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# THE RELIGIOUS DISPOSITION AS A CRITICAL RESOURCE TO RESIST INSTRUMENTALISATION

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When claiming that processes of bureaucratisation and monetarisation intrude into central areas of cultural reproduction, Habermas, following his sources in the early Marx and the Frankfurter Schule, does not appeal to the decline of religion to explain the dynamic of these processes.[1] It is true that in more recent writings Habermas displays a new openness to engage with religion, and he acknowledges that it can function as a force for social cohesion. In my view, the problem is not merely that the technological processes and the instrumental-rational mindset have developed a dynamic of their own which intrudes upon the world of morality, art, education, and so forth; rather, these processes only fill the void left empty by the decline of religion. In other words, the technological mindset only prevails when the religious mindset has disappeared. I would like to argue that religion fosters and cultivates a non-instrumentalising or non-calculative disposition towards God, and by extension, to others and self. The critical dimension of this religious disposition, usually called detachment or renunciation (*Gelassenheit, indiferencia, desasiemento, abandon*, . . .), has not been sufficiently explored by scholars. In a world in which an instrumentalising, calculative mentality intrudes into all kinds of social spheres, including education or even leisure, we need to explore this theme as it may offer us a useful resource to resist some of the onslaughts of instrumentalisation. I will develop this argument by drawing mainly on Aquinas and Augustine, and to a lesser extent on Kierkegaard.

## I. A FALLACY OF MODERN THINKING

The British philosopher Roger Scruton is one of the few authors who suggests that there is a link between the decline of the religious tradition on the one hand, and growing instrumentalisation, which results in turn in the contemporary inability to appreciate art, or to teach students, or make them understand the meaning of important achievements of Western culture, on the other hand. Scruton attempts to offer a *diachronic* outline of how this process took place – via the Enlightenment and its critique of religion; the Romantic movement in which the artist becomes the new priest, and in which art, music, poetry, and natural beauty acquire an almost religious significance;[2] the Modernist reaction to the increasing commercialization of our world as a last attempt to renew and thereby safeguard traditional high culture;[3] until, finally, the postmodern era of aesthetic insensitivity, artistic banality and kitsch.

What is missing from Scruton's account is a *synchronic* analysis of why exactly religion lends itself to safeguarding the traditional values and sensibilities he values so much, and the disappearance of which he laments. In this paper I therefore hope to sketch a rough outline as to why religion is important in cultivating a non-instrumentalising disposition.

To make this point I will start with a general philosophical observation. Roger Scruton has argued that the most valuable states and activities in life (e.g., friendship, love, worship, learning, ...) cannot be instrumentalised. Or rather, if one attempts to instrumentalise them, one loses the benefits they indirectly confer. It is a fallacy of the calculative approach to think that if something benefits us, it is a means to the benefit it confers. Play, for instance, has many beneficial side-effects: it is a way to explore the world, develop your capacities, develop social interaction, learn social rules, and so forth. But once you turn these side-effects into explicit goals, you cease to play. Again, friendship has a number of advantages but we should not directly attempt to capture those 'by-products' of friendship (such as the support and consolation it brings to people, ...). If we immediately target these 'by-products', we no longer act as friends (we may be simply networking):

> We gain the advantages of friendship only when we do not pursue them: these advantages are the necessary by-products of a practice that does not and *cannot* intend them. One of persistent fallacies of modern (...) thinking is the belief that if something benefits us, then it is a means to the benefit that it confers. On the contrary, the things that benefit us most – duty, love, friendship, beauty, knowledge, and the worship of God – are ends in themselves, and vanish just as soon as we treat them otherwise. [4]

