Thomistica III

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Since our last surveys of recent writings about St Thomas (*New Blackfriars* March 2002: 245–251; March 2003: 148–155) the flood shows no signs of abating. On the contrary, from North America, we have had several remarkable contributions to Aquinas studies.

I

The first to note is *Aquinas* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003, xx + 611 pages), a monumental achievement by Eleonore Stump, in the Arguments of the Philosophers series. This book will surely be consulted for as long as Thomas Aquinas is regarded as a major thinker.

It is a worthy addition to the series. The seventeen volumes that have appeared so far include those by Barry Stroud (Hume), Michael Ayers (Locke), Stephen Priest (Merleau-Ponty), Justin Gosling (Plato), and Robert Fogelin (Wittgenstein), to mention only the ones with which I am familiar. Better examples could not easily be imagined of how to expound arguments with the skills characteristic of Anglo-American analytical philosophy, yet without ignoring the historical context of the philosophers under discussion.

Eleonore Stump teaches at Saint Louis University, Missouri. Her early work was on Boethius. She co-edited the excellent *Cambridge Companion to Aquinas* (1993) and the equally good *Cambridge Companion to Augustine* (2001) with her mentor and friend the late Norman Kretzmann. Indeed, so she tells us, she agreed to write this book only if he would collaborate. In the end, as cancer overtook him, he concentrated on writing up the lectures that he delivered in wOxford on the *Summa contra Gentiles*.[1] Nevertheless, as she insists, 'the thought underlying every part of this book' derives from the many years they worked together.[2] Moreover, although herself a 'married

[1] Norman Kretzmann, *The metaphysics of theism: Aquinas's natural theology in* Summa contra gentiles I (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1997); *The metaphysics of theism in* Summa contra gentiles II (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1999).

[2] For an appreciation of what many scholars owed to him see *Aquinas's moral theory: essays in honor of Norman Kretzmann* edited by Scott MacDonald and Eleonore Stump (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell University Press 1999).

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female Protestant', Professor Stump has found 'deeply comforting company for the road' in the Dominican and Jesuit communities in Saint Louis.

If she is, as she quotes a Dominican friend as saying, 'the world's most improbable Thomist', she has certainly written a study of Thomas Aquinas which displays an intellectual rigour and scholarly depth which few (if any) Dominicans (or Jesuits?) these days could begin to match.

As a glance at her publications would reveal, she is a philosopher who ranges far beyond the confines of medieval scholarship, as the Gifford Lectures she gave at the University of Aberdeen in March 2003 — *Wandering in Darkness: Narrative and the Problem of Suffering* — will confirm in due course.

Even in such a 'fat book', as Stump says at the outset, 'The list of things I have left out of this book is at least as long as its table of contents'. Specifically, as she notes, we hear little or nothing about how Aquinas's views are related to the views of thinkers in the ancient Greek and Hellenistic world, or in the patristic Latin-speaking tradition, nor does she discuss how he makes use of the Islamic and Jewish literatures with which he had some familiarity.

Indeed, though they are listed in the bibliography, we do not feel the presence at all strongly of the likes of David Burrell, Marie-Dominique Chenu, Cornelio Fabro, Etienne Gilson, Jean-Pierre Torrell and John F. Wippel.

Major 'Continental' Thomists like Leo Elders and Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange appear in course of the discussion, productively, but only for their wrong-headedness: Elders is mistaken in saying that, for Aquinas, *all* God's knowledge is 'causative' — for example, God does not cause his own self-knowledge (see pages 159 to 163)[3]; Garrigou-Lagrange, relatedly, entertains the 'false dilemma' — God is either determining or determined — and ends by denying that God can do anything in response to what creatures do, thus endorsing the concept of the aloof and unresponsive God ascribed to Aquinas and so rightly attacked by modern theologians (pages 118 to 122).

The structure of the book is as follows. Professor Stump opens with an account of Aquinas's life and an overview of his thought (pages 1 to 32). Part I deals with 'the ultimate foundation of reality': metaphysics as a theory of things, goodness, God's simplicity, God's eternity and God's knowledge (pages 33 to 187). Part II deals with 'the nature of human beings': the soul, the foundations of knowledge, the mechanisms of cognition, and freedom (pages 189 to 306). Part III deals with 'the nature of human excellence': justice, wisdom, faith, and grace and free will (pages 307 to 404). Part IV, finally, deals with

[3] Brian Shanley OP is charged with the same error, in his 'Eternal knowledge of the temporal in Aquinas', *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 71 (1997): 197–224.

