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An Historical and Critical Analysis of the Eudaemonological Argument for the Existence of God

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AN HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE
EUDAEMONOLOGICAL ARGUMENT FOR THE
EXISTENCE OF GOD

by
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LIFE

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE EUDAEMONOLOGICAL ARGUMENT</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Natural desire in Plato, Aristotle, and Augustine -- History of natural desire from Thomas to O'Mahony -- Important groups: Dominican Thomists, modern non-Dominican Thomists, Scotists.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. PRESENTATION OF THE EUDAEMONOLOGICAL ARGUMENT</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Definition of terms -- Analysis of man's desire for beatitude -- Immortality -- Testimony of intellect and will -- Eudaemonological argument based on finality -- The universal, necessary term of desire -- This desire is natural -- Impossibility of frustration -- Traditional form of the argument.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE VALIDITY OF THE EUDAEMONOLOGICAL ARGUMENT</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The problem of the formal as opposed to the proper object of the rational faculties -- The problem of elicited desire -- The problem of proportion -- The problem of intellectual and volitional dynamism.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. REVIEW OF POSITIONS AND CONCLUSION</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The metaphysical order distinguished from the psychological order -- Grades of knowledge of God -- The meaning of universal good -- The objects of the rational appetite -- The position of Garrigou-Lagrange -- The position of Joseph Gredt -- Elter's analysis of earlier scholastic teaching -- W. R. O'Connor and natural desire -- Summary in the form of six questions and answers -- Final judgment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE EUDAEMONOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

The eudaemonological argument for the existence of God is based on the existence in the rational appetite of a natural desire for God. We propose, therefore, to review briefly the history of theories of natural desire for God, then to analyze the argument itself, and finally to test the validity of the argument.

In a creationist philosophy of the world, one fact is unanimously accepted by all parties to the question. All agree that every creature implicitly and necessarily does seek God in every action. Considering man more particularly, however, and asking further whether man naturally seeks God and how God figures as a natural object of man's rational appetite, we find evidence of roughly three positions. We shall outline these positions briefly at once and then examine them individually in more detail. In this historical analysis we shall follow in general the monograph of Patrick K. Bastable on the subject. ¹

How, then, does God figure as the object of the rational appetite? For the most part, the Dominican Thomists would answer that the highest use of man's natural powers is the natural contemplation of God. In this sense, man does seek God directly. A modern school of Thomists, in which Rousselot and Maréchal have been prominent, would agree that God is the supreme object of the natural powers of man, but they go on to say that these same powers naturally desire an even more direct knowledge of Him. Man desires to know God directly—although he has no natural power to do so. The third school of thought, initiated by Duns Scotus, says that the natural desire of man is, strictly speaking, not for indirect knowledge of God, but for direct vision of Him. Man naturally desires and, granted perfect use of his faculties, has the natural power to see God directly.

We have these three positions in general therefore. The first holds that man naturally desires to know God indirectly. The second holds that man naturally desires to know God directly but does not have the natural power to do so. And the third holds that man naturally desires to know God directly and has the power to do so. The first and second positions both claim to be the correct and original teaching of St. Thomas on the matter, or at least the correct interpretation of his teaching.
The question of natural desire for God is one that arises in the earlist scholastic philosophers. The further development, that because it is a natural desire it offers another method of demonstrating the existence of God, is of later origin. St. Thomas himself never referred to natural desire as a possible proof for the existence of God. If we can grant, however, an initial natural desire for God in the rational appetite, and if it is a natural desire in the strict sense of the term, then the proof is a necessary corollary of the desire. For, granted the existence of such a desire, we must admit the existence of its term. Absolutely speaking, such a natural desire cannot be frustrated.

Our investigation, therefore, concerns itself with two questions. The first, does the rational appetite naturally desire God? The second, if such is the case, can this natural desire be used to demonstrate the existence of God?

About the first question, namely, that in the rational appetite there is a type of natural desire for God, there is no difficulty. This becomes clear if we consider the necessary relationship between creature and Creator. In creation, God diffuses His own goodness. And as exemplary cause, God necessarily reproduces in the creature some imitation of His own goodness. Every created thing will be in some
way an imitation of His own goodness. In seeking, therefore, any created good, man inevitably seeks Goodness itself.

Gilson says:

If we say that each good is but a particular good we can only mean, not that these particular goods are detached parts of a whole which would be Goodness, but that they are analogues of the creative Good that gave them birth. In this sense, then, it is true that to love any good whatsoever is always to love its resemblance to the divine goodness, and, since it is this resemblance to God that makes this good to be a good, we can say that what is loved in it is the Sovereign Good. In other words, it is impossible to love the image without at the same time loving the original, and if we know, as we do know, that the image is only an image, it is impossible to love it without preferring the original. What holds of the whole totality of creatures holds much more of man in particular. To will any object is to will an image of God, that is, to will God; to love oneself, then, will be to love an analogue of God, and that is to love God.

In a creationist philosophy of things, consequently, there is no difficulty about the relation of every being to God as to a final cause. This desire for God is implicit in the activity of every creature.

When we ask the second question, whether this desire for God be the basis for an independent demonstration of His existence, the way becomes considerably more complicated.

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The eudaemonological argument would seek to prove the existence of God from the natural tendency of the rational appetite toward Him. Our immediate task, before considering at length the argument itself, is to sketch briefly the history of natural desire.

It is questionable whether we can speak of a natural desire for God, in the proper sense of the term, in the writings of pagan philosophers. There is no doubt, however, that they did give indication of the sublime goals attainable by man. Perhaps Plato expresses this best:

He who has been instructed thus far in the things of love, and who has learned to see the beautiful in due order and succession, when he comes toward the end will suddenly perceive a nature of wondrous beauty (and this, Socrates, is the final cause of all our formal toils) . . . . And the true order of going, or being led by another, to the things of love, is to begin from the beauties of earth and mount upwards for the sake of that other beauty, using these as steps only, and from one going on to two, and from two to all fair forms, and from fair forms to fair practices, and from fair practices to fair notions, until from fair notions he arrives at the notion of the absolute beauty, and at last knows what the essence of beauty is. This, my dear Socrates... is that life above all others which man should live, in the contemplation of absolute beauty; a beauty which if you once beheld, you would see to be not after the measure of gold, and garments, and fair boys and youths, whose presence now entrances you; and you and many a one would be content to live seeing them only and conversing with them without meat or drink, if that were possible—you only want to look at them and to be with them. But what if man had eyes to see the true beauty—the divine beauty, I mean, pure and clear and unalloyed,
not clogged with the pollutions of mortality and all the colors and vanities of human life—thither looking, and holding converse with the true beauty simple and divine? Remember how in that communion only, beholding beauty with the eye of the mind, he will be enabled to bring forth, not images of beauty, but realities (for he has hold not of an image but of a reality), and bringing forth and nourishing true virtue to become the friend of God and be immortal, if mortal man may. Would that be an ignoble life?

Thus Plato outlines the relationship of participated goodness to the essence of goodness and reveals the natural tendency of the soul to seek goodness in its purest form.

Aristotle teaches that a natural desire is found in every natural form. In the intellect we find the natural desire to know. Since the intellect is man's most perfect power, reasons Aristotle, the end of man will be the activity of that power speculating on the highest attainable truths. The natural desire of the will is for happiness. Men differ as to the nature of what makes man truly happy, but for Aristotle it was the perfect use of the intellect, man's highest faculty. Aristotle speaks, therefore, of natural desire, but he has, strictly speaking, no natural desire for God.

In the writings of Augustine there is no lack of theory concerning natural desire for God. But at the same time

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there is no indication of a purely philosophical viewpoint. Thus the vibrant expression of the only historical end man ever had: "Thou hast formed us for thyself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in thee," is of little utility in the present discussion.

We begin our study of natural desire, properly speaking, with St. Thomas. And the first fact to be faced is that Thomas apparently contradicted himself in speaking of natural desire. This apparent contradiction is obvious if we consider two passages of Thomas together. (Author's italics.)

Since then it is impossible for a natural desire to be void;—and it would be were it impossible to arrive at understanding the divine substance; for all minds desire this naturally,—we must conclude that it is possible for the divine substance to be seen by means of the intellect...3

Wherefore when anyone self-counseled and aided by divine grace chooses a certain good, which actually constitutes his proper happiness, to achieve his happiness, then he wins merit, not because the happiness he achieved was natural, but rather because the particular thing he achieved was not desired naturally, such as the vision of God, in which actually his beatitude does consist.4


While the first text seems to indicate a natural desire for God, it is apparently contradicted by the second. We can state at once that it is not the object of this paper to enter this problem in textual interpretation. Moreover, because Thomas does not himself mention the eudaemonological argument, we do not have to discuss directly his doctrine on natural desire. What we are interested in is the studies of this apparent contradiction made by subsequent Thomists. For it is in these studies that the evolution of the eudaemonological argument is apparent.

We can enter now a rapid survey of Thomistic teaching on natural desire. The source for much of the following matter is the dissertation of Patrick K. Bastle, *Desire for God*, which offers a detailed study of the history of natural desire among Thomists.

Of the great commentators, Cajetan concerns himself only with the question of natural desire for the beatific vision. The desire to see God directly, according to him, is elicited and consequent on the perception of supernatural effects. 5 The fact that this interpretation is based on supernatural effects and supposes therefore the existence of

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God removes its significance from the matter proper to this paper.

Sylvester of Ferrara, however, holds that man's natural desire for the vision of the divine essence is a desire for God not as object of beatitude but as first cause. Since, in his theory, we cannot know by natural reason that the beatific vision is the supreme good of intellectual nature—we know only that God is the first cause—it follows that our natural desire is for vision of the divine essence *qua* first cause, and *qua* object of supernatural beatitude. 6 Thus Sylvester holds a natural desire for God based on knowledge of effects. This introduces one type of natural desire for God which all schools of thought would admit, but which many would say does not go far enough. It is based on the principle that the intellect desires to know things perfectly. To know creatures perfectly it must know their cause, and therefore, desires to know God as first cause. This is a natural desire of the intellect which, it must be noted, presupposes the existence of God. We shall treat this desire at greater length in subsequent chapters.

John of St. Thomas follows essentially the doctrine of Cajetan. The existence of the supernatural order is known,
and from its effects man desires to know God. Bastable says: "The central point of John of St. Thomas' teaching is that, for St. Thomas natural desire means a desire conformable to man's nature, since it is merely an application of the general desire to know causes, and arises spontaneously on the perception of supernatural effects." 7 Here, again, is evidence of the natural desire of the intellect to know things perfectly. John of St. Thomas also uses this natural desire of the intellect to prove the nonrepugnance of the vision of the essence of God. His reasoning is simple. Man's desire to see God is the result of the natural activity of his mental life. Man naturally desires to know things perfectly, i.e. according to their causes, and therefore desires to know God who is first cause. Because this desire to know God is in conformity with man's natural mental life, he concludes that the desire is not repugnant, although it is beyond the range of his natural power. 8 Here again we are dealing with an elicited desire and supposing the existence of God. This argument, to prove the nonrepugnance of the beatific vision, differs, therefore, completely from the eudaemonological argument. For the latter is based on innate desire and proves rather than presupposes the existence of God.

7 Ibid., 40.
8 Ibid., 43.
It is evident, therefore, that man's natural aspiration to the beatific vision on the intellectual plane differs from the natural aspiration of man for God on which the eudaemonological argument is based. The very existence of God is deduced from the latter aspiration, while the former supposes it.