## II. THE ARGUMENT AND SOME POSSIBLE CRITICISMS

Now I would like to argue – controversially perhaps – that the way religion transforms human desire by redirecting it via God allow us to value created things in their own right. I am aware that this may at first seem rather problematic. Indeed, if human desire and love for our neighbour go, so to speak, on a divine detour, do we then still really love the neighbour for her sake and in her own right? This is the critique that has been traditionally leveled against Augustine's perhaps rather ill-formulated distinction between 'enjoying' God, and 'using' things (*frui* and *uti*). In *De Doctrina Christiana* Augustine had explained the distinction between enjoyment (*frui*) and use (*uti*) by referring to somebody travelling to his homeland who has to make use of different instruments to reach it. This kind of person should not abandon his final goal, which is the sole source of his fruition and fulfillment; if he does abandon his goal by treating the means as an end, he will never reach his homeland.[5] What Augustine attempts to make clear is that only God should be our ultimate concern; no created being should be considered as the ultimate. Contrary to the popular critique of Augustine, this is not to downplay the significance of created beings (including other persons), nor to imply that they do not have intrinsic value. As a matter of fact, Augustine was happy enough to speak of 'enjoying' other persons, such as in Book IX of *De Trinitate* – but only for the sake of God.

Drawing on these insights from Augustine, I would like to argue that we can only love the other person in her own right when we love her for the sake of God.[6] To restate this claim: it is just because our desire focuses on God as the ultimate (which is what fruition of God means) that we can then attribute intrinsic value to created things. Here the analogy with friendship is illuminating: it is only when we pursue friendship for its own sake – rather than directly pursuing its advantageous 'by-products' – that we can then (indirectly) enjoy the benefits of friendship. In an analogous manner religious persons direct their desire towards God as their ultimate concern, and relate to creation only indirectly; but it is just this indirect way of relating that safeguards the intrinsic value of the world. There is, therefore, an interesting and revealing analogy between intrinsically valuable states (such as friendship, happiness, ...), which can only be attained indirectly, and the way religious people relate to created things. Thus, the fact that these states or dispositions can only be

pursued for their own sake in an *indirect* manner does not mean that they do not have an intrinsic value – on the contrary.[7]

In order to develop this point I would now like to look at Aquinas, and examine how he links the Augustinian fruition of God with the way human desire is redirected. Before I do so, I want to make the point that linking Augustine's discussion of *frui* and *uti* with desire is in line with Augustine's own views. In *De Trin.* Bk X Augustine himself had associated *uti* and *frui* with the will.[8] The Scholastics (Peter Lombard, Bonaventure, Aquinas) were to follow him in this.[9] But it was Aquinas's fellow-Dominican, Meister Eckhart, who has given us the most penetrating accounts of the non-possessive way of relating to created things in his description of detachment. I will return to Eckhart after the discussion of Aquinas.

## III. THE TRIANGULAR NATURE OF LOVE

In the second article on charity (*ST* II–II, 23.2) Aquinas quotes *De Doctrina Christiana,* in which Augustine wrote that by charity he means 'the movement of the soul towards the enjoyment of God for his own sake'. In this section I hope to throw some light upon this theocentric focus (fruition of God) by examining the nature of charity, and specifically the way human desire becomes 're-routed' via God. I will leave a number of important aspects aside, such as the way Aquinas adopts the Aristotelian notion of friendship, or how he draws upon the Pauline notion of fellowship with Christ throughout the treatise.[10]

The key article is *ST* II–II, 27.4, which deals with the question whether God can be loved immediately in this life. It is here that Aquinas describes the triangular nature of love. Aquinas points out that, since our knowledge is derived from the senses, those things are knowable first, which are nearer to our senses. He then states:

> Accordingly, we must assert that to love which is an act of the appetitive power, even in this state of life, tends to God first *(tendit in Deum primo),* and flows on from him to other things *(et ex ipso derivatur ad alia)* and in this sense charity loves God immediately, and other things through God *(charitas Deum immediate diligit, alia vero Deo mediante)*. On the other hand, with regard to knowledge, it is the reverse, since we know God through other things . . . .

