

## L'EMERGENZA STORICA DI SAN TOMMASO

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The present paper exposes the cultural role of Saint Thomas as it was viewed in history. Usually, with the passing of time, the memory of a man and his works weakens and decreases, while in the case of “geniuses”, the opposite appears to happen. Thomas belongs to this latter characterization: the remoter his life, the stronger his presence. There are three decisive factors related to his ascend: his canonization in Avignon by Pope John XXI (1323), the title *Doctor Ecclesiae*, given by Pope Pius V (1567), and the encyclical letter *Aeterni Patris* of Pope Leo XIII (1879). These historical events encouraged the study and the comprehensive apprehension of the Thomist doctrine in its true reality and value. At the beginning of the third millennium, the Thomist thought has a more significant cultural presence than previously. The critical edition of his works, their translation into various languages and the extensive number of studies on his thinking have contributed to the continuous discovery of his doctrinal system. Thomas has become the distinguished teacher, the *Doctor humanitatis* in theology, metaphysics, anthropology, and ethics. His historical role is a positive sign for the culture of the third millennium.

Il tema della mia relazione è introduttivo: *l'emergenza storica ossia l'itinerario di Tommaso lungo i sette secoli che lo separano da noi*. Nell'anno duemila due siamo a 777 anni dalla sua nascita e a 726 dalla sua morte. E' lungo questo tratto della storia culturale e non sarà possibile raccogliere tutte le spighe in un solo fascicolo. Ma il tema è degno di considerazione e può aiutare a una migliore comprensione del tema proposto, lo studio di Tommaso e il tomismo in questo lungo arco della temporalità.

Con la memoria storica di San Tommaso accade un fenomeno singolare, proprio il contrario di ciò che capita alla grande maggioranza, *ut in pluribus*. Infatti per la maggior parte dell'umanità, anche per coloro che al loro tempo furono celebri e famosi, la memoria si debilita lentamente fino scomparire in proporzione inversa al passo del tempo.

La parola di Dio paragona questa presenza storica alla scia che la nave lascia dietro di sé mentre naviga nel mare: si cancella molto presto (Ec. 18, 8–10). Invece con Tommaso accade il contrario: la sua presenza culturale cresce quanto più il tempo ci allontana da lui. Tommaso è oggi molto più presente e operante di quanto non lo fosse al suo tempo, molto più conosciuto e discusso. Tommaso è così singolare, come diceva Gilson, che noi possiamo pensare la chiesa fino al sec. XIII senza Tommaso, ma non la possiamo pensare più senza di lui dopo il secolo XIII.<sup>1</sup>

Ci troviamo oggi, varcando la soglia del III millennio, a solo un anno dall'inizio. Ci sembra di essere sulla cima dell'alta montagna temporale, tra due millenni, e non possiamo non rivolgere lo sguardo sia al passato, che resta alle nostre spalle, che al futuro che si apre come orizzonte davanti ai nostri occhi. L'esperienza di una tale situazione è privilegiata. Il nostro passato immediato ci è molto più vicino, lo abbiamo vissuto, e non ci lascia molto soddisfatti. Nella travagliata storia del sec. XX tutto è stato possibile, sia nel bene che nel male. Al più semplice sguardo troviamo la dura realtà dello scontro tra le "due città" agostiniane, frutto dei due amori: quella di Dio e quella dell'egoismo umano. E' questa che ha lasciato tracce incancellabili, quella delle guerre, della bomba atomica, dei genocidi, dei sistemi totalitari che hanno umiliato la dignità umana. Non si possono ignorare le conquiste della scienza. Ma in realtà dobbiamo confessare che oggi abbiamo più tecnica e meno umanità.

Certamente un secolo è solo una decima parte del millennio. Il giudizio complessivo sul secondo millennio, che integra l'età moderna e quella medievale, è molto più complesso. In questo millennio l'umanità ha fatto i grandi passi della storia e della cultura: l'uomo ha scoperto la propria casa e la ha trovata rotonda, come Tommaso insinua nella sua prima questione della Somma,<sup>2</sup> si è proposto in modo nuovo la domanda sull'uomo quando si è trovato davanti agli uomini del nuovo mondo, la buona novella del vangelo ha risuonato in tutto il mondo e l'uomo ha avuto una risposta del suo essere nel mondo davanti a Dio. La cultura occidentale ha conosciuto uno sviluppo e una diffusione universale. Le scienze, la filosofia, la teologia hanno raggiunto un alto livello. L'unità della scienza e della tecnica hanno creato una nuova

<sup>1</sup> E. Gilson, *San Tommaso. Fonti e riflessi del suo pensiero, Avant-Propos (Studi Tomistici 1)* Pont. Accademia Sti Thomae, LEV, Roma, 1974, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> S. Tommaso, *S.T. I*, 1, 1, ad 2: "quod terra est rotunda."

cultura a livello universale. Alla base di queste conquiste ci sono sempre gli uomini concreti.

Chi sono i grandi artefici del secondo millennio? Si sono fatte molte inchieste al riguardo e i giudizi espressi sono molto disparati e contrastanti. Ma in non poche di queste inchieste tra i dotti, il nome di Tommaso compare in un posto molto elevato, addirittura il primo tra tutti. In una delle inchieste, fatta dalla Rivista *Humanitas* del Cile, risultavano tra le prime due figure del millennio due italiani, e tutti e due del secolo XIII, l'uno San Francesco di Assisi, l'altro San Tommaso d'Aquino. Il numero dei voti era quasi pari, ma nel capitolo delle preferenze, vinceva Tommaso, come l'uomo che ha conformato più a fondo la cultura dell'occidente.<sup>3</sup> Nel parere di molti esperti Tommaso ha avuto un influsso straordinario nella cultura occidentale, in quella cristiana particolarmente. Tommaso emerge tra i geni dell'umanità come Saul nel suo popolo, come l'Himalaya tra le montagne.

Questo fenomeno culturale ci conforta. Tutti vogliamo, come i genitori, il primo posto per il figlio. Davanti a questo fatto così notevole, abbiamo bisogno di capire come questo sia accaduto. Siamo in grado di conoscere i fatti e gli eventi nella misura in cui conosciamo le loro cause. Cosa ha Tommaso di singolare tra gli uomini del secondo millennio? Quale è stato il giudizio su di lui in questo processo emergente?

Per una risposta adeguata a questa questione ci serve lo schema di Tommaso nella Somma Teologica. Egli considera l'uomo singolo come *homo viator*, come essere personale libero nel suo dinamismo verso Dio, dal quale proviene e al quale ritorna. L'uomo è un essere in cammino e deve percorrere l'itinerario ascendente fino alla meta. Lo descrive con queste parole: *De motu rationalis creaturae in Deum*.<sup>4</sup> La libertà umana all'origine di questa traiettoria di cooperazione dell'uomo con Dio. Ma la libertà implica l'intelletto, la facoltà specifica dell'uomo, quella che Dio preferisce e ama di più nell'uomo fatto a sua immagine. Mediante l'intelletto è in grado di conoscere la verità, di amarla, e anche di testimoniarla: e così fare la verità nella propria esistenza: *Veritatem facientes in caritate* (Ef 4, 15). Questo itinerario che Tommaso ha proposto ad ogni uomo che allo stesso tempo è e diviene, lo ha vissuto, e anche si è verificato in un certo modo nella sua memoria storica.

Il nostro compito può sembrare semplice ma è molto complesso allo stesso tempo. Dobbiamo scoprire il percorso storico di San Tom-

<sup>3</sup> *Humanitas* 18, 2000, pp. 34-45.

<sup>4</sup> S.T. I, 2 prol.

maso nella storia. Come farlo? In questa allocuzione, che si propone essere breve, basta indicare, come in una carta geografica, le tappe dell'itinerario, come se si facesse in elicottero il percorso di un viaggio che poi si deve fare a piedi. Lo schema del nostro itinerario può essere semplificato nel seguente modo: un punto di partenza, ovvero la vita e l'opera di Tommaso; il percorso storico lungo sette secoli della sua memoria e presenza culturale; e il punto di arrivo, dove siamo oggi con lo sguardo indirizzato al domani. Si tratta di scoprire il percorso culturale, che in realtà è simile al percorso esistenziale, alla vita stessa, che comporta sempre lotta, conflitti e, quindi, sconfitte e conquiste. L'itinerario di Tommaso è tutt'altro che facile, è eroico. Per questo la sua lezione è di altissimo valore. Parlando dell'anima, che egli, seguendo Aristotele, ha descritto come forma del corpo, allo scopo di fare netta distinzione tra l'anima dell'uomo e quella degli altri corpi viventi, Tommaso portava avanti una differenziazione tra forme *immerse nella materia e forme emergenti*. L'anima dell'uomo, per la sua condizione di spirituale e semplice, è forma nella materia, non materiale, ma forma *emergente*.<sup>5</sup> In un senso analogo noi possiamo scoprire la sua *emergenza storica* lungo i 7 secoli fino a questo ingresso nel terzo millennio.

### I. L'UOMO E L'OPERA

Di questo binomio ancora non siamo in grado di dire l'ultima parola.<sup>6</sup> Dell'uomo storico conosciamo soltanto alcune cose; ne ignoriamo tante! Uno dei migliori biografi di Tommaso, James Weisheipl, apre la sua splendida biografia su Tommaso dell'anno 1974 dicendo che l'unica data storica che conosciamo con tutta certezza è quella della sua morte. Possiamo dire che oggi conosciamo meglio la sua ingente opera. La Commissione Leonina, dopo più di cent'anni di lavoro, ci ha presentato il testo critico, circa 50 volumi. Il p. Busa, dopo 25 anni di lavoro informatico con più di 70 operai ha fatto *l'Index*, e ci ha presentato in un CD Rom ben otto milioni di parole. Davanti all'uomo Tommaso

<sup>5</sup> S. Tommaso, *De unit. Intell. Contra Averroistas*, c. 3, nn. 77-81.

<sup>6</sup> Le biografie di San Tommaso sono una costante storica, iniziando con Guglielmo di Tocco, *Ystoria beati Thomae*, con occasione della sua canonizzazione, fino a noi. Le ultime, nella seconda metà del sec. XX, prestano grande attenzione a la realtà storica del medio evo. C. le Brun-Gouanvic (ed.), *Storica sancti Thome de Aquino de Guillaume de Tocco (1323)*, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, 1996. Le più notevoli sono quelle di Ramirez (1948), Chenu (1950), Weisheipl (1974), Spiazzi (1990), Torrell (1993).

d'Aquino non ci basta ciò che conosciamo. Davanti alla sua ingente opera, chi può dire che la conosce a fondo?

Tuttavia, sia sull'uomo che sull'opera, oggi siamo più vicini a Tommaso che non la maggior parte dei suoi coetanei. Tommaso non ci ha lasciato, come Agostino, le proprie *Confessiones*, la narrazione del suo itinerario esistenziale; ha portato con sé il proprio mistero personale.

L'esistenza storica di Tommaso potrebbe essere vista come un sentiero fiorito, tutto facile e ascendente. In realtà Tommaso può dirsi fortunato nella sua vita, sia per la sua nobile famiglia che per la formazione integrale in a Montecassino per l'incontro con i domenicani a Napoli, lo studio in questa città nella prima università civile, lo *Studium* dell'Imperatore Federico II, con i maestri che lo introducono alla lettura di Aristotele e dei filosofi arabi, quasi ignorati ancora in Occidente, l'incontro a Parigi con il maestro Alberto, l'accesso alla Facoltà delle Arti, lo studio a Colonia, la cattedra di Teologia di Parigi come *Magister regens*, invitato talvolta a tavola del re Luigi IX di Francia, la dimora a Orvieto come amico del Papa Urbano IV, l'incarico dell'Ordine dello Studio domenicano a Santa Sabina, invitato da Carlo d'Angiò alla cattedra di teologia di Napoli, la chiamata del Papa Gregorio X al Concilio di Lione, e anche la morte con fama di dotto e santo a Fossanova, etc. Tommaso ha avuto tanti doni e grazie del cielo. Era uomo di grande salute che ha goduto di stima e rispetto dovunque, un bell'uomo come diceva la madre di Fra Reginaldo di Privero quando parlava di lui e di suo figlio, il socio carissimo. Sotto l'aspetto della fortuna Tommaso ha tratto profitto di tutte quelle circostanze favorevoli.

Ma accanto a questa dimensione ben fondata troviamo anche un dramma nella sua esistenza piena di conflitti. Basta accennare a quello familiare, a quello del frate mendicante, e a quello dell'uomo di studio.

Aveva solo 5 anni quando è stato inviato dalla famiglia al monastero di Montecassino. Una lacuna psicologica si produce nella sua esistenza: una mancanza di affetto nella prima tappa della vita. Il padre lo porta, la nutrice lo accompagna, il padre paga il monastero, ma Tommaso viene allontanato dai suoi durante tutta l'infanzia e l'adolescenza. Il dramma scoppia quando Tommaso, giovane di 19 anni, rifiuta di seguire la carriera del padre o quella dei fratelli e sceglie quella dei frati mendicanti predicatori. La madre, dalla famiglia dei Rossi Caraccioli,<sup>7</sup> si oppone con tutte le forze. I fratelli lo portano a casa come prigioniero. Tommaso ama i suoi, ma la sua decisione di seguire Cristo povero è più

<sup>7</sup> Cfr. Tocco, *Ystoria beati Thomae*, nella sua ultima redazione del 1330, rettifica la tradizione che assegnava a Donna Teodora una origine normanna. Era Italiana.

forte e nasce da un amore più esigente. Possiamo immaginare la tensione familiare durante i due anni di “sequestro” nel castello di Monte San Giovanni, o in quello di Roccasecca. Tommaso supera l’opposizione e si mostrerà molto vicino alla famiglia negli ultimi anni.<sup>8</sup>

Il dramma del frate mendicante si fa molto acuto negli anni di Parigi, quando i preti secolari dichiarano la guerra aperta ai mendicanti, quando anche il Papa Innocenzo IV gli toglie i privilegi, e l’Ordine si sente minacciato nella sua esistenza. Tommaso con i frati di Parigi, che devono essere protetti dagli arcieri di Luigi IX quando escono a fare la questua o a predicare, canta ogni notte le litanie dei santi, deve lottare contro Guglielmo di Saint Amour che presenta gli Ordini mendicanti, domenicani e francescani, come i “*pericoli degli ultimi tempi*.”<sup>9</sup>

Ma il dramma costante nella sua vita di uomo di studio è la lotta per la giustizia e la verità. La Facoltà di Parigi non gli permette di ottenere la Licenza e il Papa stesso Alessandro IV deve intervenire a suo favore. Tommaso come Magister *regens* della Facoltà di Teologia ha tre compiti: *legere, praedicare, disputare*. Tutti i tre compiti gli sono diventati difficili. I professori secolari fanno sciopero contro i mendicanti, alcuni bidelli interrompono il sermone del predicatore perché è un frate, le dispute sono talvolta offensive come quelle con Pecham sull’eternità del mondo.

Ma i grandi conflitti per Tommaso sono quelli delle sue grandi opzioni dottrinali. Egli ha optato per Aristotele, e questa scelta gli apre due fronti di battaglia costante; da una parte gli aristotelici che seguono Averroè, descritti da Tommaso come “averroisti”, dall’altra i teologi che seguono la tradizione agostiniana, nella quale la volontà precede l’intelletto. A questi conflitti si devono aggiungere le difficoltà dell’uomo di studio e di vita contemplativa quale Tommaso: il suo ufficio chiede stabilità, ma Tommaso è un vero itinerante. Egli percorre a piedi le vie della vecchia Europa in tutte le sue direzioni: da Napoli a Parigi, e poi a Colonia, ritorna a Parigi, va a Valenciennes, ritorna in Italia, viaggia a Napoli, a Orvieto, a Roma. Ritorna ancora a Parigi, e dopo tre anni viene inviato di nuovo a Napoli. Da Napoli si mette in cammino per la Gallia,<sup>10</sup> per il Concilio di Lione, ma la morte lo sorprende come itinerante. Questa mobilità comporta i problemi del viaggio, a piedi,

<sup>8</sup> Cfr. J.P. Torrell, *Initiation à saint Thomas d'Aquin. Sa personne et son œuvre*, Cerf & Éditions universitaires, Paris & Fribourg, 1993, p. 403 e ss.

<sup>9</sup> Cfr. M. Dufeil, *Guillaume de saint Amour et la polémique universitaire parisienne, 1250-1259*, Picard, Paris, 1975.

<sup>10</sup> Nella *Responsio ad abbatem Berardum*: “proficiscentem in Galliam.”

carico dei libri di cui egli ha bisogno per la sua attività di professore, i disagi dei luoghi, poco adatti al suo lavoro. Tommaso deve esercitare la memoria fino ad avere in testa i libri che non può portare con sé.<sup>11</sup>

Se mettiamo insieme fortuna e conflitti abbiamo un approccio alla sua realtà esistenziale. Tommaso è stato un uomo contemplativo, dotato di un talento straordinario per la sintesi e la precisione, di una capacità di assimilazione unica, di una bontà eccezionale. Egli era ben sicuro che la sua vocazione di teologo richiedeva preghiera, riflessione, silenzio, contemplazione, una vera vita spirituale.

Da quella fonte di vita interiore è nata l'opera che oggi conosciamo come il contributo permanente di Tommaso. Tommaso si è identificato con la sua opera. In questo risplende ciò che egli stesso chiama l'ufficio del saggio. Un ufficio che conosceva bene. Infatti egli personifica le tre sapienze: quella filosofica, che acquisisce nella familiarità con Aristotele e con i filosofi arabi, quella teologica, che conquista nella scuola della tradizione cristiana, con i Padri e i pensatori medievali, e quella biblica o mistica, che assimila nella fonte della rivelazione e nell'esercizio dei doni dello spirito.

L'uomo e l'opera formano una vera unità. Tale è il punto di partenza, la stessa esistenza storica di Tommaso, uomo di carne e ossa come noi, uomo di spirito molto al di sopra del comune. Le difficoltà e i conflitti lo hanno portato alla sua grandezza esistenziale. Si deve notare che le sue grandi opere sono frutto della sua riflessione, e non sono nate nella scuola. Allo stesso modo la *Somma* contro i Gentili, la *Summa Theologiae*, anche se questa era ordinata al rinnovamento della scuola. Le tre saggezze, filosofica, teologica e mistica, sono profondamente unite. Tale è l'opera di Tommaso, come espressione della propria vita. L'unità di questa vita e opera si trova nella prima domanda che egli da bambino faceva ai monaci di Montecasino: *Dic mihi, quid est Deus?*<sup>12</sup>

## 2. ATTRAVERSO I SECOLI

Dopo la morte di Tommaso ha inizio in modo nuovo e inarrestabile la sua marcia nella storia. Si tratta di una marcia singolarissima, che possiamo dividere in due momenti contrari: il silenzio e una certa per-

<sup>11</sup> Cfr. F.X. Putallaz, *L'ultimo viaggio di Tommaso d'Aquino*, Piemme, Torino, 2000.

<sup>12</sup> Cfr. A. Lobato, *Santo Tomás de Aquino, maestro de maestros*, Monte Carmelo, Burgos, 2000; Id. *Santo Tomás de Aquino, el Santo*, Edibesa, Madrid, 2000.

secuzione nei primi 50 anni, la sua scoperta e l'ascesa sempre più alta a partire dal 1323, anno della sua canonizzazione in Avignone.

L'uomo che in ginocchio professava la fede cattolica a Fossanova, vicino alla morte, e sottometteva la sua opera al giudizio della Chiesa, poco dopo era minacciato di condanna a Parigi. Il vescovo E. Tempier aveva emesso la prima condanna delle tesi averroistiche nel 1270. Prima di questa condanna Tommaso aveva scritto contro Siger de Brabant il suo opuscolo *De Unitate Intellectus*. Ma sotto il pontificato del Papa portoghese Pietro Ispano, Giovanni XXI, si produce una nuova inchiesta nella Facoltà di Teologia, e lo stesso Tempier, proprio il 7 marzo del 1277, pubblica una nuova condanna di 219 proposizioni.<sup>13</sup> Alcune di queste tesi toccano aspetti della dottrina di Tommaso: circa la conoscenza, l'eternità del mondo, l'antropologia. Un discepolo di Tommaso, Egidio Romano, è privato dalla cattedra. A questa condanna di Parigi negli anni successivi si aggiungono altre a Oxford; la prima dal domenicano Roberto Kilwardby, dopo dal francescano Pecham. Tutte e due procedono dal fronte agostiniano, che rifiuta l'antropologia dell'unità della forma sostanziale nell'uomo, dottrina che Tommaso ha difeso con tutte le sue conseguenze.

L'opposizione a Tommaso viene in primo luogo dalla scuola francescana. Guglielmo della Mare pubblica nel 1279 un Catalogo di 118 tesi di Tommaso che giudica pericolose per la fede. Gli studenti francescani non potranno leggere la *Summa Theologiae* di Tommaso senza la correzione di queste tesi. In questo clima hanno inizio le opere contro Tommaso chiamate *Correctoria*.

Nella scuola domenicana ci sono anche professori contrari a Tommaso d'Aquino. In realtà Tommaso non ha avuto fortuna tra i discepoli. Non possiamo dire che qualcuno dei suoi discepoli abbia capito a fondo sia l'originalità che la profondità del suo insegnamento. I baccellieri che egli ha avuto a Parigi, mentre era *magister regens*, Guglielmo di Altona, Annibaldo di Annibaldi, e Romano di Roma, come Pietro di Tarentaise, hanno seguito nella scuola il testo del Commento alle Sentenze di Tommaso, ma non hanno capito a fondo la dottrina e sono morti prima di Tommaso.

Verso la fine del secolo i Domenicani giovani iniziano la difesa del maestro, alcuni capitoli dell'Ordine consigliano lo studio di Tommaso, Ricardo Knapwell, Giovanni di Parigi, Ramberto di Primadizzi, Egidio

<sup>13</sup> Oggi è documentata la preparazione di un altro processo questa volta contro Tommaso, da parte del Papa Giovanni XXI, processo interrotto con la morte del Papa. Cfr. A. Lobato, 'El Papa Juan XXI y los dominicos', *Medioevalia* 7/8, 1995, pp. 303-327.

di Lessines, e Bernardo di Triglia sono tra i primi che confutano le tesi dei francescani.<sup>14</sup> Lo stesso Alberto, il maestro di Tommaso, viene a Parigi per la difesa del discepolo nel 1277, ma Tempier li aveva condannati prima del suo arrivo. L'improvvisa morte del Papa Giovanni XXI fu provvidenziale, perché, come attesta Pecham, era in corso un processo contro le dottrine di Tommaso.

Tutta questa opposizione ebbe fine con un fatto singolare: la canonizzazione di Tommaso fatta il 18 luglio dell'anno 1323 dal Papa Giovanni XXII ad Avignone. La sua elezione era avvenuta nel conclave più lungo della storia, durato più di due anni, nel convento domenicano di Lione. Il Papa voleva dare un segno di gratitudine per l'ospitalità del conclave e chiese all'Ordine di proporre per la canonizzazione un illustre domenicano. Fu lo stesso Papa a preferire Tommaso a Raimondo di Peñafort. Egli ordinò il processo, lo seguì da vicino, si procurò una copia ufficiale delle opere di Tommaso, e così iniziò una nuova epoca per Tommaso. La Bolla *Redemptionem misit*, e la messa *In medio Ecclesiae* mettevano in risalto la dottrina e la santità di Tommaso. Il processo napoletano convocò 25 testimoni che avevano conosciuto il santo, mentre quello di Fossanova raccoglieva i miracoli operati dal santo nel culto che aveva nel sepolcro: i miracoli erano più di 300. Il Papa che stimava molto Tommaso avrebbe detto che oltre quei miracoli bisognava tener conto degli articoli scritti, ciascuno dei quali era un vero miracolo: *tot miracula fecit, quot articulos scripsit*.

Come c'era da aspettarsi, la canonizzazione ebbe effetti immediati. L'Ordine accetta Tommaso come maestro di teologia in tutti i suoi centri, il vescovo di Parigi elimina ogni condanna emessa contro Tommaso e le reliquie del santo, dopo lunghi e tortuosi traslochi, saranno portate a Toulouse, per ordine del Papa Urbano V, il 28 gennaio 1368. Con la canonizzazione si passa dalle persecuzioni e accuse del primo mezzo secolo, alla venerazione e allo studio di San Tommaso. Le prime chiese in onore del santo sono l'oratorio di Santa Sabina a Roma e la chiesa nuova di Roccasecca del 1324.

Dopo questo evento radicale possiamo distinguere tre tappe nella storia della presenza culturale di Tommaso, la prima di difesa, la seconda di studio e magistero, la terza di ricupero.

La prima tappa coincide con l'epoca debole del pensiero cristiano. Il secolo XIV è molto sconvolto in Europa per la strage che ha causato la peste nera. La situazione dottrinale è di scarso valore. I di-

<sup>14</sup> Cfr. I. Andereggen, *Introduzione alla teologia di San Tommaso*, Greogoriana, Roma, 1998, pp. 184 e ss.

scepoli di S. Tommaso devono far fronte alle nuove scuole scotista e nominalista, sorte entrambe dalla scuola francescana. I primi studiosi di Tommaso sono discepoli di Alberto in Germania come Giovanni e Gerardo di Sterngassen, Enrico de Lübec, e Giovanni di Lichtenberg, Ulrico di Strasburgo, o il maestro Eckhart. I domenicani iniziano lo studio di alcune opere di San Tommaso, come Armando di Belloviso, che commenta l'opuscolo *De ente et essentia*, Pietro della Palude, Godin. In questo secolo ha inizio il tomismo di Bisanzio, con le traduzioni in greco di Massimo Planudes e di Gregorio Akyndinos della Somma contro i gentili, e di Demitrios Kydones che traduce la Somma Theologica. Tommaso trova studiosi in Armenia, Bohemia, Polonia, Scandinavia, come nei centri universitari di Oxford, Colonia, Parigi, Bologna. La riforma dell'Ordine fatta da Raimondo di Capua ha dato un nuovo impulso allo studio di Tommaso.

L'uomo che sintetizza meglio questo periodo di scoperta e assimilazione di Tommaso è Giovanni Cabrol, conosciuto con il nome di Capreolo, che insegna a Parigi, e fa il Commento alle Sentenze seguendo quello di Tommaso, poi scrive la sua grande opera dal 1426 al 1432, *Defensiones theologiae divi Thomae Aquinatis*. Capreolo può dirsi il primo che ha conosciuto a fondo l'originalità della teologia di San Tommaso e le sue posizioni ben chiare di fronte alle altre scuole del tempo. Perciò viene chiamato *Princeps thomistarum* (1380–1444).<sup>15</sup>

La difesa di Tommaso viene portata avanti di fronte alle altre scuole che hanno come fondatori Enrico di Gante, Duns Scoto, Gregorio di Rimini, Guglielmo d'Occam e Pietro Aureolo. Altri conoscitori di Tommaso sono Dionigi il Certosino e Domenico di Flandria.

Con l'invenzione della stampa cambia il panorama. Tommaso trova una diffusione molto più ampia. Un prezioso strumento di questa diffusione è la *Tabula aurea* di Pietro di Bergamo del 1473. Si calcola che in quel momento c' erano più di 2000 manoscritti delle opere di Tommaso, ma nessuno degli studiosi e nessuna biblioteca aveva ancora l'*opera omnia*.

La seconda tappa di crescita e diffusione del tomismo ha luogo nel secolo XVI. In questo secolo la *Summa Theologiae* di Tommaso entra nelle università come libro di testo di teologia, tale quale era l'uso nell'Ordine domenicano. A Parigi inizia questa prassi Pietro di Crokaert, che affida al suo discepolo Francisco de Vitoria la prima edizione francese de la *Prima Secundae*. In Italia l'uomo decisivo è stato Tommaso

<sup>15</sup> Cfr. K. White, *Jean Capreolus et son temps*, Cerf, Paris, 1997. Cf. in questo volume Sigrid Müller.

de Vio, noto come il Gaetano. Egli ha iniziato la lettura della teologia commentando le Sentenze a Padova; dal 1497 al 1499 egli insegna a Pavia e segue il testo della *Summa Theologiae*, che sarà pubblicato a Lione nel 1540. Il Gaetano è diventato il Commentatore per eccellenza. Silvestro di Ferrara prosegue la linea del Gaetano nel suo Commento alla *Summa contra Gentiles*.<sup>16</sup>

Nel secolo XVI l'Ordine domenicano riformato acquista un posto di rilievo culturale che non aveva avuto prima. Alla testa di questa rinascita, chiamata la *seconda scolastica*, si trovano i domenicani spagnoli. Essa ebbe inizio con Diego de Deza, consigliere dei re cattolici Ferdinando e Isabella, promotori della riforma dei religiosi, con la fondazione dei collegi domenicani di Valladolid, di Salamanca e di Siviglia. Vitoria inizia a Valladolid il suo insegnamento quando viene da Parigi e passa all'Università di Salamanca nel 1523, dove forma centinaia di discepoli come maestro di teologia morale fino alla sua morte nel 1545. Nasce con lui la scuola di Salamanca, di stampo tomista. I suoi discepoli, Domingo de Soto + 1560, Melchior Cano + 1560 e Domenico Bañez + 1604, tra tanti altri, sono i teologi che trovano la soluzione ai problemi della teologia e della vita della Chiesa nel nuovo mondo. La difesa degli "indios", fatta da Pedro de Cordoba e dai domenicani in America, prosegue nell'opera di Bartolomé de Las Casas e trova il luogo adatto nelle Università del Nuovo mondo, che seguono il modello di quella di Salamanca.<sup>17</sup>

In questo secolo si produce la rottura del mondo cristiano con Lutero e il protestantesimo. Due grandi eventi sono il segno della presenza culturale di Tommaso; il Concilio di Trento (1545-1563) nel quale i grandi teologi partecipanti si erano formati sotto la dottrina di San Tommaso. Il Concilio adopera la Somma nei suoi documenti. Questo fatto dà origine all'affermazione che nell'altare, accanto alla Bibbia, viene collocata l'opera di Tommaso. Oltre a Domingo de Soto e Melchior Cano, al Concilio partecipa il portoghese beato Bartolomé dei Martiri. Poi sarà il domenicano Papa Pio V colui che porterà alla prassi le direttive del Concilio. Egli pubblica il Catechismo della Chiesa cattolica in cui, la teologia di San Tommaso, assurge al ruolo di guida.

Un altro evento di grande rilievo per la presenza nel mondo culturale è la proclamazione di San Tommaso d'Aquino Dottore della Chie-

<sup>16</sup> Cfr. J.-P. Torrell, *La "Somme de théologie" de saint Thomas (Coll. Classiques du christianisme)*, Cerf, Paris, 1998.

<sup>17</sup> Cfr. A. Lobato, *El novus Orbis y el hombre nuevo. El triple legado antropológico del tomismo del s. XVI*, Balmes, Barcelona, 1994, pp. 47-72.

sa, mediante la Bolla *Mirabilis Deus* del 15 aprile del 1567. In essa il Papa fa l'elogio di Tommaso dicendo che la Chiesa ha fatto sua la dottrina di Tommaso perché è fondata sulla rivelazione ed è la più sicura tra tutte. Nel futuro non sarà solo Tommaso a onorare la Chiesa, ma anche la Chiesa, che assume la sua dottrina, gli tributa uno splendido onore e culto. Questo evento è singolare, Tommaso è il primo Dottore proclamato in modo diretto con documento del magistero. I dottori precedenti, quattro latini e quattro orientali, erano stati proclamati dal popolo. Tommaso diviene il 5° dottore della Chiesa latina, accanto ai Padri Ambrogio, Agostino, Girolamo, Gregorio, e a quelli della Chiesa orientale; Atanasio, Basilio, Gregorio Nazianzeno e Giovanni Crisostomo. Molto presto questo Dottore sarà chiamato il dottore comune, dottore di tutti nello studio della teologia.<sup>18</sup>

Nel secolo XVII le diverse scuole di teologia si trovano insieme nei centri della Chiesa. A Salamanca e Alcalá coesistono le diverse scuole: scotista, nominalista, Durando, agostiniana, suareziana, tomista. I Carmelitani hanno pubblicato grandi opere d'ispirazione tomista: *Complutenses*, sette volumi di filosofia editi ad Alcalá dal 1624, *Salmanticenses*, dieci volumi di teologia, editi a Salamanca dal 1600. Il tomismo del sec. XVII è molto fecondo, ha tanti centrismi, talvolta, viene impoverito, occupandosi di questioni di scuola e si allontana dai problemi reali della modernità.

L'ultimo dei grandi tomisti è Giovanni di San Tommaso che scrive ad Alcalá i suoi *Cursus* sia di filosofia che di Teologia. Egli lascia la scuola per essere il Confessore del Re Filippo IV, ma muore nel 1644. I neotomisti del sec. XX, fra cui Jacques Maritain, hanno speciale affinità con questo tomista, l'ultimo dei classici.

La terza tappa di questo emergere di Tommaso nella storia può dirsi che trova il punto di partenza nell'Enciclica *Aeterni Patris* del Papa Leone XIII, pubblicata il 4 agosto del 1879. Questo documento ha aperto una nuova era per Tommaso d'Aquino. Il Papa Pecci riprende i frutti della rinascita tomista in fieri e propone Tommaso d'Aquino come il vertice dottrinale del pensiero cristiano non soltanto in teologia, ma anche in filosofia. Egli si propone la restaurazione della filosofia nelle scuole cattoliche. Nomina San Tommaso Maestro e Patrono di queste scuole. La sua scelta ricade su Tommaso e impone la sua dottrina. I due grandi centri di questo rinnovamento tomista, sotto la direzione

<sup>18</sup> Cfr. A. Walz, 'San Tommaso d'Aquino, dichiarato Dottore della Chiesa', *Angelicum* 44, 1967, pp. 145-173. Si veda a proposito dell'autorità di Tommaso la relazione di Blum in questo volume.

pontificia, sono Roma e Lovanio. Allo stesso tempo egli crea la Commissione Leonina per l'edizione critica delle opere di San Tommaso e la Pontificia Accademia San Tommaso d'Aquino con la potestà di conferire gradi accademici. Queste misure di governo hanno avuto un effetto immediato. I centri culturali della Chiesa si sono moltiplicati in modo sorprendente. Tommaso diviene il modello, il maestro di tutti. L'indirizzo del Papa Pecci diventa norma per il magistero.<sup>19</sup>

Tutti i Pontefici fino ai nostri giorni hanno proseguito nella stessa linea del magistero con accenti complementari. Il più forte, dopo quello di Leone XIII, è stato il pontificato di San Pio X. Per la diffusione e l'imposizione del tomismo questa misura politica ha avuto grandi ripercussioni lungo il secolo XX. Seguendo il percorso di questo indirizzo si avvertono tre momenti complementari: fino al 1923 si può dire che il tomismo recupera la propria identità nella conoscenza integrale di Tommaso d'Aquino. È il tempo delle famose XXIV tesi tomiste. In una seconda tappa si procede con la ricerca del nucleo del tomismo: nell'atto e nella potenza, nella distinzione reale tra l'essenza e l'esse, nella partecipazione, o nell'*actus essendi*. Un'ulteriore tappa è quella del dialogo con i diversi sistemi di filosofia e di teologia.<sup>20</sup>

La seconda guerra mondiale ha interrotto questo processo, ma nel Vaticano II, e nella Lettera *Lumen Ecclesiae* di Paolo VI, Tommaso ritorna con le nove celebri parole di guida degli studi della teologia dogmatica (OT, 16). In modo speciale Giovanni Paolo II ha proposto la dottrina della Chiesa nelle questioni dell'antropologia, della giustizia, della società umana, della relazione tra fede e ragione, proponendo l'insegnamento di San Tommaso. La linea di accoglienza di Tommaso nella Chiesa, iniziata da Leone XIII, si è mantenuta. All'inizio si metteva l'accento nell'imposizione della dottrina, adesso si preferisce proporre e non imporre, avendo fiducia nella forza della verità.<sup>21</sup>

### 3. ALLE SOGLIE DEL III MILLENNIO

Al momento attuale la presenza di Tommaso nella cultura occidentale è patente e operante. Mai nel passato aveva raggiunto il livello attuale.

<sup>19</sup> Cfr. A. Lobato, *Tommaso d'Aquino e l'Aeterni Patris*, SITA, Roma, 1981.

<sup>20</sup> Cfr. A. Lobato, *Santo Tomás de Aquino en el magisterio de la Iglesia desde la "Aeterni Patris" hasta Juan Pablo II*, LEV, Roma, 1981. Cfr. in questo volume la relazione di Frederick Erb.

<sup>21</sup> Cfr. A. Lobato, 'L'attualità di San Tommaso nel magistero di Giovanni Paolo II', *DC* 40, 1987, pp. 3-28.

Abbiamo alla mano la sua *Opera omnia*, non solo nell'edizione critica della Commissione Leonina, che è molto avanzata, ma anche tramite i mezzi dell'informatica. Accanto ai grandi volumi delle biblioteche, possiamo avere sue computer tutto Tommaso, leggero, tascabile che ci può sempre accompagnare, anche in valigia. Viene alla mente il ricordo degli studiosi medievali che portavano i manoscritti della Summa e scherzavano dicendo che il peso e il costo di un volume era come quello di un cavallo!

Coloro che non capiscono la chiara lingua latina di Tommaso hanno alla portata di mano traduzioni nella propria. Oggi Tommaso parla tutte le lingue della cultura. Per fortuna abbiamo ottime iniziazioni per conoscere Tommaso, la sua persona e il suo ruolo nel proprio tempo, come quella di Chenu negli anni 50, la biografia di Weisheipl negli anni 70 e gli studi di Torrell negli anni 80. La bibliografia attorno a Tommaso sorpassa la capacità di qualsiasi lettore normale. Il *Bulletin thomiste* di un tempo e la *Rassegna di letteratura tomistica* che lungo 26 anni ha portato eroicamente il P.C. Vansteenkiste, raccolgono più di mille titoli di lavori qualificati ogni anno.

Tommaso è presente nella vita delle Università della Chiesa, nelle Facoltà, negli Istituti che portano il suo nome. Ho un amico cileno che lavora con passione instancabile per ottenere che non ci sia paese al mondo che non abbia una Università dedicata a lui. Nel mese di novembre ne ha fondato niente meno che tre in Africa, un continente che appena lo conosceva. L'Associazione ICUSTA (International Council Universities of Thomas Aquinas) conta più di 20 università nel mondo che portano il nome e seguono i principi di Tommaso. La SITA (Società Internazionale Tommaso d'Aquino) è presente in tutti i continenti e raduna studiosi attorno ai testi di Tommaso. Non c'è nessun altro uomo del passato che abbia questo onore e raduni tanti allievi nella ricerca della verità come lui.<sup>22</sup>

Una tale situazione è per Tommaso un singolare onore. Ma è anche un segno ambivalente ed è per i discepoli una sfida all'ingresso del terzo millennio.

San Tommaso è una delle più grandi personalità della storia che non ha voluto onori personali, che si è nascosto nella sua opera di ricerca teologica. Quasi mai ha parlato di sé, ha voluto parlare di Dio e della sua opera. Era convinto che ciò che conta non è ciò che io penso, ma la verità delle cose. L'onore e la gloria sono dati in aggiunta. *Nolenti-*

<sup>22</sup> Cfr. D. Berger, "S. Thoma praesertim magistro..." — Überlegungen zur Aktualität des Thomismus', *Forum Katholische Theologie* 15, 1999, pp. 180–202.

*bus datur!* Tommaso è un esemplare dello studioso, del saggio, del pensatore cristiano che conquista le tre sapienze, quella filosofica, quella teologica, quella mistica. E inoltre ha ricevuto il dono di comunicarle.

Perciò egli, in questa emergenza storica, è diventato il dottore per eccellenza. Otto sono i titoli di Dottore che egli porta: il primo proclamato dal magistero “Doctor Ecclesiae”, il Dottore esemplare nell’armonia tra fede e ragione, il dottore Angelico, il Dottore della verità, il Dottore sapiente, il Dottore della divinità, il Dottore della verità rivelata in Cristo, il Dottore dell’umanità. Tutti questi titoli per Tommaso erano soltanto una partecipazione e una grazia. Per lui il vero Dottore è Gesù Cristo, che fin dal primo scritto chiama “*Doctor doctorum*.”<sup>23</sup>

Il celebre dipinto di Francesco Traini nella Chiesa di Santa Caterina di Pisa è una grafica espressione di questa sua profonda convinzione. In verità Tommaso si era proposto di essere un teologo che parla agli uomini del mistero di Dio.

L’ambivalenza di questa situazione è facile da scoprire. Infatti tale è la lezione della storia della sua presenza culturale. La verità e il magistero devono essere viventi, messi alla prova nella storia. Tommaso deve essere capito nella storia concreta del suo tempo. La sua opera porta due note complementari: affonda le radici nella tradizione del pensiero occidentale, che ha conosciuto e assimilato, e assume il peso di questa tradizione per arricchirla con una vera creatività applicata ai problemi del tempo.

Il tomismo ha avuto un momento originario in Tommaso, poi altri due momenti, uno nel secolo XVI quando viene applicato ai problemi della scoperta dell’America, il secondo nel secolo XX quando deve dialogare con la scienza, la teologia e l’antropologia odierna. Non basta avere un maestro, è necessario seguirlo. Non basta che il maestro abbia dei titoli, sono i discepoli che devono seguirlo nelle due dimensioni, nell’assimilazione della tradizione e nella creatività storica. Buona parte di essi restano nella prima prospettiva e dimenticano la seconda, che è più difficile.

Su questo versante del terzo millennio la sfida culturale ricade sui discepoli. Tommaso ha bisogno di discepoli, di studiosi che conoscano la sua dottrina, il suo metodo, e siano in grado di metterlo alla prova nella realtà culturale del tempo. Giovanni Paolo II parla della “perenne novità del pensiero dell’Aquinata.”<sup>24</sup> Questo duplice compito non

<sup>23</sup> S. Tommaso, *Rigans montes*; cfr. A. Lobato, ‘Santo Tomás Magister in Sacra Theologia. El “principium” de su magisterio’, *Communio* 21, 1988, pp. 49–170.

<sup>24</sup> Giovanni Paolo II, *Enc. Fides et Ratio*, n° 43.

è possibile per un solo uomo. Deve essere condiviso tra molti, nella scuola che assuma il motto di S. Alberto: *in dulcedine societatis quaerere veritatem*.

L'opera di Tommaso è come un'isola. Ma colui che la percorre scopre l'infinito. La sfida della nostra situazione è questo duplice compito: penetrare a fondo nella dottrina di Tommaso, conoscere tutta la sua opera sapienziale e avere la capacità di ordinare, giudicare e proiettare questa luce nella cultura del nostro tempo. Una vera sfida di lavoro, di coraggio, di fedeltà alla verità. La cultura del III millennio ha bisogno di fondamenti antropologici, metafisici, teologici. Ed è questo che il maestro Tommaso insegna, non con l'imposizione di un sistema autoritario, ma tramite la forza della verità, che è la più potente delle forze: *potentissimum est veritas*. Una vera sfida che richiede uomini disposti. Alla luce della verità tutta intera Tommaso giudicava "paglia" la sua opera. Ma questa "paglia" sembra destinata nella storia a incoraggiare sempre di più la ricerca costante delle più alte e profonde verità. Il prato d'incontro di Tommaso con la cultura del III Millennio sarà l'uomo, l'anello nella catena dell'essere, l'immagine di Dio, oceano al quale corrono tutti i fiumi delle bontà divine, e dal quale partono tutte le speranze per il futuro, dal momento in cui Dio stesso ha voluto farsi uomo.<sup>25</sup>

Risulta ben chiara l'emergenza di Tommaso d'Aquino nella storia culturale. Nella nostra situazione culturale Tommaso si è fatto presente in modo inaspettato, ma formidabile, come diceva Paolo VI. Da una parte abbiamo scoperto il nucleo del suo pensiero, la sua originalità storica, dall'altra attendiamo dal suo magistero un valido aiuto per il futuro culturale dell'umanità. Tommaso rimane il teologo per eccellenza, il maestro che indica le vie per l'accesso al mistero di Dio, rivelato in Gesù Cristo. Ma Tommaso si è scoperto come maestro del pensare umano, come guida verso le verità ultime nei tre orizzonti della umana conoscenza: metafisica, antropologia, etica. Queste tre aree del sapere sono oggi sommerse nella lacuna del nulla. Nella metafisica, per la prima volta, abbiamo una esposizione integrale in due opere recenti. John F. Wippel ha portato a termine una esposizione della metafisica che Tommaso ha lasciato nelle briciole della sua mensa, ma non ha sviluppato.<sup>26</sup> Un altro contributo essenziale lo dobbiamo all'ingegno acuto di

<sup>25</sup> Cfr. A. Lobato, Quattro volumi degli Atti del Congresso della SITA, celebrato a Barcelona, nel 1998, e pubblicati a Córdoba, Cajasur 1999, E. Forment (a cura di), *El hombre y el misterio de Cristo*. Ci sono in questi volumi 200 comunicazioni.

<sup>26</sup> J.F. Wippel, *The metaphysical thought of Thomas Aquinas: From finite being to uncreated being* (Monographs of the Society for Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy 1), Catholic University

B. Mondin, che propone le due radicali intuizioni di Tommaso, quella dell'essere come *actus essendi*, e quella della composizione di *esse et essentia* negli enti: “sono due intuizioni assolutamente personali che nessuno ha avuto né prima, né dopo di lui.”<sup>27</sup> Accade lo stesso nel campo dell'antropologia. Tommaso ha una risposta al problema dell'uomo e dell'umanesimo cristiano. Nel prossimo settembre sarà celebrato a Roma un Congresso Internazionale promosso dalla Pontificia Accademia di S. Tommaso e dalla Società Internazionale Tommaso d'Aquino su questo tema che è centrale nel nostro tempo.<sup>28</sup> Tommaso ha speso anche una parola decisiva sull'orizzonte del divenire dell'uomo mediante l'acquisto delle virtù morali, che rendono l'uomo veramente uomo.

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of America Press, Washington, D.C., 2000.

<sup>27</sup> B. Mondin, *La metafisica di San Tommaso d'Aquino e I suoi interpreti*, EDS, Bologna, 2002.

<sup>28</sup> Cfr. A. Lobato, *El pensamiento de Santo Tomás para el hombre de hoy. I: El hombre en cuerpo y alma*, Edicep, Valencia, 1994-2002.

## WHY A PHILOSOPHER CAN AND SHOULD READ ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

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I begin by explaining how Aquinas understands the task of the theologian so that theology necessarily includes much philosophy. I then present two philosophical theses from Aquinas and describe their relevance for contemporary discussion to the contrary: first, Aquinas' immediate and direct realism of sensation versus the priority of consciousness since the critical turn and, second, Aquinas' view of the thing's existence as a unique kind of act or attribute of the thing versus the contemporary fact-view of what is meant by the thing's existence.

### *I.*

I am a philosophy professor and I think that I know and am respectful of the norms of philosophical discourse. One of those norms involves the avoidance of *ad hominem* reasoning. In *ad hominem* reasoning one concludes either to the truth or falsity of what is said on the basis of the one saying it. A philosopher knows that this reasoning is illegitimate because the insane can utter truths and the sane can utter falsehoods. For example, we can plant the arithmetical proposition  $3+2=5$  on the lips of a maniac. Does that make the proposition any the less true? How, then, is a philosopher to proceed? The philosopher's total concentration must be on the content of what is said and the intrinsic evidence offered for the truth of that content. Given one's revulsion for the speaker, this exercise can often be excruciating. But the philosophical vocation demands total fidelity to truth and that entails an investigation of what is said on its own merits. The philosopher cannot

take the easy road and accept what is said because it is uttered by the most “current” thinkers, is published by the most prestigious houses, or taught at “Ivy League” schools. Neither should he reject what is said because it is the opposite of these things.

For eight weeks in the Spring semester 2000, I taught two courses in Vilnius. At the Pedagogical University, I lectured on Aquinas’ philosophical basis for obligation, or moral necessity. At Vilnius University, I spoke on the 20th Century Thomistic Revival. Both assignments gave me good contact with students and faculty. One attitude that I noticed immediately on the part of many was the *ad hominem* dismissal of the philosophical character of Aquinas’ thought and that of his followers, the Thomists. The master and his disciples were believing Catholics, i.e., members of an authoritatively teaching Church. Hence, the real basis for what they said could only be religious. The given impression was that if a Catholic is to do philosophy credibly, the Catholic would do better to choose as a philosophical instrument the thought of Kant or Husserl.

Philosophy is difficult, and so it is understandable why many would like to deal with what philosophers say in an *ad hominem* manner. Besides, it is often embarrassing to admit that one does not understand the reasons for what is said. It is always much easier to brush off an obtuse position by saying that its basis is religious. But I want to plead that my fellow philosophers remain true to the norms of philosophical discourse and resist the quick and easy behavior of *ad hominem* dismissal. In particular I want to urge this in respect to St. Thomas Aquinas (1225?–1274). *Prima facie* it may appear that I have no case. A Dominican friar, Aquinas was self-admittedly a theologian, and he acknowledged that theology is religiously based. Theology’s basis is Divine revelation accepted on faith. In contrast, philosophy proceeds in virtue of the natural capacity to understand found in all humans. Hence, the audience of theology is much more parochial than that of philosophy. In reading Aquinas, would not a philosopher be “barking up the wrong tree”?

The question is reinforced today by theologians, even Catholic ones, who would not be caught dead doing philosophy. For them it is a badge of honor that they do theology without philosophy.<sup>1</sup> But it would be myopic to take this as true of Aquinas’ own understanding of theological practice. For Aquinas theology is more expansive and in-

<sup>1</sup> For a description of these theologians, see John Paul II, *Fides et ratio*, paras. 61–62.

clusive than is suggested by the narrower views of today's theologians.<sup>2</sup> Aquinas saw his duty to explain, to make understandable, the content of Divine revelation. But that content includes two kinds of truth: truth accessible to natural reason (e.g., God's existence, uniqueness, spirituality, and even moral truths as are found in the Ten Commandments) and truth inaccessible to natural reason (e.g., the Triune nature of God, Christ in the Eucharist, Christ as the Son of God). To be especially noted is that even naturally known truth is included in God's speaking to us. This inclusion is not redundant on God's part. Left to our own resources only few after a long time and with much error would attain it. For example, many philosophers reasoned to God but identified God with a body or with a finite being. Hence, to avoid the impropriety of humans returning God's revelation by addressing the sun, God also informs us that he is an infinite spiritual being. In principle, natural reason could have reached these conclusions but in fact, natural reason did not and probably would never have.

My point, then, should be clear. Since Aquinas' duty as a theologian is to explain God's revelation to his fellows and since God's revelation includes truths knowable by natural reason, then when in the course of doing his theology Aquinas explains naturally knowable truths, Aquinas will necessarily be doing philosophy. In his own reflections, a philosopher can turn to Aquinas at those times Aquinas is philosophizing. In sum, do not think that because Aquinas is a theologian, then the only things that he says are theological. It is not as simple as that.

Aquinas' acknowledgement of naturally knowable truths is more than lip service. His seriousness is underlined, for example, by his rejection of the famous *Proslogion* argument for God of St. Anselm (1033–1104). Anselm claimed that if God is thought of as the greatest conceivable, then God would have to be thought of as an existent, for it is greater to exist than to not exist. Aquinas concedes that the argument concludes to something but not exactly to what Anselm intends. The argument shows that if you think of the greatest conceivable, you must think of it as existing. But this necessity of thought is distinct from any necessity of affirmation. You can *think* of something as existing, even necessarily, and for all that not be *affirming* it to exist. As theologically attractive as Anselm's simple and direct argument for God is, Aquinas rejects it for the much more convoluted and difficult

<sup>2</sup> The following explanation is taken from Etienne Gilson, *History of Christian philosophy in the Middle Ages*, Random House, New York, 1955, pp. 366–368.

Aristotelian argument from motion. Does not Aquinas' critique of Anselm show that Aquinas is interested in more than making points for a religiously dictated agenda? Before a point can perform that service, it must pass the philosophical test. Aquinas is cognizant of philosophical procedure and is honestly trying to practice it. Hence, he is a thinker that a philosopher can also read.

2.

But there are good philosophers and poor philosophers, philosophers who practice the craft better than others. Obviously, philosophers ought to spend their time and energy reading the former. So, even if Aquinas' theologizing is not to the detriment of his philosophizing, what grounds does one have for thinking that Aquinas is a good philosopher rather than a mediocre one? I want to mention two grounds that are also central positions in Aquinas' larger philosophy.

First, today it is widely regarded that philosophy came of age with the "critical turn." The turn consists in the recognition that the existence of consciousness is more evident, hence more foundational, than the existence of the world. Though the understanding of consciousness has undergone many permutations since the critical turn was made, it is still the focus of philosophy, even in post-modernism. What necessitated the turn and has perpetuated it are scenarios in the methodic doubt exercise described in the *Meditations on First Philosophy* of René Descartes (1596–1650). Two of these scenarios are classic ones. The first is the dream/hallucination possibility. I have dreamed or hallucinated that I was reading a philosophy article; how do I know that I am not dreaming or hallucinating right now? My inability to articulate a fool-proof answer prevents any assertion of the world's existence. Second, also from Descartes but especially from the British Empiricists (Locke, Berkeley, and Hume) comes the critique from the relativity of perception. I see the field of poppies as red, a color-blind person sees the field as gray. Who sees the real color of the poppies? To stay perfectly impartial, these philosophers insist that we have to answer, "Maybe nobody sees the real color." The colors that we see may just exist in our perception. Also, the people to the front see the shape of the paper that I hold as rectangular; the people to the sides see the shape as trapezoidal. Who sees the real shape? To be impartial, we have to say, according to the Empiricists, that maybe no one sees the real shape. In the second way also, the world's existence slips away.

The undeniable perspectival character of perception was also used by Husserl in *Ideas I* to critique the “natural attitude.”<sup>3</sup>

Aquinas belonged to the period before Descartes in which thinking began with a presumed contact with a real world. For Aquinas, following Aristotle, that contact is achieved in sensation, i.e., what you are doing right now as you look this way and listen. Aquinas is not so naïve as to think that sensation immediately presents bodies, or sensible substances. Yet he thinks that sensation immediately presents their real “accidents”, e.g., their color, shape, fragrance, texture, motion, temperature, etc., from which the intellect could cogently reason to bodies as the real substrates of these accidents.<sup>4</sup> By saying that the accidents are real, Aquinas means that they present themselves as ontologically independent of the sensor. Hence, if the sensing stopped because the sensor was rendered blind or deaf, the sensed item would be understood as still existing. Obviously, this “immediate realism” of sensation makes Aquinas a target for the above classic reasons for the critical turn and casts him as outmoded for contemporary philosophy. But if these reasons are benchmarks for “critical and mature” philosophy, then a realist who can reply to them is *ipso facto* supereminently critical and mature. I will contend that Aquinas is this philosopher.<sup>5</sup>

I want to begin a Thomistic reply to the dream and hallucination possibilities by asking you to do something. Imagine tarantulas crawling up your back. Yes, for a second you are frightened, but then you regain your composure. You realize that you were only imagining. But we need to take a closer look at this. Did you not come out of your fright thanks to an act of reflection that made apparent the cognitional device in and through which you were imagining the tarantulas crawling on your back? In other words, your reflection from what you were

<sup>3</sup> “The studies we have completed left us with the transcendence of the thing over against the perception of it, and as a further consequence, over against every consciousness generally which refers to the thing; not merely in the sense that the thing as a real constituent part of consciousness is as a matter of fact not to be found—the whole situation rather concerns eidetic insight: in absolutely unconditioned generality or necessity, a thing cannot be given as really immanent in any possible perception or, generally, in any possible consciousness. Thus a basic and essential difference arises between *Being as Experience* and *Being as Thing*.” Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General introduction to pure phenomenology*, Collier Books, New York, 1972, p. 120.

<sup>4</sup> For the argument from real accidents to real substance, see Richard J. Connell, *Substance and modern science*, Center for Thomistic Studies, Houston, 1988, chapters 2–3.

<sup>5</sup> For an elaboration of the replies with texts, see my ‘Aquinas’ metaphysics and Descartes’ methodic doubt’, forthcoming in the American theological and philosophical quarterly, *The Thomist*.

imagining does not immediately and directly go to yourself. It first crosses something in and through which the imagining was occurring. This cognitional device is called an “image”, and it is a fascinating item. It possesses an “intentional” charge, a capacity to bring your awareness to something else. Other states of human awareness involve similar cognitional devices. For example, remembering does. Here the cognitional device is called a “memory”, not an image. For purposes of discussion, let me call all of these cognitional devices, these items with an “intentional” charge, — “ideas.”

Now it is Aquinas’ contention that both dreaming and hallucinating occur in and through ideas. Some times when we are on the boarder between sleeping and waking we can be catch sight of the dream ideas in and through which we were dreaming this or that. You would then come out of a dream or an hallucination by an act of reflection that uncovers the ideas in and through which you were dreaming or hallucinating. Sadly but truly, some people cannot reflect and uncover the ideas in and through which they are hallucinating. For these people, hallucinations become a real torture, e.g., alcoholics who suffer *delirium tremens*. So, how do I know that I am not dreaming or hallucinating right now? The answer is that my reflection from my current awareness shows that no ideas are present. Reflection shows that my awareness right now is not an awareness of real things in and through ideas, as happens in dreams and hallucinations. Rather, reflection shows that my awareness right now is of real things directly and immediately. In other words, reflection upon my current sensory cognition shows that my object is self-manifestly real.

It is regrettable fact that many Thomists compromise this reply to the dream and hallucination possibilities by insisting that even sensation occurs in and through “ideas.”<sup>6</sup> Just as there are “ideas” of imagination, remembering, dreaming, and hallucinating, so too for many Thomists there are ideas of sensation. This move resurrects all the doubts about sensing a real world, for we can never be certain that like ideas of imagination the ideas of sensation bring us to something not real. Fortunately the reflexively ascertainable truth is that sensation does not include ideas. Finally, I will note in passing that correctly understood, Aquinas’ doctrine of sensory cognitional likenesses, the “sensible impressed species”, is not any reference to sensory “ideas.”

<sup>6</sup> For a description of these Thomists, see my ‘Yves R. Simon and the Neo-Thomist Tradition in Epistemology’, in: Anthony O. Simon (ed.) *Acquaintance with the absolute: the philosophy of Yves R. Simon*, Fordham University Press, New York, 1998, pp. 83–100.

The sensible impressed species is the very form of the real thing as it is in the knower.<sup>7</sup>

What about the relativity in perception critique of the immediate realist understanding of sensation? The relativity in perception is not sufficiently great to justify doubt about immediate realism. Note, both me and the color blind person see real color, we just disagree on the exact shade. Also, when I hold up the paper, everyone in the class sees real shape. Students just disagree on the exact configuration. Even relativity theory fails to blunt knowledge of something really moving. While day-dreaming at the window of my train, I might for a moment think that the near-by truck has begun moving. In fact I began moving as my train pulled slowly from the station. Was my perception of motion false, an illusion? No, the motion that I observed was real; I was not wrong about that. I was wrong only about the precise subject of the motion. For a moment, I thought that it was the truck. So, note that in all these cases, sufficient immediate realism exists for the Thomist to initiate his philosophizing. The Thomist does not have to know what is the exact shade of color of the poppies, the exact configuration of the paper, the exact subject of the motion. It is enough that sense cognition provides real color, shape, and motion.

It is worth mentioning that immediate realism never claimed that in directly knowing real things, we know real things perfectly. The immediate cognitional presence of the real should not be confused with an immediate physical presence of the real. Physical presence demands exactitude and brooks no exception. For example, to be physically present a one-arm man cannot be two-armed. But often real things come to be cognitively present at the end of long chains of physical causality, so that real things become directly present in cognition imperfectly. Yet in fairness, one should note that the physical causality can also achieve exactitude. Our experience with TV cameras shows that sometimes physical causality gets it right. The pink shade of the dress of the woman in the studio is captured by the image on the screen. But again, for the Thomist the fundamental point remains that perception presents something real — a real color, a real shape, etc., even granting inexactitude in the perception.

<sup>7</sup> For texts and an explanation, see Joseph Owens, *Cognition: an epistemological inquiry*, Center for Thomistic Studies, Houston, 1992, chapter 2.

3.

A second idea that makes Aquinas a valuable philosophical study is his development of a unique understanding of a thing's existence. Aquinas says that something is called a being in virtue of possessing its *esse* or *actus essendi*. Consequently, a being is a "*quasi habens esse*." A being is "as if a haver, or possessor, of *esse*." Just why Aquinas makes a qualification here, I will explain. Now I want to describe generally what Aquinas means by *esse* or *actus essendi*. Neo-Thomists render these phrases into English as "the existence of a thing." This translation is unfortunate because we can start thinking about *esse* or *actus essendi* as if it were just the fact of a thing. For example, if we ask, "Does so-and-so exist?", all that we want to know is whether so-and-so is a fact, is in the world. Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) philosophically expressed the fact-view of existence in his famous critique of Descartes' ontological reasoning for God. In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant observed that no real difference exists between a hundred possible thalers and a hundred actual thalers. The actual thalers are simply the possible thalers as in themselves as distinct from in their cause. In sum, existence is not a real predicate that could be added to a thing. Real predicates, like red or blue, make a real difference to the thing.

Aquinas thinks differently. I have mentioned Aquinas' notion of *ens* as *habens esse*. In still other passages,<sup>8</sup> Aquinas regards existence as a distinct principle composed with the individual substance to render the substance a being (*ens*), an existent. In fact, *esse* is sufficiently distinct to compare its composition with a substance with form's composition with matter within the substance. Aquinas also uses the infinitive "*esse*" as a noun, or substantive, in the context of referring to the individual generable and corruptible thing as "*possibile esse et non esse*." Moreover, he compares the meaning of *ens* and *esse* to those of *currens* and *currere*. Just as a runner is a man plus his act of running, so too a being is something plus its act of existing. But the act of running is something distinct from the man, hence a thing's act of existing should also be distinct from it. The same thinking is revealed in a most famous remark on *esse*. Both in his *De Potentia Dei* and in his *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas says that he understand by "*esse*" the act or actuality of all acts and the perfection of all perfections. But as an act or actuality, substantial and accidental forms are distinct items composed with another item

<sup>8</sup> For Aquinas' Latin texts referred to here with Lithuanian translation, see Šv. Tomas Akviniėtis, *Ištraukos*, LOGOS leidykla, Vilnius, 1998, pp. 126–159.

that is in potency to the act. Hence, calling *esse* an act and an actuality should indicate on Aquinas' part similar thinking. Aquinas will also be considering *esse* as a distinct item composed with another item that is in potency to the act.

In sum, it is not so much that Aquinas disagrees with the fact-sense of the thing's existence, but rather that Aquinas insists that the fact-sense be deepened to include the act in virtue of which the thing is a fact. A thing is a fact in virtue of its *actus essendi*. The relation of this act to the substance with which it is composed also bears mention. In respect to the substance rendered a being by composition with *esse*, *esse* is prior (*prius*), first (*primus*), most profound (*profundius*), and most intimate (*magis intimum*). *Esse* is the core around which the thing revolves. It is like the hole of a donut. Just as the hole is distinct from the donut yet "inside" the donut, so too *esse* is an act distinct from the thing but for all its distinctness *esse* is most intrinsic to the thing. We are so accustomed to conceiving acts of a thing as items subsequent and posterior to the thing that the notion of an act basic and fundamental to its thing is strange. But for a reason to be given, if one is to correctly appreciate *esse*, usual ways of thinking must be suspended. The priority of *actus essendi* to the thing that it actuates seems to explain Aquinas' earlier mentioned qualification in describing the *ratio entis* as "*quasi habens esse*."

How does one philosophically attain the *esse* or *actus essendi* sense of "the existence of the thing"? Usually we make a distinction between a substance and its accident by finding the substance without the accident. For example, we make a distinction between the hand and the waving by later finding the hand without the waving. But do we ever find the substance apart from its existence as the hand is found apart from the waving? Rather, without its existence, the substance is not found at all. To understand how Aquinas makes the distinction between a substance and its act of existing, you need to go back to his immediate realism. Immediate realism is Aquinas' understanding of sense cognition — what you are doing right now as you look this way and listen. His claim is that your object of sense cognition was something real, a real thing, not an image, picture or representation of something real. In short, according to the immediate realist understanding of sense cognition, a real thing is also cognitively existing. Before the "critical turn", many philosophers acknowledged this fact but then went on to other things. Aquinas sees metaphysical implications in this fact and is not quick to move on.

Aquinas asks, “What does the fact of a real thing also cognitively existing imply?” Aquinas points out that if a real thing also cognitively exists, then the real thing of itself cannot be real. The real thing cannot be intrinsically real. Somewhat similarly, if water were intrinsically cold, it could never be hot. Hence, the thing does not include its real existence but has it as a distinct accidental act. Somewhat similarly the water has the cold temperature as an accident. It is from the facts of immediate realism that we can come to think an individual thing as not necessarily a being. Intrinsically speaking the thing is existence neutral just as we come to regard the water as temperature neutral. A thing is a being if and when it has its real existence as a distinct act. The basicness of the thing’s act of existing is also evident from the above. Since the thing is nothing in reality without its act of existing, one correctly regards the act of existing as basic and fundamental in its composition with the thing.

Finally, there are causal considerations here. Existential act cannot be completely explained by the substance whose act it is. As an accident, existential act is obviously dependent at least upon its subject. But that subject precisely as subject is existence neutral and a potency for its existential act. This means that the total or complete dependency of existential act also involves a reference to something else. Ultimately this something else must be a substance whose *esse* is not an accident but identical with itself. Aquinas calls this first cause: *esse subsistens*, *esse purum*, *esse tantum*. He regards it as the God of his belief who told Moses that his name was: “*Ego sum qui sum*.”<sup>9</sup>

I want to mention how Aquinas’ position that a being is a composition of a thing and its fundamental and basic *actus essendi* is a decisive answer to a common and popular criticism of metaphysics. The criticism comes from the British logical positivist, Alfred Jules Ayer. In his well-known *Language, Truth, and Logic*, Ayer criticizes metaphysics for its making the existence or being of the thing an attribute of the thing. Ayer says,

A simpler and clearer instance of the way in which a consideration of grammar leads to metaphysics is the case of the metaphysical concept

<sup>9</sup> David Hume (1711–1776) claimed that from experience we could appeal only to past constant conjunction to argue for efficient causality. In Hume’s opinion this appeal is worthless in the light of possible future experience. Hume’s critique misses Aquinas’ approach that is based upon characterizing the thing’s *esse* as “accidental.” On how Hume might be constrained to acknowledge the category of the “accidental”, see Connell, *Substance and modern science*, chapter 3.

of Being. The origin of our temptation to raise questions about Being, which no conceivable experience would enable us to answer, lies in the fact that, in our language, sentences which express existential propositions and sentences which express attributive propositions may be of the same grammatical form. For instance, the sentences 'Martyrs exist,' and 'Martyrs suffer' both consist of a noun followed by an intransitive verb, and the fact that they have grammatically the same appearance leads one to assume that they are of the same logical type. It is seen that in the proposition 'Martyrs suffer,' the members of a certain species are credited with a certain attribute, and it is sometimes assumed that the same thing is true of such a proposition as 'Martyrs exist.' If this were actually the case, it would, indeed, be as legitimate to speculate about the Being of the martyrs as it is to speculate about their suffering. But, as Kant pointed out, existence is not an attribute. For, when we ascribe an attribute to a thing, we covertly assert that it exists; so that if existence were itself an attribute, it would follow that all positive existential propositions were tautologies, and all negative existential propositions self-contradictory; and this is not the case. So that those who raise questions about Being which are based on the assumption that existence is an attribute are guilty of following grammar beyond the boundaries of sense.<sup>10</sup>

Ayer's argument against metaphysics is as follows. Metaphysicians who are engrossed with talking about the existence of a thing as if it were an attribute of the thing simply have had their thought misled by the way they speak. Metaphysicians have wrongly assumed that because we speak about the existence of the thing in the same grammatical fashion as we speak about genuine attributes of a thing, then the existence of the thing is also an attribute of the thing. But for two reasons, this thinking of the metaphysicians, understandable as it is, must be erroneous. Logically speaking, both the ascription and the denial of an attribute to a subject presupposes the subject as there. For example, "Prof. Knasas studies Thomas Aquinas" attributes studying Aquinas to an already existing Dr. Knasas. Hence, it really is saying "The existing Dr. Knasas studies Aquinas." And if we made the negative attributive statement, "Dr. Knasas does not study Hegel", we once more would be presupposing the fact of Dr. Knasas, as is indicated by the appropriateness of asking, "Well, what then is Dr. Knasas doing?"

If we now turn to existential propositions, but logically considered to be subject/attribute in character, watch what happens. According to the logical norms of ascribing attributes, "Dr. Knasas exists" would become the useless redundancy, "The existing Dr. Knasas exists." And

<sup>10</sup> Alfred Jules Ayer, *Language, truth and logic*, Dover Publications, New York, 1952, pp. 42-43.

according to the logical norms of denying attributes, “Dr. Knasas does not exist” would become the embarrassing self-contradiction, “The existing Dr. Knasas does not exist.” Hence, thought through, the metaphysical attempt to make something of the being of a thing by considering the being an attribute collapses. The attempt collapses because it renders perfectly good ways of speaking into bad ways of speaking. Whatever the logic of existential propositions is, the logic is not subject/attribute as maintained by the metaphysicians.

Ayer’s refutation of metaphysics is just another way that a philosopher makes the case for the fact-view of existence. For Ayer, saying something exists is simply saying something is a fact. Would it be appropriate to include Aquinas in the metaphysicians of being ably refuted by Ayer? It seems not. For these metaphysicians, the being of the thing is not simply an attribute. More accurately speaking, they conceive existence as an attribute posterior and subsequent to the thing. What force would Ayer’s argument have against the view that the existence that the thing possesses is basic and fundamental to the thing? None at all. For Aquinas “Martyrs exist” is subject/attribute but translates to “The existentially neutral martyrs exist.” This is not a tautology. Also, “Martyrs do not exist” translates to “The existentially neutral martyrs do not exist.” This is not a contradiction. Aquinas is not one of the metaphysicians of being whose thinking is lead astray by the way they speak. It is not the superficialities of grammar that have engendered Aquinas’ metaphysics but the hard cold facts of reality.

#### 4.

Many other of Aquinas’ philosophical positions are worth pondering: his distinction between univocal and analogical concepts, his application of hylomorphism to the human person, his grounding real freedom and real obligation on the fact that the human is an intellect of being (*ratio entis*). Hopefully I have said enough to illustrate the rashness of ignoring what Aquinas says because of the *ad hominem* reason that a theologian is saying it. I must admit to a perverse fantasy. Suppose because of the Trinity Doctrine, the Pope were to write an encyclical dealing with mathematical propositions. Would this mean that mathematical propositions are now Catholic doctrine? Would this mean that they are too sectarian to be included in public school curricula? Would contrary types who say black if the Pope says white, now have to say that 3 is 1? The fact is that the Catholic faith of

Aquinas contains many truths that are naturally knowable as those of mathematics. One cannot deeply reflect upon these truths without being driven to philosophize just as one cannot reflect upon numbers without being driven to mathematicize. Religious believers can also “think” and only *ad hominem* dismissals will exclude them from a place in philosophical discussion.

## AQUINAS' PHILOSOPHICAL CRITIQUE OF PHILOSOPHY

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Down through the ages different philosophers, whatever their other disagreements, have insisted that the philosophic life is the best human life. As philosophers, they equate happiness with wisdom, the comprehensive account of the whole of reality in light of its first principles and causes. In his *Expositio super librum Boethii de trinitate*, Thomas Aquinas denies this teaching. He asserts, rather, that philosophy can know with absolute certainty that it cannot attain such wisdom and thus that it cannot be the best life. More precisely, Thomas argues that the limited abstracting power of the agent intellect precludes in principle the very possibility of a *quod est* knowledge of the First Principle of the whole; human beings must resign themselves to a mere *quia* knowledge of it at best. On the other hand, the philosophers are right to identify happiness with wisdom; but the very impossibility of attaining that wisdom negates the claims that philosophy provides the best and happy life. Thomas, in short, turns the philosophers own arguments against themselves. He discovers the roots of the philosophers erroneous account of the best life in their now disproved assumption that the human mind is commensurate with reality itself.

In his *Expositio super librum Boethii de Trinitate*<sup>1</sup> (hereafter Exposition) Thomas Aquinas takes up the question of the best human life first

<sup>1</sup> All references to this work are to Bruno Decker (ed.), *Sancti Thomae de Aquino, Expositio super librum Boethii de Trinitate*, E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1965. A two volume English translation of this book has been published by Armand Maurer (ed.) *Faith, reason, and theology* and *The division and method of the sciences*, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto, 1986–1987. The first volume translates Questions I–IV, the second V and VI. I will generally cite the Maurer translation, though I will make my own translations when I need greater precision. Two fairly recent commentaries on Aquinas text are by Leo Elders, *Faith and science*, Herder, Roma, 1974, and Douglas C. Hall, *The Trin-*

raised by Socrates more than a millennium and a half earlier. Is it philosophy or is it religion that provides the proper guidance for and supreme perfection of human beings? Socrates emphatically affirms philosophy for it is the life according to nature, while religion is merely political and conventional. At its best, religion is a “noble lie” useful for politically governing the unphilosophic multitude; usually, however, it is the city’s ignoble lie which forms foolish fanatics like Euthyphro and Miletus. Plato’s Socrates is committed not so much to his particular philosophical teachings (e.g., the “Ideas”) as he is to philosophic inquiry itself: he is a lover of wisdom rather than wise; he knows that he does not know. But what he *does* know is that his way of life is best. Plato’s student Aristotle develops his own line of thought, but he is one with his teacher in affirming the supremacy of the philosophic life. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*’ weighing of alternative accounts of the best life, religion is not even mentioned. Down through the ages Socrates’ successors — whether members of the Academy, the Lyceum, the Porch, the Garden, etc. — have stood united on this point, that the philosophic life is the right life.<sup>2</sup> And it is precisely this teaching that Aquinas puts in the gun sights of his Exposition.

Virtually every major writing by St. Thomas includes a hefty discussion of the relation between philosophy and the Christian faith. His oft stated teaching on the topic is so well known that the briefest summary of it suffices here. Philosophy serves as the “handmaiden” (*ancilla*) to faith by discovering certain truths about reality — e.g., the existence and unity of God — which constitute the *praeambula Fidei*, by showing that arguments against the faith are either false or lacking in necessity, and by equipping the Faith with analogies to make it more intelligible to us.<sup>3</sup>

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ity E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1992. Elders’ book is especially strong on the background of the book, while Hall sees the text as developing St. Thomas’ theological methodology. Ralph McInerny, *Boethius and Aquinas*, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 1990, devotes three substantial chapters to St. Thomas’ commentary, but he concentrates on the metaphysics of the final two Questions rather than on the whole work. I will cite the work using Roman numerals for Aquinas’ Questions and Arabic numerals for the Articles. Unless otherwise indicated, all references are to this book by St. Thomas.

<sup>2</sup> See Pierre Hadot, *What is ancient philosophy?*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 2001; J. Domanski, *La philosophie: Théorie ou manière de vivre?* Cerf, Paris, 1996; Leo Strauss, ‘The mutual influence of theology and philosophy’, *The Independent Journal of Philosophy* 3, 1979, pp. 111–118.

<sup>3</sup> See *Summa Contra Gentiles* I, 1–9 and the *Summa Theologiae* I, Q1. A small compendium of Aquinas texts on this question has been compiled by Stephen F. Brown,

Such an understanding did not impress the thirteenth century successors of Socrates, the Averroistic Aristotelians on the Sorbonne Arts Faculty.<sup>4</sup> Aquinas' "handmaiden" solution subordinates philosophy to faith, and so it assumes the very thing that it needs to prove — that the Christian faith offers a better guide for human life and a truer account of reality than that which reason can discover for itself. It begs the question, moreover, to say that Aquinas is a Christian believer and therefore that he holds faith is superior to philosophy: it is the very status of faith itself that the philosopher calls into question. From the standpoint of human reason, Aquinas' "handmaiden" teaching is utterly arbitrary, if not simply irrational. Boethius of Dacia, expressing the mind of the Averroistic Artists, sums up the case for philosophy being the best life as follows.