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'God's relationship to human beings': the metaphysics of the Incarnation, atonement, and providence and suffering (pages 405 to 478). The book concludes with 100 pages of notes, sometimes quite substantial and by no means confined only to references, an 18-page long 'select bibliography' and of course an index.

It is taken for granted that the *Summa Theologiae* is 'the paradigm of philosophical theology' (page 29). This does not mean, however, that Stump is oblivious to the Christian theological dimension of Thomas's thought. On the contrary, she includes more discussion of explicitly theological topics than interpreters who treat him primarily as a philosopher usually do. Moreover, as we shall see, in her exposition of the philosophy, she keeps recurring to the underlying theological *a priori*.

According to Stump, Aquinas's commentaries on the Book of Job and on the Epistle to the Romans are the 'most fully developed and philosophical' of his biblical commentaries. Interestingly, the *Lectura super Joannem*, which French authorities such as Marie-Dominique Philippe and Jean-Pierre Torrell regard as equally important, she mentions only in passing. This may be, however, only because she has had no occasion to write on the doctrine of the Incarnation or on the Holy Spirit, perhaps the most prominent themes in the *super Joannem*, treated with philosophical skill as well as theological acumen (if these are ever separable in Aquinas).

It is Aquinas's theology of providence and suffering that attracts Stump's attention. The account in Part IV of his views draws heavily on the commentaries on Romans and Job, particularly the latter. Whereas we tend to see the Book of Job, in its depiction of the horrendous suffering of an innocent human being, as raising the problem of evil and thus the question of God's goodness (and so of the existence of an omnipotent, perfectly good God at all), Aquinas (as Stump says) is interested rather in the nature and operation of divine providence: that is to say, God's goodness is not assumed from the start to be incompatible, or anyway tricky to reconcile, with his permitting bad things to happen to good people. For Thomas, the horrendous evils that God sometimes permits are perfectly intelligible in view of our preparation for attaining the ultimate goal of union with God in the afterlife. The 'problem of evil', that is to say, does not present itself to Aquinas in anything like the way in which it does to philosophers, or to Christians, nowadays, or since the Enlightenment.

Moreover, so Stump argues, we read the speeches of Job's 'comforters' as 'tedious reiterations of misconceived accusations', whereas, for Aquinas, they are understood as 'constituting a genuine debate, almost a mediaeval academic disputation (determined in the end by God himself), in which the thought develops subtly, advanced by arguments'.

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Here, as elsewhere, Stump combines lucid exposition of Aquinas's argument while remaining immune to the temptation to assimilate it anachronistically to modern debates.

Stump has so much ground to cover that she desists from much debate with other interpreters of Aquinas. In her chapter on 'The metaphysics of the Incarnation', for example, she refers to recent work by Richard Cross. The bibliography includes his book *The Metaphysics of the Incarnation: Thomas Aquinas to Duns Scotus* (Oxford 2002), but obviously it did not reach her in time to discuss. She refers to one of his articles[4] — hailing his 'excellent analysis', nevertheless disagreeing with 'much' of what he says, without specifying quite what, saying only that she understands 'the underlying metaphysics differently from the way in which he does' (page 565).

Again, obviously, she did not have to hand *Aquinas on Being*, the recent study by Anthony Kenny (Oxford, 2002), in which he consolidates his well known attack on Aquinas's theory of being as giving rise to 'sophistry and illusion'.[5] In brief, Aquinas has two Latin words, *ens* ('being') and *esse* ('to be,' though used more widely than our infinitive), which he allows to generate the doctrine of what came to be known as 'the real distinction', namely his view that the nature of any created thing is *really*, not just *conceptually*, distinct from its existence. In effect, Kenny provides an exhaustive analysis of Aquinas's uses of the word 'being', concluding that this doctrine is the product of linguistic confusion — like an early example of Wittgenstein's 'houses of cards'[6], we might say. As the 'real distinction' collapses it brings down its correlative, the doctrine of God's simplicity.