Duns Scotus, who was born approximately at the time of St. Thomas' death, was the first philosopher to propound and explain thoroughly the theory that man has an innate desire for God. This theory was the logical result of his univocal concept of being. Because of his perfect precision, the concept of being was predicated of God and man in exactly the same comprehension. Scotus taught that the object of the human intellect was being in its widest extension. The divine essence, therefore, became part of the primary object of the intellect, and man had an innate desire for the beatific vision. 9

Dominicus Soto also taught that man has a natural desire for the beatific vision. This, apparently, was an innate desire of the will. Because the beatific vision is the only concrete object which can satisfy the rational appetite, man tends naturally to that vision. He teaches that on the

9 Ibid., 53.
level of elicited desire the will is dependent on knowledge and cannot therefore elicit a desire for the beatific vision of its own unaided power. Bastable explains the logic of his position in this way: "Man has a natural desire for the beatific vision, even though he cannot, by his own unaided power, satisfy that desire. For, the goal of a natural inclination must be a definite concrete object, and we cannot point to any object outside of the beatific vision which would completely satisfy human appetite." 10 Both Soto's approach to the problem of natural desire and his supposition are characteristic of those who favor the eudaemonological argument. The supposition is that the finalism of man's faculties is explicable only in a term which satisfies them absolutely. To speak of an absolutely satisfying term centers attention on the only absolutely satisfying object we know of, rather than on the nature of the rational appetite. We shall consider these aspects of the problem later. Francis Toletus, pupil of Soto, followed his teacher in holding that man has an innate desire for the beatific vision, although, in the present life its possibility could not be demonstrated. 11

In the seventeenth century, Joannes Martinez de

10 Ibid., 57.
11 Ibid., 58.
Ripalda reduced the doctrine of innate desire for God to its logical conclusion by showing that it implied a transcendental relation between human nature and the beatific vision. This introduction of a transcendental relation into the discussion foreshadowed a modern school of thought professedly teaching the existence of a transcendental relation between human nature and the vision of God. We shall review this position later. Ripalda himself followed the traditional Dominican teaching on natural desire.

A century before Ripalda, Dominic Bannez had formulated what has become the standard Dominican position on natural desire for God. Man, he said, does not have an innate desire to see God. On perception of effects, man forms an elicited desire to see their first cause. This desire to see God is elicited, conditional, and inefficacious. The beatific vision is not within the unaided powers of man. 12

Gabriel Vasquez was the first to introduce the idea of the adequate object of the intellect. Like John of St. Thomas, Vasquez believed that the beatific vision is possible because the elicited desire for it is the product of the natural working of the intellect. He adds, however, as another reason for the possibility of the beatific vision, the fact

12 Ibid., 64.
that God is contained within the adequate object of the intellect. Except for his theory of an active obediential capacity, Francis Suarez follows Bannez and the standard Dominican tradition. An innate desire is simply a metaphorical expression describing the relation of a potency to its act. For Suarez, therefore, man having only an obediential capacity for the vision of God, has no innate desire for that vision. An elicited desire is a real action depending on knowledge, and this is the desire that man has for the beatific vision. It is an elicited, inefficacious, and conditional desire, and would not cause a sense of frustration in a state of purely natural beatitude. This point is of some significance because it emphasizes the fact that man’s natural desire for God is not at all natural in the sense of being an innate desire. Were it a natural innate desire, a sense of frustration would necessarily result in a purely natural state.

According to Father Elter, S.J., the Augustinus of Jansen, which appeared in the year 1640, marked a turning point in the history of natural desire for God. Prior to that period, the older scholastics had uniformly taught that the only perfect beatitude man could have was the beatific vision. The

13 Ibid., 60.
14 Ibid., 61.
beatitude connatural to the rational appetite was beatitude secundum quid. Jansen's argument forced Catholic writers into a position radically different from the older tradition. According to Jansen, man has a necessary tendency to perfect beatitude. But the only perfect beatitude is the intuitive vision of God. Therefore, man has a necessary tendency to the intuitive vision of God. There was a false premise here. The scholastics did not wish to question the first premise, that man has a necessary tendency to perfect beatitude, so they denied the second, that the only perfect beatitude was the beatific vision. 15 The strength of the eudaemonological argument lies in the premise which the later scholastics did not wish to deny, namely, that man has a necessary tendency to perfect beatitude. The possibility of a natural beatitude became the important by-product of this argument over man's natural desire for the beatific vision. Of course, the impossibility of a purely natural beatitude figures largely in the eudaemonological argument. One consequence of Jansen's teaching was that the Augustinians were promptly accused of Jansenism when, in the eighteenth century, they taught a natural desire for the beatific vision. Unjustly censored, the Augustinians taught that as far as appetition is concerned, 

15 Joseph Buckley, S.M., Man's Last End, St. Louis, 1949, 24.
man does naturally desire the beatific vision. As far as attaining that vision is concerned, however, man cannot naturally acquire it. 16 In the same century that Jansen wrote, we find the Dominican position well established. Both Gotti and Billuart, the leading Thomists of the century, accepted and taught the traditional doctrine. Man’s desire to see God is an elicited, conditional, and inefficacious desire. It is formally a desire to see the author of nature. This desire to see God would cause no sense of frustration in a state of purely natural beatitude. Billuart points out that we cannot prove that it is possible for man to see God; man’s desire provides only a probable argument in support of his capacity to see God. 17

Just prior to the beginning of the present century Dr. Sestili wrote the first book dealing exclusively with the problem of natural desire for the beatific vision. He held that man has an obediential capacity for the beatific vision. Because of this obediential capacity, human nature is transcendentally related to the beatific vision. The transcendental relation is in turn the cause of an elicited desire for perfect happiness which is implicitly a desire to see God. This

16 Bastable, Natural Desire, 66.
17 Ibid., 70.
elicited desire is not a free act but is forced by man's nature. Thus, man does not have an explicit desire, as Cajetan said, but he does have an implicit desire for the beatific vision. Explicitly, man seeks perfect happiness. In freely elicited desire, man is able to elicit a desire to see God because he is able to elicit a desire for the vision of the first cause. Sestili's teaching that man necessarily and naturally desires absolute beatitude is pertinent to the eudaemonological argument because by affirming that, he necessarily denies that a state of natural beatitude would be consonant with human nature.

With Rousselot, whose theory on natural desire appeared in 1908, we have the beginning of the modern school which distinguishes "the order of finality" from "the order of factual realization," and holds that these two orders do not coincide for man. This distinction harks back to that of the Augustinians' between the power to desire and the power to acquire. Man, according to Rousselot, tends toward a goal—supernatural beatitude—which he cannot reach naturally. Rousselot held that the human intellect is so constituted that it will never be at rest until it intuits reality, and, therefore until it sees all things in the essence of God.

18 Ibid., 72.
19 Ibid., 114.
Following Rousselot, Guy de Broglie held that man's natural desire for beatitude is implicitly a desire to see God. Since the natural desire for beatitude is the ultimate end of individual acts for beatitude, implicit in every act is the desire for God. It is the same with the intellect's search for truth; it is implicitly a search to see all things in God. Finally, the desire to see God connotes a velleity that is implicit and necessary--necessary because it is implicit in every act. 20 Father Marechal further developed the distinction between the order of finality and the order of realization by emphasizing the metaphysical tendency towards the beatific vision. This basic tendency is to a perfection beyond man's powers. It is natural in the sense that it is a metaphysical urge, although its fulfillment depends on the intervention of God. 21 Father Laporta, O.S.B. reduced this metaphysical tendency to a transcendental relation. He interprets natural desire in two senses:

(1) It connotes the essential and necessary relation of a thing to its end. . . . and this is natural ontological desire.

(2) It also connotes an action elicited by the appetitive faculty but determined by the nature possessing that faculty. And this is natural elicited desire.

20 Ibid., 116.

21 Ibid., 119.
Man has a natural desire to see God in the former and not in the latter sense of natural desire. He has not a natural elicited desire to see God; for the formal object of the will is bonum in communi, and not the beatific vision, and so the will does not necessarily desire this vision. But he has a natural ontological desire to see God; for the beatific vision is the ultimate perfection or final end of man.\(^{22}\)

We find this position fully developed in the work of Father O'Mahony, O.S.F.C. In his book, *The Desire Of God*, he assumes that man has a natural desire for the beatific vision and seeks to solve the apparent contradiction of a natural desire for an object beyond the power of the nature. His solution follows the solution of Rousselot, the distinction between the orders of finality and factual realization.

\[ \ldots \] The metaphysical tendency of human nature is towards the beatific vision. And, since nature is the principle of activity, it follows that this tendency is implicit in the higher activity of man, and can be discovered by metaphysical analysis of the nature, object and acts of his intellect and will. The tendency of human nature, however, outstrips its powers; for man has only an obediential capacity for the beatific vision, and so, before the advent of grace, the tendency of his nature is inefficacious.\(^{23}\)

With O'Mahony we conclude our outline of the history of natural desire. In the main we have found three general positions, all of which vary considerably in detail and terminology. The first holds that man naturally desires to know

\(^{22}\) Ibid., 120.

\(^{23}\) Ibid., 124.
God only indirectly. A state of purely natural beatitude is consonant with this position. The second position holds that man naturally desires to know God directly, but does not have the power to do so. Natural beatitude does not satisfy man's nature, according to this position. Finally, the third position holds that man naturally desires to know God directly and has the power to do so. Man, therefore, naturally desires the beatific vision.

With these facts concerning the relationship between God and the rational appetite in hand, we proceed now to study the eudaemonological argument.
CHAPTER II

PRESENTATION OF THE EUDAEMONOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

We have reviewed briefly the history of natural desire for God. The eudaemonological argument is based on that natural desire. That term, however, is hardly univocal, and so it is necessary to preface our presentation of the argument with a clear definition of natural desire. The term natural desire connotes a "congenital and abiding relation of a nature or faculty to a certain good—it is an ordo essentialis ad bonum aliquod." 1 Human nature is a principle of activity. This principle is in potency to the perfection which belongs to it by reason of its nature. The tendency to possess that perfection, we call natural desire. This tendency operates on two levels. On the first level, the primary movement of the will, the appetitive faculty of the soul, is a necessary movement. It is independent of knowledge of the object. The weight of nature, as we say, moves the appetite to desire necessarily the perfection which is natural to it.

This is natural desire in its strict sense, innate desire. On the level of elicited desire, however, the will under the influence of general impulse to seek the perfection of the nature moves consciously under the direction of the intellect to concrete, determined perfections. The natural desire we use in the eudaemonological argument is in the primary sense of the term, the innate, necessary desire of the nature for the perfection proper to it. 2 Buckley describes it this way:

Every potentiality is, of its very nature, an intrinsic ordination to its natural fulfillment. This order, ordination, and tendency of a potency toward its fulfillment, toward the object that will perfect it, is called by Scholastics an appetite, appetitus naturalis. The sense of sight is a natural appetite for color; materia prima is a natural appetite for forma substantialis, and man's faculties are a natural appetite for their perfection. However, man can know the things toward which he is tending and can strive for them consciously. In beings in which there is perception of attractive objects, there is a special penchant or tendency toward them, distinct from the intrinsic ordination of every potency of the being to its proper act. This tendency is an appetite, in the proper and formal sense of the term. In act, this tendency is a movement consequent upon the perception of a thing as attractive. In potency, this tendency is a special faculty of appetite; it is a power of movement toward an attractive object as perceived. 3

It is the intrinsic ordination, therefore, of human nature

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2 Ibid., 25.

