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<916, col. b>²

DISPUTATIO XXVI.

De comparatione causarum ad sua effecta.

Postquam de singulis causis disputatum est, oportet ad huius tractatus complementum, nonnulla, quae omnibus possunt
5 esse communia, disserere: quod commode fiet, comparando
tum causas ad effectus, quod nunc agimus, tum etiam inter se, quod praestabimus disputatione sequenti. Comparari autem possunt causae ad effectus vel in perfectione, vel in sufficientia, vel in duratione seu in ratione prioris et posterioris.
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SECTIO 1.

Utrum omnis causa sit effectu suo nobilior.

1. Potest effectus comparari in perfectione vel ad singulas causas suas, vel ad omnes simul sumptas: idque vel ad omnes
15 simpliciter, vel ad omnes eiusdem generis seu rationis. 15R
2. Primo igitur certum est non posse effectum excedere in perfectione omnes causas suas simul sumptas. Probatur, quia nihil est perfectionis in effectu, quod non habeat a causis suis: ergo nihil perfectionis habere potest effectus, quod
20 non praeexistat in aliqua causarum suarum, vel formaliter, 20R

DISPUTATION XXVI.

Concerning the comparison of the causes to their effects.

After having discussed each of the causes individually, it is necessary in order this treatise to discuss some of the things that can be common to all of them. This will be done neatly by comparing the causes to their effects, which we will do now, and then also comparing the causes to each other, which we will leave for the following disputation.³ Moreover, causes can be compared to their effects either with respect to perfection,⁴ with respect to sufficiency in number,⁵ or with respect to duration or to the notion of prior and posterior.⁶
10R

SECTION 1.

Whether every cause is more noble than its effect.

1. An effect can be compared with respect to perfection either to each of its causes individually or to all of them taken at once, either to all causes strictly speaking or to all causes of the same genus or *ratio*.
2. First, therefore, it is certain that an effect cannot exceed in perfection all its causes taken at once. It is proven: for there is nothing of perfection in the effect that it does not have from its causes. Therefore, an effect cannot have anything of perfection that did not pre-exist in one of its causes, either formally or eminently. For causes cannot give

¹Latin text by and large follows the 1597 edition, with most abbreviations expanded and spellings modernized. Punctuation kept as is. I checked the text against the Vivès edition for significant variations. For recorded variants, A = 1597 edition and V = Vivès edition. Note that the Vivès edition does not have marginal notes; many, though not all, of the marginal notes from the 1597 edition are included in the Vivès edition as italicised text at the head of paragraphs.

²Numbers in angle brackets indicate page numbers in volume 25 of the Vivès edition for ease of reference, given that it is the most widely used edition.

³DM 27.

⁴DM 26.1.

⁵DM 26.3.

⁶DM 26.2.

vel eminenter, quia causae dare non possunt quod nullo modo in se continent.

Comparatio effectus ad intrinsecas causas.

3. Secundo dicendum est, si comparetur effectus ad eas tantum causas quibus intrin- <917> sece constat, non posse excedere in perfectione omnes illas simul sumptas, ut actu causantes. Quod est dicere substantiam, verbi gratia, compositam, quae est effectus intrinsecus materiae et formae, non posse excedere in perfectione ipsam materiam et formam simul sumptas et unitas; ideo enim addidi *actu causantes*, ut earum unionem comprehenderem. Atque ita facile probatur assertio, primo quia ille effectus non distinguitur in re ab huiusmodi causis simul sumptis et actu causantibus, ut infra ostendam tractando de substantia materiali: ergo non potest esse inter eas inaequalitas perfectionis. Secundo, quia effectus non habet aliunde formaliter, seu entitative perfectionem nisi ab eis causis quibus intrinsece constat: ergo non potest excedere in perfectione omnes illas cum suis causalitatibus, quia non est unde habeat illum perfectionis excessum. Dices, multa convenire composito, quae ad perfectionem pertinent, et causis eius intrinsecis attribui non possunt, ut sunt per se esse, per se operari, ut in rebus viventibus composito convenit vivere, quod nec materiae nec formae convenit. Respondetur, has perfectiones non convenire singulis causis intrinsecis per se sumptis; convenire autem eis ut simul et actu causantibus: unde solum concluditur ex unione seu causalitate harum causarum aliquid perfectius consurgere, quam sit aggregatum (ut sic dicam) harum causarum absque unione et causalitate earum inter se.

