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Saint Thomas Aquinas

VOLUME I
The Person and His Work

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the same time, he remained available for more occasional tasks, and though we might suspect that these tasks were sometimes a burden for him, we must also recognize that he honestly forced himself to satisfy those who appealed to him. Finally, during this period he also launched himself into the work of commenting on Aristotle, which was going to become a considerable part of his activity. And this occurred because of his concern better to fulfill his principal profession in the service of truth. If we recall that he also preached at this time, we must recognize that his extraordinary gifts did not remain unused, but we also understand perhaps a little better the state of exhaustion in which he found himself less than ten years later.

52. We have at least one example. Tocco (Yatras 53, p. 365; Tocco 53, pp. 126–27) reports that Thomas preached at Rome one Holy Week; after his preaching on Easter day, a woman suffering from a flow of blood was freed from her illness after touching the holy doctor’s cape, and she went from Saint Peter’s to Santa Sabina to recount this fact to Brother Reginald; cf. Naples 75, p. 369. Leonardo of Caia reports the same thing, which he says he heard from Reginald himself, but he places the sermon at Santa Maria Maggiore.

Chapter X

The New Sojourn in Paris

Doctrinal Confrontations

Thomas’s occupations during the years in Rome, as well as at Orvieto, were numerous, as his works exist to testify. Yet his literary output reflects a calm and serenity that have always struck observers. We suspect that he is sometimes overburdened, but he is neither impatient nor irritated with his direct interlocutors. If he is sometimes angered by certain errors—in the Summa contra Gentiles or in the commentary on De anima—it is over a conflict of ideas with some philosophers of the past. He does not have contemporary adversaries confronting him who directly menace the Christian faith. But things began to change upon his return to Paris; the works from this new period attest to an agitation that impinges on the peaceful tone of the works from the previous period.

Date and Place of Thomas’s Departure for Paris

When did Thomas return to Paris? Historians have long wavered about this matter. Many historical essays dealing with this subject are still in circulation, although they are now mostly out of date. But it will not be useless to review here for the reader some of the scholarly give and take.

In 1910, Mandonnet summed up with great perspicacity the results of his inquiry: “All the positive data that we have establish, therefore, that Saint Thomas Aquinas resumed his professorial duties at the University of Paris probably in autumn 1268 and certainly before Easter 1269. And it is in this capacity that he undertook his first quodlibetal dispute, if not at
The New Sojourn in Paris: Doctrinal Confrontations

Christmas, then just before Easter of the same scholastic year.\(^1\) Today’s historians have tested and further sharpened this intuition, but they have also confirmed it.

The problem with Mandonnet’s assertion is not so much the date of return as the point of departure for Thomas’s journey. This question is important, for it reflects on Thomas’s place of residence during his last year in Italy. An admonition of the general chapter of Bologna (July 1267) recommends that the Roman province watch carefully that the priory of the city where the pope is be peopled with intellectually capable friars.\(^2\) On that basis, Mandonnet had concluded that Thomas must have been assigned to Viterbo soon after this chapter, since the pontifical curia was there. In fact, as Gauthier recalled and as we can see in the passage itself (see note 2 below), the text in question speaks neither of Thomas nor of Viterbo. And the conclusion that he was there, arrived at by a purely imaginary inference, is not supported by any document.\(^3\)

Although Mandonnet’s position was adopted by a number of historians,\(^4\) nothing allows us to think that Thomas left Rome for any reason other than the short absences required by the chapters in which he had to take part; we must therefore conclude that he remained at Rome until his departure for Paris.\(^5\)

No text allows us to specify exactly the date of this return to Paris. Mandonnet, who had this journey leaving from Viterbo, situates the de-