3 Joseph Buckley, S.M., Man's Last End, St. Louis, 1949, 126.
that is the foundation of the eudaemonological argument.

The standard terms and definitions used in the eudaemonological argument are these: Appetite, as we have seen, is an ordination of one thing to another. Supernatural appetite is one proceeding from a principle exceeding and elevating natural powers. Its opposite is natural appetite which is proper to the simple powers of a nature. "Natural appetite is nothing more than an ordination or relation to that which is suited to itself, as, for instance, a stone seeks its lowest level of rest." Natural appetite is further subdivided into innate appetite and elicited appetite. Innate appetite is the necessary tendency of any being to the perfection befitting its nature and to the exercise of its proper activity. It does not demand in the subject any previous knowledge. Elicited appetite is the tendency of a knowing subject to an object befitting the nature. It follows previous cognition, and is either necessary or free. Innate appetite, which is the main term in our study, is further subdivided into exigent appetite, an appetite whose object is proportioned to the nature and due to it, and aptitudinal

4 De Ver., q. 25, a. 1. Nihil aliud est appetitus naturalis quam quaedam inclinatio et ordo ad aliquam rem sibi convenientem, sicut lapidem ferri ad locum deorsum.
appetite, an appetite for an object not contradictory to the nature, but for which the nature has no strict right. 5

Beatitude is a term which will occur frequently. It has been variously defined. Boethius calls it: "A state perfect in the possession of every good." Thomas calls it: "The perfect good which completely satisfies the appetite."

In other words, we are dealing here with the supreme good proper to the rational appetite and proportioned to it. It is the perfect and perpetual possession of every good necessary to perfect and satisfy the rational nature of man.

Of especial importance to our argument is the definition of the objects of the faculties. The formal object of a faculty is that aspect of the object that is attained first and in itself and through which the faculty attains any other object. Color, for instance, is the formal object of the human eye, and inasmuch as a thing is colored, it is a proper object of the eye. The material object is that which is attained by reason of the formal object. St. Thomas describes it:

There is in the object two aspects, the one formal, the other material. The formal aspect of

the object is the relation of the object to the potency or habit; and the material aspect is the foundation of the formal; if we take the object of the faculty of vision, for instance, its formal object is color, or something of that nature; for to the degree that something is colored, to that degree it is visible; and the colored body is the material object. 6

We have, finally, the proper object of a faculty, namely, that object which does not exceed the capacity of the faculty and can be attained by it naturally. The adequate object, as contradistinguished from the proper, is any object capable of being attained by the faculty, by natural or supernatural means, directly or indirectly.

In order to lay the strongest possible foundation for the eudaemonological argument, we shall discuss at some length the evidence of man's desire for beatitude. This discussion will be based on the thorough treatment of it by Sertillanges in his monograph on the knowledge of God, Les Sources De La Croyance En Dieu. 7 Sertillanges gives three

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6 Q.D., De Car., 7th ed., Taurinensis, Rome, 1942, II, 549. In objecto consideratur aliquid ut formale et aliquid ut materiale. Formale autem in objecto est secundum quod objectum refertur ad potentiam vel habitum: materiale autem id in quo hoc fundatur; ut si loquamur de objecto potentiae visivae objectum eius formale est color, vel aliquid huiusmodi; in quantum enim aliquid coloratum est, in tantum visibile est; sed materiale in objecto est corpus cui accidit color.

7 A.D., Sertillanges, Les Sources De La Croyance En Dieu, Paris, 1913.
main points as evidence of this desire. The first is man's desire of never-ending life in order to satisfy all of his desires. The second is the nature of man's intellect, which extensively and intensively always desires to know more and more. The third is the fact of disorder connected with man's existence which serves to emphasize his craving for unlimited happiness. We shall examine these facts of common experience more closely.

Man desires never-ending life. Poets, philosophers, theologians bear witness to man's desire to have permanent possession of life. It is the brevity of life that captures the imagination of people in every age. Life is a shadow, a flower, a day, a swift-running river. It is not permanent. And it is not the number of years of its course that makes it so short. Lengthen life's span to a thousand years; it becomes relatively long. How rapidly again it shrinks, however, with the realization that it will necessarily end. As Sertillanges says: "Tout ce qui doit finir n'est rien." What man instinctively desires, then, is not a piece of life, but life itself. He desires unending, indestructible being. Man, touching the eternal because raised above the material swirl around him by his power

8 Ibid., 327.
9 Ibid., 332.
of thought, of reflection, wants eternity of being. Thus, powerfully, the proponents offer a fact of universal experience to demonstrate man's desire for beatitude. From this initial fact, then, the proponent of the eudaemonological argument reasons in this way. The desire just described is found in every age, among all peoples, in every sort of condition; it reveals, therefore, the nature of man. And because it is a natural desire, it must reveal a natural object. At this point is introduced the principle that such a natural desire cannot be frustrated. Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, Augustine, Thomas, and all scholastic philosophers have agreed that a natural desire cannot be frustrated. This does not mean, of course, that every natural desire must necessarily be fulfilled. Rather, what is understood is that no such desire can absolutely lack an object. At least, a real object must be possible. Obviously, therefore, if we grant the proponents of the eudaemonological argument such a genuine natural desire for their eternal object, we must grant them the validity of their argument as a demonstration of the existence of God.

At this point we must emphasize the fact that the eudaemonological argument is based solely on final causality. It is essentially a sixth way of proving the existence of God, absolutely distinct from efficient causality. It would be to
argue from efficient causality were we to say that this natural desire must be caused by something eternal because it is eternal. But we argue from finality if we say that a natural desire for an eternal object demonstrates the existence of that eternal object because such a natural object cannot be frustrated. The eudaemonological argument is based on finality.

The second point to be considered is the nature of man's rational appetite. Man's appetite in its quest for satisfaction is satisfied only by the appearance of infinity in the objects it seeks. Why is science deified today? Perhaps, it is because the man in the street seems to find hero something whose power is unlimited, whose progress is endless. The scientists have told him to throw guns and God away. Science has touched power in man that has no limit. Why is the dictator deified? Because, again, the mixture of power and accomplishment seems unlimited. So it is with love, with riches; the union of both with infinity enhances them and makes man desire them as ends in themselves. At the same time, the finite nature of these objects explains the inevitable betrayal and disillusionment that results on discovery of their limitations. Their failure but emphasizes man's undeniable drive for the unlimited.

10 Ibid., 376.
Finally, we consider the disorder connected with man's existence. Literature, from the Greeks to Graham Greene, emphasizes the constant external constraint of man's milieu and the utter insufficiency of all that seems capable of satisfying the real exigencies of desire. The rebuff man meets in his physical milieu needs no profound investigation; it is patent. Wrapped in the material world, part of it, depending on it for sustenance and for protection, he finds that it continually revolts against his dominion. His own body suffers the blight seemingly stamped on all matter. The interior contradiction offered by the impotence of the intellect, by the weakness of the will, and by the instability of the imagination are ample evidence of the limitations which confront man's desire for the perfect life. Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor. Finally, the insufficiency of the things calculated to satisfy man's urge for the full life greets us at every turn. Failure where success is expected is disappointing, but when success fails to fill, when the gold of expectation turns clay, then it is that man finds the void of desire has no bottom. The savant finds knowledge empty; the scientist is appalled by vast areas yet unexplored; the politician finds no comfort in conquest. After uniting the German states and dominating the continental political scene for decades, Bismarck sighs: "How little joy and satisfaction the whole affair has brought me."
No one loves me for it. . . . I have made no one happy, neither myself nor my dear ones." Thus man realizes the insufficiency of things to satisfy his constant desire for perfect happiness. 

Having thus described the natural desire of man, the proponents of the eudaemonological argument offer the object which, they say, is alone capable of satisfying that desire. The characteristics, they say, are determined by the nature of man himself. The object that satisfies that nature must necessarily be desired for itself. Were it desired for any other reason, it would not be a final end and general motive for all other desires. All men must be able to attain it. It must perfectly satisfy the rational appetite of man. All evil must be excluded from it. And finally, it must be stable and permanent. Since it is evident that no created thing could possess these characteristics, and because some term must be postulated for man's natural desire—if, indeed it is a true natural desire they have drawn—the uncreated, necessary Good must be the term of the desire. 

There are many approaches to the eudaemonological argument as outlined in general above. The more common ones follow these patterns. Man's natural and necessary desire for

11 Ibid., 348.
Beatitude is a necessary and natural desire for God as final end. God, therefore, must exist. Again, God is the formal, specifying object of the intellect and the will. God, therefore, must exist. Or, in the order of being, God is the proper, specifying object of the human will since it necessarily tends to God as to its end. Even if God, therefore, is not the formal object of the will as a faculty, still God must be the object of the will as a nature, for God is the proper term and specifying object of the will as a nature. 13

We have considered rather thoroughly the fact of a desire for perfect happiness and have seen how this is used to demonstrate the fact of God's existence. We ask now whether this desire is a natural desire. This, of course, is the basic issue between the proponents and the adversaries of the argument. How do we know that this desire is congenital to the nature of man? The proponents of the argument offer three characteristics of the desire to prove that it is natural. First of all, they say, it is found in all men. All men desire perfect happiness. History records the constant effort to exclude all evil from life. It is the history of every nation. Experience teaches us and universal consent confirms the fact that all men desire perfect happiness. The desire is, therefore,

13 Ibid., 228.
universal. Secondly, this desire for perfect happiness is in all men necessarily. This is, of course, a necessity of specification, not of exercise. A man, in other words, may simply abstain from the thought of happiness, but in the event that he does turn his attention to happiness, it is impossible for him not to desire it. Lessius describes it in this way:

It is not necessary that everyone thinks about beatitude, nor that everyone that does consider it elicit a desire for it. For the will is free and is able to abstain from acting with regard to any object whatsoever. If however it does actively consider beatitude, it can only do so with love and desire for it. For no one can truthfully and sincerely say: I do not desire to be happy; I wish to be unhappy. 

Finally, this desire of perfect happiness which is in all men is the cause of all their other desires and aspirations. Precisely because a man desires to be happy will he perform this or that act which he believes will lead to the happiness he desires. Noteworthy is the fact that this general intention need not be formally expressed during the performance of any particular act. Possibly it will be only implicit and virtual. One man, for instance, may conceive his happiness to be located in a particular place. In using all the means he knows to put himself in that place, he may not explicitly think of it, but it will nonetheless be the virtual cause of each act leading to final possession of the place.

Ibid., 229.
The desire for beatitude, therefore, is universal, is necessary, is the cause of all other desires, and according to the proponents of the eudaemonological argument is shown by these characteristics to be natural, i.e., radicated and based in nature itself.

We consider, finally, the impossibility of frustration for a natural desire. The principle that no natural desire can be vain is universally valid, says Descoqs, under the following conditions. Such a natural desire need not de facto be completed; it must admit the possibility of being completed. This possibility of completion, furthermore, must be a positive possibility in the order of nature. And the means of achieving the end must be supplied by nature. The fact that some moral or physical disorder may frustrate the end does not negate the principle. The natural desire, finally, must be an innate, necessary tendency. It may be elicited, but it may not be free or elective. 15 Granted these qualifications, we argue to the impossibility of frustration either from the nature of finality or from analogy. The extrinsic causes of being are the efficient cause and the final cause; the former determining that a thing is, the latter determining what it is. Palumbo describes

15 Descoqs, Theologiae Naturalis, 158.
Every agent necessarily acts for a determined end. He tends, that is, to a determined effect which is suitable to him and perfects him. Some good, therefore, as end it is which determines the agent to act rather than to abstain from acting and to seek this end rather than another. 16

Such is the nature of the final cause. In the present instance we are considering a natural desire for beatitude. That is, in the operation of the rational appetite that which determines the agent to act and that which determines the end of the act is the final cause, beatitude. Beatitude is, therefore, essential to the operation of the rational appetite because without it the appetite remains undetermined either to act at all or to any specific act. By denying the final cause, the nature is necessarily destroyed.

Arguing from analogy, we find that in brute animals every natural desire has its proper end. For herbivorous animals there is plant life; for carnivorous animals, meat. This natural disposition of object and appetite is, of course, in no wise upset by the fact that accidentally in one instance or other the natural end of a creature may not be available, as is explained above. Analogously, then, we say that were man

16 Palumbo, Theodicea, 226.
urged on to perfect happiness by all the forces of his nature and yet of all creatures alone deprived of a satisfying term, he would certainly be more miserable than brutes and even inanimate life itself. 