4. Hinc vero infertur, et dicitur tertio, comparando effectum totum ac simpliciter ad singulas causas intrinsecas, perfectiorem esse effectum qualibet earum. Probatur aperte, quia includit totam perfectionem cuiuscumque earum, et praeterea includit perfectionem alterius, et praeterea perfectionem unionis earum inter se. Item, si talis effectus sit substantia composita, constat esse perfectionem quam

that which they do not in any way contain in themselves.

Comparison of effects to the intrinsic causes.

3. Second, it should be said that if an effect is compared to only those causes by which it is constituted intrinsically, then it cannot exceed in perfection them all taken together at once as actually causing. That is to say, a composite substance, for example, which is an intrinsic effect of matter and form, cannot exceed in perfection that matter and form taken at once and united. For I added the phrase ‘actually causing’ in order to include their union. And thus the assertion is easily proven. First, because that effect is not distinguished *in re* from causes of this sort taken at once and actually causing (as I will show below when treating material substance). Therefore, there cannot be an inequality of perfection between them. Second, because an effect cannot have perfection formally or entitatively from elsewhere than from those causes by which it is constituted intrinsically. Therefore, it cannot exceed in perfection all those along with their causalities, since there is nowhere from which it might have that excess of perfection.

You will say that many things that pertain to perfection apply to a composite that cannot be attributed to its intrinsic causes as they are in themselves and operate in themselves. For example, living applies to composite living things but it does not apply to either matter or form. It is responded that these perfections do not apply to individual intrinsic causes taken in themselves, but it does apply to them as taken at once and actually causing. Hence, the argument only shows that something more perfect arises from the union or causality of these causes than what the aggregate (if I may speak in this way) of these causes without their union and causality with each other would be.

4. But from this is inferred and is stated, third, that when comparing the effect taken as a whole and *simpliciter* with individual intrinsic causes, then the effect is more perfect than any of the causes. It is manifestly proven from the fact that it includes the whole perfection of any one of them and also includes the perfection of the other one and furthermore the perfection of their union with each other. Likewise, if such an effect is a composite substance, it clearly is more perfect than

materiam: supra etiam ostensum est esse perfectiorem quam
 formam. Neque hoc mirum videri potest, quia talis effectus
 ex neutra talium causarum per se sumpta habet intrinsece
 60 totam perfectionem suam; et ideo quamlibet earum per se
 sumptam excedere potest ratione alterius. Dixi autem, *si*
totus effectus simpliciter comparetur secundum totam perfec-
 65 tionem quam habet, nam si solum fiat secundum quid com-
 paratio in eo praecise, quod effectus habet a tali causa, non
 potest excedere in ea ratione perfectionem causae, cum ab
 illa nihil amplius habere pos- <col. b> sit quam ipsa in se
 contineat. Immo sub ea consideratione causa quodammodo
 65R excedit, in quantum ipsa est, quae communicat alteri suam
 perfectionem, et in quantum effectus ab ea pendet sub ea
 70 ratione. Dices, Quando hic effectus est aliquod composi-
 tum accidentale, non semper est perfectior altera causa per
 se sumpta, nimirum materiali, quae est ipsamet substantia.
 70R Respondetur, etiam hoc compositum superare substantiam
 ipsam saltem in perfectione accidentalium formae, eiusque in-
 75 formatione: haec enim aliqua perfectio est. Quod si con-
 tingat totam hanc perfectionem eminenter in sola substan-
 tia contineri, illud non erit ratione causalitatis materialis,
 75R sed alia superiori ratione. Unde illud est per accidens ad
 comparisonem causae materialis ut sic ad suum effectum,
 80 quam nunc facimus. Poterat vero hic ulterius fieri comparatio
 inter ipsamet causas materialem et formalem, quatenus
 una potest esse effectus alterius: sed hanc comparisonem
 80R attingemus melius sectione sequenti.

Comparatio effectus ad efficientes causas.