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1. Mandonnet, Siger I, p. 88 (see also preceding pages).
3. Gauthier, Quelques questions, pp. 438–42, has retracted the rather instructive history of this “sojourn” at Viterbo; it was the German scholar J. A. Endres who first spoke of it (in 1910) thanking Father Mandonnet for having revealed to him the meaning of this text from the Bologna chapter; for Mandonnet the issue was settled from that point on and, without giving further proof, he summed up the situation thus: “At the behest of Clement IV, he was recalled [from Rome] to the curia and resided at Viterbo from autumn 1267 to November 1268, when he was suddenly sent to teach a second time at the University of Paris” (Chronologie sommaire, p. 144); we can see in reading this page that the determining element for this theory was Thomas’s (supposed) position as “lector to the pontifical curia”; in this capacity, he was supposed to have resided at Anagni before arriving in Oviedo during the years 1259–61, although no document can be quoted in support of this deduction.
4. WN, p. 147; Wesheip returned to this subject in his revised edition (pp. 330, 473) While he expresses the position in a hypothetical fashion, he does not seem to have perceived the force of the arguments against his view.
5. We might add to the account of these brief departures from Rome a visit for a Christmas feast to the castle of La Molaro on the via Latina a little beyond Gottaferrata, at the invitation of Cardinal Richard De Annibaldi; Thomas’s preaching caused the conversion of two of the cardinals’ Jewish guests (Naples 86, pp. 389–91).

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parture in mid-November 1268 and the arrival in January.\(^6\) Since Thomas preached two sermons for Advent in Bologna and Milan, Mandonnet proposed situating them in December 1268, on the way back, before Thomas took the route through the Alps to France.

Walz and Verbeke long ago expressed doubts on the dates proposed for these sermons and the plausibility of this crossing of the Alps in the dead of winter;\(^7\) people generally chose a better season to confront this route. As to the Advent preaching in Bologna and Milan, this can be situated quite well, as Tugwell suggests, in December 1259, which is to say several years earlier, at the time when Thomas was returning to Italy after his first teaching assignment at Paris.\(^8\)

After reexamining the evidence, Father Gauthier arrived at the conclusion that the departure from Rome (and not from Viterbo), could well have taken place several months earlier. The commentary on the De anima having been completed, since it had already been published in Italy in the autumn of 1268, nothing prevents us from thinking that Thomas could have left at that time (probably in September).\(^9\)

Gauthier thus came to the position that G. Verbeke had already reached by an entirely different route (although the details in his argument cannot be maintained any longer). He also thought that we could say that Thomas must have departed before 12 September 1268. We may add to these considerations the invasion of Rome by Conradin in July 1268 (Santa Sabina was pillaged at the time), which provides an additional motive for the earlier departure date.\(^10\) For Gauthier there is no doubt; Thomas left Rome in that period and travelled by boat (the story about a storm that he and his companions endured may be explained quite well as an equinoctial storm).\(^11\)

This solution would have permitted Thomas to save time and fatigue (Thomas could have embarked at Civitavecchia, disembarked at Aigues-Mortes, and sailed up the Rhone by boat). It also presents, in our view,

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8. Tugwell, p. 221.
11. Historia 9.5, p. 321 (Tocco 38, pp. 111–12); Le Brun-Gouanvic lists a series of authors who call this third trip to Paris a voyage by sea.
the advantage of filling in a lacuna of several months in the occupation of the second Dominican chair at Paris. Mandonnet and others attribute this chair to Thomas at his arrival in January 1269, but we cannot say who occupied the chair for the beginning of the university year 1268-69. Mandonnet had believed it possible to place Master Gerard Reveri in it, of whom we know scarcely anything other than the fact that he died at Saint-Jacques while he was regent. It would have been his death that caused Thomas’s earlier return; but in fact, his death was some ten years earlier.12

The hypothesis that Thomas left as early as possible and by way of the most rapid means of travel would therefore allow him to arrive at Paris a little after 14 September, the official opening of the school year. This would finally return to Mandonnet’s first intuition, but free of the additional inventions that have obscured his position somewhat. Thus, it seems we can say with reasonable historical certitude that Thomas taught almost an entire year, and we should speak of 1268-72 (rather than 1269-72), for this second stint of teaching in Paris.13

The Motives for Thomas’s Return to Paris

We can only guess at the reasons that might have motivated Thomas’s recall to Paris. For Mandonnet, the Averroist crisis was the principal reason; Weisheipl thinks instead that it was a new flare-up in the secular agitation against the mendicants.14 Verbeke sums up this situation very well and adds a third motive: at his return to Paris, Thomas would have to “struggle on three fronts simultaneously: he would have to battle the conservative minds in the theology faculty who saw in Aristotle only a danger for the Christian faith; in the other direction, he would have to oppose the Averroist monopsychism; and finally, he would have to provide an apology for the mendicant orders against the seculars, who wished to exclude them from university teaching.”15

