

# THE DESIRE FOR GOD AND THE LOVE OF LEARNING: A SKETCH OF PLATO AND ARISTOTLE

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The studies of mediaeval historians since the beginning of this century have made the originality of the Middle Ages so clear to us that we are now in danger of forgetting the continuity of the mediaeval world with that of Classical Greece. One similarity between these two periods that seems worthy of exploration is their common conviction that a man's intellectual life depends in some originative way upon his moral life.<sup>1</sup>

As far as the Middle Ages are concerned, this conviction is so well-known as to need no further elaboration. After all, the most widely read of all philosophical works in that period was the dialogue Boethius wrote while in prison. He portrays Lady Philosophy appearing to him for his consolation. In the bottom hem of her garments there is interwoven a Greek Π which stands for practical wisdom. In the uppermost hem there is a Greek Θ representing theoretical wisdom. In between these two letters there were represented the steps by which one could ascend from the lower to the higher.<sup>2</sup>

But, before Boethius, the fact that St Augustine's intellectual flowering resulted from the catalyst of his moral conversion sixteen hundred years ago is there for all to see and wonder at.<sup>3</sup> What is noticed less often is that Plato and Aristotle also considered the morally good life to be a condition for the approach to wisdom.

That is the reason for the title of this paper: just as Augustine's desire for God was the matrix within which his learning was conceived, that is to say, his serious and therefore recorded learning, so too something like

this was not unknown to the greatest of the Greek philosophers. The opening language of my title is biblical, in homage to St Augustine; but, as the subtitle indicates, this is no more than a short account of the greatest of his Greek predecessors.<sup>4</sup>

Nor is this to say that we have any precise biographical information on a conversion of Plato and Aristotle to the philosophical life -- although one scholar has said that this is exactly what Socrates was trying to accomplish. He maintains that in the Classical world "a person was converted to philosophy, just as one is converted to Christianity, and this conversion signified in the mind and in the heart of those who accomplished it both a reversal of values and the beginning of a new existence."<sup>5</sup> Werner Jaeger has said that "the essence of philosophical education is 'conversion' which literally means 'turning round'."<sup>6</sup> Meanwhile, Plato and Aristotle do supply us with a few facts and a number of texts which suggest that for them the philosophical life does indeed begin in ethically good behaviour.

Looking at the facts first, we remember that Socrates was executed in Athens in 399 B.C. As Plato tells it, Socrates had to drink the hemlock because he felt more constrained to follow the words of the god, Apollo, and his own conscience than the words of the men who would condemn him for continuing to philosophize.<sup>7</sup> A few years later, one of his followers, Plato, returned to that same city to openly inaugurate in the Academy his own school in which he took up in his own way the dangerous work of Socrates. In the next generation, Plato's pupil, Aristotle, came back to that self-same city to hold up before the Athenians the Socratic figure of a magnanimous man.<sup>8</sup> For Plato and Aristotle to have had such a passion for wisdom in the full light of what such a passion might cost shows us that they were not merely professors of philosophy; they were men making a public profession of their love of wisdom. By having the courage to walk in the footsteps of Socrates, through the very city that had judicially murdered him, Plato and Aristotle demonstrated that they were what Thomas Aquinas would later call "proven men."<sup>9</sup>

This moral or ethical or even religious side of the philosophical life is so old that it looks like new. On the other hand, in most of today's colleges and universities, philosophy -- which for the Greeks included all of the liberal arts -- constitutes simply one group of subjects alongside all the others in the smorgasbord<sup>10</sup> we offer our students. Etienne Gilson has said that in none of the philosophy examinations in which he had participated over a very long career had he ever overheard "a single

examiner asking any candidate: 'Well, do you love wisdom?'"<sup>11</sup> To us the question is out of place and out of date. For Socrates it was the most fundamental of all questions. And he knew, better than most, that the correct answer to that question could be a matter of life or death.