Aquinas's account of divine simplicity is 'notoriously difficult', Stump allows. Indeed, she devotes most of her discussion of the topic to the difficulties. Yes, it seems 'outrageously counter-intuitive' to many philosophers of religion these days; but this is largely because they imagine 'religiously untoward consequences of the doctrine'. In particular, they endorse the idea that, as *actus purus* (pure actuality), God must have no potentiality for change and so must remain impotent to respond to created things and contingent events. The doctrine is, she insists, 'fundamental to the Thomistic worldview', which means 'foundational for everything in Aquinas's thought from his metaphysics to his ethics'. (Garrigou-Lagrange would have rejoiced to hear her say this!)

In the event, Stump's exposition of Aquinas's metaphysics of being intertwines her chapter on the doctrine of divine simplicity to such an

[4] Richard Cross, 'Aquinas on nature, hypostasis, and the metaphysics of the Incarnation', *The Thomist* 60 (1996): 171–202.

[5] Reviewed by Vivian Boland OP, *New Blackfriars* September 2003: 388–398.

[6] *Philosophical Investigations* I: § 118: 'What we are destroying is nothing but houses of cards and we are clearing the ground of language on which they stood'.

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extent that Aquinas's view of reality and his concept of God are seen to be correlative — each turning out to be profoundly true, *pace* Kenny. For all that she is expounding the arguments of Aquinas as a philosopher, he remains, at key points, as much a theological philosopher as a philosophical theologian — which is perhaps why, in the end, in Stump's reading of his work, the metaphysics of being remains essential and indispensable for him, and, moreover, well worthy of respect by us now.

Stump is, of course, familiar with Anthony Kenny's *Aquinas on Mind* (1993), the classical interpretation in the anglophone academy of his philosophical psychology. Here, while doing no more than assert that she 'strongly' disagrees with his account of Aquinas's views of cognition, she seems to work out her own interpretation and evaluation of Aquinas's views very much as an alternative to Kenny's. For all its 'scattered development', so she contends, Aquinas nevertheless has a 'systematically unified theory of knowledge' — largely, it turns out, 'because it is based on a metaphysics in which the first principle of existence is an omniscient, omnipotent, perfectly good God, whose rational creatures could not have been made so as to be standardly mistaken about the rest of creation' (page 21).

In other words, an account of Aquinas's philosophy of mind that regards his metaphysics as incoherent will inevitably prove inadequate.

As regards his theory of knowledge, Stump insists, against well-known arguments by Nicholas Wolterstorff and Alvin Plantinga, that Aquinas is not a 'foundationalist'.

'Foundationalism', which comes in many varieties, is the current label for a theory of knowledge according to which there is a small set of propositions that we can know with certainty to be true as soon as they are understood, without inferring them from anything else that we know, and they provide the foundation for the rest of our beliefs.

Foundationalism is often combined with 'internalism', which also flourishes in many forms, but covers any philosophical theory according to which the foundational propositions are readily available to a person, by introspection.

It takes little effort on Stump's part to dispose of the idea that Aquinas favoured internalism. He is not tempted by the modern ('Cartesian') idea that one knows nothing directly except one's own sensations, impressions or ideas, and thus that one never has *certain* knowledge of anything outside one's own head — an idea, then, leaving one always open to doubt about the existence of 'other minds' or 'the external world'. The problem, for Aquinas, is not (as in post-Cartesian scepticism, supposedly) to account for our ability to have sure and certain knowledge at all; but rather to explain the fact that we are so often in error, in a world created by a good God. For Aquinas, that is to say, error, deception and so on, far from seeming

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threateningly 'natural' in creatures in our epistemic situation, are the result of sin, or the punishment for sin, and not 'natural' at all, in beings created to know the truth. When our senses and intellect function *as God designed them*, then they work in a reliable way to yield knowledge of ourselves and everything else in our reach.

Perhaps, in Aquinas's epistemology, our physicality is more inhibiting than Stump seems to allow; but it is enlightening to notice how he explains error, deception, etc., principally in the light of sin.

