

## The Criteria of the Moral Act According to Aristotle and their Criticism by St. Thomas

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It is a truism to say that the question of the criteria of morality is of great actuality. In recent years it has indeed received a variety of answers. For instance, G.E. Moore believes that the morally good and evil are intuitively known to us, much like Lord Shaftesbury had assumed, in his *Enquiry into Virtue* that man is gifted with a moral sense, by which he knows what is good, just like he spontaneously recognizes the beautiful if he has good taste. But according to another modern British philosopher, Alfred Ayer, ethical judgments would not have any objective value, but be expressions and excitants of feelings<sup>1</sup>. Kant carried the role of man's subjectivity to an extreme in making autonomous human reason the source of the laws which govern moral conduct. While the views mentioned above make morality dependent on man's subjectivity, other theories assume that there are objective criteria. A first opinion insists on utility: those acts are good which are advantageous. The good is either identified with man's liberty and fulfillment or it is understood in a hedonistic way or it may be said to consist in social well-being ("the greatest possible happiness for the greatest number"). A classical expression of this view may be found in J. Stuart Mill's *Utilitarianism*: "Actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness, wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness is intended pleasure and the absence of pain"<sup>2</sup>. American authors as William James and John Dewey stress the place of results: ethics is a sort of natural experimental science; one has to look for results, to reconsider rules and to develop new methods in order "to bring about the very largest total universe of good which we can see"; "it is a matter of consequences; ...the process of growth... becomes important"<sup>3</sup>. Marxist authors take over this theory, but they prefer to speak of the well-being of the proletariat: the triumph of communism is, for the time being, the highest measure of good and evil, to which individual well-being is subordinated<sup>4</sup>.

Others again place the criterion of morality in the prospect of evolution. A. Arntz speaks of an ever continuing development of man, by which new possibilities come to light, which man must "administer"<sup>5</sup>.

I. Lobo sees a criterion in the "continual adaptation to changing circumstances"<sup>6</sup>. R. Simon wishes to replace the ethics of St. Thomas (which he believes to be based on biological facts) by an ethics characterized by the controlling and steering of progress<sup>7</sup>. J.G. Milhaven, on the other hand, pleads in favor of an ethics based upon results; he is convinced that many moral laws hitherto acknowledged are only accidental<sup>8</sup>. Others pursue this line of thinking to the point of making the animal origin of man the source of ethics and custom<sup>9</sup>. Freud attributed moral laws to the dictatorial behavior of the super-Ego; in reality, however, he writes, human conscience far from being a judge, is only a symptom. In this view psychology has a normative role. In agreement with some of the views stated above E. Schillebeeckx considers the criteria of morality a map, drawn on the basis of common experience<sup>10</sup>.

In a more recent study he speaks of certain unchanging factors given with the human being, which have to be completed in ever different ways so as to become norms<sup>11</sup>. F. Bockle urges us to set aside heteronomous moral criteria, so that we are able to formulate in freedom rules for our moral behavior, inspired by faith<sup>12</sup>.

This summary of some of the more important views recently proposed shows that human nature is no longer acknowledged as the foundation of moral life. We might perhaps

characterize the evolution which has taken place in the field of fundamental ethics, as follows: for centuries man was convinced that his actions had to take into account or were subject to objectively given structures and that his desires had to be restricted because of the limits imposed upon him. In recent years, however, some are looking for total freedom from any restrictions and proclaim subjective spontaneity to be the highest value. Sartre led the way, when he stated that man determines moral values and that freedom is the only foundation of morality. And by freedom he meant the absence of any objective motivation of our spontaneously arising actions<sup>13</sup>. His position was somewhat modified by Simone de Beauvoir, who stressed that our spontaneity may not cause any harm to others<sup>14</sup>. H. Marcuse drew the final conclusions from this way of seeing the problem of morality and argued that in the near future technology will free us from whatever restrictions and tedious tasks there are, so that our subjective instincts will then be able to unfold themselves fully<sup>15</sup>.

