyday” for the street child, or the refugee family. In any case, it pushes human capacities to their limits. In most every case, one already has some basic strength that he has won through everyday life to date. However, by definition, the extreme situation puts human dispositions to the test. Will the person prove resilient or vulnerable in this situation? Unsurprisingly, normal adaptation often proves solid and resilient under trial, even though not always. On the contrary, surprisingly, certain qualities that are maladaptive for normal situations seem instrumental for overcoming extreme situations. For example, the DeVries Zimbabwe famine study found that a demanding temperament and low tolerance for pain, hunger and suffering, while sources of distancing a child from caregivers in normal situations, served the survival needs of children in

⁸⁵ Cf. Werner and Smith, 1992, 192.

⁸⁶ The social development model suggests that motivation serves to protect an individual through social bonding with family and other social units. This attachment can regulate behavior according to the group’s standards (cf. Consortium, 1994, 300; Hawkins et al., 1992; Hawkins and Weis, 1985).

famine.⁸⁷ While educational projects revolve around everyday situations, the extreme situation is the locus of undesirable testing that can nonetheless provide a resilience tutor for patience and perseverance.

Although a good number of individuals resiliently overcome extreme situations having coped with pain, resisted self-destruction and even built something positive out of a negative situation, others need therapeutic intervention. In both cases, the complexity of development and trauma makes resilience theories an evolving commodity. In both everyday and extreme cases, resilience involves exploiting the numerous ways in which we find personal and social resources to affront and overcome the adversity or loss. It is difficult to distinguish these two categories too neatly, since we acquire the disposition for resilient patience and perseverance both through ordinary developmental pathways and through more extreme hardships.

I suggest that patience-phenomena spring from the three aspects of resilience: we creatively cope with sorrow-producing situations; we actively resist suffering, deformation and loss; and we constantly build out of the painful situation. Without having depleted the resilience input, we shall now use it to enhance our understanding of patience in managing suffering and adversity, and perseverance in the face of waiting for and attaining a far off goal.

5.4.2. Strategies for Managing Sorrow and Pain and Virtuous Sorrow

Before asking how resilience insights enrich Aquinas' approach, this section will examine his own strategies for managing sorrow and pain. Thomas, in his *Summa theologiae*, explains five such strategies that involve the employment of pleasure, emotional venting, receiving sympathy, contemplation of truth, as well as being refreshed through sleep and baths.⁸⁸ He first describes how pleasure can drive away sorrow. Not only the pleasures directly contrary to the given

⁸⁷ Cf. De Vries study (cited in M. Rutter 1998); Clarke and Clarke 1992 hypothesize that temperamental irritability can become a resilience mechanism in extreme situations.

⁸⁸ Cf. *ST I-II* 38.1-5.

pains or sorrows, but any pleasure in some way pacifies them. Indeed, according to Aquinas' anthropology and psychology, as sorrow wearies the appetite, so pleasure refreshes it.⁸⁹ He observes that when seeking pleasure to overcome sorrow, more people seek bodily pleasures (*delectationes corporales*) because sensible goods are more widely known than spiritual goods and pleasures (*delectationes spirituales*).⁹⁰

Aquinas holds secondly that "tears and groans naturally assuage sorrow."⁹¹ Hurtful things pain us more when we are intent upon them and when they are kept inside. Inward sorrow is lessened when sorrow manifests itself in tears, groans and words. Such action befits the sorrowful condition, accords a certain pleasure and lightens sorrow further. As true as this may be, exceptions exist and we need to avoid extreme types of emotional venting. The excessive venting of emotions like sorrow has drawbacks; especially when we cannot break the grip of the disordered emotion (e.g. being inconsolable). An expressive, yet self-soothing and corrective manifestation of sorrow can put the cause of sorrowing into a larger perspective.

The sympathy of friends thirdly brings consolation to the sorrowing in two ways. The heavy, depressing effect is lightened, through other people helping to bear the burden. Furthermore, the love expressed through a friend's sympathetic sorrowing serves as a source of pleasure, which sedates the sorrow. In both these regards, Aquinas acknowledges the importance of social bonding, the highest and most pervasive form being friendship-love.⁹²

Fourth, Aquinas holds that the contemplation of truth, which is the greatest of all pleasures, calms pain and sorrow.⁹³ Contemplation of

⁸⁹ Cf. *ST* I-II 38.1. Here Aquinas draws upon Aristotle, *NE* VII.15, 1154b13-15.

⁹⁰ Cf. *ST* I-II 31.5 ad 1. We shall discuss spiritual good and pleasures in chapter six.

⁹¹ "*Lacrimae et gemitus naturaliter mitigant tristitiam*" *ST* I-II 38.2; cf. Augustine *Conf.* iv.7.

⁹² Aquinas (*ST* I-II 38.3) here draws from the insights concerning love and friendship from St. Augustine's *Confessions* (cf. *Conf.* iv.9; PL 32.699) and concerning sympathy and friends from Aristotle's *NE* (ix.11, 1171a29-30). See also the ultimate context for friendship-love as the highest form of charity in *ST* II-II 23.1.

⁹³ *ST* I-II 38.4.

truth calms us; the higher powers of the soul influence the lower ones. Once again this action gives a form of pleasure (joy, in this case) overcoming pain, for a truth-inspired-joy lightens both physical pain and psychological sorrow. Although contemplation itself is a good (based on the natural and spiritual inclination to truth) and naturally pleasant, Thomas claims that the more a person is a lover of wisdom, the more the contemplation of truth can assuage suffering and even sensual pain.

Lastly, he notes the remedial effects of sleep and baths, which “bring nature back to its normal state.”⁹⁴ By restoring the bodily nature to its due condition of vitality and giving a certain pleasure, sleep and baths lighten both pain and sorrow. Aquinas demonstrates a well-balanced understanding of human corporality, and the effect of the body on the soul. The body serves the soul. Bodily pleasures and even simple caring for the body can help to overcome pains that are on the same level, as well as sorrows that are on another.⁹⁵ Here the reprieve that refreshment and sleep offer may be short-lived, if resolution of the problem is elsewhere. Nonetheless, it may grant us physical energy to address the more profound issue.

If we were to stop the study here, Aquinas’ strategies for managing pain and suffering might seem lacking on both psychological and philosophical levels. His five strategies for managing sorrow and pain might seem unexpectedly venial. But his understanding of human nature and of metaphysics gives these strategies further relevance. Indeed, his strategies for managing pain and sorrow are varied elements for developing the virtues of patience and perseverance. Employing these strategies in a way that orders them toward the goals that give life meaning requires prudence. Aquinas astutely uses these strategies—to which we should join the other resilience strategies earlier discussed—in order to develop his idea of

⁹⁴ “*Per hoc etiam quod huiusmodi remediis reducitur natura ad debitum statum, causatur ex his delectatio*” *ST I-II* 38.5.

⁹⁵ The classic tradition supports Aquinas’ claim. As Augustine says: “*Audieram balnei nomen inde dictum, quod anxietatem pellat ex animo*” *Conf.* ix, 12, 32: PL 32, 777; quoted in *ST I-II* 38.5 sc. And according to Ambrose: “*Quies artus solutos reddit laboris usui, mentesque fessas allevat, luctusque solvit anxios.*” *Deus Creator omnium*: PL 16, 1410; quoted in *ST I-II* 38.5 sc.

virtuous sorrow. Patience and perseverance strategies are ways to develop the ability to sorrow virtuously.

Virtuous sorrow, for Aquinas, involves a disposition to resolve situations of sorrow in the larger moral (and resilience) framework.⁹⁶ Indeed, the framework sets the standard for the type of virtue and resilience that we exercise through patience and perseverance. If patience strategies are not in rational relationship with some good, then the implied endurance of pain and sorrow will be more a hardness of heart (*duritia*) than the virtue of patience.⁹⁷ Aquinas argues that virtuous sorrow is expressed in relation to a virtuous good. It is an interior sorrow that follows a right measure and rectitude of reason and will.⁹⁸ The virtue of patience thus is not simply a matter of managing pain, suffering and sorrow; it entails virtuous sorrow. Thomas identifies virtuous sorrow as one that entails the perception and rejection of evil, either through shunning bodily pain or through a right rational judgment of the evil situation, which should then lead us to act appropriately.⁹⁹

Virtuous sorrow is useful when it moves us to expel the saddening evil, the source of the suffering. It adds another motive for avoiding evil as well. It does so in two ways. It entails avoiding things that are evil in themselves or that are occasions of evil. It also rectifies disordered sorrows, as when we rejoice at evil or when we are saddened by good. For Aquinas, we need to refine all the soul's passions by the rule of reason.¹⁰⁰ In excessive sorrow, our passions are

⁹⁶ We have taken this notion of "virtuous sorrow," from Aquinas' discussion "*Utrum tristitia possit esse bonum honestum*" (Whether sorrow can be a virtuous good?, *ST I-II 39.2*). Since Aquinas affirmatively responds it would seem that we can speak of a "virtuous sorrow" as we explain here following. He also describes how sorrow is useful or beneficial (*bonum utile*) in *ST I-II 39.3*. Furthermore, even though Aquinas does not mention "patience" in this discussion of virtuous sorrow, patience serves as the conceptual context, as the virtue implied in managing sorrowful situations well and not going to extremes for the sake of charity (in the fullest sense).

⁹⁷Cf. *ST II-II 136.1 ad 2* from a quotation of St. Augustine, *De patientia ii*.

⁹⁸ Aquinas identifies the rational and volitional dimensions of virtuous sorrow: "*In interiori vero tristitia, cognitio mali quandoque quidem est per rectum iudicium rationis; et recusatio mali est per voluntatem bene dispositam detestantem malum*" *ST I-II 39.2*.

⁹⁹ Cf. *ST I-II 39.2*. He also describes how sorrow is compatible with moral virtue: cf. *ST I-II 59.3*.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. *ST I-II 39.2 ad 1*; cf. *ST I-II 24.1*.

not properly under reason. It is patience's role to manage sorrow in general and especially when it moves us toward excess. This virtue involves rejecting the temptation to revel in sorrow. Inordinate sorrow is an obstacle to flourishing. However, cultivating virtuous sorrow does not mean that one chooses to be sorrowful *per se*, as if sorrow were a good in itself and certainly not as an end in itself. Although we can nurture the character from which emanates particular emotions, we do not choose to be sorrowful inasmuch as we do not choose the evil that is the source of the sorrow. Rather, we patiently choose and perseveringly long for the good end and the mediate good in the face of suffering and sorrow.

5.5. Some Conclusions on Patience, Perseverance and Resistant Resilience

Aquinas bases his notion of how patience naturally develops upon the dynamic interaction of human inclinations, passions and virtues. His moral and metaphysical approach, while offering enriching insights, can be enhanced by resilience research at the same time. When something impedes the enjoyment of a good for which we long, we have at least two options. We can labor, when possible, to overcome the obstacle. In other words, we seek to solve the problem in order to attain the desired good. The virtues of initiative primarily manage the acts of daring and hope required by this option. Secondly, when the desired good is unattainable, we can respond by patiently keeping our wits in the midst of the inevitable sorrow. We perseveringly hold on to our goal by waiting and wisely working on practical remedies to alleviate or mitigate the sorrow. It is through the virtues of patience and perseverance that we withstand suffering, sorrowing and waiting in the midst of our mediate and ultimate goals.

For Aquinas, the virtue of patience safeguards the good of reason. It strengthens the mind in the face of sorrow and suffering that inevitably arise from bearing evil. We need to recall two elements of Aquinas' anthropology here. First, we only withstand difficulty for the sake of some good. Second, the nature of sorrow, suffering and delay enter into direct conflict with our fundamental search for flourishing. We can understand how patience bears with the evil, does not give into sorrow and holds fast with a calm spirit, only in the overall quest for

goodness, truth and happiness. It produces undisturbed self-domination and control, as well as a joy in the process. The virtue of long-suffering specifically relates to the dimension of waiting and enduring in the midst of the delay in attaining what is hoped for, especially when it is a long way off. Constancy specifically manages the toil required in persistently confronting some evil for the sake of good, or conversely in accomplishing good while resisting evil. Lastly, perseverance pertains to the specific difficulties involved in persisting for a long time until the good is accomplished and the goal attained. It moderates fear of failure or weariness due to the length of delay in our efforts.

How can Aquinas' virtue theory on patience and perseverance critically appropriate the resilience theory and findings on suffering? Thomas' insights on virtues of enduring provide a developmental framework that has psychological, philosophical and metaphysical tenor, while not offering the last word on the study of resisting persisting phenomena or on the promotion of developmental strategies. Resilience findings aid in enhancing virtue theory concerning how humans endure difficulty or suffering, hold firm in a painful struggle, resist self-destructive pressures, wait for the attainment of good, persist until the accomplishment of some goal, and even express sorrow as a virtuous good.

The social and developmental lines of insight are especially strong in cognitive, evolutionary and social developmental sciences. Their observations of resilience and vulnerability phenomena offer both confirmations and extensions to virtue theory. The three aspects of resilience that involve coping, resisting and constructing suggest a nuanced grid through which to cull insights for the virtues of enduring. In general, the resilience perspective affirms that pain, suffering and loss can have detrimental as well as steeling effects on humans at physical, psychological and social levels. First, developing a capacity to endure physical pain *in extremis* involves the failure of adequately protecting the goods of the body within the larger scheme of human goods. On the contrary, a capacity to manage the distractive and destructive nature of physical pain and even to support immense suffering can lead to personal and social benefits. Second, different expressions of timidity, fear and suffering can have either positive or negative effects on human psychological well-being and resilience,

depending on situations and personal adaptation. Third, at sociological level, we cumulate risk through relationships and through various emotional styles that promote violence, family disintegration or social passivity. However, we acquire resilience confidence in challenges through social attachment, socially supported life projects and strategies like play, humor and rest.

Resilience theory offers parallels to the virtues of patience and perseverance. In particular, the concept of coping as formulated by cognitive psychology parallels the notions of patience and perseverance. We can use “coping” to understand how humans develop active, passive and evasive strategies to reestablish homeostasis in the face of suffering, or even choose high levels of discomfort in order to achieve a goal. Representation-oriented, and evaluation-oriented coping operations parallel the role of prudence, knowledge and wisdom in virtue theory. Some resilience research even speculates that cognitive appreciations of a moral order (e.g. sense of solidarity and justice) can aid us in bearing suffering and managing sociobiological inclinations concerning pain in altruistic perspectives. As in the case of the virtues of initiative, resilience research in the domain of enduring and resisting finds positive correlations between optimism or hope, and both coping with pain or suffering and building something positive out of the painful hardship.

Aquinas’ vision takes neither patience nor perseverance as synonymous with passivity, vulnerability and defeatism. Rather these virtues require that we actively resist the difficulty, while employing an intelligible project in order to retain a good or to stand strong against assault. Researchers have sometimes confused enduring, resisting and passivity. Distinguishing between levels of action, intention and finality however help to resolve this confusion. Moreover, we need to differentiate the battle from the war. Overall success may demand that we endure a certain kind of defeat or firmly hold far-off goals in the midst of the proximate struggle. What appears to be a passive defeat, a waste of time or the result of weakness, may be a vital stepping-stone in a larger event. To understand this type of activity, we must admit a difference of perspective. Aquinas recognizes that in the midst of a difficult struggle for the good we cannot always engage in an initiative that will immediately right the

wrong or resolve the difficulty. Sometimes we need to stand firm in the midst of an onslaught that will spell a loss on one level, in order to achieve a gain on another: losing a contract because we will only make an honest bid, losing a job in order to retain moral principle, suffering for defying an unjust law, and so on. This is more than a trade off. Patience resists the vulnerability of passivity. It manages sorrow and resists evil, while remaining resolutely attached to a good. Perseverance resists significant compromise and the vulnerability of misplaced suffering. It persists for as long as it takes to procure the ultimate victory.

PART THREE.

FORTITUDE AND RESILIENCE TRANSCENDED

In the previous three chapters, we have employed resilience research to enhance St. Thomas Aquinas' philosophical conception of fortitude and its related virtues. In turn, Thomas' approach has offered insights to enrich resilience theory. However, our effort up to the present is the last word neither on these virtues nor on resilience. Aquinas' theological considerations, which build up, yet transcend the natural virtues, take us further.

I have delayed treating explicitly the theological aspect of fortitude until now. This delay has allowed us clear terrain for dialogue between resilience research and Aquinas' virtue anthropology. The previous chapters serve as a foundation concerning his vision of human agency in adversity and the way in which resilience research completes it. By treating the theological aspects of virtue and resilience apart from the philosophical and psychosocial aspects I do not mean to imply that the philosophical and scientific domain exists apart from the spiritual and theological dimension of human life. Instead, I am following Aquinas' model (*Secunda Secundae*), which is pervasively theology in dialogue with philosophical and scientific sources. Nonetheless, in the present chapter, the object becomes explicitly theological: God as source and goal for human agency. The present theological exploration of virtue theory seeks to renew moral theology. This unequivocally theological project draws upon the philosophical anthropology and virtue theory enriched by resilience insights in the discussions on natural fortitude and its related virtues. It also recalls chapter two's theological discussion of resilience, virtue theory and moral theology.

In this theological aspect of the dialogue between resilience and Aquinas, I shall continue to explain his thought, while enriching it with resilience insights. In doing so, however, I cannot draw upon specific resilience research, as before, since no resilience studies pursue these properly theological questions. Nevertheless, I do enhance Aquinas' theological approach with the resilience perspective and a resilience-enriched anthropology; in this limited way, I appropriate the insights of resilience research in revisiting Aquinas'

thought. In turn, St. Thomas' theological insights offer a coherent spiritual worldview that invites reductionistic approaches to consider larger realities concerning spiritual coping, resisting and constructing in hardship.

Chapter one proposed a tentative definition of spiritual resilience, which now serves as a means to deepen our theological understanding of the virtues in question. Spiritual resilience takes into account the ethical, religious and theological dimensions of human resilience. Earlier I tentatively defined it as the spiritual processes that render human persons and communities able: (1) to cope actively with difficulty, (2) to resist disintegration of actual competencies, and (3) to construct positively out of the present adverse situation. In this chapter, I employ the resilience research to understand the theological dimension of virtue theory, fortitude and its associated virtues.

This chapter's subdivisions follow the anthropological structure that Aquinas uses for the virtues that face difficulty, making manifest their theological dimension. First, theological fortitude specifically concerns an infused virtue, the act of martyrdom and the Beatitude of the just. It is strengthened through the Gift of the Holy Spirit. What is the theological tenor of Thomas' conception of fortitude? Does it simply add a deeper motivation to a natural virtue, or does it specify a different act and measure of strength in the midst of fearful trials? How might we consider Christian fortitude as a type of spiritual, and more specifically Christian, resilience?

Second, Aquinas identifies theological initiative-taking as a type of Christian excellence. He distinguishes the exacting parameters for this excellence, which expresses hope, magnificence and generosity in a way we can summarize as a meek and humble magnanimity. What are the theological sources and purposes of initiative for Aquinas? What are its dangers? Can we consider it a constructive spiritual resilience?

Third, Thomas describes the theological aspect of enduring. The related virtues patiently manage pain and suffering, and perseveringly treat waiting and longing. How might theological patience and perseverance serve as a measure for Christian resilience? Can we consider Christ's passion and death an archetype for spiritual resilience or vulnerability?

Chapter Six.

Aquinas' Theological Transformation of Fortitude and Resilience

“The Lord is my strength and my song.” (Psalm 118: 14)

In this chapter, I start by investigating the infused virtue of fortitude and its relationship with spiritual resilience. How do infused and acquired virtues, in general, differ and resemble each other? In particular, how does theological fortitude underlie spiritual resilience? Second, I examine Aquinas' teaching on martyrdom. What type of resilience or vulnerability is promoted therein? Third, I demonstrate the centrality of the Gifts, Beatitudes and fruits of the Holy Spirit in understanding Christian fortitude. Once again, Aquinas serves as the prism through which we revisit the tradition. I ask: How might his theological transformation of fortitude appropriate insights in dialogue with the resilience perspective? And how might it modify reductionistic perspectives on resilience, which challenge the Christian tradition?

6.1. The Infused Virtue of Fortitude

6.1.1. Distinguishing Acquired and Infused Virtues

Before entering into the content of the virtue of fortitude, I shall address how Aquinas distinguishes acquired and infused virtue. In general, Aquinas distinguishes virtue as either acquired or infused in order to account for the interplay of divine grace in human agency. Even with his large definition of virtue, he has proper notions of how complete virtue accomplishes actions that are purely good.¹ Rather than employing Aristotle's definition of virtue, Aquinas uses a customary definition of infused virtue (attributed to Augustine) in order to discuss the perfection of virtue: “virtue is a good quality of the

¹ Cf. *ST* I-II 65.1.

mind, by which we live righteously, of which no one can make bad use, which God works in us, without us.”² Thomas identifies three characteristics of infused virtues: its object is God; only God can infuse it; and its object depends on divine revelation.³ He also differentiates acquired and infused virtues according to their final, formal and efficient causes.

A specific distinction between these types of virtue arises from what they subserve, their finality or goal: either the socio-political or the divine order. The goal or final cause of the acquired and infused virtues directs and motivates human beings. The acquired virtues aim at the good of the earthly city, whereas the infused virtues aim at acting well as members of the household of God. As Aquinas says citing St. Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, in acquired moral virtue “people behave well in relation to human affairs,” while in infused moral virtue “people behave well as *fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God*.”⁴ The acquired and the infused virtues differ according to their relation to these ends. The perfect virtues of Christ and the saints in glory spell out the content of promised complete flourishing, and thus serve to direct and motivate human efforts that are transformed by infused virtue.⁵

Aquinas specifies that the acquired and infused virtues also differ according to their formal cause, which constitutes the reasons

2 “*Virtus est bona qualitas mentis, qua recte vivitur, qua nullus male utitur, quam Deus in nobis sine nobis operatur*” (*de Libero Arbitrio*, II.19: PL 32.1268), which Aquinas quotes and comments on in ST I-II 55.4; cf. ST I-II 65.1. According to O. Lottin (1929, 371), although this definition is customarily attributed to St. Augustine, it is probably due to Peter of Poitiers in his commentary on the Sentences (III, I. PL 211, 1041). Thomas notes that this definition would be more precise if it read “*habitus*” instead of “*qualitas*.” He furthermore notes that instead of properly referring to infused virtues this definition could include acquired virtues if one deleted the phrase “which God works in us without us.” Cf. J. Porter 1998a, 1219.

3 As Aquinas says: “*tum quia habent Deum pro obiecto, inquantum per eas recte ordinamur in Deum; tum quia a solo Deo nobis infunduntur; tum quia a sola divina revelatione, in sacra Scriptura, huiusmodi virtutes traduntur*” (ST I-II 62.1; cf. ST I-II 63.3).

4 “*Et per hunc etiam modum differunt specie virtutes morales infusae, per quas homines bene se habent in ordine ad hoc quod sint cives sanctorum et domestici Dei* (Ephsians 2, 19): *et aliae virtutes acquisitae, secundum quas homo se bene habet in ordine ad res humanas*” ST I-II 63.4.

5 Cf. ST I-II 1-5; ST I-II 61.5.

that make acts and dispositions virtuous. Acquired virtues use the measure fixed by human reason, establishing the mean according to a virtue's matter. Human social nature informs acquired virtue toward human flourishing in accord with the common good.⁶ Infused virtues use the measure of divine rule (ultimately) and reason informed by faith (mediately).⁷ They operate through faith and charity, which grant a higher principle (*secundum regulam divinam*) and surer will.⁸ For Thomas, human beings can rationally participate in divine reason, as created in the image of God and guided by God's Spirit. The Holy Spirit and graced charity thus form all Christian (infused) virtue.

Ultimately, our good is eternal flourishing, being face to face with God and experiencing the beatific vision. However, natural, spiritual inclinations towards acquiring virtue, and human rational and volitional powers, cannot efficiently cause the virtues needed to obtain this supernatural good.⁹ While the natural principles and seeds of virtue are ordered to eternal glory, they cannot cause the virtues proportioned to this end. Rather here we need God's grace, the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity, as well as the infused moral virtues.¹⁰ The Holy Spirit, through the grace received in the infused virtues, perfects our natural powers so that we attain the theological object of divine flourishing and act more faithfully toward every good.

Aquinas' teaching on the efficacy of grace follows at least three basic principles: (1) that which is received into one, is received according to one's nature: "even though the divine power is infinite in its cause, and so acts without limits, the effect of this power depends

⁶ Cf. *ST* II-II 23.8; *ST* I-II 61.5; *ST* I-II 63.4. Cf. Aquinas' on the "perfecting virtues" (*ST* I-II 61.5).

⁷ Cf. *ST* I-II 63.4. I have already correlated natural and infused prudence with moral and theological norms in chapter two.

⁸ Cf. *ST* I-II 91.4 ad 1; *ST* II-II 23.1.

⁹ The grace associated with infused virtues alone causes this flourishing. Aquinas says, "*quia gratia nihil est aliud quam quaedam inchoatio gloriae in nobis*" (*ST* II-II 24.3 ad 2). That is, we are elevated to a status of salvation that otherwise would be un-hoped for and therefore unsought (cf. *ST* I-II 4.3). For Thomas, our first turning to God involves a divine act (prevenient grace) and is in no way merited by us (cf. *ST* I-II 111.3).

¹⁰ Aquinas says: "*Virtus vero ordinans hominem ad bonum, secundum quod modificatur per legem divinam et non per rationem humanam, non potest causari per actus humanos, quorum principium est ratio; sed causatur solum in nobis per operationem divinam.*" *ST* I-II 63.2; Cf. 3 *Sent.* d. 33, q. 1, a. 2.

upon the capacity of the recipient and upon God's own plan"¹¹; (2) that our operations are perfected not destroyed by grace; and (3) that we are *capax Dei*—able to enjoy communion with God—although unable to achieve this union on our own, that is without grace.

The last qualification of Augustine's definition of perfect virtue—"which God works in us, without us"—refers specifically to God as the efficient cause of infused virtues. Thomas thus identifies how human intelligent and divine sources cause virtues. At the natural level, reason and will produce virtuous acts and the formation of the underlying dispositions, as we discussed extensively in chapters two through five.¹² At the supernatural level, God efficaciously produces the infused virtues, but not without human graced collaboration. Infused virtue enables an excellence of performance that we could not assure otherwise.¹³ This flourishing is not a purely human progressive self-elevation towards God. Rather, it entails a two-fold action: a Gift from God and a response of the believer. First, God's gift involves calling us into union with Himself. This union is primarily His movement toward and presence in us, rather than our moving ourselves.¹⁴ His grace is the common root for two distinct but simultaneous effects: "the enlightenment of the mind and the

11 "*etsi virtus divina sit infinita, et infinite operetur quantum est ex parte operantis, tamen effectus virtutis ejus recipitur in rebus secundum earum capacitatem et secundum Dei dispositionem*" *ST* III 57.3 ad 3. Also see *ST* I 75.5; *ST* I 79.6; *ST* I 89.4; *ST* III 54.2 ad 1, and *SCG* 3, 150, ad 7.

12 However, insofar as any natural good action correlates with the Source of goodness, God is also its first and efficacious cause through a help that is typical of the goodness endemic to nature, which Aquinas calls *auxilio divino* or *auxilio Dei* (*ST* I-II 109.1 and 109.3). Aquinas moreover holds that God is the origin or first cause of the virtues, since in him exist the exemplar virtues. St. Thomas, drawing from Platonic sources through Macrobius, divides the cardinal virtues into social, perfecting, perfect and exemplar virtues (cf. *ST* I-II 61.5). Nonetheless, Augustine is the key for explaining the Christian vision of God as being the exemplar, whom humans follow in order to "live aright" (*bene vivimus*). In God pre-exist the types of all good things.

13 Cf. *De verit.* 14.10.

14 God accords His gift by becoming present to us, by giving us the gift of grace through which He raises us into a new adoptive relationship with Himself. Cf. Eph 1:5f; *ST* I 20.2 ad 3, and *ST* I-II 110.1; "*Et ideo procedit ipse in nos et dona ipsius: quia et dona ejus recepimus, et per eadem ad ipsum nos aliter habemus, inquantum per dona ejus ipsi Spiritui sancto conjungimur, per domum nos sibi assimilanti*" *I Sent.* d. 14, q. 2, a. 1, s. 1; cf. *ST* I 43.5.

enkindling of the affections.”¹⁵ This “God-like form” given to the believer through grace is not something other than the perfecting of what God started in creating us.¹⁶ Humans are created toward God’s image in that we have an intelligent nature, comprised of both reason and will. We imitate God most completely when we emulate “God’s understanding and loving of himself.”¹⁷

A second aspect of transformation in the image of God entails our being capable of receiving grace and *capax Dei*,¹⁸ as well as our active cooperation in using the grace granted through applying our intelligence, through freedom in judgment and through progression in self-mastery.¹⁹ The divine indwelling, as well as created grace and virtue, direct and attract us in our freedom to fully return to God.²⁰ We however are not slavishly driven to believe, to hope or to love. Rather, we remain free. Insofar as it fulfills our human nature, Aquinas deems that we are freest when we choose to be in union with the one who fulfills us. The gifts of grace given to us—in which God becomes present to us in a new way—do not destroy our human nature.²¹ On the contrary, they enable us to do things that we otherwise would not (because of the deforming effects of sin) and to know and to believe things we otherwise would not (because of our intellectual limitations, ignorance and pride).

15 “*Si autem quantum ad effectum gratiae, sic communicant duae missiones in radice gratiae, sed distinguuntur in effectibus gratiae, qui sunt illuminatio intellectus et inflammatio affectus. Et sic manifestum est quod una non potest esse sine alia, quia neutra est sine gratia gratum faciente nec una persona separatur ab alia*” ST I 43.5 ad 3.

16 Cf. Gn 1:26-27; 1 Cor 11:7; Eph 4:24; Col 3:10.

17 “*homo secundum intellectualem naturam ad imaginem Dei esse dicatur, secundum hoc est maxime ad imaginem Dei secundum quod intellectualis natura Deum maxime imitari potest. Imitatur autem intellectualis natura maxime Deum quantum ad hoc quod Deus seipsum intelligit et amat*” ST I 93.4.

18 Cf. ST I 12.1; ST I 12.4 ad 3. On human persons’ being *capax Dei*, see: ST I-II 3.8; ST II-II 2.3.

19 *Prima secundae*, Prologue.

20 Cf. 1 *Sent.* d. 14, q. 2, a. 2.

21 “*Super istum modum autem communem est unus specialis quo convenit naturae rationali, in qua Deus dicitur esse sicut cognitum in cognoscente et amatum in amante*” ST I 43.3. Thus in regard to the gift of faith, our intellect is not humiliated or made useless. Rather our mind is elevated to new heights. With new knowledge of God’s existence, provident plan and promises, we are attracted to God. He draws us to cooperate in our return through living out a well-formed faith, a lively hope and a burning love.

On the natural level, our intellect starts with the first universal principles to truth and our will begins with a natural tendency toward the good of reason. On the supernatural level, the Holy Spirit directs us into divine flourishing here and now insofar as we transform our intellects and rectify our wills.²² Thus, the Spirit shapes us according to the Beatitudes and the commandment of love, which encompasses all the others. In the infused virtues, God's grace is the transforming agent and the fuller foundation through which reason works and the virtues are built.

6.1.2. Acquired and Infused Moral Virtues: The Case of Fortitude

As an infused virtue, fortitude according to Thomas involves a graced strength in difficulty to face fear and anxiety, especially in terms of death and destruction. Aquinas construes this virtue in the context of the theological virtues (especially friendship-love of God and neighbor), but also the life projects (*circa ea quae sunt ad finem*) that concern created things and that have personal and social extension. A series of more precise questions arises about the correlative exercise of acquired and moral infused virtues, which will also occasion a dialogue with resilience insights. How vulnerable is infused moral virtue when one has acquired vice? And do human beings exercise infused virtue normally with ease, promptness and pleasure? For Aquinas, charity is the heart of the solution to these questions. God infuses all the moral virtues into the believer, contemporaneously with faith, hope and charity.²³ Through grace a person can exercise perfect virtue, not only infused charity, but also infused fortitude and temperance. However, such a person might at the same time have great difficulty and no pleasure in the infused moral virtue.

Through well-developed acquired virtues, we normally act with ease, promptness and joy (and pleasure).²⁴ These properties

²² Cf. *ST I-II* 62.3.

²³ Cf. *ST I-II* 65.3 and 65.4.

²⁴ "*inde est etiam quod operationes ex habitu procidentales delectabiles sunt et in promptu habentur et faciliter exercentur, quia sunt quasi connaturales effectae*" *De verit.* 20, 2. Also see *SCG* 3, 150, nr 7. As explained in chapter three, natural virtues (moral and intellectual) perfect the use of a human faculty.

underlie also well-established resilience qualities. Nevertheless, Aquinas recognizes that they are not always evident when someone is fatigued or ill. Furthermore although charity itself brings joy, one can find it difficult and pleasureless to do works of infused moral virtue for their own sake. As Thomas explains, “certain contrary dispositions remaining from previous acts” can inhibit someone from facility in moral matters.²⁵ Indeed, we obtain and use infused and acquired virtues in different ways. Since we receive infused virtues without necessarily developing the underlying moral faculties rightly, we have to overcome past negative dispositions before we can gain the connatural ease, promptness and pleasure that come with perfect virtue.²⁶ In resilience terms, this insight explains how infused virtues can comcommittantly exist with an acquired moral vulnerability. Yet for Aquinas, the infused virtues involve a source of strength that can overcome consistently this moral weakness (eventhough the individual might suffer an internal struggle in the process).

In the case of fortitude, Aquinas claims that: “sometimes it does not lie within human power to attain the end of one’s work, or to escape evils or dangers, since these sometimes press in upon us to the point of death.”²⁷ In a state of intact nature (prelapsus state of original justice), we could achieve such a natural good, as well as the supreme good, by well-proportioned acts. In both cases now we need the help of grace in the infused virtues.²⁸ For Aquinas, God’s help (auxilio Dei for

When we arrive at a certain level of acquired virtue, we can manage our human capacities efficaciously. For example, through prudence, we can adjudicate the truth with facility and speed. The question remains whether these same qualities apply to the exercise of the infused virtues. According to R. Cessario, “The grace of the infused moral virtues shapes and energizes our human operative capacities, intellect, will, and sense appetites, so that a human person can act promptly, joyfully, and easily in those areas of human conduct that are governed by the Gospel precepts.” Cessario 1996, 5; cf. Cessario 2002, 200-205.

²⁵ “*Et similiter habitus moralium virtutum infusarum patiuntur interdum difficultatem in operando, propter aliquas dispositiones contrarias ex praecedentibus actibus relictas*” ST I-II 65.3 ad 2.

²⁶ Nevertheless, God in his divine pedagogy does extraordinarily grant pleasure in order to encourage one soul, or withdraw it in order to strengthen another.

²⁷ “*Quod quidem excedit naturam humanam: quandoque enim non subest potestati hominis ut consequatur finem sui operis, vel evadat mala seu pericula, cum quandoque opprimatur ab eis in mortem*” ST II-II 139.1.

²⁸ Cf. SCG 3, 150, ad 7.

natural virtue and grace for infused ones) underlies any goodness present in human acts, any goodness in the distinct types of fortitude.

How does Aquinas understand the specifically theological dimension of infused fortitude? The virtues of faith, hope and charity establish this infused virtue's context and finality. God directs us to our supernatural end through divinely bestowed theological virtues. Because of charity's place therein, infused fortitude goes beyond the range of its acquired counterpart, in which human beings in our capacity as a citizens order our actions to the common good. Charity commands infused fortitude (and martyrdom), ordering it to the ultimate end. Infused fortitude's very acts are formally acts of charity, since it takes its species formally from charity. However, it is not due to infused fortitude being formally an act of charity that infused and acquired fortitude specifically differ. Rather, they specifically differ because infused fortitude's acts establish a mean ordered to the ultimate end, i.e. the object of charity.²⁹ Furthermore, the rational means established by acquired and infused fortitude can vary. In the *Sentences* Aquinas specifies that "what is excessive according to the norms of civic virtue may be truly moderate, according to infused virtue; for example, that a man fast or offer himself voluntarily to die in defense of the faith."³⁰

Aquinas argues that the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity parallel the natural principles of acquired virtue, in that they have infused *habitus* that are correspondingly proportioned to the acquired moral and intellectual virtues. The acquired moral and intellectual virtues do not themselves exactly match (or make superfluous) the theological virtues.³¹ Although we need faith, hope and charity to shape us to our supernatural end, to God, we also need the other "infused virtues in regard to created things, though as subordinate to God."³² According to Aquinas, fortitude and the other

29 Cf. *de virt. com.* 10 ad 10.

30 *III Sent.* 33, q. 1, a. 2 Sol. 4. ad 2. He also affirms the specificity of infused virtues in the *ST*: cf. *ST* I-II 63.4 corpus, ad 1 and ad 2.

31 As Aquinas says: "*tamen illae [habitus] non sunt proportionatae virtutibus theologicis. Et ideo oportet alias eis proportionatas immediate a Deo causari*" *ST* I-II 63.3 ad 1.

32 "*Sed oportet quod per alias virtutes infusas perficiatur anima circa alias res, in ordine tamen ad Deum*" *ST* I-II 63.3 ad 2.

infused moral virtues of the emotions involve that through grace we progressively transform the dispositions related to the concerned emotions.³³ Although reason and will participate, Aquinas holds that further dispositions proper to our emotions take new shape in infused moral virtue.³⁴ The time needed to reorder our emotional dispositions involves added difficulty in the process. In the *Summa theologiae*, Aquinas inscribes his discussion of the virtue of fortitude in the context of the human need for grace. In the preceding philosophical and psychological discussions (chapters three, four and five), these theological dimensions were set aside. We shall now take them up and place them into context.

6.1.3. Fear and Trials: Theologically Transforming Fortitude and Resilience

Although Aquinas' technical virtue-terminology is philosophical in origin, it is pervasively theological in content when he applies it to the infused virtue of fortitude, which he transforms theologically using the Christian tradition. He transposes Aristotle's virtue theory and the definition of courage to involve not only the natural but also the theological dimensions of the virtue. He likewise employs Cicero's insights on the structure, ordering, and political end of courage in order to establish its fulfillment in the act of martyrdom rather than in the act of facing death either in the political arena (Cicero) or on the battlefield (Aristotle). Because of this extension, beyond strictly politico-philosophical bounds, we cannot completely understand the depth of Aquinas' general definition of fortitude without treating its principal act, martyrdom, as well as its relationship to related emotions, virtues and Gift of the Holy Spirit. In this section, I shall ask: how does Aquinas theologically transform fortitude? And how might resilience research offer insights at this level? As discussed

³³ For Aquinas both the acquired and the infused virtues bring right ordering to the emotions. Thomas says that these virtues impress reason on these appetites ("*appetitus recipit impressionem rationis*"), cf. *ST* I-II 60.1.

³⁴ Another part of the Tradition focuses on the will in the infused moral virtues. For example, St. Bonaventure construes the infused moral virtues as a matter of will without any lasting effect on the development of our emotional dispositions (cf. Cessario 2002, 203; B. Kent 1995).

in chapter three, through fortitude humans manage fear and daring. Now I shall highlight major trains of thought on the correlation of fear and religion. This excursus will open the way for a more in-depth theological treatment of the matter in Aquinas' thought and from a resilience perspective.

Rich and varied reflections on the relationship of fear and religion are found throughout the history of thought. Certain thinkers posit that fear and other emotions have engendered religion and quests for God (or gods).³⁵ On a more pragmatic level, some thinkers observe that religion produces and controls fear.³⁶ William James, for his part, catalogues the variety of emotions involved in religious intention: "religious fear, religious love, religious awe, religious joy, and so forth."³⁷ However, negative interpretations of religion's role in fear management include Freud's reductionistic thesis considers religion as an immature response to coping with fear and helplessness.³⁸ Other critiques claim that some types of religion are potentially detrimental to mental health, for example, by "creating anxiety and fear by beliefs in punishment (e.g. hell) for our evil ways."³⁹ Positive interpretations however are not wanting. Pargament speculates that religious faith reduces fear of death and aids in managing fear in general.⁴⁰ Certain studies even suggest that potential health benefits ensue when religion: (1) reduces existential anxiety through cognitive explanations of the chaotic; (2) offers a sense of hope, meaning, and purpose, as well as a resulting sense of emotional well-being; or (3) solves, at least partially, the problem of mortality.⁴¹ Taking the negative interpretations as a

35 Lucretius held that "Fear begets Gods;" Hume thought that the first ideas of religion originate in concerns for life and human fear; Feuerbach construed "primitive" religion as exclusively focusing on frightful aspects of nature; some recent empirical approaches pose similar foundations (cf. Hood et al. 1996, 18-20 and 9-13; Allport 1950, 161).

36 Cf. Thomas and Carver 1990, 195.

37 G. Allport 1950, 10-11.

38 The illusion of God, as an ideal father figure who protects and controls (oedipal phase) is created in order to cope with the unpleasant details of reality and to reduce fears of helplessness (cf. Watts and William 1988, 27).

39 Schumaker 1992, 3-4.

40 Cf. Pargament, 1990, 797-8.

41 Schumaker (1992, 3) furthermore offers a list of other potential health benefits from religion.

partial warning about the potential shortcomings of religion, and the positive as leads to develop, this study turns to Aquinas.

Aquinas' focus on the philosophical physiognomy of fortitude and its management of fear does not imply forgetfulness about theological finality and flourishing. He establishes fortitude's theological dimension through the role that flourishing plays in managing fear. In this case, theological flourishing is the continual motive and end animating human life.⁴² It involves a cognitive, motivational and emotional coping tool. A contemporary question is whether fortitude needs to be linked with flourishing (and goodness), as we mentioned earlier. Aquinas affirms that a brave person does what is fittingly brave, while seeking eternal flourishing at the same time. Fortitude itself is good, but this virtue taken out of the context of our loving flourishing loses its fullest power to courageously face fearful obstacles and move us to act. For Aquinas, God remains the first mover, the efficacious center and the final end of fortitude.⁴³

Fortitude's foundations are weakened, however, when fear of violent death dissuades us, when we deem physical life the highest value, or when pacifism at all costs rules our attitudes.⁴⁴ A myth of terrestrial satisfaction, either in terms of wealth, goodness or flourishing, can offset the resilient endurance we need throughout life's journey. It involves a forgetfulness of ultimate sources of flourishing and fear. On the contrary, when flourishing that is rooted in divine beatitude serves as a goal and motivation, fortitude counteracts the temptation to short change theological flourishing for an apparently easier life. This type of courage connotes spiritual resilience, which does not construe human existence merely in physical terms.

42 Thomas gives a striking example of the influence of theological flourishing in the middle of his discussion of whether brave people act for the good of this *habitus* (cf. *ST* II-II 123.7).

43 On the goodness of fortitude, Aquinas cites Aristotle (*NE* iii.10, 1115b21-24). On the relationship between theological fortitude and flourishing, Aquinas draws from Augustine (*De Trin.* xiii.8: PL 42, 1022-1023). Besides Aquinas' own simple affirmation, he (*ST* II-II 123.7 ob 3) quotes Augustine again: "*fortitudo est amor omnia propter Deum facile perferens*" *de morib. eccl.* xv, i, 15: PL 32, 1322.

44 Cf. M. Forschner 1983, 33-34.

For a faith perspective, Aquinas recalls the Scriptural precepts concerning “fearing the Lord” (with filial rather than servile fear).⁴⁵ He contrasts this type of fear with the Scriptural precept to not fear what is naturally fearful. We are not to excessively fear bodily death, the enemy and so on, in order to remain duly attached to the goods of faith, hope and charity.⁴⁶ These instances demonstrate how the soul through ordinate relationships to fearful objects can manage fear, how it respects natural objects of fear, and how it can supersede them for a reason.