In his theory of knowledge Aquinas's most frequently repeated axiom is to the effect that 'the soul *is* in all things' (citing Aristotle), 'the intellect in act *is* the thing understood in act' (seemingly his own pet formula), and so on. This should not, however, be translated, so Stump insists, into such 'startling formulations' as she quotes from the eminent Canadian Thomist Joseph Owens (writing of Aristotle as it happens): 'you *are* the things perceived or known'. For Stump, Aquinas's theological assumption that the human soul is created such as to become one with things as they disclose their intelligibility in the actualizing of our knowing and of their being known, does not amount, in any strong sense, to 'cognition by *assimilation*', or 'mind/world *identity*'.[7] On the contrary, when he says that 'the intellect is all things', Aquinas is speaking in the same register as we are when we say, for example: 'It won't be long before all our reference books will be on CD-readers' — or so Stump maintains, quite deflatingly (page 275).

At this point, at least, no theological background is allowed to bear on the philosophy.

Related to this, of course, is the much discussed question in current philosophy of psychology about whether the knowledge we have of 'extramental reality' is direct and unmediated knowledge. Strictly, so Stump argues, only God would know anything 'directly' — at least

[7] Scholastic Thomists would be familiar with much stronger readings: Bernard Lonergan SJ, for example, speaks, in a now classic study, of 'knowing by identity', Aquinas's 'theorem of immaterial assimilation', etc., and distinguishes between what Aquinas regarded as the Platonist conception of knowledge on the model of confrontation and his own conception of knowledge as a kind of assimilation (*Summa contra gentiles* 2.98), see Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press 1967); John Haldane speaks of Aquinas's theory of knowledge as a 'mind/world identity theory' , see 'The life of signs', *The Review of Metaphysics* 47 (1994): 451–70; while Norman Kretzmann seems to go further than Stump, seeing our access to the world, for Aquinas, as 'utterly direct, to the point of formal identity between the extra-mental object and the actually cognizing faculty', see his chapter 'Philosophy of mind' in *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas* edited by himself and Eleonore Stump (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press 1993). None of these authors would go so far as to interpret Aquinas as conceiving meaning as a transaction between things and the mind which leaves neither things nor mind unchanged, in virtue of a thoroughly participationist metaphysics: John Milbank and Catherine Pickstock, *Truth in Aquinas* (London and New York: Routledge 2001).

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if we are thinking of the subject's knowing the object in an act of knowing which involves nothing that counts as a means or mechanism of enabling or articulating the knowing. If we mean by 'unmediated' knowing that there is no intermediary process of any kind between cognizer and cognized, then again only God could have such an act of cognition.

On a more relaxed account, however, we might want to say that the cognizer knows the cognized *directly*, that is to say, not in the way that we see a football match (Stump's example) by watching it on television. In the same way, we might want to say that it is possible to see or know something *unmediatedly* in the sense that no third thing mediates between the mind and the world. On this more down to earth and human notion, so Stump contends, Aquinas regards our knowledge of the world as direct and unmediated (see pages 245–6). We shall return to this topic in section II.

As regards moral agency and freedom, Stump begins by noting how remote Aquinas's views are from modern conceptions of the will, whether held by libertarians or their opponents (page 277). Aquinas has a 'virtue-based ethics', the depth and power of which she illustrates by discussing a moral, intellectual and theological virtue in one chapter after another — justice, wisdom and faith in turn; but here again, his 'central meta-ethical thesis' has to be traced to his 'metaphysics of goodness'. This does not only give his virtue-based ethics exactly the kind of meta-ethical foundation that modern virtue-centred ethics is sometimes supposed to lack, 'it grounds an ethical naturalism of some philosophical sophistication' (page 62).

In Part III of the book, then, Stump finds a version of an ethical naturalism in Aquinas which owes much, of course, to Aristotle but which, as she says, when combined with Aquinas's account of God's absolute simplicity, 'effects a connection between morality and theology that offers an attractive alternative to divine-command morality, construing morality not merely as a dictate of God's will, but as an expression of his nature' (page 62).