From the nature of finality and from analogy, consequently, we say that no natural desire can be frustrated.

The traditional form of the eudaemonological argument is given in this way by Palumbo:

We have a natural desire for perfect beatitude, or a natural desire to obtain a supreme and perfect good, which can satisfy all the needs of our soul.

& Such a natural desire cannot be inefficacious. Ergo: There must exist a supreme and perfect good as the term of our desire.

& Such a supreme and perfect good must be infinite, that is, God. Ergo: God does exist.

17 Ibid., 225.
18 Ibid., 222.
Positions of adversaries of the eudaemonological argument vary considerably. Some concede it no validity at all; others are willing to grant some probable validity. We shall indicate the main points of these dissenting positions in this chapter. We want a clear picture of the opposition to the argument as it is proposed in Chapter II.

A brief review of the nature of the intellect and will will serve to clarify the basic issues and bring us immediately to the heart of the matter. We are dealing with natural desire in a rational being. Because that rational being acts through its faculties, it is the faculties that reveal what does and what does not belong to the nature of the being. The adversaries scrutinize very closely, therefore, the make-up of the intellect and will. We consider first of all the various objects of these two faculties. They are three: the formal object, the proper object, and the adequate object. The formal object of a faculty is that object which defines the activity of that faculty, to which the faculty is essentially ordered, and which it necessarily attains in every act.
If God, for instance, were the formal object of the human will, granted the existence of the will, it would be impossible for God not to exist. At the same time, because of the nature of this formal, specifying object, it is clear that this is the only object which allows such a conclusion. Here we apply the metaphysical principle that nothing natural can be absolutely frustrated. Granted, therefore, an essential ordination of faculty to object, that object must exist or the nature of the faculty is frustrated.

What, then, is the formal object of the intellect? Even those who defend the validity of the argument answer that the formal object of the human intellect is being in general. In other words, that which is known first and in itself is being in the widest extension of the word. Maher says: "Within the sphere of being is included substance and accident, body and spirit, creator and creature, actual and possible reality; in fact, everything capable of being in any measure understood." In extension, therefore, the formal object of the human mind, being in general, does include God.

And, secondly, what is the proper and specifying object of the human intellect? Again, all agree that the

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proper object of the human intellect is the abstract and universal essences of sensible or material things. Maher puts it neatly: "But, although the formal object of the intellect embraces all forms of being, yet the human intellect has for its connatural, immediate, or proportionate object, the abstract and universal essences of sensible or material things." In treating of the proper object of the intellect, there is question of those things toward which the intellect tends directly as opposed to objects which it can know only mediately or indirectly. Thus God and pure spirits are not proper objects of the human intellect, though, supposing their existence, they are contained within the scope of its formal object.

To clarify immediately the relation between the human intellect and God, man's knowledge of Him is attained in this fashion. Man cannot intuit directly the divine essence. The proposition "God exists" is not immediately evident as far as we are concerned. Our idea of God, therefore, is analogous as opposed to proper. All of our ideas originate in objects on the sensible level. By abstraction man forms ideas of different perfections. These are proper concepts. Now, by negating all imperfection in these concepts and by predicating

2 Ibid., 306.
them of God as pure perfection man can represent the divine essence, not, indeed, properly but at least analogously.

At this point it might be well to distinguish the formal and proper objects of the intellect from its adequate object. The former pertain only to the natural order; the latter to the supernatural order after the elevation of the faculty by grace.

What is the formal object of the will? The formal object of the will is good in general. This universal concept includes all possible good; it is good conceived abstractly as unlimited good. In extension this object must include God.

Having reviewed the nature of the objects of intellect and of will, we are in a position to consider the arguments brought against the eudaemonological argument.

From our definitions of the proper and formal objects of the intellect it is clear that although a concrete, infinite good possibly is contained in the orbit of the formal object of the intellect, the proper and conatural object of that faculty offers no conclusive evidence of it. That proper object is restricted to sensible, material things. Again, as we stated just above, the formal object of the will embracing all good must include God, the infinite good. But the opponents of the eudaemonological argument insist that prior to a demon-
stration of the actual existence of God, the fact cannot be demonstrated that such an infinite good is actually verified in some concrete being. Since we have no proper concept of such a being, no real argument beyond mere gratuitous assumption can be offered to show that this tendency to good in general includes the tendency to a concrete infinite good.

Strictly speaking, therefore, neither the formal object of the intellect nor the formal object of the will disclose a natural tendency to a concrete infinite good. In this fact the opponents of the eudaemonological argument offer one strong reason for questioning the fact itself of a natural desire for absolute beatitude. What is evident from an examination of the faculties, according to the adversaries, is that man's natural and necessary tendency for happiness is an appetite for universal good rather than a concrete, infinite good. It is a good conceived abstractly as an unlimited good. Therefore, before the existence of God is established, says Palumbo, that such a good is verified in some concrete being cannot be proved. 3

In the face of the analysis just given, defenders of the argument propose a distinction. Granted that God is

3 Palumbo, Theodicea, 299.
not the formal or proper object of the faculties in the order of activity, could he not be the object of those faculties in the order of being? Here we have the familiar distinction between the intellect and will considered as faculties and the intellect and will considered as natures. And so, runs the argument, granted that infinite good and infinite being are not the objects of the intellect and will as faculties, nonetheless they are the formal and specifying objects of those faculties insofar as they are natures. The cause of man's tendency to the infinite is the infinity of God to which, by its nature, the will is ordered. God must, therefore, exist; otherwise the will would be naturally frustrated. In other words, God is the formal and proper object of the will as a nature.

The adversaries of the argument reply quite simply that the distinction between the will as a faculty and the will as a nature has no foundation. For whatever is said of the one must be said of the other; the capacity of the one is known from the capacity of the other. Consequently, if God cannot be the object of the will as a faculty, He cannot be the object of the will as a nature. And with this distinction the advers-

4 Ibid., 230.
saries of the argument insist time and time again on the principle: the infinite good cannot be the formal and proper object of any created thing. Here is how Manser puts it:

When a faculty is naturally ordered to the proper object of its nature, there ought to be a natural proportion between the faculty and the object. . . . This principle is valid for our human intellect, for our will. . . . Hence there should be a natural equity between the faculty and its natural object, a certain likeness of nature and form. How is it possible then to have that likeness between God. . . and the human intellect and will. . . .

Again, the adversaries note, the fact that the formal object of the will contains the idea of infinite good in no way helps the validity of the argument. It is from other sources we know that such an idea is contained in the universal scope of good in general. The precise point of the eudaemonological argument is to prove that it is contained in that idea independent of any other proof.

Some adversaries of the argument base their objection on the nature of an elicited appetite. In the natural desire for beatitude we are dealing with an elicited appetite.

5 Descogs, 172. Là où une puissance est naturellement ordonnée à l'objet propre de sa nature, il doit y avoir une proportion naturelle entre la puissance et l'objet. . . . Ce principe vaut pour notre volonté humaine, pour notre intelligence. . . . Il doit donc y avoir entre une puissance et son objet naturel une connaturalitas, une communauté de nature et de forme. Nous demandons alors comment cette communauté peut être, possible entre Dieu. . . et l'intelligence ou la volonté humaine.
Now, in order to have an elicited appetite of any object at all, the intellect must first know and present that object to the will. Consequently, if the will would tend necessarily to an infinite good, God, it is necessary that the intellect should preconceive that infinite object as existing and as necessary to obtain perfect happiness. Knowledge of God necessarily precedes the existence of the appetite for Him as the ultimate end of the appetite. The existence of God, therefore, according to Palumbo, is a presupposition and not a consequence of the appetite. 6

Perhaps the most recurrent objection to the eudaemonological argument is that emphasizing the lack of proportion between the intellect, the will, and transcendent good. We have the finite nature of these faculties contrasted to the infinite nature of what the proponents of the argument would call the natural object. Something essentially finite is paired off with something infinite. What the adversaries object to is evident. The rational faculties are not proportioned to such an object, and this is true even if the object is granted to exist. Elicited acts for beatitude cannot proceed from the human intellect and will for this is an object

in such a way that they manifest an essential need of those faculties. At most, they can demonstrate an inefficacious desire, and, of course, the actual existence of such an object cannot be proved from an inefficacious desire. 7

Treating this matter of proportion, Palumbo is quite strong. He states that since the will for its part is finite while its direction in this instance is to an infinite object which completely exceeds its natural capacity, the whole argument is seemingly based on the supposition that the will is a divine faculty. This is the supposition most of the adversaries of the argument attack. They argue that the result of this hypothesis would be to make the human intellect and will tend positively to an intuitive vision of the infinite and to a real, essential possession of it on the purely natural plane. If the need were absolute, if our nature were utterly unintelligible without it, we might argue to the need of such a term. However, this conclusion, say the adversaries, is not only improbable, but it seems absolutely impossible since human nature seems altogether unproportioned to such an end. 8

To avoid holding an explicit desire for an object


8 Palumbo, Theodicea, 229.
clearly not proportioned to the faculty, the proponents of the argument make this case. The absolute good in question is not known by way of abstraction, but, rather, the will immediately—although implicit—desires that absolute good as real and as concrete. Now this seems to hark back to the distinction mentioned above between the will as a nature and the will as a faculty. The answer is the same. The nature of anything is revealed by its acts. We know the nature of a faculty by what it does. On the one hand we have a finite nature; on the other an infinite term. What positive proof, the adversaries repeat, is there that the former is able to tend to a real possession of the latter? The only proof offered is the desire itself which is quite possibly purely subjective and illusory. It is precisely the distance between such a finite faculty and the infinite term that is the crux of the matter. This is the disproportion the adversaries come back to as the foundation of their objections and the cause of their mistrust of the argument.

In spite of the fact that the formal objects of the human intellect and will offer little support to the argument. In spite of the disproportion between the finite and the infinite, the fact yet remains that man does as a matter of universal experience have a strong tendency toward absolute sat-
isfaction. On that tendency it is that the strength of the argument rests. If those who propose the strongest arguments against this proof for the existence of God seem to bend over backward to preserve its validity—witness Descoqs after two score pages which tear it apart bit by bit, attesting to its apologetic value—it is the very force of the universal tendency to absolute satisfaction that breeds this philosophic reluctance.

Descoqs brings matters mostly to a head by reducing to three the criteria which test the validity of the universal tendency to absolute satisfaction as a proof for the existence of God. To prove the possibility of the infinite Good from such a tendency it is necessary either (1) to see that the Infinite is positively possible in itself, or (2) to see its nature immediately in itself—Ontologism, or (3) to see that the motion toward indefinite good would not be intelligible in the unity of transcendental good, but only in transcendent Good. In treating the third hypothesis, Descoqs comes to the heart of his argument. The defenders claim that an infinite series in final causes is equally as repugnant as an infinite series in efficient causes. A final cause is as necessary as an efficient cause. Consequently, there must be a final term which corresponds perfectly to the potency

9 Descoqs, Praelectiones, 166.
and the capacity of the nature. There must exist, therefore, a term which corresponds to the natural appetite for beatitude found only in transcendent Good. Descoqs' answer— and it forces to the surface the basic issues in the minds of the adversaries of the argument—is this. Such a natural appetite must have its proper end only if the ontological order has already been established. Again, in the purely logical order such an appetite must be satisfied only if a first efficient cause has been proved. However, in the purely logical order until a first efficient cause has been proved, the necessity of such a term is conceded by Descoqs only with probability.¹⁰

In rejecting the eudaemonological argument, Descoqs follows, in the main, the line of difficulties we have already stated. In the first place, the tendency itself is not such that only the transcendent term can possibly explain it. Secondly, the disproportion between the nature of the faculty and the nature of the term makes certitude highly questionable. Thirdly, neither the will nor the intellect requires in its formal object such a term. And finally, the term of the faculties can be explained satisfactorily in another way.