5. Quarto dicendum est, effectum nunquam posse excedere
 in perfectione omnes causas efficientes, quae ad illum con-
 currunt, simul sumptas: immo neque aliquam earum, quae
 5 ut causa principalis et totalis in aliquo genere ad illum con-
 5R currat: e converso vero causa efficiens principalis saepe ex-
 cedit in perfectione suum effectum. Haec assertio quoad

the matter. It was also shown above that it is more perfect than the
 form. Neither of these seem remarkable, since such an effect does not
 intrinsically have its whole perfection from either of these causes
 taken in itself. For this reason the composite substance can exceed ei-
 ther of the intrinsic causes taken in itself by virtue of the other one. I
 said, moreover, *if the whole effect simpliciter is compared* according to
 the whole perfection that it has, for if that comparison is made *secun-*
dum quid precisely with respect to that effect that it has from such a
 cause, then it cannot exceed in that *ratio* the perfection of the cause,
 since the effect cannot have anything more from that than what it con-
 tains in itself. Indeed, under this consideration the cause exceeds [the
 effect] in a certain way insofar as it is the cause that communicates its
 perfection to the effect and insofar as the effect depends on the cause
 under that *ratio*.

You will say that when this effect is some accidental composite,
 it is not always more perfect than one cause taken in itself, namely,
 the material cause, which is the substance itself. It is responded that
 even this composite outdoes the substance itself at least with respect
 to the perfection of the accidental form and its information. For the
 accidental form is some perfection. If it happens that this whole per-
 fection is contained eminently in the substance alone, that will not be
 by the *ratio* of material causality but by some superior *ratio*. Hence,
 that is *per accidens* with respect to the comparison of the material cause
 as such to its effect, which is what we are dealing with now. But here
 a further comparison could be made between the material and formal
 causes themselves insofar as one can be the effect of the other. But this
 comparison will be better handled in the following section.⁷

Comparison of effects to efficient causes.

5. Fourth, it should be said that an effect can never exceed in perfection
 all the efficient causes taken together than concur for it. Indeed, it can
 never exceed in perfection any of them that concur for it as a principal
 and total cause in some genus. Conversely, a principal efficient cause
 often exceeds its effect in perfection. Both parts of this assertion are
 obvious from what we discussed more thoroughly with respect to the

⁷*DM* 26.2.7 and 9.

omnes partes est facilis ex iis, quae de causa efficiente latissime disputavimus. Et prima quidem pars probatur, quia
 10 tota perfectio effectus manat a causis efficientibus: ergo fieri non potest ut aliqua perfectio sit in effectu, quae non
 aequali, vel nobiliori modo sit in aliqua causarum efficientium: ergo non potest excedere effectus in perfectione
 omnes suas causas efficientes simul sumptas. Dices, Praeter
 15 causas efficientes habet effectus alias sibi intrinsecas: ergo ratione illarum potest excedere in perfectione causas efficientes.
 Respondetur, ipsas intrinsecas causas componentes effectum manare necessario ab aliqua efficiendi causa extrinseca;
 et ideo fieri non potest ut effectus comparatus ad
 20 causam efficientem sibi adaequatam habeat aliquam perfectionem a suis causis intrinsecis, quae non sit aequali vel nobiliori modo in extrinseca seu efficiendi.

6. Altera vero pars, qua comparatur effectus ad singulas causas efficientes, declaratur facile ex distinctione
 25 causae principalis et instrumentalis. Nam instrumentalis potest esse ignobilior effectu, ut supra dictum est, et notavit D. Thomas in 4. dist. 1. q. 1. art. 4. qc. 1. ad 3. quia effectus non procedit principaliter ex virtute eius. At vero causa principalis nunquam potest esse ignobilior, praesertim si
 30 sit integra et totalis in suo genere, nam de partiali res est magis dubia. Quamvis loquendo proprie de perfectione intensiva, probabilius sit etiam causam partialem principalem nunquam esse intensive minus perfectam suo effectu, quia in hoc maxime differt a causa instrumentali, et quia talis
 35 causa licet ex parte actionis sit partialis, tamen ex parte effectus agit in totum illum, et ideo excedere non potest suae perfectionis gradum, ut in superioribus tactum est. Et hinc a fortiori constat, quando causa est totalis principalis, non posse esse inferiorem perfectione suo effectu, quia non
 40 posset illi dare perfectionem quam in se non haberet. Inter causas autem principales quaedam sunt univocae, aliae
 40R aequivocae, ut supra diximus: ex quibus posteriores nec-

efficient cause.⁸ The first part, indeed, is proven from the fact that the whole perfection of the effect flows from the efficient causes. Therefore, it cannot happen that there is some perfection in the effect that is not in one of the efficient causes either in an equal or a more noble way. Therefore, the effect cannot exceed in perfection all its efficient causes taken at once.

