Reading Aquinas as a Theologian: The Hermeneutics of some Medievalists Old and New

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1. Looking for the "Pure Philosophy" of Aquinas

As there are many histories of medieval philosophy, so too there can be different second-order histories of the history of medieval philosophy. Armand Maurer, adhering closely to the views of his great intellectual *maître*, Étienne Gilson, proceeds by scrutinizing the variant conceptions, extrapolated from nineteenth and early twentieth century historians, of how, in the middle ages, reason and faith, or, in terms of the disciplines, philosophy and theology were related.[1] In diametrical contrast, Alain de Libera opines that such an emphasis, whether by Gilson or his adversaries, on *la théologie scholastique* and the philosophy subordinated to it, is an ethnocentric and temporally prejudicial historiography that is naively Western and Christian.[2] Accordingly, de Libera sharply criticizes Gilson's construction of the history of medieval philosophy as insensitive to *la pluralité*—of times, cultures, religions, languages, and centers of study and production of knowledge. The same criticism, of course, could be extended to Maurer's admittedly derivative, Gilsonian construction of medieval philosophical history.

Let us remain, nonetheless, with Gilson whose intellectual fecundity has hardly been exhausted, whatever be the merits of de Libera's critique "de la généalogie du mythe de l'averroïsme."[3] Among historians influenced by but

1. See Armand Maurer, "Medieval Philosophy and Its Historians," in *Being and Knowing: Studies in Thomas Aquinas and Later Medieval Philosophers*, Papers In Mediaeval Studies 10 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1990) 461–79.

2. Alain de Libera, *La philosophie médiévale*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1995) xiii–xvi: "Le christianisme latin, celui qui parle dans le 'nous' de l'historiographie … a érigé sons temps en temps universel" (xiv).

3. See Alain de Libera, *L'Unité de l'intellect: Commentaire du* De unitate intellectus contra averroistas *de Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: J. Vrin, 2004) 9. In his "Foi et raison: Averroès et Thomas d'Aquin," ch. in *Raison et foi: Archéologie d'une crise d'Albert le Grand à Jean-Paul II* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2003) 231–61, de Libera objects to the "deux mythes historiographiques" reflected in "le scénario gilsonien" (233): (1) Gilson, captivated by his view of Aquinas as the apex of the golden age of scholasticism, misconstrues the consequences of the Parisian Condemnation

reacting negatively to Gilson's famously controversial account of how, during the second half of the thirteenth century, "the golden age of scholasticism," philosophy was both Christian and essentially embedded in theology,[4] there are prominent Thomists who maintain— originally and polemically, Fernand Van Steenberghen and, revisionally and irenically, John Wippel—that Aquinas's treatment of many topics within his theological treatises and academic disputes, some of his opuscula, and especially his Aristotelian commentaries, are "strictly" or "clearly" or "purely philosophical in character."[5] Recently, James Doig has offered a book length defense of the strictly philosophical character of Aquinas's *Sententia libri Ethicorum*,[6] repudiating any theological interpretation of this commentary, such as proposed by Joseph Owens, R.-A. Gauthier, and J.-P. Torrell and—since he includes me with those illustrious scholars—myself. Doig presses the view of Kleber and Elders, which is one that has been propounded since the mid-nineteenth century: Aquinas, in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* and the other Aristotelian commentaries, provides a literal exposition of the "*intentio Aristotelis*, while keeping in mind the *veritas rei*," a truth that, if it is reached through a demonstration that does not explicitly incorporate any premise formally held on Christian faith, Doig unhesitatingly calls "philosophical reasoning."[7]

If we synthesize Van Steenberghen's, Wippel's, Doig's and other liked-minded historians' criteria for philosophical reasoning, we can call a philosophy that is constituted solely from elements that are "strictly" or "properly" or "clearly" or "independently" or "purely philosophical in character," *a*

of 1277: it did not eventuate a loss of confidence in philosophy among the theologians; (2) contrary to what Gilson and other historians project, there was no unified Averroist position on the relationship between faith and reason, since the Arts *magistri* were, in fact, ignorant of the relevant texts of Averroes: rather, Aquinas "radicalise la position des philosophes [chrétiens]" (252) and, thereby, became the first to formulate "le programme de l'averroïsme" (251).

4. Among the many works of Gilson pertinent to this topic, beginning with his 1931–1932 Gifford Lectures, *L'Esprit de la philosophie médiévale*, 2 vols.(Paris: J. Vrin, 1932), see especially, "Historical Research and the Future of Scholasticism," in *A Gilson Reader*, ed. Anton C. Pegis (Garden City, NY: Image Books, Doubleday, 1957) 156–67; originally published in *The Modern Schoolman* 29/1 (1951): 1–10.

5. See Fernand Van Steenberghen, *La philosophie au xiii^e siècle* (Louvain: Publications Universitaires; Paris: Béatrice-Naewelaerts, 1966): "strictly," 346; "properly," 351; "independently," 354; John F. Wippel, "Thomas Aquinas and the Problem of Christian Philosophy," in *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, DC: Catholic U of America Press, 1984) 1–33; Introduction to *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being* (Washington, DC: Catholic U of America Press) xviii–xxvii: "purely," xvii; "clearly," xix.

6. James C. Doig, *Aquinas's Philosophical Commentary on the "Ethics": A Historical Perspective,* The New Synthese Historical Library: Texts and Studies in the History of Philosophy, vol. 50 (Dordrecht/Boston/London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001).

7. **Ibid., xv, n. 21.**

pure philosophy.[8] A pure philosophy, since it is grounded solely on reason, is autonomous in its method and end; it is "distinct" from any so-called "Christian philosophy" geared to or implicitly sustained by—and, *a fortiori*, any Christian theology explicitly grounded on—divinely revealed doctrines, those Aquinas identifies as the principles or "articles of faith" (*ST*, II–II, q. 1, a. 6).[9]

For those controversialists, who since the thirties of the twentieth century have continued to query the logical coherence and Thomistic propriety of Gilson's notion of "Christian Philosophy,"[10] the meaning and reference of this opposed category, *pure philosophy*, is perspicuous: Wippel characterizes a pure philosophy as one that is "worked out on purely rational grounds … under the positive guidance of natural reason alone," one that appeals only to "naturally accessible evidence."[11] In distancing himself from Gilson, Wippel implies that Aquinas's "philosophical achievement"—at least as recaptured by "today's historian of philosophy"[12]—could or should be described as "pure philosophy."[13] Of late, however, the meaning of the latter term has become more elusive for those post-modern historians, the "new medievalists," who both emphasize the diversity of medieval philosophies and promote the multiformity of medieval philosophical historiography.[14]

Yet, any historian, whether methodologically committed to (what might be tagged) a monist or (in contrast) a post-modern/pluralist historiography, inevitably determines the criteria of "pure philosophy" in the same fashion. The genre or type *pure philosophy* (and, consequently, the putative medieval tokens falling under it) is fixed by defining the semantic coordinates of the

8. Cf. Fernand Van Steenberghen, "La II[e] Journée d'études de la société thomiste et la notion de 'philosophie chrétienne,'" *Revue néoscolastique de philosophie* 35 (1933): 539–54: "une philosophie proprement dire" (546); "une philosophie vrai" (547).

9. Cf. Fernand Van Steenberhen, *Introduction à l'étude de la philosophie médiévale* (Louvain: Publication Universitaires; Paris: Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1974) 254.

10. For a painstaking survey of the controversy with Gilson, see John F. Quinn, *The Historical Constitution of St. Bonaventure's Philosophy* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1973), who finally reaches Van Steenberghen's position: neither Aquinas's nor Bonaventure's philosophy "can be said to be intrinsically or formally Christian" (836).

11. John F. Wippel, "The Possibility of A Christian Philosophy: A Thomistic Perspective," *Faith and Philosophy* 1/3 (1984): 272–90; quotations found respectively pp. 274, 277.

12. Ibid., 279.

13. Ibid., 278.

14. For a recent survey of the diversity in conceptual frameworks among philosophical historians, leading to the distinction between "Mittelalterliche Philosophie oder Philosophie im Mittelalter," see Peter Schulthess and Ruedi Imbach, *Die Philosophie im lateinishen Mittelalter: ein Handbuch mit einem bio-bibliographischen Repertorium* (Zürich/Düseldorf: Artemis and Winkler, 1996) 17–24.

term "philosophy."[15] In identifying and defining "philosophy," with what is it contrasted and compared? Throughout its history, philosophy has been significantly contrasted with rhetoric, mythology, mathematics, religious faith, revealed theology, science, and ideology. The contextualization of "philosophy" by a paired contrast thus exposes the shifting meanings of the term, determines the periodization of a given semantic history, and enables one to identify an intellectual enterprise within a period as "pure philosophy."[16] Without concurrence about those coordinates, the controversy about the purity of Aquinas's philosophy—or, as his critics insist, solely Gilson's oxymoronic "Christian Philosophy"—is jejune and not merely dated.

2. Monist vs. Pluralist Philosophical Historiography

In a late summary of his own—what I call "monist"—historiographical views,[17] Van Steenberghen rehearses his decades old view of the controversy over "Christian Philosophy": he offers a brief historical survey purporting to show that any history of medieval philosophy imposes a normative distinction between "*philosophy* in the large sense" (so large that the term can refer to any Christian *weltanschauung*) and "*philosophy* in the strict sense." Only the latter, "defined by purely rational methods," may be identified as "philosophy at the scientific level": it is found paradigmatically in the works of Aristotle and, then, Aquinas, who produced the "first truly original philosophy" in Christian civilization.[18]

To a critic who charges that his identification and normative use of "scientific philosophy" arbitrarily subjects the diverse meanings that "philosophy" assumed during the Middle Ages to a uniquely Aristotelian or Thomistic semantic criterion, Van Steenberghen makes a sharp but, for anyone not already committed to the philosophical principles underlying his historiography, unconvincing rejoinder. While acknowledging, in rather pejorative terms, that the two senses of "philosophy" were often "symbiotically" joined,

15. Cf. Richard McKeon, "Philosophy of Communications and the Arts," in *Rhetoric: Essays in Invention and Discovery*," ed. Mark Backman (Woodbridge, CT: Ox Bow Press, 1987) 105: "The subject-matter and problems of philosophy change with changes of semantic schemata."

16. **Cf. Jean Jolivet, "Émergences de la philosophie au moyen âge," in** *Philosophie médiévale arabe et latine* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1995) 21: who prefers to call the Arts *magistri* "philosophes" and not "averroïstes" precisely because they "s'en tiennent par méthode à la *pure philosophie* [my emphasis], sans tenir compte dan leur exégèse, ni bien entendu de ce que l'Église enseignait par ailleurs, ni même des conséquences que pourrait avoir, par rapport à l'enseignement de la théologie confié à une autre faculté, une interprétation purement immanente des textes inscrits à leur programme."

17. See Fernand Van Steenberghen, "La conception de la philosophie au moyen âge: Nouvel examen du problème," in *Philosophie im Mittelalter:Entwicklungslinien und Paradigmen*, ed. Jan P. Beckmann et al. (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1987) 187–99.

18. **Ibid., 192; 196.**

"fused," or "confused" during the Middle Ages, Van Steenberghen insists, nonetheless, that the distinction between them is (though, admittedly, not was) normative. He claims that, *de facto,* there is a kind of consensus among philosophical historians most of whom distinguish, implicitly at least, the two senses of "philosophy";[19] moreover, their distinction must be presupposed, *de jure*, by any historian who "minimally orders"[20] his study of medieval philosophy.

Van Steenberghen's *de jure* claim is required by and crucially abets his own extrapolation of a freestanding, neo-Thomist philosophy from Aquinas's theology. But, outside of that context, the historical or methodological or hermeneutical necessity of Van Steenberghen's *de jure* distinction is not evident. Neither the large nor the strict sense of *philosophy* governs, as Van Steenberghen alleges that they do and should do, the methodology of those historians of philosophy in the Middle Ages who reject taking one conception of philosophy as privileged:[21] speaking historically, what is evident is that there is no unique or definitive or normative criterion of "philosophy" that covers all the medieval usages of that term. Speaking systematically, these medievalists, in good post-modernist fashion,[22] presuppose that the history of philosophy is itself a construction in which any one of diverse philosophies, itself historically contextualized, may and should be used to ground its own historiography.[23]

Among important medievalists, Alain de Libera and Kurt Flasch, are trend setting post-moderns. Alain de Libera, "under the influence of the negative theology elaborated by Meister Eckhart," attempts a "monopsychic" (in an Averroist sense) or "de-subjectivized" (à la Derrida) reading of medieval philosophers: not the individual thinker but the "theses and ideas circulating in the anonymous universe of discourse" determine the history of medieval philosophy.[24] Kurt Flasch—by way of exemplifying normative

19. Van Steenberghen, *Introduction à l'étude de la philosophie médiévale*, 79.

20. Van Steenberghen, "La conception de la philosophie au moyen âge," 192.

21. For a soberly neutral survey of current medieval historiographies, see John Marenbon, introduction to *Medieval Philosophy*, Routledge History of Philosophy, ed. John Marenbon (London and New York: Routledge, 1998) 1–10.

22. Philipp W. Rosemann, *Understanding Scholastic Thought with Foucault* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999) identifies and defends two basic tenets of post-modern medievalists: (1) "the conviction that naive realism is untenable" (ix); and, (2) the emphasis on "the *difference* between … [medieval] historical conditions and those prevailing in our own day" (x).

23. See Kurt Flasch, *Introduction à la philosophie médiévale*, trans. Janine de Bourknecht (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires Fribourg Suisse, 1992) 14–18; Roland Hissette, review of *La philosophie médiévale*, by Alain de Libera, *Revue philosophique de Louvain* 96 (1988): 310–13.

24. David Piché, "*Penser au Moyen Âge* d'Alain de Libera: Une perspective novatrice sur la condamnation parisienne de 1277," *Laval théologique et philosophique* 52/1 (1996): 199–217; quotations found respectively pp. 200, 202.

interpretations of the sort that he rejects—equates a Kantian and Thomist reading of medieval philosophy. As Flasch projects them, each reads medieval philosophy as mere pre-history to itself—including, for the Thomist, a post-history that views medieval philosophy after Aquinas as a "decline." Flasch finds both readings guilty of treating *philosophy* as an historically uprooted "ensemble of abstract theses."[25]

For a similar reason, Flasch rejects both Gilson's notion of Christian Philosophy and the anti-Gilsonian notion of "an entirely autonomous [medieval] philosophy" as "abstract and lacking historical sense."[26] Here, though, I shall demur. Flasch's substantive criticism bears relevantly not on Gilson, whose "Christian Philosophy," whether or not it is considered an oxymoron, is an historical contextualization of medieval philosophy,[27] but on Van Steenberghen. The latter argues that not philosophy but only the philosopher—and, in a further stricture, not qua "philosopher"—is directly or intrinsically subject to cultural or historical conditions. Now it is just this elevation of philosophy to the level of an atemporal noesis of an eternal object that has been under furious assault since the nineteenth century.[28] Hegel celebratedly denied—but Gilson, let it be noted, did not naively philosophically affirm—its radical presupposition : "the allegation of an [eternal] truth without a [self-determining or historical] subject."[29]

For Gilson, there have been and will be "ceaseless variations in science and philosophy"; in contrast, "nothing is less transitory than the Christian faith."[30] As a moment within a theology, scholastic metaphysics, since it is drawn toward, although it cannot reach, the "heaven of faith,"[31] participates in the latter's intransitoriness. If Gilson, then, is to be charged with naivété, it is theological not philosophical. One can see how the charge could be framed by adverting to Lonergan. The historicity of human understanding, *Christian*

25. Kurt Flasch, *Introduction à la philosophie médiévale* (Fribourg: Edition Universitaires de Fribourg, 1992) 16.

26. Ruedi Imbach and François-Xavier Putallaz, preface to *Introduction à la philosophie médiévale*, by Kurt Flasch, vi.

27. See Etienne Gilson, *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy* (Gifford Lectures 1931–1932), trans. A.H.C. Downes (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940) 37: "… the concept ["Christian Philosophy"] does not correspond to any simple essence susceptible of abstract definition; but corresponds much rather to a concrete historical reality as something calling for description."

28. See Emil Fackenheim, "Metaphysics and Historicity," in *The God Within: Kant, Schelling, and Historicity,* ed. John Burbridge (Toronto: U of Toronto Press, 1996) 122–47; originally published Marquette U Press, 1961.

29. Paul Ricoeur, "The Question of the Subject: The Challenge of Semiology," in *The Conflict of Interpretations: Essays in Hermeneutics*, ed. Don Ihde (Evanston: Northwestern U Press, 1974) 237.