When Aquinas describes how fortitude concerns fear and daring, once again he does not hide the theological dimension of fortitude. In quoting St. Gregory he reaffirms that as a special virtue it consists in “loving the trials of this life for the sake of an eternal reward.”⁴⁷ This insight introduces the importance of testing, trials and tribulation that we overlook too quickly when examining fortitude only in terms of fear and daring. These realities illustrate a basic aspect of resilience and courage. In the midst of testing, we need to cope with adversity and to retain our own integrity. An important dimension of testing is to prove the strength and genuineness of the protagonist, while also being a means to establish further strength, faith and goodness.

How might we enrich Aquinas’ teaching on theological fortitude with further Scriptural sources and with the resilience perspective? The way in which Scripture handles strength in weakness, and testing can serve as analogues (functional equivalents) for Aquinas’ treatment of fortitude as a general virtue.⁴⁸ Aquinas mines

45 Cf. Psalm 127:1 cited in *ST* II-II 125.2 obj. 1. On Aquinas’ typology of fear and the Gift of fear, see: *ST* II-II 19.1-12.

46 Cf. Matt 10:28; Ezek 2:6; cited in *ST* II-II 125.1 sc.

47 “*Huius mundi aspera pro aeternis praemiis amare*” *ST* II-II 123.3 ad 1.

48 The resilience and faithfulness of God’s chosen ones are tested time and again in the Old Testament: Adam and Eve (Gn 2:17), Abraham (Gen 22:1), the Exodus (Ex 15:25). They are proven, purified or strengthened by the ordeal. New Testament accounts of resilience in trial and testing include: the archetypal resilience in trial of Jesus Christ through his passion and death (John 12:27f; 3:14f.); his paradigmatic resilience is a spiritual resilience that includes ontic, moral and salvific dimensions, and is only manifest in the resurrection. In turn the trials of the Church and that of Christians correlate with those of Jesus Christ. In one-way or another, everyone must pass through trials. Jesus Christ announces that those who follow him will face their own ordeals (cf. Mark 10:38f, Heb

Scripture but is necessarily selective. A wider look at Scripture identifies pertinent teaching concerning strength (as an analogue for both fortitude in general and resilience), strength in weakness (as a functional equivalent for moral virtue and moral resilience), as well as testing, trials and tribulation (which are especially akin to resilience). Scripture narratives illustrate that, excluding rare exceptions, humans are neither indefectible nor faultless. Indeed, a primary aspect of human experience is the testing that not only can reveal human vulnerability, but whose primary function (according to Aquinas) is both to show a person's integrity and to serve in expanding spiritual capacities. Thus physical, psychosocial and spiritual types of resilience are uncovered through testing, trials and tribulations. Hardships can either test, prove and build up those involved, or tempt, distract and weaken them.⁴⁹ Overcoming our fears in the midst of courageous action involves a strange strengthening of human weakness through trials.

6.1.4. Strength in Weakness: A Test for Infused Fortitude and Spiritual Resilience

Christian notions of strength, weakness and humility challenge a virtue approach to fortitude. Thomas takes this challenge as the place to examine how human and divine competences interact.⁵⁰ Aquinas and the Christian Tradition's conceptions of strength fly in the face of certain cultural standards. The very notion of God is put to the test in the humble Jesus Christ, who dies on a cross. Furthermore, Christian doctrines and practices relating to suffering and death have spawned numerous sometimes conflicting notions and practices that range from the glorification of suffering *per se* (dolorism), to the denial of any benefit from human effort. Critiques arise from certain philosophers

10:32-9). The intended purpose and effect of testing is multiple: investigating the qualities and endurance of God's servants; causing their improvement and development; and offering them a reward.

⁴⁹ This basic meaning of "experience" finds its etymological roots in the practical knowledge, skill or competence (*peritia*) drawn from trial or danger (*periculum*) once surmounted; cf. *WEUD* 1989, 501; *OED* 1998.

⁵⁰ Treating the thirteenth century debate about the importance of humility would help to further develop this theme. Cf. R. Gauthier 1952, 475 ff. L. H. Yearly 1971, 557-580.

(Nietzsche and Marx) and resilience researchers (Cyrulnik) who slight some manifestations of Christianity for promoting weakness and glorifying suffering.

I shall examine how Aquinas' treatment of the problematic Pauline adage, "strength in weakness," might help to illustrate Christian fortitude, as well as spiritual resilience. Can we reconcile Thomas' notion of virtue and fortitude with a Pauline conception of strength in weakness? Furthermore, how might insights about moral resilience and acquired fortitude enhance Aquinas' theological conception of strength in weakness?

The rather problematic Scriptural formula "strength in weakness" tests infused fortitude's resilience. First, the enigma of strength in weakness is pertinent for Christian fortitude and education. This problem is poignantly posed through St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians (12:9) concerning "virtue being perfected in infirmity."⁵¹ The Pauline text is so significant that Aquinas uses it as the first potential objection concerning whether fortitude can be a Christian virtue.

Before addressing Aquinas' interpretation, I would like to note several pertinent points of exegesis. First, according to J. Murphy-O'Connor, Paul's text refers to human weakness as the means whereby we acquire the power of God, rather than the virtue of fortitude *per se*.⁵² Secondly, considering the cultural milieu, according to T. Savage, Paul's weakness refers to being conformed to the poor and vulnerable Christ, rather than to the self-exalting tendencies of the Corinthians.⁵³ This type of weakness does not mean that Paul was weak in practice,

51 As mentioned earlier, this translation of the Vulgate differs significantly from the *RSV*: "my power is made perfect in weakness."

52 According to J. Murphy-O'Connor (1990, 828), this weakness cannot only involve the general weakness of the human condition, but also that of individuals put in particular situations. In this context, Paul refers to the power that God accords him for his ministry, as well as the weaknesses that are obstacles to it (cf. 2 Cor 3:5-6).

53 The Corinthians find fault with Paul in four areas: boasting (Paul refused to follow the cultural practice of boasting); physical presence (Paul's physical demeanor was unimpressive); speech (unskilled, in an arena that prizes powerful and polished rhetoric); support (Paul would not accept monetary support; he lived a simple life and thus deprived the community of a reason to be proud of their generosity). Cf. Savage 1996, 54-99.

but rather that he understood that a minister of Christ will resist certain cultural pressures.⁵⁴ Thirdly, Paul's so-called weakness refers to his aptitude for apostolic adaptation and for glorifying the "power of God for salvation for everyone who has faith."⁵⁵ Paul does not exalt the divine power over the nothingness of mortals, but rather, he opposes the strength that human beings find in God versus the impotence found in being without God.⁵⁶ Paul testifies to the strength that Christ's Spirit works in the believer who is brought into God's own fullness.⁵⁷ Such strength unfolds in the midst of weakness and often does so through testing, the proving grounds for spiritual resilience.

Aquinas, for his part, employs Paul's text to affirm that Christian fortitude has human and graced dimensions. In the midst of the human capacity of fortitude, humans are weak and need continuing help from God. Aquinas interprets St. Paul as distinguishing weaknesses regarding the flesh (*infirmities carnis*) from weaknesses of the mind (*infirmities animae*). Aquinas' spiritual interpretation goes beyond the literal text. The weaknesses of the flesh concern emotional and dispositional frailty; they are not physical debility *per se*. He does not want Paul read as encouraging spiritual weakness.

⁵⁴ In this case, the Corinthian culture had exaggerated practices of boasting about one's own importance, displays of physical presence, grandiose and abusive oratory and ostentatious wealth. This context bears light upon the antithesis of strength in weakness as in the rest of the series of dyads (antitheses) that Paul employs in 2 Corinthians: comfort experienced through suffering (ch. 1); glory manifested through shame (ch. 3); life working in death (ch. 4); riches won through poverty (ch. 6); and finally power expressed through weakness (chapters 12 and 13). Cf. Savage 1996, 1, and 164-192.

⁵⁵ Romans 1:16. According to Paul, although faith is a gift (1 Cor 12:9), its strength varies: (1) Abraham "grew strong with respect of faith" (Rom 4:20); (b) Rom 12:3; (c) certain gifts are to be employed in proportion to faith (Rom 12:3); (d) faith is individuated (Rom 14:22; cf. Sampley 1995).

⁵⁶ Being without God is folly, while even the simple means that God employs is wisdom. As Paul says: "For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor 1:25). God's method is clear: "God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong, God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God" (1 Cor 1:27-29; cf. Jos. 23:10; Lev 26:8; Phil 4:13).

⁵⁷ Paul's teaching on the Spirit is clear in his letters to the Philippians and Ephesians, especially Phil 3:10f; Eph 3:14-19, and Eph 6:10-20. In order to fulfill his ministry in Christ, Paul has inner strength (2 Cor 4:6), the power of Christ dwelling in him (2 Cor 12:9),⁵⁷ the resilience of Christ.

Rather fortitude entails strength of spirit in handling weaknesses of the flesh. The strengths (virtues) of the soul that are thusly developed are patience or fortitude (in regard to bearing the infirmities of the body bravely) and humility (in courageously recognizing our own weaknesses and our need for social and graced support).⁵⁸ In recognizing our weaknesses and need for grace in order to do good with consistency, we can be stronger in practicing the virtues, especially when the object of the virtue is supernatural. This type of graced-virtue in the midst of human weakness does not simply limit, but rather puts further demands on human efforts.

In the debate on weakness, strength and humility some scholars have feared that Aquinas has completely missed St. Paul's meaning of "flesh," and has actually contradicted the sense of the Second letter to the Corinthians (12:9);⁵⁹ other scripture scholars point to other meanings.⁶⁰ The Pauline notion of strength in weakness is certainly at odds with a Pelagian understanding of Aristotelian virtue theory, especially of fortitude. The juxtaposition of these two notions, in Aquinas' dialogue, does not yield a hybrid Pauline Aristotelianism or an Aristotelian St. Paul. Aquinas figures that he is respecting both Aristotle and Paul, and that the truth of each is both preserved and advanced. How does he do so?

First, the Creator has endowed humans with natural capacities for good action and excellence, including the natural, acquired virtue of fortitude. Thomas nonetheless takes into consideration the disordering effects of original, personal and social (structural) sin. Second, God's wisdom and strength is far beyond human strength,

⁵⁸ Cf. *ST* II-II 129.3 ad 4 on the utility of recognizing one's own faults (*defectus proprios considerans*).

⁵⁹ In particular, Congar (1974, 342) objects to Aquinas' interpreting "*infirmities*" as weakness in human sensibility ("*sensibilité*"). He says that: "*Chair* signifie en effet, pour S. Paul, la condition fragile de la créature: elle ne s'oppose pas à l'esprit mais elle désigne tout l'homme tel que le péché l'a fait' (F. Prat)." Pinckaers (1996) also says that S. Paul has a different, synthetic way of describing the whole human person either as under the influence of the spirit or the flesh.

⁶⁰ *The Jerusalem Bible* and the *Jerome Biblical Commentary* (1968: 52:42) suggest that it refer either to a disease (with severe attacks, an "angel of Satan") or persecution (from Israelites, his brothers "according to the flesh"). See also T. Savage's (1996) interpretation presented above.

which depends on divine help to assure natural fortitude and on divine grace to receive infused fortitude and the Gift of courage.⁶¹ Aquinas presumes that grace builds up and brings completion to nature in infused virtues. On the one hand, the natural, acquired virtue of fortitude demands reason, while also being demanded by reason (it requires the prudent exercise of reason, while also protecting our reason from the sway of excess emotion). On the other hand, acquired fortitude underlies the psychological experience (pleasure), moral ease, and promptness that accompany infused fortitude. Nonetheless, according to Aquinas, acts of infused fortitude *per se* do not create a perfect acquired virtue of fortitude.⁶² When we have developed moral courage, infused acts of fortitude contemporaneously strengthen it. But when we do not have an underlying moral virtue, we experience the difficulty and a lack of promptness and pleasure in acts of infused fortitude. In a more direct response to this objection, Aquinas recognizes that the human person cannot be both weak and strong in the same way, at the same time. Therefore through fortitude (acquired and infused) the mind manages our own emotional weakness with the help of God, and through humility we recognize our limitations and need for God's continued grace and, secondarily, for the assistance of others.

Infused fortitude concerns fearful things that have a theological tenor, or the natural ones that attempt to cut us off from our theological goals. It sharpens our acquired capacities to act calmly in danger. However, an acquired virtue must provide a foundation with which the infused virtues confer a further measure to reason and an added surety to acts. Infused fortitude does not make the acquired virtue redundant; nor does acquired fortitude make infused fortitude

⁶¹ This distinction of natural and supernatural fortitude is not a simple one, for "the idea of grace perfecting nature coupled with the notion of the continuing presence of the supernatural end forces the recognition that no clear, simple, and neat distinction can be made between natural and supernatural activity" L. H. Yearley 1971, 578; see also M. Labourdette 1961-2, 15.

⁶² Aquinas says that "*actus qui producuntur ex habitu infuso, non causant aliquem habitum, sed confirmant habitum praeexistentem*" (*ST* I-II 51.4 ad 3; cf. *de virt. com.* 10 ad 19). In my thought, Aquinas holds that moral premeditation and posterior reflection, which accompany particular acts of infused fortitude, contribute to the development of acquired virtue. Aquinas does not address whether they undo acquired vice.

superfluous. Infused fortitude neither replaces human efforts to master fearfulness nor creates a full blown acquired virtue of fortitude without human habituation. Progress in the acquired virtue of fortitude, nonetheless, can find further support in the infused virtues of faith, hope and charity. Scriptural and other narratives, liturgy and hagiography, as well as contemporary struggles for peace and justice provide training grounds for learning to conquer fearful situations and to acquire fortitude.⁶³ I suggest that Aquinas' understanding of acquired and infused fortitude enrich a theory of moral and spiritual resilience. But his teaching on Christian fortitude includes martyrdom, which will pose further questions about spiritual resilience and vulnerability.

6.2. Resilience in Martyrdom?

If resisting human mortality is *the* criteria for resilience, then martyrdom will be nonsensical vulnerability. The pride of place that the NT and the Christian Tradition give to martyrdom can be disturbing, especially in view of the way in which Christ's passion and death (martyrdom) is the archetype for charity.⁶⁴ The key text for Aquinas in this regard is Jesus' farewell discourse in the Gospel of John: "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life

63 Indeed, both life and fiction instruct us in managing emotions in accord with virtuous goals. Children, youth and adults learn fortitude from the experiences of mothers and fathers, friends and the community at large. Aquinas did not develop a theory of narrative, nor do I pretend to do so here. For more developed theories of narrative and its relationship with virtue see: A. MacIntyre 1981, S. Hauerwas 1981, P. Hall 1994, and so on.

64 Although martyrdom has held an important place in the tradition from the beginning, Aquinas has a novel way of recognizing that the act of martyrdom is the supreme act of courage (cf. Congar 1974). Hauerwas (1993) poignantly highlights the significance of the differences between the traditions of Aristotle and Aquinas on fortitude (and martyrdom). In treating martyrdom, Thomas principally utilizes sacred Scripture and Patristic sources to illustrate his uniquely Christian notion. As will be seen, Aquinas employs a plethora of Scripture citations on martyrdom in questions 124 of the *Secunda secundae*, in which he cites the following (in order): Matt 5:10 (2x); Acts 1:8; John 15:13 (2x); 1 Cor 13:3; Rom. 3:22; Rom 10:10; 1 John 3:16; Col 3:14; Phil 2:8; Heb 10:34; Heb ch. 11; Job 2:4; 1 Peter 4:15-16; James 2:18; Titus 1:6; Rom 8:9; Gal 5:24.

for his friends.”⁶⁵ The martyr fulfills the vocation of every Christian to holiness⁶⁶ and is motivated by faith and truth, and by hope in promised life eternal.⁶⁷ Indeed Thomas crowns fortitude by his discussion of martyrdom (*ST* II-II 124) that directly follows his initial question about fortitude. Martyrdom serves as the pinnacle of his Christian synthesis on fortitude. We shall ask: how Aquinas’ conception of Christian martyrdom might offer an archetype for spiritual resilience? And how might it resist critiques of its ultimate vulnerability? In so doing, we shall attempt to enrich Aquinas’ treatment of martyrdom with resilience insights, and offer them in return his vision of spiritual resilience.

6.2.1. Martyrdom and the Virtue of Faith

In demonstrating the pertinence of martyrdom for natural and theological fortitude, Aquinas draws upon the etymology of *martus*, which means witness (*testis*). He calls both upon Scriptural and Patristic sources to explain that martyrdom involves a witness to one’s faith in Christ,⁶⁸ which finds its principal motivation in charity. Since the second half of the second century for Christians,⁶⁹ the ‘martyr’ has referred to those who have witnessed with their lives (that is, at the cost of their physical lives) to the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ

⁶⁵ John 15:13, which Aquinas cites on numerous occasions in this regard: cf. *ST* II-II 122.1 ad 1; *ST* II-II 124.3 (2x); *ST* II-II 140.1 ad 3. See also: 1 Cor 13:3; 1 John 3:16; Col 3:14.

⁶⁶ Cf. Roman 1:17, 1 Cor 1:2; 1 Peter 2:9. Martyrdom is a sign of the holiness of the Church and a call for a reawakening of moral truth. It reproves those who transgress the law (cf. Wis 2:12) and who confuse evil for good, as Isaiah (5:20) says: “Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!” (cf. *VS* no. 93)

⁶⁷ In the Book of Revelation (2:10), those who are about to suffer are encouraged as follows: “Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

⁶⁸ Aquinas (in *ST* II-II 124.2 obj. 1) cites both Scripture (Acts 1:8) and a notable Patristic source (St. Maximus the Confessor, *de natali S.S. Mart.* 3, al. Sermon 88; PL 57, 708B).

⁶⁹ The technical distinction between “martyr” and “confessor” (one who suffered for Christ without dying from it) was not made until the second half of the 2nd century with the *Martyrdom of Polycarp* (cf. Louth 1998, 711).

and the coming Kingdom of God.⁷⁰ The NT has several senses of the word “*μάρτυς*,” three of which are more central to Aquinas’ focus:⁷¹ (1) the active proclamation of personal experience, (2) the witness of one’s acts, including (3) the witness in giving one’s life. First of all, Biblical martyrs are more than simple eyewitnesses; they actively proclaim what they have seen and what they know. For example, the mission of the twelve apostles is to bear witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ.⁷² Second, examples of the witness of one’s actions are found in Jesus Christ’s acts of healing, which testify to the veracity of his message as well as to his origin and his mission.⁷³ Third, the ultimate test of martyrdom is the witness of one’s own life. Christ is thus the archetype for all Christian martyrs;⁷⁴ he expresses what for Aquinas is

70 The NT martyrs witness to the world to come, to the Kingdom of God: e.g. the eighth Beatitude (Mat. 5:10), Jesus’ promise of paradise to the Good thief (cf. Luke 23:43), and both Steven (Acts 7:56) and John’s visions of heaven (Rev 1:9). Cf. Heb 10:34; Louth 1998, 711.

71 Furthermore, “*μάρτυς*” can have the sense of the juridical testimony of a person who has been present to a material fact, or a conclusion of a juridical operation. Cf. Spicq 1991, 969-974.

72 Cf. Luke 24:48. As preacher-missionaries, they are personally identified with the cause that they preach. The testimony, they give before auditors (John 19:35), is intended as true. In the face of false accusations, Paul defends the veracity of his witness: “We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised” (1 Cor. 15:15). Their witness is empowered by the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised to send the Spirit to speak through the mouth of those who give witness (cf. Mark 13:11; Acts 1:8).

73 In the face of those who doubt his message, he presents these works as an indication of his credibility and relationship with the Father. In face of doubts about his miracles, Jesus says: “for the works which the Father has granted me to accomplish, these very works which I am doing, bear me witness that the Father has sent me” John 5:36; cf. John 10:25, 37-38.

74 Jesus is the archetype of the martyr, above all in the Gospel of Luke, which describes the traits that henceforth define martyrdom (cf. 1 Tim 6:13; Rev 1:5; 3:14; Augrain 1995, 723-4; Louth 1998, 712). He was born to render witness through his life (John 18:37) and death, which is possible not only because of his human condition, but also because of his obedience to the Father’s will. Paul says in his letter to the Philippians (2:8): “And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.” Furthermore, Christ is seen as the Suffering Servant foretold by Isaiah (53:11). His death is redemptive for the multitude (Matt 20:28); he is an expiatory Victim (Heb 9:12, 22). Like the prophets sent before him, Jesus resolutely marches toward Jerusalem, where it is fitting that a prophet die (Luke 13:33; 9:51).

the highest form of friendship-love, which lays down one's own life for one's friends.⁷⁵

Martyrdom shares the general characteristics of virtue (voluntariness and protecting the good of reason), as well as those of fortitude.⁷⁶ Faith assures the content of a martyr's witness and the vision of his goal.⁷⁷ As Aquinas says citing Hebrews 11, "a martyr is so called as being a witness to the Christian faith, which teaches us to despise things visible for the sake of things invisible"⁷⁸ Although human beings naturally prefer to lose possessions and suffer pain rather than die, a martyr bears witness to the faith in the radical way that he subjugates visible goods to invisible ones. Thomas affirms that the perfect notion (*ratio*) of martyrdom requires that a man suffer in body unto death and that he does so for Christ's sake,⁷⁹ instead of any mere reason or truth. Witnessing to Christ can be done in word or any virtuous deed (including the avoiding of sin) provided that it refers to God or divine truth, which renders a virtuous deed a profession of faith.⁸⁰ Aquinas draws upon Scriptural authority to establish this

75 Cf. John 15:13; *ST* II-II 124.

76 These characteristics are clear from its essence (firmness itself), as well as its end. While civic fortitude's end is human justice; gratuitous fortitude's end (*fortitudo gratuita*) is faith in the form of divine justice. Aquinas affirms that: "*fortitudo gratuita firmat animum hominis in bono iustitiae Dei*" (*ST* II-II 124.2 ad 1), which he supports by citing St. Paul (Rom 3:22): "*iustitiae Dei, quae est per fidem Iesu Christi*." On the place of faith in martyrdom, Aquinas (in *ST* II-II 124.2) draws from the authority of: St. Maximus the Confessor (*de natali S.S. Mart.* 3, al. *Serm.* 88; PL 57, 708B) and St. Cyprian (whom St. Augustine cites in *Serm.* 311, al. *De Div.* 115.1; PL 38.1414).

77 Cf. Heb 11:1-40; Rom 3:22. These virtues do not forestall a certain preparation that is useful when needing to face pleasures and suffering, as well as desires and fears. Christian witness is prepared according to Paul, for "those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (Gal 5:24).

78 *ST* II-II 124.4; cf. Heb 11 and 2 Cor 4:17-18. In this question Aquinas also quotes St. Maximus to affirm the martyrdom concerns dying for the faith.

79 Even though there are many similitudes to martyrdom (Mary's martyrdom, the martyrdom involved in slaying carnal desires, the fortitude involved in other hardships related to professing faith in Christ) the perfect notion of martyrdom involves physical death (cf. *ST* II-II 124.4).

80 Aquinas says: "*omnium virtutum opera, secundum quod referuntur in Deum, sunt quaedam protestationes fidei, per quam nobis innotescit quod Deus huiusmodi opera a nobis requirit, et nos pro eis remunerat*." (*ST* II-II 124.5; 124.5 ad 1). Aquinas employs the tradition's identification of the eighth Beatitude with martyrdom as the basis of justifying that in addition to faith, other virtues

necessary interrelation between word and deed.⁸¹ The key is that the martyr be Christ's through doing virtuous deeds that are activated by the Spirit of Christ (cf. Rom 8:9). Thus he imitates Christ in avoiding sin (cf. Gal 5:24), in confessing faith and in doing good. Because of this wider understanding of witnessing to faith, Aquinas deems John the Baptist a martyr even though he suffered death for reproving adultery instead of an article of faith. This understanding of the interrelationship of faith and morals is crucial for the type of resilience expressed therein, as we shall discuss later.

In looking at the fortitude engendered in Christian faith, we need to be careful not to construct a false dichotomy between reason and faith, by opposing a rational fortitude to either a courageous faith or a faith-inspired courage.⁸² In Aquinas' perspective though, faith does

pertain to martyrdom (cf. *ST* II-II 124.5 sc). Nonetheless, other hardships are associated with martyrdom and its similitudes.

⁸¹ In this regard, Thomas (in *ST* II-II 124) employs not only the letter of James (2:18) but even St. Paul's letter to the Romans (8:9 and 10:10). Aquinas finds no necessary animosity between faith and deeds. He can employ the Romans text without divorcing its teaching on justification by faith from its moral demands and exhortations. Aquinas also quotes, Titus 1:16 and Gal 5:24. Because of the needed interrelationship between witnessing to truth and virtuous deeds, confessing a simple truth of geometry or other speculative science is not a sufficient basis for Christian martyrdom (*ST* II-II 124.5 obj and ad 2).

⁸² This dichotomy opposes two vertiginous extremes regarding faith. A fear of faith's risks and unknowns accepts only experimental certitude and positive reason. On the contrary, an overreaching confidence in the content of faith shuns any dialogue or relationship with the sciences. Within this confidence in faith, P. Secretan (1993, 311) describes another bipolar opposition: "*Deux oppositions dissemblables se dessinent : dans l'une, la foi quitte courageusement les certitudes du monde; dans l'autre, le monde paraît incertain par rapport aux certitudes de la foi.*" Such a dichotomy results when the methodologies and reflections of philosophers and scientists too radically oppose those of theologians and martyrs. This opposition is dangerous, inasmuch as it assumes: (1) that reason is used only by the philosopher, and not by the martyr or theologian (who then would have faith without reason), (2) that one is lead to believe that philosophy does not depend on some belief (albeit a rational presupposition) that cannot be verified by reason, (3) that philosophy, unlike theology, does not use models, analogies and metaphors for understanding its object, or (4) that prudence is appropriate to reason and courage to faith. In being courageous and prudent about reason and faith, we need to keep in sight the limits and complementarity of both. God has taken the risk of employing human counterparts in faith. The gift of faith is received *ad modum recipientis*, but not by one person alone. Human limits are evident not only in individual persons, but also in communities at the sociological and moral levels. Nonetheless, it is in the

not abandon reason but only the pretensions of unaided erroneous reason; and reason does not denigrate faith, but only realizes a relationship that does not do violence to human reason. Both reason and faith offer a corrective to each other's proper pretensions.⁸³ Such remedies are especially pertinent concerning the rational and faith-issues operative in an act of martyrdom. It is important for understanding the role of charity in fortitude, martyrdom and spiritual resilience as well.

6.2.2. Charity as its Unifier, Motivator and Greatest Expression

As a pinnacle among the expressions of Christian virtue, martyrdom demands and expresses the unity of the virtues.⁸⁴ The fortitude involved in martyrdom faces the danger of death for the sake of the good, the common good and the greatest good (God and our friendship with God), in a spiritual combat. It demands infused virtue, which can be supported (or not) by the person's natural, moral virtue of fortitude. Aquinas construes charity and the infused virtue of martyrdom in terms of the threefold character and reception of infused virtue: its object is God; only God can infuse it; and its object depends on divine revelation.⁸⁵

community of persons, which is the Church, that there is assurance of the fullness of faith.

⁸³ First, in believing in God's self-revelation, we can avoid the trap of an excessive confidence in reason, which estimates itself to be the source of a mundane salvation or to be adequate to dispel life's mysteries. Second, in using one's reason well, we can avoid the trap of an irrational faith that judges it does not need to reason in order to be faithful. Cf. Secretan 1993, 311-312.

⁸⁴ The unity involved surpasses the limits of human language to express such a dynamic reality. The balance of virtue, for Aquinas, is orchestrated by faith, hope and charity, instead of by fortitude or prudence *per se* (cf. Secretan 1993, 314-315). While fortitude and prudence are indispensable in the context of the theological virtues, they nonetheless become prudent charity or courageous faith, and so on. Even if there is a certain transfer of meaning from the anthropological and the philosophical to the theological level, there is also some new quality of theological virtue that informs courage and prudence. In Christian moral and spiritual life, the infused virtues and fruits of the Holy Spirit have a moral dimension.

⁸⁵ Cf. *ST I-II* 62.1; *ST I-II* 63.3; *ST I-II* 65.3.

Charity's two dimensions, friendship-love with God and neighbor,⁸⁶ order the act and virtue martyrdom. The preeminence of love for God and neighbor specifies that the ultimate (self-fulfilling) purpose of one's life is self-giving. This counter-intuitive and seemingly counter-resilient teaching is at the very center of Christ's Gospel. One can only understand it in the context: of faith in His life, death and resurrection, of hope in His promises of resurrection and eternal life, and of charity. These theological virtues serve as the necessary basis for acts of infused fortitude and martyrdom.⁸⁷

The relationship of charity to martyrdom occasions various confusions. First how can an act that disregards natural love of one's body be resilient? Will not such a basic conflict inhibit even the loftiest motivation, and render senseless all natural optimism and strength?⁸⁸ Besides the natural inclination to preserve oneself, which would tend to offer resistance to putting one's physical life in jeopardy, two motivators support the virtue of martyrdom. Charity is its chief and principal motivation (*primum et principale motivum*), while fortitude is its proper motivation (*motivum proprium*).⁸⁹ These two virtues collaborate in a determinate fashion: charity commands martyrdom, fortitude elicits it. As in the case of all Christian virtue, without charity one has neither merit nor complete virtue, as St. Paul says: "If I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profits me nothing."⁹⁰ For Aquinas, martyrdom is not fully courageous in simply enduring forced death *per se*, for it must express the charity, which is the driving force and reason to endure such a hateful act. It is the

⁸⁶ See *ST II-II* 27, 8, where Aquinas uses 1 John 4:21 to emphasize the interrelation of these two aspects of love: a love of neighbor, which includes that love of God as well as a love of God which includes love of neighbor. There is nonetheless an ordering in finality: that God be loved with one's whole being—principally since God is the source of love—and one's neighbor be loved as oneself—secondarily, but with the important measure of one's natural inclinations to self regard and protection (cf. *ST II-II* 184.3 and his sources Deut 6:5, Lev 19:18, and Matt 22:40, and also *ST II-II* 26.3 and *Ad Joan.* ch. 4, lect. 4, with reference to Origen).

⁸⁷ Cf. *ST II-II* 4.3; *de carit.* 3 ad 13.

⁸⁸ Cf. J. Pieper (1966: 127) also asks such questions.

⁸⁹ Thomas says "*ad actum martyrii inclinatur quidem caritas sicut primum et principale motivum, per modum virtutis imperantis; fortitudo autem sicut motivum proprium, per modum virtutis elicientis*" *ST II-II* 124.2 ad 2.

⁹⁰ 1 Cor 13:3; cf. *ST II-II* 124.2 obj.2.

greatest love (John 15:13), the love of Christ that is victorious in the martyr, according to Aquinas.⁹¹ This charity puts the love of one's life in a larger context. The natural inclination to preserve one's physical life is drawn up within the spiritual inclination to preserve one's life with God. Although natural abhorrence to death remains, faith, hope and charity provide the renewed object and motivation to pursue our ultimate flourishing.

Martyrdom as the greatest expression of love poses another resilience problem. Is it not counter-intuitive and even counter-resilient to claim that martyrdom expresses greatness or perfection? Is it not the ultimate folly neither to fight nor flee if faced with a way out of death? In a seeming paradox, Aquinas directly acknowledges that life is the good of this present world that humans treasure most, and that death, especially a painful one, is most naturally shunned.⁹² In blatant opposition to one's natural inclinations to preserve one's own physical life and to hate pain and death, Aquinas claims that one still rationally reckons martyrdom the most perfect completion to human life. The suffering of death itself is the greatest perfection (although the species of the act is not praiseworthy itself). But inasmuch as death is directed to something else by its principal object and motivation, it takes on a deeper meaning. If human life is more than its physical manifestation, then there can something greater than preserving one's body.

Aquinas argues that the love of charity, as the principal motivation of martyrdom, not only brings perfection to the act of martyrdom,⁹³ but that the act of martyrdom demonstrates the greatest proof of charity. Since death is so naturally despicable and life so naturally embraced, martyrdom can be the most perfect of human acts, as the sign of the greatest charity.⁹⁴ If the primacy of charity is not

⁹¹ In this regard, Aquinas (*ST* II-II 124.2 obj.2; *ST* II-II 124.5) cites St. Maximus, *Sermon* 16; PL 57.708B.

⁹² Aquinas directly addresses this problem several times in relationship to martyrdom in: *ST* II-II 124.3; and *ST* II-II 124.4 where he also quotes Job 2:4.

⁹³ Aquinas (*ST* II-II 124.3) cites St. Paul (Col 3.14): "*caritas est vinculum perfectionis*." In the *sed contra*, Aquinas furthermore draws upon St. Augustine's (*de Sancta Virgin*. 46.47; PL 40.424) authority to propose that martyrdom is even more perfect than virginity.

⁹⁴ Here Aquinas once again draws upon the teaching of Christ found in the Gospel of John 15:13 (cf. *ST* II-II 124.3). Furthermore, martyrdom is also a sign

recognized however, Christianity and the pride of place it apportions to martyrdom will appear glaringly anti-resilient, as sources of ultimate and fatal vulnerability.

6.2.3. Martyrdom Defending the Good of Reason: Truth, Justice and Prudence.

We can ask whether Aquinas' conception of martyrdom conforms to the criteria of moral resilience: does it defend the good of reason and is it voluntary. I shall examine Aquinas' teaching on truth, justice, patience and prudence in relationship with martyrdom in order to investigate its correlation with reason and moral resilience

Martyrdom safeguards the good of reason in several ways, including justice as its proper effect. Aquinas argues that "martyrdom essentially consists in standing firmly to truth and justice against the assaults of persecution."⁹⁵ His source for this insight is the eighth Beatitude (Matt 5:10): "Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice's sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."⁹⁶ This Beatitude not only serves to establish that martyrdom is a virtue, but also to identify certain of its principle qualities. Martyrdom demands that we remain firm in justice, as the habit of establishing the order of reason in human affairs.⁹⁷ It involves the right endurance of suffering related to not committing injustice and to resisting injustice actively.⁹⁸ This good of reason that we achieve through acts of justice is not only that

of the greatest possible obedience, since through it one follows Christ who became "obedient unto death" (Phil 2:8; cited by Aquinas in *ST II-II* 124.3 ad 2).

⁹⁵ *"Pertinet autem ad rationem martyrii ut aliquis firmiter stet in veritate et iustitia contra persequentium impetus"* *ST II-II* 124.1. On the relationship between truth and justice, see: *ST II-II* 109.1-3.

⁹⁶ Aquinas (*ST II-II* 124.5 sc) calls upon tradition (a gloss) and St. Jerome's commentary in linking the eighth Beatitude to the act and virtue of martyrdom. The differences in translation of "*δικαιοσύνης*" (Matt 5:10) can reveal other profound theological matters that we cannot treat here for lack of space (e.g. the doctrine of justification). Aquinas' interpretation centers on justice as an infused moral virtue. Aquinas' Latin (Vulgate) text reads: "*Beati qui persecutionem patiuntur propter iustitiam: quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum.*" The Greek (Koine) reads: "*Μακάριοι οἱ δεδιωμένοι ἕνεκεν δικαιοσύνης: ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν.*" Translations for "*δικαιοσύνης*" (Matt 5:10) include: in the cause of right (*JB*), holiness' sake (*NAB*), righteousness' sake (*RSV, KJV*).

⁹⁷ Cf. *ST II-II* 123.12. Prudence of course aids justice and the other virtues, when it perfects reason.

⁹⁸ Cf. *ST II-II* 124.1 ad 3; *ST II-II* 124.5 ad 1.

of practical reason (prudence), but also includes that of infused speculative reason (faith).

Aquinas also attests to the importance of patience drawing out other important moral, pedagogical and psychological features of martyrdom.⁹⁹ He acknowledges that the chief act of fortitude found in martyrdom is endurance (*sustinere*) rather than initiative or aggressiveness (*aggredi*). St. Thomas defends martyrdom against possible misconceptions and objections about its being involuntary, illicit or presumptuous.¹⁰⁰ First, martyrdom must be voluntary in order to be a moral act.¹⁰¹ Second, it is not suicide.¹⁰² Third, it demands some mental and emotional preparation. Such preparation may seem rash, even presumptuous. Aquinas however argues that it is virtuous to prepare oneself for martyrdom. The precepts of the Divine Law thus aid one to prepare one's mind and heart to suffer martyrdom (*animi praeparationem*), when it is expedient.¹⁰³ Preparation is especially helpful, since it is so difficult to "rightly endure sufferings that are unjustly inflicted," as Aquinas says.¹⁰⁴ We do not however find the most powerful source for martyrdom, the Spirit of Christ, in human training.¹⁰⁵ Human self-preparation is necessary but not sufficient for

99 In regard to martyrdom and patience, Aquinas (*ST* II-II 123.6) cites St. Augustine's sermon on St. Cyprian in *Serm.* 311, al. *De Div.* 115.1: *PL* 38.1414.

100 Cf. *ST* II-II 124.1 obj. 1-3.

101 The voluntary nature of martyrdom is problematic when considering the Holy Innocents as martyrs for Christ's sake. Even though St. Hilary attributes the glory of martyrdom to children of such a young age, Aquinas following Augustine recognizes that they merit this glory not for the voluntary aspect of their death, but rather due to their suffering in the place of Christ. It is by God's grace that they attain what others do through collaboration with their own wills. Cf. *ST* II-II 124.1 obj/ad 1; and *ST* II-II 124.4 ad 4.

102 Augustine attests that certain women martyrs during persecution seemed to have illicitly killed themselves. Aquinas resists any association of martyrdom with suicide, yet claims that these women are fittingly honored. Cf. *ST* II-II 124.1 ad 2; *ST* II-II 64.5; *ST* II-II 64.1 ad 2.

103 The theme of preparing the soul for martyrdom in several places: *ST* II-II 124.1 ad 3; *ST* II-II 124.3 ad 1. I shall address this further at the end of this chapter.

104 "*In debita sustinentia passionum iniuste inflictarum*" *ST* II-II 124.1 ad 3.

105 Cf. Acts 1:8; Gal 5:24; which are cited respectively in *ST* II-II 124.2 obj.1; and *ST* II-II 124.5 ad 1. Furthermore, Aquinas mentions another source of strength for the martyr. In *De verit.* 13. 3 ad 9, he draws from Augustine's insights to explain that a "sprinkling" of divine glory (i.e. a non-beatific vision of God's essence) enables the martyrs to live temperately, justly, bravely, and

martyrdom. We shall raise this topic again in terms of the model that Christ showed in facing his own fear and death, and in terms of the pedagogical function of the precepts related to fortitude and its associated virtues.

In addition to defending the good of reason by standing firm in truth through the virtues of justice and patience, infused fortitude and martyrdom also indispensably draw upon prudence. Common language, however, often opposes fortitude and prudence: for martyrdom or fortitude is seen as an audacious recklessness or imprudent boldness; and since prudence is often conceived of as a spineless caution or self-serving protectionism. However, far from being contrary virtues, fortitude and prudence positively correlate in a way particular to their objects, effects and causes. Aquinas expresses the interrelation of fortitude and prudence as perfect virtues in two ways.¹⁰⁶ First as general properties they need each other in order to habitually do the good well.¹⁰⁷ Aquinas describes that prudence's qualities overflow into other virtues inasmuch as prudence directs and guides them.¹⁰⁸

Thomas differentiates prudence and fortitude according to their determinate matters.¹⁰⁹ Prudence pertains to the proper functioning of

prudently when faced with temptations. Cf. St. Augustine, *De genesi ad litteram*, XII, 26 (PL 34:476).

¹⁰⁶ Cf. *ST I-II* 65.1.

¹⁰⁷ Aquinas (*ST I-II* 61.4 obj. 1; cf. *ST I-II* 65.1) cites St. Gregory's (*Moral. xxii*, 1) testimony to their interdependence: "*prudentia vera non est, quae iusta, temperans et fortis non est; [...] nec fortitudo integra, quae prudens, temperans et iusta non est.*"

¹⁰⁸ Cf. *ST I-II* 61.4 ad 1. Furthermore, the human being who seeks perfection, by rectitude of will directs every virtue in its appropriate matter; cf. *de virt. com.* 5, 23.

¹⁰⁹ "*Alii vero, et melius, accipiunt has quatuor virtutes secundum quod determinantur ad materias speciales*" *ST I-II* 61.4. Here he is referring to Aristotle, *NE* ii.7, 1107a33ff or vi.13, 1144b36ff; cf. *ST I-II* 61.3 and *ST I-II* 65.1. Furthermore, Aquinas repeatedly differentiates fortitude, prudence and the other cardinal virtues, based on the Book of Wisdom (8:7) and St. Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Job* (xxii.1; and ii.49); cf. *ST I-II* 61.4; *ST I-II* 63.3; *ST I-II* 65.1; *ST II-II* 47.4 sc; *de virt. com.* 5, 23; and so on. He (*ST I-II* 61.4 sc) even employs Augustine (*De Morib. Eccl.* xi) who describes the four cardinal virtues as "*ex ipsius amoris vario affectu.*" In *ST I-II* 65.1, Aquinas cites Augustine *De Trin.* VI.4, in this same vein.

reason, and fortitude to that of the irascible faculty.¹¹⁰ Nonetheless, in martyrdom they interact since their determinate matters depend on each other for perfect virtue. In particular, prudence as being in the cognitive power informs fortitude.¹¹¹ Prudence overcomes the illusions that threaten courage. In order to bring a framework to courage, prudence must measure well the objective danger and the resources on hand.¹¹² It quantifies the fragility and strength found in those around us and in ourselves. It calculates what we shall gain or lose in acting and not acting in a particular way.¹¹³

Aquinas' moral analysis of infused fortitude and martyrdom not only respects moral resilience, but also pushes it to its logical limit. A perfect moral expression of our intellectual powers of reason and will demand other criteria than the good of reason and a good will. We can absolutely trust neither our brave reactions nor isolated acts of fortitude. Only the prudent person can be brave on a consistent basis. Human fragility and vulnerability demand infused fortitude and prudence in order to adjudicate the fitting type of witness and acts that might lead to martyrdom. The question of martyrdom's criteria leads Aquinas to turn to Christ as the archetype for managing fear and death.

110 Aquinas, following Aristotle, identifies the subject of the virtue of prudence as the faculty of reason, and fortitude as the irascible faculty in the following places: *ST* I-II 61.2; *ST* I-II 66.1; *ST* I-II 85.3; *De malo* 4 ad4; *de virt. gen.* 12.25; *In Meta.* lect. 20.1064.

111 Cf. *de carit.* 3.13; *ST* I-II 61.4; *ST* I-II 66.1; *In Eth.* Book 10, lect. 12.

112 If one takes his courage to be all the strength needed (physical, psychological, communal) to overcome the adversary, one can be heartily wrong. The courageous stature of a person or a whole community might be necessary but not sufficient. We can render a desperate situation all the more disastrous, by the illusion that alone we shall save the world. As Secretan says (1993, 300-1): "*Croire que le courage efface dangers et menaces est l'illusion du courage, et c'est contre cela que doit intervenir la prudence.*"

113 When discussing whether we should reckon military prudence a part of prudence, Aquinas says that "*executio militiae pertinet ad fortitudinem: sed directio ad prudentiam, et praecipue secundum quod est in duce exercitus*" *ST* II-II 50.4 ad 3. Counter examples for these interrelations also suggest themselves. The vice of "*impaviditas ex sua specie corrumpit medium fortitudinis,*" but in respect of its causes it can oppose prudence or wisdom (*ST* II-II 126.2 ad 2). In like manner, our lack of love or lack of humility can cause the vice of fearlessness.

6.2.4. Fear in Christ as the Archetypal Model of Martyrdom

A study of St. Thomas' treatment of Christ's agony, passion and death specifies the place of fear in Christ and in Christian martyrdom.¹¹⁴ Of more than passing interest, the experience of fear in Christ has ontological and moral, Christological and soteriological ramifications. How might a focus on the ontological and moral domains of fear in Christ illustrate better how He is an exemplar for Christians in handling fear and for martyrdom?¹¹⁵ How might these insights apply to Christian resilience?

