

THE ETHICS OF JOHN CAPREOLUS AND THE “NOMINALES”*

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In his discussion about moral theology, Capreolus shows an impartial way of presenting the positions of the *moderni*. Capreolus was aware of the differences between the authors of this group. With respect to the notion of grace, he even regarded Aquinas’s position as a happy medium between authors who were later attributed to the *via moderna*. The topics touched upon on this realm were not exposed to polemics. This can be explained by the explicitly theological character of the dispute. While Capreolus’s polemics were directed against the use of theological tools in philosophical discussion, the realm of theology itself does not present a place of conflict. His discussion of moral theology does not mention voluntarism. These concepts were not part of how the moral theology of the later called *via moderna* was understood at the beginning of the 15th century.

I. JOHN CAPREOLUS AND THE BEGINNING OF THE VIAE

John Capreolus (known as the “prince of Thomists”),¹ is a most interesting figure for understanding the beginning of Late Medieval philo-

* This conference contribution was prepared within the NWO Research Project “Thomism. Albertism. Nominalism. The Dynamics of Intellectual Traditions in the Late Middle Ages” at the University of Nijmegen, The Netherlands. I would like to thank Carl Ledsham for proofreading this paper.

¹ We still do not know who baptized him this way. Serge-Thomas Bonino informs us that John Mair, a Parisian master at the end of the fifteenth century, called Capreolus “thomistarum longe primus”, but that we do not know who first gave him the title of a *princeps*. For indications on the reception of Capreolus and biographical literature cf. S.-Th. Bonino O.P.: ‘Albert le Grand dans les Defensiones de Jean Cabrol (†1444)’, *Revue Thomiste* 99, 1999 : 370, n. 2.

sophical schools and their division into *via moderna* and *via antiqua*.² It is well known that John Capreolus' Commentary on the Sentences was used to interpret Aquinas alongside Cardinal Cajetan's Commentary on the Summa,³ after the division between the "two ways" and their institutionalisation in Universities and Studies of the Orders was already established. But there was little interest up to now in the fact that he was most influential in engendering that very separation between the two streams of thought.⁴

I.I. The intellectual background

The situation in Paris at the turn of the fourteenth to the fifteenth century was a confused situation in which people were looking for points of orientation. The Catholic church was divided between two popes.⁵

² The earliest document for the methodological separation of the "old" and the "new" way dates from 1414: cf. A. G. Weiler, *Heinrich von Gorkum* (†1431). *Seine Stellung in der Philosophie und Theologie des Spätmittelalters*, Hilversum: Benziger, 1962: 57–58. Before the 15th century, there was no doctrinal understanding of the differences and no institutionalisation of a certain method within the curriculum of a University. John Capreolus is therefore an important example for the formation of a doctrinal understanding of the "old" and the "new" way of doing philosophy and therefore of a new type of "Thomism" which is clearly distinct from both the first "thomists" who were spontaneous followers of Saint Thomas up to his canonization in 1323, and from the orientation toward St. Thomas within the Dominican Order during the 14th century. The same distinction needs to be made with regard of the "Ockhamists", "nominalists", or "Buridanists" before the institutionalization of the *via moderna* from the late fourteenth and early 15th century on. For a critical study see W. J. Courtenay: 'In search of Nominalism. Two Centuries of Historical Debate', in: R. Imbach & A. Maierù (eds.): *Gli Studi di filosofia medievale fra otto e novecento*, Rome: Ed. di Storia e Letteratura, 1991: 233–251.

³ A good example is the recommendation of the General Chapter of the Dominicans held in Salamanca in 1551, to use Capreolus and Cajetan wherever difficulties in the interpretation of Thomas arise. Cf. J. Theiner: *Die Entwicklung der Moralthologie zur eigenständigen (Disziplin Studien zur Geschichte der kath. Moralthologie 17)*, Regensburg: Pustet, 1970: 334.

⁴ Martin Grabmann saw this when he mentioned in his famous article that in the second half of the fourteenth century nobody saw the necessity to defend St. Thomas against the *nominales*, and that John Capreolus at that time was the first to do this. Cf. M. Grabmann: 'Johannes Capreolus O.P. der "Princeps Thomistarum" (†7 April 1444) und seine Stellung in der Geschichte der Thomistenschule. Ein Gedenkblatt zu seinem fünfshundertjährigen Todestag', *Divus Thomas* 22, 1944: 87.

⁵ On the connection between the schism and apocalyptic visions, cf. L. A. Smoller: *History, Prophecy, and the Stars. The Christian Astrology of Pierre d'Ailly, 1350–1420*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994: 85–101.

Furthermore, the political opposition between France and England represented the existing tensions and the contrasting points of orientation outside the university. These ecclesiastical and secular–political divisions were not without some impact on the different nation-based colleges at the University and on the flux of scholars.

Inside the university, philosophical discussion had reached a dead end. Aquinas’ model for integrating philosophy and theology (which can be regarded as the result of the discussions during the last third of the thirteenth century) had been put into question by Duns Scotus, William of Ockham and some of his followers from a logical and a theological point of view. On the other hand, an extreme version of “Ockhamism” had also been banished from the university.⁶ There was no way to build a bridge between the two philosophical systems (that is, the Thomistically-inspired and the versions of Ockhamism). Fearing the extremes, many scholars at the arts faculty opted for less extreme positions like the one presented by Buridan. But, most “Buridanists” had left the university of Paris at the beginning of the 15th century and gave way for the rise of a new realistic movement.⁷

This situation also showed effects in the theological faculty at the end of the 14th century. There were basically two options: either the strengthening philosophical reasoning in the way of the *antiqui*, i.e., Thomas Aquinas and Albert the Great, in order to defend Christian theology *ad extra* and render it plausible to human reason. The other basic option one finds is the strengthening of theology for its own sake, defending it *ad intra* and stressing faith as the most important element. This was a view of theology which used the results of fourteenth century philosophy with its emphasis on logic in theology while turning back to Bonaventura and the Church Fathers, especially to Augustine.

John Capreolus took his position in favour of the harmony of philosophy and theology as it was developed by Aquinas. Since he saw

⁶ For an overview on the continuing discussion on the exact interpretation of the university documents from 1339 and 1340, cf. Z. Kaluza, ‘Les sciences et leurs langages. Note sur le statut du 29 décembre 1340 et le prétendu statut perdu contre Ockham’, in: L. Bianchi (ed.): *Filosofia e teologia nel trecento. Studi in ricordo di Eugenio Randi (Textes et études du moyen âge 1)*, Turnhout: Brepols, 1994: 197, n. 1.

⁷ For literature and an interpretation of the anti-nominalist polemic by the first Albertists at the arts faculty in its relationship to Capreolus, cf. S. Müller, ‘Sprache, Wirklichkeit und Allmacht Gottes. Das Bild der *via moderna* bei Johannes Capreolus (1380–1444) und seine Bedeutung für die Schulbildung im 15. Jahrhundert’, in: J. A. Aertsen & M. Pickavé (eds.): *Herbst des Mittelalters? Fragen zur Bewertung des 14. und 15. Jahrhunderts (Miscellanea Mediaevalia 31)*, Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 2004: 157–172.

the second way of doing philosophy as disastrous, he could not refrain from some polemic remarks where the discussion touched what really was at stake: the right understanding of the world by using Aristotelian tools and the possibility of scientific knowledge. Due to the way he defended his position, Capreolus contributed to cementing the division between two opposing ways of thought. These would then be called the *via moderna* and *via antiqua* and would come to dominate the curricula of the newly founded universities in the northern part of Europe.

1.2. A new type of Commentary on Peter Lombard

The concrete role which John Capreolus played in the development of the *viae* is twofold. On the one hand, he was the starting point for school-specific Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard. Whereas before him, Commentaries on the Sentences were not qualified any further than by adding the name of the author, Capreolus started to extend the title by calling his Commentary *Defensiones Sancti Thomae*, and so he became the starting point for Commentaries “*secundum mentem Sancti Thomae*.” This type of commentary discussed the opinions which were contrary to Aquinas and tried to refute them with Aquinas’ own words or, if this was not possible, constructed a new argument according to the thought of Thomas Aquinas. The solution corresponded to Aquinas. A position of one’s own was not necessary nor was it explicitly given.⁸

The concept of hiding one’s position behind an authority, as we find it in Capreolus’ *Defensiones*, corresponded to the general attitude developed by the Faculty of Theology of Paris at time. This situation was marked by the schismatic division of the Catholic Church in which the faculty gained power and influence as never before.⁹ This is shown by calls for the restoration of sound theology which marked the conservative tendencies at the University of Paris since John Gerson became Chancellor in 1395 (and already before that, since Gerson’s rules for theology can be traced back to the thought of his predecessor as Chancellor, Peter of Ailly). A leading thread in Gerson’s works is the warning not to look for new theories, not to be “curious”, but to stick

⁸ This attitude was accompanied by a strict exegesis of text of Aquinas which contrasts with 14th century lack of concern for literal quotations. Cf. Bonino (1999: 418, n. 2).

⁹ Cf. H. Denifle O.P. & A. Chatelain (eds.): *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis III (1350–1394)*, Paris: Didier, 1894: VIII and 486.

with the old tradition, which meant for him a return to authors like Bonaventura and St. Thomas Aquinas. Though Gerson later would be regarded as a nominalist because of his anti-realistic actions at the Council of Constance, he defended and recommended the thirteenth century authors for theological studies, as the followers of the *via antiqua* would do. John Capreolus is not at all fond of the chancellor—he tells us that he was criticized by Gerson for some opinions he defended,¹⁰ and we know that Gerson was part of the university delegation against John of Montesono,¹¹ which meant effectively against the Dominicans of the province of Toulouse, Capreolus' place of origin. Nevertheless, Capreolus' attitude fits Gerson's call for reforms within the university perfectly.

1.3. *A new type of labelling*

Apart from creating a new *genus* of academic literature, John Capreolus also provides a most interesting testimonial to the "labelling" which took place with respect to the late medieval *via moderna*. Though it covered a minimal part of his work, Capreolus was famous for his polemics against the "nominalists"¹² in which he claimed that their errors in philosophy were based on a false use of the doctrine of Divine Omnipotence, and he ascribed these errors collectively to the *moderni* or *terministae* (namely Ockham, Adam Wodeham and Gregory of Rimini). However, a close look reveals that in the detailed discussions of the rest of his work the doctrine of omnipotence had not presented any point of conflict with authors which would later be attributed to the *via moderna*. Instead, Capreolus named the different understanding of the relationship between language and reality as the real dividing line between Aquinas and the *moderni*.¹³ Capreolus' polemical attribution of the abuse of the doctrine of the divine omnipotence to the *nominales* was taken over and became so dominant in the history of late medieval philosophical schools that even the latest research which has pointed out the limits of this view does not meet yet with general acceptance. Typical for this kind of labelling (and of the late medieval *via moderna* in general) is that it collects together a series of authors in spite of their

¹⁰ Cf. Bonino (1999 : n. 2, 372, n. 17).

¹¹ P. Glorieux (ed.): *Jean Gerson. L'œuvre polémique (Œuvres complètes 10)*, Paris: Desclée, 1973 : 3.

¹² John Capreolus does not use this term, instead he talks of *terministae* and *moderni*.

¹³ For an interpretation of the polemic passages cf. Müller (2004 : n. 8).

considerable doctrinal differences, and understands them as the representatives of a common stream of thought. Capreolus was one of the first people who not only saw Gregory of Rimini and the *terministae* or *moderni* as followers of William of Ockham, but who called Ockham the “father” of the group and said that its members followed Ockham’s testament.¹⁴

It seems as if not all the labels of the *via moderna* had been attributed to it at the same time. The polemics of John Capreolus about the use of Divine Omnipotence as an argument in philosophical disputes had its historical setting in the discussions between the Parisian Faculty of Theology and the Dominicans about the authority of St. Thomas Aquinas from 1387 onwards. In a document written on behalf of the theological faculty, Peter of Ailly accused Aquinas of having an understanding of omnipotence which was too philosophical and did not respect the doctrine of the Eucharist.¹⁵ John Capreolus’ polemics seem to be a reply to this reproach: he defended Aquinas and reproached his enemies’ false use of the doctrine of omnipotence. Understanding when the first and most important “label” of the *via moderna* was attributed to the *moderni*, makes one aware of the historical contingency that needs to be respected in order to reconstruct the history of this school of thought.

These premises will be the point of departure for looking at John Capreolus’ discussion with the “representatives” of the *via moderna* in the field of moral theology. This is a very significant field for the historiography of the *via moderna*, since some of most characteristic descriptions of it have been made with respect to moral thought: the vision of a “Divine Command Morality” characterised by voluntarism and Divine Omnipotence.¹⁶ We will find that the discussion on moral thought is much more differentiated and does not even touch Divine Commands.

¹⁴ Def. II S d. 2 q. 2 a. 3, ad arg. c. 4, ad arg. Gregorii, 9° (III, 190a); C. Paban & T. Pègues (eds.): *Johannes Capreolus, Defensiones theologiae divi Thomae Aquinatis I–VII*, Tours: Cattier, 1900–1908. All the following quotations are made according to this edition.

¹⁵ Tractatus ex parte Universitatis Studii Parisiensis pro causa Fidei, contra quemdam Fratrem Johannem de Montesono Ordinis Pradicatorum editus a Petro de Alliaco Epsicopo et Cardinalis Cameracensi circa annum 1388, in: C. Duplessis (ed.): *Collectio Iudiciorum de novis erroribus qui ab initio duodecimi seculi post Incarnationem Verbi, usque ad annum 1632 in Ecclesia proscripti sunt et notati I (1100–1542)*, Paris, 1728: 128.

¹⁶ There are many questions with regard to this label for the moral theory of the *via moderna*. Not only has the interpretation of Ockham’s ethical thought as a “Divine Command Theory of Eternal Destiny” (McCord Adams) be questioned, but there is still not enough evidence of the real impact of the ethical theory of William of Ockham on the moral teaching of the *via moderna*, since for the ethical training at the Arts Faculty Buridan’s commentary on Aristotle was used, and the reception of Ockham’s commen-

2. *THE DISCUSSION ON MORAL THEOLOGY*

If we follow Grabmann in saying that John Capreolus was defending Aquinas against “nominalism”, we can do so only having already said before that in the ranking of opponents (taking into account the frequency of quotation and discussion) a “nominalist” occupies only the third place. The main opponent of John Capreolus was Peter Aureol, followed by John Duns Scotus and then Gregory of Rimini. Thus we are narrowing the perspective when we look specifically at the points of discussions between Capreolus at one side and Gregory of Rimini, Adam Wodeham and William of Ockham on the other side.¹⁷

However, the result will be disappointing if one expects to find any information about one of the “typical” ingredients of nominalistic ethics, as the concept of a voluntaristic God who gives arbitrary commands to human beings, or the image of human beings who by using their natural reason cannot be certain of fulfilling the divine precepts. The discussion about moral theology that actually took place can be divided in three fields: divine fruition, free will and the concept of grace.¹⁸

tary on the sentences before the late 15th century within the Theological Faculty still needs to be examined. For a succinct overview on the traditional and recent interpretation of Ockham’s moral thought, cf. S. Müller: *Handeln in einer kontingenten Welt. Zu Begriff und Bedeutung der rechten Vernunft (recta ratio) bei Wilhelm von Ockham*, Tübingen & Basel: Francke, 2000: 23–41; a new overview is given in: P. V. Spade (ed.): *The Cambridge Companion to Ockham*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999: 227–373. For a critical view on the use of Divine Power in 14th century thought, cf. W. J. Courtenay: *Capacity and Volition. A History of the Distinction of Absolute and Ordained Power (Quodlibet 8)*, Bergamo: Lubrina, 1990.

¹⁷The three names are ordered according to their frequency of quotation. While Gregory, in the first volume of the edition is quoted 43 times, Adam nine times and Ockham only three times. The relationship remains the same; in book four (volumes VI and VII of the edition), the *moderni* are not mentioned again, which may be due to the circumstances of the redaction of the work. Cf. Bonino (1999:n. 2, 374–375).

¹⁸The discussion on virtue takes place without any reference to one of the *moderni*. Cf. John Capreolus: *On the virtues*. Translated by Kevin White and Romanus Cessario, O.P. with a Foreword by Servais Pinckaers, O.P., Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2001. For understanding how late medieval philosophical schools worked, further research is needed on the relationship between philosophical training in ethics during the Arts studies, (which in the *via moderna* would follow John Buridan) and the moral theology which was developed in the commentaries on the Sentences, treatises, bible exegesis and academic preaching.

2.1. *Divine fruition, or: the ultimate good*

In the first distinction of book I of the *Defensiones*, John Capreolus discussed the opinions of Gregory of Rimini and Adam Wodeham. Capreolus did not refer to Gregory as defending terministic opinions, but he criticized him point by point on the grounds of his identification of the volition (*velle*) with love (*dilectio*), tranquillity (*complacentia*) and fruition (*fruitio*). Capreolus himself defended a real distinction between the three different acts of the will, especially between love (*amor*) and *delectatio* or fruition, which he interpreted as the special pleasure resulting from the activity of the intellect directed towards its optimal object, God. He described the relationship between the three acts as a sequence of steps leading to fruition: It starts from a vision that regards its ultimate good in general and can be properly called love (*amor*), followed by the presence of the ultimate good (which would be called *comprehensio*). What Capreolus aimed at was to keep some space open for the activity of the intellect, because he thought that fruition or ultimate happiness could be identified with that joy which resulted from the activity of the intellect, which for Aquinas was the most important activity of which a human being is capable.

The difference between fruition as an intellectual activity, and fruition regarded as an activity of the will had been the subject of many discussions between Franciscans and Dominicans. Therefore we need not be surprised by the fact that Capreolus did not make any remark regarding the *moderni*, but only discussed the topic with Gregory as an individual author, just as he did with Aureoli on the same topic. The discussion itself was old¹⁹ and did not seem to be something typically “modern”. Thus we find that Capreolus disapproved of Gregory’s opinion, but there was no polemical touch to his criticism.

2.2. *Free will*

More interesting for our question of how the moral theory of the *via moderna* was “labelled” by Capreolus is the attitude which can be found in Capreolus’ discussion about the free will. He not only exempted Gregory from critique, but even understood him as a defender of his own

¹⁹ For a new interpretation of the history of the discussion about fruition and for literature on the discussion before Ockham, cf. W. J. Courtenay: ‘Between Despair and Love’, in: K. Hagen (ed.): *Augustine, the Harvest, and Theology (1300–1650)*, Leiden: Brill, 1990: 5–20, especially n. 7.

position against the opinion of Duns Scotus, and of a few anonymous opponents whose positions were known to him because they had been discussed by Adam Wodeham and Gregory of Rimini.²⁰ Scotus argued against Thomas that a volition was not in the power of the will if it was caused naturally by an object.²¹ The other opponents tried to show that acts of volition were not dependent on or an effect of acts of cognition.

Capreolus was satisfied with the answers Gregory gave; to some points he added further explanations in order to close the gap between what Gregory said and how Aquinas would have answered. In most cases he also approved of Adam Wodeham's answers, too. He only criticized him once, for some erroneous examples: Adam's errors lay, in the first case, in the fields of the *substantia separata*, where Adam presumed that the separate substances could move other bodies by will alone; in the second case, Capreolus criticized that according to Adam Wodeham the moral evaluation of an exterior act depended on the inside act of the will; in the third case, Adam was being criticized for saying that the attentiveness of the priest offering mass was part of the divine precept and necessary in order to make the act of offering of the mass a good rather than sinful act.²²

We see that in his detailed discussion, Capreolus distinguishes clearly and impartially between right and wrong answers given by authors which belonged, for him, to the group of the *terministae* or *moderni*. To him, their position on the understanding of the free will was not incompatible with the position of St. Thomas Aquinas. He even used their arguments in order to strengthen his own position.

²⁰ Def. II d. 25 q. 1 a. 2 c. 1 et 2, arg. quorundam et Adae (ed. IV, 234a–235a); c. 2, arg. aliorum (ed. IV, 239a–b).

²¹ Def. II d. 25 q. 1 a. 2 c. 1 et 2, c. Scotum, 2° (ed. IV, 233a).

²² Def. II d. 25 q. 1 a. 3, ad arg. c. 1 et 2, ad arg. quorundam et Adae, 9° (ed. IV, 244b): "Haec tamen responsio assumit aliqua falsa vel dubia.—Primum est, quod nulla substantia separata possit movere aliquod corpus per solum velle [. . .] Secundum est, quod executio exterior non sit meritoria, nisi quamdiu durat actus interior voluntatis. Hoc enim falsum est; quia, secundum doctores, ad hoc quod actus exterior sit meritorius, non requiritur continua attentio, vel volitio illius actualis, nec tamen sufficit habitualis, sed requiritur virtualis. Et de hoc sanctus Thomas, I–II q. 1 a. 6 ad 3.—Tertium est, quod dicere divinum officium cum attentione actuali et actuali devotione cadat sub praecepto; ita quod nisi sic dicatur, incurritur peccatum [. . .]."

2.3. *The notion of grace*

The treatment Capreolus gave the “nominalist” authors in the discussion about the notion of grace is even more instructive: With the help of Gregory of Rimini, he defended Aquinas against Scotus, Ockham and Adam Wodeham.²³

The question which was discussed was whether human beings could fulfil divine precepts without grace.²⁴ Capreolus defended the opinion of Thomas Aquinas that human beings could produce some good acts without habitual grace, but they needed God’s special help in each case, and they definitely needed habitual grace in order to produce meritorious acts which were directed towards a supernatural good. As opponents, John Capreolus quoted some arguments from Gregory’s commentary on the Sentences. We learn from Gregory’s notes that these arguments are proposed by Scotus, Ockham and Adam Wodeham. These authors who are all called *moderni* by Gregory,²⁵ and are quoted as defenders of the position that human beings by their natural means could have a judgment of right reason with respect to the ultimate good, and therefore they could love God above all. They could do morally good acts which were characterized by respecting a certain order (*actus ordinatus* or *deordinatus*), and they could fulfil such morally good acts which

²³ This is not the only time Capreolus can see Gregory as a defender of Aquinas’s opinion. We find a similar situation in the discussion about the soul. Capreolus criticised Gregory because he did not distinguish between the different *abilites* (*potentiae*) of the soul, i.e., its sensitive, reasonable and volitional parts, because for Gregory these *potentiae* were identical with the soul. But he did agree fundamentally with Gregory and acclaimed his defence of Aquinas against *aliqui moderni* (who in this case are Ockham and Hibernicus). Perhaps Capreolus took over *aliqui moderni* from Gregory where is written: “contra ista tamen est opinio aliquorum etiam modernorum.” Cf. Gregor von Rimini, II S. d. 16–17 q. 2 (ed. V, 341); *Lectura super primum et secundum sententiarum tomus V* (*Spätmittelalter und Reformation. Texte und Untersuchungen 10*). Super secundum, elaboraverunt A. Damasus Trapp, Venicio Marcolino, Manuel Santos-Noya, Berlin & New York: de Gruyter, 1979. By quoting this, the word *modernus* changed its meaning; Gregory used it to point at his contemporaries (Thomas Hibernicus was at the Sorbonne at the beginning of the 14th century and wrote a Commentary on the first two books of the Sentences). For Capreolus, it meant the authors of the 14th century referred to by the later *via moderna*. Cf. Capreolus, Def. II d. 15 q. 1 a. 3 (ed. IV, 68a). To my knowledge however, we cannot find Hibernicus being attributed to the *via moderna* in later texts.

²⁴ Def. II d. 28 q. 1: “Utrum homo sine gratia possit praecepta legis implere” (ed. IV, 282b sqq.).

²⁵ On the different meanings of the term “modern”, cf. n. 20.

God would regard as meritorious.²⁶ However, Gregory held the contrary position, namely that human beings not only needed God's special help for knowing the supernatural good, but also for knowing sufficiently what was morally good or evil.²⁷ Capreolus agreed with Gregory and said that there was no discord between St. Thomas and Gregory. Instead, their positions were basically the same.²⁸

Capreolus not only quoted the arguments of the *moderni* from Gregory's text, he also quoted Gregory's answer to them, and repeatedly we find approval for what Gregory replied: "This is what Gregory said, and he said it very well" (*Haec Gregorius et valde bene; haec ille et bene* [. . .]).²⁹ He only disagreed when Gregory was too rigorous by saying that all the acts of those who did not believe in God (*infideles*) were vicious,³⁰ and with the reason that Gregory gave for why acts could or could not be morally good or meritorious: while Gregory said it was impossible for those acts to be good because they were not done out of the love of God,³¹ Capreolus came to the conclusion that human beings that did not have grace could still do morally good or meritorious acts, because the good quality of those acts was not attributed to human will, but to God's help.³²

²⁶ Def. II d. 28 q. 1 a. 2, arg. c. 2, arg. quorundam, 2°–4° (ed. IV, 288b).

²⁷ Def. II d. 28 q. 1 a. 2, arg. c. 1, arg. Gregorii (ed. IV, 287a): "[. . .] arguit Gregorius de Arimino (d. 26 q. 1 concl. 2), probando quod non solum ad cognoscendum veritates supernaturales indiget homo in praesenti statu speciali Dei auxilio, immo etiam ad sufficienter cognoscendum quid volendum vel nolendum, agendum vel non agendum, in his quae pertinent ad vitam moralem."

²⁸ Def. II d. 28 q. 1 a. 3, ad arg. c. 1, ad arg. Gregorii (ed. IV, 298a): "Ex quibus sequitur quod mens sancti Thomae non discordat a Gregorio, quoad hoc quod uterque intendit quod nullus in statu praesenti constitutus, potest, sine speciali Dei auxilio, perfecte cognoscere quid volendum sit aut nolendum, quid agendum sit aut vitandum in materia morali, non solum quoad omnia agibilia collective sumpta, immo nec quoad aliquod agibile seorsum et in particulari sumptum."

²⁹ Def. II d. 28 q. 1 a. 3, ad arg. c. 1, ad arg. Gregorii (ed. IV, 299a sqq.).

³⁰ Cf. Def. II d. 28 q. 1 a. 3, ad arg. c. 2, ad arg. quorundam, 7° and 8° (ed. IV, 300a–b); under 8°, Aquinas's position is being quoted: "Cum dicitur quod omnis vita infidelium peccatum est, non est intelligendum hoc modo, quod omnis actus eorum peccatum sit; sed quia semper cum peccatis vivunt [. . .]."

³¹ Def. II d. 28 q. 1 a. 3, ad arg. c. 2, ad arg. quorundam, 8° (ed. IV, 302b): "Sed contra dicta arguit Gregorius (d. 26 q. 1 a. 1). Nullus actus moralis non ordinatus in Deum finaliter, seu non factus propter Deum, est factus propter illud propter quod fieri debet [. . .]."

³² Def. II d. 28 q. 1 a. 3, ad arg. c. 2, ad arg. quorundam, 8° (ed. IV, 302b): "Ex quibus apparet quod opera non existentis in charitate possunt esse moraliter bona

Capreolus' position presented itself as being closer to the one taken by the *moderni* than was Gregory's. It is obvious that Capreolus was aware of the differences between the authors of this group. And at least with the respect to the possibility that a human being does morally good acts without habitual grace, Aquinas' and some positions of the *moderni* were in fact not too far from each other, though Aquinas of course preferred a different language, the language which used Gregory when he was claiming the necessity of actual grace for completing morally good acts. Gregory himself had judged his opponents more severely and had drawn a connection between their position and the heresy of Pelagianism.³³ We do not find any reference to that in Capreolus.

3. JOHN CAPREOLUS AND THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF THE VIA MODERNA

The discussion between John Capreolus and the *moderni* on moral theology invites some remarks about the position John Capreolus held in forming the late medieval schools of thought, and also some conclusions about the historiography of the *via moderna* and its moral doctrines:

1. *The limitation of polemics to philosophy:*

In his discussion about moral theology, Capreolus shows an impartial way of presenting the positions of the *moderni*. The topics touched on in this realm were not exposed to polemics. This can be explained by the explicitly theological character of the dispute. While Capreolus' polemics were directed against the use of theological tools in philosophical discussion, the realm of theology itself does not present a place of conflict. His discussion of moral theology neither mentions voluntarism (e.g., arbitrary commands or the use of the doctrine of Omnipotence for moral questions). These concepts were not part of how the moral theology of the later called *via moderna* was understood at the beginning of the 15th century.

et alicujus temporalis praemii meritoria, etsi non proper voluntatem a qua eliciuntur, tamen propter divinam motionem quae voluntatem ad talia movet."

³³ Gregory of Rimini, II S. d. 26–28 q. 1 (ed. VI, 19–22 and 58–59); *Lectura super primum et secundum sententiarum tomus VI (Spätmittelalter und Reformation. Texte und Untersuchungen 11)*. Super secundum, elaboraverunt A. Damasus Trapp, Venicio Marcolino, Manuel Santos-Noya, Berlin & New York: de Gruyter, 1980.

2. *The variety of doctrines behind the one "modern school":*

John Capreolus was clearly aware of the variety of positions among the *moderni* in topics related to moral theology. This awareness contrasts with the polemical passages in his work where he collectively attributed to all *moderni* both a wrong view on the relationship between language and reality, and an excessive use of the doctrine of omnipotence. This ambiguity between polemics and academic discussion shows that at the beginning of the polemics there was not a catalogue of doctrines dividing the two lines of thought, but a fundamental difference in the field of philosophy (relationship between language and reality) and a controversy about the exact relationship between philosophy and theology.

3. *The continuity of "old" discussions:*

We can see how "old" antagonisms, as the one between Dominicans and Franciscans on the preference for will or intellect in the vision of God as the ultimate goal of moral theology, were discussed by John Capreolus as a point of difference between Aquinas and some *moderni*. After the establishing of the two *viae* in the universities, these differences were finally interpreted as "typical" for the division between *via moderna* and *via antiqua*.³⁴

4. *Roots for later dispute on Moral Theology:*

There was a wide agreement between Capreolus, Adam Wodeham and Gregory of Rimini, the two most prominent *moderni* in the work of Capreolus, on the understanding of free will. The points which were criticised in the doctrine of Adam Wodeham (e.g., the capacity of the separate substances to move others by will alone and the moral evaluation of an act as depending on the intention of the actor and not on the exterior act) can be found as characteristics of the *via moderna*.³⁵ Therefore we can say that the picture of the *via moderna* which was developed later in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries contains more elements than at the very beginning of the *viae*. The understanding of the *via moderna* underwent a development, and not all doctrines of all authors had caused discussions at the same time.

³⁴ This difference is on the list of theological differences between the schools, composed by the realist professor of theology Johann Permetter von Adorf at the university of Ingolstadt (datable to around 1508): cf. F. K. Ehrle S.J.: *Der Sentenzenkommentar Peters von Candia (Franziskanische Studien Beiheft 9)*, Münster, Westf.: Aschendorff, 1925: 341–342.

³⁵ These elements are not yet on the list of characteristics at 1508: cf. n. 35.

5. *Aquinas as the happy medium between Gregory and Ockham or Wodeham:*

In his *Defensiones*, John Capreolus formulated disagreements with Ockham and Adam Wodeham and agreement with Gregory of Rimini in discussion on the necessity of grace for good and meritorious acts. He uses Gregory in order to refute Ockham and Wodeham to such an extent that it is not possible with respect to moral theology to sustain the thesis that Capreolus defended the doctrine of St. Thomas especially against the *nominales*. The closeness of Gregory's and Aquinas positions on grace and their common opposition to Ockham and Wodeham shows why one could see a big difference between the moral theology of the "moderns" and Aquinas, or see them as very close together. The doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas could be regarded as a happy medium between the extreme positions of authors which all were attributed to the *via moderna*. It is therefore no surprise to find Aquinas and the *moderni* shoulder to shoulder against opposite positions within both lines of thought, and later against other schools.³⁶

³⁶ In his treatise against John of Montesono, Peter of Ailly uses Aquinas to show that his dominican enemy is guilty of Pelagianism. Cf. *Tractatus* (n. 16), 92. For Gregory's critique of the Pelagianism of the *moderni* cf. n. 34.

ETHICAL AND METAPHYSICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE REJECTION OF DETERMINISM BY AQUINAS

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In this article, an attempt is made to show how freedom is possible. The objection that Divine Providence and its opposite, scientific or physical determinism, make freedom impossible is examined. The question is raised as to whether the universe consists of things (beings/substances), which is a presupposition of scientific determinism. The order in the universe is held not to be an objection to freedom. It is argued that the future is not determined on the basis that causes refer to the past, not the future. Freedom would appear to depend on the soul not being determined like a stone, but a self-mover. In addition, intellect appears necessary, since freedom requires choice, which in turn requires the capacity to deliberate. If both soul and intellect are required for freedom, it is understandable that human beings alone in the universe are free.

The problem of freedom is one that has tested the minds of some of the greatest philosophers over the centuries, including Aristotle, Kant and St. Thomas Aquinas. The problem may be divided into two parts, firstly, the question whether human beings are free at all, and secondly, if they are free, which actions are free and under which conditions. In this article I aim to concentrate on the first part of the problem.

As St. Thomas points out, there are a number of objections to the possibility of human freedom. It would appear that human beings are not free, because God's foreknowledge and Divine Providence mean that human free will is an illusion. Again, it might appear that human beings are not free, because for everything human beings decide a cause

can be found.¹ Thirdly, there is the *a priori* reasoning, which is formulated as follows by Voltaire: “It would be very strange if all of nature, and all the stars obeyed eternal laws, and if there was one little animal, one metre seventy tall, who was independent of these laws, and could always act as he wished according to his own pleasure and caprice.”²

If human beings are to be considered free it is necessary to reply to each of these arguments. I will claim in this paper that only a metaphysical argument can provide an adequate reply. But let us turn first to the field of ethics.

In the field of ethics the great philosophers mentioned above have put forward *a priori* arguments in favour of human freedom. According to Aristotle the aim of life and of ethics is happiness, and, in order to achieve happiness, human beings must act according to the moral and intellectual virtues.³ In the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle writes that human beings are free to act or not to act as required by their ultimate final cause. We choose the means to our end voluntarily.⁴ Virtue and vice depend on ourselves.⁵ Man is the source and father of his actions as he is the father of his children, and the origins (ἀρχαί) of his actions are within himself.⁶ Again, in the *Eudemian Ethics* Aristotle writes:

Hence it is clear that all actions (πράξεων) of which man is the first principle (ἀρχή) and controller (κύριος) may either happen or not happen, and that it depends on himself (ἐφ’ αὐτῷ) for them to occur or not, as he controls (κύριός ἐστι) their existence or non-existence. But of things which it depends on himself (ἐφ’ αὐτῷ) to do or not to do, he is himself the cause (αἴτιος), and what he is the cause (αἴτιος) of depends on himself (ἐφ’ αὐτῷ).⁷

¹ It would seem that the 24 objections to human freedom given by St. Thomas in *De Malo* 6 can be reduced broadly to these two main objections.

² Voltaire: *Le Philosophe Ignorant*, Ch. xiii: “En effet, il serait bien singulier que toute la nature, tous les astres obéissent à des lois éternelles, et qu’il y eût un petit animal haut de cinq pieds qui, au mépris de ces lois, pût agir toujours comme il lui plairait au seul gré de son caprice.”

³ Cf. my book *Dio e Contemplazione in Aristotele, Il Fondamento Metafisico dell’ “Etica Nicomachea”*, Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1999: 150–151.

⁴ *NE* III, v, 1113 b 3–5.

⁵ ἐφ’ ἡμῖν: *NE* III, v, 1113 b 6–7.

⁶ *NE* III, v, 1113 b 17–21; *Met.* E(VI), i, 1025 b 22–24.

⁷ *EE* II, vi, 1223 a 4–9. On Aristotle’s firm belief in free choice, cf. further R. Sorabji: *Necessity, Cause and Blame. Perspectives on Aristotle’s Theory*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1980: 233–238.

Thus it is clear that Aristotle held that human beings are free, i.e., that he rejected the notion that human beings are causally determined.⁸ However, the only justification given by Aristotle in the ethical works is *a priori*. He argues that human beings must be free because we blame and praise people and punish them. We do not do so in those cases where people are unable to act otherwise. Kant was also unable to offer anything better than an *a priori* argument for freedom, namely as a postulate of the practical reason.

St. Thomas also argues *a priori* that human beings are free, where he writes in *De Malo*:

If there is nothing free in us, but the change which we desire comes about by necessity, then we lose deliberation, exhortation, command and punishment, and praise and blame, which is what moral philosophy is based on.⁹

Thus three of the greatest thinkers, Aristotle, Kant and St. Thomas put forward an *a priori* argument to show that human beings must be free. However, against this *a priori* argument there is the *a priori* argument of Voltaire that it is very unlikely in the vast universe that only one little animal 1,70 metres tall should be free.

In order to examine the situation further let us see, firstly, how St. Thomas explains freedom. According to St. Thomas the human will is a faculty of the soul and differs from the sensitive appetite, because the will desires the good as such or the good in general (*bonum sub communi ratione boni*), whereas the sensitive appetite desires the particular objects of desire presented by the sense. The will necessarily desires the good in general, which is the last end or happiness (*beatitudo*).¹⁰ This

⁸ G. Fine: 'Aristotle on Determinism. A review of Richard Sorabji's *Necessity, Cause and Blame*, *The Philosophical Review* 90, 1981: 561–579 writes: "When Aristotle says that voluntary actions have an internal origin and are up to us, he does not imply a break in causal necessitation at any point" (p. 577). However, Fine's Stoicising interpretation of Aristotle (cf. *ibid*: 578) is certainly at variance with Aristotle's meaning. For Aristotle human action is not necessitated (or 'caused' in the sense of 'causally necessitated'). Cf. P. L. Donini: *Ethos. Aristotele e il Determinismo*, Turin: Edizioni dell'Orso, 1989: 57: [sc. Aristotle] "È inoltre convinto [...] che, se fosse vero che tutto avviene necessariamente, la deliberazione e l'iniziativa dell'uomo perderebbero ogni senso" (18 b 31–35).

⁹ *De Malo* 6: "Si enim non sit liberum aliquid in nobis, sed ex necessitate movemur ad volendum, tollitur deliberatio, exhortatio, praeceptum et punitio, et laus et vituperium, circa quae moralis Philosophia consistit." Likewise *STb* Ia, 83, 1; *SCG* III, 73, 2411.

¹⁰ *STb* Ia, 83, 1: "[...] naturaliter homo appetit ultimum finem, scilicet beatitudinem. Qui quidem appetitus naturalis est et non subjacet libero arbitrio [...]"; cf also *De Malo* 6, *ad* 6.

necessity proceeds from the will itself, i.e., it is a necessity of nature (*necessitas naturalis*) and is not due to external force (*necessitas coactionis*).

Freedom is possible because the intellect has not got that clear vision of God as the infinite good and only source of happiness, which would be needed to determine the will.¹¹ In other words, in heaven there could be no free will, because the goodness of God exercises too powerful an attraction on the human intellect for it to be possible for man to will anything except God. But in this world the connection between happiness and God is not so steadfastly clear to man that he is unable to will something other than God.¹²

In regard to the first objection against the possibility of human free will (*libera voluntas*),¹³ namely that Divine Providence makes free will an illusion—often referred to as theological determinism—, St. Thomas replies as follows. He holds that the freedom, which we know about *a priori*, is manifestly not infringed by Divine Providence, although Divine Providence is at work in everything.¹⁴ It is the will that acts, although change is initiated by God.¹⁵ There is no inconsistency in holding that God makes human beings free by arranging that they function independently of the determining agency of other created beings.¹⁶

St. Thomas holds that “God lays down necessary causes for the effects that he wants to be necessary, and he lays down causes that act contingently—i.e., that can fail in their effect—for the results that he wants to be contingent.”¹⁷ In other words, there is nothing to prevent an omnipotent God from willing human freedom. It may be noted that there are rather few philosophers at the present time who would

¹¹ *STb* Ia, 82, 8 *ad* 1; *De Malo* 6 *ad* 7.

¹² *STb* Ia, 82, 2; *De Malo* 6 *ad* 9.

¹³ B. Davies: in his ‘Introduction’ (p. 35 n. 103) to *Thomas Aquinas, On Evil*, transl. R. Regan, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, denies that Aquinas uses the expressions free will (*libera voluntas*) and freedom of the will (*libertas voluntatis*). This is a rather astonishing assertion, since Aquinas uses both expressions on many occasions both in relation to God and to man, as a glance at the *Index Thomisticus* shows. The source of this error seems to be a misinterpretation of A. Kenny: *Aquinas on Mind*, London & New York: Routledge, 1993: 75.

¹⁴ Cf. *De Potentia* III, 7 *ad* 13; *Comm. in Lib. I Sent.* XLI, 1, 3: “ad tertium dicendum, quod praesentia non est causa voluntatis, quia voluntas libera est [..].”

¹⁵ *De Malo* 6, *ad* 3; *STb* Ia, 83, 1 *ad* 3.

¹⁶ *De Malo* 6 *ad* 21; *Comm. In Peri Herm.* I, 14.

¹⁷ *In Peri Herm.* Bk. 1, *lectio* 14, 22: “[..] ad effectus enim, quos voluit necessarios esse, disposuit causas necessarias; ad effectus autem, quos voluit esse contingentes, ordinavit causas contingenter agentes, id est potentes deficere [..].” Cf. J. R. Lucas: *The Freedom of the Will*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970: 75.

see Divine Providence as an objection to the possibility of human freedom. While most of these philosophers — and indeed most people living in modern western society — would not deny the existence of God, they seem to place God more or less in the situation of Aristotle's Unmoved Mover or the gods of Epicurus. Epicurus did not deny the existence of the gods, but held that they are in no way concerned with the world. In the contemporary world it is clear that scientific or physical determinism has taken the place of Divine Providence as an objection to freedom in the thought of St. Thomas. Thus the treatment by St. Thomas of Divine Providence — and his concern to show that it does not interfere with human free will — provides a perspective, which is the opposite of that of contemporary society.

In regard to the second objection to human freedom, namely that of scientific or physical determinism, the question arises as to whether the world is made up of causes or of things that act as causes, and whether man simply undergoes the influence of these causes, and whether his apparently free decisions are not in reality just the outcome of these causes.

In reply to this standpoint it is important to recall that Aristotle in Book Z(VII) of the *Metaphysics* says that living beings are what we call substances in the first place.¹⁸ They are the best examples of substances. As is well known, Aristotle also writes in Book II of the *Physics* that art imitates nature and completes the work of nature.¹⁹ When a human being uses his intellect to build a house, he is imitating the action of a bird, which builds a nest without intellect. When a human being develops a weapon to defend himself, he is imitating the natural mechanism of self-defence used by the animals, which do not possess intellect. When human beings develop the art of medicine, they are completing the work of nature, by which all living beings try to cure themselves from illness.

Thus living beings are the best example of substances. All of the artefacts invented by human beings are imitations of living beings, in the sense that they are not living, but possess a unity, a purpose, and a certain duration of existence, which is comparable to that of living beings. Hence artefacts are substances in a more remote sense that

¹⁸ *Met.* Z(VII), vii, 1032 a 15–19; Z(VII), viii, 1034 a 4. Cf. my article 'The Concept of Substance and Life presupposed by Christianity', in: R. P. Francis and J. E. Francis (eds.): *Christian Humanism. International Perspectives*, New York: Peter Lang, 1995 : 187–199.

¹⁹ *Phys.* II, viii, 199 a 15–17; II, ii, 194 a 21–22.

living beings. Human beings also substantify or reify parts of nature such as a mountain or a field or an ocean. But these concepts possess a far lesser degree of unity and hence can only be considered substances in an even more remote sense.²⁰ Aristotle did not believe that they are substances, as is seen by the fact that he did not consider the world to be a substance.

If the overwhelming majority of things or beings in the universe are only substances in the second or third degree because they have been developed by the human intellect, which imitates nature, it would therefore be totally anomalous to hold that these same beings which were developed by the human intellect were at the same time causes, the interaction of which makes human freedom impossible. It cannot be the case that the human intellect is the source of most of the things or causes in the universe and at the same time is deprived of freedom by being the passive object of the interaction of these causes.²¹

Again, it is important to point out that the order in the universe cannot be used as an argument against free will. The order in the universe has been the most important argument for the existence of God throughout the centuries. It made a strong impression even on Kant and has achieved fresh popularity recently with the emergence of the anthropic principle. The argument from the order in the universe against free will would be that God had established such a manifestly ordered world that there could be no room for the disorder that could arise from free will or indeed for anything not in harmony with this order. However, against this argument it should be pointed out that the order in the universe is not geometrical. The universe is very far from symmetrical. Besides the order in the universe, there is also a great deal of disorder in the universe. In the absence of a rigidly regulated geometrical order, there is room for human creativity and initiative and therefore for free actions.²²

From a metaphysical point of view it is also important to point out that the future is not determined and therefore that there is room for

²⁰ L. J. Elders: *De Natuurfilosofie van Sint-Thomas van Aquino*, Bruges: Tabor, 1989: 34–35, has examined this problem with great perspicacity.

²¹ Take the example of the cat killed by a car. Since the form or essence (cat) is of human origin, the cat was not killed by any natural cause (cause given in nature). If one attempts to give an objective cause (cause given in nature), one could only say that the cat was killed by matter (the material cause of the car).

²² Cf. my article 'Is it a Perfect World? Spinoza and the Principle of Perfection', in: A. Tourneux (ed.): *Liber Amicorum Raphaël de Smedt*, Vol. IV, Leuven: Peeters, 2001: 161–178.

human free will. In *Metaphysics* E(VI), iii Aristotle examines the case of a man who happens to eat spicy food. Because he ate spicy food he got thirsty. Because he got thirsty, he went out to a well to drink. But at the well there were robbers who murdered the man. Aristotle is interested in asking the question whether it was predetermined (as the logical or psychological determinist would hold) that the man must die and, if so, as from what point.

His reply is that the man had to die as from the moment that he ate the spicy food. If you eat spicy food, you will inevitably become thirsty. If you become thirsty, it is logical for you to go out to the well to get water, and if there are murderers at the well, it is logical that they will murder you.

But if we trace back the series of apparently necessary causes from the man's death, we come to the point at which the man was hungry and decided to eat. By chance the first kind of food he found in his store cupboard was spicy. Or by chance he happened to feel like eating spicy food that day. It is this chance or accidental event which led to the further chain of necessary causes and to his death. According to Aristotle every chain of necessary causes, if one traces it back, is interrupted at some point by an accidental cause. An accidental cause is by definition uncaused, because it has no existence of its own, and for this reason determinism is incorrect.²³ St. Thomas agrees with Aristotle on this point in his Commentary on *Metaphysics* Book VI, although his primary concern is to defend freedom against theological determinism (the claim that freedom is rendered impossible by Divine Providence).²⁴

It may be recalled that for Aristotle all causes relate to the past (one can only explain the man's death after it has taken place), and the past is unchangeable (i.e., necessary).²⁵ It is not causes that render the past unchangeable, but rather the unchangeability of the past which means that causes (rational explanations) are necessary.²⁶ Thus the thesis that

²³ For a full interpretation of *Metaphysics* E(VI), iii, cf. my article 'Aristotle's Refutation of Determinism (*Met.* E₃)', in: J. Vijgen (ed.): *Indubitanter ad Veritatem. Studies offered to Leo J. Elders SVD*, Budel: Damon, 2003: 133–150.

²⁴ St. Thomas also agrees with Aristotle in *De Malo* VI ad 21; *In Peri Herm.* I, 14, 14.

²⁵ *Rhet.* III, xvii, 1418 a 5; *EE* V(=NE VI), ii, 1139 b 7–11; *De Cael.* I, xii, 283 b 13.

²⁶ Cf. J. Hintikka, U. Remes & S. Knuuttila: 'Aristotle on Modality and Determinism', *Acta Philosophica Fennica* 29, 1977: 102–103: "When a house is being built, say by capable builders who actively desire to build it, a potentiality of a house is present. But it does not predetermine the outcome [sc. in the future], for surely the process of building can be stopped, for instance by violence or by an earthquake. The same easily seems to us to be true of Aristotle's own chain of causes. He traces it down backwards [sc. in the

causes necessitate their effects in the past means no more than that, given the unchangeability of the past, rational explanations of the past must also be necessary. It does not mean that the future can be predicted even in principle, as accidental causes may intervene at any time. That the future is determined could only ever be a hypothesis even for the determinist, since the determinist is obliged to admit that he cannot predict the future with certainty, i.e., cannot show that the future is determined. Hence scientific or physical determinism is deficient and cannot constitute an objection to human freedom.

Again, it may be noted that in the ethical works Aristotle writes that the starting-point (*ἀρχή*) of free choice is internal, i.e., in the soul.²⁷ The possibility of free, i.e., uncaused, choice appears to be related, firstly, to the fact that the soul is a self-mover.²⁸ Its specific aim of happiness is not caused by any efficient cause²⁹ (as for Plato). Living beings are not merely passive receivers of determining influences, like a stone. Clearly human beings are not free if the body dominates the soul, but only, on the contrary, if the soul dominates the body. Secondly, in the case of human beings, the self-moving soul has an inbuilt faculty of intellect (*νοῦς*), which enables it to deliberate, that is to say, to propose a choice of ends to the will. The choice which takes place is free because the soul is not determined (forced) and could not be determined by anything material because it is immaterial.³⁰ The various possible options are proposed to the soul, but do not determine the soul, which is, therefore, free. Animals and plants are not free. But this is not because they do

past]: a man is murdered if he goes out, he goes out if he is thirsty, he is thirsty if he has eaten pungent food [...] Such a chain is surely easy to break [sc. if one tries to trace it into the future]. It does not take a Hume not to find any impression of necessity connecting the different links of such a chain.”

²⁷ Cf. n. 6 *supra*.

²⁸ *De An.* II, i, 412 b 15–17. St. Thomas writes in *De Malo* 6, *ad* 10: “[...] voluntas autem [movetur] non ab alia potentia, sed a seipsa.” Again *ibid.*: 6 *corp.*: “[...] manifestum est quod voluntas movetur a seipsa; sicut enim movet alias potentias, ita et se ipsam movet.” Cf. *SCG* II, 48, 1243: “Sola ergo moventia se ipsa libertatem in agendo habent. Et haec sola iudicio agunt.”

²⁹ Cf. D. J. Furley: ‘Self Movers’, in: G. E. R. Lloyd & G. E. L. Owen (eds.): *Aristotle on Mind and the Senses. Proceedings of the Seventh Symposium Aristotelicum*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978: 169: “Aristotle does not reject the concept of self movers in *Ph.* VIII [...] It is evidently quite legitimate, in Aristotle’s view in these chapters [sc. 4 and 5], to call the whole a self mover provided that the moving part is itself unmoved except accidentally.”

³⁰ Cf. *In Peri Herm.* I, 14, 14: “[...] nulla enim vis corporalis potest agere per se, nisi in rem corpoream.”

not possess soul, but rather because they lack intellect, which is required in order to deliberate, that is to say, to weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of different actions. Without deliberation, there is no freedom, since there is no choice.³¹ Thanks to intellect human beings can engage the will to adopt a painful course of action—contrary to the desires of the body—because it is understood as the only path to a higher good. Thus freedom presupposes not just the possession of soul, but also of intellect.³² Of fundamental importance in this context is the fact that freedom is entirely inexplicable without the existence of soul. It would appear that soul, as the immaterial and therefore uncaused cause of the choice of human (intellectual) beings is the only possible explanation of freedom, and that the failure to recognize this point or to see its implications led some of the greatest thinkers to reduce human freedom to a mysterious postulate or a truth knowable only *a priori*.

In this paper I have attempted to show that the conviction that human beings are free, which is held *a priori* in the field of ethics by some of the greatest thinkers, including St. Thomas, can be explained only by a metaphysical approach. It is not the case, as Voltaire held, that the world is made up of causes—one causing the other—and that human beings are the great exception. Rather, causes are explanations of the past, are largely the product of the free use of the human intellect, and are used by human beings to attempt to predict a future, which does not appear to be determined. Hence human free choice is not the great exception in a determined world, but rather is in harmony with a world, the future of which is undetermined. Divine Providence is not an objection, as shown by St. Thomas, nor is the order in the universe, nor are many of the things in the universe—namely artefacts and interpretations of nature—rather these are the result of human

³¹ *STh* I^a, 83, 3: “Dicendum quod proprium liberi arbitrii est electio.”

³² St. Thomas strongly emphasizes intellect as being the source of man’s freedom—cf. *STh* Ia, 83, 1: “Sed homo agit iudicio; quia per vim cognoscitivam iudicat aliquid esse fugiendum vel persequendum. Sed quia iudicium istud non est ex naturali instinctu in particulari operabili, sed ex collatione quadam rationis, ideo agit libero iudicio, potens in diversa ferri. Ratio enim circa contingentia habet viam ad opposita [...] Particularia autem operabilia sunt quaedam contingentia. Et ideo circa ea iudicium rationis ad diversa se habet, et non est determinatum ad unum. Et pro tanto necesse est quod homo sit liberi arbitrii, ex hoc ipso quod rationalis est.” Cf. *SCG* II, 48, 1245. On the relationship of intellect to will in choosing, cf. *De Verit.* q. 22 a 15 *corp.*; q. 25 a 5 *corp.*; *STh* I–II, q. 13, a 1 *corp.* Cf. also e.g., K. Park: *Das Schlechte und das Böse. Studien zum Problem des Übels in der Philosophie des Thomas von Aquino*, Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 2002, 35–36.

intellectual activity. The freedom of human beings, that is to say, the fact that they are not determined, unlike stones, by the influences that surround them, is due to the fact that they are animated, that is, they possess soul. Soul, being immaterial, cannot be determined by anything material, and if human beings did not possess soul, they could not be free. However, soul alone is not enough to make human beings, and only human beings, free. Of all living beings, only human beings are free, because they alone possess intellect, which is required to deliberate and to evaluate various possible choices. There are, therefore, very good reasons why human beings alone in the universe are free, since they alone possess soul and intellect.

PHYSICAL PREMOTION AND HUMAN FREEDOM

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The paper shows how two outstanding Thomists solved the problem of the Divine previous *concursum* in relation to human freedom. First, the paper explains what the Physical premotion according to Thomists is, and then it turns to the Thomistic definition of self-determination in order to follow the Thomistic explanation that the infallible outgoing of the act of willing is compatible with human freedom. The author tries to analyse some key Thomistic claims with the help of possible world semantics.

The Scripture presents God as the Creator of the whole reality, who constantly conserves his Work in being (comp. 2 Cor 4,6 and Hebr 1, 3). Beside these two Divine activities (*creatio et conservatio*), the Scripture also speaks about the Divine influence upon all changes, free human behaviour included. “Therefore, my beloved, [...] work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Phil 2, 12–13). So, the Scripture describes God as the sovereign Lord of all changes, who also influences a man and his free behaviour. At the same time, the Scripture does not deny the human ability of self-determination: “It was he who created man in the beginning, and he left him in the power of his own inclination” (Sir 15, 14).

The above-mentioned quotations seem to hint at some discrepancy, as if there were a certain tension between the Divine sovereign power and agency, on the one hand, and the necessary independence of human self-determination, on the other hand. I try to express that difficulty by these questions: Is it possible to get a consistent explanation

of God's immediate production of human free behavior without constraining the free nature of those activities? If so, how?

In this paper, I would like to present a Thomistic answer to those questions. I will proceed in three steps. First, I explain "Divine concurrence" (*concursus divinus*), according to Thomists. Secondly, I will mention the Thomistic definition of self-determination. Finally, I will envisage how some Thomists defend the human self-determination in connection with the doctrine of the Divine concurrence. I will focus mainly on the Divine production of free human activity in the natural order, and then I will try to specify some key Thomistic claims, and I will analyse them with the help of possible world semantics. I will use two sources: on the one hand, it will be the work of the Spanish Thomist, Domingo Bañez (1528–1604), on the other hand, it will be the work of the German Thomist, Ludwig Babenstuber (1660–1726). Both are regarded to be the authors of the Second Scholasticism.¹

I.

The schoolmen characterize the Divine influence upon the activity of the second causes as "the concurrence".² Thomists distinguish two types of concurrence: simultaneous (*simultaneous*) and previous (*praevius*). The simultaneous concurrence is the Divine influence upon the activity of the second cause. By that concurrence God causes the entity (*entitatem*) of the activity of the second cause. The previous concurrence, or *physical premotion* is the Divine action on the second cause or, more precisely, on its relevant active potency, by which God moves that cause to action. Physical premotion is the Divine influence upon the potency of the second cause, which precedes the own activity of the second cause and moves that cause to action. Both simultaneous concurrence and physical premotion can be considered *ex parte Dei* and *ex parte causae secundae*. Those considerations are put aside here. The Divine concurrence does not take away second causes, their ability to produce effects.

¹ D. Bañez: *Scholastica commentaria in primam partem Summae Theologicae Divi Thomae Aquinatis*, Lugdunum, 1588; L. Babenstuber: *Philosophia thomistica salisburgensis sive Cursus philosophicus secundum doctrinam Divi Thomae Aquinatis*, Salisburgum, 1706.