30. Gilson, "Historical Research and the Future of Scholasticism," 164, 163.

31. Ibid., 164.

doctrines and theology included, Lonergan has identified as the history of ongoing and multiple contexts of interpretation within which meaning is variously grasped and expressed, but each of which must somehow be reconciled with the permanent meaning of the revealed truth/mystery as that meaning has been formulated and dogmatically fixed within its original context.[32]

Nonetheless, Van Steenberghen requires (as, one might put it, the a priori condition of possibility for "scientific philosophy") that the "intrinsic historicality (*Geschichtlichkeit*)"[33] of the human subject of philosophical consciousness vanish. Van Steenberghen's requirement rests on two postulates: (1) a distinction, initially puzzling from a Thomist, between a knowing that is somehow philosophical but not because of its objects; and (2) an internal separation within philosophical consciousness—one disallowed by most post-Hegelians—of the historically and existentially determinate subject from his philosophical consciousness.[34] The minor puzzle in Van Steenberghen's first thesis can be easily solved: the *formal* object of philosophical consciousness is always and "entirely a work of reason," even if its material object—its "theme of reflection"—happens to be a revealed truth.[35] In other words, a revealed truth may fall under philosophical consciousness only in so far as it has been "stripped of all that is not rational."[36] This requirement seems impossible for two reasons that are dispositive for many contemporary philosophers—"be they phenomenological, hermeneutic, Critical, Marxist, Hegelian, structuralist, deconstructivist, pragmatist or analytic"[37]— but barely emergent within the ambit of, yet so challenging for, Van Steenberghen's classicist neo-Thomism.[38] First, for the historicist hermeneutics springing from Heidegger, reason—including, of course, philosophical reason—is radically historical: it is always embedded with the temporally constituted subject in a world framed by the subject's pre-understanding of things. What that

32. See Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1972), esp. 320–27.

33. Richard E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schleiermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer* (Evanston: Northwestern U Press, 1969) 176.

34. Cf. Van Steenberghen, *Introduction à l'étude de la philosophie médiévale*, 94: "Comme tout autre facteur culturel, le christianisme agit *directement* sur la personne du philosophe et non sur le travail philosophique lui-même, qui est soumis à ses propres lois." But even this, apparently, gives culture and historical factors too much influence on the philosopher: "… ces objets [aspects de la culture] ne qualifient pas la *connaisance* philosophique comme telle ni le *sujet* qui philosophe en tant qu'il philosophe" (95–96).

35. Ibid., 99. Cf. Van Steeenberghen, *La philosophie au xiii^e siècle*, 348.

36. Ibid., 93.

37. Joseph Margolis, *Pragmatism without Foundations: Reconciling Realism and Relativism* (Oxford/New York: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1988) 43–44.

38. See Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness," in *A Second Collection*, ed. William F. J. Ryan, S.J. and Bernard J. Tyrell, S.J. (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1974) 1–9.

subject takes to be purely rational is confined to a conceptual scheme that is conditioned by or relative to a world that, as presupposed, is itself not a work of pure reason. Secondly, philosophical reason is ever capable of generating legitimate multiple but competing conceptual schemes even within a given historical life-world.

MacIntyre, who now considers himself to be an *au courant* Thomist, is mindful of these pervasive relativisms; he accepts the impossibility of a contemporary escape "into some extrahistorical realm of timeless judgment" but looks, paradoxically, to the history of philosophy for an exit from "a certain kind of relativism" whether, presumably, historicist or conceptual.[39] But what MacIntyre confidently finds in the history of philosophy, McKeon argues, with even greater historical erudition and dialectical flair, does not exist, at least not in any way that could ever conclusively establish a single true philosophy: namely, the shared and commonly respected "standards of rationality and truth [about the normative concept of conclusive argument] that do in some measure transcend the limitations of historically bounded contexts."[40] For McKeon, on the contrary, what are taken to be "conclusive" philosophical arguments always fall *within* a given philosophical framework for which there are no conclusive arguments.[41] If so, philosophical pluralism is *de jure* and not merely *de facto*.[42]

Nonetheless, I shall presuppose only the latter by accepting the new medievalists' counterposition to the single-minded or monist view of neo-Thomist historiography: "medieval thought is misconstrued as a homogeneous, rationalist project, teleologically leading to the Thomistic synthesis."[43] What, then, are the shifts and transformations in the self understanding of "philosophy" as that term can be traced or, given the diverse *optiques* of philosophical historians, may be variously traced from the ancient to the modern period?[44]

39. Alasdair MacIntyre, "On Not Having the Last Word: Thoughts on Our Debts to Gadamer," in *Gadamer's Century: Essays in Honor of Hans-Georg Gadamer*, ed. Jeff Malpass, Ulrich Arnswald, and Jens Kertscher (Cambridge, MA/London: MIT Press, 2002) 157–72; quotations found p. 158.

40. Ibid.

41. Cf. Richard McKeon, "Philosophy and Method," in *Selected Writings of Richard McKeon*, vol. 1, *Philosophy, Science, and Culture*, ed. Zahava K. McKeon and William G. Swenson (Chicago/London: U of Chicago Press, 1998) 205: "Differences of methods, principles, purposes and subject-matters account at once for the richness of philosophic discussion and the impossibility of bringing it to an unambiguous termination." The differences eliminate "conclusive" philosophical arguments except within a given philosophical framework.

42. For an initial critique of *de jure* philosophical pluralism, see my "Philosophical Pluralism and 'The Internal Evolution of Thomism': Some Realist Animadversions," in *Thomistic Papers VI*, ed. John F. X. Knasas (Houston: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1994) 195–227.

43. Rosemann, *Understanding Scholastic Thought*, 9.

44. Cf. John Marenbon, *Later Medieval Philosophy (1150–1350): An Introduction*, rev.

3. "Philosophy": Way of Life or Theoretical Discourse?

Presently, one such encapsulated history of *philosophy*, now readily available to Anglophones, has received considerable attention because of the erudition and serious-mindedness of its chief proponent, Pierre Hadot.[45] Hadot, and his associates, André-Jean Voelke and Juliusz Domański, have argued, with normative implications meant to be challenging to contemporary philosophers, that ancient philosophy was, primarily, a way of life and, secondarily, a rational discourse (amounting to a therapeutic "spiritual exercise") in support of that life.[46] The Greek Fathers of the Church fit easily into Hadot's paradigm: like the ancient philosophers, the Fathers also engaged in spiritual exercises, but they maintained that the teaching of Scripture and the practices of Christianity were the only true and authentic "philosophy." However, the Patristic identification of Christian discourse with "philosophy," while retaining the ancient, dual sense of the term,[47] devalued the actual moral achievements of the Greek philosophers, a devaluation that encouraged, so Domański opines, the scholastic reduction of philosophy to theory.[48]

At the beginning of the Latin Middle Ages (circa 523–25), Boethius still retained the ancient model in his prison masterpiece, *De consolatione philosophiae*. Therein, Lady Philosophy appears as both an able dialectician and a physician who offers intellectual therapy, though puzzlingly not an explicitly Christian one, for the unhappy soul. Beginning with Alcuin in the late eighth century, the *De consolatione philosophiae* had an enormous devotional, literary, and philosophical influence—evidenced by the glossed copies in Carolingian monasteries and the many commentaries produced from the mid ninth-century and thereafter—that only peaked in the twelfth century with William of Conches (ca. 1080–1154).

paperback ed. (London/New York: Routledge, 1991) 87–90, who argues for the superiority of a contextualizing "historical analysis" of medieval philosophers, even though this approach is "ill-suited … to writing comprehensive *Histories"* (90) of medieval philosophy.

45. See Pierre Hadot, *Philosophy as a Way of Life: Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, ed. Arnold I. Davidson, trans. Michael Chase (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995); *What is Ancient Philosophy?* trans. Michael Chase (Cambridge, MA: Harvard U Press, 2002).

46. See Pierre Hadot, preface to *La philosophie, théorie ou manière de vire? Les controverses de l'antiquité à la renaissance,* by Juliusz Domański (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires Fribourg Suisse; Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1996) v–xiii; preface to *La philosophie comme thérapie de l'âme: Etudes de philosophie hellénistique*, by André-Jean Voelke (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires Fribourg Suisse; Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1993) vii–xiv.

47. Cf. *Dictionnaire de spiritualité*,15, s.v. "Théologie," 472: "… pour les Pères, cette connaissance et ce discours [= *theologia*] … présupposent une manière de vivre qui mette l'intelligence humaine en accord avec ce Dieu qu'ils cherchent."

48. See Domański, *La philosophie,* 23–29.

Alcuin, however does not look to philosophy to provide "solace or enlightenment."[49] Already by the time of the Venerable Bede (673–735), antiquity's distinct philosophical way of life—at once religious and moral, theoretic and spiritually therapeutic—had disappeared with the decline of the cultural and educational institutions of the Roman Empire. Christian discourse about Sacred Scripture (*sacra pagina*) had absorbed ancient philosophy's theoretical role and believed itself to have transcended —through Christianity's divinely sustained faith, devotion, and practice—philosophical antiquity's flawed existential quest for happiness. For Bede, "true philosophy" was found in the contemplative monastic life, and throughout the high middle ages, the contemplative monk engaged in the continuous *lectio* of Scripture was called *philosophus*.[50]

In the twelfth century, Abelard (d. 1142/4) combined, innovatively but far too recklessly for Bernard of Clairvaux and other critics, the rational subtleties of logic and dialectic with the topical exegesis of Scripture,[51] while Hugh of St. Victor (1096–1141) and the School of Chartres, in appropriating the theoretic divisions of philosophy proposed by Boethius (d. 524), Cassidorus (d. ca. 580), and Isidore of Seville (d. 636), assimilated Christian "theology"[52] to reasoning about what is supremely immaterial and *intellectibile*. By end of the twelfth century, Allan of Lille (d. 1203), had argued for the pre-eminent dignity of the rules and rational procedures of theology *vis-à-vis* the arts, a pre-eminence confirmed for the Faculty of Theology in the Statutes of the University of Paris (1215). By the middle of the thirteenth century, "sacred doctrine" or revealed theology—which Aquinas identified, in Aristotelian fashion, as the highest science—had successfully subsumed the theoretic discourse of philosophy, which henceforth could be cast as the handmaid (*ancilla*) to theology's own biblically grounded wisdom.

Reduced to the function of a handmaid without existential power, the scholastics effectively emptied philosophy of its autonomous "spiritual exercises" and transmogrified a way of life into a purely theoretical discourse: such, anyway, is Hadot's rather disparaging view of the achievements of the golden age of scholasticism.[53] But is it a plausible view, especially of Aquinas?

49. Jacqueline Beaumont, "The Latin Tradition of the *De Consolatione Philosophiae*," in *Boethius: His Life, Thought and Influence,* ed. Margaret Gibson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981) 280.

50. See Jacques Leclercq, *Études sur le vocabulaire monastique du moyen âge* (Rome: 1961), 39–79.

51. See Eileen Sweeney, "Rewriting the Narrative of Scripture: Twelfth-Century Debates over Reason and Theological Form," *Medieval Philosophy & Theology* 3 (1993): 1–34.

52. For a summary of the historical usage of "theology," see J. De Ghellinck, S.J., *Le mouvement théologique du xiie siècle* (Bruges: Éditions "De Tempel," 1948) 91–93.

53. Cf. Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy?* 257–60.

Speaking on behalf of Iamblichus and Proclus whose theurgic neo-Platonism Hadot disapproves,[54] Wayne Hankey contends that Aquinas, in this way their heir, also maintains the existential necessity and spiritual achievements of philosophy even as he integrates philosophy's natural benefits into the Christian pursuit of a strictly supernatural happiness.[55]

Hankey's erudite and provocatively entitled counterview, which merits a detailed exposition impossible to give here, is no less controversial than Hadot's. Hankey defends the necessity and irreducibility of the philosophical life within the Christian economy by binding its pursuit to the happiness attendant upon the exercise of the natural moral and intellectual virtues which Thomistic theology never eliminates. *Sapientia, scientia*, and *intellectus* are the three Aristotelian speculative habits/virtues, the exercise of which brings *eudaimonia* (*EN*, VI, 7). What though is the role of *sapientia metaphysica* in the Christian dispensation? Hankey appeals to Aquinas's doctrine that grace perfects not destroys nature to support his claim that philosophy "abides" and thus continues to make a necessary contribution to the speculative Christian's *eudaimonia*.

To assess Hankey's views in due measure one would need to ponder Aquinas's subordination of metaphysics to revealed theology. What is implied by this subordination, as Aquinas puts it, of the less to the more divine *sapientia*? Aquinas acknowledges that metaphysical contemplation of the highest causes is an intellectually virtuous activity, but one whose *modum accipiendi* he clearly labels imperfect: precisely as a way of understanding, metaphysics is not a *divina sapientia*. The only science that is *divina sapientia* in regard both to its mode of knowing and subject matter is *sacra doctrina* or revealed theology. *Sacra doctrina* alone, because it immediately derives from divine inspiration, is enabled to treat of the highest cause "per modum ipsarum causarum."[56]

54. See ibid., 171. Cf. Wayne Hankey, *Cents ans de néoplatonisme en France: Une brève histoire philosophique* (Paris/Québec: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin/Les Presses de L"Université Laval, 2004) 159 on Hadot's abandonment of Neo-Platonism and "déni de la transcendance."

55. See Wayne Hankey, "Philosophy as Way of Life for Christians? Iamblichan and Porphyrian reflections on Religion, Virtue, and Philosophy in Thomas Aquinas," *Laval Théologique et Philosophique* 59/2 (2003): 193–224.

56. See *I Sent.*, prologus, q. 1, a. 3, q. 3, sol. 1 (Mandonnet, 1: 12): "… dicimus quod est sapientia, eo quod altissimas causas considerat et est sicut caput et principalis et ordinatrix omnium scientiarum: et est etiam magis dicenda sapientia quam metaphysica, quia causas altissimas considerat per modum ipsarum causarum, quia per inspirationem a Deo immediate acceptam; metaphysica autem considerat causas altissimas per rationes ex creaturis assumptas. Unde ista doctrina magis etiam divina dicenda est quam metaphysica: quia est divina quantum ad subjectum et quantum ad modum accipiendi; metaphysica autem quantum ad subjectum tantum."

If Mark Jordan is even half right, and there is reason to think so, Aquinas would not have promoted philosophy as *a way of life* for Christians.[57] He would not and did not do so because the philosophical life cannot lead to man's ultimate beatitude, the supernatural vision of God. That happiness, which can be attained only in the world to come (*in patria*), can be anticipated here by adopting the life of the believing disciple learning from the divine teacher.[58] Doubtless the exercise of speculative reason remains, on good Aristotelian grounds, necessary for the highest form of this-worldly *eudaimonia*.[59] Aquinas can hardly abandon speculative reason, nor does he. But about philosophers, he can quote (*ST*, I, q. 84, a. 5) without softening a dismissive remark of Augustine: philosophical truths that are in accordance with the Christian faith are to be taken from the pagan philosophers as from unjust possessors (*iniustis possessoribus*). The theologian, then, can allow that, in the texts that have been bequeathed to him, philosophical truth abides but as *aufgehoben*.[60] For the speculatively minded Christian disciple, Aquinas himself provides a *magis divina sapientia*, indeed a *sapientia maxima*— a revealed theology that magnificently incorporates the full range of metaphysical reason.

For my present purposes, however, it is only important to note that Hadot uses his own conceptual history of *philosophy* to reach an evaluative

57. See Mark D. Jordan, "The Alleged Aristotelianism of Thomas Aquinas," The Etienne Gilson Series 15 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1992), 40: "When Thomas agrees with his predecessors in calling Aristotle 'the Philosopher,' he both honors and judges him, praises him above other philosophers and sets him below the least of believers."

58. Cf. ST,, II-II, q. 2, a. 3: "ultima beatitudo hominis consistit in quadam supernaturali Dei visione. Ad quam quidem visionem homo pertingere non potest nisi per modum addiscentis a Deo doctore,… Unde ad hoc quod homo perveniat ad perfectam visionem beatitudinis praeexigitur quod credat Deo tanquam discipulus magistro docenti."

59. See *Sent. Ethic.*, 10 , lect. 12 (ed. Spiazzi, 551b, n. 2125); LE 47/2: 592b.169–81: "Diis enim, idest substantiis separatis, quia habent solam intellectualem vitam, tota eorum vita est beata, homines autem in tantum sunt beati, inquantum existit in eis quaedam similitudo talis operationis, scilicet speculativae. Sed nullum aliorum animalium est felix, quia in nullo communicant speculatione. Et sic patet, quod quantum se extendit speculatio, tantum se extendit felicitas. Et quibus magis competit speculari, magis competit esse felices, non secundum accidens, sed secundum speculationem, quae est secundum se honorabilis. Unde sequitur, quod felicitas principaliter sit quaedam speculatio."