Although Aquinas' analysis of fear in Christ relies extensively on his prior treatment of the passion of fear,¹¹⁶ Thomas' basis for discussion is positive—the Gospel of Mark's account of Christ's suffering in the garden of Gethsemane, which testifies that: “Jesus began to fear and to be greatly troubled.”¹¹⁷ This quote is the only record of Christ's fear in the Gospels. Its straightforward simplicity has nonetheless spawned opposing interpretations that Aquinas aims to integrate by adding a further nuance concerning Christ's fear: in short, he affirms that Christ experienced fear, but not in a way that would deprive him of his rational use of his faculty of reason. This simple

114 In *ST* III 15.7, Thomas asks: *Utrum in Christo fuerit timor?*

115 As important as the management of fear is for fortitude, it is curious to find that Aquinas does not directly discuss fear in his treatise on martyrdom (*ST* II-II 124). This absence does not mean that martyrdom does not face fear. Rather it is typical of Aquinas' dialectical method and intent to minimize repetition. The context is clear. His treatment of martyrdom is situated in the larger context of the treatise of fortitude, which extensively addresses fear, and of the earlier treatise on the passion of fear (*ST* I-II 41-44). Aquinas treats fear and daring in *ST* II-II 123 (on fortitude), *ST* II-II 125 (on fear), *ST* II-II 126 (on fearlessness), *ST* II-II 127 (on daring), and extensively through other parts of the whole treatise on fortitude (*ST* II-II 123-140).

116 His sources are Scriptural (Mark 14:33; Prov 28:1), Patristic (St. Hilary's *De Trin.* X.10; Damascene *De Fide Orthod.* III.23; and Jerome, *Com. in Matt* IV.26 and 27) and philosophical (Aristotle *Rhet.* II.5).

117 Aquinas (*ST* III 15.7 sc) cites the Vulgate (Mark 14:33): “*Coepit Iesus taedere et pavere.*” The RSV reads: Jesus “began to be greatly distressed and troubled.” P. Gondreau (2000, 396) laments a “regrettable omission” in Aquinas' not making more explicit reference to this text in his argumentation. Gondreau rightfully remarks that further use of the only extant record of Christ's fear amplifies the argument with more existential vigor.

nuance, which applies to moral resilience, needs further explanation in order to appropriate insights for fully Christian resilience.

Jesus Christ in his human nature experienced fear as the body “naturally retreats” (*naturaliter refugit*) from a perceived future evil. Moreover, during the agony in the garden, Jesus experienced in effect two other types of fear. Fear proper moved him inasmuch as he still had a glimmer of hope that he might not have to suffer death. Furthermore, he experienced sorrow when realizing that it was inevitable.¹¹⁸ His fear was precipitated and exacerbated by the proximity of the evil (*malum propinquum*), being deserted by his friends (cf. Mk 14:37), and his foreknowledge of the physical torment that lay ahead.¹¹⁹

According to Thomas however, Jesus did not experience fear due to ignorance concerning the source, timing or certainty of the death that he was facing. Jesus Christ did not confront his terror as one would a strange sound in the night. Aquinas is keen to deny that there was any ignorance in Christ,¹²⁰ or any need for learning from experience. The claim of perfect knowledge, and perfection in general, demonstrates Aquinas’ tendency to attribute glorified and exalted status to Christ’s psychology, rather than an itinerant one with the developmental need of acquiring human knowledge through experience.¹²¹ Does Thomas’ perspective here diminish Christ’s humanity and capacity to serve as a model for resilience?

118 “*Sic igitur timor potest considerari quantum ad duo. Uno modo, quantum ad hoc quod appetitus sensitivus naturaliter refugit corporis laesionem, et per tristitiam, si sit praesens; et per timorem, si sit futura*” ST III 15.7; cf. Mk 14:35.

119 Cf. Lk 22:43-44. To illustrate Christ’s natural or spontaneous fear and aversion to death, Aquinas distinguishes between the *voluntas ut natura* (desiring by natural instinct, a “*timor naturalis*”) and *voluntas ut ratio* (desire as modified by reason, or “*timor cogitationis*”). In this regard, see P. Gondreau’s (2000, 293-300; 397-8) excellent discussion on Aquinas’ use of Damascene in relation with Maximus Confessor, Peter Lombard, Hugh of St. Victor, Alexander of Hales and Bonaventure.

120 Aquinas affirms that Christ had full knowledge even of future events (cf. ST III 15.7; where he cites Damascene *De fide orth.* III.23), because Christ was not subject to the *fomes* of sin (which include ignorance) and because of his human nature’s union with the Divine hypostasis (cf. ST III 15.3 corpus and ad 2, where he cites John 1:14).

121 Such development is reflected in Heb 5:8: “Although he was Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered” (cf. Phil 2:7). Concerning the

Aquinas affirms that Christ experienced fear not just as a natural repulsion to death, but also within his choice to not evade his foreseeable death, to accept the “cup” that is offered, to do the Father’s will. In responding to the objection found in Proverbs (18:1), “the just, bold as a lion, shall be without dread,” Aquinas explains that Christ’s fear did not compromise his rational judgment. In this regard, Aquinas introduces St. Jerome’s distinction between a pure passion (*perfecta passio*) and a propassion.¹²² While a pure passion has the postlapsus tendency to derange reason, a propassion involves an emotional and a rational apprehension of the source of evil without the blurring of reason or the inhibiting of the will. Christ is able to will freely to follow the Father’s plan that He continue His mission, while fully realizing the fearfulness of the death to be imposed upon him by those who oppose him. He did so with an unmitigated *imperium* of reason and will. The realism of Christ’s psychosomatic experience of fear meets the criteria of Aquinas’ Christology and soteriology, which demands that Christ be fully human and fully divine.¹²³ It also provides a basis for imitation in Christian resilience.

Aquinas does not contradict himself when he transforms Greco-Roman notions of fortitude into Christian martyrdom. This transformation simply demonstrates how human wisdom is extended through a fuller wisdom, which is based on divine revelation, informed by a life of grace and expressed through faith, hope and charity. It also demonstrates a larger sense of resilience. On an initial reading of Aquinas’ account of fortitude, the evolution of the arguments might seem anything but theological. Fortitude, as the virtue that most properly deals with the fear of death in battle for the common good, seems restricted to the military arena. Nonetheless, the basic definition

debate on Aquinas and the knowledge of Christ see the bibliography found in: J.-P. Torrell 1994, 394-409 and 1999, 1:135-49; and P. Gondreau 2000, 385, 405-414.

¹²² Aquinas (*ST* III 15.7 ad 1) argues: “*iustus dicitur esse absque terrore, secundum quod terror importat perfectam passionem, avertentem hominem a bono quod est rationis. Et sic timor non fuit in Christo: sed solum secundum propassionem. Et ideo dicitur quod coepit Iesus pavere et taedere [Mk 14:33], quasi secundum propassionem, ut Heironymus exponit [Com in Matt. IV.26:37].*”

¹²³ This admission of Christ’s vulnerability to pain, suffering and fear, also avoids any doubt of docetism in Aquinas’ position. Cf. *ST* III 15.7 ad 2 and ad 3; P. Gondreau 2000, 399.

of fortitude, when seen in the context of the whole treatise involving the ultimate fortitude needed for martyrdom, provides a wider basis to understand theological fortitude. Aquinas not only uses warfare in a wider sense to include the situation of private persons in everyday struggles, but also of the martyrs who “have been made valiant in battle.”¹²⁴

Christ thus serves as an example for martyrs, who meet similar ontological and moral situations of fear. Is he also thereby a model for resilience? Aquinas’ claim that Christ is the exemplar for all virtue¹²⁵ suggests that he is the model for resilience as well. But what type of resilience? Notwithstanding the martyrs in ancient Israel,¹²⁶ martyrdom takes on a new meaning rooted in the experience of Jesus Christ. When we open the resilience concept to this faith perspective, we must root Christian resilience not only in Christ’s passion and death, but also in hope in his resurrection. The Christian martyr imitates Christ and participates in his salvific work.¹²⁷ Jesus foretells that, like himself, his followers will be persecuted and put to death.¹²⁸ This type of resilience involves that: we face fear and remain strong in our faith in God; we hope in the eventual fruitfulness of the evident loss; and we are drawn on by charity even for those who persecute us.

6.3. The Gift of Fortitude and the Beatitude of the Just

In martyrdom, the spiritual dimension of Christian fortitude and resilience reaches a peak, but is not exhausted. Aquinas surpasses his treatment of fortitude as a natural virtue or an infused virtue (in the

¹²⁴ “*Fortes facti in bello*,” which Aquinas quotes in *ST* II-II 123.5 ad 1 and *ST* II-II 124.2. It is from *Hebrews* 11:34, which was in Aquinas’ time the Epistle for the Mass of the martyrs SS. Fabian and Sebastian.

¹²⁵ According to L.-B. Gillon (1959), the theme of *Imitatio Christi* is neither very present nor explicit, although not absent in Aquinas’ works (cf. Congar 1974: 344). Aquinas’ approach in the *Summa* differs from other approaches, such as Thomas a Kempis’ *Imitatio Christi* and the spirituality of the *devotio modera*. Inasmuch as its style is more analytical, it demands a re-synthesis in order to more fully draw out such a theme.

¹²⁶ For example, Eleazar, the seven brothers and their mother martyred under Antiochus (2 Mac 6-7).

¹²⁷ Cf. *ST* II-II 124.5 ad 1; Gal 5:24.

¹²⁸ Jesus announces in the Gospel of John (15:20): “‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you.” Cf. John 12:24.

case of martyrdom) in his teaching on fortitude as a Gift of the Holy Spirit, in relation to the Beatitude of those who hunger and thirst for justice and in the precept of fortitude. Thomas is consistent here with his vision of the possibility for human participation in the divine life through knowledge and affection of the Word of Christ and through the Holy Spirit's prompting, sanctification and strengthening.¹²⁹ Such divine participation has practical implications in each believer and the Church. It begins with knowledge of God and His providential plan through the virtue of faith; it seeks the accomplishments of its promises through hope; and it culminates in the friendship with God and neighbor through charity. Nonetheless these theological virtues call upon the interrelated infused and moral ones, and the sevenfold Gift of the Holy Spirit. In different ways, all the virtues and Gifts are useful; not a one of them is redundant.¹³⁰ However, the diversity of their origin and exercise raises a host of challenges for more restricted notions of resilience.

6.3.1. The Gift of Fortitude

Before treating the Gift of Fortitude, I shall treat the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in general. Afterward, we shall ask how resilience enhances Aquinas' perspective and vice versa. The sevenfold Gift of the Holy Spirit is not a secondary element in Aquinas' moral theology, nor is it unimportant for human and spiritual resilience. Nonetheless, it raises difficulties concerning its relationship to moral agency and to virtues in general. First, for Aquinas this sevenfold Gift concerns how the Holy Spirit moves our minds and hearts. Through these Gifts the Holy Spirit prompts the human person, who is disposed to be perfected in this way.¹³¹ Such a conception of the Gifts raises a difficulty for

¹²⁹ It is difficult to overestimate the importance that Aquinas places on the Holy Spirit's role in Christian life (cf. *ST* I-II 106.1; 108.1-2), as was previously discussed in terms of the New Law of grace.

¹³⁰ On Aquinas' teaching concerning the acquired and infused virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, see: R. Cessario 2002; M. Sherwin 2001; J. Porter 1992.

¹³¹ Aquinas (*ST* II-II 139.1) argues "*dona respiciunt motionem animae a Spiritu Sancto*." The Gifts of the Holy Spirit require a more perfect disposition than the virtues (cf. *ST* I-II 68.1-2). The provisional and imperfect state of the virtues (including the theological ones) helps to explain further the need for the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, not only in order to exercise the virtues and to be more

conceptions of voluntariness and responsibility, which permit no external influences. Aquinas' larger sense of voluntariness however specifies that an external influence does not necessarily diminish human autonomy. This insight recalls Aquinas' teaching on the dual principle of human movement: internal (reason and will) and external (God and human teachers),¹³² which I treated in chapter two. In particular, when the external source is reliable and contributes to the goals of true liberty (freedom for excellence), then it even assists and completes human agency in its moral quest for flourishing, truth and goodness. As contributing to human perfection, a prompting of the Holy Spirit leads human moral agency without diminishing it.

Secondly, a Gift of the Holy Spirit does not oppose a human virtue, nor does a human virtue oppose a Gift, for Aquinas. A human virtue perfects a human capacity in doing something well, while a Gift refers to a cause of the action.¹³³ Virtues are interior principles that lead people towards happiness. The Gifts bring greater perfection to the virtues. They add a further docility to the movements of the Spirit. It is thus that morality can become the life according to the Spirit. The domain of human virtue is that which is natural for us to do through reason. The domain of the Gifts is a spiritual sensibility, an instinct (*instinctus*) of the Holy Spirit in both the reason and will that adds further perfection through being more certain (since the act is informed by a "principle higher than human reason"), and more sure (since one is disposed to follow the inner promptings of divine instinct).¹³⁴

responsive to the motion of the Holy Spirit in general (cf. *ST* I-II 68.1-3), but in particular to give us a better mode of knowledge, and more well formed affections in the whole of life. According to J. Pieper (1966, 134-141), the Gift of the Holy Spirit constitutes a third degree of perfection in fortitude; the other two being political and purgatorial fortitude.

¹³² Cf. *ST* I-II 9.4 and *ST* I-II 9.6. Here Aquinas follows a work attributed to Aristotle called the *De bona fortuna*. Concerning the many problems with this text see: Th. Deman 1928, 38-58; E. D. O'Connor 1974, 142-7.

¹³³ Cf. *ST* I-II 68.1; *ST* I-II 63.3.

¹³⁴ Aquinas innovates while drawing heavily from the tradition. His primary sources include: Isaiah (11:2-3), St. Gregory the Great, St. Augustine, as well as Aristotle. In an extraordinarily long corpus concerning the Gifts of the Holy Spirit (*ST* I-II 68), St. Thomas addresses diverse erroneous positions. He concludes by saying: "*his qui moventur per instinctum divinum, non expedit consiliari secundum rationem humanam, sed quod sequantur interiorum instinctum: quia moventur a meliori principio quam sit ratio humana. Et hoc est quod quidam dicunt, quod dona perficiunt hominem ad altiores actus quam sint*

Aquinas' original contribution to the theology of the Gifts is twofold. First, they are superhuman dispositions (*habitus*) of human agency, proportionate to our supernatural calling.¹³⁵ Second, in the *Prima Secundae*, Aquinas explains this mode in terms of the prompting (*instinctus*) of the Holy Spirit.¹³⁶ The Gifts are thus dispositions to be open to the Holy Spirit, as well as promptings of the Spirit; nonetheless they interrelate with the virtues (as *habitus*) in the search for goodness, truth and happiness. If one admits the moral dimension of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit (which some philosophers and psychologists find difficult), then one can welcome a further source of resilience. What does this insight mean in the case of fortitude?

The Gift of fortitude addresses human suffering. It supports humans in managing to keep our eternal perspective and grounds us in God (first cause and last end), while facing suffering, either as a present evil or the toil needed to accomplish some good. We can examine this instinct, as a graced disposition to follow the lead of the Spirit, in two types of situation. First, it can elevate human fortitude, however this construction does not involve putting one block on top of another. Rather it entails an extension, a transformative completion, the coming to blossom of the image of God at the very core of our humanity when facing fearful situations. Second, it can even function without the naturally developed disposition or *habitus* needed for a mature moral virtue of fortitude. This idea can cause some psychologists or positive scientists to raise their eyebrows, and ask what could be the source of such an act. However, would they discredit

actus virtutum" (ST I-II 68.1 corpus). Aquinas here claims to be in agreement with others (*quidem*), who include Philip the Chancellor, St. Albert the Great, St. Bonaventure. We cannot address here the many debates that Aquinas' teaching has precipitated, for example concerning whether through scientific exegetic analysis Isaiah (11:2-3) alone could support his doctrine on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which we cannot address here. Cf. S.-Th. Pinckaers 1995, 26, E. D. O'Connor 1974; M.-M. Labourdette 1957.

¹³⁵ Thomas introduces this position in his commentary on the *Sentences* and never abandoned it.

¹³⁶ Aquinas' teaching has become the most common Catholic position on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Pope Leo XIII in *Divinum illud munus* (9 May 1897) cites his doctrine on the Gifts. Furthermore the CCC (1266, and 1830-1) follows this teaching closely, which does not distinguish the gifts for the spiritual elite, but as basis for the everyday moral agency of Christian life. Cf. E. D. O'Connor 1974; G. Lafont 1998.

all outside influences and relationships that aid a person to act well? Through instruction, discipline and suggestion, instructors, family and friends can encourage particular acts as well as the development of dispositions. The Gift (as the influence of God's relationship with us) goes beyond the present limits of our personal natural *habitus*, as does the impact of a friend who influences us to be courageous when we otherwise might well let fear control our activities. The Gift *per se* does not create a natural disposition, although it strengthens already existing ones. A good act facilitated by the Gift serves as a further basis to develop human fortitude and undo opposing cowardliness.

How does Aquinas distinguish the Gift of fortitude from the virtue? The firmness of mind (*quandam animi firmitatem*) denoted by the virtue of fortitude, as either a general virtue or a special one (when concerning difficulties in facing death), involves a mode that is proper and connatural to human beings in accomplishing arduous efforts and in enduring grievous evil.¹³⁷ Through the Gift of fortitude however the Holy Spirit prompts the human mind to persist in order to attain the sought for end and to avoid threatening perils.¹³⁸ Such persistent strength is not always naturally possible, especially when faced with the fear of death. In particular the Holy Spirit strengthens the mind by infusing confidence (1) about God's bringing us to everlasting life—the end of all good deeds, (2) about God's releasing us from all perils, and (3) by expelling any fear to the contrary.¹³⁹ Even though God (through the Holy Spirit) is present in every moment of goodness, including all courageous acts, the Gift of fortitude comes as a completion, not a destruction of human nature and efforts. The Holy

¹³⁷ Cf. *ST* II-II 139.1; *ST* II-II 123.2; *ST* I-II 61.3.

¹³⁸ The Gift of fortitude is given with and directed by the Gift of counsel in enduring evils and accomplishing any good work (cf. *ST* II-II 139.1 ad 3; Bowlin 1996, 414). The truly courageous people act knowingly. The knowledge given through the Gifts of fortitude (and counsel) differ from fortitude untouched by grace, which does not have the same indications of our final end, of God's wisdom and will for us (cf. *ST* I-II 68.2; *ST* I-II 68.4 ad 3).

¹³⁹ Aquinas explains: "*Sed hoc operatur Spiritus Sanctus in homine, dum perducit eum ad vitam aeternam, quae est finis omnium bonorum operum et evasio omnium periculorum. Et huius rei infundit quandam fiduciam menti Spiritus Sanctus, contrarium timorem excludens*" *ST* II-II 139.1. Although the virtue of fortitude perfects the mind in enduring perils, it does not give confidence that all dangers will be overcome, as is the case for the Gift of fortitude (cf. *ST* II-II 139.1 ad 1).

Spirit moves us further in the general strength of each virtue, as well as in specific acts of fortitude and the martyr's witness.¹⁴⁰ It thus promotes a spontaneous living of Christian resilience, the life of the Spirit.

This spontaneity nonetheless does not exclude an intense struggle at the level of human *habitus*, because of vice, the lack of virtue and the effort needed in developing virtue. The work of the Spirit, through a person's willing cooperation with the grace of God, can assure action that is fitting for salvation, even though everyone does not have the same natural ease, promptness and joy (moral maturity) in their use of intellect, will and emotion. The tricky issue of the co-existence of natural vice or under-developed virtue, with infused virtues and supernatural Gifts is critical for spiritual resilience. Aquinas' moral theology gives some key insights into understanding how the theological resilience of infused virtues and the sevenfold Gift of the Holy Spirit can assure salvation, even in the face of overcoming the effects of a human vice, the lack of natural capacities or struggles in maturation. Acts of theological resilience at the same time strengthen pre-existing natural dispositions, which involve separate efforts to develop through the steps of debutante, progress, self-mastery or maturity.¹⁴¹

6.3.2. Fortitude and the Beatitude of the Just

In addition to the sevenfold Gift of the Holy Spirit, Aquinas recognizes that the Beatitudes play an integral role in moral theology and in fortitude. He construes the Beatitudes as fruits or perfect acts of both the virtues and the Gifts, and as such they cap Christian resilience. In the accomplishment of the Beatitudes, we move (1) from what virtue inclines us toward according to the measure of reason, (2) to what the Gifts inspire according to the higher measure of the Holy Spirit. In this regard, Aquinas follows Augustine's principal ordering of the virtues, the Gifts, and the Beatitudes,¹⁴² even though their

¹⁴⁰ This courageous strength includes and is grounded in the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity; cf. *Ad Eph.* Ch. 3 Lec. 4 p 140.

¹⁴¹ Cf. *ST* I-II 51.4; *ST* I-II 63.3; *ST* I-II 63.4; *III Sent.* 33, q. 1, a. 2; and q. 1a. 3.

¹⁴² In his influential commentary on the Sermon on the Mount (*De Sermone Domini in monte*. PL 34), Augustine is the first to correlate the

approaches differ.¹⁴³ Aquinas explores the nature of how the Beatitudes, Gifts and virtues interrelate, and draws upon a host of sources¹⁴⁴ in a classic Patristic moral interpretation of the Beatitudes as tracing a series of virtues leading to the Kingdom: poverty and humility, docility (or meekness), justice, mercy, purity and peace.

The spiritual progression among the Beatitudes leads to purity of heart, the will for peace and even the witness of martyrdom as their summit. Aquinas ties this movement to the search for flourishing; he views the Beatitudes as Christ's response to the question of human flourishing. Although St. Thomas introduces many insights and nuances on flourishing throughout the first five questions of the *Prima Secundae* (as we discussed in chapter two), that so-called treatise on beatitude seems curiously incomplete. S.-Th. Pinckaers has argued that the treatise does not end there (*ST I-II* 1-5), but rather culminates with the question on the Beatitudes (*ST I-II* 69) as well as the questions concerning the New Law (*ST I-II* 106-8).¹⁴⁵ This spiritual progression

Beatitudes, the Gifts and the petitions of the *Pater*. In doing so, he reworks their division and order. This innovation is motivated by the Patristic Tradition's affinity for finding seven a symbol of plenitude. Prior to Augustine, writers customarily recognized only six petitions in the *Pater*. Augustine identifies the petition on temptations as distinct from that on evil. Likewise, he finds seven Beatitudes in Matthew's Sermon on the Mount (unlike St. Ambrose who finds an eightfold division in Matthew, and unlike the Gospel of Luke's fivefold division). Cf. Pinckaers 1995, 145-6; 1998b, 46-8; O'Connor 1974, 90-2.

¹⁴³ This discipleship is not slavish, but rather an expression of Aquinas' spirituality and morality. Augustine's perspective relies extensively on his own experience, quest for flourishing and desire for God. Aquinas seeks these realities' source and their interconnection in action; cf. *ST II-II* 121.2.

¹⁴⁴ Aquinas especially draws on the following sources in his treatment of the evangelical Beatitudes (in the *ST I-II* 69.1-4): the Gospels of Matthew and Luke; St. Augustine and St. Ambrose, Isaiah (ch. 11) and St. Paul; as well as the philosophical categories of Aristotle (cf. Pinckaers 1998b, 44-45). Pinckaers (1997a, 25-6) deems the *Secunda pars* a type of commentary on the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount.

¹⁴⁵ Pinckaers (1998b, 42-3) argues that the treatise on flourishing (*ST I-II* 1-5) is only completed with the question on the Beatitudes (*ST I-II* 69) for two reasons: (1) Thomas correlates the virtues, Gifts and Beatitudes, and (2) Aquinas does not consider the Beatitudes to be *habitus*, but rather perfect acts. A complete treatment of flourishing should even include Aquinas' discussion of grace (*ST I-II* 109-113). Furthermore, the concrete realization of post-lapsarian human participation in beatitude needs to consider not only the most pertinent virtues (esp. charity, cf. *ST II-II* 23-46), but also Aquinas' treatment of redemption and the sacraments in the *Tertia Pars*.

illustrates Christian resilience; it becomes evident in the way in which Aquinas treats how the Beatitudes correlate with the virtues and the Gifts.

How does Aquinas relate fortitude (as acquired and infused virtues and as a Gift) to the Beatitude of the just: “Happy those that hunger and thirst for what is right: they shall be satisfied”?¹⁴⁶ Although the ordering is Augustine’s, the approach is Aquinas’. Augustine, in his *Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount*, explains that fortitude is becoming of those who hunger and thirst for justice, since it involves toil in order to enjoy true goods and to avoid being trapped in our love of material things. Aquinas confirms this interrelation while arguing that this match is fitting since fortitude is about difficult things (*arduus*) and this Beatitude is about very difficult things involved not only in works of justice (virtuous deeds), but in doing them with an insatiable desire designated by the Beatitude’s phrase, “hunger and thirst for justice/what is right.”¹⁴⁷ Aquinas interprets “justice” as the universal justice involved in all virtuous deeds,¹⁴⁸ and “desire” as including the charity at the root of each virtue and Gift.¹⁴⁹ Furthermore, he signals that patience (in enduring evils) and longanimity (regarding long delays and accomplishing good actions) are the related fruits.¹⁵⁰ Thomas explains that the Beatitudes in general are not only acts, but

146 Matt 5:6 (*JB*). The *RSV* reads: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.” Cf. *ST* II-II 139.2.

147 When discussing whether the Beatitudes are suitably enumerated, Aquinas—following Augustine—also makes this match based on the motive (*motiva*) that it is principally fortitude of soul that moves one to hunger for the works of justice: “*ad esuriendum autem iustitiae opera, praecipue movet animi fortitudo*” (I-II 69.3 ad 3). Nonetheless, Aquinas draws other relationships between the Gifts, virtues and Beatitudes. For example, following St. Ambrose’s commentary on the St. Luke’s list of Beatitudes, he matches them according to the likeness of matter (*conformitas materiae*), which he divides according to human faculties. Thus, he assigns the Gift of fortitude to the Beatitude of the meek, explaining that: “*mitis autem ad fortitudinem, dicit enim Ambrosius, super Lucam [6:22] quod fortitudinis est iram vincere, indignationem cohibere, est enim fortitudo circa passiones irascibilis.*”

148 Aquinas (*ST* II-II 139.2 ad 1) follows St. John Chrysostom (*Super Matth.* Hom. 15.4: PL 57.227) and Aristotle (*NE* III, 1129b14-19).

149 Cf. *ST* II-II 139.2 ad 2; *ST* II-II 23.8 ad 3; *ST* I-II 68.4 ad 3.

150 Cf. *ST* II-II 139.2 ad 3. While the Beatitudes are the virtues and Gifts in act; they nonetheless relate to the fruits of the Spirit, which are the flourishing of the spiritual life possible on earth (cf. *ST* I-II 70.3).

also rewards,¹⁵¹ which fulfill the desires that underlie them on a higher plane. Thus, the Beatitude of those that hunger and thirst for justice involves already a certain fulfillment in terms of patient persisting in the face of difficult labor, persevering to the end, resisting invading evil and accomplishing the difficult good. Aquinas demonstrates an expression of fortitude (that I deem typical of Christian resilience), which finds deeper foundations and fuller expressions in the sevenfold Gift of the Holy Spirit and the Beatitudes.

6.3.3. Precepts of Fortitude and its Development

Given that law and precepts are principles external to moral action, it might seem extraordinary to address the place and resilience-effect of the precepts concerning fortitude (and its annex virtues) after the related Gift and Beatitude. Nonetheless, the topic and this ordering are that of Aquinas, and for good reason. The New Law, as consisting chiefly in the grace of the Holy Spirit,¹⁵² has not only an external, but also an internal character. First, temporally it is an external principle of human agency that becomes internal inasmuch as through the infused virtues and Gifts of the Holy Spirit it yields a spiritual spontaneity. Spiritual spontaneity, expressed in the practice of virtues and Gifts, comes from the interior. It grows out of the natural inclinations, is further moved by the Holy Spirit (through created grace) and is confirmed by reason and will.¹⁵³ Created in the image of God, human beings have this internal principle of motion, within which the Holy Spirit works without destroying human autonomy. In particular, the spontaneity of the New Law inscribed in our hearts serves the human development of virtue and attainment of happiness, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who acts as master for the attentive

¹⁵¹ Cf. *ST* I-II 69.3.

¹⁵² Cf. *ST* I-II 106 1-2; *ST* I-II 108.1. The grace of the Holy Spirit received by the Christian in the New Law works through the form of faith, hope and charity, with the tools of Scripture and the Sacraments.

¹⁵³ It comes both from the internal movement of the human person and the involvement and presence of the Holy Spirit. Here again Aquinas (*ST* I-II 106.1) follows Augustine who says: "*Quae sunt leges Dei ab ipso Deo scriptae in cordibus, nisi ipsa praesentia Spiritus Sancti?*" *De Spiritu et Lettera*, C. 21: PL 44.222.

disciple.¹⁵⁴ It serves acquired virtue inasmuch as we act freely and knowingly (even through understanding only after the fact that we have acted in accord with an inspiration). Such reflective and free acts are bases for further actions and for the development of *habitus*.

Secondly, even though one can distinguish the precepts of the Old and New Law,¹⁵⁵ they both lead to flourishing and serve growth in virtue, insofar as they assist the process whereby the prescribed good becomes second nature.¹⁵⁶ Precepts are about acts of virtue, as Aquinas repeatedly says (*ST* II-II 124.1 ad 3). Thus he can say external that law is a first step in forming the debutante in the combat against sin and in reforming vices, as discussed in regard to education in fortitude. The precepts of the New Law, which are efficacious through the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and grace, aid in assuring good and prompt action. These good acts lead to growth in virtues and have friendship-love with God and with neighbor as their ultimate end.

St. Thomas frames the different precepts of fortitude according to their source, for example according to human laws or to Divine Law. He draws chiefly from Scriptural sources in addressing the precepts of fortitude.¹⁵⁷ As is the case for all precepts, Scriptural precepts direct people to the end established by the lawgiver. The end to which the Divine Law directs human beings is to adhere to God (through friendship-love with God and with neighbor). Thus, precepts of fortitude direct the mind and heart (*anima*) to God and neighbor. Aquinas cites Deuteronomy 20:3-4 to illustrate how a divine precept of fortitude works. Even in the midst of fearful situations, God's word and presence can give one strength, confidence and ease when

154 Cf. Pinckaers 1995, 17ff and 400 ff., and Pinckaers 1999.

155 According to Aquinas (*ST* I-II 108-109), the New Law is stronger than positive law or the old law: (1) for the New Law mobilizes a further action; (2) in the quality of participation, for the person desires and attempts to live more fully; (3) in a deeper response, since it is a response of the heart; (4) in constancy, since it is the Spirit's constancy that is operative.

156 Cf. *ST* I-II 99.2; *ST* I-II 107.1. Scripture frequently associates flourishing and law: e.g. Psalm 1: "Happy the man [...] who delights in the law of the Lord and meditates on his law day and night" (cf. Ps 35: 27-28; Jos 1:8; Pinckaers 1989).

157 Cf. *ST* II-II 140.1-2, in which Aquinas quotes the following Scriptural passages: Deut 20:3-4, Matt 11:12; 1 Peter 5:8-9; James 4:7; Matt 10:28. Furthermore, he draws from St. Augustine and St. Gregory the Great.

realizing that God will fight the enemy. The archetypal NT precept is that of Christ: “Fear not; it is I.”¹⁵⁸ These words are more than moral exhortation, when they are freely accepted in grace and thereby become morally efficacious.¹⁵⁹

The promises of both the Old and New Testament serve in understanding the motivation of fortitude. Aquinas follows Augustine (*contra Faust.* iv) in adjudicating that the OT involves temporal promises, while the NT entails spiritual ones. Likewise the battles are of different sorts. The OT teaches how to fight a bodily contest, while the NT instructs us how to fight spiritually in order to possess eternal life.

We can ask whether focusing on the spiritual battle is less resilient than focusing on the bodily one: Is it not an anti-resilient tendency to focus exclusively on the spiritual? Does not everyone have to face challenges to human nature including physical ones? Aquinas recognizes the centrality and primacy of the spiritual aspect of doing battle and living aright.¹⁶⁰ Nonetheless he confirms that we also have to prepare ourselves to confront the fear involved in bodily death.¹⁶¹ The general message of these precepts is threefold: to fear not (neither spiritual nor physical dangers), to resist evil (from the devil, others and self) and to hold firm in faith. Once again, Aquinas’ approach is an ordered one; the precepts lead from what is more manifest to what is less so. The intention of the law and the lawgiver aims at making humans virtuous. In this vane, the precepts of fortitude are less direct than the precepts of the Decalogue, while leading to rich, yet less obvious aspects of Christ’s teaching: (1) that even the dangers of bodily death are not to be excessively feared; and (2) that the highest

¹⁵⁸ In the resurrection appearance, Jesus Christ says: “Do not be afraid” (Matt 28:10, *RSV*). To Peter who is starting to sink while walking on the water, he says: “Take heart, it is I; have no fear” (Matt 14:27, *RSV*).

¹⁵⁹ In Aquinas’ categories, the passage from moral exhortation to moral action involves both divine grace and a person’s intelligent will (necessary for freedom, but not sufficient for consistency and surety). Although God’s words are efficacious in the moral realm as a necessary condition, when they are taken to heart they become the basis for a voluntary human act.

¹⁶⁰ Thomas (*ST* II-II 140.1 ad 1) cites three Scriptural passages to bolster his case: Matt 11:12; 1 Peter 5:8-9; James 4:7.

¹⁶¹ In this regard, he cites: Matt 10:28; cf. *ST* II-II 140.1 ad 1.

form of virtue is the friendship-love that lays down one's life for one's friend.¹⁶²

Aquinas faces a problematic distinction attributed to sacred Scripture in regard to the virtues associated with fortitude, some of which are promoted by precepts and others by counsels.¹⁶³ First, there are precepts for the virtues of patience and perseverance. Precepts are fitting in regard to what is more difficult, for it is easier to know what to do in general concerning lesser hardships and toils.¹⁶⁴ Second, there are counsels for magnanimity and magnificence, since they belong to the genus of fortitude only because of the greatness in their respective matters.¹⁶⁵ Furthermore, Aquinas distinguishes between affirmative and negative precepts. The precepts of patience and perseverance are affirmative, while those of fortitude are (primarily) negative.¹⁶⁶ Aquinas clarifies that "although affirmative precepts are always binding, they are not binding for always, but according to place and time."¹⁶⁷ As in the case of the precept for martyrdom, this type of affirmative precept involves a preparedness of mind (*praeparationem animi*) to act when it is appropriate.¹⁶⁸ Negative ones can be more concrete, while the affirmative ones must remain more general.

Aquinas fittingly finishes his reflection on the precepts of fortitude and the whole treatise on fortitude by affirming that because of the greatness of danger associated with fortitude, we must proceed with caution without fixing particular determinate responses ahead of

¹⁶² Cf. *ST* II-II 140.1 ad 3; *ST* II-II 122.1 ad 1; John 15:13.

¹⁶³ Cf. *ST* II-II 140.2 sc.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. *ST* II-II 140.2 ad 2 and ad 3.

¹⁶⁵ "*Ea autem quae pertinent ad excellentiam magis cadunt sub consiliiis perfectionis quam sub praeceptis necessitatis*" *ST* II-II 140.2 ad 1.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. *ST* II-II 140.1 ad 2.

¹⁶⁷ "*Praecepta affirmativa, etsi semper obligent, non tamen obligant ad semper, sed pro loco et tempore*" *ST* II-II 140.2 ad 2.

¹⁶⁸ "*Et ideo sicut praecepta affirmativa quae de patientia dantur, sunt accipienda secundum praeparationem animi, ut scilicet homo sit paratus ea adimplere cum opus fuerit*" *ST* II-II 140.2 ad 2. Aquinas interprets the martyrdom precepts in the NT, which literally applies in certain cases, to pertain in general to a preparation of the mind and heart for martyrdom. Aquinas cites Rom 10.10 and 1 John 3:16 as examples of precepts concerning martyrdom in *ST* II-II 124.3 ad 1; cf. 124.1 ad 3; I-II 108.1 ad 4. Aquinas cites Rom 10.10, and 1 John 3:16 as examples of precepts concerning martyrdom in *ST* II-II 124.3 ad 1; cf. 124.1 ad 3.

time about what we should do.¹⁶⁹ In order to aid us to acquire stable virtuous dispositions and perform good acts, he intends that these precepts should not infringe upon the creativity and spontaneity of the virtues at the practical level. This insight verifies the flexibility promoted in his conception of resilient fortitude.

¹⁶⁹ Aquinas says: “*quod fortitudo [...] est circa maxima pericula: in quibus cautius est agendum, nec oportet aliquid determinari in particulari quid sit faciendum*” *ST* II-II 140.2 ad 3. However, in the less extreme cases involving minor hardships and toils, it is easier to know in general (and through the help of positive precepts) what to do in order to act with patience and perseverance; cf. Congar 1974, 339.

Chapter Seven.

A Theological Dimension of Resilient Initiative-taking?

Our theological reflections on human initiatives and divine purpose lead us to wonder about the variety of goals that humans pursue and the strength we need to accomplish them. How do everyday (natural) hopes and fundamental (theological) hope interact in human initiatives? Does hope for honor and excellence conflict with or underlie spiritual resilience? As in the case of fortitude, Aquinas establishes a specifically Christian apex for initiative-taking virtues. It involves a type of excellence that is akin to sanctification and humble magnanimity.

I did not fully explain this theological dimension of initiative while treating the theological transformation of fortitude and resilience. In this section, I shall examine the virtues and emotions of initiative and constructive resilience. I explore their potential theological extension. First, I address issues related to infused greatness and initiative, as specified in constructive projects and generosity, and in great intentions and plans. Then I concentrate on the theological honor and excellence needed to plan, motivate and complete projects that have their source and finality in God.

7.1. Infused Greatness and Initiative: Theological Dimensions of *Magnificentia* and *Magnanimitas*

In addressing St. Thomas' treatment of theological initiative, we shall examine human and divine projects in terms of virtues and resilience. First, I shall explore infused magnificence and generosity. How does Aquinas' understanding of these virtues correlate with resilience insights? Second, how does his conception of theological magnanimity and theological hope display resilience insights particular to the Judeo-Christian tradition? Finally, I shall investigate his input on the spiritual vulnerability that causes and results from failed initiatives.

This juncture of the study raises several problems of vocabulary and definition. On the one hand, we have borrowed some the terms from non-Christian cultures. However, Aristotle or Cicero's vision of the virtuous human can seem so tightly bound with Greek and Roman culture that we find it difficult to imagine it pertaining to

the humble Christ, and large segments of the Christian tradition, in particular the monastic perspective of fleeing the snares of the world (*fuga mundi*). On the other hand, we have the problem of applying resilience to a theological domain. In particular, the psychosocial sciences' use the concepts of hope, hopelessness, optimism and pessimism with great fluidity. Their meanings can imply more or less strictly philosophical or psychological foundations, and are neither always inclusive nor exclusive of religious senses. For example, resilience research employs hope and optimism (as well as confidence or trust) as a resilience capacity with differing import. Furthermore, resilience research does not necessarily attain the deepest levels of spiritual causality. We must make any appropriations in this theological study with due respect for the research; we must identify the insights and their promise, then apply them with due care.

7.1.1. Humility and Greatness in Human Agency

Many writers have queried about the Christian character of magnanimity and magnificence. Aquinas' treatment of these virtues has seemed difficult to stomach for some people, especially when read with his indebtedness to Aristotle in mind. It can invoke a sense of "greatness of spirit" and "grandeur of project" with which few contemporary people feel at ease. At first glance, these virtues might evoke the prejudices of an epoch which is neither Christian nor post-modern, let alone that of a 21st century entrepreneur or refugee child. Such notions of aristocratic greatness seem more akin to the imagined greatness of a Greek hero, a Roman senator or a Renaissance architect. We can even imagine it being personified in a Nietzschean *übermensch*,¹ or an English gentleman of yesteryear.

These misgivings denote the lines of debate on magnanimity and humility in Christian agency. With these suspicions on the table, I should recall that before Aquinas and his master St. Albert the Great,²

¹ Nietzsche seems alarmed at the way in which greatness had disappeared in the 19th century, when he says that "people [...] are becoming smaller and smaller" (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra* 1954, 169; cited in Curzer 1991, 150; cf. Congar 1974, 339-40).

² Albert integrated the Aristotelian notion of magnanimity into Christian theology. Nonetheless, Albert's solution is different from that of Aristotle and

there was a propensity among theologians to make a mystical transposition whereby they identified magnanimity either with theological hope or humility.³ This position results in identifying the magnanimity of the philosophers with Christian humility and the magnanimity of the politicians with Christian hope. However, both cases empty the Christian ideal of *human* greatness, at least according to R.-A. Gauthier.⁴ Aquinas avoids such pitfalls, according to Y.-M. Congar, when trying to give full recognition to human nature and collaboration, without depreciating divine initiative and efficacious grace.⁵ By so doing, Aquinas emphasizes the grandeur of human hope and enterprise in efforts at innovation. He admires those who realize projects that fully employ human energies and capacities.⁶

But does St. Thomas succeed in capturing the spirit of the Christian tradition or does he lead it astray? Gauthier has said that Aquinas' doctrine on *magnanimitas* reconciles the "diviniste" spirituality of the Fathers with a humanist spirituality; that it produces a spirituality, which is typically for the lay person who is engaged in the world, searching God mediately through human beings and creation.⁷ Congar for his part suggests that magnanimity has the first place of the virtues and commands all the others on the level of personal life, as social justice does for community life,⁸ without

Aquinas (at least as he formulated it in his *Summa de bono*, written between 1244-8; Albert changed his position during a course on the *NE* between 1268-70). In this early position, Albert affirms with Aristotle that magnanimity is a virtue, distinct from *fortitudo*, and concerns having a soul big enough to undertake the conquest of a great object, like honor. Albert however reverses Aristotle's ordering of virtues concerning honor, by according great honors to Aristotle's unnamed virtue (Albert's *mavortia*, which concerns great honors due to those in charge of public affairs), and according little honors to magnanimity. Thus we have a complete contradiction, which eliminates the idea of greatness from magnanimity (cf. Gauthier 1951, 307-9, and 492).

3 St. Bernard and St. Bonaventure for example supported a certain mystical transposition of magnanimity, as theologians suspicious of Abelardian and Aristotelian humanism (cf. Gauthier 1951, 282-29, 317-8).

4 Cf. Gauthier 1951, 295.

5 Cf. Congar 1974, 340.

6 Congar (1974, 340) says: "*En fait, la magnanimité englobe une grandeur de l'espoir humain, un esprit d'entreprise qui ne craint pas d'innover ni de risquer, une réalisation par l'homme des énergies qu'il sent en lui.*"

7 Cf. Gauthier 1951, 496.

8 Cf. Congar 1974, 341.

deprecating the primacy of theological love and Christian humility. Such suggestions do not offer final conclusions, but rather directions for further debate on the relationship of Aquinas' notion of magnanimity and initiative with humility and resilience research.⁹

We shall start with two questions: what is the range of magnanimity for Aquinas? Does it have the same scope as Aristotle's great-souled man? We find that Aquinas widens his notion not only in social, but also theological directions. For Aquinas, *magnanimitas* involves giving one's whole attention (*tota ejus intentio*) to the good of others and God.¹⁰ This socio-theological vision is a long stride from the purported self-absorption charged to Aristotle's version; it also demonstrates that in important regards, Aquinas' notion of greatness has less to do with Aristotle's than is commonly thought. At the very center of his virtue of great deeds and virtue theory in general, Aquinas intends an attentional style that is akin to the incentive rather than anxiety type, as mentioned earlier in the psychosocial research.¹¹ Indeed for Aquinas, the focusing of one's whole attention on common and divine goods is not a source of anxiety, but rather the result of a liberating movement that draws forth excellence. To maintain that this insight involves an incentive attentional style suggests another potential characteristic of spiritual resilience: that social and divine goals serve as incentives to focus and accomplish our tasks.