² Cf. J. Gredt: *Elementa philosophiae aristotelico-thomisticae*, n. 835, Barcinone, 1961.

I try to illustrate the given characterization of the Divine concurrence by the means of an example.³ Take the human will, which is the aptitude to desire various good things. It is possible to distinguish three moments of the will in relation to each its activity: (1) *The will has not been active yet, it is in potency to the act of willing.* At the moment there is nothing in common between the Divine concurrence and the will. (2) *The will is before the performance of its own activity moved by physical premotion from the potency of the act of willing to the act of willing.* At that moment the physical premotion is the efficient cause and the necessary condition of the realization of the act of willing. (3) *The will is active.* At that moment God influences the act of willing by the simultaneous concurrence, the simultaneous concurrence is the necessary condition of the activity of the second cause. The effect of the physical premotion is the second cause *qua* an active cause, the effect of the simultaneous concurrence is the activity of the second cause.

Let us put aside the divine simultaneous concurrence and concentrate only on the physical premotion. In the following I would like to specify what the physical premotion is and then look at the relationship between the premotion and its effect.

The physical premotion is the Divine action on the potency of the second cause by which the second cause is moved to the activity. The premotion is labeled as “physical”, for it is efficiently causal production—premotion is not being active *qua* final cause. The term “premotion” (*prae-motio*) does not express temporal priority. Premotion to an act and that act itself occur at the same moment. The premotion signifies the natural priority of the Divine action, for thanks to it, God moves the second cause to the activity. The second cause is given that entity by God only for the activity *hic et nunc*. It is the transitory entity (*entitas vialis*), which disappears at the very moment of the completion of that activity.

The following Thomistic statement is crucial: if the physical premotion is given, then infallibly the activity of second cause occurs. The question is what Thomists understand by the term “infallibility”. For the time being, I have not found the definition of that key term in any Thomistic work accessible to me. Nevertheless, according to Thomists, the infallible outgoing of the act of willing neither jeopardizes nor destroys human freedom. Therefore, we can assume that “an infallible

³ Cf. G. M. Manser: *Das Wesen des Thomismus*, Freiburg, 1935:607; R. Garrigou-Lagrange: ‘Prémotion physique’, in: A. Vacant & E. Mangenot (eds.): *Dictionnaire Théologie Catholique*, vol. XIII-1, Paris, 1936: 31–77.

act” is the act which is not produced necessarily and its nature is contingent. However, Thomists specify the contingency of that act and they claim that although the infallible act may not occur, it still *de facto* occurs.

2.

Let us look at the Thomistic definition of the self-determination in order to follow the Thomistic explanation that the infallible outgoing of the act of willing is compatible with human freedom. The self-determination is defined by Thomists as “an active indeterminacy by whose power the will reign over its acts in the way that if all necessary for the activity is given, the will may be active or not.”⁴ In other terms, we act freely if and only if everything necessary for our action is given and still it is possible for us to act or not to act. We should keep in mind that the physical premotion is a necessary condition of each free act.

To understand more clearly and more precisely what the free act is and what the conditions of its realization are, logical semantics offers us the apparatus of so called possible worlds, which I want to use in the following way. In the terminology of possible worlds, the human freedom can be defined as follows:

there is no possible world, in which the will (v) produces two incompatible acts, but there is such a world w_a , in which the will (v) produces an act p and at the same time there is another possible world w_i , in which the will (v) under the same conditions and at the same (absolute) moment produces an act non- p .

3.

Let us return to the relationship between physical premotion and human free act. I have said that God moves by physical premotion the second free cause to activity and moreover, if premotion is given, there infallibly occurs, the activity of the second cause. On the other hand, it is a necessary condition that if all appropriate conditions of a free act are satisfied (which also include premotion), the given subject could both act and not act. Thus the question is: can the second free cause resist the Divine premotion? Let us look gradually at how two outstanding Thomists—D. Bañez and L. Babenstuber—answer the question.

⁴ Cf. Gredt (1961 : n. 593).

Bañez answers that question in a positive manner, but his answer is differentiated:

[...] dicendum est, quod liberum arbitrium simpliciter et in sensu diviso potest dissentire si vellit [cum concursu—D.S.], non autem in sensu composito.⁵

So, Bañez holds that one can resist premotion *in sensu diviso*, not *in sensu composito*. I will try to show that we can read Bañez's statement in various ways.

At first, let us take a look at the possible meanings of *sensus divisus*. I read Bañez's statement in this way:

- (1) The will (v) produces an act p and at the same time it can produce non- p .⁶ The same can be formulated as follows: the will (v) produces an act p in the world w_a and at the same time there is a possible world w_p , in which the will (v) under the same conditions and at the same (absolute) moment produces an act non- p .

That interpretation of *sensus divisus* is fully in agreement with the given definition of self-determination. But Bañez's usage of *sensus divisus* can also be read differently. Those readings however are in contradiction either with Thomistic theory of physical premotion or with the definition of self-determination. Let us look at these interpretations:

- (2) The will (v) produces an act p in the world w_a and at the same time there is a possible world w_p , in which the will (v) produces an act p if and only if there occurs no premotion.

We know that physical premotion is the necessary condition of any free act and that is why we have to assert that such a reading of *sensus divisus* is in contradiction with the Thomistic doctrine of the Divine concurrence.

- (3) The will (v) produces an act p in the world w_a and the same time there is a possible world w_p , in which the will (v) produces an act non- p if and only if it is acted upon by numerically different premotion from that one, which de facto—in the world w_a —produces an act p .

⁵ D. Bañez: *Scholastica...*, p. 495, marginale *b-c*.

⁶ $a \ \& \ \diamond \sim a$, where " a " means a statement "the will (v) produces an act p ".

The consequence of that interpretation is the denial of self-determination, for it implies that if the will is acted upon by some premotion, the will then cannot resist that Divine action.

Let us look at possible meanings of Bañez's *sensus compositus*. Bañez says that will cannot resist the physical premotion in *sensus compositus*. I read that statement as follows:

- (4) It is not possible that the will (v) produces an act p and at the same moment produces an act non- p .⁷ So, there is no such possible world, in which the will (v) produces an act p and at the same moment it produces an act non- p .

The validity of that thesis is based on the validity of the principle of contradiction. So it is trivially true.

But the opponents of the Thomistic theory of the Divine concurrence present the second possible meaning of *sensus compositus* and they interpret Bañez's thesis as follows:

- (5) It is not possible that the will (v) is given the premotion to an act p and at the same time the will produces an act non- p .⁸ So, there is no such a possible world, in which the will (v) is given the premotion to an act p but the will produces an act non- p .

If Bañez accepted that reading of *sensus compositus* (5), then it seems that it is not possible to defend self-determination. If it is not possible for the will with the premotion to an act p not to produce an act non- p then the necessary condition of self-determination is not satisfied. Let us have a look at how Bañez's interprets the meaning of *sensus compositus*:

Haec propositio liberum arbitrium potest dissentire si velit, debet intelligi simpliciter loquendo, non autem in sensu composito, ita **ut possint stare simul** haec duo, scilicet hoc auxilium efficax existit in homine, & homo resistit dissentiendo. Ratio autem est evidens, voluntati enim eius quis resistit?⁹

From that quotation, it is clear that Bañez agrees with the second reading of *sensus compositus*, i.e., with (5). As a reason for his claim he presents

⁷ $\sim \diamond (a \ \& \ \sim a)$, where “ a ” means a statement “the will (v) produces an act p ”.

⁸ Cf. R. Garrigou-Lagrange: *God: His Existence and His Nature* (tr. B. Rose), St. Louis, 1934–1936: 361. $\diamond (r \ \& \ \sim a)$, where “ r ” means a statement “the will (v) is given premotion to an act p ” and “ a ” means a statement “the will (v) produces an act p ”.

⁹ D. Bañez: *Scholastica...*, p. 634, marginale *e*.

the quotation from the St. Paul's Epistle (Romans 9, 19), where the following Latin translation can be found: "Voluntati enim eius quis resistit?". I assume that Bañez's exposition of *sensus compositus* leads in its consequences to the denial of self-determination. Further, it is also apparent that it is necessary even to revise the presupposed meaning of Bañez's *sensus divisus*. If it is not possible that there is the premotion to an act p and at the same time there is an act non- p , in other terms, there is no such a possible world in which the will (v) is given the premotion to an act p and the will produces an act non- p , then the first reading of the *sensus divisus* cannot be valid. To see the reasoning more clearly, let us present the given interpretation of *sensus divisus*:

The will (v) produces an act p and at the same time it can produce non- p .¹⁰
The will (v) produces an act p in the world w_a and at the same time there is a possible world w_p , in which the will (v) under the same conditions and at the same (absolute) moment produces an act non- p .

We can see that this interpretation permits the existence of such a possible world in which there is the premotion to an act p and at the same time there is an act non- p . But that is just what is denied by the presented second reading of *sensus compositus* (5). Theses (1) and (5) are mutually incompatible. From that we can infer that Bañez might not have accepted that interpretation of *sensus divisus*, which we have just presented (1), and which, as the only one, preserves self-determination.

Let us turn to Babenstuber's exposition. The question is whether the free second cause can resist God's previous concurrence.

[. . .] I agree that the will can resist and disagrees with the pre-determination in *sensu diviso*, I disagree that it can be so in *sensus compositus*. To be able to resist pre-determination to the assent in *sensu composito* means: there is given premotion to the assent and at the same there is the dissent. To be able to resist pre-determination to the assent in *sensu diviso* means: the predetermination to the assent is given and the will has the possibility to produce **absolutely** either dissent or the omitting of assent. And in that second way the will can resist physical pre-determination, but not in the first way. And it is sufficient for the preserving of the freedom of the will.¹¹

¹⁰ $a \ \& \ \diamond \ \sim a$, where " a " means a statement "the will (v) produces an act p ".

¹¹ L. Babenstuber: *Philosophia* . . . , p. 270, argument 65: "[. . .] debet posse resistere et dissentire praedeterminationi in sensu diviso, conc. in sensu composito, nego. Posse resistere praedeterminationi ad consensum in sensu composito est posse facere, ut praedeterminationi ad consensum coexistat vel dissensus, vel negatio consensus; posse resistere praedeterminationi ad consensum in sensu diviso est stante praedetermina-

So, Babenstuber states that will can resist God's concurrence in *sensu diviso*, not in *sensu composito*. At first I will mention how I read Babenstuber's exposition of *sensus compositus*. I assume that we have already been familiar with it (see (5)).

It is possible that the will (v) is given the premotion to an act p and at the same time the will produces an act non- p . So, there is such a possible world, in which the will (v) is given the premotion to an act p but the will produces an act non- p .

In that way, according to Babenstuber, the will cannot resist the Divine premotion. Nevertheless we have already known that the necessary condition of a free act is that will could in this way resist the Divine action.

Let us recall how Babenstuber explains the usage of *sensus divisus*: "the predetermination to the assent is given and the will has the possibility to produce absolutely either dissent or the omitting of assent." So, according to Babenstuber, it holds that even if the premotion to some act is given, still the will has the possibility to resist that premotion. I read that in following way:

The will (v) which is acted upon by the premotion (P) in the world w_a , produces an act p and at the same time there is a possible world w_p , in which the will (v) which is acted upon by the premotion (P), under the same conditions and at the same (absolute) moment produces an act non- p .

That meaning of *sensus divisus* is fully in agreement with the given definition of the self-determination. Unfortunately it is not in agreement with the exposition of *sensus compositus*. That situation is *de facto* the same as that one we have seen above, i.e., the incompatibility between the interpretation (1) and (5). Therefore, I think that Babenstuber's solution is confused.

4.

I have tried to show how two outstanding Thomists solved the problem of the Divine previous *concursum* in relation to human freedom. I have

tionem ad consensum habere potentiam proxime expeditam eliciendi **absolute** vel dissentium, vel omittendi consensum. Atque hoc secundo modo potest voluntas dissentire praedeterminationi physicae, non autem primo; idque sufficit ad salvandam ejus libertatem actualem."

explained what the Physical premotion according to Thomists is and I have mentioned the Thomistic definition of the self-determination in order to follow the Thomistic explanation that the infallible outgoing of the act of willing is compatible with human freedom. I have also tried to analyse some key Thomistic claims with the help of possible world semantics.

In my opinion, both Bañez's solution and that of Babenstuber's are not satisfactory and I have tried to prove that statement above. If the given Thomistic solutions are not consistent, it does not mean that there can be no consistent solution at all. But it remains a task for us to put forth such a solution.

THE PROBLEM OF THE *DESIDERIUM NATURALE* IN THE THOMISTIC TRADITION

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The theory of the *desiderium naturale* in St. Thomas Aquinas has raised some of the most difficult questions in the history of Roman Catholic thought. At issue is whether a natural desire to see the divine essence can be reconciled with the necessarily supernatural and gratuitous manner of this desire's fulfillment. The 16th century Dominican, Cardinal Cajetan strove to mollify the problem by proposing a *duplex ordo* in which the hypothetical state of pure nature would have its own natural end distinct from man's supernatural end. This ostensible solution to the issue was regnant until the broad ranging criticisms of the *Nouvelle Théologie* in the 20th century (represented especially by Henri De Lubac). The theologies of grace, which emerged after this critique—most notably that of Karl Rahner—sought to remedy the Neoscholastic *separation* of nature and grace by an equally problematic *integration* of the two orders. We propose that the dangers inherent in both the extrinsicism of Cajetan and the immanentism of Rahner can be addressed by turning to alternative interpretations of the *desiderium naturale* (in particular that of Domingo Bañez), which do greater justice to the harmony and integrity of the orders of nature and grace.

St. Thomas Aquinas taught that there exists within the human person a natural desire to see God. Given the historical importance of the Thomistic system, the questions raised by this doctrine have proved to be among the most significant and enduring in the history of Roman Catholic thought. In spite of its apparently esoteric character, the issue bears upon the very end of human existence, the nature of human knowledge and the soul, the relation between philosophy and theology,

and between nature and grace. Indeed, this very question, I will argue, has conditioned many of the great debates and paradigm shifts in Catholic theology from the 16th century to Vatican II.

What is the problem of the natural desire or *desiderium naturale*? Fundamentally it is the paradox of a natural desire for a supernatural end. The problem therefore arises from a certain tension within the Thomistic synthesis. On the one hand, Aquinas aims to show along Aristotelian lines that beatitude is found in the possession of a self-sufficient good which fulfills and perfects the inclinations immanent within human nature itself. On the other hand, he wishes to maintain the doctrine affirmed in sacred scripture that salvation is God's free and unmerited gift made efficacious through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

For Aquinas to integrate the two positions he had to show that on the one hand, the vision of the Divine essence to which man is ordained corresponds to an immanent human desire, and, on the other hand, that the fulfillment of this desire wholly transcends the natural power of man to attain. Aquinas does this by casting the vision of God as the fulfillment of the intellect's orientation to quiddity or essences. By nature the intellect desires to know things according to their essence (their whatness) and is not satisfied merely to know their existence (their thatness). Since, according to his natural theology, it is possible for man by natural reason to know of the existence of the First Cause, if it did not arrive at knowledge of the essence of the First Cause there would remain in the intellect a natural desire to know the essence of the First cause. But says Aquinas such quidditative knowledge of God transcends the natural power of the human intellect.

The central question then becomes whether the concept of the intellectual desire to see God exerts a *claim* upon the Divine beneficence. Since in this schema the Beatific Vision corresponds to a natural ordination, would not God be required to offer the possibility of the Beatific vision to man or else thwart the legitimate claims of human nature? Indeed one of Aquinas's arguments for the possibility of the beatific vision is precisely that since man has a natural desire for it, it must be able to be fulfilled—“if the intellect of the rational creature could not reach so far as to the first cause of things, the natural desire would remain void. Hence it must be granted that the blessed see the essence of God.”¹

¹ *Summa Theologica* I, q. 12, art. 2; the translation used was that of the Dominican Fathers from 1911, reprinted by Christian Classics (Westminster, Maryland) in 1981.

Does this mean that the Beatific Vision is in a sense *owed* to man in justice? And if so can it be said to be wholly gratuitous as the Christian tradition has always maintained? It is a question that has long troubled Roman Catholic theologians through the centuries.

An exploration of theological responses to the Thomistic *desiderium naturale* leads us then to distinguish two major periods of reflection. The first phase is the commentator tradition of the 16th century, the most distinguished representative is Cardinal Cajetan of Spain. Born in Spain in 1469 under the name Jaime de Vio, Cajetan was appointed master-general of the Dominican order in 1507 and took part of most in most the central ecclesiastical events of his day. He commissioned the first monks to evangelize the newly discovered Americas, took a prominent place in the events of the fifth Lateran council defending Papal claims against conciliarism, engaged in theological disputation with Martin Luther at the dawn of the reformation controversy, and was commissioned with the task of studying the annulment request of King Henry VIII of England.

Cajetan was an ardent Thomist, and by pushing for the replacement of Peter Lombard's sentences with Aquinas's *Summa Theologica* in doctrinal formation he may be said to have inaugurated the post-medieval Baroque period of Catholic theology. He was also among the most significant commentators on the *Summa Theologica*.

For Cajetan a natural desire to see God can exist only once we presuppose the knowledge of our supernatural vocation through revelation. Considered in isolation from the supernatural order, a natural desire can exist only for something obtainable by natural powers. As he writes in his commentary on the first part:

The rational creature can be considered in two ways, either absolutely, or as ordained to happiness. If the rational creature is considered absolutely, then the natural desire is that for which is within the scope of the natural faculty, and thus I concede that there is no natural desire of seeing God as he is in himself. But if the rational creature is considered in the second sense, then it naturally desires to see God because it has knowledge of certain effects, namely those of grace and glory.²

In essence Cajetan resolves the problem of gratuity by doing away with the *desiderium naturale* properly speaking. To the extent such a desire exists it is a posteriori to revelation. Since there is no intrinsic desire

² Cajetan, *Comm. In Iam*, (Q12), quoted in R. Garrigou-Lagrangé: *The One God*, London: Herder Books, 1946 : 328.

to see God belonging to human nature as such, there is no theological problem of gratuity since nature cannot exact from God what it does not desire. Cajetan proposes instead a hypothetical state of nature that in the absence of supernatural grace or the knowledge of revelation would have its own proper end obtainable by natural powers—i.e. the natural contemplation of God. Since Cajetan's schema envisions nature as a self-contained, autonomous system with its own end we have here the idea of the *duplex ordo*, an order of grace with a supernatural end, and an order of nature with a natural end. In the concrete order the supernatural end subsumes the natural end since God has positively ordained man to a supernatural vocation. Thus in the concrete, actual order Cajetan would not speak of two modes of beatitude which we must choose between. However for Cajetan the hypothetical state of pure nature is a necessary postulate to safeguard the gratuity of the Beatific Vision.

Cajetan's solution to the problem of gratuity attained broad support. It comprised the foundation of the post-Tridentine theology of desire and remained regnant as the Neoscholastic school, which survived well into the 20th century for example in the thought of Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange. It was not until the mid-20th century that the Neoscholastic system and its *duplex ordo* came under attack from the so called *Nouvelle Theologie* of which Cardinal De Lubac is perhaps the most distinguished representative. In works such as *Surnatural* and *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, De Lubac's distinctive viewpoint on nature and grace became clear.

The focal point of the critique of the *duplex ordo* is that it radically *separates* the order of grace from the order of nature so that the two orders are fundamentally extrinsic to each other. De Lubac's principle concern was to safeguard the notion of man's ordination to God as the fulfillment of the intrinsic quality of our spiritual being as such, in opposition to Cajetan's view that the desire for God is conditioned upon the supervention of grace. Is this not really a case of a supervening grace imposing its end on nature conceived as alien to it? For De Lubac the central focus of his theology is that man has an intrinsic dynamism toward God. There is a human nature ordered to a supernatural end, but no distinct natural end. In the *Mystery of the Supernatural*, De Lubac argues that Cajetan by making the supernatural order completely extrinsic to the natural order has constructed an autonomous nature fundamentally unrelated to the order of grace. De Lubac even argues that Cajetan's view has a certain kinship with the enlightenment

anthropology going so far as to argue that the pure nature of the 16th century paved the way for the naturalistic rationalism of the 17th and 18th century. He says of the Neoscholastics that

They are just as ready to give a precise form to their concept of a purely natural economy [...] in that economy as they present it, all of man's moral life would depend almost exclusively on his own innate powers [...] does it not lead us to suppose a being similar to that present in the rationalist philosophers both ancient and modern [...] sufficient unto himself, a being who expects no graces, who relies on no providence.³

While De Lubac seldom critiques St. Thomas directly (as opposed to his neo-scholastic commentators) ultimately De Lubac believes that the conceptual virus of extrinsecism was contracted when the Aristotelian concept of nature was incorporated into Christian theology. Cajetan's concept of pure nature only becomes possible when the Aristotelian nature—a self-contained category—was imported. If the Aristotelian concept of nature is for De Lubac the main source of the problem, the remedy is to recover the Patristic concept of nature, which he contrasts with the self-sufficient nature of Aristotle. The result of this *Resource-ment* is significant for this discussion. For De Lubac the basic principle of Patristic anthropology is the concept of man as the image of God. For De Lubac Spirit and Cosmos are distinct entities, and since man is an embodied spirit belong to both realms there are conflicting tendencies within him. One tendency resulting from his embodied and created nature is cosmocentric and remains contained within the world. The other tendency resulting from the divine image has a dynamism to transcend the cosmos. Since spirit is fundamentally distinct from any other created nature it cannot be satisfied with the self-enclosed realm of nature but desires transcendence through union with God. The mistake of Aristotelianism is to treat man as a part of the natural cosmos and thus possessing an end proportionate to his own natural powers—an immanent fulfillment. This for De Lubac ignores the way in which man as a created spirit possesses a dynamism to self-transcendence. While man's spiritual nature has a restless dynamism for God, created spirit does not belong to the spiritual order as understood by the scholastics. This fact for De Lubac is ultimately sufficient to guarantee the gratuity of the Vision. As he writes:

³ H. De Lubac: *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, New York: Crossroad Herder, 1998: 46–47.

The fact that the nature of a spiritual being as it actually exists is not conceived as an order destined to close in finally upon itself, but in a sense open to an inevitably supernatural end, does not mean that it has in itself even the smallest positively supernatural element [...] thus this fact does not mean that God is in the smallest degree bound.⁴

The thought of Henri De Lubac represents a decisive turning point in the theological study of the problem of nature and grace. Though often violently attacked in his own time, his project seems in the historical sense to have dealt a lethal blow to Cajetan's Neoscholastic system and the *ordo duplex*. By and large most Catholic theologians have followed his line of trajectory in striving to avoid the extrinsecism of Cajetan and his Neoscholastic followers. In exposing the limitations of Cajetan however, De Lubac restored the *desiderium naturale* as a desire for God intrinsic to human nature as such. Yet by restoring—this time with a patristic cadence, the *desiderium naturale*—De Lubac re-awakened the old problem of safeguarding the gratuity of the vision, which Cajetan's system had meant to banish.

In responding to the challenge, the dominant solution of contemporary theologians stands in sharp contrast to that adopted by their baroque predecessors. While Cajetan endeavored to safeguard the gratuity of the beatific vision by radically *separating* the order of nature and grace, contemporary theology proposes to resolve the question by radically *integrating* the two orders. The tendency is shown in where nature is treated as always and already in a supernaturally elevated condition. The foremost representative of the tendency to view nature as radically graced is of course Karl Rahner, one of the foremost catholic theologians of the 20th century, and considered to be one of the chief influences on the thought of Vatican II.

Like Cajetan, Rahner is sensitive to the problem of the safeguarding the gratuity of man's supernatural end in light of the *desiderium naturale*.

Cajetan's system sought to silence the disquieting problems in Aquinas's original formulation of the *desiderium naturale*, while Rahner had to contend with the resurgence of the question under the aegis of the *Nouvelle Théologie*. Rahner clearly finds De Lubac's effort to resolve the problem of gratuity through a reconceptualization of nature unconvincing.

The paradox of a natural desire for the supernatural is conceivable and necessary if by desire is understood an "openness" to the supernatural [...] but a desire which is natural and at the same time, even if only objectively, attracts grace to itself [...] is a desire which demands grace, because

⁴ *Ibid.*: 31.

precisely otherwise it would be meaningless. But this is incompatible with the unexactedness of grace.⁵

The question of “exactedness” here is precisely the question of whether beatitude is something which God owes to human nature. Like Cajetan—and apparently unlike De Lubac—Rahner is unable to conceive of a strictly natural desire for God which would not exact from God the Beatific Vision. Thus like Cajetan, Rahner’s theology ultimately endeavors to eliminate the *desiderium naturale* in the proper sense.

But in spite of their common concerns Rahner adopts a diametrically opposed strategy for safeguarding the gratuity of the Beatific Vision. Rahner argues that because in the concrete order there is no simple archeology through which the pure nature can be recovered because concrete human existence is always suffused in the concrete by the supernatural.

One does not know whether in the very act of asking the question, contingently but unavoidably for us a supernatural element may not have been at work in the questioner which could never in actual fact be bracketed off, and so would prevent one from laying hold purely of man’s natural essence in the concept.⁶

For Rahner the concrete ordination of man to a supernatural end would impact the intrinsic nature of man such that a recovery of the state of pure nature would be impossible. Like De Lubac whose critique has deeply informed his work, Rahner is anxious to avoid the pitfall of conceiving the relation of nature and grace in an extrinsic manner.

The ontological presuppositions of this extrinsecism are quite problematic. One in particular is quite unintelligible, though it is tacitly assumed, to the effect that where grace has not yet laid hold of the man who has awakened to freedom by justifying him, his binding ordination to a supernatural end can only consist in a divine decree external to him.⁷

Rahner thus hopes to safeguard the gratuity of the supernatural order without reverting to the extrinsecism of Cajetan. In his effort to safeguard the unexacted nature of the Beatific Vision proposes to account for the *intrinsic* dynamism of man for beatitude. He is not prepared

⁵ K. Rahner: *Theological Investigations*, Vol. 1., New York: Seabury Press, 1974: 309–310.

⁶ *Ibid.*: 301–302.

⁷ *Idem.*

however to accept the radical re-conceptualization of nature offered by the *Nouvelle Theologie*. It is here that Rahner offers his concept of the supernatural existential—that human nature as such is always in a condition of being supernaturally elevated:

Antecedently to justification by grace received sacramentally or extrasacramentally he (man) is already redeemed and absolutely obliged to attend to his supernatural end. This situation is not a mere external one [...] but is a real modification of man added to his nature by God's grace and therefore supernatural but never lacking in the real order.⁸

Clearly in one respect conceiving of man as a supernatural existential “resolves” the matter, but by a literal *deus ex machina*. If the desire for the Beatific vision is itself supernatural then the issue of any claim upon God is dissolved. But if the order of nature cannot be delineated from the order of grace we may legitimately ask whether the integrity of the concept of nature has been so gravely compromised that the category itself has become superfluous. It seems also then that grace has become ontologically reconfigured as immanent to the human with all the potential problems that this may produce.

Rahner's theology is in a certain sense the offshoot of De Lubac's trajectory. De Lubac drew attention to the problems that arise from rendering the orders of nature and grace radically extrinsic to each other. Rahner moves to correct this through a radical “intrinsicism” that tends to conflate the two orders. In so doing we may wonder whether Rahner has on this point fled from the Scylla of radical extrinsicism to the Charybdis of a hyper-intrinsicism.

So is there a better solution to the problem of the *desiderium naturale* and gratuity than that offered by either neoscholasticism or Rahner? We have seen that the reaction of the *Nouvelle Theologie* was to a was to a specific baroque interpretation of the *desiderium naturale* of St. Thomas namely that of Cajetan. A certain theological deformation in Cajetan's system led in an overreaction in the contemporary period and equally problematic formulations. But if the conflation of nature and grace in Rahner is a reaction to the extrinsicism of Cajetan, what if Cajetan's model is itself a flawed appropriation of the thought of St. Thomas himself? Recall that Cajetan asserted that the *desiderium naturale* required knowledge of the Beatific Vision through revelation. In itself a natural desire can exist only for something obtainable by the natural powers.

⁸ K. Rahner & H. Vorgrimler (eds.): *Dictionary of Theology*, New York: Crossroad, 1985. Cf. the entry under ‘Supernatural Existential’.

However well Cajetan's solution safeguards the gratuity of the vision, it is highly questionable whether he validly interprets Aquinas himself. Aquinas roots the *desiderium* in the sense of wonder that arises from *any* effect man considers—i.e., on the inherent tendencies of the intellect considering created effects. Nowhere does he root the desire as Cajetan says in the consideration of grace and glory. Secondly, Aquinas argues here for the possibility of the beatific vision based on the natural desire to know God according to his essence. But if Cajetan were correct the natural desire would only emerge after the consideration of the beatific vision as a revealed truth. Aquinas would then be involved in a tautology.

Even within the Baroque tradition, Cajetan's understanding of this point did not go uncontested. We have for example the opinion of Cajetan's fellow Spaniard and Dominican Domingo Bañez the spiritual director of St. Teresa of Avila and one of the main participants in a famous 16th century controversy with the Jesuit Luis Molina on free will and grace. Bañez roots the desire wholly and fully within the natural order. The desire is elicited from a consideration a created effects, since it pertains to the intrinsic structure of the created intellect to seek after the essence of things. This desire however is only conditional—it desires to know God according to His essence if it is possible. Finally this desire is without grace inefficacious since nothing in the order of nature can bring it to fulfillment. Since the desire is conditional and inefficacious Bañez does not see this desire as exerting any claims upon God.

Man can have a natural appetite, that is elicited by one's natural powers, which is a certain conditional and inefficacious desire of seeing God [...] I have said *conditional* because by his natural powers man cannot be certain that such a good is possible. Thus man can desire and wish never to die, if this were possible. But although such a condition is not explicitly conceived by the mind, yet it is implicitly contained in the object, which is represented as good, and not as possible.⁹

There is no operative potency within the created intellect to cognize the divine essence. It is only possible through an ontological modification of the created intellect by which it is united to the divine essence. Bañez's approach seems to be better grounded in the text of *Summa Theologica*.

It may therefore be possible to avoid the theological difficulties of either Cajetan or Rahner by recovering the Thomistic doctrine itself.

⁹ D. Bañez, *Com in Iam*, q. 12, a. 1, quoted in Garrigou-Lagrance (1946: 330).

What if the modern dialectical reaction to Neoscholasticism was in fact a reaction to a pseudo-problem arising from Cajetan's erroneous hermeneutics? In that case, the most fruitful way to break out of the dialectic is to return to the source. In this task Bañez is a great help since he defends the gratuity of the vision along starkly different lines than Cajetan. For Bañez, while the desire originates in the order of nature, it is only fulfilled in the order of grace. Grace thus makes efficacious what in nature is inefficacious, and makes actual what in nature is merely possible. The two orders preserve their integrity and harmony. Such a view not only avoids the theological problems associated with the systems of Cajetan and Rahner, it also appears to cohere with the thought of St. Thomas himself.

L'UOMO E LA DONNA NELLA DOTTRINA DI SAN TOMMASO D'AQUINO

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As a detailed analysis of the text of St. Thomas Aquinas shows, Aquinas was influenced by the Aristotelian notion of a succession of souls. It means that the human embryo is infused at a moment of conception, first with a vegetative soul, then with a sensitive soul, and finally with a rational soul. Aquinas' description of a woman as *mas occasionatus* was also influenced by Aristotle's biology, because a woman is not generated as a man with respect to the particular nature, but only with respect to the universal nature. This is why he attributes to a woman a certain lower dignity in her relationship to man, a biological and functional inferiority. Such an evaluation of a woman was not based on the metaphysical principles used for an explanation of human being, but it was caused by an influence of Aristotelian biology. This paper is an attempt to discuss an equality between man and woman on the basis of contemporary biology and genetics with the use of the Aristotelian-Thomistic metaphysical principles.

La dottrina di san Tommaso d'Aquino sulla relazione tra l'uomo e la donna è determinata dalla sua comprensione dell'inizio della vita dell'uomo, ma anche dall'influsso della concezione della donna nel medioevo.

1. L'ORIGINE DELL'UOMO—LA DOTTRINA DELLA SUCCESSIONE DELLE ANIME

Riguardo al problema dell'origine dell'uomo, san Tommaso è stato influenzato dalla concezione di Aristotele, secondo il quale nell'embrione

c'è prima l'anima sensitiva, poi, eliminata questa, sopraggiunge un'anima nuova, che contiene in sé l'anima sensitiva e razionale.¹ San Tommaso ha accolto, in maniera simile a sant'Alberto Magno, la dottrina di Aristotele sull'origine dell'uomo, ma ha collocato questa concezione in correlazione con la teologia. San Tommaso ha elaborato in maniera più dettagliata di sant'Alberto Magno, la dottrina della successione delle anime nell'uomo. Nella dottrina di san Tommaso l'ingresso dell'anima successiva significa l'eliminazione della precedente e così si moltiplica l'origine e il cessare delle anime. Si può forse pensare che l'embrione nel primo stadio non sia ancora uomo, perché non ha l'anima razionale. Quest'idea potrebbe condurre nel nostro tempo alla tentazione di giustificare gli aborti. Ma al tempo di san Tommaso nessuno ha pensato a tali conseguenze. San Tommaso conosceva l'aborto naturale e anche quello procurato.² L'aborto procurato l'ha classificato come peccato mortale.³ Ma, d'altra parte, san Tommaso non ha precisato il momento, in cui si sostituisce l'anima sensitiva con l'anima razionale.⁴ Il motivo di questa dottrina di san Tommaso è costituito, secondo M. Schulze, dal principio delle scienze naturali,⁵ che afferma che negli organismi l'attività non perfetta precede l'attività perfetta.⁶ Questo principio è applicato da san Tommaso anche ai principi (le forme), cioè alle anime. Le sue ragioni sono biologiche, non metafisiche. San Tommaso applica questo argomento a tutti gli animali, anche all'uomo. Forse voleva così confutare la dottrina di Aristotele dell'esistenza contemporanea di molte anime, ma è arrivato alla dottrina della successione delle anime: l'una dopo l'altra. La sostituzione delle anime sembra significa-

¹ Cf. *STb* I, q. 76, a. 3, ad 3.

² "Abortivus dicitur aliquis foetus vel quia nascitur extra tempus debitum, vel cum violentia educitur, vel quia non perducitur ad debitum quantitatem [...]" (In *1 Corinthios*, cap. 15, lc. 1.)

³ "Qui vero venena sterilitatis procurant, non conjuges, sed fornicarii sunt. Hoc peccatum sit grave, et inter maleficia computandum, et contra naturam, quia etiam bestiae fetus expectant; tamen est minus quam homicidium; quia adhuc poterat alio modo impediri conceptus. Nec est iudicans tali irregularis, nisi jam formato puerperio abortum procuret." (In *4 Sententiarum*, d. 31, q. 2, a. 3, ex.)

⁴ Cf. In *3 Sententiarum*, d. 3, q. 5, a. 2, c. San Tommaso non precisa il momento dell'animazione, soltanto menziona l'opinione di Aristotele e di san Agostino sulla formazione del corpo nell'embrione.

⁵ Cf. M. Schulze: *Leibhaft und unsterblich. Zur Schau der Seele in der Anthropologie und Theologie des Hl. Thomas von Aquin*, Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1992: 119.

⁶ "[...] in animali concepto prius apparent operationes imperfectae, et postea apparent magis perfectae; sicut omnis generatio est transmutatio de imperfecto ad perfectum." (*De anima*, a. 2, ad 9.)

re, nel pensiero di san Tommaso, che l'embrione con l'anima sensitiva viene meno e arriva l'embrione nuovo con l'anima razionale. Tuttavia afferma una volta, nelle sue *Quaestiones quodlibetales*, che nella generazione, dove c'è la successione delle anime, la forma precedente produce il suo effetto nella virtù dell'ultima, la più perfetta.⁷ Questo passo di san Tommaso è interpretato da H. Seidl nel senso che il produrre l'effetto nella virtù dell'ultima anima significa per l'embrione che l'anima vegetativa e sensitiva è già umana.⁸ Anche un altro testo di san Tommaso, nell'interpretazione di Seidl, secondo cui l'anima sensitiva è già specificamente umana, perché è generata dal parente, sembra dire lo stesso, ma dal testo di san Tommaso non segue tale conseguenza.⁹ L'opinione di Seidl, secondo cui l'anima sensitiva nell'embrione è già umana, non trova conferma nei testi di san Tommaso e perciò non è un'interpretazione corretta. San Tommaso in realtà dice che la forma sostanziale sta formando la specie, e la forma è il principio della differenza specifica.¹⁰ La pianta ha come forma sostanziale l'anima vegetativa, l'animale l'anima sensitiva, l'uomo l'anima razionale. Nell'uomo l'anima razionale è la forma sostanzialmente unita al corpo, mentre nell'angelo si può trovare accidentalmente unita al corpo. Secondo Seidl la trasformazione nell'origine dell'uomo delle anime inferiori fino all'anima razionale non si deve capire come il deperimento dell'organismo precedente, ma solo come trasformazione nel senso che l'anima vegetativa cessa di essere la forma sostanziale e comincia ad essere la forma accidentale della forma sostanziale sensitiva, e similmente capita anche nella sua trasformazione in forma razionale. In accordo con questa interpretazione troviamo

⁷ "Est enim aliqua forma quae non dat nisi esse corpus tantum; aliqua est magis perfecta, quae etiam dat esse et vivere quocumque modo vivendi; aliqua, quae cum his dat etiam sensum. Unde patet quod semper ultima est perfectior primis, et habet se ad priores sicut perfectissima ad imperfectissimas; et ideo quidquid continetur in ipsis, totum est in virtute ultima. Unde dicendum est, quod una et eadem essentia est animae sensitivae et intellectivae; sed intellectiva habet se ad sensitivam sicut perfectum ad imperfectum." (*Quaestiones quodlibetales*, Nr. 11, q. 5, a., c.)

⁸ Cf. H. Seidl: 'Zur Geistseele im menschlichen Embryo nach Aristoteles, Albert d. Gr. und Thomas v. Aqu. Ein Diskussionsbeitrag', *Salzburger Jahrbuch für Philosophie* 31, 1986: 55-56.

⁹ "[...] virtus generativa non generat solum in virtute propria, sed in virtute totius animae, cuius est potentia. Et ideo virtus generativa plantae generat plantam; virtus vero generativa animalis generat animal. Quanto enim anima fuerit perfectior, tanto virtus eius generativa ordinatur ad perfectiorem effectum." (*STb* I, q. 118, a. 1, ad 2.) Cf. Seidl (1986: 55).

¹⁰ Cf. Thomas von Aquin: *De ente et essentia*. Hrsg. von H. Seidl. Hamburg: Meiner, 1988, II, 29; V, 86.

un'altra affermazione di san Tommaso secondo cui l'origine dell'anima sensitiva è vista come potenza dell'anima razionale, che è concreata.¹¹

La dottrina della successione delle anime nell'origine dell'uomo deriva dalla concezione biologica dell'uomo propria di san Tommaso. Secondo san Tommaso il corpo dell'uomo sorge dal seme dell'uomo e della donna.¹² Questo seme è secondo lui il seme dell'uomo (secondo la contemporanea biologia contiene gli spermatozoi) e anche il sangue menstruale della donna.¹³ San Tommaso non conosceva le cellule gameti, l'ovulo e lo spermatozoo. Il corpo umano è secondo lui formato dalla materia, come sostanza corporea, e dalla virtù del seme dell'uomo, che prepara la materia per poter ricevere la forma,¹⁴ che vivifica il seme.¹⁵ E questo vale per tutti gli animali. San Tommaso ha applicato per la generazione dell'uomo la dottrina della materia e della forma e ha individuato il sangue menstruale come materia e la virtù del seme come forma. Il punto di partenza di san Tommaso è il principio secondo cui l'ente è piuttosto forma che materia, perché la forma attualizza la materia dalla potenza all'atto. Perciò la materia è un ente solo in potenza; non è né un ente reale, né sostanza.¹⁶ La virtù del seme è il principio interiore e può essere solo nel seme maschile. Di conseguenza l'uomo è nella generazione il principio attivo e la donna il principio passivo.¹⁷ La vivificazione nella successione delle anime comincia sotto l'influsso della virtù del seme: quando viene meno si produce l'anima vegetativa. Similmente, dopo l'anima vegetativa viene l'anima sensitiva e infine

¹¹ "Sic igitur dicendum est quod anima intellectiva creatur a Deo in fine generationis humanae, quae simul est et sensitiva et nutritiva, corruptis formis preexistentibus." (*STb* I, q. 118, a. 2, ad 2.)

¹² "Materia autem ex qua naturaliter generatur homo, est semen humanum viri vel feminae." (*STb* I, q. 92, a. 4, c.)

¹³ "[...] in generatione animalis semen extento nomine dicitur non solum sperma, sed etiam menstruum." (In 2 *Sententiarum*, d. 18, q. 1, a. 2, ad 4.)

¹⁴ "Ad hoc enim quod corpus humanum constituatur, oportet duo advenire; scilicet materiam ex qua formatur corpus, quae dicitur corpulenta substantia, et virtus formans, quae dicitur ratio seminalis [...]." (In 2 *Sententiarum*, d. 30, q. 2, a. 2, ad 1.)

¹⁵ "[...] virtus semini disponit materiam, virtus autem animae dat formam, in generatione animalis." (*STb* I, q. 118, a. 2, ad 3.)

¹⁶ "Unde oportet quod forma sit magis ens quam materia." (In *Metaphysicorum*, l. 7, lc. 2, Nr. 9.) Cf. *STb* I, q. 71, a. 1, ad 1.

¹⁷ "[...] virtus quae est in semine a patre, est virtus permanens ab intrinseco, non influens ab extrinseco, sicut virtus moventis quae est in proiectis: et ideo quantumcumque pater distet secundum locum, virtus quae est in semine, operatur. Non enim virtus activa quae est in semine potest esse a matre, licet hoc quidam dicant, quod femina non est principium activum, sed passivum." (*De anima*, a. 11, ad 2.)

Dio crea l'anima razionale.¹⁸ La virtù del seme non può causare l'anima razionale, perché è immateriale e non usa il corpo. Per questa ragione solo Dio può creare l'anima razionale.¹⁹

Riguardo alla generazione san Tommaso dice che la donna è maschile occasionale (*mas occasionatus*), ossia l'effetto ordinario della generazione è il feto maschile. L'essere maschile occasionale è causato sia per la debolezza della virtù del seme, sia per la mancanza della materia cioè del sangue menstruale, sia per qualche influsso esteriore: per esempio per il vento meridionale, che è umido e così influisce sulla generazione della donna.²⁰ Ma rispetto all'ordine universale, che è dato da Dio, la donna non è occasionale, ma è necessaria per la generazione.²¹

La dottrina di san Tommaso sull'origine dell'uomo non è semplice e univoca, e in certo senso è compatibile con la dottrina contemporanea della Chiesa cattolica. La Chiesa cattolica ha dichiarato la sua posizione dettagliatamente al riguardo di questo problema nella dichiarazione della Sacra congregazione per la dottrina della fede: *Declaratio Quaestio de abortu procurato*, dal 18 novembre 1974. In questa dichiarazione la Sacra congregazione per la dottrina della fede dice che "la tradizione della chiesa ha sempre ritenuto che la vita umana deve essere protetta e favorita fin dal suo inizio, come nelle diverse tappe del suo sviluppo [...] senza che le diverse opinioni circa il momento dell'infusione dell'anima spirituale abbiano introdotto un dubbio sulla illegittimità dell'aborto."²² Questa dottrina è appoggiata anche dalla genetica,

¹⁸ Cf. *De potentia*, q. 3, a. 9, ad 9.

¹⁹ "[...] impossibile est virtutem activam quae est in materia, extendere suam actionem ad producendum immaterialem effectum. Manifestum est autem quod principium intellectivum in homine est principium transcendens materiam, habet enim operationem in qua non communicat corpus. Et ideo impossibile est quod virtus quae est in semine sit productiva intellectivi principii. Similiter etiam quia virtus quae est in semine, agit in virtute animae generantis, secundum quod anima generantis est actus corporis, utens ipso corpore in sua operatione. [...] Similiter etiam anima intellectiva, cum habeat operationem sine corpore, est subsistens, [...] Et cum sit immaterialis substantia, non potest causari per generationem, sed solum per creationem a Deo." (*STb* I, q. 118, a. 2, c.)

²⁰ "Tertia causa est ex aliquo principio extrinseco: quia parva immutatio, ut Philosophus dicit in 18 De animalibus, vel venti, vel temporis vel huiusmodi, sexus variationem facit; unde dicit, quod expertum est apud pastores, quod quando flat ventus septentrionalis, concipiuntur mares, et quando flat meridionalis, concipiuntur feminae, propter abundantiam humiditatis: et si etiam coitus aspiciant ad partem septentrionalem vel meridionalem, sequitur etiam dicta diversitas ut frequenter: et talis causa potuit esse in statu illo [innocentiae]." (*In 2 Sententiarum*, d. 20, q. 2, a. 1, ad 2.)

²¹ Cf. *STb* I, q. 92, a. 1, ad 1.

²² "Ecclesiae Traditio semper docuit humanam vitam tutandam esse, eique esse favendum tam in initio, quam in variis eius processus temporibus. [...] Saeculorum decur-

che ha confermato che il code genetico è fissato già al momento della fecondazione. Questo significa che l'embrione è feto umano, cioè uomo nel suo sviluppo organico.²³ Questa dichiarazione dice precisamente, riguardo all'animazione, che si possono accettare le diverse opinioni sull'animazione dell'embrione salvaguardando due principi fondamentali: 1) nell'embrione, fin dalla fecondazione, è iniziata la vita umana; 2) poiché non è certa la dottrina sull'animazione, si deve sempre proteggere la vita dell'embrione, perché resta il pericolo dell'omicidio.²⁴ Da questo testo della dichiarazione segue che la dottrina di san Tommaso sull'origine dell'anima, cioè sull'animazione, è in accordo con la dottrina odierna della Chiesa cattolica. Ma l'idea di san Tommaso sull'animazione successiva, che il Dottore ha recepito da Aristotele e da sant'Alberto Magno, è difficilmente armonizzabile con l'opinione che la natura dell'uomo sia costituita dal corpo e dall'anima razionale, co-

su, sancti Ecclesiae Patres eiusque ac Doctores doctrinam tradiderunt, neque tamen diversae sententiae de puncto temporis, quo spiritualis anima in corpus infundatur, ullam umquam fecerunt dubitationem de abortus illiciteate." (*Sacra congregatio pro doctrina fidei: Declaratio Quaestio de abortu procurato*. 18 novembris 1974. In: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 66 (1974), pp. 730–747. In: *Enchiridion Vaticanum. Vol. V*. Documenti ufficiali della Santa Sede 1974–1976. Lat.–ital. Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, 1990, Nr. 667–668, pp. 422–424.)

²³ "Scientia genetica recentioris temporis praeclare confirmat has res, quae manifesto semper patuerunt, quaeque minime tangunt disputationes de certo animationis tempore. Ipsa videlicet demonstravit iam a primo momento adesse fixam structuram seu programam geneticum huius viventis: hominem nempe, et quidem hunc hominem individuum, omnibus suis notis propriis praefinitisque iam ornatum. Ab ipsa fecundatione iniiit mirificus cursus cuiusdam vitae humanae, cuius singulae potentes facultates tempus poscunt, ut recte ordinentur atque ad agendum praeparentur." (*Sacra congregatio pro doctrina fidei: Declaratio Quaestio de abortu procurato*. 1990, Nr. 674, p. 430.)

²⁴ "Haec declaratio consulto quaestionem reliquam facit, quo temporis momento anima spiritualis infundatur. Qua de re ut traditio non est unanima, ita auctores inter se differunt. Nam cum alii affirmant id primo vitae tempore fieri, aliis placet non hoc ante fieri, quam germen in sua sede steterit. Nimirum non est scientiae eas dirimere quaestiones, quia existentia animae immortalis ad eiusdem provinciam non pertinet. Agitur enim de quaestione philosophiae propria, a qua haec moralis affirmatio nullo modo dependet, duabus his de causis: 1) quia, etiam si ponatur infusionem animae tardius supervenire, est nihilominus in fetu incipiens humana vita (de qua biologicae scientiae ope constat) quae et praeparat et exigit animam, per quam natura a parentibus accepta perficiatur; 2) quia si solum tamquam probabilis illa animae infusio, de qua dicimus (non enim de re contrarias umquam constabit), iudicetur, vitam ei adimere idem est ac periculo se committere occidendi hominis, non tamquam in spe, sed omnino anima instructi." (*Sacra congregatio pro doctrina fidei: Declaratio Quaestio de abortu procurato*. 1990, Nr. 674, Nota 19, pp. 430–431.)

me sostiene lo stesso san Tommaso.²⁵ Da questo punto mi sembra più plausibile la dottrina dell'animazione nel momento della fecondazione.²⁶ Questa opinione è sostenuta anche da E. Schockenhoff, che dice: oltre i gemelli monovulari ogni uomo ha un codice genetico individuale. L'origine dei gemelli monovulari si spiega, per Schockenhoff, in modo che il nuovo centro della vita procede dall'altro centro.²⁷ Secondo le informazioni genetiche recenti neanche i gemelli monovulari hanno il codice genetico completamente identico.²⁸

2. LA DONNA COME MAS OCCASIONATUS

La generazione è spiegata da san Tommaso per mezzo delle varie coppie dei termini metafisici aristotelici: perfetto – imperfetto, materia – forma, attività – passività,²⁹ e la donna come maschile occasionale (mas occasionatus).³⁰ La donna sorge sotto l'influsso esterno, anche dei corpi

²⁵ “[...] natura homini composita ex anima et corpore et ex natura intellectiva et sensitiva [...]” (*De malo*, q. 12, a. 1, c.) “Homo autem ex spirituali et corporali natura conditus est.” (*ScG*, l. 3, cap. 135, Nr. 23.)

²⁶ Questa dottrina è sostenuta per esempio con i argomenti di D. Tettamanzi, H. Berger, S. Schwarz. Cf. D. Tettamanzi: *Nuova bioetica cristiana*. II. edizione. Casale Monferrato: Piemme, 2000: 236–249; H. Berger: ‘Die Wissenschaft und das ungeborene Kind’, in: H. Pammer & R. Weiler (Hrsg.): *Volle Menschenrechte für das ungeborene Kind. Die Wissenschaft und das ungeborene Kind*, Wien & München: Herold, 1980: 26–30; S. Schwarz: *Die verratene Menschenwürde. Abtreibung als philosophisches Problem*. Köln: Communio, 1992: 92–108.

²⁷ Cf. E. Schockenhoff: *Ethik des Lebens. Ein theologischer Grundriß*, Mainz: Matthias-Grünwald-Verlag, 1993: 307–309.

²⁸ Cf. L. Honnefelder: ‘Was wissen wir, wenn wir das menschliche Genom kennen?’, *Information Philosophie* 29, 2001: 10.

²⁹ “[...] semen maris est principium activum in generatione animalis. Sed potest etiam dici semen id quod est ex parte feminae, quod est principium passivum.” (*STh* I, q. 115, a. 2, ad 3.) “[...] virtus quae est in semine agit in virtute animae generantis, secundum quod anima generantis est actus corporis, utens ipso corpore in sua operatione.” (*STh* I, q. 118, a. 2, c.) “[...] mas dicitur dare animam, in quantum in semine maris continentur virtus quae agit ad animam.” (*De potentia*, q. 3, a. 12, ad 6.) L’anima qui ricordata di san Tommaso è da capire come l’epifenomeno dei certi processi fisico-chimici, allora non si parla dell’anima razionale, come spiega I. W. Frank. Cf. I. W. Frank: ‘Femina est mas occasionatus. Deutung und Folgerungen bei Thomas von Aquin’, in: P. Segl (Hrsg.): *Der Hexenhammer. Entstehung und Umfeld des Malleus malleficarum von 1487*, Köln & Wien: Böhlau, 1988: 77, nota 11. “[...] ad generatione hominis mater ministrat materiam corporis informem, formatur autem per virtutem formativam quae est in semine patris.” (*STh* II-II, q. 26, a. 10, ad 1.)

³⁰ Il termine “mas occasionatus” per la donna usa san Tommaso nelle tutte sue opere sette volte: In 4 *Sententiarum*, d. 36, a. 1, ad 1, ad 2; In 4 *Sententiarum*, d. 44, q. 1, a. 3c, ag

celesti. Il principio di questo è: “omne agens agit sibi simile”.³¹ Questo principio è applicato da san Tommaso anche alla generazione, dove la virtù del seme usa la materia preparata dalla femmina come uno strumento.³² Se non si trova qualche virtù naturale che potrebbe generare la donna, la donna sorge solo sotto l’influsso esterno, che impedisce il sorgere secondo la natura particolare, similmente a quando nasce un mostro.³³ Oltre la natura particolare, secondo la quale la donna è maschile occasionale (*mas occasionatus*), c’è secondo san Tommaso la natura universale, della quale egli afferma, influenzato da Avicenna, che è la forza dei corpi celesti. La donna sorge secondo questa natura universale.³⁴

3; *STh* I, q. 92, a. 1, ad 1; *STh* I, q. 99, a. 2, ag 1; *STh* I, q. 99 a. 2, ad 1; *De veritate*, q. 5, a. 9, ad 9; *De potentia*, q. 5, a. 5, ad 9. L’altro simile termine “vir occasionatus” usa san Tommaso due volte: In 2 *Sententiarum*, d. 20, q. 2, a. 1, ag. 1; *Ad Timotheum* 1, cap. 2, lc. 3, e il termine “femina imperfectum et occasionatum” usa una volta in *Super Iohannis*, cap. 16, lc. 5. Questo era esplorato per usare del CD-ROM: Busa, R. (Ed.): *Thomae Aquinatis Opera Omnia cum hypertextibus in CD-ROM. Secunda editio*, Trend, 1996. San Tommaso usa il termine “mas occasionatus” tre volte come il termine citato dai testi di Aristotele, e lui solo usa questo termine solo quattro volte.

³¹ “Agere autem, quod nihil est aliud quam facere aliquid actu, est per se proprium actus, in quantum est actus, unde et omnes agens agit sibi simile.” (*STh* I, q. 115, a. 1, c.)

³² “[...] corpora viventia, tanquam potentiora, agunt ad generandum sibi simile et sine medio, et per medium. Sine medio quidem, in opere nutritionis, in quo caro generat carnem, cum medio vero, in actu generationis, quia ex anima generantis derivatur quaedam virtus activa ad ipsum semen animalis vel plantae, sicut et a principali agente derivatur quaedam vis motiva ad instrumentum.” (*STh* I, q. 118, a. 1, c.)

³³ San Tommaso non vuole dire che la donna sia un mostro, solo che anche per il sorgere della donna similmente che per il mostro influiscono sostanzialmente gli influssi esteriori. “[...] quamvis monstra contingant in natura praeter intentionem virtutis formativae quae agit in semine, tamen reducuntur in aliquas causas naturales, contingunt enim ex aliqua indispositione materiae sicut ex principio proximo, vel ex impressione alicujus signi caelestis sicut ex principio remoto.” (In 2 *Sententiarum*, d. 18, q. 1, a. 3, ad 6.) Ma il difetto della natura nello sviluppo embrionale dei mostri è dato solo dalla natura (“[...] monstra licet fiant contra naturam particularem, non tamen fiunt contra naturam universalem.” *De potentia*, q. 6, a. 2, ad 8) mentre nello sviluppo embrionale della donna questo è voluto da Dio che ha creato la natura, come dice san Tommaso nell’affrontare il problema, se nella risurrezione ci saranno tutti e due i sessi (“Similiter etiam nec sexus infirmitas feminei resurgentium obviat. Non enim est infirmitas per recessum a natura, sed a natura intenta,” *ScG*, l. 4, cap. 88, Nr. 3).

³⁴ Cf. *De potentia*, q. 5, a. 9, ad 9. La virtù dei corpi celesti dipende dalla provvidenza divina, cf. *STh* I, q. 92, a. 1, ad 1.