60. See *ST*, I, q. 1, a. 6: " Ille igitur qui considerat simpliciter altissimam causam totius universi, quae Deus est, maxime sapiens dicitur, unde et sapientia dicitur esse divinorum cognitio, ut patet per Augustinum, XII de Trinitate. Sacra autem doctrina propriissime determinat de Deo secundum quod est altissima causa, quia non solum quantum ad illud quod est per creaturas cognoscibile (quod philosophi cognoverunt, ut dicitur Rom. I, quod notum est Dei, manifestum est illis); sed etiam quantum ad id quod notum est sibi soli de seipso, et aliis per revelationem communicatum. Unde sacra doctrina maxime dicitur sapientia."

conclusion exactly contrary to that of Van Steenberghen.[61] What for Van Steenberghen is the long and beneficial ascent to "philosophy in the strict [scientific] sense" is for Hadot a long and deleterious decline from "the vital, existential dimension"[62] of ancient philosophy which was a way of life as well as a theory. From Hadot's perspective, Van Steenberghen's non-theological "scientific philosophy" is no less truncated than Gilson's "Christian Philosophy": both historians take for granted that scholastic philosophy was, and both consider that it should have been, "a purely theoretical activity."[63] Indeed, Gilson, echoing Aquinas, insists that philosophy for the scholastic theologians, in contrast to revealed theological knowledge, "is not a doctrine of salvation."[64] Modern philosophers inherited and, with a few exceptions, maintained the thirteenth-century truncation of philosophy as exclusively rational discourse, while denying with increasing methodological rigor that philosophy was or in any way should be the theoretical handmaiden of theology. So "purified," philosophy became, in the modern period, the enemy of religion and theology.[65]

4. "Philosophy" in the Paris Faculty of Arts

On Hadot's account, scholastic theology, by the mid-thirteenth century, had subordinated philosophy to its own ends and thus subsumed the rational as well as the spiritually therapeutic discourse of ancient philosophy, after the latter's spiritually diminishing encounter with Christianity.[66] A remark of Aquinas, which perfectly expresses the attitude of the theologian in the faculty of theology, seems to confirm Hadot: "Wisdom among us [theologians] is considered not only as it is about having knowledge of God, as among the philosophers, but also as it is the guide of human life."[67] However, there are

61. Cf. Alain de Libera, *Penser au moyen âge,* 51: "Les objets de l'histoire de la philosophie sont l'expression des intérêts, des choix et des paradigmes théoriques réglant le travail des philosophes à un moment donné de l'Histoire: ils se confondent donc toujours plus ou moins avec les objets de la philosophie vivante."

62. Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy?* 261. Cf. Van Steenbergen, *Introduction à l'étude de la philosophie médiévale*, 108–13.

63. See Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy?* 259.

64. Etienne Gilson, *Christian Philosophy*, trans. Armand Maurer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1993) 9.

65. See Pierre Hadot, *La philosophie comme manière de vivre: Entretiens avec Jeannie Carlier et Arnold I. Davidson* (Paris: Éditions Albin Michel, 2001) 73: "Au Moyen Âge tout change, parce que la philosophie n'est plus qu'un servante de la religion, mais dès que la philosophie s'émancipe de la théologie, elle redevient une critique, ou purificatrice ou destructrice, de la religion."

66. See Stephen Brown, "The intellectual context of later medieval philosophy: universities, Aristotle, arts, theology," in *Medieval Philosophy*, ed. John Marenbon (London/New York: Routledge, 1998) 188–203.

67. "… sapientia secundum nos non solum consideratur ut est cognoscitiva Dei, sicut philosophos; sed etiam ut est directiva humanae vitae …" (*ST,* II–II. q. 19, a. 7).

other factors, which need to be added to Hadot's account, that also help explain how medieval theology became a theoretical science. University theology followed the earlier theoretical turns that were consequent, in medicine, upon late eleventh century Latin translations from Arabic, and, in twelfth-century jurisprudence, the preeminence of the *Decretum Gratiani*.[68] Moreover, in current discussion of the rise of a scientific theology, controversies flourish about the scholastics' own understanding of *philosophy* after the transpositions resulting, during the late twelfth and early thirteen centuries, from the curricular ingression and theological assimilation of the Latin Aristotelian corpus.[69] The issues, in detail, may be found in the thematic surveys and studies of individual figures presented at the Tenth Congress (1997) of the International Society for the Study of Medieval Philosophy.[70]

Aertsen provides a useful account of the more notable answers proposed at that Tenth Congress to its central question "What is Philosophy in the Middle Ages?"[71] The variant answers expose the philosophical as well as the historical subtleties latent in the question to which no common answer was found. Alain de Libera contends[72]—and so corrects Hadot—that *magistri* like Boethius of Dacia, resuscitated, at least within the Faculty of Arts at the University of Paris, the ancient role of philosophical contemplation as the most noble and felicitous way of life. For de Libera, this autonomous "ethical Aristotelianism," and not the subservient *ancilla* of theology, best represents, Gilson not withstanding , "the spirit of medieval philosophy." Steel,[73] however, counters that "medieval philosophy," as de Libera would cast it, was impossible: for Aquinas had effectively demonstrated, in clear opposition to the Arabic Aristotelianism of the *artistae*, the impossibility of fulfilling through philosophical contemplation man's natural—and, therefore, rationally legitimate—desire for perfect beatitude. Aertsen, in response, draws a conclusion opposed to both Steel and de Libera: contra Steel, medieval

68. See Jean Jolivet, "The Arabic Inheritance," in *A History of Twelfth-Century Western Philosophy,* ed. Peter Dronke (Cambridge: Cambridge U Press, 1988) 113–48.

69. See Dominik Perler, "Was ist Philosophie im Mitteralter?" *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung* 54 (2000): 95–107.

70. See *Was ist Philosophie im Mitterlalter?* Akten des X. Internationalen Kongresses für mittelalterliche Philosophie der Société Internationale pour l'Étude de la Philosophie Médiévale 25. bis 30. August 1977 in Erfurt, Miscellanea Mediaevalia, vol. 26, ed. Jan A. Aertsen and Andreas Speer (Berlin/New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1998).

71. See Jan A. Aertsen, "Is There a Medieval Philosophy?" *International Philosophical Quarterly* 39/4 (1999): 385–412.

72. See Alain de Libera, "Philosophie et censure: Remarques sur la crise universitaire parisienne de 1270–1277," in *Was ist Philosophie im Mitterlalter?* 71–89.

73. See Carlos Steel, "Medieval Philosophy: An Impossible Project? Thomas Aquinas and the 'Averroistic' Ideal of Happiness," in *Was ist Philosophie im Mitterlalter?* 152–74.

philosophy was indeed possible, but, contra de Libera, not in the form of the salvific Aristotelianism of the Arts *magistri*. Medieval philosophy was possible as critical and self-limited: it is a philosophy, which Aertsen finds exemplified in the Thomistic distinction between metaphysics and revealed theology, that knows what it cannot know. But Aertsen holds (again, using Meister Eckhart as the counterexample) that the Thomistic distinction is "not equivalent to or normative for 'medieval' philosophy."[74]

In current scholarship, then, the very possibility as well as the character of "medieval philosophy" is moot. Still, there are always commonplaces that frame scholarly controversies. In the present one, it is accepted that the medievals recognized the *philosophia* of the ancient Greeks and their Arab commentators—the philosophy studied in the Faculty of Arts, first, as a propaeduetic to theology and, then, by 1265, as something intellectually and morally worthwhile in its own right—to be a work of reason without any benefit from Christian faith.[75] The theologians, however, did not identify Greek or Arabic *philosophi*, pagans who reasoned apart from the Christian faith, with those Christians called *philosophantes*: a term applied neutrally, in the second half of the twelfth century, to theologians who favored the introduction of rational speculation into the domain of theology, and, pejoratively, during the thirteen and fourteenth centuries, to theologians whose critics judged their theology to be overweighed by philosophy.[76]

Van Steenberghen and others have long argued that none of the identifiable *Averroistae* (as they were called by their theological opponents) nor Averroes himself, ever held for a double but irreducibly contradictory truth—one theological, the other philosophical.[77] The "heterodox and radical Aristotelians," to use Van Steenberghen and Wippel's preferred label for those who

74. Aertsen, "Is There a Medieval Philosophy?" 401.

75. See Fernand Van Steenberghen, *The Philosophical Movement in the Thirteenth Century* (Edinburgh: Nelsen, 1955) 51.

76. See Etienne Gilson, "Les 'philosophantes,'" *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 19 (1953): 135–40; P. Michaud-Quantin and M.Lemoine, "Pour le dossier des Philosophantes," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 35 (1968): 17–22.

77. See Aimé Forest, F. Van Steenberghen, and M. De Gandillac, *Le mouvement doctrinal du ix^e^ au xiv^e^ siècle*, vol. 13 in *Histoire de l'église*, ed. Augstin Fliche and Eugène Jarry (Bloud & Gay, 1951) 279–83; Fernand Van Steenberghen, *Maître Siger de Brabant* (Louvain: Publications Universitaires; Paris: Vander-Oyez, 1977) 242; "Rationalism," ch. in *Thomas Aquinas and Radical Aristotelianism* (Washington, DC: Catholic U of America Press, 1980) 75–110; Luca Bianchi, "Gli aristotelismi della Scolastica," in *Le Verità Dissonanti: Aristotele alla fine del Medioevo* (Rome/Bari: Laterza, 1990) 28, n. 44; Alain de Libera, "Une figure emblématique de l'héritage oublié," in *Autour d'Averroès: L'héritage andalou, Rencontres d'Averroès* (Marseille: Édition Parenthèses, 2003) 11–24: "L'origine de la pseudo-doctrine de la double vérité n'est pas chez les averroïstes, elle est chez leur adversaires" (21).

reigned over or at least populated the Faculty of Arts from 1225 until 1270,[78] understood *philosophia*, as that could be practiced in the Christian economy, to be autonomous in its method and interests but subordinate when judging the ultimate truth of its conclusions to the superior truths of revealed theology. Of course, it is possible to suspect the sincerity of the *Averroistae* and, consequently, of their avowals of Christian faith.[79] But such suspicions are not based on evident textual proofs.[80] And there is textual evidence that runs, prima facie, to the contrary: as Siger of Brabant puts it, "Since the philosopher however great, is able to err in many things, no one ought to deny the Catholic truth because of some philosophical argument even though he does not know how to undo it [the philosophical argument]."[81]

Siger's avowal has been judged a prudent, probably sincere, but latter-day statement of faith, a reaction to the Archbishop of Paris, Stephen Tempier, who on 10 December 1270 condemned thirteen erroneous metaphysical and theological propositions, four of which (notably, those bearing on the numerical unity of the separate intellect and the eternity of the world) can be directly found in Siger himself.[82] After the 1270 condemnation and publication earlier in the same year of Aquinas's anti-Averroist treatise, *De unitate intellectus contra Averroistas*, Siger became less insouciant about the conflicts between Aristotelian and Christian doctrines; he took explicit pains

78. See René Antoine Gauthier, "Notes sur Siger de Brabant," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 67 (1983): 201–32; 68 (1984): 3–49: "reigned" (227). However, Steel, "Medieval Philosophy: An Impossible Project?" objects that the label "radical Aristotelians" hides the Platonist undertones of the *Averroistae* and ignores the "real radical Aristotelian"(168), namely, Aquinas.

79. See Luca Bianchi, *Il vescovo e i filosofi: La condanna parigina del 1277 e l'evoluzione dell' aristotelismo scolastico* (Bergamo: Pierluigi Lubrina Editore, 1990) 13–16. Cf. Fernand Van Steenberghen, "Publications récentes sur Siger de Brabant," in *Historia Philosophiae Medii Aevi: Studien zur Geschicte der Philosophie des Mittelalters*, 2 vols, ed. Burhard Mojsisch and Olaf Pluta (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: B.R. Grüner, 1991) 2: 1008 who, *contra* Gauthier, maintains that Boethius of Dacia, although he criticized Tempier's condemnation as both philosophically incompetent and an abuse of power, held that there could be no real contradiction between philosophy and theology.

80. Jean Jolivet, "Émergences de la philosophie au moyen âge," who is unable to determine whether the *magistri* in the Faculty of Arts were being merely formalistic when referring to the prerogatives of theology, asserts, surprisingly, that their personal faith or lack of it is "without importance" (22) for the historian. Cf. Bianchi, *Il vescovo e i filosofi*, 198: "Questo movimento [that of the *Averroistae* in the Faculty of Arts] … era sinceramente rispettoso della fede e non intendeva mettere in questione il primato della sapienza teologica."

81. "Sed cum philosophus quantumcumque magnus in multis possit errare, non debet aliquis negare veritatem catholicam propter aliquam rationem philosophicum, licet illam dissolvere nesciat"(Siger of Brabant, *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam,* III, q. 15 comm.; ed. Graiff, 140).

82. See John F. Wippel, "The Condemnations of 1270 and 1277 at Paris," *The Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 7 (1978): 169–201.

to subordinate—or, more precisely, to juxtapose—the necessary truths of fallible philosophical reason and the infallibly revealed truths of supernatural faith.[83] The greater certitude of the latter requires the Christian to believe in, although without possibility of any rational proof thereof, the falsity of some Aristotelian or Averroist doctrines.[84] In the analogy drawn by an anonymous Arts Master (who was perhaps Siger of Brabant), theological truth is like a miracle. As a miracle interrupts but does not totally destroy the natural order of causes and effects, so too a theological truth can require one to set aside what would otherwise be the conclusions of a rationally compelling demonstration.[85]

Siger's negative fideism, which defers to faith but allows for rationally irrefutable but antinomous truths "according to the intention of the philosophers," along with the even more ambiguous rhetoric of other *magistri*, did not assuage Tempier. Boethius of Dacia and Aubry of Reims, although they never explicitly deny the supremacy of faith and theology, so extravagantly praise philosophy and the happiness attendant upon the philosophical life that critics could easily if incautiously conclude what Proposition Forty of Tempier's second condemnation (7 March 1277) charges: that these *magistri* unconditionally assert that there is no higher wisdom or happiness than those attained through philosophy. On 18 January 1277, Pope John XXI wrote Tempier, enjoining him to investigate certain errors that, so rumor had it, were being propagated in Paris. Still, Tempier's motive, as internalized within the 1277 prohibition itself, remains unclear. Is the prohibition dominated by political, doctrinal, or pastoral considerations?[86] In any case, the extraordinarily influential *articuli parisienses*, Tempier's syllabus of 219 or (given

83. See François-Xavier Putallaz and Ruedi Imbach, *Profession: Philosophe Siger Brabant* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1997).

84. See Van Steenberghen, *Maître Siger*, 229–57.

85. Cf. "Ex hoc enim quod philosophus concludit aliquid esse necessarium vel impossibile per cauas inferiores investigabiles ratione, non contradicit fidei, quae ponit illa posse aliter se habere per causam supremam, cuius virtus et causalitas non potest comprehendi ab aliqua creatura," *Ein Kommentar zur Physik des Aristoteles aus der Pariser Artistenfakultat um 1273*, ed. A. Zimmermann (Berlin: 1968) 3; quoted in Gyula Klima, "*Ancilla theologiae* vs. *domina philosophorum*: Thomas Aquinas, Latin Averroism and the Autonomy of Philosophy," in *Was ist Philosophie im Mitterlalter?* 395.

86. Contra Piché, Wippel thinks there is no evidence for attributing a political motive to Tempier's defense of the superior rights of theologians and the Church; yet, Wippel acknowledges not being able to explain why Tempier misrepresents or mistrusts the Arts Masters: see John E. Wippel, David Piché on the Condemnation of 1277: A Critical Study," in *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 75/4 (2001): 597–624; esp. 623–24. The vague attributions and even misrepresentations are perhaps explicable if Tempier's primary intent was pastoral, preventing the *simplices* from falling into error: see Luca Bianchi, "1277: A Turning Point in Medieval Philosophy?" in *Was ist Philosophie im Mitterlalter?* 90–110.

Piché's new addendum)[87] 220 heterogenous propositions, do not reproduce, putting aside de Libera's ingenious invention of a heterodox, natualistic sexual ethic,[88] a coherent philosophy—not one, anyway, that can be attributed to any known Arts master.[89] The condemnation, whose prologue imputes the double-truth contradiction, presents and prohibits teaching what the Archbishop and his censors took to be the "detestable errors" and perhaps, as they feared, latent heresies poisoning the student discussions in the Arts Faculty. Issued on the third anniversary of Aquinas's death, the 1277 condemnation—or, more precisely, canonical prohibition—of any future indoctrination (*dogmatizaverint*), defending, or sustaining these 219/220 *execrabiles errores*, also marks the beginning of Tempier's attack on those theologians, notably Giles of Rome and Thomas Aquinas, who had incorporated— so Tempier's committee of sixteen censors judged—dangerously erroneous Aristotelian doctrines into their theology.[90] Yet, Tempier's condemnation does not provide what the pope had explicitly demanded, the names of the Masters teaching nor the places where they taught these censored errors.

Presumably the majority of the Arts *magistri* were committed, through a theologically neutral exegesis of ancient Greek and Arabic philosophical texts, to the study of philosophy for its own sake;[91] perhaps a few privately defended—speaking "in corners to boys," as Aquinas tartly charged[92]—though it is unlikely that they publicly taught, heterodox doctrines. From the historical evidence available, none of the known Arts *magistri*, including Boethius of Dacia, openly repudiated the prerogatives of theology.[93] In their self-imposed statutes of 1272, the Arts Masters, made anxious perhaps by possible charges of heresy, carefully restrict philosophical teaching to non-theological ques-

87. See David Piché, *La Condamnation parisienne de 1277: Nouvelle édition du texte latin, traduction, introduction et commentaire* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1999), 24.

88. See Alain de Libera, "Philosophie et censure," who argues—following Foucault's "questionable hermeneutics" [cf. Wippel, "Piché on the Condemnation of 1277," 623]—that the propositions about sexuality, when grouped together and inscribed into the outlined program of natural philosophy, "fournissent un horizon précis et un sense d'ensemble" of the other propositions in the condemnation: the requirement "à penser le statut de la sexualité dans la structure d'un monde éternel—un monde 'naturaliste' …" (77).

89. Roland Hissette, *Enquête sur les 219 articles condamnés à Paris le 7 mars 1277* (Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1977) shows that of the 219 propositions condemned, the censors misinterpreted the 151 attributable ones, 64 of which are enunciated not as true *simpliciter* but, self-referentially, *secundum intentionem philosophorum.*

90. See Bianchi, "1277: A Turning Point," 92, n. 8.

91. See Claude Lafleur, *Quatre introductions à la philosophie au xiii^e siècle: Textes critiques et* étude historique (Montreal: Institute d'Études Médiévales; Paris: J. Vrin, 1988) vii.