Magnanimity mobilizes our resources, calms the fear of failure and converts us in natural hope. Regarding the theological virtue of hope on the contrary, magnanimity is a result of being converted in

⁹ Indeed, in addition to employing Cicero and Aristotle, Aquinas proposes a synthesis of sources whose diversity of insight on *magnanimitas* makes it even more difficult to identify a contemporary name for this virtue (or group of virtues). Diverse notions of greatness, for example, modify the import of magnanimous acts. Thus for Cicero, it is a greatness in self-confidence and being worthy of honor by acting for the public good; for the fathers of the Church, its source and end is divine greatness; for St. Albert, it entails the great scope of theological hope, for St. Bonaventure, it involves a greatness in being humble; for the voluntarist, it is a greatness in doing the will of God; for Descartes, a greatness in generosity; for Nietzsche, a greatness in striving for excellence above and beyond the crowd, even above and beyond morality. Cf. M. Dixault 1996, 596.

¹⁰ Aquinas' *In Eth.* 4, 10, 779.

¹¹ Cf. Wilson and Gottman 1996, 194-5.

hope, as we shall discuss shortly.¹² Christian daring and confidence harness a restrained aggressiveness, a specifically Christian reasoned standard of action. Aquinas not only specifies that magnanimity involves the correct judgment of reason, due deliberation and foresight in general,¹³ he follows the exacting requirements of the Christian tradition that demands one to overcome aggressive behavior toward strangers and to love hostile enemies. This teaching seems repugnant to the human evolutionary tendency to protect oneself and one's gene pool. But can a theological perspective justify it through a larger sense of struggle and survival?

Christian teachings on pardon, non-aggressiveness and love of enemies have made Christians appear soft in the eyes of certain critiques. A case in point is Freud, whose critique of Christianity's stance on aggression rings loud. He takes aim at a Christian preoccupation with self-sacrifice in the form of love for neighbors, strangers and enemies. His criticisms attack what he believes is the Christian underestimation of aggressive human nature. Unconstrained by natural affections, humans tend to be hostile to strangers, according to Freud. The Christian is overly exposed to the aggression of others. Without using the term "resilience," he basically judges Christianity to be unresilient to human hostility and aggression.¹⁴ How does Aquinas' approach stand up to Freud's critique?

Aquinas' teaching on the virtues of magnanimity, hope, courage and martyrdom bring a response to this critique and a corrective to this view of Christian passivity. The Christian is called to lay down one's life for one's friend, because it is in doing so that we not only can defend the weak and promote social justice (rather than simple self-interest), but also participate in Christ's salvific work of building up the Kingdom of God. Aquinas promotes a profound notion of human social nature. He does not deny the inclination for self-protection, but recognizes that it interacts in the larger context of other

12 According to J. L. Bruguès (1984, 47-58), the theological virtue of hope supports the virtues of courage and magnanimity, if they exist; otherwise it incites them to develop.

13 On daring and attack arising from hope, see: *ST* I-II 45.2; *ST* II-II 123.3 ad 3; and *NE* I 116b 23. On the precepts relating to hope and fear see: *ST* II-II 22.

14 Cf. S. Freud 1961, 57; D. Browning 1999, 134.

inclinations toward family-life, society and Church, as well as seeking truth, goodness and flourishing. Are not these tendencies even more powerful in the long run? A further rebuttal of Freud's claim that Christians are under-protected from natural hostility is Aquinas' position on just wrath.¹⁵ Rather than being absolute, the counsel to turn the other cheek to insult has its limits. Action, empowered by a just wrath, must correct certain types of wrong, as we shall discuss more shortly.

Humility is endemic to Aquinas' approach to Christian greatness and initiative. Insofar as human beings are neither their own creator nor completely self-sufficient, they need the assistance of others (human and divine) and must put trust in them. The resources for this confident hope that we can triumph involve: (1) recognizing the real dimension of our own strengths and resources, (2) observing friends' capacity to aid us and other sources of help, and (3) believing in promises of divine assistance.¹⁶ This third area, divine help, is the heart of Aquinas' teaching on humility, even though it applies to the other two areas as well. Indeed even when we have self-confidence, Aquinas reminds us that "a person hopes in himself, yet under God withal,"¹⁷ and that our natural hope is also a "confidence in God."¹⁸ Consequently, a person must have confidence not only in himself, in other human beings and in society, but above all in the assistance and promises of God.¹⁹ It is fitting to recall the importance of the interaction of the virtues and the Gift that render us docile to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Confidence derives its strength of hope from these sources, in which one must believe while lacking personal control of them. This point demonstrates the non-Pelagian nature of his position, and invites a further examination of the related virtues.

15 On anger and Christian action, see *ST* II-II 123.10; *ST* I-II 46.5; *ST* II-II 136.2 ad 1; *ST* II-II 157 (meekness and anger); *ST* II-II 158 (the vice of anger).

16 Cf. *ST* I-II 45.3; *ST* II-II 129.6 ad 1.

17 "*Spes qua quis de Deo confidit, ponitur virtus theologica, ut supra* [*ST* II-II 17.5; and *ST* I-II 62.3] *habitu est. Sed per fiduciam quae nunc ponitur fortitudinis pars, homo habet spem in seipso, tamen sub Deo*" *ST* II-II 128.1 ad 2.

18 *De virt. com.* 1, 12.

19 *ST* II-II 129.6 ad 1. Such confidence applies not only to the infused moral level and the promises involved in the theological virtue of hope, but also on the natural level.

7.1.2. The Theological Measure of *Magnificentia* and Generosity

Anthropological studies, as reported in the previous chapter, suggest that conspicuous consumption and altruistic giving can promote the survival advantage of an individual and his gene pool. I have argued that Aquinas' views on generosity and magnificence offer a larger moral and metaphysical framework to adjudicate efforts at self-giving and wealth sharing. Now I shall situate these comments in his theological view on magnificence and generosity. In so doing, I shall test and appropriate resilience insights.

Aquinas' treatment of *magnificentia* avoids the risk of a narrow anthropocentric self-sufficiency, by considering human virtue as a participation in divine power and purpose.²⁰ He construes the fullness of magnificence according to its theological and social content. The magnificent person is not egocentric, but rather recognizes that "one's person is little in comparison with that which regards Divine things, or even the affairs of the community at large."²¹ Once again, humility marks Thomas' notion of greatness and society.

Human works are ordered to an end, the greatest of which is the honor of God. Wherefore we enact magnificence's greatest work with reference to divine honor and glory. Aquinas denotes a unity to great works that are intended not only to glorify God, but also to sanctify human beings.²² He recognizes that we must measure the

²⁰ He says: "*virtus humana est participatio quaedam virtutis divinae*" *ST* II-II 134.1 sc; where he quotes Ps. 67:35 [68:34] and thus marks the theological dimension of a discussion that we might otherwise take as merely philosophical.

²¹ "*Quod autem pertinet ad personam uniuscuiusque, est aliquid parvum in comparatione ad id quod convenit rebus divinis vel rebus communibus*" *ST* II-II 134.1 ad 3.

²² Aquinas takes his queues on the relationship between magnificence, glory and sanctification from Scripture. From St. Jerome's Vulgate, he quotes the Book of Exodus (15:11), "*Magnificus in sanctitate,*" as well as the Psalm (95:6), "*Sanctitas et magnificentia in sanctificatione eius*" (Cf. *ST* II-II 134.2 obj. 3). Thomas' insight stands, even though contemporary Scripture scholarship offers us translations without the term "*magnificentia*." The *RSV* reads: "Who is like thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, majestic in holiness, terrible in glorious deeds, doing wonders?" (Ex 15:11; *RSV*) and "Honor and majesty are before him" (Psalm 95 [96]:6). He even employs Aristotle, who likewise considers the chief object of magnificence to concern God, namely expenditure for divine sacrifices; cf. *NE* ii.5, 1122b19-23; 33-35, which he cites in *ST* II-II 134.1 ad 3.

greatness of human action in the world in regard to its effects on human holiness and religion.²³ Aquinas aligns his notion of magnificence to the measure of holiness whose chief effect is directed to religion, the worship of God and the sanctification of the human community for God's glory.²⁴

These theological considerations about religious practice raise a question about the self-esteem and human agency mentioned earlier in regard to resilience. How might religion and spirituality enhance or degrade both self-esteem and self-efficacy? Resilience studies suggest that enhancement of self-esteem and social competence comes from an internalized religion, whose role in self-valuation and agency involves providing meaning, purpose, identity, self-realization and motivation. When faced with denigration or great efforts, religion can thus affirm us in our (faith-established) origin and purpose, as well as by offering resources to overcome difficulty in both internal and external forums.²⁵ Negative experiences of religion, on the contrary, can have adverse emotional and anti-social effects, and an extreme emphasis on human decrepitude can negatively impact self-esteem and efficacy.²⁶

Aquinas teaching on the centrality of the virtue of religion and its place in magnificence affirms the basis for an internal type of religious practice. According to resilience research, such an internal type of religion correlates with increased self-esteem and self-efficacy. We cannot take these qualities as synonymous with sanctification. Yet they might involve a significant resilience effect of the meaning and purpose that an active religious relationship with God and neighbor confirms.

Aquinas' view of magnificence though is not simply a question of religious worship and its internal resilience effects on its practitioners. It concerns a social agenda tied to the betterment of our neighbor's situation. In this regard, although Aquinas takes many cues

²³ Aquinas develops this connection between holiness and the virtue religion in *ST* II-II 81.8.

²⁴ "*Et ideo magnificentia coniungitur sanctitati: quia praecipue eius effectus ad religionem, sive ad sanctitatem, ordinatur*" *ST* II-II 134.2 ad 3.

²⁵ Cf. Lösel 1994, 8-12; Meyer and Lausell 1996, 129; Chamberlain and Zika 1992, 139; Pargament et al. 1990, 793, and 814-6; Thomas and Carver 1990, 195ff.

²⁶ Cf. Meyer and Lausell 1996, 129.

from Cicero, the range of the virtues of magnificence and generosity (*liberalitas*) is vastly different for the Roman philosopher. Cicero does consider that human nature has a universal scope. Nonetheless, his conception of the commonweal involves a different hierarchical ordering of responsibilities and reciprocities: family, city-state and then universe, foreigners falling in this latter category.²⁷ Moral obligation first demands to render practical services to our country and then to our parents.²⁸ Private property²⁹ is not owed to others, according to Cicero, for “the resources of individuals are limited and the number of needy is infinite, this spirit of universal liberality must be regulated [...] in order that we may continue to have the means for being generous to our friends.”³⁰ For Cicero, generosity (*liberalitas*) as an aspect of justice is very tightly bound by the limits of his political program.

Aquinas’ Christian conception of neighbor, generosity and magnificence prophetically calls us to reconsider the relationship that we have with our own resources and our relationships with others. This reconsideration includes a special respect and love not only for the least among us, but also for our enemies.³¹ Aquinas construes an *ordo*

27 In the optic of extending justice to the foreigner, that is, of Stoic *caritas*, Cicero explains that the foreigner is owed a very limited fare: water, fire, and honest counsel—whatever is common property.

28 Moral social obligations are ordered between common citizenship, kinship, friendship, love of country (cf. *Off.* I.53-59), which is only surpassed by the “first duty to the immortal gods” (which is mentioned in a second list, cf. *Off.* I.160); cf. McNamee 1960, 45-6; Griffin 1991, xxiii.

29 Here we see Cicero’s social conservatism. He even identifies one of justice’s two principal functions as promoting the proper use of private and common property (the other being to prevent *iniuria*, or unprovoked aggression; cf. *Off.* I.20; Long 1995, 240).

30 *Off.* I.52. Even though being far from the Christian vision of charity, this stoic vision is employed by St. Augustine and other Christian thinkers to illustrate that the eternal law is known to all. That is, to illustrate *Romans* 2:14-15: “When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them.” For a further discussion see MacIntyre 1988, 152-3.

31 As mentioned before, Aquinas’ great acts, which are “beneficent, generous and grateful,” look like loving one’s neighbor (*ST* II-II 129.4 ad 2; cf. Aristotle *Rhet.* 1366b17; Horner 1998, 433 and fn. 106).

caritatis, an ordering of love.³² Nevertheless, this *ordo* calls for a sense of responsibility that involves that we cannot rest while others are still in need. Indeed, our lives flourish when we give glory to God, sanctify ourselves, while generously doing good to our neighbors who are in need. In generosity and magnificence, we intellectually adjudicate (prudence) that so much is inadequate (stinginess), more is appropriate (generosity), and beyond is extravagant (*largesse*). However, for Aquinas greatness goes hand in hand with humility, which invites us to learn from Christ's magnificence and generosity, while being meek and humble in action.

In sum, we cannot separate Aquinas' fundamental definitions of magnificence and generosity from their larger context, which indicates a moral and spiritual type of survival that is akin to spiritual resilience. In this case, one must construe the use of money and possessions in relation to the other virtues that direct them to the Divine good (God's glory), the good of others (the common good and justice) and to one's own excellence (sanctification and justice). In particular, the virtues of religion, justice, fortitude, temperance and prudence necessarily support works of magnificence and generosity, and weigh them in a different measure than pure physical survival.³³ Ultimately, Aquinas identifies a spiritual basis for these virtues, which yield a spiritual wealth, survival and resilience.³⁴

7.1.3. Infused Magnanimity

How can Aquinas' teaching on the infused virtue of magnanimity benefit from resilience insights? Does a notion of infused magnanimity utterly muddle up Greek philosophical and Christian theological images of greatness and divine assistance? First, we need to ask whether Aquinas' doctrine of magnanimity has a theological dimension. Numerous authors have disputed whether Aquinas' moral theory is theology, philosophy or both. In passing, I have already distinguished between the virtue of magnanimity's focus on the passions of hope and despair, and the theological virtue of hope. This

³² Cf. S. J. Pope 1994.

³³ Cf. *ST* II-II 117.6.

³⁴ Cf. *ST* II-II 117.1 ad 1; Luke Ch.12.

distinction does not however necessarily negate the possibility of two types of magnanimity, one philosophical and another theological. In establishing the latter in the writings of Aquinas, I intend to illustrate another aspect of spiritual resilience in initiative-taking, the way in which the theological builds up the philosophical through unexpected turns. Aquinas conception of magnanimity would thus differ from Aristotle's in other significant ways. We have already seen how Thomas extends the Philosopher's notion of greatness by affirming in his *Commentary on the NE* that the magnanimous person's "entire attention is concerned with the goods of the community and God."³⁵ But Aquinas' position goes further.

Inasmuch as magnanimity concerns managing hope, despair and daring in life's foremost projects, we employ this virtue to seek human flourishing, which for Aquinas ultimately aims at a theological reality. As an acquired virtue, magnanimity develops as we train our passions of hope and daring that we experience in relation to important goals. Acquired magnanimity achieves that which is great in every virtue; it moves towards a harmonious development that is not only physical and psychological, but also spiritual. Although morality involves living according to right reason, Christians seek more than the natural moral virtues. Indeed, right reason informed by faith involves a further participating in divine reason and Providence.

Infused magnanimity involves reason informed by faith³⁶ and grace infused by God.³⁷ In establishing the shape and texture of magnanimity, the theological virtues aid us to identify another rational mean that appropriate our theological end. Through the grace received at baptism, the Christian possesses the infused virtue of magnanimity, by an infused proximate disposition. Thereby we are disposed to

³⁵ "*Sed tota ejus intentio est circa bona communia et divina*" In *Eth.* 4, 10, 779.

³⁶ He calls it "*secundum regulam rationis divinitus informatae*" (*De malo*, 8, 2).

³⁷ In addition to different sources, acquired and infused magnanimity differ according to their object's formal aspect. They involve different species, because they rationally relate to their object in specifically different ways (one is the mode of human reason, the other reason informed by faith). Aquinas explains this distinction through the example of temperance in *ST I-II* 63.4 in the article entitled: "*Utrum virtus quam acquirimus ex operum assuetudine, sit eiusdem speciei cum virtute infusa?*"

practice the act of magnanimity, “if it were competent to him according to his state.”³⁸ If we have a great opportunity, grace can dispose us to great acts that even exceed our past experiences. Nonetheless, infused magnanimity invites spiritual training.

In addition to being concerned for physical development, the Christian knows through grace that the body requires the special training of spiritual discipline (penance and mortification).³⁹ This need for development applies to all domains. All our faculties have been wounded by sin and need to be healed from the tendency to evil. The Christian magnanimous person does not simply strive for fulfillment of his personality within the limits of his postlapsus condition, but rather he seeks the graced-filled restoration of his wounded personality, and more. He discerns true greatness, which for the Christian is found in following Christ.⁴⁰ The infused virtues make for a greatness that God can work in us. This greatness can even be in disproportion to our strength.⁴¹ With the infused virtue of magnanimity, we measure our own capacities (strengths), and having found them to be adequate, in the context of grace, undertake great and difficult theological works; such is the case with the acquired virtue on the natural level. They both suppose the strengths that the subject possesses in our human, connatural way.

The theological form of magnanimity, however, according to Aquinas, “makes a man deem himself worthy of great things in consideration of the Gifts he holds from God: thus if his soul is endowed with great virtue, magnanimity makes him tend to perfect works of virtue; and the same is to be said of the use of any other good,

38 Aquinas says: “*Sed secundum principia virtutum, quae sunt prudentia et gratia, omnes virtutes sunt connexae secundum habitus simul in anima existentes, vel in actu vel in propinqua dispositione. Et sic potest aliquis cui non competit actus magnanimitatis, habere magnanimitatis habitum: per quem scilicet disponitur ad talem actum exequendum si sibi secundum statum suum competeret.*” *ST II-II* 129.3 ad 2.

39 Thus the body becomes ever more an instrument of reconciliation and grace, instead of an instrument of sin. This progress involves being conformed into the image of the body of the Crucified-One. This new ideal is concerned with growth and calls for the training involved in penance and reconciliation.

40 Cf. Gauthier 1951, 348-9.

41 Infused virtues and the Gifts can outstrip the individual’s strength; thus Thomas says that the Gift of Fortitude is not limited by the natural conditions of the subject (cf. *In III S.*, 34, 1, 2; Gauthier 1951, 354).

such as science or external fortune.”⁴² We strive to deserve honor, even though we do not “think much of the honor accorded by man.”⁴³ This attitude helps us neither to fall away from God’s Gifts, nor to do wrong on account of seeking human honors. Such magnanimity completes humility, which “makes us honor others and esteem them better than ourselves, insofar as we see some of God’s Gifts in them.”⁴⁴ We need a great soul in order to follow the resilient Christ through conversion, attempting to live the Beatitudes, being docile to the Spirit, remaining faithful to our baptism, and proclaiming ourselves disciples of God. Greatness’ principal purpose is theological hope: the wait and expectation for entry into divine beatitude, which shakes up our lives, by conferring an unexpected perspective.⁴⁵ Magnanimity mobilizes all the resources of hope in the greatest enterprises. It involves a spiritual resilience that strengthens us to affront the inevitable risks and perils and even awakens in us distaste for failure. The related spiritual resilience processes become clearer in the following discussion on when the interaction between our hopes, human and divine.

7.1.4. The Theological Virtue of Hope

The energy of the passions of hope and daring empowers the virtues of initiative, as described in chapter four. Although the underlying passion of hope is related most directly to everyday hopes, is it not also related to the most fundamental human hope, the

42 *ST II-II 129.3 ad 4. “Magnanimitas igitur facit quod homo se magnis dignificet secundum considerationem donorum quae possidet ex Deo: sicut, si habet magnam virtutem animi, magnanimitas facit quod ad perfecta opera virtutis tendat. Et similiter est dicendum de usu cuiuslibet alterius boni, puta scientiae vel exterioris fortunae.”*

43 *“Et hoc modo magnanimitas est circa honorem: ut videlicet studeat facere ea quae sunt honore digna, non tamen sic ut pro magno aestimet humanum honorem” ST II-II 129.1 ad 3.*

44 *“Sed humilitas alios honorat, et superiores aestimat, inquantum in eis aliquid inspicit de donis Dei. [...] Et sic patet quod magnanimitas et humilitas non sunt contraria, quamvis in contraria tendere videantur: quia procedunt secundum diversas considerationes” ST II-II 129.3 ad. 4.* Instead of Aristotle, Aquinas draws here upon Psalm 14:4 concerning the just man who “honors them that fear the Lord.” This theological perspective demonstrates the reverential bearing of both *magnanimitas* and humility for Aquinas. See also *ST II-II 161.1 ad 3.*

45 Cf. Bruguès 1991, 252.

theological level? Aquinas treats two virtues of hope that are in some way both grounded in the passion of hope, and that are both active elements in spiritual resilience. We need to ask: how does Aquinas' treatment of the theological virtue of hope inform our understanding of human agency? And how can considerations of resilience insights on agency and pathways enrich it?

Without presenting a complete treatise on theological hope, I shall trace its principal elements in order to complete our study of initiative and resilience in Aquinas' Christian perspective. As already mentioned, Thomas specifies that hope's object is a good that lies in the future and that it is difficult but possible to attain. This view of hope seems almost synonymous with a resilience trajectory, one that seeks the agency and pathways to attain the future goal. The virtue of hope as a natural virtue (magnanimity) is rooted in human desire, and manifest in the longing for flourishing. For Aquinas, however, it is impossible with one's own natural capacities to attain the vision of God, or even to hope in Him. The human person is not self-sufficient, and human natural inclinations point beyond themselves for their fulfillment.⁴⁶ The dialectic of hope, which is rooted in natural desire, passes through trials before finding the fulfillment of all its fundamental longings in God. God makes known his promises to bring us at the end of time (*eschaton*) to complete beatitude; it is only through the means of grace in the present that we can truly begin to hope theologically.⁴⁷ According to Aquinas, God alone can make us fully happy.⁴⁸

Hope as a supernatural virtue "makes one sphere of human activity to be good and to reach one of the rules it is supposed to

46 Our being drawn to God is a first and principal element (this is the psychological aspect of hope). This intentional attaining of God is imperfect desire. Aquinas distinguishes the theological virtue of hope from simple desires by its second element, confidence in divine help, which implies an actual inference and spiritual contact with God (cf. *de Spe* 1, ad 6). Divine help is the formal object of the theological virtue of hope, and confidence in God its formal element.

47 Cf. S.-Th. Pinckaers 1995a, 313-317; and 1978, 165-177; *LG* no. 48d.

48 God must provide his free and supernatural help in the form of the "light of glory" and the graces that lead one to the beatific vision. Cf. *ST* I-II 5.5; *ST* II-II 17.4.

reach.”⁴⁹ This hope is not an emotion, but a *habitus* of the spirit; that is, its subject is not the sense appetite, but the intellectual appetite, the will (*voluntas*).⁵⁰ Hope finds its roots in the human person being created in the image of God.⁵¹ Although it is expressed in a primitive form through the natural desire for communion with God and the rest of creation, and through the other spiritual inclinations, hope is properly a virtue of the will, which is situated in a spiritual sentiment of hope (beyond the emotion of hope).⁵²

Hope is a theological virtue when its principle object is God and the eternal flourishing that he offers us, according to Aquinas.⁵³ The secondary object of theological hope is divine assistance, which is necessary to attain eternal flourishing.⁵⁴ The arduous nature of the object of hope has several implications though.⁵⁵ God as the object of hope makes theological hope a theological magnanimity, as seeking to attain the greatest (and most difficult) good, which is God. Divine assistance as an object of hope moreover makes it a theological humility, as recognizing our absolute dependence on God’s help. Although divine assistance figures as the secondary object of hope, it is principal as its first efficient cause.⁵⁶ In liaison with the virtues of charity and faith, hope furthermore offers a unitive link with God,

49 “*spes est virtus, cum faciat actum hominis bonum, et debitam regulam attingentem*” *ST* II-II 17.1; cf. *ST* I-II 40.1.

50 “*Quamvis spes, de qua nunc loquimur, non sit passio, sed habitus mentis*” *ST* II-II 17.1 ad 1; *ST* II-II 18.1.

51 Cf. Gn 1:26-27; 1 Cor 11:7; Eph 4:24; Col 3:10; *ST* I 93.4; *ST* I 12.1; *ST* I 12.4 ad 3; *ST* I-II 3.8; *ST* II-II 2.3; *GS* 12.

52 The rational appetite of the will naturally follows the moral good as presented by reason in the measure that it is our good (limited to what we can accomplish for ourselves). There is no need for virtue at this level (cf. *ST* I-II 56.6; *de virt. com.* 5; Gauthier 1951, 320) of voluntary hope, which has a natural rectitude not needing a virtue to manage it (cf. *ST* II-II 22.1 ad 1; and in *III Sent.*, d. 26, qu. 2, a. 1, ad 2). In its imperfection (concerning things that are not possessed) it is not a virtue like natural virtues (subject simply to human powers). Rather, it surpasses virtue that is proportionate to humans, calling upon the strength of God (cf. *ST* I-II 62.3 ad 2, which cites 1 Cor. 1:25: “The weakness of God is stronger than me”).

53 Thomas says: “*virtus aliqua dicitur esse theologica ex hoc quod habet Deum pro objecto cui inhaeret*” *ST* II-II 17.6. Furthermore he adds: “*proprium et principale obiectum spei est beatitudo aeterna*” *ST* II-II 17.2.

54 Cf. *ST* II-II 17.5 ad 3.

55 Cf. *ST* I 59.4 ad 3.

56 Cf. *ST* II-II 17.4; *ST* I-II 40.7; Pinckaers 1978a, 226-230.

bringing about a personal relationship with God as source of absolute goodness and help toward blessed flourishing.⁵⁷

Faith precedes hope, since the hoped-for good must be made known and appear possible, and since faith manifests the hoped-for good of eternal life, parousia and resurrection, as well as the means that makes them possible for us, the divine help.⁵⁸ The belief in God's existence, power and promise to save must come before we start to hope in partaking in these goods. Although of a volitional and affective nature, hope's certainty is derived "from faith's certitude found in the cognitive power."⁵⁹ This certitude entails a certain moderation or measure, not as if one could have too much hope, but rather we must avoid presumption and despair.⁶⁰

Aquinas views charity's relationship to hope in two different ways. First, hope is prior to charity. For, "hope can initiate one into charity to the extent, namely, that one hoping to be rewarded by God becomes inspired to love him and observe his precepts."⁶¹ Such hope is a type of imperfect love of another, since it loves "something not for its own sake, but as it brings some good."⁶² Hope precedes charity, as the imperfect anticipates the perfect. Secondly, hope follows charity in a sequence of excellence. Indeed, "with the advent of charity hope is rendered more perfect, since we are most of all inclined to be hopeful

57 "*Caritas ergo facit hominem Deo inhaerere propter seipsum, mentem hominis uniens Deo per affectum amoris. Spes autem et fides faciunt hominem inhaerere Deo sicut suidam principio, ex quo aliqua nobis proveniunt*" ST II-II 17.6.

58 In ST II-II 17.7, Aquinas uses St. Paul (Hebrews 11:6) as an authority, "He who comes to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him."

59 "*Et sic etiam spes certitudinaliter tendit in suum finem, quasi participans certitudinem a fide, quae est in vi cognoscitiva*" ST II-II 18.4.

60 Aquinas says "*sed quantum ad ea quae confidit aliquis se adepturum potest ibi esse medium et extrema, inquantum vel praesumit ea quae sunt supra suam proportionem vel desperat de his quae sunt sibi proportionata*" ST II-II 17.5 ad 2: cf. ST II-II 20-21.

61 "*Spes introducit charitatem, inquantum aliquis sperans remunerari a Deo accenditur ad amandum Deum, et servandum praecepta ejus*" ST II-II 17.8.

62 "*Imperfectus amor est quo quis amat aliquid, non secundum ipsum, sed ut illud bonum sibi ipsi proveniat*" ST II-II 17.8.

when we have friends to rely upon.”⁶³ Here the perfection of charity’s form purifies hope, which is imperfect in comparison to charity.

Another corrective and guide for hope in initiative-taking comes from the Gift of the fear of the Lord; this Gift is commensurate with the theological virtue of hope and comes to the aid of the infused virtue of magnanimity. Aquinas distinguishes two types of fear concerning our relationship with God: servile fear, and filial or chaste fear. Servile fear incites us to convert to God and remain close to him through fear of punishment.⁶⁴ Filial fear involves our fearing to offend God and is indicative of a filial relationship.⁶⁵ To illustrate how filial or chaste fear is rooted in affection and love, Thomas employs St. Paul’s image of adoptive sonship through which we call out “Abba Father,” and a spousal image of chaste union.⁶⁶ Aquinas emphasizes that this second type of fear regards God neither as a source of punishment nor “of moral fault, but as a goal from which separation as a consequence of fault is to be avoided.”⁶⁷ The Fear of the Lord supports hope. This Gift is not rooted in self-love, but rather charity. It does not fear the loss of what we hope to obtain by divine help, but rather our own disregard of God’s help.

Filial fear and hope interrelate and perfect each other.⁶⁸ During this life, as in the case of hope, such filial fear becomes more intense

63 “*Et ideo, adveniente charitate, spes perfectior redditur, quia de amicis maxime speramus*” ST II-II 17.8.

64 See ST II-II 19.2. Such subjection of servant to master is rooted in the master’s authority, instead of charity. Rather the love of self causes servile fear, which is “*timor servilis ex amore sui causatur, quia est timor poenae, quae est detrimentum proprii boni*” ST II-II 19.6. Nonetheless, in a sense different from that found in servile fear, “*timor poenae potest stare cum charitate, sicut et amor sui*” ST II-II 19.6.

65 As Aquinas (ST II-II 19.2) says: “*si autem propter timorem culpae, erit timor filialis, nam filiorum est timere offensam patris.*”

66 “*Unde timor filialis et castus ad idem pertinent, quia per charitatis amorem Deus pater noster efficitur, secundum illud Rom. 8, 15 Acceptistis spiritum adoptionis filiorum, in quo clamamus: Abba, Pater; et secundum eandem charitatem dicitur etiam sponsus noster, secundum illud 2 ad Cor. 11, 2, Despondi vos uni viro virginem castam exhibere Christo*” ST II-II 19.2 ad 3.

67 “*timor servilis et timor filialis non habent eandem habitudinem ad Deum; nam timor servilis respicit Deum sicut principium inflictivum poenarum; timor autem filialis respicit Deum, non sicut principium activum culpae, sed potius sicut terminum a quo refugit separari per culpam*” ST II-II 19.5 ad 2.

68 “*timor filialis non contrariatur virtuti spei. Non enim per timorem filialem timemus ne nobis deficiat quod speramus obtinere per auxilium divinum;*

with the increase of charity.⁶⁹ They are also accompanied by an increase in confidence in God's grace, which draws us ever closer to God through our theological projects. This process explains how fear is rooted in love (emotion), how the Gift of fear is rooted in charity (virtue), and how in fortitude and magnanimity we are neither driven by fear or fearlessness *per se*. A courageous and great-spirited person resists excessive fear of evil moving us into that evil and separating us from God. Moreover, quoting Ecclesiasticus, "he that feareth the Lord shall tremble at nothing,"⁷⁰ Aquinas explains that the love of God also involves the reverse side, a type of fear of the ultimately dreadful thing, the loss of that love.

Even if Christian hope chiefly concerns eternal flourishing as the good we seek and the divine assistance needed in attaining it, this virtue also concerns other objects of our prayers, and the lesser subordinate ends of everyday actions.⁷¹ These ordinary hopes, the natural dimension of family, friends and society, concern the good human ends of life and mobilize a large part of our day. Work, family and community involve plans that elicit hopes for their accomplishments. Resilience research has demonstrated the utility of hope, for example, for the displaced refugee. It is important for the refugee to have hope in some possible future and way to achieve it: reunion with family, return to homeland, establishment in a new community, health and social security and so on. But often they need to establish a new source of hope. At the natural level, this type of hope common sense. One seeks the agency and pathways to attain a goal. On the spiritual level, ultimately (for the Christian) this search for hope must turn inside and look beyond, for a new interior and

sed timemus ab hoc auxilio nos subtrahere. Et ideo timor filialis et spes sibi invicem cohaerent et se invicem perficiunt" ST II-II 19.9 ad 1.

⁶⁹ Cf. ST II-II 19.10.

⁷⁰ Aquinas cites Ecclesiasticus 34:17 (34:14, *RSV*) in ST II-II 126.1 and *In symb. apost.* art. 5; cf. Pieper, 1966, 126-7.

⁷¹ According to Aquinas, we can face real and imagined situations of confronting death with humble and hopefilled confidence that is based in prayer. In commenting on St. Paul's letter to the Philippians (4:5-6; *Ad Phil.* lect. 4.1), Aquinas notes that we should cast aside anxiety, since we can have confidence that "the Lord is at hand" and the He will provide everything that is necessary (cf. Matt 6:25), when we ask in prayer (cf. 1 Pet 5:7). This confidence does not dispel our need to be diligent (cf. Rom 12:8) in seeking what we lack.

fundamental source of hope that grounds everyday ones. Indeed, ordinary hopes find their fuller meaning when rooted firmly in fundamental hope, for hoping in God renders hope active by confident prayer in God and by transformed action.

According to Thomas, we can achieve the act of hope, which reaches God, neither through personal effort nor through the help of other creatures, but only through God's infinite power. Nonetheless, we continue to seek secondarily the help of other human beings, the saints and angels, as instrumental sources or subordinate agents of assistance, both regarding our fundamental hope and our everyday ones.⁷² This theological perspective illustrates the interplay between theological hope and infused magnanimity, as well as the natural virtue of hope and the emotion of the same name. In resilience terms, theological hope secondarily serves to bolster natural efforts. Inasmuch as it also strengthens hope as an emotion and magnanimity as the natural virtue of hope, it is instrumental in all spiritual resilience that reaches natural levels of human agency.

7.2. Theological Honor and Excellence

Spiritual resilience and vulnerability revolve around initiatives that seek greatness and humility, honor and excellence and that can go to extremes in several ways. Aquinas' synthesis of related virtues walks a steady mean between excesses. His structuring of the virtues nonetheless raises further questions about the Christian character of his moral theory, inasmuch as it apparently (at least structurally) gives a superior place to magnanimity and magnificence than to humility. Does a diminished place for humility in Thomas' virtue theory undermine the Christian tenor of his moral theology and render it vulnerable? In particular, does his attempt to save a place for honor and excellence weaken Christian humility?⁷³ In this section, I shall

⁷² Cf. *ST* II-II 17. 2, ad 2; and *ST* II-II 17.4.

⁷³ Indeed Aquinas' solution to the issue of initiative-taking attempts to integrate Aristotle and Cicero's insights on magnanimity, with the Christian Tradition's notion of glory and honor. He addresses the polemic raised by Aristotle's two readings of magnanimity. The first gives primacy to the idea of greatness; here magnanimous people would consider themselves as worthy of great things, through greatness in each virtue, only doing what is great. The second gives primacy to the idea of honor; here magnanimous people act

investigate the way in which Aquinas' emphases on honor, excellence and meekness seek both to avoid impasses that spell vulnerability for Christians and to promote a Christian resilience.

7.2.1. Fallen Greatness: False Hopes and Misplaced Excellence

Aquinas' virtue approach identifies dispositional vulnerabilities that we acquire when seeking great and small initiatives. False hopes, presumption and despair sidetrack us from our goals. Misplaced honors, glory and excellence lead us astray. Such failures promote vulnerability and underlie risks at natural and spiritual levels. In this section, I shall revisit and enhance Aquinas' notion of enterprising activities and the way in which they employ honor, glory and excellence.⁷⁴ Outlining the risks of vainglory or misplaced excellence in initiative demonstrates Aquinas' Christian measure. The theological dimension of initiative-taking, magnanimity and hope is clarified further in his treatment of other excesses that undermine it: namely false hopes, presumption, despair and timidity.

Glory and honor motivate human actions, as outlined in chapter four. Aquinas is aware not only of the positive side of honor, but also how vainglory can make us vulnerable and weak. We sidetrack ourselves from important and ultimate goals by desiring things unworthy of us, by overestimating their value. Although we

properly concerning the object of honor. According to Gauthier (1951, 302-4, a Christian focus limited to the first reading risks aspiring to greatness, not in order to assure that mankind dominate the world *per se*, but in order to restore lost human greatness with the intention of returning it to God. Taking the Aristotelian texts in this way adds to the Abelardian influence to make magnanimity the virtue that presides over our seeking to participate in our own perfection. A Christian focus limited to the second reading risks seeing magnanimity as a casuistry of glory and honors that one need flee from inasmuch as they take us from God, and that one need search for inasmuch as they serve to give God glory. Instead of assuring human domination over the world, this perspective assures the human itinerary toward God. Taking the Aristotelian texts in this way can destroy the Abelardian influence in Aquinas' synthesis, reducing magnanimity to a precise question of casuistry.

⁷⁴ Aquinas expands his considerations of natural initiative. He takes inspiration from Aristotelian and Abelardian sources, as well as from Biblical and Patristic texts. Thomas' synthesis outstrips the Philosopher's Greek conception of magnanimity as excellence of the moral and intellectual virtues in action.

might not consciously place a temporal good over an eternal one, the neglect of ultimate goods can effectively exaggerate our attachment to worldly ones. Furthermore, when seeking human glory, as if it had eternal consequence, we desire honor from unreliable sources. These sources can redirect our time and energy in wasteful ways. Moreover, for Aquinas, glory has a purpose. When we do not use it for the common good or do not acknowledge its ultimate source, we employ glory without proper respect for its due end. Aquinas deems that we should use glory to honor God and to aid our neighbor spiritually.⁷⁵

Aquinas distinguishes spiritual risks when humans misuse honor from spiritual benefits when we use it well. Vainglory especially opposes charity either concerning the matter in which we glorify ourselves (personal wisdom, strength and riches), or the intended use of glory.⁷⁶ Nonetheless, Thomas affirms the importance of recognizing “the things that are given us from God,” and the utility of letting them be known to others.⁷⁷ Even God seeks to be glorified for our sake, since we need to know God’s glory and to glorify God in order to attain flourishing.⁷⁸ Likewise, human beings should seek honor for the good of other people and in order to glorify God aright.⁷⁹ True glory (*gloria vera*) is promised from God for good works, and in turn serves to encourage them.⁸⁰ Aquinas thus specifies that human praise and glory are not to be desired in themselves, but can be useful in four ways:⁸¹ to glorify God, to edify our neighbor, to persevere in goodness and to better ourselves. This spiritual utility is also based upon humanity’s social nature: the goods of our relationships with God and others.

⁷⁵ Cf. *ST* II-II 132.1.

⁷⁶ Cf. *ST* II-II 132.3.

⁷⁷ In his argument on *utrum appetites gloriae sit peccatum* (*ST* II-II 132.1), Thomas quotes Augustine in warning about the danger of loving praise (*amorem laudis*). Nonetheless, Aquinas finds that Scripture (notably 1 Cor 2:12, Matt 5:16 and Psalm 4:3) recognizes glory’s positive purpose.

⁷⁸ Aquinas (cf. *ST* II-II 132.1 ad 1) quotes Augustine’s Commentary *super Joan.* tract 58, 3 (re: 13:13); PL 35, 1793.

⁷⁹ In this regard, Aquinas quotes Matt 5:16: “That they may see your good works, and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (*RSV*). Cf. *ST* II-II 132.1 ad 1.

⁸⁰ Aquinas (*ST* II-II 132.1 ad 2) supports this teaching by citing Rom 2:7 and 2 Cor 10: 17-18.

⁸¹ Cf. *ST* II-II 132.1 ad 3.

Presumption also causes dispositional risks revolving around the use and abuse of our capacities. According to Aquinas, presumption strictly concerns striving for great deeds that are not proportioned to our abilities (*virtutes, facultas, potestas*).⁸² Since divine reason orders nature, human reason and action ought to imitate creatively the order that God has established in nature. Through prudence and wisdom, we scrutinize the commensurability of planned action and the agent's power to accomplish it.⁸³ Each person being endowed and educated differently face actions more or less adapted to them, at different moments in their natural and spiritual developments. Through difficult activities that push us beyond the limits of previous experience, we can become capable of more or we can fail. The muscle stretched to, but not beyond, its limit becomes even stronger, all things being equal. The human intellect is likewise sharpened through its exercise in particularly difficult domains. Even a non-devastating failure can be a source of further growth and resilience.

According to Aquinas, we have a natural inclination to strive for more, as well as to remain within the limits of our capacities. When presumptuous, we overstep our boundaries. Aquinas gives several examples. First, it is only presumptuous to endeavor advancing towards perfect virtue, when one does not possess the means. In theological matters, we need not only personal ability, but also God's assistance. Thus St. Paul, while not considering himself to be already perfect, "strains forward" to the things that were before him, because Christ has strengthened him to do so.⁸⁴ According to Thomas, it is fitting to think and do good (*cogitare et facere bonum*) and to accomplish virtuous deeds (*ad aliquod opus virtuosum faciendum*) with confidence in God's assistance.⁸⁵ Second, it is presumptuous to do

82 According to Aquinas, a mismeasure is found in presumption. It is "*quasi contra ordinem naturalem existens, quod aliquis assumat ad agendum ea quae praeferuntur suae virtuti*" ST II-II 130.1; cf. ST II-II 130.2.

83 "*Hoc autem communiter in omnibus rebus naturalibus invenitur, quod quaelibet actio commensuratur virtuti agentis, nec aliquod agens naturale nititur ad agendum id quod excedit suam facultatem*" ST II-II 130.1.

84 Aquinas (ST II-II 130.1 ad 1) says that Paul (Phil. 3:13) was "continually advancing forward" (*per continuum perfectum*). The context of this passage is Paul's longing to be "found in Christ," to "obtain the righteousness from God that depends on faith," to share in Christ suffering and resurrection. Cf. Phil 3:12-14.

85 Cf. ST II-II 130.1 ad 3.

what becomes God to do, to have inordinate confidence in divine mercy, or to seek glory without merit.⁸⁶ Nonetheless it is not presumptuous, but rather timid and un-resilient, not to strive to be united to God in reason and will. Likewise, we fall into vulnerable timidity, if we neither trust in divine forgiveness for those who seek pardon⁸⁷ nor attempt the great things that are within our reach. On the contrary, through pride, we cling too resolutely to a false opinion about our incompetency, even refusing to obey divine commands⁸⁸ or accept the worthiness granted by a divine grace.⁸⁹

Despair, furthermore, destroys initiatives. As hope is driven by love, so despair is produced through fear, which causes one to conclude that the future arduous good is impossible to attain.⁹⁰ Such fear overrides hope at natural and spiritual levels. Aquinas says, that in order to exclude despair, we need to properly adjudicate our goal of flourishing as an arduous good (a spiritual good) that is possible. To overcome despair demands that we both nurture our desire and our hope for the spiritual good of flourishing, and that we exclude sources of despair: impurity, laziness and depressive sadness. These sources of despair all hinder in some way the perception and attainment of flourishing.⁹¹

Insofar as fortitude and magnanimity (as the acquired virtue of hope) are natural virtues, their impulses spring from the hopes born of the irascible part of the soul. However, insofar as hope is a theological virtue, it does not primarily concern the emotions, but the will (*voluntas*); and its object is God and divine assistance. The promises and the difficulty that ground theological hope serve growth, moral agency and development of this virtue: hopes, human and divine. What is the distinguishing factor that enables such spiritual progress? For Aquinas, this spiritual resilience and growth demands the interaction of

⁸⁶ Cf. *ST* II-II 21.1.