3. *IL RAPPORTO TRA L'UOMO E LA DONNA*

Per la valutazione precisa della dottrina di san Tommaso sul rapporto tra l'uomo e la donna è necessario avere nella mente anche la valutazione della donna nel medioevo. La donna nel medioevo era spesso sottovalutata e subordinata all'uomo, non poteva occupare quasi nessun posto nell'ufficio; poteva acquistare l'erudizione quasi solo in monastero; era esclusa anche dall'università. Il suo ruolo era limitato alla famiglia o al monastero.³⁵ San Tommaso con la sua designazione della donna come *mas occasionatus*, espressione che ha usato anche il suo maestro sant'Alberto Magno,³⁶ ha accettato l'idea di una minore dignità della donna rispetto all'uomo. Questa concezione della donna è stata riequilibrata, nella sua dottrina, con il concetto di natura universale, secondo cui la donna è necessaria, ma san Tommaso non ha cessato di usare il termine *mas occasionatus*. D'altra parte, nel contesto teologico, ha accettato l'uguale dignità della donna e dell'uomo, perché sono ugualmente capaci di ricevere la grazia di Dio.³⁷

Nella dottrina di san Tommaso è possibile distinguere con A. Mitterer l'inferiorità biologica e funzionale della donna.³⁸ L'inferiorità biologica della donna è causata dalla ricezione di san Tommaso della biologia aristotelica riguardo alla generazione dell'uomo e alla sua interpretazione con i termini di materia e forma, così che il seme maschile designa la forma e il sangue menstruale la materia. Il frutto proprio della fecondazione dovrebbe essere l'uomo, e solo sotto l'influsso di fattori esteriori sorge la donna, designata come *mas occasionatus*. Di conseguenza, l'inferiorità della donna si manifesta nella sua mente, che è più debole di quella dell'uomo.³⁹ La donna, con il suo corpo e la sua ragione più deboli, è secondo san Tommaso più inclinata al peccato, perché

³⁵ Cf. O. H. Pesch: *Thomas von Aquin. Grenze und Größe mittelalterlichen Theologie*, 3. edizione. Mainz: Matthias-Grünewald, 1995: 208–210.

³⁶ “Mulier etiam est vir occasionatus et habet naturam defectus et privationis respectu maris [...]” (Albertus Magnus: ‘Quaestiones super De animalibus quas reportavit frater Conradus de Austria’, in: *Opera Omnia*, editio coloniensis, Tomus 12: *Liber de natura et origine animae. Liber de Principiis motus progressivi. Quaestiones super De animalibus*, Monasterium Westfalorum: Aedibus Aschendorff, 1955, l. XV, q. 11.)

³⁷ Cf. *STh* I-II, q. 110, a. 2, ad 2.

³⁸ Cf. A. Mitterer: ‘Mann und Weib nach dem biologischen Weltbild des hl. Thomas und dem der Gegenwart’, in: *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 57, 1933: 514–525.

³⁹ “[...] naturale est quod sicut mulieres sunt mollioris corporis quam viri, ita et debilioris rationis.” (*Ad Timotheum* 1, cap. 2, lc. 2.)

è meno riservata,⁴⁰ non è stabile nei suoi propositi.⁴¹ Ma secondo la biologia contemporanea non esiste inferiorità della donna rispetto all'uomo. La generazione dell'uomo procede così, che nella mitosi, cioè nella replicazione cellulare ordinaria, la cellula si replica nelle due cellule figliali con lo stesso numero di cromosomi, ma nella meiosi, cioè nella replicazione straordinaria, quando si formano i gameti, le cellule figliali hanno solo la metà dei cromosomi, e di questi 22 paia sono uguali per l'uomo e per la donna, ma il 23° paio dei cromosomi è nell'uomo a forma di X (spermatozoo) e nella donna a forma di Y (ovulo). Questa 23° paio dei cromosomi è decisiva per il sesso dell'embrione. Nella fecondazione lo spermatozoo e l'ovulo si uniscono anche con i suoi cromosomi e nasce lo zigote.⁴² Questa spiegazione biologica non parla dell'inferiorità della donna. Perciò è possibile interpretarla con i termini metafisici aristotelico-tomistici, così che nella fecondazione la forma (atto) consiste nell'unione dello spermatozoo con l'ovulo, e la materia (potenza) è lo spermatozoo e l'ovulo, che nello zigote si uniscono in una nuova materia.

San Tommaso spiega l'inferiorità funzionale della donna come conseguenza dell'inferiorità biologica della donna, ripresa da Aristotele, secondo cui la donna nella fecondazione è passiva, perché mette la materia come principio passivo (il sangue menstruale), mentre l'uomo è attivo, perché mette il principio attivo—il seme.⁴³ Da questa inferiorità

⁴⁰ “Sicut et e contrario contingit quod aliquis non persistat in eo quod consiliatum est, ex eo quod debiliter inhaeret, propter mollitionem complexionis, ut de mulieribus dictum est. [...] Haec autem, accidunt in quantum ex complexionem corporis datur aliqua incontinentiae occasio, non autem causa sufficiens, ut dictum est.” (*STb* II-II, q. 156, a. 1, ad 2.) “[...] naturale est quod sicut mulieres sunt mollioris corporis, ita et debilioris rationis. Rationis autem est ordinare actus, et effectus unusquisque rei. Ordinatus vero consistit in debita ordinatione et dispositione per rationem. [...] Et ideo quia mulieres deficiunt a ratione, requirit ab eis ornatum. Item veremundia est de turpi actu, et ideo est laudabilis qui facile solent declinare in actus turpes, cuiusmodi sunt iuvenes et mulieres, et ideo hoc in eis laudatur, non autem senes et perfecti.” (*Ad Timotheum* 1, cap. 2, lc. 2.)

⁴¹ “Cor mulieris non est firmum sicut viri; et propter hoc ad diversum movetur. Si ergo non adstringatur ad operandum, oportet ferri ad diversa. Et ideo est periculum, quod mulieres sint otiosae, unde antiqui accupabant eas. Item efficiuntur instabiles quantum ad locum, quia discunt circumire domos.” (*Ad Timotheum* 1, cap. 5, lc. 2.)

⁴² Cf. J. S. Thomason & M. W. Thomsonová: *Klinická genetika*, Martin: Osveťa, 1988: 23–45.

⁴³ “In omni enim generatione requiritur virtus activa et passiva. Unde, cum in omnibus in quibus est distinctio sexuum, virtus activa sit in mare, virtus vero passiva in femina; naturae ordo exigit ut ad generandum convenient per coitum mas et femina.” (*STb* I, q. 98, a. 2, c.) Cf. *STb* I, q. 118, a. 1, c.

funzionale e anche dalla designazione della donna come *mas occasionatus* san Tommaso dice che la donna è necessaria solo per la generazione, ma gli altri lavori sono eseguiti dall'uomo in maniera migliore.⁴⁴ In quella opinione è espressa l'esperienza vitale di san Tommaso, che fin da bambino è vissuto in monastero, dove tutti i lavori sono fatti dagli uomini, mentre l'esperienza della vita di famiglia, dove anche la donna ha il suo ruolo, sarebbe stata un'altra cosa. Secondo san Tommaso l'uomo è necessario per guidare la donna, perché la donna è il più debole nella sua mente.⁴⁵ Per questo motivo la donna deve essere subordinata all'uomo non solo nella vita privata, ma anche nella vita pubblica.⁴⁶ D'altra parte san Tommaso modera questa sua opinione con la spiegazione che tra l'uomo e la donna esiste un'uguaglianza teologica, perché anche la donna come ogni uomo è creata ad immagine di Dio, ma d'altra parte, l'immagine di Dio si trova solo nell'uomo, che è il principio e fine della donna.⁴⁷ L'uguaglianza filosofica dell'uomo e della donna deriva dalla concezione di san Tommaso dell'uomo come persona, perché ogni uomo è una persona.⁴⁸ Concludendo possiamo dire: dai testi di san Tommaso segue che, secondo lui, c'è una disuguaglianza secondaria tra l'uomo e la donna, che è la conseguenza della sua biologia della generazione dell'uomo e della non corretta applicazione dei termini di materia e forma ai processi della generazione dell'uomo.

⁴⁴ “[...] necessarium fuit feminam fieri, sicut Scriptura dicit, in adiutorium viri, non quidem in adiutorium alicuius operis, ut quidam dixerunt, cum ad quodlibet aliud opus convenientius iuvari possit vir per alium virum quam per mulierem; sed in adiutorium generationis.” (*STh* I, q. 92, a. 1, c.)

⁴⁵ “Femina enim indiget mare non solum propter generationem, sicut in aliis animalis, sed etiam propter gubernationem: quia mas est et ratione perfectior, et virtute fortior. Mulier vero ad viri societatem assumitur propter necessitatem generationis.” (*ScG*, l. 3, cap. 123, nr. 3.)

⁴⁶ “Est autem alia subiectio oeconomica vel civilis, secundum quam praesidens utitur subiectis ad eorum utilitatem et bonum. Et ista subiectio fuisset etiam ante peccatum, defuisset enim bonum ordinis in humana multitudine, si quidam per alios sapientiores gubernati non fuissent. Et sic ex tale subiectione naturaliter femina subiecta est viro, quia naturaliter in homine magis abundat discretio rationis. [...] Nec inaequalitas hominum excluditur per innocentiae statum, ut infra [q. 96, a. 3] dicitur” (*STh* I, q. 92, a. 1, ad 2.)

⁴⁷ “[...] tam in viro quam in muliere invenitur Dei imago quantum ad id in quo principaliter ratio imaginis consistit, scilicet quantum ad intellectum naturam. Sed quantum ad aliquid secundario imago Dei invenitur in viro, secundum quod non invenitur in muliere, nam vir est principium mulieris et finis, sicut Deus est principium et finis totius creaturae.” (*STh* I, q. 93, a. 4, ad 1.)

⁴⁸ Cf. *STh* I, q. 30, a. 4, c.

4. *SOMMARIO*

San Tommaso ha recepito la dottrina biologica di Aristotele e anche la sua opinione sulla generazione dell'uomo con la successione delle anime, che san Tommaso approfondì. La dottrina di san Tommaso sulla generazione dell'uomo deve essere interpretata prendendo in considerazione tutte le sue opere e i suoi presupposti metafisici. San Tommaso ha assunto anche l'opinione di Aristotele sulla donna come maschile occasionale (*mas occasionatus*) e da questo segue la sua inferiorità rispetto all'uomo. Il termine *mas occasionatus* è usato da san Tommaso solo quattro volte, e alcuni termini, per esempio *vir occasionatus* e simili solo qualche volta. Ma dall'insieme delle sue opere segue che san Tommaso ha accettato l'inferiorità secondaria biologica e funzionale della donna rispetto all'uomo. Salvaguardando i suoi presupposti metafisici io ho portato un'altra visione dell'uomo e della donna, che è fondata sulla biologia contemporanea e che dichiara l'uguaglianza della donna rispetto all'uomo.

THE ETHICS OF NATURAL LAW ACCORDING TO THOMAS AQUINAS

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Thomas Aquinas' concept of law is an example of the application of Aristotelian teleology to the integral theory of ethics, law and governing. Aquinas' concept of natural law is called moral law by many scholars. Man is able to anticipate the law of action in relation to eternal law, and such participation in eternal law Thomas calls natural law. The ethics starts from the principle good is to be done and evil is to be avoided. This principle is the basis for the rest of the ethical precepts concerning what is to be done and what is to be avoided. Man has innate general orientations on how to live and behave in this world. Conscience evaluates and judges the motives and moral qualities of actions. This is the main idea of natural law, which is described in the article.

INTRODUCTION

First of all, Thomas Aquinas is a famous theologian. Nevertheless, it is worth paying attention to his political and ethical doctrines. For instance, Aquinas' theory of natural law embraces elements of Platonism, Aristotle, Roman Law, the teaching of Stoics, the Church Fathers (especially Augustine), the feudal tradition, and the political practice of Holy Roman Empire and Italian cities. That theory was employed in the creation of *The Higher Law Background of the American Constitution*.¹ It helped to transform the traditional, local, customary social system of early feudal society into the centralized policy of the modern world, based on law and logic.

¹ P. E. Sigmund: 'Introduction', in: *St. Thomas Aquinas on Politics and Ethics*, New York: Norton, 1988: xiii–xiv.

As a rule, the moral philosophers, the predecessors of Thomas Aquinas, considered the direct and indirect moral precepts taken from Holy Scripture. Aquinas applied the teleological method of Aristotle to the analysis of fundamental ethical problems, and this way he escaped enslavement by the authoritative text and abuse of deduction. The famous *Treatise on Law* (*Summa Theologiae*, I–II, q. 90–108) is a good example of Aquinas' reliance on Aristotle's teleology in the elaboration of integrated theory of ethics, law and government. In these questions, Thomas presents the structure of four laws: (1) Eternal Law (the divine plan of the universe), (2) Natural Law (through which man, by the use of his reason, participates in eternal law), (3) Human Law (the application of natural law to particular societies by way of "conclusions" and "determinations"), (4) Divine Law (the divine revelation expressed in the Old and the New Testaments which assists man in understanding the requirements of law and morality). This structure unites the neo-Platonic concepts of hierarchy and participation, some ideas of Roman Law, the feudal belief in the common origin of law and power, and the Stoic belief in the world's order, rationality and morality. The integrity of this structure rests upon the belief that man is able to understand nature's aims which correspond to God's intentions. According to Thomas, natural law is related to the perfecting of "natural inclinations" by means of their subordination to the needs of self-preservation, nutrition, reproduction, family life, learning and adoration, when all this is understood as necessities and possibilities given by God and belonging to the realm of natural law. Of course, not all inclinations are "natural", but only those which correspond to the ends of rational human nature. They cannot be deduced, but have to be developed from the notion of an integral and socially responsible human person. I mean a person who seeks to realize the possibilities given by a merciful and purposively acting God.

This Christian, and at the same time Aristotelian, ethical rationalism significantly differs from Augustinian pessimism, which doubted the capabilities of man's reason to know good and his will to strive for it. Aquinas developed his ethics at the time of the Church's need for a method which would enable the solution of practical moral problems. That need came into being when the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) officially instituted obligatory annual confessions, and therefore priests had to be ready to lead believers to moral perfection by assigning a suitable penitence. In *Summa Theologiae* (I–II) Aquinas treats these questions on priestly and lay morality against the background of natural law.

In this article, I will analyze in more detail the ethics of natural law. First of all, I will inquire into the question, what the ethics of natural law is. But, by way of introduction, I will refer to how Thomas understands law and how he divides it.

LAW

Aquinas starts the *Treatise on Law* by indicating that, along with the devil and Grace, law is the principle of acts, and as such has to be inquired into starting from its general meaning. The order of that beginning has to be this: (1) essence of law, (2) kinds of law, (3) effects of law. Concerning the essence, four questions have to be answered: (1) Whether law is something pertaining to reason? (2) What is its end? (3) What is its cause? (4) Whether the promulgation is essential to a law?² (q. 90, *prologus*).

In order to answer the first question, one needs to know something of law's quiddity. Aquinas takes into account that the word *lex* 'law' is a derivative of *ligare* 'to bind', and joins this information with the already announced proposition that law is the extrinsic principle of acts, and gets the knowledge that "law is a rule and measure of acts"³ (q. 90, a. 1, in c). In composition with the already proven statement that "the rule and measure of human acts is the reason"⁴ (q. 90, a. 1, in c), it makes the demonstrative syllogism of the fourth figure (mode a, a, i) which concludes that something that belongs to reason is law. That means that law pertains to human reason. Of course, it does not exclude the emotions and will from participation in law, but law essentially belongs to reason as to the first principle of acts. Since the first principle in all matters of action is an end, and the final end of all human actions is happiness or bliss⁵ (q. 2 a. 7), "Consequently the law must needs regard principally the relationship to happiness [...]. And since one man is a part of the perfect community, the law must needs regard properly the relationship to universal happiness"⁶ (q. 90, a. 2, in c). And, according to Aristotle and Thomas, happiness is a perfect operation⁷ (*SCG* I, cap. C

² Sancti Thomae Aquinatis: *Summa Theologiae* I-II, La Editorial Catolica, S. A., Martini, 1952: 874 (henceforth: *S.Th. I-II*).

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ S. Thomae de Aquino, *Summa contra Gentiles*, Commissio Leonina, Roma, 1934: 582 (henceforth: *SCG*).

[3]) which depends on four things: genus, principle of operation, object of operation, and form of operation⁸ (*SCG* I, cap. C [3]). Let us take a closer look at these four as to the factors which lead to the common good “and whatever stands to reason in this sense, has the nature of law”⁹ (q. 90, a.2, ad 3).

Following Aristotle, Thomas divides the genus of operation into two species: one that remains in the agent; another that passes over into an external thing. He regards the first as more perfect: “for example, to see and to hear. For these are the perfection of the beings whose operations they are, and can be ultimate because they are not ordered to something made as to their end”¹⁰ (*SCG* I, cap. C [3]).

The perfection of activity, according to Thomas, depends on its principle, i.e., on power. Every being acts through its own form, since “the form of any agent is the principle of its own operation”¹¹ (*SCG* I, cap. XLVI [2]) whereas “a power is the name of a principle of action”¹² (*SCG* I, cap. XLIII [12]); and the perfection of the activity depends directly on the quantity of that power. Since intellectual nature surpasses all other natures¹³ (*SCG* I, cap. XLVII [7]), therefore, the highest perfection of human operation belongs to the intelligible species, i.e., the perfection of human operation depends directly on intellective power. Also, it is necessary to bear in mind that “the intellect does not produce an effect except by means of the will, whose object is a good apprehended by the intellect and which moves the agent as an end”¹⁴ (*SCG* II, cap. XXIII [4]). The sense perceptions direct man to a good, but to some particular good, whereas the good of intellect is the common good. Therefore, Thomas maintains that our happiness is “not according to the operation of sense, but according to the operation of the intellect, and one perfected by a habit”¹⁵ (*SCG* I, cap. C [3]).

In the third case, the perfection of intellect’s activity depends directly on the object of understanding: the higher the nature of a thing understood, the higher the degree of happiness that is attained. “The highest felicity in us consists in understanding the highest intelligible”¹⁶

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *S. Th. I-II.*

¹⁰ *SCG.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

(*SCG* I, cap. C [3]). But, according to Thomas, the supreme understandable is “the divine essence, since it is the most perfect act and the first truth”¹⁷ (*SCG* I, cap. XLVII [6]). Therefore, the most perfect operation of man is his attempt to understand divine essence, which gives him the highest kind of happiness.

Finally, the perfection of operation depends on the form of the operation, i.e., “that it *be done perfectly, easily, firmly, and with delight*”¹⁸ (*SCG* I, cap. C [3]). But this mode of operation belongs to God alone, since “He is intelligent, and His intellect is the highest power, nor does He need any perfecting habit [. . .] God is, therefore, blessed”¹⁹ (*SCG* I, cap. C [3]). In this life, man cannot be perfectly happy; for his operation always depends on habits²⁰ (*SCG* III, cap. XLVIII [7]).

The analysis of the perfection of operation shows that man acts in different directions, which are connected through the common good, i.e., through the commonality of the final cause; for “nothing stands firm with regard to practical reason, unless it be directed to the last end which is the common good”²¹ (q. 90, a.2, ad 3). This way, law is directed to the common good. After concluding that law belongs to the order of reason and is directed to the common good, we have to learn if any man is competent to make law and promulgate it, and whether the promulgation is essential to a law.

Since law is directly concerned with the common good, which it strives to protect and to direct the activity of the citizens to the latter, “therefore the making of a law belongs either to the whole people or to a public personage who has care of the whole people: since in all other matters the directing of anything to the end concerns him to whom the end belongs”²² (q. 90, a.3, in c). The representatives of the common good choose their own deputies who have the right to make laws, demand compliance and punish for their violation. Thomas underlines that “promulgation is necessary for the law to obtain its force”²³ (q. 90, a.4, in c). Every state’s citizen or member of a community can make propositions concerning lawmaking, but these propositions obtain the force of law if and only if they are included in an officially promulgated

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *S. Th. I-II.*

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

law. The promulgated law is binding to every member of a community, and man, while obeying its demands, becomes its own law. After considering each essential aspect of the law separately, Aquinas unites the results in one definition: the law “is nothing else than an ordinance of reason for the common good, made by him who has care of the community, and promulgated”²⁴ (q. 90, a.4, in c). So, Thomas indicates three essential properties of law: (1) to be directed to the common good, (2) to direct human behavior according to the order of rightness, (3) to urge people to do what is juridically prescribed²⁵ (q. 91, a.5, in c). After considering the essence of law, Thomas turns to its various kinds.

VARIOUS KINDS OF LAW

Thomas divides law into four kinds, of which three belong to the divine intellect and one is the product of human reason. Thomas calls them: eternal law, natural law, human law and divine law²⁶ (q. 91). Eternal law corresponds to Divine Reason, “for granted that the world is ruled by Divine Providence [...] the whole community of the universe is governed by Divine Reason”²⁷ (q. 91, a.1, in c). Since time does not exist for the Divine Intellect, therefore His understanding is eternal. That is why Thomas proposes to call this law eternal law. But nobody except God and the blessed can know this law in itself²⁸ (q. 93, a.2, in c). As such, it is beyond human reason. Nevertheless “every rational creature knows it in its reflection, greater or less. For every knowledge of truth is a kind of reflection and participation of the eternal law”²⁹ (q. 93, a.2, in c). By participation in cognition of truth, man learns something about eternal law, for this law “is *the unchangeable truth*”³⁰ (q. 93, a.2, in c). So, according to the order of eternal law, all creatures participate in eternal law, because each creature has some imprint of Divine Reason. This imprint directs creatures to their proper operations and ends. This participation of eternal law through the imprint of Divine Reason in the rational creature Thomas calls natural law. In his own words, “the natural law is nothing else than the rational creature’s participation of the

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

eternal law”³¹ (q. 91, a.2, in c). Natural law in men, because of the participation of Divine Reason, reveals itself by the inclination to seek for good and shun evil³² (q. 94, a.2, in c), but first of all it directs human actions to the end³³ (q. 91, a.3, in c). Thomas says that “it is from the precepts of the natural law, as from general and indemonstrable principles, that the human reason needs to proceed to the more particular determination of certain matters. These particular determinations, devised by human reason, are called human laws, provided the other essential conditions of law be observed”³⁴ (q. 91, a.3, in c). The peculiarity of human law consists of the adaptation of universal principles to the human species and the regulation of its life. Thomas accepts the Aristotelian division of reason into speculative and practical. He maintains that speculative reason is related to reality through phantasms which assist in comprehending forms of actually existing things and in defining their quiddities³⁵ (*SCG* III, cap. XCVII [12]). Practical reason also reveals the principle, not necessarily the principle “what it is”, but the principle of acting, i.e., the end. Thomas underlines that “the practical reason, which is directed to action, goes further, and its third act is ‘to command’”³⁶ (q. 47, a.8, in c). In promulgation, law is concerned with justice, which it implements by uniting universality and particularity in a particular kind of action. But despite the light of natural reason, practical reason can err in making the decision *what should be done and what is singular and contingent*. Man possesses the universal principles, which are universal rules and measures of natural reason, but natural reason is a measure of divine wisdom but not human measure, therefore it is unnecessary “for every measure to be altogether unerring and certain, but according as it is possible in its own particular genus”³⁷ (q. 91, a.3, ad 3). Moreover, since “the law, as to its essence, resides in him that rules and measures”³⁸ (q. 91, a.6, in c), but in all creatures the law is by way of participation, therefore “the law of man, which, by Divine ordinance, is allotted to him, according to his proper natural condition, is that he should act in accordance with reason”³⁹ (q. 91, a.6, in c).

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *SCG*.

³⁶ *S. Th. I-II.*

³⁷ *S. Th. I-II.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

In order to reduce the quantity of human errors and to increase the certainty of what should be done and what should be avoided, divine law is given to men⁴⁰ (q. 91, a.4, in c). It was revealed by the Holy Scripture. According to Thomas, it was necessary for four reasons: 1) man is ordained to a supernatural end which surpasses his natural reason, 2) because of the uncertainty of human judgments, different and contradictory laws result, 3) human law could not sufficiently direct interior acts, 4) human law cannot punish or forbid all evil deeds. Because of these reasons, the special norms of Christian life and behaviour, i.e., divine law was given through the Holy Scripture in order that men participate in more noble way in divine law⁴¹ (q. 91, a.4, ad 1). Divine Law is given directly by God, therefore it is not the result of human judgment but the gift of Divine Grace⁴² (*SCG* III, cap. CXVI[1]). At the same time, Divine Law does not contradict human reason, but completes it by presenting additional rules for life and behaviour⁴³ (q. 91, a.4, ad 2).

ETHICS OF NATURAL LAW

Now, we will try to see how Thomas presents the concept of natural law, what important questions arise, and how natural law becomes moral law.

Natural law is considered by Thomas Aquinas metaphysically and epistemologically. The metaphysical aspect of natural law is presented through the principles of contradiction and finality; the epistemological aspect, i.e., the cognition of natural law is presented through the order of the natural inclinations. Thomas underlines that the principle of contradiction enables man to see the difference between being and non-being, and to recognize being and good, the latter is the end of practical reason⁴⁴ (q. 94, a.2, in c). While solving the relations between being and good, Thomas solves the relations between reason and will, for the object of reason is being and that of will is good. The transcendental concept of good is the most fundamental concept of the practical sphere, related to the first law of the practical sphere, in other

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *SCG.*

⁴³ *S. Th. I-II.*

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

words to the first and fundamental precept of natural law that “good is to be done and pursued, and evil is to be avoided”⁴⁵ (q. 94, a.2, in c). This precept is the beginning of ethics: all the rest of ethical precepts concerning *what is to be done and what is to be avoided* are based on that precept. Practical reason understands the precepts of natural law as *human good*⁴⁶ (q. 94, a.2, in c), and is able to decide how to fulfil them without recourse to evil actions. Thanks to this ability practical reason discerns moral principles, rules and duties, therefore Thomas calls the natural law “the light of natural reason”⁴⁷ (q. 91, a.2, in c). This way natural law is understood as practical reason’s innate inclination⁴⁸ (q. 94, a.1, in c), which enables reason to make moral decisions; but *synderesis*⁴⁹ is law for the human intellect, because “it is a habit containing the precepts of the natural law, which are the first principles of human actions”⁵⁰ (q. 94, a.1, ad 2). This is the main idea of natural law developed by Thomas Aquinas in question 94 of *prima secundae* of *Summa Theologiae*. Many scholars call the doctrine⁵¹ of natural law thomist ethics, for it formulates the basic principles of human behavior. Jacques Maritain says that “natural law for man is moral law, because man obeys or disobeys it freely, not necessarily, and because human behavior pertains to a particular, privileged order which is irreducible to the general order of the cosmos and tends to a final end superior to the immanent common good of the cosmos.”⁵²

Now we will consider in more detail question 94 “Of the Natural Law”. Its six articles answer the question why natural law is moral law. In the first article, entitled “Whether the Natural Law Is a Habit”, Thomas speaks about morality. In order that human actions are moral, we cannot decide from a definition of the source of virtue, which is the principle of some action⁵³ (q. 94, a.1, ad 1) and from the precepts of natural law, which being the principles of action are obtained by practical reason, as we have already mentioned, because of *synderesis*⁵⁴ (q. 94, a.1,

⁴⁵ *S. Th. I-II*.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*

⁴⁷ *Ibid*.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*.

⁴⁹ The Greek term *synteresis*, which in the works of Latin authors was modified to *synderesis*, came from Jerome’s (340-420) Commentary on the *Book of Ezekiel*.

⁵⁰ *S. Th. I-II*.

⁵¹ V. J. Bourke: *History of Ethics*, New York: Doubleday, 1968: 98.

⁵² J. Maritain: *Man and the State*, Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1957: 87.

⁵³ *S. Th. I-II*.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*.

ad 2). In the third article, entitled “Whether All Acts of Virtue Are Prescribed by the Natural Law”, Thomas discusses two statements: reason prescribes to act virtuously; to act according with reason is a natural inclination, and makes the conclusion that all virtuous acts spring from natural law. It is important to bear in mind that here Thomas is concerned not with human actions in general but with virtuous acts, i.e., with the particular species of human acts. That means that evil acts cannot spring from natural law. Thomas explains that evil acts come into being because of errors of reason, which fails to understand rightly the particular phenomena and circumstances of action. It happens “since in some the reason is perverted by passion or evil habit, or an evil disposition of nature; thus formerly, theft, although it is expressly contrary to the natural law, was not considered wrong among the Germans”⁵⁵ (q. 94, a.4, in c). There is, according to Thomas, only one possibility to escape evil doing, which is the submission of all the natural inclinations of man to the rule of right reason, or, to put it in the author’s words: “it is universally right for all men, that all their inclinations should be directed according to reason”⁵⁶ (q. 94, a.4, ad 3).

In the second article, entitled “Whether the Natural Law Contains Several Precepts, or One Only”, Thomas explains how human reason, which is the rule and measure of human acts, is able to command the inclinations. First of all, he compares speculative and practical reason and says that they differ by the formulas of their principles, but as a power they are the same. Speculative reason formulates the first speculative principle, which cannot be demonstrated, that being and non-being are incompatible, that assertion and negation of the same cannot be done together at the same time. Practical reason formulates the first normative principle that good and evil are incompatible, or that *good is to be done, and evil is to be avoided*. As we have already mentioned, this is the basis for all the rest of the precepts of practical reason. Understanding the inclinations of human nature as good, reason directs them towards corresponding actions. Therefore, the order of natural inclinations corresponds with the order of the directives of natural law. That means that man has innate orientations on how to live and behave in this world. Bearing in mind that man is a natural as well as a rational being, Thomas classifies the natural inclinations. He distinguishes three levels of them. Two of them are both natural and human, the third is properly human.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

The first natural inclination to preserve its own being is common to all substances. Therefore, “whatever is a means of preserving human life, and of warding off its obstacles, belongs to the natural law”⁵⁷ (q. 94, a.2, in c). Hence man is obliged to preserve his own existence. This statement is extremely important for contemporary discussions on suicide, capital punishment and euthanasia. The second level of natural inclination is directed to the preservation of the species “and in virtue of this inclination, those things are said to belong to the natural law, ‘which nature has thought to all animals’, such as sexual intercourse, education of offspring and so forth”⁵⁸ (q. 94, a.2, in c). To the third level of inclinations belong those which are according to reason. Thomas indicates two of them: “to know the truth about God, and to live in society: and in this respect, whatever pertains to this inclination belongs to the natural law; for instance, to shun ignorance, to avoid offending those among whom one has to live, and other such things regarding the above inclination”⁵⁹ (q. 94, a.2, in c). This level involves faith, truth and social relations.

This classification shows that first of all a human person strives for self-preservation; secondly, he seeks to live in community, especially in a family. Life in a family presupposes an understanding of the instinct of self-preservation not only for one’s own sake but also for others. This way the notion of the common good comes into being, which on the third level is understood as the good of society. The classification of inclinations shows that reason, relying on general principles, formulates more particular rules and obligations and obtains a moral significance. That means that the principle of self-preservation, which conditions social relations, has to be ordered by reason, i.e., by law, rules and demands, which have their own moral significance.

The consideration of the classification of natural inclinations and the order of precepts brings up the question: *whether the natural law can be changed?* This question is the title of the fifth article, in which Thomas underlines that natural law can be modified by the addition of divine as well as of human law in order to become more useful in perfecting human life. But this is only a way for modification, since natural law cannot be changed by means of diminution, for, as Thomas writes, “the natural law is altogether unchangeable in its first principles”⁶⁰ (q. 94, a.5,

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

in c). The addition is necessary “because it *supplies what was wanting to the natural law; or because the natural law was perverted in the hearts of some men, as to certain matters, so that they esteemed those things good which are naturally evil; which perversion stood in need of correction*”⁶¹ (q. 94, a. 5, ad 1).

In the last, the sixth, article of question 94, Thomas underlines that natural law is indestructible in its essence, i.e., “as to those general principles, the natural law, in the abstract, can nowise be blotted out from men’s hearts”⁶² (q. 94, a.6, in c). But in particular actions a sin can prevent reason from following the precepts of natural law as it is clear in the example mentioned of German thievery. This way, natural law is partially corrupted. Therefore, the compatibility of action with the demands of natural law, i.e., with the common good, is an extremely important criterion for defining its righteousness. Only those actions which meet that criterion, does Thomas call moral, and by this aspect natural law is moral law.

CONCLUSIONS

The ethics of Thomas Aquinas is developed within theological frameworks. Guiding himself by eternal law, which is a project of Divine Wisdom, Thomas creates the order of morality and law. The totality of creatures participates in the eternal law according to the predestined species and predetermined natural inclinations. As a rational animal capable of anticipating the law of action in relation to eternal law, man is distinguished from other creatures. And his participation in eternal law is called natural law. The instance of morality is conscience, which evaluates the motivations and moral quality of actions.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

DIE ETHISCHE ROLLE DER GEFÜHLE BEIM „DOKTOR DES HUMANUMS“ THOMAS VON AQUIN

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The author tries to clarify the authentic human anthropology of St. Thomas, considering the “per excessum” interpretation of Hume and the “per defectum” valuation of the human emotions in stoicism. Thomas was referred to as “Doctor Angelicus” but he is also “Doctor Humanus.” He applies the requirements of “recta ratio” and “virtus in medio” with respect to the role of human emotions, too. To the efficacy of “habitus operativus” he accepts the helping role of “disposition” as a type of inspiration. In this conception, “habitus entitativus,” as the general state of health, is connected with the emotional forces of the soul, i.e., with the “passiones.” The theological aspect of the feelings can be considered especially in relation to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. This is the teaching of Sigmund Freud, too, but his “Libido” cannot obtain the joy of soul. The spiritual joy is the result of real happiness, or as Thomas puts it, “delectatio consequitur beatitudinem.”

Die Fragestellung der Rolle der Gefühle in der Ethik kann zunächst im Spiegel der Geschichte der Philosophie und damit einiger ethischen Richtungen kurz und bündig vorgestellt werden. Dieses Thema betrifft aber auch die moraltheologische Bewertung der Gefühle. Spielen die Gefühle — bei Thomas von Aquin die „Passionen“ — überhaupt eine besondere Rolle im Bereich einer verifizierbaren Ethik? Die Antwort kann auf ersten Augenblick mit der bekannten Einführungsmethode eines Artikels in der Summa theologica des Thomas von Aquin so formuliert werden: „Videtur quod non“. Das heißt: es scheint, daß die

These „prima facie“ nicht akzeptierbar ist. Es wird aber bei Thomas die Gegenposition als „affirmatio theseos“ mit den Worten „Sed contra“ ausgesprochen (wie in einer Art der Schachspiel oder Kartenspiel), und das heißt, daß die These, die vom Autor intendiert wurde, doch gültig ist. In dieser Reflexion, im Rahmen eines heutigen „Articulus“, kann unser „Sed contra“ so formuliert werden: *Die Rolle der Gefühle darf nicht einmal in der Wissenschaft—noch weniger in der Ethik—unterschätzt und negiert werden.* Aber man muß vorsichtig sein. Keine extremen Meinungen von Excessus und Defectus! Im Sinne von Thomas gesagt: „Neque per excessum, neque per defectum.“ Die heutigen Thomas-Interpretationen beanspruchen einen zeitgemäßen Kommentar, inspiriert von Josef Pieper, wenn wir die Frage stellen: warum?¹

a. Weil eine tiefe Wahrheit ist, was von Goethe so formuliert wurde: „Nicht der Kopf denkt, sondern der Mensch.“

b. Weil nicht einmal die Spitze des menschlichen Denkens — die Intuition — ohne Gefühl zu konzipieren ist. Ein alter Forscher der menschlichen Genialität, Lange-Eichbaum, nennt die intuitiven genialen Menschen „Fühlenden“.

c. Weil die sogenannten „denkenden Maschinen“ von den denkenden Menschen unter anderen auch deswegen unterschieden werden können, weil diese Maschinen (z.B. ein Schachcomputer) nicht fühlen und nur kalte einprogrammierte „Denkfunktionen“ produzieren können. Die echte Kreativität ist aber im allgemeinen mit der inspirierenden Rolle der Gefühle verbunden.

Es ist also nicht empfehlenswert, die Gefühle mit der bekannten Geste der Stoiker vom Spielraum der menschlichen Wissenschaft und Ethik auszuschließen und zu disqualifizieren.

Kann diese Reflexion eine echte Aktualität haben? Die positive Antwort kann durch einen kurzen und skizzenhaften Rückblick auf die Geschichte der Ethik begründet werden, falls wir bei der Ethik im Rahmen der normativen Wissenschaften bleiben, wenn wir an die Grundideen der Griechen und Römer erinnern. Ausgangspunkt dafür ist die Rationalität von Sokrates, nach der es genügend wäre zu wissen, was das Gute ist.² Die Widerlegung dazu ist der viel zitierte Spruch des bekannten römischen Dichters Ovidius: „Video meliora proboque, tamen deteriora sequor.“ Das heißt: „Ich sehe was das Gute ist, doch folge ich dem Bösen.“ Es genügt also nicht, nur zu wissen, was das Gute ist.

¹ J. Pieper: *Hinführung zu Thomas von Aquin*, Freiburg: Herder, 1967.

² S.-J. Fischl: *Geschichte der Philosophie*, Graz–Wien–Köln: Styria, 1964: 57.—P. Kecskés: *A bölcsélet története*, Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1980: 94.

Der starke *Wille* ist zwar sehr wichtig, doch bedeutet er — auch mit dem *Vernunft* — nicht die seelische Ganzheit der Person. Diese zwei Grundfaktoren des menschlichen Handelns appellieren nämlich auch an die irrationalen Kräfte der Seele. Die Ganzheit des menschlichen Handelns kann also auch *durch die Gefühle* gefunden werden, und zwar kann die emotionale Schicht der Seele nur als begleitendes und bewegendes Phänomen des menschlichen Handelns — „actus humanus“ — interpretiert werden. Durch meine Gefühle kann ich spüren, wie ich mich befinde.

Es kann auch überprüft werden, wie dies besonders im Rahmen der *Pädagogik* zu erfahren ist. Das wurde durch das vergessene Prinzip der Griechen der „Kalokagathia“ formuliert. Diese Worte „kalos kai agathos“ bedeuten die *Kombination der Ethik mit der Ästhetik* in der Bildung des Menschen und postulieren, das Gute durch das Schöne zu ergänzen und unterstützen zu lassen. Das ist eine echt hellenistische Idee, deren historische Konkretisierung wurde unter anderen von Berenike II. — der Frau des Ptolemaios III. — am Anfang des Hellenismus gezeigt.³ Es wurde über sie geschrieben, daß sie schön wie eine griechische Göttin war und zugleich in ihrem Herzen vom ethisch Guten inspiriert. Sie lebte als das gute Gewissen ihres Mannes. Ihr Mann Ptolemaios III. wollte einmal ein Todesurteil während des Würfelspieles unterschreiben. Er wurde aber von seiner Frau gebeten, das nicht zu tun, weil es nicht richtig ist, wenn es sich um Leben und Tod handelt.

Die Rolle des Gefühls wurde aber schon früher z.B. von Platon anerkannt. Der große griechische Philosoph — der Lehrer des Aristoteles — bemerkte und betonte nämlich besonders die inspirierende Funktion der „Seele des Zornes“ und der Erregung — thymoeides — in Verbindung mit der Tugend der Tapferkeit, sozusagen im Rahmen der damaligen „Soldatenethik“.⁴ Doch wurde die Rolle der Gefühle in der rationalen griechischen Philosophie im allgemeinen nicht betont. Der spätere Hellenismus bedeutete aber eine bemerkenswerte Wende. Einerseits ist es wohl bekannt, daß die Stoiker die Rationalität der klassischen Schulen der griechischen Philosophie noch weiterführten und sogar mit dem Prinzip von Apatheia überbetonten.⁵ Andererseits bekamen die Gefühle bei Epikuros als eine Art seiner speziellen Lebensphi-

³ Gy. Úrögdi: *Kleopátra*, Budapest: Gondolat, 1972.

⁴ Kecskés (1980: 112).

⁵ Conf. W. Brugger: *Philosophisches Wörterbuch*, Freiburg: Herder, 1959: 307. Das markante Kennzeichen des Stoizismus ist die „negative Bewertung der menschlichen Affekte“.

losophie eine besondere Aufmerksamkeit. Nach seiner Lehre suchen die Menschen im allgemeinen das Lustvolle (hedone), d.h. was angenehm ist, und was unangenehm ist, wollen sie vermeiden. Doch ist der „Hedonismus“ in dieser Lehre nicht „vulgär“, weil sie die Verfeinerung der Gefühle durch die Kultur empfiehlt. Deshalb spielt das Gefühl in dieser ethischen Konzeption eine Hauptrolle.⁶

In der Philosophie von David Hume wurde diese Konzeption in der Aufklärung neuentdeckt und weitergeführt. Bei Hume werden das „Angenehme“ und das „Unangenehme“ als Grundkategorien des Denkens interpretiert, weil nach dieser Konzeption der Mensch durch die Gefühle auf die Welt reagiert und die Welt erfahren kann. Vernunft soll nur registrieren, was wir fühlen. Das Ethische kann so nur durch das Psychologische begründet werden. Das ethisch Gute wird in der Konzeption Humes mit dem psychologisch „Angenehmen“ vermischt und sogar identifiziert, und dementsprechend das ethisch Böse mit dem psychisch „Unangenehme“.⁷

Das Gefühl wird dadurch noch einmal als eine ethische Hauptmotivation des menschlichen Handelns gefördert. Das drückende und fast tragische Echo dieser spießbürgerlichen Philosophie des neuzeitlichen Hedonismus donnert aber auch heute in unserer globalisierten Welt, unter der Dominanz der Medien, im Wald von Plakaten und Fernsehwerbung, die immer und immer das „Lustvolle“ als Lebensphilosophie propagieren. So ist es möglich, daß ein „erwachsener“ Mensch überrascht fragt: „Wie kann das böse sein, was für mich so angenehm ist?“ Auch die Richtung der sogenannten „Non-Kognitivist“ der modernen Metaethik kann erwähnt werden. In dieser Konzeption können die „präskriptiven Sätze“ der Ethik durch die Gefühle ausgeschaltet und „deskriptiv“ formuliert werden; z.B. „Die Bomben sind entsetzlich.“⁸

Nach diesem skizzenhaften Rückblick können wir die Lehre der Gefühle des Thomas von Aquin besser verstehen und im hermeneu-

⁶ Der sog. „Hedonismus“ des Epikuros hielt das Lustgefühl—Freud nennt es „Libido“—für eine Grundmotivation des Menschen. Das wurde aber später im allgemeinen vulgarisiert, wie heute das „Süße Leben“.

⁷ Bei Hume ist das Ethische mit dem Psychologischen vermischt: Statt zu fragen, „Was soll ich tun,“ propagiert er zu suchen, „Was mir angenehm ist“; das wurden von Kant heftig kritisiert. Conf. *Treatise of Human Nature* (ungarische Übersetzung: *Értekezés az emberi természetről*, Budapest: Gondolat, 1976).

⁸ Die sog. „Non-Kognitivist“ der Metaethik akzeptieren die Reminiszenzen von Hume und versuchen, die ethischen Wertsätze in „deskriptiver Art“ formulierend zu verifizieren. Conf. Emotivismus von Ch. L. Stevenson in: *Fakten und Werte*; ungarisch: *Tények és értékek*, Budapest: Gondolat, 1981 : 159.

tischen Umkreis unserer Zeit—zu Anfang des dritten Jahrtausends—kommentieren, wie das schon früher, z.B. nicht nur in der Thomas-Interpretation von Josef Pieper, sondern auch von dem ungarischen Philosophen und Theologen Anton Schütz überzeugend und zeitgemäß getan wurde.⁹

Thomas von Aquin ist der Grossmeister der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters, der in der Kirche als „Doctor Angelicus“ benannt wurde. Er dürfte aber zugleich auch als „Doctor Humanus“, als Zeuge und „Lehrer des Humanens“ benannt werden (vgl. seine Lehre vom „actus humanus“). Das ist für eine zeitgemäße Interpretation sehr wichtig. Der bloße Rationalismus genügt für das echte humanum nicht. Seine Rationalität ist aber kein Rationalismus. Er ist also ein „rationaler Denker“, aber kein „Rationalist“. Der vollmenschliche Akt, d.h. der „actus humanus“ und damit die menschliche „Natur“, beinhaltet demnach auch die Gefühle. Aufgabe des Denkers ist also für ihn nicht die Ablehnung der Gefühle, sondern den richtigen Ort und die authentische Rolle der Gefühle im Rahmen unserer moralischen Tätigkeit zu finden.

1. Basis der Konzeption von Thomas ist die Analyse des metaphysischen Modells der menschlichen „Natur“, worunter er die innere Quelle unserer Tätigkeit versteht (d.h. die Person).¹⁰ Dieses Modell ist einfach und klar, seine Umrisse sind stabil. Die menschliche „Natur“ hat in dieser Denkstruktur unterschiedliche Fähigkeiten (potentiae). Vernunft (intellectus) ist die Fähigkeit des Verstehens, und der Wille (voluntas) ist die Fähigkeit der menschlichen Aktivität, die von der Vernunft dirigiert werden muß. Wenn der Wille die dominierende Position übernimmt—„Wille zur Macht“—, bedeutet das eine Art der geistigen „Ruhestörung“ und heißt „voluntarismus“. Wo kann aber der „Ort“ der Gefühle in diesem Modell gefunden werden? Thomas interpretiert die Rolle der Gefühle im Rahmen der „Passionen“, die diese „irrationale Schichte“ der menschlichen Person—d.h. der Natur—bilden.

2. Wie können die irrationale Kräfte der Seele sich den zwei führenden Fähigkeiten, d.h. Vernunft und Wille anpassen? Was ist ihre Funktion in der thomasischen Struktur des Handelns? Sie können die Wahl oder die Entscheidung des Willens beeinflussen und dadurch die moralische Tätigkeit des Menschen motivieren. Es genügt nur das Haupt-

⁹ A. Schütz: *Der Heilige Thomas in Auswahl; Szent Tamás szemelvényekben*, Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1943. Mit einer Würdigung des Thomas.

¹⁰ I. q. 75: *Natura hominis ex parte animae. Anima intellectiva*; q. 77: *Potentiae animae. Intellectus (q. 79) et voluntas (q. 87)*.

werk von Thomas, die *Summa theologiae* und darin seine Lehre über die *Passiones* überblicken.¹¹ Diese Lehre kombiniert zwar die griechische Philosophie (und Psychologie) mit der Lehre der Kirchenväter — Aristoteles mit Augustinus —, doch erweckt diese Lehre unsere Aufmerksamkeit besonders mit der Interpretation von den ungarischen Professor für Moraltheologie Georg Zemplén O.Cist., der in Rom bei den Dominikanern die Theologie studiert hat. Er wurde Universitätsprofessor an der Theologischen Fakultät von Budapest, und nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg war er Mitarbeiter des später berühmten ungarischen Psychotherapeuten Leopold Szondi, der sein Hauptwerk *Schicksalsanalyse I–II* in der Schweiz publizierte. Das wurde auch in einem Buch der „welteithischen Richtung“ der deutschen Moraltheologie, im *Humanum* vorgestellt.¹² In seinen Vorlesungen und Publikationen beschäftigte sich Georg Zemplén mehrmals mit der Frage der Gefühle und Instinkte im Thomismus parallel mit der sog. „Tiefenpsychologie“ von Freud, Adler, Jung und Szondi (z.B. *Charakterologie und thomasische Ethik*, Budapest, 1939). Die Psychologie und Psychotherapie von heute ist sehr reich und differenziert, wurde aber als Wissenschaft von mehreren ziemlich skeptisch beurteilt.¹³ Die Psychologie ist freilich keine Mathematik, aber sie hat doch wertvolle Ergebnisse zu bieten. Ein kurzer Rückblick genügt zu zeigen, welche interessante Ideen vom „Doctor Humanus“ schon im Mittelalter vorausgeahnt wurden.

3. Thomas von Aquin klassifiziert die Gefühle in ihren Gegensätzen besonders in „prima secundae“ seiner *Summa theologiae*. Diese Gegensätze sind: *amor–odium*, *spes–desperatio*, *delectatio–tristitia*, *audacia–timor*. Der Zorn (*ira*) ist die einzige Ausnahme ohne Gegensatz (I–II q. 46–48). Wahrscheinlich wurde Thomas von Platon beeinflusst. Was den Kontrast von „amor–odium“ betrifft, ist das auch eine Lehre der modernen Psychologie (vgl. die Ambivalenz von Liebe und Haß). „Delectatio“ und „tristitia“ zusammen mit „spes“ und „desperatio“ werden heute psychisch und psychotherapeutisch interpretiert, nämlich in der Analyse des manisch-depressiven Charakters (unter anderen in dem zitierten Werk von Leopold Szondi). Das ist aber noch keine direkte Antwort auf die Frage, welche ethische Rolle die Gefühle bei Thomas von Aquin spielen.

¹¹ Die Lehre über *Passiones in generali*: I–II q. 22–25.

¹² Conf. W. Lauers Aufsatz über die Schicksalsanalyse von Szondi in: *Humanum. Moraltheologie im Dienst des Menschen*, Düsseldorf: Pathmos Verlag, 1972: 116.

¹³ Conf. D. O. Hebb: *Textbook of Psychology*, Philadelphia – London – Toronto: W. B. Saunders, 1972; R. Bloch: *Droht uns die totale Psychiatrie?*, Olten: Walter Verlag, 1988.

4. Die Grundthese des Thomas von Aquin zum moralischen Verhältnis der Passionen ist klar und überzeugend formuliert: *Die Gefühle und irrationalen Kräfte der Seele verlangen „an sich“ noch keine moralische Bewertung*: „non est in eis [passionibus] bonum vel malum morale“; erst durch Vernunft und Willen kann das Gefühl als ethisch gut oder böse qualifiziert werden (I–II q. 24 a. 1). Durch die richtigen Vernunft („recta ratio“) und den guten Willen („bona voluntas“) können die Passionen moralisch positiv bewertet werden. Auch Lust muß durch Rationalität normiert werden. Der Zorn „an sich“ ist nur eine Passion. Der Zorn der Propheten kann aber geheiligt werden. Die „Vehemenz“ eines Aktes hängt vom Gefühl (z.B. des Hasses) ab und kann die Intensität des Handelns beeinflussen, d.h. entweder vermindern oder steigern (I–II q. 79 a. 4). Die Freude—„delectatio“—ist aber mehr die Frucht als die Norm des moralisch richtigen Handelns, und bei der Kontemplation ist es ebenso (II–II q. 180 a. 7). *Thomas bewertet die Passionen und damit die Gefühle eindeutig positiv, wenn sie die moralisch richtige Handlungsweise inspirieren*. Es ist also keine Apatheia-Lehre des Stoizismus (I–II q. 34 a. 2 Resp.).

5. Wie kann man also die Funktion der Gefühle im tomasischen Modell der „Natur“ des Menschen verstehen? Das wird im Rahmen der Habitus-Lehre möglich. Begriff „habitus operativus“ bedeutet eine spontane Fertigkeit einer geistigen-seelischen Fähigkeit—intellectus, voluntas—in der menschlichen Aktivität, die sich durch die Praxis entfaltet. Solch eine Spontaneität bekommt z.B. die Vernunft durch die dauernde geistige Tätigkeit bis der Intuition, die als eine Spitze des „habitus operativus“ verstanden werden kann (II–II q. 180 a. 3, ad 4). Diese habitualisierte Fähigkeit ist aber auf die Hilfe der „Disposition“ angewiesen, die eine intensive und zugleich durchgehende Wirkungskraft der Fähigkeit des Verstehens und Willens geben kann. Es kommt nämlich vor, daß jemand die notwendige potentielle Fertigkeit an sich hat, aber ist zufällig „indisponiert“, wie man heute sagt. Spitze der Disposition des Willens ist die Inspiration, die geistig-seelische Wirkungskraft des Menschen, entweder um Meisterwerke produzieren zu können oder der heroische menschliche Tätigkeit zu helfen. Im allgemeinen ist die Inspiration ein wichtiger Faktor und eine markante Forderung für die menschliche Genialität. Deswegen wurden die inspirierten Persönlichkeiten, die Genies der Vernunft—auch einige Heilige wie z. B. Augustinus—vom Genie-Forscher Lange-Eichbaum als „Fühlender“ bezeichnet.¹⁴ Die These des Thomas entdeckt das Wesen des

¹⁴ W. Lange-Eichbaum: *Genie, Irrsinn und Ruhm*, München: Reinhardt, 1928.

Geheimnisses, wenn er sagt: „Requiritur *inspiratio qantum ad mentis elevationem*.“ Das bedeutet: die Inspiration verstärkt das geistige Leben (II–II q. 171 a. 1. ad 4). Das gilt auch im Rahmen der Theologie, besonders was die Inspiration durch den Heiligen Geist betrifft.¹⁵ Die Inspiration ist etwa der „Schwung“ unserer mentalen Tätigkeit.

6. Es gibt aber auch eine andere Art des habitualisierten Zustandes des Menschen, nämlich dessen „entitative“ Form (*habitus entitativus*). Was für eine Rolle kann das Gefühl in Verbindung mit diesem Begriff überhaupt spielen? *Habitus entitativus* bedeutet nach Thomas die Disponierung der ganzen Person (*conf. „dispositio ad esse naturale“*, I–II q. 51). Das ist keine isolierte Fähigkeit wie der Vernunft oder der Wille, vielmehr hilft der „*habitus entitativus*“, den Begriff „*habitus*“ zu verstehen. Die übliche Frage lautet so: „Wie geht’s Dir?“ oder „Wie befindest du dich?“ Lateinisch: „*Quomodo te habes?*“ (daher das Wort „*habitus*“). Darauf kommt im allgemeinen die spontane Antwort: „Ich befinde mich gut.“ Das Wesen dieser Ausdrucksform ist *das gute Allgemeinbefinden*, was man fühlen kann, was aber zugleich auch den guten Gewissenszustand beinhaltet. Das Muster dafür ist bei Thomas der Zustand der „Gesundheit“. Wenn man sagt: „Ich bin so froh“, „Ich fühle die Freude in meinem ganzen Wesen“, kann diese Aussage im erwähnten Bild die Rolle der Gefühle manifestieren.

7. In dieser Perspektive können wir immer besser die symbolische Bedeutung des „Herzens“ verstehen. Im Hauptwerk von Thomas von Aquin, in *Summa theologica* ist auch die Lehre über die Gaben des Heiligen Geistes zu finden (I–II q. 48). Die *Weisheit* ist die Gabe Nummer eins, in der das intuitive Wissen mit der Inspiration des Herzens verbunden ist. Ein ungarischer Dominikaner P. Alexander Horváth, der auch in Rom lehrte, war für seine abstrakte Denkweise bekannt. Er versuchte den genialen Bischof von Ungarn Ottokar Prohászka besser verstehen, aber seine abstrakten Kategorien paßten auf den charismatischen Zeugen des Herzens nicht, der voll suggestiver Gefühlen predigen konnte. Doch hatte er den Schlüssel des Verstehens gefunden. Die echte theologische Kategorie des Verstehens sind die Gaben des Heiligen Geistes, die besonders in der geistigen-seelischen Aktivität und Verhaltensweise der authentisch charismatischen Persönlichkeiten zu erfahren sind. Sie sind nach Thomas etwa „Musikinstrumente“, „Gitarre“ des Geistes. Das ist mehr als die abstrakte Rationalität eines Philosophen. So konnte der gelehrte Dominikaner den tiefgreifen-

¹⁵ I–II q. 68 a. 1., II–II q. 121 a. 1.

den Satz von Thomas von Aquin und damit die Genialität von Bischof Prohászka verstehen. Schlüsselsatz: „His qui moventur per instinctum divinum non expedit consiliari per rationem humanam.“¹⁶ Es gibt also Menschen vom Geiste inspiriert, derer spontane und ausstrahlende Handlungs- und Lebensorientierung die bloßen rationalen Kräfte der Seele überwinden kann.

Zusammenfassung: Die Rolle der Gefühle in der Ethik ebenso wie in der Theologie ist nicht zu bestreiten. Es ist aber wichtig, den „Ort“ der Gefühle in der Struktur der menschlichen Person zu finden. Das thomistische Prinzip ist maßgebend: „Neque per excessum neque per defectum“ (Extreme zu vermeiden). Es gibt besonders zwei philosophische Interpretationen, die für die nüchterne und verantwortliche Denkweise nicht akzeptabel sind: die stoische Konzeption von „Apatheia“, nach der die Gefühle in der Philosophie schädlich sind und deswegen sollen sie ausgelöscht werden. Diese Idee ist die „per defectum“ Form der Konzeption. Wenn aber jemand die andere extreme Denkweise bevorzugt, die besonders von David Hume formuliert wurde — das Angenehme über alles —, können wir das als eine „per excessum“ konzipierte Interpretation der Gefühle qualifizieren. So wurde das „Angenehme“ von Hume als Hauptmotiv auch für die ethische Bewertung des Menschen propagiert. Dann könnte die Frage mit einer schockierenden Naivität vorgestellt werden: „Wie kann das ethisch gut sein, was unangenehm ist“? Das ethisch und das psychisch Gute sind nicht synonymische Begriffe. Die Lehre von Kant harmoniert in dieser Frage mit Thomas. Übrigens kommt es vor, und zwar nicht selten, daß eine Art der Pflichterfüllung unangenehm ist. Es kommt auch vor, daß, wenn man das psychisch Unangenehme vermeidet, das seelisch Unangenehme die Folge ist (das schlechte Gewissen). Das Gefühl ist kein Hauptmotiv für die ethischen Entscheidungen, sondern es hat mehr eine disponierende oder begleitende Funktion beim Handeln. Aber Goethes Idee ist authentisch: „Nicht der Kopf denkt, sondern der Mensch“. Gleichermassen könnte man sagen: „Nicht der Wille entscheidet, sondern der Mensch, der nicht nur Kopf, sondern auch Herz hat.“

Thomas von Aquin hat wahrscheinlich die Parabel vom Barmherzigen Samariter bedacht. Dieser Reisende wurde auch von seinem Herzen motiviert, aber die Schlußworte der Parabel betrafen nicht das Gefühl, sondern den Tat des Samariters: „Geh und tue des gleichen“

¹⁶ I–II q. 68 a. 1. Conf. *Enige Ideen bei Thomas von Aquin*, ungarisch: *Örök eszmék és eszmei magvak Szent Tamásnál* Budapest: Szent István társulat, 1944.