What makes Socrates' question so unsettling is that it is not merely about which subjects we should study in comparison to any others. It is much more basic; it asks, who is the happy man and who is not? Who is living the better life and who is not?<sup>12</sup> In other words, he is asking: which way of life is most human in comparison with all other ways of life? It cannot consist in the mere pursuit of pleasure, as good and even as necessary as a certain amount of delight is for human life; for the various pleasures have themselves to be sorted out in order to find the best. This immediately requires a criterion outside of them, and even Callicles knew that some enjoyments were harmful and others beneficial.<sup>13</sup> Nor can it be a life wholly devoted to wealth, since money, important though it be, is only a means to survival. Neither can it be for the sake of a fine reputation, although everyone who has one enjoys it, since that is conferred only as the reward for some presumed personal excellence.<sup>14</sup> It remains, then, that only personal excellence, both moral and intellectual, ought to be the goal of our striving so that as far as possible everything we do or think will be in accord with a truly human life.<sup>15</sup>

In fact, to the Greeks such a life will be more than human. For, just as writers and statesmen seek to be immortal in the memory of others and all living things strive for immortality through their generation of offspring, the philosopher is also in love with what is immortal by cultivating and using the best thing in him, his mind. And one reason for saying that the mind has a share of immortality and even of divinity is that it can know objects that are immortal and divine.<sup>16</sup>

The goal of human effort, both individual and social, is the same for Plato and Aristotle. It is the best, says Plato,<sup>17</sup> that all legislation should aim at. But, "There are two different kinds of good things, the merely human and the divine; the former are consequential on the latter. Hence the city which accepts the greater goods acquires the lesser along with them, but one which refuses them misses both."<sup>18</sup> And elsewhere: "That is why we should make all speed to take flight from this world to the other, and that means becoming like the divine so far as we can, and that again is to become righteous with the help of wisdom."<sup>19</sup> Human character ought to be modelled after "the divine and godlike,"<sup>20</sup> to which he adds: "For the

gods never neglect a man who is eagerly wanting to be just and to become as like a god as it is possible for a man to be by practicing virtue."<sup>21</sup>

For Plato, then, it is by aiming at the divine, the unqualifiedly good, that human perfection is achieved. But, while this knowledge of the divine leads us to imitate it, it is not a knowledge for the sake of practice; Plato calls it purely intellectual (*gnostike*).<sup>22</sup> Its sole purpose is a knowledge of the truth.<sup>23</sup> This capacity for "beautiful and free discussions" is the most difficult part of philosophy;<sup>24</sup> it is therefore rarely seen and flourishes only in maturity. The premature involvement in this kind of discussion will be inclined to lawlessness rather than moderation; it will be used as a game and for the sake of winning arguments.<sup>25</sup> In fact, this kind of discussion can be carried on only "among friends with good will."<sup>26</sup>

For Aristotle, well-being "is certainly the chief end of individuals and of city-states."<sup>27</sup> It follows, then, that "virtue must be the care of a state which is truly so called."<sup>28</sup> He goes on:

If we are right in our view, and happiness is assumed to be virtuous activity, the active life will be the best, both for every city collectively and for individuals. Not that a life of action must necessarily have relation to others, as some persons think, nor are those ideas only to be regarded as practical which are pursued for the sake of practical results, but much more the thoughts and contemplations which are independent and complete in themselves; since virtuous activity, and therefore a certain kind of action, is an end, and even in the case of external actions the directing (*architektonas*) mind is most truly said to act.<sup>29</sup>

This is clearly a reference to "that which is most truly the master art":

And politics appears to be of this nature; for it is this that ordains which of the sciences should be studied in a state, and which each class of citizens should learn and up to what point they should learn them; and we see even the most highly esteemed of capacities to fall under this, e.g. strategy, economics, rhetoric; now, since politics uses the rest of the sciences, and since, again, it legislates as to what we are to do and what we are to abstain from, the end of this science must include those of the others, so that this end must be the good for man.<sup>30</sup>

Now the good for man, his happiness, turns out to be activity "in accordance with the highest virtue"; and "this activity is contemplative" (*theoretikos*).<sup>31</sup> But this activity depends on leisure.<sup>32</sup> And leisure itself needs to be supported by many necessities of life along with the moral virtues. Indeed, "those then who seem to be the best-off and to be in the possession of every good, have special need of justice and temperance, and all the more the more leisure they have, living in the midst of abundance."<sup>33</sup>

