legitimately be rescued from the charge of making a quantifier exchange mistake, but however this may be, the important point is that thanks to analytical philosophy we now are in a better position to work out the interpretive possibilities. The same point could be made a dozen different ways. Over and over again when one reads Aquinas through the lens of analytical philosophy, it becomes plain that Aquinas' contentions can be understood in more than one way.

The Practical Historicist presumes full clarity about a position can be achieved before it is submitted to a scrutiny that takes advantage of distinctions and insights that have become available after its original articulation. This mistake, I think, is largely responsible for the regrettable submergence of Aquinas' thought in medieval philosophy.

1 Etienne Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, translated by L.K. Shook, equivalent of the 5th and last French edition, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1956), p. 22.
2 Mark Jordan, 'Neo-Thomism,' in Ted Honderich, ed., *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 615.
3 J.J.C. Smart and J.J. Haldane, *Atheism and Theism* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 132.
4 Aquinas, for example, claims it is evident that 'every whole is greater than its parts' Analysts mindful of Galileo and Cantor will spontaneously ask whether Aquinas means to include infinite sets.

Charles Taylor

An analytical Thomism seems to me an excellent idea, but for a more general reason. This is that analytical philosophy, like some gins, is much better in a cocktail than taken neat.

Analytic philosophy, as it has developed, is a mixture of a style of philosophising on one hand, that stresses rigour and clarity, and a tendency towards a narrowing of the philosophical imagination, on the other. I don't think there is any necessary link between these two facets. It's all a matter of where the style grew up. And although the picture of it as emerging out of "positivism" is something of a caricature, the truth is that the intellectual milieux in which it evolved in the Anglo-Saxon world were generally anti-metaphysical (in one case, anti-Hegelian, because in a huge reaction against the British Hegelians), and usually hostile to religious faith as well.

Nothing prevents these two sides from being dissociated, and the style from being extended to discuss other ideas and insights than

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those usually admitted. But from within the milieux which practice this philosophy, this possible dissociation is often invisible. That is, the cause of rigour is parochially identified with certain kinds of philosophical *démarche*, which leave no room for other, more fruitful questions.

Thus there has been a parade of fads in this tradition, in which certain lines of questioning have seemed the royal roads to rigorous thinking. For a while, some invested a lot in trying to find the "real form" of propositions, underlying their merely "apparent" forms. Others thought that one had to be able to reduce statements about the world to those about appearances. Others again thought you could and should find the necessary and sufficient conditions of any of the key terms you wanted to use in your analysis. And so on.

Now people get over these fads. And I suppose that such things exist in any school of thought. But the bias of these fads was all in a direction which was at once "anti-metaphysical", and also profoundly influenced by the epistemological tradition which descends to us from Descartes and Locke. And these biases remain dominant today. For people within the analytic stream of thought, Davidson and his followers represent a radical critique of the epistemological tradition. If you come at them from Heidegger, or Merleau–Ponty, what strikes you is how much they are still within it. Compare Davidson's refusal of the very idea of a conceptual scheme with Gadamer's fusion of horizons. The issues which Gadamer is exploring can't even come up on Davidson's screen, because the very idea of their being such different horizons is not admitted.

Now the empiricist tradition both generates a distinction between representation and reality, raising a problem of "other minds", and then regularly reacts against this by denying the distinction on epistemological, "non-realist" grounds (how can you talk of a reality beyond appearances?). The real issues of how to communicate between difference can't get addressed until you transcend this alternation altogether.

Or again, the assumption among lots of practitioners, including original figures entering the analytic stream from the outside, like Habermas, is that a "post-metaphysical" discussion of moral theory will concentrate on what it is to derive a valid norm. A critique like Scheler's is hard for a lot of people to understand. (This, of course, doesn't apply to Habermas, but to the "natives" of the analytic world.)

As a result, it turns out that a lot of the really interesting work is done by people who straddle the boundary; or to continue the

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drinks party image above, who mix their analytic style in a cocktail with something else. Certain of the ideas, insights, problems, starting points are drawn from another tradition, and they try to re-articulate these ideas, express these insights, tackle these problems in an analytic style. One of the great virtues of this style is that it encourages you repeatedly to ask questions of the kind: what exactly am I (or is he/she) trying to say here? It makes you draw distinctions and discriminate between different theses which might easily get bundled together. "Working over" theses which emerge from another tradition will therefore often produce something new and interesting. Everybody gains; the original position is enriched and clarified, and the vocabulary and range of analytic philosophy is extended.

John Haldane mentions a number of examples: the work of Geach and Anscombe in relation to Aristotle; Alasdair MacIntyre in relation to a host of thinkers, among them Aquinas. I would add, for instance, Hubert Dreyfus' use of Heidegger in his writings on the limits of Artificial Intelligence, Richard Rorty's use of Pragmatism, Hilary Putnam's use of William James, and so on. A lot of the most interesting work these days is of this liminal kind. And I don't think this is an accident.