In brief: while sticking firmly to the analytical style of expounding Aquinas, revealing no inclination to read him in some more colourful 'Continental' way, Eleanore Stump offers a very lucid exposition of Aquinas's metaphysics, philosophical psychology and virtue ethics which keeps allowing his Christian theological commitments to shine through, without (however) allowing them to swamp or occlude his genius as a philosopher. In the end, of course, Aquinas was a Christian, as few great philosophers have been. If this splendid book shows that he deserves his place among the most important of Western philosophers, the question remains as to how far his metaphysics, epistemology and ethics really stand up independently of the theology.

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II

The same questions appears in another splendid book, *Thomist Realism and the Linguistic Turn: Toward a More Perfect Form of Existence*, by John P. O'Callaghan (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003: ix + 357 pp.).

The 'more perfect form of existence' is the form of life that the possession of language enables the animals that we are to enjoy. Briefly, far from being incompatible with one another, the 'linguistic turn' in Anglo-American analytical philosophy converges happily with Thomistic philosophical anthropology, resulting in an attractive picture of human life — a picture that has been cleared of the fog of various philosophical theories and remains open to religious possibilities which, however, Professor O'Callaghan discreetly eschews. This book is, perhaps surprisingly, much less theological than Stump's.

Now teaching philosophy at the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana, O'Callaghan's position on the map of Aquinas studies may be guessed by the dedication of his book to Ralph McInerny, doyen of Thomistic studies in North America and creator of the Jacques Maritain Center at Notre Dame. There is little overlap between the scholars thanked by Eleanore Stump and those whom O'Callaghan thanks in his (much shorter) list: McInerny and David Burrell are the only two who appear on each list. This testifies to the variety of 'schools' flourishing in North American Aquinas studies today.

While, as we have seen, Eleanore Stump's readings of Aquinas often touch on topics currently debated, these are not the centre of her attention. Professor O'Callaghan, however, works out his interpretation of Aquinas entirely in the context of work by philosophers such as Jerry Fodor, John McDowell, Colin McGinn and especially Hilary Putnam. He is familiar with 'analytical Thomism' as represented by John Haldane.[8] Frege and Wittgenstein are taken for granted as indispensable reference points, as in analytical philosophy departments everywhere.

In short, this is the first book-length study of a currently much-discussed question of permanent metaphysical interest by a philosopher who is plainly as much at ease in Anglo-American analytical philosophy as he is in the study of Thomas Aquinas.

The plan of the book is as follows. Chapter 1 goes far enough into Aquinas's commentary on Aristotle's *Peri Hermeneias* to see how he understands the difference between words as signifying 'passions of the soul' and words as signifying 'things beyond the soul'. Chapter 2, which O'Callaghan advises most readers to pass over, sorts out a claim by Norman Kretzmann to the effect that Boethius's Latin

[8] For analytical Thomism see *New Blackfriars* April 1999: 157–216, with bibliography.

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translation misled students of Aristotle in the Middle Ages. Chapter 3 discusses some early modern treatments of language and mental contents, by Locke, Berkeley and Hume in particular, raising the kind of objections advanced by Wittgenstein among others. Chapter 4 considers Jerry Fodor's revival of this 'British empiricist' tradition. Chapter 5 sets out Hilary Putnam's problems with the supposedly alternative 'Aristotelian' tradition.

By this point O'Callaghan has identified three substantive philosophical doctrines: the 'Third Thing Thesis' (there needs to be some *tertium quid* between our mind and reality); the 'Introspectibility Thesis' (what the mind knows is mental objects); and the 'Internalist Thesis' (no mental state presupposes the existence of any person other than the one to whom that state is ascribable).

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 demonstrate in turn that, whatever else may be the case, Thomas does not accept any of these three doctrines. He does not picture thought and understanding as private acts happening in our heads, hermetically sealed off from our basic physical acts (including talking), as well as from our social and political relationships.

The first-year philosophy question is whether it is nearer the truth to say 'My thoughts are private and I can choose to reveal them' or 'I can keep my thoughts to myself, if I choose to' — as O'Callaghan says. It is almost always the first that initially sounds more attractive than the second. As O'Callaghan shows the later Wittgenstein's 'therapy' for natural 'Cartesians', properly understood, coincides with Thomistic Aristotelian philosophical anthropology — again, of course, properly understood. For Aquinas, 'its own essence is not the primary object of the human intellect's understanding, for this is something external, namely, the nature of material things' (*Summa Theologiae* 1.87.3); for Wittgenstein, 'An "inner process" stands in need of outward criteria' (*Philosophical Investigations* I, § 580). Self-knowledge is inconceivable apart from the world with which one interacts all the time.