Among the operations of the intellective power, there is one that is best and most perfect, [and] all others naturally exist for its sake. When a man performs such an operation, he enjoys the highest possible state for man. Such men are the philosophers, who spend their lives in the pursuit of wisdom [...]. Since the philosopher has the greatest love for the first principle, as has been indicated, it follows that the philosopher

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*Aquinas: on faith and reason*, Hackett, Indianapolis, 1999. Brown includes a working bibliography on the question in his volume. In the Exposition, the three uses of philosophy in Faith are discussed at II, 3 *resp.*

<sup>4</sup> On the conflicts between the University of Paris Artists and Theologians, and indeed for discussions of the wider historical setting of Thomas' work, see the following: David Knowles, *The evolution of medieval thought*, Longman, London, 1988<sup>2</sup>, pp. 201–251; John Marenborn, *Later Medieval philosophy*, Routledge, London, 1993, pp. 66–82; Jan Aertsen, Aquinas's philosophy in its historical setting, in Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump (eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Aquinas*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993, pp. 12–37. Older but still valuable treatments of these issues will be found in Etienne Gilson, *History of Christian philosophy in the Middle Ages* Random House, New York, 1955, pp. 244–250; 387–410; Fernand van Steenberghen, *La philosophie au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Publications Universitaires, Louvain, 1966, pp. 72–189; 357–493; and still indispensable is M-D. Chenu, *Toward understanding Saint Thomas*, Regnery, Chicago, 1964, pp. 11–199. Since I am reproducing the historical situation as *Thomas saw it*, there is no need for me to enter the debates initiated by Gilson and van Steenberghen on the "Averroism" or "Aristotélisme hétérodoxe" of the Artists. The point at issue is that *Thomas* understood the Artists to be "Averroists", as is evident from his *De Unitate Intellectus Contra Averroistas*. Despite his other disagreements with Thomas, Bonaventure shared his belief about the Artists. On the issue of faith and reason in the middle ages, see the studies collected in Jan Aertsen and Andreas Speer (eds.), *Was ist Philosophie in Mittelalter?* (*Miscellanea Mediaevalia* 26), 1998, in addition to the bibliography gathered by Stephen Brown in the volume cited in the previous note. A study which reaches conclusions similar to my own is Jan Aertsen, 'Mittelalterliche Philosophie: ein unmögliches Projekt?', in *Geistleben im 13. Jahrhundert* (*Miscellanea Mediaevalia* 27), 1999, pp. 12–28.

takes maximum delight in this first principle and in contemplating its goodness, and that this alone is right pleasure. This is the life of the philosopher. Whoever does not live such a life does not live rightly.<sup>5</sup>

As his celebrated disputes with the Averroists bear witness, St. Thomas was not ignorant of the case that could be mounted against him. He well knew that he had to justify his subordination of philosophy to the Christian faith. How, then, to render his teaching non-arbitrary? To put the question more radically, why did Aquinas himself not accept the arguments for philosophy's supremacy, and subordinate the Christian faith to it? In this paper I can address only one aspect of that question. I will use the Exposition as my principal source since he wrote it to address this particular issue.<sup>6</sup> A central contention of Aquinas in the Exposition, I will argue, is that unaided human reason operating by its own purely natural powers can discover for itself that philosophy *in principle* is incapable of attaining the wisdom to which it aspires, i.e., the comprehensive account of the whole of reality in light of essential knowledge of the "first principle"; accordingly, in principle it cannot be the right way of life or provide ultimate happiness. In executing this program, I will show that Thomas argues his case on *purely* philosophical grounds: not one premise or conclusion of his argument depends on his Christian faith. In sum, I intend to show that Aquinas rejects philosophy's claim to supremacy over the Christian faith on completely rational grounds, grounds that the Artists themselves accept.

In juxtaposing the *philosophi* ascent to God from creatures with the *theologi* descent from the First Truth to creatures in his Prologue (I, 4–7), Aquinas proleptically anticipates the conflict between the two claimants for the best life. As the argument of the Exposition unfolds, Thomas' philosophers assert both that philosophy is right and that faith is wrong. They affirm philosophy on grounds expressed primar-

<sup>5</sup> Boethius of Dacia, 'Oh the Supreme Good, or on the Life of the Philosopher', in John F. Wippel and Allan B. Wolter, *Medieval philosophy*, The Free Press, New York, 1969, pp. 373–375.

<sup>6</sup> I cannot develop this point within the limited scope of this paper, but I shall merely assert my conviction that the Exposition is Thomas' one and only writing explicitly devoted to the problem of "faith and reason." While he repeatedly expresses his views on this question in his other writings, e.g., the two *Summae*, the question itself is thematically addressed *as a question* only in this book. For a like reason, I believe that St. Thomas completed what he wanted to say on the topic. That is, he decided not to proceed with his *lectiones* and *quaestiones* on the trinitarian part of Boethius' work. As it stands, the Exposition is complete. While arguing these points is not possible here, I hope the reason for my choosing the Exposition as my main source is clear.

ily, though not exclusively, in the Objections of Question VI, article 4. First, philosophy's quest is for wisdom, the essential knowledge of the first principle or separated substance in light of which a comprehensive account of the whole of reality may be scientifically demonstrated. All other sciences and inquiries are ordered to and by the highest study: *sapientis est ordinare* (V, 1 *obj.* 1; Prol. I, 5–7; II, 2 *ad* 1). Secondly, since all knowledge is acquired from the form, *scientia divina* is science precisely because by it the divine form is beheld (VI, 4 *obj.* 2). Thirdly, happiness (*felicitas*) is an act of wisdom which itself is the most perfect operation of the best power, the intellect, about the best reality, the separated substances. Accordingly happiness is the fruition of wisdom's understanding of the separated substances (VI, 4 *obj.* 3). Happiness, moreover, is the end or goal of life, that to which one's entire life is ordered; it is the fulfillment of our natural desire. As Augustine says, the philosophic enterprise is undertaken in order to be happy (V, 1 *ad* 4). Fourthly, if the speculative science of divinity cannot attain knowledge of the separated substances, it fails to reach its end — and that is absurd (VI, 4 *obj.* 4). Finally, human nature itself is inclined to know the separated substances as its ultimate end. But to have such a natural inclination or desire implies that we have the principles within us to accomplish it (VI, 4 *obj.* 5); as Aristotle had said, no natural desire is vain.

The human being by nature, then, reaches perfection and happiness through the speculative quest for and attainment of wisdom. The philosophers' claim for philosophy, accordingly, is that it is the ordering principle of the best life. Philosophy, as philosophers understand it, is the quest for wisdom understood in terms of science as Aristotle develops it in the *Posterior Analytics*. Such true knowledge is universal, necessary, causal, demonstrative, through a middle term, and derived from premises that are better known than the conclusions. In any science these criteria obtain, but in Wisdom the first principles of the whole of reality, grasped by noetic insight (*nous, intellectus*) or the "understanding of principles," secure the principles that the other sciences either assume or do not need in their more limited demonstrations. Thomas' philosopher, then, does not limit the intellect's reach to sensible phenomena; his philosopher proudly proclaims that wisdom is attainable, that the search for and discovery of it lies at the core of the best and happy life.

In his programmatic Question I Aquinas not only sketches the scope and limits of the intellect's power, but also he sets forth agenda

for the rest of the book. Reason is capable of knowing some truths (a.1), and it can even reach to an analogical, *quia* knowledge of God (a.2), but such knowledge is posterior to the knowledge of sensible realities (a.3); in no way can the mind by its own natural light arise even to the *quia* much less the *quod est* knowledge of the True God (a.4). Not only is natural knowledge dependent on the sensible body, but also reason itself fully knows this fact. As the mind knows intelligible realities which the agent intellect abstracts from sensed particulars, by remotion from effect to cause, the mind comes to know not only the existence of separated substances, but also that, by its own light, it is powerless to know their essences. Questions IV through VI will develop these points on which Question I merely touches; Questions II and III will argue that the Christian Faith and Religion provide the knowledge and way of life that philosophy cannot supply. In short, Question I sets the agenda for the entire Exposition.

In Question V Thomas takes up the problem of true knowledge (*scientia*). While his solution had been sketched in the programmatic Question I, here he fully argues his answer. By virtue of the natural light of the agent intellect true knowledge can be gathered from the flux of sense experiences. True knowledge however, is characterized by intelligible necessity and thus excludes the mutable or changeable; what can be other than it is cannot be “necessary” (V, 1). As *scientia* is characterized by necessity, the different habits of science perfect the intellect according to the different kinds of necessity that specify the objects of each science. Thus matter and form belong by necessity to physical, mobile bodies. Physics, accordingly, is the habit of science by which the intellect understands what can neither exist, nor be understood, apart from matter and motion. By abstracting the universal, either “with precision” or *sine praecisione*, from the designated matter of the sensed particular (e.g., “humanity” or “man” from Socrates), the mind grasps that which is necessary and unchanging in and from an ever-changing contingent body (V, 2; cf. *De ente et essentia*, ch. II). In a similar way, mathematics is the science by which the mind comprehends what exists in sensible matter but which is understood without such matter; this refers, of course, to the primary accident, quantity. The natural light of the agent intellect abstracts the intelligible form from the sensible matter (circle from the bronze shield), and so understands the intelligible object apart from such matter (V, 3).

Besides performing apprehensive abstractions by the agent intellect, the mind also judges by composing and dividing (V, 3). In phys-

ics and mathematics such judgments terminate in the mind's essential, *propter quid* knowledge of things. "The earth is a sphere" is a scientifically demonstrated conclusion from better known premises in both sciences, the mean of demonstration being proper to each (V, 3 *ad* 7). And though the sphericity of the earth is not evident to the naked eye—if anything it appears to be flat—the respective physical and mathematical premises through which this is known are fully intelligible to the power of the natural light. Such, unfortunately, is not the case in metaphysics. First philosophy or (philosophical) theology is the science which knows by the judgment of separation those realities which are "separated" from matter: either they do not exist in it (i.e., separated substances) or they are not dependent upon it—e.g., *esse-essentia*, act-potency, etc. (V, 1 *obj.* 7 and V, 4 *resp. ad fin.*). The opposite, rather, is the case: physical, mobile bodies depend upon these realities. As the separated substances are not limited either by matter-form composition or by sensible accidents rooted in signate matter, the abstracting power of the natural light is insufficient to reveal their essences. Such realities are known and judged by the mind not in themselves, but only insofar as they are principles of all beings, known by remotion from the posterior composites (V, 4). First philosophy, then, perfects the mind by rising from effects to the Cause who is the principle of all sensible beings; it knows Him insofar and only insofar as such effects manifest Him as their cause. Metaphysics differs from physics in that the latter knows the essential causes of physical, mobile beings (e.g., the earth's sphericity), while the former is unable to grasp the essence of any separated substance precisely because it far transcends the limited light of the agent intellect (V, 4). The three sciences of physics, mathematics, and metaphysics, then, perfect the human intellect in diverse ways: by the first habit the "inseparable" from matter is known; by the second the "separable" is understood; by the third the "separate" is neither known nor understood as it is, but it merely is affirmed. The human mind at its zenith, perfected by the science of first philosophy, both knows that the First Cause exists and knows that its essence is utterly unknowable to it (VI, 3 and 4).

Thomas' analysis of the mind's power to know is intended to establish both the legitimacy of philosophy and its limits. The three scientific habits are rooted in the natural light of the mind, not in the Divine Light. As such they are sciences, properly speaking, for each is specified by its formal objects, is characterized by intelligible necessity, and follows its own methods (VI, 1). By these habits the human

mind comes to true knowledge, *scientia* either *propter quid* or *quia*. In no way does the Light of Divine Revelation enter into these sciences; such Light is not a principle constitutive of any of them. In short, the philosophical sciences differ not only in species but in genus from any revealed theology.

The further significance of Thomas' achievement becomes apparent from the very fact that he has established the independence of the philosophical sciences: these are theoretical sciences and *only* theoretical sciences. By showing that a *propter quid* knowledge of the First Principle is impossible, Thomas denies the central claim of pre-modern philosophy — that it is the right way of life because it is devoted to the quest for wisdom (see above). On Thomas' showing philosophy *cannot* be the right way of life because it is *intrinsically* incapable of attaining the very knowledge which would make for happiness. Thomas, of course, does not deny that happiness consists in the knowledge of the first principle. To the contrary we have a "natural desire" for such knowledge (VI, 4 *ad* 4), and our perfection is to be united to God by knowledge (II, 1 *co*).<sup>7</sup> But the knowledge of the "separated substance" that metaphysics can attain is merely that of the negative judgment of separation: it is a *quia* knowledge, analogical, and more negative than positive. The truth that metaphysical science reaches is the truth that the *propter quid* knowledge of God that we would need to attain happiness is not available to our limited light. The whole argument of Q. VI, a. 4 is to show that no theoretical science attains to knowledge of the "divine form"; as the effects do not begin to reveal the Divine Essence, we far more know our ignorance of the separated substances than we know them.

In a curious way, then, St. Thomas winds up with an understanding of philosophy that is semi-Socratic: philosophy is knowledge of its own ignorance. In the words of Leo Strauss, philosophy is both "aware of the whole" and aware of its failure to account for the whole.<sup>8</sup> For philosophy to become wisdom the natural light would have to be able to reveal the Divine Essence as it is; and this it both cannot do and, most importantly, *knows* with "intelligible necessity" that it cannot. Unlike Socrates (and Strauss), however, Thomas concludes that philosophy's necessary inability to become wisdom means that it can-

<sup>7</sup> See Henri de Lubac, *The mystery of the supernatural*, Herder and Herder, New York, 1967, chapter 10 especially, for St. Thomas' understanding of man's natural desire for seeing God.

<sup>8</sup> Leo Strauss, *art. cit.*, 114.

not possibly supply the best life.<sup>9</sup> In sum, human reason through the theoretical sciences knows proportionate intelligible objects, i.e., bodily beings, and them alone with *propter quid* knowledge.

Although the agent intellects abstractive power cannot reach far enough to illuminate the mind's ignorance of the "divine form", an analogical knowledge of God and some of His attributes is available. The mind which knows nothing of God in Himself can form judgments expressed in propositions about God. As Pure Act, He is both the absolute knower and the absolutely knowable (I, 3 *resp.*; I, 4 *ad* 6). Passive potency impedes understanding, whether it be on the part of knower or the object to be known, or both. Thus whatever is known is understood through its form or essential act. Conversely, prime matter as pure passive potency is unknowable in itself and known only through its act, substantial form. Similarly the mind's passive potency, the potential intellect, is brought to knowledge only by the agent intellect's abstractive acts which render the potentially intelligible sensible substance actually so. Without any trace of passive potency, Pure Act is *noesis noeseos* or absolute Self Understanding. In knowing Himself He knows Himself precisely as the *causa essendi* of all beings and the ways in which the diverse and multiple beings may act (cf. II, 2 *resp.*; *Summa Contra Gentiles* I, 47–50). Moreover, as the First Cause of human beings, beings who have the "natural desire" to know the Divine Essence with *propter quid* knowledge, He knows Himself as the ultimate felicity of man (*ibid.* III, 17 [7–8]). Finally, man can know that if he is to have perfect happiness, God must make Himself known in a way that transcends the power of the agent intellect (VI, 4 *ad* 5). Human beings, in short know (1) that this natural desire for happiness lies in understanding the First Principle; (2) that such knowledge transcends the illuminative power of the agent intellect or the reach of human mind; (3) that the separated substance will have to be known by some way other than the theoretical sciences for man to fulfill his natural desire. Aquinas develops this last point in a way that turns the philosophers' own very arguments against them.

<sup>9</sup> "Wisdom" is an analogical term for Aquinas. The wisdom of the metaphysician or philosophical theologian is not the wisdom possessed by the believer in revealed divine science; still less is it the wisdom that is the gift of the Holy Spirit. The "wisdom" of the metaphysician may be real, but it cannot ground happiness since it is a recognition of necessary ignorance rather than the essential knowledge of the First Principle. See Kieran Conley, *A theology of wisdom*, Priority Press, Dubuque, 1963.

Owing to a deficiency on our part, divine and necessary realities which are most knowable by nature, are not apparent to us [...] [S]ince the goal of human life is perfect happiness, which consists in the full knowledge of divine realities, the direction of human life toward perfect happiness from the very beginning requires faith in the divine [...] (III, 1 *resp.*)

It is the philosophers who have taught that happiness consists in the “full knowledge of divine realities.” Thomas agrees. But since reason knows that it cannot attain such knowledge, happiness is impossible unless such knowledge is divinely revealed, received in faith, and fructified in eternity. The most that the philosopher can hope for is a *felicitas imperfecta*. Aquinas, in short, hoists Boethius of Dacia on his own petard; he uses the five objections in favor of philosophy, noted earlier in this paper, to disprove philosophy’s claim to supremacy.

What, then, explains the philosophers exalting the philosophic life? What failure does Aquinas see lying at the root of their conviction that the philosophic life is best? In discussing the three ways in which philosophy can be a “handmaiden” to faith Thomas notes that those using philosophy can err in two ways: by using teachings contrary to the faith, and by “including the contents of faith within the bounds of philosophy, as would happen should somebody decide to believe nothing but what could be established by philosophy” (II, 3 *resp.*). The latter error subsumes the three ways, which he had previously mentioned, in which reason is abused rather than used in exploring divine things: by the presumption which attempts to comprehend God, by the willingness to believe only what reason can discover, and by an individual assuming that his speculative powers are greater than they are (II, 1 *resp.*). Even if the third abuse is relegated to the vice of self-ignorant conceit, the other two abuses bring Thomas to the heart of his critique of the philosophers. The entire case for the supremacy the philosophic life rests on these two foundations — that the mind can comprehend the “first principle” and that the human mind’s power is adequate to know the whole of reality. Indeed, without these two suppositions, the case for the philosophic life simply collapses. Although Socrates knows that he does not know, his dialectic is rooted in the conviction that reality can be known; similarly the other philosophical schools may or may not suffer the conceit that each of them alone is wise, but all maintain wisdom in principle is possible; Boethius of Dacia may or may not be convinced that he himself has comprehended the first principle, but he is convinced that it can be comprehended. In short, “rationalism” — the belief that the human mind is capable of grasping the whole — lies

at the root of the conviction that the philosophic life is best; and its is precisely this rationalistic belief that Thomas has attacked at its root. The Exposition has been designed to show that such a belief is not merely an unproved opinion but a disproved error. If the philosopher becomes convinced that he knows with intelligible necessity that he cannot attain knowledge of the "divine form", but that he attains only a *quia* knowledge of the "first principle", he may well open up to hearing the case for the Christian revelation.

In making his "philosophical critique of philosophy", St. Thomas illustrates one of the ways in which philosophy serves as a handmaiden to faith: by showing that contrary teachings are false or lack necessity. By employing philosophy, he has shown that the philosophic life cannot be the best life, that its claim is rooted in a fundamental philosophical error. It is to be noted that he has made his case on purely philosophical or rational grounds; not a single step in his argument has depended on his belief in the Christian Revelation. He has done this, moreover, precisely by beginning with what the philosophers themselves teach — that knowledge of the first principle or separated substance is the key to wisdom and happiness. In showing that the mind knows that it cannot reach this wisdom, he uses philosophy to open the door for religious faith.

But which one? There are as many religions as there are philosophical schools, maybe more. Here the third use of philosophy becomes important. Not only must a true religion not contradict reason, but also its teachings must be at least "believable." While the human mind cannot attain wisdom, reason of itself can certainly discover folly. Reason cannot validate the claims of the Christian faith, but it can certainly test them for irrationality. Is the Trinity self-contradictory? Is transubstantiation an impossibility? Philosophy can try these beliefs before the bar of reason. In short, Aquinas' critique of Lady philosophy, far from dismissing her, has shaved her head bald (II, 3 *sed c.* 3), and set her on a new foundation as a set of theoretical sciences; she has become a unique handmaiden who has an honored position at the King's right hand.

BREAKING THE GREAT CHAIN OF BEING.  
A NOTE ON THE PARIS CONDEMNATIONS OF 1277,  
THOMAS AQUINAS AND THE PROPER SUBJECT OF  
METAPHYSICS\*

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In the late 13th century Latin west, the problem of the proper subject of metaphysics (a legacy of the *Avicenna Latinus*) became relevant. Two candidates were open at the time: that of the ‘ens in quantum ens’ as the proper subject of metaphysics, and that of the separate and “most noble substances.” This transition allows for a deeper reading of the Condemnation of 1277. The structure of the Condemnation reveals an intriguing commitment on the part of the condemned articles concerning the separate substances (or angels) and the peculiar neoplatonic “chain of being” that was the underpinning of their accounts. Peter Olivi argued against the neoplatonic chain of being soon after 1277. Even if this polemic is still neglected in the secondary literature on 1277, Olivi’s interpretation of the state of the debate reinforces the reading of the Paris Condemnation with regard to neoplatonistic chains of being, and the options available for characterizing the proper subject of metaphysics.

“Deus est sphaera infinita cuius  
centrum est ubique,  
circumferentia nusquam”  
(*Liber XXIV philosophorum*)

There is a strand in medieval thought that we might call the *Neoplatonic fascination*. The most clear example of this fascination is the unexpected fortune of the *Liber de causis* during the second half of the 13th Century.

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Comparing the 1277 Parisian Condemnations<sup>1</sup> with the other contemporary disciplinary actions (e.g., Paris 1270, Oxford 1277 or London 1286)<sup>2</sup> we can appreciate the distinctive character of 1277: it evoked a certain hostile reaction to the Neoplatonic fascination in medieval theology.<sup>3</sup> The 1277 condemnation as such is not a philosophical document, but it nevertheless reveals an intellectual atmosphere in a state of change.

One would expect many articles to be condemned since they were obviously inconsistent with the Christian *Weltanschauung* and the common conception of the *creatio ex nihilo* (the eternity of the world is an obvious example). The censoring mechanisms used to oppose certain answers to the problem of divine power, the mind-body problem (this issue is particularly stressed in the English condemnations), the nature of the intellect and the necessity of acts of the will. Other articles were often censured due to their moral consequences; propositions that were a potential cause of scandal, depravity or damaging to the pastoral agenda of the Church were also corrected.

This noted, a conspicuous number of articles censored in 1277 by Etienne Tempier cover very metaphysical topics, such as the nature and cosmological role of separate substances. At first sight, such articles could seem far-fetched, since they are not self-evidently inconsistent with the Christian doctrine. What was original in the 1277 Parisian condemnation was this larger and deeper metaphysical commitment, with its corresponding effort to link the other above mentioned issues with the core of an articulated philosophical conception of the world.

The logic of this condemnation is unfortunately occluded by the reorganisations of the articles by 20th Century editors.<sup>4</sup> The plan of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *La condamnation parisienne de 1277*, Nouvelle édition du texte latin, traduction, introduction et commentaire par D. Piché avec la collaboration de C. Lafleur, Vrin, Paris, 1999. Cf. L. Bianchi, 'New perspectives on the condemnation of 1277 and its aftermath', *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales* 70, 2003, pp. 206–229.

<sup>2</sup> See, *inter alia*, A. Boureau, *Théologie, science et censure au XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle. Le cas de Jean Peckham*, Les Belles Lettres, Paris, 1999.

<sup>3</sup> Ruedi Imbach acknowledged this aspect of Tempier's articles. Cf. R. Imbach, 'Notule sur le commentaire du "Liber de causis" de Siger de Brabant et ses rapports avec Thomas d'Aquin', *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 43, 1996, pp. 304–323.

<sup>4</sup> P. Mandonnet re-edited the Tempier's articles but did not follow the seeming lack of order of the *Carthularium*. He tided them up according to twenty philosophical (often anachronistic) items, giving a neoscholastic order then followed by other scholars. See P. Mandonnet, *Siger de Brabant et l'Averroïsme latin au xiii<sup>e</sup> siècle*, t. II, Institut Supérieur de Philosophie, Louvain, 1911<sup>2</sup>, pp. 175ff. Cf. Piché (1999: 21, n. 2).

Tempier and his advisers emerges from the order of the 219 articles. The first articles could be viewed as a sort of general introduction. They deal with the wide range of items: the nature of God, the eternity of the separate substances and of the human species, the necessity of the created cosmos and human beatitude<sup>5</sup> etc.

Starting with article 22 there is a probing of more specific issues. The articles from 22 to 68 deal with the relation between the philosophical *episteme* and the capacity of the divine power. On one hand, philosophy is held to be the only form of necessary knowledge (art. 24)<sup>6</sup> and, on the other hand, the action of the first substance has to be bound by the mediations of its power as established within philosophy. Among the consequences: “*Felicitas non potest a deo inmitti immediate*”; “*deus non potest immediate cognoscere contingentia*”; “*primum principium non potest immediate producere generabilia*”; “*deus potest agere contraria, hoc est, mediante corpore celesti...*”; “*deus non potest in effectum cause secundarie sine ipsa causa secundaria*”; “*effectus immediatus a primo debet esse unus tantum*” and so on.<sup>7</sup>

The problem of ontological *mediation* reveals the general frame of what I called “Neoplatonic fascination.” The christianisation of this neoplatonic necessitarianism and mediationism meant that an adequate response to the neoplatonic fascination required Tempier to consider angelology. In particular, the immateriality and eternity of the separated substances needed to be covered in as much as these attributes (could) imply metaphysical necessity.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Let me give some examples: God is not Trinity, “*quoniam trinitas non stat cum summa simplicitate*” (art. 1); everything endless is also without beginnings (art. 2); every separate soul must be co-eternal with God (art. 5); the resurrection of the body is philosophical nonsense (art. 18); nothing happens by chance, “*sed omnia de necessitate eveniunt*” (art. 21).

<sup>6</sup> “*Quod omnes scientie sunt preternecessarie, preter philosophicas disciplinas, et quod non sunt necessarie, nisi propter consuetudinem hominum.*” But see also the articles 31 and 32 (on the eternity and the unity of the human intellect), 36 (“*quod deum in hac vita mortali possumus intelligere per essentiam*”), 37 (“*quod nichil est credendum, nisi per se notum vel ex per se notis possit declarari*”), 40 (“*quod non est excellentior status quam vacare philosophie*”), 41 and also (at some length) art. 42 (on the knowledge of future contingents).

<sup>7</sup> There are numerous articles on the limitation of divine power: 22–23, 25–29, 33–35, 39, 42–68.

<sup>8</sup> Articles: 69 (“*substantie separate, eo quod habent unum appetitum, non mutantur in opere*”), 70 (“*quod intelligentie, sive substantie separate, quas dicunt eternas, non habent proprie causam efficientem [...]*”), 71–83, 84 (“*intelligentia recipit esse a deo per intelligentias medias*”), 85–86. Cf. Bianchi (2003 : 223, n. 40; 224, n. 41).

A next group of articles handle the eternity of the universe: “Nihil est novum, nisi celum variatum respectu materie generabilium” (art. 88). This covers Aristotle (“impossibile — we read at art. 89 — solvere rationes philosophi de eternitate mundi”), but it would be hard to ignore the connection with the former group of articles. For many philosophers and *artistae* the theme of the eternity of the world and that of the separate substances were liable to be connected. Boethius of Dacia would be a paradigmatic example.

These angelological and cosmological articles are followed by articles on the nature of the human soul and its faculties. After these anthropological matters, a last group of articles (concerning the moral consequences of the philosophical errors) precedes a set of more heterogeneous and thematically-mixed propositions (from art. 184 to the end) on creation, causation again, the nature of time, the intellect and the will. These seem to be a sort of addition *ad abundantiam*: to strengthen the voice of the condemnation, and to give clues to the connecting themes among the previous blocks of articles.

Contemporaries were probably sensitive to the intimate connection between the metaphysical issue on one side, and the cosmological, psychological and moral ones on the other. For example, Peter Olivi deals with the problem of creation in his *Quaestiones* on the II Book of Sentences.<sup>9</sup> He discusses the question “an mundus ab eterno fieri potuerit” (q. 5). This text is roughly contemporaneous with Tempier’s condemnation. Olivi considers the eternity of the universe as an anti-christian doctrine<sup>10</sup> that stands on three grounds:

- (1) the modal univocity of divine action (“Deus quicquid agit necessario agit”);
- (2) the structure of the world according to which there must be reasons (*cause*) for each creature’s action;<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Cf. P. Olivi *Quaestiones in II Sent.*, ed. by B. Jansen, vol. I, Quaracchi 1921. Sylvain Piron drew my attention to the impressive interpretation given here by Olivi. Piron considers it an articulation and philosophical “enforcement” of Tempier’s censorship. According to Carlos Bazán, also Scotus’ whole system might be considered expression of the cultural project embodied in the 1277 Condemnation. Cf. Bianchi (2003 : 217).

<sup>10</sup> “Error de eternitate mundi, prout a philosophis mundi est positus, habet fundamentum impium” (Olivi 1921 : 96 [q. 5]).

<sup>11</sup> “Omnium que aliquando agunt, aliquando non agunt aut que aliquando sic agunt, aliquando vero non sic oportet reddere causam quare aliquando sic aliquando vero non sic” (*ibid.* : 96).

- (3) the *metaphysical mediationism* that closes the first two points together, making their consequence necessary.

This third aspect, drawn from the *Liber de causis*, is introduced by Olivi to show how the order of the reality is seen as the necessary emanation from the first cause, in such a way that each communication from and to God cannot be direct: “Nullum inferiorum potuit esse a prima causa nisi per intermedias substantias superiores.”<sup>12</sup>

The first two points are rejected because of their moral consequences: the so-called Carneades antifatalistic argument. If every event and action in this world has a (necessary) cause, there would be no room neither for the freedom of the will (human or divine), nor for civic and religious morality: “Timor et reverentia, amicitia et gratia, spes ac deprecatio seu imploratio frustra habetur ad eum nihilque veri dominii habet in rebus.”

Nevertheless for Olivi, it is the third point above that constitutes the true *consummatio impietatis*. It limits the divine absolute power, the divine causation as well as our access to God. “Nobis — Olivi explains — attribuit essentialem infinitatem et miseriam, quia secundum hoc quasi essentialiter sumus in extremo *catene* quam fingunt.”

The picture that emerges from reading Olivi and Tempier is that their opponents posit a chain of necessary being, that encloses itself in a circle of godlessness, from where the true God is driven out by a myriad of idolatrous created-but-also-creating substances (namely, the separate mediating substances). Philosophical errors derive from this mistaken cosmology of an enclosed, necessary chain.<sup>13</sup>

Olivi spoke of a “chain” (*catena quam fingunt*). Arthur O. Lovejoy considered cognate matters in his impressive Harvard William James lectures entitled *The great chain of Being*. According to Lovejoy, this

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* : 97.

<sup>13</sup> “Sicut habet impium fundamentum, sic habet et processum, quia omnes aut fere omnes articulos fidei catholice uno flatu abnegat et de medio tollit; tollit enim peccatum originale, quia nullum primum hominem ponit ac per consequens tollit totum opus redemptionis [cf. Tempier’s articles, e.g., 9, 15–19]; ponit autem aut unitatem intellectus [cf. artt. 117–126] aut revolutionem earundem animarum per diversa corpora aut infinitas animas et plures earum in eternum manere separatas a corpore [cf. e.g., art. 10]; et cum cursus istius seculi et humane generationis ponat in eternum manere: patet quod nullam felicitatem statuit homini nisi in vita ista [cf. art. 176]” (*ibid.* : 98). Further, since the number six symbolizes the circle, the circular chain also evoked the Antichrist! “Senarius enim est numerus circularis, quia per reflexionem sui in se multiplicatus reddit numerum terminatum in se ipsum, ut sexies sex faciunt triginta sex, habebit numerum terminatum in sex et sic in infinitum [...]” (*ibid.* : 98f).

“chain of being” is a general scheme of things, an articulated conception “of the constitutive pattern of the universe.”<sup>14</sup> Like other chains, also this one could suggest different representations and provoke opposite feelings. It is a general heuristic metaphor that holds things together and makes communication through different *niveaux* of the reality possible. This said, it could constrain and fasten the freedom of man (both in thought and action). Lovejoy’s picture of a great chain of being captures the Neoplatonic fascination in a useful motif.

Aside from offering a definitive account of the relevance and historical significance of Tempier’s condemnations, a few conclusions can be reached by putting together the 1277 condemnation’s original “muddled” structure, Olivi’s picture of the enclosed chain of his neoplatonically-besotted opponents, and Aquinas’ own conception of that chain of being. First, the condemnation reveals itself only if considered as a whole, since it was a particular reaction to an establishing *état d’esprit*. The idea of Neoplatonic fascination and the problem of the “*subjectum Metaphysice*” help us better to understand Tempier’s plan in its unity and as part of a larger intellectual struggle around 1300.<sup>15</sup>

We can look at Tempier’s condemnation as an attempt to break the great chain of being. It involved its rejection, but also its definition. In some respect the definition was a falsification of the positions of Aquinas and of the *artistae*, who were probably Tempier’s targets.<sup>16</sup>

Moreover, we can sketch the manner in which this episode can be considered, a kind of road map which, like Tempier’s own condemnation, provides a model for thinking about the issue.

Avicenna first introduced to the West the problem of the proper subject of metaphysics. He opened two paths to western thinkers. First, accepting the idea that the *philosophia prima* deals with the *substantie separate* and with the different degrees of ontological perfection. Particularly at the Faculty of the Arts this path was commonly trodden. But it sets philosophy in a direct competition with theology, because God is also one (the first) of the separate substances.

<sup>14</sup> A.O. Lovejoy, *The great chain of Being. A study of the history of an idea*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass. & London, 1964, p. vii. The lecture was given at Harvard University in the second half of the academic year 1932–1933.

<sup>15</sup> Naturally, articles touching on different theological items and their analysis do not lose their own interest. Nevertheless, secondary literature has underestimated the need for a global interpretation like that suggested here.

<sup>16</sup> The intriguing thesis once proposed by Alain De Libera could be appreciated in this sense. According to De Libera, Tempier’s intervention built up not-yet-thought philosophical “doctrines.” See Bianchi (2003 : 219).

The second path turned away from the risk of an immediate conflict between reason and Authority, choosing instead the *ens in quantum ens* as the subject of supreme philosophical knowledge. Taking such a path, philosophy could now move toward a metaphysics of the transcendental (as it was to do with Duns Scotus).

The division of the issue into two competing paths has one unfortunate consequence: in both cases, the “chain of being” half-shaped by Thomas Aquinas was to be rendered unavailable. Whatever we may think about the results and the general consistency of his metaphysics, it should be clear that Thomas tried to follow another, third, itinerary. Being was conceived by him, under different aspects, as the *ens generalissimum* (*in quod omnes conceptiones resolvuntur*) and as the *esse perfectissimum*: the hollow and the full, the poorer and the richer at the same time.<sup>17</sup> Refusing any sort of *immediationism* (like that of the later nominalistic “empirists”), Thomas paid nevertheless attention to both demands of divine and human freedom. Thus, in the Thomistic scheme, both the first and the second paths could be followed, under certain conditions, without demanding an exclusive choice between them.

The development of this metaphysics which represents a third way reconciling metaphysics as first philosophy (which deals with the *ens in quantum ens* but also the separated substances) was more and more coherently expressed as Thomas’ career progressed. Indeed, his unfinished commentary on the *Peryhermenias* of Aristotle, the commentary on the *Liber de causis* and, best of all, the treatise *De substantiis separatis* reveal this third way most coherently.

Thomas left incomplete his picture of the universe, as he did with the treatise on the separate substances. Both were neglected, even by the early thomists. The metaphysics of Thomas Aquinas, in the context of the late Middle Ages, was that of an isolated thinker. It was by far the least “common” of the scholastic doctrines.

For younger generation of scholars around 1277 there was one logic in philosophy (either accepted or refused as a package). According to this logic there were difficulties distinguishing the principle of non contradiction from that of bivalence,<sup>18</sup> so that the question concern-

<sup>17</sup> Cf., *inter alia*, C. Fabro, ‘The overcoming of the Neoplatonic Triad of Being, Life and Intellect by Thomas Aquinas’, in D.J. O’Meara (ed.), *Neoplatonism and Christian Thought* (*Studies in Neoplatonism Ancient and Modern* 3), International Society for Neoplatonic Studies, State University of New York, Norfolk & Albany, 1982, pp. 97–108; 250–255; in particular p. 101 and p. 252, n. 27.

<sup>18</sup> Covering this question in more detail is not possible here. As is well-known, the principle of non contradiction can be stated: “¬(¬p et p)”. According to its classic

ing the necessity or contingency of things could only have two answers. The first substance, for instance, is either necessary or it is contingent (that is to say “not necessary”): *tertium neque cogitatur*.

By contrast, for Aquinas, to deny the “necessity” of God did not mean affirming his contingency: *tertium datur*. The human reason disposes of different logics. One of Thomas’ logical strategies consists in clarifying the modalities of the created beings (necessity and contingency) and to exclude them from God himself and from his action. Further, the different degrees of ontological perfection, at least in the sense of the Schoolman, seem to be less the links of a close-meshed net than a dynamic structure of multiple communicating worlds, where a determining history and free action are at some extent allowed to interact.

Within this clarified conception of reason, Aristotle stood as guide to know created beings, but *not* the uncreated one. This third path was neglected and became quite inconceivable to the younger generations of scholars, who had grown up in a differently shaped scholastic tradition. Aquinas’ balance between the scientific investigation of creation as promoted by Aristotle with the wider investigation of the nature of the uncreated Being became unavailable. A powerful natural reasoning for created things could be received by Aquinas because Aristotle was authoritative, without being an Authority who jostled on the same level either as religious authorities or as an absolute *ratio*.

It would be quite different to read Aristotle as a new authoritative scientist from a position of the security of a received theology, than to read Aristotle as the pagan philosopher whose thought needed to be corrected to accord with a Christian theology, cosmology and anthropology, before scientific investigation of the world can proceed. The ways to forge the chain of being must be as different as the different links.

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interpretation, the principle of bivalence can be formulated: “ $p \vee \neg p$ ”. To transform the former into the latter, the negation must be introduced into the expression between brackets, so that: “ $\neg p \neg (et) \neg p$ ”. Since “ $\neg(et)$ ” means “ $\vee$ ”, we have: “ $\neg p \vee \neg p$ ”. The equivalence “ $\neg \neg p = p$ ”, affirmed by the rule of double negation, actually hides the problematic point. According to Aquinas, without a positive knowledge of what is negated we never reach the real position regarding it because the negation is not univocal. In other words, “ $\neg p$ ” can be resolved as “ $p$ ” only within particular regions or links of the chain of being, not *universaliter*. Cf. J. Gasser, *Die Erkenntnisweise der Negation. Untersuchung bei Thomas von Aquin*, Universität Freiburg in der Schweiz, Lungern, 1969, pp. 55–117; 218–226; A.A. Robiglio, ‘La logica dell’ateismo’, *Divus Thomas* CII, 1999, pp. 120–143.

It was clear to Thomas that to live without chains is but illusory. Even when we refuse some or other kind of chain, if the faith in reason lasts, the need persists for another chain, that is to say for another *Weltanschauung* to comfort minds and to explain ontological communication. The Schoolman tried to think of such a new chain, made with strong links and, nevertheless, so great that (as Thomas More wrote): “From all places it is the same distance to heaven.”

DE UNITATE INTELLECTUS.  
DIE GLEICHNAMIGE SCHRIFT DES LEHRERS  
(ALBERTS DES GROSSEN) UND DES SCHÜLERS  
(THOMAS VON AQUIN)

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A certain *questio*, which is entitled *De unitate intellectus* remained from the Master (St. Albert the Great) and also from his disciple (St. Thomas Aquinas). Both works deal with the question of the particular souls (cf. *monopsychismus*). The two works differ from each another in many aspects; moreover, there is not any textual similarity. St. Albert explains this question on the basis of *potentia* and *actus*, but St. Thomas employs the theory of *substantia* and *accidens*. St. Albert makes an important correction regarding this theme: in his opinion, *potentia prima* is the same as *ens possibile in seipso* and it is not the *materia*; moreover, *actus primus* is the same as *ens necesse*, and it is not the *forma*. But the most significant difference between the concepts of St. Albert and St. Thomas is that St. Albert has no intentions against the Averroists in his work, in some cases, he even speaks highly of them. Therefore, the question of *unitas intellectus* was independent of the Averroists, and it can be a topical question, too.

Das Schicksal Alberts des Großen kommt in seiner Bezeichnung zum Ausdruck: er war der Lehrer ‘Thomas’ von Aquin. Und dabei bleibt es auch gewöhnlich. Diesen Eindruck wecken auch die zwei gleichnamigen Schriften von der Einheit des Intellekts. Das ist aber nur der erste Eindruck. Denn schon im vollen Titel meldet sich eine Abweichung: „Contra Averroistas“ heißt es bei Thomas. Bei Albert weichen die einzelnen Handschriften diesbezüglich voneinander ab.<sup>1</sup> Diejenigen, die

<sup>1</sup> Vgl. Paulus Simon, ‘De unitate intellectus. Prolegomena’, in Alberti Magni, *Opera Omnia*, Tomus XVII, Pars I., Aschendorff, Münster, 1975, S. IX. Im folgenden: Albertus, bzw. Simon.

die Erweiterung auch bei Albert beinhalten, sind wahrscheinlich von dem Kopisten abhängig, der das Werk des Thomas im Kopf gehabt hat. Daraus könnte sich der seltsame Schluß ergeben: „Albert sei von Thomas abhängig“, und dadurch das umgekehrte Verhältnis ergeben, „Albert sei ein Schüler des Thomas gewesen“.<sup>2</sup>

Man behauptet andererseits, Albert war ein Sammler, der den Stoff angehäuft hat, während ihn sein Schüler systematisierte. Dagegen scheint zu sprechen, was Henryk Anzulewicz<sup>3</sup> über die Struktur—wenigstens der Traktate von Albert dem Großen—nachzuweisen versucht hat, daß nämlich deren Aufbau dem neuplatonischen Gesamtkonzept der Allheit in einem Dreischritt: exitus — perfectio — reductio, bzw. von unum/primum und primum/finis folgt.<sup>4</sup> Nun ist aber die Schrift *De unitate intellectus* kein Traktat, sondern eine Quaestio und ich konnte die von Anzulewicz behauptete Struktur auf sie nicht anwenden.

Auch der Aufbau des Werkes der beiden Autoren unterscheidet sich voneinander. Thomas' Schrift gliedert sich in 5 Kapitel. Nach der Meinung einiger geht es hier um „eine Auslegung von *De anima* des Aristoteles“,<sup>5</sup> während sich die Schrift Alberts eine andere Gliederung und auch einen anderen Charakter aufweist. Am Beginn stehen 30 „Viae“, welche „das Eine Übrigbleibende der menschlichen Seelen“ zu beweisen scheinen.<sup>6</sup> Darauf folgen die „rationes in contrarium“,<sup>7</sup> und zwar deren 36,<sup>8</sup> welche sich vorwiegend auf die Akt- und Potenzlehre stützen.<sup>9</sup> In einem dritten Teil folgen zwei Paragraphen der Abgrenzung der Frage (*Determinatio huius quaestionis*); die Auslegung

<sup>2</sup> Mit mehr Glück scheint die Originalität Alberts Loris Sturlese dargestellt zu haben in seinem Buch (*Die deutsche Philosophie im Mittelalter. Von Bonifatius bis zu Albert dem Großen*, 748–1280, C.H. Beck, München, 1993, 324ff).

<sup>3</sup> Vgl. Henryk Anzulewicz, „Die Denkstruktur des Albertus Magnus. Ihre Dekodierung und ihre Relevanz für die Begrifflichkeit und Terminologie“, in J. Hamesse & C. Steel (Hg.), *L'élaboration du vocabulaire philosophiques au Moyen Âge (Rencontres de Philosophie Médiévale 8)*, Brepolis, Turnhout, 2000, S. 369–396.

<sup>4</sup> Ebd. S. 385.

<sup>5</sup> Vgl. Alain de Libera, „Introduction“, in Thomas D'Aquin, *Contre Averroes*, Flammarion, Paris, 1994, S. 20. Im weiteren: Thomas, bzw. de Libera. (Diese Ausgabe folgt der mittelalterlichen Orthographie. Ich habe in den Zitaten diese Orthographie beibehalten.)

<sup>6</sup> „[E]x quibus probare videtur isti, quod ex omnibus animabus humanus remanens est idem et unum“, Albertus 4,13.

<sup>7</sup> Vgl. Simon S. XI.

<sup>8</sup> Albertus 13ff.

<sup>9</sup> Albertus 20,23: „actus primus“; 21,45: „triplex est potentia“.

der Meinung Alberts (*Explanatio nostrae opinionis*)<sup>10</sup> und die Antwort auf die Vorwürfe (*Responsio ad obiectiones*).<sup>11</sup> Hier argumentiert Albert mit Hilfe der Akt-Potenz-Lehre,<sup>12</sup> und beruft sich auf seine „*Prima Philosophia*“.<sup>13</sup> Die Summe des „einzig wahren Standpunktes“,<sup>14</sup> welche gleichzeitig eine Summe des aristotelischen Standpunktes ist, lautet bei Albert: „*Anima igitur est substantia talis, ex qua fluunt potentiae separatae a materia et non separatae, et secundum se est incorruptibilis et permanens, licet secundum esse quarundam potentialium sit corruptibilis. Et hoc dicimus de anima humana et non de alia*“.<sup>15</sup>

Auch Thomas argumentiert mit Hilfe der Metaphysik des Aristoteles, aber eher mit seiner Substanz- und Akzidenz-Lehre. Es heißt bei ihm u.a.:

Dicit enim Aristoteles in IV Metaphysice quod, „cuiusque substantia unum est non secundum accidens et quod nichil est alium unum preter ens“. Et quod „nichil est aliud unum preter [sic] ens“. Substantia ergo separata si est ens secundum suam substantiam est una; precipue cum Aristoteles dicat in VIII Metaphysice quod ea que non habent materiam, non habent causam ut sint unum et ens.<sup>16</sup>

Ein weiterer Unterschied besteht darin, daß Albert in der Folge der Untersuchung der Frage der Scheidung der Seele vom Körper mit Hilfe von Gründen und Schlüssen vorgehen will, und alles, was „das Göttliche Gesetz“ davon sagt, beiseite lassen möchte, da dies schon vorausgesetzt wird.<sup>17</sup> Thomas, der auch die Widernünftigkeit des „Monopsychismus“ nachweist, betont auch den Gegensatz desselben zu der Wahrheit des christlichen Glaubens: „*Nec id nunc agendum est ut positionem predictam in hoc ostendamus esse erroneam, quod repugnat*

<sup>10</sup> Ebd. S. 21–23.

<sup>11</sup> Ebd. 23,50–30,70.

<sup>12</sup> Ebd. 28,7ff: „*Prima autem potentia et primus actus non sunt materia et forma, sed potius si accipiamus omnia entia, secundum quod fluunt a causa prima, prima potentia est ens possibile in seipso et primus actus est ens necesse [...]*“ und 27,64f: „*[...] quod non sit ens determinatum ex potentia et actu, dummodo sit ens secundum et non primum[...]*“.

<sup>13</sup> Ebd. 27,67: „*Sicut diximus in Prima Philosophia, ens per se necesse non est nisi unum et omne quod est secundum, est ens in potentia in se*“.

<sup>14</sup> Ebd. 23,28–30: „*Et iste pro certo fuit intellectus Aristotelis in verbis suis de intellectu, et solus iste est verus et nullus alius*“.

<sup>15</sup> Ebd. 30,67–71.

<sup>16</sup> Vgl. Thomas, S. 174.

<sup>17</sup> Albertus 1,10: „*oportet nos in his dubiis per rationes et syllogismos videre, quid sentiendum sit et tenendum. Et ideo quaecumque dicit lex nostra praeterimus. Quaecumque autem iam probata sunt in libris nostris de hoc [...] subiaceant*“.

veritati fidei christiane; hoc enim satis in promptu cuique apparere potest [...] Intendimus autem ostendere positionem predictam non minus contra philosophie principia esse quam contra fidei documenta“.<sup>18</sup>

Albert nennt die Disputation sehr schwierig: „Est autem haec disputatio difficilis multum“.<sup>19</sup> Das tut auch Thomas, der die Worte des Gregorius Nyssenus anführt: „propter hanc difficultatem“,<sup>20</sup> „habet autem hic sermo difficile quid“.<sup>21</sup>

Der eigentliche Unterschied der beiden Schriften ergibt sich aber aus der Situation und dem Anlaß, aus welchem sie entstanden sind. In die Diskussion über die Echtheitsfrage der *Summa Theologica* des Alberts möchten wir uns hier nicht einlassen. In ihrer Q77 lesen wir: „et contra hunc errorem iam pridem disputavi, cum essem in curia“,<sup>22</sup> und weiter: „Haec omnia aliquando collegi in curia existens ad praeceptum domini Alexandri papae, et factus fuit inde libellus quem multi habent, et intitulatus est ‚contra errores Averrois‘“.<sup>23</sup> Das war in der römischen Kurie in Anagni im Jahre 1256 oder 1257. Doch kann dieser „libellus“ nicht die *De unitate intellectus* in der heutigen Form sein. Denn darin nimmt Albert des öfteren Bezug auf seine *Metaphysik*, welche etwa um 1263 verfaßt worden ist.<sup>24</sup> Auch spürt man nichts von der Situation um das Jahr 1271. Albert spricht auch nicht von den „Averroisten“, sondern von Averroes, und zwar nicht ablehnend<sup>25</sup> — ganz anders als in *De XV problematibus*.<sup>26</sup> Man merkt auch nichts davon, daß die Schrift gegen lebende Averroisten gerichtet wäre.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Thomas, S. 77f.

<sup>19</sup> Albertus, S. 3,53.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas, S. 148.

<sup>21</sup> Ebd. S. 150.

<sup>22</sup> Simon S. IX.

<sup>23</sup> Ebd.

<sup>24</sup> Vgl. Simon S. X.

<sup>25</sup> So etwa S. 12,4: „demonstravit [...] quod intellectus possibilis non est materia“; S. 12,65: „Agens enim universaliter omnia non agit, nisi fundatur in aliquo“; S. 16,39: „loquitur Aristoteles contra Platonem secundum explanationem Averrois“; S. 21,19: „oportet ergo dicere, quod non sit separata sed numerata numero hominum. Tamen ad hoc solum videtur respondere Averroes et dicere [...]“; S. 24,51: „Et hoc iam ante me coactus est concedere Averroes quando solvit quaestionem, qua quaeritur, quale ens sit intellectus, cum sit potentia omnia.“; S. 27,71: „Et hoc etiam compulit Averroem dicere, quod si intellectus agens esset sine possibili, non esset aliquid [...]“.

<sup>26</sup> Vgl. Simon X,90: „non philosophiam, sed sophismata sunt secuti“.

<sup>27</sup> Albertus, *De quindecim*. . . XVII/I: „Articulos, quos proponunt in scholis magistri Parisienses [...]“.

Im Gegensatz dazu, spricht Thomas von Averroes und seinen Nachfolgern abwertend: „sicut Commentator et sectatores eius perverse exponunt“,<sup>28</sup> „ut Commentator perverse exponit“,<sup>29</sup> „minus volunt cum ceteris Peripateticis recte sapere, quam cum Averrois oberare, qui non tam fuit Peripateticus, quam philosophie peripatetice depravator“. <sup>30</sup> Thomas spricht von „aliquis Christianus“, <sup>31</sup> der es für vernunftmäßig hält, daß es nur eine Seele gibt, dessen Gegensatz er aber kräftig glaubt. („Per rationem concludo de necessitate quod intellectus est unus numero, firmiter teneo oppositum per fidem.“)<sup>32</sup> Das war ja auch der Gegenstand der Verurteilung der Behauptung von der doppelten Wahrheit im Jahre 1277.<sup>33</sup> Averroes — so Thomas — hat sogar Theophrastus und Themistius verdreht, indem er ihnen unterstellt, sie haben behauptet, nicht nur der intellectus possibilis sei ein einziger in allen, sondern auch der intellectus agens.<sup>34</sup>

Als Ergebnis dieser losen Gedanken über die gleichnamige Quaestio des Lehrers und des Schülers können wir festhalten: die Frage der Einheit „der Seele“ (de unitate intellectus) muß nicht unbedingt aus der falschen Interpretation des Aristoteles durch Averroes, oder sogar von einem falsch verstandenen Averroes stammen. Gegen die falsche Auffassung von der Seelensubstanz läßt sich mit Hilfe der aristotelischen Akt-Potenz- oder Substanz-Akzidens-Lehre argumentieren. Im Laufe dieses Verfahrens werden dann der echte Aristoteles, die echten Peripatetiker und sogar die echten — und nicht die durch „Averroisten“ verfälschten — Araber zum Gegenstand der Diskussion.

Weder eine Thomas- noch eine Albertus-Philologie könnte literarische Beziehungen zwischen beiden Werken aufweisen. Aber beide —

<sup>28</sup> Thomas, S. 84.

<sup>29</sup> Ebd.

<sup>30</sup> Ebd. S. 132.

<sup>31</sup> Ebd. S. 194.

<sup>32</sup> Ebd.

<sup>33</sup> „Quasi sint due contrarie veritates“ — zitiert nach: K. Flasch, *Aufklärung im Mittelalter? (Excerpta Classica 6)*, Dieterich, Mainz, 1989, s. 89.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas, S. 194: „Patet etiam quod Averrois perverse refert sententiam Themistii et Theophrasti de intellectu possibili et agente“. Auch Albertus (29,10–14) nimmt Bezug auf die zwei Psychologen der Antike: „quod nihil prohibet intellectum esse universalem in ambitu potentiae localis et speciei et determinatum esse secundum esse subiecti, tunc procederet obiectio, et iste fuit aliquando error Theophrasti et Themistii“.

Lehrer und Schüler—haben die Möglichkeit entdeckt und ausgenutzt, die subtilen und notwendigen Distinktionen des Aristoteles auf diesem Gebiete zu mobilisieren.

## THOMAS AQUINAS AND THE EARLY FRANCISCAN SCHOOL ON THE AGENT INTELLECT

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This paper deals with the differences between the concept of the agent intellect in Thomas Aquinas and in the early Franciscan school with a focus on St. Bonaventure. While according to Aquinas the agent intellect is the faculty of the human soul, in the thought of Alexander of Hales, John of La Rochelle and St. Bonaventure it has a double or even a triple meaning. In the Franciscan Masters the agent intellect is simultaneously considered as a faculty of the human soul but also as God himself and in John of La Rochelle as an angelic intelligence, too. This comparison could be useful in a new interpretation of the Condemnation of 1277 where the proposition on the separate agent intellect is also considered. It seems that the condemnation of this proposition 118 is in accord with the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas. What is actually being condemned here is the doctrine, partially held by the Franciscan friars, who are traditionally considered as initiators of the Condemnation.

The Condemnation of 1277 at Paris, the culmination of the doctrinal debates and conflicts in the faculty of Arts at the University, is one of the most momentous events in the history of medieval philosophy. The commission of theologians from the University and the Bishop of Paris, Étienne Tempier, who promulgated these 219 condemned philosophical and theological propositions, could scarcely have foreseen the historical meaning of this edict. Indeed the edict remains a subject of debate in modern medieval research and has been so from the very beginnings of the subject. The present state of research and critical

editions of medieval texts in the last quarter-century afford new perspectives and grounds for new interpretations of the Condemnation as a whole, of particular issues in it and of general questions related to it.<sup>1</sup> It is evident that a deep textual analysis is needed but that, on the other hand, the interpretation has to be made with respect to the wider historical context of particular issues. In this article I would like to deal with the background of one very important topic related to the Condemnation, i.e., the conception of the Agent Intellect. My task is not to describe the most notable aspect of the controversy concerning the Agent Intellect (the Thomistic arguments against Averroistic thought) but to treat the theme from another point of view. With respect to the Condemnation of 1277 I would like to compare the position of Thomas Aquinas, against whom other propositions of the Condemnation were directed, with the thought of Franciscan friars, who are believed to be the overall initiators of the Condemnation.

Aristotle in the third book of *De anima* writes about two types of human intellect. According to Aristotle, we can find in the physical universe a dichotomy of “matter” and “cause”. It is this “cause” which leads the matter from potentiality to actuality and the same type of the dichotomy can be disclosed in the intellect. Aristotle consequently distinguishes the intellect as being that is what it is “by virtue of becoming all things.” This is known as the potential or passive intellect. Conversely, the intellect that is what it is “by virtue of making all things” later became known as the active or agent intellect.<sup>2</sup> The theory of the agent intellect and its function takes Aristotelian noetics in very important directions. Thomas Aquinas also affirms the crucial role of this theory. The immaterial intellect cannot have direct cognition of material things which are only potentially thinkable. Aquinas claims therefore: “It is necessary to postulate a power, belonging to the intellect, to create actually thinkable objects by abstracting ideas from their material conditions. That is why we need to postulate an agent intellect.”<sup>3</sup> Despite, and also because of, the importance of the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. K. Emery & A. Speer, ‘After the Condemnation of 1277: New evidence, new perspectives, and grounds of new interpretations’, in J.A. Aertsen, K. Emery & A. Speer (eds.), *Nach der Verurteilung von 1277 (Miscellanea Medievaleia 28)*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin & New York, 2001, pp. 3–19.

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle, *De anima* 3, 5, 430a.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, I, 84, 1, concl. (ed. Marietti, Roma, 1939, p. 512): “Oportet igitur ponere aliquam virtutem ex parte intellectus, quae facit intelligibilia in actu per abstractionem specierum a conditionibus materialibus.” Cf. A. Kenny, *Aquinas on Mind*, Routledge, London & New York 1993, p. 46.

agent intellect in the noetics, the original theory of the agent intellect is characterised as “perhaps the most obscure and certainly the most discussed of all of Aristotle’s doctrines”<sup>4</sup> and as the most difficult task in the exegesis of *De anima*.<sup>5</sup> The problem is that it is not clear whether Aristotle considered the agent intellect to be an aspect of the human soul or an entity existing independently of man. If the latter proposition is true with what independent entity can we identify it?

The Greek commentators of Aristotle already had different notions of the status of the agent intellect. They differed in their identification of the agent intellect but concurred in the idea that it was something transcendental to the human soul. Furthermore, all Islamic philosophers in the Aristotelian tradition accepted the transcendent interpretation of the agent intellect. The Islamic philosophers also added a new aspect by integrating ideas of the transcendent agent intellect into cosmic schemes.<sup>6</sup> In the late 12th century and the first half of the 13th century the most influential concept for Scholastic philosophers was that of Avicenna. Avicenna’s view was also that the agent intellect was an entity separated from the human soul. He elaborated further that the agent intellect was the last in the series of incorporeal intelligences, a spiritual substance that ruled the sublunar world and illuminated the human intellect by intelligible forms. For Avicenna the agent intellect was the active intellect of mankind, the source of abstract concepts and first principles of thought, which are received by the intellect, which is the part of human soul.<sup>7</sup>

Several theologians combined Avicenna’s theory with the Augustinian concept of illumination. At first I would like to mention Dominic Gundissalinus, the translator into Latin of many Greek and Arabic treatises concerning the soul. Although Gundissalinus accepted Avicenna’s typology of states of potential intellect (material intellect, in-

<sup>4</sup> W.D. Ross (ed.), *Aristotle, Metaphysics*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1924, p. 1, cxliii.

<sup>5</sup> H.-J. Horn, *Studien zum dritten Buch der aristotelischen Schrift ‘De anima’*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen, 1994, p. 100; Cf. F. Brentano, *Die Psychologie des Aristoteles, insbesondere seine Lehre vom Nous Poietikos. Nebst einer Beilage über das Wirken des aristotelischen Gottes*, Kirchheim, Mainz 1867; Unveränderter Nachdruck: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1967.

<sup>6</sup> H. Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes, on intellect — their cosmologies, theories of the active intellect and theories of human intellect*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992, p. 13.

<sup>7</sup> Avicenna, *Liber de anima seu sextus de naturalibus*, I, 5 (ed. S. van Riet, Peeters, Louvain, 1972); cf. Davidson (*ibid.*: 74–126).

tellec*t in habitu*, intellect in effect), he substituted the agent intellect of Avicenna (or agent intelligence) for God Himself. There is nothing else that can illuminate the human intellect (in Aristotelian terminology potential intellect) other than God who, as a source of the light of our reason, is the principle of intelligible forms and thus the cause of human cognition.<sup>8</sup> The identification of the agent intellect with God, and so with something separated from human soul, was a very usual interpretation of the problem of Aristotle's *De anima* III,5 among theologians of the 13th century. Such an interpretation was possible because the position of Avicenna and his Christian followers did not contradict the prevailing Christian orthodoxy as it did not imply the proposition of the non-existence of the individual and immortal human soul. For many 13th century theologians then, although the agent intellect was transcendent, the immanent part of human soul was not only passive potency but it became itself actual as an individual entity when illuminated by the agent intellect. The immortality of the human intellect would automatically follow from its being an incorporeal substance.

Completely different consequences arise from the theory of Averroes known as monopsychism. According to Averroes, not only the agent intellect but also the possible (precisely the material or receptive) intellect is considered transcendent. The agent intellect is the last of the celestial Intelligences and moves the lunar sphere; the material intellect receives intelligible forms abstracted by the agent intellect. These intellects are not united to individual man by their substances, but only by their activity.<sup>9</sup> It is not important for the purposes of this discussion whether they constitute different separate substances or are identical for Averroes.<sup>10</sup> Nonetheless, the implication is the same in both cases: spirituality and immortality do not belong to individuals, but only to the Intellect of human species. Only this doctrine, which means the unity of the possible intellect, not the unity of the agent intellect, jeopardises the fundamental dogmas of Christianity. I would like to emphasise this difference, which has often been confused.

<sup>8</sup> J.T. Muckle, 'The Treatise *De anima* of Dominicus Gundissalinus', *Medieval Studies* 2, 1940, pp. 23–102.

<sup>9</sup> *Averrois Cordubensis Commentarium Magnum in Aristotelis de Anima libros*, pp. 450–454 (ed. F.S. Crawford, Medieval Academy of America, Cambridge, Mass., 1953).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. E. Gilson, *History of Christian philosophy in the Middle Ages*, Random House, New York, 1955, pp. 23–27; M. de Wulf, *Histoire de la philosophie médiévale*, Inst. sup. de philosophie, Louvain, 1934, vol. I, p. 307; F. Van Steenberghen, *Siger dans l'histoire de l'Aristotélisme*, Inst. sup. de philosophie, Louvain 1942, p. 376; Davidson (1992 : 295).

When we carefully examine the conception of the agent intellect of Thomas Aquinas we can see that it is quite different both from the tradition of Greek and Arab Commentators and from his Christian contemporaries. Aquinas was aware of this fact. In the second book of his *Commentary on Sentences* he writes that “almost all philosophers after Aristotle have concurred in the opinion that agent and possible intellects differ according to their substance and that the agent intellect is a separate substance.”<sup>11</sup> We can deduce from the words of Anselm of Canterbury, Aquinas continues, that an angel is the agent intelligence. Some Catholic writers corrected this opinion and stated that “God himself is an agent intellect” because: “The true light was that which, coming into the world, lightens every man.”<sup>12</sup> In the next lines Aquinas analyses the problem of the possible intellect and its relation to the agent intellect. In the conclusion he rejects the transcendent construction of the agent intellect: “I say together with Avicenna, that the possible intellect [...] is different in different individuals [...] But I add that also the agent intellect is different in different individuals.”<sup>13</sup> Aquinas then locates the agent intellect into human soul and asserts that both, agent and possible intellect, are virtues or operations of one intellectual potency.

Despite of unusualness of this solution it had been proposed already by predecessors of Thomas Aquinas. Some authors had taken the doctrine of the semantic difference between the *quod est*, i.e., the ontological subject, and *quo est*, i.e., the form which provides the existence to it from the work of Boethius. In the first instance Philip the Chancellor applied it to the theory of the soul. He held in his *Summa de bono* that in the soul there are “two differences, one for receiving and another for acting” and that “matter is the principle of receiving and form the principle of acting.” These two differences, Philip continues, “are the agent intellect and the possible intellect.”<sup>14</sup> The composition

<sup>11</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *In II. Sententiarum*, d. 17, q. 2, a. 1, resp.: “[...] in hoc fere omnes philosophi concordant post Aristotelem, quod intellectus agens et possibilis differunt secundum substantiam; et quod intellectus agens sit substantia quaedam separata.”

<sup>12</sup> Thomas Aquinas (*ibid.*): “[...] ipsum deum esse intellectum agentem [...] et hoc confirmant per hoc quod dicitur Joan. 1,9: erat lux vera, quae illuminat omnem hominem venientem in hunc mundum.”

<sup>13</sup> Thomas Aquinas (*ibid.*): “[...] dico cum Avicenna, intellectum possibilem [...] in diversis diversum esse [...] et superaddo etiam, intellectum agentem esse in diversis diversum.”

<sup>14</sup> *Philippi Cancellarii Parisiensis Summa de bono*, IV, q. 1 (ed. N. Wicki, Francke, Bern 1985, vol. II, p. 264): “in anima autem sunt due differentiae, una ad recipiendum et al-

of the soul from the possible and the agent intellect is analogous to the composition of *quod est* and *quo est*. Consequently the agent intellect considered as *quo est* must be something immanent to the soul. Nevertheless he doesn't develop this analogy of the composition of *quod est* and *quo est* and the possible and agent intellect.

Thomas Aquinas modifies the formula of his predecessors and he understands the composition of *quod est* and *quo est* of the soul as of *forma* and *esse*. This is the basis of his metaphysics and is often expanded in his works.<sup>15</sup> For this reason he had to find another argument for the immanence of the agent intellect. In the *Commentary of Sentences* he maintains that the theory of the separate agent intellect is not probable since then there would be no natural operation in the soul.<sup>16</sup> Aquinas advanced number of arguments supporting his own view later in the *Summa contra gentiles*.<sup>17</sup> But, having looked at the background and nature of Aquinas's views, let us pay attention to the early Franciscan school at this point.

There are very good reasons to compare the *Commentary* of Aquinas working within the Dominican Order with that of the Franciscan, Bonaventure of Bagnoregio. Firstly, both commentaries were written in the same period — at the beginning of the second half of the 13th century and at the same university. Secondly, Bonaventure is often considered to be the second the most influential thinker of this century after Thomas Aquinas. Thirdly and finally, the philosophical systems of these writers (and supposed friends) are judged by some observers to be radically different or even opposed.<sup>18</sup> Etienne Gilson interpreted Bonaventure's philosophy as Augustinianism. Gilson also

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tera ad faciendum. Ex quo accipitur quod habet materiam et formam, cum materia sit principium recipiendi, forma autem agendi; nam sunt eius heae differentiae intellectus agens et possibilis." Cf. R. Dales, *The problem of the rational soul in the thirteenth century*, Brill, Leiden, 1995, pp. 20–27.

<sup>15</sup> See for example Thomas Aquinas, *De ente et essentia* 4 (ed. H.F. Dondaine, *Opera omnia*, XLIII, Editori di San Tommaso, Roma, 1976, pp. 376–378). Cf. Dales (1995: 109).

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *In II. Sententiarum*, d. 17, q. 2, a. 1, concl.: "non enim videtur pobabile quod in anima rationali non sit principium aliquod quod naturalem operationem expelere possit, quod sequitur si ponatur unus intellectus agens, sive dicatur deus, vel intelligentia."

<sup>17</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa contra gentiles*, II, 76 (ed. Leonis XIII, *Opera omnia*, XIII, Roma, 1918, pp. 480–488).

<sup>18</sup> See R.J. Roch, 'The philosophy of St. Bonaventure — a controversy', *Franciscan Studies* 19, 1959, pp. 211–226; A. Speer, 'Bonaventure and the question of Medieval philosophy', *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 6, 1997, pp. 25–46.

argued that Bonaventure's work contained a radical repudiation of Aristotle and was, therefore, in opposition to the Aristotelianism of Aquinas. However, according to Gilson, Aquinas and Bonaventure concur with respect to the question what type of entity the agent intellect is. Bonaventure in his own *Commentary on Sentences* insisted, like Aquinas, that the agent intellect was a part of the human soul. Gilson saw the main difference between these thinkers in another point. Bonaventure writes, contrary to Aquinas (and according to Gilson, also contrary to Aristotle and principles of Aristotelian philosophy), that the possible intellect is not devoid of all actuality and that the agent intellect is not exempt from all potentiality. In Bonaventure's view then, the possible intellect is active in the preparation of intelligible notions and the agent intellect, whose function is to illuminate the possible intellect, is passive in receiving of these intelligible notions.<sup>19</sup>

Although Gilson's interpretation of Bonaventure's philosophy in general has been criticised many times and sometimes even attacked, his notion of the problem of what type of entity the agent intellect was, has been mostly accepted. Even Fernand Van Steenberghen, who had put forward a contrary interpretation of Bonaventure's philosophy to that of Gilson, insisted that Bonaventure's theory is very similar to that of Aquinas, though the thought of the Franciscan is not so developed Aristotelianism as that of the Dominican.<sup>20</sup> Another perspective comes from John Francis Quinn whose monograph on Bonaventure presents the Franciscan thinker as the author of a specific philosophical system. But also Quinn thinks that the position taken by Aquinas coincides in many ways with the position taken by Bonaventure and, most importantly for this discussion, that they agree in rejecting the idea of the transcendent agent intellect.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, there are other interpretations that offer still different views on this problem. Some historians maintain that, on the one hand, Bonaven-

<sup>19</sup> Bonaventura, *II. ententiarum*, dist. 24, pars. 1, art. 2, q. 4, (ed. Coll. S. Bonaventurae, *Opera omnia*, II, Quaracchi, 1885, p. 587): "Nec intellectus possibilis est pure passivus: habet enim supra speciem existentem in phantasmate se convertere et convertendo per auxilium intellectus agentis illam suscipere et iudicare. Similiter nec intellectus agens est omnino in actu: non enim potest intelligere aliud a se nisi adiuvetur a specie, quae abstracta a phantasmate intellectui habet uniri." Cf. E. Gilson, *Der heilige Bonaventura*, Hegner, Hellerau, 1929, pp. 500–502.

<sup>20</sup> F. Van Steenberghen, *Die Philosophie im 13. Jahrhundert*, Schöningh, München, 1977, pp. 222f.

<sup>21</sup> J.F. Quinn, *The historical constitution of St. Bonaventure's philosophy*, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto, 1973, pp. 357–360.

ture locates the agent intellect as part of the human soul but, on the other hand, that he understands the agent intellect simultaneously as a separate substance, exactly it is God.<sup>22</sup>

The problem is that Bonaventure's thinking in his *Commentary on Sentences* is not entirely clear. Bonaventure holds that the agent intellect is like a light, and that the possible intellect is that which is illuminated by the light. But no created substance has the power to illuminate the soul, so Bonaventure concludes that it cannot be considered as a separated agent intellect. Only God has that power, Bonaventure continues, as St. Augustine and Holy Scripture confirm it. God could be then understood as a separated agent intellect and this is "truth and in concord with the Catholic faith." After this statement follow the words *nihil est ad propositum* since God gives to man not only the potency of cognition but also the active power and so therefore the agent intellect is a part of the human soul.<sup>23</sup> This is a crucial point in the interpretation of Bonaventure's doctrine. Does it mean that God is not the agent intellect, as Gilson and others believe? Or does it mean that Bonaventure rejects the substantial difference of agent and possible intellect, with the exception that God is called agent intellect?

To answer this question we have to turn to another of Bonaventure's works. We can find only oblique references, which could support the latter interpretation. In the *Quaestiones disputatae de scientia Christi* in the part of arguments Bonaventure refers to the agent intellect considered as God but he does not return to this argument either in the conclusion or in the part of replies to the arguments.<sup>24</sup> In the *Collationes de septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, which is one of the first reactions to the Latin Averroism, Bonaventura confirms, on the one hand, the immanence of the agent intellect, on the other hand he stresses the illuminate activity of God which is necessary for the plenitude of the

<sup>22</sup> See B.A. Luyckx, 'Die Erkenntnislehre Bonaventuras nach den Quellen dargestellt', *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters* 23, 1923, p. 71; J.-M. Bissen, 'L'exemplarisme divin selon saint Bonaventure', *Études de Philosophie médiévale* 9, 1929, pp. 228–233.

<sup>23</sup> Bonaventura, *II. Sententiarum*, dist. 24, pars. 1, art. 2, q. 4, (ed. Coll. S. Bonaventurae, *Opera omnia*, II, Quaracchi, 1885, p. 587): "Iste autem modus dicendi, etsi verum ponat et fidei catholicae consonum, nihil tamen est ad propositum, quia, cum animae nostrae data sit potentia ad intelligendum, sicut aliis creaturis data est potentia ad alios actus, sic Deus, quamvis sit principalis operans in operatione creaturae, dedit tamen cuilibet vim activam per quam exiret in operationem propriam."

<sup>24</sup> Bonaventura, *Quaestiones disputatae de scientia Christi*, q. 4, arg. 32 (ed. Coll. S. Bonaventurae, *Opera omnia*, V, Quaracchi, 1891, p. 20).

human cognition. It seems that God is also being considered as the agent intellect but in the improper sense, i.e., insofar as He is the light illuminating the human intellect.<sup>25</sup> Having found little definitive evidence for Bonaventure's views on the agent intellect in his other work is there any we can learn from looking at Bonaventure's predecessors and teachers? The fundamental scope for an explanation could lie with those who influenced Bonaventure's thought.

Alexander of Hales, the founder of the early Franciscan school, in his so called *Summa theologica* argues that God would not have created the human soul without giving to it its own perfection of knowing. Hence the soul has its own agent and possible intellect. But Alexander then continues that the agent is said to act not because it knows all forms from the beginning, but because the First Agent illuminates it.<sup>26</sup> What does Alexander mean when he uses the term First Agent? This is again a subject of a controversy. According to Otto Keicher, Alexander means God as an agent intellect in the expression "First Agent" and therefore the Franciscan School holds two different doctrines of the agent intellect simultaneously.<sup>27</sup> However, according to Gilson, this term refers to just to the First Agent and not to the First Agent intellect.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless despite Gilson's authority I would come down on Keicher's side because the traditional application of this term and the context of its use show that his interpretation is correct.

The doctrine of another Franciscan John of La Rochelle, who was a disciple of Alexander of Hales and a teacher of Bonaventure, is clearer in that its meaning does not permit such big differences in interpretation. When he asks "whether the agent intellect is separate from the substance of the soul, or is a *differentia* of the soul, and if it is separated, whether it is a created Intelligence (which is an angel) or uncreated

<sup>25</sup> Bonaventura, *Collationes de septem donis Spiritus Sancti*, c. 8 (ed. Coll. S. Bonaventurae, *Opera omnia*, V, Quaracchi, 1891, pp. 493–498).

<sup>26</sup> Alexander Halensis, *Summa theologica*, II., n. 372 (ed. Coll. S. Bonaventurae, Quaracchi, 1928, p. 451): "Ad id vero quod obicitur quod aliqua intelligibilia sunt supra intellectum et ita oportet quod cognitio fiat per agentem qui est supra intellectum: dicendum est quod agens non dicitur esse actu, quia omnes formas a principio intelligit, sed ab agente primo illuminatur, et iam non respectu omnium, sed respectu quarundam formarum, et cum est illuminatus, perficit etiam possibilem illo modo; unde non est necesse ponere agentem separatim quoad omnia intelligibilia cognoscenda."

<sup>27</sup> O. Keicher, 'Zur Lehre der ältesten Franziskanertheologen vom "intellectus agens"', in M. Baumgartner (ed.), *Abhandlung aus dem Gebiete der Philosophie und ihrer Geschichte*, Herder, Freiburg 1913, p. 176.

<sup>28</sup> E. Gilson, 'Pourquoi Saint Thomas a critiqué Saint Augustin', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 1, 1926, p. 87.

(which is God)” he answers all these questions in the affirmative. In John of La Rochelle’s view we can call the agent intellect both God and angel, and part of the soul with respect to different objects of cognition. God is the agent intellect for our knowledge of things higher than the soul, the angel is the agent intellect (in the sense of revelation or instruction) for our knowledge of things on the same level as the soul and, finally, the agent is a light innate in the soul for our knowledge of things that lie within the soul or below it.<sup>29</sup> I would like to point out that a very close relationship can be observed between the treatises of John of La Rochelle (*Tractatus de multiplicis potentiarum animae*, *Summa de anima*) and *Summa theologica* of Alexander of Hales with respect to the doctrine of the agent intellect. John of La Rochelle expresses his own view on the agent intellect as God almost in the same words as we find in the *Summa theologica*, i.e., he describes God as the First Agent that illuminates the soul.<sup>30</sup> From my point of view this fact could, for one thing, confirm the interpretation we adduced above and for another be a new fundament for the reinterpretation of the problem of the authenticity of Alexander’s *Summa*. Detailed analysis is needed on condition that new editions of still unedited works of both Franciscans will be released.

We can conclude this part of the paper with the hypothesis that these two Franciscans consider the agent intellect as a potency of the human soul, but at the same time they tend to understand God also as the agent intellect for he illuminates the soul. This view can be deduced from the works of Alexander of Hales and is made clear by John of La Rochelle, who adds that the angel can also be called the agent intellect. The doctrine of Bonaventure is not so evident but there is a good chance that he held the same view as his teachers. In addition, the doctrine on the double-meaning of the agent intellect is characteristic for other Franciscans too, and especially in the work of the disciples of

<sup>29</sup> Jean de La Rochelle, *Tractatus de divisione multiplici potentiarum animae*, II, 21, (ed. P. Michaud-Quantin, *Textes Philosophiques du Moyen Âge LX*, Vrin, Paris, 1964, p. 91): “Dicendum igitur quod, si intellectus agens dicatur omnis intelligentia agens respectu humani intellectus possibilis, sic intelligentia divina, sive lux increata, et intelligentia angelica et intelligentia humana, sive lux anime innata, intellectus agens communiter dicitur, sed respectu diversorum cognoscibilium.”