Apparently the question of the criteria of morality is of the greatest importance. In this paper I only intend to give some principles which may be helpful in stating an answer. I would like to examine the position of Aristotle concerning the problem under discussion and, in the second place, indicate to which extent St. Thomas Aquinas admitted the criteria of morality proposed by Aristotle.

We may speak, if not of a development of Aristotle's thought, then at least of certain periods in his life, to each of which belong some of the fragments or works known to us. It is possible that *Eudemian Ethics* and the *Magna Moralia* (if this treatise is authentic) do not belong to the same period of Aristotle's life as the *Nicomachean Ethics*. In this paper, however, only the position of Aristotle as expounded in the *Nicomachean Ethics* will be studied.

A first question is that of whether ethics is a science. Its importance for the theme of our study is obvious: as a science ethics would give a universally valid knowledge of the end of human life and of the ways to attain this end. If, on the other hand, ethics is a codification of experience or of taste, the rules worked out by it will only have a relative value. According to Plato ethical insight flows forth from the knowledge of the ideas, in particular of the idea of the Good<sup>16</sup>. For this reason an absolutely certain knowledge of man's duties is possible, despite the fact that man lives in the world of change and passing away. Plato adds that imitation of God is man's highest task<sup>17</sup>. For Aristotle, however, ethics is practical knowledge in contrast to the theoretical sciences; its purpose is not knowledge but action<sup>18</sup>. Ethics should order and guide human life in the human community<sup>19</sup>. Aristotle points out that human acts, — the subject matter of ethics —, are subject to many changes and that, for this reason, no exact knowledge is possible of what should be done<sup>20</sup>. Those who are well educated will not expect to find mathematical precision in the field of human duties<sup>21</sup>. There are, in fact, different opinions as to what is right<sup>22</sup>. In a famous passage on equity Aristotle first lays down that laws are made on the basis of what usually happens, but that we sometimes must act differently from what the laws prescribe, because of the different state of something. An example will make clear what Aristotle means: we should return what we have borrowed to its proprietor, but it would be wrong to return a weapon to someone who is out of his mind for anger<sup>23</sup>. Aristotle adds that there is no absolute certainty in the field of ethics: of what is not determined, the rule is also indeterminate<sup>24</sup>. Certain modern commentators felt that these texts show that induction is the basic method in ethics, but this inference is not wholly justified, as we shall see below<sup>25</sup>. In view of the above we must conclude that the ethics of Aristotle will study human actions in a variety of situations, but that it is not a science based upon apriori principles. Although the first and the tenth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* are theoretical insofar as they treat the good of man and happiness, the eight other books are an inventory of penetrating observations with some occasional comparisons and deductions.

Did St. Thomas agree with Aristotle's view of ethics ? For St. Thomas ethics deals with man's returning to God, his Maker: man is endowed with intellect and free will and therefore he must himself give a form to his journey to God. All human actions must be done in view of this last aim<sup>26</sup>. In his commentary on the *Nicomachean Ethics* St. Thomas completes Aristotle's argument as follows: we must distinguish between four levels of ethics: the theoretical intellect works out the laws of moral behavior; the practical intellect gives the right knowledge of how we must act; from intellect and will combined our choice proceeds; there finally is the stage of execution<sup>27</sup>. Aquinas apparently feels that with the term ethics we can denote different things.

He interprets Aristotle's thesis that the end of ethics is not knowledge but action<sup>28</sup> by saying that the end is not knowledge *alone* ("non est sola cognitio"), but also human action, as is the case in all practical sciences<sup>29</sup>. Aristotle's observations on the indeterminate character of human actions, which subtracts them from always valid criteria, is understood by St. Thomas as applying to positive human laws, while there is a *iustum naturale* which is the foundation of equity<sup>30</sup>. Aquinas writes that the method proper to ethics is not the *modus resolutionis* of the theoretical sciences which reduces composed things to their principles, but the *modus compositivus*, which applies general rules to concrete cases and examines what is really good<sup>31</sup>. We shall see below how St. Thomas finds these general rules. We may conclude our remarks by saying that for St. Thomas ethics is more than the practice of prudence based upon experience.