Schockenhoff makes the point that the triangular nature of charity as Aquinas describes it is faithful to the NT account of *agape*, which refers to the creative love of God for human beings, the responsive love of human beings for God, and, included in this love, love of human beings for one another.[11] While natural love is directed towards God, self, and other persons, charity 'redirects' human love and desire: it should immediately target God, and other things through God *(alia vero Deo mediante)*.

According to Aquinas, religion, while maintaining the dynamic of our desire, prevents us from looking for ultimate fulfilment of that desire in created beings, and hence idolising them. In *ST* I–II, 2 Aquinas deals with a whole range of created goods which fail to provide us with ultimate fulfilment or happiness (wealth, honours, fame, power, bodily goods, pleasure, goods of the soul) but he desists from identifying any of them as the ultimate good. Aquinas is very aware that human desire has an almost infinite, inexhaustible dynamic – and it is for this very reason that only God can fulfil human desire: nothing in this created world can satisfy the human will *(nihil potest quietare voluntatem hominis)*; only God suffices to fill our hearts *(solus Deus voluntatem hominis implore potest)*.[12]

If human desire, and its infinite dynamic, *directly* targets created things, we are in danger of either idolising them, or of turning away from them in boredom. The pursuit of riches is an example of a kind of deceptive, merely horizontal infinity in which we need more material things because they fail to bring us fulfilment. Aquinas writes that our desire

for wealth, like our desire for God, can be infinite. However, whereas the desire for God leads to fulfilment (and the more we possess the ultimate Good, the more we find fulfilment in it), desire for wealth leads to a bad infinity, a never-ending search for more wealth as it fails to grant fulfilment to our desire.[13]

There is also the possibility that our desire zooms in on one specific created good, and invests it with its infinite dynamic. When this happens, we relate to it in an improper manner. Aquinas considers it a kind of superstition (where divine worship is offered to whom it ought not)[14] or even (in the broadest sense of the word) idolatry, the gravest of sins.[15] In idolatry something finite becomes the exclusive focus of our desire and finds a momentary rest in it whereas our desire should retain its dynamic towards God in the midst of the finite.

Thus, given the almost inexhaustible dynamic of human desire, there is always the danger that human desire rests in a finite object which, so to speak, cannot support this burden or intensity – and then we end up idolising something finite. Alternatively, desire turns away in disgust, pursuing another transient object. Religion solves the riddle of human desire by allowing it to maintain its dynamic (thus preventing it from over-investing itself in a particular created good, thereby 'burning it away') without, however, pursuing a 'bad infinity,' wandering from one particular created thing to another in a futile quest for fulfilment in this life. By refocusing our desire via God our desire for created things is not abolished; but our desire for created things is now mediated through God.[16]

## IV. A KIERKEGAARDIAN ANALOGY

I would like to draw an analogy to make Aquinas's point clear: a womaniser is somebody who directs his desire towards created things, *immediately* investing them with an infinite dynamic which they cannot support – and hence the womaniser moves from one object of his desire to another. On the other hand, the man who is infatuated bestows the fullness of his desire on one particular person, and the object of his desire cannot sustain the infinity of this desire either. Desire then creates a fantasy world in which it loses itself. Following a lead from Kierkegaard, we can state that it is only in marriage, in which God is invoked as 'the middle term' that we can properly relate to the other. Kierkegaard thus sees the nature of Christian love in terms of a triangular dynamic:

> Worldly wisdom is of the opinion that love is a relationship between persons; Christianity teaches that love is a relationship between: a person – God – a person, that is, that God is the middle term. (. . .) To love God is to love oneself truly; to help another person to love God is to love another person; to be helped by another person to love God is to be loved.[17]

Thus, for Kierkegaard, too, Christian love is triangular in nature; our love for the other is always mediated through God. Kierkegaard contrasts the merely human judgment about love (in which a person belongs to another person as if that other person were everything to him, and which is, in his view, effectively still a kind of self-love), to Christian love, in which the relationship to God is central.[18] It is this relationship to God which transforms all our relationships, including the one to ourselves: by relating to God, we will be saved from despair.