<sup>30</sup> Alexander: “dicendum est, quod agens non dicitur esse actu, quia omnes formas a principio intelligit, sed ab agente primo illuminatur, et iam non respectu omnium, sed respectu quarundam formarum”; John of La Rochelle: “[...] dicimus, quod agens intellectus [...] recipiens illuminationes a Primo [...] sed non semper nec respectu quorumlibet cognoscibilium retinet rationem agentis [...]”

Bonaventure. According to John Peckham, the separate agent intellect is the divine intellect, which is the same as the lumen. But there is also the active power of the soul that brings about the actual understanding, a phenomenon which Peckham calls the created agent intellect.<sup>31</sup> Another Franciscan, William of Baglione, whose treatises launched an attack against Averroes, held a position very similar to that of John of La Rochelle, namely that there are two agent intellects in the proper sense, God and a part of human soul. Even an angel could be called the agent intellect but only in the improper sense.<sup>32</sup>

The reason for the double-meaning of the agent intellect lies in the Franciscans' characteristic and well-known attitude towards theology and philosophy. They tried to reconcile principles of Aristotelian philosophy with the Augustinian fundament of theology. With respect to noetics this means that they had to unify the Aristotelian theory of abstraction and the doctrine of the agent intellect, which Aristotle had already compared to light, with the Augustinian theory of illumination and the division of the human intellect into two faces, the higher, which is illuminated from God, and the lower, which is not illuminated.

Thomas Aquinas knew well these attempts at reconciliation. In the *Summa theologiae* he wrote "even supposing the existence of such a separate active intellect, it would be necessary to assign to the human soul some power participating in that superior intellect, by which power of human soul makes things actually intelligible."<sup>33</sup> But he claims that only this power of the human soul could be called the agent intellect. God is not the agent intellect, because he illuminates as a universal cause. In the treatise *De unitate intellectus* Aquinas explains this position. At first he maintains that the agent intellect could be some kind of separate substance and the same for everybody, "for nothing absurd seems to follow from several things being perfected by one agent." But "this is not Aristotle's intention—he holds that the agent intellect is in

<sup>31</sup> Cf. L.J. Bowmann, 'The development of the doctrine of the Agent Intellect in the Franciscan School of the thirteenth century', in: *The Modern Schoolman* 50, 1973, p. 266.

<sup>32</sup> William of Baglione, *De unitate intellectus* (ed. I. Brady, 'Background of the Condemnation of 1270: Master William of Baglione, O.F.M', *Franciscan Studies* 8, 1970, p. 38.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, I, 79, 4, concl. (ed. B.M. de Rossi, Marietti, Torino & Roma, 1939, p. 514): "Sed dato quod sit aliquis talis intellectus agens separatus, nihilominus tamen oportet ponere in ipsa anima humana aliquam virtutem ab illo intellectu superiori participatam, per quam anima facit intelligibilia in actu [...]."

the soul.”<sup>34</sup> We can conclude that for Aquinas the reason to reject the transcendent agent intellect and to insist on its immanence rests on his conviction that this was Aristotle’s position.

In the light of this conclusion the Condemnation of 1277 seems to contain certain elements without a satisfactory explanation. Condemned thesis 118 says: “that the agent intellect is a separate substance higher than the possible intellect, and that with respect to the substance, potency and operation it is separated from the body, and that it is not a form of human body.”<sup>35</sup> It is obvious that the condemnation of this proposition is in accord with the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas. Furthermore, what is actually being condemned here is the doctrine, partially held by the Franciscan friars, who are traditionally considered as initiators of the Condemnation.

<sup>34</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *De unitate intellectus*, 4 (ed. H.F. Dondaine, *Opera omnia*, XLIII, Roma, 1976, p. 307b): “nihil enim videtur inconueniens sequi, si ab uno agente multa perficiantur, quemadmodum ab uno sole perficiuntur omnes potentie visive animalium ad videndum. Quamvis etiam hoc non sit secundum intentionem Aristotilis, qui posuit intellectum agentem esse aliquid in anima.”

<sup>35</sup> *Enquête sur les 219 articles condamnés à Paris le 7 Mars 1277*, art. 118 (ed. R. Hissette, *Philosophes Médiévaux*, XXII, Paris 1977, p. 193): “Quod intellectus agens est quaedam substantia separata superior ad intellectum possibilem; et quod secundum substantiam, potentiam et operationem est separatus a corpore, nec est forma corporis hominis.”

## THE LOGICAL INTENTION OF *GENUS* IN AN UNDERSTANDING OF TRANSCENDENTAL CONCEPTS

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Predicating the universal properties of things to God we inevitably cast the net of logical intentions on Him. Only later can we disentangle Him from it by means of additional thinking. Therefore, it is probable that Aquinas says “*Deus autem ponitur primum principium, non materiale, sed in genere causae efficientis*” (*S.T.* I, 4, 1 in c.) just because here he looks at the infinite perfection of God through the limited perfection of things and wants to remind us that in such a perspective God is seen quasi in the genus. It is very important that Aquinas does not say, “*Deus est in genere*,” but: “*Deus ponitur in genere*” (emphasis mine). The neglecting of this difference between the *est* and the *ponitur* and interpreting the latter as if it were the former compels the translators form Latin to substitute genus by other terms. But these substitutions are doubtful.

Understanding is not always the ultimate end of reading. Amusement or translation can be to that end. It is obvious that translation demands more profound and precise understanding than amusement. Sometimes, in a case of a complex speculative text, the understanding turns a translator into an interpreter. The peculiarities of the vocabulary, grammar and syntax of different languages prevent the translator from following a golden rule: to translate the same word by one equivalent. The violation of this rule seems especially distressing when the text to be translated is extremely significant, full of terms and technicalities. But try to follow the rule in translating the Latin word *ratio*, frequently used by Thomas Aquinas in his works, and you will promptly see that it is impossible; for sometimes this word means reason, other times it could mean cause, argument, sufficient reason, definition, nature,

essence, formal character, etc. The context clearly shows where *ratio* has to be translated either as *reason* or *argument*, but where it suggests meanings such as formal character, definition, nature or essence, the decision concerning the equivalent to be chosen frequently depends on the intuition and understanding of the translator, which does not always correspond to the intuition and understanding of readers. Fortunately, to a thoughtful reader, it is not very difficult to realize that though these discrepancies are unavoidable, they are not substantial. But there can occur more perplexing discrepancies. For instance, when the translator refuses the precise term's equivalent and either substitutes it by another or omits it. One of these cases is the subject matter of the following consideration.

In his works, Thomas Aquinas underlines that God is not in a genus.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, at the beginning of *Summa Theologiae* question four, article one, in corpus, he writes: "Deus autem ponitur primum principium, non materiale, sed in genere causae efficientis."<sup>2</sup> It seems that this statement contradicts the previous one, which was proved just three articles earlier in the same *Summa*, that is, that God is not in a genus either as species or as principle.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the mentioned position of God in the genus of efficient cause looks like the author's slip of the pen. It seems that this supposition was accepted by translators of his works, at least by those whose works are available to me.

The English Dominican Fathers translated *genere* as *order*: "Now God is the first principle, not material, but in the order of efficient cause."<sup>4</sup> German and Austrian Fathers omitted the term *genus* and made some translator's explanatory additions in the brackets: "Gott aber ist nicht erster stofflicher Entstehungsgrund, sondern erster Entstehungsgrund als [äußere] Wirkursache [aller Dinge]."<sup>5</sup> The same and even more was done by a Polish translator, the Rev. Pius Bełha: "Bóg jako pierwsza przyczyna sprawcza wszelkiego bytu jest tym samym istnoś-

<sup>1</sup> E.g., *De ente et essentia*, ch. V., *Summa contra gentiles*, ch. 25, *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 3, a. 5, *Compendium theologiae*, I, q. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *S.T. I*, 4, 1.

<sup>3</sup> *S.T. I*, 3, 5. *Neutro autem modo Deus est in genere*.

<sup>4</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, literary translation by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province, vol I, Benziger Brothers, New York, 1947, p. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Die Deutsche Thomas-Ausgabe, *Vollständige, ungekürzte deutsch-lateinische Ausgabe der Summa Theologica*, übersetzt von Dominikaner und Benedictiner Deutschlands und Österreichs, Herausgeben vom Katholischen Akademiker verband, Band 1, Verlag Anton Pustet, Salzburg & Leipzig, 1934, p. 81.

cią (in actu) w najwyższym stopniu, a nie możliwością jako jest materia.”<sup>6</sup> In the first Russian translation of *Summa Theologiae* (the first 43 questions were published in 2002) we read that “God is the first principle not in the material sense but in the sense of the efficient cause” (the translation from Russian is mine).<sup>7</sup> Thus, in all the given examples we see a persistent avoidance of the term *genus*. But the original author’s statement: “Deus autem ponitur primum principium, non materiale, sed in genere causae efficientis” is plain and the term *genus* can be unequivocally translated by the English *genus*, German *Gattung*, Polish *rodzaj*, and Russian *rod*. Here there is no analogy with the case of the Greek word *hypostases* mentioned by Thomas in *Contra Errores Graecorum*, where he says that it is the duty of a good translator to modify the way of speaking in order to remain faithful to the meaning.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, it seems that here we have a tradition of the tacit improvement of Aquinas’ writing. By the removal of the term *genus*, the translators escape the mentioned contradiction between the statements: God by no means belongs to any genus; He is in the genus of the efficient cause. But let us take a closer look at their achievements.

The English translator substituted *genus* with *order*. He was able to argue in favor of this step by reminding us that in the *secunda via* Thomas himself speaks about “ordinem causarum efficientium” in which it is necessary to posit the first efficient cause, “quam omnes Deum nominat.” But that substitution is a mere nominal, but not essential, change; for both the terms, “genus of the efficient causes” and “order of the efficient causes” are synonymous, i.e., signify the same class of objects. It promises a reader more fluent reading, but does not exclude the questioning of what *the order* means here, concluding that it means the *genus*. Hence the contradiction remains.

Perhaps in striving for better results, the German translator took an additional precaution by not translating the term *genus* at all and adding in square brackets the words *äußere*, ‘external’ and *aller Dinge* ‘of all things’: “Gott ist erster Entstehungsgrund als [äußere] Wirkursache [aller Dinge].” But nothing secures that the reader (and *Summa Theologiae* was intended for beginners in theology) would understand the

<sup>6</sup> Św. Tomasz z Akwinu, *Suma Teologiczna w skrócie*, skrótu dokonał i objaśnieniami zaopatrzył Feliks Wojciech Bernadski OP, Wydawnictwo Antyk–Marcin Dybowski, Warszawa 2000, p. 17.

<sup>7</sup> Foma Akvinskij, *Summa Teologii*, Chast I, voprosy 1–43, perevod S.I. Eremeeva (gl. 1–26), A.A. Judina (gl. 27–43), Nika Centr & Elkor MK, Kiev & Moskva, 2002, p. 45.

<sup>8</sup> See *Contra errores Graecorum* I, prol., ed. Leon., XL p. A71.

word *äußere* as signifying that the first efficient cause of all things is outside the genus of efficient causes; for in a creative act an efficient cause is always external in relation to its effects. Therefore, it is probable that the term is understood in the way that God as the efficient cause is external to the World (“alle Dinge”) as to His effect. But the question — Does God belong to the genus of efficient cause? — remains open.

The Polish translator omits not only the term *genus* but also the term *principium*, saying that God is the first efficient cause of every being: “Bóg jako pierwsza przyczyna sprawcza wszelkiego bytu”. But this rendering also does not secure against the mistake of God’s inclusion in the genus of efficient causes; for each time we predicate a genus to a subject, we include it in that genus. But if we exclude something from a genus, that means that we negate the possibility to apply the generic name to the subject. For example, if we say that man is outside the genus of animal, this means that the predication of animal to man is false, and properly speaking man is not an animal. Such is the usual way of human understanding and speaking. Accordingly, when we predicate to God a substance or a cause, our understanding tends to place God in the genus of substance or cause. To correct this error, one has to know God as being, and that being cannot be in any genus. In other words, he has to know the difference between transcendental and universal concepts. But such knowledge comes later than acquaintance with God on the way of natural reason, that is, in philosophy. This can be seen in the *De Ente et Essentia*.

In the preface, Thomas says that “a being and an essence are first conceived in the intellect.” Nevertheless, for the first time on the pages of the *opusculum* we meet God not as a being but as cause and substance. At the end of the first chapter, Thomas writes: “for they [that is, separate substances] are the cause of composite substances — at least this is true of the first simple substance, who is God.” This is quite comprehensible; for *ens ut primum cognitum* is a fundamental but not elaborated concept, which could be predicated to substances, accidents and in a sense to privations. It serves as the basis of recognition of the presence of something but not as the means for recognition of what that something is. Therefore, it is natural that, for the first time man recognizes God not as a being but as something else, that is, as substance and cause. Of course, recognizing Him as the cause, man recognizes Him as being also, but his attention is focused on God as cause but not as being. To recognize God as being, man has to follow a path of reasoning, which is concisely described in the fourth chapter

of *De ente et essentia*. The recognition starts from ordinary perceivable causes such as the nature of man in relation to his risibility, the sun in relation to the luminosity of air. Directed by two axioms that nothing can be the cause of its own being and that everything which is through another must be reduced to that which is through itself, it comes to the conclusion that there must be “the first being, which is existence only; and this is the first cause, which is God.” In the conclusion, we see the being and the cause connected: the first being is the first cause.

So far, nothing stops us supposing that being is a genus or that God is the principle in the genus of causes. The same can be said about the *quarta via* where Thomas says that “the maximum in any genus is the cause of all in that genus; as fire, which is the maximum of heat, is the cause of all hot things. Therefore there must be something which is to all beings the cause of their being [...] and this we call God.” I claim this, since in the *Summa Theologiae* as well as in the *De Ente et Essentia* the explanation that God is not in a genus comes later. And since in the *opusculum* and in the five ways Thomas follows the path of natural reason, therefore we can conclude that at early stages of approaching God natural reason has no means of knowing that God is not in a genus, therefore it naturally sees Him as in the genus of substance and cause.

Since knowledge of God is reached through knowledge of other things, at the early stages of learning it is indispensable to posit Him in some genus; for predicating the universal properties of things to God we inevitably cast the net of logical intentions on Him. Only later can we disentangle Him from it by means of additional thinking. Therefore, it is probable that Aquinas says “Deus [...] ponitur primum principium [...] in genere causae efficientis” just because in that article he looks at the infinite perfection of God through the limited perfection of things and wants to remind us that in such a perspective God is seen quasi in the genus. In this context it seems very important that Aquinas does not say: “Deus *est* in genere,” but: “Deus *ponitur* in genere” (the emphasis is mine); i.e., that God is placed or posited in the genus, not that He is in the genus. The neglecting of this difference between the *est* and the *ponitur* and interpreting the latter as ‘is’, ‘ist’, and ‘jest’ makes it impossible to leave the term *genus* in the sentence; for *is* does not allude to the possibility of semblance which could not correspond with reality.

The sentence considered belongs to the article in which Thomas Aquinas looks at the perfection of God through the prism of mater-

ial things. In this perspective, the presence of the second intentions is inevitable. This necessity is expressed by the words *in genere*. But the preceding word *ponitur* warns us that this could be the case in our understanding alone, but not *in re*. God is placed in the genus by the natural reason at a particular stage of cognition, and therefore the possibility that He is not really there cannot be excluded. Since in the preceding article of *Summa* it is already proved that He indeed is not there, the statement discussed can be interpreted as a pedagogical device, by which Aquinas reminds students of the difficulty which is present in thinking of God: each time we think of God we have to perform two inevitable operations: at the beginning to rely on the second intentions, but finally to liberate our notion of God from their net so that the generic names cease to belong to genus but still signify something that makes their application understandable.

Against the background of this consideration the mentioned attempts to improve Aquinas' text seem doubtful. It is hard to believe that such an accurate thinker and careful teacher as Thomas Aquinas made a slip of the pen in the treatise on God at the beginning of *Summa* which he intended for beginners in theology. And, moreover, that in doing so he repeated a slip similar to one he made earlier in *Summa Contra Gentiles*: "in genere autem causae efficientis fit reductio ad unam causam quae Deus dicitur." In translating this statement, the Spanish translator Jesus M. Pla Castellano substitutes *genus* with *orden*,<sup>9</sup> in other words he follows the aforementioned tradition of "correction." But also there are examples of the contrary attitude: Anton C. Pegis, the translator of *Summa Contra Gentiles* into English, and the translator into French, Cyrille Michon, use *the genus* and *le genre* correspondingly as the precise equivalents of the Latin *genus*.<sup>10</sup> Thus, the different ways of translating constitute the material for analysis and discussion and consequently inspire more profound studies of Thomas Aquinas' works.

<sup>9</sup> Compare Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles, Book One: God*, University of Notre Dame Press, London 1975, p. 136 with Santo Tomas de Aquino, *Summa Contra Los Gentiles*, La Editorial Catolica, S.A. Apartado 466, Madrid, 1952, p. 168.

<sup>10</sup> See Saint Thomas Aquinas, *ibid.*, and Thomas d'Aquin, *Somme contre les Gentils, I Dieu*, Flammarion, Paris, 1999, p. 216.

## AQUINAS'S VIEWS ON MIND AND SOUL: ECHOES OF PLATONISM

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St. Thomas's views on the human soul and mind are shaped by Platonic as well as Aristotelian influences. His account of the human soul as the substantial principle and form of human life quickly becomes translated into a definition of the soul as an intelligent substance that exists on the boundary line of bodily and non-bodily substances as though it were on the horizon of time and eternity, according to *Summa contra Gentiles*, Book 11, Chapter 81. The human being as a whole is also described in this way in *Summa Theologica* 1.77.2. This "boundary" image of the human being allows St. Thomas in *Summa Theologica* 1.89.1 to account for how knowledge can occur in the absence of the body after death. It also enables Aquinas to explain in other texts how religious ecstasy can occur in life before death in that the sensory powers are supernaturally suspended to free the mind to see God. Thus non-bodily based knowledge before or after death with all the important implications involved are philosophically accounted for, at least up to a point, by Platonism. This is not to deny Aquinas's Aristotelianism but simply to note the existential importance of Platonic insights in his thinking also, especially when St. Thomas attempts to philosophically present his views on how knowledge occurs in human beings in the absence of the senses

### 1. *AQUINAS, PLATONISM AND ARISTOTLE*

In certain significant respects, Aquinas's account of the human soul and his concept of mind, owe a great deal more to Platonism than to Aristotelian thought. This may seem surprising, perhaps even unacceptable, to some orthodox Thomists who might prefer to believe that Aquinas's Christian theological approach rests almost exclusively,

at least from a philosophical point of view, on an Aristotelian basis. Consequently, there are efforts to reject any perceived attempts to suggest that there are significant traces of Platonism in Aquinas's thinking.<sup>1</sup> This approach, I would suggest, represents a rather narrow interpretation of St. Thomas's views and one that does not do justice to the richness in his writings. His thinking, which was undoubtedly formed within the Christian tradition of his predecessors, was also indebted, not only to Aristotle, but to a whole range of other non-Christian thinkers and traditions. These include, not just the Platonic tradition which is evident, for example, in Aquinas's commentaries on the writings of Pseudo-Denys, but also eminent thinkers from the Jewish tradition, like Moses Maimonides, and such Islamic philosophers as Ibn Sina (Avicenna) and especially Ibn Rushd (Averroes), even if the latter views are sometimes represented by Aquinas as ones which he thinks he must reject in part or in whole in order to put forward his own claims on the relevant issues for debate.<sup>2</sup>

In point of fact, the Platonism, which St. Thomas inherited and employed (often in an implicit way) in his thinking, has contributed immeasurably to the enhancement and vitality of his approach, which is evident in his treatment of the human soul and mind. This holds true even when, at times, the Aristotelianism and Platonism that inform his understanding of these issues appear to sit uneasily with each other during his efforts to analyse the nature and activities of the human soul, mind and body.

It is interesting to examine how Aquinas proceeded, especially in the context of the kind of extraordinary existential conditions which he believed to be possible, such as, for instance, the survival of the soul independently of the body and the unusual implications of this for mental activity.

## 2. *SUMMA THEOLOGICA PART I, QUESTION 89 ARTICLE 1*

It is fair to say that *S.T.I.89.1* represents in essence St. Thomas's efforts from a philosophical and theological point of view to deal with an issue that is central to his concept of the human soul and mind, namely, the independence and non-bodily existence of soul and mind in the

<sup>1</sup> One interesting account on Aquinas's Platonism is contained in *The Platonic heritage of Thomism* by Arthur Little (Golden Eagle Books, Dublin, 1949).

<sup>2</sup> For a brief discussion of the influences on Aquinas, see Patrick Quinn, *Aquinas, Platonism and the knowledge of God*, Avebury, Aldershot, 1996, pp. 1–5.

absence of the human body. The significance here is that for Aquinas, Christian theologian and philosopher, the post-mortem existence of a personal nature for every human being is a matter of belief. It is here that Aristotle and Aquinas notably diverge in their thinking in that for the former, human life ends with death whereas for Aquinas, the point of human life is life after death and what this implies for better or worse. The problem therefore for Aquinas is how to use Aristotelian philosophy to explore these issues, which is where *S.T.I.89.1* becomes important. In fact, the failure of the text to provide an Aristotelian solution for the immortality of soul and mind, makes way for Aquinas's use of Platonism in order to explain how the post-mortem existence and activity of soul and mind is to be understood. Indeed, Aquinas admits to meeting with resistance from an Aristotelian point of view when he tries to resolve the post-mortem status of the human soul and its intelligent behaviour and this leads him, without explicitly saying so, to a Platonic solution.

The question posed by Article 1 is whether the human soul can have any understanding or knowledge when it is separated from the body. The major difficulty of which Aquinas is well aware is that since our knowledge is naturally acquired from our physical and sensory experiences, this must surely mean that since death puts an end to our physical way of functioning, no future knowledge or intelligent activity can then be possible. This is the Aristotelian point of view, as Aquinas repeats a number of times in the course of Article 1. He acknowledges that the independent existence and intelligent activity of the soul in the absence of the body is not a problem for those who are Platonists because they regard the relationship between soul and body as an accidental rather than essential relationship e.g., as in Plato's *Phaedo's* illustrations of the sailor in a boat or the man wearing a cloak or the prisoner in jail. This means that when the relationship between soul and body is dissolved by death, the soul returns to its true nature and functions much more effectively from an intelligent point of view. But that also means, according to Aquinas, that the union of soul and body is not for the good of the soul since the body (as an intelligent body) would then have a more enhanced status than the soul in life before death and the soul's position would be correspondingly weakened since its intelligent activity would not be as effective when embodied as when disembodied. That wouldn't make sense, according to St. Thomas, since the soul has primacy of status compared with the body because it is the body's substantial form.

Having struggled to explain (unsuccessfully) how Aristotelianism might offer some solution to the problem of how the soul could function intelligently in the absence of the body, Aquinas introduces a new element into the discussion in Article 1. This involves a claim by him to the effect that the soul has one way of being when embodied and another way of being when disembodied although its nature remains the same throughout. This is a contentious proposition, certainly from an Aristotelian point of view, although Aquinas introduces it in *S.T. 1.89.1* as a matter of fact. He might argue, however, that he has discussed this issue elsewhere and has even established it as being true e.g., in *Summa Contra Gentiles Book 11. Chs. 80 & 81*. In any case, this concept of the soul as being capable of functioning whether when embodied or disembodied has definite Platonic origins, not only in Plato's *Phaedo* but also in the writings of the great Neoplatonist Plotinus and in the work of Proclus.<sup>3</sup> This is the concept of what might be described as the boundary soul.<sup>4</sup>

Aquinas is careful to add that, although the soul can function intelligently both when embodied and disembodied, its natural state is to be embodied since the relationship of union between body and soul is an essential and not accidental one (as Platonists might suggest). Nonetheless, there is also the underlying claim here by St. Thomas that the soul is an intelligent substance.

Aquinas goes on to provide the interesting illustration of a circle of light and enlightenment, at the centre of which is God, the source of light and at various distances from God along the radii from the centre are intelligent substances like the angelic intelligences while on the rim of the circle exist human intelligent beings. This illustration seems designed to show that the nearer intelligent beings are to God, the greater is their ability to function intelligently whereas, with our level of intelligence which naturally occurs in an embodied form, we are the furthest away from God and so will struggle to understand reality in a way that the more superior intelligences will not have to do since they have an immediate and intuitive grasp of what is real.

We are like the slow learners in a class where some of the more brilliant students can understand very quickly after being provided with a small number of examples, whereas we need many examples in order to grasp the point at issue. That is how God has designed reality, ac-

<sup>3</sup> E.g., *Ennead IV.8.7* and Propositions 190 & 191 in Proclus, *The elements of theology* (Second Edition), trans. E.R. Dodds, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1999, pp. 167–169.

<sup>4</sup> See Quinn (1996: 52–65).

cording to Aquinas, so it is natural for us to acquire knowledge from sensory-based data. Nevertheless, he concludes abruptly in the final sentence in the body of Article 1, the human soul can also acquire knowledge in another way, that is, presumably independently of the body. This will occur, he states in a reply to the 3rd objection, when the soul in the absence of the body will be assisted by means of Divine illumination to know reality in the same way as other intelligent (angelic) substances do though to a lesser degree in the case of the human soul.

It seems clear from this article that because of the inability to effectively solve how post-mortem intelligent activity could occur in the human soul by using an Aristotelian approach, Aquinas opts for a Platonic interpretation of how the soul could function in the absence of the body. The basis for such an account of how the soul can operate in an embodied or disembodied state originates in what might be described as the concept of a “boundary” soul.

### 3. *THE BOUNDARY IMAGE OF THE SOUL*<sup>5</sup>

The notion that the human soul and human existence lies between or at the interface of the physical temporal world and the realm of the non-physical and timeless domain has a long history in the Platonic tradition. Apart from Plato's own writings where the psyche is thus described, there is Philo's claim that the human being is on the “borderland between mortal and immortal nature [...] created at once mortal and immortal, mortal in respect of the body, but in respect of the mind immortal” (*De Opificio Mundi*, 135). There are similar references in Plotinus's *Enneads* such as this one in *Ennead IV.8.7*:

(the soul) occupies a middle rank among realities,  
belonging to that divine part but being on the lowest  
edge of the intelligible, and having a common boundary  
with the perceptible nature.

Human beings, suggests Plotinus, have a split-level form of existence, midway between animality and divinity (*Enn. IV.8.7*). Christian writers like Gregory of Nyssa adopted this boundary or frontier image of the soul and of human life and similarly describe a split-level existence in which we belong to the visible world by our bodies and to the invisible

<sup>5</sup> For a complete account of this, see Quinn (1996 : 25–65) above.

one by our souls. The human being thus serves as the connecting link between both worlds and stands at the summit of the visible one as the animal endowed with reason. Nemesisius also claims that the human being is on the borderline between the bodily and spiritual realms as does Maximus of Chrysopolis who states that we were created to serve as the connecting link between the bodily and spiritual realms, and we participate in both, in the multiplicity of matter through our bodies while being united to God through our minds. In the Islamic tradition, Ibn Sina also puts forward a somewhat similar view in his concept of a two faced soul, facing towards the body and towards the realm of intelligibility.

#### 4. *AQUINAS AND THE BOUNDARY IMAGE*

There are a number of similar references in Aquinas's writings such as the following two:

[...] the human soul [...] is on the boundary line of corporeal and incorporeal substances, as though it were on the horizon of eternity and time [...]  
(*Summa Contra Gentiles Bk.II.Ch.81*)

[...] man is composed of a spiritual and corporeal nature, standing as it were on the boundaries of both [...]  
(*SCG.IV.55*)

The human being and the soul in these and similar passages in Aquinas's writings enable him to account for the way in which knowledge could be acquired whether through human embodiment or in a disembodied way, as indicated in the account already discussed in *S.T.I.89.1*. The boundary image also serves the purpose of identifying human life as unique and provides a good basis, according to Aquinas, because of this uniqueness, for demonstrating Divine forgiveness and redemption in a cosmic context when God saw fit to assume the human way of life in Jesus Christ.<sup>6</sup>

The boundary concept does lead to certain conceptual difficulties with regard to how the relationship between the human soul and the human being is conceived and, apart from *S.T.I.89.1*, this is nowhere more evident than in one of Aquinas's earlier texts *De Ente et Essen-*

<sup>6</sup> *Summa Contra Gentiles IV.55.*

*tia* (*On Being and Essence*). In this text, Aquinas analyses how the essences of things are to be understood in relation to the things themselves. When he comes to the analysis of composite or complex substances, Aquinas identifies the human being as a composite of matter and form. However, when he later examines separate substances (i.e., angelic substances), he regards the human soul as a simple substance somewhat similar to the latter, that is, the soul is an intelligent substance. The question that arises is how does one understand the relationship between the human soul as an intelligent simple substance in relation to its being the substantial form and life principle of the human being which is a composite substance composed of body and soul. It does seem that the only possible answer lies in some kind of Plotinian or Platonic concept of the soul as an intelligent substance that somehow resides in the complexity of the substance which is human and can have an independent existence after death.

#### 5. *RELIGIOUS ECSTASY*<sup>7</sup>

Aquinas's Platonic tendencies also come into play when he tries to explain the ecstatic experience of St. Paul, described in *2 Cor. 12.1–6*, which St. Thomas agrees with the traditional Christian view that takes this to be an autobiographical account by Paul. The latter's account reads as follows:

I know of a man still in Christ who, fourteen years ago, was caught up — whether still in the body or out of it, I do not know; God knows — right into the seventh heaven. I do know, however, that this same person — whether in the body or out of the body, I do not know; God knows — was caught up into paradise and heard things which must not and could not be put into human language.

This remarkable passage suggests to Aquinas an “out of body” experience of St. Paul's which Thomas then sets out to explain.<sup>8</sup> What is intriguing about Aquinas's interpretation of this event lies in his analysis of what he thinks must have occurred to the sensory and intellectual powers during the process. St. Thomas suggests that since God can only be seen in a purely non-sensory way, Paul's sensory powers must have been supernaturally suspended in their ability to function. This

<sup>7</sup> For a more extensive account, read Quinn (1996 : 66–80).

<sup>8</sup> See *S.T.II-II.Q.175* and *De Veritate Q.13*.

freed Paul's mind up to concentrate in a more enhanced way on the vision of God, which was experienced during the event. The implication here once again is a Platonic one i.e., that the human mind functions much more effectively when freed from sensory input and experience.

The same view is set out in Aquinas's accounts of how God is seen after death in the beatific vision and in the resurrected state.<sup>9</sup> Here is how Aquinas describes the vision of God in *Summa Contra Gentiles* III.51:

It would be impious to understand (this immediate vision of God) in a material way, and imagine a material face in the Godhead: since we have proved that God has no body. Nor is it possible to see God with a bodily face since the eyes of the body, which are situated in the face, can only see bodily things.

The way in which we see God, according to Aquinas in the same chapter, is as follows:

Wherefore if God's essence be seen at all, it must be that the intellect sees it in the divine essence itself; so that in that vision the divine essence is both the object and the medium of vision.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The supernatural vision of God in which Aquinas believes, can therefore apparently only be accounted for and up to a point by a Platonic explanation so it is not surprising for us to find that Aquinas adopts such an approach even if he is slow to admit it. His use of Platonism is therefore a logical outcome of his belief in the afterlife since any attempt to philosophically account for such a possibility in relation to the implications of this for human life and knowledge by Aristotelian philosophy would be futile. Aquinas's insistence on the harmony between faith and reason undoubtedly compelled him to seek explanations even for this highly speculative area of possible human experience, so it is no wonder that Platonism figures so large in his accounts of the issues involved.

St. Thomas himself was very aware of the limits of philosophical explanations, no matter how comprehensive the latter might seem to be and he points this out at the start of his *Summa Theologica* when he asks himself whether or not philosophy can tell the truth about reality (*S.T.I.1.1*). His answer is that more than human reason is needed for

this which implies a form of knowledge that goes beyond what philosophy has to offer. In such an over-all context, it is surely acceptable that Aquinas's Platonism features as an important partner to his Aristotelianism in exploring such important issues, especially if we are to admit that Aristotle himself must have been influenced by Plato to some extent given his long association with the latter. The value of what is called Neoplatonism, some of whose themes and approaches can be identified in at least some of the writings of Aquinas, is that it recognised common points of interest in the writings of both Plato and Aristotle and tried to emphasise their shared views, in a philosophical-religious context. If this is recognised, then the Platonism in Aquinas may also be valued for what it is, namely, as a philosophical attempt to compliment the limitations of Aristotelian thought when applied to at least some of the most important theological issues.

## THOMAS AQUINAS AND HIS CRITICISM OF AVEMPACE'S THEORY OF THE INTELLECT\*

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The article deals with Aquinas' relation to Avempace's theory of intellect, especially with his criticism of the conception of agent intellect as presented by Avempace. The author examines the parts of Aquinas' works where he rejects Avempace's theory of *coniunctio* as a union with the divine realm and Avempace's identification of imagination with intellect. The criticism is founded on the background of Aquinas' discussion with Averroism. The second part of the article deals with Aquinas' criticism of Avempace's theory of speculative sciences, which consist of the problem whether the ultimate happiness of man is to understand the separate substances. Aquinas criticizes the theory according to which through the pursuit of the speculative sciences man comes to the understanding of separate substances from the sensible things. Aquinas is very sceptical of this opinion and he strictly follows Aristotle's emphasis on senses and phantasms. The only things a human being can know in the speculative sciences are those that are grounded within the range of naturally known principles. The author shows the metaphysical presuppositions of Aquinas and Avempace which are momentous for the understanding of the different interpretations of Aristotle.

The present paper discusses two issues connected with Aquinas' criticism of some philosophical opinions of the Arabic thinker Ibn Bajja (known as Avempace in Latin). The first topic is Aquinas' criticism of

\* I would like to thank Ms. Anna Akasoy from J.W. Goethe Universität for her useful remarks on Avempace and providing literature about Avempace.

Avempace's identification of imagination with intellect, which was also criticized by another Arabic thinker, Averroes,<sup>1</sup> and Aquinas' refutation of the theory of *coniunctio* or *continuatio*.<sup>2</sup>

The second question connected with Aquinas' criticism concerns the problem whether the ultimate happiness of man is to understand the separate substances. These two subjects are conjoined in the main problem of the definition of the intellect and the different commentaries on Aristotle's *De Anima*.

First of all, I would like to stress the fact that Thomas Aquinas knew Avempace's doctrines<sup>3</sup> through the *Long Commentary on the De Anima*<sup>4</sup> by Averroes, where he refers to the theory of the intellect and the question of the possibility of knowing the separate substances.<sup>5</sup> Apart from Averroes there was another source of Avempace's opinions — that of Albert the Great.<sup>6</sup> We can reconstruct Aquinas' relation to Avempace through some notes and references in various treatises of Aquinas.

<sup>1</sup> *SCG* II. c.67.

<sup>2</sup> G.P. Klubertanz, *The discursive power. Sources and doctrine of the Vis Cogitativa according to St. Thomas Aquinas*, The Messenger Press, Carthagen, Ohio, 1952, pp. 166–173.

<sup>3</sup> For more information on Avempace (Ibn Bajja, Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Yahya ibn as-Say'igh), see H. Corbin, *Storia della filosofia islamica*, trad. di V. Calasso & R. Donatoni, Adelphi Edizioni, Milano, 1989, 231–237; E. Bondy, *Středověká islámská a židovská filosofie. Filosofie renesance a reformace* [Medieval Islamic and Jewish Philosophy. Philosophy of Renaissance and Reformation], Vokno, Prague, 1995, pp. 72f.

<sup>4</sup> Averrois Cordubensis, *Commentarium magnum in Aristotelis De anima libros*, ed. by F.S. Crawford, The Medieval Academy of America, Cambridge, Mass., 1953, p. 493.

<sup>5</sup> In *Boeth. De Trin.* q.6, a.4. resp.; *SCG* III, c.41, c.43; In *IV. Sent.* d.49 q.2 a.1 resp.; In *IV. Sent.* d.49 q.2 a.7 ad 12; *ST* I, q.88 a.2 resp.; *De Ver.* q.18 a.5 ad 8; D.C. Hall, *The Trinity. An analysis of St. Thomas Aquinas' Expositio of the De Trinitate of Boethius*, E.J. Brill, Leiden, 1992, pp. 109–111; St. Thomas Aquinas, *The division and methods of the sciences. Questions V and VI of his commentary on the De Trinitate of Boethius*, introduction, notes and translation by Armand Maurer, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, 1986<sup>4</sup>, 92n; In *II Sent.* d.17 q.2 a.1: "Utrum enim intellectiva vel intellectus sit unus in omnibus hominibus." (parall. *ST*, q.76 a.2) In *II Sent.* d.17 q.2 a.2: "[...] intellectus possibilis nihil aliud est quam virtus imaginativa, secundum quod est nata ut sint in ea formae quae fuerunt intellectae in actu; et haec est opinio Avempace." Alain de Libera writes that Avempace held the thesis that there exists only one intellect for all people and it is connected with the human soul by the "means of images" (*phantasmata*). This opinion is unacceptable, as Averroes states, because it reduces *intellectus materialis* to the "element of fantasy" only (E. Craig (ed.), *Routledge encyclopedia of philosophy*, Routledge, London, 1998).

<sup>6</sup> According to Albert the Great, Avempace and Avicenna were "praecipui viri in philosophia"; in A. Caparelli, *Senso e Interiorità in Alberto Magno*, Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Roma, 1993, pp. 104, 109, 118.

As I have already said, Aquinas criticised the identification of the intellect with imagination.<sup>7</sup> He attributed this opinion to Avempace (Ibn-Bajja)<sup>8</sup> who was persuaded that the potential intellect was a corporeal faculty.<sup>9</sup> Aquinas received the critical notes to Avempace from Averroes who reported that Avempace construed the *material intellect* as a disposition located in the imaginative faculty of the soul.<sup>10</sup> Aquinas, through Averroes, noticed Avempace's mistaken opinion that the material intellect is a disposition inherent in the imagination<sup>11</sup> and he tried to prove that the intellect is not a part of the human body or a

<sup>7</sup> SCG II, c.67: "Contra ponentes intellectum possibilem esse imaginationem"; SCG II, c.67: "wendet sich Thomas gegen die Meinung gewisser Leute, die mögliche Vernunft sei mit der Einbildungskraft identisch. Zu diesen Leuten gehören nach Averroes Abubacer und Avempace. Gegen ihre Theorie der möglichen Vernunft bringt Thomas vier Argumente vor, die mit Ausnahme des ersten Argumentes der aristotelischen Seelenlehre entlehnt sind"; in H. Hoping, *Weisheit als Wissen des Ursprungs: Philosophie und Theologie in Summa contra gentiles es Thomas von Aquin*, Herder, Freiburg, 1997, pp. 279f.

<sup>8</sup> Aquinas used "Auēpache" in his manuscripts. See Thomae de Aquino, *Opera omnia* iussu Leonis XIII P.M. edita, vol. 43, Editori di San Tommaso, Roma, 1976, p. 66.

<sup>9</sup> *In II Sent.*, d.17 q.2 a.1 resp.: "alii dixerunt, quod intellectus possibilis nihil aliud est quam virtus imaginativa, secundum quod est nata ut sint in ea formae quae fuerunt intellectae in actu: et haec est opinio Avempace." This opinion is similar to that of Alexander of Aphrodisias and is rejected by Averroes (see A.M. El-Har, 'Ibn Rushd's (Averroes') doctrine of the Agent Intellect', doctoral dissertation, Saint Louis University, 1982, p. 62). Cf. also: "Ibn Bajja (Avempace) stated that the term 'rational faculty' denotes 'in the first, spiritual forms insofar as they are able to receive intellect'. By 'spiritual forms' Ibn Bajja meant forms or images, in the imaginative faculty of the soul. Either by reading out the implications of that statement and similar statements in Ibn Bajja or by drawing on sources no longer extant or still undiscovered—as, for example, Ibn Bajja's *De anima*, the published text of which breaks off tantalizingly in the middle of the discussion of intellect—Averroes reports that Ibn Bajja construed the material intellect as a disposition located in the imaginative faculty of the soul. Averroes thus found himself before two poles, both of which are grounded in Aristotle. At the one extreme stood Alexander and Ibn Bajja, who construed the potential human intellect as a mere disposition either in the human subject, in the human soul, or specifically in the imaginative faculty of the soul. At the other extreme stood Themistius, who construed the potential intellect as a nonmaterial substance, which exists independently of the physical man and joins him at birth"; in H. Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna, Averroes, on intellect*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992, p. 261.

<sup>10</sup> M.A. Blaustein, 'Averroes on the imagination and the intellect', doctoral dissertation, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass., 1984, pp. 162–173; D.L. Black, 'Consciousness and self-knowledge in Aquinas's critique of Averroes's Psychology', *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 31, 1993, pp. 349–385.

<sup>11</sup> Ibn Bajja had construed the human intellect as a disposition in the human organism; cf. Davidson (1992: 200, 352).

faculty inherent to it.<sup>12</sup> Aquinas listed arguments against Avempace's theory of imagination and he tried to distinguish between imagination and intellect.

First of all, imagination is a corporeal faculty which human beings share with animals; as far as the intellect is concerned, however, we cannot talk about it in connection with animals.<sup>13</sup> Aquinas claims that fantasy appears not only in man but also in other animals who dispose of keeping fantastic images (*imaginaria*) because also in the absence of sensual perceptions they are able to react to various situations. This ability to retain certain images is the basis of instinctive behaviour of animals. Contrary to man, however, in connection to animals we can in no way talk about the activity of intellect.

The second important argument of Aquinas is that there is no identity between what is moved and the mover. Phantasms move the passive intellect in a similar way as the sense-perceptible things move the sense itself. According to Avempace the intellectual faculty operates on images presented by the imaginative faculty, but if the intellectual faculty were nothing more than a guise of the imaginative faculty, a faculty would be operating in images presented to it by itself. This is impossible because a thing would receive itself and the mover would be the same as what is moved. Aquinas uses an analogy — as *sensibilia* move the sense, so phantasms move *intellectus possibilis*. For Aquinas, as for Aristotle a few centuries before, it is impossible for one thing to be a mover and a moved thing at the same time, in other words, that the identity of *movens et motum* is unacceptable.<sup>14</sup> Aquinas emphasizes that fantasy is a kind of movement which cannot begin without a sensual stimulation and therefore it applies to corporeal things and individuals

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* : 286.

<sup>13</sup> *ST* I, q.86 a.4 ad 3: “[...] animalia bruta non habent aliquid supra phantasiam quod ordinet phantasmata, sicut habent homines rationem; et ideo phantasia brutorum animalium totaliter sequitur impressionem caelestem. et ideo ex motibus huiusmodi animalium magis possunt cognosci quaedam futura, ut pluvia et huiusmodi, quam ex motibus hominum, qui moventur per consilium rationis. unde Philosophus dicit, in libro De somn. et vigil., quod quidam imprudentissimi sunt maxime praevidentes, nam intelligentia horum non est curis affecta, sed tanquam deserta et vacua ab omnibus, et mota secundum movens ducitur.” Fantasy in animals (*animalia bruta*) is completely under the influence of celestial bodies. While a human being “moves” according to his own intellect and will, animals are under the influence of nature.

<sup>14</sup> *SCG* II, cap.67: “Impossibile est idem esse movens et motum. Sed phantasmata movent intellectum possibilem sicut sensibilia sensum”; Aristoteles, *De Anima* (431a1–431b19).

only.<sup>15</sup> And it is here that Aquinas finds a significant difference between senses and fantasy on one side and the intellect on the other. Intellect, on contrary to the senses and fantasy, can cognize universals and what is non-corporeal. Imagination deals only with things corporeal and singular; intellect, however, with things universal and incorporeal.

The third of Aquinas' arguments is that the intellect is not an actualisation of a bodily organ; fantasy, on the other hand, has a fixed bodily organ. The basic difference lies in the structure and function of intellect and fantasy. Intellectual activities do not rise from the activity of a bodily organ as they do in the case of fantasy. Aquinas supports these arguments by a quotation from the Bible: "ubi est Deus qui fecit me qui dedit carmina in nocte, qui docet nos super iumenta terrae et super volucres caeli erudit nos" ("Where is God my Maker, Who giveth songs in the night, Who teacheth us more than the beasts of the earth, And maketh us wiser than the birds of the heavens?")<sup>16</sup> in which the fundamental difference between animal and man is unveiled. This difference lies in the human cognitive ability that was given to man by God.<sup>17</sup>

Aquinas was more interested in the criticism of Averroes, however, where one of the most important matters was whether the intellectual part of human soul or the intellect is one for all people; this question appears already in one of the earliest Aquinas' treatises, in *Commentum in II Sententiarum*.<sup>18</sup> Arguments in favour of one intellect contain several epistemological and metaphysical problems which are related to questions of individuation, the possibility of universal knowledge and the theory of *species intelligibilis*.<sup>19</sup> Aquinas claims that if the thesis about the existence of one common passive intellect was to be accepted, then all people would have to receive the same *species intelligibilis* and if the intellect was individualized by a body, then *species intelligibilis* in the intellect would be also individualized which means that it could not be actually intelligible, i.e., universal.

<sup>15</sup> Aristoteles, *De anima* (429a1-2); *De Unitate*, cap.3: "fantasia enim est motus a sensu secundum actum"; *SCG* II, cap.67: "Imaginatio non est nisi corporalium et singularium: cum phantasia sit motus factus a sensu secundum actum, ut dicitur in libro de Anima (428b11-12). Intellectus autem universalium et incorporeum est."

<sup>16</sup> *Iob* 35, 10-11.

<sup>17</sup> J. Aertsen, *Nature and creature: Thomas Aquinas's way of thought* (*Studien und Texte zur Geistesgeschichte des Mittelalters* XXI), Brill, Leiden, 1988, pp. 192f.

<sup>18</sup> *In II Sent.*, d.17 q.2 a.1; d.19 q.1 a.1.

<sup>19</sup> L. Spruit, *Species Intelligibilis: from perception to knowledge* (*Brill's Studies in Intellectual History* 48), vol. I, Brill, Leiden, 1994, pp. 156-179.

For Avempace, if *intellectus agens* makes a perfect conjunction (*coniunctio*) with man then man can understand the immaterial substances, similarly to *intellectus possibilis* that understands the material things.<sup>20</sup> According to Aquinas, however, in this case it would not be the substance of *intellectus agens* but only light (*lumen*) that would get connected to man because *intellectus agens* is not a separate substance<sup>21</sup> which would be able to cognize immaterial substances. The connection to *intellectus agens* does not guarantee the cognition of immaterial substances because it is not in potentiality of this intellect to embrace all material things. *Intellectus agens* is a certain power of the soul which relates actively to the same things that are perceived by *intellectus possibilis*: “intellectus possibilis est quo est omnia fieri, intellectus agens quo est omnia facere.”<sup>22</sup> The consequence of this attitude is that both of the intellects are related to corporeal things. *Intellectus agens* turns to the corporeal things by way of illumination and abstraction and makes *intelligibilia in actu* which are subsequently accepted by *intellectus possibilis*.

A problematic question for Aquinas is the character of *intellectus possibilis*. He states that *intellectus possibilis* is for some thinkers, such as Averroes, Themistius or Theophrastus, one for all people and is in potency to accept all intelligible forms.<sup>23</sup> The opinion that the passive as well as the active intellects are one and eternal intellect and are *species intelligibiles* Aquinas ascribes to Themistius and Theophrastus. Also for Averroes the active and the passive intellects are eternal and one for all people. If, however, there was only one common intellect for all, then, according to Aquinas, all people would cognize one and the same thing, at the same time, by only one common intellectual op-

<sup>20</sup> For a detailed analysis of Avempace's theory of *coniunctio*, see S. Pines, 'Limitation of human knowledge according to Al-Farabi, ibn Bajja, and Maimonides', in I. Twersky (ed.), *Studies in medieval Jewish history and literature*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1979, pp. 82–109; A. Altmann, 'Ibn Bājjā on Man's Ultimate Felicity', in *Harry Austryn Wolfson Jubilee Volume on the Occasion of his Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, American Academy for Jewish Research, Jerusalem, 1965, pp. 47–87.

<sup>21</sup> Aquinas did not criticize the theory about the identification of God with the *intellectus agens*, but in his first works he only noted that some *catholici doctores* identified God with the *intellectus agens*. In *Sent. II*, d.17 q.2 a.1 resp.; *Q. disp. de anima*, q.2.

<sup>22</sup> *ST*, I, q.88 a.1; see Aristoteles, *De Anima* 430a10–430a25.

<sup>23</sup> Edward P. Mahoney remarks that Aquinas during his writing of the *In I–IV. Sententiarum* was not familiar with the Latin translation of the Themistius' paraphrases of the *De anima*. For that Aquinas cited Themistius via Averroes; cf. E.P. Mahoney, 'Aquinas's critique of Averroes' doctrine of the unity of the intellect', in D.M. Gallagher (ed.), *Thomas Aquinas and his legacy (Studies in Philosophy and History of Philosophy 28)*, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 1994, p. 85.

eration.<sup>24</sup> The argument that it is impossible for the intellect in the present state of life, in which it is conjoined to a corruptible body, to understand anything in actuality, except by *conversio ad phantasmata*,<sup>25</sup> is very important for Aquinas. Intellect needs phantasms as preparations for intellection: for the phantasms are preparations for the action of the intellect, as colours are for the act of seeing.<sup>26</sup> Averroes remarks that Aristotle expressly says that the relation of the intelligibles to the images is like the relation of colour to the coloured body, not like the relation of colour to the sense of sight<sup>27</sup> as Avempace poses. Therefore Averroes shows that Avempace's position is non-Aristotelian, and he recognised that Avempace is close to Alexander of Aphrodisias. Aquinas fully adopted Averroes' critical notes to Avempace and his criticism towards Avempace springs out of his repeatedly emphasized stress on the individual experience of thought.

According to Aquinas, intellect is *forma materialis* because it gives existence as a substantial form and is multiplied together with the multiplicity of matter.<sup>28</sup> It is, however, also called immaterial, due to non-corporeal operations such as thinking which comes out of its non-corporeal faculties. Another important argument is that *species intelligibilis* really has an individual existence in an individual intellect but at the same time it is a similitude (*similitudo*) of a specific nature which is to be found in various individuals.<sup>29</sup> Different from the separated substances, the human soul is multiplied numerically according to matter to which this soul is a perfection.

<sup>24</sup> *De unitate*, cap.4: "si intellectus sit unus omnium, sequitur quod omnium hominum idem intelligentium eodem tempore sit una actio intellectualis tantum".

<sup>25</sup> *ST I*, q.84 a.7., K. Rahner, *Spirit in the world*, trans. by W. Dych, Continuum, New York, 1994.

<sup>26</sup> Black (1993: 370).

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*: 367.

<sup>28</sup> *In II Sent.*, d.17 q.2 a.1 ad1: "quod intellectus non negatur esse forma materialis quin det esse materiae sicut forma substantialis quantum ad esse primum; et ideo oportet quod ad divisionem materiae, quae causat diversa individua, sequatur etiam multiplicatio intellectus, idest animae intellectivae. Sed dicitur immaterialis respectu actus secundi, qui est operatio: quia intelligere non expletur mediante organo corporali, et hoc contingit quia ab essentia animae non exit operatio nisi mediante virtute ejus vel potentia; unde cum habeat quasdam virtutes quae non sunt actus aliquorum organorum corporis, oportet quod quaedam operationes animae sint non mediante corpore."

<sup>29</sup> *In II Sent.*, d.17 q.2 a.1 resp.: "[...] species quae est forma intellectus possibilis, non est eadem numero in phantasmate et in subjecto; sed est similitudo illius; unde sequitur quod intellectus nullo modo nobis conjungatur, et sic per ipsum non intelligamus."

The word *continuatio* or *coniunctio* is a very unclear term used by Arabic thinkers for whom the term meant a union between the separate intellect and man. Aquinas tried to use this expression in different contexts.<sup>30</sup> Avempace was one of the major exponents of the theory of *conjunction* which should be looked upon as the philosophical answer to the question of human salvation. Through the conjunction with the intellect the soul achieves perfection and ultimate happiness.<sup>31</sup> The conjunction (*ittisāl*) is a union with the divine realm, a union that reveals the eternal and innermost aspects of the universe.<sup>32</sup> Through this union or knowledge one is completed as a human being, and in this completion the ultimate human end, happiness, is achieved. Avempace was most concerned with the ultimate human objective, the intellectual or philosophical ideal, which in turn is in conjunction with the agent intellect through grasping the universals. It is impossible to get to know the separated, immaterial substances *per seipsas*, nor through *intellectus agens*, nor through *intellectus possibilis*. It is characteristic of the possible intellect to imagine or create the similarities of material things which arose by the abstraction from phantasms. For this reason the intellect cognizes material rather than immaterial substances.<sup>33</sup> The possible intellect is not a power grounded in a corporeal organ, but, on the other hand, a human being understands through the possible intellect because it is located in the essence of the human soul which is the form of the human being.<sup>34</sup>

Aquinas' understanding of the intellect springs from the argument that human soul is a form of the body. For Aquinas it is necessary to accept the individuality of the intellect because it has further important consequences, in ethical sphere for example (such as individual reward

<sup>30</sup> Klubertanz (1952: 166–173); the cogitative sense (the particular reason) is produced by a kind of “continuation” of the spirit into sensibility (“the mind [...] is continued in the sense powers”), *De Ver.* q. 10, a. 5, corp.; see *ibid.* ad 2 and ad 4. See also *De Ver.* q. 2, a. 6, corp.

<sup>31</sup> Altmann (1965: 47–87).

<sup>32</sup> M. Fakhry, *Philosophy, dogma and the impact of Greek thought in Islam*, Variorum, Aldershot, 1994, pp. 193–207.

<sup>33</sup> *ST I*, q. 88 a. 1 ad 2: “Intellectus autem noster possibilis, secundum statum praesentis vitae, est natus informari similitudinibus rerum materialium a phantasmatibus abstractis: et ideo cognoscit magis materialia quam substantias immateriales.”

<sup>34</sup> *Q. disp. de anima*. q. 2 resp.

and punishment),<sup>35</sup> and in the arguments for the immortality and incorruptibility of the soul.

The second question connected with Aquinas' criticism of Avempace concerns the problem whether it is the ultimate happiness of man to understand the separate substances.<sup>36</sup> Aquinas opposes to the opinion that the human soul in the present state of life can understand immaterial substances in themselves.<sup>37</sup>

Avempace held that man can, through the pursuit of the speculative sciences, come to the understanding of separate substances from the things he knows through phantasms.<sup>38</sup> He maintained an opinion that *quiddities* of sensible things adequately reveal immaterial *quiddities*.<sup>39</sup> According to him, the object of the intellect is *quod quid est*, therefore the intellect is from its nature oriented to understand the *quidditas* of the thing.<sup>40</sup> Avempace's intention was to study the speculative sciences, and hence at first to form abstract generalisations, one higher than the other, and then to ascend to the cognition of pure intelligence.

Aquinas is very sceptical about this opinion and he strictly follows Aristotle's emphasis on senses and phantasms. The only things a human being can know in the speculative sciences are those that are grounded within the range of naturally known principles. These principles are revealed to man by the light of the agent intellect, which is something natural to him. This light makes things known to man only to the extent that it renders images actually intelligible; since in this consists the activity of the agent intellect. Because the images are taken from the senses, the knowledge of the principles begins in the senses. Consequently, the principles do not carry man beyond the

<sup>35</sup> *De Spiritualibus*, a.9: "De intellectu ergo possibili Averroes in Commento III. De Anima posuit quod esset quaedam substantia separata secundum esse a corporibus hominum, sed quod continuaretur nobiscum per phantasmata; et iterum quod esset unus intellectus possibilis omnium. Quod autem haec positio sit contraria fidei facile est videre: tollit enim praemia et poenas futurae vitae. Sed ostendendum est hanc positionem esse secundum se impossibilem per vera principia philosophiae."

<sup>36</sup> *In Boeth. De Trin.* q.6, a.4. resp.; *SCG*, III, c.41; *ST*, I, q.88 a.1–2.

<sup>37</sup> *ST*, I, q.88 a.1.; *De potentia*, q.7, a.5, ad 14.: "Illud est ultimum cognitionis humanae de Deo quod sciat se Deum nescire." *In Boethii De trinitate*, q.1, a.2, ad 1.: "Dicimur in fine nostrae cognitionis Deum tamquam ignotum cognoscere."

<sup>38</sup> *SCG*, III, c.41: "Avempace namque posuit quod per studium speculativarum scientiarum possumus, ex his intellectis quae per phantasmata cognoscimus, pervenire ad intelligendas substantias separatas."

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> For details of Avempace's theory of the understanding of separate substances, see Crawford (1953: 490); Hoping (1997: 330–336).

world which he can know from the objects grasped by the senses. Therefore, for Aquinas, man cannot know the *essence* of the separate substances through which he grasps from the senses and phantasms. Through sensible things man can arrive at the knowledge of the *existence* of the separate substances. The speculative sciences enable him to know only about the *existence* of these entities and some of their characteristics; for example, that they are intellectual or incorruptible. For Aquinas the conclusion of this subject is clear: man cannot know the *quiddity* of separate substances through the speculative sciences.<sup>41</sup>

Avempace follows Aristotle in the opinion that the ultimate happiness of a human person is to understand the highest cause and the separate substances in an act of wisdom, and wisdom is a speculative science. But for Aquinas the first principles known in speculative sciences cannot transcend beyond senses to quidditative knowledge of the separate substances or God. This is not, however, a reason for the frustration of the human being; it is only the result of the philosophical proof that *quiddities* abstracted from material things do not point to those of separated substances.<sup>42</sup>

When Aquinas deals with this topic, he stresses the meaning of human happiness, which is twofold. One is the imperfect happiness found in this life, which consists in contemplating the separate substances through the habit of wisdom. This kind of contemplation is imperfect, because it is possible only in the present life, and is not such that man can know the quiddity of separate substances. Perfect happiness comes when man sees God himself through his essence and the separate substances do not come through a speculative science, but through “the light of glory”.<sup>43</sup> In several works, Aquinas tries to explain that a human being in the present state of life is endowed with the principles by which he can *prepare* for the perfect knowledge of separate substances, but not with principles by which he can reach it. Man is inclined to his ultimate end; he cannot reach it by his nature, but only by grace.<sup>44</sup> Aquinas is somewhat ambiguous, however, because in some places he is critical towards such opinions which support the claims that during the human life (*in praesentis vitae*) the intellect cannot reach the knowledge of immaterial substances. What helps to clarify the knowledge of these substances is metaphorical language which,

<sup>41</sup> *In Boeth. De Trin.* q.6, a.4. resp.; *ST*, I, q.88 a.2.

<sup>42</sup> *Q. disp. de Anima*, q.16 ad 6.

<sup>43</sup> *In Boeth. De Trin.* q.6, a.4. ad 3.

<sup>44</sup> *De Veritate*, q.22 a.7.

however, does not unveil God's substance by mere human psychic faculties.

Aquinas' idea about light and illumination makes the knowledge of immaterial substances possible. Human intellect needs light (*lumen*) to see God's substance; this light illuminates (*illuminatio*) him in such a way as to increase his intellectual powers. This light appears by a kind of supernatural encroachment (*dispositio supernaturalis*). When a thing is edified to something that transcends this thing's nature, then it must be modified by an ability that is above its nature. The natural power of the intellect is not enough to see God and therefore a higher power must interfere from God's grace (*ex divina gratia*). Only by the encroachment of God's grace can the intellect see God's substance directly and in radiance. Similarly to the natural light (*lumen corporale*) that makes things transparent and visible, so the created light (*lumen creatum*) enables the intellect to become a more competent faculty. Aquinas does not state, however, that in this way the illuminated intellect already learns about God's substance.<sup>45</sup> Light provides power *ex divina gratia*, and therefore man does not learn due to *similitudines* and phantasms but he learns *per lumen gloriae* which causes the intellect to succumb to divine influence (*deiformitate*). Intellect, which succumbs more and more to the light of glory, sees God's substance in a more perfect way. A more perfect vision of God depends especially on love (*caritate*).<sup>46</sup> Where there is love, there is desire, too (*desiderium*). And desire makes man eligible and prepared for the acceptance of the desired thing. For Aquinas the presence of love means a more perfect vision of God and greater bliss.<sup>47</sup>

For Aquinas God's substance is the basis of all intellectual knowledge. It is out of the sphere of the intellect, however, because it transcends the intellectual powers. Therefore the intellect needs to be strengthened by God's light to be able to see God's substance.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>45</sup> *ST*, I, q.12, art.5, resp.

<sup>46</sup> *ST*, I, q.12, art.5, ad 1: "[...] quod lumen creatum est necessarium ad videndum Dei essentiam, non quod per hoc lumen Dei essentia intelligibilis fiat"; *SCG*, III, c.53.

<sup>47</sup> *ST* I, q.12, art.6, resp.: "[...] intellectus plus participans de lumine gloriae, perfectius Deum videbit. Plus autem participabit de lumine gloriae, qui plus habet de caritate: quia ubi est maior caritas, ibi est maius desiderium; et desiderium quodammodo facit desiderantem aptum et paratum ad susceptionem desiderati. Unde qui plus habebit de caritate, perfectius Deum videbit, et beatior erit."

<sup>48</sup> *SCG*, III c.54: "Divina enim substantia non sic est extra facultatem creati intellectus quasi aliquid omnino extraneum ab ipso, sicut est sonus a visu, vel substantia immaterialis a sensu, nam divina substantia est primum intelligibile, et totius intellec-

Aquinas argues that man needs some kind of phantasms to understand things which are divinely revealed to man through the influence of higher substances.<sup>49</sup> Aquinas follows Pseudo-Dionysius' opinion that divine light is clothed in a number of sacred veils<sup>50</sup> and that it appears in the world due to phantasms that are necessary for man because they turn us towards higher substances. The consequence of such a theory is Aquinas' emphasis on sensitivity as something which is not accidental. Aquinas is against the cognition of separated substances through the speculative sciences but he points to a different way of cognition of the higher substances — through illumination and by God's grace.

As a conclusion, I would like to stress that it is necessary to see Aquinas' criticism of Avempace in the context of the application and

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tualis cognitionis principium: sed est extra facultatem intellectus creati sicut excedens virtutem eius, sicut excellentia sensibilibus sunt extra facultatem sensus. unde et philosophus in ii metaphys., dicit quod intellectus noster se habet ad rerum manifestissima sicut oculus noctuae ad lucem solis. indiget igitur confortari intellectus creatus aliquo divino lumine ad hoc quod divinam essentiam videre possit. per quod prima ratio solvitur."

<sup>49</sup> *Q. disp. de Anima*, q.15 resp. According to Avicenna, physical substances succumb to the influence of separated substances. Therefore, the reason of fascination, a kind of vertiginousness (*fascinatio*), is strong imagination which causes changes of the physical substance. *SCG*, II, cap.103, *De Malo*, q.16 a.9 ad 13, *ST*, I, q.117 a.3 ad 2: "[...] fascinationis causam assignavit Avicenna ex hoc, quod materia corporalis nata est obedire spirituali substantiae magis quam contrariis agentibus in natura. Et ideo quando anima fuerit fortis in sua imaginatione, corporalis materia immutatur secundum eam. Et hanc dicit esse causam oculi fascinantis." For more detailed arguments on this topic and for a criticism of Avicenna, see *Super ad Galatas*, cap. 3, lectio 1. Marcos F. Manzanedo writes: "De la fascinación habla ya Avicenna. Fascinación significa estrictamente hechizo o encantamiento maléfico por medio de la mirada. Pero en sentido amplio equivale a cualquier engaño o ilusión visual. Según Avicenna, la fascinación se debe a que la materia corporal obedece a la sustancia intelectual más que a las cualidades activas y pasivas de la naturaleza" (*La Imaginación y la Memoria según Santo Tomás* (*Studia Universitatis S. Thomae in Urbe* 9), Herder, Roma, 1978, p. 123). Avicenna's ideas in his treatise *De anima* were essential in many ways and the systematic analysis of the conditions of psychosomatic changes had its inherent place for the understanding of magic and demonology. See D.N. Hasse, *Avicenna's De anima in the Latin West (1160–1300)*, The Warburg Institute, London, 1997, pp. 1–12. Cf. Zambelli's thoughts: "Nella piena scolastica latina l'idea di un'immaginazione transitiva o psicosomatica viene più esplicitamente connessa con l'analisi della magia naturale o demoniaca" (P. Zambelli, *L'ambigua natura della magia: Filosofi, streghe, riti nel Rinascimento*, Marsilio Editori, Venezia, 1996, p. 65); a more elaborate work on these issues is F. Rahman, *Prophecy in Islam: Philosophy and Orthodoxy*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1958, p. 119.

<sup>50</sup> *Q. disp. de Anima*, q.15 resp.

interpretation of Aristotle's opinions in *De anima*, which were critically evaluated by Averroes (and this was very substantial for Aquinas), and also of Aquinas' own metaphysical presuppositions, which are momentous for the understanding of man's place in the universe.

Aquinas' criticism of Avempace shows that his refutation of the identity of imagination and potential intellect points to the principal argument of Aquinas, which is that Avempace's theory is not adequate to explain human cognition and the difference between the human and the animal.

The second conclusion is that human intellect can never attain absolute identity with the divine form through *coniunctio*, and can never achieve cognition of separate substances through speculative sciences. Aquinas shows the principal openness of the human being to the world, human natural limitations, possibilities and finally his humility and esteem for the created world.

I believe that it is not possible to deliver a final verdict because each of these two philosophers proceed from different philosophical presuppositions. Rather, in considering the subtle Medieval discussions about various aspects of Aristotle's philosophical opinions we can see that "[...] in the history of philosophy the distortions of commentators can be more fruitful than fidelity."<sup>51</sup>

<sup>51</sup> The quote is by Richard Sorabji in M.W.F. Stone, 'The soul's relation to the body: Thomas Aquinas, Siger of Brabant and the Parisian Debate on Monopsychism', in T. Crane (ed.), *History of the mind-body problem*, Routledge, New York, 2000, p. 34.

## ADORO TE DEVOTE — A SYNTHESIS OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS'S EUCHARISTIC THEOLOGY

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In this article, the author provides a close analysis the most famous Eucharistic hymn written by St. Aquinas, *Adoro Te devote*, in the light of passages from the *Summa Theologiae* which treat the Holy Eucharist. In looking at Fra Angelico's *La Crocefissione*, which contains one of the renowned portraits of St. Thomas, the author finds similarities with the hymn.

*Adoro Te devote, latens Deitas,  
Quae sub his figuris vere latitas:  
Tibi se cor meum totum subiicit,  
Quia Te contemplans totum deficit.*

*Visus, tactus, gustus, in Te fallitur,  
Sed auditu solo tuto creditur:  
Credo quidquid dixit Dei Filius,  
Nil hoc verbo veritatis verius.*

*In cruce latebat sola Deitas,  
At hic latet simul et humanitas:  
Ambo tamen credens atque confitens,  
Peto quod petivit latro poenitens.*

*Plagas, sicut Thomas, non intueor,  
Deum tamen meum Te confiteor;  
Fac me Tibi semper magis credere,  
In Te spem habere, Te diligere.*

*O memoriale mortis Domini,  
Panis vivus, vitam praestans homini:  
Praesta meae menti de Te vivere,  
Et Te illi semper dulce sapere.*

*Pie pelicane, Iesu Domine,  
Me immundum munda Tuo sanguine,  
Cuius una stilla saluum facere  
Totum mundum quit ab omni scelere.*

*Iesu Quem velatum, nunc aspicio,  
Oro fiat illud, quod tam sitio:  
Ut Te revelata cernens facie,  
Visu sim beatus Tuae gloriae.*

If one were to imagine St. Thomas praying the *Adoro Te devote*, one would immediately<sup>1</sup> think of Fra Angelico's *La Crocefissione*,<sup>2</sup> where the saint is represented with a concentrated, intense gaze, and a heart irra-

<sup>1</sup> On the relationship between the two Dominicans, John Saward wrote in his book, *The beauty of holiness and the holiness of beauty* (Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1997, p. 40f): "St. Thomas Aquinas is Fra Angelico's missing master. [...] The Angelic Doctor-Friar is without doubt the chief teacher of the Angelic Painter-Friar, the source of his philosophical and theological aesthetics." I will point out this special relationship in the case of *Adoro Te devote* in three instances.

<sup>2</sup> Circa 1442, Refectory, San Marco, Florence.

diating its love for the One Crucified,<sup>3</sup> the One Who in His resurrected body is truly, really and substantially present in the Holy Eucharist.<sup>4</sup>

The gaze, which is implicit in the direct addressing to Christ, is of capital importance here. J. Pieper wrote to this effect the following:

The ultimate fulfillment, the absolutely meaningful activity, the most perfect expression of being alive, the deepest satisfaction, and the fullest achievement of human existence must needs happen in an instance of beholding, namely in the contemplating awareness of the world's ultimate and intrinsic foundations.<sup>5</sup>

When contemplating Christ in the Holy Eucharist, St. Thomas is contemplating the "world's ultimate and intrinsic foundations" and gives this a poetic expression which must by no means be considered of lower importance than, let us say, the *Summa*, because poetry is the closest form to contemplation and to love, as J. Pieper was fully aware when he prefaced his volume by St. Augustine's saying: "Cantare amantis est," and by J. de Maistre's: "Reason speaks in words alone, but love has a song."

*Adoro Te devote* is St. Thomas's love song for Jesus Christ present in the Sacrament of the Altar for which he had the deepest devotion:

While saying Mass he was utterly absorbed by the mystery, and his face ran with tears. At night, when our nature demands repose, he would rise, after a short sleep, and pray, lying prostrate on the ground; it was in those nights of prayer that he learned what he would write or dictate in the daytime. [...] All this is confirmed by his own statement to brother Reginald, that prayer and the help of God had been of greater service to him in the search for truth than his natural intelligence and the habit of study.<sup>6</sup>

The first stanza of this beautiful hymn composed by St. Thomas for the Feast of Corpus Christi (instituted by Pope Urban IV in 1264) be-

<sup>3</sup> First, St. Thomas is the only one depicted with an irradiating heart, which is a proof that Fra Angelico knew the fervent devotion of Thomas in regard to the Eucharist, both from the writings and from the life of the *Doctor communis*. The painting, although called 'The Crucifixion', actually refers to the Sacrifice of the Mass, which is the only possible way for St. Thomas and other saints to be present and contemplate the Crucified. John Saward connects beautifully the Eucharist and the radiance, quoting St. Albert the Great's commentary on Jo 17, 22f (*ibid.*: 108).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. The General Council of Trent, 13th Session, *Decree on the Most Holy Eucharist* (1551) [ND 513].

<sup>5</sup> J. Pieper, *Only the lover sings: Art and contemplation*, tr. by L. Krauth, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1990, p. 22.

<sup>6</sup> K. Foster, O.P. (ed.), *The life of St. Thomas Aquinas. Biographical documents*, Longmans, Green & Co. & Helicon Press, London & Baltimore, 1959, p. 37.

gins with the word which most properly describes the attitude one should have in front of the Holy Eucharist: *Adoro*. This is the highest step according to St. Augustine in the passage from *ratio*, through *oratio* to *adoratio*.

In addressing Christ present in the Holy Eucharist, St. Thomas calls Him *Deitas*<sup>7</sup> (1st, 3rd stanza), *Dei Filius* (2nd stanza), *verbum Veritatis* (2nd stanza), *Deus* (4th stanza), *panis vivus* (5th stanza), *pius pelicanus* (6th stanza), *Iesus Dominus* (6th stanza), *Iesus* (7th stanza). This hymn is not only meant for the saint's devotion, but for a popular audience also. It is therefore very important to clarify from the very beginning that God the Son, the second person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, is the One adored in the Holy Eucharist.<sup>8</sup> I will return to the appellatives *panis vivus* and *pius pelicanus*.

The way the Divinity is present here is described by the line *Quae sub his figuris vere latitas*. *Figurae* describes the species of bread and wine, indicating that the first form of Eucharistic adoration is the Holy Mass, while *his* shows proximity, in heart and space, to the Holy Eucharist. The possible difference between *latens Deitas* and *latitas* could be that the Godhead is hidden in a special way outside the Holy Eucharist, and this calls for a *disciplina arcani*, while the frequentative *latitas* refers to the repeated transubstantiation of the bread and wine, through which Christ is *vere* present.

As I said in the beginning, the “organs” of adoration are the eye—for the species—and the heart—for the substantial presence. The latter, by its total subjection to the mystery, turns away from anything less, which can only be defective in relation to God: “*Tibi se cor meum totum subiicit, / Quia Te contemplans totum deficit.*”

The second stanza introduces the adorer to a Eucharistic theology of the senses: “*Visus, tactus, gustus in Te fallitur, / Sed auditu solo tuto creditur;*” If Christ is truly present—*vere latitas*—how can the sight, feeling

<sup>7</sup> Following Dom A. Wilmart, who exposed the difficulties presented by the text, J.-P. Torrell, O.P., in his *Initiation à saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Cerf-Ed. Univ. de Fribourg, Fribourg & Paris, 1993, p. 195), chooses another reading of the first two lines of the hymn: “*Adoro devote, latens veritas / Te qui sub his formis vere latitas*”. The first, *veritas* for *Deitas*, is a less fortunate choice, because it removes from the text, understating it, the expression of the very important fact that Christ *God* is present in the Eucharist, overemphasizing thus the truth of Christ (*veritas, vere*); the second, *formis* instead of *figuris*, would support better the parallel with a poem of Jacopone da Todi, but it would not make the text richer. I therefore will follow the Marietti text, *Opuscula theologica*, t. 2.

<sup>8</sup> For a more detailed analysis of the presence of the divinity of Christ in the Holy Eucharist see *ST* 3, 76, 1 ad 1.

and taste be mistaken when coming into contact with the Holy Eucharist? Without making a detailed analysis,<sup>9</sup> the saint simply says: “in Te fallitur.” Christ is not to be perceived by the sight,<sup>10</sup> feeling, taste in the Holy Eucharist, because He is not the species, which are perceived by the senses,<sup>11</sup> but the substance hidden under them. St. Thomas continues saying that only through hearing can be given credit [to the mystery] safely: “*Sed auditu solo tuto creditur*,” but one does not have to believe a concept, a law, but a Person, and that is why the impersonal *creditur* is replaced further on by the personal *credo*, which is appropriate for the Son of God: “*Credo quidquid dixit Dei Filius*.” The first stanza introduced the adverb *vere*; the second goes deeper in stating the identity of Christ: *Veritas*. Not only is He present truly, but He is Truth itself, St. Thomas keeps reminding the adorer in a unique blending of explicit catechesis and Scriptural reference.<sup>12</sup> This act of faith in the words of the Truth itself has a more profound implication: Thomas was not at the Last Supper, so if he believes what Christ said, it is in the virtue of the priest acting *in persona Christi*, which means that the priest, the sacrifice and the victim are the same. As Bl. D. C. Marmion puts it, “In the sacrament of the Eucharist, it is God, it is Christ who gives Himself to us.”<sup>13</sup>

Comparing the crucifixion and the presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist, following the first two lines of the first stanza, the adorer can only reach one conclusion: “*In cruce latebat sola Deitas, / At hic latet simul et humanitas*,” the Eucharist demands greater faith than Christ’s human life demanded: His contemporaries were invited to go beyond

<sup>9</sup> This line and the following were a reason for some to doubt the hymn as truly Thomistic.

<sup>10</sup> This Eucharistic poem is indeed a synthesis not only of St. Thomas’s Eucharistic theology, but also of our Christian life: we begin by contemplation (*contemplans*) to end with the beatific vision (“*Ut Te revelata cernens facie, / visu sim beatus tuae glorie*”). John Saward writes beautifully: “Now faith has to do with unseen realities, and so just as the one Person of the Son offers us His divinity in an invisible manner, so here, in the Sacrament, He offers his humanity in an invisible way: ‘Blessed are they who do not see and yet believe...’ The hiddenness of the Real Presence is a mark of His chivalrous Heart: He does not force His beauty upon us, with a fury of obviousness. He invites us into the bridal surrender, to faith in Him in obscurity.” (1997: 98).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *ST* 3, 75, 1: “The presence of Christ’s true body and blood in this sacrament cannot be detected by sense, nor understanding, but by faith alone, which rests upon Divine authority.”

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *Jo* 14, 6.

<sup>13</sup> Bl. D. C. Marmion, *Christ the life of the soul (Spiritual Conferences, 10th ed.)*, Sands & Co., London & Glasgow, 1922, p. 258.