92. *De unitate intellectus contra Averroistas*, ch. 5 (LE, 46:314, lines 436–39); ed. McInerny, 145.

93. See Marenbon, *Later Medieval Philosophy,* 67; Klima, "*Ancilla theologiae* vs. *domina philosophorum*, 393–402.

tions. Yet, none of these charges, tensions, or restrictions finally prevented the development of what some historians enjoy tagging a professionally "lay philosophy" that not only institutionally separated philosophers from theologians, but also threatened the traditional theological understanding of philosophy as solely *ancilla theologiae*.[94]

To their theological opponents, the Averroist *magistri* in the Faculty of Arts were engaged in dismantling the established epistemic hierarchy of the sciences in which the science of philosophy self-consciously subordinates itself to the revealed science of faith.[95] In de Libera's view, it was Tempier's 1277 condemnation that actually created the possibility of a coherent autonomous philosophy by presciently spelling out the anti-Christian implications of a de-clericalized, Greco-Arabic Aristotelianism.[96] Most historians, though, put the issue in more conventional terms. Did the *artistae* develop a notion of philosophy that substantively anticipates and thus should be assimilated to the modern notion of autonomous—or as Jolivet precisely labels it—"pure philosophy?"[97] That assimilation, despite the predilections of certain historians, seems to other scholars to exaggerate the tensions between the Arts and Theology Faculties.[98] In any case, it is not the referent of "philosopher" but the type or genre of "pure philosophy," as that may be used by a philosophical historian, which is so resistant to a properly medieval contextualization.[99]

94. Cf. Ruedi Imbach, *Dante, la philosophie et les laïcs: Initiations à la philosophie médiévale* (Fribourg: Éditions Universitaires Fribourg Suisse; Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1996); Kurt Flasch, *Das philosophische Denken im Mittelalter* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1987) 375–76; Lafleur, *Quatre introductions,* vii.

95. See Bianchi, *Il vescovo e i filosofi*, 18–19; Piché, *La condamnation parisienne,* 186–88.

96. See Alain de Libera, "Philosophie et censure," 75: "… les erreurs stigmatisées par Tempier s'articulent en un véritable système, celui de la philosophie péripatéticienne …" Cf. Rosemann, *Understanding Scholatic Thought*, 159–67.

97. See Jean Jolivet, "Émergences de la philosophie au moyen âge," 21: "la pure philosophie," see note 12 *supra*. Cf. Piché, *La condamnation parisienne,* 287: "… les gestes discursifs que posent alors ces *magistri artium* sont déjà, en ce dernier tiers du xiiie siècle, des gestes précurseurs de la modernité philosophique."

98. For reservations about Kurt Flasch's "hypothèse d'une forme d'Aufklärung'"(405), see Roland Hissette, "Notes sur le syllabus 'antirationaliste' du 7 mars 1277," *Revue philosophique du Louvain* 88 (1990): 404–16. Cf. Marenbon, "The Aims of Arts Masters and Theologians," ch. 4 in *Later Medieval Philosophy,* 66–82: "the arts masters … were not antagonists of the theologians but co-operators in a common enterprise in which they [the arts masters] accepted their subordinate and preparatory role" (74). Cf. Bianchi, "1277: A Turning Point," 102, n. 42 who "cannot agree" with Marenbon's characterization.

99. Imbach, *Dante, la philosophie et les laïcs,* 3 charges: "Parlant de philosophie chrétienne, Gilson en méconnaît le charactère spécifiquement philosophique, Van Steenberghen néglige la fécondité philosophique de l'interrogation théologique, et Vignaux paraît sous-estimer la signification d'une production philosophique sans rapport avec les questions religieuses."

During the first half of the thirteenth century, the Paris Faculty of Arts attained an "institutional autonomy," as Marenbon calls it, that at least enabled the arts *magistri* to realize their professional independence from the theologians. Despite various episcopal and papal prohibitions that circumscribed the teaching of the Arts masters,[100] philosophy ceased to be merely a propaedeutic to theology, medicine, and law. The Statutes for the Arts Faculty, promulgated in 1255, formally prescribe the existing practice of teaching all the known works of Aristotle. The Statutes are tacit acknowledgment that the Arts *magistri* were pursuing philosophy as a methodologically and topically autonomous science. Nonetheless, the thirteenth-century scholastics, whether in the Faculty of Arts or Theology, retain a theological placement of the *truths* attainable in both pre and post-Christian philosophy. The point is of capital significance in understanding Aquinas's "purely philosophical" works.

Throughout the reoccurring controversies of the late twelfth and thirteen centuries about the value of philosophy for the Christian believer, the boundaries drawn between the *sciences* of philosophy and theology shift with the author considered.[101] The borders, however, are always conceptually contiguous since "natural reason … [is understood] by contrast—with supernatural powers and with revelation."[102] This contrast, while allowing for the distinction of their principles, objects, and methodology, does not severe the conceptual domain of philosophy from theology: the truths attained in *philosophia* are always placed within the larger and contrasting framework of nature/grace or reason/revelation.[103] For their part, the scholastic theologians,

100. At the Synod of 1210, the Archbishop of Sens, Peter of Corbeil, forbade the public and private teaching of Aristtole's *libri naturali;* in 1215, the university statutes of Cardinal Robert of Courçon prohibited public teaching of the same; the 1231 Bull of Gregory IX, *Parens scientiarum Parisius*, reaffirmed the public ban until such time as Aristotle's works could be purged of errors, but the Pope twice reiterated (1231 and 1237) that no sanctions were attached to the prohibition. For a summary statement of the long term consequences, negative and positive, of the 1277 prohibition, see Bianchi, "1277: A Turning Point."

101. See G.R. Evans, *Philosophy and Theology in the Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 1993).

102. John Marenbon, "The Theoretical and Practical Autonomy of Philosophy as a Discipline in the Middle Ages: Latin Philosophy, 1250–1350," in *Aristotelian Logic, Platonism, and the Context of Early Medieval Philosophy in the West* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2001) 274.

103. See *De trin.,* q. 2, aa 2–3; Andreas Speer, The Vocabulary of Wisdom and the Undersanding of Philosophy," in *L'Élaboration du vocabulaire philosophique au moyen âge,* Acts of the International Colloquium at Louvain-la-Neuve and Louvain, 12–14 September 1998, International Society for the Study of Medieval Philosophy, ed. Jacqueline Hamesse and Carlos Steel (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000) 257–80. Cf. Bianchi,"1277: A Turning Point," 104, who argues that, although the Arts Masters, especially Boethius of Dacia, were well on their way to affirming a "non-committal religious neutrality" that promoted not the "complimentarity" but the "mutual independence" of faith and science, "late medieval though retained its 'unitary character'" (105), whereby philosophy and theology continued their inter-relationship.

especially Bonaventure and Aquinas, were neither silent nor ambiguous about maintaining the theoretical preeminence of theology and the need to subsume philosophy into a theologically unified hierarchy of sciences.[104] However, by the middle of the fourteenth-century, Corrado di Megenberg would laud the *magistri* in the Arts Faculty—and not the traditional roster of theologians, doctors, and jurists—as the only true philosophers.[105]

5. "Pure Philosophy" in the Modern Era

From this encapsulated history, what may we conclude about the meaning of *pure philosophy*, taking this typological classification to be equivalent to what Van Steenberghen labels "philosophy in the strict sense" and Jolivet calls the "purely philosophical attitude"?[106] In Aquinas's case, it can properly mean only that philosophy is methodologically distinct— because independently grounded on its own rational principles and thus a science that is *not* "subalternate" to the higher science of theology[107]—but not that philosophy as wisdom is ultimate or self-sufficient apart from the *sacra doctrina* that grounds theology. Such pretended self-sufficiency would be a mistake: metaphysics, starting from creatures, can only reason to their highest causes; theology, taking as its principles the revealed articles of faith, is able to reason from the divine realities themselves.[108] Theology, because it shares in God's own self-knowledge, is "more divine" and "more wisdom" than metaphysics.[109] That greater wisdom is needed because man's ultimate happiness, as an intellectual

104. See Quinn, *Historical Constitution,* 704–23.

105. See Bianchi, "Gli aristotelismi," 20.

106. Jean Jolivet, "Émergences de la philosophie au moyen âge," 22: "attitude purement philosophique." Cf. Lambert Marie De Rijk, *La philosophie au moyen âge* (Leiden: Brill, 1985) 14–22 who argues that the typological classifications of medieval philosophies reveal the arbitrary and shifting interests of the historian more than the essence of the philosophy classified. De Rikk's criticism not withstanding, typological classification of the medieval documents is an eliminable historiographical device: see Pierre Hadot, "La Préhistoire des genres littéraires philosophiques médiévaux dans l'antiquité," in *Les Genres littéraires dans les sources théologiques et philosophiques médiévales: Définition, critique et exploitation* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Catholic U of Louvain, 1982) 1–9.

107. Metaphysics, the science of being qua being, is attained through a regressive analysis (*via resolutionis*) of sensible beings that leads to their ultimate causes—the immediate (*per se nota*) principles of being and the transcendental conceptions that follow thereupon: "ens et ea quae consequuntur ens, ut unum et multa, potentia et actus" (*In meta.,* prooemium; ed. Cathala-Spiazzi, 1b). Cf. *In meta.,* 2, lect. 1 (81b, n. 278); *ST,* I, q. 79, a. 8. By contrast, revealed theology, the scientific presentation of *sacra doctrina*, is not grounded on self-evident, naturally known principles; it is a science subalternated to God's self-knowledge. Theology accepts as its principles the supernaturally revealed articles of faith: see *ST,* I, prologus; *De trin.,* q. 2, a. 2, ad 5.

108. See *De trin.,* q. 2, a. 2.

109. See *I Sent.,* prologus, q. 1, a. 3, q. 3 (Mandonnet, 1:12).

creature, is supernatural; it requires knowing God as He is in Himself.[110] Here and now, faith anticipates and realizes, more than metaphysics, that beatific knowledge whose perfection may be attained only in heaven.[111]

At this point, the medievalist—at least the one who wishes to maintains an *autonomous* or *pure* philosophy as the other science contrasted with theology—becomes unavoidably implicated in the modern connotations of those terms.[112] Eighteenth-century *Kritik* promised to give birth to a pure philosophy whose global motivation and self-understanding, and not only whose principles or particular arguments and demonstrations, are independent of—*by negation not contrast*—any theological premises grounded on religious faith.[113] In precisely this way, however, the radical Aristotelianism of Siger of Brabant and Boethius of Daccia is the contrary not the precursor of *Kritik*.[114] In its post-Kantian usage, an autonomous or self-authorizing rationality grounds a philosophy that is a radically self-sufficient wisdom.[115] By its own standards, only such a philosophy should claim to be "pure." As the ancients and the medievals thought to be true of the divine mind, modern philosophical reason is perfectly self-identical.[116]

110. See *De ver.,* q. 14, a. 10, resp. (ed. Spiazzi, *Quaest. disput.,* 1: 300a): "Ultima autem perfectio ad quam homo ordinatur, consistit in perfecta Dei cognitione; ad quam quidem pervenire non potest nisi operatione et instructione Dei, qui est sui perfectus cognitor." Cf. *SCG,* III, ch. 48–50;

111. See *ST,* II–II, q. 2, a. 3, ad 3: "… invisibilia Dei altiori modo, quantum ad plura, percipit fides quam ratio naturalis ex creaturis in Deum procedens."

112. Cf. Ruedi Imbach, "Autonomie des philosophischen Denkens? Zur historischen Bedingtheit det mittelalterlichen Philosophie," in *Was ist Philosophie im Mittelalter?* 125–37. For the paradigmatic modern conception of autonomous philosophy, see Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy: The Lectures of 1825–1826*, vol. 3, *Medieval and Modern Philosophy*, ed. Robert F. Brown, trans. R.F. Brown and J.M. Stewart, assisted by H.S. Harris (Berkeley: U of California Press, 1990): "When thinking emerges on its own account … we are therefore cut off from theology" (108); "The philosophical theology of the Middle Ages did not have as its principle the free thought that proceeds from itself" (133).

113. Cf. G. W. F. Hegel, *Faith and Knowledge,* trans. Walter Cert and H.S. Harris (Albany: State U of New York Press, 1977) 55: "In earlier times philosophy was said to be the handmaid of faith. Ideas and expressions of this sort have vanished and philosophy has irresistibly affirmed its absolute autonomy."

114. See Olivier Boulnois, "Le Chiasme: La philosophie selon les théologiens et la théologie selon les artiens, de 1267 à 1300," in *Was ist Philosophie im Mitterlalter?* 595–607; esp. 598.

115. Cf. Robert B. Pippin, *Idealism as Modernism: Hegelian Variations* (Cambridge: Cambridge U Press, 1997), 6: "… the only consistent philosophical modernism … the ideal of a wholly critical, *radically* self-reflexive or rationally 'self-authorizing' philosophy."

116. Cf. Hegel, *History of Philosophy,* 3: 141: "Thinking is movement within self, but pure reference to self, pure identity with self."

Doubtless, neo-Thomists reject the notion that "pure philosophy" needs to be anti-theological philosophy; accordingly, they would deny that there is any compelling reason to reserve that typology for the idealist progeny of Enlightenment critique. One can hardly forbid, on philosophical grounds, the neo-Thomist or any other philosopher his peculiar usage. For those Thomists interested in doing so, cannot "pure philosophy," as long as it is carefully distinguished from its modern counterpart, be given an historically authentic Thomistic meaning?[117] "Pure philosophy," of course, is not philosophical thought without a thinker; it us philosophy that makes no appeal to or use of a principle outside or above human reason. Aquinas himself carefully distinguishes (*ST,* I, q. 32, a. 1, ad 2) two modes of reasoning: (1) sufficiently proving a principle; (2) proving that effects are congruent with a supposed (but not sufficiently proven) principle. Theological arguments about matters of faith that exceed human reason (chiefly, the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation) fall within the second category of *rational argument*. Cannot the neo-Thomist historian claim, then, that the arguments in the first category, since they have premises grounded solely in reason, constitute for Aquinas as well as for himself the realm of "pure philosophy"?[118]

If one uses the Thomistic distinction between the two types of reasoning, then arguments seem easily sortable into one or other category, philosophical or theological. On occasion, Aquinas seems to do exactly such himself.[119] Nonetheless, it would be erroneous, by Thomistic standards, to label all the demonstrative arguments and doctrines that Aquinas advances by reasoning of the first type "philosophical arguments." Aquinas's rationally demonstrated ethical, psychological, and metaphysical doctrines are found primarily within works in which the author's supernaturally grounded beliefs direct, formally

117. Cf. Cornelio Fabro, "Philosophy and Thomism Today," in *Thomas and Bonaventure: A Septicentenary Commemoration,* ed. George F. McClean, O.M.I., Proceeding of the American Catholic Philosophical Association, 48 (1974), 44–54: "… the deep call of modern Hegelianism for the absolute starting point of philosophy cannot be answered except by the authentic Thomistic position: '… quod primo intellectus intelligit est ens … in quo omnia fundantur'" (51). Aquinas's "original concept of the *ens*" (51), then, is Fabro's starting point for constructing an "essential Thomism" (48) capable of overcoming a "bankrupt" (46), "completely failed," "modern philosophy of immanence" (47). Essential Thomism, however, is not "a purely historical recall" (48) of Aquinas, but is "dynamic and basically open to all … [the] methods of science and modern culture" (53).

118. Cf. Ralph McInerny, "Reflections of Christian Philosophy," in *One Hundred Years of Thomism: Aeterni Patris and Afterwards: A Symposium*, ed. Victor B. Brezik, C.S.B. (Houston: Center of Thomistic Studies, 1981) 63–73: "… there are sound and valid proofs of … **[the]** *praeambula fidei*" (72).

119. **Cf.** *De unitate intellectu contra Averroistas,* prooemium (ed. Spiazzi, 63; ed. McInerny, 18: 29–32): "Intendimus autem ostendere positionem praedictam [ex dictis Averrois sumens originem] non minus contra philosophiae principia esse, quam contra fidei documenta."

subsume, and systematically unify what one contemporary interpreter doggedly calls, despite its theological motivation and setting, Aquinas's "sheer philosophy."[120] So despite those texts where Aquinas carefully notes that his own rational arguments are constructed precisely from the *consideratio theologi*,[121] the issue remains whether Aquinas himself ever developed a sheer or pure philosophy.[122]

In pursuing the issue, Thomist philosophers, including Van Steenberghen, advert to the problem posed by the religious motivation and theological service and setting of Aquinas's "philosophical" arguments. Wippel attempts to circumvent the hermeneutical problem of how to isolate and disengage a theologically embedded philosophy by allowing that Aquinas's Christian beliefs do operate in his philosophy but only heuristically—that is, "in the moment of discovery … not in the moment of [philosophical] proof."[123] This is a reformulation of Van Steenberghen's assertion that there are Christian philosophers but no "Christian Philosophy." But a position even closer to Wippel's reformulation can be found far earlier, in Peter Auriol (ca. 1275–1322): a truth of faith can be taken as the occasion (*occasio*) for discovering a rational demonstration thereof.[124] This latter distinction—in both Auriol and Wippel—amounts to an epistemic separation between the "occasion" or "moment" of discovering a proposition and its proof.