A final matter to be considered in connection with

¹⁰ Descoqs, Praelectiones, 167.
the position of the adversaries is their explanation of the
dynamism of the intellect and the will. We can introduce the
problem with this question proposed by defenders of the argu-
ment: how can the object which directs the tendencies of the
will be an abstract object? The good as such necessarily im-
plies simple good. And if goodness as such (bonum ut sic) is
the object of the will, that object necessarily implies abso-
lute good (bonum simpliciter.) Adversaries of the argument
find the answer to this proposition in a further analysis of
the mechanism of the will. That the formal object of the will
is goodness in general is evident. That this formal object
necessarily implies absolute good is not evident. The formal
object is the aspect under which a concrete determined object
is desired. The object of the human will remains finite,
indefinite, and concrete. The will itself terminating always
in its formal object, the good, need never be absolutely
satisfied. The fact that we constantly rise above the goods
which we do gain, say the adversaries, does not necessarily
mean that this tendency of the must end in transcendent good,
but simply that we retain the liberty of the good in general.
That is, that we continue to act freely. That goodness does

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11 Descoqs, Praelectiones, 131.
not of course exclude transcendent good, but from the mechanism of the will itself such an object cannot be proved. Each particular act of volition and intellection has its sufficient reason in the continued freedom to consider finite objects under the aspect of the true and the good, the aspect under which man's faculties attain their material object.

Concerning the finalism of a tendency to the indefinite, Descoqs has this to say: It is true that no finite good can satisfy the desire of man for beatitude if one suppose beatitude to be a static condition. But could not that desire of man be satisfied by a dynamic pursuit of finite, ever-renewed goods? The nature of the desire leads man always to the finite, indefinite good. The indefinite implies a capacity never filled. The very lack of satisfaction is a condition of our activity. How is it possible, therefore, to conclude with certitude that the tendency to beatitude—to which our faculties are in no way proportioned—must have for its term an infinite, positive good? 12

In conclusion, it is well to note that we are not concerned here with the validity of the principle "In essentials nature cannot be defective." It is admitted that the

12 Descoqs, Praelectiones, 183.
principle of sufficient reason requires us to recognize the equal validity of the principle of final causality with that of efficient causality. Granted a positive natural tendency, there must be a term corresponding to it. To deny this is to make human nature unintelligible. The basic difficulty is one of fact. Does an analysis of our natural tendencies reveal that we do tend to a good that is positive, transcendent, and concrete, so that there must exist a term corresponding to that natural desire? The validity of the eudaemonological argument rests on the answer to this question. Such an object would have to be objectively possible. That is, the object's source would have to be the concrete finite order since there is no a priori foundation for it in the dynamism of the will. It would have to be subjectively possible. Some proportion would have to be proved between the finite faculty and the infinite object.
CHAPTER IV

REVIEW OF POSITIONS AND CONCLUSION

We have weighed the eudaemonological argument rather thoroughly. Its strong point is the insistent craving of man for unlimited happiness. This craving is called a natural desire. By natural desire we understand an ordination of the rational appetite toward its natural object. This ordination is an appetite in the formal sense of the term, i.e. perception of the proper object and motion toward it. The intellect presents the object; the will desires the object. Inasmuch as this desire for happiness is a natural desire, it cannot fail of its object. No truly natural desire can be vain. Because the term of the desire is beatitude, and therefore God, the existence of God follows necessarily from the fact of the natural desire. This, in outline, is the proposed sixth way of demonstrating the existence of God.

The adversaries of this eudaemonological argument do not question the metaphysical certainty of the principle which affirms the impossibility of absolute frustration in a desire of this kind. Nor do they deny the infinite capacity
of the rational appetite. The moot point lies in the formal and proportioned object of that appetite. From the proportioned object of the appetite is it possible to demonstrate with certitude the existence of God? What is the real, proportioned object of the rational appetite from which we can define its natural desire? The adversaries emphasize the lack of proportion between the finite faculty and the infinite object proposed by the eudaemonological argument.

We shall examine carefully the principle issues in the present chapter. We shall review the particular arguments of authorities on both sides. We shall give a summary of the critical issues at the end of the chapter and attempt some definite conclusion based on this study.

The investigation will necessarily carry us into the current dispute about natural desire for the beatific vision. Only indirectly will that discussion of the correct interpretation of the texts of St. Thomas contribute to the present problem of a sixth way. It might be well to preface our use of matter taken from that controversy by remarking that whatever use is made of it will not prejudice the problem of the correct interpretation of Thomas, nor will it presuppose the correctness of any particular opinion.
It will be advantageous to clear up several concepts at the outset of this chapter. We single out first for clarification the distinction between the metaphysical and the psychological orders. What do we mean by the metaphysical order as distinguished from the psychological order? The metaphysical order is on the third and highest level of abstraction. It considers being as such, the relations that exist, therefore, between being created and uncreated. The psychological order, on the other hand, is on the first level of abstraction. In the case of man, it abstracts from the individual and considers all the causes of movement and especially the self movement that comes from rational appetite. In the metaphysical order, then, man is considered as related to all being and as passively moved in relation to them. In the psychological order man is considered as related to an end which he consciously chooses as proportioned to his faculties. In the metaphysical order man's action and goal are determined by God. Man is passive. In the psychological order, consequent on the general movement of God, man determines himself. Man is active. Concerning this distinction, Buckley says:

... In the metaphysical order, we may consider as participated beings the created goods which man desires,

1 Joseph Buckley, S.M., Man's Last End, St. Louis, 1949, 97.
which derive their goodness from the goodness of God; so that in considering the objects man desires, not as man desires them but as they are in their metaphysical implications, we may say that in desiring created goods, man desires God, in whose goodness these created goods share. . . .

In the psychological order, on the contrary, man is considered active and conscious, tending toward an end viewed as adapted to man's powers and needs; seen, in other words, from man's point of view. 2

In one instance, consequently, God determines the movement of man; in the other, man determines the movement of man. Are the two movements identical or different? As far as the movement itself is concerned, they are the same. The formal object, however, of the movement may be different. Buckley explains the distinction this way:

God could not create anything except for the sake of His own goodness. But, if God created all things for the sake of His goodness as end, then all things are ordained to God's goodness as their end. This does not mean, however, that creatures either should tend toward God's goodness as such by conscious act or do so by natural appetite. The purpose of an action and corresponding passion, or reception of the action, are identical in re, not necessarily in aspect. 3

On the metaphysical plane, therefore, the divine goodness is the efficient, the exemplary, and the final cause of every being. Every movement toward any of these created participations of the divine goodness is, on that plane, an explicit

2 Ibid., 98.
3 Ibid., 99.
movement toward the divine goodness. On the psychological plane, on the other hand, the same movement is explicitly determined by the intention of the rational appetite, in the case of man, and this may or may not be the divine goodness. Buckley puts it clearly:

Man is moved by nature—this first and fundamental act of the will is natural and necessary—toward good in general (object) and beatitude in general (end.) By virtue of this first movement, man moves himself toward particular good objects, choosing and determining in what he is to seek his beatitude. If man is really to satisfy and fulfill his natural cravings and powers (man as patient), he must, indeed, direct himself (man as agent) toward those values which respond to his natural and reasonable tendencies. But, as a free agent, man is able to set his choice on mere apparent goods and false values. There is no psychological nor even moral necessity for man to adopt in his actions the same point of view as God has with regard to the purpose of man’s acts.  

The importance and significance of this distinction is obvious. The validity of the eudaemonological argument must be established on the psychological plane. At the same time, the temptation to sidle into the metaphysical order is attractive.

Because the relation of the mind to God is, in part, the focal point of the present discussion, the second matter for study is man’s knowledge of God. The knowledge or contemplation of God is of varying kinds and degrees. The first is that common to the majority of men. It is confused and subject

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4 Ibid., 102.
to error. The second, scientific in its approach, is acquired by demonstration. It is a fully rational approach to God and results in a negative-positive concept telling us what God is not. The third is on the higher level of faith and revelation. It affords us positive knowledge of God. The fourth is the knowledge of God that is proper to pure spirits and disembodied souls. And, finally, the most perfect of all knowledge, that of direct vision of the divine essence. Of these ways of knowing God, the first three are proper to man in his present condition. Since the eudaemonological argument is strictly on the philosophical plane, the third way of faith and revelation is not pertinent. Ruling out the first type, that of the confused knowledge, we find that the present discussion concerns itself with the second kind of knowledge of God. That is the properly rational approach to Him. The heart of the argument is to analyze the relation between the mind—and therefore the rational appetite—and God. 5

Any discussion of the validity of the eudaemonological argument centers sooner or later on the formal objects of the intellect and the will and more particularly on the precise meaning of these objects, universal good and universal

truth (bonum universale et verum universale.) Limiting our
discussion to the will for the moment, we have three possible
interpretations of the term universal good. It may mean uni-
versal good in the order of being (bonum universale in essendo).
That is, subsistent good, God. Again, it may be universal
good in the order of predication, which by reason of its exten-
sion is predicated univocally or analogically of any good.
This is the bonum universale in predicando. Finally, it may
mean general universal good, which is the formal object of the
will. This is the bonum universale in genere. The necessity
of care in using the term universal good is apparent. If we
define the tendency of the rational appetite by the universal
good in the order of being, God, that is, there can be no dis-
pute about the validity of the eudaemonological argument.
However, the universal good referred to as the object of the
will is not the bonum universale in essendo; it is not the
bonum universale in predicando, which is the logical universal;
it is the bonum universale in genere, the metaphysical univer-
sal. Buckley describes it as "good in the universality of its
analogical character." In other words, whatever object is

6 Buckley, Man's Last End, 123.
7 Ibid., 129.
the term of an act of the will, that object is chosen under
the aspect of good. And in the scale of being, everything
that is falls under the scope of this formal object of the
will either directly or analogically.

Finally, we subject to clarification once again the
objects of the rational appetite. We have defined the formal
object as the particular aspect under which the faculty at-
tains its object. As explained above, being in general is
the formal object of the intellect; good in general is the
formal object of the will. The proper object is that object
which is proportioned to the powers of the faculty in its
given condition. For the intellect this proper object is the
essence of a material thing; for the will it is any good thus
presented by the intellect. Finally, the adequate object of
the faculty comprehends the complete extension of the capacity
of the faculty. For the intellect anything in the scale of
being is embraced in its adequate object; the will led by
the intellect is equally universal. The significance of these
distinctions lies in this, that the present discussion is lim-
ited to the proper and proportioned object of the rational
appetite. That God is included in the adequate object of the
intellect is true. But the very point of the eudaemonological
argument is to demonstrate, independently of any other proof,
that such a determined concept does belong to the indeter-
mined range of the adequate object.

To summarize these introductory remarks then, we
are trying to ascertain the validity of a sixth way which is
based on the natural desire of rational appetite in its pres-
ent condition. The argument is based on the proportioned
object of the faculty; it is on the psychological plane;
finally, the formal object of the rational appetite is bonum
universale in genere. These are the conditions on which the
proof is based.

The adversaries of the eudaemonological argument
stress in particular two points. The first is the lack of
proportion between the finite faculty and the infinite object
if we claim a natural desire for God. The second is the
nature of the formal and proportioned object itself. That
object is not God. How do the proponents of the argument
handle the difficulty of lack of proportion? Garrigou-
Lagrange presents one way of doing it. We shall review the
theory of Garrigou-Lagrange in general and then discuss this
particular point of proportion.