His human form, we are invited to go beyond the form of bread and wine and to recognize that He is true man and true God and that He is present on the altar with His humanity, body and soul, and His divinity.<sup>14</sup> It is remarkable how St. Thomas's poetry resembles official professions of faith: "*Ambo tamen credens atque confitens, / Peto quod petivit latro poenitens.*" When the adorer is assimilated to the penitent thief,<sup>15</sup> one is at the same time made a witness of the crucifixion, of the last act of the offering that Christ made and continues to make in an unbloody manner, and our position in regard to Him is clarified: we are the reason for His suffering and we are the beneficiaries of His daily sacrifice.

St. Thomas brings in the fourth stanza the example of the Apostle Thomas, with whom he does not share the same vision,<sup>16</sup> but the same conclusion: "*Plagas, sicut Thomas, non intueor; / Deum tamen meum Te confiteor;*" It is interesting to recall what one of his biographers, B. Gui, wrote on the two saints:

Or again, lastly, is he not another Thomas? Not indeed like Didymus in doubting, for our Thomas's hold on divine things was firm and sure; but resembling that Apostle in entering the abyss of the side of Jesus Christ (does not Thomas mean 'abyss?')—entering as one invited, and therein searching out and expressing the mysteries contained there, with such assurance that it is as if his hands had handled what the finger of his intellect points to.<sup>17</sup>

Again St. Thomas, at this point in this meditation, recalls the Scriptural basis of the mystery of the Holy Eucharist, asking, like the father with

<sup>14</sup> Cf. the oath of Berengarius of Tours (1079): "I, Berengar, believe in my heart and confess with my lips that the bread and wine which are placed on the altar are, by the mystery of the sacred prayer and words of the Redeemer, substantially changed into the true and proper and life-giving body and blood of Jesus Christ our Lord; and that, after consecration, they are Christ's true body, which was born of the Virgin and hung of the cross, being offered for the salvation of the world, and which sits at the right hand of the Father; and Christ's true blood, which was poured forth from his side; not only by way of sign and by the power of the sacrament, but in their true nature and in their reality of their substance." [ND 1501]; for a detailed discussion of the entirety of Christ's body present in the Holy Eucharist, see *ST* 3, 76, 1–6.

<sup>15</sup> Fra Angelico seems to have had *Adoro Te devote* in mind when he painted *La Crocefissione*: not only St. Thomas and other saints are contemplating with intense gazes the Crucified, but the penitent thief too adores, with a loving abandonment in his eyes, Christ the Lord.

<sup>16</sup> One should notice, however, that St. Thomas enjoyed at least once the miraculous sight of Christ, as reported by B. Gui, in Foster (1959: 43f).

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*: 36.

little faith and great love and humility,<sup>18</sup> for an increase in the virtues of faith, hope and love: "*Fac me Tibi semper magis credere, / In Te spem habere, Te diligere.*"

In the same train of thought St. Thomas recalls the words of Christ in the first two lines of the fifth stanza: "*O memoriale mortis Domini! / Panis vivus, vitam praestans homini!*"<sup>19</sup> The Eucharist is a memorial of Christ's death: it is clearly not a mere supper, but the same sacrifice, now offered in an unbloody manner so that the saving power of the bloody sacrifice may be applied to the living and the dead.<sup>20</sup>

It is interesting that St. Thomas wants his *mens* to be nourished by the Bread of Life. The word can mean 'mind', 'heart', 'soul', 'conscience', 'intellect', and clearly St. Thomas does not want to make communion an intellectual act in a narrow sense of the word, but the connection between the Holy Eucharist and his writings is noteworthy: "He had a particular devotion to the Sacrament of the Altar; and no doubt the special profundity on this subject was due to the same grace that enabled him to say Mass so devoutly."<sup>21</sup> The last line of this fifth stanza offers a very beautiful image, where St. Thomas joins synaesthetically taste and understanding in relationship to the Holy Communion: "*Et Te illi semper dulce sapere.*"

And now back to *Pie pelicane* of the sixth stanza. The pelican is generally the symbol of Christ the Redeemer, the one who gives his blood to nourish his offspring.<sup>22</sup> The 'dirt' that needs to be washed in Christ's blood is sin and, in his simple and direct manner, St. Thomas reminds us that we are sinners, who need to be bathed daily in this most sacred bath, but that we are also the 'chicks' of the pelican, its very precious offspring, for whose eternal life He sheds His own blood: "*Pie pelicane, Iesu Domine, / Me immundum munda Tuo sanguine;*" The salvific

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Mk 9, 22–24.

<sup>19</sup> For the institution of the Eucharist, see Lk 22, 19; for the places where Christ calls Himself the Bread of Life, see Jo 6, 35; 47; and esp. 51.

<sup>20</sup> For the detailed analysis of the necessity of the Eucharist for salvation, see *ST* 3, 73, 3; for the reality of the sacrifice see *ST*, 3, 83, 1.

<sup>21</sup> Gui, in Foster (1959: 37).

<sup>22</sup> The original story about the pelican and the shedding of its blood is to be traced back to the *Physiologus*. For a detailed survey of the development of this metaphor, see *Enciclopedia cattolica*, vol. IX, s. v. pellicano. This is the third instance where one can trace a relationship between *Adoro Te devote* and *La Crocefissione*: above the Crucified Christ, Fra Angelico painted a pelican feeding its offspring with drops of blood from its chest. Under the pelican and above the cross, one reads the words of the Psalm 101: 7: "Similis factus sum pelicano solitudinis." A most fitting caption, which invites all to come and to console Christ by partaking of His body and blood.

power of the Blood of Christ extends to the entire world and to any sin:<sup>23</sup> “*Cuius una stilla saluum facere/ Totum mundum quit ab omni scelere.*” One could wonder why St. Thomas refers to this power by *quit saluum facere* and not by *facit*. Just as Christ offers His Blood ‘for many’<sup>24</sup> not because He wants to exclude someone from salvation, but because He knows that some will refuse Him, in like manner St. Thomas, implicitly, distinguishes between the objective and objective redemption.

The last stanza mirrors the first one, but enlarges the frame to the future glory: the beatific vision. The vocabulary is that of seeing: *aspicio, velatum, revelata, cernens, facie, visu*. In this lexical choice St. Thomas gives expression to the intensity of his thirst—“*oro fiat illud quod tam sitio*”—and, as it were, a ‘foretaste’ of the beatific vision: “*Iesu, Quem velatum nunc aspicio, / Oro fiat illud quod tam sitio; / Ut Te revelata cernens facie, / Visu sim beatus Tuae gloriae.*” Except for the third stanza, where the relation is implicit by the reference to the dialogue between Jesus and Dismas, every single stanza contains a personal reference to the Person in the Holy Eucharist: *Te* (1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 7th), *Tibi* (4th), *Tuo* (6th). The Eucharist is the most direct relationship between the Godhead and the creature, a relationship of love.

I started by showing the preeminent role of poetry as a form of prayer in the life of St. Thomas. It is interesting to know that the last energy invested by the Angelic Doctor was on poetry, love poetry: “And it was indeed appropriate that the great worker in the school of the Church should terminate his teaching on that song of eternal glory.”<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup> *ST* 3, 79, 3: “[T]his sacrament has from Christ’s Passion the power of forgiving all sins, since the Passion is the fount and cause of the forgiveness of sins.” Cf. *ST* 3, 79, 4 for the special case of venial sins.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Mk 14, 24.

<sup>25</sup> The song was the *Canticle of Solomon* (Gui, in Foster 1959: 55). For the attaining of glory through the Holy Eucharist, see *ST* 3, 79, 2.

## EMOTIONS AS INDICATIONS TO THE GOOD: THE EVALUATIVE FUNCTION OF DESIRE IN AQUINAS' ETHICS

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Aquinas' ethical theory contains two basic approaches, Aristotelian virtue ethics, and the law. How is their relationship to be understood? Are there genuinely philosophical ethics? We analyse Aquinas' theories of appetite (§I) and emotions (§II), examine their relevance for ethics and their integration into his account of natural law (§III). Three central formulations give the focus of each part: I. *bonum nominat id in quod tendit appetitus*—appetitions create motivational relations to the good, the fundamental practical dispositions. II. *Passiones appetitus indicadores ad bonum*—the emotions are inclinations to the good, thus providing the primary evaluation of situations. Their basic objectivity becomes clearer in Aquinas' ordering of the passions. III. *Secundum ordinem inclinationum naturalium est ordo praeceptorum legis naturae*—natural law theory, properly understood, reveals the autonomy of practical reasoning and its independence from metaphysical interpretation exactly because of the theory of desire. The highest *praeceptum* contains desire insofar as it names the structure of acting as acting which is defined by its relation to something good as good. In my interpretation, neither the virtues nor the law nor the connection of both parts of Aquinas' ethical theory can be understood without desire, *passiones*, *appetitus naturalis*.

*Sunt quidam praeiudicantes scientiam  
moralem dependere a metaphysica:*

After a long period of interpreting Aristotle mainly through a thomistic looking-glass, historians of philosophy stressed the differences between the moral philosophies of Aristotle and Thomas.<sup>1</sup> It became

<sup>1</sup> See Jaffa (1952); Oehler (1957); Gilson (1972: 17); Thiry (1957: 236f); also Gauthier & Jolif (1970: 131). Jaffa was criticized by Mercken (1974), Papadis (1980) and refuted by Kleber (1988).

apparent that the former based his ethics on the *phainomena* in the double sense of moral experience of appearing goods and the dynamics of desire on the one hand and of the opinions people generally hold about fortune, happiness, virtues etc. on the other.<sup>2</sup> In contrast, Aquinas developed a system of natural law, which is theologically based on the belief in creation, Divine governance of the cosmos and its structures, revelation etc., integrating the old virtue-ethics into the *reditus* of all creatures to their origin (Jaffa 1952). As a consequence, thomistic moral theory would not stand on philosophically accessible grounds. Could this interpretation be influenced by a neo-scholastic understanding of Saint Thomas, coming close to a deduction of ethics from (Christian) metaphysics?

The debates between Kantian and consequentialist ethics did not pay due attention to emotions and their integration; some philosophers looked for alternatives. They first turned to Aristotle, not so much to Aquinas. Why? Some revivals of desire-based or virtue-ethics found it necessary to sharpen their “modern”, i.e., post-metaphysical profile by criticizing the metaphysical or even theological framework of their classical predecessors.<sup>3</sup> For people who do not share those beliefs and respective value systems, the thomistic model seems to be irrelevant, which is equivalent to saying that there are no real philosophical ethics to be found in Aquinas. Recently, D. Bradley has backed this argumentation again, against the interpretation by W. Kluxen and M. Rhonheimer, but from a strictly theological point of view, more radical than J. Maritain.<sup>4</sup>

Are these pictures adequate?

*Videtur quod non:*

Aquinas cannot have overlooked the phenomenological basis of the *Ethica Nicomachea* (EN), Aristotle’s theory of motion and emotion and the fundamental role of *orexis* (desire).<sup>5</sup> He, too, developed a moral

<sup>2</sup> See Riedenauer (2000: 77f).

<sup>3</sup> Krämer (1992: 127ff); Brachtendorf (2002: 62f).

<sup>4</sup> “Thomistic natural law ethics is a part of the Thomistic theology of creation as that is understood by means of the metaphysical doctrine of participation.” (Bradley 1997: 136, compare 88f). R. Leonhardt intends to show the compatibility of Thomas with a Lutheran concept of beatitude.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas as a medieval writer was more interested in finding the truth as he understood it in the *Ethica Nicomachea* than in achieving historical accuracy, still his com-

psychology as a basis for his theory of virtues and defined the practical good in the first place as the aim of desire, just like Aristotle.

*Sed contra:*

Of course, Aquinas integrated the Aristotelian theories into his new framework, reevaluated them in his Christian horizon, combined with some Augustinian traditions—and what is really new, compared to the Greek, is his theory of *lex*, which is thoroughly inspired by the Bible.

*Status quaestionis:*

I will leave aside considerations of the hierarchy of *scientiae*<sup>6</sup> and focus on the content of ethics as indicated in the theory of moral law, on the “material” of practical reason. This will shed some light on the questions I mentioned. On the basis of my assumption that the phenomena of desire, mainly the passions, are central to Aristotelian practical philosophy, we have to look at Aquinas’ theory of *appetitus* and emotions, examine their relevance for the foundation of ethics (sections 1 and 2) and see how this is integrated into his account of natural law (3). In my interpretation, neither the virtues nor the law nor the connection of both parts of his ethical theory can be understood without desire, *appetitus naturalis*, *passiones*, affectivity.

# I. BONUM NOMINAT ID IN QUOD TENDIT APPETITUS

This quotation from *Summa Theologiae*<sup>7</sup> shows how Aquinas accepts the Aristotelian definition of the practical good as the aim of natural desires (*to orekton*). “Nam bonum est aliquid in quantum est appetibile et terminus motus appetitus”.<sup>8</sup> It is our experience of being moved towards the good, of attraction, which allows us to identify different

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mentary is a diligent interpretation. For a discussion of Thomas’ commentaries on Aristotle’s ethics, see Grabmann (1926: 266–313), and recently Rhonheimer (1994).

<sup>6</sup> See Maritain (1935); Kluxen (1980); Rhonheimer (1994: 23–27); Merks (1978: 53ff).

<sup>7</sup> I 16,1. Quotations from the *Summa theologiae* are referred to with roman book number, *quaestio*, *articulus* in arabic numbers only (e.g., I–II 9,1).

<sup>8</sup> I 5,6. The commentary on the EN explicitly states: “Cum autem bonum proprie sit motivum appetitus, describitur bonum per motum appetitus, sicut solet manifestari vis motiva per motum” (*In I Eth.* lect 1).

goods and, needless to stress this every time, the same structure works for the cognition of the bad as repellant.

In the famous *quaestiones* about the natural law, Thomas writes: “Bonum est quod omnia appetunt. Hoc est *ergo* primum praeceptum legis, quod bonum est faciendum et prosequendum, et malum vitandum” (I–II 94,2). The scholar of Thomas will recognize immediately that here he not only cites the fundamental definition of the good from the EN,<sup>9</sup> but uses this as the basis for his own theory of natural law. Evidently, it has its central place not only in commenting Aristotle, but in the very theory which for the first objection (Jaffa 1952) separates him from the Greek. We will come back to this in section 3. But what is the meaning of *appetitus*?

First and fundamentally, it is a concept of action theory: “Omne enim agens aliquo modo appetit finem” (17,8). If we ask by which faculty we act, the usual answer is: by the will. Now Aquinas defines *voluntas* as one form of desire: *appetitus* is found in three forms: as merely natural tendencies, as sensitive in the forms of *appetitus concupiscibilis* or *irascibilis* and as proportionate to cognition, *voluntas*:

Appetitus autem non est proprium intellectualis naturae, sed omnibus rebus inest: licet sit diversimodi in diversis [...] Quae enim omnino cognitione carent, habent appetitum naturalem tantum. Quae vero habent cognitionem sensitivam, et appetitum sensibilem habent sub quo irascibilis et concupiscibilis continetur. Quae vero habent cognitionem intellectivam, et appetitum cognitioni proportionalem habent scilicet voluntatem. Voluntas igitur, secundum quod est appetitus non est proprium intellectualis naturae: sed solum secundum quod ab intellectu dependet. (ScG III 26 n. 2078)

Rational animals have a higher mode of inclination;<sup>10</sup> will is a higher desire (“imperium voluntatis quod est appetitus superior;” (I 81,3)) and itself an *inclinatio* (I 82,1; I 81,3; I–II 1,2). Thomas sounds provocative to modern ears when he defines the will as something somehow natural: “ipsa voluntas quaedam natura” (*De Ver.* 22,5).<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> “[T]agathon hou pant’ ephietai”, in Latin “bonum quod omnia appetunt” (EN I,1 1094 a3).

<sup>10</sup> “[I]n eis sit inclinatio supra modum inclinationis naturalis, quae dicitur appetitus naturalis” (I 80,1); see *Quodl.* IV 1 1,1 (21): In human beings there is a threefold *appetitus*, 1. *appetitus naturalis* in the vegetative powers, 2. sensitive desire/*passiones*, 3. rationally informed desire (will); compare also *In II Sent.* d 24 3,1.

<sup>11</sup> Compare Bormann (1998: ch. II,2) to understand the “Einheit der Vernunft- und Bedürfnisstruktur des Menschen” (p. 288) from the indispensable basis of action theory.

So *appetitus naturalis* is not restricted to sensitive appetites, but must be regarded as an analogous concept. Its most general meaning is an innate impulse to self-realization through the operation of all the powers of a being.<sup>12</sup> The widest definition is: "Appetitus naturalis est inclinatio cuiuslibet rei in aliquid ex natura sua: unde naturali appetitu quaelibet potentia desiderat sibi conveniens."<sup>13</sup> Once constituted, the form determines the natural inclination to fulfillment of each being: "Hanc igitur formam naturalem sequitur naturalis inclinatio, quae appetitus naturalis vocatur" (I 80,1). The concept of weight (*pondus*) which Thomas often uses for *appetitus* according to a standard example for *inclinatio naturalis*, the fall of a stone, shows the foundation of desire in natural philosophy even before the (Aristotelian) theory of self-movement in animals comes into play. Here we are on the level of a metaphysical interpretation of action: as the (second) actualization of the form, adequate to and fulfilling for it. For this action theory, the impulse of appetite is the imperfect operation, its beginning and therefore a necessary mediation between existence and *operatio*.<sup>14</sup>

But nobody needs to share these metaphysics of being and action for his *praxis* to function.<sup>15</sup> The activity of practical reason only needs the impulse from single natural inclinations.<sup>16</sup> "Primus autem voluntatis actus ex ratione ordinatione non est, sed ex instinctu naturae."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Here, the ontological explanation of the specific form of each being as a *finis* and therefore as a dynamic force comes in. In human persons, an overall natural tendency works towards specifically human acts, towards the voluntary, free and rational actualization of the human powers (*actus secundus*). This metaphysical interpretation of appetite comes close to a more dynamic understanding of *potentia*. Even matter desires its formation, compare *II Sent.* d. 18 q. 1 a. 2 and *ScG III* 22: "Appetitus materiae quo appetit formam."

<sup>13</sup> I 78, 1 ad 3. The concept necessarily becomes analogical, see O'Connor (1953: 403). The whole article argues against a univocal misunderstanding of *appetitus*, see p. 363.

<sup>14</sup> See O'Connor (1953: 385; 379). The *motus* of *appetitus* is *actio* and at the same time *passio* (*In III. Phys. lect.* 5). This double characteristic allows the mediation.

<sup>15</sup> For the epistemic independence of ethics from theoretical science, see *Sent. libr. eth.* I, 19 1102a 13–23; *In De An.* I c. 1 402a 4.

<sup>16</sup> Reason reaches out "auf den Bereich des Praktischen nicht schon als Vernunft überhaupt (absolut), sondern erst, sofern sie als leitendes Vermögen einer wirkfähigen und mit Strebevermögen begabten Natur innewohnt" (Kluxen 1980: 34).

<sup>17</sup> I–II 17,5 ad 3 and 9,4: "in primum motum voluntatis voluntas prodeat ex instinctu alicuius exterioris moventis." This twofold identification of the first mover in human action as a natural instinct and as its object, an exterior mover, reflects the Aristotelian identification of the *kinoun* as interior, in the desire in one respect, and as exterior, in the situation and the object of desire in the other respect, which guarantees

The three main features of *appetitus* are: (a) it works in single movements, mainly irascible and concupiscible passions, which are (b) objectivized desire, aroused by determined situations, (c) on the sensitive level their relation is necessary. But because the sensitive reaction to situations which are relevant to the individual being is part of an integrating dynamic towards the fully human act, thus mediated (“aufgehoben”) into the actualization of the form i.e., soul, it is open to rational control and scrutiny, it asks for a voluntary, free integration: a fully human answer to specific situations. But what I want to stress here is that the appetitive phenomena are indispensable for creating a practical motivational relation to objects in our environment, for representing them as goods.

The world is not neutral and does not receive importance from rational judgment, but for animals the world always has a profile of relevance, structured according to good or bad, helpful or harmful, pleasant or painful, which is elucidated by appetite in unity with perception, physical changes and movements<sup>18</sup> “Motus autem sensualis est appetitus apprehensionem sensitivam consequens [...] operatio autem virtutae appetitivae perficitur in hoc quod appetens inclinatur in rem appetibilem [...] Unde per sensualem motum intelligitur operatio appetitivae virtutis” (I 81,1).

The source of motivation is desire and cannot be understood without *appetitus*,<sup>19</sup> i.e., — apart from bodily needs like hunger etc. — especially the passions. Appetite provides the disposition for action, the beginning of the movement which in its full sense becomes an *actus humanus*.<sup>20</sup> As a basic *dispositio*, it posits us between our center and possible objects, between the present and the future. We often talk about interests, and can now understand this term from the status of *inter-esse* as effect of affective disposition.

There are passages in Thomas which seem to put the initiation of movement on the side of the intellect, which are used by “intellectualist” interpretations of his action theory.<sup>21</sup> I 82,4 ad 3 says: *apprehensio* necessarily preceeds every movement of the will. Is this in contradic-

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a first and fundamental “objectivity” of action. We see the objective and the subjective side of appetite.

<sup>18</sup> “[A]ppetitus sensitivus est actus organi corporalis” (I–II 9,5).

<sup>19</sup> This is why Keenan absurdly thinks: “Thomas has no concept of motivation” (1992: 107).

<sup>20</sup> O’Connor calls it a “midway position of natural appetite between nature on the one hand and movement on the other” (1953: 379).

<sup>21</sup> E.g., Malik (1962: 40ff).

tion with passages like *De Ver.* 22,12 ad 2, where Thomas writes that in the interaction of rational and motivational forces there can be no *processus ad infinitum*, because in the *appetitus naturalis* there is a first starting-point? Apart from the fact that the contexts of I 82,3 and 4 must be taken into account, which cannot be discussed here, I think that *apprehensio* is not necessarily part of the rational cognitive faculty, but hints to the cognitive dimension within appetite, especially in passions. We are here at a level before or below the conceptual differentiation of *voluntas* and *ratio*, at a natural receptivity and spontaneous responsiveness which cannot be analysed adequately *modo dividendo*.<sup>22</sup> *Appetitus* is *movens motus*.

## 2. *PASSIONES APPETITUS INDICATORES AD BONUM*

We have seen that appetite is a fundamental motivational relation to something. Thomas calls it inclination: "Appetitus nil aliud est quam quaedam inclinatio appetentis in aliud" (I–II 8,1). Now some forms of human desire have a special relation to rationality: the emotions.<sup>23</sup> They are the determined form of desire and thus *indicatores ad bonum*. The passions depend on single *bona* (or *mala*) which appear in a specific situation: "actus appetitivae virtutis est quaedam inclinatio ad rem ipsam" (I–II 15,1). This basic objectivity is in contrast with a certain indetermination of the will: "Appetitus sensitivus est determinatus ad unum particulare secundum ordinem naturae; voluntas autem est quidem secundum naturae ordinem determinata ad unum comune quod est bonum, sed indeterminate se habet respectu particularium bonorum."<sup>24</sup> *Indicatio* names the function of *inclinatio*.

Without the dynamic openness of the passions to information by the higher forms of desire no *actus humanus* is possible, while without the indication of affectivity no evaluation of situations as good or bad and of the *convenientia* with human life could take place; the overall desire for self-realization could find no objective field of operation: "Passio appetiti sensitivi movet voluntatem ex ea parte qua voluntas movetur ab objecto: in quantum homo scilicet aliquantulum dispositus

<sup>22</sup> For the "unity of thought and will in action" see also Westberg (1994: 50).

<sup>23</sup> "[P]assio principium habet in ipso appetitu, et terminem in ratione, in cuius conformitatem appetitus tendit." (I–II 59,1)

<sup>24</sup> I–II 13,2.

per passionem, iudicat aliquid esse conveniens et bonum, *quod extra passionem existens non indicaret*" (I–II 10,3).

The emotional responses contain a cognitive element because they evaluate the situation. We find that the particularity and spontaneity of emotional reaction which Aristotle had elaborated<sup>25</sup> is the fundamental disposition for acting also for Thomas .

The main difference between Aristotelian and Thomistic affect theory is to be found in the systematic ordering of emotions.

Aquinas uses the Platonic distinction between *epithymia* and *thymos* which plays no systematic role in Aristotle, in order to differentiate the passions: "Appetitus sensitivus est una vis in genere [...] sed dividitur in duas potentias [...] in irascibilem et concupiscibilem" (I 81,2). The *ratio* or relation of man to good or bad is different:<sup>26</sup> In some cases the reaction is more receptive, in others more active; therefore "concupiscibilis videtur ordinata ad recipiendum [...] altera, scilicet irascibilis est ordinata ad agendum" (*De Ver.* 25,2).

Compared to the phenomenological analyses of *ta pathe* in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* II, the impression which the emotion theory in S.Th. I–II q 22–48 gives is that of a much higher degree of abstraction. Aristotle had a practical scope in mind and for this purpose ordered the passions in pairs of opposites, so that a speaker could use the handbook in order to arouse emotional responses. Thomas, however, differentiates the passions according to their objects, for passive powers are known by what activates them (I 80,2). His scope being moral philosophy, he puts emphasis on the moral evaluation which is possible by judging how a person as a whole reacts: if in accordance with the fundamental *habitus* of love, the *forma virtutum* or not. That is why the S.Th. raises the question of good or bad *in passionibus* rather soon (I–II 24). Of course, the moral qualification does not come from the spontaneous reactions themselves but from their subordination to will and reason according to his action theory, insofar as they *subiacent imperio rationis et voluntatis* (24,1; cf. 24,4). Here, Thomas uses the Aristotelian theory of habituation as the basis for virtue ethics. It cannot (and need not) be discussed now, but we must keep in mind that the spontaneous affective reactions can be integrated into a consistent, good life by an indirect *ordinatio*. This is the indispensable work of the

<sup>25</sup> See Riedenauer (2000: 137–141).

<sup>26</sup> "Et ideo secundum diversas rationes particularium bonorum diversificantur partes appetitus sensitivi" (I 82,5).

virtues,<sup>27</sup> so that emotions usually and in most cases “automatically” hit the right mean. Thus they can be indirectly formed by a general will to benevolence.

While Aquinas in his effort to qualify the passions goes beyond Aristotle, he takes care to mark the difference to Stoic ethics which judged all emotions as bad.<sup>28</sup> Interesting is his explanation for that position: *quod eis non sit homo bonus* (*In EN I* 12 Nr. 5; *X* 9 Nr. 3). His statement stands against this anthropological mistake as well as against Kants opinion: “Ad perfectionem boni moralis pertinet quod homo ad bonum moveatur non solum secundum voluntatem, sed etiam secundum appetitum sensitivum.”<sup>29</sup>

After this digression on the comparison of Aristotelian, Stoic and Thomistic moral psychology, let us return to the systematic ordering of the passions in the I–II.

The *appetitus concupiscibilis* shows a simple relation to the object—be it good or bad—while the relations in case of movements of the *irascibilis* are complex. Good or bad which provokes searching or fleeing (the direction of movement) are only one dimension of the differentiation. The other is determined by the phase of movement: (a) inclination and primary evaluation, (b) movement, (c) aim. In the case of *concupiscibilis*: “Ipsa autem aptitudo sive proportio appetitus ad bonum est amor, qui nihil aliud est quam complacentia boni” (a); “motus autem ad bonum est desiderium vel concupiscentia” (b); “quies autem in bono est gaudium vel delectatio” (c) (I–II 25,2). In the other direction, concerning something bad to be fled, the respective phases are *odium* (a); *fuga/abominatio* (b); *tristitia* (c).<sup>30</sup>

In affects of the *irascibilis*, only the medium phase (b) is more complicated, while the fundamental tension of love and hate is the same and stages (a) and (c) are just like in concupiscible passions.<sup>31</sup> Because the object is difficult to obtain (or to evade), it can cause two different emotions: as good *spes* or *desperatio*, as bad *timor* or *audacia*.

<sup>27</sup> I cannot follow Keenan: “The role of the moral virtues is nothing more than to be steps on the way to the perfection of prudence” (1992: 105). See the critique by Porter (1998: 199–202, especially 200)!

<sup>28</sup> I–II 24,4, see also II–II 123,10 ad 2 and 158,1; III 15,4 ad 2 and 46,4.

<sup>29</sup> I–II 24,3. The reactions of *appetitus* are an “ultimum complementum bonitatis” (*De Virt. in com.* 4 ad 2).

<sup>30</sup> Compare *De Ver.* 23,1 ad 8 and I 19,1f!

<sup>31</sup> “[O]mnes passiones irascibilis incipiunt a passionibus concupiscibilis et terminantur in eis” (*In De anima III* lect. 14 Nr. 805).

The passions of the *appetitus concupiscibilis* are more fundamental, those of the *irascibilis* higher insofar as they involve more critical capacity, their evaluation resembles more a rational judgement.<sup>32</sup>

Thomas interpretes all emotional responses as founded in *amor* and *odium* (which is, as a privation, naturally posterior to the former)<sup>33</sup> and thus replaces the Aristotelian pair of basic motivating affections joy and pain (*hedone* – *lype*). This move allows him to connect the ethical good with the ontological good through the ideas of participation and *connaturalitas* and also with theological ethics, based on Christian love (*caritas*) as the central virtue. For our task now it is sufficient to understand that Aquinas is far from dismissing the “low” desires of *appetitus sensitivus* as remote from reason or as remote from love as highest form of virtues. To the contrary, desire and love have very much in common.<sup>34</sup> Still, the theological integration of virtue ethics with biblical ethics of love does not make the cardinal virtues dependent on the infused virtues. They need *prudentia* in order to lead man to his fulfillment through right action, but not *caritas* directly.

With these insights Thomas is already beyond any theory which imposes the good on the will as a heteronomous duty. Emotions do entail an objective relation to the good from the roots, although their primary evaluation needs good habituation through education long before it occurs and critical rational re-evaluation before a fully human act can be justified.

Furthermore, the well-ordered passions indicate not only single good (or bad) objects, but also actualize the subjective good of an assertive, benevolent, loving relation to the world and our own existence as moral agents.

Passions in their double characteristic as passivity and beginning activity make it possible that human conduct is adequate, objectively right and at the same time good insofar as emotional reactions apprehend what is *conveniens* or *connaturalis*. Any theory which minimizes the fundamental receptivity of appetitive powers, specified and activ-

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Sertillanges (1909: 510).

<sup>33</sup> “Naturaliter autem est prius bonum malo: eo quod malum est privatio boni” (I–II 25,2; compare ScG III 11). Note that both love and hate have indifference and apathy as their opposites.

<sup>34</sup> “Amor est aliquid ad appetitum pertinens. cum utriusque objectum sit bonum” (I–II 26,1). “Quodlibet agens ex amore agit quodcumque agit” (I–II 28,6). Elsewhere Thomas identifies love as the first moving principle of natural desires: “Primus enim motus voluntatis, et cuiuslibet appetitivae virtutis, est amor” (I 20,1; compare I–II 25,2; ScG IV 19).

ated by situations (in favour of “freedom of the will”) will have to take refuge to a rather intellectualistic interpretation of Thomistic moral philosophy which then makes it more dependent on metaphysics. The ontological interpretation of *bonum* then gains prevalence over the Aristotelian model of experience as revelatory of the good which Aquinas, as we have seen, does adopt. But the deductive model which eliminates practical philosophy’s own, irreducible starting-point in the phenomena of appetite, is a home-made misunderstanding. We must penetrate the dominant order of description and explanation, which for more practical reasons (methods of scholastic teaching) is deductive, and get to the order of foundation.<sup>35</sup> Thomas himself writes: “metaphysica, quae considerat omnia in quantum sunt entia, non descendens ad propriam cognitionem moralium vel naturalium” (*I Sent. prol.* q1 a 1).

Compared to Aristotle, the primary objectivity of affective responses is less elaborated in Aquinas’ Quaestiones on the passions (I–II 22–48) — but will find its place exactly in his theory of the law.

### 3. SECUNDUM ORDINEM INCLINATIONUM NATURALIUM EST ORDO PRAECEPTORUM LEGIS NATURAE<sup>36</sup>

The emotions receive their indicative strength from their congruity with natural inclination: “passiones tanto vehementius impellunt ad aliquid prosequendum, quanto magis sequuntur inclinationem naturae” (II–II 155,2).

Emotions and adequate inclinations are not *eo ipso* the same, there is a conceptual distinction, which is needed because desires can be distorted and thus lose their natural function as *indicatores ad bonum*.<sup>37</sup> But if no such habitual perversion takes place and if no extraordinary or extreme situation occurs, they do indicate what is really good for the person.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Compare Merks (1978:62–66).

<sup>36</sup> I–II 94,2. Compare 94,4: “ad legem naturae pertinent ea ad quae homo naturaliter inclinatur;” similarly 94,3, and *Quodl.* 7,17: “Illa enim sunt de lege naturali ad quae homo ex suis naturalibus inclinatur.” See also 91,2 and 91,6: “omnis inclinatio vel ordinatio quae invenitur in his quae subiecta sunt legi, participative dicitur lex.”

<sup>37</sup> “Contingit enim in aliquo individuo corrumpi aliquod principiorum naturalium speciei; et sic id quod est contra naturam speciei, fieri per accidens naturale huic individuo” (I–II 31,7).

<sup>38</sup> The conceptual differentiation of *passio* and *inclinatio* marks a tension important for the dynamics of the development of virtues, for moral progress. For the habitual

The theological explanation for the possible gap recurs to the *peccatum originale* as a weakness of the natural order, a lack of harmony between single and overall good. Because Thomas does not share the idea of a complete distortion of human nature after the fall, there remains room for genuinely philosophical ethics. He does not deny the experienced difficulties of morally good and consistent behaviour, but allows for a description of the naturally good order on a first level which is autonomous from theological anthropology.

The *Summa Theologiae* gives us two definitions of the law,<sup>39</sup> the more general being: “lex quaedam regula est et mensura actuum, secundum quam inducitur aliquis ad agendum, vel ab agendo retrahitur [...] regula autem et mensura humanorum actuum est ratio.” With hitherto unknown clarity<sup>40</sup> does Thomas locate the law in the faculty of reason. Human practical reason then<sup>41</sup> is interpreted as a participation in the Divine ordering of the cosmos.<sup>42</sup> But this means absolutely no deduction of natural law norms from theoretical reasoning. In itself it originates in moral experience with practical independence from speculation.

Practical reason participates in the Divine order insofar as it is reasoning of a living being which has the principle of its movements in itself<sup>43</sup> “Practical reason is mind directed to direct and it directs as it can. But it can direct only toward that for which man can be brought to act, and that is either toward the objects of his natural inclinations, or toward objectives that derive from these [...]” (Grisez 1980:357).

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formation of primary motivations according to right reason is, in principle, not against their own particular tendencies. As to the question, in which ways reason may conduct human affectivity to the real good, see Ziermann (1955:515f) and Pfürtner (1958:281ff)!

<sup>39</sup> I–II 90,1 and 4. For parallels in the commentary on Sent., see *In IV Sent.* d 33 1,1 sol. and *In III Sent.* d 37 1 sol. and ad 5.

<sup>40</sup> See Lottin (1942–1960:90).

<sup>41</sup> This integration into *lex aeterna* is “nachfolgende Interpretation” — see Kluxen (1980:234).

<sup>42</sup> “Eiusdem rationis est quod vitium et peccatum sit contra ordinem rationis humanae et quod sit contra legem aeternam” (S.Th. I–II 71,2 ad 4).

<sup>43</sup> After all, the *forma* of man is not theoretical reason but the soul with several distinct faculties, among them *appetitus*, including the tendency towards acting *secundum rationem*. See Kluxen (1980:192). In I–II 94,1, Aquinas asks whether *lex naturalis* is a *habitus* which makes clear that its place is the soul. But the soul is the principle of all movements.

Thomas says that all beings (including humans) participate in the "lex aeterna" through their "inclinationes in proprios actus et fines."<sup>44</sup>

The second (more sociological) definition of *lex naturalis* says: "quaedam rationis ordinatio ad bonum commune, ab eo qui curam communitatis habet, promulgata." Now practical reason is the reason of a being which naturally desires. The *regula* (in the first definition) and the ordination of reason presuppose something to be regulated and ordered, something in movement. The *ratio* itself does not move but only regulates. So there must be movements which furthermore cannot have opposite directions but must be prerationally ordered already—otherwise the effect of the rational *ordinatio* would be merely external and could not be in accordance, adequate and finally fulfilling.

Here is not the place to deal with the sources and the genesis of Thomistic law theory. The two most important factors are the Stoic idea of nature as a rational order of the world and the Aristotelian concept of the *physis* of an animal as its internal principle of movement. By combining these, Thomas can recognize the *ordo* in the natural tendencies, inclinations and movements of animals. Wherever the person promulgating the law may be, its *ratio* is to be seen immanent in nature.

The promulgation is already indicated in the structures of movements towards natural aims, no revelation and no theology is needed for it (only as a help for creatures weakened by original sin).<sup>45</sup> Practical philosophy makes it explicit. What the law does as an exterior help to good action is to clarify and strengthen that interior ordination against misinterpretations and weakness.

Every human act is automatically ordered *sub ratione boni*. Aquinas formulates this as the principle of practical reason itself: "bonum faciendum et prosequendum, malum vitandum est" (I-II 94,2). The intelligibility of the good is given by experience (the good is what all

<sup>44</sup> I-II 91,2. "Gemeinsam ist vernünftigen und vernunftlosen Wesen, daß ihnen das Gesetz als Tätigkeitsprinzip mitgeteilt wird; aber nur dort erfolgt diese Mitteilung in der Form einer Bekanntmachung, nur dort gehört das Gesetz dem denkenden Geiste an und hat es den Charakter eines normierenden Prinzips, während es in den vernunftlosen Wesen nur bewegendes Prinzip ist. Im Menschen ist daher das Gesetz sowohl in der einen wie in der anderen Form wirksam" (Wittmann 1933: 327). See Kluxen (1980: 236); Rhonheimer (1987: 70–74).

<sup>45</sup> See I-II 91,4. "Manifest wird das Ewige Gesetz nur in der Kreatur, sofern sie [...] 'Hinneigungen' (inclinationes) zu den ihr je eigentümlichen Vollzügen und Zielen hat" (Kluxen 1980: 33; cf. 39–42).

beings strive for).<sup>46</sup> The practical principle does not have to be recognized *actualiter* and explicitly (otherwise only philosophers would be able to act morally, which is evidently false), it is always already effective in *appetitus*.<sup>47</sup> Thomas makes clear what this *primum principium in ratione practica* is founded in (*fundatur*): “bonum est quod omnia appetunt” — and thus it is natural law (I–II 94,2). Thus “besteht im Rahmen desselben praktischen Verstehens auch kein Anlaß, nach einem gründenden Gesetzgeber zu fragen — es sei denn, es wird auf die Gründung der Natur überhaupt hin gefragt.” (Kluxen 1980: 236). The highest *praeceptum* contains desire insofar as it names the structure of acting as acting which is defined by its relation to something good as good. This experience makes the *bonum faciendum* evident.

So from the very structure of natural law in Aquinas, it is already clear that its single *praecepta* can only be described by integrating the dimensions of human existence as being, as animate, as sensitive and as reasonable (see I–II 94,2 as a development of EN I,8). “The precepts of reason which clothe the objects of inclinations in the intelligibility of ends-to-be-pursued-by-work — these precepts *are* the natural law.”<sup>48</sup> Although Thomas knew the catalogue of natural inclinations which Isidor of Seville had collected,<sup>49</sup> he is careful not to deduct a system of inclinations. This would be contrary to the (Aristotelian) structure of his practical philosophy, which also knows a certain variability in matters of *praxis*.<sup>50</sup>

“[O]mnia illa facienda vel vitanda pertineant ad praecepta legis naturae, quae ratio practica naturaliter apprehendit esse bona humana.” Thomas again stresses the natural evaluating function of experienced desire; the naturally ordered inclination corresponds with the natural

<sup>46</sup> As “nothing can be understood by practical reason without the intelligibility of good being included in it.” Grisez (1980: 350).

<sup>47</sup> For “one *has* these principles, even when he is not thinking of them” (Grisez 1980: 350). The natural law theory of Aquinas parallels theoretical reasoning with its first principles and practical reasoning which has its own first principles. What is immediately known is the *ratio boni*: “Sicut autem ens est primum quod cadit in apprehensione simpliciter, ita bonum est primum quod cadit in apprehensione practicae rationis [...] omne enim agens agit propter finem, qui habet rationem boni.”

<sup>48</sup> Grisez (1980: 358).

<sup>49</sup> “Viri et feminae coniunctio, librorum successio et educatio, communis omnium possessio, et omnium una libertas, acquisitio eorum, quae coelo, terra, marique capiuntur. Item depositae rei vel commendatae pecuniae restitutio, violentiae per vim repulsio” (Isidor: Etym. 5,4 PL 82,199; compare S.Th. I–II 94,2; ScG III,63).

<sup>50</sup> “Prakton d’esti to endechomenon kai allos echein” (*De anima* III,10 433a 30; compare EN V,7 1134b 30).

apprehension of its aim as good: "omnia illa ad quae homo habet naturalem inclinationem, ratio naturaliter apprehendit ut bona; et per consequens ut opera prosequenda; et contraria eorum ut mala et vitanda. Secundum igitur ordinem inclinationum naturalium, est ordo praeceptorum legis naturae" (I-II 94,2).

All of this has its own right and plausibility before the next stage, the theological interpretation takes place.<sup>51</sup> It remains valid without the thomistic theory of *virtutes infusae*, their integration of the moral virtues and connection with the gifts of the Divine spirit.

#### 4. CONCLUSIO

The S.Th. I-II 49–89 deals with moral virtues as intrinsic principles of moral behaviour (the theological virtues are systematically later, to be found mainly in II–III) and then treats the law under the title of *principia extrinseca* in I-II 90ff. As such, it can only help to the proper and best fulfillment of the intrinsically oriented movement, thus being a guide to the virtues.<sup>52</sup> The fundamental direction is given at the beginning of the practical part of the *Summa*, in I-II 1–5: the aim is happiness.

My response to the fundamental disagreements in interpreting Aquinas' moral theory, which I mentioned in the beginning, would argue along the following lines: The *lex* theory seems to be integrated into the Aristotelian account of ethics from the practical point of view (notwithstanding that from a theological point of view it may be the other way round). Only by distinguishing different layers of interpretation in the complex account which Thomas gives of the phenomena of moral life can we hope to do justice to all aspects of its structure.

We must discern (a) the effectivity of the law, working automatically (already in creatures without reason) through the *appetitus*, (b) the relation to the *finis* of each being, of the species, the human community and of the universe (the common good) which can be recognized by experience and practical reasoning (c) the theoretical philosophical interpretation of this structure including metaphysics of action and (d) its theological interpretation in light of revelation which can put the natural law in relation to what the scriptures say.

<sup>51</sup> Theology answers different questions (which to many people are very important, too), but Thomas strictly adheres to the principle: *gratia praesupponit naturam*.

<sup>52</sup> "Unde manifestum est quod hoc sit proprium legis, inducere subiectos ad propriam ipsorum virtutem" (I-II 92,1). This is a significant modification, compared to Bonaventura and even Albertus Magnus.

I believe that (c) and (d) are impossible without (a) and (b) but not the other way round. Especially (b) is not dependent on (c) and this is logically independent from the highest-level interpretation of (d).

While it may be rather clear that the Aristotelian virtue-ethics of Thomas Aquinas must be based on *passiones* as forms of *appetitus naturalis*, misunderstandings arose because they were not put in their central function as inclinations in the context of his *lex* theory. Without an understanding of desire, we will not be able to understand moral action, its internal and external principles.

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## BEING AND THE MYSTIC: THE METAPHYSICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THOMAS AQUINAS' MYSTICAL THOUGHT

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Various mystical traditions and much of modern scholarship sever the connection between mysticism and metaphysical claims. For Aquinas, differing ontological claims both generate and correlate logically to diverse mystical claims, under the aegis of one analogous notion of truth. In this way, Aquinas' mystical theology offers a metaphysics of mystical union, according to which a thing's nobility of being corresponds to its degree of union with God. Aquinas' metaphysical positions both define and circumscribe his interpretation of religious experience. This examines the points of contact between metaphysics and mysticism. Second, it takes the metaphysical issue of monism versus pluralism as a locus for intersecting truth claims in metaphysics and mysticism. Third, examines the context, formulation and solution to the problem of the "one and the many" within Aquinas' metaphysics, including its relevance for his mystical theology. Fourth, it examines a metaphysical paradox taken from the domain of the intellect, and show how it stands at the threshold of mystical experience for Aquinas.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Yahweh's words to Moses in the Book of *Exodus* chapter 3 verse 14 surely provided Aquinas with fruit for both metaphysical and mystical reflection, since the Absolute proclaiming Himself to be "I am Who Am" involves at least two interpretations.<sup>1</sup> As an abstract definition of the infinite and eternal Supreme Being, it is a name, says Thomas, more rightly His than the name of God itself.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, the

<sup>1</sup> The metaphysical interpretation: *S.T.* I 13.11; cf. A. Maurer, 'St. Thomas on the Sacred Name *Tetragrammaton*', *Medieval Studies* 34, 1972, pp. 275–286.

<sup>2</sup> *S.T.* I 13.11 ad 1. Cf. E. Gilson, *L'esprit de la philosophie médiévale*, 2nd ed. (Vrin: 1944), p. 50 #1 (Tr. A.H.C. Downes, Scribners, New York, 1936, pp. 433ff); cf. H. de Lubac, *The discovery of God*, Darton, Longman & Todd, New York, 1960, p. 137.

phrase can suggest a concrete individual, or, as some have described it, the “Supreme Someone”,<sup>3</sup> connoting “personality” as the core sense of the mystery of being. Henri de Lubac has noted correctly that while Thomas’ mystical theology is not an extension or prolongation of his metaphysical contemplation, because it springs from a different root, it is stimulated by metaphysical inquiry, animates it, and exhibits the same natural desire to see God.<sup>4</sup> Unlike natural contemplation, however, infused contemplation occurs through the supernatural gift of *wisdom*, which is produced in the intellect through charity and as such, belongs to the virtue of love.<sup>5</sup>

While the metaphysician discerns traces of a reality beyond the mind’s measure, the mystic speaks of a reality reverberating in the center of his soul, of intuitions, of extraordinary awareness and identity with the divine substance. The spectrum of views on the relation between mystical experience and metaphysical contemplation exhibits great diversity — there are philosophers who contain metaphysics within the expression of mystical insight, effectively linking the cognitive and affective orders in their descriptions of contact with ultimate reality; there are others who view mystical experience as a type of “evidence” for ontological claims, and still others who *sever* the link between mystical and metaphysical claims, distinguishing the mystical experience of bliss as practical, not epistemic, in aim. Traditionally, scholars have studied the ways in which mystical experience can provide insight both into the philosophy of mind and personal identity,<sup>6</sup> and into the perennial and central metaphysical controversy over the existence of an ultimate reality or transcendent being underlying worldly multiplicity.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> P. Teilhard de Chardin, *La phenomene humaine*, 1955, p. 332, as quoted in de Lubac (1960: 139).

<sup>4</sup> De Lubac (1960: 146).

<sup>5</sup> *S.T.* II-II 45. Cf. my article ‘*Pati Divina*: Mystical union in Aquinas’, in A. Ramos & M. Georgeeds (eds.), *Faith, scholarship and culture in the 21st century*, Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 2002, pp. 73–96.

<sup>6</sup> On this point, see L. Angel, *Enlightenment East and West*, State University of New York Press, New York, 1994, pp. 98–103. Some of the scholars exploring the connection between mysticism and the philosophy of mind and personal identity are Russell, Stace, Zaehner, Smart, Staal, Katz, Proudfoot, and Wainwright.

<sup>7</sup> There is also the question of the status of mystical claims as evidence for metaphysical entities, specifically, for the existence of transcendent being, whether that be the One, the Void, or a transcendent God or Godhead. Here, the issue of the noetic status of mystical claims is involved.

Aquinas views the metaphysics/mysticism nexus from yet another perspective. Since Aquinas' mystical thought flows from his moral theology, and since both theology and metaphysics examine "being", albeit under different aspects, much of the conceptual content of his mystical thought rests on a metaphysical scaffolding. Although he interprets the line of evidence to run *from* metaphysical claims *to* mystical claims about the mode of union with God, Aquinas, in fidelity to his Dionysian and Augustinian heritage, acknowledges the paradoxical use of language and the role of the will in mystical union, and clearly distinguishes the objects of natural and supernatural contemplation. What distinguishes his account from many medieval mystics as well as from most modern accounts is his commitment to the priority of ontological claims within his theory of mystical ascent, instead of viewing the latter as immune from or transcending metaphysical assessment.

To sum up, whereas various mystical traditions and much of modern scholarship *sever* the connection between mysticism and metaphysical claims in the effort to accommodate religious pluralism (somewhat reminiscent of the "double-truth" theory), for Aquinas, differing ontological claims both *generate* and *correlate logically* to diverse mystical claims,<sup>8</sup> under the aegis of one analogous notion of truth.<sup>9</sup> In this way, Aquinas' mystical theology transcends the phenomenalist interpretation of subjective experience through the practical and expressive functions of religious language, and offers instead a *metaphysics* of mystical union, according to which a thing's nobility of being corresponds to its degree of union with God.<sup>10</sup> In this way, Aquinas interprets metaphysical doctrine to *ground* both the mystical experience and its interpretation, such that we could produce a set of parallel propositions

<sup>8</sup> The assumptions of objectively existing foundations for truth and the possibility of consensus regarding it are not examined in this paper, but have been critiqued recently by postmodern philosophers. See, e.g., N. Rescher, *Pluralism: Against the demand for consensus*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1993.

<sup>9</sup> Aquinas, *De Ver.* I.4. Here, Aquinas says that if truth is taken in its proper, or primary sense, there is one truth by which all things are true, and that truth is the divine intellect itself.

<sup>10</sup> On the relation of instances in a category to the first instance within it, see Aquinas, *In 1 Sent.* d.8, q.4, a.2 ad 3. As applied to God, this means that God is the "measure of all beings", and that things are measured in their "quantity of being" in relation to His infinite perfection. As Aquinas says, "how much of the 'nobility of being' (*nobilitas essendi*) each thing possesses can be known by its distance from or nearness to God." (*In de div. Nom.* c.4 lect. 3 (#310): "Est enim mensura existentium, quia ex hoc potest sciri quantum unumquodque existentium habeat de nobilitate essendi, quod appropinquant Ei vel distat ab Eo.")

which are internally and mutually coherent and exclusive of other rival propositions.

It is my thesis that in contrast to the modern focus on the psychology and epistemology of mysticism, Aquinas' properly *metaphysical* positions both define and circumscribe his interpretation of religious experience, such that there can be no "core" mystical experience common to all mystics any more than there exists a unified metaphysics between philosophies. Aquinas' view will be seen to contrast to the approach to mysticism which minimizes the impact of metaphysical claims on mysticism, and which views the function of metaphysics as purely practical or preparatory for enlightenment, thus downplaying the contradictory features of those metaphysical claims concerning the nature of ultimate reality.

This paper contains four parts. First, I will examine the points of contact between metaphysics and mysticism, listing their similarities and differences in the context of Aquinas' thought. Second, I will take the metaphysical issue of monism versus pluralism as a locus for intersecting truth claims in metaphysics and mysticism. Third, I will examine the context, formulation and solution to the problem of the "one and the many" within Aquinas' metaphysics, including its relevance for his mystical theology. Fourth, I will examine a metaphysical paradox taken from the domain of the intellect, and show how it stands at the threshold of mystical experience for Aquinas.

## 2. POINTS OF CONTACT BETWEEN METAPHYSICS AND MYSTICISM

The intersection of mystical experience and metaphysical inquiry arises naturally from at least four similarities of subject matter and aim. *First*, both the metaphysician and the mystic seek a *unifying vision of reality* amidst the multiplicity of objects of experience; in both cases, the synthetic movement of the mind is directed towards an *all-embracing unity* which eludes sense perception; this very direction of the mind stemming, in both cases, from our ability to stand outside the world of phenomena as "ecstatic beings"<sup>11</sup> who are by nature open to the transcendent. For Aquinas, even the intellect is endowed with a desire or drive towards the infinite, as truth and goodness, which no finite thing

<sup>11</sup> On this point, see F. Copleston, *Religion and the One*, Crossroad, New York, 1982, p. 191.

can satisfy.<sup>12</sup> *Second*, both the metaphysician and the mystic examine *immaterial reality*, the Thomist attaining being as either “neutrally” immaterial (that is, to being as found both in matter, as in the study of categorical being, or, as in “first philosophy”, attaining being as “positively” immaterial, as in the case of beings *never* found in matter (angels and God)).<sup>13</sup> Many mystics also describe their experiences of the universality or commonality of being, as well as its presence as the unconditioned Absolute in the human soul,<sup>14</sup> but mystics, unlike metaphysicians, limit their focus to the “positive” interpretation of immateriality, with the exception of nature mystics. *Third*, most metaphysicians and mystics view *consciousness* as the most increased, noble and enriched mode of existing<sup>15</sup> yet also saturate their descriptions of divine attributes or contract with ultimate reality with the language of paradox, evoking both the inexhaustible wealth of being and the poverty of our way of conceiving God or ultimate reality. *Fourth* and finally, both the metaphysician and the mystic view the *human soul* as an isomorphic image or microcosm of all reality: for Aquinas the philosopher, man habits the horizon between spiritual and bodily reality, partaking the goodness of both worlds,<sup>16</sup> and spiritually containing the perfection

<sup>12</sup> CG III 50: “Nihil finitum desiderium intellectus quietare potest.” Cf. C.G. I 43: “Intellectus noster ad infinitum in intelligendo extenditur.” An interesting reflection on the connection between the infinity of knowing and the “infinity” of the human spirit is found in: J. Robb, *Man as infinite spirit*, Marquette University Press, Milwaukee, 1974.

<sup>13</sup> Aquinas, *In De Trin.* V.1. John F. Wippel treats this issue extensively in his discussion on the relation between the existence of God and the real distinction. An initial treatment of the types of immateriality can be found in his book, *Metaphysical themes in Thomas Aquinas*, Catholic University of America Press, Washington D.C., 1984, pp. 29f.

<sup>14</sup> Meister Eckhart and Buddhists would be good examples here.

<sup>15</sup> See Aquinas' commentary on the *Liber de Causis* 18: “Considerandum est quod omnes gradus rerum ad tria videtur reducere, quae sunt: esse, vivere, et intelligere.” The Neoplatonic triad of being, life and intelligence is taken from Proclus, Dionysius and the author of the *Liber de causis*. On this triad, see, for example: F. O'Rourke, *Pseudo-Dionysius and the Metaphysics of Aquinas*, Brill, Leiden, 1992, pp. 179–180.

<sup>16</sup> See *In 2 Sent.* 1.2.3 Sed Contra; *In 3 Sent.* Prol.: “Homo enim est quasi horizon et confinium spiritualis et corporalis naturae, ut quasi medium inter utrasque, utrasque bonitates participet et corporales et spirituales.” Cf. C.G. II 81, *In de causis* IX, 220: “Anima est in horizonte aeternitatis et temporis existens infra aeternitatem et supra tempus.” Cf. the article by G. Verbeke, ‘Man as ‘Frontier’ according to Aquinas’, in G. Verbeke & D. Verhelsted (eds.), *Aquinas and the problems of his time*, Leuven University Press, Leuven, 1976, pp. 195–223.

of the entire universe<sup>17</sup> not only cognitively but also at an ontological level, since all levels of created perfection—material, biological, animal and spiritual, are existentially present within his nature.<sup>18</sup> For a certain variety of mystics, the Absolute is discovered within the soul, which is discovered to be basically identical with ultimate reality, resulting in the dissolution of the finite soul's individuality and in the disappearance of the subject/object distinction into "pure consciousness."<sup>19</sup>

Despite the similarities noted between the reflective experience of the mystic and of the metaphysician, namely, the mind's tendency towards *synthetic unity*, the data of *immateriality*, the priority given to *consciousness* and the *isomorphism* of the soul and being in general, significant differences separate the two approaches. The mystic's contact with ultimate reality is direct and experiential, and often more volitional than cognitive, whereas the metaphysician's reflection on being is inferential and demonstrative. As well, the metaphysician's study of being embraces not only the "positive" variety but also the "neutral" variety of immateriality. With respect to *consciousness*, the apophatic summit of first philosophy differs from the intentional and poetic use of paradox by mystics—the former is intended to reveal a set of truths about God, whereas the latter serves to highlight the inherent limitations of man's mind and ultimately to reduce discursive reason to silence. With respect to the *soul*, metaphysicians generally *deny* an *ontological* or *substantial* union with ultimate reality, asserting the possibility of only a *cognitive* and *affective* presence of the Absolute to the soul,<sup>20</sup> reasoning

<sup>17</sup> *De Ver.* 2.2: "Dicatur animam esse quodammodo omnia, quia nata est omnia cognoscere. Et secundum hunc modum possibile est ut in una re totius universi perfectio existat. . ." Aristotle's text is *De Anima* III.8 (431b21).

<sup>18</sup> In *In 3 Sent.* Prol., Aquinas notes that whereas in other creatures, the streams of perfection are distinct, in man they are joined together, so that he is a microcosm and similitude (*minor mundus*) of the entire order of the universe: "Ista flumina in aliis creaturis inveniuntur distincta; sed in homine quodammodo omnia congregantur."

<sup>19</sup> Varieties of Advaita Vedanta Hinduism and various monistic philosophies (Spinoza, e.g.) are representative examples.

<sup>20</sup> Although Aquinas accepts the Aristotelian doctrine of the identity of the known object with the subject knower in the act of knowing ("the knower in act is the object known in act": *cognoscens in actu est ipsum cognitum in actu*, *In 2 de An.* l.12 [#377]), he makes clear that this is not an ontological but an epistemic identity, in his discussions of God's omnipresence (e.g., *S.T.* I 8.4). The perceiver does not really exist *in* the object perceived (*S.T.* I 8.4 ad 6). Mystical union is a sort of experiential knowledge of God through Love, where the person receives a "mission" of the Trinity, and through the infused gifts, the Holy Spirit is said to enter the mind invisibly through love, as the Son enters by the gift of wisdom (*In 1 Sent.* 15.4.1 sol.). On the notion of "presence", specifically, of God's presence in creation and to the human mind and heart,

that the distinction between subject and object is a necessary condition of consciousness or the presence of being to the mind.

Having listed both the similarities and differences between metaphysics and mysticism, we now turn to our earlier claim that in contrast to modern approaches, which either derive ontology from mystical experience or sever the connection altogether, Aquinas superimposes his mystical thought onto his metaphysics. One could say, with some conditions, that he reverses the line of causality *from* metaphysics *to* mysticism in terms of the ontological foundations of the mystical life. This grafting of mystical speculation onto a metaphysical framework, moreover, is perfectly natural for a thinker who envisions metaphysics as a necessary condition for theology, and for whom the existence of God is conceived as an end or goal of metaphysics.<sup>21</sup>

To this extent, his mystical theology is circumscribed *by* the metaphysical framework, with the consequence that there can be no "core" or common, identical mystical experience which escapes or contradicts philosophical context, for Aquinas. In short, differing metaphysical claims about the nature of being, the soul and ultimate reality generate diverse possibilities for mystical experience and define the parameters of valid mystical truth claims. To see how Aquinas' thought differs from other mystical thinkers in this regard, we must *first* illustrate the correlation between certain metaphysical claims and their mystical counterparts, and *second*, examine a selection of metaphysical concepts that Aquinas employs in his theory of mystical ascent.

### 3. THE INTERSECTION OF METAPHYSICAL AND MYSTICAL TRUTH CLAIMS: MONISM VS. PLURALISM

Turning to the first task, we can distinguish ontological pluralism from the different varieties of monism. *Ontological pluralism* is a metaphysical doctrine stating that there are many things, or kinds of things in

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see A. Maurer, 'Reflections on Thomas Aquinas' notion of Presence', in R.J. Long (ed.), *Philosophy and the God of Abraham: Essays in Memory of James A. Weisbeipl, OP (Papers in Medieval Studies 12)*, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto: 1991, pp. 113–127.

<sup>21</sup> As John F. Wippel has frequently noted, contemporary interpreters (especially the debate between Wippel and J. Owens and the entire Gilsonian school) are deeply divided over the relative priority of metaphysics to natural (and revealed) theology in the order of discovery—see e.g., the references in J.F. Wippel, 'Metaphysics' in N. Kretzmann & E. Stump (eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Aquinas*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993, p. 89 #15. Cf. Wippel (1984: 29 #80).

the world, standing in relation to each other and often in relation to a causal source. Ontological pluralism can recognize either “family resemblances” or “common essences” among things, but at other times admits only semiotic and logical entities into discourse,<sup>22</sup> refraining from ontological commitment to extramental entities of any sort. In its ancient and medieval variety, pluralism proposes a doctrine of analogical participation or order within being as a solution to the problem of how being can be both one and many. In its various guises, pluralism is the most persistent approach to being, historically claiming adherents across the philosophical spectrum. The *mystical* truth claims corresponding to metaphysical pluralism include a variety of views, many of which posit a transcendent or a grounding “ultimate reality” beyond the world of phenomena, conditioning our ordinary awareness of multiplicity and the levels of mystical ascent. While “nature mystics” are world-affirming, and display a profound gratitude for sense experience, and “apophatic mystics” are often world-denying, both posit a “differentiated unity” between the soul and ultimate reality in mystical union, rejecting the substantial identity of the personal self with a divine infinity immanent in the world, for this would violate both the requirements of consciousness (the subject/object distinction) and the data of experience (multiplicity perceived through sensation).

Unlike pluralism, ontological monism is the view that there is *one* object or reality, and that our experience of essential differences and relations between things, that is, our perception of change causality, of individuals and community, is illusory. *Strict* or *universal monism* does not express a unity of the *source*, but rather a unity of *substance* or existence, such that what we identify as finite entities exist in the same way a conditioned being, whether this be conceived of as material (materialist monism)<sup>23</sup> or as spiritual (idealist monism).<sup>24</sup> In its affirmation of the essential oneness of the infinite impersonal Absolute and the world, *pantheistic monism* states that the apparent multiplicity of entities is really a manifestation of a single substance, either according to different points of view or according to different states, such that the divine is not the independent being on which all else hinges ontologic-

<sup>22</sup> One calls to mind medieval nominalists and Bertrand Russell’s “logical atomism” here, which he himself described as “absolute pluralism”: see the entry ‘Monism’ in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vols. 5–6, MacMillan, New York, 1967, p. 364.

<sup>23</sup> Parmenides was, paradoxically, a materialist monist, in that he viewed the One to be a finite material entity.

<sup>24</sup> Some examples of idealist/spiritual monists are: Spinoza, Hegel, and the Hindu thinker Samkara.

ally.<sup>25</sup> Parmenides' hegemonic One and Advaita Vedanta Hinduism's Brahman both assume the view that the separate self is illusory are good examples of strict monism which resists the reality of plurality, time and change.

Where the Many are viewed as transient forms assumed by the One in its unfolding self-development, we find *qualified* or *partial monism*, which does not reject the Many as unreal or illusory, but unlike *theistic pluralism*, does not suppose view the One as a personal transcendent being either. Plotinus' emanating hypostases<sup>26</sup> and his metaphoric descriptions of the One's relationship to its products are apt examples of partial monism,<sup>27</sup> although there have been many interpretations of it.<sup>28</sup>

*Metaphysically*, what binds monists together is the *henological principle* or the primacy of unity over multiplicity and the assertion of substantial union of the soul with ultimate reality. For metaphysical theism, however, the soul is transformed into God only on the cognitive and appetitive levels.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, unity is the most basic of the transcendentals besides being, and a thing has existence to the degree it partakes

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Spinoza's "God-Nature" or Bradley's "Absolute."

<sup>26</sup> Viz., Nous and Soul emanating from the One.

<sup>27</sup> The One is said to emanate its effects in the way that the sun radiates light, fire emanates heat, snow its coldness, flowers diffuse their perfume, or in the manner of concentric circles superimposed on each other (Plotinus, *Enneads* V.1). These metaphors of emanation reveal the unified One to communicate its perfection through a series of descending agents/hypostases without being diminished in any way. Plotinus' ontology dovetails harmoniously into his natural mysticism in that the progress of souls towards their transcendent source also marks the unfolding cosmic return of all being to its ground. The "flight of the alone to the Alone" (*Enneads* VI.9.11) is a stripping away both of individuality and of the "will to isolation" found in the lower emanations. Personal identity is absorbed into the All in the highest stage of consciousness, and while the ordinary ego is surpassed, lower psychic activities still persist through lower forms of attention. On this topic, see Plato Mamo, 'Is Plotinian Mysticism Monistic?', in R. Baine Harris, *The significance of NeoPlatonism*, International Society for NeoPlatonic Studies, Old Dominion University, Norfolk, 1976, pp. 199–215.

<sup>28</sup> There has been considerable disagreement in the interpretation of Plotinus. While Mamo (1976) and the traditional interpretation attribute pantheist monism to him, John Rist (*Plotinus: the road to reality*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1967) attributes theism to him, and Sweeney (*Christian philosophy: Greek, Medieval, contemporary reflections*, Peter Lang, New York, 1997, pp. 383–398) denies both positions.

<sup>29</sup> On the intentional unity in knowledge, which implies an intentional otherness, see, e.g., *J.T.* I 84–85; *C.G.* I 44; *De Ver.* 2.2; *Comp. Theol.* 83. If the subject knower became the known object entitatively, then both would be destroyed, he argues. Thus, the intimacy involved in actual intentional union is balanced with the otherness of subject and object.

in unity.<sup>30</sup> *Mystically* what unites monists is first, the assertion of an original unity of the personal self with all of being, and the becoming aware, through enlightenment, of what one really is, or has been, all along. Eastern thinkers speak of reaching the knowledge that *atman* is *Brahman* or Absolute Spirit, and Plotinus speaks of the soul finding its “true self”, which has been united with God from the beginning.<sup>31</sup> Second, strict monists (excluding Plotinus) place little practical value on *desire* or the *will* in mystical ascent, since volition involves final causality and a distinction of subject and object, moving the rational agent through knowledge of an end.<sup>32</sup> In monism, there can be no “weighting of a tendency by a good”, to use Aquinas’ description of love,<sup>33</sup> since mystical ascent does not concern the movement of a rational appetite towards a transcendent term, but merely a shifting of one’s level of awareness to the Absolute within the self.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Aquinas, *De Ver.* I.1.

<sup>31</sup> Plotinus, *En.* VI.9.11; VI, 5.7.1.

<sup>32</sup> Desire, will and intellect all involve duality, which is seen to breed isolation and unhappiness—the “second noble truth” of Buddhism, called *trishna*, or the truth of clinging, expresses this well:

“Clinging is never kept within bounds,  
It is sure to go the wrong way;  
Quit it, and things follow their own courses,  
While the essence neither departs nor abides.”

This is a stanza from a mystical poem ‘On Trust in the Heart’, composed by the third patriarch of Zen, containing the essence of Mahayana mystical insight (found in F.C. Happold, *Mysticism: a study and anthology*, Penguin Books, London, 1963, p. 166).

<sup>33</sup> *S.T.* I–II 26.1–2. Cf. G. Smith, *Natural Theology*, Macmillan, New York, 1951, p. 214.

<sup>34</sup> It ought to be noted here that Buddhist ethics do promote goodwill, or benevolence, as well as a vast compassion for suffering humanity and for all creation (the word *metta* signifies “loving kindness”): “All beings, whether weak or strong—omitting none [...] born to be born [...] may all beings be happy and at their ease! [...] Even as a mother watches over and protects her child, her only child, so with a boundless mind should one cherish all living beings, radiating friendliness over the entire world.” (from ‘The Metta Sutra’, quoted in F.C. Happold 1963 : 172).

4. AQUINAS' ARGUMENTS AGAINST MONISM<sup>35</sup>

The problem of monism for Aquinas according to his treatment of the issue as found in Parmenides and inherited through Aristotle, was two-fold: first, *how* is being a “unity” without denying divine transcendence, and second, *how* can creatures be “outside” of God without adding any being to Him, Who is self-subsistent existence? Since the issue of metaphysical monism is so central to theories of mystical union, I will briefly analyze Aquinas' discussions of it from the viewpoint of three sets of questions. First, how and in what context does Aquinas formulate the Parmenidean problem of the one and the many? Here we can also ask, why is being not univocal as a concept for Aquinas, or, in other words, why is being not a genus? Second, why does Aquinas insist that the being of God and of creaturely *esse commune* are distinct, while also maintaining a theory of analogy which apparently unites the two? Finally, and third, what is the ultimate reason for Aquinas' preference for analogy over the univocity of monism, and how does this affect his mystical thought?

*Issue #1: Aquinas' formulation of the problem of the “One and the Many”*

Aquinas' treatment of the Parmenidean problem can be found in his commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Book 1, lectio 9, and on the

<sup>35</sup> In its denial of all distinctions between entities, metaphysical monism annihilates the individual human soul in mystical union, thus failing to preserve both God's transcendence and the reality of a mystical union effected by divine grace and charity. For Aquinas, it is through divine sanctifying grace alone that the soul is, in Maritain's word's, “connaturalized” with God. This union, as Maritain has noted, is one according to intention, and not according to existence or being, which would assimilate the knower into the known. The soul is appetitively transformed into God in what Maritain calls “an intentional being of love”, which retains the infinite distance between creature and Creator. (Maritain, *Degrees of knowledge* (pp. 368–375) as found in C. Hancock, ‘Maritain on mystical contemplation’, in D. Hudson & M. Mancini (eds.), *Understanding Maritain: Philosopher and friend*, Macon, GA, Mercer University Press, 1987, pp. 265, 269.) Aquinas also distinguishes between “quidditative” and “comprehensive” knowledge of God, claiming that even the blessed in heaven do not enjoy a comprehensive knowledge of God, while they do enjoy a quidditative and direct knowledge of His essence by virtue of the strengthening power of the *lumen gloriae*. (*S.T.* I 12.2, and ad 3. Both angelic and human minds need the *lumen gloriae* in order to see God. On this, see J.F. Wippel, *The metaphysical thought of Thomas Aquinas: From finite being to uncreated being* (Monographs of the Society for Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy 1), Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 2000, pp. 533–535.

*Physics*, Book 1, lectio 2.<sup>36</sup> If the cause of plurality cannot arise *within* being, and cannot originate from *outside* of being, then, Parmenides argues, there *are* no distinctions or change in the world, and being is one. Parmenides' argument is, simply, that since being is one, and since whatever is outside of being is *nothing*, then all divisions and distinctions (including change and motion) are in fact *nothing*, as introducing an impossible differentiation into the unity of being.<sup>37</sup>

Besides the Parmenidean context, there was the more immediate issue of the *pantheistic monism* present in the school of Amauric of Bene influential in the 13th century, as well as in the Stoics', and, much later, in David of Dinant's materialistic monism, all known to Aquinas. With these opponents in mind, he argues against the varieties of pantheistic monism in the context of his proof that "God does not enter into composition with other things" in both *Summas*.<sup>38</sup> He first proves that God is not present in the world as the fully immanent "world soul", as the Stoics and early Gnostics would have it in their proclamation of the unity of God and man's spirit. Rather, God transcends the material world He creates and is present through efficient, not material causality.<sup>39</sup> Second, he proves that God is not the *formal esse* of creatures, as the school of Amauric of Bene proposed, for this would entail several impossible consequences:<sup>40</sup> First, Aquinas reasons that since being (and thus, also divine being) is not a genus, things are differentiated because they have diverse natures within the community of being. Divine *esse* does not accrue to the divine *nature* as something "outside" of it, for the two are identical;<sup>41</sup> but the monists go on to *identify* the essence of God with the being of creatures, deducing their conclusion from the denial of being as a genus in both instances (*esse commune* and *Ipsium Esse Subsistens*). Second, since "common being" exists only in the intellect (and not as a third entity beyond the being of creatures), if God is *common* being, then nothing will exist outside the intellect, which is absurd. Third, God would no longer be *eternal* but would exist only as the terminus of generation, and as such, would be deprived of His

<sup>36</sup> See Wippel's treatment on this (2000: 66–73).

<sup>37</sup> Aquinas presents his argument in *In 1 Meta.* l. 9 #138.

<sup>38</sup> *S.T.* I 3.8 and *C.G.* I 26. For a treatment of this issue, it is useful to consult L. Elders, *The philosophical theology of St. Thomas Aquinas*, Brill, Leiden, 1990, pp. 157–160, as well as E. Gilson, *History of Christian philosophy in the Middle Ages*, Sheed and Ward, London, 1955, pp. 240–243.

<sup>39</sup> *S.T.* I 3.8c.

<sup>40</sup> This *reductio ad absurdum* argument is found in *C.G.* I 26.

<sup>41</sup> Aquinas proves this latter point in *C.G.* I 22.

necessary transcendence. After having proven that God is neither the immanent "world soul" nor is He the formal being of things, He rejects David of Dinant's error that made prime matter the element common to God, souls and material things.<sup>42</sup> As the first efficient cause, God is distinguished numerically from His effects<sup>43</sup> and acts independently of them. As well, as pure act, God is not a part of a composite whole, for as such His action would be proper to the whole, not to Himself, and parts depend on the whole for their being and action. In conclusion, in opposition to pantheistic monism, Aquinas affirms both God's transcendent aseity *and* His immanence in the world by way of causality, in his discussion of God's immanence by way of "essence, presence and power."<sup>44</sup>

Having discussed the context and formulation of the problem of the community in being, or the issue of the "one and the many" in Aquinas' texts, what is his solution to the problem? In his treatment of Boethius' claim that "diversity or otherness is the cause of plurality"<sup>45</sup> Aquinas argues that it is not *being* taken simply, nor is it absolute *nonbeing*, but rather "*relative nonbeing*" that accounts for the primary division among principles of being, among beings, and for change in general, so that one need not invoke monism to guarantee the unity of being. Ultimately, the foundation for plurality among beings and principles of beings lies in God's intellect, which, in cooperation with the divine will, creates a plurality of creatures to properly mirror His superabundant perfection. Departing from the Parmenidean and Platonic tradition which equate plurality and distinction with imperfection and nonbeing, Aquinas sees plurality as a *means* to God's proper end, namely, His own being, in that it is fitting for divine goodness that others partake in it.<sup>46</sup>

In his detailed responses to Parmenides' monism, Aquinas argues first, that Parmenides conceives of being as a genus,<sup>47</sup> for its differentiation falls outside of it, and second, that he destroys the meaning of

<sup>42</sup> *S.T.* I 3.9.

<sup>43</sup> Since every efficient cause is distinct, if not specifically, at least numerically, from the effects it produces.

<sup>44</sup> As found in *S.T.* I.8.

<sup>45</sup> In his commentary on Boethius' *De Trinitate* q. 4 a. 1.

<sup>46</sup> See, e.g., *S.T.* I 19.2. On the various arguments of Aquinas for plurality, and their relation to their Platonic, Dionysian and Boethian heritage, see my article: 'Arguments for Plurality in Aquinas', in Heather Senn (ed.), *Proceedings of the Patristic, Medieval and Renaissance Conference*, Villanova University Press, Villanova, 1996, pp. 205–216.

<sup>47</sup> See, e.g., *In 1 Meta.* l. 9 #138.

a “principle” which presupposes multiplicity and causality.<sup>48</sup> Even as a concept, being cannot be a genus, however, due to its various significations — being is said in different ways of different things<sup>49</sup> and is predicated analogously of the various categories.<sup>50</sup> “Being” cannot be predicated univocally simply because univocal predication, he says, requires that the thing predicated remain the same in both name and concept or definition among its subjects. In his thinking here, Aquinas’ position stands midway between the strict metaphysical monism of Parmenides, which makes reality one in both being *and* concept, and the “modified univocity” of Scotus, which claims a univocal *concept* of being but an *analogical reality* among its subjects.<sup>51</sup> For Thomas, being is analogical in both concept *and* reality, according to various entities’ relationship to their causal source,<sup>52</sup> as is seen in his various discussions of different types of analogy and in his final preference for unity “by reference to a first.”<sup>53</sup> Aquinas’ responses to Parmenides in his Aristotelian and Boethian commentaries, read beside his responses to medieval varieties of pantheistic monism in his *Summas* both reflect a formidable arsenal of arguments against the different varieties of monism and his ability to preserve both divine transcendence and immanence, and the unity and plurality of being, in dynamic tension.

*Issue #2: The distinction between God and “esse commune”*

In *C.G.* I 26, Aquinas cites the confusion of *esse divinum* and *esse commune*, the being of creatures, as one of the steps involved in the path towards adopting pantheistic monism. Elsewhere,<sup>54</sup> he notes the similarity lies in a certain “indeterminacy” in each, yet of opposed types:

<sup>48</sup> See, e.g., *In 1 Phys.* l. 2 #15.