It is rather striking to note that, in this same year of 1268 Saint Bonaventure, speaking about certain errors that threaten the Christian faith, denounces on his own part a triple danger: the eternity of the world; the necessitas fatalis, which is to say, the determinism of the will by the stars; and the unicity of the intellect for all men. This last error is the worst, adds Bonaventure, for it contains the other two.16 Bonaventure is probably not speaking about contemporaries, but we are very close to the errors that Thomas will address. Given all the work that he already had underway, this was, despite his capacity for work, his astonishing concentration, and his ability to dictate to three and even four secretaries at a time,17 more than enough to occupy him and his assistants.

The first front on which Thomas had to battle was the defense of the mendicant religious life. Since we have already spoken amply about this earlier, we recall here simply that this is the period of the De perfectione spiritualis vitae (early 1270) and of the Contra retrahentes (between Lent and summer 1271). We can also add here that Thomas used all the means at his disposal: these writings were accompanied by taking positions, at first oral and then written, in the quodlibet disputes (Quodlibet II to V, between Christmas 1269 and Christmas 1271) and in the university sermons, notably Osanna filio David (December 1270) and especially Exiit qui seminat (February 1271), which contains some arguments repeated in the Contra retrahentes.18

In this first battle, Thomas, and the Dominicans in general, as well as the Franciscans, fought against the seculars, their common enemy, who saw scarcely any difference between the two orders. One testimony among many others is provided for us by the refutations of Nicholas of Lisieux, who will respond simultaneously both to John Pecham’s Quaesitio on the evangelical perfection of poverty and Thomas’s Contra retrahentes. Although the two responses have their own titles, they follow one another in the manuscripts and are sometimes designated by the common title Contra Pecham et Thomam.19 There is a certain irony in this, since the English Franciscan John Pecham, who began his teaching in Paris a little after Thomas’s return and who would later become archbishop of Can-

12. Mandonnet, Lecteur, p. 33; the text of the epitaph that Mandonnet quotes in support of his hypothesis still stands, however: MCCLIX die . . . februarii; Glorieux speaks of February 1260, cf. Répertoire I, and the inset between 228-29 and no. 23, p. 123: “Gérard Reveri.”
17. This is a subject to which we will have to return, see the section in chapter 11 titled “Thomas and His Secretaries.”
19. To our knowledge, they are still unpublished, but the accompanying letter from Nicholas to William of Saint-Amour can be seen along with the response of the latter in Chartul, nos. 439-40, pp. 495-99; see also I. Brady, “Jean Pecham,” DS 8 (1974) 647; Leonine, vol. 41, p. C 5; we recall also P. Glorieux, “Une offensive de Nicolas de Lisieux contre saint Thomas d’Aquin,” BLE 9 (1938) 121-29, who edited the extract made by Nicholas of the errors contained in the De perfectione and the Quodlibet III from Easter 1270.
terbury, was also one of Thomas’s fiercest adversaries, the type perhaps of the conservative Augustinian tendency that opposed the new Aristotelian ideas. History has preserved two unambiguous testimonies of Pecham’s opposition to Thomas: unfavorable witness from the Dominicans, favorable when Pecham himself speaks. We can consider the case of the De aeternitate mundi as emblematic of this situation.

The De aeternitate mundi

This brief is currently much studied by the specialists, with regard as much to the historical situation of the opusculum as to its content, for in the absence of decisive external arguments, it is to questions of internal criticism that we must have recourse.

The question of the eternity of the world was the order of the day after the introduction of Aristotle’s philosophy had placed it at a high level of importance. We know that the majority of theologians at that time, among them Bonaventure and Pecham, declared that it was unthinkable and that it was easy to prove by very effective arguments that the world began. For Thomas, on the contrary, only faith can make us hold that the world began, and it is not possible to prove the contrary: mundum non semper fuisse sola fide tenetur, et demonstrative probari non potest: sicut et supra de mysterio Trinitatis dictum est. This clearly does not prevent us from believing in the fundamental and permanent dependence of the world on its relationship to God. It is therefore this thesis, which Thomas already held in the Sentences and never abandoned afterward, that is summed up forcefully and in a new light in the De aeternitate mundi.