Wippel asserts but does not defend the epistemic separability of the discovery of a proposition from its proof. So too, he takes as granted that the criteria for identifying a proposition of faith (say, one taught as a revealed truth by the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church) are different from the criteria for identifying a proposition of pure reason (traditionally, one deducible from propositions that are self-evident to reason or sensible perception). The two presuppositions, then, license Wippel to extract the *propositions* of Aquinas's pure philosophy from his theology. Divinely infused faith is heuristic; it discovers or is provided with true and certain beliefs. Such supernatural beliefs fall, on the Thomistic spectrum, midway between opinion and knowledge. Faith is not opinion because it is certain not hesitant; it involves an intellectual act because it requires assenting to the truth. But since

120. Cf. Ralph McInerny, *Aquinas Against the Averroists: On Their Being Only One Intellect* (West Lafayette: Purdue U Press, 1993) 159: "The reader of Thomas's theological writings is struck by the amount of *sheer philosophy* in them …" [emphasis mine].

121. See *ST,* I, q. 78, prologus; q. 84, prologus.

122. See Mark D. Jordan, "Theology and Philosophy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, ed. Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump (Cambridge: Cambridge U Press, 1993) 232–51: "In short, no single work was written by Aquinas for the sake of setting forth a philosophy" (233).

123. Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas,* xviii, n. 13.

124. See De Rijk, *La philosophie au moyen âge*, 73.

it comes from hearing not seeing, faith is not, strictly speaking, knowledge. Faith requires volitionally choosing to assent to the truth of what has been taught. To do so, one must first believe, because of an inward grace given and sometimes miracles performed, in the divine authority of the teacher. By contrast, knowing—cognitively "seeing"—comes from intellectually intuiting (in the case of first principles) or rationally demonstrating (as a conclusion) the truth of a proposition.[125]

Today, the sharp epistemic separation between knowing and believing (seeing and not seeing the truth of a proposition, in Aquinas's words) is not widely accepted in either continental hermeneutics or Anglophone epistemology. The hermeneutical turn occurs, according to an eminent proponent, when it is recognized that reason is particular because temporal and historical: reason always works within an horizon of presupposed beliefs some of which may be eventually identified as true because they are "the productive prejudices that make understanding possible."[126] In hermeneutical terms, what can be naively taken as an objectively rational proposition in itself cannot be shown, reflexively, to be meaningful or even intelligible apart from the horizon of the *subject's* beliefs that inspire and sustain the proposition. For its part, Anglophone epistemology has engaged in relentless inquiry into justification: it is widely held that knowledge is justified belief. And, on one important account, a belief is justified by being or being shown to be coherent with (possibly corrigible) background beliefs.[127]

Few contemporary Thomists—excepting Lonergan, if he may be so counted—have attempted to engage deeply in present-day questions of meaning, interpretation, and epistemic justification. However, the questions remain for them to consider. If supernatural faith does enlarge the natural horizon of rationality by discovering an order of truths that reason would never see or could see only with the greatest difficulty and with admixture of much error, then the heuristic moment cannot be easily dropped—and perhaps not dropped at all—from the epistemic moment of rational proof.[128] Without faith in the reasonableness of what has been revealed, reason would neither seek nor discern the reasonableness of what, once rationally demonstrated,

125. See *ST*, II–II, q. 1, a. 4.

126. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. ed. Garrett Barden and John Cumming (New York: Seabury Press, 1975) 263.

127. See *A Companion to Epistemology*, ed. Jonathan Dancy and Ernest Sosa, Blackwell Companions to Philosophy (Oxford/Cambridge Massachusetts: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1992), s.vv. "coherentism", 67–70; "continental epistemology," 76–81.

128. Cf. Gilson, *Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*, 429, n. 13: "The contemporary paradox of a Christian philosophy evidently true for its defenders, and of no value in the eyes of their opponents … may perhaps be explained by the fact the absence of the light of faith in the opponent leaves truth opaque where it might be transparent."

are then rather quickly declared to be purely philosophical doctrines. To whom, one might ask, are the *preambula* to the solely supernatural articles of faith—the great metaphysical truths about God and the human soul—naturally meaningful and rationally demonstrable *preambula*? Not to those, if we may judge from the history of modern and contemporary philosophy, who have abandoned faith in divine revelation as well as the self-evident principles grounding Aristotelian rationality.

According to Marion,[129] Christian Philosophy cannot be confined to a hermeneutics—finding a Christian meaning in an already developed *philosopheme*. So confined, Christian Philosophy would clearly be derivative and secondary, arbitrary or at least only one among many possible interpretations, itself subject to suspicious or unmasking counter-interpretations, and unable, finally, to maintain a clear distinction between supernaturally revealed and naturally grasped truths. But Gilson did not, as Marion claims, solely confine Christian Philosophy to a theological hermeneutics. On Gilson's reading,[130] the central Thomistic metaphysical doctrine, the identification of God with *Ipsum Esse Subsistens*, is not derived from a Christian exegesis of a "quasi-Aristotelian" doctrine; rather, it is philosophically original, "the first discovery" of the doctrine itself.[131] This, Hadot has shown, is a dubious historical claim.[132] Gilson, in fact, hedges; he does not settle whether the Thomistic existentialist doctrine (the identity in God of *esse* and *essentia*, their real distinction in all creatures) is heuristically prompted by or is hermeneutically brought to bear on the "sublime truth" revealed by God to Moses (*Exodus*, 3:13–14), the *"Ego Sum qui sum"*: even though the mysterious divine name has been subject in the history of Christian theology to variant metaphysical interpretations, "what God has revealed to men [cannot be separated] from the meaning of what He has revealed."[133] From Gilson's words, one might infer—just as McInerny complains—that the rational visibility and meaning of what one proves cannot be disassociated from what one first believes.[134] This contem-

129. See Jean-Luc Marion, "'Christian Philosophy': Hermeneutic or Heuristic?" in *The Question of Christian Philosophy Today*, ed. Francis J. Ambrosio (New York: Fordham U Press, 1990) 247–64.

130. See Etienne Gilson, "Haec Sublimis Veritas," in *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. L.K. Shook, C.S.B. (New York: Random House, 1956) 84–95.

131. Ibid., 95.

132. See Pierre Hadot, "Dieu comme acte d'être: A propos des théories d' Étienne Gilson sur la 'métaphysique de l'Exode," in *Etienne Gilson et nous: La Philosophie et son histoire* (Paris: Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1980) 117–21, who argues for a neo-Platonist source (probably Porphyry) for the idea that God is *ipsum esse*.

133. Gilson, "Haec Sublimis Veritas," 94.

134. See Ralph McInerny, "Thomism as Philosophy," in *Divine Creation in Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Thought: Essays Presented to the Rev'd Dr Robert D. Crouse*, ed. Michael Treschow, Willemien Otto, and Walter Hannan (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2007) 294–308: "All

porary hermeneutical issue is not without its antecedents in Aquinas, and it certainly has not escaped the notice of Gilsonian Thomists.[135]

Since the ramifications of a contemporary hermeneutics for Christian philosophy cannot be explored further here, let us return, instead, to Aquinas's own distinction between two kinds of rational argument, a distinction which in context actually preserves rather than severs the hermeneutical connection in the believing and knowing subject between philosophy and theology.[136] The Thomistic position is consistent with a circle that is both ancient and, once again, fashionable: the "'hermeneutical [and epistemic] circle' between faith and reason that Augustine formulated in paradigmatic fashion: 'I believe so that I may understand; I understand so that I may believe'—in effect—*There is no reason without faith, and vice versa*."[137]

Today the faith presupposed by some practitioners of Augustine's hermeneutical circle is more likely to be secular than sacred. Primordial faith can be construed so as to be religiously and doctrinally vacuous: Derrida's anti-Enlightenment notion of a necessary and irreducible belief in the very act of socially witnessing to something—the attestation "beyond all proof, all perception, all intuitive demonstration"[138]—that transcendentally grounds philosophy, religion, the social bond, and even science. But to understand the scholastic parallelism between faith and reason / theology and philosophy, we need not appropriate Derrida's vertiginous arguments and historical asides. Beierwaltes's observation is more illuminating and it is soberly Augustinian: "The connection between philosophy and Christian theology in the course of history was a dialectical connection: rather, philosophy and theology are two self-differentiating elements in the ambit of a single query about the concept, essence, and works of God and on questions connected with them."[139]

too often, Gilson implies that Thomas's metaphysical views are intrinsically dependent on his religious beliefs" (303).

135. Cf. Pegis, *At the Origins of the Thomistic Notion of Man*: "Ideas are the life of the mind …. Even their meaning as an intellectual discourse depends on the mind that thinks them rather than on their matter" (36); "… the philosophy created by St. Thomas … could not live anywhere but in the mind of a theologian" (49).

136. Cf. Pegis, *At the Origins of the Thomistic Notion of Man*, 46: "… we must try to recapture as the distinctive signature of the philosophy that St. Thomas never spoke as a philosopher because he chose to use it in speaking as a theologian."

137. Giovanni Reale and Dario Antiseri, *Quale ragione?* (Milan: Rafaello Cortina Editore, 2001) 202.

138. Jacques Derrida, "Faith and Knowledge: The Two Sources of 'Religion' at the Limits of Reason Alone," in *Acts of Religion: Jacques Derrida*, ed. Gil Anidjar (New York/London: Routledge, 2002) 98.

139. Werner Beierwaltes, *Platonismo nel Cristianesimo,* trans. Mauro Falcioni (Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 2000) 7.

6. Reasoning in Theology

Given the essential connection of scholastic philosophy with theology, which is the conceptual history of medieval *philosophy* that I have been developing, it is misleading and interpretively impoverishing to subsume any of Aquinas's works, even those opuscula whose rational argumentation makes no explicit mention or demonstrative use of an article of faith, under some putative medieval genre of "pure philosophy." Van Steenberghen, while never ceasing to criticize Gilson for failing to detach "Christian Philosophy" from theology, also complained, but without any sense of paradox, that the scholastic theologians themselves were guilty of conflating philosophy and theology, a symbiosis that resulted in "confusions and regrettable failures of method."[140] Apparently neither Gilson nor the scholastic theologians themselves recognized, as clearly as Van Steenberghen, that "speculative theology" itself is made up of "two profoundly heterogeneous elements, the revealed given and philosophy."[141] One might, of course, stress, exactly the opposite, their ultimate homogeneity: the revealed intelligibility, as a manifestation of God's self-knowledge, is the form of episteme to which philosophy aspires.[142] In either case, attributing the genre of *pure philosophy* to any of Aquinas's works is, arguably, a modern anachronism; it certainly promotes the mislabelling of the rational arguments that can be found in Aquinas's works that are overtly theological. On Thomistic grounds, one should not collapse reasoning in theology into "philosophical reasoning." To do so is to obfuscate the very paradigm of rational theology that Aquinas was advancing.

However, it should be forthrightly acknowledged, especially after Hankey's perspicacious exposition of the topic,[143] that Aquinas upheld and praised the integrity of pagan philosophy as a slowly advancing, truth-grasping, universal discipline distinct from and not reducible to sacred doctrine[144] or, we may add, the scientifically organized, inferential Thomistic theology based thereupon.[145] That is the assumption underlying the first article of the first question of the *Summa theologiae*: "Whether, besides the philosophical disciplines, any other doctrine is required [*haberi*]?" Still, naturally accessible philosophical

140. Van Steenberghen, *Introduction à l'étude de la philosophie médiévale,* 104.

141. Ibid.

142. See *De trin,* q. 2, a. 2, ad 7.

143. See Wayne J. Hankey, "Why Philosophy Abides for Aquinas," *The Heythrop Journal* 42: 3 (2001): 329–48.

144. See *ST*, II–II, q. 167, a. 1, ad 3: "Studium philosophiae secundum se est licitum et laudibile, propter veritatem quam philosophi perceperunt, Deo illis revelante, ut dicitur Ad Rom. 1.20." Cf. *ST*, I, q. 44, a. 2: "… antiqui philosophi paulatim, et quasi pedetentim, intraverunt in cognitionem veritatis."

145. The scientific *theologia* based on *sacra doctrina* infers conclusions from the articles of faith found in scripture: see *ST*, II–II, q. 1, a. 5, ad 2.

wisdom whether of pagans or Christian *magistri artium* is only relatively comprehensive; as Aquinas situates it, philosophy drawing on the natural light of reason must be understood in contrast to the far more comprehensive supernatural light, the *revelatio* which *sacra doctrina* articulates.[146]

What is revealed are the *credibilia* that are simultaneously for the believer the *credenda*[147]—believable truths about God and man that, for the attainment of man's ultimate happiness, ought to be believed—not only those which intrinsically transcend the capacity of natural reason to know but even those truths which can be known naturally by reason.[148] Christian faith, nonetheless, principally consists in believing what is above reason—that the one God is triune and that men are saved through the cross of Christ, the incarnate Son of God.[149] These revealed truths can neither be proved nor disproved by rational or philosophical arguments. Such *credibilia*, however, are intelligible in and through the means by which they are given: revelation occurs through an interior supernatural light that both elevates and enables the human mind to grasp with certitude truths beyond what it can naturally perceive.[150] The *credenda* so grasped are expressed in sacred doctrine, which is authoritatively proclaimed in the church's creedal statements of what has been revealed as that has been recorded in sacred scripture.[151]

Sacred doctrine, for its part, has no absolute need of philosophy in articulating the *credenda*; its proper and necessary arguments are drawn from the canonical scriptures, which consist of the inspired writings of the prophets and apostles.[152] Scripture often uses metaphorical and figurative language, but this usage accords with the natural limitations of the human intellect, whose proper object is sensible things. In speaking about God, then, there is a kind of epistemic necessity—even for the prophets—to commence with sensible

146. See *ST*, II–II, q. 1, a. 8, ad 1: "… multa per fidem tenemus de Deo quae naturali ratione investigare philosophi non potuerunt, puta circa providentiam eius et omnipotentiam, et quod ipse solus sit colendus."

147. See *ST*, II–II, q. 1 a. 5 ad 1: "… infideles eorum quae sunt fidei ignorantiam habent, quia nec vident aut sciunt ea in seipsis, nec cognoscunt ea esse credibilia. Sed per hunc modum fideles habent eorum notitiam, non quasi demonstrative, sed inquantum per lumen fidei videntur esse credenda …."

148. See *ST*, I–II, q. 99, a. 2, ad 2: "… inter credenda nobis proponuntur non solum ea ad quae ratio attingere non potest, ut Deum esse trinum; sed etiam ea ad quae ratio recta pertingere potest, ut Deum esse unum …."

149. See *De rationibus fidei ad cantorem Antiochenum*, c. 1 (LE 40: B57.15–20).

150. *SCG*, III, c.154, n. 3258 (ed. Pera-Marc-Caramello, 3: 229a): "Quae quidem revelatio fit quodam interiori et intelligibili lumine mentem elevante ad percipiendum ea ad quae per lumen naturale intellectus pertingere non potest. Sicut enim per lumen naturale intellectus redditur certus de his quae lumine illo cognoscit, ut de primis principiis; ita et de his quae supernaturali lumine apprehendit, certitudinem habet."

151. See *ST*, II–II, q. 1, a. 9, ad 1.

152. See *ST*, I, q. 1, a. 8.

metaphors,[153] although they "veil," to repeat Dionysius's own metaphor, the radiance of divine revelation. Scriptural metaphors (*similitudines*) typically speak of God under the figures of the lowly or earthly bodies (*sub figuris vilium corporum*) rather than the noble or heavenly bodies.[154]

These metaphorical veils, which hide revealed truth from those unworthy to receive it, are also useful, at least initially, for all believers. It preserves them from a grave error. Among learned non-believers, there are philosophical "corporealists" who think that the most noble bodies are the supreme realities. The lowly sensible metaphors of Scripture, which evidently are not meant to be taken literally, do not incline even simple believers to that error. Indeed, to those astute or learned believers who have received it, the light of divine revelation inevitably lifts their minds entirely beyond the sensible *similitudines* to the intellectual insight that God is in nowise a body, and, consequently, to accept that we know better what God is not than what He is.[155]

Aquinas explains why Christ, in keeping with his own earthly humiliations and suffering, chose disciples who were ignoble and illiterate, poor fishermen, to be the ministers of human salvation—"so that the salvation of the world would not be ascribed to human wisdom or power but solely to the divine."[156] Nonetheless, sacred doctrine can profitably use, at least for the learned believer, philosophy as an ancillary; it draws on philosophy for extrinsic and probable arguments on behalf of the truth of what has been revealed.[157] Such philosophical arguments can help clarify or make *more manifest* the meaning of the revealed truths about the spiritual things that are the principles of theology.[158] In attempting that clarification on their

153. See *ST*, II–II, q. 173, a. 3: "Similiter etiam non est necesse ut fiat alienatio ab exterioribus sensibus per hoc quod mens prophetae illustratur intelligibili lumine, aut formatur intelligibilibus speciebus, quia in nobis perfectum iudicium intellectus habetur per conversionem ad sensibilia, quae sunt prima nostrae cognitionis principia æ."