For Aristotle as for Plato, practical wisdom and the other moral virtues are cultivated for the sake of engaging in theoretical activity.<sup>34</sup> What is more, this kind of activity is in greater need of virtuous character than any other.<sup>35</sup>

This is a short account of what in reality is a long itinerary from the vague presentiment of happiness to some knowledge of what is deathless and above the merely human. In fact, it seems to require at least three successive steps. First there is the inclination toward what is good simply because it is fitting. Secondly, there is a cultivation of all the moral virtues, self-control, justice, courage and practical wisdom. Thirdly, once the soul is thus cultivated "by means of habits for noble joy and noble hatred," it will be "like earth which is to nourish the seed" and then it will bring forth "the most fruitful discourse and reap a golden harvest of philosophy."<sup>36</sup> What is impressive here is that Plato and Aristotle, in spite of all their differences, see the philosophical journey as following the same organic sequence and they even use much of the same language in describing it.

#### *The First Step*

The first step is absolutely crucial: it is the inclination or the disposition to assent to the good simply because of its intrinsic worth.<sup>37</sup> Normally, it is parents who try to instill such a disposition into their children. But, finally, or rather initially, it is each person within the isolation of himself who has to make this decision.

The problematic character of this entire venture lies in its dependence on this choice. Do we choose the good simply because it is best for our particular selves? To talk about what is first here is not a matter of chronology. It is a question of causality. Do we dare to want man's greatest fulfillment in the face of our clear inadequacies? That is the question. If we do not want it (God knows if we understand what we are doing -- for what we are doing seems close to the mystery surrounding moral

evil), we shall never find it. That is a hard saying. Yet, it seems to be true in the realm of ethical knowledge: unless we tend to our true development, we shall not make the choices that carry us toward it because we shall not know what they ought to be.<sup>38</sup>

Aristotle observed that we use quite different standards in learning about quantity and in ascertaining quality. For the first, we always use some measure which is a minimum; for example, in measuring a small space we use inches and in the case of a very long distance we use miles. On the contrary, when we evaluate quality we employ a maximum as our measure: in the case of states we use the best of constitutions; in the field of scholarship, the most scholarly; so, in ethics, it must be the most ethical.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, it is only in view of the most completely human sort of life that we can make the right choice for ourselves.

Both authors seem to agree that every human being needs the moral virtues in order to achieve human happiness. Yet, they say that there is another level of happiness superior to this: it is the pursuit of wisdom through a life of study. This devotion to reason, "the most divine element in us,"<sup>40</sup> finds its fulfillment in contemplative activity and contemplative knowing, as we find it in the liberal arts. Since it is loved for its own sake,<sup>41</sup> such a life requires leisure and therefore it is not likely to be pursued by most people.<sup>42</sup>

The difficulty involved in choosing this superior type of happiness becomes apparent when we learn that the better of any two things is always more serious than it is amusing.<sup>43</sup> This follows from the fact that the more serious a person is the more intently he directs his mind toward the thing he wants to know.<sup>44</sup> Or, as Plato put it even more bluntly: winning the truth will require that one "work like a slave."<sup>45</sup>

Yet, that is only half the story. Those sobering words were a warning to the beginner, alerting him to the fact that the life of learning is a slow and austere process. But, knowing itself is the goal of that process; and human beings have an insatiable thirst for knowledge.<sup>46</sup> What is more, just as every activity has its own attendant pleasure when it is done well, so too there are degrees of enjoyment accompanying the various degrees of knowledge. Therefore, each knowing power will have its most complete satisfaction when it is in the best condition and is directed toward the best of its objects.<sup>47</sup> It further follows that since the activity is inseparable from our delight in it,<sup>48</sup> we occasionally find ourselves explaining our presence in the teaching profession by that very fact. Why did we

choose such an impecunious business? At least as often as not we point to its heady satisfactions. Those who do well in the work of the historian or the mathematician or the philosopher would rather do that job than eat. This is just as well because that is exactly what they will sometimes have to do.