Which are the criteria acknowledged by Aristotle that determine the morality of our actions? Let us first recall Plato's view. In certain texts Plato argues the good man knows how to act. In order to become a good and wise man, a right education is of the utmost importance<sup>32</sup>. The wise man himself becomes a criterion, but in a secondary sense, for the ideas and their highest principle, the Good, are the model to which man must conform himself. If we know the idea of the Good, we also know the unity of moral life. As I have already indicated, Plato also expressed this function of the idea of the Good by means of the theme of imitation of God<sup>33</sup>.

To Aristotle, however, ethics is not founded upon the ideal of conformity with God. It is true that Aristotle mentions the popular feeling that the wise man is dear to the gods<sup>34</sup>, but he does not show which would be the influence of the thought of God upon moral life. God does not need anything and is not interested in man. For this reason moral life can only aim at the perfection of man himself. Aristotle rejects, in fact, very explicitly the Platonic realm of ideas. On the first pages of his *Ethics* he shows that the good is found in various categories of being and that for this reason a univocal idea of good is meaningless. What matters in ethics is not an abstract good, but the good which man can and must acquire<sup>35</sup>. This takes us to the question of the criteria of morality. But before attempting to give an answer I want to mention first a text of the *Eudemian Ethics*, which is quite close to Plato's view: "...the standard (of conduct) being — as above said — 'as reason directs'; this corresponds to saying in regard to diet that the standard should be medical science and its principles. But this, though true, is not clear. One must, then, here as elsewhere, live with reference to the ruling principle and with reference to the formed habit and the activity of the ruling principle, as the slave must live with reference to that of the master, and each of us by the rule proper to him. But since man is by nature composed of a ruling and a subject part, each of us should live according to the governing element within himself — but this is ambiguous, for medical science governs in one sense, health in another, the former existing for the latter. And so it is with the theoretic faculty; for God is not an imperative ruler, but is the end with a view to which prudence issues its commands..."<sup>36</sup>. Aristotle concludes by saying that the choice of those goods which render possible the contemplation of God, is best. It follows that in this passage the absolute criterion is the knowledge of God and the living up to what is best in us<sup>37</sup>. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*

we find the second part of this text, viz. the ideal of a life according to the highest part of us (i.e., contemplation) stressed, and this life is of greater value than practical work<sup>38</sup>, but there is no longer question of the object of contemplation as a criterion and contemplation is now outside moral life itself.

We must now face the question of whether Aristotle admitted that human nature is the standard of conduct. As we have seen, Plato describes nature as a criterion insofar as we must live in agreement with our innermost being — which is akin to the world above the realm of becoming and passing away. To live morally we must know what man is and "follow nature"<sup>39</sup>. Human nature is part of the whole of reality and is characterized by the presence of a spiritual soul. Our nature contains certain standards of conduct. For instance, Plato writes that homosexual love is not in accordance with nature, because nature wants the union of man and woman<sup>40</sup>. What is morally good, therefore, is not (or at least not always) dependent on the human mind, but is given with human nature. Man must discover the plan which nature exhibits and execute it<sup>41</sup>. For those who are not able to do so, the law is going to be the true horizon of their moral life<sup>42</sup>.

Has Aristotle taken over his theme from Plato? Aristotle is undoubtedly-convinced of the fact that nature is permeated by reason and characterized by finality<sup>43</sup>. The "intellectual" character of nature is expressed in sayings like "God and nature do nothing in vain", "nature intends", "nature conceives and executes"<sup>44</sup>. In his dialogue the *Protrepticus* B 13 (During) Aristotle writes that by art, craftsmanship and moral actions man must achieve the work of nature. Moral actions must be in conformity with the order of finality given in nature<sup>45</sup>. However, human activity is not determined by man's nature, as is that of many other substances: man himself must acquire virtue<sup>46</sup>. At this juncture Aristotle introduces his theory of the right mean of virtues. The right mean is a sort of objective criterion of moral actions.