154. See *ST*, I, q. 1, a. 9, ad 3.

155. See *ST*, I, q. 1, a. 9, ad 2: "… radius divinae revelationis non destruitur propter figuras sensibiles quibus circumvelatur, ut dicit Dionysius, sed remanet in sua veritate; ut mentes quibus fit revelatio, non permittat in similitudinibus permanere, sed elevet eas ad cognitionem intelligibilium; et per eos quibus revelatio facta est, alii etiam circa haec instruantur. Unde ea quae in uno loco Scripturae traduntur sub metaphoris, in aliis locis expressius exponuntur."

156. *De rationibus fidei ad cantorem Antiochenum*, c. 7 (LE 40: B67.141–43).

157. See *ST*, I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2: "Sed tamen sacra doctrina huiusmodi auctoritatibus [philosophorum] utitur quasi extraneis argumentis, et probabilibus. Auctoritatibus autem canonicae Scripturae utitur proprie, ex necessitate argumentando."

158. See *ST*, I, q. 1, a. 5, ad 2. Whereas the text states that philosophy is "ad maiorem manifestationem eorum quae in hac scientia [sacra doctrina] traduntur," Hankey exaggerates Aquinas's point in asserting that ". . . without philosophy, we would not understand divine speech *at all*" ("Why Philosophy Abides for Aquinas," 340; my emphasis). More recently, again in reference to *ST*, I, q. 1, a. 5, ad 2, Hankey reiterates the claim, albeit without the unconditional "at all," in "Aquinas at the Origins of Secular Humanism? Sources and Innovation in *Summa theologiae*

own rational grounds, Aquinas came to understand, in progressively greater and more accurate historical detail, the neo-Platonist, Aristotelian, and Arabic traditions. In Vernon Bourke's apt phrase, Aquinas "with the mind of a Christian" read Aristotle benevolently but without turning him into a Christian.[159]

Aquinas, nonetheless, engaged philosophy for the sake of his theology. He prescribes that the theologian, while eschewing any rationalist *Aufhebung* of faith, should use philosophy to demonstrate those natural truths that faith presupposes (the *praeambula*), find rational analogues to what faith holds, and refute what contradicts the faith.[160] Aquinas neither neglects nor avidly pursues the latter theological task in his twelve philosophical commentaries. In them, *sacra doctrina* remains discretely in the background, but when there is some need to defend or clarify church doctrine vis-à-vis the philosophers, it, quickly enough, can be brought to the foreground.[161] To take but one example relevant to Aquinas's historical views, when Aristotle's rather than Plato's doctrine is closer to the Christian faith, Aquinas duly notes the consonance.[162] The basic issue—Aquinas would insist for the philosopher as well as the theologian—is the truth of things which must take priority over a merely dialectical conciliation of opposed philosophical traditions.

In the opusculum, *De unitate intellectus contra Averroistas* (1270), Aquinas exposed the exegetical and philosophical errors of the Averroist interpretation of Aristotle. The brilliant polemic did not go unnoticed. After his death, the Rector and Arts Masters requested that the Dominicans send to them "the writings concerning philosophy that Aquinas began at Paris." To Doig this proves that Aquinas was regarded "as not only a philosopher, but one of the greatest of his day."[163] In support of this view, one might also quote the most famous of the Latin Averroist philosophers, Siger of Brabant, himself, fairly or not, perhaps the primary target of Aquinas's attack. Siger called both

I, Question 1, Article 1," *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition 5/1 (2007): 33.

159. Vernon Bourke, introduction to St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Physics*, trans. Richard J. Blackwell, Richard J. Spath, and W. Edmund Thirkel (Notre Dame: Dumb Ox Books, 1999) xxiv.

160. See *De trin.*, q. 2, a. 3.

161. Working to discredit the canard that faith, in the middle ages, swallowed reason whole, Edward Grant, *God and Reason in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge U Press, 2001) notes that in Aquinas's *Sententia super Physicam* there are only 80 paragraphs (out of 2550) where "God's name or [some] mention of the faith appears." But what weight this "3 percent" should have in interpreting the rest is to be determined, not by percentile of the gross, but text by text.

162. See *Super De causis*, Pr. X, l. 10 (ed. Pera, 68a, n. 241): "Sed quia, secundum sententiam Aristotelis, quae circa hoc est magis consona fidei Christianae, non ponimus alias formas separatas supra intellectuum ordinem, sed ipsum bonum separatum ad quod totum universum ordinatur sicut ad bonum extrinsecum …."

163. Doig, 108.

Albert the Great and Thomas "eminent men in philosophy."[164] None of these facts, though, is probative for identifying Aquinas, in his own historical and systematic context, as a "philosopher."[165]

The *Index Thomisticus* lists 906 references to "*philosophi*": none of them refer to Christian writers, but only to pagans such as Empedocles, Democritus, Pythagoras, Speusippus, Plato, Aristotle, Themistius, Seneca, Alexander of Aphrodisias, and Moslems such as Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes.[166] The philosophers, as distinguished from the "Catholic doctors" (*doctores Catholici*) know nothing about grace but treat only of "natural and acquired habits."[167]

Aquinas was a regnant Master in the Faculty of Theology during the period (1215–83), when, as the new Medievalists emphasize, the Masters in the Arts Faculty achieved a kind of autonomous professional status as "philosophers." Albert the Great, however, had already called the Faculty of Arts a "city of philosophers."[168] Especially in reference to the latter, no evidence suggests that Aquinas or any other theologian identified *himself* as a member of that city even though the controversies of the 1270's were intensely philosophical.

There is no doubt about Aquinas's own profession and motivation: with Aristotle "the Philosopher" in central focus, Aquinas distinguished not only philosophy from theology but philosophers from theologians, and identified himself only with the latter.[169] Aquinas opposed "Latin Averroism" because it was "repugnant to Christian faith" and the "principles of philosophy."[170] But, undoubtedly, it was the former that motivated the *rational* demonstration of the latter. The "judgment of faith," Aquinas remarks sharply, is not just a dialectical "position" open to philosophical debate.[171] No philosopher

164. "praecipui viri in philosophia," quoted in Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P., *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, vol. 1, *The Person and His Work*, trans. Robert Royal (Washington, DC: The Catholic U of America Press, 1966) 194.

165. Doig, 104; 107. Cf. Jan A. Aertsen, "Aquinas's Philosophy in its Historical Setting," in *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, ed. Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump (Cambridge: Cambridge U Press, 1993) 12–33.

166. For example, see *I Sent.*, d. 3, q. 1, a. 4, arg. 1; d. 24, q. 1, a. 3, co.; d. 26, q. 2, a. 1, co.; *II Sent.*, d. 18, q. 2, a. 3, co.; *III Sent.*, d. 16, q. 1, a. 1, ad 5; *IV Sent.*, d. 43, q. 1, a. 3, qc. 1, co.; d. 49, q. 2, a. 1, co.; *SCG*, I, cap. 13, n. 1;

167. *II Sent.*, d. 26, q. 1, a. 4, ad.

168. See Aertsen, "Aquinas's Philosophy in its Historical Setting," 24.

169. See Inos Biffi, *Teologia, storia et contemplazione in Tommaso d'Aquino* (Milan: Jaca, 1995) 134–52, for an analysis of the lemmi (found in the *Index Thomisticus) theologia, theologus, theologicus, theologizo*: "Riguardo al lemma *theologus* che attraversa le opere di san Tommaso dall'inizio alla fine della sua attività" (140, n. 26).

170. McInerny, *Aquinas Against the Averroists*, 18, #2.

171. Ibid., 143, #122.

should be followed—not Plato nor, for that matter, Aristotle—beyond what the Catholic faith allows.[172] Faith takes precedence over philosophy.

Doig, who ignores Aquinas's repeated caveats about the debilities afflicting (fallen) reason and the mistakes made by even the greatest philosophers,[173] minimizes the radical theological issue underlying the Averroist controversies. The proposition that one ought not to be satisfied with certitude based solely on authority—the thirty-seventh of the condemned propositions on Tempier's second list— is more than "indirectly" "antagonistic to the [Christian] faith"[174] since the latter, as Aquinas insistently points out, originates by deferring to divine authority.[175] To Aquinas, certainly, it is no less evident that the Averroist proposition is directly antagonistic to reason. He remarks with rare hyperbole: "For if a man were perfectly able to know through themselves all things visible and invisible, it would be stupid to believe what we do not see; but our understanding is so weak that no philosopher was ever able to investigate perfectly even the nature of a single fly."[176]

Precisely framed, the interpretive issue is not discovering the implicitly "philosophical" character but appreciating, *within their own setting*, the explicitly rational, theological formality of Aquinas's demonstrative arguments: "Theology, to which all the other sciences are so to speak ancillary and propaedeutic in its coming into being, though they are of lesser dignity, can use the principles of all the other sciences."[177] Aquinas's "philosophical arguments" are formulated as rational exegesis of the revealed *sacra doctrina* held on faith.[178]

To return to a prominent example that I have already mentioned: what has been called Aquinas's "strictly philosophical work"[179] in *Summa theologiae,* I,

172. See *De spirit. Creat.*, q. un., a. 10, ad 8 (ed. Calcaterra-Centi, 410a): "Augustinus autem, Platonem secutus quantum fides catholica patiebatur …."

173. See, e.g., *Super De trin.*, q. 3, a. 1, ad 3.

174. Doig, 104.

175. *ST*, I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2: "… argumentari ex auctoritate est maxime proprium huius [sacrae] doctrinae, eo quod principia huius doctrinae per revelationem habentur, et sic oportet quod credatur auctoritati eorum quibus revelatio facta est. Nec hoc derogat dignitati huius doctrinae, nam licet locus ab auctoritate quae fundatur super ratione humana, sit infirmissimus; locus tamen ab auctoritate quae fundatur super revelatione divina, est efficacissimus."

176. "… nam si homo posset perfecte per se cognoscere omnia visibilia et invisibilia, stultum esset credere quae non videmus; sed cognitio nostra est adeo debilis quod nullus philosophus potuit unquam perfecte investigare naturam unius muscae …" (*Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum,* Prooemium).

177. *Super Boet. De Trin.*, q. 2, a. 3, ad 7; Maurer trans., 51.

178. Cf. *Lect. sup Matth.,* 4, 3: "quaedam in theologia traduntur quae naturalis ratio dictat."

179. Hankey, 332. However, Hankey rightly denies (contra Milbank and Pickstock) that "there is in Aquinas 'a philosophical approach to God independent of theology'" (340).

QQ. 75–89 is presented, explicitly, from a theological point of view. Aquinas prefaces this so-called "Treatise on Man" with a self-referential observation about the character of his arguments: "Now it pertains to the theologian to consider the nature of man from the part of the soul, not however from the part of the body, except in so far as the body has a relation to the soul." (*ST*, I, q. 75, preface). Of the powers of the soul, the theologian focuses on those that are the subjects of the virtues—the intellectual and the appetitive powers.[180] "The other powers of the soul do not pertain directly to the theologian" (*ST*, I, q. 84, prologus). These questions about the nature of man, then, could not be more clearly labeled: they are theology not philosophy. Nonetheless, Van Steenberghen asserts, with all the tenacity of an *idée fixe*, exactly the opposite: that this section of the *Prima pars* is a philosophical psychology that can be "easily detached" from its theological setting in the *Summa theologiae*.[181]

Likewise, the *Summa contra gentiles*, although often described as a philosophical work, Bormann correctly classifies as "actually a speculative apologetic for Catholic dogma."[182] In it, Aquinas sets for himself the task of "making known the truth of what the Catholic faith professes, and of setting aside the errors that are opposed to it."[183] Nonetheless, the same scholar continues to present, even while acknowledging that "Thomas himself gave no complete representation [*Gesamtdarstellung*] of philosophy," a florilegium of so-called philosophical texts picked from Aquinas's theology.[184]

Still everyone should admit that Aquinas did not write a *Summa philosophica*. But why not? Lacking any biographical information that could directly answer this question, we can only consider Aquinas's systematic views. Aquinas held that philosophy is intrinsically subordinated to theology: "Since the end of all philosophy [the contemplation of God in this life through knowledge of creatures] is below the end of theology [the contemplation of God in this life through knowledge immediately inspired from the divine light], and is ordered to it, theology ought to command all the other sciences and to use those things which are handed down in them."[185] The

180. See *ST*, I, q. 78, prologus..

181. Van Steenberghen, *La philosophie au xiii^e siècle*, 354. Cf. Anton C. Pegis, *At the Origins of the Thomistic Notion of Man*, The Saint Augustine Lecture 1962 (New York: MacMillan, 1963) 36–37, n. 13 for why this treatise cannot constitute, even when extracted from its theological setting, a philosophy of man.

182. See Karl Bormann, Introduction to Eugen Rolfes, *Die Philosophie des Thomas von Aquin* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1977) ix.

183. *SCG,* I, c. 29 (ed. Pera-Marc-Caramello, 2: 3b, n. 9; Pegis trans.).

184. Bormann, *op. cit.*, ix.

185. "Ita, cum finis totius philosophiae sit infra finem theologiae, et ordinatus ad ipsum, theologia debet omnibus aliis scientiis imperare et uti his quae in eis traduntur" (*I Sent.,* prologus, q. 1, a. 1, sol; Mandonnet, 1: 8).

simple answer, then, is that developing a "free-standing" philosophy was not part of Aquinas's theological task or, assuming the doctrine above, the best use of his time. The theologian who knows about must, accordingly, order his intellectual efforts to the higher end.

Nonetheless, in the contemporary context, even adept readers of Aquinas sometimes contour his rational argumentation to the modern distinction between reason and faith—though the latter is certainly not isomorphic with the Thomistic distinction of philosophy from theology.[186] Thus, they too easily permit themselves to identify Aquinas's rational arguments as "philosophy." However, the strictly rational arguments elaborated in Aquinas's theological works are not, by Thomistic standards, properly called "philosophical doctrines,"[187] though, indeed, propositions within these *theological* arguments may be materially identical with propositions of the latter.[188]

Philosophy and theology have different starting points: respectively, first principles intuited by the human mind and principles self-evident only to God.[189] By receiving as its principles the articles of faith, theology begins from what God reveals of His own self-knowledge;[190] in receiving understanding through these principles, human reason is lifted to the order of divine truth and is thus perfected not weakened.[191] But so lifted theology is not subse-

186. In reviewing my *Aquinas on the Twofold Human Good: Reason and Human Happiness in Aquinas's Moral Science* (Washington, DC: Catholic U of America Press, 1997), Gerard J. Hughes, "Does Aquinas Have a Moral Philosophy?" *Heythrop Journal* 39/3 (1998): 314–19 makes a surprising claim that is in nowise correctly attributable to Aquinas: that when "either in the opening questions of the *Summa*, or in the section dealing with ethics, Aquinas engages in *philosophical* argument … he is establishing the *basis* on which *alone* theology can securely rest" (315; my italics). Cf. *ST,* I, q. 1, a. 5, ad 2: "Non enim ["theologia quae ad sacram doctrinam pertinet"] accipit sua principia ab aliis scientiis, sed immediate a Deo per revelationem. Et ideo non accipit ab aliis scientiis tanquam a superioribus sed utitur eis tanquam inferioribus et ancillis …."

187. See *ST,* I, q. 1, a. 1, ad 2: "Unde theologia quae ad ad sacram doctrinam pertinet, differt secundum genus ab illa theologia quae pars philosophiae ponitur."

188. See *ST,* I, q. 1, a. 1, ad 2: "Unde nihil prohibet de eisdem rebus, de quibus philosophicae disciplinae tractant secundum quod sunt cognoscibilia lumine naturalis rationis, et aliam scientiam tractare secundum quod cognoscuntur lumine divinae revelationis."

189. See *II Sent*, prologus (Mandonnet, 2: 1): "Creaturarum consideratio pertinet ad theologos, et ad philosophos; sed diversimode. Philosophi enim creaturas considerant, secundum quod in propria natura consistunt; unde proprias causas et passiones rerum inquirunt: sed theologus considerat creaturas, secundum quod a primo principio exierunt, et in finem ultimum ordinantur qui Deus est; unde recte divina sapientia nominatur: quia altissimam causam considerat, quae Deus est." Cf. *De trin.,* q. 2, a. 1, ad 5; a. 2, ad 5.

190. See *De trin.,* prologus; q. 5, a. 4, ad 8; q. 6, a. 1, ad 1.

191. Cf. André Hayen, "*Aqua in totaliter in vinum conversa*: Philosophie et révélation chez saint Bonaventure et saint Thomas," in *Die Metaphysik im Mittelalter: Ihr Ursprung und ihre Bedeutung*, Miscellanea Mediaevalia, ed. Paul Wilpert (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1963) 317–24.

quently diminished by incorporating human reason. Aquinas's metaphor is telling: the wine of theology, without losing its own purity, absorbs and totally converts into wine the water. of philosophy that is added to it.[192] Unless it is distilled therefrom, the philosophy that is found in the wine of Thomistic theology remains theology.[193]

In less metaphorical terms, Aquinas holds that theology's formal point of view is global and irreducible: theology knows anything and everything, including things that can also be known in the other sciences by strictly rational arguments, "inasmuch as they are [also] knowable under the divine light"[194] or known in reference to or in service of revealed doctrines (*revelata*). So known, they are included in or fall under the theological category of the *revelabilia.*[195] The latter category is the hermeneutical key to contextualizing Aquinas's "strictly philosophical" arguments in all his Aristotelian commentaries.[196] But here I shall only use that key to unlock if not fully open the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*.[197]

192. See *De trin.,* q. 2, a. 3, ad 5: "Unde ille, qui utuntur philosophicis documentis in sacra doctrina redigendo in obsequium fidei, non miscent aquam vino, sed aquam convertunt in vinum." The *obsequium* of philosophy to the faith connotes not only "service" but "obedience" and "compliance," or as Jordan, "Theology and Philosophy," 235, translates the term, "subjugation."