I do not want to pursue this dialogue with Kierkegaard any further in this context because Kierkegaard's views on Christian love are too disembodied. Given his robust defence of kinship preference (in his question on the order of charity), I suspect Aquinas would have shared this criticism. As an Aristotelian in his moral orientation, Aquinas will not be tempted by an ethics which downplays our natural everyday affections. This is a major correction of certain views within the tradition which resurface later in Kierkegaard, and which result in an unhealthy dichotomy between preferential love and Christian charity.

Let me recapitulate before I enumerate some of the critical implications of our theme. I have indicated the origins of this view in Augustine's distinction between *uti* and *frui*. I then suggested that religion redirects desire towards God, without abolishing desire for created things. And I claimed that rather than abolishing the possibility of attributing intrinsic value to created things, this dynamic of love focused on God does not compete with our love for created things but actually allows us to relate to them in a proper way.[19]

## V. DETACHMENT AND ITS CRITICAL IMPLICATIONS

It was Meister Eckhart who has beautifully described the nature of this radical theocentric focus. Eckhart reminds us that we should not love God 'the way we love a cow' (for what we can get out of it); this is why he admonishes us to live and love 'without a why'.[20] We have to abandon all self-seeking reasons and claims, every trace of possessiveness and self-centredness. This disposition he calls *Gelassenheit* or *Abgeschiedenheit*, usually translated as detachment, renunciation or surrender – a notion that was to influence the later thought of Heidegger. The theme of this non-possessive disposition is well-known, and we need not develop it in this context.[21]

In light of what I have said earlier, it is clear, I hope, that this non-instrumentalising disposition, fostered by religion (detachment), does not imply escapism or indifference towards the world. On the contrary, when we are detached we are devoid of self-centeredness and possessiveness, and this allows us to reengage with the world in a proper manner, without instrumentalising it, or subjecting it to our concerns.[22] It is the theocentric focus that contains the resources for resisting a calculative approach to a number of different spheres, such as free time and education.

A number of scholars have noticed how *free time* has become instrumentalised. First let us recall the etymology of the Latin word, *otium,* for leisure. The opposite of *otium* is *negotium* (which refers to occupation or business, hence the English word to negotiate). Thus, leisure is time characterised by freedom, not subject to the demands of the hustle and bustle of normal work and business.

Josef Pieper and Theodore Adorno, from very different intellectual perspectives, argue that the idea of work has invaded and taken over the whole realm of human existence. At first this may appear an absurd claim: surely people have more free time than ever before?

Both authors are well aware of the growing free time people have but they argue that it is not genuine free time. Adorno, for instance, writes that free time is 'tending towards its own opposite, and is becoming a parody of itself. Thus unfreedom is gradually annexing 'free time''.[23] Why so? Free time is becoming instrumentalised, according to Adorno, because of the very fact that free time becomes an oasis of recreation utterly divorced from work and serious pursuits. This kind of free time allows people to 'recharge their batteries', as popular parlance has it, using – significantly – a mechanical metaphor. Adorno writes: 'free time must not resemble work in any way whatsoever, in order, presumably, that one can work all the more effectively afterwards'.[24] In other words, free time has become heteronomous. The shallow entertainment which further dulls the imagination of people, is nothing more than 'a shadowy continuation of labour'.[25]

These views also have implications for *education*. The intrusion of instrumentalising approaches into education can be called the 'sophisti-fication' of education.[26] True education is the pursuit of knowledge 'severed from its present purposes, and pursued wherever it may guide us. For if we do not detach education from its application, we shall never acquire it'.[27] We must engage in a kind of ascesis and abandon a calculative approach if we want to learn anything profoundly meaningful. This is the difference between learning and training. Training is by its orientation towards something

specialised. Education is concerned with the whole, it concerns the whole being of the person.[28] Perhaps this is why there is a link between the Greek word for leisure (σχολη) and its modern-day derivatives, school. The name for institutions of education and learning is derived from the Greek word for 'leisure'.[29]