According to what we observe in nature, there also has to be a mean in human actions between excesses and deficiencies<sup>47</sup>. Aristotle compares the situation in which man finds himself with that of medicine or nautical art. When one has set a course of action, one must decide what to do under the circumstances. Virtues perish both by excess and by deficiency, just as happens with health (for instance, too much and too little food are harmful). Temperance and courage disappear when there is excess or deficiency<sup>48</sup>. Aristotle works out his theory in detail: at the level of our desires and passions there is a right mean, but also in the field of our actions<sup>49</sup>. All virtues have the right mean as their specific object. Aristotle stresses that this mean is a mean in the thing, but that there also is a mean relative to ourselves<sup>50</sup>. In short, the mean is what is equal to what is right. The equal in a thing is the same for all men<sup>51</sup>, but with regard to us, that is, with regard to the different individuals, the mean is not the same. For this reason the mean cannot be deduced mathematically. At the end of the second book Aristotle points out once more the difficulties we are bound to incur when we attempt to determine the right mean: "But up to what extent a man must deviate before he becomes blameworthy it is not easy to determinate by reasoning, any more than anything else that is perceived by the senses; such things depend on particular facts and the decision rests with perception"<sup>52</sup>. Aristotle gives the following definition of virtue, based upon his theory of the mean: "Virtue, then, is a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e. the mean relative to us, this being determined by rational principle (logos), and by that principle by which the man of practical wisdom would determine it"<sup>53</sup>.

There are different interpretations of this definition. Must "determined by *logos*" be translated by *plan* or by *reason*? The Oxford Translation wisely leaves the matter undecided but intimates that an objective structure lies at the bottom of this determination.

Theodore Tracy has pointed out that that according to Alcmaeon and four treatises of the *Corpus Hippocraticum* the human body is a balanced synthesis (metriotes) of warring elements; this equilibrium must be maintained or restored, if man is to live in health<sup>54</sup>. In his

*Timaeus* Plato drew a corollary from this theory: this equilibrium also exists and must be maintained in the soul and in the cosmos. The elements in the universe are well balanced and distributed around the centre. — Aristotle applies the theory of the mean (*mesotes*) to the distribution of cold and heat in the human body (there is an equilibrium between digestion and respiration), to the function of the heart (which has cold and warm blood in respectively its right and left ventricles) and to the senses (because each sense is a *mesotes*, it can perceive the extremes of a quality). In view of all these applications of the theory of the mean it is not surprising that Aristotle also looked for a mean in moral actions. The fact that emotions go to extremes and that in our dealings with our fellowmen we must observe measure, justifies Aristotle's intuition. It must be mentioned, however, that although St. Thomas uses this theory, he attaches less importance to it than Aristotle had done. Virtues are essentially determined by their specific objects, and these objects are in their turn determined by reason. Virtues help us to keep the right mean in our actions. The mean no longer is the formal element of virtue but rather one of the circumstances. For instance, St. Thomas writes that if we have courage or fear when this is necessary and in the way it is necessary, we have the right mean<sup>55</sup>. St. Thomas furthermore makes a distinction between justice and the other moral virtues: the first is specified by the equality it must establish, the other virtues must direct our emotions and feelings<sup>56</sup>. In the first case we speak of a mean in the thing itself, in the second case of a mean with regard to ourselves<sup>57</sup>. Apparently the theory of the mean is not for St. Thomas a sufficient criterion of moral actions.