The date of this work has been highly debated by the scholars for many years. Given the context that we have already noted, Mandonnet situated it at first during the second period of teaching in Paris and, more precisely, during 1270. That period saw increased acrimony in the controversy that temporarily culminated in the condemnation of 10 December 1270, pronounced by the bishop of Paris, Stephen Tempier. Mandonnet admitted, however, that this opusculum might be situated one or two years later.

The plausibility of this position has led the great majority of specialists—except for some dissenting voices (F. Pelster, F. Hendrickx and Th. P. Bukovski, who wished to move this text to a much earlier date, between the Sentences and the Summa)—to adopt it. While recalling the contrary opinions, the Leonine edition also accepts this theory. But in searching for a more precise context, Ignatius Brady published an original essay on the occasion of the seventh centenary of Saint Thomas’s death. He proposed there that De aeternitate mundi be considered as a reply directed against John Pecham and seen as the result of the dispute that Tocco and Bartholomew of Capua mention.

During his inaugural lecture, in the presence of Gerard of Abbeville and Thomas Aquinas, Pecham in effect would have passionately upheld the thesis opposed to Thomas’s about the eternity of the world. Out of respect for the candidate for mastership, Thomas kept silent; but upon leaving the ceremony, his indignant students pressed him to intervene.

The next day, therefore, during Pecham’s resumpto of the thesis expounded the previous evening, Thomas intervened calmly but firmly in
order to show his opponent the fragility of his position. Nothing remains from that oral intervention, but a little later Thomas wrote *De aeternitate mundi*. To all appearances, this opusculum repeats the same arguments that had been developed orally, for Thomas refutes Pecham's arguments step by step.

After first accepting Brady's proposition on this subject, Weisheipl began his own detailed examination. 30 Weisheipl arrived at several conclusions, the first somewhat off the main line of the discussion but not without interest, since it emphasizes that this opusculum is not a philosophical but rather a theological text. 31 Second, Weisheipl thinks that we should look not for a direct refutation of anything but simply the manifestation in broad daylight of an opinion that had come to maturity. If we recognize Pecham's arguments here, Thomas in fact strikes, without specifying, all who oppose his position. In reality, the same reasons are found as a commonplace among all those whom the overly strong presence of Aristotle in this field had disturbed.

As to the date, Weisheipl draws on a study by John F. Wippel, which had put all the texts where Thomas speaks of the subject in chronological perspective. 32 Wippel remarked that Thomas had not always held exactly the same position; at first, influenced by Maimonides, who had strongly contested Aristotle's thesis, Thomas believed that the Philosopher himself considered his arguments as only probable; not wishing to give them a greater force than their author had, he therefore contented himself with saying that it was not possible to prove peremptorily the beginning or the nonbeginning of the world. But after having commented himself on Book Eight of the *Physics*, Thomas perceived that Aristotle's conviction was much more constraining than he had previously thought. 33 This new cer-


33. In VIII Phys., lib. 8, lect. 2 (ed. P. M. Magiolo) (Turin, 1954), no. 986: "perpetuitate temporis et motus quasi principio utitur (Aristoteles) ad probandum primum principium esse, et titude found expression in the opusculum we are considering; not only has the noneternity of the world not been demonstrated; not only can it not be demonstrated; but indeed, a world eternally created is possible. 34

The interest of this development for our inquiry is that it places the *De aeternitate mundi* a little after the commentary on the *Physics* (1268–69). And it confirms, therefore, its late date, if not exactly in the same terms as Mandonnet, at least with a new force, since we can thus show that it is situated at the end of an entire evolution in Thomas's thought. In our understanding, contrary to what Weisheipl believed, this does not at all force us to renounce Brady's reading, which has the merit of giving the opusculum a plausible context. 35 The debate with Pecham would have been the spur to Thomas's expressing with full clarity the certitude at which he arrived by his frequent recourse to Aristotle. 36