Students of Thomas who doubt the worthwhileness of reading analytical philosophers are no doubt the more likely to benefit from this book. Yet, philosophers who wrestle, for example, with Hilary Putnam's (ever changing) views about the nature of 'realism', should be encouraged to consider what light might be cast on the question by Thomas's Aristotelian thesis about the formal identity of knower and known in any act or event of knowing.

Putnam finds that the thesis 'makes no sense', O'Callaghan allows. It needs, he insists, a good deal of explanation. In one of the many detailed, carefully argued moves in the course of the book, he brings Putnam and Thomas together, in an illuminating and pretty convincing way, contending that Putnam should find Thomas's 'externalism' quite congenial. That is to say, the formal identity thesis excludes the need for any class of intermediaries, such as sense

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data, impressions, and the like, to bridge the supposed gap between mind and world. For Putnam, following McDowell, there is no such gap — though much effort needs to go into liberating philosophers from assuming that there is. For Thomas, as we have just noticed, the primary object of a person's mental state is something external, *aliquid extraneum*, namely, the nature of a material thing. Concepts arise from things: it is in virtue of the existence in our environment of non-mental entities that we have any mental states at all.

Over the years, especially recently, Putnam has been working towards what he now calls 'natural realism', the truth that we do, after all, perceive the world directly. Thomas can be enlisted as an ally in the struggle, which is still central in modern philosophy, to liberate philosophers from the notion that the knower can have nothing better than indirect knowledge of anything, which means (in Kantian terms) that the world *as it appears* may not be the world *as it really is* — at least for all *we* know.

Putnam is now quite happy to agree that 'Aristotelian realism' is very much what he wants. Much effort on O'Callaghan's part goes into showing that Thomistic-Aristotelian metaphysics should not be assimilated to the horror story that Putnam tells about 'metaphysics'. He shows, with wonderful lucidity, that, for Thomas, the mind as a power of perceiving and conceptualising is continuous with the other ways in which the human being engages with the world. These of course include speaking. Language, Thomas says, in a splendid formulation which O'Callaghan highlights, is how 'nature uses air that has been breathed in for the formation of articulated sounds, which is for the sake of a more perfect form of existence (*bene esse*)'.[9] This wonderful remark, a real *trouvaille*, points us towards the social and political nature of human beings as that 'form of existence' which is richer and more complex than any that is enjoyed by languageless animals.

As regards animals in general, O'Callaghan debates with philosophers whom he greatly admires, provocatively contending, for example, that McDowell and Haldane are less than fully 'Wittgensteinian' in their attitude to the pre-linguistic human animal.

As regards medieval scholarship, he takes time, rightly, to refute Robert Pasnau's claim that Thomas was as guilty as any modern philosopher (as Locke, Pasnau says) of assuming the existence of mental entities between our minds and the world.[10]

[9] Commentary on Aristotle's *De Anima* book 2 chapter 18.

[10] Robert Pasnau, *Cognitive Theory in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press 1996) claims that Aquinas *did* interpose a *tertium quid* between the act of understanding and the extra-mental object understood, namely the *species intelligibilis*: basically, however, when he contends that the *species intelligibilis abstracta a phantasmatibus* is not *what* the mind understands but *how*, not the *quod* but the *quo* (*Summa Theologiae* 1.85.2), we have to emphasize that the *species* is only the means by which cognition occurs and not itself the object of cognition, if we are to save him from the dread representationalism that opens the way to scepticism.

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In these, and in many other instances, this remarkable book will enlighten and delight all who are interested in the questions and the authors with whom it deals.

III

With *The Passions of Christ's Soul in the Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters, NF, 61, Münster Aschendorff 2002: pp. 516) Paul Gondreau establishes himself among the finest of the new wave of North American medievalists. Now teaching at Providence College, Rhode Island, he pays tribute to the French Dominican scholars Jean-Pierre Torrell and Gilles Emery, who guided the research at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, from which this splendid work derives.