<sup>49</sup> *In 9 Meta.* l. 9 #139.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. *In 1 Phys.* l. 3 #20–#21.

<sup>51</sup> As is well known, Scotus’ theory of the univocal concept of being was proposed as a necessary first step in the human mind’s ascent to God. If being were not common at least on the conceptual level between God and creature, there would be ability of the mind to rise to a knowledge of God’s existence, according to Scotus.

<sup>52</sup> Whether that be substance, in the case of predicamental being, or in relation to infinite Being, in the case of beings taken individually and as a whole.

<sup>53</sup> Aristotle’s *pros hen* equivocation, as opposed to the analogy of proportionality, or among sets of relations. On this topic, see, e.g., B. Montagnes, *La doctrine de l’analogie de l’être d’après saint Thomas d’Aquin*, Louvain, Paris, 1963, and Wippel (2000: 73–93).

<sup>54</sup> *S.T.* I 13.11.

*Esse commune* as an abstraction<sup>55</sup> can be viewed as the indeterminate logical substrate of the categorical determinations, but *Esse Subsistens* has the indeterminacy of infinite and perfect actuality,<sup>56</sup> and Aquinas takes it as axiomatic that *esse* as such is not self-limiting.<sup>57</sup> It is precisely because God's description as "*Qui est*" names "the infinite sea of substance itself" and designates no particular form, that it is the name most proper to God.<sup>58</sup> Yet subsistent *Esse* which is the source of all thing's being differs from *esse commune* which does not subsist but exists alone only in the human intellect.<sup>59</sup> The fact that being cannot exist without its modes mitigates against the possibility of identifying the two forms of *esse*. The determination of being into both its special/categorical and its general/transcendental modes is internal to being, and immediate, not accruing onto some prior indeterminate state.<sup>60</sup> "Right from the beginning" (*statim a principio*)<sup>61</sup> being is either substance, quality, or quantity, or one of its transcendental modes. If being can be understood but can never *exist* without its modes, there is still the question of the origin of the confusion of creaturely and divine *esse*, especially if both are said to be "without any addition." In both *S.T.* I 3.4 and *C.G.* I 26, Aquinas notes the double meaning of this phrase — first, something can *preclude* any possible addition by its very definition, or, second, it can merely *prescind* from any addition (that is, it is merely *being considered* to be without reference to any addition: in being considered universally, being *neither includes nor excludes* an addition). *God's being* is of the first sort, while *esse commune* is of the second sort, in that Subsistent *Esse* cannot be determined by anything outside of it, whereas "common" or universal *esse* is open to many determinations and indicates that in each of its particular instances, being is related to an essence in which it is received. It is the particular essence which accounts for the addition made to being in each case.

<sup>55</sup> And here we must distinguish *esse commune* from *esse ut actus essendi*, which *De pot.* 7.2 ad 9 describes as the completion and fulfilment of each form. Here, *esse* is said to be the most perfect and most formal element in a thing.

<sup>56</sup> For the indeterminate actuality of pure *esse*, see *De pot.* 7.2. ad 9.

<sup>57</sup> For references to this principle in Aquinas and for a detailed study of its self-evident character for him, see Wippel (2000: 172–174).

<sup>58</sup> Cf. *De pot.* 7.5c. Cf. J. Reichmann, 'Immanently transcendent and subsistent *Esse*: a comparison', *Thomist* 38, 1974, 332–369, p. 345.

<sup>59</sup> *C.G.* I 26.

<sup>60</sup> See *De Veritate* I.1.

<sup>61</sup> *In 8 Meta.* l. 5 #1763.

*Issue #3: Aquinas' preference for analogy over the univocity of monism, and the impact of analogy on his mystical thought*

Without detailing the various types of analogy throughout Thomas' writings,<sup>62</sup> it can be said that analogy provides Thomas with an explanation of the simultaneous community and diversity within finite being by reference to the unity of their causal source, namely, infinite being. As Aertsen puts it, "the model of analogy is intended to bring the categorical diversity to unity at the transcendental level."<sup>63</sup> Because there is some likeness of the effect and its cause, and because there is an order of priority and posteriority with respect to names for God and creatures, being is predicated in the case of natural theology according to an analogy of relation or proportion to a first, namely, God. Unlike the metaphysical analogy of being among substance and accidents, the predication of being between God and creatures in natural theology involves a dissonance between the order of nature and the order of discovery. Here, being is predicated of *God* first in the order of *nature/existence*, but is predicated of *creatures* first in the order of *knowledge/discovery*. This is what Thomas means by saying that in the case of the divine names, the "thing signified" is correctly predicated, but the "way of signifying" is imperfect as drawn from a finite intellect.<sup>64</sup> Over and against monism, Aquinas acknowledges a hierarchy within being from which, he says, the various modes of being are derived, as well as the categories.<sup>65</sup> At the basis of his theory of analogical predication of being lies his metaphysical theory of participation in *esse*, which states, in a nutshell, the insight that the entity possessing the maximum in a certain order *causes* that same perfection to exist in its various instances or inferiors.<sup>66</sup> While pantheistic monism would have creatures *directly*

<sup>62</sup> The evolution in Thomas' description of types of analogy and their uses in his metaphysics is presented well by Montagnes (1963) and is summarised in J. Aertsen, *Medieval philosophy and the transcendentals: the case of Thomas Aquinas*, Brill, Leiden, 1996, pp. 386f.

<sup>63</sup> The language of "predicamental" or "categorical" versus "transcendental" being is that of Fabro, and has been adopted by several scholars, especially Aertsen (1996).

<sup>64</sup> See, e.g., *C.G.* I 34; *S.T.* I 13.6, for the *res significata/modus significandi* distinction.

<sup>65</sup> *De Veritate* I.1.

<sup>66</sup> *S.T.* I 44.1: "If something is found to be present in something by participation, it must be caused in it by that to which it belongs essentially [...] It follows therefore that all things other than God are not identical with their *esse*, but participate in *esse*. It is necessary therefore that all things which are distinguished by reason of diverse participation in *esse* so as to exist more or less perfectly be caused by one first being, which exists most perfectly."

participating in God's essence, however, Aquinas uses the language of "participating by *likeness* or *similitude*"<sup>67</sup> to the divine essence.

Aquinas' preference for analogy over univocity is central to his mystical thought in that it provides the foundation for accepting a "differentiated unity" of God and the soul by providing compelling arguments *against* a *substantial* union between the two. Aquinas' occasional language of the soul's "dissolution" into God<sup>68</sup> is to be understood at the intentional level only, and as an expression of the union among wills. As Maritain explains Thomas' text, mystical union involves God's presence as an *esse intentionale* for the will, and "the divine object of love is called *intentional* by analogy with the intentional being, the intentional object, of knowledge."<sup>69</sup>

The interesting similarity between Aquinas' mysticism and his metaphysics lies in the fact that neither the summit of metaphysical knowledge nor the peak of mystical experience delivers any conceptual content. For the metaphysician, the way of removal in our judgments about being advances through a series of negations — of corporeal, then of intellectual creaturely aspects, and finally, of creaturely *esse*, in relation to the first efficient cause. It is in a "darkness of ignorance" that we are best joined to God, he states,<sup>70</sup> which signifies, as Father Owens has aptly demonstrated,<sup>71</sup> the infinite character of undetermined *esse*, or the all-embracing universality to which existence can extend, grasped only through a process of resolution and judgment. The highest metaphysical notion of being is confused or indistinct, in that it is illumined only in the synthesis of judgment, and not bathed in the clarity found in our knowledge of natures.<sup>72</sup>

Similar to the summit of metaphysical knowledge is the situation of mystical union, which also involves an evacuation of the intellect, and is nonconceptual and incomplete. Unlike the metaphysician's knowledge of God's nature, which is in no way intuited, but, as Owens

<sup>67</sup> *De divinis nominibus* 2.3.1#158. The issue of participation in Aquinas is summarised well by Wippel (1993: 93–99).

<sup>68</sup> See *S.T.* II-II 24.9 and see Erb (2002: 90).

<sup>69</sup> Maritain, *Degrees of knowledge*, pp. 369 #5 (as quoted in Hancock 1987: 266 #12).

<sup>70</sup> *In 1 Sent.* 8.1.1 ad 4.

<sup>71</sup> In his article 'Aquinas — 'Darkness of Ignorance' in the most refined notion of God', in R. Shahan & F. Kovach (eds.), *Bonaventure and Aquinas*, Oklahoma, 1976, pp. 69–86.

<sup>72</sup> *In 1 Sent.* 8.1.1 ad 3: "[...] cum esse creaturae imperfecte repraesentet divinum esse, et hoc nomen 'qui est' imperfecte significat ipsum, quia significat per modum cuiusdam concretionis et compositionis; [...] sicut in hoc nomine 'qui est'."

affirms, is “*concluded* to, and only in darkness”,<sup>73</sup> Thomas the mystic *experiences* God’s presence or “suffers divine things”<sup>74</sup> through an experimental wisdom wrought by charity and the supernatural gifts. In initiating mystical union, God wills to us His very Self, and comes to dwell in the soul in a relationship of love.<sup>75</sup> The mystic’s affective union is consonant with its metaphysical moorings but is more noble, more mysterious and more intimate, since the union caused by love is closer than that which is caused by knowledge.<sup>76</sup>

##### 5. METAPHYSICAL PARADOX AND THE THRESHOLD OF MYSTICISM

As Maritain has noted, in *Degrees of knowledge*,<sup>77</sup> for Thomas, mystical and metaphysical wisdoms diverge not only in their starting points and inspirations, but also in the scope of their conclusions. Maritain argues that mysticism is the natural culmination of metaphysics,<sup>78</sup> however, since both are driven by the natural desire to know the First Cause. Moreover, the human soul can ultimately be satisfied only by knowing the infinite source and plenitude of all being, namely, God.<sup>79</sup> Bringing the two approaches together, we can say that Thomas’ metaphysics of creation signals a meditation on the mystery of being that touches on the mystical, in that both the metaphysician and the mystic stand in

<sup>73</sup> Owens (1976: 85f).

<sup>74</sup> The text is *S.T.* II–II 45.2. See Erb (2002: 78f).

<sup>75</sup> See, for example, *In 2 Sent.* 26.1.1 ad 2, and Erb (2002: 83).

<sup>76</sup> *S.T.* I–II 28.1 ad 3.

<sup>77</sup> Maritain, *Degrees of knowledge*, as found in C. Hancock, ‘Maritain on mystical contemplation’, in D. Hudson & M. Mancini (eds.), *Understanding Maritain: Philosopher and friend*, Macon, GA, Mercer University Press, 1987.

<sup>78</sup> Maritain, *Degrees of knowledge*, pp. 266f; cf. pp. 283–290.

<sup>79</sup> Maritain, *Degrees of knowledge*, p. 284: “[...] metaphysics, like every human science, leaves us dissatisfied. Being oriented towards the First Cause and naturally desiring to know it perfectly, it is natural for it to make us desire... to contemplate God’s essence [...]” Although the human spirit is not infinite *simpliciter* because its form is determined by matter, and therefore, by the imperfect, nonetheless, the human mind *does* extend, in a way, to an infinite number of things, and thus, is infinite in a qualified or secondary way: *S.T.* I 7.2 ad 2: “Dicendum quod hoc ipsum quod virtus intellectus extendit se quodammodo ad infinita, procedit ex hoc quod intellectus est forma non in materia [...]” For a defense of the relative “infinity” of the human spirit, see J. Robb, *Man as infinite spirit (Marquette Aquinas Lecture, 1974)*, Marquette University Press, Milwaukee, 1974. Cf. W.N. Clarke, *Person and being (Marquette Aquinas Lecture, 1993)*, Marquette University Press, Milwaukee, 1993, pp. 36ff.

relation to, and are surrounded, as it were, by the divine mystery that surpasses our understanding and sustains all things in being.

One paradox that illumines the commonality of experience between Thomas' metaphysics and his mystical thought stems from the arena of the intellect, namely, the simultaneous immanent and transcendent meanings of *esse* in relation to creation.<sup>80</sup> Regarding this, we can note that both the metaphysician and the mystic know the *fragility of creatureliness* in relation to the fullness of its source, and both also know the *intimacy* of the supreme Cause existing in creatures through His "essence, presence and power."<sup>81</sup> God is said to exist in His creatures by *essence* not formally or inherently, for this would deny His transcendence, but by acting on them; moreover, He is present most immediately and intimately in things by giving them existence, which, as the most interior and conditioning aspect of a thing, is the source of the many perfections in it.<sup>82</sup> God also exists in things according to His *power* or providential governance by enabling things' operations, and according to His *presence* or knowledge, and in this last sense, it is more proper to say that "creatures exist in *God*", rather than saying that "God exists in His *creatures*", for what is known exists in the knower and through His knowledge God causes things to be.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, the Christian mystic enjoys a still more intimate mode of divine immanence through grace<sup>84</sup> and in a special way through the gifts of the Spirit, by which he is blessed with an experiential knowledge of God through love.<sup>85</sup> Thus, there are two modes of *divine immanence* for Thomas: In an *ordinary* way, God is related as a cause to His effects, which are partici-

<sup>80</sup> There is an additional paradox that reveals the connection between his metaphysics and his mystical thought which is taken from the order of the appetite: it is Thomas' conviction that in order to seek out its end or fulfillment, the human will already in fact possesses that end, for it is created, directed and sustained as the image and likeness of that infinite good by which it is attracted. On this point, see E. Gilson, *The Christian philosophy of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, Random House, New York, 1956, pp. 272ff.

<sup>81</sup> *In 1 Sent.* 37.1.2 Sol; *Comp. Theol.* 135; *S.T.* I 8.3.

<sup>82</sup> *In 1 Sent.* d.37 q. 1 a. 1: "Deus est unicuique intimus, sicut esse proprium rei est intimum ipsi rei."

<sup>83</sup> What is known exists in the knower: through its likeness (*S.T.* I 8.3 ad 3). What is willed exists in the will as an inclination towards the thing willed (cf. *S.T.* I 27.4).

<sup>84</sup> *S.T.* I 43.3.

<sup>85</sup> *S.T.* I 93.7; 43.5 ad 2.

ations in His perfection; and in a *higher* way, God exists in the hearts of those who know and love Him through the sending of His Spirit.<sup>86</sup>

As we have noted, on the metaphysical level, God works intimately in all things precisely as the cause of their “universal *esse*” (*causa ipsius esse universalis*)<sup>87</sup> yet the fact that the limitations of created perfection do not *derive* from *esse*, for “to be caused by another” is not an inherent characteristic of *esse* as such,<sup>88</sup> leads the mind to infer the subsistent, undetermined and infinite nature<sup>89</sup> of an existence that is *transcendent*.<sup>90</sup> *Esse* thus signifies both the immanent presence *and* the transcendent subsistence of God, without confusing *esse commune* with *esse subsistens*, such that there is still an ontological community between them based on real participation. Since each thing receives its perfection by participating in existence, *esse* is the perfection of every form,<sup>91</sup> and things in this way participate in the first and “pure act” (God) in some way. This is true because anything that exists in a diminished way must be caused by something to which the perfection of existence belongs essentially.<sup>92</sup> Finite beings do not partake of the divine essence either “partially” or “wholly” as pantheistic monism would have it, however, since He communicates His perfection through a similitude or likeness.<sup>93</sup>

<sup>86</sup> *S.T.* I 43.3. Cf. *In 1 Sent.* d. 15 q. 4 a. 1 sol.: “[...] Unde sicut Spiritus sanctus invisibiliter procedit in mentem per donum amoris, ita Filius per donum sapientiae; in quo est manifestation ipsius Patris, qui est ultimum ad quod recurrimus.” For the sending or mission of the divine persons, see *S.T.* I 43.1–5.

<sup>87</sup> *S.T.* I 105.5c: “Et quia forma rei est intra rem, et tanto magis quanto consideratur ut prior et universalior; et ipse Deus est proprie causa ipsius esse universalis in rebus omnibus, quod inter omnia est magis intimum rebus; sequitur quod Deus in omnibus intime operatur.”

<sup>88</sup> *C.G.* II 52.

<sup>89</sup> *De ente* 4 [6–7].

<sup>90</sup> “Qui est” is God’s most “proper” name, firstly, because of its indefiniteness, for it does not signify a determinate form: *S.T.* I 13.11; *De pot.* 7.5.

<sup>91</sup> *Quaest. Disp.* 12.5.1.

<sup>92</sup> *S.T.* I 44.1. Wippel (1993: 98) correctly notes that Aquinas speaks sometimes of participation in the finite act of being, and at other times of participation in subsistent being.

<sup>93</sup> On this point, see R. te Velde, *Participation and substantiality in Thomas Aquinas*, Brill, Leiden, 1995, p. 99; *In de div. nom.* c.3 l. 2 #158. te Velde (*ibid.*: 95) notes that multiplied similitude in creatures rests on the fact of their composition: the negation of the identity of essence and *esse* in all else but God. In this he agrees with the view of Fabro over and against Geiger, who gives participation by similitude a priority to that of composition.

Aquinas' "analogy of light" states that just as the sun is naturally luminous, while the air is illumined by sharing in the sun's light while remaining distinct from the source of light, so also God alone is essentially being (*ens per essentiam suam*), while creatures are beings through participation, since their existence is limited by a specific essence.<sup>94</sup> Thomas follows Dionysius' view that through the various modalities of *esse*, namely, being, life and wisdom, God is participated by His effects in the manner of His likeness or mode of imitability<sup>95</sup>—and the mystery of being, we could say, lies in the gratuitousness of God's creative act—Self-diffusive divine goodness manifesting itself as "theophany", to use Dionysius' term, without departing from its own transcendent unity<sup>96</sup> in the establishment of things' being.

What is *mystical* in Thomas account of being is first, the *coincidence of opposites* of divine transcendence and immanence; second, the recognition that despite certain positive knowledge wrought by argument, the divine remains *ineffable*; and third, and most important, the his insight into the *gratuitous nature of God's creative act*. Regarding the coincidence of divine immanence and transcendence, Thomas differs from later mystics such as Meister Eckhart and Nicholas of Cusa, in balancing his apophatic statements about the lack of quidditative knowledge of God for the *viator*<sup>97</sup> with an assertion of our limited, though positive knowledge of God as First Cause.<sup>98</sup> Even God's *transcendence* is often described in terms of the "virtual containment" of all creaturely perfections, and far from using religious paradoxes to confound and release the soul from the labors of reason,<sup>99</sup> Aquinas' natural theology strains but does not break the creative powers of philosophical language. It is true that for Thomas, what is most ultimate in the human know-

<sup>94</sup> *S.T.* I 104.1. The virtual containment of effects in their cause is not as a multiplicity, but *secundum unam virtutem*, just as all radii are present within the centre of the circle (*In de Div. Nom.* XIII, ii, 971).

<sup>95</sup> See *In de Div. Nom.* II ii; 160.

<sup>96</sup> Dionysius calls this divine Self-manifestation a "theophany" of divine goodness, which indicates that divine similitude is not just a gift bestowed on beings, but is their very being itself. On this, see O'Rourke (1992 : 258).

<sup>97</sup> Cf. John F. Wippel, 'Quidditative knowledge of God' in Wippel (1984 : 215–241).

<sup>98</sup> In *S.T.* I qq. 4–11, he derives several positive attributes of God from His simplicity as Pure Act.

<sup>99</sup> The performative function of philosophical paradoxes in the description of God and creation is detailed in 'Introduction', in *Meister Eckhart (Classics of Western Spirituality Series)*, tr. E. Colledge & B. McGinn, Paulist Press, New York, 1981.

ledge of God is “to know that we do not know Him”,<sup>100</sup> and although we reach a knowledge of His existence from the effects bearing some resemblance to Him, this is only by negation and transcendence.<sup>101</sup> Because we can deduce many positive qualities from the simplicity of the First Cause, the *res significata* corresponding to the divine attributes is accurate; but because we lack quidditative knowledge of God, the way of signifying (*modus significandi*) is inadequate, and God is known by analogy alone.

As well, the *ineffable* nature of God is taken seriously by Thomas the metaphysician in his preference for a *quia* proof. Whereas in a *propter quid* demonstration, we show how some effect or attribute necessarily flows from a nature whose definition we already know, in a *quia* proof rises from our knowledge of effects to that of causes, where the effect substitutes for the definition of the cause,<sup>102</sup> which remains essentially unknown. Although bearing some similarity to its cause (for *every agent produces something similar to itself*: “*omne agens agit sibi simile*”),<sup>103</sup> the effects represent it inadequately,<sup>104</sup> exhibiting in a partial and divided way what is contained perfectly and unitedly in the cause. As one scholar puts it, Thomas’ Five Ways “take us from what we do understand, that is, observable features of the natural world, to what we do not understand — to an unknown God.”<sup>105</sup>

<sup>100</sup> In commenting on the three types of knowledge of God, according to causality, transcendence and negation, (*In de Trin.* I, 2, e.g.), Josef Pieper says “[...] there are three degrees in our knowledge of God: the lowest, the knowledge of God as He is active in creation; the second, the recognition of God as mirrored in spiritual beings; the third and loftiest, the recognition of God as the Unknown, *tamquam ignotum*. Or consider this sentence from the *Quaestiones Disputatae*: ‘This is what is ultimate in the human knowledge of God: to know that we do not know God’, *quod (homo) sciat se Deum nescire*” (J. Pieper, *The silence of St. Thomas*, tr. J. Murray & D. O’Connor, Henry Regnery, Chicago, 1965, p. 69).

<sup>101</sup> “[T]he human mind advances in three ways in knowing God, though it does not reach a knowledge of what He is (*quid est*), but only that he is (*an est*). First, by knowing more perfectly his power in producing things. Second, by knowing him as the cause of more lofty effects, which, because they bear some resemblance to Him, give more praise to His greatness. Third, by an ever-growing knowledge of Him as distant from everything that appears in His effects. Thus, Dionysius says that we know God as the cause of all things, by transcendence and by negation.” (*In de Trin.* I, 2).

<sup>102</sup> *S.T.* I 2.2 ad 2.

<sup>103</sup> *C.G.* I 29; I 73; II 6; II 20

<sup>104</sup> *S.T.* I 13.5.

<sup>105</sup> H. McCabe, “The logic of mysticism I”, in M. Warner (ed.), *Religion and philosophy* (*Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement 31*), Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992, pp. 48f. McCabe also rightly stresses the mystery and “gratuity” of creation:

But more mystical than the paradoxes of divine presence or even than the ineffability that culminates metaphysics is, we have said, the insight into the *gratuitous nature of God's creative act*. Maritain finds this insight within the Five Ways, which, he says,<sup>106</sup> place reason "in an attitude of natural adoration" in relation to the Creator. We can also recall Wittgenstein's much celebrated statement that "not *how* the world is, is the mystical, but *that* it is."<sup>107</sup> The insight into the gratuitous nature of creation stems from what some of have called "the difference of being" or the "theological difference" that characterizes Thomas' existentialist metaphysics. In short, reflection on revelation (*Exodus* 3.14) introduces a new question, not asked by the Greeks, namely, "why is there anything at all?"<sup>108</sup> and a new distinction, between essence and existence, that explains the radical contingency of beings. As many have noted,<sup>109</sup> the Christian distinction between the world and God signals the fact that the highest principle of existence is neither finite nor a part of the world, as were the various Greek conceptions of the divine (including Aristotle's Prime Mover),<sup>110</sup> but is *beyond* the whole realm of finite beings. Whereas Aristotle's "question of being" inquired about

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"For St. Thomas, then, the *esse* of things turns out to be their createdness, their gratuity [...]" (p. 53). As to the "unknown God" and the Five Ways, cf. P.R. Blum, 'Gottes Plan: Von der Physikotheologie zur Theophysik', *Philosophisches Jahrbuch* 109, 2002, pp. 271–282.

<sup>106</sup> Maritain, *Degrees of knowledge* (cited in R. Woods p. 68 #13): Maritain says that "[...] to demonstrate the existence of God is not to subject Him to our grasp, nor to define or lay hold on Him, nor to manipulate anything other than ideas which are inadequate to such an object, nor to judge anything except our rightful and radical dependence. The process by which reason demonstrates that God exists, places reason itself in an attitude of natural adoration and intellectual admiration."

<sup>107</sup> L. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* 6.44 (tr. C.K. Ogden, London, 1933).

<sup>108</sup> Although this question is not to be equated with Heidegger's question and his notion of the "ontological difference."

<sup>109</sup> In particular, R. Sokolowski, *The God of faith and reason: Foundations of Christian theology*, Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, 1982, pp. 12–20; cf. R. Sokolowski, 'Creation and Christian understanding', in D. Burrell & B. McGinn (eds.), *God and creation: an ecumenical symposium*, Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, 1990, pp. 179–196. Cf. H. Hoping, 'Understanding the difference of being: on the relationship between metaphysics and theology', *Thomist* 59, 1995, pp. 189–221.

<sup>110</sup> *Metaphysics* VI 1 (1026a21–22): Divine being is said to be the "worthiest genus of being", and is thus a part of the whole of beings and is thus finite (cf. J. Owens, 'The relation of God to world in the *Metaphysics*', in P. Aubenque (ed.), *Etudes sur la Métaphysique d'Aristote. Actes du cinquième Symposium Aristotelicum*, Vrin, Paris, 1977, pp. 213; 219–221. According to Owens, the divine being of the Aristotelian metaphysics is not an infinite being as is the God of Christian belief). Cf. Hoping (1995).

*ousia* or substance as the first cause of being,<sup>111</sup> Aquinas propels human reason, by way of the real distinction (between being and essence), beyond finite being to *esse absolutum* or *esse infinitum*, which now has to be thought of over and against a world whose existence is radically unnecessary.<sup>112</sup> The gratuitous nature of creation thus lies in the conviction of the world's contingency and the hypothesis that even without creating, God's goodness and power would remain undiminished.<sup>113</sup> As one scholar puts it, "the *existence* of the world now prompts our *gratitude*, whereas the *being* of the world prompts our *wonder*."<sup>114</sup> It is interesting to note that this realisation also indicates Aquinas' commitment to *ontological pluralism*, in that to conceive of God as the reason why a universe exists at all, it to conceive of God as the source of diversity in the world.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In this paper I have described 'Thomas' approach to mystical truth claims as primarily ontologically *pluralist*, and *speculative* in aim, in contrast to more pragmatically driven monist theories, which *sever* the connection between mystical claims about ultimate reality and the corresponding metaphysical theories about the nature of being. Although he is aware of the distinction between the practical, doctrinal and experiential dimensions of religious experience, Thomas is part of the tradition which regards the doctrines of being and love to be at the *centre* of reflection on the mystical life, such that the cognitive and affective validity of mystical claims is balanced with a corresponding set of claims about the nature of being, the soul and ultimate reality.

<sup>111</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics* VII.17 (1041b27–28).

<sup>112</sup> "It is this gratuitousness of things that St. Thomas calls their *esse*: their existence no just over-against the possibility that they might not have been a part of the world (if natural causes had operated differently—which is why the dodos do not exist), but their existence over-against the possibility that there might not have been any world at all. In thinking of the *esse* of things we are trying to think of them not just in relation to their natural causes but in relation to their creator" (McCabe 1992 : 51).

<sup>113</sup> "Christian theology is differentiated from pagan religious and philosophical reflection primarily by the introduction of a new distinction, the distinction between the world understood as possibly not having existed. And God understood as possibly being all that there is, with no diminution of goodness or greatness" (Sokolowski 1982 : 23).

<sup>114</sup> Sokolowski (*ibid.* : 23).

Far from assuming that the mystic has recourse to metaphysics only in order to account for a primarily psychological phenomenon,<sup>115</sup> which is a more *phenomenological* approach to mysticism, or from assuming that *mystical* experience provides direct evidence for *metaphysical* claims (as in the Buddhist *anatman* doctrine providing evidence for monism, for example), Aquinas' commitment to *theistic pluralism* defines the boundaries of authentic or cognitively valid mystical experience, and provides a symmetry between the realm of mystical experience and metaphysical theory. For this reason, Thomas would reject the view that there is a "common core" to mystical experience that not only transcends culture but also philosophical context. Instead, his text imply a "*contextualist*" mystical typology grounded in and conditioned by, specific metaphysical commitments.

Ultimately, for Thomas, the fulfillment of the supernatural life of charity and the completion of our surrender to God's action within the soul is nothing but the return of the self, on the cognitive and affective levels, to the Infinite plenitude of love, that transcendent good which both elicits and finalizes all human seeking. In this way, the presence of God to man through grace both completes the divine disclosure found in creation, and confirms creatures' similitude to their Source.

<sup>115</sup> "The mystic approaches as an ethicist, emerges next as a psychologist, and finally appears to be driven to wooly metaphysics in order to account in a straightforward manner for the psychological phenomenon" (Angel 1994: 107).

## LA LUCE IN TOMMASO D'AQUINO

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The theme of light is not central in Aquinas' thought. He speaks about it when the opportunity arises, especially when he is concerned with the creation of the world and vision. When he is concerned with light, Thomas appears as the *magister*, Aristotle's follower, an alert reader of the *sacra pagina* and of the *sancti*'s works. He clearly adheres to the physics and cosmology of Aristotle and solves the old equivocation according to which light is part both of the sensible and intelligible and divine: *proprie* light is the one, and the only one, with the help of which we can see through the eyes of our body. Light is the medium through which the sun and the other heavenly bodies influence our world, it is connected to the natural warmth and favours of life. It is neither a body nor a form or substance or a substantial form, but it is the *qualitas activa* of the sun and of the other self-shining bodies. But as light has a *virtus manifestativa*, we can speak of light even *metaphorice* in all the cases in which we have a form of sight or knowledge. For that Thomas can write: "Divina sapientia lux dicitur, prout in puro actu cognitionis consistit."

La luce: fenomeno, o meglio realtà più di ogni altra dai molti aspetti e significati. Tutti, da sempre ha affascinato e molti ne hanno scritto per dir così la storia, raccogliendo e ordinando quello che è stato sentito, immaginato, pensato di "lei", di volta in volta come fenomeno fisico, principio metafisico, "mistero"...

Ma in tutte queste "storie della luce", siano esse scientifiche, speculative, o spirituali, Tommaso d'Aquino non occupa certo un posto di rilievo, quando non è trascurato del tutto.

Siano sufficienti alcuni esempi: David Park nel suo *Natura e significato della luce* dedica all'Aquinate in tutto una pagina scarsa;<sup>1</sup> David Lindberg nei suoi *Studies in the history of medieval optics* non lo nomina nemmeno, e così fanno anche Werner Beierwaltes e Margot Schmidt rispettivamente nelle voci *Licht* dell'*Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie* e *Lumière. III. Le thème de la lumière au moyen âge* del *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*; infine nella recente raccolta antologica di testi sulla luce dal I al XV secolo curata da Crispino Valenziano troviamo pagine di Roberto Grossatesta e Alberto Magno, ma non di Tommaso d'Aquino.

E, d'altra parte, anche tra gli studiosi della filosofia e della teologia medievali pochi sono quelli che si sono soffermati su questo aspetto del pensiero dell'Aquinate: ricordiamo le ricerche, ormai lontane, di Jacques Guillet e di Joseph de Tonquédec e quella più recente di Klaus Hedwig, che dedica a Tommaso d'Aquino più o meno lo stesso numero di pagine che a Bonaventura da Bagnoregio e ad Alberto Magno.<sup>2</sup>

Il fatto è che Tommaso è teologo, squisitamente teologo, e, oltre a non aver coltivato interessi scientifici, come per esempio il suo maestro Alberto Magno, da filosofo non considera la luce come un elemento strutturale della realtà, per cui, giustamente, non viene annoverato tra i sostenitori della cosiddetta "metafisica della luce".

Ma della luce non si può non parlare: si arriva, prima o poi, a parlarne... e anche Tommaso, lo abbiamo già detto tra le righe, non sfugge a questo destino.

Ne parla *ex professo*, e anche con una certa ampiezza, innanzi tutto nei due contesti in cui può, ma forse è meglio dire deve parlarne un maestro della facoltà di teologia di Parigi nella prima metà del secolo XIII: a proposito della creazione della luce e della visione, innanzi tutto commentando i luoghi in cui, rispettivamente, ne hanno trattato Pietro Lombardo nelle sue *Sententiae* e Aristotele nel suo *De anima*, e poi anche nella *Summa theologiae*, là dove tratta di Dio in quanto principio di tutte le cose, cioè di Dio creatore. Per la precisione dedica alla luce i primi quattro articoli del suo commento alla *distinctio XIII* del secondo libro delle *Sententiae* (1252–1268),<sup>3</sup> buona parte della *lectio XIV* sul secondo

<sup>1</sup> Park (1998:120–122) (la pagina 121 è in buona parte occupata da una illustrazione).

<sup>2</sup> Guillet (1927); de Tonquédec (1950); Hedwig (1980): su Bonaventura pp. 161–173, su Alberto Magno pp. 175–185, su Tommaso pp. 199–209.

<sup>3</sup> Ed. parmensis, t. VI, pp. 496–503.

libro del *De anima* (1267–1268),<sup>4</sup> e la *quaestio* 67 della prima parte della *Summa theologiae* (1268).

Poi, come è facile vedere dai lessici, ne parla di passaggio anche in molti altri luoghi, in contesti e in termini assai diversi: per esempio, ancora nella prima parte della *Summa theologiae*, là dove considera l'unione, nell'uomo, dell'anima con il corpo, nella *Quaestio disputata de prophetia*, la dodicesima delle *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate* (1256–1259), per spiegare che cos'è il *lumen propheticum*,<sup>5</sup> e, a più riprese, nella *Lectura super Joannem* (1270–1272).

Vediamo dunque che cosa ha pensato Tommaso della luce, partendo dalla lettura del suo commento alla pagina in cui il Lombardo riflette, con i Padri, sulla creazione della luce.

Il racconto mosaico della creazione è stato, fin dall'epoca dei Padri, occasione imprescindibile per elaborare e proporre riflessioni “scientifiche”, luogo privilegiato per raccogliere, passare in rassegna e vagliare osservazioni e opinioni di cosmologia e di filosofia naturale in genere. Infatti, anche se il contesto è squisitamente teologico, l'esegesi letterale richiedeva che l'argomento fosse affrontato tenendo conto anche di quello che avevano detto i *philosophi naturales*.

A proposito della creazione i problemi erano molti, e svariati: dall'inizio del tempo alla natura delle acque sopracelesti, alla possibile identificazione dello spirito che passava sopra le acque con la platonica anima del mondo...

Per quel che riguardava la luce creata da Dio nel primo giorno, ci si chiedeva quale fosse la sua natura, visto che il sole e i luminari furono creati solo nel quarto, e quale fosse stato il suo “ruolo” nel prosieguo della creazione.

Anche il Lombardo, giunto a considerare la *formatio lucis*, primo momento dell'*opus distinctionis*, si era chiesto: *qualis fuerit lux illa, spiritualis, an corporalis* e, seguendo Agostino nel *De Genesi ad litteram*,<sup>6</sup> aveva risposto che la luce poteva intendersi in entrambi i modi: nel primo caso, intesa cioè spiritualmente, indicava la natura angelica; nel secondo caso, si doveva intendere che fosse un corpo luminoso, come una nube. Come altre volte, il Lombardo non aveva preso posizione, limitando a un inciso, *quod utique probabile est*, il suo parere a favore della seconda ipotesi.

<sup>4</sup> Ed. parmensis, t. XX, pp. 71–74.

<sup>5</sup> In relazione all'episodio evangelico della trasfigurazione (*Mt.* 17, 1–8) Tommaso parla di *claritas* (*III Sent.*, d. 16, q. 2, a. 1).

<sup>6</sup> Agostino, *De Genesi ad litteram*, 1, 3–5 e 17.

Nel commentare questa pagina, Tommaso a differenza del Lombardo tiene conto di quello che hanno detto in proposito non solo i *sancti*, ma anche i *philosophi*, in particolare il *Philosophus*, la cui cosmologia, come è noto, non è sempre facilmente e immediatamente conciliabile con il dettato biblico, anche per quel che riguarda il racconto mosaico della creazione.<sup>7</sup>

Dopo la *divisio textus*, nel primo articolo del suo commento Tommaso spiega perché fu necessario che all'*opus creationis* seguisse l'*opus distinctionis*, e poi, passando a considerare la luce, si discosta in modo significativo dalla "lettera": nel secondo articolo si chiede infatti *utrum lux proprie inveniatur in spiritualibus* e solo nel terzo si interroga sulla natura di questa luce.

Questa diversa impostazione e formulazione del problema deriva da un lato dalla tendenza, per non chiamarla predilezione, degli scolastici a impostare e a risolvere le questioni proponendo diversi criteri per ordinare una serie di "cose" — siano queste oggetti naturali o organi del nostro corpo, funzioni o attività, vizi o virtù — o distinguendo i vari sensi — *latissime*, *late*, *proprie*, *proprissime* e *proprie*, *analogice*, *aequivoce*, *metaphorice* — in cui si può intendere un termine o riferirlo ad un altro; dall'altro dal fatto che Tommaso, che segue fondamentalmente Aristotele anche per quel che riguarda la *physica*, non ha il minimo dubbio su quale sia la natura della luce, che cioè la luce creata da Dio sia quella, e solo quella, fisica, e quindi non accetta l'idea di lasciar aperta la questione, come hanno fatto Agostino e il Lombardo.

Ma, per escludere la prima ipotesi, ha naturalmente bisogno di "coprirsi le spalle", e all'autorità di Agostino contrappone quelle di Ambrogio e Dionigi, secondo cui nulla che sia di per sé sensibile può convenire alle realtà spirituali se non metaforicamente<sup>8</sup> e, quindi, conclude:

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Chenu (1937).

<sup>8</sup> "Sed contra est quod dicit Ambrosius, qui inter ea quae transumptive de Deo dicuntur, ponit splendorem qui contingit ex multiplicatione luminis. Ergo videtur quod lux in spiritualibus non nisi metaphorice inveniatur. Praetera, Dionysius dicit quod Deus dicitur lumen ex hoc quod similitudo eius maxime resultat in radio solari quantum ad causalitatem. Sed omne nomen quod dicitur de Deo per similitudinem a creatura corporali sumptam, convenit sibi metaphorice." (ed. cit., p. 499a). Tommaso si riferisce rispettivamente al *De fide*, 2, *prol.*: "Sunt enim evidentia indicia, quae proprietatem deitatis ostendant, sunt quae similitudinem patris et filii, sunt etiam quae perspicuam divinae maiestatis exprimant unitatem. Proprietatis itaque sunt generatio, deus, filius, verbum; similitudinis splendor, character, speculum, imago [...]" (CSEL 78, p. 58, 9–14), e al *De divinis nominibus*, c. 4, § 4, che Tommaso nel suo commento, riferendosi anche ai due paragrafi successivi, presenta così: "[...] hic prosequitur ea quae pertinent ad nomen luminis: et primo ostendit quomodo nomen luminis so-

Respondeo dicendum, quod in hoc videtur esse quaedam diversitas inter sanctos. Augustinus enim videtur velle, quod lux in spiritualibus verius inveniatur quoam in corporalibus. Sed Ambrosius et Dionysius videntur velle, quod in spiritualibus non nisi metaphorice inveniatur. Et hoc quidem videtur magis verum; quia nihil per se sensibile spiritualibus convenit nisi metaphorice, quia quamvis aliquid commune possit invenire analogice in spiritualibus et corporalibus, non tamen aliquid per se sensibile, ut patet in ente, et calore; ens enim non est per se sensibile, quod utrique commune est; calor autem quod per se sensibile est, in spiritualibus proprie non invenitur. Unde cum lux sit qualitas per se visibilis, et species quaedam determinata in sensibilibus; non potest dici in spiritualibus nisi vel aequivoce vel metaphorice.<sup>9</sup>

Tommaso vuol però salvare, come vera, anche l'affermazione agostiniana, "quod lux in spiritualibus verius inveniatur quam in corporalibus",<sup>10</sup> e quindi, tralasciando l'*aequivoce*, spiega come e perché si può parlare *metaphorice* di luce nelle realtà spirituali:

Sciendum tamen, quod transferuntur corporalia in spiritualia per quendam similitudinem, quae quidem est similitudo proportionabilitatis; et hanc similitudinem oportet reducere in aliquam communitatem univocationis, vel analogiae; et sic est in proposito: dicitur enim lux in spiritualibus illud quod ita se habet ad manifestationem intellectivam sicut se habet lux corporalis ad manifestationem sensitivam. Manifestatio autem verius est in spiritualibus; et quantum ad hoc, verum est dictum Augustini, quod lux verius est in spiritualibus quam in corporalibus, non secundum propriam rationem lucis, sed secundum rationem manifestationis, prout dicitur in canonica Ioannis,<sup>11</sup> quod "omne quod manifestatur, lumen est" (*solutio*).<sup>12</sup>

La *virtus manifestativa*, "virtù" universalmente riconosciuta alla luce fisica, è dunque la *ratio similitudinis* dell'analogia secondo cui la luce si può trovare nelle realtà spirituali.

Senza far ricorso ai *philosophi*, ma allegando *auctoritates* di *sancti*, Tommaso è riuscito a sostenere la sua tesi che la luce, propriamente, è so-

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laris metaphorice Deo attribuitur; secundo quomodo attribuitur ei intelligibile lumen. [...] ostendit quod nomen solaris luminis Deo attribuitur ratione similitudinis [...]" (*Super librum Dionysii De divinis nominibus, lectio III*, ed. parmensis, t. XV, p. 301).

<sup>9</sup> Ed. cit., p. 499a.

<sup>10</sup> Questa affermazione, che non si trova nella prima parte dell'articolo, si fonda su un luogo del *De Genesi ad litteram* (4, 28) riportato invece nella prima parte dell'articolo corrispondente nella *Summa theologiae*.

<sup>11</sup> In realtà, come cita correttamente nella *Summa theologiae*, II-II, q. 171, a. 2, si tratta di *Eph.* 5, 13.

<sup>12</sup> Ed. cit., p. 499a.

lo quella per cui noi vediamo e d'altra parte, ricorrendo alla classica analogia tra *videre* e *intelligere*, a giustificare le affermazioni agostiniane.

Dopo aver delimitato chiaramente l'ambito della luce al sensibile, Tommaso si interroga sulla natura di questa luce, chiedendosi innanzi tutto *utrum lux sit accidens*. In realtà questa domanda rispecchia solo in parte il contenuto dell'articolo, invero assai lungo, perché nella prima parte Tommaso riporta una serie di autorità e alcuni dati di esperienza da cui di volta in volta sembra potersi dedurre che la luce non è un accidente, ma piuttosto un corpo,<sup>13</sup> o una forma sostanziale,<sup>14</sup> o una "qualità passibile" (che comporta cioè una *passio* nel *subiectum* che la possiede). Nel *sed contra* introduce la sua tesi citando il Damasceno (*De fide orthodoxa*, 1, 9) ed Avicenna (*De anima*, 3, 1). La *solutio* inizia con una analisi dei termini in gioco: *lux*, *lumen*, *radius*, *splendor*:

Lux dicitur secundum quod est in aliquo corpore lucido in actu, a quo alia illuminantur, ut in sole. Lumen autem dicitur, secundum quod est receptum in corpore diaphano illuminato. Radius autem dicitur illuminatio secundum directam lineam ad corpus lucidum [...]. Splendor autem est ex reflexione radii ad aliquod corpus tersum et politum, sicut aquam, et ad argentum, vel aliquod huiusmodi; ex qua reflexione etiam radii proiciuntur.<sup>15</sup>

Secondo Tommaso quindi, solo alla *lux* compete l'essere in atto, mentre il *radius* indica la modalità rettilinea dell'illuminare e il *lumen*<sup>16</sup> e lo *splendor* sono, se pur in modo diverso, entrambi connessi ad una *passio*: sono luminosi non per sé, ma per la presenza di luce ricevuta, che può, naturalmente essere trasmessa.

(Tra parentesi dobbiamo aggiungere che, nonostante queste precisazioni, la terminologia di Tommaso non è sempre rigorosa, in parti-

<sup>13</sup> Agostino, *De libero arbitrio*, 3, 5; Aristotele, *Topici*, 2, 3.

<sup>14</sup> Dionigi Areopagita, *De divinis nominibus*, c. 4.

<sup>15</sup> Ed. cit., p. 500a.

<sup>16</sup> In deroga al significato che deriva al termine *lumen* dal suffisso *-men*, che in latino, come anche in altre lingue indoeuropee, viene usato con radici verbali per dare un senso concreto e per formare nomi d'agente, che indicano cioè la cosa o la persona che compie l'azione indicata dalla radice, in questo caso *lūc* – *lūc* (la prima *u* lunga, la seconda *u* breve), che significa "essere luminoso, rischiarare". Cf. Ernout & Meillet (1985). Al *lumen* di Tommaso non possiamo quindi far corrispondere l'italiano "lume". Quest'ultimo termine infatti indica una fonte di luce, o in ogni caso una luminosità, un essere luminoso inteso come capacità attiva, di produrre, ed emettere luce. Per questo abbiamo usato e useremo di preferenza il termine latino.

colare per quel che riguarda *lux* e *lumen*: “ipsa evidentia coloris vocatur lux, vel lumen.”<sup>17</sup>

Nel prosieguito della *solutio*, tralasciando di fatto *radius* e *splendor* (incontriamo lo *splendor* solo nel riferimento ad Ambrogio),<sup>18</sup> Tommaso passa ad esporre e criticare le molte e varie opinioni sulla natura della *lux* e del *lumen* (“circa naturam lucis et luminis est multiplex opinio”). Sulla base dei dati dell’esperienza, interpretati secondo i principi della filosofia naturale aristotelica, ma anche riportando gli argomenti di altri, siano essi genericamente *philosophi* (e uno di questi è senz’altro il *Philosophus* del *De anima*), o con maggior precisione Averroè o Avicenna, l’Aquinata confuta l’opinione di quanti hanno detto che la luce è un corpo, una forma, una sostanza, l’evidenza del colore, un’intenzione.

Vediamo brevemente i vari punti di questa lunga rassegna critica. Innanzi tutto

[...] quidam dixerunt, quod lux est corpus, quod est ipsa substantia solis, ex quo fluunt queadam corpora, et illa corpora dicuntur lumen vel radius.<sup>19</sup>

La confutazione di Tommaso si basa su un fatto che, a quei tempi, sembrava si dovesse accettare così come appare: l’illuminarsi istantaneo dell’aria. Se la luce fosse corpo, l’illuminarsi dell’aria sarebbe conseguente a un moto locale di corpi che fluiscono dal sole e dovrebbe quindi avvenire secondo una successione che non dovrebbe sfuggire ai sensi, dal momento che si tratta di spazi molto grandi — da oriente a occidente o dal sole a noi —; inoltre ci sarebbero due corpi insieme nello stesso luogo (questi due primi argomenti sono già nel *De anima*, 418b18–27), e il sole dovrebbe diminuire, tanto che noi dovremmo accorgercene.<sup>20</sup> Questa posizione, secondo cui la luce è corpo si

<sup>17</sup> Ed. cit., p. 500b. Ancora, oltre ad altri esempi riportati più avanti: “[...] et similiter dicendum est de nomine *lucis*. Nam primo quidem est institutum ad significandum id quod facit manifestationem in sensu visus [...] Si ergo accipiat nomen *luminis* secundum suam primam impositionem [...]” (*S. th.*, I, q. 67, a. 1, *resp.*). Ancora nella *Summa* il *respondeo* del secondo articolo, in cui si chiede *utrum lux sit corpus*, inizia “[...] dicendum quod impossibile est lumen esse corpus.” A proposito della “luce informe”, creata il primo giorno, troviamo una *variatio* terminologica tra il commento e la *summa*: nel commento: “per lucem illam ipse intelligit lumen solis tunc informe” (a. 4, *ad secundum*); nella *summa*: “illa lux fuit lux solis, sed adhuc informis” (a. 4, *ad secundum*).

<sup>18</sup> Cf. *supra* nota 8.

<sup>19</sup> Ed. cit., p. 500a.

<sup>20</sup> “Primo, quia sequeretur quod illuminatio esset motus localis corporum a sole fluentium; et cum motus localis non possit esse subito, sequeretur illuminationem fieri

potrebbe sostenere, conclude Tommaso, solo “allis principii naturalis philosophiae inventis.”

Tommaso esclude poi che, essendo il *lumen* in un corpo diafano un accidente — e questo è evidente per il fatto che sopraggiunge quando questo è perfetto, e viene meno mentre questo permane — la *lux* sia una forma, o una sostanza,<sup>21</sup> o una forma sostanziale: innanzi tutto perché, se il *lumen* nell’aria è un accidente, è necessario che sia un accidente anche il principio da cui deriva,<sup>22</sup> e poi perché la forma, la sostanza, la forma sostanziale non si vedono, in quanto rientrano nel campo dell’intelligibile, sono *obiecta intellectus*, mentre la luce, anche se non è un corpo, rientra nel campo del sensibile.<sup>23</sup>

Per confutare poi la tesi che “ipsa evidentia coloris vocatur lux, vel lumen”<sup>24</sup> Tommaso ricorda, senza riportare in dettaglio gli argomenti, che anche Avicenna l’ha confutata<sup>25</sup> e richiama di seguito un dato dell’esperienza sensibile: il fatto che di notte vediamo alcune luci, senza vedere i colori. Anche se è vero, aggiunge, “quod per lucem videtur color, quia lux facit colorem esse visibilem in actu.”<sup>26</sup>

Non è nemmeno possibile, infine, che la luce abbia un essere puramente intenzionale, che cioè, come luce, sia solo nel soggetto conoscente, perché — è ancora un dato di esperienza — “per illuminationem videmus sensibiliter naturales transmutationes fieri per caliditatem ex radiis solis consequentem.”<sup>27</sup>

successive, quae successio non posset sensum latere secundum maximum spatium, ab oriente scilicet in occidentem, et a sole ad nos. Secundo quia sequeretur duo corpora esse simul in eodem loco, cum totum spatium quod illuminatur sit plenum aere [...] Tertio, quia illa corpora aut deciduntur de substantia solis [...]” (ed. cit., p. 500a).

<sup>21</sup> “Alii autem dicunt, quod lumen quod est receptum in corpore diaphano, est accidens, quia post esse completum advenit, et recedit rebus manantibus: sed in corpore lucido lux est substantia” (ed. cit., p. 500b).

<sup>22</sup> A sostegno di questo argomento Tommaso ricorre, sulla scorta del Commentatore, al paragone con il calore, che non è la forma sostanziale del fuoco, perché nei corpi riscaldati è un accidente: “calor non est forma substantialis ignis, quia in corporibus calefactis est accidens” (ibidem, ivi).

<sup>23</sup> “[N]ulla substantia est per se sensibilis, quia “quod quid” est obiectum intellectus. Unde oportet quod lux quae per se videtur, non sit forma substantialis. Et si dicatur, quod illud quod videtur, non est lux, sed fulgor quidam; dicendum, quod illud quod nos appellamus lucem, est illud quod per se videtur” (ibidem, ivi).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *supra*.

<sup>25</sup> Avicenna, *De anima*, 3, 1 e 3.

<sup>26</sup> Ed. cit., p. 500b.

<sup>27</sup> Ibidem, ivi.

La conclusione, interessante soprattutto per i corollari, conformemente alle autorità citate nel *sed contra* è che

[...] lux est forma accidentalis, habens esse ratum et firmum in natura, et, sicut calor, est qualitas activa ipsius solis, et in aliis est secundum quod magis cum sole communicant, qui totius luminis est fons. Unde Avicenna dicit<sup>28</sup> quod nulla actio est a corporibus superioribus in inferiora, nisi mediante luce, sicut ignis etiam agit mediante calore: unde lux et lumen differunt, sicut calor in subiecto per se calido, et in calefacto. Et quia caelum est primum alterans, inde sequitur quod omnis alteratio quae est in inferioribus, perficiatur per virtutem luminis [...] et ex hoc habet lux quod omnibus corporibus generationem conferat, ut dicit Dionysius [...] et inde est etiam quod, secundum Augustinum, lumen est medium in omni sensu, sed in visu primo et immediate.<sup>29</sup>

Concependo dunque così la luce, si spiegano, secondo Tommaso, le affermazioni di Avicenna, portavoce qui della cosmologia aristotelica, di Dionigi, di Agostino: che la luce sia l'unico mezzo attraverso cui i corpi superiori agiscono su quelli inferiori, che la luce giovi in tutti i corpi alla generazione, che il *lumen* sia il mezzo in ogni conoscenza sensibile, primariamente e immediatamente nella visione, nelle altre sensazioni mediante altre qualità.<sup>30</sup>

Nel quarto articolo, *utrum productio lucis convenienter recitetur*, Tommaso riprende la problematica affrontata nel primo e risolve alcune difficoltà che derivano da una interpretazione letterale del racconto della creazione nelle sue varie sequenze: la presenza iniziale delle tenebre, l'alternarsi del giorno e della notte, precedente alla formazione dei luminari ecc.

Tommaso spiega che la produzione della luce rientra in parte nell'*opus distinctionis* e in parte nell'*opus ornatus* e, a proposito del problema cui abbiamo accennato all'inizio, di quale sia la natura della luce creata il primo giorno, visto che il sole fu creato il quarto, afferma che:

[...] in lucis productione intelligitur proprietas luciditatis et diaphaneitatis, quae ad luci genus reducitur, omnibus corporibus lucidis et diaphanis collata fuisse; sed tamen, secundum Dionysium,<sup>31</sup> sol est principium et fons luminis, illuminans superiora et inferiora corpora; et ideo per lucem illam ipse intelligit lumen solis tunc informe.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Avicenna, *De caelo et mundo*, 14.

<sup>29</sup> Ed. cit., p. 500b-501a.

<sup>30</sup> Tommaso può aver avuto presente *De Genesi ad litteram*, XII, 16, riportato, in parte, nel *De spiritu et anima*, XXII (P.L. 40, vol. 795).

<sup>31</sup> Dionigi Areopagita, *De divinis nominibus*, c. 4.

<sup>32</sup> Ed. cit., p. 502b.

Nella *Lectio XIV* sul secondo libro *De anima* si respira, naturalmente, un'altra aria: rispetto al commento alle *Sententiae*, accanto a comprensibili silenzi troviamo però alcune "costanti" ed anche alcune novità, che costituiscono, entrambe, gli aspetti più interessanti del commento tomistico a questa pagina aristotelica.

Tommaso "legge" la prima parte del capitolo 7 (418a27–b27), in cui Aristotele prende in considerazione il visibile, e tratta quindi del colore, del diafano e della luce. Seguendo la "lettera" del *Philosophus*, affronta dunque il tema che ci interessa nell'ultima parte della *lectio*: illustra innanzi tutto la definizione aristotelica del *lumen*<sup>33</sup> come *actus diaphani*, passa poi a esporre e confutare le molte false opinioni *de natura luminis*, per concludere, infine, riproponendo la definizione del commento alle *Sententiae*: "lux est qualitas activa corporis caelestis [...] lux est qualitas primi corporis alterantis" e la distinzione terminologica che conosciamo, secondo cui "ipsa participatio vel effectus lucis in diaphano, vocatur lumen."

Fedele allo spirito dell'opera che sta leggendo, Tommaso parla della luce solo in relazione all'attività conoscitiva dell'uomo. Ma, andando ben al di là della "lettera" aristotelica, affronta anche qui il problema della luce spirituale, impostandolo e, quindi, risolvendolo in termini diversi rispetto al commento alle *Sententiae*: solo ed esclusivamente in relazione alla sfera intellegibile.

Nella rassegna critica delle false opinioni sulla natura del *lumen*, Tommaso ripropone infatti tutte le opinioni che abbiamo già visto esposte e confutate nel commento alle *Sententiae* (art. 3), anche quella che la luce sia una *natura spiritualis*:

Quidam [...] dixerunt quod lux est quaedam natura spiritualis, argumentum sumentes quod in rebus intellectualibus nomine luminis utimur: dicimus enim in substantiis intellectualibus esse quoddam lumen intelligibile.<sup>34</sup>

Si tratta di un'opinione senz'altro errata: non è possibile che esista un *lumen intellegibile*, perché è impossibile che una natura spirituale e intellegibile cada sotto i sensi. Ma, fermo restando che la luce che si percepisce con la vista non è una natura spirituale, espressioni come quella appena ricordata sono senz'altro accettabili, perché nulla impedisce di usare uno stesso termine riferendolo a cose diverse:

<sup>33</sup> Così nelle due versioni latine, l'*antiqua* e la *recens*, a disposizione di Tommaso.

<sup>34</sup> Ed. parmensis, t. XX, p. 73b.

Si quis autem dicat quod alius est lumen spirituale ab eo quod sensus percipit, non est cum eo contendendum, dummodo hic habeat quod lumen quod visus percipit, non est natura spiritualis. Nihil enim prohibet unum nomen imponi rebus quantucumque diversis.<sup>35</sup>

Tommaso non fa cenno al *metaphorice*, né all'analogia e alla *virtus manifestativa*: la "spiritualità" della luce è giustificata, nel nostro uso linguistico, "ex nobilitate visus, qui est spiritualior et subtilior inter omnes sensus."

L'eccellenza della vista rispetto a tutti gli altri sensi, tema antico,<sup>36</sup> viene dunque qui declinata nel senso della spiritualità. Tommaso per provarla porta due argomenti: il primo, classico, sottolinea l'eccellenza dell'oggetto; il secondo, più originale, evidenzia il mutamento che avviene nell'organo di senso quando percepisce, mutamento che non è, come nel caso degli altri sensi, prima naturale e poi spirituale, ma solo spirituale<sup>37</sup>:

[...] in quolibet alio sensu non est immutatio spiritualis, sine naturali. Dico autem immutationem naturalem prout qualitas recipitur in patiente secundum esse naturae, sicut cum aliquid infrigidatur vel calefit aut movetur secundum locum. Immutatio vero spiritualis est secundum quod species recipitur in organo sensus aut in medio per modum intentionis, et non per modum naturalis formae. [...] Patet autem quod in tactu, et gustu, qui est tactus quidam, fit alteratio naturalis, [...] similiter autem immutatio odoris fit cum quadam fumali evaporatione, immutatio autem soni cum motu locali. Sed in immutatione visus est sola immutatio spiritualis [...].<sup>38</sup>

Diamo ora uno sguardo alla *quaestio* 67 della prima parte della *Summa theologiae*, che, come nel caso di altri temi, non mostra grandi differenze di impostazione e di contenuto rispetto al commento alle *Sententiae*.

La comune prospettiva teologica fa sì che i problemi siano gli stessi, e così pure, nella sostanza, le risposte, ma qui nella *Summa* Tommaso, non dovendo seguire alcuna "lettera", è libero di organizzare "al meglio" il suo discorso. Lo articola, appunto — mi sia concesso il bisticcio

<sup>35</sup> Ibidem, ivi.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Platone, *Timeo* 47a; Aristotele, *Metafisica* A, 980a, *De anima*, 3, 3, 429a3-4.

<sup>37</sup> Anche questo motivo ha una lunga storia: vi accenna, per esempio, Agostino nella sua disanima sui sensi esterni nel secondo libro del *De libero arbitrio* (7, 19). Tommaso riprenderà e svilupperà il motivo nella *Summa theologiae*, I, q. 78, a. 3, *resp.*: "Est autem duplex immutatio: una naturalis, et alia spiritualis [...] Visus autem, quia est absque immutatione naturalis et organi et obiecti, est maxime spiritualis, et perfectior inter omnes sensus[...]."

<sup>38</sup> Ed. cit., p. 73b.

di parole — in quattro articoli, in cui si chiede, successivamente: *utrum lux proprie in spiritualibus dici possit, utrum lux sit corpus, utrum sit qualitas, utrum conveniens fuit prima diei fieri lucem*.

I quattro articoli corrispondono dunque solo in parte a quelli del commento: anche nella *Summa* ritroviamo il “disordine” del commento rispetto alla lettera del Lombardo, la preoccupazione cioè di definire innanzi tutto l’ambito in cui si può parlare *proprie* di luce. Ma all’unico, lunghissimo articolo dedicato, nel commento, alla definizione della natura della luce ne corrispondono, nella *Summa*, due: *utrum lux sit corpus, utrum sit qualitas*. I problemi relativi alla “convenienza” dell’ordine della creazione, così come è narrata all’inizio della Genesi, infine, non costituiscono la cornice di tutta la trattazione, ma sono affrontati insieme nell’ultimo articolo.

All’interno dei singoli articoli poi l’argomentare di Tommaso procede più conciso e schematico, e risulta ancor più chiaro e stringente. Per esempio, siccome nella *Summa* i *sed contra* sono costituiti da un solo argomento, di solito fondato su una sola autorità, nel primo articolo, come autorità per sostenere che nelle creature spirituali si può parlare di luce solo in senso metaforico, riporta unicamente quella di Ambrogio, nel terzo, per affermare che la luce è una qualità, riporta solo l’autorità del Damasceno (tralasciando rispettivamente quella di Dionigi<sup>39</sup> e quella di Avicenna); gli argomenti per cui “impossibile est lumen esse corpus” sono introdotti secondo la distinzione *ex parte loci* (due corpi non possono occupare lo stesso luogo), *ex ratione motus* (l’istantaneità con cui si propaga la luce), *ex parte generationis et corruptionis* (la mancata diminuzione del sole); manca la distinzione terminologica fra *lux*, *lumen*, *radius* e *splendor*, ma c’è — in compenso? — una interessante osservazione sull’estensione di significato, nell’uso, del termine *visio*:

[... nomen *visionis*] primo impositum est ad significandum actum sensus visus, sed propter dignitatem et certitudinem huius sensus, extensum est hoc nomen, secundum usum loquentium, ad omnem cognitionem aliorum sensuum. Dicimus enim: *Vide quomodo sapit*, vel *quomodo redolet*, vel *quomodo est calidum* [...].<sup>40</sup>

Per quel che riguarda la natura della luce, notiamo che Tommaso è più esplicito che nel commento nel non attribuirle esclusivamente al

<sup>39</sup> In questo articolo Tommaso cita comunque il *De divinis nominibus* di Dionigi: nella prima parte ricorda il passaggio del capitolo quarto immediatamente successivo a quello citato nel *sed contra* del commento alle *Sententiae*, passaggio in cui Dionigi attribuisce a Dio il nome di *lumen intelligibile*. Cf. *supra* nota 8.

<sup>40</sup> *S.th.*, I, q. 67, a. 1, *resp.*

sole, ma anche ad altri corpi “lucenti per sé”, ammesso che ce ne siano: “lux est qualitas activa consequens formam substantialem solis, vel cuiuscumque alterius corporis a se lucentis, si aliquod tale est.”<sup>41</sup>

A proposito infine dell'ultima questione, è senza dubbio più chiaro nell'illustrare la tesi di Dionigi:

Et ideo est dicendum, ut Dionysius dicit, quod illa lux fuit lux solis, sed adhuc informis, quantum ad hoc, quod iam erat substantia solis, et habebat virtutem illuminativam in communi; sed postmodum data est ei specialis et determinata virtus ad particulare effectus.<sup>42</sup>

Tra i luoghi in cui Tommaso ha occasione, se pur di passaggio, di ribadire la sua opinione sulla natura della luce ricordiamo, nella prima parte della *Summa*, l'articolo 7 della *quaestio* 76, dedicata a una delle tesi più originali dell'Aquinate, quella secondo cui l'anima si unisce direttamente al corpo come forma sostanziale. In questo articolo, passando in rassegna le opinioni, false, di coloro che, posta l'alterità tra anima e corpo, pensano che questi possano essere uniti da un corpo intermedio, Tommaso considera anche quella di coloro che ritengono “quod [anima] unitur corpori mediante luce, quam dicunt esse corpus, et de natura quintae essentiae.”<sup>43</sup> Tale soluzione è, a suo giudizio, fantasiosa e ridicola:

“tum quia lux non est corpus; tum quia quinta essentia non venit materialiter in compositionem corporis mixti, cum sit inalterabilis, sed virtualiter tantum; tum etiam quia anima immediate corpori unitur ut forma materiae” (*resp.*).

Un discorso a parte meriterebbe la *Lectura super Joannem*, per la frequenza con cui la “lettera”, soprattutto nella prima parte, propone al “lettore” il tema che qui ci interessa. Limitiamoci dunque a considerarne uno dei passaggi iniziali, quello in cui Tommaso ripropone le due autorità di Agostino e di Ambrogio che avevamo già trovato contrapposte nel commento alle *Sententiae* e nella *Summa theologiae*. Ancora una volta, e con serenità e chiarezza ancora maggiori, l'Aquinate compone il contrasto: spiega, come già sappiamo, che il termine *lux* si può riferire sia

<sup>41</sup> *S. th.*, I, q. 67, a. 3, *resp.*, cf. de Tonquédec (1950:76); già nel quarto articolo del commento la *lux* è, più genericamente, “qualitas activa corporis caelestis, sicut calor est qualitas activa ignis.”

<sup>42</sup> *S. th.*, I, q. 67, a. 4, *resp.*

<sup>43</sup> Nella prima parte dell'articolo ha riportato, come autorità, un passo del *De Genesi ad litteram* (7, 19): “Dicit enim Augustinus quod anima per lucem et aerem, quae sunt similiora spiritui, corpus administrat”.

alle “cose” sensibili che a quelle spirituali o intelligibili perché in entrambi i casi indica una *manifestatio*, e poi, ricorrendo come altre volte<sup>44</sup> alla distinzione aristotelica tra *secundum naturam* e *quod nos*, aggiunge un prezioso chiarimento: la *lux*, con la sua *virtus manifestativa* si trova prima *secundum naturam* nelle “cose” intelligibili, *quo ad nos* in quelle sensibili.

[...] considerandum est quod, secundum Augustinum et plures alios, nomen lucis magis proprie dicitur in spiritualibus, quam in sensibilibus. Ambrosius tamen vult, quod splendor metaphorice dicatur de Deo. Sed in hoc non est magna vis facienda: nam de quocumque nomen lucis dicatur, ad manifestationem refertur, sive illa manifestatio sit in intelligibilis, sive in sensibilibus. Si ergo comparentur manifestatio intelligibilis et sensibilis, secundum naturam prius invenitur lux in spiritualibus; sed quo ad nos, qui nomina rebus imponimus ex earum proprietatibus nobis notis, prius invenitur in sensibilibus, quia prius impositum est a nobis hoc nomen ad significandum lucem sensibilem quam intelligibilem; quamvis secundum virtutem prius et verius conveniat spiritualibus quam sensibilibus.<sup>45</sup>

Passiamo all'uso metaforico, che Tommaso giustifica, anzi in alcuni casi ritiene conveniente anche in teologia, perché “est naturale homini ut per sensibilia ad intelligibilia veniat.”<sup>46</sup>

Abbiamo visto — è stato lui stesso a dircelo — che nel caso della luce quest'uso si basa sull'analogia di proporzionalità, che si può stabilire a partire dal fatto che la luce, quella per cui noi vediamo, possiede una *virtus manifestativa*: si può quindi, analogamente e *metaphorice*, dire che c'è luce non solo là dove c'è visione in senso proprio, ma anche là dove c'è conoscenza, di qualunque tipo o livello essa sia.

Ma Tommaso sfrutta anche un altro aspetto della luce sensibile, per riferirsi e descrivere in modo a noi più facilmente comprensibile fenomeni e “cose” lontani dalla nostra comune esperienza: il fatto che la *lux* è una qualità attiva e permanente, mentre *lumen* è una qualità passiva, che può essere permanente o temporanea.

Il modo di essere luminoso del *lumen* può evidentemente essere riferito in senso metaforico a molte più “cose” di quello della *lux*.

E così capiamo perché, come è possibile rilevare dai lessici, nell'opera dell'Aquinate le occorrenze di *lumen* sono molto più numerose di quelle di *lux*, innanzi tutto là dove si parla degli altri modi e livelli di conoscenza, oltre a quella sensibile: per esempio, anche solo nella prima *quaestio* della *Summa theologiae* troviamo: *lumen naturale intellectus* (a.2,

<sup>44</sup> Cf. *S. th.*, I, q. 1, a. 5, *ad primum*; I, q. 2, a. 1, *resp.*

<sup>45</sup> *Lectura super Joannem*, c. I, *lectio* III, ed. parmensis, t. X, p. 294.

<sup>46</sup> *S. th.*, I, a. 1, q. 9, *resp.*

resp.) e *naturale lumen rationis humanae* (a. 5, resp.), ma anche *divinum lumen* (a. 4, resp.), *lumen divinae scientiae* (a. 5, resp.).<sup>47</sup>

Più volte poi, in contesti per il vero assai disparati, Tommaso ricorre al paragone con la presenza del *lumen* nel diafano dell'aria, presenza che "dipende" da un influxo esterno ed è temporanea.

[...] esse per se consequitur formam creaturae, supposito tamen influxu Dei: sicut lumen sequitur diaphanum aeris, supposito influxu solis. (*S. th.* I, q. 104, a. 1, *ad primum*)

Accidens quod causatur ex participatione alicuius superioris naturae est dignius subiecto, [...] sicut lux diaphano. Et hoc modo caritas est dignior anima, in quantum est participatio quaedam Spiritus Sancti (*S. th.* II-II, q. 23, a. 3, *ad tertium*)

[...] sicut lumen statim cessaret esse in aere quod aliquod obstaculum poneretur illuminationi solis, ita etiam caritas statim deficit esse in anima quod aliquod obstaculum ponitur influentiae caritatis a Deo in anima (*S. th.* II-II, q. 24, a. 12, resp.)

In alcuni casi infine i due aspetti, quello della *virtus manifestativa*, propria sia della *lux* che del *lumen*, e quello della attività-permanenza della prima e passività-temporaneità del secondo, si combinano.

Per quel che riguarda la *lux*, vediamo che più volte Tommaso la attribuisce a Dio: "Divina sapientia lux dicitur, prout in puro actu cognitionis consistit",<sup>48</sup> "esse enim lucem est proprium Dei, alia vero sunt lucentia, id est participantia lucem; sed Deus est lux per essentiam,"<sup>49</sup> quindi: "omnis Dei locutio ad angelos est illuminatio."<sup>50</sup>

Per quel che riguarda il *lumen*, troviamo un esempio interessante nella *solutio* del primo articolo della *quaestio* 12 *De veritate*, là dove, a proposito della conoscenza intellettuale e della conoscenza profetica, Tommaso spiega che la profezia è, in un certo modo, visione: per questo si può parlare di *lumen profeticum*, e siccome ogni cosa può essere in un'altra in modo stabile o passeggero, come il *lumen corporale* è una quali-

<sup>47</sup> E poco più avanti: "[...] per participationem sui [sc. Dei] luminis omnia cognoscimus et diiudicamus: nam et ipsum lumen naturale rationis participatio quaedam est divini luminis; sicut etiam omnia sensibilia dicimus videre et iudicare in sole, idest per lumen solis" (*S. th.* I, q. 12, a. 11, *ad tertium*).

<sup>48</sup> *Summa contra Gentiles*, IV, 12, cf. Hedwig (1980: 208).

<sup>49</sup> *Lectura super Joannem*, c. XII, *lectio* VI, ed. parmensis, t. X, p. 522 b.

<sup>50</sup> *S. th.*, I, q. 107, a. 2, ad 3: "omnis Dei locutio ad angelos est illuminatio: quia cum voluntas Dei sit regula veritatis, etiam scire quid Deus velit, pertinet ad perfectionem et illuminationem mentis creatae."

tà permanente nelle stelle, passeggera nell'aria, così nell'uomo il *lumen* dell'intelletto agente è stabile, quello della profezia è passeggero.<sup>51</sup>

prophetia visio dicitur et propheta videns. [...] Cum autem omne quod manifestatur sub lumine quodam manifestatur, [...] oportet ut ea quae manifestantur homini supra cognitionem communem quodam altiori lumine manifestentur, quod lumen propheticum dicitur, ex cuius receptione aliquis propheta dicitur. Sciendum est autem quod aliquid recipitur in aliquo dupliciter: uno modo ut forma in subiecto consistens, alio modo per modum passionis; [...] lumen corporale est quidem in stellis ut stellarum qualitas, utpote quaedam forma in eis permanens, in aere vero est ut quaedam passio quia lumen non retinet sed recipit tantum per appositionem corporis lucidi. In intellectu igitur humano lumen quoddam est quasi qualitas vel forma permanens, scilicet lumen essenziale intellectus agentis ex quo anima nostra intellectualis dicitur. Sic autem lumen propheticum in propheta esse non potest [...]

La luce in quanto tale è dunque, nella speculazione dell'Aquinate, un tema marginale, ma forse sarebbe meglio dire occasionale, o ancor meglio: d'occasione.

Tommaso, abbiamo visto, si è trovato a parlarne durante tutto l'arco della sua vita, man mano che gli si sono presentate, appunto, le occasioni, nei contesti più diversi. E se da un lato tiene ben distinti i vari ambiti — abbiamo notato nei commenti la fedeltà allo spirito delle opere che sta leggendo —, dall'altro seguiamo lo svolgersi di una ben precisa linea di pensiero, un pensiero che di volta in volta, grazie anche ad alcuni interessanti episodi di “osmosi”, si arricchisce, si sistema, si completa.

Leggendo quello Tommaso che ha scritto a proposito della luce, abbiamo trovato lo scolastico, il seguace di Aristotele, il lettore attento della *sacra pagina* e delle opere dei *sancti*.<sup>52</sup>

Da *magister*, di fronte alla *multiplex opinio circa naturam lucis et luminis*, ha affrontato il problema, formulato le questioni, chiarito i termini in gioco, esposto e difeso le sue soluzioni.

In particolare poi, aderendo decisamente alla fisica e alla cosmologia aristoteliche, ha risolto con chiarezza, determinazione, coerenza l'equivoco racchiuso nel modo in cui, fin dall'antichità, è stata concepita la luce, come appartenente contemporaneamente alla sfera del

<sup>51</sup> Ritroviamo queste osservazioni anche nella *Summa theologiae*, II-II, q. 171, a. 2.

<sup>52</sup> Speriamo di poter riprendere e svolgere in modo sistematico l'analisi delle fonti, evidenziando il modo in cui Tommaso le ha, di volta in volta, utilizzate.

sensibile e a quella dell'intelligibile e del divino:<sup>53</sup> la luce è quella, e solo quella, che ci fa vedere “questa bella d'erbe famiglia e di animali”,<sup>54</sup> che è tramite dell'influsso del sole e più in generale dei corpi celesti sul mondo inferiore, che è connessa al calore naturale, e favorisce la vita.

Dalla lettura della *sacra pagina* e dei Padri, in particolare di Ambrogio e dell'apostolo Paolo, è stato infine portato a “vedere”, ed affermare, che della *lux* e del *lumen* si può parlare anche *metaphorice*, in forza sia della loro *virtus manifestativa* che del loro diverso modo di essere nel diafano.

E la frequenza con cui Tommaso ricorre a metafore “luminose” ci fa vedere che anche lui, a suo modo, non è rimasto insensibile al fascino di questa realtà, comunque, misteriosa.

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<sup>53</sup> Nardi (1971 : 126): “[...] mentre essa è la luce sensibile che raggia dal sole, a questo è attribuito potere divino ed è ritenuto ‘mente del mondo’.”

<sup>54</sup> U. Foscolo, *Dei sepolcri*, v. 5.

THOMAS AQUINAS AGAINST THE SCOTISTS  
AND PLATONISTS. THE DEFINITION OF *ENS*:  
CAJETANO, ZIMARA, PERERIO 1495–1576\*

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Thomas Aquinas is usually studied as a metaphysician, this is not the reading given to him by three Renaissance philosophers. At the turn of the sixteenth century there were at least two schools of Thomists, one influenced by Avicenna and Scotus, and the other influenced by Averroes, a reading of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas himself. The discussion below traces how the interpretation of Thomas' *De ente et essentia* was changed from being a text for metaphysics to one used for physics. One of the meanings of *ens*—being—was as a term that was coterminous with the object. As a result, the debate over the first thing thought or the *De primo cognito* debate centered around the meaning for the term *ens*, the following essay demonstrates how it moved from metaphysics to physics.

Between 1495 and 1560 Thomas Aquinas' *De ente et essentia*<sup>1</sup> and his commentary on Aristotle's *Physics* were read with increasing interest.

\* I would like to thank Antonino Poppi and Charles Lohr for encouraging me to engage in further research into the *De primo cognito* debate. This paper is just a preliminary examination into the formation of the question. Charles Lohr pointed out to me that the *Quaestio de primo cognito* was a topic in metaphysics in the middle ages, thus it appears to be new for this question employed in logic and physics texts. It was during discussions with Eckhard Kessler that I realized how very important the Lohr article was.

<sup>1</sup> I will take as given Aquinas' definition of *ens* by John F. Wippel in 'Metaphysics,' *The Cambridge companion to Aquinas* (ed. N. Kritzmann & E. Stump, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1993, p. 88): "The better interpretation recalls that for Aquinas the notion of being (that which is) is complex, including both the quidditative and existential—essence and existence. Hence both simple apprehension and some judgement of existence seem to be required for us to formulate this primitive notion of being."