Denys Turner has rightly criticized those who reduce education to a mere service to the economy by comparing this approach to that of the Sophists in Plato's time. While Plato called them – with heavy irony – 'sophists' (wise men), he thought they were really *merchants* of wisdom, not so much because they demanded payment for their teaching but more fundamentally because Plato

> thought it possible for them to conceive of selling their teaching only because they had in any case reduced knowledge itself to a sort of commodity – the sort of thing you could *exchange* for some other commodity of equivalent value. The sophists, as Plato represents them, thought that knowledge 'got you places' – indeed it *was* knowledge only if it got you places.[30]

From this perspective we can question those approaches that aim at making education – and the university sector in general – more 'useful' in economic terms, for they may turn out to be a kind of 'sophisti-fication'.

Again, I have elsewhere drawn out the parallel between the *aesthetic disposition* (the Kantian indifference with which we approach a work of art) and the non-possessive religious disposition of detachment.[31] Religion differs, however, from art and education in that the non-instrumentalising disposition is not just a requisite; its cultivation is actually one of the main 'goals' of religion. Paradoxically, it is a kind of 'goal' that cannot be pursued directly through our own efforts.[32] Perhaps it is here that discussions with Buddhism become meaningful. According to Buddhism enlightenment is something we should pursue and yet it is something that comes to us. It may very well be that focusing on the religious disposition rather than on the so-called mystical experiences offers a more fruitful perspective for inter-religious dialogue. But that is an issue for another day.

## VI. SUMMARY

I have argued that religion fosters a non-utilitarian disposition and that it therefore contains the resources to withstand the development of an instrumentalising mindset, allowing us to adopt a critical stance against instrumentalising policies in many areas of life, such as education, culture and human relations. Religion, by redirecting our desires to God, allows us to find intrinsic meaning in created beings. By refocusing our desire towards God our desire for created things is not abolished; but our desire for created things is now mediated through God.[33] The analogy with friendship stands: just as we should not directly desire to attain the benefits it confers, but only indirectly by pursuing friendship; so too we should not directly invest the infinite nature of our desire upon created things but only indirectly, via God as the middle term, as Kierkegaard puts it. Because in religion our desire should become love for God, without idolising the finite or abnegating it, our dealings with created beings become non-instrumentalising, and we can treat them as valuable in their own right.[34]

1 Jürgen Habermas, *Der Philosophische Diskurs der Moderne* (Franfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1987), p. 412–14.

2 See Roger Scruton, *An Intelligent Person's Guide to Modern Culture* (South Bend, IN: St Augustine's Press, 2000), p. 52–53: 'The high culture of the Enlightenment (. . .) involved a noble and energetic attempt to rescue the ethical view of human life – the view of life which flourished spontaneously in the old religious culture, but which demanded to be snatched from the ruins, when that culture collapsed. The rescue was a work of the imagination, in which the aesthetic attitude took over from religious worship as the source of intrinsic values. (. . .) Thereafter art becomes a continuous

meditation on our loss – a melancholy acknowledgement that the primary source of moral feeling has dried up, and that *only* the aesthetic remains'.

3 Scruton points out (p. 82) that some of the main Modernists were traditionalists in their religious outlook (Stravinsky, Messiaen, Britten, Matisse and, of course, T.S. Eliot): when the religious motive withers away, the Modernist project collapses.

4 Roger Scruton, 'On Humane Education' from *The Aesthetic Understanding. Essays in the Philosophy of Art and Culture* (South Bend, IN: St Augustine's Press: 1998), p. 245.

5 See St Augustine, *Teaching Christianity,* translated by Edmund Hill (NY: New City Press, 1996), p. 107–108.

6 In Bk IX, 13 Augustine had argued that 'the lower creature should be used to bring us to God, the creature on a par should be enjoyed, but in God. (. . .) Let us then enjoy both ourselves and our brothers in the Lord . . .' Translated by Edmund Hill from *St Augustine. The Trinity* (New York: New City Press, 1994), p. 278. Clearly, Augustine argues here that we can 'enjoy' our fellowmen, too, 'in God'. The critique popularly leveled against Augustine and the ensuing tradition may appear even more powerful in light of the fact that a number of Christian theologians have construed Christian love for the neighbour in universalistic, non-preferential terms, such as for instance Søren Kierkegaard in his flawed masterpiece *Works of Love* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998). But such a non-preferential interpretation of Christian love is not necessary, as the example of Aquinas shows.