⁸⁷ Cf. *ST* II-II 130.1 ad 2; *ST* II-II 130.2 ad 1.

⁸⁸ *ST* II-II 133.1 ad 3. Following Gregory (*Pastor*. I, 7: *PL* 77, 20 D), Aquinas cites the example of Moses who avoids the double temptation of pride: undertaking a great task without some trepidation; and not refusing to do a difficult task commanded by his Creator.

⁸⁹ Cf. *ST* II-II 133.1 ad 4.

⁹⁰ Cf. *ST* I-II 40.4; *ST* I-II 45.2; and *ST* II-II 20.1-4.

⁹¹ Cf. *ST* II-II 20.4.

both God's grace and human conscious action that Aquinas differentiates in terms of virtues, Gifts and Beatitudes. Hope plays vital roles in this spiritual resilience. Highlighting the developmental aspect of hope and the place that God's promises play therein, Origen says: "That it may do this, that is, that the soul may become capable, the Lord our God as it were holds His promises out of our reach; He does not withdraw them. He so withholds them that we may stretch ourselves towards them. We strain, and therefore we grow. And so we grow, that we may reach what He promised us."⁹² This citation collected by Aquinas, emphasizes the divine pedagogy that is active in Thomas' virtue theory, and serves as a transition to the investigation of the place of honor, great deeds and excellence in initiative-taking and spiritual resilience.

7.2.2. Theological Virtue Guiding Honor

As mentioned earlier, Aquinas' treatment of *magnanimitas* attempts to overcome an apparent conflict concerning the use of honor and excellence as criteria for action. The question in the theological realm becomes whether Aquinas' anthropology breaks down in front of particularly Christian virtues like humility. Can we use acquired magnanimity, conceived in terms of honor and excellence, as a basis for infused magnanimity without deforming the Christian tradition in the process? Will it render the Tradition vulnerable to itself?

For Aquinas, theological magnanimity parallels martyrdom, which is the apotheosis of courage. Fortitude's correlation with martyrdom does not degrade it, but puts it in the perspective of the highest possible form that we can only understand theologically. Natural magnanimity similarly tends toward theological fulfillment, although it is marked by a double absence. "Ordinary magnanimity" (the mean between *philotimia* and *aphilotimia* concerning ordinary honors) remains nameless. Likewise, theological magnanimity (concerning great acts which merit honor from God) has no name.⁹³

92 Aquinas' *Catena aurea*, 17th Sunday after Pentecost, vol. 4.7, Origen 6.1.

93 We might call this virute theologal magnanimity only inasmuch as we distinguish it from the theological virtue of hope; it would also then correlate with theological magnificence. Cf. *ST* II-II 129.3 ad 2.

Through the natural virtue, we have the disposition toward managing our emotions of daring and our acts in the face of greatness well.⁹⁴ It involves a life of excellence. In order to understand how such excellence relates to Christian resilience, we need to explore Aquinas' theological perspective on honors and human agency.

Aquinas finds several reasons why the virtue of *magnanimitas* is absolutely about the proper use of a particular type of honor, "the best use of the greatest thing," as he says. However, we must understand even this natural virtue in terms of his overall theological project. In particular, he analyzes three aspects of magnanimity's relationship with honors: (1) the reasons for honor and its source, (2) the people who are honored and the hierarchy of honors, as well as (3) the social purpose of honor.

Honors for Thomas are due attestation of a person's virtue.⁹⁵ As individualistic as Aquinas' definition of honor might seem to some interpreters, honor is a social and theological reality. Honor is the reward that others give for being virtuous; it is public recognition for goodness.⁹⁶ As attestations of virtue, honors are the best of external things. His conception follows, yet substantially contrasts Aristotle's conception of magnanimity.⁹⁷ For Aquinas and the Christian Tradition, honor as an objective recognition of one's excellence does not

⁹⁴ For Aquinas, we can have this disposition without the opportunity for a great act (or great honor). He specifies that the honors due to magnanimous acts aim at the hope of excellence in acts (cf. Labourdette 1962, 29).

⁹⁵ Aquinas says that "*honor testificationem quandam importat de excellentia alicuius*" (ST II-II 103.1), and "*honor est [...] protestatio de excellentia bonitatis alicuius*" (ST II-II 103.2). He contrasts this operative perfection with entitative perfection, which is the source of a different type of honor.

⁹⁶ As Aquinas says: "*honor importat quandam reverentiam alicui exhibitam in testimonium excellentiae eius*" ST II-II 131.1; cf. ST II-II 103.1 and 103.2.

⁹⁷ In particular, Aquinas reforms Aristotle's magnanimous man by turning five objectionable qualities of Aristotle's magnanimity toward more positive qualities (cf. ST II-II 129.3 obj 5). Moreover, he addresses the problem of self-absorption by focusing on the magnanimous man's great actions, and in terms of a theologically grounded humility and a general respect for other humans as created in the image of God (cf. ST II-II 129.3 ad 4; Horner 1998, 435). Furthermore, Aristotle stresses the importance of external goods (including being honored at social level) more than either the Stoics or Aquinas (cf. Horner 1998, 421 and fn. 34 and 35).

primarily come from society, but rather it is ultimately from God. Indeed, God alone attests truly and completely to the worth and honor of our dispositions and acts. Such impartial and just recognition credits the virtuous person, whom society unjustly condemns, but also goes hand in hand with Christian humility. Although honor is good, the only adequate reward for being virtuous is flourishing rather than honor *per se*.⁹⁸

Aquinas has a twofold typology of honor. Honor is offered either to God (*latría*) or to the best people (*dulia*). The ancient and medieval worlds acknowledged an ordering of goods. Aquinas' hierarchy of goodness ultimately focuses the magnanimous person's interest on the life of grace.⁹⁹ We need to return all true human honors (*dulia*) in the form of praise, veneration and adoration (*latría*) to God, who is present even in human virtues. Indeed, God is the principle source of human excellence, which Aquinas deems something divine in human garb.¹⁰⁰ On the contrary, ambition neither recognizes proximate and ultimate sources of one's excellence nor returns this honor to its due sources, especially the divine one.

Aquinas describes honor's purposes. Honor motivates our acts, as a final cause. We do or avoid things in order to attain honor or to shun shame.¹⁰¹ Honor can thus aid in controlling our concentration, efforts and emotions. Moreover, it has a social function, as an efficacious cause of action. Aquinas remarks that we should use God-given qualities of excellence to benefit others in two ways: we can aid them directly with outstanding acts, and we can use the recognition for such acts to further benefit others.¹⁰² Although such human honor is

98 *ST* II-II 131.1 ad 2. That is unless we understand by honor the glory that is given to God, the source of beatitude.

99 Cf. *ST* II-II 129.1; *ST* II-II 103.3. Furthermore, for Aquinas honor is due to someone because of real virtue or excellence. God is first and best, therefore honor is first of all due to God (cf. *ST* I-II 129.2).

100 Aquinas puts it this way, "*id secundum quod homo excellit, non habet homo a seipso, sed est quasi quiddam divinum in eo. Et ideo ex hoc non debetur principaliter sibi honor, sed Deo*" *ST* II-II 131.1.

101 Cf. *ST* II-II 129.1.

102 Aquinas says, "*secundo considerandum est quod id in quo homo excellit, datur homini a Deo ut ex eo aliis prosit. Unde intantum debet homini placere testimonium suae excellentiae quod ab aliis exhibetur, inquantum ex hoc paratur sibi via ad hoc quod aliis prosit*" *ST* II-II 131.1.

clearly not an ultimate source of good or flourishing, it is nonetheless a real good.¹⁰³

Although honor is important, it is only a secondary object of magnanimity for Thomas. Honor involves positive exchange with a social sphere. In the Christian context, magnanimity ultimately manages personal and social honor in order to glorify God and to advance the salvation of the world (sanctify human beings). His Christian conception of flourishing demands not only that we attain friendship with God, but also that we glorify God. The search for eternal flourishing is not only great in itself, but also informs the typically great difficulties in virtuously managing more mundane honors and shame. This virtue makes every virtue even greater, since it engages them in the perspective of seeking to be worthy of honor from God, and in returning any honor to God. It even makes the acts that Aquinas construes as great to look like loving God and one's neighbor.¹⁰⁴ This work of Christian virtue constitutes a primary source and finality for Christian resilient action. Christian resilience then is especially apparent in the great and excellent action involved in the seemingly contradictory Christian excellence of meek magnanimity and magnanimous humility, which we shall now treat more extensively.

7.2.3. Christian Excellence: Meek and Humble Magnanimity

These insights on doing great deeds and using honor well do not exhaust the spiritual dimension of seeking excellence in Aquinas' perspective. Rather, he completes the doctrine on excellence with the Christian virtues of humility and meekness, as well as the Beatitude of the meek. This excellence in the form of a meek and humble magnanimity refocuses the question of whether Christianity promotes a type of vulnerability. How can the meek and humble person consistently accomplish difficult or important feats? In this section, I argue that meekness and humility are integral aspects of Christian

¹⁰³ Cf. *ST* II-II 131.1 ad 3.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. *ST* II-II 129.4 ad 2; Aristotle *Rhet.* 1366b17; Horner 1998, 433 and footnote 106.

excellence, provide correctives to possible abuses regarding initiative, and actually promote human and social flourishing and a typically Christian resilience.

Aquinas integrally correlates magnanimity (and fortitude) with three aspects of meekness (*mansuetudo*), (1) as an evangelical Beatitude: “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matt 5:5), (2) as a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:23) and (3) as a virtue.¹⁰⁵ Thomas’ virtue theory relates such Beatitudes to virtues, as complete acts relate to dispositions to act; they both relate to fruits, which involve delight in the graced act. As a moral virtue, meekness develops a disposition (*habitus*) of subjecting the emotion of anger to reason.¹⁰⁶ As a Beatitude, meekness is a graced act of the virtue bearing the same name. As a fruit of the Holy Spirit, it involves delight taken in such a meek act. How do these aspects of meekness concern theological magnanimity and Christian resilience?

Thomas highlights the necessity of meekness for magnanimity through the passion of anger, which we might otherwise overlook. Through magnanimity, we deal with arduous goods that can engender vengeance or anger, and blind us to our rational project, even our ultimate goal. A particular challenge arises from the nature of anger.¹⁰⁷ Anger can aid proper and prompt action, as was previously mentioned.¹⁰⁸ Anger also needs to be carefully controlled. Meekness restrains the onslaught of anger and vengeance by mitigating this passion.¹⁰⁹ The impetuosity of anger comes from its clouding our free judgment of truth, according to Aquinas. The virtue of meekness involves an excellence, albeit a restricted one (*quandam excellentiam*),

¹⁰⁵ Aquinas deems meekness as a virtue, a Gift and a Beatitude (cf. *ST* II-II 157.2 ad 3). Aquinas (and Augustine) also associate the Beatitude of meekness with the Gift of piety and the Petition of the Our Father: “thy kingdom come.”

¹⁰⁶ Thomas calls upon the authority of Seneca (*De Clementia* II.5) and Aristotle (*NE* iv.5) in regards to *clementia* and *mansuetudo* here (*ST* II-II 157.2) and often throughout the four articles of question *ST* II-II 157.

¹⁰⁷ Aquinas (*ST* I-II 46.5) follows Aristotle (*NE* iv.11 1126a30-31) in saying that revenge is in a way more natural to man than meekness since it is natural, as a rational being, to resist things that are hurtful.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. *ST* II-II 123.10.

¹⁰⁹ Clemency (*clementia*) concurs with meekness by moderating punishment (cf. *ST* II-II 157.1). Thomas classifies meekness and clemency as virtues associated with temperance, since they retain vehement emotions (cf. *ST* II-II 157.3).

among the virtues that resist evil inclinations, since it guards our self-possession. Highlighting meekness' theological import, Thomas furthermore emphasizes how it directs our minds to the knowledge of God, self-possessed mitigation of anger and consistency with truth.¹¹⁰ Meekness especially establishes a new balance and focus for aggressive or attack (*aggredi*) movements of the emotions, of which anger is one of the most powerful. In particular, meekness harnesses anger for a Christian response to overcoming injustices and other hardships. It describes an aspect of resilience that is both human and led by the example of Christ.

Aquinas also includes the Christian notion of humility in initiative and magnanimity. It is curiously a particular dimension of spiritual and Christian resilience. Aquinas construes humility and magnanimity as a sort of dual virtue (*duplex virtus*) that addresses arduous goods (*boni ardui*).¹¹¹ An oft-overlooked hermeneutical

¹¹⁰ Aquinas expresses the theological framework for understanding the proper use of anger in the words of Augustine: "*rectus amor omnes istas affectiones rectas habet. Metuunt enim peccare, cupiunt perseverare, dolent in peccatis, gaudent in operibus bonis*" (*de civ. Dei.*, XIV, 9, 1: PL 41, 413; quoted in *ST I-II* 24.2 sc, and cited at the beginning of *ST II-II* 123.10). These are spiritual goals that support the formation of a fuller notion of fortitude.

¹¹¹ Cf. *ST II-II* 161.1. Before going further though, a historical note is in order. Thomas participates in the thirteenth century controversy over the relation of *magnanimitas* and *humilitas* (Cf. S.-Th. Pinckaers 1995a, 228, and 2002, 8; Y.-M. Congar 1974, 345-6; B. Kent 1995, 51-2, 72-74). His position differs both from the radical Aristotelians of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Paris and from eminent theologians like St. Bonaventure. Part of the reason for this dissimilarity is the different use and appreciation of sources. Drawing on Scriptural and Patristic writers as their primary sources, both Aquinas and Bonaventure share the essentials and figure as part of the Catholic theological tradition, unlike the radical Aristotelians. Nonetheless, the two theologians illustrate two sub-traditions, shaped not only by how they structure their theological sources, but also by the philosophical sources they employ. In particular they differ in the ways they interpret Aristotle's thought.

The writings of Aristotle and his principal Arab commentators, Averroes and Avicenna, were translated into Latin and were being introduced into Scholastic theology in the thirteenth century. St. Albertus Magnus, Aquinas' teacher, was instrumental in this rediscovery of Aristotle. Aquinas builds upon Albert's work and innovatively uses Aristotle as a primary source in his moral and theological inquiry. Drawing from the wisdom of Aristotle was not popular with everyone. Aquinas was rebuked for not using more Patristic writers in his works, and after his death some of his positions were even condemned as Aristotelianizing "errors" (cf. Gauthier 1951, 295-371; J.-P. Torrell 1996; S.-Th. Pinckaers 2002; B. Kent 1995).

principle for Thomas' treatise on the virtue of humility can be found in the *sed contra* of its first article, "whether humility is a virtue."¹¹² He starts the treatment of humility with a Scriptural and Patristic reference to Jesus Christ's admonition: "Learn from me, because I am meek, and humble of heart."¹¹³ The position of such a quote in Thomas' scholastic approach, as well as its content is highly significant. It serves as a narrative background and provides content for reading the whole treatise. This admonition is not simply an extrinsic rhetorical nicety, but rather a metaphysical and moral basis for Christian agency, according to Aquinas. It demands that one reread even the philosophical references to Aristotle (or Cicero) in the light of the Gospel narrative.¹¹⁴ Such a theological appraisal is not always made.¹¹⁵

Both Thomas and Bonaventure oppose certain doctrines of the radical Aristotelians. And they both critique and integrate the Philosopher's thought in their own theology. Bonaventure considers these virtues to belong essentially to the rational part of the soul. On the contrary, Aquinas, while acknowledging the role of reason and will in these virtues, recognizes more fully the emotional bases involved. St. Bonaventure (1221-74) and Aquinas' differences can be illustrated in terms of the way in which these two great contemporaries developed their *Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*. St. Bonaventure does not build a theology of virtue; he is less virtue-centric than Aquinas (whose *Commentary on the Sentences* is already based on the virtues, although only a sketch of his later works). In Bonaventure's conception, virtues like fortitude reside in the part of the soul that is controlled by the rational (cf. *Com. on the Sent.* III, 33, 3). They are virtues of the will. For Aquinas, a moral virtue, like fortitude, resides in the sensible appetite, and needs to be considered in the context of the Gift of Fortitude. For a sympathetic and nuanced reading of Bonaventure and his development, see B. Kent 1995.

Not having the space to trace Bonaventure's positions on *magnanimitas* and *humilitas*, I shall content myself with drawing from Aquinas' treatment of these two virtues. Aquinas compares and interrelates magnanimity and humility in the following places: *ST* II-II 123.1 ad 1; *ST* II-II 129.3 ad 4; *ST* II-II 161.1 ad 3; *Ad Mat.* 5:16; *de vert. com.* 12, 26.

¹¹² Cf. *ST* II-II 161.1 sc. Likewise, at the very beginning of his treatment of the virtue of fortitude, Thomas acknowledges the importance of the virtue of humility in responding to St. Paul's understanding of virtue as being perfected in infirmity (2 Cor 12:9). Humility assures that we acknowledge our weaknesses and infirmities (*infirmitas*) of body, in order that fortitude's strength of mind (*fortitudo mentis*) bear them bravely. We need to understand this reference to humility in its theological context (cf. *ST* II-II 123.1 obj 1 and ad 1).

¹¹³ Aquinas (*ST* II-II 161.1 sc) quotes the Gospel of Luke (1:48), through the commentary of Origen (Hom 8 in Luc.: PG 13.1821A; PL 26.236C).

¹¹⁴ Thomas' close association with Aristotle and a philosophical structuring of the virtues in general has attracted several critiques of Aquinas' teaching, and limited such a wider interpretation. Attacks target the distance between

Aquinas' response to the question about the way humility and magnanimity interrelate (as presented in the *Summa theologiae*) has sometimes been interpreted as abstract philosophy that has the following content. In controlling the impulses that arduous goods provoke, we would need a twofold virtue: first, humility which restrains the mind from immoderately tending to things that are too high (*in excelsa*), and second, magnanimity which strengthens the mind against despair and urges it to pursue what reason rightly dictates is truly good.¹¹⁶ The rest of Aquinas' treatise would seem more philosophical than theological, and would be summarized as such: (art. 2) humility is essentially in the appetite itself, as suppressing excessive hope, (art. 3) it does not demand us to necessarily subject ourselves to other people, and (art. 4) it is chiefly about restraining the passion of hope and is associated with the moral virtue of temperance. This philosophical dimension is Thomas', but it is not the entirety of his teaching.

When looking deeper, in the light of the Lukan passage and the other Biblical citations, another interpretation of Aquinas' teaching on humility comes alive. His articulation of humility depends on more than its philosophical citations and arguments. It necessitates a

Aristotle's conception of magnanimity and Christian humility. They critique his associating humility with the virtue of temperance, which limits: humility's focus, its pride of place among the virtues and its integration of Scriptural teaching (cf. S.-Th. Pinckaers 1993, 442; 1995a, 228; Torrell 1996, 41; and discussions with M.-L. Ardoin).

¹¹⁵ On the one hand, M. Nussbaum's reading of Christian humility is completely incompatible with magnanimity. She holds that they are competing conceptions of one and the same thing. The term greatness of soul "implies in its very name an attitude to one's own worth that is more Greek than universal." A Christian, she continues, "will feel that the proper attitude to one's own worth requires understanding one's lowness, frailty, and sinfulness. The virtue of humility requires considering oneself small, not great." (Nussbaum 1988, 38; cited in D. McInerney 1997, 79). On the other hand, A. MacIntyre (1999, xi) attests to a major difference between Aristotle and Aquinas concerning these two virtues. He says: "I was struck by this [difference] when reading a prayer composed by Aquinas in which he asks God to grant that he may happily share with those in need what he has, while humbly asking for what he needs from those who have, a prayer that in effect, although not by Aquinas's own intention, ask that we may not share some of the attitudes of Aristotle's *megalopsychos*."

¹¹⁶ Cf. *ST* II-II 161.1. Aquinas' argument and references to previous treatises (I-II 23.2 and *ST* I-II 61.2) seem to indicate that the article is only addressing a moral virtue.

theological content and prime referent. Humility's tempering of presumptuous hope and immoderate self-confidence denotes our subjection to God, even as the Son is subjected to the Father in an ordered love. As Thomas says it chiefly involves "divine reverence, which shows that man ought not to ascribe to himself more than is competent to him according to the position in which God has placed him."¹¹⁷ This type of humility involves adoptive filiation, which has searching social features.

The theological content and pedagogy of Aquinas' approach to humility need to be more explicitly distinguished from that of Aristotle. That is not the major point however. The deeper emphasis is that humility adds a corrective to great and self-confident efforts. It recognizes the ordering of creation, redemption, human initiatives and social goods. The resilience of humility in particular involves a perspective on divine help and ultimate goals. This vision of Christian humility is not the weak sort critiqued by Nietzsche, but rather an exuberant one that follows Christ who dares to walk where even the strong would not tarry. This humility is a self-referential and other-respecting movement. To humble oneself according to Aquinas involves acknowledging our weaknesses and social needs, acclaiming God's greatness, and calling upon God as the source of grace and hope for all that is great and perfect (*perfectum*).¹¹⁸ This Christian excellence in meek and humble form involves a type of resilience that we acknowledge as a gift from God, which at the same time is at risk due to personal infirmity and social injustice.¹¹⁹ This meek excellence motivates a typically Christian constructive resilience that finds its

¹¹⁷ Cf. *ST* II-II 161.2 ad 3. Thomas follows Augustine who understands humility as poverty of spirit, while ascribing it to the Gift of filial fear whereby we revere God (he cites Augustine's *De Serm. Dom. in Monte* I.4,11: PL 34,1234). Also see the earlier treatment of this Gift and its relationship with the theological virtue of hope (cf. *ST* II-II 19.1-12). Lastly, humble people as the Letter of James (4:6) illustrates obtain grace from God, who conversely resists the proud (cf. *ST* II-II 161.5 ad 2). If more space permitted, this analysis could treat Thomas' other theological, Biblical and Patristic arguments and references, and in particular his objections to St. Benedict's division of humility into twelve degrees (cf. *ST* II-II 161.6).

¹¹⁸ Cf. *ST* II-II 161.1 ad 4; cf. *SCG* III.97.

¹¹⁹ Cf. *ST* II-II 129.3 ad 4; D. McNerny 1997, 80.

standard for excellent initiative in Christ as the rule for thought, intention and deed.

Chapter Eight.

Theological Dimension of the Virtues of Enduring

“Through patience we have peace both in prosperous and adverse times.”¹

Is there a specifically Christian response to pain, suffering and sorrow? For Aquinas, the infused virtues of patience and perseverance distinctly offer Christian criteria and models. They involve necessary dispositions for Christian maturity in the face of adversity. These infused virtues should not be confused with the acquired virtues of the same names, even though they can strengthen already existing acquired virtues.

In this section, I shall explore the St. Thomas’ Christian understanding of these virtues. Nonetheless, we must recall our previous discussions on his typology of sorrow and suffering, his natural virtue approach to them and the psychosocial input on pain, suffering and loss. First, I shall examine a theological dimension found in the infused virtues of patience and perseverance, long-suffering and constancy, and contrast them with their opposing vices. In exposing the rich contour of patience and perseverance, Aquinas interprets the Biblical and Patristic tradition with well-structured philosophical-theological reasoning. Nonetheless, patience and perseverance are not abstract concepts. For Thomas, God’s patience, as expressed through Christ, serves as the archetype for a Christian response to suffering. Indeed, Christ’s life, death and resurrection function as the model, not just for meditation, but above all for imitation.

Secondly, I shall examine Aquinas’ theology on how grace informs emotions, reason and will, for a Christ-like relationship to suffering and evil. In particular, the theological virtue of hope, the Gift of knowledge, the fruit of patience and the Beatitude of mourners, all constitute a Christian type of patience and perseverance.²

¹ “*Per patientiam pacem habemus et in tempore prospero et adverso*” Aquinas, *in ora. dom.* pet. vii.

² One finds this notion of “virtuous sorrow” in Aquinas’ discussion of *Utrum tristitia possit esse bonum honestum?* (ST I-II 39, 2). The Sermon on the

Third, I shall investigate the development of patience and spiritual resilience in terms of Thomas' Christian anthropology, in particular through his notion of virtuous sorrow, and moral and spiritual progress. I thus ask: How do these virtues outline a type of spiritual resilience concerning resisting and persisting? And what do resilience insights drawn from psychosocial sciences concerning pain, suffering and resisting offer to enhance Aquinas' theological approach to actively enduring hardship and waiting for the accomplishment of the good?

8.1. Infused Patience, Perseverance and Resilience

8.1.1. Aquinas on Patience, Grace and Human Nature

In order to enrich Aquinas' understanding of enduring and resisting with resilience insights, we shall first explore his approach to infused patience and perseverance. Thomas masterfully addresses the dynamics of patience in the *Summa theologiae*, using both philosophical and theological sources.³ He starts his treatment of patience by affirming that patience is a gift of God, and a quality attributed to God.⁴ This Scripturally-based insight serves to furnish the theological inspiration without which we cannot understand Aquinas' treatise.

Mount, in particular the Beatitude of mourners, which serves as *the sed contra* to the question, informs his notion of virtuous sorrow.

³ Although the principal sources—not only in quantity—are Scripture and St. Augustine, the philosophical foundation is significant. Aquinas uses the following sources for *ST II-II* 136 (in order of frequency): Scripture (subtotal: 14): Isa 49:10; Rev 7:16; Eccl 5:16; Gal 5:22; 2 Co. 7:10; Eccl 30:25; Jas 1:4; Luke 21:19; Ps 61:6; 1 Cor 13:4; Rom 5:5; Eccl 5:4; Rom 2:4; Prov 13:12; St. Augustine (subt. 9): *De Trin.* 14, 9; *de Pat.* ch. i (twice) and ii and iii and iv (twice) and v; *De Civ. Dei* 14; *De Morib. Eccl.* xv; Ep. cxxxviii (*ad Marcellius*); St. Gregory the Great (subt: 3): *Hom. 35 in Ev.* (twice); *Moral.* 22; Aristotle (subt: 2): *NE* i, 8; ii, 6; Cicero (subt: 2): *Rhet.* II.54 (twice); *Opus Imperfectum* (falsely ascribed to Chrysostom): *on Matt* 4,10; Origen (or gloss of P. Lombard): *ad Rom* 2:4; Prosper: *Sent.* 811. Usage rather than frequency determines the importance of these citations. Not all citations are on the same footing. For example, quotes used in the *sed contra* have a certain priority; Aquinas uses them as superior authorities serving to enlighten the arguments (cf. S. Pinckaers 2002).

⁴ In the first *sed contra* (*ST II-II* 136.1 sc), Aquinas quotes Augustine's *de Patientia* (I; PL 40.611).

When Aquinas asks, “whether it is possible to have patience without grace,” he poses a question he does not directly ask of any other virtue associated with a cardinal virtue, except for perseverance.⁵ He straightforwardly answers that we are not able to have true patience (*vera patientia*) without the help of God. Many writers have heatedly debated the meaning of true patience and the implications of his text. Does *vera patientia* concern both acquired and infused patience? If yes, does true patience involve both a natural-graced and supernatural-graced patience? It is worthwhile to broach this important issue.⁶ Some authors hold that Aquinas does not think that (true) patience exists without the help of grace.⁷ Others hold that he thinks humans exercise a natural virtue of patience through their own nature and effort; this patience would be a moral, non-infused virtue.⁸ The discussion revolves not only around the notion, object and act of patience *per se*, but also that of the type of grace involved.

These questions of grace, virtue and the quality of agency are not indifferent for resilience. In the Christian perspective, grace establishes the basis for spiritual resilience that cannot be measured or quantified, as can external acts. We necessarily presuppose a conception of human nature in any treatment of grace. The correlation of grace and nature, as discussed previously, offers insights in the way that, for Thomas, persons and communities rely on God’s help consciously and unconsciously, for ordinary development and patience, as well as for extraordinary resilience and perseverance.

5 Cf. *ST* II-II 136.3; and *ST* II-II 137.4. Thomas explains grace’s foundational role for human action in his treatise on the necessity of grace (I-II 109.1-10), which serves as a reference for his texts on specific virtues. See the tenth article “*Utrum homo in gratia constitutus indigeat auxilio gratiae ad perseverandum?*” Cf. E. Gilson 1946, 93.

6 According to Lottin (1942-60, III:186), the debate on the natural-supernatural and acquired-infused aspects in virtue started with Aquinas, since prior to him thinkers made such distinctions, but the reasoning for this differentiation and interrelation was not yet an issue.

7 Cf. M. Labourdette 1962, 44; E. Gilson 1946, 93-104; M. Spanneut 1984b, 452.

8 Cf. Delhay 1984, 247; Noble 1932, 296; J. van der Meersch 1925, VI.2:1578; E. Vansteenbergh 1932, XI.2:2248-49. In regards to some of these authors, Gilson (1946, 102, fn 1) says: “*On dirait que la nature thomiste, irriguée et fécondée en tous sens, même comme nature, par la grâce divine, tend à se naturaliser sous la plume de nos contemporains.*”

How does Aquinas understand and promote the management of sorrow, grief and waiting through patience and perseverance? Aquinas explores the necessity of grace and what it would mean to have natural patience by asking: “Is it possible to have patience without grace?”⁹ An important reference point in reading this question is the authoritative wisdom that he quotes in the *sed contra*, which runs: “It is written (Ps. 61:6): *From Him*, i.e. from God, *is my patience*.”¹⁰ It is easy to understate the importance of this passage and its placement. For Aquinas however, the *sed contra* generally serves as a source of light, which refracts in different variants and intensities throughout the rest of the article and question. In this regard, the richness of the quote’s larger context needs to be recalled. Indeed *Psalm* 61 (62) is one of the psalmist’s most powerful expressions of trust in God. Not only does the psalmist express his trust in God in the face of harassment by enemies, vv. 2-5 (1-4), but he also invites the community to follow his example of trusting God, rather than human vanity, wealth and power, vv. 6-10 (5-10). The full message of the quotation announces the tone of the response that Aquinas intends.

Aquinas dialectically presents objections to a Christian understanding of grace, nature and patience. He poses a Pelagian objection, which claims that in following their rational natures and without grace, those who are evil can patiently suffer for the sake of an evil purpose.¹¹ Those who seek a good goal, thanks to their rational nature, should be all the more able to suffer patiently without grace. Aquinas responds saying that even though it is reasonable to suffer evil for some good, there are two drawbacks to doing so. First, the inclination of reason towards the goal constantly prevails only in integral human nature, but not in our present, weakened (lapsarian)

9 This question (*ST* II-II 136.3) is placed in the middle of Aquinas’ discussion on patience (*ST* II-II 136.1-5). The other related articles are: whether patience is a virtue (art. 1); whether it is the greatest of virtues (art.2); whether it is a part of fortitude (art. 4); and whether it is the same as longanimity (art. 5).

10 “*Sed contra est quod dicitur in Psalmo: Ab ipso, scilicet Deo, patientia meo*” (*ST* II-II 136.3). This version of the Vulgate Psalm 61:6 (62:5 *JB*) is translated in different ways: “Rest in God alone, my soul! He is the source of my hope” (*JB*); “For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope if from him.” (*RSV*); “*verumtamen Deo retice anima mea ab ipso enim praestolatio mea*” (*BS*, iuxta Hebr.).

11 Cf. *ST* II-II 136.3 obj1 and ad1.

state of nature. Second, in this condition the concupiscible inclination makes human beings more prone to follow its desires than reason, in bearing evils for the sake of present pleasures rather than for future goods. “True patience” on the contrary endures evils for the sake of future goods (*bona futura*) that we desire in accordance with reason.¹²

Even though Aquinas’ argument seems to mean that we might be truly patient in a particular situation, it also indicates that we are not able to assure our own consistent true patience. He says: “man is more prone to bear evils for the sake of goods in which the concupiscence delights here and now, than to endure evils for the sake of goods to come, which are desired in accordance with reason: and yet it is this that pertains to true patience.”¹³ While recalling the limitations of the present human condition, what he clarifies in this text is simply three criteria for the virtue of true patience: (1) endurance of evil (object); (2) for the sake of future goods (final end); and (3) desired in accordance with reason (mediate end--*circa ea quae sunt ad finem*). We must see these issues in the fuller context of divine grace’s interaction with human nature and of the particular “goods to come.”

He addresses another objection concerning the criteria for true patience. It claims that non-believers have true patience, since while not in the state of grace they abhor sinful evils more than bodily ones, and in some cases have patiently endured many hardships rather than

¹² Aquinas uses the terminology “*vera patientia*” or “*est vere patientiam*” only in *ST II-II* 136.3, where he carefully addresses Augustine’s *De patientia* that uses these terms all throughout. Aquinas moreover is aware that these adages exist in a sermon of St. Cyprian, which is quoted in the *Catena Aurea* (Vol 2.1, Part 2, 346; *On the Advantages of Patience*, PL 4.621).

¹³ “*Et ideo praeior est homo ad sustinendum mala in quibus concupiscentia delectatur praesentialiter, quam tolerare mala propter bona futura quae secundum rationem appetuntur, quod tamen pertinet ad veram patientiam*” *ST II-II* 136.3 ad 1. Aquinas contrasts delighting in a present pleasure, from desiring the future good (cf. *De pat.* xvii). Gilson (1946, 100) argues in this regard that both Aquinas and Augustine deny that there can be a natural patience, i.e. patience without grace. We could accept this position, if “*bona futura*” only refers to the future goods promised through the Gospel, which are beyond human reach without sanctifying grace, and if he refers to true, perfect and complete supernatural or infused virtue of patience (not the social virtue of patience). Aquinas, respecting the best of Augustine’s insights, deems that God sustains natural activities through another type of gift, *auxilio divino*. Distinguishing *gratia* and *auxilium divinum* as two types of gift, allows us to respect both the natural and supernatural orders.

betray their country.¹⁴ Aquinas answers that such social virtues—human beings acting well in human affairs—are commensurate with human nature and concern natural goods only.¹⁵ Social virtues, whereby someone behaves well in human affairs, spring from human nature, which is social.¹⁶ They are acquired in civil life and have the civil good as their end, i.e. acquired moral virtues.¹⁷ They are possible without sanctifying grace (*gratia gratum faciens*), but not without the help of God (*auxilio Dei*).¹⁸ This latter type of gift (*auxilium Dei*) assures the realization of the good commensurate to human nature, and even though such divine help is from God, the human effect can nonetheless be called human natural virtue, since it is within human nature to commit such acts. Further treatment of Aquinas' typology of graced patience will not only distinguish acquired and infused patience better, but help to understand spiritual resilience as well.

8.1.2. Types of Patience

Aquinas argues that human beings need God's gifts at two levels: (1) for doing natural good (acting well); and (2) for the healing of broken human nature (justification) and supernatural acts of virtue (such as the infused virtue of patience).¹⁹ These two levels concern

¹⁴ Cf. *ST* II-II 136.3 obj.2/ad2.

¹⁵ Cf. *ST* I-II 61.5; Pinckaers 1976, 255-273.

¹⁶ Aquinas speaks of these social or human virtues (*politicae* or *humanae*) earlier in his *Summa theologiae*, where following Macrobius, he distinguishes them from two other types of human virtue: purgative and perfect virtues. The purgative or cleansing virtues (*purgatoriae*) pertain to acting in accord with divine realities, especially by contemplating them: "*quaedam sunt virtutes transeuntium et in divinam similitudinem tendentium*" (*ST* I-II 61.5). The virtues of the pure souls (*purgati animi*), "*sunt virtutes iam assequentium divinam similitudinem*" (*ST* I-II 61.5). Both these *virtutes purgatoriae* and *purgati animi* have citizenship and the good of the city of God as their goal (cf. *ST* I-II 61.5 sc; *III Sent.* 33, 1, 4 ad 2). In these discussions, a fourth type of virtue (exemplar virtues) concerns God.

¹⁷ Thomas says: "*homo secundum has virtutes recte se habet in rebus humanis gerendis*" *ST* I-II 61.5; and "*quod acquisitae dirigunt in vita civili; unde habent bonum civile pro fine*" *III Sent.* 33, 1, 4, co; cf. *III Sent.* 33, 2, 3.

¹⁸ Cf. *ST* I-II 109.2.

¹⁹ Aquinas distinguishes five effects of grace in supernatural acts: "*Sunt autem quinque effectus gratiae in nobis: quorum primus est ut anima sanetur, secundus est ut bonum velit; tertius est ut bonum quod vult, efficaciter operetur; quartus est ut in bono perseveret; quintus est ut ad gloriam perveniat*" *ST* I-II, 111.3.

moral and spiritual resilience, as we shall see. First, Thomas' Theocentric anthropology posits that human beings are marked by the image of the divine Creator, who is the source of their being and co-origin of their perfections.²⁰ He says: "human nature needs the help of God as First Mover, to do or wish any good whatsoever."²¹ All good, even natural good, comes from, is possible through and returns to God. Aquinas affirms the continuing goodness of creation and the efficacy of divine exemplar virtues (*virtutes exemplares*).²² No natural good can be separated from God, who is the source and final goal for creation. In this context, we need to recall Aquinas' distinction between two types of moral virtues, acquired and infused.²³

Second, in the present human state, grace is needed to heal deformed human nature, which is now more prone to follow proximate concupiscible desires rather than the future, promised goods. Human beings cannot fulfill all that is possible through human nature, although they are able by their natural endowments to act well or to

20 God continually creates and sustains grace in the life of the believer. God creates and recreates each human person through grace. "*Et secundum hoc etiam gratia dicitur creari, ex eo quod homines secundum ipsam creantur, idest in novo esse constituuntur, ex nihilo, idest non ex meritis; secundum illud ad Ephes. 2, [9]: Creati in Christo Iesu in operibus bonis*" *ST I-II* 110.2 ad 3. Cf. *ST I* 93.1-9.

21 This position holds for both human integral and fallen states. "*Secundum autem utrumque statum, natura humana indiget auxilio divino ad faciendum vel volendum quodcumque bonum, sicut primo movente*" *ST I-II* 109.2. Aquinas calls upon the authority of St. Paul (*Rm* 9:16) and Augustine (*De Corrept. et Gratia* ch. 2: PL 44, 917) in illustrating how God's grace is that source of every good thought, wish, love or act. Furthermore in *ST I-II* 109.1 sc. Aquinas calls upon Augustine (in one of his later works, *Retract.* I, 4, 2; PL 32, 589) to affirm that sinners also can know many truths—"potest multos etiam non mundos multa scire vera."

22 Through these *virtutes exemplares*, God "directs us to himself" (*ST I-II* 62.1 ad 2). Exemplar virtues pre-exist in God, as Aquinas says: "*Oportet igitur quod exemplar humanae virtutis in Deo praeexistat, sicut et in eo praeexistunt omnium rerum rationes*" (*ST I-II* 61.5; cf. *SCG*. I.54, I.92, and *ST I* 93; *III Sent.*, 33, 1, 4). Aquinas employs both Macrobius (*Super Somn. Scip.* I, referring to Plotinus and Plato) and St. Augustine (*De Moribus Eccl.* 6, n. 9-10; PL 32, 1314-1315) as sources for this position on exemplar virtues.

23 Acquired moral virtue entails behaving well in regards to human affairs (cf. *ST I-II* 63.2). While infused moral virtue pertains to the spiritual life, "*secundum quam homo est civis civitatis Dei, et membrum corporis Christi, quod est Ecclesia; et haec quidem civilitas in futuro non evacuabitur, sed perficietur*" *III Sent.* 33, 1, 4, sol.; cf. *ST I-II* 63.2-4. On the difference between "human virtues" and Gifts infused by the Holy Spirit, cf. *ST I-II* 63.3; and *ST I-II* 68.1.

attain some particular, natural goods, such as: building homes, planting vineyards and having friends, as Aquinas specifies. “Yet [human nature] cannot do all the good natural (*connaturale*) to it, so as to fall short in nothing; just as a sick man can of himself make some movements, yet he cannot be perfectly moved with the movements of one in health, unless by the help of medicine he be cured.”²⁴ Thus in addition to needing divine help (*auxilio divino*) for the capacity to perform well any good action, one needs grace (*gratia gratum faciens*) in the form of infused moral virtues to heal human inconsistency and thus, even only in the realm of social virtues, approach true, consistent and complete natural patience.

In its integral state, human nature needed the assistance of sanctifying grace in order to be conformed most completely to the image of the Creator. All the more so now, true patience as an infused virtue counts on God’s completing and purifying grace. This need for grace is also true for the theological virtues of faith, hope, love and the other infused virtues. The question remains whether there is an acquired true patience without grace.

Aquinas’ treatment of patience makes two original points:²⁵ that natural virtue needs God’s help (in order to act well); and that it also requires sanctifying grace in order to heal the deformities in human nature and for acts of theological and infused virtue. Laboring to demonstrate the harmonious relationship of human and revealed wisdom, Aquinas acknowledges two types of patience, one a natural acquired moral virtue and the other an infused moral virtue. The

24 “*potest quidem etiam in statu naturae corruptae, per virtutem suae naturae aliquod bonum particulare agere, sicut aedificare domos, plantare vineas, et alia huiusmodi; non tamen totum bonum sibi connaturale, ita quod in nullo deficiat. Sicut homo infirmus potest per seipsum aliquem motum habere; non tamen perfecte potest moveri motu hominis sani, nisi sanetur auxilio medicinae*” ST I-II 109.2; cf. ST I-II 109.5.

25 While remaining faithful to Augustine’s central insights, Aquinas’ treatment of patience goes beyond them. A difference springs from these two theologians’ approaches to doing theology and perspectives on society in general. Augustine emphasizes how true virtue opposes the pride endemic in the Roman pagan society of his time, especially the philosophical circles that he had frequented, where pagan pride manifests itself in the rejection of Scripture (he is also battling Pelagian errors). Aquinas on the contrary lives in another epoch and approaches pagan sources in a more conciliatory way, without the same bellicose rhetoric.

question remains whether they both merit the Augustinian appellation of true patience.

In order to understand the two types of patience more fully, it is perhaps useful to compare how they parallel two types of flourishing. First, limited flourishing is possible in the present life. Second, complete flourishing is beyond our experiences at present, and further dependent on God for its realization.²⁶ Moreover, in the present life, there are two additional types of flourishing: (a) there is the incomplete flourishing achieved through various natural human activities;²⁷ (b) there is an imperfect participation in happiness, which is possible through the theological life of the infused virtues.²⁸ At present, both natural patience and infused patience are incomplete (from the human side), and they participate differently in sources of strength and vision as well: one that is in the measure of this world, the other that participates in the security and completeness of the next.

In parallel with this typology of patience, can it be said that there are two types of resilience? This perspective indicates that resilience as a natural good is empowered by God through natural means (as *auxilio Dei*). As a supernatural good, spiritual resilience is likened to infused virtue insofar as the object of its act, its finality or future good, and its rational means (informed by faith) are theological in tenor. These distinctions are a tentative theological application to resilience research and theory. They propose an understanding of spiritual resilience in terms of virtue, which is within the realm of theological reflection rather than strictly external scientific observation. These questions of the typology of patience, flourishing and resilience leave unanswered questions about the purpose of patience and resilience, to which we turn.

8.1.3. Patience, Its Purpose and Motivation

What is the end of these types of patience and resilience? Can we further distinguish them according to their purpose(s)? Aquinas clarifies his position on patience's purpose by raising another objection

26 Cf. *ST I-II* 69.2; Pinckaers 1984, 80-94.

27 Cf. *ST I-II* 2.1-8; 5.1-8.

28 Cf. *ST I-II* 69.2 corpus and ad 3; Pinckaers 1995a; R. Cessario 1996, 2-5.

to the need for grace in patience. It claims that often people without grace go through much pain and trouble in order to regain their own bodily health.²⁹ If the good of the soul is even more important, why cannot someone without grace endure many difficulties and much suffering in order to regain one's health and well-being? This position seems common sense. We can apply this insight to the typology of resilience as well. If the stakes are so important—complete flourishing and health—why cannot people achieve spiritual resilience on their own?