One of the central topics discussed was the meaning Thomas attached to the word *ens*. The question was *ens* the first thing thought and if it was, how was it defined? This was formulated into three questions: (1) was it a category or grade above the object?; (2) was it abstracted from the object, as the Platonists defined 'idea'?; (3) or was it coterminous with the object in some way?

The Scotists held that *ens* was the first thing thought while others influenced by the Platonists held that 'idea' was the first thing thought. While these philosophical positions were clearly defined, what the three philosophers, Cajetano, Zimara and Pererio who we will be discussing objected to most was a view taken by some who called themselves Thomists, yet claimed that Avicenna was correct when he wrote that *ens* was the first thing thought.

The first philosopher who was also a theologian of is a Dominican, partly educated in Padua, Thomas de Vio, Cardinal Cajetano.<sup>2</sup> He was a brilliant young student and began teaching in the University of Padua at 25 receiving the Chair of Thomistic Metaphysics at 26. He was ordered to write his commentary on Thomas' *De ente et essentia* in 1495, the object was to dispute against Antonio Trombeta, who held the Chair of Scotist Metaphysics.<sup>3</sup> Trombeta had attacked Thomas' interpretation of the future contingent.

Our second philosopher is a secular philosopher and student of both Cajetano and Pomponazzi. Marc Antonio Zimara gave a lecture at Padua in 1508 named *Questio de primo cognito*.<sup>4</sup> This treatise was read widely, discussed in the commentary on the physics, *De Communibus omnium rerum naturalium principiis & affectionibus* by Pererio and later by Zabarella in his *Opera Logica* where the question assumes a centrally organizing function, as we have stated elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> The last philosopher

<sup>2</sup> For Cajetano (1468–1534), see C.H. Lohr, *Latin Aristotelian Commentaries II*, Florence, 1988, p. 71–73; referred to as *LAC II* and Thomas de Vio Cardinal Cajetano, *Commentary on Being and essence (in De ente et essentia de Thomas Aquinatis)* trans. and intro. by Lottie H. Kendzierski and Francis C. Wade, Mediaeval Philosophical Texts in Translation, no. 14., Milwaukee, Wisc., 1964.

<sup>3</sup> Antonio Trombeta, *Opus doctrine Scote Patavii in thomistas discussum Sententii*, Venice, 1493.

<sup>4</sup> For Zimara (1475–before 1537): C.H. Lohr, *LAC II*, p. 504–512; Antonio Antonaci, *Ricerche sull'Aristotelismo del Rinascimento, Marcantonio Zimara*, Pubblicazioni dell'istituto di filosofia universita delgi studi Bari, Edirice Salentina, Galatina, 1975, vols 2.

<sup>5</sup> C. Blackwell, 'The Vocabulary for Natural Philosophy, the *de primo cognito* question: a preliminary exploration: Zimara, Toledo, Pereria, Zabarella', in J. Hamesse & M. Fattori (eds.), *Lexiques et glossaires philosophiques de la Renaissance (XIVe–XVIe siècles)*,

to be discussed is a Spanish Jesuit, Benedetto Pererio<sup>6</sup> (1535–1610) from Valencia. He was educated at the Collegio Romano and not only read Zimara's treatise with care but examined it in detail in chapter xv, book three of his commentary on Aristotle's physics *De communibus omnium rerum naturalium principiis & affectionibus*.<sup>7</sup> He then went on to develop an explanation of what Aquinas meant by *ens*.

Why and how did a medieval scholastic topic in metaphysics become transformed into a debate over the meaning of *ens*? This debate narrowed down to the question of whether *ens* was coterminous with an object as well as one's sense perception or a concept in the mind. This is a complex question and some historical background that may help to explain the new interest in Thomas Aquinas and why were his texts so widely used to attack both Scotist and Platonist philosophy. Recent very interesting research by Charles Lohr and Antonino Poppi has suggested why important philosophical discussions took place that utilized topics from the medieval traditions and how, in the 1490's, an attack on Neo-Platonic philosophy began in Padua. In 'The Sixteenth Century Transformation of Aristotelian Natural Philosophy,'<sup>8</sup> Lohr suggested that there were different sources to some of the debates in sixteenth century philosophy than those usually studied. The opposition to Pomponazzi's assertion that it was impossible to prove the immortality of the soul from Aristotelian texts was not made by those afraid of atheism but by those who followed the northern Scholastic-theological philosophical tradition that developed around Paris in the 13th and 14th century. This tradition held that there was nothing true in philosophy that was not true in theology, a belief that suited a curriculum that had been taught as a preparation for the study of theology. All three of the philosophers treated here debated within the philosophical traditions of nominalism and Scotism and used their interpretation of Thomas to develop mediating positions between the two.

But the debate was not just between Scotism, nominalism and various types of Thomism, but as Poppi has pointed out, it was also against

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Actes du séminaire Roma, 3–4 novembre 2000, Brepols, Louvain-La-Neuve, 2003, pp. 287–308.

<sup>6</sup> For Pererio see C.H. Lohr, *LAC II*, pp. 313–320, and Blackwell (*ibid.*).

<sup>7</sup> Benedicto Pererio, *De Communibus omnium rerum naturalium principiis & affectionibus*, libri xv, Andreas Muschius, Venice, 1591, pp. 105–109.

<sup>8</sup> C.H. Lohr, 'The sixteenth century transformation of Aristotelian Philosophy', in E. Kessler & C.H. Lohr & W. Sparr (eds.), *Aristotelismus und Renaissance. In memoriam Charles B. Schmitt*, Wiesbaden, 1988.

Platonism.<sup>9</sup> We know from reading Pererio's commentary on Genesis,<sup>10</sup> that the Dominican Cajetano had been very aware of the theological and philosophical theories of the Florentines, and so disliked Pico's *Heptaplus*, a commentary on the first seven days of the world that interwove the tales of Homer and Zoroaster with the Biblical history of Moses, that he would not even mention the work in his own commentary.<sup>11</sup> Edward Mahoney<sup>12</sup> has engaged in detailed research on Zimara and reveals that he does not actually quote Ficino until late in his career. Whether Zimara actually quoted Ficino or not he certainly strongly questioned the Platonic philosophical method and terminology for use in physics or logic.

One could write a paper on how each philosopher developed the question, but the transformation of the definition of *ens* from one embedded within Thomas' own text into a place within the central argument on the first thing thought would not be appreciated. Thus this a short paper will be an initial summary of the approaches of each philosopher, setting similarities and differences between them. It is hoped it will open up the study of how Thomas Aquinas' writings were employed in logic and physics commentaries.

*CAJETANO'S COMMENTARY ON AQUINAS'*  
*'DE ENTE ET ESSENTIA'*<sup>13</sup>

Cajetano had marshaled excellent arguments for his treatise by the time he completed the work at twenty-seven. In the space available we can only discuss two of the opening questions. The treatise opened asking: Whether Being is What the Human Intellect knows first? Beginning in this way, Cajetano initiated the approach that would be later developed in Zimara's *Questio de primo cognito*. Cajetano wrote:

<sup>9</sup> A. Poppi, 'Antiplatonismo e flessioni nominalistiche nella dottrina del concetto di Pietro Pomponazzi', in *Saggi sul pensiero inedito de Pietro Pomponazzi*, Antinore, Padova, 1970, pp. 93–116.

<sup>10</sup> C. Blackwell, 'The challenge of Perennial philosophy, accepted and transformed into the history of logic: Benedetto Pererio, Zabarella, and Gassendi', in S. Hutton (ed.), *Platonism and modernity*, to be published in 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Benedetto Pererio, *Comm. on Genesis*.

<sup>12</sup> Edward Mahoney, *Two Aristotelians of the Italian Renaissance, Nicoletto Vernia and Augustino Nipho*, Variorum, Aldershot, 2000, pp. 525–528.

<sup>13</sup> Cajetano, *Commentary on Being*... cf. footnote 2. There is an extensive discussion of Cajetano's definition of *esse* and *essentia* on pp. 1–37.

since what the intellect first conceives is being and essence, as Avicenna says in the *Metaphysica*, we ought first, lest we fall into error through ignorance of them, state for the purpose of disclosing the difficulty they involve, what is meant by the names of Essence and Being, how they are found in different things, and how they are related to logical intentions, namely to genus, species and difference.<sup>14</sup>

Paraphrasing Thomas closely he wrote that when acquiring knowledge, we go from the easy to the more difficult, from the composite, to what is later simple. In this argument *ens* was designated as the composite and *essentia* was the simple and prior the two positions are contradictory.

At this point Cajetano introduced the caveat that *ens* “should not add a grade to any of its subjects of predication, which is not the opinion of Avicenna, Alfarabi, Algazel.”<sup>15</sup> Importantly Cajetano then criticizes Thomas’ explication of the question, pointing out that Thomas had not been clear on the subject.<sup>16</sup> Cajetano tried to solve the problem not with an analysis of the argument, but by giving *ens* a grammatical definition to tighten the argument by writing that *ens* taken as a noun is *esse actualis existentiae*, it is the first thing known. This first thing known, this *ens*, was confused and initial knowledge.<sup>17</sup>

In *Questio II*, ‘Whether Being and Essence Signify the Categories or Their Natures immediately or mediately,’ Cajetano began this section criticizing Scotus’s view in the *Sentences* that an a priori reality could be abstracted from similar things and this made it prior to all. Cajetano answers that being, or that abstract reality does not have nor does it signify a reality prior to categories.<sup>18</sup> This was because, as he stated in Question one, the term being is not a grade or level of thought. Being, he writes, and its attributes are in any grade and undivided. This view is completely opposed not only to Scotist definitions of being but Platonic views of reality.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* : 43.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* : 7.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* : 7.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.* : 44–48.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* : 67. This is an argument Cajetano admits comes from Averroes commentary on *Metaphysics X*, com. 8 where Averroise says that the term being signifies what is signified in the category of substance, quantity and quality in the first signification without any medium or mediation of any common factor.

MARCANTONIO ZIMARA,  
'*QUESTIO DE PRIMO COGNITO*', 1508<sup>19</sup>

To place Zimara's treatise it is useful to look at its date. He wrote his *Quaestio de primo cognito* four years after that his teacher Pomponazzi wrote his *Quaestio de speciebus intelligibilibus* 1504,<sup>20</sup> a work that denied that species were the first thing thought in the mind. Following Pomponazzi's secular tradition of philosophy, Zimara took the debate on the meaning of *ens* in Aquinas of the theological context and placed it into the curriculum of the Paduan medical school.

The treatise *De primo cognito*<sup>21</sup> was short well organized and only ten folio pages long. He began with the problem itself, then listed the discussion by setting out the opinions of those he calls famous philosophers and finally concluded with, he writes, his own opinion that he believes to be true.<sup>22</sup>

Zimara asked the question whether the universal was more known, the most universal, or the less universal. This question first enters Zimara's work in his comments on Averroes's commentary on Aristotle's Physics<sup>23</sup> where he asks if *ens* is the first thought in Physics, and if was, what kind of thought was it? He admitted that it was a question with many difficulties. "One can see where subtle doctor disagreed with beatific doctor and where it was difficult to see the truth, but I wish to show the truth in this material as much as it is possible for me."<sup>24</sup> By placing *ens* as a primary question in the physics he demotes metaphysics and concludes that it was clearly false that metaphysics was prior to the senses and that metaphysics preceded all of the sciences.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>19</sup> The following edition was used: Marcantonio Zimara, *Questio de primo cognito, Eiusdemque Solutiones contradictionum in dictis Averrois, in quibus eam solertiam internoscet, ut eas ne parva quidem labes contaminet*, Lyon, 1442.

<sup>20</sup> This text is printed for the first time in Poppi (1970).

<sup>21</sup> It was printed at least six times: Venice, 1508, 1516, 1550, 1560, and 1562, 1573 and two times in Lyon, 1530 and 1542, and widely collected in Germany.

<sup>22</sup> Marc Antonio Zimara, *De primo cognito*, Lyon, 1542: "In ista questione difficilima ita procedam, primo exponam titulum questionis. Secundum ponam opiniones famosas [...]. Et prostremo ponam opinionem quam credo veram esse."

<sup>23</sup> Aristotle *Libri physicorum octo*, Louvain, 1563, proemium, fol. 2-4.

<sup>24</sup> *Quaestio, op.cit.*: "Dico quod ista questio est multum difficilis, quia ubi subtilis doctor discrepat a beato doctore, difficile est videre veritate, conabor tamen ostendere veritatem in hac material quantum mihi possibile fuerit." 9, 1.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.* fol 7v.

Zimara then sets out the contradictions in Thomas who on the one hand wrote that the most universal is the most difficult to know.<sup>26</sup> But this presents problems for Zimara, and he was forced to redefine terms on to make his treatise develop in the way he wished. Because like Cajetano, Zimara notes that in his commentary on the first book of the Physics that Thomas says quite the opposite: that the most universal is the most noted.<sup>27</sup> Zimara then sets out to redefine the universal into that which is not complex. He justifies this definition by quoting Aristotle that this imperfect first thought is like nature, proceeding from the imperfect to perfect knowledge. If the most universal was the first thought, it is not complex. He ends this part of the treatise with a paraphrase of Averroes on the physics,

If we who wish to know what is the first cognition, in confused cognition one must turn to sense. For it seems to me that this is the fundamental principle of Averroes in his proemium of the first physics was that the first known was confused, and that the singular can be identified through the confused, which though not the principle of scientia, is however the principle of looking into universals, which in turn is the principles of the arts and sciences.<sup>28</sup>

#### *BENEDETTO PERERIO: THOMAS' DEFINITION OF ENS GOES INTO THE MAINSTREAM*

Benedetto Pererio<sup>29</sup> is the best known of the three: his import as a philosopher is appreciated by Galileo scholars, his fights over the position of mathematics with Clavius detailed by historians of mathematics and read by those interested in new structures of Renaissance thought, like Charles Lohr. Pererio was read in England by John Case at Ox-

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* fol. 6v: "Ista responsio non est vera, nec est de intentione sancti Thome [...]."

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* fol. 7v, 8r: "Similiter illud non est de intentione sancti Thomae. Nam in praemio metaphysicae in lectione secunda super illo passu philosophi universalis sunt difficillima ad cognoscendum dubitat contra philosophum: quia ut inquit videtur contradicere sibi philosophus in primo Physicorum, text. com. 3 & 4. ubi oppositum videtur tenere videlicet, quod universalis sunt nobis primo nota."

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* fol. 8r.

<sup>29</sup> He studied at the Roman College of the Jesuits 1553–1556, teaching between 1556–1610. He taught first of *litterae humaniores* 1556–1558, and then in 1558–1567 was professor of philosophy. Between 1567–1610 he was professor of theology.

ford, quoted by Francis Bacon<sup>30</sup> and printed in Germany until 1647. Like many Jesuits few of his writings were published — only four of the 34 works listed by Lohr were printed.<sup>31</sup> Pererio was extremely well read, he studied not only Zimara but Pomponazzi and Ficino, Pico della Mirandola, and Plotinus. He even became so annoyed at Augustino Steucho's use of Simplicius' interpretation of Aristotle in the *De philosophia Perenni* that he devoted a chapter to criticize him in detail in Book 4, 'Preprehenditur Simplicius qui conatur ostendere, omnes supradictas opiniones veterum Philosophorum versa esse at que inter se consentientes' of *De communibus omnium rerum naturalium principiis & affectionibus*.<sup>32</sup>

Pererio imbeds the *De primo cognito* question in the centre of book three: *De via ordine doctrina Physicae*? If Zimara included the topic of the *De primo cognito*, and Thomas' definition of *ens* into a university oration, Pererio abstracts it even further and imbeds it in the centre of book three: "De via ordine doctrina Physicae?"

Here Pererio first defines what he means by the *De primo cognito* question — the following is a paraphrase of the text:

It is not about what ever thought man had among others, nor is he asking a question in Metaphysics (i.e., he is not asking what is man's very first knowledge of God). Instead he wants to know what is the first sensitive thought of all known to man. Pererio emphasizes that he is not interested in identifying the first clear and distinct thought, but that what he is trying to identify is the rude and confused first thought. It is a type of cognition first noted by man in the very first origins or moments of time. Man has this type of first thought because the intellect of man is not eternal and thus does not have semi eternal thoughts of things — man's thought in the beginning is in various different ways and understands ambiguously.<sup>33</sup>

He wants to know: "what is first noted by this or that man but says that what one man experiences is merely a singular contingent and known by accident."<sup>34</sup>

Because this is a conference on Thomas Aquinas I will skip Pererio's detailed critique of Scotus and his followers and set out his basic

<sup>30</sup> I would like to thank Graham Rees, editor of the new Oxford Edition of Francis Bacon for that information. On Pererio, see P.R. Blum, 'Benedictus Pererius: Renaissance culture at the origins of Jesuit science' and M. Ciliberto 'Pererius e la magia', forthcoming in *Science and Education*.

<sup>31</sup> *LAC II*.

<sup>32</sup> Pererio, *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*: 97–101.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*: 100f.

argument attacking—as Cajetano and Zimara—Scotist Thomists’ distortion of Thomas. In Chapter xv “Discutitur opinio Thomistarum; qui colent primo cognito esse ens” he wrote that these Thomists collected evidence that supported their view that *ens* was the most universal and as such was most known to us—Avicenna, notes Pererio—had this point of view, but he lived before Thomas and thus had no authority. Pererio decides to use Thomas’ own arguments against them. He argued against this view in the following way: “if pure potential leads to action, imperfect action comes before perfect action—thus first something is not hot and then becomes hot. This does not happen in reverse.”<sup>35</sup>

Pererio then discusses Zimara’s critique of the false Thomists. Zimara had written that they believed that *ens* was the first thought which, notes Pererio did not please Zimara, as Zimara preferred the opinion of Hervet Natalis, who maintained that when our senses feel solid matter we know this first before the concept of substance. Unlike what Pererio will write, Zimara’s own view was that the first cognition is universal (as he opposes the idea that it could be individual), but it is not substance, but the feeling of solid matter, an encounter with the senses of the body, shape colour, and motion.

Pererio then criticizes these false Thomists himself. Their argument that *ens* is by necessity the first of all things to be discovered by the intellect and they leave the argument at that, incomplete. They did not deal with qualities and wrote that qualities did not have to be discovered even in a confused way before things which are less universal.

After discussing the views of Ockham, Durand, Burley and Gregory of Rimini, Pererio confesses that he prefers the nominalist position that the singular is known first and judges it the most true. He then side steps writing that he will try to improve on the argument by linking the singular to the intellect, an argument we will not follow here.

We will end this summary of some very complex arguments summarized in a short list of six propositions Pererio lists at the end of chapter 17. Here he summarises some of the basic arguments about the logic of *De primo cognito* and how it applies to sense perception. He begins by reminding the reading of what Aristotle said in the Posterior Analytics 1, text 5: what is first and best known to us is closest to our senses, and what is most remote is known later and is least known.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*: 106f.

1. Our intellect first knows other things than itself.
2. Material things are known to us sooner than immaterial things, this experience declares and reason teaches that immaterial things are more remote from the senses and more difficult for us to understand.
3. When we view material things we see them first rather than the parts and their principles.
4. Accidents are noted sooner than substance, as Hervet Natalis says.
5. Among accidents, the individual thing is known to us sooner than the universal thing.
6. Among individual things in the case of accidents what is more greatly felt by the senses is better known.<sup>36</sup>

We have barely begun to exhaust the various subtle arguments written around this debate, but it is hoped that the basic theme of the paper, Thomas' texts the *De ente et essentia*, provided a source of important arguments against the Scotists and the Platonists, demonstrating how *ens*—being—could be used as a term in physics rather than metaphysics. By placing the term in physics the definition of *ens* was transformed in the *Questio de primo cognito* debates. The central issue became, as one can see in Pereira's interest in sense perception, a central question for sixteenth and seventeenth century logic and natural philosophy.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*: 115.

## FABLE OR PHILOSOPHICAL CLAIM? THOMAS OF AQUINAS IN PICO'S *ORATIO*\*

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The present paper aims at reading a famous passage on the freedom of choice from Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's *Oratio* in the light that St. Thomas of Aquinas' *De ente et essentia* might cast upon it so as to make room for a fresh reading of the *Oratio*. This attempt is significant, because as far as the critical tradition is concerned the part of Pico's work is entrapped in two extreme views: the one claims that it is a serious philosophical statement, while the other refuting this view notes that it can only be a rhetorical introduction to the main theme of the *Oratio*. Showing the disadvantages of these views, and thus refuting them, I will propose a more accommodating position for the interpretation of the passage, which consists in reading it as a modification of Aquinas' logico-ontological scheme with the objective to show how moral philosophy may help one see the ethical aspect of his life in greater depth.

“He [Pico—Zs. A.] was an admirer of  
Saint Thomas, but not a Thomist.”  
Paul Oscar Kristeller<sup>1</sup>

The present paper aims at reading a famous passage on the freedom of choice from Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's *Oratio* in the light that St Thomas of Aquinas' *De ente et essentia* might cast upon it. There have

\* The present paper could not have come into being without the generous help of the Hungarian Research Fund (OTKA).

<sup>1</sup> P.O. Kristeller, *Medieval aspects of renaissance learning* (ed. and trans. E.P. Mahoney), Duke University Press, Durham, 1974, p. 72.

been two extreme views on the passage in the critical tradition: one of them says that the passage on the freedom of choice is a philosophical statement, forming thus Pico's central philosophical tenet, his philosophy of man; the other extreme view claims that the passage tells a fable forming, thus, an impressive introduction to the main theme of the *Oratio*. The significance of the choice lies in the fact that if it is a philosophical statement, it must be taken seriously, i.e., it can be compared with other philosophical claims on the same topic, and can be criticized. If, however, it is pure rhetoric, it cannot be thought of as something that can be falsified and the analysis can only focus on the rhetorical quality and attributes of the text. Thus the decision will affect or determine the interpretation of the *Oratio*. Every extreme determining principle will, however, if there is room for hesitation, inevitably run into major difficulties. To avoid these difficulties, I will propose a more accommodating view that aims at releasing the text from the bondage of the philosophical-rhetorical continuum or dichotomy. My objective, thus, is to show that Giovannio Pico encounters St Thomas of Aquinas, but he uses the latter's logico-ontological scheme to emphasize a moral claim: he demonstrates with an illustration how moral philosophy can help one on the way towards the highest peaks of moral life.

For the account, let me first present the passage in the *Oratio* that led to the controversy over which discourse, the rhetorical or the philosophical, one should anchor the text in.

O great liberality of God the Father, great and admirable felicity of man! To him it is given to have what he chooses, to be what he wants. Brutes from their birth bring with them (as Lucilius says) from "their mother's bag" what they are going to possess. Highest spirits since the beginning or a bit later have been what they are going to be in everlasting eternity. In man at his birth, the Father put all sorts of seed and the germs of all types of life. Those that a man cultivates will grow to maturity and bear their fruit in him. If vegetative, he will become a plant, if sensual, he will turn into a brute, if rational, he will become a heavenly animal, if intellectual, he will be an angel and the son of God. And if not contented with created things, he withdraws into the centre of his own unity, made one spirit with God, in the solitary darkness of the Father, who is above all things, and he will excel all.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> My translation — Zs. A. of <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/fld/CLASSICS/mirandola.oratio.html>.

The overall meaning of this passage is clear and there is no controversy about it. This is a celebration of the human freedom of choice, i.e., it suggests that man is free to choose from different types of life. It is also the common assumption in varying degrees of every interpreter irrespective of their place on the philosophical-rhetorical continuum that it is ethics that is at stake. Kristeller talks about man's "task to overcome the lower forms of life and to elevate himself toward God."<sup>3</sup> Craven states, "man is free to choose, for better or for worse, his level of moral existence,"<sup>4</sup> while Miller writes about "the ethical choice between good and evil."<sup>5</sup> The controversy concerns the vocabulary, the discourse one anchors the passage.

One convention, and a powerful one for which the representatives may be Walter Pater from the 19th century and Paul Oscar Kristeller from the 20th claims it is a philosophy of man that we read in Pico. Pater states that Pico's writing "helped man onward to the reassertion of himself, that rehabilitation of human nature, the body, the senses, the heart, the intelligence, which the Renaissance fulfils"<sup>6</sup> as against the Medieval depreciative outlook on man. Kristeller implies—though occasionally talks otherwise<sup>7</sup>—that this is a philosophical statement and its rhetorical undertones do no decrease its anthropological insights. The celebration of human freedom with its limitations is a recurring topic in Pico—as in the *Heptaplus*—criticizing Ficino's view on man, who assigned a fixed place for the human being in the center of the universe. In contrast with Ficino, Pico in this very passage denies a determined location for man in the universe, claiming that his very essence lies in his ability for metamorphosis occupying thus any place, identifying with any being whatsoever.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>3</sup> P.O. Kristeller, *Renaissance thought and its sources*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1979, p. 175.

<sup>4</sup> W.G. Craven, *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Symbol of his age: Modern interpretations of a renaissance philosopher*, Librairie Droz, Geneve, 1981, p. 34.

<sup>5</sup> P.J.W. Miller, 'Introduction', in Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *On the dignity of Man, on Being and the One, Heptaplus* (trans. C.G. Wallis, P.J.W. Miller, D. Carmichael), Hackett Publishing, Indianapolis & Cambridge, 1998, pp. vii–xxviii, p. xvi.

<sup>6</sup> W. Pater, *The renaissance*, The Mentor Books, Chicago, 1959, p. 41.

<sup>7</sup> P.O. Kristeller, 'Introduction', in E. Kassirer, P.O. Kristeller, J.H. Randall Jr. (eds.), *The renaissance philosophy of man*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago & London, 1948, pp. 215–222, p. 222.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Kristeller (1979: 174f).

If Pico's claims are anchored in a philosophical, anthropo-ontological scheme, however, one has to face difficulties as is convincingly shown by William Craven. There is no room to relate all his arguments, but three will suffice for my intention. First and foremost, man's being severed from the structure of the universe can hardly be reconciled with the *Heptaplus* where man has a realm to occupy in the universe on his own, the fourth besides the angelic and invisible, the celestial, and the elemental worlds. As refuting Kristeller, Craven states that "man in *Heptaplus* is certainly part of the system, firmly tied to it by correspondences. [...] His position on the cosmic ladder is clearly defined; man has his proper place in the hierarchy of being."<sup>9</sup> Secondly, if the view in the *Oratio* is to be construed as a philosophical statement, then it contradicts the *Heptaplus* on another ground as well, i.e., on the idea of man. As Craven notes the contrast "between a dynamic view on man who is potentially all [*Oratio*—Zs. A.], and a static view of man who is actually all [*Heptaplus*—Zs. A.]" seems irreconcilable.<sup>10</sup> Thirdly, most readers misunderstand the entire *Oratio* when they believe that it is about human dignity, for the largest part of the speech is concerned with philosophy, and only the first few pages discuss the dignity of man. Thus, the celebration of "our chameleon" is there to prepare the audience for how to use this freedom well with the help of philosophy and theology. It follows then that "the theme of the first part of the *Oratio* is not the dignity of man, but the dignity of philosophy."<sup>11</sup> In conclusion, Craven notes that if presupposing the philosophical discourse leads to problems of irreconcilability with other philosophically charged writings of Pico, and with the entire claim of the *Oratio*, one should abandon the presupposition and false image, and should construe the passage as "a metaphor,"<sup>12</sup> "a rhetorical argument for the educational effectiveness of philosophy and theology,"<sup>13</sup> "a fable,"<sup>14</sup> i.e., a "story with a moral,"<sup>15</sup> and not "a philosophical statement,"<sup>16</sup> and it is a mistake "to speak of a 'philosophy of man' in his writings."<sup>17</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Craven (1981: 30).

<sup>10</sup> Craven (*ibid.*: 31).

<sup>11</sup> Craven (*ibid.*: 36).

<sup>12</sup> Craven (*ibid.*: 35).

<sup>13</sup> Craven (*ibid.*: 45).

<sup>14</sup> Craven (*ibid.*: 34).

<sup>15</sup> Craven (*ibid.*: 34).

<sup>16</sup> Craven (*ibid.*: 32).

<sup>17</sup> Craven (*ibid.*: 45).

The emphasis on the rhetorical quality of the *Oratio* seems to be appropriate with respect to the context of the writing. The *Oratio* must bear the strong marks of rhetoric, as it was originally intended to be a speech, the opening speech of an international conference on nine hundred theses put together by Pico. The speech however, was not delivered, as there was nothing to be opened, since Pope Innocent VIII cancelled the conference due to 13 seemingly heretic theses. The speech, thus, being undelivered and yet of interest, was posthumously published by Giovanni Pico's nephew, Gianfrancesco as the *Oratio*. The fame of the speech grew to such extent that it has been published frequently and slowly the qualification, *de dignitate hominis* appeared on the title page, and soon the qualification pushed the word *oratio* out of the title. As a speech, thus, it must have been rhetorically constructed.

The rhetorical quality of the speech does not, however, entail necessarily that the ideas should only be taken as metaphors if the text is seriously contextualized with respect to the conference, to the writings immediately surrounding it, and to the tradition the text identifies itself with. The conference was intended not for poets or orators, but for serious philosophers and theologians of the time. Furthermore, as is noted by Craven three writings of Pico: a letter to Ermolao Barbaro (1485), a letter to Andrea Corneo (1486) and the *Oratio* (1486) share an element of Pico's self-fashioning. In these writings, Pico aimed at representing "himself as a philosopher in terms of the ancient debate: a philosopher in contrast to a rhetorician."<sup>18</sup> These contexts, i.e., that of the conference, and Pico's endeavours to fashion himself as a philosopher in contrast to a rhetorician cast serious doubts on the view that what we read is nothing else but rhetoric.

The merely rhetorical disposition of the text is also undermined by Pico's recalling the philosophy of St Thomas of Aquinas, who was one of Pico's favourite philosophers, if there were any. Gianfrancesco Pico asserted that Giovanni opposed only three or four of the ten thousand propositions of Thomas.<sup>19</sup> In addition, the international conference for which the *Oratio* was composed was supposed to discuss forty-five theses originating from Thomas out of the nine hundred. (No other thinker could claim for himself more than 45.)<sup>20</sup> If Pico was such an admirer of Thomas it is worth reading his text with an eye on Thomas's

<sup>18</sup> Craven (*ibid.* : 42).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Miller (1998 : xxi).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Miller (1998 : xxi).

*De ente et essentia*,<sup>21</sup> and more particularly on the part where Thomas discusses the three modes substances have *essences* (*Invenitur enim triplex modus habendi essentiam in substantiis*).<sup>22</sup> because of the parallels between the two texts.

The three modes according to which substances can have their essences classify beings into three categories: the first mode pertains to God, the second to created intellectual substances, the third to substances composed of matter and form. The first mode belongs to God alone, because he is distinguished among beings in as much as His essence is his very existence itself (*cuius essentia est ipsummet suum esse*),<sup>23</sup> in whom essence is identical with his existence, for example because he described himself to Moses as “*Qui est*,” and which identification means “rich totality”<sup>24</sup> signifying God’s perfection, the perfection that can only be attributed to God. The second mode belongs to created intellectual substances (*substantiae creatae intellectuales*) comprising intelligences (*intelligentiae*) and the human soul (*anima humana*). The third mode of having an essence relates to those substances that are composed of matter and form (*substantiae compositae ex materia et forma*) including according to Thomas animals (*animalia*), beings that are between animals and plants (*quae sunt media inter animalia et plantas*), and lastly plants. The similarity between the two latter modes in contrast to the first mode lies in the fact that in both cases existence is something external to the essence to the extent that they are not identical, but are in “intrinsic union [...] in a concrete existing thing.”<sup>25</sup> What differentiates the two latter modes is that in the case of the second mode the essence consists in the form only, while that of the third mode in the composition of matter and form. Substances, categorized this way, are further qualified with respect to their share of actuality: God is supreme to all other beings through his being pure actuality (*actus purus*), as his essence lies in his existence, consequently

<sup>21</sup> All references pertain to S. Thomae Aquinantis, ‘De ente et essentia’, in S. Thomae Aquinantis, *Opera Omnia* vol. 3. (Ed. Robert Busa), Friedrich Frommann Verlag Günther Holzboog KG, Stuttgart & Bad Cannstadt, 1980, pp. 583–587.

<sup>22</sup> S. Thomae Aquinantis, ‘De ente et essentia,’ 586.

<sup>23</sup> S. Thomae Aquinantis, ‘De ente et essentia,’ 586.

<sup>24</sup> Though I used Anthony Kenny’s term (A. Kenny, *Aquinas*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1980, p. 59), I do not agree with him when he says that “even the most sympathetic treatment of these doctrines cannot wholly succeed in acquitting them of the charge of sophistry and illusion” (p. 60).

<sup>25</sup> E. Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas of Aquinas*, (transl. L.K. Shook), University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, 1994, p. 38.

no potentiality can enter his being. The next category, created intellectual substances have less actuality, as their existence is received from God, but they still have more actuality than the composite substances, since the latter cannot be conceived without matter, the principle of potentiality.

Though the result of the classification may well invoke what is loosely termed as the "medieval ladder of beings" it must be noted that the intention of the text is not the description of the structure of the physical universe. Though the classification of beings into a hierarchical structure beginning with God through Intelligences via the human soul, through animals to plants seemingly structures the universe, it is clear that Thomas did not want to give a catalogue of substances so as to describe the world. It has to be mentioned, here, that the catalogue is strictly speaking not complete, since the word *homo* was not applied at all. His sole intention then was to analyze the relationship between existence and essence in beings and to account for what results from the relationship with respect to notions of genus and species. Thus the description in its claims is rather a logico-ontological study, in as much as ontology follows from and is subsumed to the logico-linguistic investigation of how terms be related in certain statements. Therefore, the image of the "ladder" is misleading, as it invokes spatial distribution, physical arrangement of substances as against what there is in Thomas, namely a logico-ontological investigation.

If the *Oratio* is considered from this point of view, it becomes clear that it is not a metaphysical structuring of the universe focusing on man's place in it and on human nature. Though Pico refers to different beings, ranging from God (*Deus*), through the angel (*angelus*), via heavenly being (*caeleste animal*), to brutes (*bruta*) to plant (*planta*), but the structure is significant from man's relation to them in as much as the different beings signify various qualities of life, and are defined with respect to human activity. A man's life is identified with that of a plant, if he acts according to the vegetative principles (*vegetalia*), brutes if according to the sensual principles (*sensualia*), heavenly being if rational (*rationalia*), angel if *intellectualia* and God, if made one spirit with God (*unus cum Deo spiritus factus*). The element of hierarchy is also implied in the construction, as it is not all the same which quality of life is lived. Therefore, instead of the logico-ontological term "act," and consequently the degree of existence that organizes the elements, it is the degree of moral quality that is the organizing principle.

The similarities between Pico's *Oratio* and Thomas of Aquinas' *De ente et essentia* are numerous. Pico's classification follows almost *verbatim* that of Thomas, as most of the items in the list correspond to the ones in *De ente et essentia* with the exception of the human soul:

in Pico: *Deus* — *angelus & caeleste animal* — *bruta* — *planta*

in Thomas: *Deus* — *intelligentiae* — *animalia* — *planta*.

This close correspondence implies that if it was misleading to construe Thomas's investigation as if it had something to do with the "ladder of beings," then it is misleading in Pico as well. It is not a spatially oriented arrangement that can be found in Pico, but a quality centred one. It is useless to speak about man being outside the structure, since there are no spatial references, there is no reason to talk about localities. Consequently, the speech is not about where man is in the structure of beings, it is about what man should do. Furthermore, the rigor of the application of a single principle — though different in the two authors: moral *versus* logico-ontological — for the categorization equals in Pico with that of Thomas.

We may say then with Kristeller that Pico was a great admirer of Thomas, but we also have to make clear in harmony with Kristeller that he was not a Thomist. This qualification is substantiated with the modification of the objective: the logico-ontological investigation of Thomas of Aquinas is modified radically by Pico through giving the arrangement of beings an ethical turn. This ethical orientation is not only simply an ethical exhortation, but precisely due to the logico-ontological point of reference against which the ethical quality is emphasized the reader's attention is drawn to the ethical aspect of human life. The emphatic ethical charge receives its highlighted prominence precisely because of its being a modification.

The heightened ethical load points toward another *locus* in the *Oratio*. When discussing the means by which one can arrive at God, Pico assigns tasks to natural philosophy, moral philosophy, dialectics and finally to theology. Moral philosophy is supposed to purge man from his sins. Thus, it has, as other disciplines, its own way of contribution to ascending to God. This purgative power is foreshadowed in the opening of the speech in the passage under discussion, when Thomas's logico-ontological inquiry has been turned into the investigation of the moral perspective for man.

As we have contextualized Pico's passage and reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of whether it is mere philosophy or rhetoric, we are supposed to decide on one of them against the other. But, precisely it is the analysis that destabilizes the act of decision. The text is rather philosophical in exploring the moral aspect of the human beings via deploying the Platonic-Aristotelian psychology in a Christian context qualified by the logico-ontological analysis of Thomas of Aquinas. Nevertheless, this is only one side of the coin as all these philosophical insights are only implied and not discussed straightforwardly. Furthermore, it is not only the explicit encounter with these philosophical traditions that is veiled but also the ontological statements are removed from their original context and redirected towards a moralizing one. And thirdly, what we have is not so much a rigorous abstract ethical meditation but rather the representation of the way moral philosophy may help one towards the heights of moral life, and this very representation needs something else than mere plain teaching. This rhetorical aspect of the text, however, does not allow the reader to extend the discussion towards aims and claims that are not projected by the propositions of the text, such as the philosophy of man, the nature of man, the structure of the universe, whether individuals are as free as they are implied or what kind of qualifications or limitations Pico may have thought of.

It follows then that Pico's text is both philosophical and rhetorical and neither at the same time. Consequently, the problem is not where one should locate Pico's text on the rhetorical — philosophical continuum, but the problem is there already in the question. If there is no further criterion, the interpreter must assume that Pico balanced on the borderline between what we now conceive as philosophy and rhetoric, and also that Pico is to be celebrated for that. It is a great achievement to render Thomas's technically constructed logico-ontological scheme into a rhetorically acceptable form and into an illustration for moral philosophy in action.

We began this mediation emphasizing the necessity of anchoring a text in a tradition for an interpretation. The stages of the inquiry have shown, however, that whichever direction the interpreter chooses, the result will be misunderstanding, which has resulted in the destruction of the original choice posed in the title. What is the fruit of the

destruction of the initial claim, then? The fruit lies in the destruction itself, when a false question is thoroughly destroyed, enabling the reader to restart the interpretation by reading the *Oratio* once, freed from the original error.

## POMPONAZZI'S *DE FATO* AND THOMAS AQUINAS

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In his *De fato*, written in 1520, Pomponazzi examines Thomas Aquinas's doctrine of predestination. From his point of view, Thomas's solution to the traditional conflict between divine science and human liberty is twofold: it mixes philosophy and theology, thereby transforming the revealed doctrine as well as that of philosophical rationality. The analysis of the Thomistic position is therefore an opportunity to define the specificity of the theological discourse from a critical point of view.

“Quid enim pulex contra elephantum?” “What can a flea do against an elephant?” By this adage commented by Erasmus (*Adagia*, III, 1, 27), Pomponazzi expresses, in the 8th chapter of his *De immortalitate animae* his consideration for the enormous weight of St. Thomas's authority right after he called into question the Thomistic solution to the problem of immortality of the soul. However, adds Pomponazzi, the point of these doubts and objections is not to “contradict a great philosopher”, but simply to clarify the truth.<sup>1</sup> The formula gives a fairly accurate idea of Pomponazzi's attitude with respect to the *doctor angelicus*. In all of his works, and in many of his university courses which have made it down to us, Pomponazzi maintains a critical dialogue with St. Thomas precisely because he constantly discusses the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *De immortalitate animae*, VIII, ed. G. Morra, Nanni & Fiammenghi, Bologna, 1954, p. 102 (on problems raised by the attribution to Aristotle, by St. Thomas, of the thesis of immortality of the soul): “Praeterea oporteret vel ponere resurrectionem, vel fingere fabulas Pythagoreas, vel otiosi tam nobilissima entia; quae omnia videntur remotissima a Philosopho. Haec autem dicta sint non ut tanto philosopho [i.e., Thomas Aquinas] contradicamus — quid enim pulex contra elephantum? — sed studio addiscendi.”

thesis which is most definitely at the heart of Thomistic theology: that of the agreement between faith and reason.<sup>2</sup>

In the *De immortalitate animae*, Pomponazzi denounces the compromise which pushes Aristotelian philosophy towards theological pre-suppositions that are foreign to it, and shows that the thesis of the mortality of the soul remains central to the Thomistic commentary of the *De anima*.<sup>3</sup> In the *De incantationibus*, Pomponazzi proposes a criticism of the causality specific to immaterial substances. From St. Thomas, he quotes the *De occultibus operationibus*, on the subject of the virtue of relics. Here he only rejects the main argument saying that “the theory presented here by St. Thomas, may God rest his soul, has no weight”:<sup>4</sup> miraculous healings are the effects of faith and imagination, “unde si essent ossa canis, [...] non minus subsequeretur sanitas, immo multa corpora venerantur in terris, quorum animae patiuntur in inferno, iuxta Augustini sententiam.”<sup>5</sup> He then opposes Thomas’s authority to the unanimous *consensus* of “doctors and philosophers” (“ut notum est ex medicis et philosophis”), by concluding: “This is why St. Thomas often astonishes me and I doubt that this work be his” (“Unde multotiens miratus sum de divo Thoma, et suspicatus sum illud opus non prodiisse ex eius officina”).<sup>6</sup> This astonishment can seem legitimate, although the authenticity of the *De occultibus operationibus* can certainly not be called into question.

Now we must recall the *De Fato, de libero arbitrio et de praedestinatione*.<sup>7</sup> This work, written in 1520, and published much later in 1556,

<sup>2</sup> Several courses have been published, notably by B. Nardi, *Studi su Pietro Pomponazzi*, Le Monnier, Florence, 1965 and by A. Poppi, *Corsi inediti dell'insegnamento padovano*, Antenore, Padova, 2 vol., 1966–1971. For a more complete list of published works and courses, see my *Unité de l'être et dialectique. L'idée de philosophie naturelle chez Giordano Bruno* (Vrin, Paris, 1999); I commented on the two questions published by A. Poppi, one on the demonstrative *regressus* (chap. V, p. 146–151), the other on the question of indeterminate dimensions of matter (chap. XIII, p. 373–391). In both questions, Pomponazzi opposes the Thomistic view to the Averroistic one.

<sup>3</sup> Concerning this ambiguity about St. Thomas’s commentary, as set forth by Pomponazzi, see the long and stimulating introduction by V. Perrone Compagni to her translation of the treatise: *Trattato sull'immortalità dell'anima*, Olschki, Florence, 1999.

<sup>4</sup> “Ratio autem ibi per divum adducta, pace eius dixerim, nullius est ponderis”, *De naturalium effectuum causis sive de incantationibus*, in Pomponazzi, *Opera*, Basel, 1567 (reprint Hildesheim, Olms, 1970), p. 233.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*: 232.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*: 234.

<sup>7</sup> I quote the most recent edition: Pietri Pomponatii Mantuani, *Liber quinque de fato, de libero arbitrio et de praedestinatione*, edidit R. Lemay, Lucani, in aedibus Thesauri Mundi, 1957 (abridged: *De fato*).

thirty years after Pomponazzi's death in 1525, is perfectly representative of the very singular relationship between the Italian philosopher's and St. Thomas's thought. The *De Fato*, which is contemporary to early Lutheran reform, is not a theological work claiming to make a statement on the interpretation of the Scriptures. Christian doctrine is only mentioned in the context of a study of Alexander's *De Fato* which extends to different doctrines (Epicurian, Stoic, Peripatetic). Among them, we find the *doctrina fidei catholicae*, which states the coexistence of providence extended to individual things and the liberty of human will. Pomponazzi claims his implicit faith in this doctrine because of the authority of the Revelation and the infallibility of the Roman Church. This truth, seen as absolute, is not the subject of the discussion. What one looks at here is not the article of faith in and of itself, but at the doctrine from a strictly "philosophical" point of view, meaning the *modus intelligendi*.

Thomistic theology is used here because, according to Pomponazzi, it proposes the most complete philosophical exposition of the Christian doctrine of providence, of freedom, and therefore, of predestination. As opposed to *De immortalitate animae*, it is not a question of examining Aristotelian orthodoxy of the Thomistic path, but its internal consistency on points which do not concern Aristotle directly. The possibility of a theology which borrows argumentative principles from philosophy is questioned here. In this respect, the question bears directly upon the Thomistic tentative to consider theology as a "science."

#### THE STAKES OF THE ARGUMENT OF AUTHORITY

In order to better understand this singular philosophical dialogue, we can consider the presentation of Thomas's opinion which introduces discussion, in Book V, of the doctrine of "predestination." In his paraphrase of the main articles of the 23rd question of the first part of the *Summa theologiae*, Pomponazzi states: "In order therefore to understand what predestination is, one must know what theologians commonly say, and mainly the divine Thomas."<sup>8</sup> In conclusion, Pomponazzi justifies his choice in remarking that Thomas's position is "clearer and more common" than all the rest.<sup>9</sup> Immediately afterwards, at the be-

<sup>8</sup> *De fato*, p. 413: "Ut igitur intelligatur quid sit praedestinatio, scire oportet ut communiter dicitur a Theologis, et praecipue a divo Thoma."

<sup>9</sup> *De fato*, V, 5, p. 417: "Haec sunt quae sub compendio de praedestinatione dicuntur a divo Thoma; immo quasi communiter ab omnibus sic tenetur. Quare quoniam ipse

ginning of the following chapter, in which he presents a series of objections or “doubts”, Pomponazzi continues by putting forth Thomas’s huge authority, especially with respect to his Dominican brothers for whom “everything which was written by their Thomas about theology is very true and perfectly expressed.”<sup>10</sup> Therefore, if this is true, adds Pomponazzi,

this discourse on predestination will not raise any doubts, because even if it seems to me that there are false and impossible things, which seem erroneous and illusory instead of clear, still, as Plato says, it is impossible not to believe in gods and their sons, even if they seem to say impossible things; and the Apostle himself says it: ‘Oportet captivare mentem nostram in obsequium Christi’.<sup>11</sup>

After elevating Thomas to an almost canonic rank of authority, Pomponazzi presents his doubts as scruples of conscience, desiring that one of the many “famous people” (*virī clarissimi*) of his school cure him of his ignorance (*mentemque meam ab omni ignorantia purgabunt*), because error and ignorance are sicknesses of the intellect (*nam intellectus morbi sunt ignorantia et error*).<sup>12</sup> Pomponazzi does not oppose the impossibility of believing what one does not understand, as rationalists from

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est aliis clarior et communior, ideo eius sententiam apponere volui.” Showing a lot of practical sense, he adds: “fortassis enim si uniuscuiusque dicta vellem recensere fastidium generaretur et non proficuum.”

<sup>10</sup> *De fato*, V, 6, p. 417: “Percelebre divulgatumque est, praecipue apud fratres divi Dominici, divum Thomam habuisse a Redemptore nostro, multis veraciter audientibus et non phantastice, quod omnia quae per eum Thomam scripta sunt quae attinent ad Theologiam verissima esse et recte declarata.”

<sup>11</sup> *De fato*, V, 6, pp. 417–418: “Quod si verum est, nihil est quod in dictis his de praedestinatione dubitem; nam quanquam mihi falsa et impossibilia esse videantur, immo deceptiones et illusiones potius quam enodationes, tamen, ut inquit Plato [Tim. 40e], impossibile est Diis et eorum filiis non credere, et si impossibilia videantur dicere; et iuxta Apostoli sententiam: ‘Oportet captivare mentem nostram in obsequium Christi’.” Same reference to *Timaeus*, and same position, but applied to the revelation itself, in *De incantationibus*, cap. XIII, op. cit., 1567, p. 320–321: “Nam secundum Augustinum 32. libri 16. de civitate Dei, Divino intonante oraculo, non est disputandum, sed parendum sine mora, eius dictis sine inquisitione vel interrogatione adhaerere debemus: quoniam, ut inquit Plato in Timaeo, impossibile est deorum filiis non credere, quanquam incredibilia dicere videantur. Quanto magis verbo quod est ipsa veritas? Aristotelem autem et Platonem scimus fuisse homines mortales, ignorantes et peccatores, veluti ipsi de seipsis dicunt. Quare, fatuum est in omnibus fidem eis adhibere, et praecipue in his in quibus Christianae religioni adversantur. Et quamvis eorum rationes adversus religionem videantur nobis apparentes, et fortassis nescimus perfectam earum solutionem, unica solutio est, quoniam fidei adversatur, ergo quod dicitur ab eis falsum est. Impossibile namque est Dei mentiri, neque praestigiari.”

<sup>12</sup> *De fato*, V, 6, p. 418.

the following century would do. Instead, he opposes the necessity of a "medicine of the mind" which would heal the intellect of mistakes and ignorance of truth. Although doubt does not damage "faith", the contradiction between faith and knowledge on the subject of "impossibilities" must lead to the healing of the mind.

This manner of addressing the issue is typical of Pomponazzi's specific philosophical model. With respect to St. Thomas, it is a question of philosophizing in the first person, and putting forth doubts and conjectures of a scrupulous conscience, facing uncertainties of a still imperfect wisdom which is prey to *contrarietas*.

Behind the modesty, it appears clearly that Pomponazzi intends to question Thomas's architectonic conception of theology and the harmonious integration of philosophy into an edifice regulated by theological wisdom. The conclusion of *De fato*, as we know, is negative: the contradictions of the doctrine of the predestination cannot be solved and the Revelation remains an object of faith extraneous to any rational discourse. According to reason, the stoician opinion is the only philosophical answer to the question, a conclusion extremely problematic for Pomponazzi because it finally means that reason is absolutely incapable of giving any satisfying answer to the question of man's destiny and salvation.<sup>13</sup>

### *DIVINE SCIENCE AND LIBERTY*

The explicit thesis of the *De fato* is to prolong the analysis of Alexander's treatise by the examination of the main doctrines of causality and the universal order, meaning destiny and providence. In chapter 6 of Book II, Pomponazzi exposes the "opinion of catholic faith" which sustains a providence extended to singular realities and maintains the

<sup>13</sup> The conclusion of *De Fato* calls into question philosophy's capacity, meaning the rational discourse in general, to provide satisfactory answers to the ethical problem which is to coordinate the order of human life to natural and divine order. It therefore takes into account the Thomistic position of which the compromise necessarily seems equivocal. On this lesson of *De Fato*, see A. Ingegno, *Saggio sulla filosofia di Cardano*, La Nuova Italia, Florence, 1980, of which the first chapter (pp. 1–78) is dedicated to Pomponazzi. In her introduction to the *Trattato sull'immortalità dell'anima* (*op. cit.*), V. Perrone Compagni perfectly highlights the aporetic meaning of Pomponazzi's philosophy, which she refuses to consider as a mask hiding an antireligious or atheist position: such a reading, justified in the case of Vanini, is only based here on the "petition of principle." Of course, this does not make him an orthodox.

free will.<sup>14</sup> This thesis is distinguished from the five other examined opinions, in particular the thesis of Peripatetic inspiration which denies that providence extends to sublunar realities, and the Stoic thesis which extends divine providence to all singular things, but denies the freedom of will.

Pomponazzi then declares the main problem that must be faced: although providence extends to contingent things, God must have a certain and determined knowledge of all events, and of the future not only as it is *in potentia et in suis causis*, but also *ut erit extra suas causas et deventum ad actum*. God, whose eternity embraces all of time, must know in a perfectly determined way all of the parts of time, and consequently all future happenings, including those which proceed from the free will of man.<sup>15</sup> “This opinion seems to me intelligible and in keeping with truth: although some did not express it this way, I suppose nonetheless that they understood it this way, *et maxime divi Thomae, ut ego existimo*.” Pomponazzi then adds a first series of difficulties: “Although this opinion seems easy and intelligible, there are several difficulties which scholars often evoke.”<sup>16</sup>

The first difficulty concerns the determination of the contingent in divine intellect, and especially what comes from the causality of will. I am going to turn my attention to this. It is examined in chapter 2 of Book IV, in direct relation to question 14 of the first part of the *Summa theologiae*. As an answer to traditional difficulties, Pomponazzi exposes two fundamental theses taken from Boethius, but relayed and explained by Thomas. The first considers the question from the point of view of divine prescience, the second from the point of view of causality:

(1) Divine science can be *in se certam*, although its object is *in sui natura incertum*. Therefore, explains Boethius, there is no difficulty in the fact

<sup>14</sup> *De fato*, II, 6: “Opinio igitur fidei catholicae, secundum quod existimo, haec est. Deus conctorum tam caducorum quam non caducorum, tam in singulari quam in universali, tam causalium quam non casualium providentiam certissimam et infallibilem habet, nihil est vel fuit vel erit vel poterit esse de quo scientiam Dei non habeat et providentiam: et cum hoc toto stat liberum arbitrium.”

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*: 185.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*: 186–187: “Iste igitur mihi videtur modus intelligibilis et consonans veritati, qui quancumque non taliter exprimitur ab aliis, puto tamen eorum esse hunc intellectum, et maxime divi Thomae, ut ego existimo. Et quancumque modus iste videatur facilis et intelligibilis, multas tamen habet difficultates quas communiter doctores adducunt, de quibus in quarto volumine huius libri dicitur.”

that human acts be uncertain in themselves (and therefore depend on free will), although they are certain from God's point of view.<sup>17</sup>

This argument is prolonged by the distinction proposed by Thomas in article 13 of question 14, between a "composed" and "divided" meaning. The point is to explain the link between the specific necessity of divine science, which eternally knows the integrality of futures, and a temporal order, in which all futures are said to be contingent.<sup>18</sup> According to Thomas, the proposition: "Everything known by God is necessary" (*Omne scitum a Deo necesse est esse*) can be considered in two ways:

- (a) First, in a "divided" meaning. The modality (the necessity) is understood *de re*, about the thing. In the example, necessity will be attributed to the object of divine knowledge. In this sense, one should therefore deny all indetermination and all contingency in the events of the sublunar world. In this "divided" meaning, according to Thomas, the thesis is false.
- (b) Secondly, in a "composed" meaning. The modality is only understood *de dicto*, and concerns the complete or composed proposition. In this respect, necessity must be understood conditionally, as only relative to divine science, but not to the thing itself which God knows. Necessity in the order of knowledge therefore does not imply a necessity in the order of things. This is the crux of Lorenzo Valla's demonstration in his dialogue *De libero arbitrio*. In other terms, one must differentiate between the "necessity of the consequent" (*necessitas consequentis*) (understood *de re*, of the thing), and "necessity from the consequence" (*necessitas consequentiae*) (un-

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*: 327.

<sup>18</sup> The distinction is inspired by Boethius, *De consolazione*, V, prosa VI: "For there are really two necessities, the one simple, as that it is necessary that all men are mortal; the other conditional, as for example, if you know that someone is walking, it is necessary that he is walking. Whatever anyone knows cannot be otherwise than as it is known, but this conditional necessity is not caused by a thing's proper nature, but by the addition of the condition; for no necessity forces him to go who walks of his own will, even though it is necessary that he is going at the time when he is walking. Now in the same way, if providence sees anything as present, that must necessarily be, even if it possesses no necessity of its nature. But God beholds those future events which happen because of the freedom of the will, as present; they therefore, related to the divine perception, become necessary through the condition of the divine knowledge, but considered in themselves do not lose the absolute freedom of their nature" (Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, translation by S.J. Tester, Harvard University Press & W. Heinemann, Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Mass. & London, 1978, pp. 429–431).

derstood *de dicto*, meaning the complete and composed proposition). This distinction is naturally essential to Thomas's doctrine of predestination, as it appears in other works as the *Commentary of the Sentences* and the questions *De veritate*.<sup>19</sup>

(2) Boethius' second answer leads us to consider the question from the perspective of causality. It first proposes the necessary and the contingent as relative determinations. According to Boethius, it is possible that one thing has a certain disposition with respect to another, but that related to another thing it has the opposite disposition. Thus, human action, which is certain relative to God, remains contingent relative to natural contingent causes. Therefore, free actions are ultimately contingent and indeterminate, but they are conditionally necessary and determined, *ut stant sub divina providentia*.<sup>20</sup> Using this solution, Pomponazzi mentions yet another example taken from *Summa Theologica* I<sup>a</sup>, q. 14, a. 13 ad 1<sup>m</sup>: "They also give the example of the plant which is produced from a necessary cause, the sun, and a contingent cause, the seed." Therefore, "because the science of God is necessary, the human act, relative to the science of God, will be necessary. But if it is considered as produced by will, it will be contingent. And these two determinations joined together are not in any way incompatible."<sup>21</sup> The argument on a whole reproduces here the Thomistic solution which distinguishes divine causality, first and universal, which extends to all beings, including the contingent realities and free acts of will, of causality specific to will. Divine will is not only an efficient cause of all that happens in general, as the cause of being itself. Instead, it is also the cause of modalities responsible for all the events of the world. This is why contingency, and therefore the free mode of our actions, also falls under the providence of God's almighty power: "Unde modus contingentiae et necessitatis cadit sub provisione Dei, qui est universalis provisor totius entis."<sup>22</sup> From this perspective, contingency and necessity appear as "compossible" determinations, relative to two distinct

<sup>19</sup> Cf. (for example) *Summa contra Gentiles*, I, 67; *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 12, ad 4<sup>m</sup>; q. 2, a. 13, ad 5<sup>m</sup>; *In Sent.* I, d. 38, q. 1, ad 5<sup>m</sup>. But also, on predestination, *Summa theologia* Ia, q. 23 ad 3<sup>m</sup>, *De veritate* q. 6, arg. 8 and resp. ad 8<sup>m</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> *De fato*, IV, 2, pp. 327–328.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*: 328: "Dant et exemplum de planta quae quanquam producatur a causa necessaria, ut puta sole, et contingenti, ut puta semine, magis tamen dicitur effectus contingens quam necessarius. Quare quanquam scientia Dei sit necessaria, et in ordine ad eam actus humanus sit necessarius, in se tamen et ut a voluntate producitur est contingens; neque haec simul iuncta aliquam impossibilitatem claudunt."

<sup>22</sup> *Summa theologia*, Ia, q. 22, a. 4, ad 3<sup>m</sup>.

orders of causality: the infallibility and the efficiency of the first cause must not question the contingency of the effect relative to the order of second causes. God can therefore push will, without restraining it.<sup>23</sup>

#### POMPONAZZI'S ANSWER

Pomponazzi's answer is perfectly clear: "Hae igitur sunt communiores responsiones quas, nisi gravissimi viri inventissent vel approbassent, certe dicerem esse deliramenta et illusiones pueriles; verum virorum autoritas me terret" ("Such are the most common answers. If they had not been invented and approved by very serious men, I would certainly have held them for delirious thoughts and childish illusions. However, the authority of men strikes fear in me — and prevents me from speaking in such a manner.")<sup>24</sup>

Pomponazzi then proposes a similar objection to the two solutions: the compossibility allowed by Boethius and Thomas as theological argument is reduced to a pure and simple contradiction of the philosophical point of view. Theological language therefore rests on a equivocal use of philosophical categories of cause and of science, which must be disallowed in the context of a rational discourse. At worst, it is devoid of meaning, at best, it is metaphorical.

Pomponazzi responds to the solutions in order, but his objections are taken from the same principle: that of the definition of truth as adequation of the concept and the thing. He draws the following conclusion: the modality of knowledge must correspond to the modality of the thing known. In saying that a thing which is by definition indeterminate, can be determined relative to God, Boethius absolves divine science of the principle of contradiction, and enters into the paradoxes of a divine knowledge of impossibilities.<sup>25</sup> Also, in saying that with God, knowledge does not follow the nature of the known and therefore that science can be determined when the existing thing

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *De veritate*, q. 22, a. 8 and *De Malo* q. 6 a 1 ad 3<sup>m</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> *De fato*, IV, 2, p. 329.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*: 329–330: "Prima nanque responsio Boetii nullo modo videtur esse tolerabilis. Dicit enim: Quae ex natura sua est indeterminatum, apud Deum tamen est determinatum. Si enim hoc esse posset, nulla est ratio quare Deus impossibilia scire non posset, quod tamen est impossibile; nam quod scitur, est; quod est, esse potest; et sic impossibile esset possibile."

is indeterminate in itself,<sup>26</sup> Boethius overthrows the essential order of knowledge and definition of truth as adequation of the science and the known thing. If the principles of that which is known are indeterminate (and indetermination does indeed belong to the concept of the contingent future), and if God has a determined knowledge, his knowledge will be false.<sup>27</sup>

(1) The argument is then specified from the point of view of the question of the modality of knowing, based on the *Second analytics* (I, 2, 71b15) where Aristotle enounces this principle: “Quare cuius est scientia simpliciter, hoc impossibile est aliter se habere.” Put otherwise, science is only necessary because its object is.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, “if the science of God is certain, its object will be certain.” The principle is indeed universally received: “Universaliter enim certitudo et incertitudo cognitionis est ex objecto, ut est notum omnibus philosophis,”<sup>29</sup> and therefore, “maintaining that a thing, as being in the science [of God] is necessary or certain, but in and of itself contingent and uncertain—this proposition implies a contradiction.”<sup>30</sup>

From the point of view of causality, Pomponazzi goes back to the example of the plant which is supposed to illustrate the thesis of the cooperation between the first cause and second causes. The example is in itself null because, being relative to the universal and necessary cause (the sun), the effect itself must be said to be contingent and depend on second causes (the seed). It is impossible to infer from the example, as Thomas does, that “in the same way, contingent causes that God knows are contingent because of their next causes, although the science of God, which is their necessary cause, is a necessary cause.”<sup>31</sup> The example is used by Thomas to maintain that in itself, the effect remains contingent because of its next causes, and that the first cause only produces its effect according to the modalities specific to the order of second causes. Therefore, one must not try to distinguish, in the effect, that which is due to the first cause and that which is due to second causes. This idea then reconciles the necessity specific to

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.* : 330: “Dicit autem quod cognoscens non sequitur naturam cogniti, quare stat cognoscens esse determinatum, cognito existente indeterminato.”

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* : 330–331.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* : 332.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* : 332–333.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* : 333: “Implicat ergo contradictionem dicere: ut est in scientia, est necessarium vel certum, in se tamen est contingens vel incertum.”

<sup>31</sup> *Summa theologiae*, 1<sup>a</sup> q. 14, a. 13 ad 1<sup>m</sup>.

divine science to the contingency of futures as they take place in the natural order of things.<sup>32</sup> Pomponazzi then identifies the metaphorical character of the comparison, to insist upon the fact that relative to the sun, the plant could not be considered as a necessary effect. "The sky, without a particular agent, would not be able to produce the plant."

It is therefore "erroneous to maintain that something is contingent because of its intrinsic nature, but, considered with respect to something else, that it becomes necessary."<sup>33</sup> Thomas's reasoning comes down to taking necessity and contingency which are intrinsic modalities of the thing as relative determinations. In this way, "the same thing can be similar or dissimilar, large or small, compared to different things, but the same thing would not be man or non-man neither in itself, nor relatively. If a man was called a man compared to a thing, but beast or non-man compared to another, it would not be relative to his specific nature or to intrinsic principles (which make it up), but by accident, following a certain resemblance and by metaphor, and not veritably."<sup>34</sup> "Consequently, those for which nature is contingent, would never be said to be necessary compared to whatever may be, unless by similitude," unless by denying all consistency of the properties of the species and saying that "a man can change into a donkey": "sic homo posset fieri asinus."<sup>35</sup>

According to Pomponazzi, the equivocalness of the principle of the theological discourse consists in adding to the discourse of natural philosophy from a higher supplementary perspective in which modal immanent determinations are converted in terms of relationship. The Italian philosopher in this way emphasizes a fundamental and general point which could in itself define religious language as a whole which, even in its most elaborate forms like those that Pomponazzi examines here, still recalls Ovid's fables. I think that Pomponazzi's remark must

<sup>32</sup> Cf. *In Sent.* i d. 38 a. 1 resp.

<sup>33</sup> *De fato*, IV, 2, p. 333: "Unde falsum assumitur etiam quod aliquid ex natura intrinseca sit contingens et ut refertur ad alterum sit necessarium."

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*: 333–334: "Idem enim est simile et dissimile, et magnum et parvum, in comparatione ad diversa; sed idem non est homo et non homo, neque in se neque ad diversa. Quod si aliquis homo alteri comparatus aliquando dicitur homo, alteri comparatus dicatur bestia et non homo, non est quoad naturam et principia intrinseca, sed quoad accidentia et quamdam similitudinem et metaphoram; non autem secundum veritatem."

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*: 334: "Quare quod natura est contingens nunquam fit necessarium, cui-cunque comparetur, nisi similitudinarie; aliter enim una natura transmutaretur in alteram, et sic homo posset fieri asinus."

be taken seriously, because it does not only maintain that St. Thomas's solution is contradictory. He goes further, to the point of saying that theological language at its very roots, enters into clear conflict with philosophical rationality and the univocity of concepts on which it is based. The answer appears to be perfectly ambiguous because it will lead Pomponazzi to question all possibility of thinking philosophically about a supernatural destination of man, which strikes a great blow at the rhetoric of *de dignitate hominis*.

(2) The answer to the second part of Boethius's and Thomas's argumentation proceeds from a logical analysis of the conceptual content of these solutions which try to reconcile human language of philosophy to the singularity of revelation. This is why the answer is still completely disappointing for whomever would expect arguments with the theological depth of those of St. Thomas.

In the name of the principle according to which the modalities of knowledge are borrowed from its object, Pomponazzi therefore concludes that what is contingent in itself would not be necessary with respect to God and divine science: "Quod in se est contingens, Deo comparatum non est ex natura necessarium; quare si contingens certe et determinate sciretur, cum scientia capit certitudinem ab objecto, veluti necessitatem [...] quare si cognito Dei est certa de aliquo, oportet illud esse certum."<sup>36</sup>

St. Thomas's distinction between a "divided" meaning and a "composed" meaning is also dropped: Thomas's response "videtur esse illusio et involutio, neque est vera in se."<sup>37</sup> The philosopher will make constant allusions to this question which to him, is the heart of the Thomistic answer to all problems posed by divine prescience in general (by providence and by predestination in Book V).

The answer specific to the difficulty clearly comes from the will to restore the univocity of modal determinations of natural realities. Here is how it stands: one supposes therefore (according to *opinio fidei catholicae*) that God knows all things, not only of the last species, but according to the individual. Futures therefore come under God's knowledge (as long as they are possible). Some of these future events are determined and can be known as certain in their causes (like the astronomer who foresees the eclipse with certainty). On the contrary, other futures come under the power of free will. No intellect created would be able

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* : 334.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* : 337.

to know these futures before they happen, even if it was possible to guess about them.<sup>38</sup>

Up until this point Pomponazzi has only explained known premises. He then adds: "With respect to God, when one speaks while these futures are in potentiality and in their causes, they cannot be known by God in a certain and determined way, unless the moment when they take place is present to God."<sup>39</sup>

Given that in the eternity of all times are equally present, one must say that God knows the futures in two distinct ways: as they are in their causes, and divine science must then be said to be uncertain, but also as these futures have taken place, and in this respect, divine science is certain and determined.<sup>40</sup> God, therefore, sees the same contingent thing in two different ways: "utrunque simul videt, non tamen secundum eandem rationem, sed secundum diversam."<sup>41</sup> Therefore, before Socrates sinned, God "is not certain nor can he be certain if Socrates will sin because Socrates is free. God therefore has only an indeterminate knowledge of Socrates' sin, a knowledge of sin *in suas causas et in potentia: tantum scit quod potest peccare et non peccare*."<sup>42</sup> However, with respect to the time in which the sin was committed, God is certain because the sin was consummated.

Therefore, against Thomas, Pomponazzi affirms that all that God knows as necessary, is simultaneously so in a divided meaning and a composed meaning, *de re* and *de dicto*. Here again, the theological weakness of the argument is entirely remarkable, but it is commanded by a philosophical principle, aiming to guarantee the identity of modal determinations of the order of natural realities. Basically, the refusal of distinction between a composed meaning and a divided meaning comes from the same analysis as the preceding example: in both arguments, Pomponazzi refuses to consider a modal property of the natural subject as simply relative. Here, the distinction between a composed meaning and a divided one must, as said by St. Thomas, apply to determinations or forms which can be separated from their subject.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Cf. *De fato*, IV, 3, pp. 337–339.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.* : 339: "Respectu autem Dei, loquendo de his quando tales actus sunt in potentia et in suis causis, certe et determinate a Deo cognosci non possent nisi ipsi Deo tempus in quo erunt illi actus esset praesens."

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* : 340.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* : 341.

<sup>43</sup> *Summa theologica*, I<sup>a</sup>, q. 14, a. 13, ad 3<sup>m</sup>; but also *In sent.* d. 38, q. 1, ad 5<sup>m</sup> and *De veritate*, q. 6 a. 3 arg. 8 ("Sed contra in formis illis quae non possunt removeri a subiecto,

However, adds Thomas, the fact of being known does not imply any inherent disposition in the subject: “One can (therefore) attribute to the subject in itself, although it is always known, something (here, the contingency) which is not attributed to it whether it falls under the act of knowing.” St. Thomas continues then by this example: “It is in this way that the quality of being material is attributed to stone in itself, and it is not attributed to it in that it is intelligible.”

To Pomponazzi, St. Thomas is doing precisely the contrary of what he claims to do: he does not attribute to the subject itself a determination which does not belong to it as an object of knowledge, but he attributes moreso to the known thing a determination which does not belong to it in itself, as though one attribute for example, immateriality to stone under the pretext that God has a separate intellection. In this respect, the examples of the *De veritate* (the white crow) and of the *Commentary of the Sentences* (the black swan) seems to go in this direction, and could still be criticized by Pomponazzi who precisely does not cease to order divine science to its object — and naturally closes himself off to the possibility of thinking of the specificity of divine science.

Fundamentally, it seems as though the two arguments lead to the same conclusion, the revelation of an equivocalness of the theological discourse which gives a relational meaning to strictly modal determinations of the being. This is clearly the *cruce* of the contradictions resulting from the Thomistic attempt to produce a philosophical concept of the revealed doctrine. One could also add that, perhaps without this conversion of the modalities in relation, no philosophical discourse could produce a doctrine of salvation or human destination, except if it developed a purely naturalistic theory of vicissitudes and metamorphoses. This seems to be the final word of the *De fato* which closes on a statement without illusion of this type which finally gives credibility to Stoicism tinted with origenism.<sup>44</sup> I believe that Pomponazzi's thesis translates a characteristic dissatisfaction, in several respects, of many

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non differt utrum aliquid attribuitur subiecto sub forma considerato, vel sine forma utroque enim modo haec est falsa: corvus niger potest esse albus”).

<sup>44</sup> Pomponazzi's solution should be compared to that of Origenis (*In Epist. S. Pauli ad Romanos*, VII, 8: “Nam et si communi intellectu de praescientia sentiamus, non propterea erit aliquid quia id scit Deus futurum, sed quia futurum est, scitur a Deo antequam fiat,” PG 14, col. 1126; *Philocalia*, in *Eusebii Evang. Praep.*, VI, 11, 34; cf. Boethius, *De consolatione*, V, prosa 3<sup>a</sup> et 4<sup>a</sup>, as well as Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, I<sup>a</sup>, q. 14, a. 8, sed contra 1 et resp.). Pomponazzi mentions Origenis in several places: *De fato*, II, 6 (p. 110); III, 13 (p. 318–321). To our knowledge, the question of origenism of the *De Fato* has not been studied.

Renaissance philosophers, and not only in Pomponazzi's peripatetic entourage. This duality of the relation and modality is indeed at the heart of Neoplatonic reform undertaken by Ficino who, in his *Platonic Theology* and even more so in his commentaries on Plato, constantly comes to found the relational theme of "conversion" on a modal doctrine of "participation." This is precisely done to overcome the dualism emphasized by Pomponazzi. In return, we can also obviously guess that Pomponazzi, in these pages, refuses the thesis of a human "twofold nature" specific to Ficino's or Pico's. This is the reason why the stakes of his dialogue with St. Thomas go far beyond those of the theology of the School or those of the leading 16th-century philosophers of religion — those of Pico or Agrippa, and even beyond to those of Servet and Giordano Bruno.

TRUTH THRIVES IN DIVERSITY:  
BATTISTA MANTOVANO AND LORENZO VALLA  
ON THOMAS AQUINAS

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Renaissance humanists tended to disregard medieval scholasticism. But most of humanist anti-scholasticism was directed against late medieval exaggerations in the areas of conceptualism and nominalism. Therefore, it is interesting to find out whether these humanists had a precise and justified view of medieval philosophers and theologians, and especially of Thomas Aquinas. Two writings of humanists, which expressly deal with Aquinas, namely the *Encomium S. Thomae Aquinatis* by Lorenzo Valla (1457) and the *Opus aureum in Thomistas* (1490s) by Johannes Baptista Spagnoli Mantovano give witness of the humanist philosophical approach to the saint and teacher of the Church. A look at these two treatises discloses some basic features of humanist thought, and *ex negativo* of the importance and specific value of Thomas Aquinas in the post-medieval culture. They also show samples of how monopolizing one authority might endanger its very acceptance.

It is a commonplace that Renaissance humanists disliked medieval scholasticism ever since Francesco Petrarch's invective against university learning at Padua and other Italian universities.<sup>1</sup> However, it is also evident that most humanist anti-scholasticism was directed against late medieval exaggerations in the areas of conceptualism and battles about words. On the other hand, words, language, was what humanism was about; so it must have been the mistaken way of fighting about

<sup>1</sup> E. Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate in the Renaissance and Reformation*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1995. Special thanks to John Betz for correcting my English (remaining errors are mine).

words that they criticized. But one has also to check whether these humanists had a precise and justified view of medieval philosophers and theologians, and especially of Thomas Aquinas. Indeed, there are two writings of humanists, which expressly deal with Aquinas, namely the *Encomium S. Thomae Aquinatis* by Lorenzo Valla, written in 1457, and the *Opus aureum in Thomistas* by Johannes Baptista Spagnoli, known as Mantuanus/Mantovano, written in the early 1490s. A look at these two treatises discloses some basic features of humanist thought, and *ex negativo* the importance and specific value of Thomas Aquinas in post-medieval culture. I will discuss these two in reversed chronological order, because it helps to know the outcome when discussing the prior events.

Giovanni Battista Spagnoli Mantovano (1447–1516) was a Carmelite monk, who was prolific in literary writings, engaged in the reform of his religious order, and a true heir of Renaissance humanism.<sup>2</sup> In spite of his vigorous attack on Thomism<sup>3</sup> he was beatified by Pope Leo XIII, who in his encyclical letter *Aeterni Patris* (1880) had declared Thomas Aquinas the leading teacher of the Catholic Church. As a Carmelite he was involved in polemics against the Dominicans, which concentrated on the interpretation of the Holy Blood of Christ. As a part of this controversy he wrote the pamphlet against the Thomists, *Opus aureum in Thomistas*. We should note that he, indeed, speaks of such a sect of “Thomists.” Thus Battista not only takes sides against the Dominicans and in favor of John Duns Scotus, as we will see: he also joins the movement of those thinkers who identified philosophy and theology with a bunch of schools or sects, which in itself is significant as regards his treatment of the authorities.

The Thomist school is identified by a number of tenets, which Battista is resolved to refute, namely (1) that Aquinas is the only authority not alone of the Dominican Order but also of the Church, (2) that

<sup>2</sup> For some biographical data and for a bibliography see P.O. Kristeller, *Le thomisme et la pensée italienne de la Renaissance*, Vrin, Montréal & Paris, 1967, pp. 80–90; this book contains on pp. 127–185 the critical edition of Mantovano’s work discussed here; reference is made to this edition. The text of the lectures, to which the edition is an appendix, is available in English in: P.O. Kristeller, *Medieval Aspects of Renaissance Learning*, Duke University Press, Durham, 1974, pp. 29–91; on Mantuanus, pp. 65–71. For biographical information and overview on *In Thomistas*, see Romano Rosa, ‘Tomismo e antitomismo in Battista Spagnoli Mantovano (1447–1416),’ *Memorie Domenicane* 7, 1976, pp. 227–264. As for the name, it should be noted that Carmelites, like in some other religious orders, abolished their civil or family name and were called by their Christian name plus the place of origin, in this case Mantua.

<sup>3</sup> It had remained almost unknown until Paul Oskar Kristeller’s edition.

Christ himself had said that Thomas was right in what he wrote about him, and (3) that there is only one true theology.