In his monograph on the realism of the principle of
finality, published in 1932, 8 Garrigou-Lagrange expounds very

8 P. Reg., Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., Le Réalisme Du
Principe De Finalité, Paris, 1932.
carefully the possibility of a sixth way. Although there is some evidence that he has since changed his position somewhat, his clear and forceful explanation of the argument warrants study. 9

In outline, Garrigou-Lagrange follows the main lines of the argument as presented above. The basic fact is that limited goods do not and cannot satisfy the appetite of man. Neither external goods nor internal goods do satisfy, whether they be of a material or a spiritual nature. But these limited goods do show man something. On the metaphysical plane they point out by their limited perfection a cause which is necessarily unlimited in perfection. Beyond this, on the psychological plane their inability to satisfy the appetite of man demonstrates the need of an object that can satisfy the appetite. This is no longer a question of causality; rather, it is one of finality. Garrigou-Lagrange quotes Thomas:

The object of the will, which is the appetite of man, is universal good, just as the object of the intellect is universal truth. It is clear from this that nothing is able to satisfy the will of

9 See Buckley, Man's Last End, "Foreword."
man except universal good which is not found in any created thing but only in God.

He then comments:

Is there not in the natural desire for happiness a proof contained implicitly in the fourth way of Saint Thomas with which we are at present concerned but which is based on the principle of finality "every agent acts for an end; a natural desire cannot be inefficacious". Could it be that the metaphysical validity of this principle is less certain than the principle of efficient causality? And is it not just as certain without the existence of God having been proved, since it is impossible to have efficient causality or desire without finality?

Garrigou-Lagrange goes some length in exploring the possibility of satisfying the appetite by limited good. From experience and from the nature of the rational appetite, he finds that it is impossible. The only object that will satisfy the appetite must be real; it must be extra-mental--because man does not

10 Garrigou-Lagrange, Le Réalisme, 262. --Objectum autem voluntatis, quae est appetitus humanus, est universale bonum, sicut obiectum intellectus est universale verum. Ex quo patet, quod nihil potest quietare voluntatem hominis, nisi bonum universale, quod non inventur in aliquo creato, sed solum in Deo.

11 Ibid., 262. --N'y a-t-il pas là, dans le désir naturel du bonheur, une preuve implicitement contenue dans la 4a via de saint Thomas dont nous parlions à l'instant, mais que s'explicite par le principe de finalité "tout agent agit pour une fin; un désir naturel ne peut être vain". La valeur métaphysique de ce principe serait-elle moins certaine que celle du principe de causalité efficiente? N'est-elle pas aussi certaine avant même d'avoir prouvé l'existence de Dieu, puisqu'il ne peut y avoir d'efficience et même de désir sans finalité?
tend to an abstract good, and it must be infinite. Absolute good must therefore necessarily be its object and absolute good must necessarily exist. He says:

... Thus it follows that man, pursuing not an abstract idea of good but real good which is contained in things, cannot discover his true beatitude in any finite or limited good, but only in the Supreme Good (bonum universale in essendo et in causando). 12

Garrigou offers the usual minor of the argument, that such a natural desire cannot be vain. To prove that a natural desire cannot be vain, he uses the metaphysical argument and that based on analogy with nature to prove that a natural desire cannot be inefficacious. The metaphysical argument is the usual examination of the terms agent and end. Every agent tends to some determined thing which is suitable to it. The end is precisely that determined good. Without the end, there is neither sufficient reason for the agent to act at all nor for it to act in a particular way. Thus the principle has ontological validity equal to that of the principle of efficiency. 13

12 Ibid., 265. ... Il s'en suit que l'homme, tendant non pas vers l'idée abstraite du bien, mais vers le bien réel qui est dans les choses, ne peut trouver sa vraie bétitude en aucun bien fini ou limité, mais seulement dans le Souverain Bien (bonum universale in essendo et in causando).

13 Ibid., 270.
Garrigou-Lagrange qualifies the object of man's natural desire with two notes. In the first place, that object must be real. It is necessarily real because, granted that truth is formally in the mind, the good is formally in things. The good which we naturally seek, therefore, will be real extra-mental good. Secondly, that natural object will be one thing. The assertion that it might possibly be a succession of finite goods, a mere collection, is illusory. For the question is not one of quantity but rather of quality.

Garrigou-Lagrange says:

Quantity is not material to the question; the point at stake here is the quality of the good; for one might multiply ad infinitum finite goods without thereby producing the absolute Good, without imperfection which is conceived by the intellect and accordingly desired by the will. That is the essential reason for the frustration which dismays the worldling. He travels the surface of the earth; he turns first to one creature and then another, and thus it goes without his ever being fully satisfied and really happy.

Thus Garrigou-Lagrange underlines the oneness of the true object of the will. No matter how multiplied, many objects will not satisfy it.

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Ibid., 272.---La quantité ne fait rien à l'affaire; il s'agit ici de la qualité du bien; même si l'on multipliait à l'infini tous les biens finis, ils ne constitueraient pas le Bien pur, sans mélange, que notre intelligence conçoit, et que par suite, notre volonté désire. C'est la raison profonde de l'ennui qu'éprouvent les mondains, qu'ils traînent sur toutes les plages du monde; ils se portent vers une créature, puis vers une autre, et ainsi de suite, sans qu'ils soient jamais vraiment satisfait, et véritablement heureux.
Finally, the key question. Garrigou-Lagrange asks:

"S'ensuit-il que notre désir naturel du bonheur exige que nous arrivions à la vision immediate du Dieu Souverain Bien?" His answer: "Nullement."¹⁵ He continues:

But much below the immediate vision of the divine essence, and much below the Christian Faith, there is a natural knowledge of God, the author of nature, which affords us the proofs for his existence.

Moreover, except that original sin has rendered our moral powers weak, that natural knowledge of God would afford us an efficacious natural love of God, the author of nature, of God, the supreme Good, naturally known. ¹⁶

It is this part of the theory of Garrigou-Lagrange—that man's natural desire is for a natural vision of God, rather than a supernatural vision, that will be the focal point for the discussion that follows. The question is now limited by Garrigou-Lagrange to natural knowledge. And if the eudaemonological argument can draw on this source, there will be no longer any

¹⁵ Ibid., 230.

¹⁶ Ibid., 230. —Mais très au-dessous de la vision immediate de l'essence divine, et très au-dessous de la foi chrétienne, il y a la connaissance naturelle de Dieu, auteur de la nature, celle que nous donnent les preuves de son existence.

Et si le péché original n'avait pas affaibli nos forces morales, cette connaissance naturelle de Dieu nous permettrait d'arriver à un amour naturel efficace de Dieu, auteur de la nature, de Dieu, souverain Bien, naturellement connu.
difficulty of lack of proportion between a finite faculty and an infinite object precisely because the mode of possession will be natural. Nature finds perfect satisfaction in a natural end.

Why does Garrigou-Lagrange offer this solution; namely, the divine goodness naturally known as the term of the rational appetite? Simply because he insists on perfect satisfaction of the appetite, which only the divine goodness can give, and because he stays within the resources of the nature. It is rather interesting to note that the much belabored point of the insufficient satisfaction offered by finite objects is one quite readily accepted by the adversaries of the argument. Neither side denies that absolute satisfaction is impossible short of possession of the infinite object. Now the agreement of the adversaries on this point raises one important issue. Is it possible that a faculty can exist without the potentiality of perfect satisfaction on the natural plane? The adversaries say—-are forced to maintain--that that is possible. Garrigou-Lagrange says that it is impossible. The appetite must be perfectly satisfied. He is forced, therefore, to hold that the divine goodness, which alone can satisfy the appetite, is the term of the rational appetite. The position is simple. Because the object is absolute good, the nature is perfectly
satisfied. Because the possession is natural, according to Garrigou-Lagrange, there is no difficulty about proportion between finite faculty and infinite object. Thus, the main difficulty of the adversaries is sidestepped. It seems rather clear, however, that by thus avoiding the difficulty of proportion, Garrigou-Lagrange steps into a greater one. For it is difficult to understand how natural possession of God can be the absolute satisfaction his major demands. We have seen above that he requires perfect satisfaction of the rational appetite. He insists that man's natural desire will be satisfied only by complete possession of the bonum universale in essendo, universal good, that is, in the order of being. To satisfy this need of nature, he brings forward now a natural possession of that universal good.

Let us consider carefully the implications of this position. We have outlined above the relation of the mind to God. 17 We have reviewed the six ways in which man can know God. We have seen that the sixth way, direct vision of the divine essence, is the only one which affords direct and perfect knowledge of Him. But we have seen too that the second manner of knowing Him is the manner proper to man in his

17 See this chapter, 5.
present condition and proper, too, to the present argument. This second manner is the rational approach which by negative-positive concepts comes to some indirect knowledge of God. With these points in mind, let us review this theory of Garrigou-Lagrange.

In the first place, this natural possession of God cannot be the perfect satisfaction that Garrigou-Lagrange insists on in his treatment of the natural desire of man for happiness. The object of that natural desire he has described in these terms: *bonum universale*, *le Souverain Bien* (*bonum universale in essendo et in causando*), and *le Bien pur, sans melange*. Having insisted on perfect satisfaction of the appetite and having provided the only object capable of giving that satisfaction, he offers not perfect possession as the term of man's desire, but simply possession consonant with the natural power of the intellect. Thus he offers an unlimited appetite, an unlimited object, and a limited union of the two. What are the limitations? Man's possession of the supreme good will be indirect or analogical. Directly, the intellect still has not possessed the supreme good. The concept of the supreme good will be negative. For, as we have seen, the positive part of the concept, the perfection itself, is taken directly from the finite objects proportionate to the intellect. Having denied any limit to this finite perfection, man
predicates it of God. It must be emphasized that the mind has conceived only finite perfection. It is not a matter of more or less; it is a question here of quality. That God is pure perfection, the mind knows; but just what pure perfection is, it does not know. The difficulty is, of course, that such indirect, analogical knowledge cannot properly satisfy the mind. The theory seems to be imperfect in this first respect then, that while seemingly demonstrating a natural desire for the supreme good—and therefore fitting perfectly the eudaemonic logical argument—it never satisfies that natural desire through perfect possession of the supreme good. Thus we can hardly say that the natural desire is for the supreme good, and the theory, therefore, offers no support to the eudaemonic logical argument. For to prove that God does exist from natural desire, we must show that He is the real object of that natural desire. And we see that the real object of Garrigou-Lagrange's natural desire is not a direct possession of God but only an indirect possession. Thus the theory does not offer perfect satisfaction to the appetite, and it offers no foundation for demonstrating the existence of God from natural desire. Again, that desire of its nature terminates directly in finite perfections. Granted, therefore, the existence of finite perfections, the term of its natural desire is possessed
And from finality alone how can it be proved that something more than the finite term must exist? The term of the appetite is reached, and that is an end of it as far as finality is concerned.