The wise man, whose help has already been invoked to determine the right mean, is often cited as a criterion of the morality of human actions. Plato also speaks of the well educated man, the philosopher king who by contemplating the world of ideas knows what justice, fortitude, piety etc. are. When Aristotle rejected the theory of ideas, the foundation of the position of the wise man was destroyed. Nevertheless Aristotle takes up the theme and further elaborates it. According to Pierre Aubenque, Aristotle would have returned here to the traditional wisdom of Greece and to the Greek ideal of excellence. A similar return was made by Aristotle in other fields, as, for instance, in cosmology. The term *spoudaios*, used by Aristotle in this context, evokes indeed the zeal and vigor of former heroes<sup>58</sup>. Aristotle sometimes cites Pericles as a typical example of prudence<sup>59</sup>. Plato did have some appreciation for Pericles, but attributed his prudent leadership more to divine assistance than to Pericles' own wisdom, but according to Aristotle Pericles possessed the knowledge of what was good for himself and for others<sup>60</sup>.

As the point of departure for our study of the theme of the prudent man I should like to take E.N. in, 6,1113 a 26 ff.: a healthy organism experiences as good for itself what really is so, but this is not the case with a diseased body. Something similar happens in the field of ethics, "since the good man judges each class of things rightly, and in each the truth appears to him. For each state of character has its own ideas of the noble and the pleasant, and perhaps the good man differs from others most by seeing the truth in each class of things, being as it were the norm and measure of them. In most things the error seems to be due to pleasure, for it appears a good when it is not"<sup>61</sup>. — This text seems to assign an absolute position to the wise man. Yet the wise man is subject to reality: he is excellent because he knows how things are. There is, therefore, no pure subjectivism in this theory of the wise man.

St. Thomas weakens the argument of Aristotle's text and writes that that which is according to reason, and therefore good, appears as good to this man. He furthermore stresses that the wise man is *as it were a criterion*<sup>62</sup>.

Another text is E.N. iv, 14, 1128 a 31: "The refined and well bred man, therefore, will be as we have described, being as it were a law to himself". Here too St. Thomas makes a correction by writing that such a man does what is good by his own choice and that therefore he *seems to be* his own law<sup>63</sup>:

In E.N. vi, 12, 1143 b 7 ff. we read that insight and knowledge are proper to certain people and certain ages. We should heed the unproven assertions of old and experienced people. — Also with regard to this text St. Thomas directs us toward a more objective criterion by adding that these people know the principles of what we have to do and he recalls his doctrine of the first principles of the practical intellect, which are the basis of all moral actions<sup>64</sup>. Already earlier in his commentary St. Thomas had pointed out the need for such principles: how does the virtuous man become virtuous, for nothing reduces itself from potency to actuality? For this reason we must admit first principles in us, which arise spontaneously and in which the rules of conduct are contained<sup>65</sup>. At least four times in his commentary St. Thomas returns to the doctrine of these principles. The theory of these principles is so important because it provides an objective basis to the moral judgments of the wise man and it shows that moral law is objectively determined, even if it is worked out and formulated by the human individual.

In E.N. vi, 13, 1144 a 30 Aristotle speaks of an *eye* of the soul, which becomes prudent by the practice of virtue. The theme of the right eye was already known to Plato<sup>66</sup>. It is intended to prove that the good only shows itself to those who really apply themselves to it. According to Plato one must turn to the ideas and open oneself for truth, but according to Aristotle this insight is not dependent on the knowledge of the ideas, but on experience<sup>67</sup>. We notice the gap between both theories: what for Plato would be turning oneself to darkness, becomes a source of knowledge to Aristotle. St. Thomas refers again to the principles of the practical intellect, which we know intuitively<sup>68</sup>.

A text of the ninth book, 1166 a 10, should finally be mentioned where the excellent man and virtue are said to be a criterion of all things<sup>69</sup>. In 1176 a 17 Aristotle adds that in order to determine what is good and bad in the different fields of human action we must assume that what the good man holds to be such, is good and bad, for virtue and the good man are the measure of these things. Dirlmeier suggests that the constant recurrence of the theme of the wise man as the criterion of morality must be explained by the fact that Aristotle is a Greek<sup>70</sup>. St. Thomas seems to have felt this defect of Aristotle's theory and constantly points to virtue, introducing in this way a more objective criterion.