But, most important, those who choose a life of scholarship do so because they know of none more fitting for a rational animal. Yet, prior to our discovering its own characteristic joys and its intrinsic reasonableness, we are usually persuaded by a person who is probably older than we and, seemingly, wiser. This sort of person appears to be the very embodiment of such a life. For example, we cannot close our ears to the words of Plato as he tries to encourage us to have a "stable belief" about the good.<sup>49</sup> How could he do this? According to his student, Aristotle, by first of all showing himself to be a man of good character.<sup>50</sup> Most often, however, Plato has Socrates take his place.

This is why Plato has Socrates dialoguing with Callicles in the *Gorgias* and with Thrasymachus in the *Republic*. He wants to persuade them through the example of Socrates and the rationality of his arguments that a life given to philosophy is the only acceptable human life. This is not to say that this kind of encouragement (a *protreptikos* in Greek or an *exhortatio* in Latin) was always successful. It cannot be accomplished by coercion and it can only be assisted by persuasion. In the end, each person must choose for himself.

Aristotle uses less of the hortatory tone -- no doubt because he was writing for students who were already persuaded of the value of what they were doing. Nevertheless, at the beginning of his *Nicomachean Ethics* he quotes Hesiod to the effect that a person who does not know "all things himself" must *listen* "when men counsel right."<sup>51</sup> And, at the end, he encourages his students to make themselves immortal and to "strain every nerve to live in accordance with the best thing in us."<sup>52</sup> This is to say, they ought to live in accordance with reason.

### *The Second Step*

Assuming we have made the right initial choice, what on earth does the cultivation of the moral virtues have to do with the growth of the intellectual virtues? The answer is simple. We are not born philosophers.<sup>53</sup> We choose actions that are most agreeable to our dispositions. Therefore, only the good man chooses "what is in accordance with virtue"<sup>54</sup> because he

has consciously developed a disposition in favour of excellence. This practically wise man will be able to deliberate well not only about what is good in this or that particular case but also about the sorts of things that lead to the good life in general.<sup>55</sup> Meanwhile, his practical wisdom will be preserved by his self-control. Conversely, the vicious man will have made himself blind to the end of human actions and will be operating in the dark.<sup>56</sup>

This applies to all the areas of human conduct. The person who allows himself to be distracted by a longing for self-gratification or self-aggrandizement has failed to recognize his truest self, which is located in his reason.<sup>57</sup> Consequently, he will not hear the "argument that dissuades him, nor understand it even if he does hear it." What is necessary is that before hearing reasons, one must "already have a character with an affinity for virtue, loving what is noble and hating what is base."<sup>58</sup> Therefore, "a good man, since he lives with his mind fixed on what is noble, will submit to reason."<sup>59</sup> Having once directed his desires toward what is reasonable, and clinging to it, a person is easily directed toward the reality of anything.<sup>60</sup> He is now a fit student for the cultivation of the intellectual virtues or philosophy as a life of learning.

Everyone knows that philosophy is essentially this, a kind of learning. Love cannot be substituted for knowledge. And each of the liberal arts has its own principles and its own methods. But, because their practitioners must be submissive to reason and open to argument, they must first of all be dedicated to the good of reason which is the truth. And truth needs us much less than we need it. Therefore, the labours of investigation and the humility to acknowledge whatever truth is discovered no matter how unwelcome<sup>61</sup> require a disinterestedness on the part of anyone who pursues this kind of wisdom. To put it another way, because his areas of research are obscure to most people and therefore quite free of outside scrutiny and also because the intellectual virtues must be chosen like the moral, for their own sake, the lover of wisdom ought to "desire all wisdom, not just a part of it."<sup>62</sup> At the very least, this may keep him honest. It is in this sense that the *philia* in philosophy provides for the coming into being of its *sophia*.