(Lk 10, 37). Dem Gefühl darf man nämlich nicht befehlen, weil „ad impossibile nemo tenetur“ („Man ist nicht zu dem verpflichtet, was unmöglich ist“). Der Tat aber darf in der Ethik ebenso wie im Recht befohlen werden, und dieser Unterschied ist sehr wesentlich. Die „irrationale“ Schicht der menschlichen Seele kann auch nach der Lehre von Sigmund Freud „sublimiert“ werden.¹⁷ So können die Gefühle ihre inspirierende Funktion wirklich erreichen. Inspiration bedeutet sublimierte nämlich „Passion“.

In der thomasischen Konzeption können wir besser verstehen, welch „sublimierende Kraft“ die Gnade bedeutet. Durch die Gaben des Heiligen Geistes kann die Irrationalität, die „Unterwelt“ der menschlichen Seele, nicht im Sinne von Freud interpretiert werden. Freud zitiert den Satz aus berühmten Epos von Vergilius als Motto seiner tiefenpsychologischen Untersuchungen: „Flectere si nequeo superos acheronta movebo“. Das heißt: wenn ich den Himmel nicht mobilisieren kann, bewege ich die Höllen. Die menschliche Irrationalität ist aber keine „Hölle“ der Seele. In der theologischen Konzeption kann diese sogenannte innere „Hölle“ — Acheron — durch die sublimierenden Kräfte der Gnade und besonders durch die Gaben des Heiligen Geistes verwandelt werden. Von der „massa damnata“ der irrationalen Kräfte kann so — symbolisch gesagt — etwa ein innerer „Himmel der Seele“ werden. Was für eine „Metamorphose“! Und das ist eine ganz logische Konklusion, wenn die Tugenden und die echte Liebe als sublimierende Kräfte interpretiert werden können, die ins „Unbewußte“, in den tiefenpsychologischen Erdboden der Seele bewurzelt werden. Das betrifft nicht nur die Moralthologie, sondern auch die Ethik und kann — von Thomas inspiriert — neue kühnen Begriffe ergeben: die „Enthüllung“¹⁸ und damit die „Verhimmlischung“ unserer inneren Welt, deren Königin die echte Freude ist, das Gefühl, die Sigmund Freud — die innere Hölle, die „Acheronta“ „bewegend“ — niemals finden konnte. Libido als „Instinkt-Befriedigung“ an sich ist nämlich noch keine Freude und wenn das von einigen Psychologen als sexuelle „Freude“ übersetzt wird, ist es die schlimmste Übersetzung. Die Seligkeit geht mit der echten Freude zusammen, wie in der *Summa theologica* so prägnant formuliert zu lesen ist: „delectatio consequitur beatitudinem“ (I–II q. 2 a. 6 resp.).

¹⁷ Conf. F. J. Sulloway: *Freud, Biologist of the Mind*, New York: Basic Books, 1983 : 218–221 (Libido); 221–243 (Sublimatio).

¹⁸ Als „Enthöllenisierung“ wäre ein ironischer Hinweis auf die „Enthellenisierung“.

AFFINITÀ E DISCORDANZE TRA S. TOMMASO E KIERKEGAARD

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The relationship between reason and faith is very delicate, and they both are elements of utmost importance for St. Thomas Aquinas but also for S. Kierkegaard. For Aquinas, man is composed of body and soul (the body is corruptible and the soul is immortal) and he affirms the individual's singularity, a conception that we can also find in Kierkegaard. We can perceive many other similarities but also a substantial difference between them; namely the fact that Kierkegaard is more tragic than St. Thomas, this is a particular difference that contains many contrasts. This interpretation may seem rash but if we go into the problem in more depth we can also hear a conversation between both the philosophers. In this conversation the time barriers are knocked down and we can see the approach of two big thinkers on similar topics.

Quando si parla di un filosofo che ha sviluppato il suo pensiero e le sue dottrine in un lontano passato, la più grande difficoltà consiste nell'accostarsi a questo pensatore come se fossimo suoi contemporanei e, in tal modo, attraversare assieme ad esso la via temporale che ci conduce fino ai nostri giorni. Se poi il filosofo in questione è S. Tommaso d'Aquino ci accorgeremo, lungo questo percorso temporale, di quante riflessioni abbia suscitato e di quante volte egli sia stato chiamato in causa, non solo nel corso della storia della filosofia.

Anch'io ho cercato di percorrere questa via temporale e, nel far ciò, mi sono soffermato, assieme all'Aquinate, di fianco ad un pensatore danese, S. Kierkegaard. L'accostamento potrebbe sembrare inizialmente

piuttosto azzardato, perlomeno anacronistico, tuttavia non è mia intenzione portare avanti una interpretazione tomistica del pensatore danese né una interpretazione kierkegaardiana dell'Aquinate.

Quel che mi propongo è di effettuare una lettura comparata di entrambi che, soffermandosi su alcuni temi, metta in evidenza le discordanze dovute ai secoli che li separano ma, d'altro canto, mostri anche inaspettate affinità. Che l'accostamento di questi due pensatori non sia così anacronistico come potrebbe sembrare lo dimostra anche l'Enciclica *Aeterni Patris*, datata 1879 (non molti anni dopo la morte di Kierkegaard), un'enciclica che ripropone, appunto, la dottrina di S. Tommaso.

Il primo riferimento cui vorrei fare un breve accenno riguarda la vita dei due pensatori: da una parte abbiamo Tommaso che, pur travagliato da drammi esistenziali, trova accordo e coerenza con se stesso, con il contesto storico del suo tempo, trascorrendo quindi una vita pressoché tranquilla e in un ambiente non tragico; dall'altra parte ritroviamo lo spirito tormentato di Kierkegaard, afflitto da tragedie familiari, in contrasto con se stesso e col mondo che lo circonda.

Questa prima precisazione è utile per delineare una differenza sostanziale tra i due filosofi, quella riguardante, appunto, la maggior tragicità kierkegaardiana, una tragicità di fondo che sospinge e dà vita alle sue riflessioni ma che, nonostante tutto, lo avvicina, in certo qual modo, al pensiero tomista.

Un motivo di incontro e di scontro tra l'orientamento dei due filosofi riguarda la riflessione sul rapporto che intercorre tra ragione e fede, un problema delicato che Tommaso affronta in maniera equilibrata. Da un lato nulla viene tolto al valore assunto dalla religione e dalla rivelazione, dall'altro si dimostra, tuttavia, che la ragione è necessaria per poter meditare sulla parola divina anzi, riprendendo le parole di Tommaso, potremmo affermare quanto sia “[...] necessario che la ragione naturale segua la fede come l'inclinazione naturale della volontà obbedisce all'impulso della carità.”¹

In tal modo l'Aquinate dà valore ed importanza alle capacità razionali: l'uomo ha in sé la possibilità di comprendere non solo se stesso e la realtà ma anche credenze religiose. Conseguenza di ciò è la fiducia che tra le conclusioni della ragione e i dati della rivelazione vi sia un certo accordo. E' questo il cosiddetto *concordismo* secondo cui ragione

¹ Frase di T. d'Aquino riportata da S. Moravia: 'Lo sviluppo dell'aristotelismo e il pensiero di Tommaso d'Aquino', in: *Filosofia 1 — Dall'antichità al Medioevo*, Firenze: Le Monnier, 1990: 555. In quest'affermazione di Tommaso si può notare un primo accostamento tra ragione e fede.

e fede verrebbero pian piano a convergere tra di loro. Compito della ragione sarà quindi non solo quello di chiarire con delle similitudini le verità della fede ma anche di controbattere le obiezioni che la offuscano dimostrando come esse siano false o indimostrabili.

Per quel che riguarda la riflessione kierkegaardiana potremmo affermare, come ci fa notare C. Fabro, che il danese “[...] si colloca tra razionalismo e fideismo.”² Non siamo quindi distanti dalla linea tomistica, la ragione viene ad assumere una certa rilevanza anche se, giunti ad un certo punto, cozza contro l’assurdità della fede e non può far altro che giungere alla seguente conclusione, ovvero “[...] comprendere che non si può (né si deve) comprendere.”³ E’ proprio questo il paradosso della fede, quello di ammettere l’incomprensibilità di ciò che la fede suggerisce, un’incomprensibilità che può essere superata solo effettuando quella sorta di *salto nel vuoto* di cui parla Kierkegaard. Simbolo dell’uomo di fede è Abramo, che lascia posto alla rassegnazione rinunciando a Isacco, da spazio alla fede credendo alla parola divina, e si getta nell’assurdo riottenendo, nell’immensità del paradosso, il “figlio della promessa.” In Kierkegaard, tuttavia, non troviamo sempre la pacificazione cui dovrebbero giungere, secondo il già accennato *concordismo* tomistico, ragione e fede: “[...] nel tempo io e Dio non possiamo parlare insieme, non abbiamo una lingua comune”⁴ afferma Kierkegaard in *Timore e Tremore*. Questa mancanza di una lingua comune non vuol dire che non vi sia comunicabilità tra uomo e Dio ma, semplicemente, che il dialogo tra me e Dio non può avvenire nel tempo bensì soltanto nell’eterno.

Anche il concetto di eternità è presente sia in Tommaso che in Kierkegaard, tuttavia i due pensatori si muovono in un ambito concettualmente diverso, Tommaso da un lato riprende la dottrina eternistica di

² La frase è estrapolata da un’intervista fatta a C. Fabro nel 1993. L’argomento dell’intervista riguardava *Fede e sapere nel pensiero di Kierkegaard*, tuttavia qua e là (quello appena citato ne è un esempio) vengono messe in luce alcune affinità tra l’orientamento del pensatore danese e quello tomistico.

³ Sono queste le parole di S. Kierkegaard citate da C. Fabro nella suddetta intervista. E’ inoltre interessante confrontare questa posizione con quella presente ne *Gli atti dell’amore* tr. it. a cura di C. Fabro, Milano: Rusconi, 1983. Qui il danese afferma: “Il mormorio della sorgente ci attira con il suo gorgogliare e quasi invita l’uomo a seguire il suo corso [...] fino alla sorgente e manifestare il suo segreto; [...] i raggi del sole invitano l’uomo a contemplare la magnificenza del mondo, ma colpiscono con la cecità il presuntuoso che osasse per curiosità scoprire l’origine della luce; [...] la fede si offre all’uomo come guida nella via della vita, ma pietrifica lo sfacciato che pretendesse comprenderla”, *ivi* p. 152.

⁴ S. Kierkegaard: *Timore e tremore*, tr. it. a cura di C. Fabro, Milano: BUR, 1998 : 56.

Aristotele, dall'altro afferma che l'atto creativo di Dio si colloca al di fuori della temporalità. Anche in tal senso ci si può richiamare al mistero divino: Dio non è evidente a priori ma lo si può dimostrare razionalmente attraverso le celebri cinque vie (movente immobile; causa prima; essere necessario; perfezione assoluta; fine ultimo). Nonostante ciò se non vi fosse rivelazione la verità divina, riprendendo le parole scritte da Tommaso nella *Summa theologiae*, sarebbe conosciuta "a paucis et per longum tempus, et cum admixtione multorum errorum" (da pochi, dopo molto tempo e con mescolanza di errori).

Il pensiero moderno era giunto alla conclusione che l'uomo aveva trionfato su Dio, la cultura aveva soppiantato la fede. Sono questi gli esiti immanentistici che avevano portato ad un radicale ateismo e, proprio nell'800, se da un lato il pensiero cristiano venne fortemente insidiato, dall'altro, forse proprio per questo motivo, vi fu una ripresa del pensiero tomista che divenne, in un certo senso, la *filosofia cristiana* per eccellenza.

Kierkegaard, che come sappiamo visse nell'800, si oppose radicalmente al dichiarato trionfo dell'uomo su Dio, non poteva accettare queste conclusioni e, di fronte al pensiero moderno, a quel pensiero che avversava il dogma, il paradosso, il mistero, egli mostrava smarrimento e disperazione. Kierkegaard amava definirsi un *pensatore cristiano* e, se è vero che parlò di un io estetico, culturale, filosofico, è anche vero che non tacque la presenza dell'io di fronte a Dio,⁵ di fronte al peccato e alla responsabilità della scelta. Questo dinamismo della ragione umana, di una ragione che non è fine a se stessa, di una ragione che vive in un rapporto di reciprocità con la fede, accomuna Kierkegaard a Tommaso e instaura tra i due una sorta di tacito dialogo.

Anche se il pensatore danese non si rifece apertamente a S. Tommaso potremmo pensare che, in fondo, portò avanti anch'egli una prova, una "via" che conducesse all'esistenza di Dio. La "via" di Kierkegaard è quella che si riferisce allo *scandalo* suscitato dalla ragione che urta contro il mistero: questo scandalo prova che vi è qualcosa che la ragione non può racchiudere, qualcosa che va oltre i limiti del pensiero e, per raggiungere questo qualcosa, bisogna affidarsi alla fede. La via della fede non ha un percorso tracciato, è una via sconosciuta, un vero e proprio salto nel vuoto. E' inoltre interessante ripercorrere brevemente i tre sta-

⁵ Cfr. S. Kierkegaard, *Gli atti dell'amore*, tr. it. a cura di C. Fabro, Milano: Rusconi, 1983. "[...] l'uomo appartiene a Dio in ogni suo pensiero, anche il più segreto, in ogni suo sentimento, anche il più occulto, in ogni suo movimento, anche il più intimo", *ivi* p. 277.

di della vita di cui parla Kierkegaard: il primo stadio è quello estetico, caratterizzato da una illimitata soggettività; il secondo è lo stadio etico, dove prende corpo la moralità umana; il terzo è quello religioso, che vede il rapporto con Dio e con Cristo. In Tommaso non sono presenti in maniera esplicita questi tre stadi ma, qualcosa di simile, la si può ritrovare nei gradi della conoscenza, nella dottrina della “disposizione” che porta all’agire morale ed infine nella distinzione tra teologia “in sé” e teologia “rivelata”.

I gradi della conoscenza li si potrebbe far corrispondere allo stadio estetico: la conoscenza ha origine dalla sensazione e presenta una prima fase sensibile ed una seconda fase in cui si considerano forme più astratte ed universali. Nella dottrina della “disposizione” si potrebbe risentire l’eco dello stadio etico: la disposizione è un qualcosa che si acquisisce ed offre all’uomo diverse possibilità di azione, quando tale azione è continuamente indirizzata verso il bene diventa *habitus morale*. Lo stadio religioso sarebbe invece rappresentato dalla concezione teologica tomista: da un lato la teologia in senso assoluto contiene proposizioni divine, dall’altro la teologia rivelata presenta il sapere limitato dei testi sacri.

Ovviamente in questi ultimi parallelismi non si può parlare di un accostamento di totale affinità tra i due pensatori in questione, è tuttavia interessante notare la presenza di piccole somiglianze che permettano una loro lettura comparata. Procedendo in questa lettura, appunto, non si può fare a meno di accennare al *libero arbitrio* di Tommaso e alla *scelta*, all’*aut-aut* kierkegaardiano che considera la libertà come decisione.

Per l’Aquinata l’uomo è libero di attuare un giudizio e di scegliere i mezzi per raggiungere un determinato fine, egli ha la possibilità di muoversi, grazie al libero arbitrio, verso la giustizia. Kierkegaard pone l’accento sulla scelta che, in fondo, è pur sempre una scelta etica: l’uomo ha la possibilità di decidere, anzi, si trova di fronte ad un *aut-aut*. In fondo la sua è una scelta obbligata ma egli è libero di indirizzare il suo discernimento e, una volta presa la decisione, si accorgerà di aver scelto l’assoluto, di aver scelto se stesso. D’altro canto l’uomo potrà cadere nella disperazione e, anche qui, non sarà disperazione per qualcosa bensì disperazione per se stesso, ovvero *malattia mortale*.

Tommaso parla invece di *peccato mortale*,⁶ un peccato che consiste nel male morale, una scelta che opera verso beni transitori che possono ben soddisfare qualche appetito ma mortificano la vita dello spirito: “Il peccato mortale — afferma Tommaso — è un voltar le spalle al bene indefettibile e il dirigersi verso un bene mutevole.”⁷

Entra qui in gioco la contrapposizione tra materia corruttibile e spirito incorruttibile, il mondo è fatto di sostanze e le sostanze possono essere spirituali (pure forme o angeli), corporeo-spirituali (l'uomo), oppure semplicemente corporee (forma).

Per Tommaso l'uomo è un *sinolo*, un composto di materia e forma, di corpo e anima. Proprio per questo motivo egli è in grado di spingere il suo pensiero oltre le cose sensibili, procedendo per analogia dalle realtà materiali a quelle immateriali e dando prova che l'anima umana non è legata ai processi di generazione e corruzione della materia. Anche in questo caso possiamo notare in Kierkegaard la distinzione dei due piani della materialità e della spiritualità.⁸ Nel pensatore danese è molto forte il riferimento allo scorrere del tempo, alla fugacità delle cose fagocitate dagli attimi e, oltre a ciò, vi è un costante riferimento al ricordo, a quel frammento di passato che genera malinconia e, nello stesso tempo, offre eternità.

Kierkegaard definisce l'uomo non solo come sintesi di anima e corpo ma anche come “[.] sintesi dell'infinito e del finito, del temporale e dell'eterno, di possibilità e necessità”:⁹ l'anima è l'eterno che irrompe nell'uomo, il corpo è il tempo che misura l'uomo. Ovviamente nascono contrasti e lotte, vengono generate sofferenze immani, dolori dovuti alla contraddittorietà e alle incongruenze di quella strana sintesi chiamata “uomo”.

⁶ Se mettessimo su un piatto della bilancia i beni materiali e sull'altro i beni spirituali ovviamente ad abbassarsi sarà il piatto dei beni materiali. Bisogna tuttavia osservare che il criterio che si prende qui in considerazione è quello della *quantità* e non della *qualità*: in altre parole, qualitativamente parlando, bisognerà dar maggiore importanza non tanto al piatto che si abbassa ma a quello che si “alza”. Il peccato mortale corrompe l'anima, la rende *pesante*, così pesante da non permettergli di innalzarsi e salire verso *realtà superiori*.

⁷ Tommaso d'Aquino: *I vizii capitali* (dalle *Questioni disputate sul male*), tr. it. a cura di U. Galeazzi, testo latino a fronte, Milano: BUR Classici, 2001: 455.

⁸ Per Kierkegaard la materia offre all'uomo un iniziale impressione di appagamento e beatitudine apparente ma la sua pesantezza, a lungo andare, porterà l'uomo sulla via dell'angoscia e della disperazione.

⁹ S. Kierkegaard: *La malattia mortale*, tr. it. a cura di M. Corssen, Milano: Mondadori, 2000: 11.

Un'altra distinzione su cui vorrei richiamare l'attenzione riguarda la contrapposizione kierkegaardiana tra *singolo* e *folla*. Per Kierkegaard la categoria del singolo regge la causa del cristianesimo, il singolo non ha un'esistenza concettuale e, nello stesso tempo, riesce ad astrarsi dalla folla informe. Nella folla tutto è indistinzione, gli uni si confondono con gli altri, la capacità di scegliere viene man mano scemando e lascia il posto ad una pseudo-scelta collettiva. Tommaso non parla in questi termini di singolarità ma concepisce la realtà come realtà individuale e, dalle sue dottrine, molti sono gli insegnamenti che si possono trarre a favore della concretezza e singolarità dell'individuo.

Come si è potuto notare le riflessioni suscitate da S. Tommaso sono innumerevoli e, senza dubbio, presentano una indiscussa attualità. L'uomo di oggi ha fatto molte conquiste... ma ha subito anche molte sconfitte, è un uomo disorientato che vorrebbe ottenere delle risposte che non arrivano.

Tornando alla domanda iniziale ci si chiede, nuovamente, per quale motivo si debba accostare Tommaso a Kierkegaard. Mi rendo conto che alcune delle analogie da me portate avanti possano risultare, talvolta, un po' arrischiate, forse poco credibili... ma quel che è certo è che Tommaso ha elaborato un pensiero affascinante, un pensiero che, per alcuni versi, ha trovato in Kierkegaard un suo tacito continuatore, e lo ha trovato in un'epoca in cui il contesto culturale avversava il pensiero cristiano. E' indiscusso il fatto che i problemi sollevati da Tommaso non contrastino con le tematiche kierkegaardiane, il mio tentativo è stato proprio quello di aprire un dialogo tra i due pensatori, un dialogo che annullasse le distanze temporali e potesse offrire, grazie all'accostamento di riflessioni perpetratesi nei secoli, delle risposte all'uomo contemporaneo.

I desideri seguono la ragione e, come afferma Tommaso, “[...] è proprio della ragione procedere all'infinito”¹⁰ ...ed oggi, tra le altre cose, ci sarebbe davvero un grande e profondo bisogno d'infinito.

¹⁰ Cfr. Tommaso d'Aquino: *Summa theologiae*, I-II, q.30, a.4, ed. a cura dei Domenicani italiani, trad. it. a fronte, Edizioni Studio Domenicano, 35 voll., Bologna 1985.

DIE THOMISTISCHE SCHOLASTIK UND DIE HUSSERLISCHE PHÄNOMENOLOGIE IN DER GEDANKENWELT VON EDITH STEIN

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Edith Stein (1891–1942) was at first a student of Edmund Husserl in Göttingen, later she became his assistant in Freiburg. According to Husserl, she had a thorough knowledge of phenomenology, and she applied it as well. Having become a Catholic and translating *De veritate* by St. Thomas Aquinas, she turned to the method of Aquinas with new interest. As a consequence, she integrates the topic of faith in the Husserlian phenomenology. She assumes faith as an epistemological source. This faith postulates its subject matter, i.e., the existence of God, because of intentionality. This way, she claims to avoid the danger of subjectivism or solipism present in the Husserlian brackets. Her interpretation of faith is twofold as well as the essence revealed in the case of Husserl. For Stein, the faith found in the transcendental sphere is also valid knowledge in everyday reality, although this knowledge by faith—and here she relates to the mystics—is also different from ordinary knowledge inasmuch as it refers to the essence, God, and the existence of God at the same time. Using the Husserlian phenomenology and the scholastics of Aquinas, Stein aims at a religious philosophical grounding in which the existence-postulate of Aquinas and the essence-postulate of Husserl are both present.

Edith Stein ist am 12. Oktober 1891 als Tochter einer orthodox-jüdischen Bürgerfamilie in Breslau geboren. Sie studierte Philosophie, Psychologie, Geschichte und Germanistik in Breslau und in Göttingen. 1915 machte sie in Philosophie, Germanistik und Geschichte Staatsexamen. Von 1916 war sie die Assistentin von Husserl. 1917 promovierte sie. Am 1. Januar 1922 ließ sie sich taufen. 1922–1932 unterrichtete sie in

dem Lyzeum und in der Lehrerausbildungsanstalt der Dominikanerinnen in Speyer. Zwischen 1928–1931 nahm sie an pädagogischen Tagungen und Kongressen auch als Vortragende teil (Wien, Salzburg, Basel, Paris, Münster, ...). Von 1932 war sie Dozentin des Deutschen Pädagogischen Instituts in Münster. Diese Stelle mußte sie 1933 wegen ihrer jüdischen Abstammung aufgeben. Noch in demselben Jahr zog sie in das Karmeliterkloster in Köln ein. 1934 trat sie dem Orden bei, 1938 feierte sie ihre ewige Profess. Vor der Verfolgung des Nationalsozialismus wurde sie in das niederländische Kloster Echt versetzt. 1942 wurde sie in das Konzentrationslager in Auschwitz interniert, wo sie am 9. August 1942 starb. Die Veröffentlichung ihrer Werke in 24 Bänden ist bei dem Herder Verlag im Gange.

Das Denken von Edith Stein wurde von zwei Philosophen, von Edmund Husserl und von Thomas von Aquin beeinflusst. In ihrer Philosophie können wir einer interessanten Verbindung der Husserlschen Phänomenologie und der thomistischen Scholastik begegnen.

Während Edith Stein zwischen 1922 und 1932 bei den Dominikanerinnen in Speyer unterrichtet, trifft sie die Philosophie von Thomas von Aquin. Stein, die die Methode der Phänomenologie gut kennt, wendet sich mit Interesse dem scholastischen Denken von Thomas zu. Sie entdeckt in der thomistischen Methodologie die konsequente, präzise und strenge Methode, die sie bei Husserl gewohnt war, und das Verwerfen des erkenntnistheoretischen Skeptizismus mit großer Freude. Wie sie bei Husserl das Anknüpfen an die Vorfahren, und den Dialog, die Diskussion mit ihnen (Descartes, Kant, Locke) sieht, so entdeckt sie das gleiche bei Thomas. „So reichen sich die echten Philosophen über alle Grenzen von Raum und Zeit die Hände. So waren Plato und Aristoteles und St. Augustin des hl. Thomas Lehrer—wohl zu beachten: nicht Aristoteles allein, auch Plato und Augustin—und es war ihm gar nicht anders möglich als in beständiger Auseinandersetzung mit ihnen zu philosophieren.“¹ Nachdem der Jesuit Erich Przywara ihr zugeredet hatte, fing sie an *De veritate* von Thomas zu übersetzen; dies führt sie dann zur religionsphilosophischen Anwendung der Phänomenologie. „Die Übertragung der *Quaestiones de veritate* war für mich ein notwendiger Weg, um in die Gedankenwelt des hl. Thomas einzudringen“²

¹ E. Stein: ‚Husserls Phänomenologie und die Philosophie des hl. Thomas v. Aquino‘, in: *Festschrift Edmund Husserl zum 70. Geburtstag gewidmet. Ergänzungsband zum Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung*, Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1929: 316.

² E. Stein: *Des hl. Thomas von Aquino Untersuchungen über die Wahrheit*, I. Teil, Louvain & Freiburg: Herder & E. Nauwelaerts, 1952: 7.

Die Übersetzung erscheint 1931–32. Edith Stein will eine Übersetzung geben, die zum Kennenlernen der ursprünglichen Gedanken von Thomas führt.³ Zum Werk verfaßte Martin Grabmann ein Geleitwort. Und der Jesuit Erich Przywara schrieb am 1931 in der *Stimmen der Zeit*:

Das ist in der Tat das Überraschende dieses Werkes, das zum erstenmal diesen allein rechten Weg einschlägt: auf der einen Seite spricht hier ein Deutsch, in dem die schlichte Klarheit des Lateins des Aquinaten fast unmittelbar hindurchschimmert; auf der anderen Seite ist nicht nur durch die reichen Anmerkungen, sondern durch die Art der Übertragung selber alles heutige lebendige Philosophie geworden. Es ist überall Thomas und nur Thomas, aber so, daß er Aug in Auge zu Husserl, Scheler und Heidegger steht. Die Terminologie der Phänomenologie, die Edith Stein als selber schaffende Philosophin beherrscht, ist nirgendwo an die Stelle der Sprache des Aquinaten getreten, aber es öffnen sich nun mühelos Türen hinüber [...] Hier liegt wohl das Wichtigste dieses bedeutenden Werkes: Der langsame Aufstieg aus den deutschen Anmerkungen zu den Grundrissen eines wirklichen „Thomas von Aquin“-Deutsch, d.h. in der Lebendigkeit heutigen Philosophierens. Edith Stein hat dem in ihrer vergleichenden Abhandlung über Thomas und Husserl bereits so etwas wie ein Programm geschrieben. Es wäre ein Segen für die deutsche katholische Philosophie, wenn sie rechtzeitig dafür hellhörig würde.⁴

Nach der Veröffentlichung der Übersetzung laden sie die französischen Dominikaner 1932 zu einer thomistischen Konferenz ein, wo sie über die Husserlsch Philosophie im Zusammenhang mit dem thomistischen Denken referiert. In *Die christliche Frau* läßt sie unter dem Titel „Die deutsche Summa“ einen Artikel über die lateinisch-deutsche *Summa Theologica* erscheinen.⁵

Sie vergleicht die Gedanken der beiden „Meister“ auch. Dies schrieb sie zuerst in der Form eines Dialogs nieder, wo Thomas und Husserl miteinander ein imaginäres Gespräch führen.⁶ Dies erschien 1929 auch in epischer Form. Hier schreibt sie:

Aber wer längere Zeit mit diesem klaren und scharfen, stillen und besonnenen Geist in seiner Welt lebt, dem wird es immer öfter begegnen, daß er in schwierigen theoretischen Fragen oder praktischen Situationen, denen er früher hilflos gegenübergestanden hätte, leicht und sicher die richtige Entscheidung findet; und wenn er sich dann — selbst überrascht —

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ T. Renata: *Edith Stein*, Freiburg: Herder, 1957: 76–77.

⁵ *Die christliche Frau*, 1934, 8–10. Heft; 1935. 1. Heft.

⁶ „Was ist Philosophie? Ein Gespräch zwischen Edmund Husserl und Thomas von Aquino“, in: E. Stein: *Erkenntnis und Glaube*, Freiburg: Herder, 1993: 19–48.

hinterher besinnt, wie es möglich wurde, so entdeckt er, daß Thomas mit irgendeiner seiner „Haarspaltereien“ die Grundlage dafür geschaffen hat.⁷

In der thomistischen Theorie hält Edith Stein den Begriff, das Moment des Glaubens für wichtig. Sie meint, dem subjektivistischen oder idealistischen Denken der Neuzeit fehle ein Element, das die Gewißheit (oder Husserls strenge Wissenschaftlichkeit) bestätigt. Der Glaube sei nach Stein nicht nur eine emotionale Reaktion, eine emotionale Abhängigkeit sondern ein wichtiger Grundstein der Erkenntnistheorie und damit gleichzeitig der geistigen Tätigkeit.

Edith Stein war mit Hilfe der Husserlschen Phänomenologie und der thomistischen Scholastik um eine religionsphilosophische Grundlegung bemüht, in der die thomistische Existenzbehauptung und die Husserlsche Wesensbehauptung gleichzeitig vorhanden sind. Für die religionsphilosophische Anwendung der Husserlschen Phänomenologie lassen sich neben Edith Stein mehrere Beispiele finden: Max Scheler (1874–1928), Karl Rahner (1904–1984), Emmanuel Lévinas (1906–1995) usw.

Mit Hilfe der Phänomenologie können mindestens drei grundlegende Wege gefunden werden, um Gottes Existenz zu begründen:

- Infolge der Phänomenologie kann Gott eine logische Notwendigkeit sein, die durch die Struktur des Erkennens begründet wird, die Intentionalität, die Korrelation können formal auch Gottes Existenz erfordern.
- Gott kann im transzendentalen Bewußtsein am Ende der Reduktionsreihe stehen. In der Reduktion kann durch das Einklammern der Eventualitäten ein Wesen gefunden werden, das mit Gott identisch sein kann.
- In Husserls späterem Alter kann die Intersubjektivität als Grund zur Annahme Gottes dienen. Hier erscheint Gott als ein Gott, der zwischen den Egos die Beziehung herstellt, und sie als ein pantheistischer Gott, der einen an den absoluten Geist bei Hegel erinnert, miteinander verbindet.

Edith Stein geht den Weg der Reduktionsreihe und wendet dabei die Phänomenologie in der Praxis an.

Eins der wichtigen Momente der Phänomenologie — als Wesenschau — ist die Reduktionsreihe, das ständige Einklammern. Das Einklammern kann im gewissen Sinne auch die Rückkehr zum Psycholo-

⁷ Stein (1929 : 324).

gismus bedeuten. Wenn die Existenz der Gegenstände und ihrer Merkmale in Klammern gesetzt werden, um das Wesentliche zu erkennen, bleibt zum Schluß in den Klammern nur das Ego, das psychische Ich. Laut Husserls Kritiker können dieses Vertiefen durch Reduktion, die Entfernung von der Welt in philosophischer Hinsicht Skeptizismus und Nihilismus bedeuten. Die Methode der Reduktionsreihe erinnert jedoch an die das Verfahren der Mystiker (Augustinus, Bernhard von Clairvaux, Meister Eckhart, u.a.)

Edith Stein, die sich entscheidet katholisch zu werden, nachdem sie die Selbstbiographie von der hl. Teresa von Avila (1515–1582) gelesen hat, sieht die Methode der Phänomenologie auch als einen Weg in Richtung Mystik.

Edith Stein neigt auch schon in der Anfangsperiode, als sie mit der Methode der Phänomenologie arbeitete, zu Fragen der Psychologie. Der erste Titel ihrer Doktorarbeit war: „Das Einfühlungsproblem in seiner historischen Entwicklung und in phänomenologischer Betrachtung“. Sie ist zum Schluß 1917 unter dem Titel „Zum Problem der Einfühlung“ erschienen.⁸ Für ihre erste Publikation in dem *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Phänomenologische Forschung* wählte sie 1922 auch ein Thema aus dem Bereich der Psychologie. Der Titel lautet: „Beiträge zur philosophischen Begründung der Psychologie und Geisteswissenschaften“.

Das Grundproblem bei Edith Stein ist die Frage zu klären, wie die Konstruktion eines Gegenstandes in der Phänomenologischen Einstellung zustande kommt.⁹ In ihren meisten Werken untersucht sie die Psychologie, die Tätigkeit der Person in phänomenologischer Einstellung.

Dieses Interesse wird nach ihrer Konversion stärker und führt sie zu der Frage nach dem Glauben als Gefühl und als Erkennen. Ihr letztes Hauptwerk, an dem sie vor ihrem Tod neun Monate lang geschrieben hat, die *Kreuzeswissenschaft*, enthält Abhandlungen über den Mystiker hl. Johannes vom Kreuz (1542–1591).

Edith Stein interessierte sich vor allem für die Problematik der Noesis, des Bewußtseinaktes, der bewußten Konstitution und der phänomenologischen Reduktion. Edith Stein gelangt zu dem Ego, das am Ende des Einklammerns zurückbleibt, und zu dessen bewußtem, psychischem Akt nicht nur als jemand, der der Methode der Phänomenolo-

⁸ S. R. Wimmer: *Vier jüdische Philosophinnen: Rosa Luxemburg, Simone Weil, Edith Stein, Hannah Arendt*, Tübingen: Attempo, 1991: 185.

⁹ S. M. Rath: ‚Die Stellung Edith Steins im Psychologismusstreit‘, in: R. L. Fetz, M. Rath & P. Schulz (Hrsg.): *Studien zur Philosophie von Edith Stein. Internationales Edith Stein Symposium, Eichstätt 1991. Phänomenologische Forschungen* 26/27, 1993: 197–225.

gie folgt, sondern als Phänomenologe, als Philosophin, die die Methode der Phänomenologie in der Praxis anwendet. In der Tiefe des Einklammers findet sie nach ihrer Konversion den Akt, das Erlebnis des Glaubens. Für sie ist in der Phänomenologie dieses In-die-Tiefe-gehen wichtig. „Die phänomenologische Methode ist ein Verfahren schärfster, in die Tiefe dringender Analyse eines gegebenen Materials.“¹⁰

Bei Husserl besteht die Möglichkeit, daß nach dem Einklammern der für das Sein und für das Bewußtsein alltäglich gegenwärtigen Kenntnisse nichts als die nicht konfrontierbare Konstruktion des Bewußtseins oder die Gefahr des Psychologismus, das eigenartige Eigenerlebnis des Ego, übrigbleibt. Das kann Husserl-Nachfolger an das Erlebnis der gläubigen Mystiker erinnern. Von hier aus geht Edith Stein aus, von der Phänomenologie in Richtung Religionsphilosophie, und wendet dabei den Begriff des Glaubens an, den sie bei Thomas von Aquin entdeckt hatte. Stein findet in der mystischen Tiefe der „Klammern“ den Glauben als Erlebnis, als Konstitution und als Konstituierenden, das heißt: als erkenntnistheoretische Quelle. Für sie ist der Glaube Quelle der Wesensschau, der Wahrheit, weil sie ihn am Ende des Einklammernprozesses „gefunden hat“. „Der Glaube verdient den Namen Erkenntnis, sofern er den Besitz der Wahrheit verleiht.“¹¹

Als jemand, die die Methode der Phänomenologie angewandt hatte, wurde Edith Stein durch Thomas von Aquin veranlaßt, durch die Tiefe der Reduktion den Glauben zu finden, das heißt, die Phänomenologie als eine Methode der Religionsphilosophie weiter zu überdenken. Edith Stein sieht Parallelen im Prozeß des Erkennens bei Thomas und Husserl.

Was bei Thomas „*conversio ad phantasmata*“, Zuwenden zu den durch Erfahrung entstandenen Vorstellungen ist—was der Erfahrung so primäre Bedeutung zuschreibt—, ist nach Edith Stein auch bei Husserl zu finden: „zu den Sachen selbst,“ sagt Husserl, das heißt zurück zu den Gegenständen, besser gesagt zu der Konstitution der Gegenstände im Bewußtsein. Hier handelt es sich also auch um die mittelbare Rückkehr zu den Gegenständen. Rückkehr nicht zu den konkreten Gegenständen (kein Empirismus), sondern zum intentionalen und dadurch mit den Gegenständen verknüpften Erlebnis des Bewußtseins.

Edith Stein meint, „*phantasmata*“ bei Thomas bedeute auch nicht den Gegenstand selbst, sondern die Vorstellung über den Gegenstand. In diesem Sinne sind beide Methoden Prozesse des Bewußtseins, die

¹⁰ Stein (1929 : 330).

¹¹ E. Stein: *Erkenntnis und Glaube*, Freiburg: Herder, 1993 : 49.

bei Thomas das „Intelligibilis“, bei Husserl das Wesentliche erfassen wollen. Obwohl das Erkennen bei Thomas induktiven Charakter hat, kommt auch bei ihm das induktive Erkennen vor, das aus dem Inneren der Gegenstände das „Intelligibilis“ (intus legere) entnimmt. Die primären Prinzipien bei Thomas, die zum Erkennen nötig sind (intellectus principiorum), sind quasi habituell schon vor der Erfahrung in uns, er geht jedoch weiter in Richtung empirisches, induktives Erkennen. Auch Husserl meint, wir sehen die Wahrheit des Wesens, den logischen Bestand unmittelbar ein, und diese sind in dem Prozeß des weiteren Erkennens als Axiome gegenwärtig, obwohl Husserl dieses weitere Erlernen seinem Charakter nach nicht für induktiv hält. Es kann jedoch nicht gesagt werden, daß die Husserlsche Wesensschau keine intellektuelle Tätigkeit erhalte. Er hielt seine Methode für ein der Scholastik ähnliches, präzises Verfahren.

Interessant ist zu bemerken, daß beide Philosophen sich vor der Gefahr des Subjektivismus hüten, deshalb gilt für beide, daß die Erkenntnis neben der aktiven Tätigkeit des Verstandes (intellectus), beziehungsweise des Bewußtseins nicht zustandekommt, sondern sie aufgenommen, beziehungsweise eingesehen wird. Auch Edith Stein ist der Meinung: „Erkenntnis ist geistiges Erfassen eines Gegenstandes. Streng wörtlich genommen: Erfassen von etwas, was vorher nicht erfaßt war.“¹²

In diesem Moment sieht Edith Stein auch die Existenz Gottes angenommen, weil wenn Gott in dem Erlebnis des Bewußtseins gegenwärtig ist, dann wird — da dieses Erlebnis das geistige Wahrnehmen eines Gegenstandes ist — auch die Existenz dieses Gegenstandes (die Existenz Gottes) angenommen. „In jeder Erkenntnis ist der Gegenstand als ein Seiendes gegeben.“¹³ Nach ihr ist der Husserlsche Ansatz „ich bin“, aus der thomistischen „reditio completa“ abgeleitet, auch in dem von ihm beschriebenen Erkenntnisprozeß vorhanden. „So oft der Menscheng Geist bei seinem Forschen nach der Wahrheit nach einem unbezweifelbar gewissen Ausgangspunkt gesucht hat, ist er auf dieses unentrinnbar Nahe gestoßen: die Tatsache des eigenen Seins.“¹⁴ Andere Ursachen dafür, daß Edith Stein nach Parallelitäten sucht, gibt es bestimmt. Sie blieb durchgehends eine Phänomenologin, war Husserl als ihrem verehrten Meister treu zugetan und hielt an der Methode fest. Nach ihrer Konversion zum Katholizismus, in dem sie die thomistischen Gedanken kennengelernt und verstanden hatte, wollte sie

¹² Stein (1993: 50).

¹³ Stein (1993: 49).

¹⁴ E. Stein: *Endliches und ewiges Sein*, Freiburg: Herder, 1950: 34–35.

auch diesen treu bleiben. Da sie beide Methoden verstand und ihre Schwächen sah, meinte sie, wenn die Methoden nebeneinander gestellt werden, können diese Unvollkommenheiten der Methoden behoben werden.

Edith Stein hält die folgenden Parallelitäten bei Thomas von Aquin und Husserl für wichtig:

- mittelbares Anknüpfen an die Erfahrung: „*conversio ad phantasmata*“ — „zu den Sachen selbst“;
- die Rolle der Intuition: „*intellectus principiorum*“ (Prinzipien des Verstandes) — „das Erkennen der Wesenswahrheit“;
- die Annahme des Ichs: das Erkennen der eigenen Existenz in „*reditio completa*“ — der Ansatz „ich bin“;
- das Erkennen der inneren Zusammenhänge von den Gegenständen: „*intus legere*“ mit Abstraktion der inneren Ration der Gegenstände — „Wesensschau“ befreit von der Eventualität, das Schauen des wahren, inneren Wesens der Gegenstände;
- der letzten Endes passive Charakter des Erkennens: die Kenntnis stammt aus dem Gegenstand, das Erkennen des „intelligiblen“ Inhaltes von dem Gegenstand durch „Abstraktion“ — in der Wesensschau wird das Wesentliche nicht zustande gebracht, sondern es wird als das Ergebnis des Einklammers gefunden.

So tritt Edith Stein mit der Anwendung der Phänomenologie — die nach ihrer Meinung an manchen Punkten mit der thomistischen Methode Ähnlichkeiten aufweist — auf das Gebiet der Religionsphilosophie hinüber. Sie ergänzt die Husserlsche Phänomenologie aufgrund der Ansichten von Thomas wie folgt. In der Tiefe der Husserlschen Reduktion nimmt sie den Glauben als erkenntnistheoretische Quelle an. Dies wiederum nimmt wegen der Intentionalität des Glaubens die Existenz Gottes an. So kann die Gefahr des Subjektivismus und des Solipsismus in den Husserlschen Klammern vermieden werden, da man mit Hilfe des Glaubens quasi in die Welt des Alltags zurückkehrt. Die Deutung des in der Tiefe der Reduktion, in der transzendentalen Sphäre gefundenen Glaubens ist auch bei ihr doppelt, wie die des erschlossenen Wesens bei Husserl es ist. Nach Husserl hat das in der transzendentalen Sphäre gewonnene Wissen auch in der natürlichen Einstellung seine Geltung, aber dieses Wissen unterscheidet sich von dem alltäglichen Wissen, da dies wegen der Reduktion von den eventuellen Momenten frei ist.

Der in der transzendentalen Sphäre gefundene Glaube ist bei Edith Stein auch ein im Alltag gültiges Wissen, aber dieses Wissen durch den

Glauben—hier schließt sie sich den Mystikern an—unterscheidet sich vom alltäglichen Wissen, weil es sich auf das Wesentliche—auf Gott—bezieht. Nach ihr unterscheiden sich der thomistische—vom „intellectus agens“ aus dem Gegenstand erarbeitete—Begriff (der gleichzeitig die Wahrheit und das Wesen ist) und das Wesen an und für sich (das Wesen nach Husserl), aber das Wesentliche nach Thomas (der Begriff) ist eher mit dem existierenden Gegenstand—d.h. mit der Existenz—verbunden als mit dem Husserlschen Wesen, und so können eventuelle Irrtümer entdeckt werden. Der Irrtum oder die Richtigkeit des durch die Phänomenologie entdeckten Wesens stellt sich nicht heraus, weil die Suche nach dem Wesen hier nicht der Existenzforschung, Ontologie gleich wird. „Diesem Fehlgreifen des urteilenden Verstandes entgeht die Phänomenologie, indem sie auf die Anwendung der Wesenswahrheiten auf die Wirklichkeit verzichtet und die Wesensaussagen auf den Bereich der Spezies selbst beschränkt, sie nur als ‚noematische‘, nicht als ontologische, faßt.“¹⁵

Edith Stein sieht auch als wichtigstes Ergebnis der Phänomenologie das Erschließen des Wesens. Der in der Tiefe der phänomenologischen Methode entdeckte Glaube impliziert den Gegenstand des Glaubens, der bei ihr das „Wesen“ ist. Da der in der Tiefe der Suche nach dem Wesen liegende Glaube als Wesen wegen seiner Intentionalität seinen Gegenstand bedingt (nicht als einen alltäglichen Gegenstand, sondern als einen in der transzendentalen Sphäre entstandenen, transzendentalen Gegenstand), verfügt dieser Gegenstand auch über den Charakter des Wesens.

So wird das Wesen nach Stein—doppelt: als transzendentaler Gott und als im Alltag existierender Gott—Gott des Christentums.

Edith Stein tritt aus dem Prozeß der Wesenssuche in das Gebiet der Existenzsuche, der Existenzbehauptung ein—das wegen der Existenz von Jesus Christus für das Christentum unumgänglich ist.

Es kann also gesagt werden, daß die Phänomenologin Edith Stein die Wesenssuche der Phänomenologie als Methode in Richtung Ontologie erweitert.

¹⁵ Stein (1929: 337).

SAN TOMMASO D'AQUINO DOPO (E PRIMA DI)
MARTIN HEIDEGGER

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Modern humanism, in the form of Marxism and existentialism, is humanism without God where the present-day man has lost his transcendental sources. These novel, “post-modern” philosophies have created a new mythology, i.e., the myth of existence (*Sein*) and ontology. In the 20th century, ontology is no more the science of the existent but that of the existence. According to Heidegger, all previous philosophy forgot about existence, beclouded being. The present essay shows that the accusation of forgetting about being is valid exactly for the new, fashionable philosophies. With regard to Christian tradition, and thus Thomism—neo-Thomism, ontology had indeed been the science of the existent (*ens*). However, an in-depth analysis shows that existence (*esse*) and not the existent stands at the core of St. Thomas’s teachings. Hence the accusation of Heidegger is not valid for Aquinas. St. Thomas himself is going to be our guide in this treatise. We might as well say that Aquinas himself answers the problems of existence of present-day man. One can build an undistorted humanism upon this ontology, which avoids the one-sidedness and immanen-tism of both materialism and subjectivism. The Christian humanism of the man open to existence, to God, is the unspoilt heritage of St. Thomas.

Nel 1927 appare l’opera del filosofo tedesco *Martin Heidegger* (1884–1976) intitolata *Sein und Zeit* (‘Essere e Tempo’): questo scritto—pos-siamo affermarlo con certezza—ha rivoluzionato la riflessione filoso-fica. Come lo stesso Heidegger aveva mostrato nel precedente *Was ist Metaphysik?* (‘Cos’è la metafisica?’) ed ora sarebbe stato palese nell’o-pera appena ricordata, in sostanza tutte le filosofie a lui precedenti si erano occupate piuttosto dell’ente (*das Seiende*) o dell’essenza degli enti

(*die Seiendheit, das Wesen*), non dell'essere (*Sein*), in questa maniera reificando l'essere, degradandolo a oggetto. L'accusa principale mossa alle precedenti filosofie, ivi inclusa quella di San Tommaso d'Aquino,¹ era dunque di aver trascurato l'essere.

Ma ci sembra legittimo, chiederci se questa critica — giusta — si riferisca al *tomismo a noi contemporaneo* oppure a San Tommaso stesso. Nel mio saggio vorrei dimostrare — dal punto di vista di una sola prospettiva problematica, pure notevole, quella della *ontologia e metafisica* — come la critica cui sopra ho accennato non sia tanto da addebitare a San Tommaso, quanto piuttosto al tomismo scolastico, che effettivamente ha distorto i caratteri dell'eredità filosofica dell'Aquinate; proprio il fatto di confrontarci oggi con il problema dell'essere può portare ad una rivalutazione di questa eredità, ovvero ad un *San Tommaso postheideggeriano*.

Potrei dunque dire che voglio giungere ad una revisione ed aggiornamento di quel processo che potremmo intitolare *San Tommaso vs tomisti*, e perciò lo stesso Tommaso sarà nostra guida nel procedimento di superamento del tomismo falsificato (almeno in questo ambito di riflessione, in quanto la valutazione delle altre questioni del tomismo va oltre le intenzioni e le dimensioni di questa analisi). Vorrei sottolineare che questo insegnamento tomista nella sua nuova interpretazione lo chiamerò *neotomismo* ovvero “San Tommaso postheideggeriano”, proprio al fine di sottolineare la distanza dal tomismo scolastico.

Un'analisi dei testi più efficace e profonda potrà dimostrare quanto l'accusa d'oblio dell'essere sia non tanto da addebitare all'ontologia di San Tommaso, ma piuttosto a quelle nuove correnti che si sono affermate utilizzando l'essere come slogan e dicendosi i paladini, in realtà occupandosi solo di una parte di esso (dell'esistenza umana, ovvero della materia, dell'essere oggettivo), dimenticando nel frattempo l'essere vero e proprio, l'interezza dell'essere e la sua fonte.

L'ONTOLOGIA DEL TOMISMO SCOLASTICO: OPPURE SOLA METAFISICA?

Dapprima vorrei eliminare sul nascere tragiche incomprensioni: del fatto che in Heidegger ed in altre testimonianze del nostro secolo si sia formata la convinzione che San Tommaso si sia occupato dell'ente e non dell'essere, è colpevole lo stesso *tomismo tradizionale*. Attraverso alcuni

¹ M. Heidegger: *Sein und Zeit*, Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1927: 2; 55–87.

esempi vorrei ora mostrare gli equivoci cui è andata incontro la neoscolastica (il tomismo scolastico): caratteristico esponente della neoscolastica fiorentina nella prima metà del secolo fu *J. Donat*. Nel suo pensiero l'ontologia — accanto a cosmologia, psicologia e teodicea — è quella parte centrale della metafisica come prima filosofia (*metaphysica generalis*) che si occupa dichiaratamente dell'*ente* (*ens*). L'identificazione di ontologia e di *ens* è qui tanto forte, che Donat utilizza per questa scienza direttamente la definizione di metafisica di Aristotele: “*Est autem scientia quaedam, quae speculatur ens in quantum ens et quae huic insunt secundum se*” (“è quella scienza che esamina l'ente in quanto ente, e quanto vi è naturalmente compreso”).²

Donat non prende neanche in considerazione tutti quei passi, nei quali San Tommaso parla dell'*essere stesso* (*esse ipsum*): ricorda appena che *ens* ed *esse* sono in rapporto reciproco come il concreto all'astratto, e che nei nostri giorni i due concetti vengono spesso confusi, l'*ens* di San Tommaso con *Sein, être, etc.*, nei diversi modi di tradurlo nelle lingue moderne.

Per questo Donat (e gli scolastici) si sofferma piuttosto sulla parola *ens* che, sebbene sia participio del verbo *esse*, nel suo uso filosofico non è tanto aggettivo, quanto piuttosto sostantivo, identico al nome ente nel senso di ciò che esiste, come anche il participio *vivens*, vivente è piuttosto nome, e di qui anche i sinonimi di *ens*: esistente, qualcosa (*aliquid*), cosa (*res*), entità (*entitas*), realtà (*realitas*).³

In Donat possiamo poi cogliere quell'altro equivoco — ed accusa — secondo cui il tomismo avrebbe identificato l'essere con l'*esistenza*, fino a degradarla a componente dell'ente (*ens* come *essentia et existentia*). Donat procede in questo modo: il concetto di *esse* ritorna nel capitolo “*Essentia et existentia*”, da cui viene fuori che l'autore davvero identifica *esse* con *existentia*; qui da qualche parte si trova il punto di partenza della riduzione all'*ens* dell'ontologia — ed insieme punto di partenza della trasformazione, incomprensione, addirittura, diciamo pure, della *falsificazione* della ontologia tomista originale — se Donat stesso riconosce che l'Aquiniate non scrive espressamente di questo da nessuna parte, mentre quei passi nei quali parla dell'identità in Dio di *esse* ed *essentia*, identità non valida nelle creature, vengono utilizzati per provare

² J. Donat: *Ontologia*, Roma: Oeniponti, 1953: 3; cf. *Met.* III 1, 1003 a. 21.

³ Nell'uso della parola da parte della tomistica ungherese tra le possibili traduzioni di *ens* figurano *lény, létező, való, lévő*, persino l'arcaismo *levente* ed i sinonimi di *esse*, quali *lét, levés, létezés, lenni*.

l'identità di *esse* ed *existentia*. Per avvallare la sua tesi cita gli scritti del cinquecentesco Dominicus Soto.⁴

Uno dei più celebri tomisti del secolo passato, *Jacques Maritain*, ha un approccio simile al problema. La sua ontologia parla dell'*ens*: nonostante lo traduca spesso con *être*, e nella traduzione ungherese della sua opera *Eléments de Philosophie, Introduction générale à la Philosophie* venga invece spesso usata la parola *lét* (essere),⁵ dalla determinazione concettuale appare chiaro come si parli dell'ente; infatti egli ne mostra due componenti (essentia ed existentia), e poi nella divisione concettuale parla di Dio come di "ens a se" (sebbene il traduttore lo restituisca come *teremtetlen Lét*, Essere non creato), infine sulla linea dell'essere creato (il vero ente!) elenca l'assoluto ed i suoi annessi.

Sulle stesse impronte si è condotto anche il tomismo ungherese: il più noto tomista ungherese della prima metà del secolo passato, *Antal Schütz*, nella sua opera intitolata *Aquinó Szent Tamás szemelvények* (Braniscielti dall'opera di San Tommaso d'Aquino), anche nelle parti che si occupano dell'essere di Dio traduce l'essere (*esse*) con *létezés*, esistenza. Il testo estrapolato dalla *Summa* I q. 3. a. 4. (Oportet igitur quod illud cuius esse est aliud ab essentia sua, habeat esse causatum ab alio. Hoc autem non potest dici de Deo: quia Deum dicimus esse primam causam efficientem. Impossibile est ergo quod in Deo sit aliud esse et aliud eius essentia) viene tradotto in questa maniera: "Ne consegua dunque che quanto ha esistenza altra dalla propria essenza, ha esistenza causata da altro. Questo non si può però dire di Dio, che stabiliamo come prima causa di esistenza. Per questo è impossibile che in Dio altro sia l'esistenza ed altro l'essenza"; mentre la traduzione corretta dovrebbe essere (e ci limitiamo alla fine del passo): "è impossibile che in Dio l'essere sia altro rispetto alla sua essenza". San Tommaso definisce questo positivamente, più in là, dicendo che "Sua essentia igitur est suum esse" ("L'essenza (di Dio) è dunque il suo essere"), così da dichiarare davvero il *fondamento del concetto di essere*, non l'analisi dei componenti interni dell'ente!⁶

⁴ S. Thomas [...] saepe hanc construit differentiam inter Deum et creaturas, quod in solo Deo esse et existentia sit de quidditate et essentia sua, quia, cum sit prima causa, si de se non haberet esse, nullo modo posset ab alio habere. (*I praedic.* q. 1.)

⁵ J. Maritain: *A filozófia alapelemei* [*Gli elementi di base della filosofia*], Budapest: Szent István Társulat, 1983 : 410 e segg.

⁶ Con questo non intendo affermare che entro l'ente (creato) non possiamo parlare di aspetti di essenza e esistenza, ma desidero soltanto dimostrare come il concetto di essere di San Tommaso non possa essere semplicemente identificato con il concetto di *existentia*, essendo assai più comprensivo e profondo nel contenuto, che si connette intimamente con la questione di Dio.

La neoscolastica ha in ogni modo fornito una base a che la riflessione moderna potesse vedere nella metafisica tomista la filosofia dell'ente (e considerarla metafisica, non ontologia, nel senso heideggeriano della parola). Eppure, come appare già dalle citazioni finora riportate, e come più avanti verificheremo ancora meglio, il vero insegnamento dell'Aquinate non ha interessato "metafisicamente" questa questione, non ha ridotto l'ambito all'esistente ed ai suoi componenti interni. Siamo dunque in presenza di uno dei più tragici *fraintendimenti* della storia del pensiero filosofico.