7 Aquinas makes a similar observation when he discusses joy. In *ST* I–II, 4.2 *ad* 3 Aquinas makes the point that charity does not seek the beloved good for the sake of delight: for charity it is a consequence that it delights in the good gained which it loves. Delight is clearly a 'side-effect' of charity, and not its goal. The end of charity is vision, not delight. As he puts it in *ST* I–II, 4.2 *ad* 1: 'Delight is a perfection attendant upon vision'. Thus, something (such as 'delight') can be valued in its own right but you can only attain it by not directly targeting it.

8 For instance: 'memory and understanding contain the awareness and knowledge of many things; will is there for us to enjoy them or use them. We enjoy the things we know when the will reposes in them because it is delighted by them for their own sakes; we use things when we refer them to something else we would like to enjoy', from *St Augustine: The Trinity*, p. 296.

9 See, for example, Peter Lombard in his *Commentary on the Sentences*, Book I, Distinction I.

10 Aquinas describes charity in terms of friendship with God (*ST* II–II, 23.1) who is the principal object of charity (*ST* II–II, 23.5 *ad* 1). As this is a well-known theme in Aquinas, a brief summary will suffice. Charity as friendship implies benevolence (in which we wish good to somebody for his sake) and mutuality (made possible by the Incarnation, cf. John 15:15, quoted in the first article on charity). These in turn are based on 'a certain communication' *(aliqua communicatio)* of the person with God. Aquinas concludes: 'since there is a communication between man and God, inasmuch as He communicates His happiness to us, some kind of friendship must needs be based on this same communication, of which it is written (1 Cor 1:9): *God is faithful: by whom you are called unto the fellowship (societas) of his Son*. The love which is based on this communication, is charity: wherefore it is evident that charity is the friendship of man for God'. (*ST* II–II, 23.1) Eberhard Schockenhoff, ['The Theological Virtue of Charity,' in Stephen Pope (ed.), *The Ethics of Aquinas* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2002), p. 244–58] has argued that *communicatio* refers to a sharing of God's love with humanity through the participation of the faithful in Christ and the vital union of all Christians with the Son (as the quotation from Paul suggests), resulting in an inner transformation of the person.

11 See Schockenhoff, 'The Theological Virtue . . .', especially p. 251–54.

12 *ST* I–II.2.8 and *Commentary on John*, no. 586 (Marietti edition).

13 In the Reply 3 in *ST* I–II, 2, 1, he writes: 'the desire for artificial wealth is infinite, for it is the servant of disordered concupiscence, which is not curbed . . ..' He goes on to explain how this kind of infinite desire differs from 'the desire for the sovereign good' which fulfils us when it is possessed, while wealth fails to bring us fulfilment when possessed. Quoting John 4:13 he writes: '*Whosoever drinks of this water*, by which temporal goods are signified, *shall thirst again*. The reason for this is that we realise more their insufficiency when we possess them: and this very fact shows that they are imperfect, and that the sovereign good does not consist therein'. When we possess riches, we realise that they fail to fulfil us, and we seek more.

14 *ST* II–II, 92.1

15 *ST* II–II, 94.3: 'the greatest of all [sins] seems to be for a man to give God7apos;s honour to a creature, since, so far as he is concerned, he sets up another God in the world, and lessens the divine sovereignty'. Aquinas mainly has in mind the worship of inanimate objects or animals but his remarks have a wider application (see *ST* II–II, 94, 1 *ad* 4).