193. See Aquinas, *Contra impugnantes*, c. 5 (Marietti, nn. 407, 416): "Quando aliquid totaliter transit in alterum, non dicitur esse mixtio … et ideo quando aliquid adiungitur sacrae Scripturae de sapientia saeculari, quod cedit in fidei veritatem, vinum sacrae Scripturae non est mixtum, sed purum remanet." Cf. Joseph Owens, C.Ss.R., "Aristotle and Aquinas," *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, ed. Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump (Cambridge: Cambridge U Press, 1993) 38–59, who, although well aware that Aquinas "did all his writing as a theologian," slips (*bonus dormitat Homerus*) and makes the surprisingly incongruous remark, referring to *De trin.,* q. 2, a. 3, ad 5, that when "the water of philosophy was absorbed into the wine of theology … it remained philosophy" (44).

194. "… scilicet prout sunt divino lumine cognoscibilia" (*ST,* I, q. 1, a. 4).

195. See *ST,* I, q. 1, a. 3, ad 2: "Et similiter ea quae in diversis scientiis philosophicis tractantur, potest sacra doctrina, una existens, considerare sub una ratione, inquantum scilicet sunt divinitus revelabilia …."

196. See René Antoine Gauthier, O.P., preface to *Sentencia libri de Anima,* Leonine Edition of Thomas Aquinas, *Opera Omnia* (Rome: 1882–) 45: 289*a: "… écrits pour affiner l'instrument de la réflexion théologique, les commentaires d'Aristote font partie intégrante de l'oeuvre du théologien …." On the "properly theological direction" (238) of Aquinas's twelve Aristotelian commentaries, see Joseph Owens, C.Ss.R., "Aquinas as Aristotelian Commentator," in *St. Thomas Aquinas, 1274–1974: Commemorative Studies*, 2 vols, ed.-in-chief Armand A. Maurer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1974) 1: 213–38. Cf. Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought,* xx, n. 18.

197. For a textually nuanced theological reading that opens the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, see Mark D. Jordan, "Aquinas Reading Aristotle's *Ethics*, in *Ad Litteram: Authoritative Texts and Their Medieval Readers*, ed. Mark D. Jordan and Kent Emery, Jr. (Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame Press, 1992) 229–49.

First, though, we must characterize what is undoubtedly Aquinas's *own* moral science. Is it philosophical or theological?[198] The Thomistic corpus contains four extensive presentations of Aquinas's virtue ethics:[199] according to the current account of their chronological order,[200] (1) Book III, distinction 33 of *Scriptum super libros Sententiarum,* published with later revisions circa 1257; (2) Book III, chapters 26–63 and 114–38 of *Summa contra gentiles*, circa 1263–64; (3) *De malo*, redacted circa 1266–70; (4) and the systematically comprehensive *Secunda pars* of the *Summa theologiae,* 1271–72. In each of these works, Aquinas uses innumerable rational arguments to undergird and develop his ethics. It is hardly surprising, then, that the Thomistic corpus has been continuously mined for arguments in support of a philosophical theory of Natural Law. Typically, the Thomist philosopher first adverts to the doctrine that the principles of natural law ethics are epistemically self-evident; Aquinas presents them (*ST*, I–II, q. 94, a. 2) as the immediate or indemonstrable principles of practical reason itself.

Nonetheless, Aquinas's theological commitments, when laying out his own moral science, are overt and systematic.[201] Each of the four major presentations of Thomistic ethics occurs in a theological work, and each develops a theological ethics explicitly aimed at supernatural happiness.[202] Unlike so many Thomist philosophers, Aquinas emphasizes the onto-theological character of the Natural Law: the self-evident principles of the natural law *participate* divine law and are divinely implanted in the human mind.[203]

198. See Mark D. Jordan, "Ideals of *Scientia moralis* and the Invention of the *Summa theologiae*, in *Aquinas's Moral Theory: Essays in Honor of Norman Kretzmann*, ed. Scott MacDonald and Eleonore Stump (Ithaca: Cornell U Press, 1998) 79–97; "The *Pars moralis* of the *Summa theologiae* as *Scientia* and as *Ars*, in *Scientia und ars in Hoch- und Spätmittelalter*, ed. Ingrid Craemer-Ruegenberg and Andreas Speer, Miscellanea Mediaevalia 22 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1994) 468–81.

199. See *ST*, II–II, prologus: "Sic igitur tota materia morali ad considerationem virtutum reducta, omnes virtutes sunt ulterius reducendae ad septem, quarum tres sunt theologicae, de quibus primo est agendum; aliae vero quatuor sunt cardinales, de quibus posterius agetur."

200. See Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P., *Saint Thomas Aquinas,* vol. 1, *The Person and His Work*, trans. Robert Royal (Washington, DC: The Catholic U of America Press, 1996).

201. Cf. Leo J. Elders, S.V.D., *L'Éthique de saint Thomas d'Aquin: Une lecture de la Secunda pars de la Somme de théologie*, French trans. Véronique Pommeret (Paris: Presses universitaires de l'IPC, 2005) 22: "Les textes de la *Secunda Pars* qui consistent en des arguments philosophiques forment un tout cohérent et, dans leurs explications, demeurent au niveau de la raison naturelle."

202. See *I Sent.,* prologus, q. 1, a. 1, co. (Busa, 2b); *SCG,* I, c. 9 (ed. Pera-Marc-Caramello, 2:12b, nn. 55–7); III, c. 115 (3:174–5, nn. 2882–93); IV, c. 1 (3; 244, nn. 3347–9); *De malo,* q. 5, a. 1; *ST,* I, q. 1, a. 3, ad 2.

203. See *SCG,* I, c. 7; (ed. Pera-Marc-Caramello, 11a, n. 44): "Principiorum autem naturaliter notorum cognitio nobis divinitus est indita: cum ipse Deus sit nostrae auctor naturae. Haec ergo principia etiam divina sapientia continet." Cf. *III Sent.,* d. 33, q. 2, a. 1b, ad 2 (Busa, 383b).

Yet more significantly, Aquinas characterizes the Old Law, whose revealed moral precepts (the Decalogue) are also identified as precepts of the Natural Law, as "imperfect": the New Law, based on the grace of the Holy Spirit, is "perfect" because it is focused on interior acts and virtues rather than moral precepts.[204] That its central and foundational virtues are the infused supernatural virtues follows from the *only* end that Thomistic ethics proposes to men as ultimate: "seeing God" Himself.[205] Ultimate beatitude can only be attained through the exercise of the infused theological and moral virtues, the latter of which bear respectively on the supernatural means to the ultimate, supernatural end. Acquired virtues, which bear on on particular goods or proximate ends, are really virtues but always in a conditional or restricted—*secundum quid*—sense of the term "virtue."[206]

Against this background, we now pose the question whether those arguments that "remain at the level of natural reason"[207] and are not explicitly subsumed into a theological perspective —as, indeed, they are not explicitly subsumed in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*—may be legitimately called by contemporary interpreters Aquinas's "purely *philosophical* arguments"? In advancing a strictly philosophical hermeneutic of the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, Doig strongly rejects the counterposition, which attends to the implicitly theological character of the same commentary. Yet, Aquinas indicates, using an overstatement, that overall he is reading the *Ethics* "theologically": "The Philosopher speaks in this book of happiness, such as it can be had in this life. Now the happiness of the other life exceeds all investigation of reason."[208] Nonetheless, Doig confidently affirms that he knows what was in the mind of Aquinas when he wrote this commentary—*only* philosophy[209]—albeit he is less confident in the ability of others to discern that same mind. He

204. See *ST,* II–II, q. 107, a. 1, ad 2. However, Jordan, "*Pars moralis* of the *Summa theologiae*," 472 underestimates the foundational moral role of the natural law by characterizing it as "nothing more than a dim and inarticulate anticipation of lessons to be taught more plainly and more forcefully in the divine law and especially in the 'law' of grace." Cf. *ST*, I, q. 1, a. 8., ad 2: "Cum enim gratia non tollat naturam, sed perficiat, oportet quod naturalis ratio subserviat fidei; sicut et naturalis inclinatio voluntatis obsequitur caritati."

205. See *ST,* I, q. 12, a. 1.

206. See *ST,* I–II, q. 65, a. 2: "… solae virutes infusae sunt perfectae, et simpliciter dicendae virtutes: quia bene ordinant hominem ad finem ultimum simpliciter. Aliae vero virtutes, scilicet acquisitae, sunt secundum quid virtutes, non autem simpliciter …."

207. Leo J. Elders, SVD, "Faith and Reason: The Synthesis of St. Thomas Aquinas," in *Laudemus viros gloriosos: Essays in Honor of Armand Maurer, CSB*, ed. R. Houser (Notre Dame: U of Notre Dame Press, 2007) 123.

208. *Sent. Ethic.*, 1, lect. 9 (ed. Spiazzi, 31a, n. 113); LE 47/1: 381.88–90.

209. Cf. Doig, *Aquinas's Philosophical Commentary on the "Ethics,"* 85, first par. for his exclusionary ("philosophical" *not* "theological") characterization of Aquinas's reasoning in the *Sent. Ethic.*

assures us, among other things, that contemporary Aristotelian exegesis is "simply not *ad rem*" for understanding that Aquinas's exegesis is "in accord with what he [Aquinas] understood Aristotle to mean."[210]

Now I can only admit that I am not assured: a fundamental ambivalence blurs Doig's entire characterization of Aquinas's exegesis in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*. Does the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* present an *amplified exposition* of "Aristotle's system"[211] as Aquinas understood it; or do the Aristotelian commentaries "represent as much of *Aquinas's philosophy* as could be legitimately be proposed within the confines set by Aristotle's texts"?[212] If the latter, however, we must once again contextualize Aquinas's conception of philosophy.

Is the philosophy that existed in the mind of a Christian theologian, who never identified himself or any other Christian as a "philosopher," just the philosophy that could have existed, even as it surely did not, in the mind of an Aristotle? Aquinas, it may be thought, claimed as much in his anti-Averroist polemic about the unity of the agent intellect: "We intend to show that the foregoing position [of the *Averroistae*] is opposed to the principles of philosophy every bit as much as it is to the teaching of faith … [it is] in every way repugnant to his [Aristotle's] words and judgments."[213] In considering how Aquinas carries out his intention, no contemporary reader can ignore that Aquinas does to Aristotle what Aristotle did to his pre-Socratic predecessors: he finds in them his own doctrine.[214] In combating heterodox doctrines

210. Doig, 134. Cf. Vernon J. Bourke, *The Nicomachean Ethics* and Thomas Aquinas," in *St. Thomas Aquinas, 1274–1974: Commemorative Studies*, 2 vols. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1974)1: 239–59: "There was no way in which Thomas Aquinas could have challenged the exegesis of a good modern interpreter" (259).

211. Doig, 110.

212. Doig, 106; my emphasis. Cf. Christopher Kaczor, "Disclaimers in Aquinas's *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*? A Reconsideration," paper delivered at the University of Notre Dame Thomistic Institute, 2001, http://www2.nd.edu/Departments/Maritain/ti01/ kaczor.htm: "Aquinas would seem to indicate by choice of genre that his own views are to be found in the commentaries on Aristotle … The *Commentary on the Ethics* is not simply a commentary; it shows Thomas's own exploration of the issues at hand."

213. *De unitate intellectu contra Averroistas,* prooemium (ed. Spiazzi, 63; ed. McInerny, 18: 29–32); Latin quotation n. 119 *supra.*

214. John Jenkins, C.S.C., "Expositions of the Text: Aquinas's Aristotelian Commentaries," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 5/1 (1996): 39–62, who characterizes Aquinas's hermeneutic as a dialectical use of authorities, gives numerous and convincing examples of how Aquinas reads into (or, as Jenkins might prefer, reads out of) Aristotle's words meanings unknown to Aristotle. To establish the legitimacy of Aquinas's hermeneutic, Jenkins himself reads into Aquinas a version of "semantic externalism"—the contemporary theory that the meaning of terms is (should be?) dependent on "the speaker's [external] environment and not solely on the speaker's internal states" [55]—which he aligns with the Thomistic distinction between real and nominal definitions. The complexities of "semantic externalism" make Jenkins's alignment dubious and obscure rather than illumine how Aquinas understood his own hermeneutial procedure.

rampant in the Faculty of Arts, Aquinas attributed to Aristotle philosophical doctrines compatible with Christian faith: divine particular providence, the impossibility of perfect this-worldly happiness, personal immortality, special creation of individual souls, and *synderesis* (the innate natural habit of universal moral principles). Neither the ancient and medieval commentators nor every astute contemporary scholar could find these doctrines in or regard them as plausibly attributable to Aristotle himself.[215]

Doig, however, regards these doctrines as the "foundations"[216] of Aquinas's own "moral philosophy." Yet, this reading hardly clarifies Aquinas's own interpolations, which admittedly the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* presents as expositions of the *intentio Aristotelis* but which substantively argue a *veritas rei* evidently coordinated with Christian doctrine. Doig correctly observes that Aquinas, where it is to his purposes, carefully notes what Aristotle, "expressly in his own words,"[217] says and does not say; but Doig also allows that Aquinas, where presumably it was not to his purposes to be literal, articulates the principles of a hitherto misunderstood, true, but strictly philosophical "theory of morality"[218] found "implicitly" in Aristotle. If the latter does accurately describe Aquinas's procedure, then we are dealing with two very different kinds of Thomistic "exegesis" which, in a contemporary context, cannot be conflated.

Doig maintains the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*, does not introduce any interpretation "not needed for understanding of the *Ethics* and for the realization that Aristotle's moral thought does not contradict Aquinas's vision of Christian theology."[219] Can these two hermeneutical criteria be so seamlessly joined? Unless Aristotle was a philosophically prescient proto-Christian—and Aquinas bluntly remarks that he was not[220]—one cannot assume that exegesis of the *intentio Aristotelis*, by interpolating arguments on behalf of what evidently is the theological as well as philosophical *veritas rei*, will inevitably lead to the same doctrinal results. Doig, who provides ample evidence that Aquinas sometimes slants his exegesis toward a theological goal, does not adequately address this issue but permits himself to move between alternative views of Aquinas's own "moral philosophy": the latter both is and is not substantively motivated and controlled by Aquinas's theological vision.[221]

215. See Jordan, "The Alleged Aristotelianism of Thomas Aquinas."

216. **Doig, 272.**

217. **"ex verbis suis expresse"** (*I Sent.,* d. 39, q. 2, a. 2, c.; Mandonnet, 1: 930).

218. Doig, 35.

219. Doig, 133.

220. See *Sent. Ethic.*, 4, lect. 7 (ed. Spiazzi, 202a, n. 719); LE/2 47:222.28–32: "The Philosopher speaks here according to the custom of the Gentiles, which has now been abrogated by revealed truth."

221. Cf. Kaczor, "Disclaimers in Aquinas's *Commentary on the Nicomachean Ethics*? A

Christopher Kaczor appears to fall into a similar dilemma: in a 2001 lecture, Kaczor maintains that the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* "represents Thomas's own thought," but, in a 2004 lecture, he concludes that "theistic belief is not a necessary component or required prerequisite for the account of the moral life presented in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*."[222] Now one or the other claim—or perhaps both—must be abandoned. If "theistic belief" covers Aristotle's demonstration of the first of the many divine, immaterial or separate substances (that is, the supreme God who is the first of the 55 or 47 unmoved movers in *Metaphysics*, book 7, chapter eight),[223] then Kaczor's 2004 conclusion cannot be squared with what Aquinas says elsewhere: "All who have thought rightly have placed the end of human life in the contemplation of God,"[224] a maxim which he explicitly applies to Aristotle.[225] Aquinas states an important principle in his exposition of the first book of the *Ethics*: "It is necessary that all of human life be ordered to the ultimate and best end of human life. Therefore, for the rectitude of human life, it is necessary to have knowledge of the ultimate and best end of human life. And the reason for this is as follows: the very intelligibility of those things which are for an end [the means] is always to be taken from the end itself."[226] Kaczor's odd contention aside, clearly Aquinas thought that Aristotle promoted the "ultimate and best end of human life," the contemplation of God;[227] if he had thought otherwise, Aquinas would have been forced to discount the whole *Ethics*.

Reconsideration": "the commentary on the *Ethics* represents Thomas's own thought, even if not in its theological fullness, on ethical matters or issues in the philosophy of nature."

222. Christopher Kaczor, "The Divine in Aquinas's Commentary on the Ethics: Can we be Good without God?" paper delivered at the University of Notre Dame, Jacques Maritain Center, 2003, http://maritain.nd.edu/jmc/ti03/eKaczor.htm#n_11; forthcoming chapter in *Ethics Without God? The Divine in Contemporary Moral and Political Thought*, ed. Fulvio Di Blassi, Joshua P. Hochschild, and Jeffrey Langan (St. Augustine's Press).

223. On the many problems involved in relating Aristotle's polytheism to his doctrine that being is said *pros hen*, see L. P. Gerson, "Aristotle's God of Motion," in *God and Greek Philosophy: Studies in the Early History of Natural Theology* (London/New York: Routledge, 1990) 82–141.