La neoscolastica ha poi portato tutto questo al suo massimo ponendo in primo piano l'essenza all'interno dell'ente, così che vi possiamo facilmente assegnare la marca di *essenzialismo*, come poi è successo effettivamente. Poiché nella storia del pensiero è ininterrotto il gioco di effetto e controeffetto, potremo anche osservarlo come se l'esistenzialismo e la filosofia dell'esistenza siano in qualche modo negazione di questo genere di primato dell'essenza. Come dice espressamente lo stesso Sartre, "esiste un essere per il quale l'esistenza precede l'essenza: esso è l'uomo."⁷ Sarà giusto procedere in maniera da non porre Heidegger sulla linea esistenzialista, in quanto egli in realtà non voleva parlare semplicemente e soltanto dell'ente—come componente del Seiende—ma dell'essere stesso. In questo modo la sua critica è appropriatamente valida anche per le diverse forme di filosofia dell'esistenza, in quanto esse—in base all'essenzialismo—si pongono questioni "metafisiche": la questione dell'esistenza dell'ente (e più precisamente dell'uomo come ente). Ma di questo ci occuperemo più dettagliatamente nel sesto capitolo di questo scritto.

Torniamo adesso alla concezione della neoscolastica: la critica heideggeriana colpì indubbiamente a sorpresa il tomismo fiorentino durante la prima metà del secolo passato, fiorentino proprio ed in special modo grazie all'enciclica Aeterni Patris di Leone XIII, che annunciava la rinascita del tomismo.⁸ La nuova scolastica, sulla scorta di Heidegger ma anche dell'influenza degli esistenzialisti, cominciò a rivalutare l'insegnamento di San Tommaso, cercando in esso una risposta alla "nuova ondata" del secolo, servendosi in un primo tempo proprio di tratti "esistenzialisti". Come abbiamo già ricordato, gli ungheresi Pál Kecskés e György Zemplén cominciarono a scoprire già subito dopo la seconda guerra mondiale il concetto di esistenza, mentre un processo simile iniziava

⁷ J. P. Sartre: *L'Être et le Néant*, Paris: Cerf, 1965 : 29.

⁸ 'L'enciclica Aeterni Patris nell'arco di un secolo', *Studi Tomistici* 10, 1981.

in Occidente, come anche nelle università cattoliche.⁹ Infine, si parlò del prolungamento dell'aspetto estesosi nei precedenti: sempre più numerosi furono quelli che affermavano il ruolo fondamentale dell'essere in San Tommaso, ma l'analisi si inchiodava sulla constatazione che l'essere altro non è che aspetto dell'esistenza, il suo atto, l'*actus essendi* (nell'uso del genitivo del gerundio del verbo esse). Leo J. Elders valuta i concetti dei suoi predecessori come Étienne Gilson o Cornelio Fabro, nel senso in cui pone *in rerum natura* (nella natura delle cose) l'aspetto dell'esistenza, perché questo è l'aspetto che spinge l'essenza delle cose nell'essere.¹⁰ Tutto questo resta tipicamente una interpretazione metafisica.

Pian piano iniziava a diventare chiaro, agli occhi dei ricercatori, che presso San Tommaso l'essere, l'*esse* non si identifica con l'esistenza, ma che è fonte sia dell'*ens* che dell'*existentia*, ovvero che la vera pietra angolare della sua costruzione di pensiero è l'*esse*, motivo per cui il suo è non un sistema metafisico, bensì ontologico.

LA DOTTRINA DI TOMMASO SULL'ENTE: L'ENS COME PARTECIPAZIONE DELL'ESSERE

Secondo analisi approfondita in Tommaso l'*ens* non è il verbo ultimo, ma è soltanto una potenza, una *partecipazione dall'essere* come atto. Vediamo di nuovo i testi originali di Tommaso.

1. "Ens sumitur ab actu essendi, sed res sumitur a quidditate."¹¹ ("L'ente proviene dall'atto di esistenza, mentre la cosa dalla reità.")
2. "Ens imponitur ab ipso actu essendi."¹² ("L'ente si impone per lo stesso atto di essere.")

Emerge chiaramente, inoltre, come la fonte dell'*ens* sia effettivamente non semplicemente l'*actus essendi* nel senso dell'*existentia*, bensì il concetto che tutto sintetizza, primario di *esse*:

3. "Ens imponitur ab ipso esse."¹³ ("L'ente è imposto dallo stesso essere.")

⁹ *Sapientia Aquinatis. Communicationes IV Congressus Thomistici Internationalis*, Romae, 1955 (due vol.).

¹⁰ L. Elders: 'La connaissance de l'être', in: *L'enciclica Aeterni Patris nell'arco di un secolo (Studi Tomistici 10)*, 1981: 285.

¹¹ *Sent.* 1, d. 8, q. 1, 1, c, d. 25, 4, c ad 1, 2, d. 37, q. 1, 1, c, d. 25, 4, c ad 1, 2, d. 37, q. 1, 1, c, *S.c.G.* 1, cap. 25, *De veritate* q. 1, q. 1, 1, c.

¹² *Sent.*, dist. VIII, q. 1, a. 1; *De veritate* q. 1, a. 1.

¹³ *Comm. Met.*, IV, 1, 2, 533 e 556–558; *S.c.G.* I. ch. 25.

Il contenuto intimo dell'*esse* è qui lo stesso *est*, non nella sua accezione logica (in quanto verbo ausiliario), ma piuttosto nel contenuto vero, ontologico della parola (=realtà):

4. "Nihil habet actualitatem, nisi quantum est."¹⁴ ("Niente ha attualità, se non in quanto è.")

Il *rapporto tra ens ed esse* si può determinare con il fatto che gli esistenti sono soltanto frammenti dell'essere, particelle determinate di esso (tesi n. 44). Tommaso indica in questa maniera (per esprimerci modernamente) il campo di dominio della metafisica e dell'ontologia: l'*ens* è solo in parte *esse* (tesi n. 45), infine solo partecipazione (tesi n. 46), essere partecipato (tesi n. 47):

5. "Omne ens creatum est in aliquo genere determinatum."¹⁵ ("Ogni ente creato è determinato in un certo modo.")
 6. "Omnis creatura plus habet de non esse quam de esse, quia de non esse habet infinite, de esse habet finite."¹⁶ ("Ogni creatura ha più del non-essere che dell'essere, in quanto che del non-essere ne ha in misura infinita, dell'essere in misura finita.")
 7. "Omnes res quae existunt participant de esse."¹⁷ ("Tutte le cose che esistono partecipano dell'essere.")
 8. "Illud quod habet et esse et non esse, est ens per participationem."¹⁸ ("Quanto ha essere, ed insieme non essere, è esistente per partecipazione.")

Quest'ultima dichiarazione la troviamo immediatamente in apertura, nel capitolo terzo della prima parte della *Summa*: per l'Aquinate è dunque primissimo assioma, che gli enti siano soltanto partecipazioni. In particolare, l'essere è incapace di avere dell'abbondanza totale di essere, che pure è in sé infinito¹⁹ — e questo costituisce la base della sua celebre riflessione su Dio. Per questo possiamo dire che la profondità intima dell'essere superi infinitamente l'ente (finito).

La *partecipazione* (*methexis*, *participatio*), categoria non aristotelica ma platonica, coglie anche la propria e adatta forma grammaticale, appunto *ens* come *participio presente* del verbo *sum*. Tra gli altri, Vittorio Possenti ha richiamato l'attenzione sul fatto che lo stesso participio de-

¹⁴ *S. Th.* I q. 4. a. 1 ad 3.

¹⁵ *Opusc.* 42.

¹⁶ *De veritate* q. 2, 3 ad 16.

¹⁷ In evang. Joan., Prol., n. 5.

¹⁸ *S. Th.* I q. 3.

¹⁹ *Ibidem* I, 43

rivi dalla locuzione *partem capit*, allo stesso modo della partecipazione. La forma participiale (*ens* ovvero ciò che è) esprime dunque come l'ente partecipi dell'essere.²⁰ Quanto affermato a proposito dell'*ens* può essere a giusto diritto inteso come *a proposito dell'essere*.

Viene sottolineato anche da Luigi Bogliolo che: "L'ente in questo saggio è inteso in senso forte, cioè come *participio presente* del verbo essere, atto di ogni atto, perfezione di ogni perfezione che rende attuale, esistente tutto ciò che esiste. L'ente così inteso coinvolge, necessariamente, l'essere realizzato secondo una determinata misura o essenza. Le parole esistere ed esistente si riferiscono sempre all'ente concretamente attuato dall'atto primo che è appunto l'essere."²¹ La forma participiale — forma aggettivale del verbo, ma diremo piuttosto semplicemente l'aggettivale, anzi il nominale — (*ens, ente, étant, Seiend, being*) si riferisce inequivocabilmente alla forma infinitiva (*esse, essere, être, Sein, to be*) ed alla forma verbale (*est, è, est, ist, is*).

Non possiamo poi continuare a considerare quanto accettato dal tomismo scolastico, secondo cui si tratterebbe soltanto di un ausiliario logico, così che nel giudizio, dunque, il soggetto sarebbe l'essenziale e l'*ens* ne avallerebbe il primato. Come già mostrato da J. B. Lotz, nel giudizio esprimiamo il fatto che qualcosa (la cosa concreta, l'ente, il soggetto) "è", "sta",²² partecipa dell'essere. La primissima proposizione del giudizio, dunque, si dirige verso l'essere, la forza del giudizio *trova nutrimento nell'essere* (compreso nell'ente concreto). Dappertutto *l'esse*, l'essere è nella lingua latina (e nella tutta la lingua europea) un infinitivo, che esprime *l'infinità ed indefinibilità dell'essere stesso*.

Ora la strada è aperta per esaminare le proposizioni di San Tommaso apparentemente metafisiche o ontiche (che si riferiscono cioè all'*ens*) anche *ontologicamente* (nel senso heideggeriano).

²⁰ V. Possenti: Il reale concreto è raggiunto attraverso l'universale e l'essere. 'Intellectus' e intuizione dell'essere', *Studi Tomistici* 40, 1991: 135.

²¹ L. Bogliolo: 'Essere e conoscere', *Studi Tomistici* 21, 1983: 149.

²² J. B. Lotz: 'Das Sein nach Heidegger und Thomas von Aquin', in: A. Lobato (ed.): *Tommaso d'Aquino nel suo VII. Centenario*, Vaticano: Editrice Vaticana, 1974: 303; cf. *Sent. I. d. 19, q. a. 1 ad 1*.

QUESTIONI OGGETTO DI DISPUTA

I.

Sulla base dei testi finora presi in esame si è delineata, forse, un'immagine più chiara dell'ontologia tomistica. Restano aperte però alcune questioni, anzi restano da chiarire equivoci e da respingere false accuse: prima di tutto la questione della *differenza ontologica*. Come abbiamo osservato, Heidegger aveva posto radicalmente la differenza tra essere ed ente, ammettendo che l'ontologia debba occuparsi dell'essere e dell'ente.²³ Questa proposizione di differenziazione è reperibile nel sistema filosofico tomistico?

Eppure, il confronto di essere ed essenza esprime già di per sé come si ponga una differenza tra essere ed ente, se l'*essentia* è nucleo centrale dell'*ens*, come viene argomentato da testi ancora più inequivocabili. Sebbene appaia un anacronismo far interrogare Heidegger da San Tommaso, non possiamo tacere la presenza della differenziazione posta con una espressione concreta:

9. "Esse et quod est (ens) differunt."²⁴

Ad ogni modo, era peculiare della variante graduale dell'interpretazione di San Tommaso che, nello stesso volume dove faceva la sua comparsa il "dogma" del tomismo tradizionale, *Giorgio Penzo* si schierasse chiaramente a difendere la tesi che la differenza ontologica, in San Tommaso, consista nella *differenza di essere ed ente*.²⁵ Secondo il suo modo di vedere, alla base della differenziazione si trova il fatto che l'ente creato partecipa soltanto dell'essere.²⁶ La profondità intima dell'essere supera incommensurabilmente l'ente finito, cosa che si esprime nella differenza di essere ed essenza (*esse et essentia*) e, sulla base di ciò, di essere ed ente (*Esse et ens*).²⁷ Questo è il contenuto vero e proprio della differenza ontologica, e si tratta di una questione ontologica, non ontica o metafisica, che si riferisce all'essere e non al mondo interno dell'ente!

²³ Heidegger (1931 : 213).

²⁴ *Hebdo. Lect. 2. Qualitas 1, 12, Quantitas 5.*

²⁵ G. Penzo: 'La differenza ontologica', *Studi Tomistici* 14, 1982 : 70.

²⁶ Cf. *Summa contra Gentiles*, (S.c.G.) II, 25.

²⁷ Cf. *Quodlibetalia*, III, q. 8. a. 20.

2.

Altra “questione disputata” è il fatto che secondo San Tommaso *la ragione tende all’ens*. Come abbiamo visto, è questo il punto di partenza dell’accusa heideggeriana: ecco, Tommaso ha trascurato l’essere ed insegnava solo sull’ente. . .

Veramente ci sono passi in cui si accenna appena alla cosa, come ci è occorso di citare nel capitolo sull’*ens*: “*Illud quod primo cadit sub apprehensione, est ens.*”²⁸ Ma ci sono inoltre testi in Tommaso, in cui viene categoricamente asserito che comprendiamo prima di tutto *l’aspetto dell’essere*, ancora prima di ogni questione di merito (chi? cosa? come?):

10. “*Quod quid est, sequitur quaestionem, an est.*”²⁹ (“Cos’è qualcosa? segue sempre la domanda: È?”)

11. “*Omne quod est, est obiectum intellectus.*”³⁰ (“Tutto quello che è, è oggetto dell’intelletto.”)

Nella filosofia dell’Aquinates esiste una via di transito reciproco, di andata e ritorno, tra essere ed intelligenza:

12. “*Cum suum esse sit suum intelligere.*”³¹ (“Poiché il proprio essere è comprendere quanto è proprio.”)

Secondo Luigi Bogliolo,³² se è vero che la ragione è capacità di afferrare l’ente (*intellectus est facultas entis*), San Tommaso sottolinea numerosissime volte che *ens* è quello che è (*ens est id quod est*).³³ Dietro la forma participiale si nasconde infatti una *forma infinitiva*, ovvero quello che è detto a proposito dell’*ens* deve intendersi detto, *a fortiori*, anche a proposito dell’essere. Per questo Bogliolo ha intitolato il suo saggio “Essere e conoscere” (e non “Ente e conoscenza”): sulla scorta di quanto sinora esposto, possiamo affermare che ha osato parlare di ontologia e non di metafisica, perché nelle opere di San Tommaso ha scoperto il ruolo assai più decisivo dell’*esse* rispetto a quello dell’*ens*.

²⁸ *S. Th.* I. q. 5. a. 2, q. 11. a. 2, 4.

²⁹ *S. Th.* q. 2, 2, ad 2, *Sent.* d. 18, q. 1, 2, c, 3, d. 6, q. 2, 2, c.

³⁰ *S. Th.* I. q. 17, a. 3, ad; q. 18, a. 2; q. 57, a. 1, ad 2, q. 58, a. 5; q. 67, a. 3; q. 85, a. 4, 6; I-II-ae q. 3, a. 8; q. 10, a. 1, ad 3, q. 31, a. 5, II-IIae q. 8, a. 1; III. q. 10, a. 3, ad 2, q. 76, a. 7, *De Veritate* q. 1, a. 15; q. 8, a. 7, q. 10, a. 4, ad 1, q. 14, a. 1, q. 15, a. 2 etc.

³¹ *S. Th.* I. q. 14, a. 5.

³² L. Bogliolo: ‘Essere e conoscere’, *Studi Tomistici* 21, 1983: 29.

³³ In *Met.* V. I. 18, n. 951; XII. I. 1, n. 2416; *S.c.G.* II. 54; *S. Th.* I. 5, 1., *De Pot.*, VIII. a. 2; *Net.* IV. I. 1, n. 535, 536; *De Pot.* III. a. 8; *Met.* XI. L. 3, n. 2197; *Met.* XI. L. 8, n. 2540; *Met.* VII. L. 4, n. 1331; *De Gener. et Corrupt.* I. 6.

Anche per questo Bogliolo traduce il principio tomistico già citato (*intellectus est facultas entis*) nella favella postheideggeriana con “l'intelletto è la *facoltà dell'essere*”, motivando la sua scelta con il fatto che l'essere non è solo e semplicemente un concetto, o la copula del giudizio, ma la più reale delle perfezioni reali degli enti, la base che rende reale il reale, concreto il concreto, ente l'ente, intellegibile la conoscenza.³⁴

Dal fatto che la ragione comprenda prima di tutto l'aspetto dell'essere, e che si lanci completamente verso l'essere, consegue sorprendentemente che *l'essere è primario rispetto all'intelletto*, è a dire che l'essere oggettivo precede l'essere soggettivo.³⁵ In altre parole: l'intelletto non ha forza creatrice. Siamo al punto di partenza del *realismo* tomistico: in ultima analisi potremmo essere d'accordo con la tesi di Marx secondo cui l'essere è primario rispetto alla coscienza. Ma facciamo attenzione: il marxismo identifica l'essere con la materia, che a sua volta è, nel lessico del neotomismo, solo una specie di ente, l'ente sensibile (*ens sensibile*), mentre l'essere è concetto infinitamente più ampio e ricco in San Tommaso: comprende infatti l'essere (creato) soggettivo (anima, coscienza) e l'essere divino stesso, anzi quest'ultimo è fondamento dell'essere di ogni altra forma di essere. Il primato dell'essere dunque esprime anche che l'uomo ambisce alla conoscenza di Dio.

3.

Esistono inoltre dei dubbi addirittura di natura terminologica, delle *sovrapposizioni* testuali, così sembra, a proposito di *ens* ed *esse*: in molti casi l'Aquinate utilizza gli stessi attributi sia per l'ente che per l'essere. Marie-Dominique Philippe ha individuato una lunga serie di queste espressioni parallele:³⁶

<i>ens commune</i> ³⁷	<i>esse commune</i> ³⁸
<i>ens in quantum ens/ens secundum quod ens</i> ³⁹	<i>esse in quantum esse</i> ⁴⁰
<i>ens per se subsistens</i> ⁴¹	<i>esse per se subsistens</i> ⁴²

³⁴ Bogliolo (1983 : 149).

³⁵ *Ibid.* : 235.

³⁶ M.-D. Philippe: 'Analyse de l'être chez Saint Thomas', in: *Tommaso d'Aquino nel suo VII centenario*, Roma & Napoli, 1874: 255 e segg.

³⁷ *Comm. Met., De Potentia* q. 7. a. 2, ad 6.

³⁸ *S. Th.* I. q. 3. 4, ad 4, ad 1, S.c.G. I. ch. 26; *Comm de Causis*, prop. 9, p. 64.

³⁹ *S. Th.* I. q. 5, a. 3, *Comm. Met.* IV. l. 1, 529-532., IV. l. 1, 1145; VII. l. 1, 124.

⁴⁰ *S.c.G.* II. ch. 52.

⁴¹ *S. Th.* I. q. 2, a. 5, ad 1.

⁴² *De Potentia* q. 7, a. 2, ad 5; S.c.G. II. ch. 52.

ens simpliciter ⁴³	esse simpliciter ⁴⁴
ens per se, ⁴⁵ ens per essentiam ⁴⁶	esse per se, ⁴⁷ esse substantiale ⁴⁸
ens creatum, ⁴⁹ ens causatum ⁵⁰	esse secundum quid, ⁵¹ esse accidentale ⁵²
ratio entis ⁵³	ratio esse(ndi) ⁵⁴

Questo significherebbe che lo stesso San Tommaso non avesse chiaro il contenuto dei due concetti, che li “confondesse”, o addirittura che utilizzasse i due concetti *quasi fossero sinonimi*? Come abbiamo visto, il tomismo scolastico ha glissato di fronte a tale questione, proseguendo il suo cammino sul sentiero dell’*ens*, semplicemente interpretando onticamente tutto quello che San Tommaso ha detto a proposito dell’*esse*. Dopo Heidegger però si pone il problema di riprendere la questione, vista l’impossibilità di giungere ad un approdo continuando ad interporre esemplificazioni.

Il tomismo più recente ha elaborato tutta una serie di soluzioni a che si potesse districare il dilemma del *parallelo terminologico di ente ed essere*: la risposta più evidente, che ho già ricordato a proposito dell’interpretazione fornita dal tomismo scolastico, è che il rapporto di *ens* ed *esse* — ed il *rapporto della metafisica ed ontologia*! — è descrivibile come rapporto di *concreto ed astratto*, più o meno nel senso in cui parliamo di Dio e di divinità, ed a proposito di ambedue sono validi gli stessi attributi determinativi (infinito, onnisciente, onnipotente, etc.).

Sebbene siano validi quasi gli stessi aspetti anche per ente ed essere, essi sono in un rapporto di possibilità ed effettualità, che da Aristotele in poi significa che *il fattore proprio, necessitante, è l’essere*. Come abbiamo visto, San Tommaso unisce il più delle volte l’*esse* alle espressioni di *actus* ed *actualitas*: l’*esse* è “actus essendi”,⁵⁵ “actus entis inquantum est ens”,⁵⁶ ma l’essere è a buon diritto definibile “virtus essendi”,⁵⁷ così da

⁴³ *S. Th.* I. q. 5, a. 1, *Comm. Met.* XI. L. 3, 2197.

⁴⁴ *S. Th.* I. q. 26, a. 4; q. 77, a. 6; III. q. 16, a. 9, ad 2; *Comm. Met.* VII. l. 1, 1256.

⁴⁵ *Comm. Met.* VII. l. 1, 1245.

⁴⁶ *S. Th.* I. q. 3, a. 4; q. 104, a. 1. *S.c.G.* III. ch. 66, e contrario: *l’ens per participationem*.

⁴⁷ *S. Th.* I. q. 3, a. 5, ad 1.

⁴⁸ *Comm. Met.* V. l. 9. 896; *S. Th.* I. q. 5, a. 1, ad 1.

⁴⁹ *S. Th.* I. q. 45, a. 5; *Comm. de causis*, prop. 4, p. 29.

⁵⁰ *S. Th.* I. q. 44, a. 1, ad 1.

⁵¹ *S. Th.* I. q. 5, a. 1, ad 1.

⁵² *S. Th.* I. q. 9, a. 2, *S.c.G.* I. ch. 23.

⁵³ *S. Th.* I. q. 16, a. 4, ad 2.

⁵⁴ *Comm. De nom. div.* V, l. 1. 628; *Comm. Met.* I. l. 9, 138.

⁵⁵ *S. Th.* I. q. 3, a. 4, ad 2.

⁵⁶ *Quodlibetalia* IX, q. 2, ad 2.

⁵⁷ Cf. É. Gilson: ‘Virtus Essendi’, *Mediaeval Studies* 26, 1964: 1–11.

rendere possibile l'inserimento appropriato delle categorie aristoteliche di forma e causa.

Marie-Dominique Philippe, invece, vede la differenza fondamentale e determinante tra i concetti di ente ed essere in San Tommaso, nel fatto che mentre l'ente si manifesta sulla linea dell'essenza (una cosa concreta: aliquid, res, essentia, quidditas), l'essere è realizzazione, *forma compiuta dell'essere*:⁵⁸ l'ente è riconducibile all'*ousia* ed al concetto di *dynamis*, all'atto dell'essere ed al concetto di *energeia* della filosofia greca.⁵⁹

4.

Appare innegabile anche, che San Tommaso consideri Dio ens (*ens ultimum, ens primum, ens simpliciter*,⁶⁰ *simpliciter Primum Ens*).⁶¹ Sarebbe dunque corretto l'atteggiamento critico di Heidegger, che accusa San Tommaso di vedere in Dio soltanto *uno degli enti*?

In questa terminologia forse dobbiamo ritenere decisiva l'influenza della tradizione di traduzione della Sacra Scrittura: ci trova concordi l'affermazione di Tamás Nyíri,⁶² secondo il quale a questa denominazione — chiamiamolo pure equivoco — avrebbe contribuito quella traduzione che P. Engelhardt definisce la traduzione che ha più di ogni altra influito sulla storia del pensiero,⁶³ quando nel famoso passo Exod 3,14, LXX traduce in greco “ego eimi ho Ón”: non si tratta della esatta interpretazione del nome Jahvé (Hagion Tetragrammaton). Anche qui la chiave del mistero sta nella presenza di un “verbo essere” (l'ebraico *hava*). Persino la traduzione tradizionale ungherese riesce migliore della LXX (“Én vagyok, aki vagyok”, ovvero “Io sono chi sono”, dunque colui che è), mentre per gli esegeti ci troviamo di fronte ad un *participium futurum* o *instans*: “Io sono chi sarà sempre con voi”, così da dare un carattere di promessa al nome, per quanto non gli manchi un innegabile contenuto ontologico.

L'Ón però, che inoltre è finito, nelle icone greche, proprio a corredo delle immagini di Cristo, ha indirizzato sul piano dell'Ente il concetto di Dio, il fatto che Dio sia l'Ente Supremo, tanto che anche San Tommaso

⁵⁸ Philippe (1874: 259 e segg.).

⁵⁹ Philippe (1874: 278).

⁶⁰ *Comm. Met.* IX. l. 1, 1768; VII. L. 1, 1248.

⁶¹ *S. Th.* I, q. 3, a. 6, *De veritate* q. 10, a. 11, obj. 10. e ad 10.

⁶² Nyíri (*op. cit.*: 166).

⁶³ R. Kittel: *Bibelkommentar II.*, Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1953: 396.

lo definisce “il nome più adatto” a Dio.⁶⁴ Lo stesso Tommaso affianca spesso allo “ho Ón” la proposizione “Ego Sum Qui Sum”, ovvero “Io sono chi sono”, con cui sottolinea quanto abbiamo già osservato anche per gli enti creati, al momento della interpretazione dell’*ens*: l’ente viene reso reale dal fatto che è, mentre Dio, come Ente Supremo, è reso supremo dal fatto che è *Egli stesso l’È, l’Essere*. È innegabile che, anche da un punto di vista squisitamente statistico, San Tommaso nomina Dio assai più spesso Essere, che Ente: se parla di Dio, lo fa non onticamente o metafisicamente, ma *ontologicamente*. Benedetto d’Amore scriveva, nel 1979, che una delle attualità più emergenti dell’insegnamento di San Tommaso sta nel fatto che egli non formula *sic et simpliciter* una teologia, altrimenti non avrebbe posto Dio tra gli enti, anche solo come Primus Motor, ma ha formulato una *ontoteologia*, è a dire che ha parlato di Dio nella lingua dell’ontologia.⁶⁵

Inoltre non dobbiamo dimenticare di osservare come San Tommaso non applichi l’“*ipsum ens*” all’*ens*, ma soltanto all’*esse*: le espressioni “*ipsum esse*” ed “*ipsum esse subsistens*” sono riservate quasi esclusivamente a Dio,⁶⁶ cosa che indica non soltanto la funzione particolare che nel suo pensiero ricopre l’essere, ma anche il fatto che Dio non è semplicemente un “ente”, per dir meglio non è soltanto “uno degli enti tra i tanti”, ma *l’essere stesso*, chi sta sul culmine della *gerarchia* dell’essere, al di sopra di “*esse rei*” (essere degli enti) ed “*esse commune*” (i.e., tutti gli enti del mondo).

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Esistono infine testi, nei quali San Tommaso sottolinea che Dio—in quanto Causa Prima, in quanto essere infinito—*si pone al di sopra dell’ente*, anzi è non-ente!⁶⁷ Giunge fino all’adattamento al proprio sistema di una riflessione presa dai platonici:

13. “Causa Prima, secundum Platonicos quidem, est supra ens, in quantum essentia bonitatis et unitatis, quae est Causa prima, excedit etiam ipsum ens separatum. Sed secundum rei veritatem Causa Pri-

⁶⁴ *S. Th.* I. q. 13. a. 11.

⁶⁵ B. D’Amore: ‘Saint Thomas, le concile et la théologie contemporaine’, in: *Tommaso d’Aquino nel centenario dell’enciclica Aeterni Patris*, Vaticano: Editrice Vaticana, 1979: 254.

⁶⁶ *S. Th.* I. q. 4. a. 2.

⁶⁷ C. D’Ancona: ‘Aspetti del rapporto dell’Aquinato con i Platonici’, *Studi Tomistici* 17, 1982: 57.

ma est supra ens, in quantum est ipsum esse infinitum.⁶⁸ (“La Causa Prima, secondo i Platonici, è al di sopra dell’ente, in quanto la Causa Prima, essenza di bontà ed unità, supera lo stesso ente separato. Ma secondo la verità della cosa, la Causa Prima è al di sopra dell’ente, in quanto essa è essere infinito.”)

La cosa viene però affermata con una differenziazione chiarissima:

14. “Deus non sic dicitur non existens, quasi nullo modo existens, sed quia est super omne existens, in quantum est suum esse.”⁶⁹ (“Dio non si può dire non esistente nel senso che non esiste in alcun modo, ma per il fatto che è al di sopra di ogni esistente, in quanto è l’essere stesso.”)

Il suo insegnamento sorprendentemente moderno è mutuato da *Dionigi Pseudo-Aeropagita*, in un’ottica già propria e peculiare:

15. “Dionysius Deum nominat quandoque ipsum bonum aut superbonum [...] et similiter supervitam, supersubstantiam [...]”⁷⁰ (“Dionigi nomina di volta in volta Dio come il bene stesso o il superbene [...] similmente supervita, supersostanza [...]”)

In questa maniera San Tommaso sembra obiettare con secoli d’anticipo alle critiche heideggeriane, affermando di voler parlare di Dio nient’affatto onticamente, ma *ontologicamente*.

⁶⁸ In *Librum de Causis expositio*, pr. VI, 1. 6.

⁶⁹ *S. Th.* I, q. 12, a. 1 ad 3.

⁷⁰ In *De Div., Nomm Prem.*, II-a.

WHAT IS DIFFERENCE? DELEUZE AND SAINT THOMAS

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The difference between the univocal and the equivocal concept of being marks a firm separation of philosophy from theology. Considering the *analogia entis* as the core structure of the epistemology of Thomas corresponding to the concept of being as the supreme reference point of his metaphysics, Deleuze misses a positive concept of difference in Thomas, who cannot avoid explaining difference in relation to an external reference or to a transcendent principle. Analogical Being, whenever related to particular beings, can never say what constitutes their individuality. Therefore, Deleuze traces the tradition of ontological univocity, noting it first in Duns Scotus, in order to think about difference in a new way. Only a univocal, anti-hierarchical ontology of immanence is capable of thinking about difference in itself or of providing difference with its own concept.

At which level does the thinking of Thomas and Deleuze intersect? How shall we conceive this strange connection of two thinkers who seem to be, at first glance, strictly incompatible? For there is no doubt that Deleuze develops throughout all his writings an atheist philosophy of immanence. According to him, the Greek origin of philosophy even coincides with the establishment of an absolute plane of immanence free from any Gods and transcendence. For Deleuze, it is meaningless to dispute whether there is or is not such a thing like a Christian philosophy carrying the signature of Thomas. As long as you fail to identify the immanence with the absolute, as long as you subordinate the immanence to an absolute principle, you remain in the realm of

theology. For the present Deleuze claims that the conflict between philosophy and theology does not constitute any longer a significant line of demarcation, since atheism must not be regarded as a tragedy for the philosopher but as his serenity. In order to establish a firm separation of philosophy from theology, we need to make intelligible the entanglement of their respective concepts in search for a future being that is neither God nor man, but better than both of them. Therefore, Deleuze rejects the dogma of secularisation pretending that modernity, substituting man for God, has regained the real world instead of the transcendent one, when in fact, by doing so, it never escaped from its old plane of thinking, from its prior theological conditioning, since it maintained God and man on the same level, simply reserving the rights of the former to the latter. Modern Philosophy can only acquire a full release from the implicit identity underlying the apparent discontinuity between cause and effect when posing the problem differently, that is to say when creating a new idea of conversion together with a new realm of faith.

Le «chevalier de la foi» de Kierkegaard, celui qui saute, ou le parieur de Pascal, celui qui lance les dés, sont les hommes d'une transcendance ou d'une foi. Mais ils ne cessent de recharger l'immanence : ce sont des philosophes... qui ne se soucient plus de l'existence transcendante de Dieu, mais seulement des possibilités immanentes infinies qu'apporte l'existence de celui qui croit que Dieu existe. Le problème changerait si c'était un autre plan d'immanence. Non pas celui qui croit que Dieu n'existe pas pourrait alors prendre le dessus, puisqu'il appartient encore à l'ancien plan comme mouvement négatif. Mais sur le nouveau plan, il se pourrait que le problème concerne maintenant l'existence de celui qui croit au monde, non pas même à l'existence du monde, mais à ces possibilités en mouvements et en intensités pour faire naître de nouveaux modes d'existence encore, plus proches des animaux ou des rochers. Il se peut que croire en ce monde, en cette vie, soit devenu notre tâche la plus difficile, ou la tâche d'un mode d'existence à découvrir sur notre plan d'immanence aujourd'hui. C'est la conversion empiriste (nous avons tant de raisons de ne pas croire au monde des hommes, nous avons perdu le monde, pire qu'une fiancée, un fils ou un dieu...). Oui, le problème a changé.¹

On the other hand, the extent to which philosophy, up to the end of the 17th Century, ultimately speaks to us, all the time, of God, seems curious to Deleuze. Why is philosophy so compromised with God?²

¹ G. Deleuze & F. Guattari: *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*, Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1991: 71.

² G. Deleuze, Seminar, 25 November 1980, transl. Timothy S. Murphy, at website: <http://www.imaginet.fr/deleuze/TXT/ENG/251180.html>. See P. Goodchild: 'Why

And what is even more surprising: why does Deleuze's philosophy, in apparent contradiction to its materialistically charged genealogy (Lucretius, Spinoza, Nietzsche), constantly invoke theological themes and thinkers (repetition, choice, vitalism, contemplation as self-enjoyment: Kierkegaard, Bergson, Whitehead, Plotin), ready to retrace a line connecting the prince Mychkin (Dostojevski), Bartleby the scrivener (Melville) and Francesco d'Assisi as historical variations of one and the same figure: the idiot, whose first incarnation was Christ? Again, why is philosophy so compromised with God? Rather than posing this question historically, Deleuze seeks a philosophical motivation when affirming that philosophy since its beginnings revolves around the question of being. That is why philosophy and ontology are fundamentally the same. In fact, ontology can be reduced to one single proposition: "L'Être est univoque."³ Univocity does not simply mean that being can be conceived in one and the same sense, it also entails that being has to be conceived in one and the same sense with regard to all its intrinsic individuating differences and modalities. Being is the same for all its modalities, but the modalities are not the same. Consequently Deleuze rejects each equivocal idea of being that is necessarily entangled with transcendence. The platonic idea, the emanative or creative transcendence in neo-platonic and Christian philosophers, all hierarchies of being based on participation, degradation or devaluation confirm the primacy of transcendence, that is the primacy of an equivocal concept of being. The suspicion that philosophy is deeply compromised with God derives from one essential thesis: as long as you start from an equivocal concept of being you are not able to think difference in itself, you will not attain a positive concept of difference. That means that you cannot avoid explaining difference in relation to an external reference, in relation to a generic difference and a specific difference that embrace all beings and serve as the uniform basis to determine the individual. Following the same pattern, it needs just a shift to another dimension of being to recognize that the sufficient reason for the existence of the world cannot be found within it.

By means of this preliminary description of an equivocal idea of being, we have almost reached the thinking of Thomas Aquinas. Whenever Deleuze is treating the history of philosophy, he always proposes a new way to deal with it. He belongs to the post-war generation of

is philosophy so compromised with God?', in: M. Briden (ed.): *Deleuze and religion*, London & New York: Routledge, 2001: 156–167.

³ G. Deleuze: *Différence et Répétition*, Paris: OUF, 1968: 52.

French philosophers that had suffered too much from the very conventional style of philosophy teaching widely practised in the Parisian high courts of thinking. The history of philosophy, as he mocks, that they taught me was very similar to an enormous school of intimidation: how can you dare to say a single phrase on any philosopher without having plunged into an ocean of secondary literature? How can you dare to think on your own before you are 89? As a result, philosophy was much more like a cemetery of concepts strictly reserved to a handful of chosen gravediggers rather than to laughter without a cat. And Deleuze even complicates the challenge by adding a warning: “Tout philosophe s’enfuit quand il entend la phrase: on va discuter un peu [...] La philosophie a horreur des discussions.”⁴ Discussion or communication comes either too early or too late. There is no need to discuss before you have not identified the problem, and there is no need to discuss after having done so. Quoting Bergson, Deleuze claims that posing a problem in the right way is identical with solving it. This procedure is noteworthy for it bans negativity from the area of philosophy. Whenever a philosopher criticizes another philosopher, he necessarily starts from problems that were not the problems of the one he criticised. You never share the same plane of thinking. The only way to access a philosophical system may be to reconstruct the problem that is in the centre of it, the very singular problem for which the respective philosophy was seeking a very unique answer.

It may be reasonable to assert that difference is one of the central items of Thomas Aquinas. Neglecting the distinction between essence and being, greater stress is laid here on the *analogia entis*, the hierarchical organisation of being. The analogy of being can be considered as the core structure of the epistemology of Thomas corresponding to the concept of being as the supreme reference point of his metaphysics. With regard to the following the attention has to be drawn to the, so to speak, functional investigation of Deleuze: What happens to difference if it depends on a transcendent principle? How can difference work on the condition of an equivocal concept of being? The direct presence of Thomas in the writings of Deleuze is quite small. Nevertheless he is mentioned in *Difference and repetition*, his most startling philosophical book. In the chapter “La différence en elle-même” some pages give account of Aristotle’s use of analogy and its transformation through the doctrine of Thomas. In Aristotle’s vocabulary, analogy means proportionated equivalence; the model is: $a : b = (\text{equals}) c : d$; insight stands to

⁴ Deleuze & Guattari (1991: 32–33).

intellect as seeing stands to the eye. Disregarding the intricated meanings of analogy in other writings of Thomas, for instance the fine distinctions in *De veritate*, in favour of the simplified theory of analogy exposed in the *Summa theologica* and the *Summa contra gentiles*, two types of analogy have to be distinguished: the analogy of proportionality and the analogy of attribution. On the threshold of ontology and the logic of proposition, the analogical signification cannot be separated from the analogy of being, one is rooted in the other. The 13th investigation in the first book of the *Summa theologica* provides the ultimate basis. Among the multiple names of God, let us say his infinity, simplicity or perfection, the name “he is” is the most adequate name of him. Thus, there is a perfect equality between God and being on condition that you withdraw all other intrinsic determinations from it. What is left is just the most abstract structure of being that precedes all analogical structures of being without indicating therefore a genus. Thomas agrees with Aristotle that being cannot be a genus since genus is not conceivable without its constitutive differences that are supposed to be not already included in the concept of the genus. Thus, if being would indicate a genus, differences in the genus would not exist. And this is precisely impossible.

In other words, the abysmal distance, meaning the difference between the creator and his creatures, is an ontological one. How can we mediate the pure and supreme being of God with all different kinds of beings? This is the task of analogy as a logic of participation in the face of the twofold aporia of an agnostic as well as an anthropomorphic idea of God, either too close, too similar to Man, or too distant to him. On the one hand, there is no relation between God and Man. On the other hand, man is related to God for he created man and the world. This unilateral difference is the very reason for the analogy of attribution based on the *analogia entis*. Nothing can be predicated in the same sense or in a purely univocal mode on God and Man. But at the same time nothing is said about God in a purely equivocal mode. Thomas places the concept of analogy between pure univocity and pure equivocity. Whatever Creator and the creatures have in common, it will be predicated analogically, as Thomas claims in the 34th chapter in the first book of the *Summa contra gentiles*. Thus, Being is said in several senses of man, animal, plant or God. This became the position of Christian orthodoxy: there is indeed a common measure to the form of Being, but this measure is analogical and not univocal.

Before analysing some consequences for the organisation of the immanent being, let us emphasize just one point concerning the couple immanence—transcendence. Thomas raises the question whether God is within all things, whether God is everywhere.⁵ According to him, God is immanent in the world through his effects but outside of the world with regard to his essence. For Deleuze, all Christian thinkers are driven by the problem of immanence. While the doctrine of Thomas controls and frames immanence by subordinating it to the requirements of creative transcendence, later theology has to offer proof—and often at the risk of work and life—that the dose of immanence injected into the world and into the mind would not compromise the transcendence of God. On the way from Eckhart via Cusanus to Bruno, this precarious balance finally collapses into pantheism.⁶

Let us come back to the structure of being in the world. In which way does the eminent being of God, the universality and pure indetermination of the *ens commune* succeed in distributing the different series of contingent beings? The ontology of Thomas allows an infinity of different beings or acts of existence. However, due to his distributive and hierarchical concept of being, the reason for each difference is an external one, since it takes a maximum of distinctions between all kinds of beings, a maximum of diversity between all creatures and a maximum of degrees of being to express the supreme being of God by means of similarity, image or trace.⁷ How can difference operate here? A theology with so positive ambitions, like that of Thomas, relies on analogy to found new distributive rules for differences proceeding from an equivocal concept of being. So, what went wrong for Deleuze when Thomas took up theologically Aristotle's analogical vision of the world?

L'analogie de l'être implique à la fois ces deux aspects : l'un par lequel l'être se distribue dans des formes déterminables qui en distinguent et en varient nécessairement le sens, mais l'autre par lequel, ainsi distribué, il est nécessairement réparti à des étants bien déterminés, chacun pourvu d'un sens unique. Ce qui est manqué, aux deux extrémités, c'est le sens collectif de l'être, et c'est le jeu de la différence individuante dans l'étant. Tout se passe entre la différence générique et la différence spécifique. Le véritable universel est manqué, non moins que le vrai singulier : l'être n'a de sens commun que distributif, et l'individu n'a de différence que générale.⁸

⁵ See *Summa Theologica* I, 8.

⁶ Deleuze & Guattari (1991 : 47).

⁷ See *Summa contra gentiles* II, 45; *Summa theologica* I, 47.

⁸ Deleuze (1968 : 387).

Put differently, analogical Being, whenever related to particular beings, can never say what constitutes their individuality. It retains in the particular (the individual) only what conforms to the general (the concept). Common sense and analogy of being collaborate. For example: Man is an animal rationale. Man is distinguished from “sensual being”, as the generic concept to which he belongs, by the specific difference of rationality. But the specific difference represents in no way an universal concept for all singularities. The specific difference merely designates the particular moment where difference becomes reconciled with the concept in general. A true universal is lacking no less than a true singular. Thomas declares clearly that individuals exist for the sake of the species — “individua enim sunt propter speciem”.⁹ In that, however, Deleuze recognizes the principle of a ruinous confusion for the whole philosophy of difference: the attribution of a proper concept of difference is confused with the inscription of difference in the concept in general. All you obtain is merely a conceptual difference instead of the concept of difference.

Against analogy, therefore, Deleuze traces the tradition of ontological univocity, which is the one ontological proposition that ever existed, noting it first in Duns Scotus.¹⁰ By removing difference entirely from the province of representation or equivocal and analogical being, Deleuze preserves the possibility to think difference in a radically new way.¹¹ Only a univocal ontology is capable of thinking difference in itself or of providing difference with its own concept. This pure ontology is anti-hierarchical, a world of immanence. The doctrine of Duns Scotus, the subtle doctor — here we have to refrain from a full version in favour of a very rough summary — posits not a first being but a univocal being common to God and creatures. If Being is said in one and the same sense of everything that is, than what constitutes the difference between beings, between genus, species and individuals? Being does not have to embark on its long way around the categories, since there cannot be categories in a univocal ontology: if we distinguish beings by their generic or specific differences, then we are back in the analogical vision of the world. In fact, what determines being is an intrinsic mode. Duns Scotus gives the example of the white colour that may exist in

⁹ *Summa contra gentiles* II, 59.

¹⁰ Deleuze’s understanding of Duns Scotus relies primarily on Etienne Gilson’s *Jean Duns Scot: Introduction à ses positions fondamentales*, Paris, 1952.

¹¹ See O. Davies: ‘Thinking difference — a comparative study of Gilles Deleuze, Plotinus and Meister Eckhart’, in: Briden (2001 : 83).

different degrees of intensity without turning therefore into different colour. Intensity predicates an intrinsic degree of whiteness in itself.¹² Thus, being exists in different intrinsic modes without the need to add therefore a new reality. As infinite being, being is God, as finite being, it is creature. Infinity and finite nature are just two different modes, two different intensities of one and the same concept of being. Duns Scotus defends himself against the accusation that the univocity of being would destroy philosophy and theology.¹³ However, his opponents had good reasons to fear that the gate was now wide open for breaking the bond between God and creatures as soon as the essence of creature was allowed to be conceived in terms of contingency, individuality and singularity. Indeed, Deleuze's endeavour to create a positive concept of difference, a concept of an individuating difference was deeply attracted by the idea of an individuating entity called *haecceity* as the masterpiece of Duns Scotus.

The thomistic theory of individuation based on the *materia signata* did not satisfy Duns Scotus, because the same matter could cause as well another individual. The very intrinsic determination that constitutes the singularity of each individual is named *haecceity*, which makes the individual irreducible both to specific and generic difference as to simple alterity or diversity. Hence the transition from specific difference to singular difference cannot take place without the addition of an intrinsic perfection to being itself. The scotistic doctrine of *haecceity* aims precisely to point out the individual greater richness of perfection in contrast to the species.¹⁴ Thus, *haecceity* is the last degree of reality, the ultimate perfection of things. Taken as *haecceity*, each individual is totally different from, and has nothing in common with other *haecceities*. Closely linked to the univocal concept of being is the transcendental, generating function of individuating difference, which exceeds the boundaries between different genres. From a distributive and hierarchical idea of being, the new scotistic ontology shifts to a transcendental science. Deleuze aligns himself with Duns Scotus when he renders difference transcendental. Moreover, the *parti pris* by Deleuze for Duns Scotus in his dispute with Thomas becomes the point of depar-

¹² See D. Scotus, 'Lectura in primum librum Sententiarum', distinctio 8, pars 1. 3 [104], in: T. Hoffmann (ed.): *Johannes Duns Scotus—Die Univozität des Seienden. Texte zur Metaphysik*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2002 : 171. See G. Deleuze: *Spinoza et le problème de l'expression*, Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1968 : 179.

¹³ See D. Scotus, *ibid.*, distinctio 3, pars 1 q. 1–2 [110], p. 66.

¹⁴ See E. Bettoni, *Duns Scotus—the basic principles of his philosophy*, Westpoint, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1961 : 63.

ture of his philosophy of difference. Indeed, Deleuze's anarchic political ontology, including individuation by *haecceity*, virtualities, multiplicities and differentiation as transcendental powers—an ontology thoroughly composed of positive intrinsic differences without admitting any negativity—derives more or less directly from Duns Scotus.¹⁵

There is, however, a very strange but very striking example of the univocal ontology à la Deleuze—an example inseparable from an equivocal understanding of being, raising the question of transcendence or immanence without finding an answer. In *Mille Plateaux* Deleuze and Guattari refer to Spinoza for vindicating the idea that difference is only conceivable as a degree of power. Thus, each individual has its internal measure of perfection. We no longer determine something by its specific and generic difference (for instance, man as a rational animal or featherless biped) but rather what its affective capacities are, since the power of an existing individual is expressed in a certain capacity for being affected. Deleuze is quoting the biologist Jacob von Uexküll and the amazing description of the tick.¹⁶ Its relation to the world is composed by only three affects: first, the smell of butyric acid contained in the sweat of mammals; second, the temperature of 37 degrees corresponding to the blood-temperature of mammals; third, the hairy skin of mammals. Nothing else of the world exists for the tick. The tick hangs motionless on the branch of a tree waiting for a mammal to pass by. If this happens, the smell of the butyric acid pouring out of the glands of the animal signals to the tick to fall down on the mammal. Now the tick is looking for a hairless place on the skin to bore its way under the skin of the prey. After that, the tick pumps a stream of warm blood into its own body. However, this bloody meal is also its final supper since there is now nothing left to do for the tick but to fall down to the ground, lay its eggs and die. We must appreciate the perfection of these actions. During its lifetime the tick is always living at the limit of its degrees of power; a maximal degree when falling down on the mammal, a minimal degree while waiting for the mammal. The same perfection at different

¹⁵ See Goodchild (2001: 160). On the scotism of Deleuze with regard to the univocity of being, see Deleuze (1968: 52–58); with regard to *haecceity* as individuating difference see G. Deleuze & C. Parnet: *Dialogues*, Paris: Flammarion, 1977: 111–114; 169–173; G. Deleuze & F. Guattari: *Mille Plateaux*, Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1980: 309–367; 632–634.

¹⁶ See Deleuze & Guattari (1980: 314); J. von Uexküll: *Streifzüge durch die Lebenswelten von Tieren und Menschen*, Hamburg: Fischer-Taschenbuch-Verlag, 1956: 23–30; G. Agamben: *L'ouvert—De l'homme et de l'animal*, Paris: Éditions Payot-Rivages, 2002: 69–74.

degrees. In fact, it happens quite rarely that an animal is passing by the tree where the tick hangs waiting. Therefore, the tick possesses the capacity for waiting for a long time without food until its host arrives. But the duration of waiting is beyond human comprehension. The tick can wait up to eighteen years within an unchanging environment, within an unchanging world. Is this perhaps to say that, in the very heart of immanence, we find the longing of the creature for a new world? Let it be a matter of taste or belief to regard this event as a matter of biology, of joke, or of metaphysical wit—it compels to think difference not in an empirical but in a metaphysical sense. Deleuze gives good reasons to believe in it.

LE THOMISME COMME « PHILOSOPHIE CHRÉTIENNE » CHEZ ÉTIENNE GILSON ET CLAUDE TRESMONTANT

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Thomism as “Christian philosophy” wishes to provide an answer to the question of the relation between philosophy and theology in St. Thomas Aquinas. The expression itself became famous with Etienne Gilson and the interesting debate that gathered some influential philosophers and theologians in the 1930’s. For him, Aquinas is the main figure of the Christian philosophy. Aquinas comes after a long tradition of “Christian philosophy,” as Claude Tresmontant demonstrated in his works. According to him, the decisive facet of Christian metaphysics and, at the same time, its condition of possibility, is revelation. The questions of Christian philosophy are those of the human intellect that go from revelation to experience and from experience to revelation.

Le thomisme comme « philosophie chrétienne » se veut une réponse à la question du rapport entre philosophie et théologie chez S. Thomas. La formule même a gagné sa notoriété sous la plume d’Etienne Gilson qui s’est retrouvé au centre d’un débat qui a passionné dans les années 1930 plusieurs philosophes et théologiens. Peut-être que cette problématique est due à un contexte historico-philosophique bien particulier, c’est-à-dire le XIII^{ème} siècle de la chrétienté latine.

La nouvelle entrée d’Aristote en Occident au début du XIII^{ème} siècle a conduit à une situation où deux rationalités se disputaient le champ des explications du monde : la théologie, d’abord, comme science sacrée issue de la religion chrétienne et la philosophie, ancien héritage de la Grèce classique.

S. Thomas a laissé une synthèse équilibrée de ces deux rationalités dans son œuvre. Pour lui, la philosophie est le couronnement de la sagesse naturelle tandis que la théologie se fonde sur la Révélation et l'explicite, *fides quaerens intellectum*.

UNE PHILOSOPHIE DE L'HISTOIRE DE LA PHILOSOPHIE ?

Étienne Gilson propose dans son livre *L'être et l'essence* une lecture globale de l'histoire de la philosophie, ayant comme critère le fondement « essentiel » ou « existentiel » de chaque philosophie. Ainsi, il classifie la vraie pensée de S. Thomas dans la catégorie de philosophie de l'existence, en opposition avec toute la tradition ultérieure, essentialiste.

Un autre schéma d'interprétation totalisante de l'histoire de la philosophie se trouve dans l'œuvre de Cl. Tresmontant. Il distingue deux fils conducteurs dans le développement de la métaphysique occidentale : la métaphysique biblique contre la Gnose. Celle-ci se définit par la méconnaissance de la distinction entre l'être créé et l'être increé, rendue possible par l'idée philosophique de création. On retrouve dans l'œuvre de Tresmontant les thèmes antérieurement abordés par Gilson, avec une terminologie différente : là où Gilson parle de « philosophie de l'existence », Tresmontant préfère l'expression « philosophie judéo-chrétienne » et, opposée à elle, la « gnose », ce qui, pour Gilson, c'était la « philosophie de l'essence ». Mais le schéma d'intelligibilité reste le même.

LE STATUT DE LA PHILOSOPHIE

Par philosophie nous entendons un effort de réflexion systématique et rationnelle sur le sens global de l'existence humaine et du monde. C'est dans le sillage de penseurs comme Justin et Clément que se développera la compréhension catholique de l'adage célèbre *fides quaerens intellectum* : la foi est un don de Dieu, mais, dans son effort pour se comprendre elle-même, elle fait légitimement appel aux lumières de la raison philosophique. Thomas d'Aquin doit être compris dans cette tradition chrétienne à laquelle il appartient.

La relation entre philosophie et théologie s'établit au plan ontologique comme relation entre nature et grâce¹ et au plan noétique comme

¹ Il faut éviter le danger de l'extrincésisme, selon le mot de Blondel.

relation entre les sources de connaissance : révélation et raison. La révélation comporte un aspect noétique. Mais de même que la grâce, pour être reçue comme grâce (gratuite), présuppose une nature humaine consistante, ainsi cette confiance gratuite qu'est la révélation ne peut être reçue comme une confiance indue que si, en dehors d'elle, l'homme est déjà capable, par lui-même de saisir et d'exprimer quelque chose de Dieu et du sens du monde et de sa propre existence.

«Que les relations entre philosophie et théologie chrétienne apparaissent si conflictuelles, au point que chacune des disciplines tend à phagocyter l'autre, cela ne résulte ni de hasards historiques, ni des options personnelles des grands penseurs. L'affaire tient à la nature profonde des deux démarches.»² C'est dans ce contexte que nous situerons notre enquête sur la position de S. Thomas.

«La distinction qui, au niveau du discours réflexif, existe et doit être respectée entre la philosophie et la théologie se comprend et se définit théologiquement à la lumière de ce mystère des deux natures du Christ.»³

La relation systématique entre philosophie et théologie est ainsi significativement, historiquement, par l'incarnation du Verbe. Cette union hypostatique est comme une métaphore de notre étude.

CONTRA GENTILES

Le texte de S. Thomas qui nous sert de base pour l'analyse de la relation entre philosophie et théologie dans son œuvre est le début du *Contra Gentiles*, le livre I, chapitres III–VIII.

«Les vérités que nous professons sur Dieu revêtent une double modalité. Il y a, en effet, sur Dieu des vérités qui dépassent totalement les capacités de l'humaine raison : que Dieu, par exemple, soit trine et un. Il y a, par contre, des vérités auxquelles peut atteindre la raison naturelle : que Dieu, par exemple, existe, qu'il soit un, etc. Ces vérités, même les philosophes les ont prouvées par voie démonstrative, guidés qu'ils étaient par la lumière de la raison naturelle.»⁴

Cette citation esquisse le cadre général dans lequel Thomas va poursuivre ses recherches. La double raison, philosophique et théologique, n'est pas duale dans le sens où les deux vérités seraient juxtaposées

² P.-Ph. Druet : *Pour une philosophie chrétienne*, Paris : Lethielleux, 1983 : 10.

³ *Ibid.* : 26.

⁴ *CG* I, ch. III.

et, éventuellement, opposées, mais elle délimite les domaines propres à la foi et à la raison naturelle. La connaissance humaine part des sens, mais «les objets sensibles ne peuvent amener notre intelligence à voir en eux ce qu'est la substance divine, car il y a décalage entre les effets et la puissance de la cause.»⁵ Thomas donne ici un contre-argument ontologique, si on peut l'appeler ainsi, au sens où, à l'intérieur même de l'*analogia entis*, la dissemblance est plus grande que la ressemblance. L'échelle des intelligences correspond à la hiérarchie des êtres : l'ange connaît Dieu plus parfaitement que l'homme parce que son degré d'intelligence est plus élevé. «Mais combien plus l'intelligence de Dieu l'emporte sur l'intelligence de l'ange que celle-ci sur l'intelligence de l'homme.»⁶ Il ne faut pas donc chercher la connaissance de Dieu du côté des sens, mais plutôt dans la connaissance proprement intellectuelle, quoique toute connaissance humaine ait son origine dans les sens, selon l'Aquinat.

«Les objets intelligibles présentant donc en Dieu deux sortes de vérité, l'une à laquelle peut atteindre l'enquête de la raison, l'autre qui dépasse totalement les capacités de l'humaine raison, c'est à bon droit que Dieu propose à l'homme l'une et l'autre comme objet de foi.»⁷ Le domaine de la raison naturelle est comme enveloppé par la foi, qui préserve ainsi également les «vérités de raison». Ce dépassement de la foi n'endommage aucunement l'autonomie légitime de la quête rationnelle.