Aquinas responds to this Pelagian argument by affirming that to seek the soul's supernatural good (*salus animae*) is itself on a different level than the seeking of bodily health (*sanitas corporis*). Salvation requires supernatural love while health requires natural love. Sanctifying grace is already operative in our concern for our salvation. Aquinas clarifies this point further in his treatment of the working of prevenient grace, which describes how we desire the good of salvation before it is possessed.³⁰ Moreover, it is interesting to note how Aquinas here distinguishes the acts of natural and supernatural patience. He applies the word patience (*patientia*) only to the realm of salvation, but uses *tolerantia malorum* (the tolerance of ills and evils) instead when referring to the enduring of difficulties in view of regaining bodily health. This distinction seems to illustrate: (1) that the object of "true patience" is the eternal flourishing and the fulfillment of the Gospel promises needing the help of God, that comes in sanctifying grace; and (2) that natural patience is the *tolerantia malorum*, which we sustain by natural love although neither consistently nor completely.³¹

29 Cf. *ST* II-II 136.3 obj. 3.

30 Cf. *ST* I-II 111.3. Someone in sin cannot but place an obstacle to grace, except through the assistance of prevenient grace; cf. *SCG*, III.160; *Ad Joan.* 1.10, 206 and 1.4, 644. Prevenient grace does not prevent (or force) but rather enables someone to take a free decision for faith, cf. *Ad Eph.* 5.5. In regards to prevenient grace, Aquinas finds sources in St. Augustine *De natura et gratia* xxxi; *Rm* 11:6 and 6:23.

31 H.-D. Noble (1932, 296) says: "*La patience vertu naturelle n'est pas autre chose que le stoïcisme, l'endurance calme devant les aspérités et les souffrances de la vie. On voit des hommes qui supportent avec un admirable courage des souffrances très grandes, uniquement pour des motifs humains, d'ailleurs très légitimes; [...] Cette patience ne procède point de l'amour surnaturel, si elle n'a que ces motifs humains.*"

Aquinas argues that this virtue becomes intelligible when we realize that someone will only patiently suffer through an ill for the sake of some good goal.³² Indeed, we will not patiently bear difficulties for the sake of something that we perceive as evil itself. Aquinas understands that those who do evil, who act for a bad end, misrepresent that end as a good. More than a simple epistemological mistake, it can result from a gradual accumulation of moral errors. In the hierarchy of goods, we will suffer evil for some greater goods, and we will do without some lesser goods even when their lack causes sorrow and demands patient endurance. The first type of good is more powerful since it enables us to bear some evil. It has a certain absolute character. For Aquinas, the good of grace (and the desire not to lose it) exemplifies this first type of good, which allows us to both suffer evil, and endure patiently the sorrow of doing without other secondary goods.

Aquinas argues that if we prefer the good of grace to other lesser, natural goods it is because of charity. He thus recognizes that the infused virtue of patience has God as its source (in sanctifying grace—*gratia gratum faciens*) and as its final cause. In this fundamentally theological perspective, Aquinas deems that inasmuch as patience, at least indirectly, has as its end the future glory and flourishing that God alone grants, such patience depends upon sanctifying grace,³³ and insofar as it concerns not wanting to lose the good of grace (*bonum gratiae*), it depends on the grace of charity, through which we love God above all things.³⁴ Indeed, acts of patience, as well as of fortitude and all other virtues, are only meritorious if they

32 Cf. *ST* II-II 136.3; and Augustine's argument about only suffering for some pleasure in *De pat.* iv.

33 Thomas says in the *SCG* (III.151) "*Forma per quam res ordinatur in aliquem finem, assimilatur quodammodo rem illam fini: sicut corpus per formam gravitatis acquirit similitudinem et conformitatem ad locum ad quem naturaliter movetur. Ostensum est autem [cap. praec.] quod gratia gratum faciens est forma quaedam in homine per quam ordinatur ad ultimum finem, qui Deus est. Per gratiam ergo homo Dei similitudinem consequitur. Similitudo autem est dilectionis causa: omne enim simile diligit sibi simile [Eccli. xiii, 19]. Per gratiam ergo homo efficitur Dei dilector.*"

34 Aquinas says "*Unde manifestum est quod patientia, secundum quod est virtus, a caritate causatur: secundum illud I ad Cor 13, 4: 'Caritas patiens est'*" *ST* II-II 136.3; cf. *ST* II-II 23.4 ad 2; *ST* II-II 186.7 ad 1; *ST* I-II 65.3 ad 1.

are done out of charity.³⁵ Another effect of charity in the act of patience is excellence in bearing hardships.³⁶

Although Aquinas clearly holds that it is impossible to have the patience based on charity without the help of actual grace,³⁷ he also affirms that even when sanctifying grace and the theological virtue of charity are absent every good human act in the realm of social virtues entails another gift from God (*auxilio Dei*), as we have stated. It seems to me that the natural political or social virtues involved in building homes, farming fields, and having friends must then involve a natural patience, with the help of God (*auxilio Dei*) appropriate for natural goods. However, does Aquinas construe it as a “true” natural patience?³⁸ The question seems clarified by the principle that a natural

35 When addressing whether charity or another virtue is the principle of merit, Aquinas says: “*Similiter etiam actus patientiae et fortitudinis non est meritorius nisi aliquis ex caritate haec operetur; secundum illud 1 ad Cor. 13,[8]: Si tradidero corpus meum ita ut ardeam, caritatem autem non habuero, nihil mihi prodest*” *ST I-II 114.4 ad 3*.

36 In discussing Christian perfection, Thomas says, “*patientia dicitur habere opus perfectum in ordine ad caritatem: in quantum scilicet ex abundantia caritatis provenit quod aliquis patienter toleret adversa, secundum illud Rom. 8 [35]: Quis nos separabit a caritate Dei? Tribulatio? an angustia? etc.*” *ST II-II 184.1 ad 3*; cf. *Jas 1:4*.

37 *ST II-II 136.3*. “*Manifestum est autem quod caritas non potest haberi nisi per gratiam: secundum illud Rom. 5, (5): Caritas Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris per Spiritum Sanctum, qui datus est nobis. Unde patet quod patientia non potest haberi sine auxilio gratiae.*”

38 In my reading, Aquinas does not clearly resolve this problem in question *ST II-II 136*, because he has already done so in *ST II-II 23.7*. According to Gilson (1946, 104), however, there is a “natural virtue of patience without grace,” but no true natural patience. Gilson would have us think that Aquinas strictly follows Augustine, who is not unaccustomed to say that true patience only pertains to that which is inspired and sustained by charity. Gilson interprets Thomas as affirming that true patience is supernatural patience alone. E. Gilson (1946, 104), says “*Qu’il y ait une vertu politique naturelle, non d’ailleurs sans un secours de grâce, soit, mais une vertu naturelle ‘de patience’, il n’en est pas ici question.*” This comment might only refer to the infused virtue of patience (cf. *ST II-II 136.3 ad 1*).

In adjudicating this issue, we need to ask what Aquinas intends by “goods to come” (*bona futura*). Do they refer to the goods of social virtues as well, or only to strictly supernatural goods and ends? Aquinas’ use of *bonum futurum* (*bona futura*) needs to be considered in the larger context of his *ST* and the whole of his thought. In the *ST*, we find several examples where he makes a comparison between temporal goods and the goods to come (*ST II-II 36.2*: “*ad bona futura*”), or between present things and invisible goods to come (*ST II-II 124.4*: “*ad futura et ad invisibilia bona*”). In his other works a marked example

virtue can be true, even though it is incomplete.³⁹ Calling lesser, natural human goods “true patience” need neither diminish the primacy put on charity-based patience, which finds its ultimate source and final cause in God’s patience,⁴⁰ nor disregard charity as the foundation of infused social virtue.⁴¹

This typology of patience suggests a parallel for resilience: we acquire a resilience that is in the measure of our natural capacities (though not possible with consistency and completeness unless we are healed and strengthened by sanctifying grace); we receive a spiritual type of resilience that outstrips our natural capacities and needs the grace of the theological virtues, in order to know, to motivate and to hope to attain its theological object(s).

8.1.4. The Patience of God expressed through Jesus Christ

This discussion demands a fuller examination of Aquinas’ approach to the theological sources and manifestations of patience, in order to explain how the patience of God as expressed in Christ serves as the source and model of patience for others. Thomas’ theological and Christological exploration of patience can serve in turn to enhance Christian resilience, which entails that we understand suffering through faith and that we endure with charity and hope.

is in the *Exp. Job*, where he distinguishes temporal goods from future spiritual rewards (Ch. 2, p. 95) and from goods of the soul (Ch. 27, p. 325).

³⁹ In his discussion of “*Utrum sine caritate possit esse aliqua vera virtus*” (ST II-II 23.7), Aquinas concludes: “*Si vero illud bonum particulare sit verum bonum, puta conservatio civitatis vel aliquid huiusmodi, erit quidem vera virtus, sed imperfecta, nisi referatur ad finale et perfectum bonum.*” Cf. ST II-II 136.3 ad 1. M. Labourdette (1962: 44) holds that “*il y a une vertu naturelle de patience mais qu’on ne peut acquérir sans la guérison de la grâce et les confortations de la vertu infuse de patience.*”

⁴⁰ Aquinas affirms this insight with support of Scripture (Ps. 61: 5) and St. Augustine (*De Patientia*, i).

⁴¹ In addition to ST II-II 136.3 ad 1 (of which we are speaking), Aquinas discusses “true patience” in the following places: (1) in *Sent.* 33, 3, art iii, no. 343, he says “*Unde Gregorius* (Hom. 25 in *Evang.*, n. 4; L. 76, 1261): ‘*Vera patientia est mala aliena, id est ab aliis illata, aequanimiter perpeti*’;” and (2) in Aquinas’ *Catena Aurea*, we find other texts to which he was familiar, like St. Cyprian’s Sermon (Fourth Sunday of Lent, 2.12, Sct. 1, Pt 2, p. 346).

Aquinas' Scriptural commentaries⁴² illustrate how the blessing of God's patience expresses divine mercy and charity, which serve as a final cause for human action.⁴³ God's patience is made known so that sinners may turn to God, believe in Christ and come to eternal life.⁴⁴ God patiently (yet actively) waits⁴⁵ in the face of the evil that we suffer and that we do, of the good that we do not accomplish, and in anticipation of our participating more fully in God's own good. In particular, God's merciful patience is the means that God offers human beings to participate in the redemption wrought by Jesus Christ.⁴⁶

42 Examination of this fuller patience requires exploring Aquinas' works on patience, beyond the question devoted to it *ST* II-II 136. The comprehensiveness of his notions of the virtues is exhausted neither in his philosophical sources, nor his systematic theological analyses, like that of the *ST* in which he outlines basic concepts without always fully articulating them. Indeed, he unfolds insights, images and descriptions in a less systematic way in his commentaries and *reportationes* on Scripture, the *Pater* and the *Credo*, as well as other loci of his *ST*.

43 Aquinas in commenting on the final cause of God's blessing (Eph 2: 7) relates that it is through God's mercy that God is patient with sinners (cf. *Ad Eph.* cap. 2 lect. 2; cf. cap. 3 lect. 2).

44 Cf. *Ad Eph.* cap. 2, lect. 2 (Eph 2:4-7); Aquinas uses 1 Tim 1:15 to illustrate how divine mercy and patience is the final cause for human conversion. Also see: *Ad Rom.* cap. 2, lect. 1 and 2 (Rom 2:4 and 7), where Aquinas illustrates this point further with reference to Ps 7:11-12; 2 Pet 3:9 and 3:15.

45 "Patience" and "waiting" are metaphorically attributed to God, only inasmuch as we can intelligibly predicate these time-bound images to God's simplicity and eternity. The waiting of God is especially problematic in the context of the suffering of the innocent and the just at the hands of the unjust. Patience or long-suffering does not entail that God suffers in the human sense of suffering. Aquinas employs the authority of Augustine who says: "*quod patientia Dei praedicatur non in hoc quod aliquod malum patitur, sed in hoc quod expectat malos ut convertantur*" *De Pat.* i, quoted in *ST* II-II 136.5 obj. 1, where Aquinas also refers to Eccl 5:4: "*Altissimus patiens redditur est.*" Furthermore, it is interesting to note that Aquinas slightly modified Augustine's *De Pat.* when he used it in the *ST* II-II 136.1 sc: "*Virtus animi quae patientia dicitur, tam magnum Dei donum est ut etiam ipsius qui nobis eam largitur [qua malos ut corrigantur expectat] patientia praedicatur.*" Aquinas dropped the bracketed part of Augustine's definition. Cf. *Ad Mat.* cap. 17, no. 2; and *I Sent.* 30, 1, 2, ad 2.

46 Thomas explains the soteriological fruit of divine patience in his commentary on Romans 2:4, "*An divitias bonitatis eius et patientiae et longanimitatis contemnis*" which he also quotes in: *ST* II-II 136.5 sc; *ad Rom* cap. 2, lect. 2 (Rom 2:4). The whole plan of salvation and reconciliation, worked through Christ, is an expression of God's patience; as Aquinas says: "*ex parte Christi qui pro nobis mortem sustinuit, fuit immensa caritas, quae facit passionem ex parte patientiae Deo acceptam: et sic per ipsam sumus reconciliati*" *III Sent.* 19, 1, 5, ad 3.

Jesus' patience offers us a model of well-ordered suffering and sorrow. Aquinas establishes three criteria in order that Christ's passion and death serve as an efficacious exemplar: the reality of his suffering, its voluntariness and its conformity to reason.⁴⁷

Aquinas holds that Jesus Christ really suffered and experienced sorrow,⁴⁸ with moral and soteriological ramifications. Neither Jesus Christ's union with the Father and the joy of His divine contemplation, nor His perfect virtue kept Him from feeling human sadness.⁴⁹ Aquinas illustrates this by quoting Matthew (26:38): "My soul is sorrowful even unto death."⁵⁰ Jesus Christ was capable of joy and sorrow, since the divine Word, the second person of the Holy Trinity, assumed human nature.

Aquinas distinguishes between a passion and propassion,⁵¹ in order to explain that Jesus had a true experience of sadness, which was rightly affected by the object, without unreasonable resultant action.⁵² Jesus Christ's experience of sorrow and suffering was a propassion and not a disordered passion.⁵³ This difference does not make His sorrow

47 Thomas says: "*Et ideo Christus, ut satisfaceret pro peccatis omnium hominum, assumpsit tristitiam maximam quantitate absoluta, non tamen excedentem regulam rationis*" *ST* III 46.6 ad 2.

48 In addition to a human intellect and will, Christ had a human sensitive appetite or sensuality; cf. *ST* III 18.2; *SCG* IV.8, IV.32, and IV.35.

49 Cf. *ST* I-II 59.3; and *ST* III 15.6.

50 Aquinas quotes this passage as the authority (of the *sed contra*) quoted in his article on "whether there was sorrow in Christ" (*ST* III 15.6 sc; cf. *ST* I-II 59.3 sc). In the *Comp. Theo.* (ch. 232 ff.), Aquinas asks what suffered in Christ? He responds that the Word of God, Christ suffered in His soul, not only in His lower reason, imagination and body. Gondreau (2000, 373-88) skillfully addresses Aquinas' position on Christ's sorrow in the *Tertia pars* (*ST* III 15.6).

51 In general, passion can have as its object what is unlawful to do, or it can forestall the judgment of reason. A propassion however does not hold sway over the soul and its functions. Aquinas says: "*ut passio perfecta intelligatur quando animo, idest rationi, dominatur; propassio autem, quando est inchoata in appetitu sensitivo, sed ulterius non se extendit*" *ST* III 15.4; cf. *ST* III 15.6 ad 2.

52 Cf. *ST* III 46.5-8; and *III Sent.* 2, 3, co.

53 In the *III Sent* 15, 2, 2, co, Thomas says: "*sed in Christo nunquam surgebat motus tristitiae nisi secundum dictamen superioris rationis, quando scilicet dictabat ratio quod sensualitas tristaretur secundum convenientiam naturae suae; et ideo non fuit in eo tristitia rationem pervertens, nec fuit necessaria, sed voluntaria quodammodo.*" Furthermore in the *ST* (III 15.6 ad 1 and ad 2), Aquinas explicitly responds to the Stoics. He distinguishes well-ordered and inordinate management and experiences of passion, which are explained by the Stoics in terms of proper sorrowing, which pertains to the

radically different (human experiences of sorrow do not necessarily hinder reasonable action) nor does it diminish what He suffered (for He suffered immensely).⁵⁴ The difference concerns consistency, not type. His were moral acts. Aquinas distinguishes Jesus suffering as a “propassion” since in experiencing His own passion and death, and in sorrowing for the plight of others,⁵⁵ He was not deflected from His mission, which involved knowledge, freedom and surety, that is, a moral act.

In facing great suffering and trials, even his own death, with tranquility of mind, Jesus Christ has become an example of patience, manifesting the patience of God the Father. The example of Christ is especially efficacious since He knew He would suffer death and torture, as a result of proclaiming the Gospel of salvation for all humankind, in accord with the plan and will of the Father. Christ did not voluntarily will His death and passion *per se*; however He did chose them as ordained to the end (*voluntaria in ordine ad finem*), the redemption of humankind.⁵⁶ Jesus suffered for a purpose. He did not search human glory. Rather, He knew His destiny, His glory to be revealed in the future, and that the path to the redemptive manifestation of this glory was His passion and humiliation.⁵⁷ Moreover, Aquinas specifies that when needing patience when faced with persecution, we in a more general sense also follow Jesus Christ’s example through gentleness.⁵⁸ Patience demands such gentleness in order to not perturb right judgment and to withstand persecution.

apprehending, through the sensitive appetite, of bodily or exterior evils without disturbing reason.

⁵⁴ “circa mortem Christi, commendantur patientia et constantia ipsius qui mortem est passus: et tanto magis, quanto mors fuit abiection” ST III 51.2 ad 1.

⁵⁵ Cf. ST III 15.6; and ST III 46.6.

⁵⁶ “Et hoc modo mors Christi et eius passio fuit, secundum se considerata, involuntaria et tristitiam causans: licet fuerit voluntaria in ordine ad finem, qui est redemptio humani generis” ST III 15.6 ad 4.

⁵⁷ Cf. *ad Joh.* cap. 7, lect. 1 no. 1019, where Aquinas reinforces his commentary referring to Luke 24:26 and Rom 8:18. Aquinas (ST III 15.6 sc) quotes Ambrose who says: “*Ut homo, tristitiam habuit: suscepit enim tristitiam meam. Confidenter tristitiam nomino, qui crucem praedico*” *De Trin.* ii, Al., *de Fide ad Gratiam.* ii, 7.

⁵⁸ Aquinas’ commentary reads: “*Generale, quod debet habere qui vult disputare, est quod sit mansuetus. [...] Est enim mansuetudo virtus compescens ab ira, quae perturbat iudicium rationis, quae necessaria est in quaestione et iudicio veritatis. Matth. 11:29: ‘Discite a me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde.’* In

St. Thomas employs Romans 15:5 in order to explain that the mercy and consolation of God is made manifest in the suffering of Jesus Christ, who serves as an example for us when we must face some suffering or evil.⁵⁹ Thomas explains that Jesus Christ

gave an example of patience, a virtue that prevents sorrow from overwhelming man in time of adversity; the greater the trials, the more splendidly does the virtue of patience shine forth in them. Therefore an example of perfect patience is afforded in the greatest of evils, which is death, if it is borne without distress of mind.⁶⁰

This model is especially clear in His enduring passion on the cross. Aquinas says: "If you seek an example of patience, you will find it in its highest degree upon the Cross."⁶¹

Aquinas sees the passion and cross of Jesus Christ as the exemplar not only of the virtue of patience,⁶² but of all virtues.⁶³ Illustrating that patience is not a static virtue, but mobile, dynamic and

speciali autem debet habere, respectu superiorum, docilitatem; respectu persecutorum, patientiam; respectu falsorum doctorum, correctionem" *II ad Timoth.*, cap. 2, lect. 4 (2 Tim 2:24-25).

⁵⁹ Cf. *Ad Rom.* cap. 15, lect. 1; Luke 22:42; Ps 93:19; 1 Pet 1:11; Job 13:15; 2 Cor 1:3.

⁶⁰ "*Quantum ad patientiam uero, que in aduersis tristitiam hominem absorbere non sinit, quia quanto sunt maiora aduersa, tanto magis in hiis relucet patientie uirtus : unde in maximo malorum quod est mors, perfecte patientie datur exemplum, si absque mentis turbatione sustineatur.*" This quote continues: "*quod de Christo propheta predixit dicens Ys. liii,7 'Tamquam agnus coram tondente se obmutescet, et non aperiet os suum'*" *Comp. Theo.* 1, 2, 227. Elsewhere, in the context of discussing the virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, Aquinas says: "*in passione Christi praecipue a sanctis proponuntur nobis imitanda caritas, humilitas, patientia, quae sunt uirtutes, et magis quam sapientia et scientia, quae sunt dona*" *III Sent* 34, 1, 1 co; cf. *ST I-II* 68.1.

⁶¹ Aquinas argues "*Si queris exemplum patientiae, excellentissima in cruce inventitur. Patientia enim ex duobus magna ostenditur: aut cum quis magna patienter suffert, aut cum ea suffert quae vitare posset, et non vital*" *In symb. apost.* art. 4. He adds in the *ST* (III 15.6 ad 4): "*Et hoc modo mors Christi et eius passio fuit, secundum se considerata, involuntaria et tristitiam causans: licet fuerit voluntaria in ordine ad finem, qui est redemptio humani generis.*"

⁶² Cf. *ST* III 46.4; where Aquinas, in discussing the passion of Christ, identifies how the length of the cross itself symbolizes Christian longanimity. He finds this insight in Augustine, *de Gratia Vet. et Novi Test.* 140, 120, 26.

⁶³ He says: "*Nullum enim exemplum virtutis abest a cruce*" *In symb. apost.*, art. 4. In addition to patience, he also specifically mentions how Jesus Christ's passion serves as an example of charity, humility, obedience and contempt of earthly things. *In sym. apost.* art. 4. He also deems the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints as exemplars of virtue (*In sal. ang.*).

fruitful, his commentary on the Apostle's Creed quotes the letter to the Hebrews: "Let us run by patience to the fight proposed to us; looking on Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, who, having joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame."⁶⁴ Christ for His part shows that being set on the reward of joy and future glory with the Father enabled Him to endure the cross. It is the promised joy of eternal life and glory with God the Father (as final cause) that makes the passion and death of Jesus Christ comprehensible, and in turn makes possible following His example in offering one's life for others, in martyrdom and other self-giving acts.⁶⁵ The "cloud of witnesses" mentioned in the Letter to the Hebrews (12:1) serves participatively as active examples sharing spiritual consolation and, showing how they were able to run the race more freely and surely by having laid down the weight (burden) of sin and earthly desires. Thomas also affirms that Paul and the "cloud of witnesses" serve as models of following Christ's suffering.⁶⁶

In sum, by patiently enduring the dangers of death and other types of suffering, we enter into the life of glory. It is thus that Aquinas interprets what it means to "always carry in the body the death of Jesus" (2 Cor 4:10), to always be in His patience.⁶⁷ Aquinas recognizes that such fullness of patience as found in Christ must be rooted in charity; that is, the fullness of patience entails how we support evil and

64 "*Per patientiam curramus ad propositum nobis certamen, aspicientes in autorem fidei et consummatorem Iesum, qui, proposito sibi gaudio sustinuit crucem confusione contempta*" Heb 12:1-2, as quoted in *In symb. apost.*, art. 4. The RSV translation: "let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance (*ὑπομονῆς*) the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured (*ὑπέμεινε*) the cross, despising the shame" (Heb 12:1-2) is also quoted by Aquinas in his commentaries *Ad Phil.* cap. 2, lect. 1; and *ad Thes.* cap. 1, lect. 1.

65 Cf. *Ad Heb.* cap. 12, lect. 1. Thomas mentions the patience of martyrs in numerous places including: *ST* II-II 124.2 ad 3; I 19.9 ad 1; I 22.2 ad 1; *ST* I-II 102.4 ad 8; *ST* I-II 114.4 obj. 3.

66 Cf. *I ad Thess.* cap. 1, lect. 1, (1 Thess 1:6); *Ad Heb.* cap. 12, lect. 1 (Heb 12:1); Cf. *I ad Thess.* cap. 2, lect. 2 (1 Thess 2:6-10); and *II ad Thess.* cap. 3, lect. 1 (2 Thess 3:5); *Ad Rom.*, prologus.

67 "*Consequenter cum dicit, Semper mortificationem Jesu Christi in corpore nostro circumferentes, subdit rationem hujus patientiae. [...] Et ideo dicit, quod ideo pericula mortis et passiones patienter sustinemus, ut perveniamus ad gloriosam vitam*" *II ad Cor.* cap. 4, lect. 3.

suffer difficulties following His example of self-giving love for God the Father, for humanity (our neighbors) and for all creation.⁶⁸

8.1.5. Persisting to the End in Christ: The Virtue of Perseverance

Aquinas' treatment of the infused virtue of perseverance is quite akin to that of patience, and his sources are philosophical, Patristic and Scriptural.⁶⁹ Aquinas does not construe perseverance as merely a human natural virtue through which we complete acts important for this life, such as building, planting, familial and friendship relationships. We express two types of perseverant act according to two types of ends: a specific work and one's whole life. Some acts cannot find completion until the end of life. For example, the dispositions of faith, hope and charity concern the fulfillment of our entire life, so that we persevere until the end. This distinction between perseverance as a *habitus* and as two types of act allows Aquinas to explain Augustine's dictum that "no one can be said to have perseverance while living, unless he persevere until death."⁷⁰

Thomas explores the specifically Christian dimension of perseverance by asking whether it needs the help of grace. As with the

68 In his commentary on 2 Thess 3:5, Aquinas calls on a large number of Scriptural sources to support this insight (*II ad Thess.* cap. 3, lect. 1). "*Sed opera non sunt bona, nisi directe in finem caritatis.* 1 Tim. 1,5: 'Finis praecepti est caritas de corde puro, et conscientia bona et fide non ficta.' *Item nec patientia nisi per Christum.* Luc. 21,19 'In patientia vestra possidebitis animas vestras.' *Mat.* 5,11 'Beati eritis cum maledixerint vobis homines, et persecuti vos fuerint, et dixerint omne malum adversus vos, mentientes, propter me.' *Et ideo dicit, Et patientia Christi, idest tolerantia malorum propter Christum, vel ad exemplum ejus.* 1 Pt. 2,21 'Christus passus est pro nobis, vobis relinquens exemplum, ut sequamini vestigia ejus.'"

69 Aquinas dialogues with the following sources on the virtue of perseverance (*ST* II-II 137) and on the vices opposed to perseverance (*ST* II-II 138), listed in order of frequency: Aristotle (subt. 15): *NE* ii.3; ii.4; vi.8; vii.7 (eight times); vii.8; vii.9 (three times); Augustine (subt. 7): *De Persever.* I.1; I.6 (twice); *De Lib. Arb* ii.19; *Tract. In Joan.* lxxix.14; *De Correp. et Grat.* xi.11; xi.12; Scripture (subtotal: 5): Deut 28:56; Wis 5:7; Mat 24:13; Rom 5:15; 1 Cor 6:9-10; Cicero (subt. 5): *De office.* I.20; *Rhet* ii.53; ii.54 (three times); Andronicus (Chrysippus) (subt. 2): *Definit.* III.578 (twice); St. Gregory the Great (subt. 1): *Moral.* 31.45; Isadore (subt. 1): *Etym.* X.213-214; Macrobius (subt. 1): *In Somn. Scip.* i.8.

70 "*nullus potest dici perseverantiam habere quandiu vivit, nisi perseveret usque ad mortem*" *De Persever.* i; quoted in *ST* II-II 137.1 obj. 2.

virtue of patience, Augustine is the authority on the necessity of grace. He quotes Augustine as saying: “We hold that perseverance is a gift of God, whereby we persevere unto the end, in Christ.”⁷¹ Aquinas agrees, explaining two ways that someone needs grace in persevering. First, he considers the *habitus* of perseverance as an infused virtue, and therefore as needing the gift of habitual grace (*donum habitualis gratiae*). Second, he considers the act of perseverance as enduring in the good until the end of life, which needs not only the gift of habitual grace, but also another gratuitous gift of God.⁷² Aquinas explains that the habitual grace of the infused virtue of perseverance does not take away the human capacity to choose otherwise than what is good. Even when the free will is repaired (healed), it is still changeable. While our free will is capable of persevering, it so happens that it is not in our power to accomplish alone our plan or choice to persevere. As Aquinas says: “for it is often in our power to choose, but not to accomplish.”⁷³

In his discussion on the necessity of grace, Thomas discusses three ways that we need grace to persevere in good. First, as a *habitus* of the mind, through perseverance we are disposed to resist the pressures of sadness and sorrow that sidetrack us from the good we intend to accomplish. Secondly, we need a particular intention to remain attached to the good until the end (*in finem*). Both these types of perseverance are infused in us along with grace. Aquinas remarks that we need this type of habitual grace for the other virtues,⁷⁴ and to heal wounded human nature. Although through justifying grace God redeems us and heals our minds (*mentis*), we need habitual grace that assists in the progressive recovery of the integrality of human nature, and informing our intellects that are burdened by ignorance.⁷⁵ Thirdly, through perseverance, we abide in the good until the end of life. The grace of justification is not adequate. We need God’s continuing assistance in habitual grace in order to resist evil and persist in the

71 “*Asserimus donum Dei esse perseverantiam, qua usque in finem perseveratur in Christo*” *De Persev. I*; quoted in *ST II-II* 137.4 sc.

72 Cf. *ST I-II* 109.10.

73 “*plerumque enim cadit in potestate nostra electio, non autem executio*” *ST II-II* 137.4.

74 Thomas (*I-II* 109.10) says: “*Et utroque istorum modorum, perseverantia simul cum gratia infunditur sicut et continentia et ceterae virtutes.*”

75 Cf. *ST I-II* 109.9.

good. As Thomas observes, we need “divine assistance guiding and guarding us against attacks of the passions.”⁷⁶

Aquinas addresses a false and static notion of perfection and passivity. He recognizes the humble nature of virtue, which as a *habitus* inclining us to specific acts of excellence, must always be confirmed by the will. Therefore, even if we can consider that someone has the virtue of perseverance, as Aquinas does, “it does not follow that a person who has the *habitus* of virtue uses it unchangeably until death.”⁷⁷ We are vulnerable because of our own status as voyagers. Complete and stable resilience is not assured by a singular resilient act, it needs to be progressively won. We need the special help of God’s gratuitous grace, through which we actively persevere in faith and hope, which are the guides for spiritual resilience.⁷⁸

Aquinas’ approach to the scripture-based precept of fortitude illustrates further that his notion of perseverance is not simply philosophical. This precept plays a pedagogical role in developing the disposition and preparing for acts of perseverance.⁷⁹ Following Augustine,⁸⁰ the precept is understood as a means for us to learn to persevere in order to gain eternal life. Indeed, the promise of the eternal flourishing serves a key role in understanding and motivating final perseverance. Thomas distinguishes the promises and effects of both the Old and New Testament teaching. When confronted with

76 Concerning the third type of perseverance, Aquinas says: “*Alio modo dicitur perseverantia continuatio quaedam boni usque ad finem vitae. Et ad talem perseverantiam habendam homo in gratia constitutus non quidem indiget aliqua alia habituali gratia, sed divino auxilio ipsum dirigente et protegente contra tentationum impulsus*” ST I-II 109.10; see also ST I-II 109.9 and ST II-II 137.4.

77 “*Quia tamen habitus est quo quis utitur cum voluerit, non est necessarium quod habens habitum virtutis immobiliter utatur eo usque ad mortem*” ST II-II 137.4 ad 1; cf. ST I-II 49.3 sc; ST I-II 50.1 ad 1; ST I-II 50.5.

78 Cf. ST II-II 137.4 ad 2 and ad 3; where Aquinas quotes Augustine *de Corrept. et Gratia* 12, 34-35 (PL 44.937): “*Sed nunc praedestinati per gratiam Christi non solum datur ut perseverare possint, sed ut perseverent.*”

79 St. Thomas (cf. ST II-II 140.2 obj. 1) construes the following Scripture passages to involve precepts of perseverance: “He who endures to the end will be saved” (Matt 10:22); “Therefore, my brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain” (1 Cor 15:58); “It is for discipline that you have to endure” (Heb 12:7).

80 Thomas (ST II-II 140.1 ad 1) cites Augustine’s anti-Manichean, *contra Faust.* IV.2; PL 42.217-8.

physical and especially mortal danger, Aquinas affirms that the NT teaches us to do spiritual battle, not only physical battle, as in the OT. In effect he interprets the violence mentioned in Mt. 11:12 to mean a spiritual struggle: “In the New Testament, men were to be taught how to come to the possession of eternal life by fighting spiritually.”⁸¹ In such spiritual battle we need to overcome the fear of death and to persevere until the end.⁸²

Another aspect of this spiritual battle is the resisting and enduring that pertains more specifically to perseverance. In various Epistles, Aquinas finds precepts of resistance, which are most connected with resisting evil and the devil.⁸³ Such resisting, at first glance, might seem negative. Practically speaking however, it is quite positive. It entails holding firm to something or someone. According to 1 Peter 5:9,⁸⁴ resisting the devil involves standing firm in faith and keeping friendship with God. Perseverance is to “stand fast in the Lord” (1 Thess 3:8); this virtue also serves as a source of fortitude and perseverance for others.⁸⁵

This positive resisting recalls Augustine’s insight that Aquinas makes his own. Patience, which is first the patience of God expressed in Christ, is the gift of active waiting. We sometimes push the human side of waiting and resisting to extremes, and enact unnecessary damage. Is such patience and perseverance a type of unresilient vulnerability? In Aquinas’ theological perspective, what can seem to be folly (e.g. martyrdom, generosity or social justice) can involve following the model of Christ and participating in his salvific act through patience and perseverance. Once again the difference between virtue and true folly is its rational measure. Acts of patience and perseverance are neither un-purposeful nor unreasonable acts of

81 “*In novo autem instruendi fuerunt homines qualiter, spiritualiter certando, ad possessionem vitae aeternae pervenirent: secundum illud Matth. 11, [12]: Regnum caelorum vim patitur, et violenti dripiunt illud*” *ST II-II 140.1 ad 1*.

82 Aquinas (*ST II-II 140.1 ad 1*) quotes Matt 10:28, “Fear ye not them that kill the body.”

83 In this regard, Aquinas (*ST II-II 140.1 ad 1*) quotes 1 Pet 5: 8-9: “*Adversarius vester diabolus [...] cui resistite fortes in fide;*” and Jas 4:7: “*Resistite diabolo, et fugiet a vobis.*”

84 Aquinas quotes 1 Peter 5:9 in *ST II-II 140.1 ad 1*.

85 Cf. *I ad Thess.* lect. 3.1.

suffering. The reason informed by faith, that guides our acts of patience and perseverance, proves to be Aquinas' criteria for spiritual resilience.

Aquinas' treatise on the cardinal virtue of fortitude treats patience and perseverance last, in less space and with fewer articles.⁸⁶ Do these two virtues, which have such significance for spiritual resilience, get short shrift? Being last is not in this case a depreciating quality but rather a teleological one. Patience and perseverance are more central to the highest form of fortitude that is martyrdom.⁸⁷ They involve resisting sorrow and remaining strong in the pursuit of good, in Christ, until the end of our lives, especially when it means following him through a martyr's death or being ready to do so.⁸⁸ This ultimate dimension of the Christian life, persisting unto the end in Christ, spells the parameter of Christian resilience. We need now to pursue further Aquinas' treatment of these virtues through consideration of the theological supports and development of patience and perseverance.

8.2. Theological Supports for Patience

In continuing to enhance our notion of spiritual resilience through Thomas' works on patience, we need to keep in mind the importance accorded to the patience of God the Father, the example of Jesus Christ, as well as patience's related Gifts, Beatitudes and fruits of the Holy Spirit, the latter of which we shall now explore. All these elements contribute to a progressive fullness of patience for Aquinas. My thesis is that beyond the two types of patience already explored (natural and infused patience), Aquinas articulates the way that

⁸⁶ He writes a total of 3 questions and 11 articles on patience and perseverance, versus 7 questions and 25 articles for magnanimity and magnificence, and 5 questions and 25 articles for the virtue of fortitude itself and its principal act, martyrdom.

⁸⁷ Although Aquinas does not go so far as to say that martyrdom is an act of patience rather than fortitude, he does deem that martyrdom is chiefly about fortitude's movement of endurance, which is expressed in patience and perseverance (cf. *ST* II-II 124.2 obj and ad 3; *ST* II-II 123.6). On patience, Aquinas quotes St. Cyprian and St. Augustine in *ST* II-II 124.2 in order to appreciate the way in which we can praise the martyr's patience (and faith).

⁸⁸ Secondly, Aquinas has already made his case for the cardinal virtue of fortitude and the analysis of its related emotions. Therefore, he develops patience and perseverance without repeating the foundations established earlier in the treatise nor forgetting the perseverance needed in martyrdom.

patience progresses as a disposition and is enacted through these further theological sources. These theological resources enrich our understanding of spiritual resilience as well. A parallel between patience and fortitude serves as an illustration. Fortitude finds its fulfillment in martyrdom: where one proves true to God, witnessing to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, even while being put to death for the cause of truth, goodness and justice. In Thomas' analysis of patience, we find a similar progression and transformation of a conception of virtue that we can no longer simply deem a Stoic virtue of resistance. Infused patience is completed by the perfection of the infused virtue of hope, and the Gift of fortitude; it is further perfected in the fruits of patience and longanimity and the Beatitudes.

8.2.1. Hope as a Source of Patience

Aquinas says that the “hope set on the living God, who is Savior of all, especially of those who believe,” gives the reason motivating all of life, especially in the midst of sorrow and toil.⁸⁹ How can we enrich our awareness of resisting resilience through the role that hope plays in patience? For Aquinas, the promise of the life to come, as the final cause, inspires hope that underlies our patience in labor; likewise, this patience serves to fuel Christian hope. Patience is pertinent not only in the waiting for the accomplishments of the hoped for promises, but in actively doing what is fitting in the mean time. As the letter to the *Hebrews* says: “For you have need of endurance [*ὑπομονή*, patience], so that you may do the will of God and receive what is promised.”⁹⁰ This promise is eternal life and a sharing in the true glory of God.⁹¹ Aquinas explains that confidence in these rewards inclines us to handle sadness patiently, without exceeding what is reasonable, both in regards to suffering evil and waiting for the loved goods.⁹²

⁸⁹ 1 Tim 4:10. Cf. *I ad Timoth.* cap. 4, lect. 2. 1 Tim 4:7-8 (in regards to training in piety or godliness) and also 2 Tim 2:6 (concerning hard work and rewards), and *Ad Eph.* cap. 2, lect. 2 (concerning final cause).

⁹⁰ Heb 10:36 (*RSV*). *Ad Heb.* cap 10, lect. 4. Cf. *Ad Eph.* cap. 4, lect. 1 (Eph 4:2), where the quote illustrates why we rightly avoid impatience.

⁹¹ Cf. *ST* II-II 132, 1 ad 2; Rom 2:7; 2 Cor 10:17-18.

⁹² Cf. *Ad Heb.* cap. 10, lect. 4 (Heb 10:35-36).

In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul illustrates the interrelationship between patience, hope and consolation: “If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.”⁹³ Aquinas says that this consolation, granted to Paul, is effective for others not only in being a means of consolation and salvation, but also in expressing the ordering of this consolation toward salvation. In patiently enduring as Paul did, we demonstrate patience in adversity as well as the fruit, which comes from this patience. This fruit is hope in eternal life. As Aquinas says in his commentary on 2 Corinthians: “From the suffering which the saints of God sustain for Christ springs forth their hope for eternal life: and the cause of this hope is the knowledge that *as you have shared in our suffering, so you shall share in our consolation*; that is eternal life.”⁹⁴ The fullness of the graced virtue of hope is completed when it becomes embodied in the believer’s experience of patience and perseverance in the face of the inevitable and unavoidable suffering and waiting that one must face while being true to Jesus Christ, in word and deed.

Hope is a key in Paul’s understanding of how God strengthens the local churches against tribulation.⁹⁵ Aquinas interprets Paul’s teaching on hope to be eschatological and Trinitarian. This hope allows us to patiently support adversity, with the joy inspired by the Holy Spirit;⁹⁶ it is based on the promises made known through Christ and his resurrection, which all lead us to God the Father.⁹⁷ The hope that we

⁹³ 2 Cor 1:6-7 (RSV).

⁹⁴ “*Nam ex passionibus quas sustinent sancti Dei pro Christo, consurgit eis spes vitae aeternae: et causa spei hujus est, quia sumus scientes, quia sicut estis socii nostri in passionibus, eritis socii et consolationis; idest vitae aeternae*” *II ad Cor.* cap 1, lect. 3 (2 Cor 1:6-8). In this regard, he also quotes: Rom 5:3; 2 Tim 2:11; 1 Pet 4:14; and St. Gregory the Great. Cf. *Ad Eph.* cap. 4, lect. 1 (Eph 4:1-4).

⁹⁵ Cf. 1 Thess 1:1-8; 2 Cor 1-11.

⁹⁶ In *I ad Thess.* cap. 1, lect. 1 (1 Thess 1:3-6), Aquinas refers to the plenitude of the Holy Spirit’s works among Christ’s followers who suffer: Acts 2:4; Acts 5:41; Acts 10:44; Heb 2:4; Matt 10:20; Jas 1:2.

⁹⁷ Cf. *I ad Thess.* cap. 1, lect. 1 (1 Thess 1:3); where Aquinas argues in the light of the following Scripture quotes: 1 Thess 4:9; Rom 12:12; Jas 5:2; 1 Pet 1:3; Matt 6:1; Heb 6:19.

have, in the midst of trial, tribulation and suffering has to be based both in faith, which gives meaning to tribulations and expresses itself in good works,⁹⁸ and in charity, which endures and through which good works abound.⁹⁹ Observance of the law or human works alone separated from hope (as well as faith and charity) are inadequate for recognizing the sources and ends that inform, motivate and empower patience.

We shall now recall the resilience research on hope and optimism, outlined in chapter four, particularly the significance of having plans for the future, and of hope's cognitive and social dimensions. The passion and virtues of hope express modalities of resistance that further specify Aquinas' typology of patience and perseverance. Hope and despair can involve either active or passive resistance to suffering. Thomas' typology and language of patience provide a counter narrative to a misconstrued notion of patience that would promote a blind passivity and receptivity that effectively means violence and oppression to minorities, women and children.¹⁰⁰ In the latter case, passive resisting spells defeat. It involves an inactive submission to oppression, abuse and the like. This passivity can arise if we construe the evil or difficulty to be so powerful and permanent that it excludes any hope for evading or repulsing it; then we become depressed, immobilized and even stupefied by it.¹⁰¹ This type of

98 Cf. *Ad Gal.* cap. 3, lect. 2 (Gal 3:4); Jas 2:26. In his commentary on Gal 3:4, Aquinas' translation of Scripture reads *passi estis*; contemporary translations (*RSV*, *NAB*) translate the original—ἐπάθετε—in the sense of "experienced" instead of "suffered." In his *Commentary on Galatians* (3:4), he points out how patient suffering is either in the perspective of faith and thus also of eternal life, or it is vain: "*quia haec sustinuitis ut perveniretis ad vitam aeternam*. Rom. 5,3: 'Tribulatio patientiam operatur, patientia autem probationem; probatio vero spem; spes autem non confundit.' *Unde si praecluditis vobis aditum vitae aeternae, deserentes fidem, quaerentes conservari carnalibus observantiis, sine causa, idest inutiliter, passi estis: et hoc dico, si tamen sine causa.*" *Ad Gal.* cap. 3, lect. 2 (Gal. 3:4), where he also cites Rom. 5:3.