You will say that the effect has other causes intrinsic to it beyond the efficient causes. Therefore, in virtue of them it can exceed its efficient causes in perfection. It is responded that those intrinsic causes composing the effect necessarily flow from some extrinsic efficient cause. For this reason it cannot happen that an effect compared to an efficient cause that is adequate to it has some perfection from its intrinsic causes that do not exist in its extrinsic or efficient cause in an equal or more noble way.

6. The other part—in which the effect is compared to individual efficient causes—is easily shown by using the distinction between a principal cause and an instrumental cause. For an instrumental cause can be less noble than the effect, as was said above and as St. Thomas noted in *Sent. IV*, dist. 1, q. 1, art. 4, qc. 1, ad 3. For an effect does not proceed principally from its power. On the other hand, a principal cause can never be less noble, especially if it is complete and total in its genus. The matter is more doubtful concerning a partial cause, although speaking properly about intensive perfection, it is more probably that even a partial principal cause is never less intensively perfect than its effect. For it differs especially in this from an instrumental cause and since such a cause, although it is partial on the part of the action, nevertheless, on the part of the effect it acts on that whole. For this reason, the effect cannot exceed the grade of its perfection, as was touched on in earlier sections. And from here it is clear a fortiori that when a cause is a total principal cause, it cannot be a lesser perfection than its effect, since it could not give perfection to the effect that it does not have in itself.

But among principal causes, certain ones are univocal and others are equivocal, as we said above. Among these the latter ones necessarily are more noble than their effects, since when they are different

⁸*DM* 17–22 concern the efficient cause.

45 essario sunt effectibus nobiliores, quia cum sint diversae
 speciei ab effectibus, necesse est ut non contineant perfec-
 tionem eorum formaliter et secundum eamdem rationem:
 ergo oportet ut illam habeant eminentiori modo, ut notavit 45R
 D. Thomas 1. p. q. 4. art. 2. ad 3. et est frequens apud omnes
 Philosophos. At vero causa univoca, quamvis non possit
 esse effectui inferior, non tamen necesse est ut illum exce-
 50 dat, communicat enim totam suam perfectionem, quem in
 eadem specie producit, et ideo inter ea invenitur aequalitas. 50R
 Quod si obiicias Augustinum liber 83. *Quaestionum* q. 2. di-
 centem: Omne quod fit, ei a quo fit, par esse non potest.
 Respondeo primum, intelligi posse, effectum nunquam esse
 55 parem causae in omnibus, nam saltem in relatione depen-
 dentiae est inferior: non tamen in absoluta et intrinseca 55R
 perfectione. Vel secundo, et fortasse magis ad mentem Augus-
 tini respondeo id esse intelligendum de eo, quod fit ab alio
 tamquam a necessario principio a quo essentialiter pendet:
 60 effectus autem nunquam habet huiusmodi dependentiam a
 causa univoca, sed ab aliqua superiori; et ideo de tali effectu 60R
 verum est nunquam posse pervenire ad aequalitatem cum
 causa.

65 7. Aliunde obiicere quis potest, quando plures causae
 principales per se subordinatae ad eundem effectum concu-
 rrent, etiamsi <col. b> unaquaeque in suo genere et
 gradu sit totalis, nihil obstare quod effectus excedat inferi- 65R
 orem seu proximam causam, dummodo non excedat superi-
 ores omnes, quia satis est quod tota perfectio effectus sit in
 70 tota serie causarum, quamvis non sit in singulis. Atque ita
 contingit, ut brutum minus perfectum generet aliud perfec-
 toris speciei; et frequentius evenit, ut unus homo generet al- 70R
 ium melioris ingenii, atque adeo in individuo perfectiorem.
 Respondetur ad argumentum ex superioribus, nullas causas
 esse per se et essentialiter subordinatas in agendo nisi secun-
 75 dam et primam: causae enim secundae inter se non habent
 illam adeo intrinsecam subordinationem: quamquam inter 75R
 secundas dentur aliquae universales et superiores, quae
 suo modo adiuvant inferiores ad suos effectus. Causa igitur
 80 prima, quando agit cum secunda principaliter operante in