Finally, there is some question of the accuracy of the statement that the intellect has a natural desire to know God perfectly. There is no doubt that the intellect does desire to know God perfectly. But is this a natural desire in the primary sense of that term? According to an interpretation of St. Thomas by William R. O'Connor, the answer is in the negative. His interpretation is this. The primary natural desire of the intellect is to know things perfectly. It will naturally, therefore, seek to know the essence of anything fully, and it will know the essence of a thing fully when it knows it in all of its causes. In describing this natural tendency of the intellect, Finili says:

The natural inclination or desire of the mind is for knowledge; ... This natural inclination will evidently extend to all knowledge that may perfect the mind, and this in man's earthly condition is restricted to the knowledge of the essences of material things. ... Perfect knowledge of any object can only be said to be ours when we know its causes; hence the natural desire of the mind for knowledge is for knowledge of essences and their causes. Moreover, knowledge of the mere existence of a cause will not satisfy this natural desire of the mind, for knowledge of the essence of that cause is also perfective of the mind and as such falls under the mind's natural desire. There would seem to be no end to this process, the
discovery of the existence of any cause only stimulating further research to discover what it is in itself, and therefore what are its causes.18

The proposition Omnis intellectus naturaliter desiderat divinae substantiae visionem clearly then is not a description of the initial state of the intellect. Primary is the desire to know perfectly, and following on this is the perfection of knowing particular things totally.19 O'Connor has this to say:

Every power, every nature, has its natural tendency, which is its natural desire. In the intellect is a tendency flowing from its natural form as intellect towards knowledge and truth. "All men by nature desire to know," said Aristotle, and St. Thomas gives us a special application of this general principle in his doctrine of a natural desire for the vision of God. Once we know that God exists, the intellect is still unsatisfied; it tends by its very nature towards a further knowledge of Him. We know that God exists through the celebrated five ways; does anyone imagine that the human mind is completely satisfied when it reaches the end of the five ways? The intellect cannot be satisfied with partial truth or incomplete knowledge; it tends by a necessity of its nature to know the essence of any object once it know this much about it, that it exists.20

The natural desire of the intellect, therefore, is to know things perfectly. Consequently, once it knows of the existence of God through the five ways, then it desires to know Him

18 Finili, "Natural Desire," 347.
19 Ibid., 335.
perfectly. We note that the initial natural desire of the intellect is not for God. If, therefore, this interpretation of St. Thomas be correct, Garrigou-Lagrange's major is considerably weakened. The primary movement of the intellect on the psychological plane gives no indication of the necessary existence of God. Moreover, the secondary movement toward God presupposes that his existence is known before He is desired naturally. The sixth way, the eudaemonological argument, finds little footing in this explanation of the nature of the natural desire of the intellect.

Perhaps it is worth mentioning here that if the proponents of the eudaemonological argument could expect to find support for their theory of natural desire, one would expect it to come from men like O'Connor and Finili. For these men follow in general the doctrine of Sylvester of Ferrara, that man's desire for the beatific vision is elicited and natural. That position, if any, would seem favorable to the sixth way. Certainly, the position of Cajetan, that the desire is elicited and supernatural, would seem less favorable. And the position of Bannez, that the desire is conditional and inefficacious, offers no help.

A final quotation from O'Connor will conclude this particular point.

It is important, however, to see that to desire
to know an object is not the same as desiring an object already known. The intellect naturally desires to know more about God once it knows that He exists; but this does not mean that the will of man naturally desires God as our beatitude before He is seen as He is in Himself. 21

Thus there is very little probability that we can argue from the natural desire of the intellect to the necessary existence of God.

To conclude our remarks on the theory of natural desire for a natural contemplation of God, we will consider Garrigou-Lagrange's use of the term universal good (bonum universale) as the formal object of the will. We have discussed the three possible interpretations of this term. It may seem universal good in the order of being (in essendo) or God, in the order of predication (in praedicando), or in general (in genere). In describing the object of the will, Garrigou-Lagrange says: "... Il s'en suit que L'homme... ne peut trouver sa vraie béatitude en aucun bien fini ou limité, mais seulement dans le Souverain Bien (bonum universale in essendo)." 22 As it stands, that statement is true. True beatitude can be had only by direct possession of God. But the point at issue is not the fact of beatitude but the natural desire of the will. Is the natural tendency of the will to

21 O'Connor, Natural Desire, 35.
22 Garrigou-Lagrange, Le Réalisme, 265.
universal good in the order of being or to universal good in
general? There seems to be no disagreement that it is ordered
to good in general. To use the formal object of the will,
therefore, as if it were synonymous with the adequate object
is to confuse the issue. And when Garrigou-Lagrange says first
that man can find his beatitude only in the Supreme Good and
then uses that fact to demonstrate man's natural desire for
God, he does use the adequate object of the will as if it were
synonymous with the formal object of the will. This distinc-
tion is important. O'Mahony puts it rather clearly:

The distinction between the finality of the
intellectual nature as such and the realization
possible in virtue of its natural faculties is a
metaphysical necessity. It arises out of the very
antinomy of finite mind, whose "capacities" neces-
sarily outstep its powers of realization. For if
the finite mind, left to its natural faculties,
can attain God only in His finite manifestations,
the intellectual nature as such, has a certain in-
finitiy in regard to its object. The object of in-
telligence and of will is a certain potential in-
finte being, under its transcendental aspects of
truth and goodness. Thus if the activities of will
and intellect cannot attain God directly, but only
in the formal object of the "good in general" and
the "true in general," yet they reveal the funda-
mental orientation of the nature whence they pro-
ceed. 23

It is extremely important to distinguish the primary tendency
of the rational appetite, therefore, from its secondary move-

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23 James E. O'Mahony, The Desire Of God, Dublin,
1929, 253.
ments. As with the will, so with the intellect, its formal object is being in general. Its natural secondary movements are proportioned to the sensible quiddity. The whole point of the adversaries of the eudaemonological argument is that the general concept of being (ens) must be determined before we know that it includes Supreme Being as the adequate object of the intellect. The determination of that concept, moreover, cannot be done by the natural tendency of the faculty toward being as such, but only by way of efficient causality. We know, in other words, finite creatures as the proportioned objects of the intellect. On the principle of sufficient reason, we conclude the existence of an infinite creator. Thus, the general concept of being is further determined, and within the adequate object of the intellect lies infinite being.

To summarize then, we have tried to show that Garrigou-Lagrange's natural possession of the supreme good cannot afford the perfect satisfaction he demands. Furthermore, his natural possession of the supreme good cannot be used to demonstrate the absolute necessity of the existence of God because its term is really the finite rather than the infinite. Again, his natural desire of the intellect for God is a secondary rather than a primary movement. And, finally, his use of the term universal good is ambiguous.
Joseph Gredt uses the traditional five ways to prove the existence of God and adds a sixth way based on natural desire. This model of the sixth way is quite unlike that of Garrigou-Lagrange. The basic fact of the argument is the same as that found in other versions of it. In the human intellect and will there is a natural appetite for beatitude whose specific object is infinite good. Granted this specification of the appetite by the infinite good, that good must exist. No natural desire can be vain. It is the capacity of the intellect and will that reveals the specification of the rational appetite. Gredt says:

... This capacity is, however, objectively infinite; the intellect knows things under the aspect of being as such, and the will under the aspect of universal good. Wherefore the objective beatitude of man consists in infinite good, which cannot be a created good. 24

So we have the usual desire and the usual principle that such a desire cannot be frustrated. Gredt's conclusion, however, has a peculiar twist. Granted, he says, the natural appetite for infinite good, that infinite good is possible. Since it

is infinite, being possible, it does exist. Gredt does not make the familiar transit from the desire to the fact of its object immediately because he holds that the existence of an object of natural desire need not be necessary and absolute, but only possible. In this instance of it, however, because of the lack of potentiality in God, the fact that He is possible makes His existence a necessity. Concerning this point he says:

Granted the existence of a specified object, there is no universal and absolute necessity for the existence of a specifying cause. But it is absolutely necessary that the specifying cause be at least possible. For if the specifying cause were impossible, the specified object would also be impossible. For if the cause or specifying agent were absurd, the effect also or the specified object could be no other than absurd. Wherefore in our proposition that natural appetite identified with the very nature of the will would be impossible or absurd, and the will itself would be impossible and absurd. 25

And in this instance we know that infinite good must exist once we have granted its possibility because infinite good is

25 Ibid., 200. --Si existit specificatum, non sequitur quidem universaliter et absoluta necessitate etiam causam specificantem existere. At absoluta necessitate sequitur specificans saltem non esse imposibile. Nam si specificans esset imposibile, etiam specificatum imposibile esset. Si enim causa seu objectum dans specificationem absurdum esset, etiam effectus seu specificatum non posset non esse absurdum. Quare in proposito nostro appetitus ille naturalis identificatus cum ipsa voluntatis natura esset impossibilis seu absurdus, et ipsa voluntas esset impossibilis et absurda.
an absolutely necessary being, which is either impossible or actually does exist; there can be no potentiality in such a being.

Gredt's explanation of the intellect contrasts sharply with that of Garrigou-Lagrange and affords us the broadest possible interpretation of natural desire. Let us examine his theory to make this clear. The essentially spiritual quality of the human cognitive faculty, he says, embraces within the object of that faculty all being, known not indirectly or analogically, but directly and positively. He says:

... By that degree of immateriality which is found in spirituality strictly so called, the cognitive power is established in such perfection that its formal object extends to all things, and indeed to the attainment of these things through a strictly quidditative knowledge (that is, a positive knowledge of things as they are in themselves). 26

However, Gredt continues, by reason of its present dependence on the material faculties, the intellect per accidens, and by reason of the absence of the light of glory which strengthens and elevates it, is for the time being excluded from a direct intuitive vision of God. Consequently, man has a positive

26 Ibid., 432. ... Immaterialitate, quae est spiritualitas stricte dicta, constituitur potentia cognoscitiva tantae perfectionis, cuius objectum formale ad omnia extendatur, ita quidem ad omnia cognoscenda quidditative cognitione quidditative stricte dicta (conceptu stricte quidditativo seu simpliciter positivo.)
ordination to the divine goodness which is passive and must be actualized by the divine power. On this point Gredt says:

The intellect of its very nature can know this object, which is the clear vision of God, by an ordination not merely of non-repugnance, but by a positive ordination. This is passive, however, and cannot be actualized other than by the divine power. 27

Buckley describes the position in this way:

Some authors think that the natural object of the human intellect, the adequate object, perhaps, but still natural to it, is being in all its amplitude, in such a way that it includes positively not only all things but the ability to know them as they are in themselves. According to this view, the fact that at present we know spiritual things only through and in the essences of sensible objects or even that we know God through and in the mirror of creatures is owing solely to our present condition. Our present condition of union of soul and body, or even of non-elevation to grace, is looked upon as a limitation placed on the human intellect's broader natural powers. This view holds also that God known as He is in Himself falls within the positive natural scope of the human intellect. 28

We might say at once that it is not our purpose to adjudicate the validity of the theory described above. What is apropos is the possibility of proving the existence of God from the theory. Does the natural desire of the intellect, as Gredt

27 Ibid., 433. *Intellectus natura sua ordinatur ad hoc objectum cognoscendum, quod est Deus clare visus, ordinatione, quae quidem non est mera non-repugnantia, sed ordinatio positiva, passiva tamen, neque actuabilis nisi virtute divina.*

28 Buckley, *Man's Last End*, 132.
describes it, support the eudaemonological argument? It would seem at first glance that this theory of direct vision of God as being within the natural powers of the intellect would substantiate the validity of the eudaemonological argument. Let us examine the theory from this point of view.

We note first of all that the divine goodness, in Gredt's theory, lies within the adequate object of the intellect and not within the scope of its proper and proportioned object in the present condition of that faculty. For, as we have seen, the intellect's ordination to the clear vision of God must be actualized by the divine power. But the validity of the eudaemonological argument cannot be judged by the ordination of the intellect to its adequate object, but only by its proportioned object. Why? Because it is precisely the content of the adequate object, i.e. the content of the notion of being as such, that must be determined. That the supreme being lies within the adequate object of the intellect we do not know from the initial ordination of the intellect to its proportionate object. We must argue from the created effects that are the proportioned objects of the intellect to the necessary existence of a Creator. Once then the existence of the Creator is established, we know that he lies within the adequate object of the intellect and subsequently we desire to know him perfectly. Gredt's theory, therefore, utilizing
the adequate object of the intellect cannot be validly used to explain the eudaemonological argument.