Before passing to a next criterion of morality in the *Nicomachean Ethics* we should answer an objection. Aristotle has been criticized for introducing into his ethics conceptions of moral life, proper to his time and his own class<sup>71</sup>. It is undoubtedly true that Aristotle's appraisal of certain human actions, as, for instance, of the *megalopsuchos*, shows aspects which Christians cannot admit and which depend on Greek paganism. But despite this bias Aristotle always attempted to describe the real structure of things and often succeeded in doing so. His motto is expressed in the *Protreptikos*, fr. 1W3 Ross: we must get to know nature.

It should be mentioned that in Aristotle's works there is a remarkable shift in the meaning of the term *phronesis*. In *Metaph.* 1078 b 15, *De caelo* 298 b 23, *Phys.* 247 b 11 etc. the term is used as synonymous with *gnosis* and *episteme*, but in the *Nicomachean Ethics* it denotes a knowledge of changing things and it should help man attain his good<sup>72</sup>. In his famous study *Aristoteles. Grundlegung einer Geschichte seiner Entwicklung* Werner Jaeger understands this change in meaning as a rupture with Platonism: the *Eudemian Ethics* still were theonomous, but in the *Nicomachean Ethics* man can count only on himself. It is no longer possible to admit Jaeger's sweeping conclusions, but there remains an important shift in meaning from the Platonic use of the term to a more popular one<sup>73</sup>.

When we continue our study of the criteria of morality we arrive at E.N. vi, 13 1144 b 26-28 where virtue is defined as a state of mind accompanied by right *logos*. In order to trace the precise meaning of this term we must return to Plato. According to Plato the leaders of the state must know the ideas in order to carry out their task, but for the guardians, who assist

them, a less perfect knowledge is sufficient, viz. true opinion, which can be attained by education and a life according to law<sup>74</sup>. In *Laws* 644 c-665 a, Plato even writes that men are like puppets in a theater which are moved by strings. Reason is a golden string and we must obey its directions in order not to destroy the harmony in our being. Apparently the *orthos logos* is the successor to Plato's true opinion, but right reason has become the only source of moral knowledge. Right reason determines the mean, but it does so in conformity with the structure of things and on the basis of much experience<sup>75</sup>, just like medicine prescribes certain treatments on the basis of the proper knowledge of the human organism, of the effects of food, climate etc.<sup>76</sup>. Right reason is anything but a mere subjective factor; it implies knowledge of objective data<sup>77</sup>. Right reason has a certain authority and so Aristotle writes that it commands us<sup>78</sup>.

Right reason is sometimes based upon deliberation<sup>79</sup>, or it may make use of syllogisms, which have the following form: this kind of people have to do this or that in order to attain their end; this person belongs to this group of people; hence he must use the same means<sup>80</sup>. This kind of reasoning, however, does not have an important place in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and it was not used by Aristotle to formulate criteria or rules. The right mean is determined by taste and by experience.

A last question concerns the highest value in Aristotle's ethics. As a first remark we can say that Aristotle's ethics is not an ethics of the good nor of duty, for Aristotle denies the existence of the good in general and stresses the good of man. This human good is in the first place the good of reason and in the second place a certain order which reason must bring about in the other faculties and in man's actions. The good of reason itself consists in theoretical knowledge. Surprisingly the *Nicomachean Ethics* does not treat the question of the contents of theoretical knowledge and give the impression of considering this a question of secondary importance for human happiness. In other works, however, as in *De partibus animalium* 644 b 22 ff. Aristotle attributes much importance to the object of knowledge: if we are allowed to have some contact with higher things, we are in a better position than when we thoroughly know the things on this earth. Aristotle is not unaware of the fact that this theory of contemplation as man's highest action may seem unreal considering what most people do and think, but he nevertheless keeps stressing that we must become happy according to the best in us, that is according to what is most specifically human in us, viz. reason, and that we must do so through the highest activity<sup>81</sup>. Man's other activities are associated with that of reason, so that a certain integration takes place.