But if the philosopher is so wholly committed to truth and wisdom in both thought and action, why is he held in such low regard today? Plato asks this question in the *Republic*.<sup>63</sup> His answer has two parts. He points out first that the general public is simply not equipped to comprehend this



mode of life. But secondly he says, "the greatest and chief disparagement of philosophy comes from those who pretend to that way of life."<sup>64</sup> Instead of pursuing the truth "always and in every way," these "impostors" have in fact "nothing to do with true philosophy."<sup>65</sup>

How could such a reversal come about? It happens, says Plato, when those who are most suited to philosophy abandon her. It is then that equally small men appear. Hoping to share in the honour of her name, they consort with philosophy and bring her into disgrace. And what sort of progeny do these men who are "unworthy of education" produce? Their offspring resemble the fathers themselves; they are sophisms.<sup>66</sup>

Who exactly are these progenitors of sophistry? They are individuals who are "calculating and bold and by nature skilled in dealing with people." Accordingly they treat their superiors with flattery. In this way they deceive them into believing that they, the Sophists, are of "the greatest value" while they themselves have no idea as to "what is best."<sup>67</sup> Meanwhile, toward other people, Sophists tend to be "quarrelsome, disputatious, argumentative and combative"; for they have a consuming interest in just one thing: personal gain.<sup>68</sup>

What does Aristotle say about these "counterfeit philosophers" in comparison with "the true?"<sup>69</sup> He suggests that the outside observer could easily mistake the one for the other since they are both talking about the very same things. Nevertheless, there is a profound difference between them; it consists "in their chosen way of life."<sup>70</sup> Sophists consider it "more profitable to seem to be wise rather than to be so without seeming to be so."<sup>71</sup> Like the athlete who is so bent on victory that he will use every means, foul or fair, to win a contest, so the Sophist will stop at nothing in order to win an argument. Every such seeming victory enhances his reputation for excellence in debate; and such a reputation can lead to a larger income.<sup>72</sup> In Aristotle's view, the natural abilities of the Sophist need not be inferior to those of the true philosopher; however, his choices always are.<sup>73</sup>

In the end, we find ourselves back where we started: what kind of choices are made by the person who claims the name "philosopher"? The value of this "greatest of the arts,"<sup>74</sup> and even its existence, seem to derive from a person's motivation. The goal of the philosopher is truth and wisdom. The objective of the Sophist is a prosperous career.

### Conclusion

No doubt there are other aspects of the affective side of philosophy on which the mediaevals and the Greeks agree. For example, they share the clear recognition that from a pedagogical point of view, the act of believing another person generally precedes the act of knowing what he is talking about; thus, we listen to a speaker for the most part in the expectation of learning some truth from him. As Augustine will say of this merely human belief: without it we shall never have a friend nor ever be one.<sup>75</sup> It was only in passing that I alluded to this function of belief as a path to knowledge.

Another similarity between our two historical periods is their candid reference to the religious beliefs of their time. This is not to say that they engage in a narrow apologetics while doing philosophy; that would be out of place. It is rather to say that in the struggle for ethical and intellectual excellence they were open to sage advice from any quarter, no matter who the source might be.<sup>76</sup> But, as the saying goes, that is another story.

For the present, I have limited this investigation to a single issue: the concurrence of the ancients and the mediaevals in seeing philosophy as a way of life in which ethical integrity prepares for and purifies and nourishes the love of learning; and, correspondingly, the folly that is produced by those who lack this integrity.

This leaves us with two questions. First, if such a demanding conception of philosophy flourished for two millennia and then seemed to evaporate, does that mean that it cannot survive in the twentieth century? Secondly, if a blend of the active and the contemplative lives really constitutes human happiness, should not some sign of this be found even outside the history of Western philosophy?

Regarding the survival of this notion of philosophy into the present, there are two signs indicating that it is still alive. The first is from a man who never claimed to be a professional philosopher but who was fortunately wiser than some of us who aspire to this profession. G.K. Chesterton wrote: "Nothing sublimely artistic has ever arisen out of mere art, any more than anything essentially reasonable has ever arisen out of the pure reason. There must always be a rich moral soil for any great aesthetic growth."<sup>77</sup>

Another sign of the vitality of the Greeks we find in the grim reports of recent newspapers. I refer to the case of Julius Tomin, a professor of philosophy at Charles University in Czechoslovakia.<sup>78</sup> He was removed from his position when the Russians entered that country in 1968; he was unacceptable because he was teaching the works of Plato and Aristotle. He was reduced to doing a menial job from midnight to morning. Next, because students continued coming to his home to read these authors with him, a twenty-four hour guard was placed at his door to harass anyone leaving or entering. Since he persisted in his subversive activity, his sons were expelled from their schools. Still, he continued to teach. But, finally, his wife was beaten within an inch of her life. Only then did he accept outside help to leave Prague for Oxford. Such evidence indicates that our Greek thinkers still have the power to invigorate and even to liberate the minds of today's students.