224. *I Sent.*, I, prologus, q. 1, a. 1 (Mandonnet, 1: 7). Cf. *2 Sent.,* d. 4, q. 1. a. 1 (Mandonnet, 2: 133): "Intellectus autem perfectissima operatio est in contemplatione altissimi intelligibilis, quod Deus est. Unde tam Dei quam Angeli, quam etiam hominis ultima felicitas et beatitudo, Dei contemplatio est, non solum secundum sanctos, sed etiam secundum philosophos."

225. *III Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 2, qc. 3, sol. 3 (Moos, 3: 1179, n.44): "… felicitas contemplativa, de qua philosophi tractaverunt, in contemplatione Dei consistit: quia, secundum philosophum, X *Eth.*, consistit in actu altissimae potentiae quae in nobis est, scilicet intellectus, et in habitu nobilissimo, scilicet sapientia, et etiam objecto dignissimo, quod Deus est."

226. *Sent. Ethic.*, 1, lect. 2 (ed. Spiazzi, 7a, n. 23); LE 47/1: 8a.67–73.

227. See *ST*, I, q. 64, a. 1: "Unde et Aristoteles perfectissimam hominis contemplationem, qua optimum intelligibile, quod est Deus, contemplari potest in hac vita, dicit esse ultimam hominis felicitatem." Cf. *Sent. Ethic.*, 1, lect. 10 (ed. Spiazzi, 33a, n. 120); LE 47/1: 35a.44–45: "… Deus dicitur esse beatitudo hominis."

"The ultimate happiness of man only consists in the contemplation of God."[228] Precisely what kind of divine contemplation does Aquinas propose to be the end of man? The whole moral part of the *Summa theologiae*, turns on—as Pinckaers has brilliantly elucidated—a doctrine of ultimate happiness that prompts Aquinas's "famous argument affirming the natural desire to see God,"[229] paradoxical inasmuch as this natural desire can only be fulfilled supernaturally. But Aquinas does not simply assert this theological doctrine as a supernatural datum that escapes rational penetration; on the contrary, he gives an extended rational argument demonstrating that this-worldly philosophical contemplation of God (of the sort that Aquinas attributes to Aristotle) does *not* satisfy man's natural desire for happiness and, therefore, is not man's ultimate end.[230] Thus Aquinas uses reason *in theology* to determine the exact limits of philosophy.

How, then, can one suppose that Aquinas's own true moral philosophy—surely not globally but, to put the question more cautiously, its foundational principles—is implicit in Aristotle?[231] To take the prime instance of the latter, does Aristotle implicitly hold, as the "guardian of morality,"[232] that there are universal or exceptionless, indemonstrable moral principles of the kind spelled out in the medieval doctrine of *synderesis*?[233] The hermeneutical legitimacy of

228. "… ultimate felicitas hominis non consistit nisi in contemplatione Dei" (*SCG*, III, c. 37; ed. Pera-Marc-Caramello, 3: 43b, n. 2160).

229. See Servais Th. Pinckaers, O.P., "The Place of Philosophy in the Moral Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas," paper delivered at University of Notre Dame, Thomistic Institute, 1999, http://is maritain.nd.edu/jmc/ti99/schedule.htm.

230. Inasmuch as Aquinas's argument is rationally grounded, it is of philosophical interest and, therefore, could not be viewed as "totally extraneous to Aristotle." In charging me with an "extreme view"—allegedly because I interpret Aquinas's doctrine of perfect, other-wordly happiness as motivated "by theological reasons only"—Antonio Donato, "Contemplation As The End of Human Nature in Aquinas *Sententia libri Ethicorum*," http://maritain.nd.edu/jmc/ti03/eDonato.htm ignores the point that I spent a chapter developing: although the rational arguments in Aquinas's theology are, formally speaking, theology not philosophy, they are not for that reason less rational, and hence can be materially identical to a philosophical proposition. In other words, the same proposition, depending upon context, can be "theological" or "philosophical."

231. Cf. Ralph McInerny, "Thomistic Natural Law and Aristotelian Philosophy," in *St. Thomas Aquinas and the Natural law Tradition: Contemporary Perspectives*, ed. John Goyette, Mark S. Latkovic, and Richard S. Myers (Washington, D.: The Catholic U of America Press, 2004) 36: "Aristotle forms the fundamental structure of Thomas's moral thinking"; Mark Jordan, "The Alleged Aristotelianism of Thomas Aquinas," 30: "A careful study of the ethical discourses will show that the Aristotelian authorities do not function for Thomas as the main authorities."

232. Doig, 165.

233. See Elders, "Faith and Reason," 119: "The Stagirite also developed the theory of first principles although he failed to apply it to the moral order." Cf. Daniel McInerny, "Deliberation about Final Ends: Thomistic Considerations," in *Recovering Nature: Essays in Natural Philosophy, Ethics, and Metaphysics in Honor of Ralph McInerny*, ed. Thomas Hibbs and John O'Callaghan

Aquinas attributing the doctrine to Aristotle is undercut by the solely Christian genealogy that Doig summarizes. Aquinas, it is correct to say, lived and thought within the Christian "culture of *synderesis*,"[234] but there a significant difference between asserting that Aquinas found "an implied need"[235] or an implicit doctrine of *synderesis* in Aristotle.[236] In fact, neither can be found in Aristotle, as Doig himself could have learned from his own footnote (p. 249, n. 80) quoting Elders.[237] The doctrine of *synderesis*, beginning with the gloss of St. Jerome on Ezekiel, emerged only from the history of Christian theological speculation on the *rational grounds* for belief in the exceptionless laws of the revealed Decalogue; Albert the Great introduced it into his commentary on the *Ethics* and Aquinas followed suit.[238] It is in this historically precise and theologically contextualized sense that the "philosophical" doctrine of *synderesis* is, Doig not withstanding, "religiously based."[239]

Unless we imagine Aquinas bifurcating neatly into a theologian *and* a philosopher (being while the latter, a more acute Aristotelian, from what contemporary exegetes can discern, than Aristotle himself), the hermeneutical question remains. In the case that we are considering, how should we characterize Aquinas's understanding of the rational argumentation in his own ethics? In their primary contexts, these rational arguments are patently motivated by and in the service of Aquinas's Christian beliefs; they belong to the *officium sapientis*, the theological proclamation and defense of the revealed truth.[240] The rational arguments developed in Aquinas's major and

(Notre Dame: Notre Dame U Press, 1999) 105–25 for an attempt to tease out, conceptually rather than textually, a doctrine of *synderesis* from Aristotle insofar as "practical reason is one *in subjecto* with speculative reason" (115). But, contra McInerny, the Thomistic doctrine of *synderesis* demands more than "untutored universal apprehension" (115) of naturally perfective goods—in Aristotelian psychological terms, it requires positing a faculty of *nous praktikos* with a range beyond the quasi-sensible intuition of particular actions, a faculty capable of intuiting universals that are exceptionless moral principles for all (not just Greek) rational agents, requirements which are dubiously Aristotelian: see Denis J.M. Bradley, *Aquinas on the Twofold Human Good: Reason and Human Happiness in Aquinas's Moral Science* (Washington, DC: The Catholic U of America Press, 1997) 161–67; 172–84.

234. Doig, 180.

235. Doig, 192.

236. See Doig, 165, 180.

237. See René Antoine Gauthier and JeanYves Jolif, *L'Éthique a Nicomaque: Introduction, Traduction, et Commentaire*, 2nd ed. (Louvain/Paris: Publications Universitaires/Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1970)2: 563–65.

238. For the doctrinal history of *synderesis*, see Vernon J. Bourke, "The Background of Aquinas' Synderesis Principle," ch. in *Graceful Reason: Essays in Ancient and Medieval Philosophy Presented to Joseph Owens, CSsR*, ed. Lloyd P. Gerson (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1983) 345–60.

239. Doig, 181.

240. See. *SCG,* I, ch. 2 (ed. Pera-Marc-Caramello, 3b, n. 9).

undeniably theological works—and those comparable doctrinal prolongations found in the *Sententia libri Ethicorum* (and the other Aristotelian commentaries)—fit easily into the Thomistic *theological* category of "truths which faith professes and reason investigates … by bringing forward both demonstrative and probable arguments"[241] about the *revelabilia* (*ST,* I, q. 1, a. 3, ad 2).[242] Gilson's observation about the topics chosen and doctrinal positions argued in Aquinas's "philosophical" opuscula and commentaries remains hermeneutically apposite: "the level of theology is not far from the surface."[243]

McInerny, however, retorts that "The suggestion by Gilson and others that Thomas just uses Aristotle for his own purposes simply will not wash as a description of [Aquinas's Aristotelian] commentaries."[244] But remove the rhetorical "just" and one could readily admit, as Gilson himself did, what McInerny contends: that Aquinas's commentaries, while they have their own theological purport, are "precious instruments for understanding the text of Aristotle itself."[245] In the *Sententia libri Ethicorum,* and the other Aristotelian commentaries, Aquinas usually keeps his specific Christian beliefs in the background but infrequently, though pointedly, his exegesis can turn directly theological—when he introduces, for example, the notion of the "perfect beatitude" (*beatitudo perfecta*) which can be found only in the eternal life that follows earthly death.[246] Notice too that it is the abstract philosophical view of perfect this-worldly metaphysical contemplation—not its Aristotelian counterpart, the attainable but intermittent, existentially vulnerable, and partial human happiness—that the *Sententia libri Ethicorum*

241. *SCG*, I, ch. 9 (ed. Pera-Marc-Caramello, 12b, n. 55).

242. In affixing the label "philosophy" on Aquinas's doctrinal prolongations of Aristotle in the *Sent. Ethic.* chronology plays an important role for Doig: although Gauthier dates the *Sent. Ethic.* after the *Prima secundae* but contemporaneously with the *Secunda secundae* 1271–72, Doig argues that it was written after both parts, and was not, as many suppose, "preparatory to the 'moral part' of the *Summa* [*theologiae*]" (xv). While acknowledging [24] the theological character of the moral science contained in the *Summa theologiae*, Doig infers that, since the *Sent. Ethic.* came first, Aquinas presents a different genus of moral science: Aquinas's own Aristotelian but personally reworked and *exclusively* philosophical "vision of correct moral philosophy" (xvii). The inference even, if one accepts Doig's dating, is tendentious. How does this "correct moral philosophy" happen to be congruent—merely *per accidens*, so it seems from Doig's account—with Aquinas's Christian faith and theological moral science?

243. See Etienne Gilson, *The Philosopher and Theology* (New York, 1962) 211; quoted disapprovingly by Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought,* xix, n. 15.

244. Ralph McInnerny, "Thomism and the Future of Catholic Philosophy," in *New Blackfriars* 80/938 (1999): 192–99; quotation found on p. 194 in response to John Haldane.

245. Ibid, 194. Cf. Elders, "Faith and Reason," 124: "… from a doctrinal point of view, they [Aquinas's Aristotelian commentaries] are the best commentaries extant on the text of Aristotle."

246. See *Sent. Ethic.,* I, lect. 9 (ed. Spiazzi, 31a, n. 113); LE 47/1: 32b.162–5; lect. 10 (34b, n. 129); 36b–7b.153–76; lect. 16 (53b, n. 202); 60b.218–26.

tags "imperfect happiness" by comparison with the theological view of the supernatural vision of God, which is other-worldly or "perfect happiness." Doig claims that Aquinas's *philosophical* doctrine of other-worldly happiness "completes" Aristotle in a way that the latter "never intended."[247] But perhaps we should say "never could have *philosophically* intended"—which is to reject the propriety of Doig's term "completes." In short, the Thomistic contrast between imperfect/perfect happiness makes no sense apart from the theological framework (the contrast between natural and supernatural) in which it is situated.

Of course, it is possible to use words without regard to their proper historical or semantic context. If the term "philosophy" is identified *tout court* with rational argumentation, Aquinas's Aristotelian commentaries certainly contain Aquinas's "philosophy." But, then, what kind of, or better perhaps, whose philosophy is it—Aristotle's, as Elders continues to main despite the animadversions of Gilson and his "disciple Joseph Owens,"[248] although corrected, deepened, prolonged, and made doctrinally more coherent but not in its principles radically transformed by Aquinas?[249] Or is it, as Jordan has notably argued in ingenious and convincing detail (*pace* Kaczor), an original, rationally articulated theology (*not a philosophy*) that actually incorporates "the most far reaching changes that Thomas has worked on Aristotelian materials?"[250] To be sure, the question will remain moot since the nature of "philosophy" and, a fortiori, the identify of the same philosophy allegedly found among its different exponents are themselves philosophical issues.

Gilson, in some of his remarks, comes surprisingly close to Van Steenberghen and Wippel's view of a theologically independent or pure Thomistic philosophy: Gilson states that both Saints Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas "have written philosophical treatises and commentaries on Aristotle, in which natural reason *alone* was at work."[251] But this statement surely must be balanced by what Gilson repeats elsewhere about Aquinas's theologically motivated and situated "Christian philosophy." Although I cannot rehearse all the developments and nuances of that controversial notion over his long lifetime, Gilson seems to have left a fundamental issue unresolved. As a way

247. Doig, 127.

248. Elders, "Faith and Reason," 121.

249. Cf. Elders, "Faith and Reason," 124: "Is there a question of non-Aristotelian principles …. Our answer is a categorial 'no.' Thomistic anthropology, metaphysics of being, and ethics … [are] derived from the principles posited by Aristotle himself." Accordingly, Elders (referring to *De pot.*, q. 3, a. 2 and *ST*, I, q. 44, a. 2) attributes to Aquinas the view that the followers of Plato and Aristotle "understood … the real composition of the act of being and the essence in created things" (124).

250. Jordan, "The Alleged Aristotelianism of Thomas Aquinas," 30.

251. Gilson, "Historical Research and the Future of Scholasticism," 157; my emphasis.

of philosophizing in explicit conjunction with supernaturally infused faith in revealed truth, to what extent can a "Christian" as distinguished from a "scholastic" philosophy exist—not to say flourish—independently of theology? Gilson's mature view was that any present or future Christian philosophy, like the scholastic philosophies of the middle ages, should retain, to ensure its metaphysical vitality, a theological matrix. Contrariwise, Gilson's disciple and collaborator, Anton Pegis, eventually proposed that a present-day Thomist, in his own name, could and should give the theologically embedded "philosophy of St. Thomas an authentic [independent] philosophical existence in the modern world."[252]

Wippel, for his part, forthrightly acknowledges that any free-standing and systematically developed body of "purely philosophical" Thomistic doctrines—whether a *Summa* of metaphysics, epistemology, anthropology, or ethics can only be something that "today's historian of philosophy"[253] personally recovers and reconstructs mostly from Aquinas's explicitly theological texts. Such a reconstruction—whether or not it can or, better, should ever radically escape "theologism in interpreting Aquinas's philosophical thought"[254]—properly belongs not to Thomas Aquinas but to the continuing history of Thomism; it remains the effort of a would-be disciple presenting what he thinks "[Aquinas] himself might have done … had he chosen to write"[255] any one of the above *Summae philosophiae,* each of which has been so often extracted—always *"ad mentem divam Thomam"* but with such variant doctrinal results—from the Thomistic texts.

No matter what the results, Thomas Aquinas is not implicated in the pure philosophies of his disciples. A hermeneutic that recalls the theological motivation of the historical Aquinas and the centrality of his systematic theological works plausibly remains the best background against which to read even his "philosophical" opuscula and commentaries. In doing so, nothing rational—by Aquinas's theological criteria—will be lost from them and something of great contemporary philosophical interest will be found in them: as the new medievalists might put it, a rationality that is grasped *in proprio situ*, and, therefore, one expressive even if not, by their standards, fully or adequately cognizant of its own historicity.[256] Here, though, we should advert to the unfashionable

252. Cf. Etienne Gilson, "What Is Christian Philosophy?" in *A Gilson Reader*, 177–91, esp. 187; *The Philosopher and Theology* (New York: Random House, 1962) 221; Anton C. Pegis, *St. Thomas and Philosophy*, The Aquinas Lecture, 1964 (Milwaukee: Marquette U Press, 1964) esp. 84–87. Maurer, however, anecdotally smoothes over the difference between Gilson and Pegis: cf. *Christian Philosophy*, xix–xx.

253. Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought,* xviii.

254. Ibid., xviii, n. 13.

255. Ibid., xxvii.

256. Cf. de Libera, *Raison et foi*, 25: "Premièrement, un historien *des* théologies médiévales ne doit pas confondre raison et rationalité …. La raison est pluriforme dans son histoire."

counterview of the medieval philosophical historian with whom we began this essay, Armand Maurer. Aquinas, he points out, does acknowledge the temporality and mutability of truth as it exists in the human mind. Although allowing that any universal, considered in itself, abstracts from the here and now and thus grounds theoretical and practical science, Aquinas insists that the only eternally existing truths are those in the divine mind. Human truths are temporal and mutable in how they arise and how they are sustained: "Socrates is sitting" *is true* only so long as Socrates is sitting.[257] On this doctrinal basis, Maurer, makes the far reaching and—*à la rationalité au moment même*—highly contestable claim that Aquinas was adequately and correctly aware of the historicity of human truths.[258]

257. See *ST*, I, q. 16, aa. 7–8.

258. See Armand Maurer, C.S.B., *St. Thomas and Historicity*, The Aquinas Lecture, 1979 (Milwaukee: Marquette U Press, 1979).