in species from their effects, it is necessary that they not contain the
 perfection of their effects formally and according to the same *ratio*.
 Therefore, it is necessary that they have it in a more eminent way, as
 St. Thomas noted in *ST* Ia.4.2, ad 3, and as is frequently said among
 all the philosophers. On the other hand, a univocal cause, although it
 cannot be inferior to its effect, does not, however, necessarily exceed
 it. For it communicates its whole perfection, which it produces in the
 same species, and therefore an equality is found between them. But if
 you object that Augustine says in q. 2 of his book *Eighty-three Questions*
 that everything that happens cannot be equal to that by which it comes
 to be, it is responded, first, that this can be understood as saying that
 an effect is never equal to its cause in everything. For an effect is infer-
 50 rior at least in its relation of dependence. Yet it need not be inferior in
 absolute and intrinsic perfection. Or, second, and perhaps this is more
 in keeping with the mind of Augustine, I respond that this should be
 understood about that which comes to be from another thing as from a
 necessary principal on which it depends essentially. But an effect never
 has a dependency of this sort on a univocal cause, but only on some
 60 superior cause. And for this reason it is true concerning such an effect
 that it can never reach equality with its cause.

7. Someone could object from elsewhere that when multiple prin-
 cipal causes *per se* subordinated concur for the same effect, then even
 if each one is total in its genus and grade nothing stands in the way of
 the effect exceeding the inferior or proximate cause, provided that it
 does not exceed all the superior ones. For it suffices that the effect's
 whole perfection be in the whole series of causes, even if it is not in an
 individual cause. And thus it happens that a less perfect brute animal
 could generate another animal of a more perfect species. It happens
 even more frequently that one human being generates another one of
 better talents and to that extent a more perfect one with respect to the
 individual. It is responded to the argument from what was said in ear-
 50 lier sections: no causes are subordinated *per se* and essentially in acting
 except the secondary cause and the first cause. For secondary causes
 do not have that subordination intrinsic to that degree between them-
 selves, although there are some universal and superior ones among the
 secondary causes which in their way help the inferior causes to their ef-
 60 fects. The first causes, therefore, when it acts with a secondary principal

suo ordine, accommodat actionem suam perfectioni et naturae talis causae; et ideo nunquam potest effectus excedere perfectionem causae secundae, nec potest aliqua perfectio dimanare a causa prima in effectum, nisi per secundam: alioqui in communicanda illa perfectione iam non ageret causa prima ut concurrens cum secunda, sed per sese ut supponens aliquem defectum causae secundae. Ac simili modo si interdum effectus ex influenza caelorum habet aliquam maiorem perfectionem quam causa particularis univoca, quoad illam perfectionem non procedit a particulari causa, saltem ut a principali, sed a caelo, vel alia causa universali, quae in eo effectu gerit vicem proximae causae principalis.

8. Unde ad exempla de animantibus, quae in perfectiori specie videntur generari ab aliis minus perfectis, vel negandum est assumptum, quia semper alterum saltem ex generantibus est aequae perfectum, vel perfectius in specie; vel certe dicendum est, talia generantia ad eum effectum non concurrere ut causas principales, sed ut instrumentales disponentes materiam: generationem autem perfici virtute alicuius superioris causae: sicut contingit etiam in effectione mixti, quod ex mutua actione et mixtione elementorum generatur. De inaequalitate autem individuali, si teneamus individua eiusdem speciei non esse inaequalia nisi in accidentalibus dispositionibus, ut multorum est opinio, facilis est responsio, nam perfectio talis dispositionis seu complexionis non provenit semper a <919> proximis et univocis causis, sed ex aliis circumstantibus, et praesertim ex caelesti influenza, ut est omnium Philosophorum concors sententia. Quod si fortasse in ipsismet individuis est inaequalitas perfectionis, et individuum perfectius generatur ab imperfectiori, necessario dicendum est, etiam illum excessum perfectionis provenire ex concomitantia et concursu aliarum causarum; quae sicut iuvant ad perfectius disponendam materiam, ita et ad introducendam formam individualiter perfectiorem. Quae res proprie disputari solet in libris de anima, et bene a Fonseca 5. *Metaphysicorum* cap. 28. q. 16.