Secondly, in Gredt’s natural intuition of God, a necessary condition of that vision is a special elevation by God. Granted the existence of God, this theory may explain a natural desire of the intellect for Him. We note, however, that this theory presupposes the existence of God. Gredt’s natural desire for God is, therefore, an elaboration hardly conceivable as long as the proportioned object of the intellect is the sensible quiddity. To desire to know an object is not the same as desiring an object already known. We recall again the important distinction between the metaphysical and psychological orders. In the metaphysical order there is no difficulty about the final object of natural desire. Granted that order, man with the rest of creation is tending to God. In the psychological order, however, this is not the case. The faculty that entitatively must tend to God need not consciously tend to Him in its elicited acts. And the direction of the latter will depend on the specification of the faculty. If that specification is to universal good in the sense that whatever it does choose it will choose under the aspect of good, God is not the psychological object of its acts. Because the eudaemonological argument is on the
psychological plane, we must conclude again that Gredt's theory cannot be used validly to explain it. Thus on two main points, the use of the adequate rather than the proportioned object and the presupposition of the existence of God, Gredt fails to support not, indeed, his own theory of natural desire, but the eudaemonological argument.

Turning now to the larger controversy on natural desire, we will consider briefly the study Father Elter, S.J., made of earlier scholastic teaching on natural desire. 29 His conclusions will serve to emphasize and support a basic point of the adversaries of the eudaemonological argument.

Father Elter came to two conclusions from his analysis of the history of natural desire. (1) Contrary to the most common doctrine of scholastics today, St. Thomas and his contemporaries taught that in the natural order man could attain only imperfect beatitude. (2) The key point in this doctrinal revolution—that man has a natural desire to be perfectly happy—was the Augustinus of Jansen, which appeared in the year 1640. Jansen's thesis was that man has a natural desire to be perfectly happy; but this true beatitude can be found only in the beatific vision; therefore, man has a

natural desire for the beatific vision. Not wishing to deny the first statement, that man has a natural desire for beatitude, scholastic authors denied the second, that true beatitude can be found only in the beatific vision. 30 Father Elter says:

We think...that the major proposition in the argument of Jansen, which asserts that we have an innate desire for perfect beatitude, is not to be distinguished but simply to be denied. Because the innate desire, or natural ordination, of the will concerns good in general, not the perfect good. The perfect good is, indeed, desired naturally; not, however, with an innate desire but with an elicited desire, as we have explained above. 31

This historical estimate of the problem, if correct, certainly weakens the eudaemonological argument. That man has no innate desire for perfect beatitude means that man has no natural desire for God in the primary sense of the term. And if we deny this natural desire, we forestall any possibility of arguing from the innate tendency of the nature to the necessary existence of God. In denying such a desire, moreover, the theory that man's contemplation in the natural order is for natural things is affirmed. And this too is contrary to the analysis of the object of man's desire by the proponents of the eudaemonological argument. Finally, this theory

30 Ibid., 284.
31 Ibid., 284.
upholds the two main contentions of the adversaries of that argument. The first is that there is no proportion between the finite faculty and the infinite object. The second, that the proportioned object of the faculty does not directly include God.

We have reviewed thus far two examples of the eudaemonological argument which offer the broadest possible interpretations of it. Garrigou-Lagrange proposed a natural desire for an indirect vision of God and beatitude; Gredt proposed a natural desire for direct vision of God and beatitude. Neither offered safe footing to the eudaemonological argument. We shall now consider briefly the study William R. O'Connor has made of natural desire. Directly, he does not concern himself with the present argument, but several of his conclusions are pertinent in determining its validity.

Does every creature—intellectual creature, that is—have a natural desire for the beatific vision? According to O'Connor, St. Thomas's answer is a straightforward "No." Prior to all actual knowledge, is the intellect tending by its nature towards this vision as the only object that can finally put an end to its unlimited craving for truth? Again, "No." And this, in spite of the fact, says O'Connor, that the only

32 O'Connor, Natural Desire, 27.
historical end man has ever had is that of the vision of God.

The basic factor in the doctrine of St. Thomas, according to O'Connor, when Thomas is speaking of natural desire is the primacy of intellect over will. This primacy extends even to the innate, natural tendency of the will. The will is the appetite of the soul which follows an apprehended good. The natural object of the will is happiness, but that happiness is not independent of cognition. Because man cannot see God directly in his natural state, and therefore because the intellect never identifies the direct vision of God with the complete good as far as natural desire is concerned, the will cannot have a natural desire for the vision of God. The heart of the matter is the primacy of the intellect and its manner of knowing God. Since the will follows the intellect and since the intellect has no natural knowledge of God, the will can have no natural desire for the beatific vision. 33

It is the emphasis that O'Connor places on the doctrine of Thomas concerning the natural object of the intellect, and therefore of the will, that is of importance in deciding the validity of the eudaemonological argument. Clearly, in this interpretation of the natural object of the faculties,

33 Ibid., 28.
the possibility of knowing the existence of God from the proportioned object of the intellect is impossible. What is more decisive is the further development of natural desire by O'Connor. This point we have discussed above. Does St. Thomas teach a genuine natural desire for God? Yes, he does. Is that desire a natural desire in the sense of a primary movement of the rational appetite? No, it isn't. That desire must be understood in the light of the relation between the intellect and knowledge. After we know that God exists through the agency of the five ways, then the natural desire of the intellect to know a thing in all of its causes, to know more and more about it until its knowability is exhausted, comes into play. The intellect, therefore, knowing that He exists desires to know what this is that exists. For our present purpose it is sufficient to point out that this natural desire is consequent to the knowledge of the existence of God. O'Connor puts it this way:

It is important, however, to see that to desire to know an object is not the same as desiring an object already known. The intellect naturally desires to know more about God once it knows that He exists; but this does not mean that the will of man naturally desires God as our beatitude before He is seen as He is in

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34 Ibid., 33.
Himself. . . . Even in a state of pure nature, where the vision of God would not have been granted as the end of man, the natural desire to see Him would still be present after His existence came to be known by reason alone. 

There is no question here of progressing from an innate desire to the existence of its term. Rather, from the existence of the term, the desire is awakened to know not only that the particular object is but what it is. When O'Connor refers to reason as the method of determining the existence of God, he is referring to the five ways. This process, we have described above; from the proportioned object of the intellect, created being, we reason to a Creator. Thus we determine the content—or a particular part of the content of the adequate object of the intellect, placing within it the real existence of Supreme Being.

Why is it impossible for the divine substance to be the natural end of any created intelligence? O'Connor's answer is based on his concept of being. The simple subsisting of the Creator is on one level; the compound being of the creature is on another. The latter's mode of activity follows its mode of being. Therefore, no natural direct knowledge of a being on the higher level is possible. Man's natural

35 Ibid., 35.
knowledge of God must be indirect, analogical:

For St. Thomas Aquinas no created intellect tends by its nature towards a direct and immediate vision of God as its natural end. The analogy of being makes this impossible. Knowledge always takes place according to the way in which the knowing subject exists. Where the mode of being of an object altogether transcends the mode of being of the knower, a direct knowledge of the essence of such an object is above the nature of the knower. God's mode of being is, as it were, to be subsisting being; every creature, spiritual or material, is not subsisting being but a compound of essence and existence. This fact alone makes it impossible for the divine substance to be the natural end of any created intelligence.

In this theory the lack of proportion between the finite faculty and the infinite term is fully substantiated. That, of course, is one of the major contentions of the adversaries of the eudaemonological argument.

To conclude this chapter, we shall attempt to summarize the main points that have been made. This will be done in a series of questions, which will touch on the key issues under discussion.

Has man a natural desire for the beatific vision? The answer to this question does not admit of a simple answer. As it touches the present argument only indirectly, we offer one interpretation of it and pass immediately to a more pertinent facet of the same problem. Regarding this first

36 Ibid., 37.
question, however, Father De Broglie, S.J., says this:

It is an article of faith that the vision of God in store for man exceeds the powers of human nature, and it is at least theologically certain that he has no exigency for it; it is certain too that that vision is properly supernatural both for man and for any created spirit. . . .

It is theologically certain, therefore, that the fact of man's vocation to the divine vision cannot be demonstrated with certainty by philosophy. 37

We quote this passage simply to point out that man's natural desire for God is not for the beatific vision. Could the contrary be proved, there would be no question of the validity of the eudaemonological argument. But a defender of the argument need not hold that man has a natural desire for the beatific vision. What he must hold is a natural desire for God. But possession of God may fall short of the beatific vision. Thus Garrigou-Lagrange, as we have seen.

Does man have an aptitude for the beatific vision? This question concerns the capacity of man for the beatific vision. Granted that it is a supernatural gift, not required


Hinc theologice certum est factum vocationis hominum ad divinam visionem non posse per philosophiam certo demon-
by nature, can man’s capacity for it be demonstrated philosophically? De Broglie says:

It is easily seen that one might grant the philosopher the mere power of demonstrating that man could be raised to that vision (God willing), without thereby conceding him the right or power of affirming the exigency of that vision. And only the latter, properly speaking, would gainsay the supernatural or gratuitous note of the vision. 38

The supernatural aspect of the vision in no way excludes the opinion that man’s aptitude for it can be established with philosophic certainty, nor does it deserve any theological censure. 39

Thus, as far as the theologian is concerned, there is no contradiction in a philosophic demonstration of man’s capacity for the beatific vision. What we are interested in, however, is whether this possibility helps the eudaemonological argument. Obviously it does not. The validity of that argument is based on the absolute necessity of a real term for the rational appetite. It is only possible to prove the existence of God from natural desire when between the appetite and its

38 Ibid., 192. Sed, ut facile vides, si quis attribuit philosophiae meram potestatem demonstrandi quod homo possit (si Deo placuerit) ad illam visionem venehi, is non ideo attribuit philosophiae jus aut potestatem affirmandi exigentiam illius visionis, — quod solum proprie contradiceret supernaturalitati seu gratuitati ipsius.

39 Ibid., 189. Opinio vero secundum quam ipsa philosophia certo demonstrare potest aptitudinem hominis ad tales vocationem neque per supernaturalitatem divinae visionis excluditur, — Neque ullam censuram theologicam mereri videtur.
object there is an absolutely necessary relation. But the fact that man has an aptitude for the beatific vision which possibly can be demonstrated philosophically shows not a necessary relation but mere capacity. From mere capacity one cannot demonstrate the existence of God.

Does man have a natural desire for God below the supernatural plane that might be used to demonstrate His existence? We are not concerned now with the beatific vision. On the purely natural plane man can be said to desire God in two ways. The first concerns the metaphysical order. Granted the relation that is established at creation between creature and Creator, there is no dispute that every created good is a participation of the infinite good of the creator. In every act of appetition, therefore, in seeking created good, necessarily, if implicitly, we do seek and tend toward the increated Good. This is certainly a natural desire for God in the metaphysical order. Secondly, in the psychological order there is a natural desire for God that is based on the nature of the intellect. Once the intellect knows that a thing exists, it naturally desires to exhaust the knowability of that object. It cannot be satisfied with incomplete knowledge. Having known of the existence of God, therefore, it necessarily tends to know more and more about Him. This is what we mean by natural
desire for God on the psychological plane. And this is explained at length earlier in this chapter.

We have, therefore, two types of natural desire for God, and the question is whether either of them is sufficient to establish the validity of the eudaemonological argument. The natural desire on the ontological plane, i.e. that we necessarily seek God implicitly in every act of appetition, does not help the argument. To know of this implicit desire for God, we must first know that God exists. In other words, the ontological order must first be established. Yet it is precisely the force of the eudaemonological argument that it presupposes no such order. The natural desire on the psychological plane cannot support the argument either. Again, before that desire is conceived, the existence of God must be known. Only consequent to the fact that God is does the intellect seek to know what He is—to know Him perfectly in all aspects.

Can the rational appetite of man be perfectly satisfied short of the beatific vision? There is only one answer to this question, no. It is the very nature of the rational appetite that being capable of possessing God in his fulness, by reason of the universality of its formal object, nothing short of full possession of Him will perfectly satisfy the
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II. Articles


APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by William Jogues Ennen, S.J., has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Philosophy.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Jan 5, 1953  M R Vogel, S.J.  Date  Signature of Adviser