The Unicity of Substantial Form

After what we have just seen, we understand how Pecham retained a stinging memory of his meeting with Thomas; but what these two masters at odds was much more serious than a simple question of personal opinion. We have spoken of Augustinianism against Aristotelianism; that is only partly true. Today it is widely recognized that the partisans of the plurality of forms claimed themselves to be in the school of Aristotle; as to Thomas, he could have placed himself in an authentic line of descent from Augustine. 37 With much truth, Saint Bonaventure had already seen in these contrasting intellectual positions a reflection of the differences in spirit between the two great orders: “The first [certainly the preachers], apply themselves first to *speculation*, from which they even take their

34. See the texts reviewed by J. F. Wippel: Sent. II d.1 q.1 a.5; SCG II 31–38; *De Pot. III 17; Compendium theolog. I 98–99; ST Ia q.46; Quodl. III q.14 a.2; *De aeternitate mundi*; Quodl. XII q.6 a.1 (we will reestablish the most probable chronological order in our view). This position of Wippel's has been contested by T. Bukovski, "Understanding St. Thomas on the Eternity of the World: Help from Gile's of Rome," *RITAM* 58 (1991) 113–25, in whose opinion Thomas held the same position throughout his career.

35. Wippel accommodates it quite well, cf. p. 213.

36. Weisheipl, "The Date,” p. 249, uses certain inexactitudes in Tocci to conclude that this cannot be Pecham's resumption; Brady responded to that objection in advance by emphasizing that we cannot take Tocci's story literally, since he is notoriously uninformed about the practices of Paris universities.

name, and in the second place to *unction;* the others [the friars minor] aim first at *unction,* then at *speculation.*

Even this does not suffice to explain the violence of the confrontation, for many Dominicans also opposed Thomas on the same subjects, such as Robert Kilwardby. There was the conviction that Thomas's thesis on the unicity of substantial form and on the eternity of the world put the faith in danger pure and simple. As to the eternity of the world, we have seen, Thomas was not at all convinced of it and persevered in his position until the end. With the unicity of substantial form, the debate moved from the domain of creation theology to the domain of anthropology.

Far from being novel to our epoch, this problem occupied minds for over fifty years. Dom Lottin once thought he could conclude that around 1230—among thinkers such as Roland de Cremona and Philip the Chancellor, John de La Rochelle and even Alexander of Hales—there existed veritable unanimity against the plurality of the forms, and that one would not dream of citing the authority of Saint Augustine in its favor. Rather, according to Lottin, it was thought characteristic of the Jewish philosopher Avicebron (Ibn Gebirol).

Numerous other works since have modified this first approach and show on the contrary that the greatest diversity reigned during the first scholasticism. The partisans of the plurality of forms made use not only of Avicebron's name, but also especially of Avicenna's and, through him, of Al Farabi. As to Saint Augustine, the uncertainty of his position on this subject led those who wished to use his name to try to reconcile him with the Aristotelian doctrine. Thus scholars were led to identify the traditional doctrine before Saint Thomas as an *eclectic Aristotelianism,* or

40. In addition to Zavalloni and Bazán, cited above, we mention only D. A. Callus, "The Origins of the Problem of the Unity of Form," The Thomist 24 (1961) 256–85; we refer especially to E.-H. Weber, *La personne humaine au XIIIe siècle,* Bibl. thomiste 46 (Paris, 1991) 17–119 (for the period before Thomas), 120–98 (Albert and Thomas); the bibliography is fairly up to date, but see also note 63 below.
41. R. Zavalloni, *Richard de Mediavilla et la controverse sur la pluralité des formes. Textes inédits et études critiques,* Philosophes médiévaux 2 (Louvain, 1991), while agreeing on a number of points with this fundamental study, B. Bazán, "Pluralisme de Moureau ou dualisme de substances. La pensée pré-thomiste touchant la nature de l'âme," RPL 67 (1967) 51–73, thinks that it is better to speak of a dualism of substances to characterize the pre-Thomist epoch.
42. Both labels can, without doubt, be discussed, but the way in which Zavalloni sums up

in even a more nuanced fashion, *eclectic neo-Platonizing Aristotelianism,* emphasizing again Avicebron's influence on it.