Mantovano's counter-arguments can be summed up in two assumptions: Truth consists of variety, and truth evolves in history. His key commonplace to express both aspects is Seneca's saying: "Veritatem dies aperit."<sup>4</sup> He uses this motto after having discussed some apparent contradictions in the interpretation of Thomas' teaching and before discussing "degrees of approbation" of a doctrine. Therefore Mantovano's strategy is to show that the inherent truth in Aquinas' theology depends on further research, so that eventually it might "come to daylight." But this saying is quite akin to the well-known motto "Veritas filia temporis" (truth is a daughter of time), which goes back to the Greek myth of Saturn (Kronos/Chronos) as the God of Time,<sup>5</sup> and was a mode of thought frequently applied in Renaissance literature.<sup>6</sup> This means that for the critic there cannot be a definite and a historical truth, since truth evolves over time. Therefore one might render the motto as: Truth is a "secular" phenomenon. Indeed earlier in his pamphlet Battista states that truth shows up more and more over time: "Quod in dies veritas magis apparet" (p. 170). His reason is that many teachings of theologians at times have been accepted and later rejected. He illustrates this by a quotation from Psalm 19 that says: "Day to day uttereth speech, and night to night sheweth knowledge." The learned Carmelite understands this verse as saying that the days "spit out" what the previous day had said, while it is night and darkness that purport to teach knowledge—which is quite opposite to the common reading of the Psalm.<sup>7</sup> It is crucial to Mantovano that "a truth" can be falsified in later times, it may thrive and eventu-

<sup>4</sup> In Thomistas p. 180; Seneca, *De ira*, II 22. Kristeller in his footnote refers to a similar remark in *Epistulae morales* 33, 11. However, there is no connection between Mantovano's and Seneca's usage, as Seneca then refers to gullibility and patience.

<sup>5</sup> Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, 12, 11, 7: "Alius quidam veterum poetarum, cuius nomen mihi nunc memoriae non est, Veritatem Temporis filiam esse dixit." Laurentius Beyerlinck, *Magnum theatrum vitae humanae*, Huguetan, Lyon, 1665, vol. 7, letter V, col. 84 E, refers to Plutarchus.

<sup>6</sup> F. Saxl, 'Veritas filia temporis,' in R. Klibansky and H.J. Paton (eds.), *Philosophy and History. Essays presented to Ernst Cassirer*, Clarendon, Oxford, 1936, pp. 191–222, esp. p. 200 n. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Psalm 19 (18), 2 (Caeli enarrant gloriam dei), King James Version; In Thomistas, 170: "Nam dies dei eructat verbum, et nox nocti indicat scientiam." The negative reading might be justified by the equally negative observation on time by Cicero, *De natura deorum*, 2, 2, 5: "Opinionis enim commenta delet dies, naturae iudicia confirmat."

ally may even “die”, this is one of his “axioms” of humanity.<sup>8</sup> Time is critical since knowledge is only acquired over years and by accumulation.<sup>9</sup> Thus the author dares to add some of his own, namely a bold interpretation of the well known “spiritus ubi vult spirat” (John 3, 8): Combining this with Paul (1 Cor. 12, 11) he suggests that the Spirit granted some revelation to Aquinas, some other to others, to the effect that it is true for all believers, i.e., for the totality of Christianity, because “the temple of God [...] this is you all.”<sup>10</sup> This is a statement of highly debatable implications. For it might lead from the common understanding that no individual may attain perfect knowledge, to the thought that every individual does have access to some revelation (a clearly Protestant teaching), and from there to the eschatological ideal that the whole of the community of Christians by the fullness of time will have the perfection of the revelation. Battista tries to downgrade Aquinas by making truth an ongoing work in progress.

Of course, it was not Battista’s intention to secularize truth; rather, he holds that it was God’s intention to spread knowledge over all humanity. But this entails that knowledge of the one truth is diversified through the centuries and among the peoples.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, there cannot be one authority alone; and even in minor authors there is some truth. Mantovano’s text collects a great number of classical arguments on the plurality and unity of wisdom. It connects human fallibility with freedom, and authority with eclecticism. He was evidently influenced by Giovanni Pico della Mirandola<sup>12</sup> who also had defended the plural-

<sup>8</sup> “Hoc assioma [sic] declarandum assumo: genus omne sermonis et vocabula, quibus animorum conceptus exprimimus, simul cum ceteris rebus humanis patitur cariem, senium et mortem.” Quoted from his *Contra calumniatores epistula* in Rosa (note 2), p. 231.

<sup>9</sup> In Thomistas, 170: “succedentibus annis per additamenta inventas.” Aulus Gellius and Cicero are both referred to in Polydorus Vergilius, *De inventoribus rerum* (late 15th, early 16th cent.); see Polydore Vergil, *On Discovery*, ed. and transl. Brian Copenhaver, Harvard University Press, Cambridge & London, 2002, ‘Preface,’ p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> 1 Cor. 3, 17 (my translation); In Thomistas, 171: “singulis dividit prout vult et non solum Thomae. Sed omnibus fidelibus est dictum: templum [...] dei [...] quod estis vos.”

<sup>11</sup> This thought is not alien to Renaissance thinkers: Nicholas of Cusa defends it in order to explain the existence of competing truth claims in religion; see P.R. Blum, “‘Salva fide et pace.’ Religionsfrieden von Cusanus bis Campanella,” in M. Thurner (ed.), *Nicolaus Cusanus zwischen Deutschland und Italien*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin, 2002, pp. 527–554 (also in Slovenian in: *Poligrafi* 6, 2001, pp. 231–258).

<sup>12</sup> Three letters of Pico’s to Battista Spagnoli are extant, see E. Garin, *La cultura filosofica del Rinascimento italiano*, Sansoni, Firenze, 1961, 2nd ed., 1979, p. 265. Here Pico reports on his project to reconcile Aristotle and Plato, and talks about his readings.

ity of learning for the sake of Christian doctrine in his “Nine hundred Theses” and in his “Oration” that served as a program to it.<sup>13</sup> In his defense against the condemnation of some of his theses, the young count had even claimed that contradiction is the essence of theological endeavors so that heresy is either congenial with the search for the truth of revelation or there is no such thing as heresy; and he adduced St. Augustine as his ally who had called it extremely hard to tell a heresy.<sup>14</sup> One reason is, again, that since all men strive for illumination, none accomplishes it fully.

Pico is, indeed, quoted indirectly in the text, when Battista invokes a number of medieval theologians who easily can compete with Aquinas, such as Henry of Ghent and John Duns Scotus. Each of them was seen as head of one “sect” out of many that derived like rivers from the mighty fountain of theology.<sup>15</sup> “Battles are their threshing of scriptures, and the Catholic truth’s rich and abounding commerce.”<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, the Carmelite does not even refrain from calling upon the “ancient theology”, as fostered in part by Pico and advocated by Marsilio Ficino, in order to make his point that theology thrives in diversity. Pico’s testimony is cited when it comes to the fallibility of human science: Aquinas cannot possibly have proven every doctrine scientifically, otherwise he would not have been contradicted so frequently. Moreover, most sciences lack apodictic proofs of their tenets, even mathematics—at least insofar as astrology is concerned that had been utterly refuted by Pico.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>13</sup> S.A. Farmer, *Syncretism in the West: Pico’s 900 Theses (1486). The Evolution of Traditional Religious and Philosophical Systems*, MRTS, Tempe, Arizona, 1998. Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *De hominis dignitate, Heptaplus, De ente et uno e scritti vari*, ed. E. Garin, Vallecchi, Firenze 1942.

<sup>14</sup> ‘Apologia’, in: Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Opera omnia*, ed. E. Garin, Bottega d’Erasmus, Turin, 1971, vol. 1, p. 145: “Item etiam discordant [...] sic quod sibi contradicendo, unus necessario falsum dicit: et tamen ex hoc neuter eorum hereticus reputatur. [...] Dicta ergo istorum, non innituntur infallibili veritati, cum sibi contradicant; quorum una pars necessario est falsa: ut patet per philosophum 4. Methaphisice.” *Ibid.*: 144: “Possunt ergo dicta Augustini egregii et divini doctoris, non semper in omnibus continere indubiam veritatem, cum ipse circa ea dubitet erraverit necne. Et quod dictum est de Augustino, dictum intelligatur similiter de aliis doctoribus.” *Ibid.*: 126: “ut et illud Augustini dictum in libro de Haeresibus verificari videamus, Nihil esse difficilius, quam definire, hoc est haereticum aut non haereticum.”

<sup>15</sup> In Thomistas, 163, and Kristeller’s notes.

<sup>16</sup> In Thomistas, 164: “Lites enim eorum tritura quaedam est scripturarum et veritatis catholicae opulenta mercatura.”

<sup>17</sup> In Thomistas, 141. Reference is made to Pico della Mirandola, Giovanni: *Disputationes adversus astrologiam divinatricem*, ed. E. Garin, Vallecchi, Firenze, 1946–1952.

As for Thomas Aquinas' role, Mantovano assigns him his place among other teachers:

Thomas is great and deserves high praise, as he was more than average in some sciences and specifically in the best. But as for genius he cannot compete with John [Duns] Scotus, Aristotle, and Augustine; as for intensity in writing, and as for appropriateness and variety of speech he cannot be compared with Jerome and most others; and as for number of books he does not beat Chalcidius, Varro, Augustine and Origen. So, he has his place among the teachers of the third rank; because the first rank belongs to the Apostles and Evangelists, the second to the older Eastern and Western Church Fathers, while the third rank is for those younger doctors who have chewed some gist of truth out of the texts of the Fathers and the Bible by a flowerless new and raw mode of talk and by intricate questioning.<sup>18</sup>

We not only see the anti-scholastic polemics of the humanists in full flower, we may also note that Mantovano esteems John Duns Scotus more highly than Aquinas, even though Scotist language was definitely more "flowerless and raw" than that of Aquinas.

So the Carmelite friar maintains a position within the internal controversy among the scholastics and an external view as a defender of elegant language and humanist devotion to ancient authorities, including such pagan writers as Varro, of whom we know only on account of the polemics of St. Augustine.

What we have seen in Battista Spagnoli is a beginning of historicizing and temporalizing truth and specifically Christian dogmatics, which has its origin in humanist learning. It was the humanists who first developed a sense of the historical differences of language and learning, first in secular fields like grammar and rhetoric, then also in matters that were essential to Christian life. Before the Protestant Reformers deplored the alleged aberrations of Church tradition from the original meaning of Holy Scripture, humanists like Battista Mantovano

<sup>18</sup> Kristeller (1974: 183ff): "Magnus ergo Thomas et magna laude dignissimus, qui in quibusdam et eis quidem excellentissimis scientiis non mediocris fuit. Sed de ingenio cum Johanne Scoto, cum Aristotele, cum Augustino non contendat, de scribendi labore et utilitate copiamque dicendi Hieronymo et plerisque aliis non se aequiparet, de librorum numero cum Calcidio Varrone Augustino et Origine non certet. Sedeat inter tertii ordinis doctores, primi namque ordinis, ut in primo libro dictum est, sunt Apostoli et Evangelistae, secundi ordinis veteres orientalis et occidentalis ecclesiae patres, tertii vero ordinis sunt hi iuniores qui sine flore sermonis novo et rudi genere dicendi et problematicis quaestionibus de scripturis patrum et legis aliquem succum veritatis emungunt."

and, before him, Lorenzo Valla sought to put things in a chronological order and even to relate them to ancient sources, which were deemed closer to truth. The notion that truth may evolve over the centuries, as well as the notion that truth reveals itself in various guises according to historical circumstances, are both parallel to the seemingly contrary image, that truth loses its force over the course of tradition and decays through human conversation with it.

The most important humanist to call into question human access to divine truth and to justify the specific human approach to wisdom through language was Lorenzo Valla (1406/07–1457). He was involved in polemics against all authorities of his time, including fellow humanists, as he challenged Aristotelian metaphysics and logic, traditional sources of the Church, including the text of the Bible, and defended language as the only way in which the world is accessible.<sup>19</sup> Shortly before his death in 1457 he was invited by the Dominicans of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, the main convent of this Order in Rome, to give the annual lecture in praise of Thomas Aquinas.<sup>20</sup> The circumstances of this invitation remain unclear, and the text survived only in a few manuscripts.<sup>21</sup> (So it is unlikely that Mantovano had read it.) The humanist

<sup>19</sup> P.R. Blum, 'Lorenzo Valla: Humanismus als Philosophie,' in P.R. Blum (ed.), *Philosophen der Renaissance*, Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1999, pp. 33–40 (incl. bibliography).

<sup>20</sup> L. Valla, 'Encomium Sancti Thomae Aquinatis', in: J. Vahlen, 'Lorenzo Valla über Thomas von Aquino', *Vierteljahrsschrift für Kultur und Literatur der Renaissance* 1, 1886, pp. 384–396 (Reprinted in: L. Valla, *Opera omnia*, Basel 1540, ed. E. Garin, Bottega d'Erasmus, Torino, 1962, vol. 2); a French translation in: P. Mesnard: 'Une application curieuse de l'humanisme critique à la théologie: L'Éloge de saint Thomas par Laurent Valla', *Revue thomiste* 55, 1955, pp. 159–176; Mesnard underscores Valla's impact on Reformation. On the history of those annual Thomas lectures in the 15th/16th centuries see J.W. O'Malley, 'Some Renaissance Panegyrics of Aquinas', *Renaissance Quarterly* 27, 1974, pp. 174–192, and J.W. O'Malley, 'The Feast of Thomas Aquinas in Renaissance Rome, A Neglected Document and its import', *Rivista di storia della chiesa in Italia* 35, 1981, pp. 1–27. (Just a sample of late enlightenment criticism is the academic address by Pietro Ragnisco: Della fortuna di S. Tommaso d'Aquino nella università di Padova durante il Rinascimento, Randi, Padova 1892.)

<sup>21</sup> Kristeller (1967: 72–79; 1974: 63f); H.H. Gray, 'Valla's Encomium of St. Thomas Aquinas and the Humanist Conception of Christian Antiquity', in H. Bluhm (ed.), *Essays in History and Literature, Presented by Fellows of The Newberry Library to Stanley Pargellis*, Newberry Library, Chicago, 1965, pp. 37–51; M. Fois, *Il pensiero cristiano di Lorenzo Valla nel quadro storico-culturale del suo ambiente*, Università Gregoriana, Roma, 1969, pp. 456–469; G. Di Napoli, *Lorenzo Valla: Filosofia e religione nell'umanesimo italiano*, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, Roma, 1971, pp. 115–122; S.I. Camporeale, *Lorenzo Valla. Umanesimo e teologia*, Istituto Palazzo Strozzi, Firenze, 1972, p. 3, starts his treatment with this piece of Valla's paradoxical prose, cf. pp. 3–5 and passim; very much in detail, includ-

has a twofold agenda in his oration: to discuss the very nature of an *encomium* (and, consequently of the exemplary person) and to treat the relationship between theology and philosophy.

The talk begins with a series of digressions, first on the legitimacy of invoking God in an exordium, then on the quality of witnesses. He emphasizes that such invocation is proper to rite and cult and therefore can be employed to non-divine affairs; consequently even evil spirits can be implored. But the true meaning, he insists, is to invoke the help of God himself. Concluding this initial excursus the speaker turns to the “Ave Maria” as an apt way to begin an encomium in praise of the Saint.<sup>22</sup> As for the form, we here encounter a classical intertext. For Valla integrates that what he is set to do into the ancient tradition and distances himself from it at the same time. He gives the current practice a traditional meaning and interprets this same tradition from his humanist historical point of view. The beginning is an adequate prelude to the speech, inasmuch as it creates the expectation that there is only one who deserves praise, namely God — however, by the intercession of Our Lady.

In the second digression he identifies martyrs, witnesses (testimonies) and confessors, drawing upon the etymology of the word *martyr*.<sup>23</sup> On philological grounds he argues that there is no difference between martyrs and confessors, because whoever confesses Christ is a martyr. Again the speaker follows a double strategy: on the one hand, he levels out any hierarchy among the saints, on the other hand, he fulfils the expectations of his audience in placing Aquinas on the supposedly higher level of a martyr.

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ing the history of this genre and Renaissance Thomism: S.I. Camporeale: *Lorenzo Valla. Umanesimo, Riforma e Controriforma*, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, Roma, 2002, pp. 123–176 (first in: *Memorie Domenicane* 7, 1976); he maintains (p. 152ff) that after Valla had been suspect of heresy by Dominicans in Naples, in 1444, now the invitation by the Roman center of the same order was a move in a debate on Thomism within the Dominicans, and that, consequently, Valla was even expected to criticize Aquinas. O'Malley (1981) shows that it was the “Humanist Pope” Nicholas V to establish the annual celebrations on the 7th of March; he also mentions that a “sermo sacer et evangelicus” (no reference for this quote given) was to be delivered during a solemn Mass at the Minerva (p. 9; with a list of eight panegyrics between 1449 and 1510 that are extant), but he does not discuss how it was possible that a lay person, as Valla was, could be invited to deliver this sermon (if it was a sermon what Valla produced), and how a homily was to be replaced by a panegyric.

<sup>22</sup> *Encomium*, p. 390ff.

<sup>23</sup> *Encomium*, p. 391.

This exordium must have appeared to his audience as patchwork (“*pannus consutus et ex varietate pannorum confectus*”), so that some declared him to be “insane.”<sup>24</sup> Probably this reaction was prompted by the fame of the philologist, of whom one might well have expected a polemic similar to the later one of Mantovano, or even worse. In fact, Valla had criticized Aquinas’ comments on St. Paul for his ignorance of the Greek language.<sup>25</sup> It was one of the humanist’s strategies “to coerce truth to emerge by various reasons, contradictions, examples, and comparisons.”<sup>26</sup> The hidden truth that Valla’s digressions are intended to put forth, is the uniqueness of veneration, as it is due to God, and to stress that any other praise is legitimate only as a derivative from and in function of the true praise of God. In the same way as the Highest Good is the ultimate measure of lust, so has the cult of saints to be related to true holiness, if the panegyrist shall be justified.

Approaching more closely his topic, Valla plays with the name of Thomas by observing that in Hebrew this name may signify either abyss or twin brother (p. 392). Figuratively speaking, *this* Thomas was an abyss of learning; and he was in himself science and virtue intertwined. This allows Valla to liken Aquinas to Cherubs and Seraphs, because in his combined virtues of knowledge and charity he is, indeed, the Angelic Doctor, a title Valla presupposes as known without mentioning it (p. 392). Having thus consciously played with the rhetorical devices of eulogy,<sup>27</sup> the speaker expresses his embarrassment that he is not able to applaud Thomas for those achievements for which his hosts consider him to be famous, namely for having shaped scholastic

<sup>24</sup> Vahlen, 1886, ‘Introduction’, p. 385, quotes Gaspar Veronensis, *De gestis tempore P.M. Pauli II*: “cum audivisset Laurentium Vallam [...] illum insanire iudicavit [...]. Nam [...] evagatus est atque stulte digressus [...]. Fuit ergo illius oratio velut pannus consutus et ex varietate pannorum confectus.” O’Malley (1981) calls it a “counter-panegyric” (p. 22).

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Poggio Braccionlini, ‘Invectiva quinta’ in L. Vallam, in: Poggio Braccionlini, *Opera*, Basel, 1538 (Reprinted as *Opera I*, ed. R. Fubini, Bottega d’Erasmus, Turin, 1964), p. 246: “[Valla] qui Aristotelem et caeteros graecos, e nostris Albertum Magnum, et Thomam Aquinatem ut ignaros philosophiae reprehendat, qui beatum Hieron. et Augustinum duo fidei nostrae luminaria, male de doctrina Christiana sensisse suis prophanissimis vocibus et scriptis dictitet [...]” Thus might have been the expectations, when Valla was invited to talk about Aquinas. Valla’s critical remarks on Aquinas’ New Testament commentaries in Camporeale (2002: 266–330).

<sup>26</sup> L. Valla: ‘On pleasure—De voluptate’, ed. A. Kent Hieatt & M. Lorch, Albaris, New York, 1977, III, XII, 1977, §6, p. 272: “At orator multis et variis rationibus utitur, affert contraria, exempla repetit, similitudines comparat et cogit etiam latitantem prodire veritatem.”

<sup>27</sup> *Encomium*, p. 392: “quid tu cum ista hyperbole vis [...]?”

theology.<sup>28</sup> Referring to a lecture that was given previously on the same occasion by another speaker, he admits that among the Dominicans Aquinas is considered “second to none.” This eulogist had even reported of a dream in which St. Augustine—doubtless the greatest theologian—declared Aquinas equal to him in glory. But the main reason for Thomas’ priority over any other theologian would be that he—as distinguished from earlier theologians—had applied logic, metaphysics, and all natural philosophy to proving theology. But here Valla has a problem. Even though he claims to like Aquinas’ subtlety and his diligence, as well as the vastness, variety and ‘resoluteness’ of his learning, he despises “the so called metaphysics and the modes of signification” etc. introduced by the more recent theologians.<sup>29</sup> It should be noted that the encomiast is not accusing Aquinas of such terminology; rather, he interrupts his praise (“Ista autem . . .”) in order to chastise the abuses of the later developments in scholastic theology.<sup>30</sup> While Valla’s contemporaries admire them like new heavenly spheres or planetary epicycles, Valla deems them indifferent if not injurious to research and alien to the ancient theologians, in any case. To him, the author of the “Trenching (or grafting, or reparation) of logic and philosophy”,<sup>31</sup> these “barbaric” terms such as “ens, entitas, quiditas, identitas, reale, essentiale, suum esse” are both pointed and pointless (p. 394). Not only did the Church fathers ignore this terminology, given that it did not exist in Greek; it also fails to foster any knowledge of the divine. According to Valla, there is only one way of doing theology, that of St. Paul: The Fathers “se totos ad imitandum Paulum apostolum contulerunt, omnium theologorum longe principem ac theologandi magistrum” (p. 394).

Well then, what to do with Aquinas? It seems he has to find his place among the venerated theologians. The names given here include Cassianus, Anselm and other medieval scholars, including John Duns

<sup>28</sup> *Encomium*, p. 393: “eum ad probationem theologiae adhibere logicam, metaphysicam atque omnem philosophiam [. . .]. Lubricus hic mihi et anceps locus [. . .].”

<sup>29</sup> *Encomium*, p. 394: “Ista autem quae vocant metaphysica et modos significandi et alia id genus, quae recentes theologi tamquam novam sphaeram nuper inventam aut planetarum epicyclos admirantur [. . .].”

<sup>30</sup> Di Napoli (*cit.*) p. 118ff, mentions that “modi significandi” is not Thomist, but rather Occamist terminology, and underscores that Aquinas is eventually being presented as the “minor male” in comparison with Scotus and the later scholastics (p. 122).

<sup>31</sup> L. Valla, ‘Repastinatio dialectice et philosophie’, ed. G. Zippel, Antenore, Padua, 1982, 2 volumes.

Scotus and Albert the Great. All these seem to be inferior to Aquinas. The serious competition, then, is with the great Church Fathers. Valla's Solomonic solution is to create a set of five Greek and five Latin Church Fathers that are paralleled as twins (p. 395):

Basil – Ambrose  
 Gregory of Nazianzus – Jerome  
 John Chrysostom – Augustine  
 Dionysius the Areopagite<sup>32</sup> – Gregory the Great  
 John Damascene – Thomas Aquinas

In order to bring his unusual panegyric to a harmonious conclusion, Valla attributes to each of the twin theologians a musical instrument: *lyra*, *cithara*, *psalterium*, *tibia* and — to John Damascene and Aquinas — the *cymbalum*. The speaker does not dwell too much on the symbolism of such instruments, and justly so, since the cymbals have a bad resonance in St. Paul, who in a passage not far from another, already cited, called a man without love “sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal”<sup>33</sup> What he emphasizes is, again, the motive of twins, because the cymbal is made of two parts that, brought together, bring about “a merry, blithe, and plausible sound” (p. 395), in harmony with all the other teachers of the Church.

The humanist thus reaches his aim in praising Aquinas without dispensing with his philosophical and theological convictions, and he does so in the dialectical way that marks all his philosophy: provoking the audience and reshaping common assumptions of scholarship into a new harmony.

What do we learn from this about Aquinas? *Ex negativo* these two examples of the Renaissance treatment of Thomas show how not to use his teaching: As soon as Aquinas, as any other teacher, for all his virtues and excellence, is extolled as the one and only teacher we lose sight of what he himself was aiming at, namely research into the truth of Christian belief with all means humanly available. Making him divine, above his merits as a Saint, threatens to overshadow the original

<sup>32</sup> This pairing is, interestingly justified with the remark that it was Gregory who among the Latins first makes mention of him, a statement that entails some doubt about his authenticity.

<sup>33</sup> 1 Cor. 13, 1 (King James Version); on symbolism of musical instruments see H. Giesel, *Studien zur Symbolik der Musikinstrumente im Schrifttum der Alten und Mittelalterlichen Kirche*, Bosse, Regensburg, 1978. (Thanks to Aušra Grigaravičiute for this reference.)

source of Christian truth and to overload Aquinas with a burden he should not have to carry. Thus far as regards the person of the Angelic Doctor. The consequences of this go much further, given that “a small error in the beginning grows into a larger one.” For the counter reaction, which we can observe in Mantovano, involves and endangers the whole approach to science and knowledge. Once the later humanist is compelled to emphasize that Aquinas was just another human thinker, he opens the door to the notion that no one will ever have access to truth, and that in the best case, the whole of humanity is the store of wisdom. Christianity, then, becomes an option, but nothing more than that.

## POUR UNE APPROCHE POLYPHONIQUE DU JOURNAL INTIME

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The genre of the intimate diary is a monophonic narration *par excellence*; nevertheless, it will be shown that even personal genres are not exempt from the presence of others. The purpose of the paper is to examine the occurrence of polyphonic marks based on some extract of young ladies' diaries collected and published by Lejeune. The analysis reaches the conclusion that others' words appear in the form of scriptural marks like quotation marks and meta-linguistic comments which make it possible for the diarists to use and refuse at the same time any discourse borrowed from their social surroundings.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Les marques scripturales d'énonciation (Laufer 1980), c'est-à-dire, l'emploi de l'italique, du guillemet et des commentaires métalinguistiques (Laufer 1980) ou les marques d'attribution des propositions (Adam 1990) permettent à l'énonciateur de définir ses frontières, sa distance avec la voix des Autres. Ce que le guillemet et l'italique délimitent, c'est un énoncé étranger inséré dans le discours. Tous les deux procédés marquent l'hétérogénéité scripturale : ils permettent au locuteur de signaler implicitement qu'il parle avec les mots des Autres. Les commentaires métalinguistiques, par contre, sont des indications explicites (Rey-Debove 1978) : les formules *comme on dit*, *selon l'expression de tel ou tel*, *avec le sens de*, etc. sont les marques de l'hétérogénéité montrée.

L'énoncé étranger — isolé à l'aide de ces trois procédés — est appelé îlot textuel (Perret 1994) ou connotation autonymique (Perret 1994;

Fromilhague & Sancier 1994; Rey-Debove 1978; Authier-Revuz 1984). Selon Perret (1994: 102) «l'îlot textuel est un fragment de style direct que le locuteur primaire ne reprend pas à son compte, dont il laisse la responsabilité à un autre énonciateur, en général désigné». Dans la connotation autonymique (qui n'est qu'une variation de l'îlot textuel), par contre, le locuteur primaire emploie et cite en même temps un terme<sup>1</sup> tout en l'attribuant à une personne non désignée ou générique (Perret 1994). Herschberg Pierrot (1999: 102) ajoute que dans la connotation autonymique «la frontière entre le même et l'autre ne sépare pas deux énonciations successives, elle est interne à l'énonciation.» La distinction entre îlot textuel et connotation autonymique n'apparaît que chez Perret, d'autres, comme Rey-Debove (1978) postulent un seul groupe, celui de la connotation autonymique qui est examiné sous deux angles: selon le premier on distingue des connotations signalées par un commentaire métalinguistique et des connotations sans commentaires métalinguistiques (marques graphiques); selon le deuxième on distingue quatre modes du dire: «comme un autre dit» (*il, tu*), «comme certains disent» (*ils, vous*), «comme tout le monde dit» (*on*), «comme je dis» (*je*). Les modes du dire peuvent être explicites (accompagnés de commentaires métalinguistiques) ou non explicites (mis entre guillemets ou en italique): si aucun commentaire précis, ni marque métalinguistique n'apparaît, d'autres données peuvent être prises en considération, comme la définition ou le proverbe. Authier-Revuz (1984) emploie le terme autonymie pour désigner toute cette problématique. Il distingue l'autonymie simple dans laquelle l'hétérogénéité (le fragment mentionné) est accompagné d'une rupture syntaxique et la connotation autonymique dans laquelle le fragment mentionné est en même temps un fragment dont il est fait usage: dans ce cas, le fragment est intégré au fil du discours sans rupture syntaxique<sup>2</sup>.

Vu l'imprécision terminologique, nous adopterons la notion d'îlot textuel (Perret 1994), qui est susceptible de traduire l'idée d'isolation des termes étrangers, toutefois nous garderons le système proposé par Rey-Debove (1978): les modes du dire permettent d'analyser en détail les occurrences d'îlot textuel dans notre corpus.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rey-Debove (1978: 253): «La connotation autonymique cumule deux sémiotiques: on emploie un signe et on le cite tout à la fois.»

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Authier-Revuz (1984: 103): «[...] l'élément mentionné est inscrit dans la continuité syntaxique du discours en même temps que, par des marques, qui, dans ce cas, ne sont pas redondantes, il est renvoyé à l'extérieur de celui-ci.»

L'îlot textuel est certainement un discours qui réunit le Moi et l'Autre. Il est en général le résultat d'une intention précise : son rôle est de signaler à un autre locuteur que l'énoncé connoté est mis en question et constitue un corps étranger dans le discours. Habituellement, la situation d'énonciation, dans laquelle l'îlot textuel apparaît, implique aussi bien le Moi que l'Autre, mais dans certains contextes, cette dualité semble être effacée. C'est le cas par exemple du journal intime : ici, le locuteur n'écrit que pour soi-même. Loin de lui l'intention de publier son texte ou de le montrer à qui que ce soit !

Cette communication se propose de montrer que même dans les écrits de soi les plus intimes, l'Autre apparaît sous différentes formes dont il ne sera examiné que les occurrences de l'îlot textuel. Le corpus a été recueilli par Lejeune (1993) : il est constitué d'extraits de journaux inédits<sup>3</sup>, datant du 19<sup>e</sup> siècle et du début du 20<sup>e</sup> siècle, et tenus par des jeunes filles âgées de 10 à 20 ans.

## 2. *L'APPARITION DE LA VOIX DE L'AUTRE DANS LE DISCOURS DU MOI: LE CAS DES JOURNAUX DE JEUNES FILLES*

Par la suite, nous allons démontrer, à l'aide d'extraits de journaux, comment l'Autre pénètre dans le discours du Moi et quelles sont les marques métalinguistiques qui assurent l'introduction des termes étrangers. Dans le souci de résumer les faits d'une façon claire, nous exposerons les problèmes en suivant les quatre modes du dire proposés par Rey-Debove (1978).

### 2.1. *Les modes du dire*

#### 2.1.1. *« Comme tout le monde dit »*

Le mode « comme tout le monde dit » apparaît dans les extraits sous formes de proverbes ou de propositions attribuées à des locuteurs représentés par le pronom personnel *on*.

<sup>3</sup> Références des auteurs : Claire Pic (1848) : journal tenu depuis l'âge de 15 ans (1862) jusqu'à son mariage (1869), inédit ; Émilie Girette (1876) : journal tenu de 1901 à 1903 (date de son mariage), inédit ; Renée Berruel (1894) : journal tenu de 1902 à 1911, inédit ; Catherine Pozzi (1882) : journal tenu depuis l'âge de 11 ans (1893) jusqu'à l'âge de 24 ans (1906), inédit ; Louise Weill (1901) : journal tenu de 1914 à 1920, inédit.

### 2.1.1.1. *Proverbe*

Les proverbes<sup>4</sup> ou les dictons, qui appartiennent à une conscience linguistique commune, sont souvent utilisés par les auteurs de journaux pour appuyer une affirmation ou pour se justifier. Ils s'emploient avec ou sans guillemets, avec ou sans commentaires métalinguistiques. Dans l'exemple (1), l'auteur se sert des guillemets pour insérer un dicton, ce qui lui permet de décrire son état d'âme d'un point de vue général et individuel à la fois.

- (1) Come c'est vrai cela :

**«Les années se suivent et ne se ressemblent pas.»**

Lorsque j'étais petite je croyais pas cette phrase bien vrai, mais je le vois et le comprends maintenant. Quand ai-je été bien heureuse ? jamais je le crois. Quand j'étais petite j'étais bien heureuse mais je ne comprenait pas mon bonheur. Quand j'ai commencé à être grande, vers 8 ans, j'allais en classe et je disais : «Oh ! que j'aimerais ne pas aller à l'école» [...] (1906, p. 172, Renée Berruel)

Par contre, l'auteur de l'extrait (2) évite l'emploi des guillemets et choisit d'introduire un proverbe à l'aide d'une formule métalinguistique (*un proverbe populaire dit avec raison*). Même si le commentaire métalinguistique et la proposition commentée sont séparés par la ponctuation et se trouvent dans deux propositions distinctes, ils permettent à l'auteur de s'appuyer sur le discours des Autres afin de pouvoir renforcer son propre discours. Au lieu de rejeter la parole de l'Autre, le locuteur cite et emploie en même temps la parole étrangère pour se justifier.

- (2) Dimanche mon frère avant de partir nous recommanda de bien travailler afin de pouvoir nous donner un mari pour récompense. Quel beau but n'est-ce pas. Nous avons bien ri et combattu cette fausse idée et pour ma part je lui ai fait entendre en termes clairs et précis que loin d'être une récompense pour moi j'appréhendais le moment de mon mariage avec dégoût. Je n'ai pas besoin, lui dis-je, de sortir des mains d'un tyran pour être sous le joug d'un autre. Il a fort bien compris l'allusion de tyran que je faisais et il n'en a pas paru fort satisfait. Tant pis pour lui. **Un proverbe populaire dit avec raison. Qui se sent morveux se mouche.** (1859, p. 217, Louise Weill)

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Rey-Debove (1978:268) «Le proverbe est statuairement une phrase qui se connote sur le mode du *comme on dit*, quelles que soient les intentions de l'encodeur.»

Les textes (3) et (4) présentent une certaine redondance des marques d'attribution : les auteurs emploient un commentaire métalinguistique dans la première proposition (*quoique le proverbe dise ; je me rappelle ces mots*) qui a pour rôle d'introduire la deuxième proposition guillemetée contenant le proverbe ou le dicton et de séparer les deux discours.

- (3) [...] Mon nez est mince et grand, droit, mais le milieu est orné d'une légère éminence, la «bosse» des Pozzi [...] à vrai dire, ça n'est pas une bosse, et on ne la remarque qu'avec beaucoup de volonté... — soit, mais mon nez est laid, décidément très laid, **et quoique le proverbe dise : «Jamais grand nez n'a gâté beau visage»**, je ne suis pas contente du mien. [...] (1897, p. 276, Catherine Pozzi)
- (4) [...] Avoir dix-huit ans, et déjà regretter !  
Et c'est ma faute, c'est ma faute, c'est ma faute.  
Jamais plus, jamais plus, jamais plus. Oh, comme c'est cruel !  
Quel châtimement [...] avoir pu être ! Et ne pas avoir été [...]  
**Je me rappelle ces mots : «La récompense est en nous-même».**  
Et le châtimement aussi. [...] (1900, p. 285, Catherine Pozzi)

Ces deux exemples témoignent plutôt un rejet de la part des auteurs. Le texte (3) exprime une valeur concessive (*quoique le proverbe dise*) ce qui permet à l'auteur de rejeter le discours de tout le monde et de formuler le sien. L'auteur du texte (4) se distancie du discours des Autres à l'aide du démonstratif *ces* qui indique qu'il s'agit de la parole de quelqu'un d'autre et à l'aide d'un procédé lexical qui consiste à employer un terme contraire (*châtiment* pour *récompense*).

#### 2.1.1.2. *Le pronom personnel on*

Le pronom personnel *on*, qui représente des énonciateurs non désignés, génériques, c'est — à-dire tout le monde, se trouve le plus souvent à la tête d'une formule métalinguistique de type «on dit». À partir des extraits (5), (6) et (7) on remarquera qu'il s'agit d'un certain type de texte, notamment, de l'autoportrait. Les auteurs cherchent à décrire leur physique et leur caractère, parfois, en se servant des mots des Autres.

- (5) **On dit que j'ai la figure très expressive.** Cela m'inquiétait autrefois. Mais bah ! qu'y lira-t-on ? le plaisir, l'ennui, la contrariété, qu'est-ce que cela me fait ! (1865, p. 244, Claire Pic)

- (6) Je voudrais être adorée, adorée à genoux, si ce n'était un sacrilège, aimée de toute la force d'un homme droit et loyal. Et l'aimer lui-même, jusqu'à en oublier ma personnalité. N'est-ce pas là le paradis terrestre ? Mais le connaîtrai-je jamais ? Si j'étais belle, il y aurait quelque espoir ; mais je ne le suis pas. Je ne suis point laide, cependant. **J'ai des yeux bruns très expressifs et doux, à ce qu'on m'a dit, le nez à peine relevé, la bouche riante et de taille moyenne** ; j'aurais la peau très blanche si ces maudites taches de rousseur ne couvraient pas mes joues, à mon grand désespoir. [...] (1907, p. 258, Claire Pic)
- (7) Le principal charme de Catherine, c'est une extrême mobilité d'expression, une vivacité très grande ; l'esprit prompt et très gai, la repartie facile, une conversation drôle, souvent originale.
- Une personne qui aurait causé avec elle longtemps, qui aurait vécu avec elle quelques jours, une personne à qui elle aurait désiré être agréable résumerait probablement ainsi son opinion :
- « Catherine ? Nous nous sommes promenées, nous avons fait des parties et causé un peu ensemble : eh bien, c'est une drôle de fille, très amusante. Elle a beaucoup d'aplomb, beaucoup d'entrain et beaucoup d'esprit. Elle est laide, mais gentille et très agréable, on ne s'ennuie jamais avec elle ; elle est peut-être un peu trop originale »
- Je n'aurais probablement montré à cette personne que le côté de moi que je montre à tout le monde ; voici pourquoi son opinion de moi peut sembler fausse.
- Je tiens à paraître gaie et folle et pleine d'entrain, **on dit de moi « qu'elle est amusante »** [...] (1898, pp. 280–281, Catherine Pozzi)

Dans le texte (5) et (6) le discours étranger est isolé à l'aide d'un commentaire métalinguistique (*on dit, à ce qu'on m'a dit*), dans le texte (7) le commentaire métalinguistique (*on dit de moi*) introduit la proposition guillemetée. Et ce n'est pas tout. On aura noté qu'au début de l'extrait, l'auteur se décrit à la troisième personne, du point de vue des Autres. Tout cela nous amène à penser qu'il existe un procédé particulier de faire apparaître le discours étranger, celui du changement du point de vue.

2.1.2. «*Comme un autre dit*»

La catégorie «comme un autre dit» regroupe des locuteurs désignés, le plus souvent connus des auteurs. Le texte (8) indique plusieurs locuteurs dont les paroles sont citées par l'auteur : le frère, les enfants et le père. Les signes typographiques servent de démarcation énonciative et concourent à la suspension de la prise en charge énonciative. Les paroles étrangères ne sont suivies d'aucun commentaire critique, elles sont citées et employées en même temps sans provoquer de rupture syntaxique.

- (8) [...] Ce tableau, je l'avais vu dans le grenier de mes parents, posée contre d'autres cadres. Il fut sorti de l'oubli tardivement, et placé au salon, dernier hommage de ma mère à la grand-mère janséniste qui avait influencé sa jeunesse. A la mort de mes parents en 1878, un peu par intuition, et parce qu'il trouvait que j'avais «**l'air de savoir qui c'est**», mon frère décida de me l'attribuer. J'ai accroché le portrait au-dessus de mon secrétaire. Mes enfants, comme mon père avant eux, le trouvaient «**sinistre**» [...] Peu à peu, je l'ai regardé, Claire m'a regardée, a suivi de son œil perplexe les péripéties de ma vie ; elle voyait ma vie, je pensais à la sienne. (p. 263 ; Claire Pic)

En revanche, dans le texte (9), on ne trouve que de commentaire métalinguistique (*comme aurait dit ma nounou*), qui sert non seulement à désigner le locuteur cité, mais à approuver les paroles rapportées.

- (9) [...] Heureusement que je ne crains pas d'ennuyer un lecteur ombrageux et à l'humeur critique, puisque ce n'est que pour moi que j'écris. Si je venais à mourir (qui sait, en effet, ce qui peut arriver ?) je laisserais ce carnet à maman, en souvenir de sa chère petite fille bizarre. **Mais j'espère vivre encore un brin, comme aurait dit ma nounou**, autrefois ; et cela me chiffonne de faire mon testament si tôt. (1896, p. 81, Catherine Pozzi)

Le texte (10) comporte, en fait, une citation littéraire. C'est un mot (*Les Courlis*) qui pousse l'auteur à évoquer une phrase de Loti. Le discours étranger, qui est mis entre guillemets, est — dans ce cas — suivis d'un commentaire métalinguistique (*je pense toujours à cette phrase de Loti*). La citation littéraire touche également le problème de l'intertextualité qui constitue dans notre cas une source importante de la reproduction de la parole de l'Autrui.

- (10) Il y a juste un an que j'ai commencé ces petites notes. Quoi d'amélioré depuis ? ?

Je suis sans forces maintenant. J'ai hâte de quitter Paris. Et pourtant je redoute le voyage et l'arrivée là-bas, à la Baule. «**Les Courlis**», serait-ce bien ? «**Les tristes courlis annonciateurs de l'automne**» **Je pense toujours à cette phrase de Loti** [...] (1902, p. 227, Émilie Girette)

### 2.1.3. «*Comme certains disent*»

Les modes du dire «comme un autre dit» et «comme certains disent» ne se distinguent que grâce à la pluralité et à l'imprécision des locuteurs cités. Dans les textes (11) et (12) les locuteurs cités — *la famille, les amis, les gens* — sont moins individualisés que dans les cas précédents (2.1.2.).

- (11) Je ne me crois intelligente que quand j'écris — car j'ai assez de goût pour comprendre que j'écris bien — je dis : je ne me crois, car **ma famille et mes amis éblouis** — de quoi ? — **passent leur temps à me répéter** que j'ai un «**esprit d'homme**» [...] hélas ! J'aurais pu [...] peut-être [...] mais savez-vous ce que c'est que mon esprit d'homme ? Un esprit raté. Un esprit capable de sentir, de penser, de deviner, de vibrer et de créer, et qui ne vibre, ni devine, ne pense ni ne crée par paresse — Par paresse ! Quelle tristesse ! Tiens, ça rime. [...] (1900, p. 287, Catherine Pozzi)
- (12) [...] Puisque je le pense, je puis le dire : **je crois avoir l'esprit juste. Des gens qui ne me flattent pas me l'ont dit**. Du point de vue du monde, je ne l'ai peut-être pas juste, mais chrétiennement et raisonnablement parlant, je crois et espère l'avoir. (1864, p. 251, Claire Pic)

La structure de la citation comporte un schéma tripartite : locuteurs cités (*ma famille, mes amis, des gens qui ne me flattent pas*) + verbes de type dire (*passent leur temps à me répéter; me l'on dit*) + énoncé cité guillemeté ou non. Dans tous les deux cas, les auteurs hésitent entre l'adoption et le refus des termes étrangers : les marques de cette incertitude sont l'emploi des modalisateurs (*peut-être*), des verbes subjectifs (*croire, pouvoir*), des contraires (*esprit juste/esprit raté*) et de la négation (*je ne l'ai peut-être pas juste*)

2.1.4. «*Comme je dis*»

Le mode du dire «comme je dis», dans la majorité des cas, ne favorise pas l'apparition de la polyphonie, excepté l'occurrence sporadique des voix intérieures que nous considérons comme un mélange du mode «comme je dis» et du mode «comme un autre dit». Les textes (13) et (14) fournissent le cas des voix non identifiables d'origine inconsciente.

(13) [...] Quelquefois après un élan de cœur, une émotion, voilà une faculté bien distincte en moi que je pourrais désigner sous le nom de **censure**, toujours prête à se moquer et à me faire doute de moi-même. **Cette faculté s'éveille et me dit : «Comédie ! tu joues la comédie avec toi-même, pour te faire croire à toi-même que tu es sensible, pleine de cœur, etc.»** Mauvaise faculté, il faut toujours qu'elle me trouble. [...] (1863, p. 247, Claire Pic)

(14) [...] Je n'ai que quatorze ans. J'en parais douze. Et pourtant [...] pourtant, je ne me sens plus une enfant !

Oh, qui pourra me dire ce que sera ma Vie ?

Oh, qui pourra me dire ce que j'écrirai sur toutes ces pages blanches ? Oh, le doute de tout ! Le doute de l'Éternité, le doute de Dieu, le doute de la Mort ! Qui pourra me dire ??? [...]

– **Mais quelle est la voix lugubre que j'entends ? Quelle est la voix qui me dit : «Enfant ! Personne ne pourra jamais te dire si Dieu est Dieu, si la vie n'est pas un caprice de la nature, si ton âme existe, et si tu n'es faite que pour souffrir et mourir ! Personne ne pourra jamais te rien dire ! Va ! Cours, marche, cours, ne t'arrête jamais ! Va dans l'Inconnu ! Marche seule jusqu'au Néant ! Va, marche, va ! »** (1896, p. 271, Catherine Pozzi)

Ces voix intérieures, qui sont appelées par les auteurs *censure* ou *voix lugubre*, sont en même temps pourvues de la faculté de parler. Mais qui parle, en effet ? Est-ce la voix du Moi, du Surmoi ou de l'Inconscient collectif ? Personne ne saurait y répondre.

En tout cas, l'inconscient élargit l'univers où l'Autre fait son apparition : en quittant l'univers conscient du Moi, l'Autre s'installe dans l'univers de l'inconscient.

## 2.2. *Le rattrapage et l'anticipation*

Les différents types des mode du dire nous ont permis de regrouper les marques d'attribution observées dans notre corpus. Nous avons montré que la voix de l'Autre se présentait sous forme de marques scripturales, de commentaires métalinguistiques, de changements de point de vue ou de combinaisons des procédés.

Nous avons aussi observé que dans certains extraits, la prise en charge énonciative et sa suspension alternent au sein du même texte. Nous avons trouvé des cas où avant de signaler la suspension de la prise en charge énonciative (à l'aide des marques scripturales ou des commentaires métalinguistiques) l'auteur utilise le terme comme appartenant à son propre vocabulaire. Dans le texte (12), il s'agit d'une anticipation :

- (12) [...] Puisque je le pense, je puis le dire : je crois avoir **l'esprit juste**. **Des gens qui ne me flattent pas me l'ont dit**. Du point de vue du monde, je ne l'ai peut-être pas **juste**, mais chrétiennement et raisonnablement parlant, je crois et espère l'avoir. (1864, p. 251, Claire Pic)

Dans d'autres textes, l'auteur se sert d'un procédé de rattrapage : après avoir signalé la suspension de la prise en charge énonciative, elle emploie le terme étranger comme son propre mot. Les textes (3), (11), (15) illustrent bien cette alternance qui s'explique par le fait que le vocabulaire des auteurs adolescents est encore instable. Nous irons jusqu'à dire que ces adolescentes, qui sont en quête de leur identité physique et morale, ne font pas que de découvrir leur personnalité, mais de chercher les mots qui leur appartiennent.

- (3) [...] Mon nez est mince et grand, droit, mais le milieu est orné d'une légère éminence, la «**bosse**» **des Pozzi** [...] à vrai dire, ça n'est pas **une bosse**, et on ne la remarque qu'avec beaucoup de volonté [...] — soit, mais mon nez est laid, décidément très laid, et quoique le proverbe dise : «Jamais grand nez n'a gâté beau visage», je ne suis pas contente du mien. [...] (1897, p. 276, Catherine Pozzi)
- (11) Je ne me crois intelligente que quand j'écris — car j'ai assez de goût pour comprendre que j'écris bien — je dis : je ne me crois, car ma famille et mes amis éblouis — de quoi ? — passent leur

temps à me répéter que j'ai **un «esprit d'homme»** [...] hélas ! J'aurais pu [...] peut-être [...] mais savez-vous ce que c'est que mon **esprit d'homme** ? Un esprit raté. Un esprit capable de sentir, de penser, de deviner, de vibrer et de créer, et qui ne vibre, ni devine, ne pense ni ne crée par paresse — Par paresse ! Quelle tristesse ! Tiens, ça rime. [...] (1900, p. 287, Catherine Pozzi)

- (15) Ce matin nous sommes allées à la messe de 9 heures et quart ; je pensais donc que je ne verrais pas Aimé puisque ce n'était pas l'heure habituelle. J'avais mis ma robe blanche et ma charlotte : c'est la première fois que nous la mettions. A la sortie de la messe j'ai vu deux de ses amis qui m'ont vue : nous sommes allées ensuite chez bonne maman en passant par la place Grenette et la rue de la République : mais nous nous sommes arrêtées devant les galeries assez longtemps ; enfin quand nous avons été rue de la République, le voilà qui nous croise, il arrivait par la rue Philis de la Charce. « On le rencontre tout le temps », dit Dédette. Et maman a répondu : « **Il le fait exprès** [...] ». Sûrement, mais il fait tout ça si habilement qu'on ne croirait jamais **qu'il le fait exprès**. Ça m'a fait si drôle de le voir là ! [...] (1906, p. 179, Renée Berruel)

### 3. CONCLUSION

L'ambition de cette communication aura donc été de discuter de plus près les problèmes de la suspension de la prise en charge énonciative dans un corpus composé d'extraits de journaux de jeunes filles. Nous nous sommes proposée de démontrer que le Moi et l'Autre sont étroitement liés même dans les écritures de soi les plus intimes et que même la narration monophonique par excellence que représente le genre du journal intime, n'est pas exempte des marques de la polyphonie.

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## SEMÁNTICA LÉXICA Y CULTURA LINGÜÍSTICA: ANÁLISIS DEL VOCABULARIO METALINGÜÍSTICO DEL ESPAÑOL\*

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There is a wealth of bibliographic material available to the researcher who intends to understand the different models of linguistic analysis. By contrast, far fewer pages have been devoted to the examination of the linguistic ideas implicit in languages, that is to say, to the investigation of the *linguistic culture* of a community. By means of linguistic cultural expression one can distinguish at least two different realities: on the one hand, the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs about the factors at play in the act of speaking and which in some manner determine it, and, on the other, the notions of language and speaking manifested by distinct languages in their differences.

My article is concerned with this last element of *cultural linguistics*. Above all, I am interested in the communal evaluations which help each historical collective to identify their linguistic reality, inasmuch as they reveal a prescientific and intuitive conscience which does not respond to the criteria of any science, though they are not delimitations which seek to study the nature of this reality in detail. This does not mean, however, that they are therefore absurd or unnecessary; in reality they appear daily in the behaviour of the speakers of the language (including that of linguists).

### INTRODUCCIÓN

Hablamos bien o mal. Unos hablan *por los codos* (padecen de verborrea) y otros *son de pocas palabras*. Decimos las cosas *en cristiano* o de forma

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ininteligible; para nuestro fuero interno o para un auditorio concreto. *Nos hacemos oír o predicamos en el desierto*. Hablamos en serio o en broma; en voz alta o en voz baja; con conocimiento de causa o *diciendo las cosas por decir*. A veces nos expresamos espontánea e improvisadamente; otras, tras una cuidadosa preparación. Anunciamos nuestros triunfos *a grito pelado*, confesamos los errores y los fracasos *a media voz* y murmuramos *entre dientes*. Decimos las cosas con claridad, cuando *llamamos al pan pan*, pero en ocasiones todos andamos *con medias palabras* (o *con medias tintas*). Hay *dimes y diretes*. Y, por supuesto, *damos que hablar*.

Hablamos, sobre todo, para los demás. Al tiempo que hacemos el lenguaje, este nos va creando. Somos, o podemos parecerlo en ocasiones puntuales, *locuaces, malhablados, charlatanes, lenguaraces, gárrulos, dicharacheros, badulaques, lacónicos o facundos*; y también *inoportunos o discretos, optimistas o pesimistas, comprensivos o intolerantes, enérgicos o medrosos, francos o insinceros, necios o inteligentes, tímidos o valientes, campechanos o pedantes, osados o prudentes, acomplejados o vehementes, ingeniosos o previsibles, soberbios o humildes, engreídos o apocados*...

Cualquier cosa puede ser dicha, desde una insensatez, un sinsentido o una inconveniencia hasta un discurso de fuste, una argumentación brillante o una explicación convincente. Y mediante las palabras pretendemos realizar múltiples intenciones: *convencer, justificarnos, ofender o perdonar, atacar o defendernos, felicitar o dar el pésame, aconsejar, mentir, amonestar, reprender y ordenar, responder, replicar, afirmar, negar*, etcétera.

Todas estas acciones y comportamientos son *conocidos*. La prueba definitiva es su fijación, cada uno con su nombre, en la lengua (en este caso, en el español).

El lenguaje es esencialmente *logos* semántico: crea estructuras de contenido a partir de la experiencia humana. Es, en síntesis, el primer instrumento que posibilita al hombre adueñarse del mundo. Este proceso de transformación de la realidad extralingüística en contenidos de la conciencia responde a los intereses y a las necesidades de cada comunidad de habla; y depende de la intuición, de ahí que cada colectivo establezca las distinciones que cree convenientes:

Según la filosofía clásica, las esencias de las cosas no se pueden conocer adecuadamente o de modo comprensivo. La capacidad humana de conocer, al ser limitada, percibe la realidad en accidentes y relaciones. Y por ellos nos guiamos para formar los significados lingüísticos, que son las formas que damos a esas captaciones intuitivas de la realidad.

(Casado Velarde 1988: 36)

Los significados, entonces, nada informan de la verdad de las cosas: sólo las representan y las seleccionan. Más que con el pensar, tienen que ver con el conocer: “La estructuración lingüística es ya conocimiento, pero, precisamente, sólo la primera etapa del conocimiento, un conocimiento sólo diferenciador, en el que se se aprehende simplemente como en sí mismo idéntico (uniforme) y como diferente de lo demás” (Coseriu 1991:45).

Es el léxico el archivo principal del conocer mediante el lenguaje. En él se acumula la experiencia (en otras palabras, los significados) de cada colectivo de habla sobre los diversos campos de la realidad. Entre ellos está, o suele estar, el lenguaje. En el español, por ejemplo, hay voces usuales, no terminológicas, para distinguir formas de hablar (como *mentir*, *acusar*, *susurrar*, *declarar*, *decir* o *conversar*), modos de realizar los actos de habla (adverbios y locuciones como *francamente*, *sinceramente* o *lisa y llanamente*), y cualidades de las personas en tanto que hablantes (*locuaz*, *dicharachero*, *badulaque*, *bienhablado*, *mordaz*, etcétera) o de los discursos como tales (por ejemplo, *lapidario*, *obvio*, *conciso*, *escueto* o *sucinto*); además de numerosos términos para identificar tipos de texto: *explicación*, *observación*, *apunte*, *aviso*, *charla*, *comentario*, *traducción*, *murmuración*, *conversación*, *noticia*, *rumor*, *paráfrasis*, *receta*, *justificación*, *diálogo*, *discusión*, *poema*, *carta*, etcétera.

Lo que sigue es un acercamiento a la descripción del léxico metalingüístico del español. Su análisis, conjuntamente con el de las distinciones de otras lenguas, debe servir como punto de partida para los trabajos del lingüista atento a la realidad de los hablantes: “En la lingüística (descriptiva y teórica), como en las demás ciencias del hombre, se trata de trasladar al plano de la reflexividad — es decir, de lo justificado y fundamentado — aquello que se sabe ya de manera intuitiva: de transformar lo ‘conocido’ en algo racionalmente ‘reconocido’” (Coseriu 1987:10).

## 1. LOS NOMBRES DE LOS TIPOS DE TEXTO

Un primer campo del léxico metalingüístico del español es aquel en el que se oponen los nombres de los tipos de texto (cf. Loureda Lamas 2003). En el español actual trescientos ochenta y siete lexemas se reparten el continuo de contenido ‘lo que se dice’.<sup>1</sup> Con un rápido repaso de la sustancia semántica que propicia las oposiciones se advierte que

<sup>1</sup> Ninguno de ellos funciona como archilexema.

éstas se efectúan con base en rasgos de carácter pragmático; dicho de otro modo, las distinciones entre los lexemas implican que los textos se presentan, en la experiencia de los hablantes del español, como actos de habla y como su producto. Se entiende que en los discursos hay más que palabras: existe un hablante, un oyente, un contexto o circunstancias, una finalidad, un medio de comunicación y un discurso como tal, con un contenido, a veces con un tema, y con una serie heterogénea de aspectos formales.

El hablante es un rasgo semántico distintivo en *ponencia* ('discurso en una asamblea *por un miembro de ella*') y en *alocución* ('discurso *de una autoridad*'). En ambos casos importa, pues, su condición. El número de interlocutores es pertinente en la oposición *monólogo/conversación*: aquí lo relevante es la existencia o no de una pluralidad de voces, no su número exacto. Por su parte, en *anónimo* se acepta como nota semántica la identidad del autor: significa 'escrito *de identidad no conocida*'.

El oyente o destinatario es el referente de una buena cantidad de oposiciones. Aparece de manera explícita en ciento siete lexemas, los que tienen por archisemema  $s_1$ . 'lo que se dice' +  $s_2$ . 'a alguien'. La única determinación del sema 'a alguien' exige que el destinatario de las palabras sea 'divino': se halla en los lexemas *rezo, oración, preces, plegaria y jaculatoria*. Consiguientemente, los hablantes del español, por medio de deslindes de significado, sólo fijan en el vocabulario dos clases de apreciaciones concernientes al oyente: una distingue textos comunicados (entonces la diferencia se establece entre las palabras transmitidas y las que no lo son necesariamente); otra, como se acaba de exponer, separa el oyente o destinatario humano (el no marcado semánticamente) del divino (el marcado).

Un tercer componente de las palabras dichas es el medio por el que éstas se expresan. Es un rasgo específico en *chat* ('conversación *en la red Internet*'); también en *carta*<sub>1</sub>, *epístola*, *misiva* y *billete*: su significado es 'texto enviado *por correo*'. En los sememas 'transcripción', 'traducción' y 'transliteración' importa, respectivamente, el cambio de sistema fonográfico, de lengua y de sistema de signos de escritura.

El contexto o las circunstancias del discurso también forman parte del acto de habla. El tipo de suceso acaecido a alguien es condición semántica de lexemas como *pésame* (se transmite a otro u otros el pesar que se siente *por un suceso infausto para él o para ellos*, o lo que es lo mismo, 'la condolencia') o *felicitación* (en este caso se comunica a otro u otros la satisfacción experimentada *con motivo de un suceso fausto para él o para ellos*). Lo inapropiado de lo dicho en una circunstancia aparece fijado en *exa-*

*brupto*,  $s_1$ . 'lo que se dice' + (dimensión 'contenido expresado':  $s_2$ . 'una salida de tono'), y *tarascada*, 'respuesta fuera de tono'. Asimismo, generan hipónimos de 'discurso' los semas 'en una intervención' (es distintivo en *parlamento*<sub>1</sub>), 'en una asamblea' (funciona en *ponencia*; por su parte, 'en una asamblea pública y política' es distintivo en *mitin*) y 'en un acto solemne' (forma parte de *lección magistral*). Otro tipo de distinciones concernientes al contexto tienen lugar en el seno del semema 'conversación': 'conversación en una reunión de ocio' es el significado de *tertulia*; 'conversación al margen de otros', de *aparte*; 'conversación tras una exposición en público', de *coloquio*<sub>2</sub>; y 'conversación en un encuentro concertado', de *entrevista*.<sup>2</sup> Por último, el contexto importa en *brindis*, cuyo semema es  $s_1$ . 'lo que se dice' + (dimensión 'contenido expresado':  $s_2$ . 'un deseo') +  $s_3$ . 'al ir a beber en compañía'.

La finalidad del discurso es otro rasgo significativo de lo que se dice. Diferencia, por ejemplo, *explicación*<sub>2</sub> ( $s_1$ . 'lo que se dice' + dimensión 'contenido expresado':  $s_2$ . 'una razón') de *justificación* ( $s_1$ . 'lo que se dice' + dimensión 'contenido expresado':  $s_2$ . 'una razón' +  $s_3$ . '*probatoria*'). También permite distinguir *observación* ( $s_1$ . 'lo que se dice' + dimensión 'contenido expresado':  $s_2$ . 'una consideración' +  $s_3$ . '*para hacer notar algo*') de *comentario* ( $s_1$ . 'lo que se dice' + dimensión 'contenido expresado':  $s_2$ . 'una consideración'). Posibilita, asimismo, la distinción de paradigmas: en la dimensión 'contenido expresado', el sema 'para preparar para lo que se dice a continuación' es específico en el campo 'introducción'; el sema 'para hacer reír', en 'chiste'; y el rasgo 'para darlo a conocer', en 'anuncio'<sub>1</sub>. En el subsector determinado por el sema 'a alguien' se oponen por la finalidad los campos 'propuesta' ( $s_1$ . 'lo que se dice' +  $s_2$ . 'a alguien' +  $s_3$ . '*para que se acepte*') y 'exhortación' ( $s_1$ . 'lo que se dice' +  $s_2$ . 'a alguien' +  $s_3$ . '*para inducir a que se haga algo*').

Del discurso puede resultar significativa su totalidad, como acto mismo o como su producto. Dos de los deslindes fundamentales son la semejanza de lo dicho con otro acto de habla y la posición del discurso respecto de otro. El primero sólo se incorpora en *cita*<sub>2</sub> (significa  $s_1$ . 'lo que se dice' +  $s_2$ . 'reproduciendo lo dicho'). El segundo se concreta en tres campos, definidos por los semas específicos 'antes de comenzar a decir algo' (aquí establecen sus oposiciones de contenido *prólogo*, *preámbulo*<sub>2</sub>, *prefacio* y *proemio*), 'intercalado entre otras palabras dichas'

<sup>2</sup> Se trata de un significado presente en usos como *tendré una entrevista con el gerente*. No pertenece al léxico estructurado, sino a delimitaciones terminológicas del lenguaje del periodismo, usos como los de *en el periódico de hoy viene una entrevista con el presidente*.

(los lexemas del campo son *inciso*, *digresión* y *excurso*) y ‘añadido al final de lo dicho’ (este sema está presente en *adenda*, *apostilla*, *coletilla*, *posdata*).

Muchos otros rasgos significativos interpretan el discurso como un todo, con forma y contenido. Uno de ellos presenta lo dicho como producto y acción de una sola voz (*monólogo* y *soliloquio*); otro, como actividad y resultado de varios hablantes (el campo ‘conversación’). En segundo lugar, en diversos lexemas son funcionales las dimensiones físicas relativas: en *parloteo*, *parrafeo*, *charloteo* y *parrafada*<sub>2</sub> es distintivo el sema ‘extenso’, mientras que en *opúsculo*, *coletilla* y *apunte*<sub>1</sub>, pongo por caso, lo es el sema ‘breve’. Un tercer deslinde es el que separa los actos de habla orales de los escritos. El campo definido por el sema ‘oralmente’ es menos numeroso: en él se incorporan diez lexemas cuyas diferencias de significado radican principalmente en el modo de pronunciación.<sup>3</sup> Por su parte, el sema ‘por escrito’ determina el significado de un buen número de unidades léxicas cuyo hiperónimo es *texto*. Genera, además, varios subespacios en combinación con otros rasgos de contenido que lo limitan: el semema ‘texto *breve*’ aparece en *nota* (y en sus hipónimos *escolio*, *apunte*<sub>2</sub> y *receta*<sub>1</sub>); ‘texto *grabado*’, en *epitafio* y *epígrafe*<sub>2</sub>; ‘texto *de redacción provisional*’, en *borrador* y *minuta*; ‘texto *añadido a un texto antes del cuerpo*’, en los archilexemas *encabezado* y *encabezamiento*; y ‘texto *puesto en un lugar visible*’, en *letrero* y *rótulo*. *Texto* funciona, asimismo, como el hiperónimo de las unidades léxicas determinadas por el espacio físico que ocupan las palabras escritas: forman parte de este campo *renglón*, *párrafo*, *parágrafo*, *lección*<sub>2</sub> y *epígrafe*<sub>1</sub>; y el subsector ‘lo que se dice *en un volumen escrito*’, en el que establecen sus oposiciones *libro*, *opúsculo*, *libelo*, *manual*, *epítome*, *vademécum* y *breviario*.

Pueden destacarse otras tres distinciones en el ámbito de la forma de lo que se dice. La primera separa los textos dados en verso. En el español disponemos de una unidad léxica que nombra cualesquiera palabras que están dichas ‘en verso’; pero carecemos de un término para nombrar específicamente ‘lo que se dice en prosa’; dicho de otro modo, lo semánticamente marcado es el discurso puesto ‘en verso’, y lo expresado ‘en prosa’ es un contenido dado por exclusión. Una segunda distinción presenta como notable la forma histórica del acto de habla: el rasgo ‘en una frase hecha’ (tradicionalmente fijada) aparece, por ejemplo, en *refrán*, *adagio*, *dicho* y *proverbio*. Y la tercera y última nota de contenido reseñable es la forma de exponer un contenido dado. En

<sup>3</sup> Por ejemplo, *farfulla* significa s<sub>1</sub>. ‘lo que se dice’ + s<sub>2</sub>. ‘oralmente’ + s<sub>3</sub>. ‘confusamente’ + s<sub>4</sub>. ‘mal pronunciado’; y *balbuceo*, s<sub>1</sub>. ‘lo que se dice’ + s<sub>2</sub>. ‘oralmente’ + s<sub>3</sub>. ‘con vacilación’ + s<sub>4</sub>. ‘mal pronunciado’.

este ámbito se encuentran semas como ‘compendiadamente’ (deslinda el significado ‘resumen’), ‘deliberadamente encubierto’ (significado específico de ‘enigma’), ‘dándolo a entender’ (rasgo presente en *indirecta*, *insinuación* o *pulla*), ‘con un rodeo’ (archilexema *circunloquio*) o ‘con falsedad consciente’ (se halla en los significados de *mentira*, *embuste*, *falacia*, *infundio*, *patraña* y *calumnia*; también en los lexemas del español coloquial *trola* y *bola*).

El contenido de un acto de habla es cuantitativa y cualitativamente el punto de vista más importante del campo ‘lo que se dice’. Puede aparecer de tres formas: aisladamente (como contenido expresado), transmitido o dicho a propósito de un tema. Precisamente el objeto del hablar está presente en el significado de cuarenta y ocho lexemas subordinados a *exposición* (cuyo semema es  $s_1$ . ‘lo que se dice’ +  $s_2$ . ‘de un tema’).

Por último, los hablantes del español distinguen intuitivamente la existencia de textos en tanto que productos y textos en cuanto actividad. Así, nombran tipos de texto en tanto que producto lexemas como *aforismo*, *anécdota*, *apoteagma*, *autobiografía*, *biografía*, *borrador*, *carta*, *chiste*, *chuleta*, *coletilla*, *créditos*, *cuento*, *cuestionario*, *currículum*, *dictado*, *epitafio*, *eslogan*, *exordio*, *fábula*, *guión*, *historia*, *historial*, *índice*, *indirecta*, *letra*, *leyenda*, *libelo*, *manual*, *manuscrito*, *máxima*, *memorias*, *nómina*, *parábola*, *patraña*, *perogrullada*, *posdata*, *prólogo*, *proverbio*, *pulla*, *receta*, *refrán*, *subtítulo*, *trabalenguas* o *vademécum*. En cambio, identifican tipos de discurso en cuanto actividad *aclaración*, *acusación*, *anuncio*, *conversación*, *delación*, *deletreo*, *descripción*, *digresión*, *exhortación*, *explicación*, *introducción*, *lamentación*, *llamamiento*, *objeción*, *observación*, *oración*, *petición*, *regateo*, *relación* o *relato*.

## 2. LOS NOMBRES DE LAS FUNCIONES TEXTUALES

Otro campo del léxico metalingüístico lo conforman los nombres de las funciones del hablar en una situación determinada, esto es, los nombres de los sentidos de los actos de habla. En rigor se trata de dos tipos de catálogos que remiten a dos clases de funciones que se pueden dar en los discursos: las *funciones textuales*, o sea, aquellas que se dan en los textos como contenido propio,<sup>4</sup> y las *funciones idiomáticas*, es decir, aque-

<sup>4</sup> La *función textual*, que podemos denominar también *sentido*, designa el contenido propio de un texto o de una parte de un texto. Así, por ejemplo, “pregunta”, “respuesta”, “orden”, “asentimiento”, “conclusión”, “resumen”, etc. son, entre otras muchas, funciones textuales o sentidos (cf. Casado Velarde 1993: 12).

llas que se dan en los textos como nivel estructurado de un idioma.<sup>5</sup> Según Coseriu (1981:61): “Seguramente sería un trabajo interesante investigar en una lengua, o comparativamente en varias, cuáles son las funciones textuales que en cada idioma están dadas como funciones ya identificadas, esto es, cuáles son las funciones para las que esa lengua dispone ya de denominaciones especiales” (Coseriu 1981:228, la traducción es mía). Añade a continuación que “la clasificación paradigmática de estas funciones textuales está aún por hacer, tanto para los textos en general como para los textos como nivel estructurado de un idioma” (Coseriu 1981:228, la traducción es mía).

El catálogo de funciones de los discursos no coincide con el de los nombres de los tipos de texto. Son tres las combinaciones posibles. En primer lugar, pueden coincidir los nombres de los tipos de texto con los nombres de las funciones textuales (y si hay estructuras de específicas de la lengua, de las funciones idiomáticas):

| NOMBRES DE TIPOS<br>DE TEXTO Y NOMBRES<br>DE FUNCIONES TEXTUALES | UNIDADES DEL ESPAÑOL<br>QUE PRESENTAN LAS FUNCIONES<br>TEXTUALES ANTERIORES |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| aclaración                                                       | <i>mejor dicho...</i>                                                       |
| advertencia                                                      | <i>ojo, cuidado, oye, mira...</i>                                           |
| afirmación                                                       | <i>exacto, cierto, desde luego, por descontado...</i>                       |
| digresión                                                        | <i>por cierto, a propósito, dicho sea de paso,<br/>a todo esto...</i>       |
| enumeración                                                      | <i>primero, segundo...; en primer lugar, en segundo<br/>lugar...</i>        |
| explicación                                                      | <i>es decir, o sea, en otras palabras...</i>                                |
| matización                                                       | <i>mejor dicho, bueno...</i>                                                |
| recapitulación                                                   | <i>en suma, en resumidas cuentas, en fin...</i>                             |
| refutación                                                       | <i>pues, en absoluto, de ninguna manera...</i>                              |
| réplica                                                          | <i>pues...</i>                                                              |
| resumen                                                          | <i>en resumen, total, en una palabra...</i>                                 |

En segundo lugar, es posible que algunos términos que nombran tipos de discurso no puedan identificar clases de funciones textuales (o, en su caso, funciones idiomáticas). Dan testimonio de este conjunto las siguientes lexías: *antetítulo, falacia, fe de erratas, historia, lema, libelo, maledicencia, manual, manuscrito, preámbulo, subtítulo, texto o título*; además de las citadas en el apartado 1 de este artículo, *aforismo, anécdota, apotegma, autobiografía, biografía, borrador, carta, chiste, chuleta, coletilla, créditos, cuento, cuestionario, currículum, dictado, epitafio, eslogan, exordio, fábula, guión, historial,*

<sup>5</sup> La *función idiomática*, o *significado* de un texto en sentido estricto, designa el contenido del nivel discursivo proporcionado por las unidades idiomáticas de una lengua determinada (cf. Casado Velarde 1993:12).

*índice, indirecta, letra, leyenda, máxima, memorias, nómina, parábola, patraña, perogrullada, posdata, prólogo, proverbio, pulla, receta, refrán, trabalenguas o vademécum.*

Finalmente, algunos nombres de funciones textuales (e idiomáticas) no pueden significar tipos de texto (cf. Casado Velarde 1993: 36–38). Son, por ejemplo, *apertura de discurso, aprobación, asentimiento, atenuación, causalidad, concesión, conclusión, condición, consecuencia, continuación, contraste, corrección, culminación, deducción, duda, equivalencia, evidencia, inferencia, intensificación, llamada de atención, mantenimiento de la atención del interlocutor, oposición, reformulación, refuerzo (o énfasis), restricción, topicalización (tematización) o transición.*

### 3. EL CAMPO LÉXICO ‘HABLAR’

En Escobedo Rodríguez (1992) se presenta la organización del campo léxico ‘hablar’.<sup>6</sup> Se trata de un estudio diacrónico que muestra la organización de dicho sector del léxico metalingüístico desde el siglo XII hasta el XX. En la actualidad, según este autor, forman parte del campo ‘hablar’ más de doscientas unidades léxicas que se reparten el continuo de contenido ‘emitir palabras’. La superestructura del campo delimita tres ámbitos.

En primer lugar, existe una serie de lexías “cuyo contenido hace referencia no a la comunicación propiamente dicha, sino más bien al momento de la fonación” (Escobedo Rodríguez 1992: 18). Se trata de unidades cuyas oposiciones se establecen a partir del entendimiento del decir como un hecho material, sobre todo fónico. En este espacio del léxico caben, entre otros lexemas, *tartamudear* (‘emitir palabras entrecortadamente por defecto orgánico repitiendo las sílabas’), *farfullar* (‘emitir palabras atropelladamente y muy deprisa’), *mascular* (‘emitir palabras entre dientes y confusamente’), *susurrar* (‘emitir palabras quedo’), *cuchibear* (‘emitir palabras quedo y sin que otros se enteren’), etcétera. Todos ellos tienen a *pronunciar* como archilexema.

En segundo lugar, *hablar* encabeza un sector cuya sustancia semántica registra el mero uso del sistema verbal. En su seno se individualiza el ‘hablar con otros’ (*conversar, dialogar, platicar, parlamentar, departir...*);<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> En Wierzbicka (1987), al margen del modelo de la semántica léxica estructural, se analiza el correspondiente sector del vocabulario de la lengua inglesa.

<sup>7</sup> Se opone a *monologar*, ‘hablar uno sin dirigirse a otros’ (cf. *DRAE01*, s. v.), lexema éste que, sin embargo, no se registra.

o se especifica el oyente o destinatario (por ejemplo, en el campo ‘rezar’, cuyo archisemema es ‘hablar con Dios’).

Finalmente, el tercer grupo de verbos, encabezado por *decir*, se refiere al uso del sistema lingüístico para la comunicación de contenidos de la conciencia concretos. Aquí cabe el mayor número de unidades léxicas, por ejemplo, *preguntar, responder, pedir, aconsejar, mentir, mandar, afirmar, explicar, difamar, vituperar, maldecir, blasfemar, contar, jurar, llamar*, etcétera.

#### 4. LOS ADVERBIOS DE ENUNCIACIÓN

En González Ruiz (2000) se estudian ciertos adverbios de manera (y también de locuciones adverbiales de contenido similar) que ocupan el hueco funcional de modalizador enunciativo. Se ha comprobado que los comentarios metaenunciativos de gran parte de dicho paradigma codifican esencialmente cualidades del emisor o del receptor como hablantes cooperativos (como un hablante sincero, claro, veraz, etc.: *sinceramente, francamente, a decir verdad, claramente, la verdad sea dicha*, por ejemplo). Los contenidos codificados por estos modalizadores son, pues, esencialmente metalingüísticos: la sinceridad, pongo por caso, es una característica que se da fundamentalmente en el hablar, es una *forma de decir* (así se refleja en las definiciones que se dan en los diccionarios: “que *habla* o procede”, “que *dice* lo que piensa o siente”, “que *se expresa* libre de fingimiento”, etcétera).

En este trabajo, para la descripción semántica y pragmática de los modalizadores enunciativos de sinceridad y franqueza, se ha utilizado el método, desarrollado principalmente por los lingüistas Anna Wierzbicka y Cliff Goddard, denominado *Natural Semantic Metalinguage*.

#### 5. LOS ADJETIVOS QUE VALORAN LOS DISCURSOS

Los hablantes del español emplean una serie de adjetivos para valorar lo que han dicho los demás y lo que uno mismo ha expresado.<sup>8</sup> No son voces que *significan* cualidades exclusivas de los actos de habla;<sup>9</sup> es decir, *denso, extenso, aburrido, inteligente*, etc. no sólo pueden adherirse a las

<sup>8</sup> Véanse los detalles en Loureda Lamas (1999).

<sup>9</sup> No obstante, en el español hay adjetivos que valoran cualidades de las personas en tanto que hablantes, como *locuaz, malhablado, bienhablado, charlatán, lenguaraz, gárrulo, dicarachero, badulaque, lacónico, hablador, fanfarrón, parlanchín* o *facundo*.

unidades del campo léxico 'lo que se dice', pues también pueden calificar otros objetos de la realidad y otras obras del hombre (por ejemplo, *un líquido denso, un terreno extenso, una película aburrida, una actuación inteligente*, etcétera). Se trata, entonces, de voces que, una vez aplicadas a los nombres de los tipos de texto, juzgan algún aspecto de estos.