cause operating in its order, accommodates its action to the perfection and nature of such a cause. Hence, the effect can never exceed the perfection of the secondary cause, nor can any perfection flow from the first cause into the effect except through the secondary cause. Otherwise, in communicating that perfection the first cause would already not act as concurring with the secondary cause, but would act through itself as supposing some defect in the secondary cause. In a similar way, if an effect sometimes has from the influence of the heavens some greater perfection than a particular univocal cause, then with respect to that perfection it does not proceed from a particular cause (at least not as from a principal cause) but from heaven or another universal cause, which in that effect takes the place of the proximate principal cause.

8. Hence, in response to the examples about living things that seem to be generated in a more perfect species from other less perfect species, one should either deny the assumption (since the latter at least with respect to the ones generating is always equally perfect or more perfect in species) or one should certainly say that generating things of that sort do not concur for that effect as principal causes but as instrumental causes disposing the matter. But generation can be perfected by virtue of some superior cause, just as also happens in the effecting of a mixture that is generated from the mutual action and mixing of the elements.

But concerning unequal individuals, if we hold that individuals of the same species are not unequal except with respect to accidental dispositions (which is the opinion of many), the response is easy. For the perfection of such a disposition or constitution does not always come into being from proximate and univocal causes but from other circumstances and especially from celestial influence, as is the shared view of all philosophers. And if perhaps there is an inequality of perfection in those very individuals and the more perfect individual is generated by the less perfect one, it is necessary to say that that excess of perfection also comes to be from the concomitance and concurrence of other causes. Just as such causes aid in disposing matter for something more perfect, so also they aid in introducing a more perfect form individually. This issue is usually disputed properly in books on the soul and it is well discussed by Fonseca in *Metaphysics* V, ch. 28, q. 16.

Comparatio effectus ad finalem causam.

9. Ultimo dicendum est, finalem causam non semper esse perfectiorem suo effectu: quamquam, si finis sit ultimus, et ordo in finem sit rectus, et iuxta institutionem naturae, 5 semper sit perfectior suo effectu, seu re ordinata in finem. 5R
 Prior pars constat primo inductione: nam saepe quis exercet nobilissimas actiones propter pecuniam, vel hominum aestimationem, qui fines imperfectiores sunt. Et ratio est, quia finis solum movet agens metaphorice ad operandum; et 10 ideo non oportet ut vel formaliter, vel eminenter contineat 10R effectum, sed satis est quod habeat aliquam rationem boni sub qua possit movere voluntatem. Posterior pars etiam constat inductione, nam quatenus Deus propter finem operatur, clarum est finem ultimum quem ipse intendit esse 15 nobiliorem caeteris rebus propter talem finem procreatis. 15R
 Rursus naturalia agentia, cum non operentur propter finem ultimum a Deo intentum, etiam agunt propter nobiliorem finem. Quod si considerentur praecise quatenus agunt ex naturali impetu naturae, uno ex tribus modis operantur. 20
 Primus est propter individui perfectionem vel convenientem statum, ut quando movetur lapis ut quiescat in centro, vel brutum ut vitam conservet; et in hoc modo operandi ipsummet agens est finis illius actionis, et aliquo modo ultimus, scilicet in illa serie: et ita constat finem huiusmodi 25 esse perfectiorem tali actione, vel formali termino eius. 25R
 Secundus modus est, quando haec agentia agunt propter conservationem suae speciei, ut cum ignis generat ignem, etc. et tunc finis quodammodo est aequae perfectus, quatenus ipsa forma geniti dicitur ab Aristotele finis generationis, vel 30 quatenus ipsummet generans est finis suae actionis: quodammodo <col. b> est finis perfectior, quatenus bonum commune totius speciei ac perpetuitas eius est excellentius bonum quam sit unum vel alterum individuum. Tertius 35 modus est, quando hae causae operantur propter communicandum aliquo modo esse quod habent, ut cum sol illuminat, et idem est de omnibus influentiis caelorum: non enim agunt ut se conservent, cum sint incorruptibiles: solum ergo

Comparison of effects to the final cause.