Already lively on the strictly philosophical level, the discussion became even sharper in passing into the theological domain. The point of crystallization for the quarrel was one of those questions to which the scholastics had the secret. It recurs under diverse forms in the quodlibets that Thomas was obliged to undertake during Lent and Advent in the years 1269–70. At the beginning one question appears that seems harmless at first: "Are the preceding forms annihilated by the arrival of the intellectual soul?" The first question brings with it a series of others that are apparently gratuitous: "Did Christ remain man during his three days in the tomb?" or even frankly outlandish: "After His death, was Christ's eye 'really' an eye or only in an equivocal fashion?" right down to the question on which we must pause for a moment: "Did Christ's body remain numerically the same on the Cross and in the tomb?" The constant return of these questions indicates the preoccupation of certain minds; they appear futile to a modern person. But they really raise the most fundamental problems of the diverse positions has at least the merit ofnuancing in a sensible fashion an overly Manichean vision of the situation: "The doctrinal debate of the thirteenth-century scholastics is not involved in choosing between Augustinianism and Aristotelianism, but in choosing between the *traditional doctrine* and the *Thomist doctrine.* The traditional doctrine grafts itself, as does the Thomist doctrine, onto some conceptions of Aristotelian origin. The expression that might best characterize the traditional doctrine would be an *eclectic Aristotelianism,* to oppose it to the *radical Aristotelianism* of Siger of Brabant and to the *personal Aristotelianism* of Saint Thomas. Eclectic Aristotelianism presents a different tint in various authors according to the predominant influence that they have undergone. Thus we can speak of a neo-Platonizing Aristotelianism in Roger Bacon, an Augustinizing Aristotelianism in Thomas of York, Saint Bonaventure, and Roger Marston, and of an Augustinian-aviciennizing Aristotelianism for Richard of Vedeligna" (Zavalloni, *Richard,* p. 472).

43. This is Bazán's position (above, note 41), who agrees in using this label with F. Van Steenhouweren, *La philosophie,* pp. 181 ff. (2d ed. 1991, pp. 165 ff.).
44. For the debate prior to Thomas, see A. M. Landgraf, "Das Problem *Utrum Christus fuerit homo in trido mortis* in der Frühchristlautik,* in *Mélanges Auguste Pelouz* (Louvain, 1947), pp. 100–83.
45. Cf. *Quodl.* I q 4 a 1 [6] (Lent 1265); "Utrum forma praecoeperit corripuum per adventum animae?"; II q 1 a 1 (Advent 1265); "Utrum Christus idem in trido <corted> fuerit homo?"; *III q 2 a 2 a 4 [Lent 1270]: "Utrum oculus Christi post mortem fuerit oculus equivocum?"; IV q 5 a 1 [8] (Lent 1271); "Utrum corpus Christi in cruce et in sepulcro sit unum numero?"; we recall that these titles were not given by Thomas himself, but are taken from the text of the question. Zavalloni (pp. 488–90) believes he can detect an evolution between *Quodl.* III and *Quodl.* IV, which are found on one side and the other of the episcopal condemnation in December 1270. As to the first case, Thomas concluded that Christ's eye was not an eye in an equivocal fashion, as a dead eye; the condemnation led him to "insist further on the identity of the living body of Christ and of his cadaver." Doubtless, we ought to add with Zavalloni: more a verbal than a doctrinal difference.
christological anthropology. And whoever goes through Q, 50 of the Tertia Pars, for example, will easily see it. In article 5, Thomas returns to the question which had already been put to him in diverse forms during the quodlibets: “Did the body of Christ remain numerically the same before and after his death?”

To sum up these matters in a somewhat simplistic fashion, for Thomas—in accord with the hylo-morphic doctrine he got from Aristotle—the intellectual soul is the only substantial form of the human composite, and it exerts this function at different levels of the life of that composite: vegetative, sensible, intellectual. His adversaries held, on the contrary, for a plurality of forms according to the different levels and, in the eyes of these adversaries, Thomas’s doctrine was heretical, for it put in doubt the numerical identity of Christ’s body before and after his death. In effect, the soul being the unique form of the body and Christ’s body being deprived of it temporarily by death, one could no longer say that the body in the tomb was the same as the body of the living Christ. It was necessary therefore to admit in addition to the soul, a “corporal form” (or forma corporeitatis) that remained the same, inhering in the body before and after death, and thus was able to assure the continuity and the unity between these two states of Christ’s body.