Contemplative life is characterized by pleasure and happiness, whereas less pleasure is inherent to other activities. In a famous text of *Metaph.* XII, ch. 7 Aristotle writes that God's activity is joy and pleasure, and he sometimes connects pleasure so intimately with activity that some students of Aristotle thought that pleasure is the highest value to him. However, this interpretation must be rejected: pleasure is connected with activity and accompanies it<sup>82</sup>. Man may act for the sake of the pleasure connected with an action, without necessarily being a debauchee<sup>83</sup>. Pleasure is added to activity just like beauty accompanies the youthful period of life<sup>84</sup>.

Aristotle mentions a law according to which all men must imitate divine bliss, for all possess a divine element and show the tendency — which is stronger than themselves - to avoid what is painful and to seek what is pleasurable<sup>85</sup>. Hence we have a fundamental tendency towards happiness and pleasure: the end of man is to attain *eupraxia* in friendship for himself<sup>86</sup>, that is a state in which he always does what is good.

Aristotle indicates various ways to find the criteria of morality. In every day life prudence and experience are the general criterion and determine the right mean. Virtuous life prepares man for contemplation, his real end. Yet Aristotle does not elaborate the relationship of virtuous life and contemplation.

Also on this point St. Thomas completes Aristotle's theory and gives it a new direction: in order to judge on the morality of human actions we must know the end of man, because all things which move towards an end, are determined by this end; because of the unity of human nature, there can only be one end for all men<sup>87</sup>. St. Thomas also corrects Aristotle's rejection of Plato's idea of the good: Aristotle, he argues, would only have rejected such an idea, but not the subsistent Good itself. Thomas furthermore writes that man's highest good cannot consist in human activity nor can it be anything of this life<sup>88</sup>. He reduces Aristotle's doctrine of contemplation to a theory of the limited happiness possible to man in this life<sup>89</sup>. Man's real and lasting happiness consists in Truth itself, God.

In conclusion we may say that St. Thomas without formally contradicting Aristotle, transposes his theories onto a higher level making them elements in a new system of thought. Such a remarkable transposition was only possible because of the high degree of truth of Aristotle's method and tenets.

1. *Language, Truth and Logic*, ch. 6.
2. *Utilitarianism*, ch. 2.
3. See James' *The Moral Philosopher and the Moral Life*, III and Dewey's, *Reconstruction in Philosophy*, ch. 7.
4. Peter Ehlen, *Die philosophische Ethik der Sowjetunion*, München 1972, pp. 185 ff.
5. "Natuurwet en geschiedenis", in *Concilium* 1, 5 (1965) 36.55.
6. "Towards a Morality based on the Meaning of History", *Concilium*, 3(1967) 13-23,
7. *Fonder la morale. Dialectique de la foi et de la raison*, Paris 1974, 115-118.
8. *Toward a New Catholic Morality*, Garden City 1970.
9. Cf. E. Goffman, *Les rites d'interaction*, Paris 1974.
10. *Gott, die Zukunft des Menschen*, Mainz 1969, p. 130.
11. *Gerechtigheid en liefde, genade en bevrijding*, Bloemendaal 1977, pp. 674 ff.
12. "La Morale fondamentale", in: *Recherches de science religieuse* 59 ( 1971) pp. 331-364.
13. *L'existentialisme est un humanisme*, p. 76.
14. *Pour une morale de l'ambiguité*, p. 76.
15. *One-dimensional Man*, ch. 9.
16. *Polit.* 29 7 a.
17. Diogenes Laertius, III, 78 ; *Theaet.* 1 76 a ff.
18. *E.N.* 1095 a 5.
19. *Ibid.*, 1092 b 11 ; *MM* 1 181 b 25.
20. *E.N.* 1094b 14.
21. *Ibid.*, b23
22. *Ibid.*, b14-19
23. *EM V*, ch. 14.
24. *EM* 1137b29.
25. Gauthier & Jolif, *Aristote. Ethique à Nicomaque, II, 19*; W.D. Ross, *Aristotle*, p. 189.
26. *S.C.G.*, III, 1.
27. *In I Eth.*, lectio 1, n. 8.
28. *E.N.* 1095 a 5.
29. *In I Eth.*, 1.3, n. 40.
30. *In V Eth.*, 1.16, n. 1086.
31. *In I Eth.*, 1.3, n. 35.
32. *Crito* 47; *Rep.* 618 e; *Theaet.* 176 e; *Laws* 728 b.
33. *Theaet.* 176a ff.