9. Lastly, it should be said that the final cause is not always more perfect than its effect. If, however, the end is ultimate and the ordering to the end is right and according to the institution of nature, then the final cause is always more perfect than its effect or than the thing that is ordered to the end. The former part is obvious, first, by induction. For often someone performs the most noble actions for the sake of money or for human esteem, which are more imperfect ends. The reason is that the end only moves the agent to activity metaphorically and for that reason it is not necessary that it contain the effect either formally or eminently. It is enough that it have some *ratio* of good under which it can move the will.

The latter part is also clear by induction. For insofar as God acts for the sake of an end, it is clear that the ultimate end that he intends is more noble than all the remaining things that have been brought into existence for the sake of such an end. Natural agents in turn, even when they do not act for the sake of the ultimate end intended by God, also act for the sake of a more noble end.

But if they are considered precisely insofar as they act from the natural impetus of nature, they act in one of three ways. The first is for the sake of the preservation or an agreeable state of the individual, as when a stone is moved to rest at the centre or a brute animal is moved to conserve its life. In this way of acting the agent itself is the end of its action and is in some way an ultimate end, namely, ultimate in that series. And thus it is clear that an end of this kind is more perfect than such an action or than its formal terminus. The second way is when these agents act for the sake of the conservation of their species, as when fire generates fire, and so on. In this case the end is in a certain way equally perfect, insofar as the form of the generated thing is called by Aristotle the end of generation or insofar as the generating thing itself is the end of its action. In a certain way the end is more perfect, insofar as the common good of the whole species and the species perpetuation is a more excellent good than the good of one or another individual. The third way is when these causes act for the sake of communicating in some way the being that they have, as when the sun illuminates. The same is true in all the cases of the influence of the heavens. For they do not act in order to conserve themselves, since they are incorruptible.

agunt ut se communicent, vel (quod idem est) ut alia conser-
 vent aut perficiant. In qua actione si consideretur finis prox-
 40 imus ipsius actionis, ille quidem minus perfectus est quam 40R
 sit ipsum agens, tamen ille non est finis ipsius agentis, sed
 solius actionis: si autem consideretur finis ultimus, propter
 quem dici possint agere huiusmodi agentia, ille secundum
 quamdam rationem aut seriem est bonum totius universi:
 45 simpliciter autem est Deus ipse, quem haec agentia imitan- 45R
 tur, dum se communicant: et utroque modo finis est quid
 excellentius eo quod ad finem ordinatur.

10. Denique intellectualia agentia creata, si recte et ordi-
 nate operentur propter finem, per suas operationes tendunt
 50 in verum ultimum finem, qui est Deus, vel expresse, aut 50R
 saltem implicite, quatenus propter virtutem et honestatem
 operantur. In quo etiam aliquo modo operantur propter
 se, quatenus operantur propter propriam perfectionem, non
 quidem sistendo in seipsis tamquam in fine ultimo cuius gra-
 55 tia operantur, sed tamquam in fine cui perfectionem illam 55R
 procurant. Atque ita finis quem ultimate intendunt, abso-
 lute est perfectior omni eo quod ad finem ordinant; nam de
 Deo constat: de ipsismet autem agentibus, quatenus ad se
 aliquid ordinant, et ad illud comparantur ut ultimus finis in
 60 aliqua serie, etiam necesse est ut sub ea ratione sint perfec- 60R
 tiora, nam haec agentia, perfectiora sunt suis operationibus.
 Quod si ipsa dicuntur esse propter suas operationes, non ita
 in eis sistunt, quin ad se illas ordinent, ita ut complete inten-
 dant seipsa in statu perfecto; qui potest dici intrinsecus finis
 65 ultimus talis actionis, non tamen simpliciter ultimus, cum 65R
 tota illa actio vel referatur, vel ex se tendat in ulteriorem
 finem ultimum extrinsecum qui est Deus.