As an associate editor of the learned periodical *Nova et Vetera*, founded in 1926 by the future Cardinal Charles Journet in association with Jacques Maritain and now published in an English edition under the auspices of Ave Maria College, Ypsilanti, Michigan, Professor Gondreau may be said to represent one more corner in the field of Aquinas studies, linked to a quite different network from either Eleanore Stump or John O'Callaghan, as the scholars whom he thanks and cites indicate.[11]

Gondreau's book is divided into six chapters. Chapter 1 traces the sources of Thomas Aquinas's account of Christ's affectivity in Scripture, patristic literature and the Middle Ages (pages 35 to 100). Chap- . Chapter 2 discusses the questions on the passions in the *Summa Theologiae* and the main authorities cited (pages 101 to 135). Chapter 3 deals with the questions in the *Summa* about the hypostatic union, the humanity of Christ, his sinlessness, the coassumed defects and perfections, and the 'fittingness' of his human weakness (pages 137 to 189). Chapter 4 deals with Aquinas's discussion of Christ's soul (pages 191 to 259. Chapter 5 deals with the moral dimension of Christ's human affectivity (pages 261 to 374). And chapter 6 deals with Christ's experience of pain, sorrow, fear, wonder and anger, and his enjoyment of the vision of God (pages 375 to 455).

The bibliography runs to almost forty pages: primary sources and translations of them; books and articles on Aquinas's account of Christ's human affectivity (few of much interest apart from the introductions to the relevant volumes of the Blackfriars edition of the *Summa* and the French equivalent); works on Aquinas's general theory of the emotions, and finally a panorama of the extensive background reading, in Spanish, French and German, as well as in

[11] O'Callaghan is listed as a contributor to *Nova et Vetera*.

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English, with which a student of Aquinas at a Catholic university in western Europe could be acquainted.

Gondreau's book makes a major contribution to the history of medieval theology. At one level his thesis is that, though most of his contemporaries discussed the matter, none pays more attention to Christ's human affectivity than Aquinas does. On the key points what Thomas says is compared with the views advanced by Albert the Great, Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure and Peter Lombard. Unlike many students of Aquinas in the past, that is to say, Gondreau does not treat him in isolation from his context. As Jean-Pierre Torrell rightly says, in the quite lengthy and highly appreciative preface, the progress of medieval scholarship in the twentieth century is such that one should no longer be offering analysis of texts without appeal to parallel discussions in other authors. This contextualization, paradoxically, helps to disclose internal evolution in an author.

Gondreau guides us step by step through the first fifteen questions of the *tertia pars* of the *Summa Theologiae*, slowing down as he reaches Aquinas's consideration of whether Christ's soul was *passibilis* and, since it is so, then in what sense and degree he was subject to the natural consequences of a mortal body, among which is affective or psychological suffering (question 15, articles 4 to 9). Here, it turns out, Thomas revised his earlier view that pain does not exceed the body. According to Gondreau, indeed, Aquinas changed his position on human psychology in the light of rethinking the Christological issue, in particular as he increasingly resisted the doctrine of Hilary of Poitiers[12] which claims that Christ 'felt the force of passion but without its pain (*impetum passionis, non tamen dolorem passionis*)'. In the course of his career, then, Aquinas moves from denying any affective suffering in Christ that originates with the proper operations of his *anima sensitiva* to affirming the exact contrary.

Nowadays Christians of all persuasions take it for granted that Jesus was truly human: the problem is to see how it might be said that he was also truly divine. In the Middle Ages, and indeed until quite recent times, orthodox or anyway mainstream Christians had no difficulty in seeing Jesus as 'God': the problem lay in seeing how much of a real human being he could have been. Here, the first-year theology issue was whether Christ suffered 'in himself', as we might say, or 'only in his body' — and for centuries the second was the tempting thesis.[13] In his polemic against the tradition traceable to

[12] St Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers (c.315–367/8), the 'Athanasius of the West', held an almost Monophysite Christology; hugely influential in the Middle Ages, he was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1851 by Pope Pius IX; gives his name to the spring term at the Law Courts and at Oxford and Durham universities.

[13] Not so long ago one could trick good Catholics into hesitating over whether Christ had a human soul at all.