Pourquoi est-il besoin d'une autre discipline que de la philosophie pour avoir la connaissance de Dieu ? Thomas trouve trois groupes d'arguments. Cela est nécessaire, sinon :

1. peu de gens jouiraient de la connaissance de Dieu a) à cause «des mauvaises dispositions de leur tempérament», b) parce que «le temps manque pour le loisir de la recherche contemplative» et c) à cause de la paresse, parce que le but «exige au préalable des connaissances nombreuses». Toutes ces citations se trouvent dans le IV^{ème} chapitre du livre I du *Contra Gentiles*

2. même ceux qui ont des chances pour y parvenir, «les hommes qui arriveront à découvrir la vérité divine, le feraient difficilement et après beaucoup de temps» en raison de la profondeur de cette vérité

3. «les recherches de la raison humaine seraient dans la plupart des cas entachées d'erreur, en raison de la faiblesse de notre intelligence à juger, en raison aussi du mélange des images.»

⁵ *CG* I, ch. III.

⁶ *CG* I, ch. III.

⁷ *CG* I, ch. IV.

Ces raisons peuvent paraître assez peu philosophiques au chercheur du XX^{ème} siècle, mais pour le regard du théologien S. Thomas elles s'avèrent suffisantes.

Dans le chapitre V, il renforce encore le rôle de la foi dans la démarche de l'intelligence : « Nous ne connaissons vraiment Dieu que si nous le croyons au-dessus de tout ce que l'homme peut en concevoir. » On voit là aussi l'importance de l'autorité (de Dieu) dans l'obéissance théologale, qui diffère de l'esprit indépendant de l'ami de la sagesse grecque. Il faut ajouter pourtant que le philosophe se soumet lui aussi à la vérité. Tel est l'avis des maîtres de l'ordre religieux auquel Thomas appartenait, parce que leur devise était celle de la *veritas* et donc leur recherche celle de la *Sophia*. L'autorité divine se manifeste d'abord comme Révélation, autrement dit comme automanifestation de soi, et ce n'est pas légèreté que la foi surnaturelle parce qu'elle est basée sur cette Révélation divine. La source complémentaire de la raison est la révélation surnaturelle, fondée sur la liberté de la grâce.

Les preuves traditionnelles de crédibilité de la révélation se retrouvent chez S. Thomas : « guérison merveilleuse des malades, résurrection des morts, changement étonnant des corps célestes [...], inspiration de l'esprit des hommes. »⁸ La présence dans cette énumération du « changement des corps célestes » nous autorise à faire le rapprochement entre la cosmologie de Thomas (et de son temps) et une vision sacralisée du cosmos.

Quel est le rapport entre les deux sources de cette vérité que la théologie fait sienne ? Sont-elles hétérogènes, même opposées, ou y a-t-il hiérarchie et donc priorité entre les deux ?

La réponse donnée dès le début du *Contra Gentiles* est que « si la vérité de la foi chrétienne dépasse les capacités de la raison humaine, les principes innés naturellement à la raison ne peuvent contredire cependant cette vérité. »⁹ En même temps, « il est impossible que la vérité de foi soit contraire aux principes que la raison connaît naturellement. »¹⁰ Les principes surnaturels sont, en quelque sorte, plus profonds que les principes naturels de la raison et il n'y a pas contradiction entre eux, mais seulement différence de degré. Cela nous rappelle l'esprit de finesse pascalien, les raisons du cœur que la raison naturelle elle-même ignore. La connaissance de Dieu comporte des degrés de visibilité et de certitude. Elle se réalise selon une échelle qui conduit du sensible,

⁸ CG I, ch. VI.

⁹ CG I, ch. VII.

¹⁰ CG I, ch. VII.

à travers l'intelligence et par la foi, à la vision béatifique, où Dieu est connu «tel qu'il est», selon le mot de S. Paul que Thomas reprend.

L'Aquinate donne le cadre général du problème dans ce début du *Contra Gentiles*, sous une forme qui est restée comme paradigme. Les commentateurs, eux, procèdent aux distinctions (pas toujours heureuses) et explicitent les thèses du Maître, par souci d'une meilleure compréhension. Ces présupposés, sur lesquels Thomas bâtit son édifice, sont souvent exposés à travers son œuvre, mais non pas analysés en eux-mêmes, si bien qu'il revient aux continuateurs de les clarifier. Les thomistes se sont acquittés de cette tâche dans des commentaires du texte. La relation entre philosophie et théologie est un problème propédeutique pour l'enseignement de la théologie ; elle est son préambule et un de ses fondements. De fait, la philosophie met en évidence les articulations rationnelles des deux types d'intelligibilité. La révélation est «génératrice de raison», selon le mot d'E. Gilson, et le débat entre philosophes et théologiens se joue sur ce plan-là.

Nous retiendrons quelques remarques sur la raison et sa place dans l'économie de la théologie chrétienne (de Thomas) :

1. La raison naturelle est faillible dans les choses de Dieu.
2. Les vérités auxquelles peut atteindre la raison naturelle se prouvent par voie démonstrative.
3. En Dieu se trouvent des vérités intelligibles accessibles à la raison humaine, d'autres qui en dépassent totalement ses forces.
4. La raison reçoit une grande perfection des vérités suprationnelles qu'elle tient de la foi.
5. La raison humaine ne peut aller contre les vérités de foi.

*ÉTIENNE GILSON: LA MÉTAPHYSIQUE DE L'EXODE*¹¹

«Historiquement, la foi chrétienne a fait recours à la philosophie : pour l'énoncé même de ses dogmes ; pour formuler ses mises en garde contre certaines philosophies, ce qui supposait de la part du christianisme, d'abord l'impossibilité de s'accommoder de toute philosophie et en-

¹¹ Livres et articles : *Introduction à la philosophie chrétienne*, Paris : Vrin, 1960 ; 'Le christianisme et la tradition philosophique', *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques* 30, 1941 :61-81. ; 'Autour de la philosophie chrétienne. La spécificité de l'ordre philosophique', *Vie intellectuelle* 21, 1933 :404-424 ; *Christianisme et philosophie*, Paris : Vrin, 1936 ; *Le thomisme*, 2e éd., Paris : Vrin, 1922 ; *L'esprit de la philosophie médiévale*, Paris : Vrin, 1932 ; *L'être et l'essence*, Paris : Vrin, 1948.

suite la nécessité de préambule de la foi ; pour le développement de ses dogmes dans la totalité d'un discours cohérent.»¹²

Étienne Gilson (1884–1978) s'est fait le défenseur de la «philosophie chrétienne», authentiquement rationnelle et, aussi, authentiquement fidèle au message du Christ. Selon cet exégète de la pensée du Moyen-Age, les théologiens médiévaux, bien qu'ils cherchent à rejoindre leur foi par l'intelligence—*fides quaerens intellectum*—n'en sont pas moins philosophes. De même qu'il existe un art chrétien qui, pour être chrétien, n'en est pas moins un art, il existe une philosophie chrétienne qui est vraiment philosophie, bien qu'elle présente une vue du monde chrétienne: «Ce n'est pas l'influence d'Aristote qui explique la théologie de S. Thomas, c'est la théologie de S. Thomas qui explique l'influence d'Aristote. Plus précisément, c'est l'idée neuve que S. Thomas s'est faite de la théologie comme telle, qui explique l'usage que lui-même a fait d'Aristote.»¹³

L'attitude que Thomas a envers les sciences de la nature est celle du désenchantement, mais «la scolastique n'a pas su tirer de ses principes la physique qui pouvait et devait en découler.»¹⁴

Gilson traite le thème de la «philosophie chrétienne» d'abord en historien de la philosophie et seulement ensuite d'un point de vue doctrinal. Pour cette raison, on pourrait appeler Gilson théologien de l'histoire de la philosophie si cette expression n'était pas trop lourde: «l'expression et la notion même de la 'philosophie chrétienne' exprime une vue théologique de la philosophie, mais il ne suit pas de là que la philosophie ainsi conçue soit elle-même une théologie.»¹⁵

«La foi se comporte à l'égard de la raison comme la grâce à l'égard de la nature.»¹⁶ Ainsi, l'auteur trace un parallélisme entre la gnoséologie *sui generis* engendrée par la foi et une ontologie qui tient compte du surnaturel.

La relation entre la philosophie et la théologie est un thème récurrent dans l'œuvre d'E. Gilson. Il avait écrit dans *Le thomisme*: «Alors que le philosophe en tant que tel prétend ne puiser la vérité qu'aux sources de sa raison seule, le philosophe théologien reçoit la vérité de deux sources différentes: la raison et, puisqu'il est théologien, la foi en la vérité révélée de Dieu dont l'Eglise est l'interprète.»¹⁷

¹² S. Breton: *Foi et raison logique*, Paris: Seuil, 1971: 148.

¹³ Gilson (1941: 76).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*: 421.

¹⁵ Gilson (1936: 39).

¹⁶ *Ibid.*: 134.

¹⁷ Gilson (1922: 22).

Quels sont les domaines respectifs de la raison et de la foi ? La philosophie première a pour objet l'étude des premières causes : le premier moteur qui est une intelligence. Ainsi la vérité est l'objet de la métaphysique comme fin de l'intelligence. Mais Dieu est la vérité selon l'Évangile, donc l'objet de la métaphysique c'est Dieu en tant que vérité.¹⁸

Selon l'Exode, Dieu est celui qui est, donc l'être. Les transcendants médiévaux se convertissent les uns dans les autres et ainsi, Dieu est comme vérité et comme être l'objet de la métaphysique. Sur ce point Thomas rejoint Aristote qui avait posé comme objet de la philosophie première «l'être en tant qu'être».

Mais l'intellect humain peut-il atteindre par ses seules forces l'essence divine ? «Les philosophes peuvent établir, par voie démonstrative, que Dieu existe, qu'il est un, etc. Mais il apparaît très évidemment aussi que certaines connaissances relatives à la nature divine excèdent infiniment les forces de l'entendement humain.»¹⁹

S'il y a en outre une source hétérogène de connaissance, comment les deux vont-elles s'articuler ? «La foi dans la révélation n'aura pas pour résultat de détruire la rationalité de notre connaissance, mais de lui permettre, au contraire, de se développer plus complètement ; de même en effet que la grâce ne détruit pas la nature, mais la féconde, l'exalte et la parfait, de même la foi, par l'influence qu'elle exerce de haut sur la raison en tant que telle, permet le développement d'une activité rationnelle d'un ordre plus fécond.»²⁰

Gilson est d'accord avec Maritain sur ce point, «la raison est inséparable de la foi dans son exercice.»²¹ Ainsi, la philosophie n'est pas séparée, en sens gilsonien, de la théologie. «Il n'y a pas de raison chrétienne, mais il peut y avoir un exercice chrétien de la raison.»²²

L'auteur voit le thomisme comme figure excellente de la philosophie chrétienne. Thomas vient après une longue tradition de «philosophie chrétienne», comme l'a montré par son œuvre Cl. Tresmontant : «Le contenu de la philosophie chrétienne est donc le corps des vérités rationnelles qui ont été découvertes, approfondies ou simplement sauvegardées, grâce à l'aide que la révélation a apportée à la raison.»²³

¹⁸ Cf. *Contra Gentiles* I, 3, 9.

¹⁹ Gilson (1922 : 25).

²⁰ *Ibid.* : 28–29.

²¹ Gilson (1932 : I, p. 12).

²² *Ibid.* : 13.

²³ *Ibid.* : 36–37.

Gilson fait la distinction entre toute philosophie compatible avec le christianisme et la philosophie chrétienne²⁴. Il conclut : « J'appelle donc philosophie chrétienne toute philosophie qui, bien que distinguant formellement les deux ordres, considère la révélation chrétienne comme un auxiliaire indispensable de la raison. »²⁵

*CLAUDE TRESMONTANT: LA MÉTAPHYSIQUE BIBLIQUE*²⁶

« Les problèmes de la philosophie chrétienne sont ces problèmes qui se posent à l'intelligence humaine qui va de la révélation à l'expérience et de l'expérience à la révélation. »²⁷

Tout en continuant la philosophie chrétienne dans la lignée de Gilson, Cl. Tresmontant a développé avec force l'idée de « métaphysique biblique » ou « judéo-chrétienne » à travers son œuvre. La métaphysique biblique se déploie comme une antithèse à la Gnose de la philosophie occidentale. Elle distingue entre l'être créé et increé par l'idée fondamentale de création. La création selon la volonté se distingue également de la génération selon la nature et de la fabrication qui utilise un matériel préexistant. Le créateur est différent du démiurge. L'immanence de l'action créatrice n'empêche pas la consistance propre des créatures et leur dignité de causes. Contre le panthéisme, contre le monopsychisme, Tresmontant retrouve l'excellence de l'être, comme Gilson et son réalisme méthodique.

Mais quelle est la part de la raison dans cette métaphysique biblique qui s'applique aussi, même si elle est dépassée et achevée, dans le christianisme ? « Le christianisme comporte une certaine doctrine de la raison, qui est liée à son ontologie, à sa métaphysique. »²⁸ Sa conception sur la raison n'est donc pas sans lien avec l'idée de la foi : « La foi n'est pas un saut déchirant et tragique, mais un acte suave et paisible, où nos yeux découvrent l'évidence naturelle et surnaturelle de Dieu. »²⁹

²⁴ Cf. Gilson (*ibid.* : 38–39).

²⁵ *Ibid.* : 39.

²⁶ Livres : *Etudes de métaphysique biblique*, Paris : Gabalda, 1955 ; *Essai sur la connaissance de Dieu*, Paris : Cerf, 1959 ; *Les origines de la philosophie chrétiennes*, Paris : Fayard, 1962 ; *La Métaphysique du Christianisme et la crise du treizième siècle*, Paris : Seuil, 1964 ; *Les idées maîtresses de la métaphysique chrétienne*, Paris : Seuil, 1966 ; *Problèmes du christianisme*, Paris : Seuil, 1980.

²⁷ Tresmontant (1980 : 196).

²⁸ Tresmontant (1966 : 91).

²⁹ *Ibid.* : 94.

La notion catholique de raison s'est constituée en opposition avec :

- 1) le fidéisme, qui déprécie la raison,
- 2) l'ontologisme, qui soutient une connaissance naturelle de l'Absolu et
- 3) le «rationalisme», qui méconnaît la distinction entre la raison créée et incréée.

«La raison humaine n'a aucun titre pour refuser comme impossible une chose qu'elle ne connaît pas encore, pour rejeter *a priori* cette manifestation gracieuse de Dieu à l'homme. Refuser la possibilité du surnaturel au nom de la nature donnée en fait, c'est un paralogisme.»³⁰

Dans *Problèmes du christianisme*, l'un de ses derniers ouvrages, Tresmontant s'explique sur les notions-clefs : «Ontologie fondamentale, théologie, cosmologie, anthropologie, tout ce que la tradition hébraïque avait apporté, la pensée chrétienne l'a repris et conservé intégralement.»³¹

Qu'est-ce que la philosophie chrétienne ? «Nous appelons philosophie chrétienne l'ensemble des doctrines de portée proprement philosophique que le christianisme assume, qu'il s'approprie, qu'il reconnaît pour siennes.»³² Et il continue : «J'appelle chrétienne l'ontologie qui est compatible avec le christianisme.»³³

«Il existe une philosophie chrétienne parce qu'il existe un corps de doctrines proprement métaphysiques qui est propre au christianisme et au judaïsme, et que l'intelligence humaine a pu retrouver, vérifier, établir par ses méthodes propres.»³⁴

«Ceux qui mélangent les deux ordres, le théologique et le métaphysique, et qui ne reconnaissent pas la pleine humanité de la part philosophique du christianisme, ses assises rationnelles humaines, son fondement objectif, indépendamment de toute révélation, font comme les monophysites qui confondaient les natures dans le Christ, ou les apollinaristes qui déniaient au Christ une intelligence humaine, ou les monothélites qui refusaient au Christ une opération humaine.»³⁵ Le parallélisme ontologie-christologie éclaire encore une fois la place étonnante de la «philosophie chrétienne» : «La distinction des ordres, la commu-

³⁰ *Ibid.* : 100.

³¹ Tresmontant (1980 : 36).

³² *Ibid.* : 38.

³³ *Ibid.* : 38.

³⁴ *Ibid.* : 39.

³⁵ *Ibid.* : 43.

nication des idiomes dans l'unité d'une même doctrine : c'est l'analogie entre la philosophie chrétienne et la personne du Christ.»³⁶

«La philosophie chrétienne n'existe que si elle est vraie. Elle n'existe que si elle est vérifiable à partir de l'expérience concrète qui s'offre à tous les hommes.»³⁷

L'expérience assure la validité de cette philosophie, comme de toute philosophie : «La rationalité se définit à partir de l'expérience objective, à partir de ce qui est. Nous ne pouvons pas *a priori* déterminer ce qui est rationnel et ce qui ne l'est pas, ce qui est possible et ce qui ne l'est pas, sauf à propos des contradictoires. Nous savons que le contraire de la pensée rationnelle, c'est une pensée qui ne tient pas compte de la réalité objective donnée dans notre expérience, c'est le délire.»³⁸

Mais le phénomène fondateur de la métaphysique chrétienne, et en même temps sa condition de possibilité, c'est la révélation : «Les problèmes de la philosophie chrétienne sont ces problèmes qui se posent à l'intelligence humaine qui va de la révélation à l'expérience et de l'expérience à la révélation.»³⁹

CONCLUSIONS

«La foi chrétienne déborde la philosophie, en redresse certaines positions et est un critère externe de leur vérité»⁴⁰, écrit L. Elders. Mais est-ce ainsi ? Quel est le sens de l'expression «critère externe» ?

Gilson parle d'une «révélation génératrice de raison», tandis que Blondel met en garde contre le danger «d'extrinsécisme», c'est-à-dire la pure juxtaposition des sources de connaissance théologique (raison et révélation). La doctrine totale (philosophique et théologique) de Thomas se fonde philosophiquement sur Aristote ; l'aristotélisme est une «médiété»⁴¹, point de référence et norme de son discours philosophique. Est-ce que c'est légitime de parler d'un «dosage» des sources de la connaissance et, par conséquent, d'une «base principale»⁴² qui se-

³⁶ *Ibid.* : 196.

³⁷ *Ibid.* : 196.

³⁸ *Ibid.* : 196.

³⁹ *Ibid.* : 196.

⁴⁰ Tresmontant (1987 : 18).

⁴¹ *Ibid.* : 18.

⁴² Cf. L. Elders : *Autour de S. Thomas d'Aquin*, Paris : FAC éditions, 1987 : 21 : «Si, malgré le régime de la foi, sous lequel nous vivons, nous voulons continuer l'enseignement selon la *sapientia verbi* (raison humaine), de telle façon que nous la prenions comme la

rait la révélation ? Nous ne le pensons pas. Parce que la philosophie (même « chrétienne ») doit rester entièrement philosophique, tandis que la théologie se pratique « en régime de foi ».

Qu'est-ce qui est caractéristique à la philosophie « chrétienne » ? A la fin de cette recherche, nous pouvons répondre qu'elle est essentiellement une ouverture de la philosophie, par laquelle, reconnaissant ses propres limites constitutives, elle se démontre prête à accueillir des données ultérieures⁴³.

Finalement, chez Thomas, la philosophie est en vue de la théologie (il s'agit de la philosophie d'un théologien selon l'expression de D. Dubarle), sans perdre, pour cela, son autonomie. Elle est servante de la théologie (*ancilla theologiae*), mais, en même temps, la reine des sciences humaines qui sert, ainsi, un but apologétique pour la religion chrétienne. La philosophie peut être pratiquée pour elle-même et, dans ce cas, considérée comme le sommet de la sagesse et c'est son statut chez les Grecs anciens ou bien en vue de la théologie et s'instaurant dans un rapport « reine-servante », avec la prééminence de la sagesse révélée. Dans ce dernier cas, « la sagesse de ce monde » est appelée aussi à conforter le statut rationnel de la théologie, en la consolidant de l'intérieur et en la défendant de l'extérieur.

Mais ce qui pose problème dans cette relation intra-rationnelle est la stricte juxtaposition qui découle. Cette situation de fait se traduit en langage ontologique par la distinction entre nature et surnaturel. Est-ce que cette juxtaposition est suffisante, ce qui peut donner et a donné historiquement naissance à un rapport extrinsèque entre une *pura natura* et l'ordre de la grâce surnaturelle ou bien le problème permet une solution plus nuancée de distinctions conceptuelles ?

Les théologiens adoptent les schèmes de pensée préparés par la philosophie et les utilisent comme pierres à bâtir pour leur propre édifice ; la philosophie tombe alors au rang de pressentiment de la théologie. Ce qui nous semble être le cas d'Aristote par rapport à S. Thomas.

base principale de notre doctrine, nous corrompons la foi. Il en va autrement quand nous prenons la foi comme notre fondement et que nous utilisons *in obsequium fidei* ce que nous trouvons de vrai dans les doctrines des philosophes.»

⁴³ M. Blondel, : 'La notion de philosophie chrétienne', *Bulletin de la Société française de philosophie* 1931 : 88 : « Par raison, par devoir, constitutionnellement si l'on peut dire, la philosophie doit-elle aboutir, quel que soit le stade de son évolution, à reconnaître en quoi elle est normalement incomplète, comment elle creuse en elle et devant elle un vide préparé non pas seulement pour ses découvertes ultérieures et sur son propre terrain, mais pour des lumières et des apports dont elle n'est pas elle-même et ne peut devenir l'origine réelle ? »

RAHNER AND LONERGAN ON THE COMMITMENT TO ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

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Rahner and Lonergan bear witness to and emphasize a personal commitment to St. Thomas Aquinas. This personal commitment to St. Thomas is what counts, whether the study of St. Thomas is encouraged by ecclesiastical authority or not, whether Thomistic Studies boom or are considered out of fashion. The personal commitment to St. Thomas has its grounds in the ongoing relevance of St. Thomas thought, and this sets before us the tasks of appropriating his framework, and transposing Aquinas' framework into the self-understanding of the contemporary person as we search for answers and solutions to questions and problems of our time. And the process of transposing Aquinas' framework into the self-understanding of the contemporary person leads to developing the position of Aquinas, thereby arguing a case for what William A. Wallace calls "developmental Thomism".

The year 2002 marked the 750th Anniversary since St. Thomas Aquinas began teaching at the University of Paris. So it was befitting to have a conference in Hungary dedicated to "a reassessment of the meaning of Aquinas" and "his influence", an influence which, for some, is not restricted to commitment to the school known as "Thomism".

In 1974, a colloquy on medieval religious thought, which took place at the University of Chicago Divinity School, was organised jointly by the University of Chicago, the Catholic Theological Union and the Jesuit School of Theology at Chicago to mark the septcentenary cel-

celebration of Saints Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas.¹ This colloquy had as its leitmotif the theme of “Tradition and Innovation”. For it is seen that Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas were for the people of their time great innovators of the Christian Tradition. The opening lectures of this colloquy were delivered by Richard McKeon, Bernard Lonergan and Karl Rahner. Rahner and Lonergan, two outstanding philosopher-theologians of the 20th century, spoke on Aquinas.

Rahner and Lonergan, themselves genuine innovators of the Christian Tradition, bear witness to and emphasize a personal commitment to St. Thomas Aquinas. This personal commitment to St. Thomas is what counts, whether the study of St. Thomas is encouraged by ecclesiastical authority or not, whether Thomistic Studies boom or are considered out of fashion (§1). The personal commitment to St. Thomas has its grounds in the ongoing relevance of St. Thomas thought (§2), and this sets before us the tasks of appropriating his framework (§3), and transposing Aquinas’ framework into the self-understanding of the contemporary person as we search for answers and solutions to questions and problems of our time (§4).

And the work of transposing Aquinas’ framework into the self-understanding of the contemporary person leads to developing the position of Aquinas, thereby arguing a case for what William A. Wallace calls “developmental Thomism” (§5).

I.

If the *Aeterni Patris* of Leo XIII in 1879 set into motion the boom in Thomistic Studies, it remains that that trend waned particularly after the second Vatican Council. The flow of literary turn-out on Thomistic Studies later experienced an ebb marked by disinterest in Thomism in particular and Scholasticism as a whole. As Lonergan remarked, “what had been a torrent has become a trickle.”² But in the period of draught of interest in St. Thomas, Rahner and Lonergan continued to stress their indebtedness to him and insisted on the relevance of the Angelic Doctor for the post-conciliar developments in philosophy and theology. They continued to refer to him, to speak about him, and also warned against any attempt to jettison him from the framework

¹ ‘Celebrating the Medieval Heritage: A Colloquy on the Thought of Aquinas and Bonaventure’. Supplement to *The Journal of Religion* vol. LVIII, 1978.

² B. Lonergan: *A Third Collection*, ed. F. E. Crowe, New York: Paulist Press, 1985: 35.

of Catholic thought or neglect him. Their personal commitment to St. Thomas remained steadfast both in the flow and ebb of Thomistic literary production.

A tour of their earlier and later writings reveals their commitment to St. Thomas Aquinas in and out of season of Thomistic scholarship. Karl Rahner's major philosophical works, *Spirit in the World* and *Hearer of the Word*, form the bedrock of his theological writings.³ They were written in the high season of Thomistic Scholarship, and together with other related smaller writings of his, express his personal allegiance to St. Thomas.

In his later writings, especially those of the post-conciliar period, Rahner drew attention of contemporary Catholic theologians to the importance of St. Thomas. He regretted the "strange silence on the subject of Thomas"⁴ shown by the recession of St. Thomas into the background among theologians. Rahner wanted this trend to be put to a halt, not through a sort of naïve commitment to St. Thomas such as restoring the former seminary Thomism or making his works the textbook of theology for today, but rather by making Thomas "alive in contemporary theology even though his function in it is more or less that of a Father of the Church."⁵ Rahner hoped that St. Thomas' teaching could be kept alive in contemporary theology, if independent thinkers constantly emerge afresh in theology and take up courage to swim against the current of the cult of mere modernism by entering the arduous school of a great master like St. Thomas. It is the presence of such independent and courageous thinkers and theologians that could guarantee keeping St. Thomas alive in contemporary philosophical and theological thinking.⁶

In this period of disinterest in Thomistic studies, Rahner would lecture and publish on themes concerning St. Thomas. His essay on *The Concept of Truth according to Aquinas*, which came from the same period with his *Spirit in the World* and *Hearer of the World*, would appear in publication, in a then new volume of the Theological Investigations. Rahner would write on the *Hiddenness of God*, and *The incomprehensibility of God according to St. Thomas*. These two themes have their roots in his *Spirit*

³ G. A. McCool: 'The Philosophy of the Human Person in Karl Rahner', *Theological Studies* 22, 1961: 537-562.

⁴ K. Rahner: *Theological Investigation*, Vol. XIII, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1975: 3f.

⁵ *Ibid.*: 4.

⁶ *Ibid.*: 12.

in the World and Hearer of the Word. His writing on *The incomprehensibility of God in St. Thomas* has appeared in at least three different forms, attesting to the fact that he spoke on this theme in the 1970s at least for three different occasions that demanded increasing penetration into the matter. Rahner took up again in his *Foundations of Christian Faith* the epistemological grounding already present in his *Hearer of the Word* that is grounded in the Thomistic metaphysics of knowledge. Prof. Coreth⁷ has added Rahner's *Foundations of Christian Faith* to *Spirit in the World* and *Hearer of the Word* as the main works in which one can find the philosophical foundations of Karl Rahner's Theology. Coreth would say further that most of the criticisms of Rahner's theology owe their origins to a lack of understanding of its philosophical foundations. These works, which form the philosophical foundations of Rahner's theology, have their roots in Rahner's interpretation of St. Thomas. And to conclude, it is worth saying that Rahner kept mentioning explicitly the Name of Aquinas in all the sixteen volumes of his *Schriften zur Theologie*,⁸ thereby making the voice of Aquinas resound both in his early and later writings.

Lonergan's two major historical works on St. Thomas, the *Gratia Operans* and the *Verbum*, were also written when the outpour of Thomistic scholarship was a torrent. In his first major work on St. Thomas Aquinas, *Gratia Operans*, he studied the speculative development of St. Thomas on the question of operative grace and freedom. He followed up this historical study of St. Thomas with his investigation of the *Verbum* in the thought of St. Thomas. In the *Verbum* he studied Aquinas on cognitional theory.⁹ Lonergan's major philosophical work, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, is indebted to St. Thomas. Lonergan notes that there are clarifications in his book *Insight*, which come from St. Thomas. For instance: the distinctions between understanding and concept, between the reflective understanding and judgement, between the question of value and the judgment, between the question of value and the judgment of value – what St. Thomas calls proceeding love.¹⁰

⁷ E. Coreth: *Beiträge zur Christlichen Philosophie*, Innsbruck: Tyrolia, 1999: 373.

⁸ K. Rahner's *Schriften zur Theologie* has 16 volumes. Even where there seems to be a lack of an explicit mention of Aquinas in the index of a volume, one can stumble upon references to St. Thomas by reading the text. But this opinion may not apply to the English translation which is titled *Theological Investigations* and amounts to 23 volumes.

⁹ B. Lonergan: *A Second Collection*, ed. W. F. J. Ryan and B. J. Tyrrell, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996: 38.

¹⁰ P. Lambert et al. (eds.): *Caring About Meaning, Patterns in the life of Bernard Lonergan*, Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1982: 21.

In his later writings Lonergan continued to acknowledge his indebtedness to Aquinas and to develop on the conclusions of his earlier studies. He would write an *After thought*¹¹ on his study of cognitional theory in St. Thomas by saying that St. Thomas laid the foundation of the transition from soul to subject. He would defend the validity of Thomist epistemology and philosophy of God in the face of the assault launched by Leslie Dewart in his *The Future of Belief: Theism in an age come of age*.¹² He continued to argue in his later works like *Method in Theology, Philosophy of God and Theology*, and *A Second Collection*, for the need to fuse natural and systematic theology in the manner of Aquinas's *Summa Contra Gentiles* and *Summa theologiae*.¹³ He would speak on the ongoing relevance of St. Thomas within the interplay of tradition and innovation.¹⁴ And towards the end of his life, he would say in an interview in 1981 that he had learned an awful lot from St. Thomas, that the structure of his thinking is conspicuously Thomist; that other people could see what he is doing and know that that is what Thomas was doing.¹⁵

Both Rahner and Lonergan express a stable personal commitment to St. Thomas that cuts across the wide spectrum of their reflecting, teaching and writing.

2.

Rahner and Lonergan were quite aware that St. Thomas was a man of his time, and that over seven hundred years separate him from us. They knew that in this span of time so much have occurred in world history, and human thinking has taken directions that even the Angelic Doctor could not have envisaged. In spite of this they emphasized the need for a personal commitment to St. Thomas, because a lot of what he said then could still be of interest to the contemporary philosopher and theologian.

In drawing attention to the ongoing relevance of St. Thomas' thought, Rahner said that the Second Vatican Council, in spite of its less forceful tone, still refers to the role of St. Thomas in philosophical and

¹¹ B. Lonergan: *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, CWL Vol. 2, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997: 3–11.

¹² Lonergan 1996: 11–32.

¹³ *Ibid.*: 277.

¹⁴ Lonergan (1985: 35–54).

¹⁵ Lambert et al. (1982: 103).

theological formation. This Council has singled out St. Thomas among other Church Fathers in its pronouncement on ecclesiastical studies.¹⁶

We live in a post-Kantian world where the anthropological turn still influences the cultural and intellectual life of people. Rahner recommends for anyone interested in reaching back to roots of the anthropological turn in thinking, not to bypass St. Thomas who is an initiator of the anthropocentric approach.¹⁷ He is of the view that one could stumble upon certain qualities of transcendental theology in St. Thomas' writings, which shows that transcendental theology is not an absolutely new discovery of an area of investigation that has never existed before.¹⁸

In an age where historicity takes a dominant role in human thinking, Rahner sees the need for contemporary thinkers to look at St. Thomas' few explicit reflections on the historicity of the human person and of his thought.¹⁹

He stressed the need of theologians and philosophers of today to learn from St. Thomas. For they can learn from him what it means

to think in breadth, to have enough boldness to be modest and self-critical, to give devoted consideration to points which seem uninteresting or not relevant to the moment, to listen to, and take seriously, the views of others, even when they may at first be on a different wave-length from oneself in the arguments they put forward, to recognize genuinely and sincerely that one can only exercise self-criticism, and so be truly modern and avoid merely following the fashions of yesterday with the rest, by bearing in mind the ideas of earlier ages.²⁰

Contemporary philosophers and theologians can also learn from St. Thomas to recognize the limits of philosophical and theological insights and to have a sense of reverence and yearning for the eternal light. They need to learn from him not only how to strive for a precise linguistic formulation of their insights, but also how to adore the mystery that transcends all powers of expression. They need to learn from St. Thomas what it means to be forced out of the brightness of dimension which they can comprehend, and into the mystery of God where they no longer grasp but rather are grasped, where they no longer ra-

¹⁶ *Theological Investigations*, Vol. XIII, 3f.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* : 4f.

¹⁸ K. Rahner: *Theological Investigations*, Vol. XI, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974: 86.

¹⁹ *Theological Investigations*, Vol. XIII, 1of.

²⁰ *Ibid.* : 7f.

tionalize but rather adore, where they no longer control but rather are themselves subject to a higher control.²¹

For Lonergan also, there is an ongoing relevance of St. Thomas for philosophers and theologians of today. For the ongoing differentiations of consciousness and specializations of the fields of inquiry is making contemporary philosophers and theologians to be confronted with the type of problematics that St. Thomas faced. So we need today an apologetic clarification of issues just as Aquinas did. And systematic thinking in theology and philosophy today needs a broad and coherent basis just as in the days of Aquinas. Our account of the human person's salvation today presupposes an adequate understanding of the human person just as in the times of Aquinas.²²

Now, apart from the fact that we are facing a similar problematic like Aquinas, there is also continuity in the way of solving the problems. Lonergan saw in the implicit methodical approach to medieval specialization in theology something similar to our explicit methodical approach today. So it is that what is achieved in Lonergan's functional specialties of research, interpretation, and history was the kind of thing that was sought for by Aquinas in his commentaries and books of sentences. What is now carried on in the functional specialties of dogmatics and systematics is what Aquinas did in his questions and summas. There is continuity in methodical approach in theological reflection with the only difference that we now take seriously the reflection and justification of theological and philosophical methodology.²³

Again, in an age where the turn to the subject has dominated human thinking, and intentionality analysis is playing a key role in phenomenological thinking, there is a need to turn to Aquinas who had a firm grasp of what introspective analysis consists in, and who together with Aristotle and St. Augustine practised an introspective analysis whose focus lies in the objectification of our acts of conscious intentionality. Lonergan says that Aquinas said enough about the subject that enabled him to write his *Verbum* articles.²⁴

The problem of philosophical method plays a key role in philosophical thinking since the rise of modern philosophy. In the concern for philosophical method there has emerged from Kant to Gadamer various formulations of what has been characterized as the transcen-

²¹ *Ibid.* : 8.

²² *A Third Collection*, 51.

²³ *Ibid.* : 51f.

²⁴ *A Second Collection*, 53.

dental method as the proper method of philosophising. For Lonergan St. Thomas understood the point of what this method is all about, although he did not elaborate a transcendental method. An evidence of this is “St. Thomas’s argument against Averroes: Averroes’s position implied the conclusion that *this man does not understand* and St. Thomas concluded that therefore *this man was not to be listened to*.”²⁵

Furthermore, modern science rejected the scientific ideal of Aristotle’s Posterior Analytics, just as Aquinas did. Lonergan says that Aquinas did not allow himself to be caught in the implications of scientific ideal represented in Aristotle’s Posterior Analytics. For Aquinas placed a restriction on the application of the scientific ideal of essential predication, in so far as he kept insisting that we neither know the essence of God nor the essence of the substance of material objects.²⁶

Moreover, Aquinas’s achievement in differentiating the orders of nature and grace, philosophy and theology still lives on and deserves to be pushed further. His distinction between the natural and the supernatural order paved the way for an independent study of nature in which, first, philosophy is studied for its own sake without just serving as a tool for theology, and second, natural science sought for its autonomy, not only from Aristotle, but also from philosophy, and third, that scholarship made it possible to make the history of religions an independent study from theology.²⁷

Lastly, an adequate knowledge of St. Thomas plays a key role for understanding subsequent developments in theology and philosophy. Just as any theologian reading Tertullian need to be acquainted with Stoicism, and those reading Origen need to be acquainted with middle Platonism; just as any theologian reading Augustine has to be acquainted with Neoplatonism and in reading Aquinas needs an acquaintance with Aristotle, Avicenna and Averroes, so also must one know Aquinas in order to understand better the subsequent theologians.²⁸

3.

The ongoing relevance of the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas sets before us a two-fold task: of appropriating the framework of Aquinas and

²⁵ *Ibid.* : 53.

²⁶ *A Third Collection*, 49, 187.

²⁷ *Ibid.* : 36.

²⁸ *A Second Collection*, 137.

transposing his framework in contemporary problematic. Rahner and Lonergan give helpful indications on how one could go about the task of appropriating the framework of St. Thomas's thought.

Appropriating the thought of St. Thomas meant for Rahner the effort to get at the really philosophical event in St. Thomas that remained at the background of his theological works. To grasp the really philosophical in St. Thomas means to join St. Thomas in looking at the matter itself so as to understand what he means. It involves reliving the philosophy itself as it unfolds by taking a definite starting point and abandoning oneself to the dynamism of the matter itself and evaluating the accuracy of one's understanding by constantly checking the progress of development in understanding him against his explicit statements. It involves reconstructing that living philosophy out of which St. Thomas wrote his theology but never articulated in its unity and development, and which rather remained hidden in the silence of his thought.²⁹

To appropriate St. Thomas meant for Rahner posing questions to St. Thomas that have to drive the finished propositions in St. Thomas' writings back to their objective problematic.³⁰

Rahner's appropriation of St. Thomas' thought means more than just assembling and summarizing the relevant statements he made. It involves a creative reconstruction of his original line of reasoning. Such an interpretation of St. Thomas does distinguish itself from the common opinion in scholasticism and it wants its claim of validity to be settled not by invoking the consensus of scholastics, but rather only by a fresh examination of St. Thomas' own writings and of the matter itself.³¹

The task of appropriating St. Thomas demands that we take a specific theme from his writings and follow it up as it unfolds the total viewpoint of St. Thomas on the topic at hand. Rahner carried out this task by taking the theme of Conversion to phantasm as a fundamental phenomenon from which he could unfold the broadlines of Thomist metaphysics of knowledge.³²

Lonergan speaks about his appropriation of St. Thomas in terms of the years he spent "reaching up to the mind of Aquinas." This reaching up to the mind of Aquinas could be understood along the lines of

²⁹ K. Rahner: *Spirit in the World*, trans. W. Dych trans, New York: Continuum, 1994: xlix-l.

³⁰ *Ibid.*: li-llii.

³¹ *Theological Investigations*, Vol. XIII, 14f.

³² Rahner (1994: liiif).

the Leonine programme of veteran *novis augere et perficere*, of augmenting and perfecting the old by the new. His studies on Aquinas' *Gratia operans* and *Verbum* led him to penetrate the mind of Aquinas in order to ascertain the *vetera*. The labour of penetrating the mind of Aquinas made him to follow Aquinas through his successive works the variations and developments of his views. Hence he could see for himself how the intellect of Aquinas developed more rapidly on some points and more slowly on others until it reached a position of dynamic equilibrium that continued to drive towards fuller and more nuanced synthesis.³³

To illustrate this developing mind of Aquinas on a specific question of cognitional theory, Lonergan says that Aquinas had a growth in the development of the distinction firstly, between understanding and concept, and secondly, between concept and judgment. He says that if one reads carefully, one will find this development in Aquinas of the distinction between concept and judgment.

In the *Sentences* Thomas hasn't the distinction between concept and understanding. That occurs for the first time in the *De veritate*. In the fourth book of the *Sentences* there may be something like that, but in the clear instance, he is describing an architect, a man planning a city: he has his key idea, his inspiration, and then the unfolding of it—planning various ornaments, buildings and streets, market places and so on—a big layout. Conceiving it is the planning part, but you have to be intelligent to understand how these things will fit together, what would be aesthetic, and all the rest that is the understanding, and he calls it *prima forma*. The other, the product of it, is *secunda forma*, and that Thomas calls the *conceptio* or *conceptus*.³⁴

This development could be seen in St. Thomas's division of inner words. On this division, Lonergan notes "four major works of Aquinas and a large number of his commentators are silent."³⁵ The works he cited are "the *Sentences*, the *Contra Gentiles*—which [...] mentions definition but not judgment [...], the *Summa* [...] and the *Compendium Theologiae*." As an exception from the other commentators, he says that "Ferrariensis acknowledges the twofold inner word."³⁶ He goes on to say that "four other works of recognized standing divide inner words into the two classes of definitions and judgments, and three of these recall the

³³ B. Lonergan: *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1957: 747f.

³⁴ Lambert et al. (1982: 101).

³⁵ Lonergan (1997: 17).

³⁶ *Ibid.*: 17, note 19.

parallel of the Aristotelian twofold operation of the mind.”³⁷ In addition, “the *De veritate* argues that there is a *processio operati* in the intellect”, which “clearly supposes that the judgment is an inner word, for only in the judgment is there truth or falsity”, and he goes on to stress that “while Aquinas does refer frequently to the inner word as a *conceptio*, *conceptum*, *conceptus*, [...] Aquinas employed it to denote judgments” and that inner words correspond mainly to reality, which is divided “into essence and existence.”³⁸

The task of appropriating St. Thomas demands that one learns to practise introspective analysis of one’s cognitional and volitional acts. Lonergan was convinced that it is only through a personal practice of introspective analysis of our cognitional acts that we can understand that *intelligere* means understanding for Aquinas. The contention of Lonergan’s *Verbum* study is that to follow Aquinas in catching up the point that *intelligere* for him means understanding, “one must practice introspective rational psychology; without that, one no more can know the created image of the Blessed Trinity, as Aquinas conceived it, than a blind man can know colors.”³⁹ In other words, “it is only through a personal appropriation of one’s own rational self-consciousness that one can hope to reach the mind of Aquinas.”⁴⁰

4

Coupled with the task of appropriating St. Thomas’ thought is the task of transposing his framework into the burning issues of our time. The transposition of the framework of Aquinas into the horizon of a modern person’s consciousness was a task that Rahner and Lonergan set to themselves.

Rahner said explicitly that his intention of doing a historical study on St. Thomas in his *Spirit in the World* was conditioned by the need to transpose St. Thomas into the framework of contemporary problematic. He says that his aim of getting away from so much of what was called neo-scholasticism to return to St. Thomas himself was to “move closer to those questions which are being posed to contemporary philosophy.”⁴¹ For this reason a “confrontation of modern philosophy

³⁷ *Ibid.* : 17.

³⁸ *Ibid.* : 17.

³⁹ *Ibid.* : 24.

⁴⁰ Lonergan (1957 : 748).

⁴¹ Rahner (1994 : xlvii).

from Kant to Heidegger with Thomas⁴² remained at the background of the work. The problem of modern philosophy, which he means here is the critical foundation of metaphysics and the question of man and knowledge God as an integral part of general metaphysics.

This intention of transposing the framework of Aquinas is indicated in Rahner's paper, *Thomas Aquinas on the Incomprehensibility of God*. In this paper Rahner undertook a two-fold task. In the first part he set out to "speak about this teaching in Thomas himself 'historically', to say something about this teaching as it is given in his writings. Then in a second part, leaving Thomas behind, as it were," Rahner tried "to translate this teaching into the self-understanding of a contemporary man [...], to speak about the incomprehensibility of man and of God in a way that seems appropriate for a contemporary man,"⁴³ thereby showing "that the ultimate that we can still say about man even today is just what Thomas had already known with admirable clarity and sobriety."⁴⁴ Paul Ricoeur describes this procedure of Rahner's as satisfying "the most fundamental rule of any hermeneutics, that is, that the interpreter transfers and translates the meaning of a work of the past into the language of his own time, by doing so, acknowledges and preserves the distance between this past and his present."⁴⁵

In describing Rahner's transposition of St. Thomas J. B. Metz said that Rahner's "*Spirit in the World* uses a Thomistic metaphysics of knowledge explained in terms of transcendental and existential philosophy to define man as that essence of absolute transcendence towards God insofar as man in his understanding and interpretation of the world respectfully 'pre-apprehends' (vorgreift) towards God."⁴⁶

Lonergan considers what he did in his book *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* to be a transposition of the framework of Aquinas which he has appropriated through the years of labouring to reach up of the mind of Aquinas. His *Insight* is "an independently elaborated system of thought" in which he imports Aquinas' "compelling genius to the problems of this later day."⁴⁷ What he has done is a transposition of Aquinas' framework to answer the problems posed by both seven

⁴² *Ibid.* : lii.

⁴³ K. Rahner: 'Thomas Aquinas on the Incomprehensibility of God', *Journal of Religion Supplement*, 1978 : 107.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* : 107.

⁴⁵ P. Ricoeur: 'Response to Karl Rahner's lecture: 'On the Incomprehensibility of God'', *Journal of Religion Supplement*, 1978 : 126.

⁴⁶ Rahner (1994 : xvi).

⁴⁷ Lonergan (1957 : 748).

centuries of modern science and the critical problem raised by modern philosophy since Descartes and Kant. His transposition of Aquinas's framework is able to provide a synthesis of modern science and modern philosophy, develop a critical metaphysics and a philosophy of God that are verified in the psychological experience of the cognitive fact of knowing, objectivity and reality in response to three basic questions: What do I do when I am knowing? Why doing that knowing? What is known when I am knowing?

Lonerган notes that Aquinas' *Summa theologiae* aimed at providing a single coherent set of principles "relevant to every question that might be raised" in theology, while the *Contra Gentiles* explicitly aimed at "the manifestation of Catholic truth and the exclusion of opposite errors."⁴⁸ Lonergan' *Method in Theology* transposes the aim of the *Summa theologiae* for a coherent set of principles into creating a fundamental method based on the four levels of conscious intentionality whose specification in theology as functional specialties provides a coherent set of operations need to settle any question that might arise in theological reflection. This same fundamental method transposes into a methodical theology the concerns of the *Contra Gentiles*. A methodical theology operates on the basis of a heuristic structure that enables one to determine the positions and counter-positions of theological understanding and affirmation.

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A commitment to St. Thomas that is characterized by the two-fold task of appropriating St. Thomas's framework and transposing it into a contemporary context would argue a "case for developmental Thomism", in a sense differentiated from William A. Wallace's.⁴⁹

William Wallace means by "developmental Thomism" the Thomism as developed after the death of St. Thomas. He distinguishes this form of Thomism from "historical Thomism, the Thomism of the thirteenth century." Developmental Thomism results from the dialogue that Thomists or those trained in the Thomistic tradition engage in with every philosophical current of interest. The fruitfulness of this dialogue is the development in philosophical and theological thinking that helps to keep Thomism alive. But this has its validity if the "de-

⁴⁸ *A Second Collection*, 45f.

⁴⁹ W. A. Wallace: 'The Case for Developmental Thomism', *Proceedings of The American Catholic Philosophical Association* XLIV, 1970: 1-16.

velopers” are kept honest, if they preserve the purity of St. Thomas’ teaching and do not corrupt it by foreign influences. He argues that the phases of renewal in Thomism arose as reactions to the failure of developers of Thomism to make their developmental Thomism authentic by preserving the purity of St. Thomas’ teaching. Now one could go further and ask if Wallace’s criteria for an authentic developmental Thomism that preserves the purity of St. Thomas’ teaching is “purely Thomistic.”

Rahner and Lonergan argue for a developmental Thomism that claims to be an authentic Thomism, without conceding to the mistaken view that a developmental Thomism can only be authentically Thomistic when it takes “on the appearance of a mummy that would preserve for all time Greek science and medieval common sense.”⁵⁰ For Rahner a developmental Thomism can claim to be Thomistic if “it begins with the starting point given by Thomas” and developmental if “such starting points given by Thomas will be pushed further by one’s own thought” in such a way “that the historically accessible fragments of his philosophy can really become philosophy.”⁵¹ Rahner understood his developmental Thomism to be of the kind “which shares the objective concerns of contemporary philosophy and which joins Thomas in looking first at the matter itself, and only then at the formulation which is found in Thomas.”⁵² And Lonergan’s developmental Thomism is authentically Thomistic since it has been able to piece “together from Thomist writings a sufficient number of indications and suggestions to form an adequate account of wisdom in cognitional terms”, which Aquinas seems not to have “treated explicitly.”⁵³ Just as Aquinas’ emanatio intelligibilis gives an account of the rational process “that made explicit what Augustine could only suggest”, so is Lonergan’s analysis of our levels of conscious intentionality an authentic development of Aquinas who “did practice psychological introspection and through that experimental knowledge of his own soul arrived at his highly nuanced, deeply penetrating, firmly outlined theory of the nature of the human intellect”,⁵⁴ although he did not elevate the introspective analysis “into a reflectively elaborated technique.”⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Lonergan (1957: 401).

⁵¹ Rahner (1994: 1).

⁵² *Ibid.*: lii.

⁵³ Lonergan (1957: 407).

⁵⁴ Lonergan (1997: 104).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*: 6.

To conclude, the commitment of St. Thomas discernable both in the thinking and in the explicit formulation of Rahner and Lonergan lies in appropriating and developing the position of St. Thomas in order to answer the questions posed today concerning the human person's knowledge of himself, of his being in a world and of his relation to God, the incomprehensible mystery, in whose presence St. Thomas was inspired to say: *adoro te devote, latens Deitas, quae sub his figures vere latitas.*

KARL RAHNER'S NOTION OF *VORGRIFF*

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The paper will examine the role of the notion of *Vorgriff* in Rahner's thought. Rahner was convinced that man's nature is being oriented towards God. The meaning of the notion of *Vorgriff* ('preapprehension') depicts man as a being who lacks something and whose main characteristic is "world-openness". In which sense can one preapprehend being? Is it apprehended in totality, or partly? Is it an explicit or implicit knowledge about being? If we proceed with this notion of the intellect to infinity, how can one, without further ado, identify infinity with God? In the paper, I shall examine the philosophical roots of Rahner's notion of *Vorgriff*, as one can find it in Maréchal and Heidegger. In addition, I will show how Rahner reconciles the Kantian challenge with Maréchal and Heidegger. Finally, I will argue that the notion of *Vorgriff* opens the way of transcendental Thomism towards the Platonic tradition.

The word *Vorgriff* is usually translated as 'preapprehension'. Rahner's theory of the *Vorgriff auf das Sein*, the preapprehension of being, plays a decisive role in his theology and philosophy. He thinks that by the help of this word one can express the fundamental being and God-orientedness of man. In other words, if we were to rank theology and anthropology in terms of their respective importance, then theology would be primary. But, as a starting point, the word 'preapprehension' is very important in his anthropology as well, namely it depicts the man as a being who lacks something and whose main characteristic is "world-openness". This world-openness reveals that man already possesses somehow the totality of being. Therefore, the relation between

theology and anthropology (Rahner's anthropology in *The Hearer of the Word* is called sometimes natural theology) is hardly definable.

Not only the question of the relation of theology to anthropology is controversial, but the word *Vorgriff* as well. What does it mean to preapprehend being? In which sense can one preapprehend being? Is it apprehended in totality, or partly? Is it an explicit or implicit knowledge about being? If we proceed with this motion of the intellect to infinity, how can one without further ado identify infinity with God? These and other questions arise here and we hope that with the analysis of the notion of *Vorgriff* we can give proper answers to these questions.

Let us approach the problem from another point of view, from Joseph Maréchal's interpretation of Kant. Actually Maréchal's work was not an interpretation, rather it was a confrontation of Thomism with the 'critical' philosophy of Kant. He wanted to give a possible Thomistic answer to the questions raised by Kant. Maréchal's original thought was that if one develops further St. Thomas Aquinas' idea of intellectual dynamism, then one can overcome the antinomy between the (Kantian) understanding and (Kantian) pure reason. Kant's question was: how can one have absolutely certain knowledge? He formulated a radically different answer, namely he rejected experience as non-reliable datum and turned to the preconditions of every kind of experience. The absolutely certain knowledge is founded upon the preconditions of experience, in other words, "our *a priori* knowledge is based, not on the nature of things we know, but on the nature of our way of knowing things."¹ And it was a very new approach to shift the focus of philosophical inquiry from reasoning about experience to reasoning about having experience and its subjective preconditions. This is the examination of the *a priori*, which is independent of experiences. To be independent of experiences means that this kind of knowledge, the *a priori* knowledge, is the basis of every other kind of knowledge. In order to get this *a priori* knowledge one has to analyze the mental constructions. This was Kant's "transcendental philosophy", but not transcendental enough for Maréchal! Maréchal claimed that Kant was inconsistent in two things: firstly, in emphasizing the dynamic nature of the intellect; and secondly, in appreciating that this dynamic movement of the intellect is toward absolute being, toward God. According to Maréchal, this dynamic movement is revealed in every judgment at least partially, as the subject in every act of judgment points beyond the object and points at an absolute being. But at this point Maréchal is

¹ W. A. Herr: *Catholic Thinkers in the Clear*, Allen, Texas: Thomas More, 1985 : 248.

in opposition to Kant, because stating that God is the ultimate goal of the intellect's movement means that God is not only a postulate of the practical reason, but a speculative necessity of knowledge. In his philosophy, God is not a mere postulate, "a system filling in god", but the ground of every possible cognition.

The dynamic movement of the intellect can be observed in every judgment. In the act of judgment the subject sets itself over against the object and it is a partial realization of the intellect's dynamic orientation, as the subject takes its place in a wider context of the cognition. The judgment, according to Maréchal, implicitly affirms its movement's ultimate goal, that is, God. We have to emphasize here that Maréchal doesn't speak about explicit knowledge about God in the act of judgment. God in the judgment is not a direct object, but, on the one hand, he is revealed as the *a priori* condition of objectification, as He who makes possible the judgment as such, and, on the other hand, He is revealed as the aim of the movement of the intellect.

Maréchal accepted the Kantian starting question about the possibility of absolutely certain knowledge and he appreciated as Kant did the activity of the mind, but as Maréchal says he (Kant) should have considered the dynamism of the intellect as an *a priori* condition of knowledge. Maréchal was convinced that the consequent use of the Kantian method can lead to the solution of the problem and one can overcome Kantian skepticism. He thought that one can make a comparison between St. Thomas Aquinas and Kant and with the developing of the implicit idea of the intellectual dynamism of Aquinas one can give a satisfactory answer to the questions of the modern philosophy. He adopted the transcendental method, which he believed was virtually present in the thought of Aquinas, and with this he prepared the way for the so-called "transcendental Thomism". Of course, he was strongly criticized because although he accepts the Kantian point of departure and method, he draws too far-reaching conclusions from it, namely he tries thereby to establish the existence of God. His critics say that these consequences are illegitimate; Kant didn't want to prove the existence of God and by no means in such a way. For Maréchal, adopting Kant's transcendental method was not a scholastic baptizing of Kant, but the appreciation of his insights concerning the possibilities of the mind's intentional acts. Moreover, for Maréchal as a scholastic philosopher, Kant's thought on the existence of God as the postulate of the practical reason was unacceptable. Maréchal was aware that Kant imposes a limit of the activity of always reaching beyond the intellect: he limits it

to the realm of things we experience within space-time. What Maréchal did was to drop these limits.

With the reception of the Kantian method, Maréchal prepared the way for Rahner's notion of *Vorgriff*. Nevertheless, the creator of the word was not Maréchal, but Martin Heidegger. Rahner, while in the Jesuit novitiate in Feldkirch, Austria studied mostly Maréchal and Kant, later in Freiburg-im-Breisgau Rahner attended the lectures of Heidegger. In Heidegger's lectures Rahner met first with the word *Vorgriff*. From the 20's on, Heidegger used this word not exclusively, but together with *Vorbabe* (fore-having) and *Vorsicht* (foresight). According to Heidegger, in the realization of every philosophical thought, the realization exists in a region-foregoing preapprehension (*in einem region-vorwegnehmenden Vorgriff lebt*).² The preapprehension plays the role of an original motivation-basis (*ursprüngliche Motivbasis*),³ from where the philosophical inquiry can set out. In another place, Heidegger says that there is a kind of fundamental experience of the consciousness of existence (*Dasein*) and from this fundamental experience follows the claim of the reflection upon preapprehension, fore-having and foresight, from which philosophy stems (*entspringt*) and always strikes back (*zurückschlägt*).⁴

In the *Being and Time*, Heidegger says that the fore-having is understood in a pre-philosophical sense but is not yet enfolded (*aber noch Eingehüllte*). One has certain knowledge about it, but it isn't a thematic knowledge. Because of the existential structure of the *Dasein*, an unconditional starting point is impossible — so said Heidegger. Therefore, regarding its full-being-possibility (*Ganzzeinkönnen*) the *Dasein* stands in the fore-having. Especially the mode of being of the being in question needs such a fore-sight, a preliminary sight of the original existence (*Vor-sicht auf die ursprüngliche Existenzialität*). Heidegger emphasizes that the preapprehension (*Vorgriff*) remains unperceived, but at the same time the object has to be measured against the preapprehension, in other words: in the preapprehension every structure of being is elevated (*alle Seinsstrukturen zu heben*).⁵ In *Being and Time*, Heidegger wanted to give a conceptual analysis of the *Dasein* and as we see, one of the results of this conceptual analysis was the notion of preapprehension.