El interés de estas unidades léxicas radica en el análisis de qué cualidades de los discursos valoran. Ello no quiere decir que haya que fijarse en si el hablante acierta o yerra en la atribución de un juicio a tal o cual discurso. Lo verdaderamente relevante para la lingüística no es el conjunto de opiniones que los usuarios de una lengua emiten sobre el hablar (por lo demás, carentes, habitualmente, de justificación ulterior), sino el saber práctico y las distinciones intuitivas implícitas en esas atribuciones tan corrientes.

Por lo tanto, cuando los hablantes califican un discurso (un resumen, una exposición, una conferencia, un ensayo, una conversación, una invitación, una promesa o una disertación, por ejemplo) con algún adjetivo, en rigor *dicen* algo sobre su lenguaje. El saber lingüístico, además de un saber hablar en general, de un conocer las reglas de un idioma dado y de un dominio de las técnicas para construir discursos concretos (adaptados a las circunstancias, destinatarios y temas que determinan el acto de habla), incorpora un saber metalingüístico, esto es, una capacidad de juzgar lo hecho a partir del saber primario. Este saber es también intuitivo, *naïf*: en cuanto propio de los hablantes, no de los lingüistas, no incorpora justificaciones últimas, sino únicamente apreciaciones inmediatas, pero no por ello desechables, pues en éstas se advierte cómo los usuarios de las lenguas entienden su hablar.

Por otra parte, las atribuciones que implican los juicios que valoran los discursos son, en la mayor parte de los casos, hechos del hablar: se producen en este o aquel acto de habla. No son leves o intrascendentes. Si las apreciaciones de unos hablantes coinciden con las de otros, pueden tener consecuencias para el desarrollo de la lengua:

Si la reflexión metalingüística, como suponemos, no sólo influye en el hablar, sino que a través del hablar puede tener también influencia en la lengua, entonces es necesario investigar — además de las actividades lingüísticas — también el saber metalingüístico, el cual puede ser o un saber implícito o un contenido de discursos explícitos de una comunidad.

(Kabatek 2000:62, la traducción es mía)

¿Qué aspectos de los discursos se valoran? En primer lugar, los puramente verbales: el contenido y la forma del discurso. Los hablantes juzgan, desde el punto de vista formal, la fisicidad del acto de habla

(*un discurso voluminoso*, por ejemplo), la forma sonora (*un discurso musical, cadencioso*, etc.), o la organización general (*un discurso conexo, ordenado, compacto, deslavazado, desorganizado*, etcétera). Desde el punto de vista del contenido, los textos se juzgan en relación con las ideas, sentires o actitudes que muestran. Así, un discurso *banal, obvio* o *superficial* es “un discurso que dice cosas banales, obvias o superficiales”. Lo significativo de estos adjetivos es que no valoran en ningún caso el hablante en tanto que productor del texto.

En segundo lugar, un considerable número de juicios se refiere a lo que del hablante manifiesta el discurso. Con ellos no se juzgan cualidades inicialmente propias de los textos, sino cualidades del hablante (que, traslaticiamente, deposita en su acto de habla): su carácter (*un discurso presuntuoso* o un discurso *sincero*); sus características intelectuales (*un discurso inteligente* o *agudo*); sus ideas (*un discurso machista, feminista, antimilitarista, europeísta*...); su estado de ánimo (*un discurso resentido, desesperado*, etc.); su ser moral (*un discurso honesto* o *mezquino*); sus intenciones (*un discurso interesado, malicioso, maquiavélico*...); y, finalmente, su comportamiento (*un discurso grosero, zafio* o *inconsecuente*).

En tercer lugar, existen juicios que valoran el discurso como un acto de conducta en una ocasión y, que, como tal, puede adecuarse o no a ciertos criterios de los que dispone el oyente. En este sector pueden reconocerse dos grandes grupos de adjetivos: por un lado, aquellos que se aplican para valorar si el discurso concuerda o no con las costumbres, los intereses y las expectativas del oyente (*un discurso interminable, insoportable, inaguantable*...); por otro, aquellos que juzgan más propiamente las reacciones que provoca en el oyente el acto de habla (*un discurso aburrido, asombroso, ilusionante, esperanzador, agobiante*).

Además, el hablante, por el mero hecho de entablar una conversación con otra persona, establece con ella un determinado tipo de relación. Esta relación es el punto de referencia de valoraciones como *un discurso cordial, atosigador, desafiante, leal, lisonjero, amable*, etc.

Otra serie de juicios valora el discurso en su globalidad en relación con las circunstancias: *un discurso solemne*; o *un discurso formal, conveniente, afortunado, apropiado, adecuado*, y sus opuestos, *un discurso informal, inconveniente, desafortunado, inapropiado* e *inadecuado*, respectivamente.

Además de la valoración de estos aspectos concercientes al acto de habla como tal, puede medirse el hablar en función del saber lingüístico que manifiesta. Los juicios emitidos en este sentido son *genéricos*, pues, aunque aplicados a los textos concretos, los juzgan únicamente como realizaciones de los respectivos estratos del saber lingüístico: el saber

se presenta, en consecuencia, como una norma o exigencia intrínseca al hablar. Los juicios que valoran el hablar en relación con el saber lingüístico pueden ser de suficiencia o conformidad con la norma (*un discurso correcto*, por ejemplo), de insuficiencia o disconformidad (*un discurso incorrecto*) o de excelencia (en ciertos sentidos, *un discurso estupendo, fantástico, excepcional, memorable, antológico, formidable*).

## 6. CONCLUSIONES

Hoy juzgamos “pragmático” cualquier enfoque de la lingüística que entiende el hablar como una acción y que considera la relación de las palabras dichas con la situación comunicativa. Ambos aspectos están presentes en las distinciones intuitivas de los hablantes del español. Por ello, en el nivel de conocimiento que les corresponde, el intuitivo, su lingüística también puede recibir el mismo calificativo.

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## VERBE DE L'AMOUR? LE VERBE *PAÏR* DANS DEUX TEXTES OCCITANS

IMRE GÁBOR MAJOROSSY

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The following study shows metaphorical meanings of a verb (*païr*) that comes from the religious tradition. Two texts will be presented: a poem of Raimbaut d'Aurenga and an occitan short story. Both speak about love and both use *païr* in a somewhat unusual way. In the poem, *païr* expresses love of the Domna; in the short story, after their marriage, lovers take new names and the wife has one that contains *païr*. The study tries to reveal a possible literary relationship between semantic fields of *païr* and *aimer*.

### I. INTRODUCTION

Dans cette petite étude, je voudrais analyser l'emploi d'un verbe qui échappe souvent à la compréhension lors de l'interprétation des poèmes et des nouvelles. Le sens du verbe *païr* relève en général des allusions bibliques, mais on connaît également quelques textes dans lesquels la notion la plus importante de la littérature occitane se manifeste derrière ce verbe, notamment l'amour. À première vue les deux textes à présenter ne paraissent pas vraiment proche l'un de l'autre : il s'agit d'un poème troubadoursque (Raimbaut d'Aurenga : *Cansó XIV*) et d'une nouvelle occitane (*Frayre de Joy e Sor de Plaser*). Il existe tout de même un point commun, l'emploi du verbe *païr* au sens de l'amour, ou, du moins, dans un sens qui est vraiment proche de l'amour. Bien que l'enrichissement polysémique<sup>1</sup> appartienne plutôt à la linguistique

<sup>1</sup> «Les linguistes établissent parfois, en revanche, une corrélation entre le développement d'une culture et l'enrichissement polysémique des unités (M. Bréal).» Jean Dubuis et d'autres : *Dictionnaire de linguistique et des sciences du langage*, Larousse, Paris, 1994, p. 369.

historique, on espère à présent relever quelques motifs littéraires de ce changement.

## 2. TÉMOIGNAGES BIBLIQUES

Il semble utile de commencer la recherche par le texte biblique, appelé *Vulgate*. C'était la version la plus répandue à l'époque des auteurs occitans cités, et même s'ils ne la lisaient pas, ils la connaissaient par des citations rhétoriques, transmises oralement<sup>2</sup>. Si l'on cherche donc les occurrences du verbe original (*pasco(r)*, *pascere (pasci)*, *pasti*, *pastum/(s sum)*) de *païr* à la troisième personne du singulier, on en retrouve huit, dont seules deux peuvent être en rapport avec quelque chose de semblable à aimer. Les deux sont d'ailleurs les versions d'un même discours.

Respicite volatilia caeli, quoniam non serunt, neque metunt, neque congregant in horrea, et Pater vester caelestis *pascit* illa. Nonne vos magis pluris estis illis ? (Mt 6,26)

Considerate corvos, quia non seminant, neque metunt ; quibus non est cellarium, neque horreum, et Deus *pascit* illos. Quanto magis vos pluris estis illis. (Lc 12,24)

La plupart des textes se trouvent dans l'Ancien Testament, et sont en rapport avec des phénomènes naturels, surtout avec des brebis. Le tableau suivant montre les sens différents :

<sup>2</sup> Surtout dans le cas de Raimbaut d'Aurenga, on peut citer une série de poèmes qui prouvent la connaissance certaine de la Bible, p. ex. *Cansó XIV* et *XXXV*.

| VERS BIBLIQUE <sup>3</sup>    | MOT-CLE | GREC (LXX)              | LATIN (VULG.)       | FRANÇAIS MODERNE (TOB) <sup>4</sup> |
|-------------------------------|---------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Gen 48,15                     | pascit  | τρέφω με                | pascit me           | fut mon berger                      |
| 1 Sam 16,11                   | pascit  | ποιμαίνει ἐν τῷ ποιμνίῳ | pascit oves         | fait paître le troupeau             |
| Ps 22,1                       | pascit  | ποιμαίνει με            | pascit me           | est mon berger                      |
| Prov 28,7                     | pascit  | ποιμαίνει ἄσωτίαν       | pascit come-satores | fréquente les débauchés             |
| Os 12,1<br>(in LXX : 2 !)     | pascit  | ἐδίξεν χάσωνα           | pascit ventum       | se repaît de vent                   |
| Mt 6,26                       | pascit  | τρέφει αὐτά             | pascit illa         | les nourrit                         |
| Lc 12,24                      | pascit  | τρέφει αὐτούς           | pascit illos        | les nourrit                         |
| 1 Cor 9,7<br>(in Vulg. : 8,7) | pascit  | ἢ τίς ποιμαίνει ποίμνην | pascit gregem       | fait paître un troupeau             |

On voit qu'il existe quatre sens : 1. : activité agricole ; 2. : la même activité, comme métaphore concernant l'être humain ; 3. : diriger quelque chose ; et finalement 4. : nourrir (sens identique à celui d'aujourd'hui). Une question se pose donc : à quel sens peut-on lier une allusion sémantique supplémentaire *aimer*, qui, beaucoup plus tard, deviendra dominante à l'intérieur du sens complexe du verbe. Au cours de son développement, le sens du mot s'enrichit d'un nouvel élément, « par extension successive »<sup>5</sup>. À première vue, cet élément est étranger au sens original, mais en réalité, il y a un point commun à travers lequel ou plutôt, sur la base duquel la nouveauté entre dans le champs sémantique du mot. Plus tard, de par la fréquence de l'usage, c'est justement le nouveau sens qui devient progressivement dominant. Néanmoins, le phénomène n'aboutit pas au changement total du sens du mot, car le sens original conserve sans cesse, pour ainsi dire, son propre territoire. Par conséquent, le mot garde toujours son sens original, et ce n'est que l'importance de différentes significations qui changent au cours de l'enrichissement.

Tout cela se vérifie pour le verbe *paître*. On se souvient toujours du sens original, mais en même temps on connaît une série de contextes

<sup>3</sup> Sauf les françaises, la source de toutes les références bibliques est l'édition par *Biblia CD 5.0*, par le *Folio VIP Electronic Publishing*, 1992–1993.

<sup>4</sup> La source des références bibliques françaises est l'édition de la TOB (*Traduction Oecuménique de la Bible*, Cerf, Société Biblique Française, Paris, 1975–1989).

<sup>5</sup> Martin Riegel, Jean-Christophe Pellat & René Rioul, *Grammaire méthodique du français*, P.U.F., Paris, 1994, p. 560.

dans lesquels ce n'est pas la signification première qui domine, mais celle qui se nourrit tout d'abord de la tradition que l'on vient de citer.

Donc, avant de répondre à la question sémantique, il faut se concentrer sur la variété des mots qui se trouve dans la version grecque, car les mots parallèles à *pascit* nous invitent à une série de nouvelles recherches. En effet, le changement sémantique et ses manifestations littéraires présentées, qui se trouvent au centre de cette étude, interviennent largement plus tard, et sont influencés plutôt par le langage de la tradition biblique, antique et patristique. C'est pourquoi on montrera quelques exemples des verbes mentionnés ci-dessus, et ensuite, on citera des exemples extraits de la littérature latine classique et de quelques Pères d'Église. On espère que les textes révéleront l'arrière-plan sémantique du rapport *pascit* – *amat/diligit*.

Selon le tableau, on voit que τρέφειν signifie *nourrir*; ποιμαίνειν signifie *paître*; διώκειν signifie *poursuivre*. Pour prouver les sens rattachés, énumérons justement quelques expressions où on retrouve les verbes :

- 1.: Gen 48,15 : ὁ θεὸς ὁ τρέφων με — Deus qui pascit me ;  
 Sap 16,26 : τρέφουσιν ἄνθρωπον — pascunt homines ;  
 Prov 25,21 : τρέφε αὐτόν — ciba illum ;  
 Apo 12,14 : ὅπου τρέφεται — ubi alitur ;
- 2.: 2 Sam 7,7 : ποιμαίνειν τὸν λαόν  
 — ut pasceret populum meum Israhel ;  
 Cant 6,2 (3) : ὁ ποιμαίνων ἐν τοῖς κρίνοις — pascitur inter lilia ;  
 Ac 20,28 : ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ  
 — regere ecclesiam Dei ;
- 3.: Apo 12,13 : ἐδίωξεν τὴν γυναῖκα — persecutus est mulierem.

Cette abondance, à première vue superflue, est tout de même nécessaire pour relever la tradition qui se trouve derrière le sens premier. La traduction latine<sup>6</sup> ne présente pas la richesse du texte grec qui connaît trois verbes. Comme on peut le constater, le troisième a une signification tout à fait différente (par le même verbe que l'on a vu un peu plus

<sup>6</sup> La version du texte de la Bible antérieure à la Vulgate (*Vetus Latina*; les formes différentes en italique) met: 1) pascit (Gen 48,15), pascunt (Sap 16,26), ciba (Prov 25,21), alitur (Apo 12,14); 2) pasceret (2 Sam 7,7), *pascit* (Cant 6,2), regere (Ac 20,28); 3) persecutus est (Apo 12,13). On voit donc que c'est justement le lieu de texte le plus problématique où les traducteurs antérieurs et Saint Jérôme se diffèrent. Le contexte du *Cantique des cantiques* est d'ailleurs difficile à saisir, car malgré le sujet amoureux de l'ouvrage, la tradition de son interprétation comme ouvrage allégorique remonte à l'activité des savants juifs, bien avant Jésus Christ.

haut, chez Osée : ἐδίδωκεν), mais les deux premiers montrent une issue vers un rapport sémantique possible entre *païr* et *amer*. Le premier exprime le sens de nourrir dans des contextes familiaux, référant ainsi au rapport fondamental entre un père et un fils. Dans le deuxième on retrouve le même sens, mais à un niveau plus élevé : la différence ontologique et sa conséquence, le pouvoir de diriger sont attribués au sujet grammatical<sup>7</sup>. Donc d'un certain point de vue, les deux représentent l'amour, même si cet amour est encore bien lointain de celui de la littérature occitane. Pour ainsi dire, cet amour est plutôt *c(h)aritas* que *amor*.

Cependant le sens d'aimer — qui était tout d'abord caché, mais qui est plus tard devenu traditionnel et canonisé au niveau littéraire — s'éclaircit davantage lorsque l'on complète la recherche par l'occurrence la plus importante du mot *pastor*. En effet, la figure du berger a une longue tradition dans la Bible, comme la figure de celui qui se charge de nourrir et de protéger les brebis, bref, qui donne des soins<sup>8</sup>. Son image parfaite se manifeste dans Jésus qui récapitule toute la tradition de l'Ancien Testament et lie définitivement le rôle de la figure concrète à la figure du Sauveur et aussi à celle de Dieu, incarné en lui-même<sup>9</sup>.

Le tableau suivant ne montre que les contextes dans lesquels le mot *pastor* figure dans un sens métaphorique. La plupart des citations extraites de l'Ancien Testament montrent clairement les origines de l'image. Là, il est nécessaire de s'intéresser à tout l'entourage du mot-clé :

<sup>7</sup> C'est vrai pour la citation de le *Cantique des cantiques* aussi. La fille se repose parmi les fleurs, et est rafraîchie, c'est-à-dire, orientée, dirigée par elles.

<sup>8</sup> «Vielmehr hat die Anwendung des Hirtenbildes auf Jahwe ihren Sitz im Leben in der legendigen Frömmigkeit Israels. Das geht aus der überaus großen Zahl der Stellen hervor, die die reiche Terminologie der Hirtensprache auf Jahwe anwenden und Gott in immer neuen anschaulichen Abwandlungen des Bildes als Hirten schildern, der seiner Herde vorangeht (Ps 68,8), und sie führt (Ps 23,3), der sie zu den Weideplätzen (Jer 50,19) und Rastplätzen am Wasser (Ps 23,2) leitet (Js 40,11, Ps 23,2), der sie mit dem Hirtenstab (Ps 23,4) schützt, der den Verstreuten pfeift (Sach 10,8) und sie sammelt (Js 56,8) und der 'die Lämmer an seinem Busen trägt und die Mutterschafe führt',» *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, begründet von Gerhard Kittel, hrsg. von Gerhard Friedrich, VI Band, Stuttgart, 1959, p. 486. (Ce dictionnaire suit la numérotation hébraïque.)

<sup>9</sup> Voir : Jn 10,1–16.25–30. «Ihren Höhepunkt erreicht die Hirtenrede in v 16 : Jesu Hirtenamt beschränkt sich nicht auf Israel, sondern ist universal,» *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament* VI, p. 495.

| VERS BIBLIQUE              | MOT-CLE | GREC (LXX) | LATIN (VULG.)                                                                                                                                                                                               | FRANÇAIS MODERNE (TOB)                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------|---------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Es 40,11                   | pastor  | ποιμήν     | sicut <i>pastor</i> gregem suum, pascet                                                                                                                                                                     | comme un <i>berger</i> il fait paître son troupeau                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Jér 31,10; (in LXX: 38,10) | pastor  | ποιμνιον   | audite verbum Domini, gentes, et adnuntiate insulis, quae procul sunt, et dicite, qui dispersit Israhel, congregabit eum, et custodiet eum, sicut <i>pastor</i> gregem suum                                 | Nations, écoutez la parole du Seigneur, annoncez-la aux rivages lointains, dites : Celui qui a jeté Israël aux quatre vents, le rassemble, il le garde, comme un <i>pasteur</i> son troupeau.                                                  |
| Ez 34,5                    | pastor  | ποιμένας   | et dispersae sunt oves meae eo, quod non esset <i>pastor</i> , et factae sunt in devoracionem omnium bestiarum agri et dispersae sunt                                                                       | Les bêtes se sont dispersées, faute de berger, et elles sont servi de proie à toutes les bêtes sauvages ; elles se sont dispersées.                                                                                                            |
| Ez 34,12                   | pastor  | ποιμήν     | sicut visitat <i>pastor</i> gregem suum in die, quando fuerit in medio ovium suarum dissipatarum, sic visitabo oves meas, et liberabo eas de omnibus locis, quo dispersae fuerant in die nubis et caliginis | De même qu'un berger prend soin de ses bêtes le jour où il se trouve au milieu d'un troupeau débandé, ainsi je prendrai soin de mon troupeau ; je l'arracherai de tous les endroits où il a été dispersé un jour de brouillard et d'obscurité. |
| Si 18,13                   | pastor  | ποιμήν     | qui misericordiam habet et docet, erudit quasi <i>pastor</i> gregem suum                                                                                                                                    | il reprend, il instruit, il enseigne, il ramène, tel le <i>berger</i> , son troupeau                                                                                                                                                           |
| Mt 25,32                   | pastor  | ποιμήν     | et congregabuntur ante eum omnes gentes, et separabit eos ab invicem, sicut <i>pastor</i> segregat oves ab hedis                                                                                            | Devant lui seront rassemblées toutes les nations, et il séparera les hommes les uns des autres, comme le berger sépare les brebis des chèvres.                                                                                                 |
| Jn 10,2                    | pastor  | ποιμήν     | qui autem intrat per ostium <i>pastor</i> est ovium                                                                                                                                                         | Mais celui qui entre par la porte, est le berger des brebis.                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Jn 10,11                   | pastor  | ποιμήν     | ego sum <i>pastor</i> bonus ; <i>pastor</i> animam suam dat pro ovibus                                                                                                                                      | Je suis le bon berger : le bon berger se dessaisit de sa vie pour ses brebis.                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Jn 10,14                   | pastor  | ποιμήν     | ego sum <i>pastor</i> bonus et cognosco meas et cognoscunt me meae                                                                                                                                          | Je suis le bon berger, je connais mes brebis et mes brebis me connaissent.                                                                                                                                                                     |

D'après le tableau, il est clair que la figure du berger est très positive. Toutes ses activités consistent à défendre et à offrir de la nourriture aux brebis. Dans la plupart des cas, il est employé dans un sens métaphorique, et il représente Dieu, dont l'attitude envers le peuple élu (ou ré-élu) est tout à fait semblable au travail du berger. C'est justement le sens métaphorique et par conséquent l'apparition de Dieu qui ouvrent la voie vers une interprétation possible plus étendue. Car l'activité agricole apparaît systématiquement comme la métaphore de l'amour ; comme une sorte d'introduction à l'illustration de la manifestation multiple des soins de Dieu. De cette façon, l'image assez répandue et populaire revêt une série d'impressions positives rattachées au berger. Le couronnement et l'accomplissement de ce sens est sans aucun doute la citation du discours de Jésus. L'importance des dernières citations est encore renforcée si l'on se souvient de la tradition selon laquelle Saint Jean Apôtre était le disciple qu'il aimait, et c'était lui qui écrivit de la façon la plus explicite de l'amour.

### 3. TÉMOIGNAGES CLASSIQUES

Bien qu'une analyse exhaustive doive présenter un grand nombre d'occurrences dans la littérature antique, là, on se limitera à mentionner quelques exemples, car il serait vraiment possible de citer d'innombrables extraits où l'on retrouve le verbe *pasce*. C'est pourquoi il vaut mieux se concentrer sur les ouvrages des auteurs qui étaient considérés comme populaires<sup>10</sup>, c'est-à-dire, souvent lus et cités au Moyen Âge : Horace, Virgile et Ovide. On peut mentionner aussi Lucrèce, Lucane, ainsi que Catulle. Ce dernier pose un problème particulier, puisque sa

<sup>10</sup> On a quelques preuves indirectes du fait que Raimbaut d'Aurenga avait beaucoup étudié : «The poet's vocabulary contains a number of Latinisms ; his language abounds in rhetorical and stylistic embellishments ; and among his ingenious metaphors there are several based on the language of the law. At least one other metaphor is very likely derived from Ovid. Several themes common in Raimbaut's works could be reminiscences of Ovid or other Latin writers. All this literary evidence suggests that Raimbaut was a person of considerable learning. [...] The eleventh century saw a rapid increase in the number of monastic and especially episcopal schools in the southern provinces of France. [...] Orange and its neighboring cities also had their learned men and centers of study. [...] I do not mean to imply that only the classical tradition as preserved in the trivium and quadrivium influenced Raimbaut,» Walter Thomas Pattison, *The life and the works of the Troubadour Raimbaut d'Orange*, Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1952, pp. 21f. Tout cela permet d'affirmer que Raimbaut avait une connaissance littéraire plus ou moins générale, y compris celle de la Bible, qui dépassait sans doute la connaissance moyenne de l'époque.

poésie, abondante d'amour, s'exprime souvent dans un langage trop libertin pour le Moyen Âge officiellement chrétien. Bien entendu, on ne veut citer que quelques textes de poètes, puisque l'usage du verbe *pascit* dans le sens *aimer* suppose un langage métaphorique qui est plutôt celui de la poésie.

Horace :

me **pascunt** olivae  
me cichorea levesque malvae.  
(Carmina, 1,31,15)<sup>11</sup>

o noctes cenaque Deum, quibus ipse meique  
ante larem proprium vescor vernasque procacis  
**pasco** libatis dapibus.  
(Satyrarum libri, 2,6,65)

Virgile :

Navem in conspectu nullam, tris litore cervos  
prospicit errantis ; hos tota armenta sequuntur  
a tergo, et longum per vallis **pascitur** agmen.  
(Aeneis, 1,184)

In freta dum fluvii current, dum montibus umbrae  
lustrabunt convexa, polus dum sidera **pascet**,  
semper honos nomenque tuum laudesque manebunt<sup>12</sup>,  
quae me cumque vocant terrae.  
(Aeneis, 1,607)<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> La source de toutes les références de la poésie de l'Antiquité se trouve sous l'adresse suivant : [www.perseus.tufts.edu](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu).

<sup>12</sup> Il est important d'attirer l'attention sur le fait que, pour illustrer le sens théologique, Saint Jérôme cite ces trois lignes de Virgile dans son ouvrage intitulé *Commentaria in Jeremiam* (PL 24,797). À propos d'un vers du livre de Jérémie (Jér 18,14), Jérôme montre que la providence divine a déjà été reconnue par Virgile. D'ailleurs cette citation se trouve aussi dans le livre *Etymologiae*, par Isidore de Séville (PL 82,126).

<sup>13</sup> Hormis son importance générale, le rôle de Virgile est encore plus essentiel, si l'on a déjà relu la *novas* tout de suite présentée. Car là-bas, c'est justement Virgile qui apprend le jeune chevalier comment passer par le pont vers la tour gardée. De cette façon, le poète antique remplit la fonction d'une sorte de guide, plus connue par Dante.

Ovide :

Illic innocui late **pascuntur** olores  
 Et vivax phoenix, unica semper avis ;  
 Explicat ipsa suas ales Iunonia pinnae,  
 Oscula dat cupido blanda columba mari.  
 (Amores, 2,6,53)

Non habet, unde suum paupertas **pascat** amorem :  
 Non tamen hoc tanti est, pauper ut esse velis.  
 (Ars amatoria, 749)

Malgré le fait que l'on ne cite que quelques textes, on voit les significations essentielles du verbe analysé. Pour la plupart, on le retrouve dans le sens agricole concret, ainsi que dans le même sens d'une façon métaphorique, et enfin dans la deuxième citation d'Ovide, dans un contexte rattaché à l'amour. De plus, ce contexte ne se trouve pas dans un ouvrage de petite importance, mais au contraire, dans celui qui aborde l'amour et qui sert de point de repère au développement du code amoureux du Moyen Âge. L'énumération des citations et des allusions nous amène à penser qu'en arrière-plan, dans le trésor commun des connaissances littéraires, les notions et les activités liées à *pascere* et *amare* étaient probablement proches l'une de l'autre.

#### 4. TÉMOIGNAGES PATRISTIQUES

Après la présentation de la richesse cachée du champs sémantique de l'origine du verbe *païr*, un devoir similaire nous séduit concernant les quatre figures les plus marquantes de l'histoire littéraire et théologique, c'est-à-dire, de la patrologie. Une analyse théologique comparée motiverait la présentation des textes qui interprètent les verbes au centre des citations bibliques, mais dans ce cas-là ce qui nous intéresse, c'est un rapport possible entre les sens de *pascit* et *amat/diligit*. Malgré ce que l'on pourrait peut-être croire, l'ensemble de l'énumération suivante est étroitement liée au but visé. Pour relever un arrière-plan plus ou moins authentique, on citera quelques textes des Pères d'Église dont les ouvrages pouvaient être connus par les auteurs occitans. On suppose que c'étaient les pères les plus importants qui formaient la matière des écoles fréquentées par les jeunes troubadours, au moins en ce qui concerne la rhétorique et la langue latine. L'image la plus populaire est liée aux brebis dans laquelle Dieu est le berger, et les fidèles sont les

brebis. De cette façon, on cite quelques extraits d'Ambroise, d'Augustin, de Léon et de Grégoire :

1. : Ambroise :

- PL 14,216 : «si **pascit** volatilia (sc. : Deus)» (Hexaëmeron)<sup>14</sup>  
 PL 14,217 : «Omnia videt, qui **pascit** omnia» (Hexaëmeron)  
 PL 14,232 : «pari autrimentorum subministratione **pascit** et nutrit» (Hexaëmeron)

2. : Augustin :

- PL 36,83 : «ipse (sc. : Deus) nos **pascit** et continet» (Enarrationes in Psalmos)  
 PL 36,303 : «de ipso pane **pascit** infantem» (Enarrationes in Psalmos)  
 PL 35,1731 «in **pascuis** dominicis oves **pascimus** et simul **pascimur**» (In Ioannis evangelium tractatus)

3. : Léon I :

- PL 54,187 : «gaudentes quod per vos Dominus pauperes suos **pascit** et vestit» (Sermones)  
 PL 54,357 : «nova creatura de ipso Domino inebriatur et **pascitur**» (Sermones)  
 PL 54,383 : «et in pauperibus ipse **pascitur**, ipse vestitur» (Sermones)

4. : Grégoire I :

- PL 75,721 : «Cibo **pascit**, quia verbi scientia reficit» (Moralia)  
 PL 76,116 : «Ecclesia filios suos et **pascit** et protegit» (Moralia)  
 PL 79,480 : «quasi Christum in convivium recipit, Christum **pascit**» (Expositio super Cantica Canticorum)

Hormis l'importance et l'autorité, un autre point de vue oriente l'énumération, notamment l'influence de ceux qui jouaient un rôle spécial dans la vie spirituelle des auteurs des ouvrages que l'on va maintenant présenter. C'est surtout dans la dernière période de la poésie des troubadours qu'une attention particulière s'est tournée vers les idées chrétiennes, ou plutôt, vers la possibilité d'harmoniser les idées centrales

<sup>14</sup> La source de toutes les références patristiques est l'édition de la *Patrologia Latina Database*, Chadwyck-Healey Electronic Books, 1995–1998.

de la poésie troubadouresque avec les principes moraux chrétiens<sup>15</sup>. Néanmoins, un siècle avant, l'opposition éventuelle ou fréquente avait déjà régulièrement provoqué des disputes intérieures<sup>16</sup>, et avait finalement mené tant à la bipartition (*fin'amors* – *fol'amors*) de la poésie des troubadours, qu'à la naissance d'un courant religieux, plus tard quelquefois mystique, à l'intérieur de cette sorte de poésie. Il faut rappeler aussi le fait que la situation était assez compliquée à l'époque de la naissance de la nouvelle occitane à citer, qui se situe : on est une centaine d'années après la Croisade «domestique», menée par Simon de Monfort qui a pour conséquence la chute des centres hérétiques, et l'occupation définitive des territoires des souverains locaux. Quant au pouvoir spirituel, il a été pris par les Dominicains qui, pour défendre la vaste majorité catholique de la société, dirigeaient la censure, y compris sur les produits littéraires. De ce point de vue, on comprend mieux pourquoi il semble nécessaire de continuer la recherche en citant quelques personnages dont les phrases peuvent s'avérer essentielles. Bien que Raimbaut d'Aurenga n'appartînt pas encore à la dernière période, et que son activité ne constituât pas un objet d'analyse de la censure, ce qui concerne notre sujet à présent, c'est la présence d'autres personnages importants en arrière-plan, dont les ouvrages peuvent exercer une influence considérable sur la vie spirituelle et culturelle, y compris celle de l'auteur de *Frayre de Joy e Sor de Plaser*. Il semble suffisant de mentionner tout d'abord Bernard de Clairvaux et ses contemporains, disciples et adversaires également, dont l'influence se manifeste même dans le genre romanesque : la spiritualité et les ermites de la *Quête du Graal* reflètent bien la conception cistercienne, toute nouvelle à l'époque. Avant de jeter un coup d'oeil sur quelques ouvrages de ces Pères d'Eglise, il est utile de fixer l'autre point de repère du choix des citations. En effet, il semble important d'en retrouver quelques-unes qui s'intéressent aux mêmes pensées évoquées dans le premier tableau, et qui peuvent par conséquent être considérées comme des interprétations des sens possibles du verbe analysé. De plus, le but visé et les connaissances préliminaires nous orientent vers le *Cantique des cantiques* dont le texte, à cause de son sujet même, rapproche les deux

<sup>15</sup> Ce sont les *Lays d'Amors* qui rendent témoignage le mieux de l'ambition et du déroulement de l'harmonisation.

<sup>16</sup> Même quelques poèmes de Raimbaut d'Aurenga peuvent être interprétés comme la manifestation d'une opinion d'art poétique, voir la récapitulation des opinions concernantes par : Marc M. Vuijlsteke : «Raimbaut d'Orange et le *trobar ric* ou *prim*,» *Revue des Langues Romanes*, XCVI, 1992.

sens essentiels (*paître – aimer*) l'un de l'autre. Ces considérations servent de base à l'établissement de la liste suivante, qui ne contient que deux phrases de chaque auteur :

Bernard de Clairvaux :

Ita ergo quod ad lilia descendere, et inter lilia **pasci** dignatus est is qui omnes **pascit**, dilectum fecit illum, quia non potuit ante diligere, quam agnoscere. (Sermones in Cantica canticorum, PL 183,1117)

[...] in resurrectione vero et vita quam ostendit quadraginta diebus reficimur, et delectabilibus **pascimur** alimentis. (In tempore resurrectionis, PL 183,289)

Pierre Abélard :

Lanis gregis Dominici superbe vestiuntur, lacte **pascuntur**, et oves fame et penuria verbi Dei moriuntur. (Expositio orationis dominicae, PL 178,615)

[...] et non de residuis ipsum Dominum in pauperibus **pascit** et vestit, sicut ipse ait : [...] (Sic et non, PL 178,1531)

Pierre le Vénérable :

Qui «**pascitur** inter lilia,» quia dilectus meus cui cuncta bona placent, inter universa quae placent, singulariter delectatur pudicitia, delectatur purificata conscientia, delectatur sequestrata a sordibus immundorum actuum vita. (Sermones, PL 189,980)

[...] quia nullum de ovili suo **Pastor** ille projicit, nisi quem non coloris varietas, sed fidei vel charitatis laesio ab ovium suarum grege secernit. (Epistola CCXXI, PL 182,410)

Aelred de Rivaulx :

Haec est pax, quae quodam praegustu charitatis vos **pascit** in via, ejus plenitudine satiandos in patria. (Sermones de oneribus, PL 195,422)

Ubique autem uno Dei Verbo **pascimur** et potamur [...] (Sermones de oneribus, PL 195,427)

Pierre Lombard :

Dominus, id est Christus regit vel **pascit** me, id est Christus est **pastor** meus, in quo sum tutus, et etiam sufficiens. (Commentaria in Psalmos, PL 191,241)

Vel hoc totum de sacra communione accipi potest, quando corpore ejus **pascimur**, et sanguine potamur. (Commentaria in Psalmos, PL 191,587)

Innocent III :

Ecclesia siquidem, quae per oves, et earum innocentiam designatur, non sequitur alienum, non extraneum, non adulterum, sed suum, scilicet proprium virum, sed dilectum, quem diligentissime quaerit, et invenit, ubi **pascit**, et accubat in meridie, ne juxta quod inquit in Canticis (1,6) : Incipiat vagari post greges sodalium. (De quadripartita specie nuptiarum, PL 217,932)

Et ipse tribus modis nos **pascit**, videlicet, alimento naturae, cibo doctrinae, et pabulo eucharistiae. (Sermones de tempore, PL 217,407)

D'après les phrases, qui représentent les deux courants importants (celui qui exprime la nourriture, et celui qui manifeste les soins), on voit que la fonction du berger est définitivement attribuée à Jésus ou à Dieu, selon les textes. Dans le domaine des sens possibles il est clair, surtout en comparant les premières citations des Pères d'Église avec celles-ci, que c'est le sens métaphorique et appliqué qui domine désormais dans les textes cités. Tout cela est vrai à tel point que dans la pratique, c'est le sens métaphorique qui devient le sens premier. Ce changement permet au verbe *pascere* de revêtir une série de sens qui évoquent des contenus positifs, presque célestes. Si l'on observe les citations ci-dessus, on s'aperçoit que non seulement les textes bibliques (*Psaumes*, *Cantique des cantiques*) ont servi de base à l'introduction du verbe *pascere*, mais également des ouvrages qui abordaient le mariage (*De quadripartita specie nuptiarum*). Le sens positif du verbe, la nourriture, les soins, ensuite déjà la tradition juive qui, hormis le sens primaire, interprète le *Cantique* d'une façon allégorique et plus tard aussi mystique, et finalement le discours fameux de Jésus qui accomplit la tradition de la figure du berger, fournit un arrière-plan très complexe pour les auteurs du haut Moyen Âge, dans le domaine de la poésie séculaire. C'est dans ce domaine et dans la connaissance de cet arrière-plan que les auteurs des ouvrages que l'on présente, s'inscrivirent. Si l'on considère tout le savoir dont la présence est plus ou moins probable, il n'est plus tellement inouï que le verbe *païr* signifie sans aucun doute aimer.

##### 5. TÉMOIGNAGES OCCITANS

Ce n'est qu'à partir de là que l'on est enfin en mesure de commencer l'analyse des deux textes occitans choisis. Tout ce qui précède, se révélait tout de même nécessaire, parce que la compréhension et l'évaluation correcte de la valeur littéraire et esthétique dissimulée dans les

textes cités exigent la présentation de l'arrière-plan du mot qui peut être étonnant, dans ce cas-là presque inconnu et également un peu oublié.

Quant aux auteurs occitans, on citera tout d'abord Raimbaut d'Aurenga. Dans la *Cansó XIV*, on trouve des lignes bien étonnantes :

C'ap ton cor q'el mieu se planta,  
 Sai q'em tols — car donar no·m vols —  
 Domna, que Jois pais e vest,  
 Tot l'enjan q'a me ! portava.  
 (XIV,36–39)<sup>17</sup>

Le verbe *pais* est soumis au *Jois*, qui semble avoir un pouvoir spécial. La traduction moderne propose le sens premier, moderne du verbe, mais on ne se trompe pas en le remplaçant par le deuxième sens, soit *aimer*. La base de ce remplacement, ou plutôt encore seulement, de cet emprunt, c'est tout l'entourage qui témoigne de l'amour profond. On ne répète pas l'analyse détaillée du poème<sup>18</sup>, mais on attire l'attention sur l'image qui précède le verbe en question. Le *topos* bien commun, celui de l'échange de coeurs, prépare le compliment suprême auquel succède l'enchantement parfait et le baiser imaginé :

Ar m'en creis talans  
 Don cairai el sol ablasmans !  
 Ai ! domna prezans,  
 Ar penz qe·us acol en baizans.  
 (XIV,41–44)<sup>19</sup>

De ce point de vue, après avoir donc presque lu la fin du poème, le sens du verbe *pais* est beaucoup plus complexe que le simple sens : nourrir. Étant donné que l'amour charnel est très accentué, le verbe qui suit, *vest* signifie aussi quelque chose de plus, probablement la perfection extérieure. Par conséquent, le verbe *pais* ne peut faire allusion qu'aux valeurs intérieures, c'est-à-dire à toutes les caractéristiques qui rendent la *domna* digne d'être tellement aimée. Bien entendu, toute l'idéologie

<sup>17</sup> Raimbaut d'Aurenga : *éd. cit.*, 1952, 114.

<sup>18</sup> On la fait dans la thèse doctorale : Imre Gábor Majorossy, *La présence de la mystique dans la poésie des troubadours tardifs*, ELTE BTK, Budapest, 2003, pp. 123–134., à paraître.

<sup>19</sup> Raimbaut d'Aurenga : *op. cit.*, p. 114.

du *Jois*<sup>20</sup> se cache aussi derrière la figure de la *domna* : c'est le *Jois* qui semble tout diriger, presque comme une incarnation de la divinité antique, *Erôs*<sup>21</sup>. Cependant, le passage cités ne se termine pas ainsi. Il nous reste encore la réponse de la *domna* :

Joglar, vostr'enans  
Voil, e Dieus lo vol mil aitans.  
(XIV,45-46)<sup>22</sup>

Phrase unique de la *domna*, l'affirmation finale indique un petit signe d'espoir. Bien que l'épreuve de la présence de Dieu et de la pensée biblique ne concerne pas notre sujet, il suffit de mentionner tout de même que toute une série des images bibliques, ainsi que l'adresse de Dieu, se trouvent dans le poème qui témoigne du rapport étroit entre les sphères, notamment terrestre et céleste. Ainsi n'est-il pas étonnant que Dieu soit invoqué dans une affaire purement amoureuse.

On espère qu'après cette petite présentation de l'entourage du poème, le sens supplémentaire du verbe *pais* apparaît plus clairement. La *domna* est dans un état privilégié, puisque c'est le *Jois* qui prend soins d'elle : il la *pais e vest*. Néanmoins, d'une part, il y a trop d'éléments rattachés à l'amour : coeurs échangés, baiser, embrassement, pour ne mentionner que ceux qui se trouvent dans la citation ; d'autre part, il y a deux personnages qui jouent un rôle important dans, pour ainsi dire, l'histoire de l'amour. Soit Dieu, soit le *Jois* révèlent des arrière-plans extrêmement riches en allusions amoureuses. En ce qui concerne le deuxième, il est plus compréhensible que le premier. Cependant si l'on déchiffre les images qui sont souvent celles de la Bible transformées par Raimbaut, on reconnaît l'activité de Dieu plus souvent inspirée par l'amour que l'on ne pense.

<sup>20</sup> Bien que cette notion soit liée au personnage de Bernart de Ventadorn, son collègue un peu plus âgé, Raimbaut d'Aurenga met l'image métonymique de l'amour au centre de son poème.

<sup>21</sup> Son apparition cachée, même au niveau d'une allusion, n'est pas du tout surprenante. Car tant le dialogue de Platon intitulé *Le banquet*, que ses commentaires étaient largement répandus à l'époque, et l'on peut bien supposer leur connaissance par Raimbaut.

<sup>22</sup> Raimbaut d'Aurenga : *éd. cit.*, p. 114.

E neys noca·m n'espavanta  
 Lurs estols del fels, fals e mols  
 Lauzengiers, [. . .]  
 (XIV,22–24a)<sup>23</sup>

qui semble la paraphrase du psaume 26 :

Dum adpropiant super me nocentes, ut edant carnes meas, qui tribulant me.  
 Et inimici mei ipsi infirmati sunt et ceciderunt.  
 Si consistant adversus me castra, non timebit cor meum ;  
 si exurgat adversus me proelium, in hoc (*i.e. : in Deo*) ego sperabo.<sup>24</sup>

Ou bien :

Si·m pren midonz e m'entrava  
 Per ja mais a mil ans  
 tot als seus comans ;  
 (XIV,25–27)<sup>25</sup>

Unam petii a Domino, hanc requiram, ut inhabitem in domo Domini  
 omnes dies vitae meae, ut videam voluntatem Domini, et visitem templum eius.<sup>26</sup>

De plus, l'échange de coeurs comme la chance de commencer une vie toute nouvelle se trouve également dans la

Bible :

Ab nou cor et ab nou talen  
 Ab nou saber et ab nou sen  
 Et ab nou bel captenemen  
 Vuoill un bon nou vers commensar ;  
 (XXXV,1–4)<sup>27</sup>

Et dabo eis cor unum, et spiritum novum tribuam in visceribus eorum.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Raimbaut d'Aurenga : *éd. cit.*, p. 113.

<sup>24</sup> Ps 26,2–3.

<sup>25</sup> Raimbaut d'Aurenga : *éd. cit.*, p. 113.

<sup>26</sup> Ps 26,4.

<sup>27</sup> Raimbaut d'Aurenga : *éd. cit.*, p. 184.

<sup>28</sup> Ez 11,19.

Et dabo vobis cor novum, et spiritum novum ponam in medio vestri.<sup>29</sup>

La forte présence cachée de Dieu comme source d'amour dans un sens étendu sert de base à l'emploi supposé de *païr*. De plus, on n'a mentionné que des parallélismes directs entre les *cansós* citées et la Bible, bien que le point terminal de l'enrichissement du sens du verbe soit le discours de Jésus, cité ci-dessus. Donc, pour continuer la démonstration, observons la charmante nouvelle occitane.

L'échange d'objets, ici des anneaux, apparaît dans la *novas* aussi. Après avoir vu pour la première fois la fille, le jeune homme échange avec elle les anneaux :

«Anell suy de Sor de Plaser,  
Qui m'aura leys pora aver,  
Per amor, ab plazer viven,  
Can ach de joy pres complimen,»  
Pres l'anell e-l seu lig aqui,  
E n'er' ab letres atressi  
Qui desia lo nom de luy :  
«Anell de Frayre de Joy suy,  
Qui m'aura leys amaray,  
No jes a guisa de vilan,  
Mas com a fiill de rey presan.»<sup>30</sup>

Cependant, dans l'histoire de *Frayre de Joy e Sor de Plaser*<sup>31</sup>, le verbe analysé joue un rôle encore plus important et étonnant, car c'est le nom de l'épouse qui le contient : *Amor mi Paixs*. Pour mieux comprendre le nom, il faut rappeler l'histoire, dans laquelle un prince tombe amoureux de la demoiselle qui dort depuis longtemps dans une tour fort gardée. Néanmoins, ce n'est pas lui, mais un oiseau, élément fréquent dans les nouvelles occitanes, qui la réveille, et organise la rencontre entre fille et le jeune homme. Après le mariage, les jeunes prennent de nouveaux noms :

<sup>29</sup> Ez 36,26.

<sup>30</sup> «Frayre de Joy e Sor de Plaser», in : *Nouvelles courtoises, Lettres Gothiques*, Livres de Poche, Paris, 1997, vv. 233–243, p. 220–222.

<sup>31</sup> L'histoire, qui est une version du conte *La Belle au bois dormant*, est analysée du point de vue psychologique sur la base d'école de C.G. Jung par Marie-Louise von Franz : *Das Weibliche im Märchen*, Stuttgart, 1977.

E *Amor mi Paixs*, la gentil,  
Pres *Amor m'Esduy* per marit ;<sup>32</sup>

Les deux noms valent la peine d'être analysés, car les deux verbes ont le même mot pour sujet : *Amor*. Les deux verbes l'un près de l'autre sont trop étroitement liés pour ne pas faire allusion d'une part au texte le plus connu employant le verbe paître («Dominus pascit me, nihil mihi deerit.»)<sup>33</sup>, d'autre part à l'acte le plus important de Dieu avec le peuple d'Israël, l'exode. Car le verbe *esduy* vient de *educo*, faire sortir. À mon avis, l'emploi du verbe est tellement restreint que, dans ce cas-là, l'identification de l'*Amor* avec Dieu est encore plus forte. Par conséquent, on peut établir deux syllogismes :

1. : *Esduy* est généralement le verbe de Dieu ;  
**dans ce cas-là *esduy* est le verbe de l'*Amor* ;**  
donc dans ce cas-là l'*Amor* est Dieu.

En supposant que les deux *Amors* sont les mêmes :

2. : si dans ce cas-là l'*Amor* est Dieu,  
**et vu que dans ce cas-là *paixs* soit le verbe de l'*Amor*,**  
alors dans ce cas-là *paixs* est le verbe de Dieu.

(D'ailleurs il est vrai aussi, que *paixs* est souvent le verbe de Dieu dans la tradition, cette affirmation s'avérerait là une présupposition peu fondée.)

Même si l'emploi de cette sorte de raisonnements semble curieux dans notre domaine scientifique, à l'aide de ceux-ci on constate indiscutablement que l'activité d'aimer et celle de paître sont sans aucun doute rattachées<sup>34</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> *Frayre de Joy e Sor de Plaser*, éd. cit., vv. 817f, p. 258.

<sup>33</sup> Ps 22,1.

<sup>34</sup> Du point de vue de l'histoire tardive de la poésie des troubadours il est important de mentionner que dans la poésie d'un représentant important de la littérature italienne du treizième siècle, on retrouve le sens complexe de la racine du verbe *pascere*. «Ké, quand tu **pass** un povero, tu **pass** lo to pastor, / Ke t'á **pass** pos la morte in l'eternal dolzor.» (vv. 7f, in : *Le opere volgari di Bonvesin da la Riva*, a cura di Gianfranco Contini, Società Filologica Romana, Roma, 1941.) Les deux vers lient deux images bien connues : celle du berger et du Christ le Juge, présenté dans l'évangile de S. Matthieu (Mt 25,31-46, en particulier 25,35a.40).

## 6. CONCLUSION

Pour conclure, en récapitulant, il faut d'abord avouer que, d'après les textes présentés, on ne voit aucun rapport direct entre les deux verbes, *païr* et *amer*. Néanmoins, il faut absolument ajouter aussi que dans les ouvrages cités, le verbe *païr* se trouve toujours dans un contexte qui est profondément caractérisé et influencé par la tradition de l'amour. À l'aide de deux syllogismes basés sur les textes cités, on a prouvé que grâce à cette tradition en principe biblique, et tant dans la figure de la *Domna*, que dans la fonction du sujet du mot *Amor*, le sens du verbe examiné est sans aucun doute influencé par l'amour. La tradition mentionnée se cache donc d'une part dans le texte inspiré et littérairement articulé de la Bible, d'autre part dans l'interprétation du texte sacré. Étant donné que les auteurs devaient connaître plus ou moins cette tradition, il n'est pas du tout vraisemblable qu'ils emploient des mots riches en allusions sans aucun motif. On ne peut ainsi qu'affirmer que le verbe *païr* comporte le verbe *amer* aussi.

Si l'on veut enfin formuler le changement des sens, le déroulement de l'enrichissement polysémique, on peut dire qu'à partir du sens agricole concret (=nourriture) on arrive à l'abstrait (=nourriture de l'âme, y compris sa défense). Le pas suivant est la généralisation de l'activité agricole en vie réelle, dans laquelle tous les biens peuvent être attribués à Dieu, qui défend l'âme de/et l'homme, et veille sur elle/lui. Ces derniers ne sont finalement rien d'autre que les manifestations de son amour, dont le signe suprême est la rédemption offerte à l'humanité dans la deuxième personne de la Trinité, Jésus Christ. C'est donc, pour ainsi dire, le lignage, les étapes à travers lesquels l'enrichissement polysémique se déroule. Comme on le voit, il s'agit plutôt d'un enrichissement littéraire que linguistique. Le changement s'inspire de la connaissance et de la tradition commune à tous les auteurs de l'époque. Le trésor de la Bible, celui de la littérature antique et aussi toute la littérature des commentaires leur fournirent une base sur laquelle le rattachement de *païr* à *amer* était acceptable pour le public, et propre à référer à l'amour qui se trouve au centre des deux textes occitans présentés.

## I NOMI DI MESTIERE NEL SARDO\*

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In her paper, the author presents results of her examination on profession names in the Sardinian language. This corpus prepared by the author and organised in cards shows the etymological composition and word formation of the names of professions.

La nostra ricerca ha avuto per oggetto i nomi di mestiere nel sardo, argomento che sinora non è stato fatto tema di una trattazione specifica ma è stato affrontato dai diversi linguisti solo occasionalmente, in relazione a singoli termini. Occorre poi precisare che il lavoro non si è limitato unicamente all'esame dei nomi di mestiere in senso stretto, quelli cioè relativi ad attività manuali (che un tempo si definivano *arti manuali* o *meccaniche*), ma ha incluso anche termini di ambito diverso, con riferimenti più ampi: per fare solo alcuni esempi, vi si possono incontrare anche nomi di attività legate alla sfera commerciale, come *bendbuléri* 'merciaiolo ambulante', a quella agricola, come *bingiàrgiu* 'custode di vigna, chi coltiva una vigna', all'ambito delle libere professioni,

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<sup>1</sup> Mentre nel *Dizionario Etimologico Sardo* (= *DES*), Heidelberg, Carl Winter, 1960–1964 di Max Leopold Wagner, che rappresenta il principale strumento lessicografico per le ricerche sulla lingua isolana, le forme dialettali vengono riprodotte secondo una trascrizione fonetica ispirata ai principi della dialettologia italiana — e la stessa cosa vale per un'altra opera del Wagner cui spesso abbiamo fatto ricorso, la *Historische Wortbildungslehre des Sardischen* (= *HWS*), Bern, Francke, 1952 — nel presente contributo, per necessità tipografiche, notiamo il sardo secondo i criteri adottati da M. Puddu nell'unico dizionario monolingue esistente per il sardo, il *Ditzzionàriu de sa limba e de sa cultura sarda* (= *DitzLics*), Cagliari, Condaghes, 2000.

dei lavori di concetto e di carattere impiegatizio ed altro ancora, come *potecàriu* 'speciale, farmacista', *interramòrtos* 'becchino', *curréu* 'corriere, messo', *levadòra* 'levatrice' ecc.

Fonte principale della nostra indagine è stato il *Dizionario Etimologico Sardo* (= *DES*) di Max Leopold Wagner, il massimo conoscitore delle parlate dell'isola; altre opere di carattere lessicografico risultate assai utili nella ricerca sono inoltre il *Dizionario della lingua sarda. Fraseologico ed etimologico* (= *DILS*)<sup>2</sup> di Massimo Pittau e il già menzionato *Ditzionàriu de sa limba e de sa cultura sarda* (= *DitzLcs*) di Mario Puddu. La raccolta di nomi di mestiere messa insieme nel lavoro di tesi è stata articolata in 189 schede: in ognuna di esse è indicato un lemma (ma spesso una scheda include più di una denominazione per la stessa occupazione), avendo attenzione in primo luogo alle due varianti dialettali fondamentali della lingua sarda, il logudorese e il campidanese, e proponendo anche, se esistenti, le testimonianze dei testi medioevali al fine di registrare le più antiche attestazioni di un dato vocabolo oggetto di analisi. In un campo successivo è stato proposto l'etimo dei termini: i rinvii bibliografici presenti in questa sede rimandano, oltretutto, naturalmente, al *DES*, soprattutto al *Romanisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (= *REW*)<sup>3</sup> di W. Meyer-Lübke e, per ciò che riguarda specificamente la formazione delle parole, a un'altra fondamentale opera di M. L. Wagner, la già ricordata *Historische Wortbildungslehre des Sardischen* (= *HWS*). In un terzo campo, quello delle osservazioni, sono state raccolte annotazioni di carattere vario: talora si sono indicati termini corradicali, talaltra si è segnalata la penetrazione di un certo termine nell'onomastica personale, oppure un proverbio che chiama in causa il singolo mestiere ecc. Per avere un'idea più chiara del nostro metodo di lavoro proponiamo qui di seguito alcune schede (il numero iniziale si riferisce all'ordinamento progressivo presente nella tesi):

1. **abiarésu**: 'apicoltore' (*DES* I, p. 98 e *DitzLcs* p. 31, s.v. *abiarésu*). Termine log.

Etimo: da *àpe* 'ape' (< lat. *APIS*, *APEM*; *REW* 525), o meglio da *apiàrju* 'arnia, sciame di api' (< lat. *APIARIUM*; cfr. *REW* 521) più il suffisso *-ésu* (< *-ENSIS*; cfr. *SSM* p. 67).<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Pubblicato a Cagliari nel 2000 presso l'editore Gasperini.

<sup>3</sup> Heidelberg, Carl Winter, 1992<sup>6</sup> (rist.).

<sup>4</sup> La sigla *SSM* sta per G. Paulis, *Studi sul sardo medioevale*, Nuoro, Ilisso, 1997.

Osservazioni: cfr. → *cheràju*, → *mojàrzu*. Nel sardo medioevale è presente la forma *apiariosos*. Per ‘apicoltore’, riconducibili sempre alla parola per ‘ape’, ricordiamo anche il camp. *abiàrgiu* (< lat. *APIARIUS*; cfr. *DES* I, p. 98 e *DitzLcs* p. 31, s.v. *abiàrgiu*; per il suffisso cfr. *HWS* § 76) e *abiéri* (cfr. *DitzLcs* p. 31, s.v. *abiéri*; per il suffisso cfr. *HWS* § 82). Il vocabolo *apiarésu* è a Núoro “una denominazione ironica del gruccione, forse non priva di una sfumatura eufemistica tesa a ingraziarsi il temuto predatore delle arnie” (*SSM* p. 172).

28. **bendhuléri**: ‘merciaiolo ambulante’ (*DES* I, p. 193). Voce registrata per il camp.

Etimologia: il Wagner osserva che il termine ha l’aria di un prestito dal catalano o dallo spagnolo (per il suffisso cfr. *HWS* § 82), lingue nelle quali però non compare. Si tratterà forse di un incrocio di *bandhuléri* ‘vagabondo’ (< cat. *bandoler*) con *bèndhere* ‘vendere’.

Osservazioni: cfr. → *bettuléri*. Derivato dallo stesso verbo *bèndhere* è pure *bendhijólu* ‘rivendugliolo (venditore di cose poco costose)’: per il suffisso cfr. *HWS* § 38.

81. **filonzàna** log., *filongiana*, *filangiana* camp.: ‘filatrice’ (*DES* I, p. 521).

Etimologia: da *filónzu* log., *filóngiu* camp. ‘l’azione del filare, filatura’, a sua volta da *filàre*, -ài ‘filare’ (< lat. *FILARE*; cfr. *REW* 3293) più il suffisso -ónzu, -óngiu (cfr. *HWS* § 71).

Osservazioni: a Cagliari si usa anche ironicamente per ‘zitellona’. In vari dialetti designa anche il ragno (Oristano, Sèneghe: *filonzàna*). Nel log. mer. e in camp. si chiamano *filonzàna* e *simm.* anche i viticci della vite (S. Lussurgiu: *sa vilonzàna*; Milis: *sa virunzàna*). Nel Logudoro *María vilonzàna* è la filatrice delle fiabe, che personifica il sonno (*María vilonzàna es benzèndhe* si dice ai bimbi che socchiudono gli occhi); inoltre indica anche il danaro (*càndo màncat María vilonzàna, no si pòdet fàgher nùdha*: Casu).

159. **portorariu** (*portorargios*): ‘esattore e guardia daziaria’ (*DES* II, p. 298). Termine documentato nel log. ant.

Etimo: secondo il Wagner è derivazione semidotta dal lat. PORTORIUM ‘dazio’.

Osservazioni: cfr. → *diritadòre*, → *godhetàrzu*, → *listàrzu*, → *tacéri*.

185. **seràcu** centr., *teràcu* log., *tzeràcu* camp.: ‘servo’, oggi impiegato nel senso di ‘uomo che presta il proprio lavoro per un padrone (*mère*)’ e, al femm., ‘donna di servizio, domestica’. In sardo ant. questa voce si usa generalmente nel senso di ‘giovane’ (*DES* II, p. 542).

Etimo: secondo il Wagner si tratterebbe di una voce preromana, come farebbe sospettare anche il suffisso *-àcu*. Rileviamo che sarebbe un fatto unico incontrare una voce di sostrato nel settore lessicale che analizziamo.

Osservazioni: cfr. → *carristèrzu*, → *chenàrzu*, → *criàdu*, → *mùtza*, → *serbidòre*, → *terrale*.

Come si è già sottolineato e come si può vedere in pratica dagli esempi proposti, la fonte principale della nostra ricerca sui nomi di mestiere nel sardo è stata il *Dizionario Etimologico Sardo* di Max Leopold Wagner, opera che vide la luce tra il 1957 e il 1962:<sup>5</sup> è un dato che conviene tenere presente per comprendere la civiltà riflessa dai termini raccolti. In quegli anni, che seguivano non di molto le due guerre mondiali, la Sardegna si apriva infatti in modo sempre più intenso all’influsso dell’Italia (il *Continente*, come dicono i Sardi), dopo secoli di sostanziale isolamento. La lingua sarda, così come è stato illustrato in modo magistrale in numerose opere del Wagner,<sup>6</sup> era stata sino ad allora espressione di una civiltà da secoli agraria e pastorale, carattere che emergeva immediatamente a un’analisi storico-etimologica del suo

<sup>5</sup> Occorre tenere presente che il primo fascicolo del *DES* uscì nel 1957, mentre il primo volume rilegato di quest’opera porta la data del 1960; il terzo volume, contenente gli indici e pubblicato nel 1964, non fu opera del Wagner (morto nel 1962) ma di R.G. Urciolo, avvocato italo-americano studioso di linguistica che ospitò il glottologo tedesco negli Stati Uniti nei suoi ultimi anni di vita, permettendogli in questo modo di portare avanti le ricerche (in particolare la compilazione del *DES*) senza preoccupazioni economiche.

<sup>6</sup> In particolare, si vedano M. L. Wagner, *La vita rustica della Sardegna riflessa nella lingua*, Nuoro, Ilisso, 1996 (ed. it. a cura di G. Paulis) e Id., *La lingua sarda. Storia, spirito e forma*, Nuoro, Ilisso, 1997 (ried. a cura di G. Paulis).

lessico (quella storico-etimologica, infatti, era la prospettiva di ricerca privilegiata dallo studioso tedesco). L'impatto con la civiltà industriale, che avvenne in modo sempre più violento a partire dagli anni Cinquanta del Novecento, ebbe come conseguenza linguistica quella che si potrebbe definire una grave crisi di identità della lingua sarda: l'influsso dell'italiano è divenuto sempre più forte, tanto che si assiste continuamente a un processo di rilessificazione all'interno del vocabolario sardo, nel senso che parole tradizionali del lessico isolano vengono sostituite da italianismi e di esse si perde ogni ricordo.<sup>7</sup> Inoltre, provengono pure quasi esclusivamente dall'italiano i nuovi settori lessicali che esprimono le realtà della moderna società industriale e tecnologica, sicché il sardo nel prossimo futuro corre il rischio, come è stato rilevato da numerosi studiosi, di essere assorbito dall'italiano, di diventare un suo dialetto.

Questo processo di penetrazione del lessico italiano nel sardo è evidente anche nella terminologia dei mestieri: se si tralasciano le professioni tradizionali, che hanno costituito l'oggetto del nostro lavoro, accade che i termini indicanti le attività nate o introdotte nell'isola in tempi relativamente recenti sono tutti prestati dall'italiano, più o meno integrati foneticamente. Per rendersene conto basta dare un'occhiata ai più recenti dizionari della lingua sarda, per es. al *Ditzionàriu de sa limba e de sa cultura sarda* di Mario Puddu, pubblicato nel 2000. In esso si trovano voci come *chímicu* per 'chimico', *ingegnéri* per 'ingegnere', *elettritzista* per 'elettricista', *idràulicu* per 'idraulico', *autista* per 'autista', *editòre* per 'editore', *giornalista* per 'giornalista', *pilòta* per 'pilota', e numerose altre ancora. Anche da questi pochi esempi si capisce facilmente che il prezzo che il sardo, lingua di pastori e di contadini, sta pagando per partecipare alla moderna civiltà industriale e tecnologica è costituito da abbondanti trasfusioni lessicali dall'italiano, che ne stanno alterando in profondità la compagine lessicale.

<sup>7</sup> Cfr. G. Paulis, *Il sardo unificato e la teoria della pianificazione linguistica*, in M. Argiolas, R. Serra (a cura di), *Limba lingua language. Lingue locali, standardizzazione e identità in Sardegna nell'era della globalizzazione*, Cagliari, CUEC, 2001, pp. 155-171, a p. 155: "La recessione del sardo rispetto all'italiano ha raggiunto livelli preoccupanti. Uno studio recente ha evidenziato che i locutori sardi riescono sempre meno a sostenere continuamente un lungo discorso in sardo e hanno bisogno di ricorrere alla commutazione di codice con l'italiano. Si sta compiendo sotto i nostri occhi un vero e proprio processo di rilessificazione in senso italiano, ossia il lessico sardo si sta ristrutturando profondamente secondo quello italiano, con l'introduzione massiccia di prestiti italiani che riguardano tutti i campi lessicali compreso il nucleo indigeno del lessico. Sviluppandosi ulteriormente, questo processo di metamorfosi potrebbe condurre alla disgregazione strutturale della lingua sarda."

Alla luce di queste considerazioni si può comprendere perché la nostra ricerca si sia basata fundamentalmente sul *DES*: quest'opera, infatti, oltre a essere considerata da tutti gli studiosi lo strumento fondamentale per l'analisi del lessico sardo (un vocabolario etimologico di assoluto valore), fotografa la civiltà sarda in un momento fondamentale di transizione fra il vecchio e il nuovo. Vi si leggono i nomi delle professioni tradizionali, che hanno trovato espressione lessicale in duemila anni di vicende storiche e linguistiche, ai quali cominciano ad affiancarsi anche alcuni nomi di mestiere propri della nuova civiltà industriale: il Wagner, in ogni caso, fu in generale prudente nell'accogliere gli italianismi più crudi, accordando invece la sua preferenza a quei termini penetrati stabilmente nel sardo. La nostra ricerca offre pertanto il quadro dei mestieri di una civiltà fundamentalmente pre-industriale, in cui lavorano i pastori (di pecore, di vacche, di capre, di porci, di cavalli), i contadini, gli apicoltori, gli stagnini, i fabbricanti di mattonelle, gli orologiai, i barbieri, i bilanciai, i venditori ambulanti, i calzettai, i calzolari, i macellai, i becchini, i produttori di formaggio, i sarti, i mercanti di bestiame, i panettieri, le filatrici, i muratori, i bottai, i fabbri, i materassai, i mugnai, gli osti, ma anche i ragionieri, gli avvocati, gli esattori, i notai ecc. Non ci sono però gli ingegneri, gli architetti, i costruttori edili, i direttori di banca, i professori di glottologia ecc.: per farsi un'idea di come queste professioni trovino espressione nella parlata isolana converrà consultare, più che un dizionario del sardo, un dizionario dell'italiano.

Al fianco dei nomi di mestiere veri e propri, ne abbiamo schedato anche pochi altri che lo sono solo in senso lato (anche a voler intendere la parola *mestiere* nel suo significato più estensivo, come si accennava in precedenza): indicano cioè attività che tradizionalmente si praticano (in ogni società) e che, se pure non approvate socialmente, sono comunque finalizzate al guadagno. Pensiamo in particolare ai termini per 'prostituta', per 'fattucchiere' e per 'astrologo'. Si sono inoltre inclusi e commentati alcuni termini che fanno riferimento alla società medioevale sarda e che compaiono nei più antichi documenti (i *condaghes*, in particolare).

Quali sono le conclusioni di carattere generale che sono emerse dalla nostra analisi? Il primo dato riguarda la composizione etimologica del lessico dei nomi di mestiere nel sardo, in cui, come era prevedibile anche *a priori*, non compaiono termini attribuibili al sostrato prelatino: potrebbe costituire l'unica eccezione il termine *seràcu* 'servo' (al femm. 'donna di servizio, domestica'), ma, stante il fatto che le voci di sostrato

tendono ad affiorare in altri settori del lessico (nomi di piante, di piccoli animali, di particolarità geomorfologiche del terreno), si potrebbe pensare che ancora non sia stata trovata un'adeguata proposta etimologica per il termine in questione. Esiste poi un nucleo di vocaboli di ascendenza latina, che spesso indicano occupazioni legate alla terra e a una civiltà agropastorale, o comunque a una fase di sviluppo sociale caratterizzata da scarsa urbanizzazione: fra queste ricordiamo *agasòne* 'guardiano di cavalli' (< AGASO, -ONE), *araciòni* 'mezzadro' (< RATIONE), *binnidòre* 'vignaiolo, custode della vigna' (< VINITOR, -ORE), *canàrxu* 'custode di cani', 'battitore' (< CANARIUS), *chenàrxu* 'servo che di notte porta le pecore al pascolo' (< CENARIUS), *pastòre* 'pastore' (< PASTOR, -ORE), *piscadòre* 'pescatore' (< PISCATOR, -ORE), *porcàrxu* 'porcaro, guardiano di porci' (< PORCARIUS), *vacàrxu* 'vaccaio, guardiano di vacche' (< \*VACCARIUS) ecc.

L'elemento catalano e spagnolo testimonia invece di una società più evoluta, in cui lo sviluppo urbano richiedeva un quadro di professioni più ricco per soddisfare alle esigenze di una società maggiormente complessa. Fra le voci di origine iberica ricordiamo: *abogàu* 'avvocato' (< sp. *abogado*), *arrelogéri* 'orologiaio' (< cat. *rellotger*), *balanséri* 'bilanciaio' (< cat. ant. *balanser*, *balancer*), *barbéri* 'barbiere' (< cat. *barber*), *caltzèteri* 'calzettaio, artigiano che fabbrica o vende calze' (< sp. *calcetero*), *candeléri* 'ceraiolo' (< cat. *candeler*), *carnicéri* 'macellaio' (< cat. *carnicer*), *contadòre* 'computista, ragioniere' (< sp. cat. *contador*), *curréu* 'corriere, messo', 'procaccia, portalettere' (< cat. *correu*), *drapéri* 'sarto' (< cat. *draper*), *ferréri* 'fabbro' (< cat. *ferrer*), *frutéri* 'fruttivendolo' (< cat. *fruyter*), *liaunéri* 'stagnaiolo, lattoniere' (< cat. *llauner*), *matalaféri* 'materassaio' (< cat. *matalafer*), *notàriu* 'notaio' (< sp. *notario*), *pastisséri* 'pasticciere' (< cat. *pastisser*), *potecàriu* 'speziale, farmacista' (< sp. *apotecario*, cat. *apotecari*), *sabbatéri* 'calzolaio' (< cat. *sabater*), *tapisséri* 'tappezziere' (< sp. *tapicero* o cat. *tapisser*) ecc.

Per quanto riguarda infine l'elemento italiano, ricordato che l'influsso dell'italiano si esercitò sul sardo in due periodi distinti e separati fra loro da circa settecento anni, si possono fare in generale le stesse considerazioni che si sono espresse per l'elemento catalano e spagnolo. Si possono ricordare le seguenti voci di origine italiana: *ambulànte* 'mercettaio ambulante' (< it. *ambulante*), *bandhidòre* 'banditore che nei paesi annunciava gli atti della pubblica autorità, le vendite, ecc.' (< it. *banditore*), *bidràju* 'vetraio' (< it. *vetraio*), *butegàju* 'bottegaio, negoziante' (< it. *bottegaio*), *caltzòlaju* 'calzolaio' (< it. *calzolaio*), *carradòre* 'carrettiere' (< it. *carratore*, *carradore*), *gabbelléri* 'gabelliere, appaltatore di gabelle' (< it. *ga-*

*belliere*), *mercànte* ‘mercante’ (< it. *mercante*), *panatéri* ‘panettiere, fornaio’ (< it. *panettiere*), *petinàju* ‘artigiano che fabbrica e vende pettini (soprattutto per il telaio)’ (< it. *pettinaio*), *sedbàju* ‘sellaio, artigiano che fabbrica le selle’ (< it. *sellaio*), *stangiàju* ‘stagnino’ (< it. *stagnai*) ecc.

Un fatto molto interessante che merita di essere posto in rilievo è che si assiste non di rado a una concorrenza fra termini di origine iberica e i corrispettivi di origine italiana, con questi ultimi che tendono a prevalere e a sostituire i primi.<sup>8</sup> Così, per fare alcuni esempi, la voce originaria per ‘orologiaio’ è *arreloggèri*, dal cat. *rellotger*: questa voce, tuttavia, è segnalata soltanto per il camp. rustico, mentre a Cagliari si ha, attraverso un incrocio con l’it. *orologiaio*, *arrelogiàju* e in log. direttamente l’italianismo *orolozàju*. Così pure, mentre per ‘vetraio’ in camp. si ha *birdiéri*, dal cat. *vidrier*, in log. si ha *bidràju*, che deriva dall’it. *vetraio*. Ancora, mentre per ‘sellaio’ in camp. si ha *sedbéri*, dal cat. *seller*, in log. si ha *sedbàju*, dall’it. *sellaio*. Nel camp., infine, per ‘stagnino’ si ha, a fianco di *stagnéri*, che proviene dal cat. *estanyer*, *stagnàju*, dall’it. *stagnai*.

Se nel campo lessicale l’italiano tende a sostituire l’originaria componente catalano-spagnola, vi è un settore in cui questa continua a essere presente e assai vitale: il settore dei suffissi. Qui, infatti, si osserva che uno dei suffissi più utilizzati è *-éri* che, penetrato inizialmente attraverso vocaboli catalani e spagnoli terminanti in *-er*, *-ero* (come *ferrer*, *sabater*, *calcetero* ecc.), è divenuto produttivo in sardo, specialmente nel settore dei nomi di mestiere,<sup>9</sup> come illustrano numerosi casi presentati nelle schede. Un fatto interessante è che uno stesso nome di mestiere può presentare diversa suffissazione: così in camp. per ‘apicoltore’ si ha *abiàrgju* (< lat. *APIARIUS*) e al suo fianco, con l’intromissione del suffisso *-éri*, *abiéri*; sempre in camp. si ha *arregiolàju* ‘fabbricante di mattonelle’, derivato da *arregiòla* ‘mattonella’ (< cat. *rajola*) più il suffisso *-àju*,<sup>10</sup> ma si ha anche la forma concorrente *arregioléri*, con impiego del suffisso *-éri*; in camp. è segnalato *butegàju* ‘bottegaio, negoziante’, ma al suo fianco si ha pure *buteghéri*, *butechéri*; in log. e camp. si ha *casàju* ‘produttore e venditore di formaggio’, ma in camp. si sente anche *caséri*; in log. e camp. per ‘artigiano che fabbrica mantici’ si hanno sia *fodbéri* che *fodbàju*; in camp. per ‘esattore’ è registrato *tacéri* ma anche *taciàju*.

Fra gli altri suffissi molto produttivi nella formazione dei nomi di mestiere ricordiamo ancora *-àju* (in *arregiolàju* ‘fabbricante di matto-

<sup>8</sup> Fatto rilevato in termini più generali anche da M.L. Wagner, *La lingua sarda*, cit., pp. 191–192.

<sup>9</sup> Cfr. *HWS* § 82.

<sup>10</sup> Cfr. *HWS* § 81.

nelle', *casàju* 'fabbricante e venditore di formaggio', *cheràju* 'ceraiolo', 'apicoltore' ecc.), di origine toscana,<sup>11</sup> e log. *-àrzu*, camp. *-àrgiu* (in *aidatonàrzu* 'custode di maggese', *carriàrzu* 'facchino', *abiàrgiu* 'apicoltore' ecc.) dal lat. *-ARIUS*.<sup>12</sup>

Per quanto riguarda sempre la formazione delle parole, segnaliamo infine che fra i termini di mestiere abbiamo raccolto anche alcuni composti che presentano tutti la stessa tipologia: base verbale + tema nominale che funge da oggetto (*acontzalapiòlos* 'stagnino, calderaio, acconciatore', letteralmente 'aggiusta-caldaia'; *acutzávérru* 'arrotino', letteralmente 'aguzza-ferro'; *carramòrtos* 'becchino, beccamorti', letteralmente 'trasporta-morti'; *carristèrzu* 'pastorello, servo di pastore che porta il formaggio e gli attrezzi dall'ovile', letteralmente 'trasporta-attrezzi'; *fraigamiùru* 'muratore', letteralmente 'fabbrica-muro').

Fra i risultati raggiunti con la nostra ricerca, il più importante ci pare quello di aver messo insieme un primo corpus di nomi di mestiere del sardo, dal momento che un lavoro simile ancora non era stato fatto per la lingua isolana, contrariamente a quanto è avvenuto per numerose altre regioni. Si è provveduto, inoltre, a dare delle voci individuate una descrizione in termini etimologici e di formazione delle parole, segnalando in particolare i suffissi più produttivi in questo specifico settore del lessico; si è infine ricordata, laddove presente, la penetrazione di nomi di mestiere nell'onomastica personale. Un tale repertorio di nomi di mestiere potrà costituire anche un utile apporto per ricerche nel campo degli studi storico-linguistici (per ragionare, ad es., sulla percentuale di lessico latino conservata nel sardo), di quelli linguistico-comparativi (per instaurare, ad es., un confronto fra i nomi di mestiere sardi e quelli di altre lingue romanze, anche in ordine alla composizione etimologica), di quelli linguistico-descrittivi (per esaminare, ad es., la produttività o meno dei vari suffissi), o anche di quelli dialettologici (soprattutto per censire i nomi di mestiere vitali nei singoli dialetti). In quest'ultimo settore, senza dubbio, si potrebbero ottenere risultati assai interessanti predisponendo un questionario per condurre delle inchieste sul campo che consentirebbero, fra le altre cose, di registrare, prima della loro definitiva scomparsa, i nomi e le espressioni legati alle varie attività tradizionali.

<sup>11</sup> Cfr. *HWS* § 81.

<sup>12</sup> Cfr. *HWS* § 76.