As to the generality of the belief that human happiness must include both the moral and the intellectual virtues, there are some ancient stone carvings that have been interpreted as symbols of this combination. I refer first to the Archaic Greek statues from the sixth century B.C. They have the left leg advanced as though to walk and the right leg firmly planted as though to stay. Secondly, and at the very same time, but on the other side of the world, the Chinese sage K'ung Fu-tse (Confucius) is pictorially engraved in stone in the very same position. These figures seem to say that we must have the moral virtues for the sake of moving us forward; but at the same time we need the intellectual virtues to root us in reality. Perhaps those earlier observers in Greece and China saw something that we no longer see: that we shall not be complete human beings until we achieve both kinds of excellence.

But our original intention was simply to find the contribution that ethically good conduct provides to scholarship. That contribution, says Thomas Aquinas while commenting on Aristotle, is like that which the physician makes to health. The physician is not the principal cause of health; but he does lay down rules for its sake. Thomas writes:

The art of medicine commands how health may be brought about in such a way as to give orders for the sake of health but not to it. Similarly, practical wisdom, or politics, does not make use of theoretical wisdom by prescribing how it ought to judge of divine things but rather does give orders for its sake by

regulating the way in which men will be able to arrive at theoretical wisdom. Hence, just as health is preferable to the art of medicine since it is its end, in the same way theoretical wisdom is more excellent than practical wisdom.<sup>79</sup>

Practical wisdom shows us how to make the humanly good choices that aim us in the direction of excellence. Once we are so positioned we shall be able to follow the most demanding rules of "beautiful and free discussion."

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#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The meanings of "philosophy" and "morality" in this account are based entirely on the texts of Plato and Aristotle cited in the following notes. References to Greek terms are taken from the editions of the Loeb Classical Library. English translations of Plato are from the edition of Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, *The Collected Dialogues of Plato, Including the Letters* (New York 1961). The English versions of Aristotle are from Jonathan Barnes, *The Complete Works of Aristotle: The Revised Oxford Translation*, 2 vols. (Princeton 1984).

<sup>2</sup> Boethius, *De consolazione philosophiae*, I, with the English translation of "I.T." (1609) revised by H.F. Stewart (Cambridge, Mass. 1949) 130.

<sup>3</sup> Sister Mary Patricia Garvey, R.S.M., *Saint Augustine: Christian or Neo-platonist* (Milwaukee 1939) 40: "All admit that approximately in 386 A.D. a reformation occurred in the conduct of the Milanese Professor of Rhetoric, that he began at that time to embrace a new moral life."

<sup>4</sup> The title of this paper obviously originates from the title of the book by Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God* (New York 1961; rpt. 1974).

<sup>5</sup> Gustave Bardy, *La conversion au Christianisme durant les premiers siècles* (Paris 1949) 46-47. In fact, the word "conversion" is often used by

translators to render *metabibadzo*, "to lead in a different direction." See Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics*, 1116b31 and *Topics* 8, 11, 161a33; and Plato, *Phaedrus*, 262B; *Laws*, 736D and *Gorgias*, 517B; or *Republic* 7, 527C and 532B where Plato uses *peristrepheo*, "to whirl round." See A.D. Nock, *Conversion: The Old and the New from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo* (London 1933) 173, for the same idea.

<sup>6</sup> Werner Jaeger, *Paideia: the Ideals of Greek Culture*, tr. Gilbert Highet (New York 1943) II, 295-302, 316. See Robert E. Cushman, *Therapeia, Plato's Conception of Philosophy* (Chapel Hill 1958) 135-84 for a similar view.

<sup>7</sup> Plato, *Apology*, 28E-30C.