² M. Heidegger: *Anmerkungen zu Karl Jaspers "Psychologie der Weltanschauungen"* (Gesamtausgabe Band 9), Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1976: 4.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ See M. Heidegger: *Sein und Zeit* (Gesamtausgabe Band 2), Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1977: 51.

⁵ See Heidegger (*op.cit.*: 232).

Of course we don't want to claim that Heidegger used the preapprehension in a Rahnerian sense, we would like to say only that his use of the word has a certain tendency toward the Rahnerian interpretation, which enables him to adopt the word in his theology and philosophy. According to Heidegger, the man has a pre-reflective sense of being, when he is asking about being. One can draw a parallel between Heidegger and Rahner, as when Heidegger speaks about this pre-reflective sense of being and then Rahner uses the word preapprehension. When Heidegger claims that man is able to raise the question about being and thus is open to being, Rahner goes further and says that man is not open only for the being, but for God as well. Again, it is very important that the later Heidegger was inclined to say that as the man is open to being, similarly is being open to God, that is, man is transparent to being, and being is transparent to God.⁶

But let us turn now to Rahner's work *Spirit in the World*. The main question of the *Spirit in the World* is a very simple one, namely, who are we? This "who are we?" indicates an investigation into human knowledge, into human cognition. "*Spirit in the World* uses a Thomistic metaphysics of knowledge explained in terms of transcendental and existential philosophy to define man as that essence of absolute transcendence towards God insofar as man in his understanding and interpretation of the world respectfully 'pre-apprehends' (*vorgreift*) towards God."⁷ When Rahner talks about investigation under the conditions of the human cognition, he claims that man is such a being who has questions about his own existence and about the totality of the world altogether. "Man questions"⁸—as he says, and in this simple fact one can find the point of departure of metaphysics. The things of the world and man's being as well, can be set against the questioner, and this is a final and irreducible phenomenon. The ground of the necessity of questioning is the questionableness (*Fragwürdigkeit*) of being in its totality.

Rahner finds in the questionableness of being a certain intellectual dynamism. But how can one explore this dynamism and how can this be done in the best way? He follows Aquinas in the inquiry about human knowledge and says that the facts that we perceive are not empty facts; they do not hang in the air. We not only accept the facts, but

⁶ See P. Bolberitz & F. Gál: *Aquinói Szent Tamás filozófiája és teológiája*, Budapest: Ecclesia, 1987: ch. 2.

⁷ J. B. Metz: 'Foreword', in: K. Rahner: *Spirit in the World*, New York: Continuum, 1994: XVI.

⁸ K. Rahner: *Spirit in the World*, New York: Continuum, 1994: 57.

we also constantly evaluate, compare, and question them. The facts are standing in a wider context from the perspective of the knower. Owing to this wider context, we know that these facts are limited and we experience that we are limited as well. The finite being, man, at the same time has an *a priori* knowledge of being; at least he has knowledge about the fact that the being is not absolutely unknown. “Being is questionability.”⁹—This is the starting point.

We see that Rahner sets out from everyday experience, from a single fact. We experience something, and in this experience we are directed to its ground or foundation. The everyday experience reveals the contingency of man, but this the feeling of contingency doesn't satisfy the truth-seeking intellect. Starting from everyday experience, and reasoning *a posteriori* is of course a very Thomistic way of proceeding. It is precisely this which we see in the method of the so-called “five ways”. Whereas, the basic experience of contingency is a natural companion of our worldly existence. Nevertheless, the human being has an eminent place within the world, since he/she is aware of this contingency, whereas the other creatures—i.e., the irrational ones—are not. Only the human being is capable of asking questions and directing his senses beyond himself. The human being is the one capable of passing himself over, of regarding himself from the outside, i.e., from a remote point of view. Yet, the human being does not analyze himself only, but beyond this, the entirety of existence. This transcendent necessity and direction can be observed also within the arguments based on contingency: in order to be satisfied, we have to postulate a self-existing and by itself necessary world, which underlies every occurrence from every viewpoint (*ipsum esse subsistens per se necessarium*). The existence of such a world excludes non-existence and a cannot-be-otherwise existence, its greatness lies within its being the basis for everything, and as such, it is not very far from the mystery of the transcendental experience.

Nevertheless, the way in which Rahner proves God's existence seems to be similar to Aquinas' way, but after a careful consideration one has to admit that Rahner's thought has nothing to do with the *a posteriori* proofs for the existence of God. He approaches the problem from another point of view, namely, from the transcendental activity of the intellect. His main question is, what *a priori* fact about ourselves do these transcendental experiences point to? The answer is that there is a transcendental reality in us, that is, there is something in our innermost part of the soul, which leads us to investigate the world. Altogether,

⁹ Rahner (*op.cit.* : 68).

that is the precondition of having experiences and expressing our spirituality. This transcendental reality in us is God. But this characteristic of Rahner's thinking is very Platonic. One can render it into the Augustinian language: God is *intimor intimo meo*...

But of course, our knowledge about this *intimor intimo meo*—reality is not an explicit knowledge, although it is the precondition of every kind of reality-experiencing. But precisely, since God is not of the same nature as a direct object is, and he is the precondition of cognition and precondition of the transcendental experience, it means that one cannot deny the existence of God—and this is very Anselmian.

What we wanted to say is that Rahner starts from an everyday experience, namely from the fact of questionableness, and believes that the presence of God is presupposed in our everyday actions, which seems to be very *a posterioristic*, very Aristotelian. According to William A. Herr, Rahner has developed a non-dualistic, non-Platonic theology,¹⁰ but in my view, this opinion is an exaggeration. Herr says that Rahner has attacked “the basic presuppositions which have guided the mainstream of Catholic theology since the time of Augustine”¹¹ and in addition he freed the Catholic doctrine from Platonism. But precisely, because of the above mentioned characteristics we have to say that the Rahnerian theory is not completely anti-Platonic. The God who inhabits our very consciousness and discloses Himself therein are very Platonic ideas.

To get closer to Rahner's notion of preapprehension, we have to investigate his theory of knowledge. In his theory of knowledge (and in Aquinas' as well) the agent intellect forms universal concepts from the particular objects of sensation. The agent intellect can form these particulars and limited realities only because of the antecedent transcending of the whole field of possible objects by the agent intellect. Precisely the experience of the object in question as limitation shows the possibility of transcending it. Rahner gives a definition for agent intellect as preapprehension: “This transcending apprehension of further possibilities, through which the form possessed in a concretion in sensibility is apprehended as limited and so is abstracted, we call ‘preapprehension’ (*Vorgriff*).”¹²

Rahner characterizes the preapprehension as a horizon. This horizon gives the possibility to experience the objects of the senses as lim-

¹⁰ See Herr (1985 : 257).

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Rahner (1994 : 142).

ited and, at the same time, gives the possibility to experience the horizon's unlimitedness. The horizon is in principle unlimited, its goal is the unlimited being, so, and at this point Rahner contradicts Kant, it transcends space and time.

Further on, Rahner gives four characteristics concerning the nature of preapprehension:

1. "Preapprehension as such does not attain to an object."¹³
2. The preapprehension by its very essence "[...] is one of the conditions of the possibility of an objective knowledge."¹⁴
3. (The third point follows from the second point.) The objects, let's say the first objects, are able to be apprehended only in a preapprehension.
4. And the fourth point follows from the first point, and can be conceived as a conclusion: "The preapprehension can only be determined by establishing that to which it attains."¹⁵

From the fourth characteristic which deals explicitly with the determination of preapprehension Rahner derives five further points:

1. The first point says that the preapprehension tends towards something, as Rahner says it has a "whither" (*Worauf*). From this follows that the preapprehension has no "humanly conceivable object".¹⁶
2. The second point has to do again with the object of preapprehension. Rahner refines it by saying that we have to conceive the preapprehension as an object, although its "whither" is not meant as such.
3. A very important feature of the preapprehension is that during the cognition of one object, it discloses the real possibility of other objects, that is, there is no obstacle not to cognize other objects.
4. The preapprehension has to be characterized as the only condition of human knowledge, because it "is not an inconsequential supplementation, but the condition of the possibility of any objective knowledge at all."¹⁷
5. The preapprehension can be explained as movement towards the totality. In this sense, this movement is the movement of the soul. It is a continuous and unthematic movement, where the intellect

¹³ Rahner (*op.cit.* : 143).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Rahner (*op.cit.* : 145).

can experience at the same time its limitedness and unlimitedness. So the preapprehension is not a static state, rather a dynamic process.

Now, what was Rahner's primary contribution to philosophy with the notion of *Vorgriff*? I am convinced that with the notion of preapprehension and with its intrinsic reality Rahner tried to bridge over the differences between the two main philosophical traditions, namely the Platonism and Aristotelism, although it wasn't his primary intention. Another question is, how did Rahner contribute to theology? This question involves another question, namely, are we right to give a religious interpretation to our world-openness? John F. Crosby gives a very simple answer to this question. "If we hold on other grounds [...] that God exists and we human persons are grounded in God, then it becomes natural to recognize in the sense of infinity conditioning our experience of things a certain presence of God in our conscious lives."¹⁸ One has to admit that the theistic reading of our sense of infinity is the only reasonable reading of Rahner's theory if we are consistent.¹⁹ Therefore, it is a genuine contribution, because it opens the way of transcendental Thomism towards the Platonic tradition.

¹⁸ J. F. Crosby: *The Selfhood of the Human Person*, Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996: 164.

¹⁹ See *ibid.*

MODELS OF THOMISTIC STUDIES IN CONTEMPORARY NORTH AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

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The history of the dialogue between Thomists and the modern world in the past century reveals many shifts and transformations unforeseen yet instigated by Leo XIII, in his 1879 encyclical *Aeterni Patris*. The evolution of “Thomism” —that Christian philosophy deriving its inspiration from the works of Thomas Aquinas— in the past 125 years has centered on the twin issues of authenticity (conservation) and enculturation (innovation), *viz.*, “How can Thomist philosophers be authentic interpreters of Aquinas while simultaneously engaging mainstream contemporary philosophies by contributing in some meaningful way to the concrete particular concerns of the present age?” With this problematic in mind, the author traces the evolution of Thomism as practiced in North American institutions of higher learning, and discerns five “models” or approaches of Thomistic studies, namely, exclusivist (triumphalist), formational, conservative (traditionalist), dialogical, and pluralist (inclusivist). The future prospects of Thomism are argued to rely largely on the degree of success to which Catholic educators are able to transmit Aquinas’ ethics and spirituality to the postmodern mind.

I. HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

The perennial wisdom of St. Thomas Aquinas has been taught in celebrated seats of learning for more than seven hundred years. A robust tradition, Thomism has waxed and waned, only to flourish again many times over the centuries. One of the more fascinating and useful sagas today is the story of twentieth century Thomism¹ in English-

¹ Without debating here the merits of the name, “Thomism” refers to that emphatic formulation of Christian philosophy which derives its inspiration from the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas.

speaking North America. This episode in the long and uneven history of Thomistic studies began in late nineteenth century Europe, where a major effort to promote the Angelic Doctor to primacy within Catholic intellectual thought occurred during the pontificate of Leo XIII (1878–1903). Leo insisted that the scholastic approach to philosophy at its apogee was the work of St. Thomas. He envisioned a Thomistic revival, coupled with the centralization of ecclesial authority in Rome, as the best antidote and alternative to the rapidly spreading influence of secularism, agnosticism and scientific materialism in modern culture. In his famous 1879 encyclical letter *Aeterni Patris*,² Leo described the problem as he perceived it, urging its resolution through the reintroduction of St. Thomas' thought into Catholic higher education:

Domestic and civil society [. . .] is exposed to great danger from this plague of perverse opinions, [and] would certainly enjoy a far more peaceful and secure existence if a more wholesome doctrine were taught in the universities and high schools—one more in conformity with the teaching of the Church, such as is contained in the works of Thomas Aquinas.³

Leo XIII named Aquinas patron saint of all Catholic universities, colleges, and schools worldwide. In the same encyclical letter, Leo identified several schools and academies of Europe—Paris, Salamanca, Alcalá, Douay, Toulouse, Louvain, Padua, Bologna, Naples and Coimbra—as having at one time or another maintained strong intellectual ties with the thought of St. Thomas.⁴ Had Leo written a century later, undoubtedly he would have added to his “short list” the *new* centers of Thomistic thought that arose in North America as well as Europe in response to his call. It was chiefly the ecclesiastical faculties in Rome, especially the institution known today as the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (the *Angelicum*), which Leo founded in part to undertake the perennial commission of producing a critical edition of St. Thomas's writings in the *Editio Leonina*. Along with the Institut Supérieur de Philosophie in Louvain, these new centers for the study and dissemination of St. Thomas's thought initially spurred Neo-Thomism and medieval studies into their modern heyday, which was attained during the second quarter of the twentieth century.

² Leo XIII: *Aeterni Patris*, encyclical letter On the Restoration of Christian Philosophy, issued August 4, 1879.

³ *Aeterni Patris*, 28. English translation extracted from www.vatican.va (Vatican web site), Nov. 4, 2002.

⁴ *Aeterni Patris*, 20.

Catholic higher education in North America followed Europe's lead by embracing the *philosophia perennis* — notably in Canada at Toronto's St. Michael's College, at Laval in French-speaking Canada,⁵ and in the United States at numerous sites such as Catholic University of America, Notre Dame, Saint Louis, Marquette, Fordham, and elsewhere. Each in its own fashion supported and enhanced the Thomistic revival that had occurred in Europe between the world wars; and in the decades prior to the Second Vatican Council, these North American institutions contributed unique opportunities for higher learning and advanced scholarship infused with Thomistic and Neo-scholastic theology, philosophy, and history. As the post-war European Thomist revival reached its zenith between the years 1926 and 1930, a remarkable development of Neo-Thomism was occurring in North America. As Gerald McCool wrote in 1988: "Reflecting upon its history fifty years later, it is clear that, in its American evolution, the tradition of Saint Thomas had a stronger and more lasting influence on philosophy in general and on Catholic higher education than it had in Europe."⁶

Thomism's roots in the United States date at least to the emergence of The Catholic University of America (CUA), located strategically in the nation's capital, which today refers to itself as "the national university of the Catholic Church in the United States."⁷ Leo XIII chartered the "flagship" university in 1887, partly to satisfy the desire of certain American church leaders who sought to make accessible to Catholics in North America a graduate education along the lines of the modern German research university. CUA is the only American university licensed by the Vatican to teach Catholic theology, philosophy, and canon law; and it is the only American university with ecclesiastical faculties that grant canonical degrees in these disciplines. Leo's main objective in allowing the establishment of CUA seems to have been at odds with the vision of the American leadership. The Americans, led by Bishop John Spalding, sought to use CUA as part of a larger strategy of evangelizing American culture by mainstreaming existing Catholic

⁵ Although outside the purview of this essay, it is important to note that French Canadian Dominicans established the École Supérieure de Philosophie at Laval University in Quebec, and in 1930 opened the Institut Saint-Thomas d'Aquin at Ottawa, which later moved to the University of Montreal. Cf. L. K. Shook: *Étienne Gilson*, Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1984: 193–194.

⁶ G. A. McCool: 'The Tradition of Saint Thomas in North America: At 50 Years', *Modern Schoolman* 65, 1988: 186.

⁷ The Catholic University of America web site (www.cua.edu). Cf. McCool (1988: 187f).

thought. In contrast Leo XIII, with the appointment of the first Apostolic Delegate to the United States, in part, to “correct errors,” left no doubt that the American church was *not* to be encouraged to engage the larger world on the world’s own terms. Instead it was to focus on strengthening its own distinctively Catholic worldview by introducing Thomistic ideas and ideals to Catholic intellectuals residing in English-speaking North America.⁸ Leo’s successor, Pius X, writing in 1914, made abundantly clear his understanding of Leo’s intention, with his directive to “order and command that teachers of sacred theology in Universities, Academies, Colleges, Seminaries and Institutions enjoying by apostolic indult the privilege of granting academic degrees [...] use the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas as the text [...] and comment upon it in the Latin tongue.”⁹ The 1917 Code of Canon Law issued under Benedict XV required all professors of philosophy and theology to hold and teach the doctrines of St. Thomas.¹⁰ And in 1923 Pius XI declared that “St. Thomas should be called [...] the Common or Universal Doctor of the Church: for the Church has adopted his philosophy for her very own.”¹¹

Within a decade of Pius XI’s pronouncement, Toronto asserted itself as Canada’s premier center of Thomistic learning. If ever there was a jewel in the crown of the publicly chartered and mostly state funded University of Toronto’s St. Michael’s College, that jewel was the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies—commonly known as “PIMS.” Canadian historian Laurence Shook, writing in 1971, referred to PIMS as “an autonomous teaching and research institute, at the graduate and post-doctoral levels, specializing in the thought and culture of the middle ages as recoverable and as bearing on man in subsequent times in-

⁸ Leo XIII’s concerns are amply described in his encyclical letter on the Catholic Church in the United States, *Longinqua Oceani* (Jan. 6, 1895). In it, Leo refers to the establishment of the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC (para. 7), and announces and explains his motives for naming a papal legate to the United States (para. 11ff).

⁹ Pius X, *Doctoris Angelici* (June 29, 1914), Appendix II, in J. Maritain, *St. Thomas Aquinas*, London: : Meridian Books, 1958: 215–221.

¹⁰ Code of Canon Law (1917). Cf. J. C. Livingston: *Modern Christian Thought*, 2nd ed., vol. 1, *The Enlightenment and the Nineteenth Century*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1997: 343. See esp. ch. 13, ‘Movements of Recovery and Conservation: Ultramontaniam and the Neo-Thomistic Revival’, pp. 327–355, and ch. 14, ‘Roman Catholic Thought at the End of the Century: The New Apologetics and Modernism’, pp. 356–383.

¹¹ Pius XI, *Studiorum Ducem* (1923).

cluding the present.”¹² The Institute was established in 1929 at the encouragement of world-renowned Thomistic historian Etienne Gilson, who joined the faculty. Jacques Maritain, arguably the world’s leading proponent of Thomistic philosophy at that time, was a frequent lecturer. The Institute achieved its pontifical charter in 1939. Its basic funding and support came from St. Michael’s College, the Basilian Fathers, and its own fellows. As late as the 1980s, PIMS offered courses leading to the licentiate and doctorate in medieval studies, provided a specialized research library for scholars, and published material related to its specialization, and Shook referred to PIMS in his day as the “paradigm” of Catholic post-secondary education at the post-graduate and research levels.¹³ Even today, scholars at PIMS continue to labor over the Leonine Edition of St. Thomas’s works.

Following the Second World War, Thomistic philosophy came under increasing criticism from Catholic scholars who claimed they were increasingly out of touch with mainstream intellectual inquiry. Faced with the threat of ever new forms of “Modernism” and secular relativism, Pius XII defended the continued use of St. Thomas in Catholic education, noting in the encyclical *Humani Generis* that Aquinas’ teachings were by that time “scorned by some, who shamelessly call it outmoded in form and rationalistic, as they say, in its method.”¹⁴ Only with the reign of John XXIII (1958–1963) was strict adherence to a Thomistic framework relaxed; and with Paul VI and the Second Vatican Council (1963–1965), for a time “all things Thomistic” were considered *passé* as Catholic historians, philosophers and theologians scrambled to dialogue with and appropriate diverse philosophical systems.

2. TWENTIETH-CENTURY CONTROVERSIES

At the turn of the twentieth century, Thomism had no sooner become the favored system of thought for Catholic scholarship than Catholic

¹² L. K. Shook: *Catholic Post-Secondary Education in English-Speaking Canada: A History*, Toronto & Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1971 : 210.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Pius XII, *Humani Generis* (Aug. 12, 1950), 31. Pius continues, in para. 32: “[T]he Church demands that future priests be instructed in philosophy ‘according to the method, doctrine, and principles of the Angelic Doctor,’ since, as we well know from the experience of centuries, the method of Aquinas is singularly preeminent both for teaching students and for bringing truth to light; his doctrine is in harmony with Divine Revelation, and is most effective both for safeguarding the foundation of the faith and for reaping, safely and usefully, the fruits of sound progress.”

scholars themselves began to dispute its method and meaning. Gilson and Maritain, along with Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange and Maurice Blondel, debated whether it was desirable or even possible in the modern era to achieve a genuine “Christian philosophy.”¹⁵ If Blondel was criticized in 1896 in the *Revue thomiste* for allegedly embracing neo-Kantian subjectivism,¹⁶ the attack on him was mild when compared to the rethinking of Thomistic philosophy in the early twentieth century by men such as Pierre Rousselot and Joseph Maréchal. The period between World War II and the Second Vatican Council, saw the maturation of the branch of Neo-Thomism now known as Transcendental Thomism—so named for its affinity for Kant’s transcendental method.¹⁷ In addition to leading mid-twentieth century Continental theologians such as Henri de Lubac (1896–1991) and Karl Rahner (1904–1984), the University of Toronto’s Regis College had its own Transcendental Thomist in the person of Bernard Lonergan (1904–1984). Whatever their differences, all Neo-Thomists faced the same fundamental tension: In what way, and to what extent, ought their philosophy to be authentically Thomistic while simultaneously engaging mainstream contemporary philosophies by contributing in some meaningful way to the concrete particular concerns of the present age?¹⁸ Leo XIII en-

¹⁵ Cf. A. C. Pegis: *St. Thomas and Philosophy*, Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1964. This volume, dedicated to Gilson, was based on Pegis’s 1964 Aquinas Lecture at Marquette University.

¹⁶ Livingston (1997: 363).

¹⁷ The quarrel was whether the transcendental method managed to maintain the integrity of the “architectonic theses” of the Angelic Doctor’s metaphysics while undertaking the “necessary absorptions” of modern thought, i.e., could this approach, which sought to accommodate modern (post-Kantian) philosophical presuppositions, succeed without misinterpreting or misapplying St. Thomas’s thought? A description of the so-called “error” of Maréchal’s approach is provided by R. J. Henle, S.J.: ‘Transcendental Thomism: A Critical Assessment’, in: V. B. Brezik, C.S.B. (ed.): *One Hundred Years of Thomism: Aeterni Patris and Afterwards, A Symposium*, Houston: Center for Thomistic Studies, University of St. Thomas, 1981: 92–116. For a more sympathetic analysis, see G. McCool: *The Neo-Thomists*, Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1994, esp. pp. 97–135. In this volume, McCool also traces the history of the “Christian philosophy” debate.

¹⁸ Doubtless, a contributing factor to the malaise resides in the difficulties inherent in interpreting Thomistic language in a way that remains true to its author’s meaning yet is made comprehensible to the modern person without presupposing a lifetime of study in Scholastic categories and concepts. On the other hand, many modern and postmodern philosophers have stubbornly resisted meaningful engagement with Thomistic philosophy under any circumstances. This prejudice against a Catholic philosophy borne in Thomistic thought is at heart the modern rejection of transcendence, i.e., that St. Thomas’ use of theology breaks the rules of modern philosophy. As Pegis

visioned Thomistic thought as an antidote and an alternative to the decline of modern culture. Thomistic scholars and the academic centers that have supported their scholarship, on the other hand, generally recognized the need to engage the wider world. Brian Shanley, looking back on a century of Thomism on the eve of the new millennium, aptly describes the dilemma but only hints at the solution:

What emerges from [...] twentieth-century Thomism is that the tradition has always been marked by the tension between conservation and innovation, between doctrinal fidelity and dialogue. This has been true throughout the entire history of Thomism, and it will continue to be true in the new century. How could it be otherwise? A Thomism that stayed in a defensive intellectual ghetto would cease to be a living tradition, while a Thomism that accommodated itself to every philosophical movement would cease to be Thomism. Each age demands both a genuine fidelity to the original and a genuine willingness to dialogue with what is new in philosophy.¹⁹

Perhaps because of its tension between conservation and innovation, Neo-Thomism has never attained mainstream prominence in English-speaking North America; but it has never completely evaporated, either. Its resilience was apparent even during the 1970s, when in the aftermath of Vatican II scholarly and public interest in Thomism and medieval studies reached its twentieth century nadir, just as competition for limited funds from other interests within the universities increased sharply. But even then, the decline of Toronto's Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies could not have been predicted. PIMS had served,

explains (*op.cit.* : 86f), "the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas aims at its very substance to direct man's vision to his encounter with a transcendent God within the universe; it aims, by the very metaphysical urgency of that encounter, to locate the human person in the known presence of an unknown God. This is the philosophy of St. Thomas in its principles, in its aim, and, above all, in the personalist spirit of his intellectualism. Our own problem is that this philosophy exists in its author for a higher than human purpose. Can we, in the condition of our own day, give to this same philosophy a human purpose and a human existence without violating the theological dedication that St. Thomas himself wrote into it in creating it?" The debate in France, beginning in 1931, is chronicled in M. Nédoncelle, *Is There a Christian Philosophy? (Twentieth Century Encyclopedia of Catholicism)*, New York: Hawthorne Books, 1960: 85–99; cf. A. Henry, 'La querelle de la philosophie chrétienne: histoire et bilan d'un débat', in: J. Danielou (ed.): *Philosophies Chrétiennes, Recherches et Débats*, Paris: Librairie Fayard, 1955: 35–68. Ralph McInerny provides an excellent summary of the debate in North America: R. McInerny: 'Reflections on Christian Philosophy', in: Brezik (1981: 63–73).

¹⁹ B. J. Shanley: *The Thomist Tradition*, Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002, vol. 2 in *Handbook of Contemporary Philosophy of Religion* series, Eugene Thomas Long, ser. ed., p. 20.

after all, as the “perfect” answer to a major dilemma at the University of Toronto. Although the federation of colleges participating in the publicly funded and largely secular University of Toronto had allowed Catholic studies in general and scholastic philosophy in particular to flourish at the undergraduate level for its Catholic member institutions St. Michael’s College, Regis College, and St. Augustine’s Seminary, the same system had cut off its denominational colleges at the graduate level. Today Toronto has a seven member Toronto School of Theology which offers graduate degrees in Catholic theology through the three Catholic member institutions, but in 1929 was no outlet for the more profound interests of faculty or students either in graduate study or in research in Thomistic higher learning at St. Michael’s College. The same system that made it economically feasible for a student to do honors work in scholastic philosophy made it very difficult to provide the academic environment proper to faculty capable of teaching that work.²⁰ PIMS was created at great expense by St. Michael’s College to provide just such a work environment, and for several decades PIMS succeeded in attracting to Toronto several of the world’s leading Thomists, in addition to Gilson, including over the years such names as Anton Pegis, Joseph Owens, Armand Maurer, and other scholars of medieval philosophy, history and theology.

During the 1980s and 1990s, with academic interest in “medievalia” on the wane, PIMS suffered from a decline in funding and decided to drop its academic programs so as not to duplicate courses offered elsewhere in the University, and to focus its efforts almost entirely on the reprinting of scholarly publications concerning the great minds of the Middle Ages. Recently, however, PIMS fortunes appear again on the rise. With an increase in support from the Vatican as well as significant funding from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, PIMS is emphasizing the medieval interaction between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Its refocus on ecumenism appears to have ensured the future of PIMS. But how this restructuring of PIMS’ mission will affect the future of Thomistic studies at Toronto remains largely unanswered.²¹

²⁰ Shook (1971: 211f).

²¹ Cf. F. Erb III: ‘What American Educators Need to Know About the “Toronto Model” of Catholic Higher Education’, unpublished manuscript presented at American Academy of Religion annual meeting, Roman Catholic Studies Group (A-126), Toronto, November 24, 2002.

3. *SPECTRUM OF THOMISTIC STUDIES IN NORTH AMERICA TODAY*

The Second Vatican Council (1963–1965), with the intellectual fervour that followed, left Thomism hopelessly fragmented in North America as in Europe. Yet, as Gerald McCool suggests in his recent history of Neo-Thomism, although there is no longer an “organized movement” as in the pre-conciliar period, several current approaches to the tradition of St. Thomas are indeed full of promise.²² That Thomism in its various ideological forms still flourishes today in small but vibrant communities of higher learning throughout the U.S.A. and Canada is undeniable. On the other hand, to accurately identify and fairly categorize these programs by institution and initiative can be problematic. Although the majority of Thomist enclaves are associated in some way with Catholic institutions, individual Thomists and a few independent societies devoted to Thomistic thought stem from other-than-Catholic colleges and universities. While it is possible to identify by name certain centers of Thomism in Canadian and American higher education today, it is perhaps more useful to attempt to develop in a preliminary sense a categorization or taxonomy of academic approaches to the study and transmission of Thomism in North America today.

Drawing in part from a recent classification of Catholic studies programs at U.S. Catholic colleges and universities,²³ this five-fold typology of programs of Thomistic studies in English-speaking North America is intended to differentiate among the various paradigmatic ideologies that are utilized today in schools and institutes which offer explicitly Thomistic studies or which take some form of Thomistic approach to preserving or spreading Christian philosophy or the Catholic intellectual tradition. Returning to Shanley’s remark that the entire history of Thomism has been marked by tension between conservation and innovation,²⁴ it is this struggle between the efforts of some Thomists

²² McCool (1994: 160).

²³ Mary Ann Hinsdale formulated a four-fold typology of Catholic studies programs based on diverse understandings of the “Catholic intellectual tradition” and its (dis)content, in an unpublished paper entitled ‘Catholic Studies: Models and Motives’, which was read at a conference of the American Academy of Religion in Boston, MA, on November 22, 1999. Cf. F. Erb III: ‘Preserving the “Catholic Moment” by Inaugurating Catholic Studies at Non-Catholic Colleges and Universities’, in: A. Ramos & M. George (eds.): *Faith, Scholarship, and Culture in the 21st Century*, Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2002: 219–247.

²⁴ See footnote 19 above.

who emphasize doctrinal fidelity and others who stress dialogue with influential alternative philosophies and ideologies, that accounts for the spectrum²⁵ of Thomistic studies.²⁶ In our view, five distinct models of Thomistic studies have emerged and are present in higher education in the United States and Canada today, signifying (in sociological terms) an ideological spectrum or range from “closed” to “open” groupings. Although the identifiers we have chosen to apply to each model are less significant than the philosophies of education that undergird them, for the purpose of identification and nothing more, we have labeled the spectrum of approaches toward Thomism in English-speaking North American higher education as: exclusivist, formational, conservative, dialogical, and pluralist. The five models are described as follows:

The first of the models is *exclusivist*, representing the “right wing” of the spectrum. This paradigm, which might have been labeled *triumphalist* or *utopian*, attempts to provide a safe haven for Catholic intellectuals who may be searching (perhaps implicitly) for a utopian enclave in some form based on revitalized Thomistic values. A stated

²⁵ Helen James John, in *The Thomist Spectrum*, New York: Fordham University Press, 1966, provides a thorough description and analysis of the (arguably healthy) controversies that occurred within Thomistic scholarship between 1900 and 1960, all or most of which impacted upon the aforesaid tension between conservation and innovation. McCool’s *The Neo-Thomists*, and Shanley’s *The Thomist Tradition, op.cit.*, offer more recent insights into these debates.

²⁶ Both the historical and contemporary debates in twentieth century Thomistic scholarship have been driven by this tension, which is inevitable whenever one philosophical system is impelled to encounter another, or is revitalized as Leo XIII promoted Thomism as a response to the systems that undergird modern culture. Before constructing a typology, a few helpful caveats: To begin with, we are not attempting to identify Thomistic programs by their purported adherence to the traditional “schools” or “movements” within Thomism. Such identifications inevitably change over time with the intellectual climate and as administrators, teaching and research faculty come and go, influencing the interpretation of missions and development and execution of curricula over time. As a consequence, there can be no “pure” examples, regardless of the typology. And while it is possible to categorize Thomistic studies programs in countless ways (e.g., by size of faculty or student enrollment, by patterns or extent of funding, by institutional affiliation or degree of acceptance among the wider academic community, by stated mission or goals, or by unwritten or understood or otherwise “covert” philosophy of education, aims or goals, by status or standing within one or another accrediting authority, by research output, by prestige, etc.), each potential method of classification poses its own difficulties. Further, it is impossible to please or satisfy everyone, whether they are partisan or presumably disinterested observer. For our purposes, therefore, we propose a modest typology based on our perception of the degree to which a particular program of Thomistic studies engages—and is influenced by—the wider intellectual environment of modernity and postmodernity.

goal may be to transform society by preparing future leaders in a world perceived as hostile to Catholic values and the Thomist tradition. This approach seeks to restore a unified Catholic worldview consistent with the thought of St. Thomas, while preparing students and scholars to go forth into the world as witnesses to Christ. It is exclusivist because its stated aim is to reclaim the Western culture for Christianity. In practice this type of program emphasizes a dichotomy and an irreconcilable tension between a mindset based on Thomistic values and a mainstream modern (or postmodern) secular worldview. Equipping the student to evangelize or to offer themselves as witnesses to Catholic truth may constitute an important byproduct of the educational philosophy, but the notion of a struggle (of cosmic proportion) between clashing worldviews is the most prominent characteristic of the program. This model's main strength is its zeal (which, when put to good use, has helped initiate many formidable movements within Catholicism, e.g., St. Francis of Assisi and St. Ignatius Loyola); and certainly zealous groups such as fundamentalist Protestant sects such as the Assemblies of God denomination have gained huge numbers of converts in the United States and Canada in recent years. But there are drawbacks to this approach. First, there is a tendency to become so "out of touch" with the outside world that, like the Amish today, a triumphalist enclave could devolve from a self-imposed ghetto into a utopian nightmare. Another concern of this extreme end of the spectrum is the ever-present chance that its studies may devolve into manualism, i.e., the clear but uninspired exposition of safe Thomistic doctrine that does little to stimulate thought in the contemporary mind. Suffice it to say, the pervasively fideistic flavor of this paradigm is far from the Angelic Doctor's own conviction that the one truth requires us to draw from and exploit all sources of wisdom, whether pagan Greek or Jewish or Muslim scholarship.²⁷ In this respect, St. Thomas was the quintessential inclusivist!

Since exclusivism is far from the present mainstream of Catholic higher education, few if any "pure" examples exist today. One approximate representative is Christendom College, a small Catholic liberal arts college located in Front Royal, Virginia, comes close to embodying this model. Christendom was founded in 1977 on the vision of historian Warren H. Carroll who dreamed of a Catholic college that rejected the

²⁷ Cf. John Paul II, encyclical letter *Fides et Ratio* (43), On the Relationship Between Faith and Reason (Sept. 14, 1998); see also St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, I, 7.

1967 Land O'Lakes declaration²⁸ by proclaiming its perpetual fidelity to the Catholic Church's teaching magisterium.²⁹ The College's mission is expressed in this statement:

Christendom's essential purpose is to place students on the path to Christian wisdom [...] The chief goal of the academic program is to form intellectual virtues in the students. The activities, events, community and spiritual life on campus also foster the cultivation of wisdom, helping students to form the moral virtues, the habits of Christian living, which will enable them to order properly the goods and things of the body and the higher goods and things of the soul. These moral habits, as traditionally understood, make possible the speculative life; without them, a person is incapable of true contemplation, for contemplation is a matter not only of the mind, but also of the will, of the heart, of the whole man. Man is called not only to know the truth, but to love it, and to make it the formative principle of his life. Encouraging these habits is the responsibility of the College as a whole.³⁰

Christendom's explicit emphasis on holistic character development to prepare its students to reenter the post-Christian culture armed with Pauline vigor, strikes us as commendable in its zeal but unrealistic if it anticipates a reconversion of the present society in the way that early Christian martyrs might have anticipated the eventual conversion of Roman culture with Constantine. To accomplish its lofty aim, Christendom relies heavily on Thomistic studies.³¹

²⁸ In the "liberating" atmosphere which followed Vatican II, Catholic university presidents and other representatives of the U.S. Catholic Church and higher education, met at Land O'Lakes, Wisconsin, in 1967, to redefine the Catholic university in the postconciliar setting. Their statement called for an end to "theological or philosophical imperialism" and, in effect, embraced the "pluralist" model discussed in this essay. A detailed account of Land O'Lakes, its development and aftermath, is found in D. J. O'Brien: *From the Heart of the American Church: Catholic Higher Education and American Culture*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994.

²⁹ By the 1980s, Rome was attempting, not without difficulty in the United States, to reassert its doctrinal influence over Catholic higher education worldwide. John Paul II's encyclical letter on Catholic Universities, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (Aug. 15, 1990) eloquently reclaims Catholic higher education for the Church. Debate over the "Catholic identity" of Catholic colleges and universities in the U.S. made headlines during the 1990s, but the unresolved conflict has been eclipsed since 2002 by the more pressing problem of sexual scandal involving the clergy.

³⁰ Christendom College's web site (www.christendom.edu), Sept. 29, 2003.

³¹ Descriptions of the College's introductory courses in philosophy and theology prominently feature St. Thomas. Christendom's core curriculum includes "[...] a systematic exposition of Catholic doctrine in the freshman year, followed by courses in Sacred Scripture, moral theology and apologetics, enabling the student both to defend

The second or *formational* model is slightly less withdrawn from secular society, as it struggles to maintain a Thomistic identity in an overwhelmingly unreceptive world. This model is formational because it strives to reestablish Thomistic thought or Christian philosophy and theology at the heart of the curriculum. Openly proselytizing, such programs seek to inculcate in the student, reader or devotee, a Thomistic frame of reference from which those being “formed” will thereafter view the world, thereby recreating a viable contemporary Thomistic *Weltanschauung*. Examples of this paradigm are only slightly more plentiful, as the initial zeal expressed by their founders often tends to mellow and wane as the years pass. One example of the formational model is the popular Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio. A recent statement by the University’s academic dean clarifies its relation to the larger culture:

[W]e resist the temptation to be “relevant” in a shortsighted way. We teach many important subjects that do not have direct consequences for dealing with the burning social issues of the day. On the other hand, we recognize our responsibility for addressing these social issues in our teaching and writing [...] We affirm all that John Paul II says in *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (especially in paragraphs 32–34) about the dialogue that the Catholic university should have with the larger culture in which it is situated. We also affirm what he says about the unique contribution the Catholic university precisely as university can make to the Church’s work of evangelization.³²

Although not Dominican in its intellectual origins, Franciscan University’s curriculum appears nonetheless influenced by Thomistic scholarship, which plays a prominent role in courses for undergraduates (including men in the pre-theologate) on metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of religion, philosophy of human nature, aspects of Catholic dogmatic and moral theology. One upper level course, “The Thomistic Tradition in Philosophy,” focuses on St. Thomas and several modern Thomists, including Gilson, Maritain, Fabro, Lonergan, and Rahner.

the faith and to apply it to his own life. In conjunction with this, courses in Thomist philosophy of human nature and metaphysics assist the student in using reason to understand the nature of reality and to illumine further the truths of revelation.” The first (Fall 2003) lecture in the College’s new speakers program is entitled, “Learning from Aquinas: Dante on Free Choice and the Will.” Core readings (required of all undergraduate students) include works by St. Thomas (including parts of his *Treatise on Man*, *On Being and Essence*, and *Summa Theologiae*), as well as selections by Wippel, Maurer, and other modern authors of Thomistic metaphysics and natural law ethics. (Web site, Sept. 29, 2003.)

³² Franciscan University web site (www.franciscan.edu), Nov. 4, 2002.

Another course, “Great Catholic Thinkers,” has sometimes focused exclusively on St. Thomas.

The third or *conservative* model attempts to preserve and pass on “Western culture” through Thomism, thereby keeping alive the Catholic intellectual tradition as it has been interpreted in the twentieth century by Maritain, Gilson, and their disciples. It is “conservative” because its primary mission is to conserve the Thomistic tradition, while secondarily engaging modern and postmodern philosophies in meaningful dialogue. One prominent example is the newly formed³³ Ave Maria College in Ypsilanti, Michigan, along with its planned expansion as Ave Maria University in Naples, Florida. Like Christendom College and Franciscan University, Ave Maria offers students a solid formation using a core curriculum that draws heavily from Christian philosophy and Catholic theology, especially St. Thomas and his twentieth century commentators. In doing so, however, Ave Maria seems to operate less *in loco parentis* than these other institutions, and appears to make a greater attempt to engage the outside world, both the popular culture and the intellectual mainstream.³⁴ Apart from the Thomistic emphasis in its course offerings, Ave Maria College through its newly formed Aquinas Center for Theological Study, in August 2003, hosted an academic conference entitled “John Paul II and the Renewal of Thomistic Philosophy.”³⁵

The fourth, the moderate or *dialogical* model, is so named because its primary objective is engagement through dialogue between Thomism and contemporary varieties of modern and postmodern secular philosophy, as well as the philosophies underlying Eastern religious traditions. This approach seeks to promote the “objective” study of

³³ Ave Maria Institute was founded in 1998, and it became a four year college in 2000. The college received regional accreditation in May, 2003.

³⁴ See Ave Maria College web site (www.avemaria.edu).

³⁵ The Aquinas Center for Theological Renewal is a new academic institute created to foster the renewal of Catholic theology, founded in 2001 by two professors at Ave Maria College, Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering. Ave Maria’s web site (Sept. 29, 2003) describes the new institute: “Grounded by its founders’ interest in the theology of Aquinas and with projects that involve scholars from colleges and universities around the world, the Aquinas Center hopes to contribute to the development of a vibrant theological renaissance [...] The Aquinas Center reaches out to scholars and graduate students around the world who share in its vision of a dynamic renewal of theology in fidelity to the Magisterium. The Center has a Thomistic emphasis and an interest in ecumenical and interreligious dialogue. The major projects of the Aquinas Center are the English-language edition of a semi-annual journal, *Nova et Vetera* and international conferences.”

St. Thomas and Thomism with an “open mind” while considering the potential promise and value of all philosophical systems and ideologies that have intellectual standing in the present day — which is arguably closest to St. Thomas’s own position. It also appears consonant with John Paul II’s 1998 encyclical letter *Fides et Ratio*, in which he maintains that Thomism can hold its own in dialogue with other philosophies and worldviews.³⁶

While there are numerous colleges and institutes throughout North America that today offer a dialogical approach or some variant, one stellar example of this model in practice is the “Christianity and Culture Program” at Toronto’s Saint Michael’s College. According to Toronto’s Kenneth L. Schmitz, the Second Vatican Council dramatically altered the landscape of Thomism, by undermining the impetus for scholarly engagement in Thomistic thought because the American “pragmatic penchant” diverted energies to the attention of the Council in the post-Conciliar era, placing high priorities on ecumenism and liturgical renewal.³⁷ As an educator, Schmitz has been involved in developing the hugely successful Christianity and Culture Program established in 1979 by Janine and Thomas Langan and other concerned faculty of St. Michael’s College, to reintroduce the younger generation to the *philosophia perennis*. Writing in 1979, Janine Langan lamented the almost unlimited freedom of choice to enroll in courses throughout the Toronto system that was enjoyed and exercised by St. Michael’s students, and that as a result these students were becoming ignorant of the richness and uniqueness of their own Catholic-Thomistic heritage. The fact that so many St. Michael’s students were taking a large part of their coursework outside the College meant they were missing the Catholic formation that at one time had been such a prominent feature of St. Michael’s. Janine Langan was one of several St. Michael’s faculty who were instrumental in the creation of an interdisciplinary “Christianity and Culture” program at Toronto. This innovative Catholic-Christian studies program with Thomistic thought as an integral component, was intended to fill a gap in Toronto’s Arts and Sciences curriculum, by giving students systematic access to the Catholic-Christian tradition in its fullness. The program is taught by profes-

³⁶ Cf. *Fides et Ratio* (44): “Profoundly convinced that “whatever its source, truth is of the Holy Spirit” (*omne verum a quocumque dicatur a Spiritu Sancto est*), Saint Thomas was impartial in his love of truth. He sought truth wherever it might be found and gave consummate demonstration of its universality.”

³⁷ Schmitz, *Communio* (Fall 1992), p. 477.

sors who are expert in various academic disciplines but who are also committed Catholic-Christians, and whose courses focus on the nexus between the Christian traditions and mainstream culture. Langan's vision of the Christianity and Culture Program, she says, is based on two insights which serve as founding principles: The first was to clarify to students what makes Christianity unique, which is, in fact, the challenge of the incarnation. The second principle was to convey to students that Christianity is not a culture among others, but an openness to the Spirit of God which operates in and through any culture, continually reforming Christianity and making its intellectual and lived tradition relevant and meaningful in all cultural settings.³⁸

Now in its twenty-fifth year, Christianity and Culture today offers a minor, a major, and a specialist (honors) degree. In 1999, the Toronto Archdiocese gave one million Canadian dollars to St. Michael's College to endow a faculty chair in Christianity and Culture. Janine Langan, who recently retired from active involvement in the program's administration but will teach a course or two this year, says that, ironically, most of the resistance to the now highly successful program came not from non-Catholics quarters as one might have expected, but from *within* St. Michael's College, from members of its faculty who feared the program would reduce the numbers of students enrolling in existing courses offered at St. Michael's.³⁹ Christianity and Culture is certainly among a handful of curricular initiatives that may prove useful to the growing number of Canadian and American educators who are concerned with bringing genuine Thomistic studies to publicly supported universities. While St. Michael's Christianity and Culture like other such programs depends upon the training and intellectual bent of individual instructors for its strengths and weaknesses, is not exclusively Thomistic, it does serve as a model for Thomistic higher education at the undergraduate level.

The fifth and final model is *pluralist* or inclusivist, a "cultural studies" approach that tends to accommodate and sometimes appropriate twentieth century modern philosophies and contemporary postmodernism. This model tends to view Thomism as historically important and potentially useful, certainly deserving of study and reflection, though ultimately "one philosophy among many."⁴⁰ While some de-

³⁸ From a personal interview with Janine Langan in Toronto, Aug. 23, 2002.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ John Paul II, who is apparently concerned about the extremes when modeling Thomistic studies programs, wrote in *Fides et Ratio* (43), quoting Paul VI, who wrote

partments of philosophy, theology, and religious studies at Catholic colleges and universities in English-speaking North America, ensconced in a post-Vatican II mentality of liberal Catholicism remain openly hostile toward the thought of St. Thomas and Neo-scholasticism, most U.S. and Canadian Catholic colleges today are not averse to integrating some elements of Thomistic philosophy into their curricula, with the proviso that it is “one among many” and poses no threat to the intellectual *status quo*. The philosophy, theology, and religious studies departments of most major Catholic colleges and universities in the U.S.A. and Canada today can be said to possess faint traces of Thomism in their educational philosophy, or to have individual members of their faculties, usually tenured or emeritus, who are known to be sympathetic to the thought of St. Thomas.⁴¹ During its heyday in the first half of the twentieth century, Thomistic studies occurred (often in “manualist” form, and sometimes with a Suarezian interpretation) in Roman Catholic seminaries. By the 1940s, major Catholic universities (along with several teaching and research faculty at non-Catholic universities) were teaching and expanding Neo-Thomism, and for a generation those schools supplied teachers of philosophy and theology to approximately 300 smaller Catholic colleges and seminaries throughout the U.S. and Canada. Today, only traces of this pre-Vatican II era Thomism remains in English-speaking North America. Since the early

in *Lumen Ecclesiae* (8), issued Nov. 20, 1974, on the occasion of the seventh centenary of the death of the Angelic Doctor: “Without doubt, Thomas possessed supremely the courage of the truth, a freedom of spirit in confronting new problems, the intellectual honesty of those who allow Christianity to be contaminated neither by secular philosophy nor by a prejudiced rejection of it. He passed therefore into the history of Christian thought as a pioneer of the new path of philosophy and universal culture. The key point and almost the kernel of the solution which, with all the brilliance of his prophetic intuition, he gave to the new encounter of faith and reason was a reconciliation between the secularity of the world and the radicality of the Gospel, thus avoiding the unnatural tendency to negate the world and its values while at the same time keeping faith with the supreme and inexorable demands of the supernatural order”.

⁴¹ Examples include The Catholic University of America, Notre Dame, Marquette, Fordham, St. John’s, Georgetown, and many others. Moreover, with few exceptions (one noteworthy exception in recent years was Cornell’s “analytic Thomist” Norman Kretzmann, whose protégé Eleanor Stump has already achieved prominence), serious students of St. Thomas today generally do not select these schools for the express purpose of receiving an introduction to the Angelic Doctor’s thought, although some are still known to offer an adequate grounding in scholastic and medieval philosophy in general.

1980s, however, various priestly and lay orders⁴² have begun to promote Thomistic thought. Indeed, the personalist Thomism of John Paul II⁴³ has contributed “moral support” to a modest revival of Thomism in Canada and the United States today. As of yet, many of these “pockets” are so small they go unnoticed, yet they may eventually affect the “big picture.”

The few examples cited above of institutional centers of Thomistic studies in English-speaking North America today surely do not approach a comprehensive list. A more thorough study would identify the recently established Lumen Christi Institute at the University of Chicago; the Center for Thomistic Studies at the University of St. Thomas⁴⁴ (Houston, Texas); the Center for Catholic Studies at the University of St. Thomas (St. Paul, Minnesota); and Robert Royal’s Faith and Reason Institute (Washington, DC). More research into Catholic studies programs both at Catholic and other-than-Catholic private and public colleges and universities in the United States and Canada would be likely to produce an extensive list of small though occasionally vibrant centers of Thomistic higher learning.⁴⁵

Several noteworthy individual Thomists were still writing in the opening days of the new millennium, men such as the independent thinker W. Norris Clarke who has effectively dialogued with a wide range of scholars including linguistic Thomists and Whiteheadian process thinkers. Today, however, most Thomistic scholarship is no longer advanced mainly by priest-scholars whose education and training was paid for either by diocesan funds or by one of the major religious orders, and who perhaps studied at Saint Louis or at any of a number of

⁴² E.g., the Priestly Fraternity of the St. Charles Borromeo Missionaries, the Opus Dei Personal Prelature, and the Legionaries of Christ, as well as instructors and professors (more than a few of whom are non-tenured) at seminaries and pontifical universities.

⁴³ Although Neo-Thomism in Poland and Eastern Europe is outside the limits of this essay, the influence of Karol Wojtyła’s proposal (while a member of the philosophy faculty at Lublin) of a contemporary Thomist metaphysics in *The Acting Person* is influential in North American Thomism, if only because this metaphysics which is centered on the individual person, consciously aware of himself as the responsible source of the free actions which bring about his self-determination, has also found expression in the widely read writings of Wojtyła as John Paul II, especially in the present pope’s Christian ethics.

⁴⁴ For details of the founding of the Center for Thomistic Studies in 1979, which Anton Pegis envisioned, see V. J. Bourke, “The New Center and the Intellectualism of St. Thomas”, in Brezik (1981: 165–172).

⁴⁵ See Erb III (1992), esp. 24–26.

Catholic seminaries which taught Neo-Thomistic philosophy and theology prior to Vatican II in the United States, Canada, or Europe. Thomism today is more commonly carried forward, for better or worse, by an odd assortment of lay professors, independent scholars, and a handful of non-Catholic scholars. North American Thomists meet and occasionally publish through the auspices of the Canadian and American Maritain Associations, and to a lesser extent two former Neo-Thomist strongholds, the Catholic Theological Society of America and the American Catholic Philosophical Association (ACPA).

Ironically, the ACPA, which was founded in 1926 to establish forums and advance publications for Neo-Thomist scholars who at that time were excluded from mainstream philosophical reflection, is today neither Thomist nor predominantly Catholic in its membership and interests. The successor to ACPA in recent decades as a leading forum for Thomistic philosophy is the American Maritain Association, which produces an annual volume of essays, currently published through CUA Press. Indeed, university presses at CUA, Notre Dame, Fordham, Marquette, SUNY, Mercer, and elsewhere have published hundreds of collections of essays, manuals, *Festschriften* and assorted scholarly treatises on all aspects of Thomistic thought, including theology, philosophy, and natural law ethics from various Thomistic perspectives. Thousands of excellent essays and articles attempting to further the cause of Thomistic philosophy and theology have appeared over the years in various North American scholarly journals, notably *The Thomist*, *Modern Schoolman* (formerly *The New Scholastic*), *Theological Studies*, *Communio*, Fordham's *Thought*, Marquette's *Philosophy & Theology*, College Theology Society's *Horizons*, Society for Christian Philosophers' *Faith and Philosophy*, and ACPA's *Proceedings*—to name a few of the more prominent and influential periodicals.

Not all Thomism has remained sequestered within the ivy-shrouded cloisters of *academia*. The influence of Thomistic education on the popular mind is also present in North America today. Besides the perennial Catholic radio, electronic media since the late 1980s has included the enormously successful Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), an Alabama-based cable and satellite television programming network operated by the rapidly growing, conservative religious Sisters of the Eternal Word, founded recently by celebrated TV talk-show host Mother Angelica. EWTN's philosophy is neo-conservative, and its current programming is favorable toward the legacy of St. Thomas Aquinas and to fostering a Thomistic worldview. Several Catholic magazines promote

Thomism in the States, including a former scholarly journal turned popular periodical, the Maryland-based *Crisis* magazine, founded by Thomistic scholar Ralph McInerny and presently owned and edited by Deal W. Hudson, a Maritain scholar. McInerny, who directs Notre Dame's Medieval Institute, is among a small group of successful American and Canadian academics-turned-novelist whose writings popularize a Thomistic pattern of thought, however nostalgically, to the wider public. *First Things*, a conservative journal of Catholic thought edited by Richard John Neuhaus, often features Thomist-inspired original writings aimed at a wider intellectual public. While several publishing houses operated by Catholic religious orders and numerous university presses, PIMS, and even major publishers occasionally produce new books about St. Thomas and his thought, or reprint Thomistic works, Thomas A. Nelson, founder of TAN Books and Publishers of Rockford, Illinois, since 1967 has begun the task of reprinting in affordable paperback editions many previously out-of-print classics of Thomistic theology, philosophy, and spirituality.

Over the years, Thomism in North America has crept out of narrowly Catholic intellectual circles, and at times it has enjoyed a following among non-Catholics of various stripes. One good friend to Maritain and hence to the philosophy of St. Thomas—albeit to a peculiar interpretation overflowing with Aristotle but deficient in explicitly Christian doctrine—was American educator Robert Maynard Hutchins (1899–1977). The controversial University of Chicago chancellor was an outspoken advocate of liberal higher learning in the 1930s and was involved in the Great Books movement of the 1950s. Although a Protestant-turned-agnostic, Hutchins proclaimed the wisdom of St. Thomas as paradigmatic for the renewal of American higher education, and he delivered the 1949 Aquinas Lecture at Marquette University.⁴⁶ Another Thomistic philosopher, the late Professor Mortimer Adler, was general editor of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, director of the Aspen Institute for several decades, and a close friend and former colleague of Hutchins who collaborated on the Great Books movement during the 1950s. Adler did not convert to Catholicism until his death was imminent, but he contributed regularly to Thomistic journals throughout his long career, and he quoted St. Thomas liberally and frequently in his numerous writings that were often intended not for his fellow philosophers but for an educated general readership.

⁴⁶ Hutchins' lecture was subsequently published as *St. Thomas and the World State* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1949).

4. *A FALLIBLE PROGNOSIS*

To speculate with any degree of certainty on the future of Thomistic studies in English-speaking North America is a daunting task. Thomism's decline in the last decade can be traced to two main causes: First, there was the inability of several leading Neo-Thomists during Thomism's heyday in first half of the twentieth century to rise above their personal career interests as professional philosophers and theologians, and work together for their common cause. This internal discord effectively undermined Leo XIII's earlier vision of a unified Thomism that could serve as a viable alternative to modern atheistic ideologies, even though the debates produced some healthy results by stimulating philosophical inquiry that widened the scope and breadth of Thomistic studies. Out of frustration, Gilson's once remarked, "Truth is important, we are not."⁴⁷ Second, intellectual atrophy caused by the breakdown of a united "school" within Thomism by the third quarter of the century, combined with the mainstreaming efforts of Catholic colleges and universities in the United States, provided the setting in which intellectual pluralism flourished in the postconciliar period and Thomism appeared to be forgotten as aging scholars retired from their positions and were replaced by faculty who were unfamiliar with Thomistic thought or scholastic language.

During the final quarter of the twentieth century, North American higher education began to exhibit new interest in St. Thomas and Thomism. As Gerald McCool wrote modestly in 1988, "the tradition of Saint Thomas, despite its ups and down, has still a valuable contribution of its own to make to American philosophy and higher education. And indeed, the neutral historian of ideas might find that the history of an intellectual movement as vigorous, widespread, and yet as little chronicled, as North American Thomism is not without intrinsic interest."⁴⁸ Especially since the early 1990s, as various competing modern materialist and postmodern nihilist philosophies moved ever closer to intellectual bankruptcy while taking their toll on human dignity and fostering intellectual cynicism, we may be witnessing a resurgence of interest in personalist and realist philosophies which are sympathetic toward the legacy of St. Thomas. The burgeoning interest in spirituality within the popular culture, which has accelerated since September 11, 2001,

⁴⁷ E. Gilson: *Wisdom and Love in Saint Thomas Aquinas*, Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1951: 29.