99 Cf. *I ad Thess.* cap. 1, lect.1 (1 Thess 1:3); 1 Cor 13:15; 1 Thess 4:9.

100 The Christian virtue tradition, which Aquinas represents so well, does not promote misogyny or child-abuse by neglect. It furnishes ample conceptual, motivational and communal means to resist abuse and rape, battery and oppression in terms of virtues that must accompany patience: fortitude and initiative-taking virtues, chastity and martyrdom, prudence and justice, and so on. Cf. Todd Whitmore 1999.

101 Cf. *ST I-II* 37.2.

defeated patience, where we simply suffer the present hardship as inevitable, lacks all redeeming qualities. It involves a vulnerable passivity.

On the contrary, according to Aquinas, if the evil that we are suffering is not strong enough so as to deprive us of all hope of release or of conquering it, then the depression of body and mind is relative. It might involve a systemic (genetic and connatural) effort at group-preservation and self-conservation, which is a type of active passivity that waits for the prudent moment to repulse the evil. At theological level, faith informs us that the final victory is God's, hope motivates us through his promises. At natural level, prudent hope needs to render patience creative and ready for timely action. Without a plan and desire for resolving the problems on hand, we would have to simmer (stew) in our suffering or simply bend to oppression. Prudent hope provides a basis for patience and resilience at two levels: first a cognitive re-appreciation of hardship and potential release or resolution (meaning), and second a volitional resolve to wait for and persist in the promised good (motivation). It also assures that Christian patience does not passively give into neglect, oppression or violence.

8.2.2. Patience in Gift, Beatitude and Petition

We can enhance our understanding of resisting resilience further through examining the way in which Aquinas associates patience with the Gifts, Beatitudes and fruits of the Holy Spirit as well as the petitions of the *Pater Noster*. He treats patience as both a specific virtue and a transversal quality (or a general virtue of Christian life) because of the way that patience and human sorrow interrelate and help us to understand the theological dimension of patience. Thomas' articulation between pertinent Gifts, Beatitudes and fruits of the Holy Spirit and petitions to Christian patience invites two diagnostic questions.¹⁰² Does a theological type of patience simply add a further

¹⁰² Aquinas once again uses Augustine's insightful correlation of the Gifts, Beatitudes and petitions of the *Pater noster*, found in the latter's Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount. In regards to knowledge, mourning and the third petition, Augustine says: "*Si scientia est qua beati sunt qui lugent, oremus ut fiat voluntas eius: quia sic non lugebimus*" *De Serm. Dom. in Monte* ii, 11, 38, PL 34,

motivation to philosophical patience (Stoic *apatheia*)? Or does it further specify the virtue, adding a Christological or theological measure?

Thomas attributes patience to the third Beatitude: “Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.” The relationship between mourning, comfort and patience is neither a free association nor a phenomenological progression nor a developmental stage analysis. Aquinas has a profound theological and metaphysical understanding of this interrelationship. It is too simple to observe (even by definition) that comfort can only follow suffering or sorrow. In more than an observation about temporal progression, Aquinas explains that the promised comfort is not received without having to go through internal suffering or sorrow.¹⁰³ In the *Summa theologiae*, he follows Paul in holding that the Beatitude of mourners is grounded in charity and reflects the sorrow that is due to being in the body and absent from the Lord.¹⁰⁴

In his commentary on this Beatitude, Aquinas distinguishes three types of mourning that parallel three types of consolation.¹⁰⁵ First, we sorrow because of sin, both our own and others’; “for if we mourn those who have died physically, we should all the more mourn those who have died spiritually.”¹⁰⁶ Second, we mourn because of having to live actually in a distressing condition, as well as in longing for our heavenly homeland. Third, we mourn worldly pleasures inasmuch as they distract us from coming to and remaining in Christ.¹⁰⁷ Aquinas

1286. Aquinas quotes it in *ST* II-II 83.9 ad 3 and uses Augustine’s insights and ordering through out the *ST* and in the *Collatio in orationem dominicam*.

103 Cf. Matt 5:5; *ST* I-II 69.4; Pinckaers 1995a, 141-163.

104 Cf. 2 Cor 5:8; *ST* II-II 28.1 obj. 2 and ad 2.

105 Cf. *Ad Mat.* cap. 5-2. Aquinas’ *Lectura* on the Gospel of Saint Matthew seems to have been written in 1269-70. Even though the passage that concerns us here (Matt 5:5) is authentic, a good deal of the rest of the commentary of the Sermon on the Mount in the currently circulated printed texts is instead by Peter of Scala (cf. Torrell 1996, 339).

106 “*Primo pro peccatis non solum propriis, sed etiam alienis: quia si lugemus mortuos carnaliter, multo magis spiritualiter*” *Ad Mat.* cap. 5-2. He holds that once someone had committed sin, refraining from further sin is not sufficient or satisfactory in itself.

107 Thomas says, “*Tertio, secundum Augustinum, pro luctu quem habent homines de gaudiis saeculi, quae dimittunt veniendo ad Christum*” *Ad Mat.* cap. 5-2.

offers St. Paul as a model of resisting worldly distractions from distancing us from Christ. He quotes the letter to the Galatians (6:14) in order to demonstrate how Paul does not seek the approval of others, nor worldly pleasures, but rather the glory of the cross of Jesus Christ, through which as he says “the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” This patient resisting transforms mourning into comfort through a union with Christ’s suffering and glory.

Aquinas identifies three types of consolation that parallel each group of mourners. First, those who mourn sin will receive the remission of sin as the effect of contrition and faith. Next, those who mourn the delay of heaven and the presence of misery receive consolation through the hope of eternal life. Thirdly, those who mourn worldly pleasures while the world rejoices receive consolation through divine charity. For when someone mourns the lack of a desirable thing, being given something greater more than suffices. Thus it is the Gift of the Holy Spirit, divine charity, which brings joy to our hearts.¹⁰⁸ Mourning is transformed into comfort and eventually into joy, through the working of the theological virtues that underlie the life described in the Beatitude of the mourners.

Aquinas goes so far as to claim that this Beatitude of mourning inclines us to develop virtuous moderation in regards to being sorrowed, or even deliberately choosing sorrow in order to promote some good thing. This inclination can happen in two ways. First through a virtuous disposition, we gain a certain control and consistent right ordering of the concupiscible passions. Through experience and education we acquire the capacity to comprehend their functioning and to use (enjoy and suffer) them moderately. As for the emotion of sorrow, Aquinas addresses both the virtue of patience and “virtuous sorrow” (*tristitia honestum*), which positively orient mourning or sorrowful situations; later we shall discuss them in the terms of education and progress.¹⁰⁹

Second through the Gift of knowledge, we can achieve a heightened type of sorrow, for we come to know more fully the effect

108 In this regard, Aquinas quotes the Gospel of John 6:20 (*RSV*): “your sorrow will turn into joy.” cf. *Ad Joan.* cap. 2, 1-9, where he also quotes Rom 8:18.

109 Cf. *ST* I-II 69.3.

of our actions and the magnitude of the social situation, and also the way to participate in Christ's salvific works. In regards to the Gift of knowledge, Augustine says: "Knowledge befits the mourner, who has discovered that he has been mastered by the evil which he coveted as though it were good."¹¹⁰ Aquinas explains how right judgment about creatures entails the knowledge that we can be led astray from God, when creatures are mistakenly judged to be the last end and true good for humankind.¹¹¹ The Gift of knowledge assures, in turn, an appropriate sorrowing for past errors, as well as the related consolation promised in the flourishing, "which begins in this life, and is perfected in the life to come."¹¹² It is thus that the Gift of knowledge has a practical effect in the active life, by directing the operative act of the Beatitude of mourning.¹¹³ The knowledge of a sinful condition even serves as the principal motive for the Beatitude of mourners: "whereby man knows his failings and those of worldly things, according to *Eccles. 1:18*: 'He that addeth knowledge, addeth also sorrow.'"¹¹⁴ But this sorrow leads to joy in that, through faith, it merits eternal consolation. As Aquinas says: "the sorrows of the present life lead us to the comfort of the future life. Because by the mere fact that humans mourn for their sins, or for the delay of glory, they merit the consolation of eternity."¹¹⁵ Contrition for sin and hopeful anticipation

110 "*Scientia convenit lugentibus, qui didicerunt quibus malis vincti sunt, quae quasi bona petierunt*" *De Serm. Dom. in Monte* i, 4; PL 34, 1234; quoted in ST II-II 9.4 sc.

111 Aquinas also notes how the third beatitude's right judgment and sorrow about evil committed relates to both the Beatitude of poverty and the Gift of fear of the Lord, "*quo homo se retrahit a cupiditatibus et delectationibus mundi*" (I-II 69.3 ad 3). These Gifts dispose the human faculties to be more readily obedient to the Spirit's promptings (cf. ST I-II 68.1).

112 "*Et ideo in hac beatitudine ponitur luctus pro merito, et consolatio consequens pro praemio. Quae quidem inchoatur in hac vita, perficitur autem in futura*" ST II-II 9.4 ad 1. In this same regard: "*Unde quod dicitur, Beatus vir qui corripitur a Domino, pertinet ad beatitudinem luctus*" ST I-II 69.3 ad 4

113 Cf. ST I-II 69.3 ad 2, and *Ad Mat.* cap. 5.2.

114 "*Ad lugendum autem movet praecipue scientia, per quam homo cognoscit defectus suos et rerum mundanarum; secundum illud Eccle. 1:18: 'Qui addit scientiam, addit et dolorem.'*" ST I-II 69.3 ad 3; cf. ST II-II 19.12; and ST I-II 69.3 ad 2.

115 "*Et utroque modo luctus praesens ad consolationem futurae vitae perducit. Quia ex hoc ipso quod homo luget pro peccatis, vel pro dilatione gloriae, meretur consolationem aeternam*" ST I-II 35.3 ad 1. Aquinas also relates humility with the third Beatitude—"Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be

of God's promises result from this gift, and in turn are the formal reason for its merit.

In his homily on the *Pater Noster*,¹¹⁶ Aquinas recognizes how the third petition—"Let thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"—helps to explain the third Beatitude's relation to patience in a threefold manner. First, the Beatitude of mourning manifests the desire for eternal life (cf. *Ps.* 120:5). This sorrow is especially present among the saints, whose mourning becomes accidentally a longing for death,¹¹⁷ which would naturally be avoided. Second, those who will to keep the commandments are in sorrow, because of the difficulty for the body of the implied discipline (cf. *Ps.* 126:6). Third, we sorrow because of the sins of the body; such sorrow has an expiating effect (cf. *Ps.* 6:6). In this commentary on the *Pater* moreover, he associates the Beatitude of peacemakers and the Gift of wisdom with patience. Through the Holy Spirit, believers are incited to pray and thereby obtain a certain blessedness of peace and trust even in the midst of difficulty and tribulation. For it is through patience that we are able to be at peace in prosperity and in adversity.¹¹⁸

8.2.3. Patience as a Fruit of the Holy Spirit

Aquinas' analysis of patience-related moral agency and grace does not stop with his correlation of the virtues, Gifts, Beatitudes and petitions. He completes the Augustinian schema by explicating the nature and typology of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Various scholastic attempts at including the fruits within this theological framework were

comforted" (Matt 5:5, *RSV*)—in order to illustrate how "*contemnentibus mundi gaudia promittuntur consolationes caelestes, secundum illud Matth. 5,5.*" *ST* II-II 161.5 ad 3. Aquinas' reflection is based also on Matt 6:19-20.

¹¹⁶ *In orat. dom.*, art. 3. The *collatio in orationem dominicam* is a homily or catechetical instruction on the *Pater Noster*. It is thought to date from the last period of his life (1272-73); cf. Torrell 1996, 266, 358.

¹¹⁷ Cf. 2 Cor. 5:8. It is primarily and essentially a longing for the realization of the fullness of beatitude.

¹¹⁸ "*Et ideo Spiritus Sanctus per donum sapientiae facit nos petere: et per hoc pervenimus ad beatitudinem ad quam ordinat pax, quia per patientia pacem habemus et in tempore prospero et adverso*" *In orat. dom.* art. 7; cf. art. 6. In articles 6 and 7, Aquinas addresses respectively the petitions of the *Pater Noster* on temptation and evil, and how patience is crucial for them both.

already afoot preceding Aquinas.¹¹⁹ Instead of a historical investigation though, I shall examine his notion of the fruits of the Holy Spirit in view of identifying insights into resilience outcomes that they might offer.

The Gifts, Beatitudes, petitions of the *Pater* and fruits of the Holy Spirit (*Gal.* 5:22-3) are not neat, non-overlapping theological concepts, for St. Thomas. He distinguishes the fruits according to formal, yet flexible rationale; they are types of goods enjoyed,¹²⁰ which complete and signify the flourishing of the spiritual life, as it is possible on earth.¹²¹ He includes the fruits of the Holy Spirit in his moral theology, employing the images of seeds, trees, flowers and fruit from a number of Scriptural metaphors to suggest the nature, growth and goal of these acts.¹²²

Aquinas identifies the different senses of “fruit,” the meaning of which he transfers from material to spiritual realities. Even though we either produce or gather fruit, not all that is produced or gathered is fruit. Virtuous human operations proceed from reason and will; such is the case both for acquired and infused virtues, the latter of which involve the fruit of reason and will informed by faith, hope and charity. The spiritual sense of fruit connotes that which is last and gives pleasure. As Thomas argues: “man’s fruit is his last end (*ultimus hominis finis*) which is intended for his enjoyment.”¹²³ The fruits involve the effect of the Holy Spirit on the human organism.¹²⁴ Both the infused virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit participate in producing fruitful acts. In particular, fruits spring forth through the

119 The fruits of the Holy Spirit had been included in the works of St. Bonaventure (*In III Sent.* 34.1.1.1), and St. Albert the Great, who makes them a higher perfection (*In III Sent.* 34.1), transforming the ascending order proposed by Philip the Chancellor (virtues, Gifts and fruits together, Beatitudes; cf. *Summa de bono*; cited in Lottin 1942-60, III.363; cf. E. D. O’Connor 1974, 103).

120 Cf. *ST* I-II 70.3 ad 4.

121 Cf. *ST* I-II 70.3; *ST* II-II 139.2 ad 3.

122 Aquinas takes these images for his treatment of the fruits in the *ST* (I-II 70) from the following sources: *Gal* 5:22-3; *Matt* 12:33; *Wis* 3:15; *John* 4:36; *1 John* 3:9; *Eccl* 24:23; *Rm* 6:22; *Isa* 27:9; *Matt* 13:23; *Rev* 22:2.

123 “*Et secundum hoc, fructus hominis dicitur ultimus hominis finis, quo debet frui*” *ST* I-II 70.1.

124 He specifies that “*Si vero procedat ab homine secundum altiore[m] virtutem, quae est virtus Spiritus Sancti; sic dicitur esse operatio hominis fructus Spiritus Sancti*” *ST* I-II 70.1, where Aquinas draws his insight from *1 John* 3:9.

virtues as sweetness and delight (*suavitas et dulcedo*) and through the Gifts as being their “last and congruous products.”¹²⁵

Aquinas classes both the Beatitudes and the fruits of the Holy Spirit as acts of the infused virtues and the Gifts. While the Beatitudes and the fruits resemble each other in being something ultimate and delightful, the Beatitudes alone connote something perfect and excellent.¹²⁶ Aquinas follows the Scriptural tradition of his time in enumerating twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit,¹²⁷ in contrast to the nine fruits named in critical editions of Paul’s letter to the Galatians (5:22).¹²⁸

125 “*Patet ergo ex dictis quod fructus spiritus dicuntur opera virtutum, et quia habent in se suavitatem et dulcedinem, et quia sunt quoddam ultimum productum, secundum convenientiam donorum*” *Ad Gal.* cap. 5, lect. 6. In the *ST* (I-II 70.1 ad 2), Aquinas emphasizes that this type of pleasure in an ultimate thing formally concerns virtuous deeds. We rejoice in them because of their goodness, which is formally good although not the ultimate goodness. We do not rejoice in them as if they were a final cause of delight. God alone merits being delighted in for his own sake. God is our final goal and delight. Aquinas quotes St. Ambrose (*de Parad.* 13.6; *PL* 14.308B) in affirming that virtuous deeds are refreshing fruits “*quia suos possessores sancta et sincera delectatione reficiunt*.”

126 However, even though the Beatitudes can be deemed fruits, not all fruits can be deemed Beatitudes. Because of the Beatitudes’ central and final perspective in the moral and spiritual life, Aquinas construes the fruits of the Holy Spirit as subordinated to the Beatitudes (cf. *ST* I-II 70.2). Since the concept of fruits includes both fruits of life everlasting and those belonging to the present life, the concept of the Beatitudes entails a greater perfection than that of the fruits or even of virtuous activity (cf. *ST* I-II 70.2 corpus and ad 2; *ST* I-II 69.1 ad 1).

127 Thomas employs the *Glossa ordinaria*, which contained the following twelve fruits: *caritas* (charity), *gaudium* (joy), *pax* (peace), *patientia* (patience), *longanimitas* (long-suffering), *bonitas* (goodness), *benignitas* (kindness), *mansuetudo* (mildness), *fides* (faithfulness), *modestia* (modesty), *continentia* (self-control) and *castitas* (chastity). This twelve-fold tradition was the only one that Thomas knew; with further modifications it has persisted in theology and catechesis. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 1832) list twelve fruits with slight variation in order and content. Aquinas attributes twelve fruits to Paul’s text in Gal 5:22 (cf. *ST* I-II 70.3, and *Ad Gal.* cap. 5, lect. 6). He nonetheless quotes (in *ST* I-II 70.4) Augustine’s commentary on Gal 5:22-3 (n. 51; *PL* 35.2141-2142), in which the latter does not articulate twelve fruits, in particular Augustine refers to *longanimitas* and not *patientia*.

128 Various discrepancies in the recensions of the fruits are due to: the various Latin translations of Scripture, errors in recopying Biblical manuscripts and perhaps even efforts to reinforce other references to the Spirit. These additions might be due to the custom of glossing a text by adding synonyms between the lines. A scribe might have mistaken the interlinear gloss for the original text (cf. E. D. O’Connor 1974, 148). According to C.-A. Bernard (1964,

St. Thomas explains that patience is fittingly called a fruit of the Spirit even though it entails the contact with a painful object. Indeed “the fact of not being disturbed by painful things is something to delight in.”¹²⁹ The operation of not being overcome by sorrow and difficulty is not the fruit of patience itself; rather this fruit is a result that follows upon such a virtuous operation.¹³⁰ Aquinas closely associates the fruits of patience and long-suffering,¹³¹ and describes how they correlate with the fruits of charity, joy and peace. These five are inward perfections, with social rather than individualistic overtones. Charity, joy and peace more directly concern good,¹³²

1571-2), another theory speculates that the additions were made in function of the mystical connotations of the number twelve and the important reference in the book of *Revelation* (22:2), to “the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit.”

The Greek NT text (K. Aland, 1983), standard critical translations like the RSV, as well as the Vulgate name nine Fruits of the Holy Spirit in Gal 5:22. The *Glossa ordinaria* (used by Aquinas) contains *patientia* in addition to *longanimitas* (μακροθυμία), *mansuetudo* in addition to *fides* (πίστις) and *castitas* in addition to *continentia* (ἐγκράτεια). Cf. E. D. O’Connor 1974, 148-9.

129 Aquinas observes “*quod ipsum quod est in tristitia non perturbari, rationem delectabilis habet*” ST I-II 70.3 ad 3; and “*Et praecipue quantum ad hoc quod per patientiam animus praeservatur ne obruatur tristitia*” ST II-II 136.1 ad 3.

130 When discussing whether charity is a virtue, he responds: “*quod delectio non importat operationem, sed aliquid consequens ad operationem; unde, cum virtus sit operationis principium, delectatio non ponitur inter virtutes, sed inter fructus, ut patet Galat. 5,22: ‘Fructus autem spiritus est caritas, gaudium, pax, patientia’*” *De car.* art 2, 12.

131 Unlike Aquinas’ Latin translation of Gal 5:22, which lists two separate fruits, *patientia* and *longanimitas*, the *Vulgata* (1975) only gives *longanimitas*, and the original Greek only μακροθυμία, which is variously translated in this context as: “patience” (RSV and JB) or “patient endurance” (NAB).

132 He addresses these fruits in the traditional order, starting with charity (*caritas*). As an appetite’s first natural inclination is toward its end (the good loved, in the case of emotions and will), so the first fruit is charity, “*in qua specialiter Spiritus Sanctus datur, sicut in propria similitudine, cum et ipse sit amor*” ST I-II 70.3; cf. Rom 5:5; and ST I 37.1. The Gift and presence of the Holy Spirit is source of this and all the fruits, which according to Aquinas incline us to remain in God. Aquinas (I-II 70.3) draws this insight from Rom 5:5, 1 John 4:16. It is well developed in *Prima pars* (ST I 38.2), where Aquinas draws further from Augustine’s *de Trin* (iv.20 and xv.24) as well as Aristotle’s *Top.* (iv.4) in order to argue that the Holy Spirit is the first Gift, from which the particular Gifts and Fruits are portioned out. In turn, the fruit of joy (*gaudium*) springs from the presence of the thing loved, the actual presence of God, so that it connotes the “fruition of charity.” While the fruit of peace (*pax*) denotes both not being disturbed by external things and how our desires, our “restless desires” (*desiderii fluctuantis*) as he says, come to rest in the object; peace entails the adequacy and

whereas patience and longanimity face evil. In particular, the Holy Spirit leads a person to firmly face the evil that disrupts peace, by giving patient endurance in adversity. Concerning the evils that disturb joy, the Holy Spirit grants long-suffering; thus we can resist being broken by the delay in obtaining the loved object.¹³³ References to the fruit of patience and suffering should not be taken in a passive and self-destructive tendency;¹³⁴ their association with the virtue of fortitude and its aspect of *aggredi* (virtues of initiative) entail that this patience is not an end in itself, but serves a larger purpose.

For Aquinas, to know the fruit involves that we know the tree, its needs and potential. Aquinas correlates the fruit with the nature of the tree. If the tree produces something against its nature, it is an oddity instead of a fruit. Likewise, the works of vice are against nature (as a deformation of nature), while the works of virtue are connatural to the human tree.¹³⁵ How might Aquinas' metaphor of fruit serve to enhance the resilience perspective, and be enhanced in the process? In order to identify and promote resilience we have to understand the nature, needs, potential and goals of the rational agent and community. In the case of a good that we cannot yet attain or only with difficulty, patience-phenomena involve acquired and infused supports that help us to cope with the hardship, to conserve ourselves under destructive pressures and to persist toward the goal amidst delays. Aquinas helps us to understand how theological patience is a fruit of the human

perfect enjoyment of the present object, and so connotes "the perfection of charity" (cf. *ST* I-II 70.3; and *Ad Gal.* cap 5, lect. 6).

¹³³ These fruits involve two dispositions, when faced with difficulties. He claims: "*In malis autem bene se habet mens quantum ad duo. Primo quidem, ut non perturbetur mens per imminetiam malorum: quod pertinet ad patientiam. -- Secundo, ut non perturbetur in dilatione bonorum, quod pertinet ad longanimitatem: nam carere bono habet rationem mali, ut dicitur in V Ethic. [1131b 21-24]*" *ST* I-II 70.3; cf. *ST* II-II 136.5; *ST* II-II 139.2 ad 3; *Ad Gal.* cap. 5, lect 6.

¹³⁴ In an earlier division used in his *Commentary on the Sentences (III Sent. 34, 1, 5, co)*, Aquinas notes how the fruit of patience can be associated with the Beatitude of those who suffer persecution, as well as with the Gift of fortitude; since patience assures an unbroken spirit when facing the difficulties found in persecution and all those concerned with the fullness of fortitude.

¹³⁵ *ST* I-II 70.4 ad 1. We could explore this principle in light of genetic sciences and gene engineering, which might contribute to speculative theology insights on the inheritability of the effects of ancestors' positive and negative acts (e.g. the effects on temperament and on the pre-conscious/unconscious).

person and community, through the working of the Holy Spirit. Theological supports to patience result from revelation and grace: hope, the Beatitudes, the Gifts and the fruits of the Holy Spirit. They are thus not observable in the same way as non-spiritual resilience phenomenon. Nonetheless, Aquinas' theological anthropology illustrates the human and spiritual nature, needs and finality that produce resisting and persisting resilience. His view of theological patience and perseverance demonstrate a rich (though non-verifiable) way to depict spiritual resilience.

8.3. Development of Patience and Spiritual Resilience

Christian conceptions of patience and suffering must face challenges that arise from certain resilience and psychosocial insights. These challenges are especially evident when investigating the development of patience. Aquinas construes the development of patience and perseverance, as mentioned concerning virtues in general, neither as a merely human nor as a merely divine effort. Indeed Aquinas holds internal and external aspects of reality together in his understanding of these resisting and persisting virtues. Pain, suffering and temptation are exclusively neither external nor internal. At this point, we shall ask: what is Aquinas' developmental approach to patience? How does his treatment of patience stand up to charges that Christianity creates vulnerable, passive agents? Can resilience insights in turn strengthen a virtue perspective in this regard? These questions lead us to explore Thomas' conception of virtuous sorrow, patience and moral progress in dialogue with resilience insights.

8.3.1. Virtuous Sorrow

Aquinas' typology of patience and fortitude recalls his previously mentioned typology of sorrow. Since pleasure and pain can be of a bodily or spiritual nature—the latter relating more primarily to the effect on the soul¹³⁶—the brave and patience person can experience both spiritual joy and spiritual sorrow or pain at the same time.¹³⁷ On the one hand, one experiences spiritual sorrow at the thought of

¹³⁶ Cf. *ST* I-II 23.4; *ST* I-II 31.1; *ST* I-II 35.1.

¹³⁷ Cf. *ST* II-II 123.8; see also *ST* I-II 31.3-5.

physical death or pain. We also suffer spiritually through the knowledge of spiritual death or evil. The nature of bodily pain on the other hand has a great number of sources, and is capable of making us insensible to other realities, like the spiritual joy given through a virtuous act. On the physical level, pain is stronger than pleasure and that which leads to death causes the greatest pains to the mind, the greatest fears.¹³⁸ On the spiritual level, however, the virtue of fortitude and patience itself works to prevent bodily pain from completely overcoming reason. Indeed one experiences spiritual joy when achieving virtue or attaining the end at which virtue aims.¹³⁹ This end implies the love of God and neighbor, and complete flourishing.¹⁴⁰ God grants spiritual joy by raising the soul above the blinding effect of spiritual sorrow and bodily pain, to the Divine things that give delight.

Strategies for overcoming spiritual sorrow or pain involve the framework of the virtues. First, in order that endurance be the virtue of patience rather than hardness of heart (*duritia*), one must aim at some good—we do not rejoice in the suffering itself.¹⁴¹ The virtuous spiritual sorrow (*bonum utile*) that expresses a virtuous good involves a sorrowing according to a right measure of reason and will.¹⁴² Such virtuous sorrow is compatible with the joy of charity, “insofar as a man grieves for that which hinders the participation of the Divine good, either in us or in our neighbor, whom we love as ourselves.”¹⁴³ More

¹³⁸ Cf. *ST* II-II 123.11.

¹³⁹ Concerning joy in the midst of the virtue of courage, in *ST* II-II 123.8 obj 2, Aquinas cites Gal 5:22.

¹⁴⁰ This type of joy is manifest in Aquinas’ reference (*ST* II-II 123.8) to the Maccabean martyr Eleazar (2 Mac. 6:30). When asking whether the brave person delights in his act, Aquinas explains that one can be supported by spiritual joy in the act and end of virtue, as well as experience spiritual sorrow because of the thought of losing his life and the pain involved.

¹⁴¹ Cf. *ST* II-II 136.1 ad 2 from a quotation of St. Augustine, *De patientia* ii.

¹⁴² Cf. *ST* I-II 39.2; *ST* I-II 39.3; and *ST* I-II 59.3.

¹⁴³ “*Et ideo ex hac parte gaudium caritatis potest habere permixtionem tristitiae: prout scilicet aliquis tristatur de eo quod repugnat participationi divini boni vel in nobis vel in proximis, quos tanquam nosipsos diligimus*” *ST* II-II 28.2. In asking the question as to whether one can have both the joy of charity and sorrow, he distinguishes two types of joy. One type, which is more excellent, involves rejoicing in the Divine good considered in itself (*ST* II-II 28.2). Since such joy’s object is perfect, so is the resulting joy; neither this object (God), nor the resulting joy permit an admixture of sorrow (Cf. Phil 4:4). The other type is the joy of Charity as our participation in the Divine good. Such a participative joy

than being simply compatible with it, virtuous sorrow is both informed by charity, which directs our perception of evil, and strengthens our resolve to reject evil. Furthermore, virtuous sorrow emanates from charity inasmuch as living charity does not just react to such emotion, but is constitutive of the virtuous character that further orders the appetites toward the true good of the Gospel, so that we sorrow differently with charity than without it.

Both St. Paul and the book of *Ecclesiasticus* (*Sirach*) serve Thomas' illustration of sorrow's power to debilitate the human spirit and even to kill it.¹⁴⁴ In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul distinguishes two types of sorrow that can be likened to two types of patience. God uses the first type of grief, sadness or sorrow to bring someone to repentance, to return to God.¹⁴⁵ This type of virtuous sorrow produces spiritual benefits in two ways. Through it, we shun things that are in themselves evil; for example sin, past, present and future. Paul describes how the grief (or virtuous sorrow) that he provoked in the members of the community in Corinth served in their repenting and restoring good relations with him.¹⁴⁶ Such sorrow is useful not only in avoiding the evil of future sin, but also in repenting for sins already committed. Moreover, through virtuous sorrow, we spurn occasions of evil, for example particular disordered relations with temporal goods.¹⁴⁷ Indeed we can become too attached to temporal goods, loving them inordinately and thereby being distracted from our ultimate goal.

A second type of sadness, a worldly grief, brings destruction and death, since it depresses the soul through a present, experienced evil.¹⁴⁸ The virtue of patience resists this type of sorrow, and embraces

can be hindered by anything contrary to the Divine good (anything in us or in our neighbor), and therefore can be experienced at the same time as sorrow.

¹⁴⁴ In *ST* II-II 136.1, Aquinas illustrates this point using 2 Cor 7:10 and Eccl 30:25.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. *ST* II-II 136.5; *ST* I-II 37.2 ad 1; *ST* I-II 39.3; 2 Cor 7:10-11.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. 2 Cor 7:9, quoted in *ST* I-II 39.3.

¹⁴⁷ Quoting scripture, Aquinas claims that: "*Et secundum hoc, tristitia de bonis temporalibus potest esse utilis: sicut dicitur Eccl. 7,3: 'Melius est ire ad domum luctus quam ad domum convivii: in illa enim finis cunctorum admonetur hominum'*" *ST* I-II 39.3.

¹⁴⁸ Aquinas' Latin translation of 2 Cor 7:10 reads (*ST* II-II 136.1): "*Saeculi tristitia mortem operatur.*" The *RSV* translation is: "For godly grief produces a

the first, inasmuch as graced sorrow is a catalyst for repentance, conversion and returning to God. Aquinas furthermore distinguishes two sorts of graced sorrow that correspond to natural and infused patience.

The virtuous good of sorrow rectifies other disordered relations to sorrow, for example, since inordinate sorrow is an obstacle to flourishing. Aquinas argues that: “Although in this unhappy abode we participate, after a fashion, in the Divine good, by knowledge and love, yet the unhappiness of this life is an obstacle to a perfect participation in the Divine good: hence this very sorrow, whereby a man grieves for the delay of glory, is connected with the hindrance to a participation of the Divine good.”¹⁴⁹ Sorrow is neither chosen as a good in itself nor as an end in itself. Indeed we do not choose evil as the source of sorrow. Nonetheless, we desire the good end and good object, rather than any associated evil. “And thus Christ’s death and passion were of themselves involuntary, and caused sorrow, although they were voluntary as ordained to the end, which is the redemption of the human race,”¹⁵⁰ according to Thomas. As is evident in the Beatitude concerning those who mourn, there can be a salutary connection between present sorrowing and flourishing, the fullness of which God alone offers in the world to come.¹⁵¹

Aquinas discusses how devotion to Christ (the practices of meditation and prayer) has both the effect of joy and sorrow and thus contributes to establishing virtuous sorrow. He says that it is “evident that the first and direct effect of devotion is joy, while the secondary

repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death.” Cf. *ST* I-II 37.4 sc, which refers to Prov 17:22; Prov 25:20; Eccl (Sir) 38, 19.

¹⁴⁹ “*quamvis in incolatu huius miseriae aliquo modo participemus divinum bonum per cognitionem et amorem, tamen huius vitae miseria impedit a perfecta participatione divini boni, qualis erit in patria. Et ideo haec etiam tristitia qua quis luget de dilatione gloriae pertinet ad impedimentum participationis divini boni*” *ST* II-II 28.2 ad 3.

¹⁵⁰ “*Et hoc modo mors Christi et eius passio fuit, secundum se considerata, involuntaria et tristitiam causans: licet fuerit voluntaria in ordine ad finem, qui est redemptio humani generis*” *ST* III 15.6 ad 4.

¹⁵¹ Cf. Matt 5:5; *ST* I-II 39.2 sc; as discussed earlier.

and accidental effect is that ‘sorrow which is according to God.’”¹⁵² In meditation one comes to recognize that “in the consideration of Christ’s Passion there is something that causes sorrow, namely, the human defect, the removal of which made it necessary for Christ to suffer; and there is something that causes joy, namely, God’s loving-kindness to us in giving us such a deliverance.”¹⁵³ The sorrow and joy related with the suffering and salvation wrought through Christ’s passion, death and resurrection offer a school of virtuous, Christ-like sorrow and joy. Jesus Christ’s passion and the sorrow that he felt in his life and especially during his agony, serve as an example of education in patience. Knowing the suffering that he would confront, Jesus prepared himself. Thomas suggests that we do the same through a virtuous sorrow that prepares the mind and is part of a larger spiritual and moral progress, and we might add, spiritual resilience.

8.3.2. Development of Patience and Spiritual Resilience

The resilience research identifies a typology of suffering that is often built on non-normative and non-empirical foundations, which underlie psychosocial and moral theories about developmental pathways for the management of suffering. For example, Freud’s viewpoint on suffering and religion figures largely in contemporary psychosocial theories and in the challenges that they pose to Christian conceptions of patience. Freud, in general, critiques the forces of civilization and religion that socialize, redirect and sublimate human instinct. He speculates that while the instincts of life (*eros*) and death (*thanatos*) need to be controlled and ordered, a repressive society’s over-control produces neurosis and needless suffering. In regards to Christianity, he finds that the principle “love your neighbor as yourself” is not only over-controlling, but also psychologically

¹⁵² “*Et sic patet quod ad devotionem primo et per se consequitur delectatio; secundo autem et per accidens tristitia quae est secundum Deum [2 Cor. 7:10]*” *ST* II-II 82.4.

¹⁵³ “*in consideratione passionis Christi est aliquod quod contristet, scilicet defectus humanus, propter quem tollendum Christum pati oportuit [Luke 24:25]; et est aliquid quod laetificet, scilicet Dei erga nos benignitas, quae nobis de tali liberatione providit*” *ST* II-II 82.4 ad 1.

impossible and thus not ethically binding.¹⁵⁴ This negative assessment touches the Christian conception of patience at its heart.

Freud's position is not self-evident, nor substantiated by empirical findings. D. Browning assesses Freud's position as simplistic and unscientific, while he offers at the same time a self-critique of Christianity, seeking to correct the oppression and exploitation experienced by such groups as women and minorities in the name of self-sacrifice and patience. Browning's criteria identify notions of self-esteem that specify more resistant manifestations of self-giving and that indicate pathways for developing patience. He distinguishes self-abnegation from truly appropriate forms of self-giving in the name of our neighbor.¹⁵⁵ Browning thus takes one step toward enhancing the idea that undifferentiated physical pain or psychological suffering is an inevitable aspect of individual triumph over hardship¹⁵⁶ and of Christian self-understanding. Although challenging goals demand effort and often pain to achieve them, not all suffering is necessary or appropriate. Christian self-esteem and self-awareness is not simply equated with undifferentiated pain and self-giving; rather it is necessary to include notions of both appropriate pain avoidance and self-giving, and to distinguish social and theological goals.

Such insights might well not only be carefully transferred to experiences like disability, loss of friendship or employment, but also to more specifically spiritual and religious domains. However, more specialized resilience research further clarifies the relationship between patient suffering and spirituality or religion. According to Garbarino and Bedard, the key to addressing problems of trauma, suffering and evil is found in recognizing the multidimensional nature of the human person. In particular, they speculate that spirituality aids in overcoming such adversity because of its awareness that humans are more than physical beings, and that their spiritual existence has a certain primacy.¹⁵⁷ As mentioned in chapter two, studies have indicated that religion can: (1) work as a coping mechanism, with reports of "lower

154 Cf. S. Freud 1961; D. Browning 1987, 46ff.

155 Cf. D. Browning 1987, 160.

156 Cf. Radke-Yarrow 1990, 114.

157 Cf. Garbarino and Bedard 1996, 470. A materialist conception of humanity engenders other notions of resilience.

levels of reported pain and greater happiness,”¹⁵⁸ and (2) be beneficial to health by providing “a reassuring fatalism” enabling humans to withstand better suffering and pain.¹⁵⁹ It can also provide protection through the development of faith and religious practice inasmuch as they offer a means of finding goals, purpose and meaning in life, especially in the face of suffering and death, but also when confronted with the degradation of notions of self-esteem and self-efficacy.¹⁶⁰ The religious community can also provide support, as can the clergy who have traditionally served a caring function.¹⁶¹ This input concerning the interaction between spirituality and patient management of suffering, pain and adversity can now be put in dialogue with Aquinas formulation of these issues.

Aquinas bases his notion of how patience develops upon the dynamic interrelation between human inclinations, emotions and virtues, on the one hand, and grace and the sevenfold Gift of the Holy Spirit, on the other. For Thomas, the development of patience is a question of training, discipline, encouragement, character and progress. One of the keys to growth in the fullness of Christian patience is personal training in God’s ways, a being trained by God and others. In this regard, both docility (as discussed earlier) and piety are important. It is interesting to see how Aquinas handles the words of Paul: “Train yourself in godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.”¹⁶² Aquinas underlines the importance of the training of the affections and senses through practices like abstinence, fasting and almsgiving, which can serve as efficacious remedies. But he makes it clear that such training has eternal value only if it is rooted in charity. When informed by charity, godliness or piety is useful in every way. It abolishes sin, promotes good, and receives God’s special mercy.¹⁶³

158 Cf. Pargament 1990, 797-8.

159 Cf. Schumaker 1992, 3.

160 Cf. Lösel 1994, 8-12; Meyer and Lausell 1996, 120.

161 Cf. W. V. D’Antonio and J. Aldous 1983, 15-16, 106.

162 1 Tim 4:7-8 (*RSV*).

163 Cf. *I ad Timoth.* cap. 4, lect. 2.

Patience develops through discipline, and conversely is a necessary means to receive discipline. Thomas recognizes the place of both human and divine discipline, which both are rooted in charity, for we do not discipline children unless we love them.¹⁶⁴ However, divine discipline is more complete in its duration (eternal life) and end (sanctification). Aquinas puts divine filiation and discipline in the context of the Church as the mother, whose spouse is God.¹⁶⁵ Recognizing that human senses and thoughts can be prone to evil, Aquinas underlines the necessity of discipline to correct such tendencies. The discipline administered to children medicinally directs them toward good and away from disordered tendencies. As medicine can be bitter and painful in facilitating the desired healing, so discipline can require traversing sorrow or pain before arriving at its fruit, which is peace and joy.¹⁶⁶

Patience, for St. Thomas, also has a social function tied to aiding others in spiritual and moral growth. Indeed education takes patience and perseverance, which for Aquinas not only avoids doing evil ourselves, but also reprimands patiently a neighbor who has done evil.¹⁶⁷ Our concern and caring for a neighbor include a learned and holy rebuking or admonition. In this regard, Aquinas quotes Paul: “Reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine.”¹⁶⁸ We do not only need patience in education, we also need a sense of timeliness, which considers how the suggested correction will affect the person: whether it will be counterproductive; whether another time would

164 “*Ergo si punit, non odit: sed ejus punitio ordinatur ad bonum, quia loquitur vobis tamquam filiis*” *Ad Heb.* cap. 12, lect. 2 (Heb 12:7).

165 “*Filius autem proprie dicitur qui est ex legitimo patre. Mater nostra est Ecclesia, cujus sponsus est ipse Deus*” *Ad Heb.* cap. 12, lect 2 (Heb 12:8).

166 He emphasizes that the letter to the Hebrews admonishes us neither to neglect the discipline of the Lord, nor to grow impatient of it, but rather to persevere in it so as to attain the promised fruit. “*Verba autem auctoris ponit dicens : Fili mi noli negligere disciplinam Domini; et subdit rationem ibi, Quem enim diligit Dominus, castigat. In auctoritate vero prohibet duo : quia prohibet odium disciplinae et impatientiam ad ipsam. [...] Non negligere enim, nec etiam fatigari sub disciplina, non est aliud quam in disciplina perseverare*” *Ad Heb.* cap. 12, lect. 2 (Heb 12:5 and Heb12:7 and Heb 12:11.).

167 This type of directive patience and perseverance would not be very popular in societies where tolerance of differences, including evil done by others, is more important than sharing and progressing in the common good.

168 2 Tim 4:2; quoted in *ad Eph* cap. 5, lect. 4; where he also cites Eccl (Sir) 17:12.

better serve the effort; and how other people involved might be influenced.¹⁶⁹ Lastly, we should conjugate patience with sweetness and initiative-taking virtues in order to correct the dangers associated with patience, which are hardness of heart and passivity.¹⁷⁰

Chapter five introduced other strategies for managing sorrow and pain whose theological dimension we can now examine. For example, Aquinas construes the sympathy that consoles the sorrowing neighbor in terms of charity or friendship-love.¹⁷¹ Concerning the pleasure of the contemplation of truth that calms pain and sorrow, Aquinas says: “In the midst of tribulations men rejoice in the contemplation of Divine things and of future Happiness.”¹⁷² Truth-inspired joy lightens physical pain and psychological sorrow inasmuch as it puts us in touch with divine sources of strength, comfort and flourishing.¹⁷³

In this regard, Aquinas attends to the pedagogical functions and evangelical bases that the precepts of patience and perseverance have in handling pain and suffering and in developing these virtues. Being prepared for suffering, difficulty and adversity is key to the virtue of patience. The precepts of patience¹⁷⁴ assist the proper

¹⁶⁹ In this regard, Aquinas quotes Augustine insights found in *De Civ. Dei*, I, 9 (*PL* 41, 22).

¹⁷⁰ Cf. J.-L. Bruguès 1984, 47-58.

¹⁷¹ Although Aquinas draws here from Aristotle’s insights on the role friend’s play in comforting the sorrowing, he integrates theological insights from the experiences of St. Augustine, St. Paul and the suffering Job. Cf. *ST* I-II 38.3 corpus and ad 2; Aristotle, *NE* ix.11, 1171a 29-30 (cf. Aquinas, in *Ethic.* lect 13.). St. Augustine’s *Confessions* (viii.4 and iv.9) are an important source, but other parallels are found in Aquinas’ commentaries. For example, Aquinas recognizes that Paul will be consoled in his suffering if the Ephesians respect his wish for them to stay united; cf. *Ad Eph.* 4. lect 1; *In Job* 2, 2, 16, lect. i; *Ad Rom.* 12, lect. 3.

¹⁷² “*Et ideo homines ex contemplatione divina et futurae beatitudinis, in tribulationibus gaudent*” *ST* I-II 38.4.