16 Our whole existence is determined by this non-possession of ultimate fulfilment. (See *ST* I–II, 5.3: 'A certain participation of happiness can be had in this life: but perfect and true happiness cannot be had in this life'). This is what it means to be in the *status viatoris* (see *ST* III, 15.10). Josef Pieper has elaborated on the implications of this notion in his beautiful book *On Hope*, now included in J. Pieper, *Faith-Hope-Love* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996). Having been made out of nothing we have an orientation towards fulfilment which will only be fully met in the afterlife when we meet God face to face.

17 *Works of Love,* p. 106–107.

18 *Works of Love,* p. 108.

19 David Gallagher ('The Will and its acts (IaIIae, qq.6–17') in Stephen Pope (ed.), *The Ethics of Aquinas,* 84–85) has shown that Aquinas clearly allows for attributing intrinsic value to other human beings. This is the essence of friendship. He quotes Aquinas who states that 'that which is loved with the love of friendship is loved simply and for itself' (*ST* I–II, 26.4). Similarly, in *ST* II–II 25.2 *ad* 1, he states that 'God and neighbour are those with whom we are friends . . .' When friendship becomes instrumentalised (based on merely usefulness or pleasure for myself) it loses the character of friendship (*ST* I–II, 26.4 ad 3). Similarly, in *ST* I–II, 28.3 we read: 'In the love of friendship, a man's affection goes out from itself simply; because he wishes and does good by his friend, by caring and providing for him, for his sake' (*ST* I–II, 28.3). In an important contribution ('Thomas's authority for identifying charity as friendship:

Aristotle or John 15?' in *The Thomist* 62/4 (1998) 581–601) Anthony Keaty draws a parallel between Augustine's terms (*frui* and *uti*) and Thomas's terms (friendship-love and concupiscence-love): 'To enjoy (*frui*) is to love that good which is one's final good (*dilegere propter se* in *De Doct. Christ*. 1.22.20) and to use (*uti*) is a properly ordered love when goods are loved only insofar as they are useful for attaining one's final good *(dilegere propter aliud)*. Similarly, in friendship-love the friend loves the friend *simpliciter et per se*, and concupiscence-love is properly ordered to the further good of friendship' (*ST* I–II, 26.4). This is why charity is the form of all virtues: it directs other virtuous acts to their final end. As Keaty says p. 591–92: 'the ultimate and principal good of man is the enjoyment of God, . . . and to this end man is ordered by charity' (cf. *ST* II–II, 23.7).

20 For a discussion of this theme in Eckhart, see Bernard McGinn, *The Mystical Thought of Meister Eckhart: The Man from Whom God Hid Nothing* (New York: Crossroads: 2001), p. 147ff.

21 Eckhart may be one of the best-known spokespersons of this ideal but he is merely one of the exponents of an ideal that has a long history in Christian spirituality. The theme is sometimes expanded by developing the analogy of servants (*servi*), hirelings (*mercenarii*), and sons (*filii*). This is important because it indicates that what we are describing here is a process of transformation: from an instrumentalised relationship with God to one that is being freely pursued for its own sake. John Cassian is the first to develop these metaphors in his *Conferences*. After having referred to the story of the prodigal son who first became a slave, then longs to be a hireling but is received by his father as a son, John Cassian writes: 'If, by God's help and not relying on his own laborious effort, anyone deserves to posses this state, he will begin to pass from the condition of slave, in which there is fear, and from a hireling's hopeful desire, in which it is not so much the goodness of the giver but rather the payment of the wage that is looked for, to adopted sonship, where there is no longer any fear or greed but rather that love which never fails and always abides. (. . .) whoever attains by way of this love to the image and likeness of God will take delight in the good because of the pleasure of the good itself'. John Cassian, *The Conferences*, XI, 9, translated by Boniface Ramsey (Mahwah, N.J.: Newman Press, 1997), p. 415. St Bernard of Clairvaux adopts the same analogy in his insightful treatise *On Loving God* (*De Diligendo Deo*, chs. XII-XIV). Neither servile fear nor mercenary self-love convert the soul; they may change at times the external behaviour or appearances but they will never change the most interior disposition (*affectum)*. See *Liber De Diligendo Deo,* VII, 17, translated by G.R. Evans, as *On Loving God* in *Bernard of Clairvaux. Selected Works* (NJ: Paulist Press, 1987), p. 187. Genuine love is its own reward *(Verus amor seipso contentus est)* and should not be pursued for personal gain. Another author who adopts the analogy of servants, friends and sons, and who developed it in a masterful manner to describe our growing transformation from a calculative, instrumentalising disposition to a free, selfless one, is Jan van Ruusbroec in his little work *Vanden Blinkenden Steen* (The Sparkling Stone).