34. *E.N.* 1 179 a 24 - On Aristotle's theory see J. Donald Monan, *Moral Knowledge and its Methodology in Aristotle*, Oxford 1968.
35. *Ibid.*, 1096 b 34.
36. *Eudemian Ethics* VIII, ch. 3, 1249 b 3 ff. The text is quoted in the Oxford Translation of Sir David Ross.
37. F. Dirlmeier, *Aristoteles. Eudemische Ethik*, Berlin 1962, pp. 498-500.
38. *E.N.*, VI, 13, 1145a6ff.
39. *Laws* 836c
40. *Ibid.*, 636 c; cf. 836 bc; *Symp.* 204 e.
41. *Theaet.* 172b.
42. See J. Gould, *The Development of Plato's Ethics*, Cambridge 1955, p. 109.
43. *De part, anim.* 639 b 16.
44. *De caelo* 27 1 a 35 ff. ; *De part, anim.* 652 b 20.
45. *E.N.* 1135a3ff.
46. *Ibid.*, 1 1 03 a 29.
47. *Ibid.*, 11 04 a 10 ff.
48. *Ibid.*, II, ch. 2.
49. *Ibid.*, 1106b 18ff.
50. *Ibid.*, 1106a 28.
51. *Ibid.*, 1106a 30.
52. *Ibid.*, 1109b 20 ff. (Oxford Translation).
53. *Ibid.*, 1106b 36 (Oxford Translation).
54. *Physiological Theory and the Doctrine of the Mean in Plato and Aristotle*, The Hague 1969.
55. *In II Ethic.*, lectio 6, n. 3 1 7.
56. *Ibid.*, lectio 8, n. 335.
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58. *La prudence chez Aristote*, Paris 1963, p. 45.
59. *Cf. E.N.* 1140 b 10.
60. *Meno* 94 a-b; *E.N.* 1 140 b 8.
61. *E.N.* 1113 b 28 ff. (Oxford Translation).
62. *In III Ethic.*, lectio 10, n. 494.
63. *In IV Ethic.*, 1. 16, n. 862.
64. *In VI Ethic.*, 1.9, n. 1254.
65. *In II Ethic.*, 1. 4; *In V Ethic.*, 1. 12 n. 1018.
66. *Rep.* 5 19 a-b.
67. Dirlmeier, *o.c.*, p. 470.
68. *In VI Ethic.*, lectio 10, n. 1 273.
69. *E.N.* 1166a 10 ff.
70. *Op. cit.*, p. 586.
71. W.E.R. Hardie, *Aristotle's Ethical Theory*, Oxford 1968, p. 217.
72. *E.N.* 1140 b 21-27,
73. P. Aubenque, *op. cit.*, p. 30.
74. *Polit.* 309 c; *Laws* 659 d. See also the commentary of Dirlmeier, *op. cit.*, p. 298-304.
75. *E.N.* 1106b36ff.
76. *E.N.* 1138b30ff.
77. *Cf.* H.H. Joachim, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, Oxford 1951, p. 169.
78. *E.N.* 1114 b 29; 1125b34.
79. *Ibid.*, 1112b12ff.
80. *Cf.* Hardie, *op. cit.*, p. 240 ff.

81. *E.N.* 1177b26ff.
82. *Ibid.*, 1174 a 13-1175 a 21.
83. *Ibid.*, 1151 b 21.
84. *Ibid.*, 1174 b 31-33.
85. *Ibid.*, 1173 a 5.
86. *Ibid.*, 1140b5ff.
87. *In I Ethic.*, lectio 2; lectio 9.
88. *Ibid.*, lectio 8.
89. *Ibid.*, lectio 9.