So let a hundred flowers bloom. But let's push the question farther, and ask what are the particular virtues and shortcomings of working on this frontier, as against others, if you are trained as an analytic philosopher. John mentions some of the virtues: Aquinas is a giant of a thinker; one who has incorporated and "worked over" Aristotle, so that you are at once at a frontier linking three "countries" and not only two. And then, of special importance to a Catholic philosopher, or any philosopher with faith, is Aquinas' gigantic attempt to integrate faith with philosophical reasoning, to show where they come together and where they part company.

I agree that all of these are good reasons to betake oneself to this frontier. But there are other respects in which the road to Aquinas may fail to complement analytic philosophy in the crucial respects in which it is lacking. I am thinking primarily of the place of history, and/or the place of difference in our thought.

In one way, of course, turning to Aquinas is already doing something to offset the crippling and parochial present-centredness of much analytic philosophy. Just to acknowledge that everything interesting may not have been said in contemporary journal articles is already a gain. But I don't just mean our learning to respect the integrity of different periods of thought and culture, that they have to

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be understood on their own terms. I don't just mean recognising that we may learn from them. I mean getting to the point where we raise the question of what it means to learn from them.

Aquinas has his answer to this, and that is: create a synthesis, bring together all the insights of then and now into a coherent whole. His greatness consists in his attempt to carry out this task with the greatest rigour and comprehensiveness. And up to recently in Western civilisation, it was assumed that this was our task: integrate whatever insights we may find in the past into a view which will represent the highest scientific and moral outlook attained by human beings. But faced with a much wider understanding of human cultural and spiritual difference over history, we can doubt whether synthesis in this sense is possible, and if not, whether this is the way we can learn from others.

It is clear that the synthesising move, both in Aquinas, and in a different way among ultra-confident moderns, involves throwing out a lot of the stuff which doesn't fit. Consider the difficulty, not to say impossibility of "synthesising" the spiritual insights of Buddhism with those of Christian faith. The task here can only be accomplished by refusing some of the phenomena. Either you reduce Christian faith to some general "teachings" about spiritual progress, and then perhaps they can fit; or you take the good old Christian-chauvinist attitude of yesteryear, and you declare Buddhism erroneous to the extent it doesn't coincide with Christianity. But both these moves involve refusing to take in the spiritual power residing in one or the other tradition (or both).

But we can leave Buddhism aside. Can anyone synthesise all the varied forms of Christian belief and spirituality which we see across the world in the last twenty centuries? That is, show the compatibility of all of those which one doesn't throw away as wrong or deviant? This only looks possible if you're pretty ruthless in your rejections, which up to now most Christians have been quite happy to be. But can we go on doing this?

If synthesis is not possible, then we have to start looking for other ways of understanding the coexistence of difference. The Christian tradition offers some notions of complementarity in difference (e.g., many gifts, one spirit), which might be transposed to a quite other key to come to grips with this. And also stretched to include a recognition of human incapacity, even tragedy, in our inability to understand and live with differences which for God are also complementarities.

Here is where some modern philosophies, incorporating as they

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do a sense of history and cultural change, can help offer us the languages we need to understand the conflict between the need we feel for synthesis, and the demand to recognise the integrity of difference. Hegel is an obvious example, although with him the synthesis wins the upper hand much too easily; but at least he recognises that there's a struggle.

I am not proposing that we abandon the Aquinas frontier. Far from it. This helps define one of the imperious demands we feel: somehow combine, make sense of it all together. But only philosophies of the modern age can help us come to grips with the demands of difference. Impossible as it is in practice, ideally analytic philosophy needs to be on more than one frontier at once.

Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski

English-speaking Thomists are usually isolated from the mainstream of philosophy in their own countries. They fear it and they sometimes hate it. Likewise, mainstream analytic philosophers are woefully ignorant of any kind of contemporary Catholic philosophy, including Thomism. They vaguely assume that it has something to do with medieval theology and is consequently irrelevant to their own interests. Like Haldane, I find this disturbing. A *rapprochement* between Thomism and analytic philosophy would benefit both, but it is not going to be easy because the reasons for the division go deep, at least among the older philosophers on both sides. There are both good and bad reasons for failing to take each other seriously, and these reasons ought to be frankly acknowledged. Some reasons will die when the memory of past mistreatment by particular persons fades away, but some are learned, or rather, mislearned.

On the analytic side, Thomas' work was ignored for a very long time. The bad reason was an excessively narrow conception of the nature of philosophy which led analytic philosophers to dismiss the work of Aquinas as theology rather than philosophy. We need only look at what Bertrand Russell says about Aquinas in his quirky history of philosophy to find a blunt statement of what became a rather common judgment:

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