⁴⁸ McCool (1988: 186f).

bodes well for Thomism as Catholic intellectuals search for solutions to a growing spiritual crisis among the new generation of college students.⁴⁹

The prospect of Thomism exerting any real influence over the next generation of Canadians and Americans will depend, in no small part, upon the ability of those Catholic educators and intellectuals to make the spirituality of St. Thomas accessible to the postmodern mind. Adler's vision of simplifying St. Thomas for the educated masses has merit today, especially as regards Aquinas' ethics and spirituality. For such a program to succeed, sophistry in the form of professional Thomists arguing amongst themselves must be replaced by women and men whose lived experience is consistent with the virtuous Christian life from which Thomas's own achievements arose. Young people today are quite capable of spotting the difference between professional philosophers and those teachings are guided by *fides quaerens intellectum*. Moreover, those who carry on the Thomist tradition may well do so because of the profound influence of the present pope, whose teachings accompanied by personal sacrifice is well recognized to be a living example of personalist Christian humanism undergirded by Thomistic realism. Thomism's future in North America will hinge in large part upon the dedication of those who are committed to carrying forward the legacy of John Paul II.

⁴⁹ Conrad Cherry and colleagues provide a thoughtful assessment of the new spirituality among college students in *Religion on Campus* (University of North Carolina Press, 2001); and Colleen Carroll reports a perceived rise in spirituality among young Catholics today in *The New Faithful* (Loyola Press, 2002).

SAINT THOMAS D'AQUIN DANS LA THEOLOGIE DE PÉTER PÁZMÁNY

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The Jesuits' *Ratio Studiorum* ordered to follow St. Thomas's theology. Between 1603–1607, at the University of Graz, Péter Pázmány S. J. gave lectures on St. Thomas's *Summa Theologiae* and commented on its most important issues. St. Thomas thoroughly studied the problem of faith (*de Fide*) and explained the questions of grace and liberty (*de auxiliis*), issues debated by the Jesuits and the Dominicans. He found a fine balance between Bañezianism and Molinism through the following main principle: grace intensifies liberty, that is, God does not act on behalf of us but makes us act.

À partir d'Ignace de Loyola (*Constitutions* IV, 14), à travers les siècles, la suite, l'interprétation de la pensée de Saint Thomas était toujours à l'ordre du jour dans les universités de la Compagnie de Jésus. Le problème se posait avec plus d'acuité au versant des XVI–XVII-ème siècles, à cause de la querelle entre les jésuites et les dominicains (molinistes et bañeziens) sur la grâce et la liberté («*de auxiliis*»). Péter Pázmány (1570–1637) qui était professeur de théologie à Graz (1603–1607), devait s'affronter aux questions discutées. J'ai déjà montré¹ sa position équilibrée dans cette dispute, et, en général, pour ce qui concerne les

¹ Mes études les plus importantes : une monographie en langue hongroise sur la théologie de Pázmány : F. Szabó : *A teológus Pázmány*, Roma : Detti, 1990 et Budapest : METEM-Könyvek, 1998 ; une longue étude en langue hongroise intitulée 'Pázmány hitelemzése a grazi *De Fide* traktátusban', in : L. Lukács & F. Szabó (eds.) : *Pázmány Péter emlékezete*, Roma : Detti, 1987 : 99–180 ; 'Pázmány Szent Tamás értelmezője a *Theologia scholasticában*', in : E. Hargittay (ed.) : *Pázmány Péter és kora*, Piliscsaba : Pázmány Péter

commentaires — prescrits par le *Ratio Studiorum* — des oeuvres de Saint Thomas d'Aquin. Je vais signaler maintenant les points les plus importants de mes recherches.

I. SAINT THOMAS ET LE THOMISME HIER ET AUJOURD'HUI

Dans ma monographie (*Pázmány, le théologien*), j'ai esquissé le milieu intellectuel de l'époque de Pázmány, notamment la dispute des dominicains (thomistes) et des jésuites (molinistes), et j'ai montré la réinterprétation de Saint Thomas par les théologiens modernes, dominicains et jésuites : Chenu, Bouillard, H. de Lubac... D.-M. Chenu O.P., un des meilleurs connaisseurs de Saint Thomas, avait éclairé la perspective *historique* de la Scolastique et celle de la pensée de Saint Thomas. Nous verrons que Pázmány lui-même avait le sens de l'histoire, du développement de la pensée.

La route partant de la première renaissance du XIII^e siècle, époque de Saint Thomas (l'entrée d'Aristote au XIII^e s. à Paris est des pivots de cette «renaissance»), jusqu'à la renaissance du XVI^e siècle, est très longue ; la différence est profonde entre les deux renaissances, la médiévale et l'humaniste, comme l'a montré le P. Chenu :

Il faut observer (cette divergence) dans son principe et dans ses applications au travail sur les textes ; car nous voici au noeud de ce paradoxe d'une renaissance engendrant une scolastique, et l'aristotélisme de Saint Thomas trouvera là sa clef et sa mesure. [...] Le retour aux anciens peut procéder de deux curiosités fort différentes, sinon toujours distinctes.

On les peut cultiver (les anciens) pour eux-mêmes avec le dessein exprès de leur restituer en nous, au terme d'une patiente investigation, leur antique stature, leur raison et leur beauté. [...] Mais l'Antiquité peut être évoquée sous un autre climat que le sien, fut-ce au prix d'une assimilation spirituelle qui ne laisse rien perdre de l'aliment ancien dans cet organisme nouveau. Synthèse ou l'invention créatrice libère l'imitation de son propre poids, si le génie s'en mêle. [...] Nous voici attentifs à discerner dans le cas de Saint Thomas d'Aquin ce qu'il recueillera de l'héritage antique, mais aussi ce par quoi son génie transformera l'homme d'Aristote, comme la grâce rénove la nature sans en violenter la structure originelle.²

Katolikus Egyetem, 2001 : 7–15. En français : 'Pázmány théologien', *Folia Theologica* 1, 1990 : 44–62. Mes références aux oeuvres de Pázmány : *Oeuvres complètes en latin*, 1894–1904, vol. I–VI. *Opera Omnia* (= OO). *Oeuvres complètes en hongrois*, 1894–1905, vol. I–VII (= OC).

² M.-D. Chenu : *Introduction à l'étude de Saint Thomas d'Aquin*, Paris : Institut d'études médiévales, 1950 : 26 et 28.

C'est donc un propos bien sommaire de traiter Saint Thomas d'aristotélien. Il faudrait signaler ici — comme l'a fait le P. Chenu³ — l'évangélisme de Saint Thomas, puis tout ce qu'il a puisé de la tradition augustinienne. Hélas, beaucoup de théologiens au XVI^e siècle croient qu'il leur faut renoncer à Augustin pour mieux s'ouvrir à l'homme de la Renaissance : « catastrophe où il semble que parfois on ait abandonné Augustin à Luther ou à Jansénius. Saint Thomas, dans la renaissance médiévale, pourra opter contre certaines sources néoplatoniciennes d'Augustin, il restera en doctrine théologique et en qualité spirituelle, son fidèle disciple. »⁴

Luther, on le sait, avait connu une scolastique nominaliste (notamment celle de G. Biel) ; il méprisait cette scolastique-là, et, moine augustinien, il a pris comme maître Augustin. On comprend que les controversistes, tel un Bellarmin, un des maîtres de Pázmány, soient augustiniens. Pázmány se réfère le plus souvent à Saint Augustin dans ses écrits hongrois, mais déjà dans sa théologie scolastique.

À l'époque de Pázmány, les théologiens devaient tenir compte des idées hérétiques protestantes sur la justification, sur le *sola fide*, le *sola gratia*. Luther a formalisé son expérience religieuse existentielle (paulinienne et augustinienne à sa manière). L'Évangile fait passer l'homme de la loi à la foi. Le *sola fide* est sa réponse au *sola gratia*, à la grâce dans laquelle Dieu nous donne inconditionnellement la justice, sans aucun mérite de notre part. L'homme croyant s'abandonne avec confiance à la miséricorde de Dieu promise dans le Christ. L'homme justifié par la foi, malade en voie de guérison, demeure pécheur et pénitent.

Le *sola fide* et le *sola gratia* sont logiquement reliés au *sola Scriptura*, puisque seule l'Écriture atteste pour nous la Parole de Dieu. On comprend ainsi que pour Luther la justification par la foi soit l'article qui fait tenir ou tomber l'Église.⁵

C'est le Concile de Trente (VI^e session sur la justification, en 1547) qui a explicité et défini la doctrine catholique contre des thèses de Luther. Le processus de la conversion, la série des actes, selon leur succession logique, que nous trouvons dans les textes du Concile, rappelle un article de la *Somme* de Saint Thomas (III 85,5). Par un langage ontologique (différentes causes !), le Concile souligne que Dieu est l'auteur et cause de notre justification. Mais il récuse implicitement l'idée d'une double justice : nous avons une justice « interne » (pas l'imputa-

³ *Ibid.* : 38–51.

⁴ *Ibid.* : 47.

⁵ V. Sesboüé : *Jésus-Christ, l'unique Médiateur*, Paris : Desclée, 1988 : 228–247.

tion «forensique»!), inhérente, c'est-à-dire qui nous habite et devient réellement notre. Notre justice est tout entière de Dieu et tout entière en nous. Il ne peut y en avoir qu'une : tel est le paradoxe du rapport entre la grâce et la liberté.⁶

Mais vers la fin du XVI^e siècle, l'analyse de la justification, notamment le rôle de la grâce dans la conversion et celui des oeuvres bonnes, amène en Occident une série de débats théologiques. Michel de Bay, dit *Baius* († 1589), professeur de Louvain, met en cause la gratuité du surnaturel en remplaçant le mystère d'amour entre Dieu et l'homme par les «relations de comptoir» (H. de Lubac). Baïus oscille curieusement entre les thèses de Pélagé, quand il s'agit de l'homme avant la faute, et les positions les plus extrêmes d'Augustin, quand il est question de l'homme devenu pécheur. Au début du XVII^e siècle une âpre controverse se déclenche entre dominicains et jésuites, autour des thèses de Bañez et de Molina sur les rapports de la grâce et de la liberté. Cette querelle sous le pontificat de Clément VIII et le général C. Acquaviva rend l'atmosphère très tendue ; c'est dans ce climat qu'il nous faut situer la censure de certaines thèses de Pázmány.

2. LE PROFESSEUR DE THÉOLOGIE À GRAZ (1603–1607)

Le Général C. Acquaviva († 1615) destine le P. Pázmány d'abord à l'apostolat en Transylvanie, son pays natal, mais les circonstances politiques s'y opposent. Pázmány reste donc à Graz comme professeur de philosophie (1597–1600). En 1600, il est envoyé en Hongrie du Nord comme missionnaire, à la demande de F. Forgách, évêque de Nyitra (Nitra—Slovaquie), en attendant que les portes s'ouvrent vers la Transylvanie. Pázmány commence sa polémique antiprotestante par une *Réponse* (= *Fellelet*) à E. Magyari, prédicant de Sárvár sur les causes de la ruine de la Hongrie (1603). Mais il a beaucoup de difficultés à Kassa (Kosice). Le 20 septembre 1603, il retourne à Graz pour y enseigner, cette fois, la théologie scolastique pendant quatre années.

La *Theologia scholastica* de Pázmány—traités latins donnés à Graz—sont des commentaires de certaines questions de la *Somme Théologique* de Saint Thomas d'Aquin⁷ Pázmány (avec un autre professeur de théologie) suit le *Ratio Studiorum* qui prescrit aux jésuites les thèses «thomistes»

⁶ Texte français du Concile de Trente sur la justification (6^e session) : G. Dumeige, *La foi Catholique*, Paris : Éditions de l'Orante, 1969 : n. 559–564.

⁷ Voici la liste des traités élaborés et donnés aux cours (date) *Opera omnia* :

à suivre, ainsi que la méthode il employait dans l'enseignement (dictée, explication, disputes...).

En commentant le «Divin Thomas», Pázmány observe naturellement les prescriptions du *Ratio studiorum*, mais dans les questions «libres», il suit la logique de l'argumentation. Comme il l'a signalé lui-même en 1611,⁸ il y a, dans la pensée de Saint Thomas un certain développement des *Commentaires des Sentences* (oeuvre de jeunesse), jusqu'à la Somme théologique (inachevée à cause de sa mort). Puis Pázmány ne confond pas Saint Thomas avec les «thomistes» (dominicains ou autres) : ceux-ci sont critiqués davantage. Il passe au crible même l'opinion théologique des jésuites contemporains : Bellarmin (controverses, ecclésiologie), Valencia (surtout la foi), Suarez (surtout l'Incarnation) et G. Vazquez (morale, actes libres, grâce). Pázmány suit donc la «logique de la foi» et obéit à la force des arguments. Evidemment, pour ce qui concerne les vérités de la foi, il reconnaît toujours l'autorité de l'Écriture, des Pères de l'Église et des conciles.

Parmi les cours de Pázmány, les plus élaborés et les plus profonds sont le traité *De Fide* (1603/4) et le *De Verbo incarnato* (1606). Ils sont aussi les plus originaux : la question controversée du rapport entre la grâce (surnaturel) et la liberté puis, certains problèmes concernant l'Incarnation attiraient l'attention des collègues de Graz, et des Supérieurs de Pázmány.

De ultimo fine hominis <i>S. Th.</i> I-II		<i>OO IV</i> 5-29
De actibus humanis 17-19		31-19
De peccatis 71-79		121-280
De peccato originali 81-83		281-332
		↑ <i>élaboré</i>
De proprietatibus peccatorum 84-89		333-378
De virtutibus theologicis <i>S. Th.</i> II-II		
De fide 1-16	7.11.1603	379-635
De spe 17-22	26.3.1604	635-667
De caritate 23-33	65.1604	667-790
De iustitia et iure 57-66	12.10.1604	<i>OO V</i> 13-286
De religione 81-83	?	287-352
De Verbo incarnato <i>S. Th.</i> III 1-18	1605/1606	361-587
De sacramentis in gen. 60-55	7.11.1606	595-752
De Baptismo 66-71	13.2.1607	<i>OO VI</i> 5-40
De Confirmatione 71-72		40-46
De Eucharistia 73-75	23.4.1607	47-188
		↑ <i>donné</i>

N.B. : Plusieurs pages manquent dans le manuscrit de Budapest, donc dans l'*Opera Omnia* («Hic deficit textus», notent souvent les éditeurs).

⁸ Voir l'Appendix.

En utilisant la documentation du P. Óry,⁹ j'ai présenté et situé l'affaire de la censure dans l'oeuvre de Pázmány. Je me contente ici de rappeler en deux mots. À cause des controverses entre molinistes et bañeziens et des difficultés du Général des jésuites, le P. Acquaviva avec le Pape Clément VIII, le *Ratio Studiorum* était assez sévère dans les prescriptions concernant les thèses «thomistes» à suivre. Pázmány cherche l'équilibre entre le bañesianisme et le molinisme exagérés. Le chancelier de l'université de Graz, le flamand P. Decker(s), lui-même professeur de théologie avec Pázmány, professait un molinisme pur. C'est lui-même (avec le recteur du collège des jésuites à Graz) qui s'est senti obligé de «dénoncer» Pázmány à Rome, en y envoyant à plusieurs reprises (1603/1604 et 1606) des «propositions suspectes» d'une moindre orthodoxie. À vrai dire, comme l'examen des thèses envoyées à Rome et celui des mémoires de Pázmány l'ont montré, le P. Decker(s) a attribué à Pázmány certaines opinions «hérétiques» que celui-ci n'a jamais professées. La censure a été assez légère.

Pour donner une idée de la pensée théologique de Pázmány, de sa relative originalité, j'ai analysé longuement son commentaire *De Fide*.

3. LE TRAITÉ DE FIDE DE PÁZMÁNY

Pázmány commence son cours par le traité de la foi (*De Fide*, OO IV 379–635) le 7 novembre 1603. On sait que Saint Thomas, dans la *Somme Théologique*, traite de la foi parmi «les vertus théologiques» (II-II 1–16). Le Docteur Angélique a expliqué les principes de la moralité déjà au début de la I-II (*De ultimo fine hominis, De actibus humanis*). Pázmány a élaboré, plus tard, ces traités (OO IV 5–119), mais il ne les avait pas donnés aux étudiants. Evidemment, Saint Thomas et Pázmány supposent la connaissance de certains principes concernant la fin de l'homme, de la bonté et la malice morale de ses actes, de la liberté et de la grâce...

Qu'est-ce que la foi d'après S. Thomas? «Un habitus de l'esprit qui ébauche en nous la vie éternelle en faisant adhérer l'intelligence à ce qui n'est pas évident» (II-II 4,1).

L'homme est destiné à jouir un jour de la vision béatifique. Or comme cette béatitude surnaturelle dépasse les possibilités de la nature humaine, les principes naturels, grâce auxquels il agit en vue de sa fin naturelle, ne suffisent plus à l'homme pour s'orienter vers sa fin nouvelle. Il faut pour

⁹ P. Óry: *Pázmány Péter emlékezete*, Eisenstadt: Prugg Verlag, 1970: 10–98 et 155–164.

cela une adaptation, une surélévation de ses facultés, qui est l'oeuvre des vertus théologiques. La foi, notamment, en mettant l'intelligence en possession de certains principes surnaturels, en la proportionnant intérieurement à la connaissance béatifiante de Dieu, peut être considérée comme une première ébauche de la vision béatifique...¹⁰

Le croyant cependant prend connaissance de la vérité divine par une prédication faite au nom de Dieu, ou par une révélation divine immédiate : « fides ex auditu » (Rom 10,14-18 ; cf. S.Th. II-II 6,1). Dans cette connaissance par oui-dire qu'est la connaissance de foi, la vérité des propositions à croire ne s'impose pas à l'esprit. S. Thomas insiste : on croit *parce que Dieu l'a dit*, et c'est pourquoi la Vérité première constitue non seulement la matière principale de l'acte de foi, mais aussi son objet ou motif formel : « Formale objectum fidei est Veritas Prima secundum quod manifestatur in Scripturis sacris et doctrina Ecclesiae quae procedit ex Veritate Prima » (II-II 5,3).

Mais la foi est une vertu théologique, Dieu intervient dans le jeu des facultés humaines pour rendre possible un mode de connaissance qui leur serait naturellement inaccessible :

Lorsqu'il adhère à ce qui est de foi — écrit Saint Thomas — l'homme est élevé au-dessus de sa nature ; il faut donc qu'il ait cela en lui par un principe surnaturel qui le meuve du dedans ; et ce principe, c'est Dieu. La foi, quant à cette adhésion qui en est l'acte principal, vient de Dieu, qui, par sa grâce, nous meut intérieurement. (II-II 6,1)

Gratia facit fidem ; fides est donum Dei : S. Thomas le répète en renvoyant aux textes scripturaires exploités par S. Augustin en ce sens.

Jusqu'à ce point, tous les théologiens catholiques suivent S. Thomas, tous sont « thomistes », et parmi eux Pázmány, commentateur de S. Thomas (OO IV 379-383). Mais ici se pose une question grave (IV 383) : il semble qu'on ne puisse pas fonder l'acte de foi simplement sur l'autorité de Dieu révélant (*Prima veritas*), comme *ultima ratio*. Nous avons besoin des *signes extérieurs* qui attestent que *c'est Dieu* lui-même qui a révélé cette vérité (ou encore : on suppose ou on prouve pour les « gentils » que Dieu existe et qu'Il a donné une révélation...). Il s'agit donc des signes de la crédibilité.

Comment faut-il donc concevoir l'action divine (grâce) qui seule explique, en dernière analyse, la foi du chrétien ? Plus exactement : quel est le rôle de la connaissance et de la volonté (liberté) humaines et celui de la grâce dans l'acte de foi ; *comment* l'homme qui a entendu la prédication de l'Évangile, se décide-t-il à croire ? Ou encore : pourquoi,

¹⁰ R. Aubert : *Le problème de l'acte de foi*, 5^e éd., Paris : Louvain, 1969 : 47.

dans l'acte de foi, l'esprit s'appuie-t-il, en dernière analyse, sur l'autorité du Dieu révélant, et non pas sur les preuves de la raison? Quel est le rapport entre l'autorité absolue de Dieu (objet ou motif formel de la foi) et les signes ou preuves rationnelles de la crédibilité (*praebula fidei*)? C'est l'*analysis fidei* au sens strict de l'expression, autour de laquelle il y eut beaucoup de discussions au cours des siècles, de l'époque Pázmány jusqu'à nos jours. J'ai montré que dans l'analyse de l'acte de foi, Pázmány suit *G. de Valencia*, comme d'ailleurs dans la question de la coopération humaine avec la grâce prévenante.

G. de Valencia est donc le maître de Pázmány, surtout dans l'analyse de la foi, notamment dans l'interprétation de la *resolutio fidei*. Le théologien espagnol affirmait que nous pouvons, par un seul et même acte concret de l'esprit, embrasser le motif naturel de l'évidence expérimentale et le motif surnaturel de la foi; et nous le pouvons aussi par deux actes différents simultanés.

On sait qu'il y eut différentes tentatives pour résoudre l'apparent «cercle vicieux» dans la *resolutio fidei*, donc pour sauver le caractère surnaturel de la foi (*per se et propter se creditur*), et en même temps — c'est la tendance chez *Valencia* et Pázmány — le *rationabile obsequium* de la foi (signes et motifs de crédibilité). Pázmány accepte le raisonnement et la position de *Valencia* :

Ratio, ob quam post praedictam voluntatem (resolutio ex motivis creditibilitatis) credit intellectus [...] est prima Veritas revelans, credo enim v.g. Trinitatem, quia Deus revelavit, factam vero esse revelationem a Deo, non per aliam revelationem cognosco, sed per se et propter se credo, obscure, adiutus auxilio gratiae et hic sisto. (OO IV 424)

Pázmány se réfère donc expressément à *Valencia*.

Comme *Valencia*, évite de disjoindre le sujet agissant de son acte agi. Dieu coopère, par sa transcendance créatrice, au déploiement intégral de la liberté humaine, et la maintient unie à la Source d'être.

Pázmány distingue la causalité créatrice (générale) de l'efficacité surnaturelle (de la grâce). Dans le premier cas les deux causes se mêlent pour produire l'effet: «influxus creatus causae primae et secundae reipsa non distinguuntur, sed sunt una simplex actio». Pour ce qui concerne l'acte surnaturel: Dieu, par sa grâce antécédante et efficace, nous meut avant l'acte; non pas par une *praemotio physica*, mais *en nous faisant faire*, en nous aidant à nous déterminer nous même: «in operibus supernaturalibus, quae Deus facit nos facere *actionem Dei esse priorem secundum rem in motione gratiae praevenientis, per quam Deus excitat liberum arbitrium, ut faciat...*» C'est exactement la pensée de Teilhard de Chardin: «Dieu fait se faire les choses»! Dieu nous fait donc auto-créeurs, sa grâce nous

libère. Plus nous dépendons de Dieu, plus nous sommes indépendants et libres au bien, pour faire ce qu'Il veut faire — non pas à notre place, mais — par nous et avec nous.

En analysant les moments qui précèdent l'acte de foi, Pázmány avait déjà expliqué : *l'assensus fidei* doit être précédé par le jugement de crédibilité : nous devons reconnaître que la vérité à croire (présentée par l'Eglise) est digne de foi, mais — comme il n'y a pas d'évidence pour la raison —, celle-ci est incitée à l'adhésion par le *pious credulitatis affectus*, comme le dit le Concile d'Orange II et le Concile de Trente, et cette *pia affectio* agit sous la motion du Saint-Esprit (la grâce) (OO IV 383–388).

Pázmány, en traitant de la question de la grâce nécessaire à la *pia affectio* (OO IV 407–415), se réfère lui aussi, — mise à part l'Écriture — au Concile d'Orange, à Saint Augustin, au jeune Saint Thomas (*De Veritate* 24) et à G. Vazquez. Pázmány veut éviter, d'une part, l'erreur sémi-pélagienne, et d'autre part, celle de Baïus ; il suit G. Vazquez et le jeune Saint Thomas (augustinien) pour résoudre la *dubitatio*. (Et ici nous touchons déjà une de ses thèses critiquées par la censure romaine.)

Toute cette argumentation éclaire la perspicacité du jeune professeur hongrois : il analyse les textes avec un « sens historico-critique », ce qui manquait à son adversaire, J. Deckers qui supçonnait chez Pázmány tantôt un certain pélagianisme, tantôt une affinité avec Luther. (Pázmány lui-même a relevé, dans son autodéfense, la contradiction de ces accusations.) Le P. Bouillard a montré que, justement à propos des textes cités par Pázmány, certains soupçonnaient même le jeune Saint Thomas d'erreurs sémi-pélagiennes, mais sans fondement solide. C'est un fait que le jeune Thomas avait ignoré le sémi-pélagianisme historique, et c'est pour cela qu'il ne connaissait pas la ressemblance de certaines de ses propositions avec des thèses condamnées. P.ex. l'homme peut, par le libre arbitre seul, se préparer à la grâce ; la connaissance des Vérités à croire étant supposée, il est au pouvoir du libre arbitre de passer à l'acte de foi. En dépit de certaines ambiguïtés des écrits de jeunesse, Saint Thomas requiert une intervention divine à une fin surnaturelle, même quand elle suscite un acte moral naturel.

La préparation qui se fait par le libre arbitre sans la foi ne constitue qu'une disposition éloignée, c'est-à-dire insuffisante ; non pas un mérite *de congruo*, mais une capacité passive, une ordination à recevoir. La disposition ultime, seule suffisante, est un effet de la grâce sanctifiante et des vertus infuses, par lesquelles l'homme accomplit les actes de foi et de charité nécessaires à la justification.¹¹

¹¹ H. Bouillard : *Conversion et grâce chez Saint Thomas d'Aquin*, Paris : Aubier, 1944 : 85.

Mais Pázmány devait tenir compte des erreurs protestantes et de celles de Baïus. Contre les protestants, le Concile de Trente affirmait que le péché d'Adam n'a pas détruit le libre arbitre, bien qu'il l'ait affaibli. Par conséquent, l'homme a la capacité *physique* de poser des actes moralement honnêtes, car il est obligé d'observer la loi naturelle. En condamnant les erreurs de Baïus, l'autorité ecclésiastique a déclaré de nouveau que l'homme a la *capacité* naturelle de faire des oeuvres moralement honnêtes. Mais de cette capacité ne s'ensuit rigoureusement que *de fait* les hommes accomplissent, sans secours de la grâce, des actes moralement bons. Autrement dit, et c'est l'opinion de Pázmány : Dieu nous a donné par la création la liberté, et nous sommes capables de faire le bien et le mal. Mais ce «don» de la création (concours ontologique) n'est pas «grâce» au sens strict du mot qui est, de fait, toujours nécessaire pour accomplir un acte moralement bon et salutaire. Ainsi, la grâce (l'inspiration du Saint-Esprit) est-elle nécessaire pour *l'initium fidei* et le *pius affectus credulitatis*.

Notons bien, que dans l'analyse du processus de la justification et donc de l'acte de foi, Pázmány met une césure nette entre les *praeambula*, donc tout ce qui précède l'acte proprement dit (tout ce qui est aspect «apologétique» au sens moderne du mot) et la justification elle-même par l'acte de foi. C'est ce qu'on n'a pas compris clairement quand on a soupçonné Pázmány de pélagianisme. D'autre part, comme les censeurs l'ont observé, depuis Augustin et Thomas, la théologie a fait un progrès, on devait donc en tenir compte.

Entre l'optimisme de Pélage et le pessimisme de Luther, les théologiens catholiques, bañeziens et molinistes, cherchaient l'équilibre, suivant le Concile de Trente. On devait contrebalancer le «pessimisme» d'Augustin avec l'«optimisme» de Thomas. Disons avec le P. de Lubac :

la différence la plus habituelle entre eux deux, différence essentielle mais qui n'est pas contradiction, vient de ce que Saint Thomas envisage fréquemment d'abord la nature humaine en tant que telle, de manière encore abstraite, indépendamment du péché et de ses suites, tandis que Saint Augustin partait de l'expérience de l'homme pécheur ; tout en reconnaissant la transcendance du surnaturel, Saint Thomas montre en lui, par une interprétation peut-être un peu facile du *Fecisti nos ad Te* augustinien, «un achèvement donné à la nature dans le sens même qu'ébauchaient déjà ses inclinations actives» (G. de Broglie SJ) [...].¹²

Si l'on conçoit bien le rapport entre la Cause première et la cause seconde, comme l'a fait Pázmány, en suivant Saint Thomas, on comprend

¹² H. de Lubac : *Petite catéchèse sur nature et grâce*, Paris : Communio-Fayard, 1980 : 87.

que l'action de Dieu (la grâce) nous rend créateur, auto-créateur (libre) : *Deus facit nos facere* (OO IV 270–271).

4. EN GUISE DE CONCLUSION

Les brèves indications sur l'analyse de l'acte de foi dans le traité *De Fide* laisse déjà voir l'originalité de l'opinion de Pázmány sur l'interprétation de la *Somme* de Saint Thomas. Et la lettre de l'ex-professeur de Graz, en 1611, la réponse au Provincial d'Autriche sur «de Sancti Thomae doctrina sequenda» réassure bien sa position (voir le texte latin dans l'appendix de cette étude).

A cause des controverses entre molinistes et bañeziens et des difficultés du Général Acquaviva avec le pape Clément VIII, le *Ratio Studiorum* des jésuites était assez sévère dans ses prescriptions concernant les thèses «thomistes» à suivre. Pázmány a accepté ce règlement, mais, dans certaines questions «libres», il a exposé sa propre opinion, en cherchant l'équilibre entre le bañezianisme et le molinisme exagérés.

Pázmány reconnaît toujours l'autorité de l'Écriture, des Pères, des Conciles (il se réfère surtout au Concile de Trente), du Magistère et du *Ratio Studiorum*. En ce qui concerne les opinions des auteurs scolastiques, il les soumet toutes à la critique ; il n'accepte que la force de la vérité et la logique, et cela même, dans une certaine mesure, en commentant—toujours respectueusement—le «Divin Thomas». Comme il est prescrit aux jésuites, il suit généralement Saint Thomas. Mais dans sa il signale le *développement* de la pensée de Thomas des *Commentaires des Sentences* jusqu'à la *Somme Théologique* ; et le *développement* de l'enseignement de l'Église (de la théologie) de l'époque de Saint Thomas jusqu'au XVII^e siècle (certaines questions ne se posaient pas à l'époque de Saint Thomas) ; dans sa lettre Il ne confond pas Saint Thomas avec certains «thomistes» (dominicains ou autres) : ceux-ci sont critiqués davantage. Les «maîtres» de Pázmány sont les théologiens jésuites contemporains : Bellarmin (controverses, ecclésiologie), Valencia (surtout la foi), Suarez (surtout l'Incarnation) et G. Vasquez (morale, actes libres et grâce). Mais Pázmány prend ses distances même vis-à-vis de ces maîtres, quand la «logique de la foi» l'exige.

Les discussions et recherches théologiques ont fait, du Concile de Trente au Vatican II, un grand progrès, grâce à l'élimination de certains faux problèmes et au dialogue oecuménique, mais Péter Pázmány, en cherchant l'intelligence de la foi, nous donne encore aujourd'hui un

exemple d'honnêteté et de liberté intellectuelles, tout en respectant les mystères de la Révélation.

*APPENDIX: L'OPINION DE PÉTER PÁZMÁNY SUR LA
SUIITE DE SAINT THOMAS*

Vindobonae, 1611

Reverende in Christo Pater.

Attente consideravi iuxta voluntatem Reverentiae Vestrae quae de Sancti Thomae doctrina sequenda, a P. Nostro Generali praescribuntur. Qua quidem in re, quae mihi occurrerunt, haec fere sunt.

Primo: Cum in ipsa Sacra Scriptura ea sit interpretibus concessa libertas, ut plures ac valde discrepantes, adeoque interdum contrariae expositiones eiusdem loci, a catholicis Doctoribus et Sanctis Patribus adferantur; nec iniri hactenus in Ecclesia Dei ratio potuit, et forte ut iniretur non expedivit, ut (ubi salva fide dissent) eandem omnes loci expositionem sequerentur; non videtur aut expedire aut in usum induci posse, ut omnis libertas praecludatur in exponendis D. Thomae dictis, atque ad opiniones diversas, imo et contrarias, per consequentias varias inflectendis.

Secundo: Ut strictius Nostris ad placita D. Thomae adstringantur, quam Dominicani adstricti sint, quam utilitatem adferat, haud quidem perspicio. Cum ergo circa mentem ac legitimum D. Thomae sensum maxima sit diversitas opinionum inter ipsos Thomistas, non video quomodo haec eadem libertas Nostris vel adimi possit, vel ut adimatur expediat. Haec vero de mente D. Thomae altercatio, Triplici ex capite ortum habere videtur.

1-o: Ex summa brevitate, qua D. Thomas praesertim in Summa consecretur. Haec enim brevis obscuritatem necessario annexam habet. 2: Ex ipsius D. Thomae aliqua opinionum subinde mutatione. Nam, ut omittam, saepe aliud cum Magistrum explicat, aliud in Summa, docet, in ipsa certe Summa, non semel [103v] annotavi, aliud in prima parte, aliud de eadem re in prima secundae, aliisque partibus docere.

Nec revidere, ac primis operibus supremam manum addere Doctor Sanctus potuit, opus imperfectum morte praeventus reliquens. 3: Quia ut fit, multae de novo subtilitates motae ac examinatae sunt, multae declarationes Ecclesiae accesserunt post S. Thomam. Cum igitur, ut Thomistae videri possint nonnulli, etiam in iis quaestionibus quae tempore D. Thomae motae non erant, D. Thomam sectari videri volunt, torquent saepe in plures partes (quemadmodum et Aristotelem) D. Thomae dicta ac sententias. Haec autem impedimenta, cum penitus tolli non possint, vix

viam video, qua, vel mens D. Thomae certo in omnibus indagari possit, vel ad unam partem omnes nostri adstringi.

Tertio igitur id unum quod in has re videtur mihi praestare posse superiorum diligentia, huiusmodi est. Ut nimirum ea quae in Generali Congregatione primum, deinde in ordine studiorum habentur, absque ulla ulteriori limitatione observentur. Ad eamque rem Praefectus Studiorum (si idem non sit et professor, tunc enim tam ex parte sua, quam ex parte collegae, cui partialis videri potest, difficultates sunt) attendat; atque si quid in particulari excedatur, (praesertim in opinionibus quae vel pietati vel fidei, etiam remote, periculum creare videntur) superior emendet.*

Petrus Pasmanj

(ARSJ, Instit. 213, 103r et v)

De promovenda doctrinae uniformitate in Soc. Jesu.**

* Il s'agit de la V^e Congrégation Générale (1593–1594).

** V. Pachtler : *Mon. Paed. Germ.*, II 12.c.

Florian Schaffenrath – Stefan Tilg (Hg.): Achilles in Tirol. Der „bayerische Rummel“ 1703 in der „Epitome rerum Oenovallesi-um“ (*Commentationes Aenipontanae* 35, *Tirolensia Latina* 5). Universität Innsbruck, Innsbruck, 2004, 126 pp.

Aus Anlass des dreihundertjährigen Gedenkens an den so genannten „Bayerischen Rummel“ von 1703 wurde im Rahmen des Projektes *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur in Tirol* des Instituts für Sprachen und Literaturen (Abt. Latinistik) der Universität Innsbruck die *Epitome rerum Oenovallesi-um* herausgegeben, ein literarisch stilisierter Bericht eines Zeitgenossen und Augenzeugen von den Ereignissen im Inntal.

Diese kommentierte Edition des Textes zusammen mit einer Übersetzung schließt eine Lücke, da der Text trotz seiner „literarischen und historischen Qualitäten bisher fast völlig übersehen oder vernachlässigt“ (S. 7) wurde. Die Herausgeber konnten nur ein Exemplar der *Epitome* ausfindig machen, da der Text sehr selten oder gar einmalig ist.

Die Textausgabe beginnt mit einer Einleitung, die sich zunächst mit einer kurzen, 20 Zeilen langen Beschreibung der Forschungsgeschichte beschäftigt. Darauf folgen die anhand einer handschriftlichen Eintragung im einzig auffindbaren gedruckten Exemplar ermittelten Daten des Autors und Angaben zur Überlieferungsgeschichte des Werks. Um das Verständnis des Werks zu erleichtern, wird eine ausführliche Beschreibung der geschichtlichen Hintergründe geboten: Bevor die einzelnen Ereignisse im Inntal aus dem Jahre 1703 dargestellt werden, wird der „Baye-

rische Rummel“ „in den größeren historischen Kontext des Spanischen Erbfolgekrieges (1701–1714) eingeordnet“ (S. 12). Den historischen Darstellungen folgt der Inhalt des Werks und der Aufbau des aus 33 unterschiedlich langen Kapiteln bestehenden Textes. Die Kapitel I und IX eröffnen zwei Rahmenerzählungen mit autobiographischer Färbung, die allerdings nicht zu Ende geführt werden. Die Vorgeschichte des bayerischen Einfalles in Tirol wird in einem Gespräch erörtert, das im Laufe der zweiten Rahmenerzählung entsteht. Darauf folgen dann im Kapitel XI die historischen Ereignisse in unmittelbarer zeitlicher Abfolge, wobei der autobiographische Erzählrahmen abbricht.

Die *Epitome rerum Oenovallesi-um* ist ein „schillernder“ (S. 16) Text, der sich keiner Gattung eindeutig zuordnen lässt. „Die Vorgänge des ‚Bayerischen Rummels‘ werden nicht einfach historiographisch abgehandelt, sondern auch literarisch stilisiert. Diese Stilisierung geht von Wortspielen über Verseinlagen bis hin zur Verschlüsselung der Eigennamen, die vielleicht aus Furcht vor der Zensur eingeführt, dann aber auch mit großer Freude an den so entstehenden Decknamen verfolgt wurde.“ (S. 16–17) Der Eindruck von Gelehrsamkeit entsteht beim Leser durch die vielen Zitate von antiken und zum Teil modernen Schriftstellern. Für den Autor des Textes, den Jesuiten Ignatius Reydax liefert die am meisten zitierte antike Autorität, Tacitus „u.a. mit seinem inkonzinnen Periodenbau auch ein sprachliches Vorbild“ (S. 17). „Bei all dieser Stilisierung darf man nicht vergessen, dass der Text auch ein zeitgeschichtliches Dokument eines Au-

genzeugen ist. Die historischen Ereignisse des ‚Bayerischen Rummels‘ bilden das Grundgerüst, um das sich Zitate, moralisierende Exkurse, Gedichte u.a. eigentlich nicht historiographische Passagen ranken. Der Autor steht dabei klar auf der Seite der Kaiserlichen und polemisiert heftig gegen“ (S. 17) den bayerischen Kurfürsten Max Emmanuel.

Die Edition folgt „so weit wie möglich unverändert“ (S. 21) der Textgestalt des Originals, die wenigen Eingriffe werden in den Editorischen Bemerkungen aufgelistet. Da die im Text vorkommenden Namen von Personen und Orten „nach einem bestimmten Muster“ (S. 7) durchgängig verschlüsselt sind, steht vor dem editorischen Teil ein für das Textverständnis unerlässlicher „Schlüssel“ zu den Decknamen. Er beruht auf einer noch von zeitgenössischen Lesern zusammengestellten *Clavis*, die von den Herausgebern verbessert und ergänzt wurde. Trotzdem blieben einige wenige Namen unklar. Die Übersetzung, die dem lateinischen Text gegenübergestellt wird trägt viel zum richtigen Verständnis des Textes bei, da dieser „in einem schwierigen Latein geschrieben“ (S. 7) ist, und weil der Stil des Autors „oft mehr andeutend als beschreibend“ ist, wodurch „eine einfache Entnahme von Informationen erschwert“ (S. 7) wird. In dem Übersetzungsteil geben die Herausgeber die im Text vorgekommenen Stellenzitate „in der heute üblichen Form, wo möglich nach dem *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*“ (S. 21) wieder. In dem sehr ausführlichen Kommentar werden dann diese Stellen ausgeschrieben, „um den Vergleich auf Abweichungen mit den Originalzitate zu erleichtern.“ (S. 21) Außer-

dem bietet der Kommentar weitere Hilfe zu den einzelnen Begriffen, historischen Ereignissen und Personen. Die Edition wird schließlich mit einem *Index nominum* vollendet.

Alles in allem wird dieser Band die Hoffnungen der Editoren sicherlich erfüllen können und zu einer in „Zukunft intensiveren Auseinandersetzung mit dem Text“ (S. 7) viel beitragen können.

Klára Berzeviczy

Giampaolo Salvi – Laura Vanelli:
Nuova grammatica italiana. Società Editrice il Mulino, Bologna, 2004, 356 pp.

Il libro, collocato nella collana dei *Manuali* de il Mulino ha una preistoria che ne spiega bene l'attuale struttura. I due autori erano, nel lontano 1988 tra i collaboratori del *Lexikon der romanistischen Linguistik* (a.c. di G. Holtus, M. Metzeltin e Ch. Schmitt), avevano collaborato per redigere le voci riguardanti la morfologia e la sintassi dell'italiano. Nello stesso anno era apparso anche il primo volume della *Grande grammatica italiana di consultazione* (a.c. di L. Renzi). Da questi due presupposti nasce, nel 1992 la *Grammatica essenziale di riferimento* (Firenze, Le Monnier & De Agostini) dei nostri due autori, di cui il presente volume offre una revisione lungamente maturata.

La revisione ha toccato l'ampiezza e lo stile dell'esposizione e vuole rendere più didattico l'assetto del libro. Senza dubbio, alcune parti particolarmente ostiche, quali *Le costruzioni inaccusative* o *Le frasi copulative* sono diventate decisamente migliori e più accessibili ai lettori non specialisti nella versione nuova, e, bisogna dire,

alcuni punti poco chiari della terminologia sono stati eliminati, precisati o unificati rispetto alla versione del 1992.

La struttura risulta alquanto insolita. Infatti, dopo le definizioni introduttive, molto necessarie e concise, la prima parte tratta la frase semplice (ma in questa troviamo la parte morfologica sui verbi), la seconda i sintagmi (che quindi riassume solo i fatti sui nomi, aggettivi, preposizioni, avverbi, pronomi personali e sintagmi interrogativi). La terza parte si occupa della frase complessa, nella suddivisione nota sin dalla *Grammatica essenziale*, di *forma* e *contenuto* delle preposizioni. L'ultima parte è dedicata finalmente a dei problemi generali, quali l'ordine delle parole, la negazione, le profrasi, la deissi e la formazione delle parole. Nella prassi, questa ultima parte deve essere trattata, a nostra visione, in parallelo al filo conduttore, anzi, la formazione delle parole per molti aspetti può servire da interfaccia tra la grammatica descrittiva e quella di stampo generativista che il volume adotta come modello ideale. L'ordine delle parole va collocato invece nella trattazione della frase semplice perché esso deve interferire con quanto si dice sulle funzioni grammaticali, sulle frasi con *essere*, sulla costruzione passiva, le frasi accusative e inaccusative e via dicendo. Cioè, sebbene la struttura del libro risulti cristallina, nell'insegnamento alcune parti devono essere anticipate o posticipate per rendere più efficace l'esposizione. Ci si aspetterebbe magari anche una bibliografia più ampia per gli amanti della grammatica, ma il rimando costante alla *Grande grammatica* in qualche misura rende meno sentita la mancanza, se non per le novità bibliografiche che

potrebbero figurare in un capitoletto a parte. I pregi del libro del 1992 erano le domande poste in alternativa alla stanca tradizione eternamente ripetuta dai manuali di grammatica italiana. Questi vantaggi sono corroborati dalla revisione del testo che da grammatica "petrosa" diventa un manuale quasi "dolce" nello stile. Si prevede comunque il lamento eterno degli studenti universitari che preferiscono solo elenchi di fatti da studiare e non rapporti interni, connessioni, interrogativi, magari problemi ancora aperti. Non possiamo che augurarci una maggiore diffusione del presente manuale rispetto alla *Grammatica essenziale* che era usata forse troppo poco nell'insegnamento. Solo in questo modo la tradizione grammaticale italiana si potrà avvalersi di un filone ricco di spunti e di interrogativi nuovi, ed offrire alle nuove generazioni di insegnanti della lingua italiana una visione più ragionata.

György Domokos

Tibor Szabó: Megkezdett öröklét [Eternità iniziata]. Balassi Kiadó, Budapest, 2002, 256 pp.

Pare difficile presentare un libro che si proponga esso stesso di elencare e recensire altri libri, articoli e perfino opere artistiche. Il volume di Tibor Szabó — professore di storia della filosofia all'Università di Szeged — intende infatti di fornire ai propri lettori un'immagine esauriente sulla ricezione dantesca ungherese del secolo appena passato.

Prima di prendere in esame il saggio, pare necessario tornare indietro nel tempo per poter ricordare un altro studio simile, uscito dalla penna di

József Kaposi (Klein) nel 1911, in cui l'eccellente, ma poco conosciuto dantista prese in rassegna tutto ciò che fino all'epoca sua fosse stato scritto in Ungheria sul grande poeta fiorentino. Il libro di Kaposi lo si può trovare ormai soltanto sugli scaffali delle grandi biblioteche, eppure rimane un manuale eccellente e importantissimo per tutti quelli che volessero avere delle informazioni sulle traduzioni dantesche, sui libri e saggi, e perfino sulle opere artistiche o musicali ungheresi di interesse dantesco dal Quattro- al Novecento. Il volume apparentemente modesto, che semplicemente elenca e in poche parole valuta i lavori altrui, diventò un punto di riferimento obbligatorio, un lavoro fondamentale, quasi un inventario delle ricerche e degli studi danteschi in Ungheria.

Infatti Szabó cita più volte lo studio di Kaposi come "antecedente" al suo lavoro: pare dunque necessario il confronto. E il libro di Tibor Szabó regge la prova: probabilmente neanch'esso sconvolgerà il mercato librario, ma senza essere un veggente posso tranquillamente pronosticare che — come l'opera di Kaposi — anche fra decenni questo manuale sarà ritenuto utile e necessario. In verità il libro non è altro che un'enciclopedia della ricezione dantesca ungherese del Novecento — con gli indiscutibili pregi e gli inevitabili problemi di una vera enciclopedia.

La stesura di un simile repertorio richiede innanzitutto una ricerca lunga e assidua: senza alcun dubbio è un grande merito di Szabó quello di aver raccolto quasi tutto che nel secolo appena passato sia stato pubblicato su Dante e sulla sua opera in Ungheria. La compilazione della bibliografia di più di 500 schede già in sé

rende preziosissimo il volume. L'autore poi non ha semplicemente messo insieme questi dati, ma li ha anche brevemente commentati: nel caso di studi e libri danteschi cita le tesi più importanti, mentre trattando le opere artistiche offre una descrizione sommaria. È probabile inoltre che, durante il suo lavoro, il vero problema per Szabó non sia stato la compilazione della bibliografia e nemmeno la stesura di queste mini-recensioni; si doveva infatti trovare un filo conduttore che rendesse chiaro e omogeneo questo guazzabuglio di dati. Perciò il materiale è stato diviso in quattro sezioni tematiche, nelle quali la trattazione dei singoli dati segue l'ordine cronologico. Dopo una breve introduzione l'autore ci informa delle traduzioni ungheresi delle opere dantesche, mentre il secondo capitolo è interamente dedicato alla ricezione scientifica. Sarà interessante notare che l'analisi di Szabó divide in due grandi gruppi le interpretazioni dantesche ungheresi: da una parte troviamo la ricezione "laica" e dall'altra quella "religiosa". Il terzo capitolo elenca e descrive le opere d'arte ed anche le trasmissioni televisive ispirate all'operosità dell'Alighieri. Infine il lettore troverà una breve, ma assai interessante e utile analisi dell'immagine di Dante offerta dai manuali scolastici e dalle storie della letteratura.

Il repertorio presenta comunque alcuni punti deboli che in gran parte sono attribuibili al metodo della trattazione e non ad una reale mancanza dell'autore. Visto che la presentazione della ricezione dantesca ungherese vuol essere completa, Szabó tante volte è costretto parlare di studi e interpretazioni che sicuramente non sono il meglio dell'acume scientifico

ungherese, mentre nel caso di opere veramente importanti non ha — perché non può avere — lo spazio per un riassunto sufficientemente elaborato.

In ultima analisi penso che il volume di Szabó, oltre a essere un manuale indispensabile per i ricercatori, è testimone dell'interesse del pubblico ungherese verso il grande poeta trecentesco. Già il fatto che si sia potuto scrivere un libro di 250 pagine piene di dati, è segno indiscutibile dell'esistenza di un pubblico relativamente vasto dell'Alighieri. Eppure — e su ciò richiama l'attenzione anche l'autore — la dantologia ungherese avrà ancora tanto da fare: anche se sono tradotte tutte le opere di Dante, mancano le monografie e commenti alle singole opere.

Il volume è stato corredato da un riassunto di quattro pagine in italiano che ne facilita l'uso anche ai lettori italiani.

Norbert Mátyus

Gino Bottigioni: Leggende e tradizioni di Sardegna (*Bibliotheca sarda* 86). Testi dialettali in grafia fonetica, a cura di Giovanni Lupinu. Nuoro, Ilisso, 2003, 281 pp.

Il volume è una riedizione emendata dell'opera di Bottigioni, uscita originalmente, con lo stesso titolo, nel 1922 (Genève, Leo S. Olschki). Esso racchiude in sé centoventisette etnotesti, raccolti e riprodotti in grafia fonetica dal glottologo carrarese, la relativa traduzione letteraria a fronte dei testi e, inoltre, un lungo saggio introduttivo intitolato *Elementi e carattere generali della leggenda sarda*. Nell'eseguire la raccolta dei testi e l'impresa ardua di registrarli a orecchio in grafia

fonetica, lo scopo di Bottigioni era quello di poter disporre di documenti sicuri ed esatti per gli studi, in primo piano, linguistici. I testi provengono da diverse aree dialettali, e rappresentano le principali varietà del sardo. 21 testi illustrano, quindi, la varietà gallurese, 2 testi quella sassarese, 2 il catalano di Alghero; la varietà (sardo-)logudorese è illustrata da 20 testi, quella (sardo-)nuorese da 3 testi; quella (sardo-)arborense è rappresentata da 8 testi, e quella campidanese, infine, è illustrata da 71 testi. I racconti, di cui i più lunghi riempiono appena una pagina e mezza, ci presentano un mondo incantevole, ora misterioso, ora fiabesco, disegnato e modellato dalla fantasia popolare. Alcuni testi narrano vicende storiche e/o vicissitudini politiche della Sardegna; altri parlano di leggende, credenze, superstizioni formatesi attorno alle costruzioni o formazioni particolari dell'isola, come sono, per esempio, i nuraghi, le tombe dei giganti, i Domus de janas o gianas (cioè delle piccole fate), una roccia di granito che ispira angoscia per la sua forma o le sue dimensioni ecc. Non mancano, ovviamente, le leggende di carattere religioso che spiegano l'origine miracolosa di una chiesa, la nascita dell'eco, il dono del fuoco all'uomo da parte di Sant'Antonio ecc.; vi sono pure dei racconti fiabeschi i cui protagonisti sono spiriti d'oltretomba, mostri, demoni, streghe che succhiano sangue, ma anche personaggi reali: il pastore sardo, il bandito, la donna furba.

La riedizione di una documentazione così ricca della tradizione orale è una iniziativa senz'altro da applaudire; il volume è un tesoro il cui valore viene distinto anche dal fatto che esso fissa uno stato linguistico, etno-

grafico, folkloristico, psicologico, sociologico ecc. della Sardegna di circa 80–90 anni fa. Nel caso di una nuova edizione, l'esigenza di correzioni e/o aggiornamenti è certamente giustificata, soprattutto quando sono passati più di cinquant'anni dall'apparizione precedente di un dato libro. Nella riedizione in questione il motivo principale delle modifiche e correzioni era—come leggiamo dalla penna di Giovanni Lupinu, il curatore del volume—di rendere più facile la lettura dei testi in grafia fonetica, già stentata nell'edizione del 1922. Nel resto del volume (traduzioni letterarie, parti introduttive, rimandi bibliografici ecc.) non sono state eseguite modifiche sostanziali per rispetto storico dell'opera. Tra i cambiamenti che interessano i testi dialettali ci sono alcuni sui quali avrei qualche osservazione da rendere nota.

Per la trascrizione fonetica dei testi raccolti, Bottiglioni si serve del sistema 'nazionale', cioè quello inizialmente concepito da Graziadio Isaia Ascoli, che è stato adoperato pure nelle opere di Max Leopold Wagner, ed è largamente usato dai dialettologi italiani. Nel presente volume viene conservato il sistema fonetico impiegato da Bottiglioni, tuttavia il curatore ne sostituisce quindici caratteri, “un grafema con un altro del medesimo valore fonetico” (*Prefazione*, p. 19), spiegando che si tratta di una “sostituzione motivata [...] dall'esigenza di impiegare segni meno criptici per il lettore non specialista, che magari abbia già una qualche familiarità con le opere di Wagner e col metodo di trascrizione semplificata del sardo in esse impiegato” (*ibid.*, 18–19). Osservando la tavola che riporta le sostituzioni eseguite (p. 19), devo confessare

che non riesco a dare una spiegazione di quale sia l'aspetto o elemento d'un segno per cui esso possa essere considerato meno criptico dell'altro. Vale a dire, perché il grafema¹ ⟨ž⟩ sia meno criptico di ⟨z⟩; oppure ⟨ñ⟩ di ⟨n⟩; oppure ⟨č⟩ di ⟨c⟩; addirittura ⟨h·⟩ di ⟨x⟩ ecc.? A mio parere, un lettore *non specialista* gradirebbe, forse, l'impiego di una trascrizione fonetica meno complicata, per esempio quella internazionale (IPA) largamente diffusa (ed insegnata pure nelle scuole, italiane e non solo). Neanche le opere di Wagner potrebbero offrire al lettore un soccorso immediato nel decifrare il valore di certi grafemi del sistema ascoliano visto che tale sistema sembra essere in aggiornamento (o rielaborazione?) continuo. Per fare un esempio: la consonante laterale palatale (per es.: nella parola it. *figlio*; [ʎ] nella trascrizione IPA) in due opere wagneriane è indicata diversamente; nella *Fonetica storica del sardo* (Gianni Trois Editore, Cagliari, 1984) essa viene segnata con il grafema ⟨l'⟩, in *La lingua sarda* (Ilisso, Nuoro, 1997) lo stesso suono è segnato con il grafema ⟨l'⟩. Nell'edizione aggiornata di Bottiglioni, dalla tabella già menzionata risulta che il linguista toscano originalmente usa, per segnare lo stesso suono, il grafema ⟨l'⟩, il quale poi viene sostituito da Lupinu—come si legge nella tabella—con il grafema ⟨l'⟩. Le differenze potrebbero sembrare trascurabili, ma solamente fino alla prima apparizione della consonante fricativa laterale nei testi (praticamente già nel primo racconto, e ancora in altri dodici testi), caratteristica nei dialetti sassaresi e logudoresi settentrionale, la

¹ Adopero le parentesi angolari per l'indicazione dei grafemi.

quale nella *Fonetica storica del sardo* è segnata con il grafema ⟨P⟩, in *La lingua sarda* con il grafema ⟨I⟩, nella presente riedizione (in cui però tale suono avrebbe forse meritato una spiegazione e/o descrizione un po' più dettagliata, ed—eventualmente—non solo a favore del lettore *non specialista*) con il grafema 'combinato' ⟨P̃⟩. Infine, riguardo ancora ai testi in trascrizione fonetica, mi sembra poco adeguato l'uso dell'accento acuto per segnalare la posizione dell'accento tonico delle parole al posto di un accento grafico 'neutrale' cioè verticale (di tipo ⟨'⟩). Nell'italiano scritto, come in molte lingue in cui esiste l'opposizione di vocali aperte e chiuse, l'accento acuto, per convenzione, viene adoperato per distinguere le vocali chiuse. Sopra un grafema, quindi, che già per sé designa una vocale chiusa, l'accento acuto è ridondante. Nel caso invece di una vocale aperta, l'uso dell'acuto potrebbe creare confusione, per esempio: *bèl'tula* (p. 86, testo III); *òmìni* (p. 90, testo VII) ecc.

Certamente le mie precedenti osservazioni mirano solamente a richiamare l'attenzione sui problemi, per lo più di origine tipografica, che possono rendere più difficoltosa, secondo me inutilmente, la lettura dei testi dialettali in grafia fonetica. Vorrei nuovamente sottolineare l'importanza dell'iniziativa, con il vivo augurio che essa abbia ben presto seguito.

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