¹⁷³ Aquinas draws upon St. Augustine, upon the letter of James and upon the martyr Tiberius in order to bring Christian tradition and experience to support this phenomenon. Cf. Augustine, *Soliloq.* 1, 12; Jas 1: 2; and the martyr St. Tiburtius (Dominican breviary, 11 August), which Thomas cites in *ST* I-II 38.4.

¹⁷⁴ Thomas (*ST* II-II 140.1) identifies the following Scriptural bases for precepts of patience: “Accept whatever is brought upon you, and in changes that humble you be patient.” Eccl (Sir) 2:4 (*RSV*); “By your endurance you will gain your lives.” Luke 21:19 (*RSV*); “rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.” Rom 12:12 (*RSV*). He finds precepts of perseverance in: Matt 10:22; 1 Cor 15:58; Heb 12:7.

formation and execution of this virtue. These precepts of the Divine Law have the purpose of directing the mind to God. Aquinas argues that it is fitting to have precepts of obligation concerning both patience and perseverance,¹⁷⁵ which involve the preparedness of mind. Aquinas says that this preparedness for patience concerns being ready to withstand both things that are done and said against us.¹⁷⁶ Although we ought to be prepared to turn the other cheek if necessary, Aquinas explains that we are not always bound to do so, and furthermore that we should be prepared also to be impatient in certain cases.

When being physically attacked or verbally reviled, it may not be expedient to remain patient, according to Thomas. He gives two reasons why we should not always withstand either being attacked or reviled (as Jesus did not in John 18:23). First, we must respect the good of the attacker or reviler, since correction may serve the good purpose of assisting that person out of error.¹⁷⁷ Second, we must consider the good of other people who might be not any less concerned: indeed when the common good is endangered, a country fights against its enemies;¹⁷⁸ or when a wrong reflects on God or on the Church, one should right the wrong in order to avoid undue scandal,¹⁷⁹ or when remaining silent to slander against public figures will hinder

175 In particular, he claims that we need these precepts, since “*Afflictiones autem et labores praesentis vitae pertinent ad patientiam et perseverantiam non ratione alicuius magnitudinis in eis consideratae, sed ratione ipsius generis. Et ideo de patientia et perseverantia fuerunt danda praecepta*” ST II-II 140.2 ad 1.

176 He explains: “*Praecepta autem patientiae in his quae contra nos fiunt, sunt in praeparatione animae habenda, sicut Augustinus, in libro de Serm. Dom. in Monte [i.19], exponit illud praeceptum Domini, ‘Si quis percusserit te in una maxilla, praebere ei et aliam’: ut scilicet homo sit paratus hoc facere, si opus fuerit; non tamen hoc semper tenetur facere actu*” (ST II-II 72.3). The Scriptural text (in italics) quoted by St. Thomas is an amalgam of Matt 5:39 and Luke 6:29. In the same passage, Aquinas explains the similar preparedness needed in being patient when facing revilement. “*Tenemur enim habere animum paratum ad contumelias tolerandas si expediens fuerit*” ST II-II 72.3. Augustine’s notion of preparedness of mind (“*secundum praeparationem animi*” *De serm. Dom. in Monte* i, 19) is also quoted by Aquinas in ST II-II 140.2 ad 2; and ST II-II 72.3. Cf. St. Gregory the Great, *Hom. in Euc.*, hom. XXXV, 1 (PL 76, 1259 BC).

177 Cf. ST II-II 72.3; where Thomas cites: John 18:23; Prov. 26:5; cf. St. Augustine, *de corrept. et gratia*.

178 Aquinas quotes Augustine’s letter to *Marcellinus* (Ep. cxxxviii): “*praecepta patientiae non contrariantur bono reipublicae, pro quo conservando contra inimicos compugnatur*” ST II-II 136.4 ad 3.

179 Cf. ST II-II 108, 1 ad 4; ST II-II 72.3; ST II-II 140.2 ad 2.

the moral and spiritual progress of others, we should correct detractors.¹⁸⁰ Aquinas does not hold that the virtue of patience entails always being “patient,” in the sense of being passive in front of every adversity or evil. The virtue of patience also involves being prepared to be impatient; in that case, we call upon the virtues of fortitude and initiative empowered by righteous anger.

Freud’s critique of a certain notion of Christianity falls short of Thomas. Indeed Aquinas’ strategies for managing pain and sorrow, and his interpretation of the precepts of patience and perseverance underlie a fuller conception of what it means to manage pain and sorrow. They demand an action readiness and hardness that Freud did not grasp. Furthermore, Aquinas offers further insights on moral and spiritual progress in patience that further enhance a notion of Christian resilience.

8.3.3. Patience in Moral and Spiritual Progress

Experiences of suffering and patience are testing grounds for spiritual progress and for spiritual resilience. However, psychosocial methods often inhibit research from addressing theological treatments of suffering and patience. For this reason, Thomas’ observations on theological patience serve to complete the dearth of input from the psychosocial sciences at this level.¹⁸¹ In this section, I shall call more upon Aquinas’ Scriptural commentaries, which provide us with narrative images from the Tradition as well as more philosophical and theological concepts to explicate pathways toward growth in spiritual patience.

Aquinas interprets spiritually the wines served at the wedding feast in Cana, in his *Commentary on the Gospel of John*. He illustrates how the bitter feeling of sorrow, and the need to manage it patiently, must be kept in the perspective of moral and spiritual progress, and the sweetness of salvation. He notes that sorrow is a characteristic of the first stages of this progress, while sweetness comes with the delights,

¹⁸⁰ Cf. *ST* II-II 72.3, where Aquinas quotes St. Gregory’s *Hom. IX super Ezech* (bk I, hom. 9, n. 18: PL 76.877D).

¹⁸¹ His insights are all on the same level as psychosocial sciences. Although his spiritual hermeneutics is rich in experience, they are not based on empirical studies.

joy and glory to come. Christ did not serve the tastiest wine first, but rather proposes a way that is bitter and hard. It is only when we make progress in faith and teaching that we become more aware of the sweetness.¹⁸² This spiritual progress involves the patient management of the sorrow and tribulations, measured against the joys that come through following Christ and being supported by the Holy Spirit.¹⁸³

Aquinas notes that sorrow results when due progress is not achieved in ourselves and in others. Such is the sorrow that Paul feels because of the actions of the Ephesians (*Gal.* 4:20). Paul is sorrowed and ashamed since they have turned from good to evil, according to Aquinas, who says: “For since a son is a thing of the father, and a disciple as such is a thing of his master, a master rejoices in the good he sees reflected in him and glories in it as though it were his own. Conversely, he is pained at evil and is ashamed.”¹⁸⁴ This same concern of a father or a mother for the child, and a master for the disciple is found in the discipline exacted by God, who intends that believers grow in their stature as God’s children. Aquinas thus speaks of needing patience in correction, quoting *Proverbs*: “My son, do not despise the Lord’s discipline or be weary of his reproof, for the Lord reproves him whom he loves, as a father the son in whom he delights.”¹⁸⁵

182 Aquinas affirms that: “*Item in mundo isto amaritudines et tribulationes patiuntur omnes qui pie volunt vivere in Christo.* Joan. 16:20: ‘Amen amen dico vobis, quia plorabitis et flebitis vos’ etc. *Sed in futuro delectationes et gaudia suscipient: unde et sequitur:* ‘Tristitia vestra vertetur in gaudium.’ Roman. 8,18: ‘Existimo, quod non sunt condignae passiones hujus temporis ad futuram gloriam, quae revelabitur in nobis’” *ad Joan*, Ch. 2, lect.1-9.

183 Aquinas discusses furthermore three degrees of spiritual progress in charity (*ST* II-II. 24.9): beginning (practice of discipline), progress (progress in virtues) and perfection (maturity in freedom). Cf. Pinckaers 1995a, 359-374.

184 “*nam cum filius sit res patris; et discipulus, inquantum hujusmodi, res magistri; magister gaudet de bono quod videt in eo relucere, quasi de bono proprio, et gloriatur; et e converso de malo dolet et confunditur. Unde quia isti mutati erant de bono in malum, Apostolus confundebatur inde.*” *Ad Gal.* cap. 4, lect. 6; furthermore in this regard, Aquinas refers to *Eccl* (*Sir*) 22: 3.

185 Prov 3:11 (*RSV*). Aquinas says: “*debemus ei patientiam in castigationibus*, Proverb 3, 11: ‘Disciplinam Domini, fili mi, ne abjicias’” (*In orat. dom.* Intro). In regards to correction and admonition, Aquinas also relies on St. Augustine’s *Admonition and Grace* (*De Correptine et Gratia*), which he quotes in the *ST* (I-II 109.2; II-II 72.3; II-II 137.4), *De verit.* (6.3) and *De car.* (art. 12).

Thomas highlights the significance, place and utility of affliction and temptation in regard to growing in patience. First, the human person is directed toward patience through adversity. He reasons that God made all creation good, according to nature. But if we suffer evil and adversity or confront some punishment (*poena*), we should believe that the difficulty or punishment is from God; however not as if God willed the blameworthy evil deed. "Because no evil is from God, except that which is ordained to good; and therefore if every punishment that humans suffer is from God, it should be endured patiently. For punishments purge sins, humble the guilty, and lead the good to love God."¹⁸⁶ Thus through patient endurance of evils and affliction, we can recognize that even such difficulties can be a way to know and love God more fully. We must recall though the need to discern prudently punishment from oppression and violence.

St. Paul's letter to the Romans (5:1-5) contains one of the most important texts describing the relationship of suffering and patience to faith, hope and charity. Aquinas uses this text on numerous occasions in order to illustrate the relationship of trials to patience.¹⁸⁷ One of the reasons for the consequence of this text is the context of grace, which serves as a foundation for understanding patience and hope. Through grace, we have peace with God the Father, faith in Jesus Christ and hope of sharing future glory, the glory of God, in which we already participate through such hope. Aquinas notes that it is the strength of this hope that permits someone to endure difficulty and even bitter

¹⁸⁶ "Nam licet omnis creatura sit a Deo, et ex hoc sit bona secundum suam naturam; tamen si in aliquo noceat, et inferat nobis poenam, debemus credere quod illa poena sit a Deo; non tamen culpa: quia nullum malum est a Deo, nisi quod ordinatur ad bonum: et ideo si omnis poena quam homo suffert, est a Deo, debet patienter sustinere. Nam poenae purgant peccata, humiliant reos, provocant bonos ad amorem Dei. Job 11,10: 'Si bona suscepimus de manu Domini, mala autem quare non sustineamus?'" in *sym. apost.* art. 1. This discourse on patience is in the context of Aquinas identifying five goals in human life. The other four involve: knowing God, giving thanks, using creation aright and recognizing human dignity.

¹⁸⁷ In addition to the commentary *Ad Rom.* cap. 5, lect. 1, Aquinas also quotes Rom 5:3 in: *II ad Cor.* cap. 1, lect. 3; *Ad Gal.* cap. 3, lect. 2; *I ad Timoth.* cap. 4, lect. 2; *Ad Rom.* cap. 12, lect. 2; *De verit.* 2, 28, 8 sc 2; *IV Sent.* 15, 1, art. 4; *In Isaiam* 11; *In orat. dom.* art. 7; *In Psalmos* 24:12.

medicine for the sake of the hoped for glory or healing.¹⁸⁸ Thus we can rejoice not only in the hope of future glory, but also in present trials, which open the way to this glory.¹⁸⁹

This perspective on suffering is possible because of the faith, which enables us to know “that suffering produces endurance [*ὑπομονή*, patience], and endurance produces character [*δοκιμή*], and character produces hope” (Rom 5:3-4, *RSV*).¹⁹⁰ The suffering is not the efficient cause of the patience, but is the matter and occasion for exercising patience.¹⁹¹ Aquinas explains that patience and character¹⁹² both precede and result from suffering. They are both the condition for enduring it and the effect of the trial endured. The result is a hope that has been tried, is firm and will not disappoint. The source of this confident hope is God’s love, which God the Father manifests through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and through the Gift of the Holy Spirit. Aquinas notes that it is an expression of love, when we suffer in the service of God.¹⁹³

In the context of affirming how Jesus Christ’s passion has freed us from the power of the devil, Aquinas observes that we can be bothered by temptation either as merited from our own guilt (a result of our own evil actions) or in order to test us and to put patience into practice.¹⁹⁴ In this second regard, both Abraham and Job are examples

188 “*Qui enim vehementer aliquid sperat, libenter sustinet propter illud etiam difficilia et amara; sicut infirmus, si vehementer sperat sanitatem, libenter bibit potionem amaram, ut sanetur per ipsam*” *Ad Rom.* cap. 5, lect. 1 (Rom 5:3).

189 Aquinas (*Ad Rom.* cap. 5, lect 1) refers here to Acts 14:22 and Jas 1:2.

190 The *JB* translates *δοκιμή* as “perseverance,” which has the advantage of expressing the completeness of the quality acquired.

191 “*quorum primum est tribulatio, de qua dicitur, quod tribulatio patientiam operatur: non quidem sic quod tribulatio sit ejus causa effectiva, sed quia tribulatio est materia et occasio exercendi patientiae actum.*” Rom 12,12: In tribulatione patientes” *Ad Rom.* cap. 5, lect. 2. Elsewhere, Aquinas affirms the utility of difficulty to cultivate patience; cf. *Ad Eph.* cap. 4, lect. 1.

192 In the Latin translation of St. Paul’s letter to the Romans used by Aquinas, *probatio* is used to translate *δοκιμή*. *Δοκιμή* literally means “the quality of being approved” through a test, trial or ordeal, and hence it is also translated as “character” (*RSV*) or “perseverance” (*JB*). Aquinas’ commentary on *probatio* (*Ad Rom.* cap. 5, lect. 2) employs James 1:3 in developing the notion of how the testing of one’s faith produces patience.

193 Cf. *Ad Rom.* cap. 12, lect. 2.

194 This statement concerns the temptation of the devil: “*quod hoc quod homines in rebus et personis affligit, vel est ex merito culpae ipsorum, vel ad*

of those who have suffered temptation in order to show others their patience in resisting evil and doing good.¹⁹⁵ In his commentary on the book of Job, Aquinas uses the image of gold being tested and made manifest by fire, in order to illustrate why Job's patience and virtue in general is put to the test in order to be a source of witness for others. In commenting on *Job* (23:10), "He will prove me like gold which passes through fire," Aquinas says: "just as gold does not become true gold but its genuineness is manifested to men as a result of the fire, so Job has been proved through adversity not so that his virtue might appear before God but so that it might be manifested to men."¹⁹⁶

Aquinas correlates the development of patience with Paul's teaching on corporal mortification (*Col.* 3:5-17).¹⁹⁷ Aquinas interprets Paul's directional metaphor, to seek what is above, as meaning focusing on Christ, the Kingdom of God, a restored life of justice, a justified relation with God (*Mt.* 6:33); these are the greatest goods (*summa bona*) and give order to all earthly goods. In order to integrate this finality, that "our desire must be on him,"¹⁹⁸ we must put to death earthly ways, the old nature and its practices. We must die to evil ways and mortify our carnal desires. Aquinas highlights that his is a life-giving rather morbid perspective. Taking off the old, demands putting on the new way of life, and being "renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator" (*Col.* 3:10).¹⁹⁹ Patience, forbearing others and

probationem justorum, et exercitium patientiae ipsorum; et non est ex insufficientia passionis Christi" *III Sent.* 19, 1, 2, ad 2.

195 Aquinas says: "Sic tentavit Deus Abraham, Gen. 22, et Job. Et Deus saepe immittit tribulationes justis, ut dum patienter sustinent, appareat virtus eorum et virtute proficiant" *In orat. dom. pet.* 6.

196 "sicut aurum non fit verum aurum ex igne sed eius veritas hominibus manifestatur, ita Iob per adversitatem probatus est non ut eius virtus appareret coram Deo, sed ut hominibus manifestaretur" *In Job*, cap. 23, ln. 160-172.

197 Cf. *Ad Col.* cap. 3, lect. 1 and 2.

198 "desiderium nostrum debet esse ad ipsum" *Ad Col.* cap. 3, lect. 1; with references to Matt 24:28 and Matt 6:21.

199 Paul says that as God's chosen ones, we must put on "compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other, as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony." Another key to such an education is found in the continuation of this text. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in

forgiveness are all tools specifically fit for facing adversity, when we need to remain rooted in the love of God and the rectitude of justice (patience), to endure others' weaknesses (forbearance) and to pardon their offenses (forgiveness).²⁰⁰ Such virtues are the result of charity at work in the mortification of sinful and enlivening of good activities.

Aquinas' commentary on the *Lord's Prayer* explicitly notes the import of patience for transforming tribulations into something good. Aquinas recognizes that all who want to live in Christ will suffer tribulation or temptation (2 Tim 3, 12) and that the Lord's Prayer teaches us to pray more specifically *not to be led* into temptation. Aquinas emphasizes that this petition does not request a life without temptation, but rather that we do not consent to the inevitable temptations experienced. For temptation gives the opportunity of receiving the crown of eternal life (Jas 1:12; Rom 5:3), of finding the liberty of the children of God, (*in ora. dom. pet. vi.*), and of itself being transformed into untold good (*in ora. dom. pet. vii.*). Aquinas says that it is God who frees us from temptation and evil, works consolation, and converts situations of temptation and tribulation into something good.

We shall note one last cognitive, or rather sapiential point. Aquinas argues that God demonstrates his wisdom by freeing us from evil and by converting tribulations into something good: "This is a sign of the greatest wisdom, because wisdom orders evil toward the good through patience, which is realized through tribulations."²⁰¹ In particular, the Holy Spirit, working through the Gift of wisdom, makes us ask to participate in the transformation of tribulation. Thus, we cooperate in acquiring the patience needed to become mature children of God. This type of intelligent patience is an all-weather virtue; as Aquinas says: "through patience, one has peace both in prosperity and

word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." Col 3:16-17 (*RSV*).

²⁰⁰ Cf. *Ad Col.* cap. 3, lect. 3.

²⁰¹ "*Liberat ergo Deus hominem a malo et tribulationibus, eas in bonum convertendo; quod est signum maximae sapientiae, quia sapientis est malum ordinare in bonum; et hoc fit per patientiam, quae habetur in tribulationibus*" *In orat. dom. pet. vii.*

adversity.”²⁰² The emphasis on the cognitive dimension of wisdom terminates this renewed reading of Aquinas on the place of patience in moral and spiritual progress. Thomas provides numerous insights on patience that enhance spiritual resilience. Now we shall offer some broader concluding remarks.

202 “*et ideo Spiritus sanctus per donum sapientiae facit nos petere: et per hoc pervenimus ad beatitudinem ad quam ordinat pax, quia per patientiam pacem habemus et in tempore prospero et adverso: et ideo pacifici dicuntur fillii Dei, qui sunt similes Deo, quia sicut Deo nihil nocere potest, ita nec eis, quia nec prospera nec adversa*” *In orat. dom. pet. vii.*

Chapter Nine. Conclusions: Resilience Research and the Renewal of Moral Theology

“You understand that your faith is only put to the test to make you patient, but patience too is to have its practical results so that you will become fully developed, complete, with nothing missing” James 1:3-4 (*JB*).¹

The central question that I have asked in this book is: What do the psychosocial sciences offer for the renewal of St. Thomas Aquinas’ virtue theory concerning the management of difficulty (fortitude and its related virtues)?

The bridge that allows us to relate the psychosocial sciences and St. Thomas’ virtue theory is difficulty, and precisely, human resilience in the face of difficulty and adversity. I have defined resilience as the individual human and social capacity to cope with difficulty, to resist destruction under hardship and to construct something positive out of an otherwise negative situation.

Both the virtue of fortitude (with its associated virtues) and resilience relate to difficulty. Both fortitude and resilience (as resourcefulness for coping, constancy and constructing) contribute to a fundamentally positive perspective that counters an excessive focus on brokenness, vice and the effects of sin and psychopathology.

In this book, I have posed the leading question in terms of three further queries concerning: human anthropology, natural virtue and theological virtue.

First, how might psychosocial resilience research enrich St. Thomas’ moral anthropology?

Second, how might a dialogue between Aquinas and psychosocial sciences enhance our understanding of the natural virtues that face difficulty, namely fortitude with its related virtues?

¹ The letter of James 1:4 is a quote often used by Aquinas, in many of his scripture commentaries (11 different ones) and in his *ST* in the following places: I-II 61.3 obj. 3; I-II 66.4 obj 2 and ad 2; II-II 136.2 obj. 1 and ad 1; II-II 184.1 obj. 3 and ad 3; as well as in *de virt. com.* 5, 1 obj. 14 and 5, 4 obj. 12

And third, how might this dialogue deepen our understanding of theological fortitude and its associated virtues and Gift of the Holy Spirit?

Resilience research presents itself as a promising, yet challenging, dialogue partner for the virtues associated with difficulty. On the promising side of the dialogue, I have demonstrated that psychosocial sciences offer insights to bolster the philosophical anthropology that underlies Aquinas' virtue theory. Moreover, they offer insights about the natural and theological virtues related to fortitude.

In terms of a conclusion, I shall first reiterate resilience and its perspective. Second, I shall recall the methodological issues that this project involves. Third, I shall summarize the major findings at which I have arrived. I shall conclude with some suggestions for future research and a critical appraisal of the project.

9.1. The Resilience Perspective

The resilience perspective and research offer insights into human resources used to manage difficulty. It identifies sources of human coping, self-conservation and construction in difficulty. The source of the metaphorical image of resilience is found in the plasticity of metal. Originally resilience refers to physical resistance to deformation; for example, when resilient, a metal bar flexes but neither breaks nor remains bent.

Second, researchers have more recently applied the resilience concept to psychosocial domains. They have inquired into the psychological and sociological mechanisms that offer protection, coping and buffering in adversity; as well as those that oppose risk, stress and vulnerability.

Thirdly, thinkers have started to look for sources of resilience in the philosophical and spiritual domains—the later of which are of special interest for deepening our understanding of Christian virtue. On philosophical and theological levels, resilience involves the ethical, spiritual and religious processes that render humans capable to cope actively with difficulty, resist deformation of competencies, and construct from the unfavorable situation using spiritual resources.

Through a meta-analysis of resilience findings on temperament, emotions, cognitive and volitional processes, I have inductively identified resources and strategies that support resilience outcomes. In turn, I have brought the insights borne of the psychosocial research on difficulty into a critical and constructive dialogue with Aquinas' understanding of anthropology, virtue theory and Christian virtues

9.2. Method

Methodology is the bane of any interdisciplinary research, including a moral theology that seeks to remain theological while integrating other sciences (part one). Moral theology, when following Aquinas' example, brings the theological tradition of the Church into dialogue with the best sciences on human nature and moral agency. His theology (in general, and his moral theology, in particular) incorporates the major scientific findings (and theories) of his time with synthetic flare, philosophical insight and theological purpose. I have proposed that his dialogue between moral theology and other sciences is not over; it can profitably include the psychosocial resilience research.

What advantages might the integration of psychosocial sciences on resilience bring to moral theology? In this book, I have made the case that we can employ resilience research to contribute to a more robust philosophical anthropology, to clarify moral analysis, and to continue a renewal in moral theology. This project requires that we distinguish the methods and content not only of moral theology and philosophy (especially ethics), but also of various psychosocial sciences.

The various domains of resilience research—psychology, developmental theories social sciences and evolutionary theory—offer insights into human nature and moral agency (the natural virtues, especially those that concern the management of adversity). But they do not form, in and of themselves, a larger coherent anthropological framework. That is the work of theology aided by philosophy.

I have suggested that moral theology draws resources from descriptive, normative and theological sciences in order to formulate

its philosophical anthropology. But the ordering of these sciences is not indiscriminate.

We do not pretend that moral theology simply acquires the accumulated “scientific” status of the scientific study with which it dialogues. That is, we avoid a naturalistic approach that directly draws ethics from psychosocial sciences.

In dialoguing with the psychosocial sciences, I have had to make methodological choices in addressing the question: how can we respect the research parameters of other sciences (the distinct psychosocial sciences), while honoring the one in which we primarily navigate (namely moral theology)? I have rejected different facile methods: consequentialist models, disclosure models, bricolage models, as well as concordat models. Rather, we have followed the method of Aquinas, while employing insights from S. J. Pope’s “critical appropriation model.”

Aquinas accords a tertiary, but important, place to philosophical (and other scientific) arguments and observations in doing moral theology. These sciences are not on the same level as Scripture and Tradition, but they provide “extrinsic and probable” arguments for understanding human agency. This ordered approach does not denigrate the input that descriptive sciences can bring at the level of human agency, but it puts them in a larger normative and theological context.

I thus construe moral theology as the examination of human agency employing the tools of empirical, clinical and philosophical sciences, while providing a philosophical anthropology that integrates theological principles and reflection on the moral life. Although descriptive resilience findings themselves do not establish norms (which would entail a naturalist fallacy), they do offer the basis for philosophical reflection on a virtue-based approach to moral adjudication, norms and freedom.

In short, I have claimed that a dialogue with resilience insights (coming from descriptive sciences) enriches Aquinas’ virtue-based ethical theory and moral theology at the level of its philosophical anthropology. I have demonstrated how they can apply to his understanding of finality and flourishing, of emotions in moral development and of virtue education. But the major part of the work

has focused on how the psychosocial sciences can enrich our understanding of the virtues associated with hardship. What are this work's findings?

9.3. Findings

In the second and third parts of this book, I apply the basic resilience findings more directly to the concrete instances of courage and its related virtues.

In Part Two, I investigate the natural virtue of fortitude in dialogue with resilience research. I ask how ethicists can employ Aquinas' anthropology, enriched by psychosocial insights on resilience, to identify a moral type of resilience.

In Part Three, I investigate theological virtues in the light of resilience insights. I ask how Aquinas' moral theology in dialogue with resilience research can identify a spiritual type of resilience.

9.3.1. Fortitude and Moral Resilience

On the level of natural virtue, fortitude and the virtues related to initiative taking (*aggredi*) and endurance (*sustinere*) illustrate a type of moral resilience. Among the virtues, fortitude is the most obvious dialogue partner with psychosocial resilience research—both sides concentrate on the human response to adversity, and the place that fear and daring play therein.

Psychosocial research, for its part, highlights fear's utility and purpose in resilience, as well as that of temperament (e.g. timidity and audacity). Research describes the neurological, physiological and psychological interactions that underlie fear-related emotional, cognitive and motivational dispositions.

This research enriches Aquinas' analysis of fear. In particular, his model of thought can incorporate the physiological and neurological considerations of cognition, motivation and emotion without reducing the human experience to the biophysical level. His experiential and realist metaphysical teaching on the natural virtue of fortitude constructively adds to our understanding of human agency in difficulty. It provides a wider philosophical and psychological foundation to appreciate moral agency in the midst of fear.

For Aquinas, we master or succumb to fear in the practice of fortitude, which demands foreseeing threats and hardships and learning from failures. He contributes a richer type of moral resilience. In particular, he treats fortitude developmentally and expounds a philosophical psychology of fear and daring with a social analysis of struggle, death and the common good. His treatment of fortitude, which manages fear and daring, provides a philosophical basis to approach moral resilience. On a normative level, his typology of fortitude aids us to comprehend more fully moral responsibility and resilience.

9.3.2. Initiative and Constructive Resilience

Aquinas recognizes the specific place of initiative-taking (*aggredi*) in the face of difficulty. Sometimes we can attack or confront the source of adversity in order to overcome or change it. His notions of the virtues of initiative (*magnanimitas* and *magnificentia*) offer a type of constructive resilience (within the larger natural virtue of fortitude and its moral resilience).

Resilience research, for its part, highlights the role of optimism and generosity in human initiatives. These qualities are important since we confront arduous projects through the energy of the emotions, especially of hope and daring. Resilience research in particular shows how we harness daring in confident acts through our capacities to concentrate.

Aquinas construes initiative-taking in terms of a series of virtues grouped around *magnanimitas* and *magnificentia*, which aim to master the use of the emotions of hope and daring. His approach to initiative focuses on the natural virtue of hope (what he calls *magnanimitas*). This virtue of initiative manages temperament traits, emotions and motivations in order to overcome hardship in attaining the good (*bonum arduum*). In hope-filled agency, Aquinas affirms that (a desire and understanding of) excellence leads us to act for more worthwhile ends than does a motivation based on honors alone. Nonetheless, he accents the place of both honors and excellence in providing a further normative framework for a virtue of initiative that seeks to avoid vainglory and ambition.

Resilience research and Aquinas' reflections enrich each other to offer a nuanced typology of the natural virtue of hope. In this enriched view, to overcome the difficulty involved in constructive human acts, we need not only concentration and hope, but also a drive for flourishing and excellence. This type of natural hope and daring risk-taking underlies constructive resilience.

9.3.3. Endurance and Resistant Resilience

For Aquinas, in order to resist more consistently the destructive effects of adversity, we need to master the emotions and dispositions that underlie endurance (*sustinere*). According to him, we endure loss, suffering and pain through the virtues of patience and perseverance.

The resilience perspective aids us to appreciate and supplement Aquinas' typology of the virtues and vices that concern endurance-responses to adversity. In particular, research on resilience phenomena concerning the management of sorrow and waiting adds insights to Aquinas' moral theory. For example, it aids us to understand moral progress and the role that patience and perseverance play in managing sorrow, pain and suffering. In dialogue, Aquinas and the resilience research collaborate in a richer notion of the virtuous endurance that we might call resistant resilience.

9.3.4. Fortitude and Resilience Transcended

In part three, I addressed how grace transforms the virtue of fortitude for Aquinas. What can we say about his understanding of the theological completion and elevation of natural virtue? Does it offer a model of theological fortitude that resilience research can enrich at its own level?

I have argued that Aquinas' theological vision of the transformation of natural fortitude has radical implications for the way in which spiritual resilience transcends moral resilience. Thomas' conception of the theological tenor of fortitude (as an infused virtue, an act of martyrdom, the Beatitude of the just, and the Sevenfold Gift of the Holy Spirit) specifies a type of Christian resilience.

Aquinas—following St. Augustine—recognizes that the Christian tradition emphasizes the Gift of the Holy Spirit, the

Beatitudes (and the rest of the Sermon on the Mount) and the Precepts of the Our Father (*Pater Noster*) in spiritual agency. In regards to fortitude, he holds that humans participate in divine hardness through (1) their openness to the Gift of fortitude, (2) their acts aimed at the Beatitude of those who hunger and thirst for justice, and (3) their following the inspiration of the precept of fortitude.

As an infused virtue, fortitude illustrates a type of resilient agency that participates in divine strength, in the midst of human fear, trials and weakness. Furthermore, Aquinas' conception of Christian martyrdom offers an archetype for spiritual resilience, based upon friendship-love and justice. It resists critiques that claim that Christianity nurtures vulnerability.

9.3.5. Constructive Resilience Transcended

Aquinas' conception of grace that operates through virtues of initiative-taking opens the way for understanding a theological dimension in resilient initiative. Indeed, the theological extension of constructive resilience and of initiative-taking virtues illustrates the roles that being honorable and seeking excellence (involved in human initiatives and divine purpose) play in spiritual resilience.

Aquinas' moral theology displays a particularly Christian type of resilience through the infused greatness and initiative specified in constructive projects and generosity (including acts of adoration and religion), and in great intentions and plans that find their inspiration in the Gospel. He affirms that we evoke theological honor and excellence in order to plan, motivate and complete projects that have their source and finality in God. This type of initiative involves interdependence, meekness and humility, while seeking to honor God and serve others.

9.3.6. Resistant Resilience Transformed

Aquinas gracefully articulates the theological difference involved in infused patience and perseverance, which illustrate the stamina of spiritual resilience. This theological extension of resistant resilience, modeled on the virtues of endurance illustrates further ways to manage pain, suffering and loss.

For St. Thomas, theological patience and perseverance, long-suffering and constancy find their source in God's patience, as

expressed through Jesus Christ, who serves as the archetype for a Christian response to pain and suffering, including the ultimate and extreme instances that we all need to face, especially near death.

Aquinas identifies other theological developments that support patience. Grace completes and elevates emotions, reason and will through resisting and overcoming the difficulties that punctuate our way to our ultimate good. This grace involves a theologically informed hope that permeates daily work as well. It enables our reception of the Gift of knowledge, and makes possible acts inspired by the Beatitude of the mourners and the fruit of patience. These theological movements extend patience and perseverance and illustrate a way to resist suffering and evil.

On the developmental level, Aquinas' theological approach to enduring hardship and waiting for the attainment of good can transform psychosocial resilience insights on pain, suffering and resisting. As an indispensable element, we have to integrate our own experience, which is based on our experience of God through the theological virtues of faith, hope and love. At the same time, the experience of others—especially those who have resiliently overcome difficulty—offer us food for thought and a model for resilient behavior. Nonetheless, the level of supernatural, or graced virtue cannot find empirical or statistical corroboration. Aquinas' (and our) theological reflections on the life of grace involve the non-empirically verifiable, lived experience of the Catholic Tradition (Scripture, Patristic, Mystic and Liturgical sources).

9.4. Concluding Remarks

What are the possibilities for future research in the dialogue between the psychosocial sciences? Much remains to be done at the levels of anthropology, ethics and moral theology. I will only focus on one area for lack of space.

There is a promise in the renewal of Christian anthropology based upon a dialogue with positive psychology, rather than on psychopathology alone (that is, rather than a focus on abnormal psychology per se). More extensive research on the application of Christian virtue theory in clinical settings and through empirical studies might help us to better articulate the deeper teachings of the

Tradition on human nature and agency, especially concerning human flourishing, freedom and responsibility in pursuit of the good. It might help us to better integrate the bio-physical, psychosocial, ethical and spiritual dimensions of the human person and society into every effort at promoting health and overcoming illness, developing virtuously and overcoming vicious tendencies, as well as living in community towards a hope that is eschatological.

This method—and that of Aquinas—holds that truth is one. The truths about human resilience can help us better understand human virtues that face hardships. Nonetheless, resilience findings are shaped by the researcher's worldview and anthropology. Resilience itself—as if it were a pure phenomenon of survival, taken outside of a larger context—would dangerously promote survival at any cost. The type of surviving and thriving that we promote is the issue. We can avoid reductionistic tendencies, if we believe that resilience is more than material survival of the fittest.

We have therefore confidently sought to avoid the shortfalls of interdisciplinary methods that simplistically revamp major elements in moral theology based on the psychosocial sciences' tentative theories and empirical findings. We have limited the use of resilience insights in moral theology to a hierarchical dialogue about human nature and agency.

We do not intend to limit Aquinas or Catholic moral theology to any reductionist research method, but to suggest that Aquinas' virtue theory offers us a model for ordered interdisciplinary dialogue that renews moral theology in general, while contributing to a more robust anthropology.

Our contemporary understanding of Aquinas and of Catholic moral theology is in a process of renewal. We are struggling to escape under-specified or misdirected ideas of human nature that either reduce humans to our biophysical-neurological bases or to our psychosocial tendencies and interactions. We furthermore seek to overcome (1) exaggerated notions of rules and duty that eclipse the primacy and influence of faith, hope and charity, as well as (2) narrowed notions of virtue that recognize neither the wounds of sin nor the transforming effects of grace. In turn, following the leads of Aquinas' anthropology provides us a larger ethical and theological context than is possible in

reductionistic or non-integrated psychosocial sciences alone. In this regard, Aquinas' natural law approach to moral norms and pedagogy offers guidelines and a framework for human resilience; moreover, his approach to the New Law of grace and the infused virtues offers a fuller understanding of spiritual resilience.

Aquinas offers us a vibrant realist, metaphysical model of moral theology. He offers more as well. His reflections on natural and graced-life faced with adversity contain invaluable insights, but they cannot be understood without hermeneutical effort. They serve as a valid basis for dialogues with our contemporary experiences and with research on resilience that aid the ongoing renewal in moral theology that is dear to us all.

Abbreviations

Theological Tradition: Revelation, Magisterium, and Patristic Sources.

Aquinas, St. Thomas
Ad Col. *Super ad Coloss.*
Ad Eph. *Super ad Ephesios.*
Ad Gal. *Super ad Galatas*
Ad Heb. *Super ad Hebr.*
Ad Phil. *Super ad
Philippenses*
Ad Joan. *Super evangelium
Joannis*
Ad Mat. *Com. ad evangelium
Matthaei*
Ad Rom. *Com. in epistolam ad
Romanos*
Catena aurea *Glossa continua
super Evangelia*
Comp. Theo. *Compendium
Theologiae*
De car. *Quaestiones
disputatae de caritate*
De malo *Quaest. disputatae de
malo*
De Trin. *In Librum Boethii de
Trinitate*
De verit. *Quaest. disputatae de
veritate*
De virt. card. *Quaest. disputatae de
virtutibus
cardinalibus*
De virt. com. *Quaest. disputatae de
virtutibus in
communi*
I ad Thess. *Super I ad Thess*
I ad Timoth. *Super I ad Timoth.*

II ad Cor. *Super II ad
Corinthios*
II ad Thess. *Super II ad Thess.*
II ad Timoth. *Super II ad Timoth.*
In de Anima *Sententia Libri De
anima*
In Eth. *In decem libros
Ethicorum Aristotelis
ad Nic. Expositio*
In Job *Expositio super Job*
In Lib. causis *In Librum de Causis*
In Meta. *In duodecim libros
Meta-physicorum
Aristotelis*
In orat. dom. *Collatio in orationem
dominicam*
In Psalmos *Postilla super
Psalmos*
In sal. ang. *In salutationem
angelicam*
In symb. apost *Collatio in Symbolum
Apostolorum*
Rigans montes *Rigans montes de
superioribus*
SCG *Summa contra
Gentiles*
Sent. *Scriptum super
liberos Sententiarum*
ST *Summa theologiae*
QDL *Quaestiones
quodlibetales*

Bible (texts and translations)
Greek NT *The Greek New
Testament*
LXX *Septuagint*
Vulgata *Biblia Sacra iuxta
versionem*

<i>RSV</i>	<i>Revised Standard Version</i>
<i>JB</i>	<i>Jerusalem Bible</i>
<i>NAB</i>	<i>New American Bible</i>

Magisterial Documents

<i>CA</i>	<i>Centesimus annus</i>
<i>CCC</i>	<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i>
<i>DAS</i>	<i>Divino Afflante Spirito</i>
<i>DV</i>	<i>Dei Verbum</i>
<i>FR</i>	<i>Fides et Ratio</i>
<i>GE</i>	<i>Gravissimum Educationis</i>
<i>GS</i>	<i>Gaudium et Spes</i>
<i>LE</i>	<i>Laborem exercens</i>
<i>LG</i>	<i>Lumen Gentium</i>
<i>OT</i>	<i>Optatam Totius</i>
<i>PDG</i>	<i>Pascendi Dominici gregis</i>
<i>SC</i>	<i>Sapientia Christiana</i>
<i>SRS</i>	<i>Sollicitudo rei socialis</i>
<i>TMA</i>	<i>Tertio Millenium advenientes</i>
<i>VS</i>	<i>Veritatis Splendor</i>

Patristic Sources

<i>De Fide Orthod.</i>	<i>John Damascene, De Fide Orthodoxa</i>
<i>De Div. Nom.</i>	<i>Dionysius (pseudo-Areopagite) De Divinis nominibus</i>
<i>Cael. Hier.</i>	<i>Dionysius (ps.-A.) Caelestis Hierarchiae</i>
<i>De Offic.</i>	<i>De Officiibus, St. Ambrose</i>
<i>Moral.</i>	<i>St. Gregory the Great, Moralia in Job</i>

<i>St. Augustine Conf.</i>	<i>Confessiones</i>
<i>Contra Faust.</i>	<i>Contra Faustum Manicheum</i>
<i>De Civ. Dei</i>	<i>De Civitate Dei</i>
<i>De Corrept.</i>	<i>De correptione et gratia et Gratia</i>
<i>De Doc. Crist.</i>	<i>De Doctrina Christiana</i>
<i>De Lib. Arbit.</i>	<i>De Libero Arbitrio</i>
<i>De Morib. Eccl.</i>	<i>De Moribus Ecclesiae catholicae</i>
<i>De Nat. Boni</i>	<i>De Natura Boni</i>
<i>De Pat.</i>	<i>De Patientia</i>
<i>De Persev.</i>	<i>De Perseverentia</i>
<i>De Sermone</i>	<i>De Sermone Domini in monte</i>
<i>De Trin.</i>	<i>De Trinitatis</i>
<i>OQ</i>	<i>Octoginta trium Quest.</i>
<i>Retract.</i>	<i>Retractiones</i>
<i>Soliloq.</i>	<i>Soliloquia</i>

Philosophical Sources

<i>Aristotle</i>	
<i>Eco.</i>	<i>Economics</i>
<i>EE</i>	<i>Eudamean Ethics</i>
<i>NE</i>	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>
<i>MM</i>	<i>Magna Moralia</i>
<i>Metaph.</i>	<i>Metaphysics</i>
<i>Pol.</i>	<i>Politics</i>
<i>Post. Ana.</i>	<i>Posterior Analytics</i>
<i>Rhet.</i>	<i>Rhetoric</i>
<i>Cicero, Marcus Tullius</i>	
<i>Fin.</i>	<i>De finibus bonorum et malorum</i>
<i>Nat. deorum</i>	<i>De natura deorum</i>
<i>Off.</i>	<i>De officiis</i>
<i>PS</i>	<i>Paradoxa Stoicorum</i>

<i>Rhet.</i>	<i>De inventione rhetorica</i>	<i>FZPT</i>	<i>Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie</i>
<i>Rhet. ad Her.</i>	<i>Rhetorica ad Herennium</i>		
<i>Tusc.</i>	<i>Tusculanae disputationes</i>	<i>GELNT</i>	<i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i>

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Journals, Dictionaries, Encyclopedias		<i>JSSR</i>	<i>Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion</i>
<i>AFP</i>	<i>Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum</i>	<i>JRel</i>	<i>The Journal of Religion</i>
<i>Con</i>	<i>Concilium</i>	<i>JRE</i>	<i>Journal of Religious Ethics</i>
<i>DCT</i>	<i>Dictionnaire critique de théologie</i>	<i>NCE</i>	<i>New Catholic Encyclopedia</i>
<i>Denzinger</i>	<i>Enchiridion Symbolorum, by Denzinger and Schönmetzer</i>	<i>NDTh</i>	<i>New Dictionary of Theology</i>
<i>DEPM</i>	<i>Dictionnaire d'éthique et de philosophie morale</i>	<i>NJBC</i>	<i>New Jerome Biblical Commentary</i>
<i>DdP</i>	<i>Dictionnaire de philosophie</i>	<i>NRT</i>	<i>Nouvelle Revue Théologique</i>
<i>DOTTE</i>	<i>The New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis</i>	<i>NV</i>	<i>Nova et Vetera</i>
		<i>PG</i>	<i>Patrologia graeca, (ed. J. P. Mignes)</i>
		<i>PL</i>	<i>Patrologia Latina, (ed. J. P. Mignes)</i>
		<i>RETM</i>	<i>Revue d'éthique et de théologie morale</i>
<i>DMC</i>	<i>Dictionnaire de moral catholique</i>	<i>RT</i>	<i>Revue Thomiste</i>
<i>DS</i>	<i>Dictionnaire de la spiritualité</i>	<i>RSPT</i>	<i>Revue des Sciences philosophique et théologique</i>
<i>DTC</i>	<i>Dictionnaire de théologie catholique</i>	<i>RevScRel</i>	<i>Revue des Sciences Religieuses</i>
<i>ERE</i>	<i>Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics</i>	<i>RTAM</i>	<i>Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale</i>
<i>EThL</i>	<i>Ephemerides Theologicae. Lovanienses</i>	<i>RTL</i>	<i>Rivista Teologica di Lugano</i>

<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (Kittel)</i>
<i>TS</i>	<i>Theological Studies</i>
<i>VTB</i>	<i>Vocabulaire de Théologie Biblique</i>
<i>Zygon</i>	<i>Zygon: Journal of Religion and Science</i>

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