<sup>8</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 4, 3, 1123a33-1125a16.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *How to Study -- being the Letter of St. Thomas Aquinas to Brother John, De Modo Studendi*, tr. Victor White (London 1956) 6.

<sup>10</sup> Ernest L. Boyer, President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, said recently: "There is no longer a coherent core of knowledge and colleges are no longer able to say what outcomes are to be shared commonly with all students. . . . We have moved from the ideal of shaping students to a certain sense of values to that of offering a smorgasbord of options and letting them pick their way to a degree" (*New York Times*, Sept. 7, 1986).

<sup>11</sup> Etienne Gilson, *Wisdom and Love in Saint Thomas Aquinas* (Milwaukee 1951) 3.

<sup>12</sup> Plato, *Gorgias* 472C; *Republic*, 352D.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* 499A-D.

<sup>14</sup> Plato, *Phaedo* 68C.

<sup>15</sup> Plato, in *Republic* 6, 498E has Socrates describe "a man who to the limit of the possible is perfectly 'likened' to and 'balanced' with virtue, in deed and in speech." Aristotle also describes the happy man as doing and knowing in accordance with virtue, *Nicomachean Ethics* I, 10, 1100b20.

<sup>16</sup> Plato, *Timaeus* 90C; 73A; 88B. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 10, 7, 1177a16 and b28, 1178b8-23.

<sup>17</sup> *Laws* 1, 628C.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* 631D.

- 19 *Theaetetus* 176B.
- 20 *Republic* 6, 501B.
- 21 *Republic* 10, 613A; see *Theaetetus* 176C.
- 22 *Statesman* 258E.
- 23 *Republic* 6, 499A.
- 24 *Ibid.* 498A.
- 25 *Republic* 7, 537E-539D.
- 26 *Protagoras* 337B.
- 27 *Politics* 3, 6, 1278b23.
- 28 *Ibid.* 9, 1280b6-8 and 13, 1284a1-3.
- 29 *Politics* 6, 3, 1325b14-23.
- 30 *Nicomachean Ethics* 1, 2, 1094a28-b8.
- 31 *Ibid.* 10, 7, 1177 a12-18.
- 32 *Ibid.* 1177b5.
- 33 *Politics* 7, 15, 1334a12-34.
- 34 *Nicomachean Ethics* 6, 13, 1145a8-12.

35 It is therefore impossible to agree with the author who recently wrote: "In fact, he [Aristotle] never comes close to explicitly claiming that a virtuous character is necessary for this purpose [i.e. "The maximum realization of intellectual values"]; see John M. Cooper, *Reason and Human Good in Aristotle* (Cambridge, Mass. 1975) 108; cf. pp. 110, 134, 143. Cooper's problem seems to rise from his interpreting Aristotle as identifying man "exclusively with the intellect" (p. 168). Cooper says (p. 97, n. 7) that he derived his understanding of Aristotle's dominant end as an exclusive end from W.F.R. Hardie, "The Final Good in Aristotle's *Ethics*" in J.M.E. Moravcsik, ed., *Aristotle: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Garden City, N.Y. 1967) 297-322. However, as we have seen above, Aristotle considers man's final end to be inclusive of all subordinate goods: "The end of this science [Politics] must include those of the others" (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1, 2, 1094a28-b8).

36 Plato, *Symposium* 208C-210D; *Republic* 6, 490B. Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* 10, 7, 1177b32-1178a2; 10, 9, 1179b23-26. On the progressive steps

in Augustine's conversion see Jean-Marie Le Blond, *Les Conversions de Saint Augustin* (Paris 1950) 114, 163.

37 There is an excellent account of this assent in an analysis that does not so much as mention Plato or Aristotle but which seems to describe the very same act in Jacques Maritain, *The Range of Reason*, (New York 1942-52) 66-71. The critical importance of our choices seems to have been perfectly clear to both Plato and Aristotle. Plato concludes the *Republic* by saying: "Virtue knows no master, each will possess it in greater or lesser degree according as he honors or disdains it. The responsibility is his who makes the choice" (10, 617E). In a comment on this theme, Shorey wrote: "Despite his faith in dialectics Plato recognizes that the primary assumptions on which argument necessarily proceeds are irreducible choices of personality"; Paul Shorey, *Plato, the Republic* (London and Cambridge, Mass. 1942) II, n. to 527d. Similarly, Aristotle writes: "The choice of the doer is a sort of measure; for in choice lies the essential element of virtue and character" (*Nicomachean Ethics* 8, 13, 1163a22-23).