22 I have developed this theme elsewhere in some more detail. See Rik Van Nieuwenhove, 'The Religious and Aesthetic Attitude' in *Literature and Theology* 18/2 (2004): 160–72, especially p. 165–68; 'The Christian Response to Suffering, and the Significance of the Model of the Church as Body of Christ' in *Angelicum* 82 (2005), p. 595–609, especially p. 597–98; and 'Technology and Mystical Theology' in *Technology and Transcendence*, eds. M. Breen, E. Conway and B.McMillan (Dublin: Columba Press, 2003), p.186–94.

23 Theodore Adorno, 'Free Time' in *The Culture Industry* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 187–97. For this quotation, see p. 188.

24 Adorno, 'Free Time,' p. 190.

25 Adorno, 'Free Time,' p. 194. Adorno refers to the 'obligation' to have a hobby in accordance with what the 'leisure industry' – the irony of the term should not be lost on the reader – can supply. The dullness of free time devoid of any real creativity is exemplified by people grilling themselves brown in the sun for the sake of a sun-tan: here people themselves become fetishes. 'Free Time,' p. 191

26 I have developed this in: 'The Sophisti-fication of Education' in *Culture, Technology & Values: Ethical Dimensions of European Identity*, Michael J. Breen and Eamonn Conway (eds.) (London: Paragon Press, 2008), p. 83–96.

27 Scruton, 'On Humane Education,' p. 244. Scruton gives the example of somebody who seeks only to learn those parts of mathematics that are useful to his present needs. Such a person will never really succeed in understanding what he learned; he will fail to acquire a real interest in the subject, and will be unable to teach others.

28 See Josef Pieper, *Leisure. The Basis of Culture* (South Bend, IN: St Augustine Press, 1998), p. 22–24.

29 Pieper, *Leisure,* p. 4. This connection reflects a long tradition, especially in the Arts. Indeed, we used to speak of the 'Liberal Arts'. Aquinas, when commenting on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* I, 3, no. 59, states: 'Only those arts which are directed to knowing are called free [or liberal] arts, whereas those which are directed to some useful end attained by action are called mechanical or servile arts'. The Liberal Arts, therefore, have their justification in themselves; servile arts are ways of human action that have a purpose outside of themselves, a purpose which consists in a useful effect that can be realised through praxis. The liberality or freedom of the liberal arts consists in the fact that they are not subservient to external purposes, or that they do not need to be legitimated by a social function, i.e., by being work.

30 Denys Turner, *Faith Seeking* (London: SCM, 2002), p. 132.

31 See R. Van Nieuwenhove, 'The Aesthetic and Religious Attitude' p. 160–72.

32 If it could, religion itself would be open to instrumentalisation. Religion as religion cannot be instrumentalised; if one attempts to do this (for the sake of financial profit, or for personal self-gratification) it ceases to be religion. The same dynamic as with friendship holds here too.

33 Our whole existence is determined by this non-possession of ultimate fulfilment. (See *ST* I–II, 5.3: 'A certain participation of happiness can be had in this life: but perfect and true happiness cannot be had in this life'). This is what it means to be in the *status viatoris*. (see *ST* III, 15.10). Pieper has elaborated on the implications of this notion in his beautiful book *On Hope*, mentioned above.

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