11. Aliquando vero possunt haec agentia ordinare res
 alias perfectiores se, etiam Deum ipsum ad seipsa ut ad ul-
 70 timum finem simpliciter; tamen ille est perversus ordo, et 70R
 a recta ratione, et ab eo quod naturae rerum <920> postu-
 lant, alienus: et ideo dixi in conclusione, *si ordo in finem*

Rather, they act only in order to communicate themselves or—what is
 the same thing—in order to conserve or perfect other things. In that
 action if the proximate end of the action itself is considered, then it is
 indeed less perfect than the agent itself. But that is not the end of the
 agent, but of the action alone. If, however, the ultimate end for the sake
 of which agents of this kind can be said to act is considered, then it is
 according to a certain *ratio* or series the good of the whole universe.
 Strictly speaking it is God himself, whom these agents are imitating
 when they communicate themselves. Either way, the end is something
 more excellent than that which is ordered to the end.

10. Created intellectual agents, finally, if they rightly and ordi-
 nately act for the sake of an end, tend through their activities to the
 true ultimate end, which is God. They tend to God either expressly or
 at least implicitly insofar as they act for the sake of virtue and *honestas*.⁹
 In this they also act for the sake of themselves in a certain way insofar
 as they act for the sake of their own perfection, not indeed by stopping
 in themselves as in an ultimate end for the sake of which they act but
 as in an end for which (*fine cui*) they procure that perfection.¹⁰ And
 thus the end that they ultimately intend absolutely is more perfect than
 everything that they order to that end. For it is obvious in the case of
 God. But with respect to the agents themselves insofar as they order
 something to themselves and are compared to that as an ultimate end
 in some series, it also is necessary that they be more perfect under that
ratio. For these agents are more perfect than their activities. But if they
 are said to be for the sake of their activities, they do not stop in those
 activities in such a way that they do not order the activities to them-
 selves such that fully intend themselves in a perfect state.¹¹ This can be
 called the intrinsic ultimate end of such an action. Yet it is not ultimate
simpliciter, since that total action either is referred or tends of itself to a
 further extrinsic ultimate end which is God.

11. But sometimes these agents can order other more perfect things
 to themselves, even God himself to themselves as to an ultimate end
simpliciter. But that is a perverse ordering and alien to right reason and
 to that which the natures of things demand. This is why I said in the
 end ‘if the ordering to the end is right and according to the institution

⁹See *De fine hominis* 2.4 for more discussion of different ways of acting for the sake of an end.

¹⁰For the distinction between a *finis cuius* and *finis cui*, see *DM* 23.2.2–8.

¹¹That is, their intention fully spelled out is for themselves to be in a perfect state.

75 *sit rectus ex ipsa naturae institutione. Atque hoc modo intelligendum est quod Aristoteles dixit, finem esse optimum uniuscuiusque rei: loquitur enim de fine ultimo respective, ut sic dicam, id est vel simpliciter, vel secundum quid, in ordine ad id cuius est finis ultimus. Et ratio est, quia finis ultimus propter se appetitur, et alia propter ipsum; et ideo etiam magis amatur quam caetera, iuxta illud, Propter quod*
80 *unumquodque tale, et illud magis, et ideo si recte, et consentaneae ad rerum naturas ametur, oportet ut ipsum magis amabile sit, et consequenter maius et excellentius bonum.*

85 12. Secus vero est de fine non ultimo: recte enim potest, et convenientissimo ordine res perfectior ad minus perfectam ut ad finem proximum ordinari, dummodo ad alium finem ultimum et perfectiorem tota series referatur, quia tunc non tam attenditur finis proximus ut per se amabilis est ex propria bonitate et perfectione, quam ut est amabilis ex relatione ad perfectiorem finem.

of nature'. This is the way one should understand it when Aristotle said that the end is the best of each thing. For he is talking about the respectively ultimate end (if I may call it that), that is, either *simpliciter* or *secundum quid* in relation to that of which it is the ultimate end. The reason is that the ultimate end is desired for its own sake and other things for its sake. And therefore it is loved more than the remaining things according to that principle 'that on account of which something is what it is is even more so'. And so if something is loved rightly and in harmony with the natures of things, it is necessary that the end is more lovable and, consequently, that it is the greater and more excellent good.

12. But it is not the same with a non-ultimate end. For a more perfect thing can rightly and in a most fitting ordering be ordered to a less perfect thing as to a proximate end, as long as the whole series is referred to another ultimate and more perfect end. For then the proximate end is not so much attended as a *per se* lovable thing is in accordance with its own goodness and perfection than as something lovable in accordance with its relation to a more perfect end.