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Hilary we may say that Aquinas caught himself flirting with semi-docetic Christology — not, of course, going all the way to maintaining that the humanity and sufferings of the earthly Christ were apparent rather than real, but, by limiting Christ's passibility to his *body*, colluding tacitly with the trend towards docetism, going almost half way there.[14]

There are distinguished scholars who think that Aquinas's Christology is thoroughly 'monophysite'.[15] In his day, as just noted, that was always the tendency. In this unprecedentedly thorough study of Aquinas's views on Christ's human affectivity, however, Paul Gondreau goes a long way to showing how resistant Aquinas in fact was to monophysitism. In his discussion of Christ's *passiones*, clearly, Aquinas understood that the central issue at stake was the truth of the dogma of the Incarnation. To this extent, Gondreau's reading of Thomas is an invitation to us who accept it to reconsider the implications of the doctrine defined at the Council of Chalcedon in the light of the theology of Aquinas.

It should not be supposed, however, that Professor Gondreau is an uncritical Thomist. As regards the question of Christ's enjoyment of the beatific vision, for example, he expounds Aquinas's position: namely, that, by a special disposition of divine wisdom, the glory of the vision, which he could not but have in virtue of the union of his human nature with the divine nature, should have transfigured his earthly body as well as his soul, but was confined to the highest part of his soul in such a way as to interfere neither with the natural passibility of his humanity nor with the normal workings of his sensitive powers. Aquinas's unparalleled attention to Christ's affectivity made his position more nuanced than that of his contemporaries. For Gondreau, however, Aquinas seems unmistakably embarrassed at ascribing the experience of wonder (*admiratio*) to Christ. In the end, his adherence to the doctrine of the earthly Christ's possession of the beatific vision, Gondreau contends, prevented him from considering emotions relating to the good, like love, joy and desire. It would be hard, perhaps inappropriate, to work out a 'rounded' portrait of the enigmatic figure in the gospels, with the benefit of modern biblical

[14] The better known instance in which Thomas catches himself out in semi-docetism is over the question of Christ's acquired or experimental knowledge — 'Clearly Christ grew in knowledge and grace...Therefore, if besides the habit of infused knowledge there were not as well a habit of acquired knowledge in the soul of Christ — which is what some people think, and what I myself once thought — none of Christ's knowledge would have increased...But it does not seem right that Christ should lack what is a natural activity of intelligence' etc. (*Summa Theologiae* 3.12.2). 'Some people' include his great Franciscan colleagues Bonaventure and Alexander of Hales; this is the only occasion in the *Summa* in which Thomas refers to himself (*mihi aliquando visum est*).

[15] Even if one cannot see Aquinas as an out and out Monophysite there is no doubt that he was attracted by Alexandrian theology, as witness his eagerness to learn as much as he could about the theology of St Cyril of Alexandria.

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methods. For Aquinas, at any rate, as perhaps for the entire tradition, Christ's capacity for pain and suffering was really all that counted. While most theologians nowadays dismiss the very idea of the earthly Christ's enjoying beatific knowledge of God,[16] Gondreau is not so cavalier. He is unable to endorse Aquinas's position but he follows Torrell, cautiously, proposing that we may replace the doctrine of Christ's beatific knowledge of God with something like Aquinas's conception of the privileged knowledge that belongs to the prophets — deepened and heightened, no doubt.[17]

Aquinas's anti-monophysite and anti-docetic resolve needs no doubt to be extended — with his own self-criticism as the paradigm. In such work as Paul Gondreau's we can see how problems in Christology today — perennial problems — may be illuminated by fine medieval scholarship.

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[16] Many of those who want to maintain something like the doctrine of two natures in the person of Christ now take for granted one or other of the kenotic theories (from Philippians 2: 7, where Christ 'emptied himself'): in the Incarnation Christ's divine nature allowed union with a genuine and thus necessarily mentally and emotionally limited human nature.

[17] See Jean-Pierre Torrell, 'S. Thomas d'Aquin et la science du Christ: une relecture des Questions 9–12 de la *tertia pars* de la "Somme de théologie", *Saint Thomas au XXe siècle* edited by S.T. Bonino (Paris: Editions St Paul 1994): 394–409.

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