38 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 6, 5, 1140b16-19.

39 Plato, *Republic* 472C - 473E. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 10 on quantitative measures; on qualitative measures, *Nicomachean Ethics* 3, 4, 1113a30 - 33; 1166a10-13; and all of 10, 5. This is true of all the arts and sciences, including that of government, *Politics* 4, 1, 1288b10-40.

40 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 10, 7, 1177a15; *ibid.* 1077b26-1178a8.

41 Plato, *Republic* 6, 494A; Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1177b1-5.

42 *Ibid.* 1179b4-18.

43 *Ibid.* 1177a22.

44 My explanation of seriousness borrows from Aquinas' account of *studiositas* because it seems to be an accurate rendition of Aristotle's thought: *studium praecipue importat vehementem applicationem mentis ad aliquid*: Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, II-II, q.166, a.1 (Ottawa 1941).

45 Plato, *Republic* 6, 494D.

46 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* 1, 1, 980a1.

47 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 10, 4, 1174b15-24.

48 *Ibid.* 10, 4, 1175a16-22.

49 Plato, *Republic* 505E.

50 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 10, 2, 1172b15; *Rhetoric*, 2, 1, 1377b21-1378a19. A speaker's "character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion he possesses" (*Rhetoric* I, 2, 1356a13). Plato has Socrates say as much about Glaucon and Adeimantus in *Republic*, 2, 368B.

51 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1, 4, 1095b10-12.

52 Ibid. 10, 7, 1177b32-1178a2.

53 Ibid. 6, 11, 1143b8.

54 Ibid. 10, 6, 1176b26-28.

55 Ibid. 6, 5, 1040a26-28.

56 Ibid. 1040b12-19; 1044a30-36; Plato, *Republic*, 409D.

57 *Nicomachean Ethics*, 10, 7, 1178a8.

58 Ibid. 10, 9, 1179b26-30.

59 Ibid. 1180a9; Plato, *Republic*, 401D, 402A.

60 Plato, *Republic*, 6, 485D - 487A.

61 Ibid. 6, 494C, D.

62 Ibid. 475B. Similarly Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 6, 13, 1145a1-5.

63 Plato, *Republic*, 487B-D.

64 Ibid. 489D.

65 Ibid. 490A.

66 Ibid. 495C - 496A.

67 Plato, *Gorgias*, 464D.

68 Plato, *Sophist*, 223B - 226A.

69 Plato uses these terms, *Republic* 485E.

70 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* IV, 1004b17-26.

71 Aristotle, *On Sophistical Refutations* I, 165a20-25.

72 Ibid. II, 171b25-34.

73 Aristotle, *Rhetoric* I, 1355b18-20.

74 Plato, *Phaedo*, CIA.



<sup>75</sup> Sancti Aureli Augustini, *De utilitate credendi liber*, CSEL, vol. 25, section 6, part 1, C, 10, para. 23. See Aristotle, *On Sophistical Refutations I*, 165b3: "he who is learning must take things on trust."

<sup>76</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 6, 11, 1143b11-13.

<sup>77</sup> *A Defence of Nonsense and Other Essays* (New York 1911) 8.

<sup>78</sup> *New York Times*, Aug. 8, 1980, section A, p. 29.

<sup>79</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *In decem libros ethicorum Aristotelis ad Nicomachum expositio VI*, lectio xi, #1290 (Turin 1934):

Sed ars medicinae praecipit qualiter fiat sanitas, ita quod praecipit propter sanitatem, sed non sanitati. Et similiter prudentia, etiam politica, non utitur sapientia praecipiens illi qualiter debeat iudicare circa res divinas, sed praecipit propter illam, ordinans scilicet qualiter homines possint ad sapientiam pervenire. Unde sicut sanitas est potior quam ars medicinae, cum sit eius finis, ita sapientia prudentiae praeeminet.