No more than his adversaries did Thomas doubt the numerical identity of Christ’s body before and after his death; for him nevertheless it is not a corporal form that conserves it but, indeed, the hypostatic union. A being remains numerically the same, he explains, when it has the same supposit, which is to say the same hypostasis. Now it has been well established that Christ’s body, living or dead, had never had another hypostasis than that of the Word, for the hypostatic union of the person of the Word with his soul and his body did not cease at Jesus’ death. The body and soul of Jesus thus conserved their relation to the unique person of the Word. And it was this that maintained their numerical identity. There is therefore no need to invoke a hypothetical corporal form here when we have the guarantee of an entirely certain dogmatic datum, defined at the time of the struggle against the Apollinarians: the permanence of the hypostatic union beyond death.47

46. It was precisely with this question that Pecham quarreled in his Quodl. IV, q. 2, responsio [ed. G. J. Etzkorn (Grottaferrata, 1980), pp. 197–98; cf. L. J. Batalion, RSPT 75 (1991) 510].
47. Cf. ST IIIa q. 50 a. 5, with the responses to the objections; a useful summary of the question and its role in the debate comes from the pen of P. Synave, S. Thomas d’Aquin, Somme

The De unitate intellectus

On the front opposite to the conservatives, Thomas also had to battle what was once called “Averroism.” In the 10 December 1270 condemnation of the errors of this heterodox tendency, Stephen Tempier, bishop of Paris, assembled thirteen propositions, which we can sum up under four principal points: the eternity of the world, the denial of God’s universal providence, unicity of the intellectual soul for all men (or monopsychism), and determinism.48 Representatives of these views were found primarily in the arts faculty, and we can easily bring forward Siger of Brabant as the best known.49 Recent works have established that we have perhaps emphasized Siger too much. He began publishing in 1265. And if he furnished the largest part of the propositions condemned in 1270 and 1277 by the bishop of Paris, he is far from being the only one involved. Furthermore, the lack of published documents should not lead us into an error of perspective.50 As we gradually come to know the period better, we see that Boethius of Dacia and others were also targets, and Boethius no less than Siger.51

In fact all our knowledge of this period has been deeply advanced by comparison with where it stood at the beginning of the twentieth century;52

49. In addition to the Siger by Mandonnet (1911), cf. F. Van Steenbergen, Maître Siger de Brabant (Louvain-Paris, 1977); B. Bazin, ed., Siger de Brabant. Quaestiones in Tertium de anima. De anima intellectiva. De unitate mundi (Louvain-Paris, 1972); cf. also the editions of the different reportaciones on the Metaphysics by W. Rimper, Siger de Brabant, Quaestiones in Metaphysica (Louvain-La-Neuve, 1951), and by A. Maurer, Siger de Brabant, Quaestiones in Metaphysica (Louvain-La-Neuve, 1953).
50. P. E. Enquête sur les 219 articles condamnés à Paris le 7 mars 1277 (Philosophes médiévaux 22) (Louvain-Paris, 1977); we also note that, in 1277, Siger had already retired from teaching (and converted). He was at Orvieto, perhaps for something to do with the chapter of Liège, when he died, stabbed by his secretary (clericus), who had gone mad, during the papacy of Martin IV (1281–85).
51. Boehthius of Dacia (or of Denmark) is not well known; all we know is that he was a master in the arts faculty from 1270 to 1280 and that he is designated in certain manuscripts as principalis assertor of the propositions condemned in 1277. He left relatively abundant writings, the critical edition of which has now been completed in the Corpus Philosophorum Dacorum Medii Aevi; we can also recommend the Medici significandi sive quaestiones super Priscianum Maiorem, ed. J. Pinborg, H. Roos, S. S. Jensen (Copenhagen, 1960) (vol. IV/II), and, more important here, the De unitate mundi, ed. N. G. Green-Pedersen (Copenhagen, 1976) (vol. VIII); cf. also G. Saij, Un traité récemment découvert de Boèce de Dacia De unitate mundi (Budapest, 1954).
52. See here the instructive retrospective on the historiography of Averroism by R. Imbach,
it is useful, therefore, to do a brief retrospective on this subject in order not to "travel today with a map from yesterday." Once called (following Renan and Mandonnet) "Latin Averroism" this tendency was characterized afterward by Van Steenbergen as being instead a radical or heterodox (less happy qualifiers) Aristotelianism. But R.-A. Gauthier has shown that these matters are rather complex. 53

In the first place, as to the date of Averroes’ entrance into the West, we must place it at least in 1225, which is to say at least five years earlier than the 1230 commonly accepted a short while ago; but we also have to look at the appreciation that thirteenth-century writers showed for him. In a first phase, up until around 1250, the scholastics saw in Averroes a commentator on Aristotle who should be preferred to Avicenna. Avicenna had made the agent intellect a separate power, which is a mistake, while Averroes made it a power of the soul, which is the truth. During this entire period and beyond, a certain number of other theses from Arabic philosophy passed into use in the schools and would be so highly assimilated that their Averroist origin would be lost (which explains, among other things, how it is that Thomas frequently uses Averroes without quoting him).

But it was only in 1250, under an initially vague form in Albertus Magnus, then in 1252, in a more precise form in Robert Kilwardby, that Averroes will be accused of having said that there is only one single soul for all men. Meanwhile, Saint Bonaventure, in his commentary on Book II of the Sentences, will formulate in a definitive way the "Averroist" error: "There is only one intellectual soul for all men, and that not only quantum ad intellectum agentem, sed etiam quantum ad intellectum possibilism."

As Gauthier says without much beating about the bush: "Everything invites us, therefore, to believe that 'Latin Averroism' is the invention of theologians. In effect, we admit more and more today that Averroes was not an Averroist." 55 That "tendentious" reading spread very quickly, and that there have been Averroists who have admitted the unicity of the human intellect, that is not the case for Averroes himself, who admits the individual immortality of the human soul, even in the material intellect" 56; see also the similar positions of M.-R. Ruben Hayoun and A. de Libera, Averroès et l'Averroisme, Que Sais-Je? 2631 (Paris, 1991), pp. 87-88; opposed to them, B. C. Bazán, "Le Commentaire de S. Thomas d'Aquin sur le Traité de l'âme," RSP 59 (1985) 521-47; thinks that Thomas' Grand' commentaire indeed contains the error that the theologians denounced in it (cf. pp. 529-31).


The New Sojourn in Paris: Doctrinal Confrontations

Thomas, prepared by his Master Albert, took it from Bonaventure and denounced it in his own commentary on the Sentences. If one thinks that Siger of Brabant found this thesis in Saint Thomas, whom he read assiduously, and not in Averroes, the paradox is not minor: that "heresy" which did not exist before the theologians denounced it, exists from then on thanks to them. 56

Had Thomas already heard some echo of the teaching of Siger and of his colleagues on monopsychism while he was still in Italy? Father H.-F. Dondaine suggests this in referring to two articles of the Question De spiritualibus creaturis (a. 2 and a. 5) and two other articles of the Question De anima (a. 2 and a. 3). 57

In reality, this seems hardly probable. If we recall the date of these two questions (1265-66 for the De anima; 1267-68, for the De spiritualibus creaturis) and remember that the Quaestiones in Tertium De anima by Siger are from the scholastic year 1269-70, Thomas certainly could not have known them before his return to Paris. It is scarcely plausible either, in the absence of any text, that Thomas would have known of these ideas through the reportationes of a student.

Furthermore, as Bernardo Bazán has shown, if we look carefully at how Thomas discusses Averroes' noetic in these articles, nothing permits us to suspect that he is thinking about contemporary authors. 58 It is rather at his return to Paris, after reading the reportationes of the masters of the arts faculty (and not only of Siger), that he takes the measure of the danger and sketches his De unitate intellectus contra averroistas, justly considered pivotal to the controversy. 59
Thomas did not think himself less well armed than his adversaries, and he followed them onto their terrain in a close discussion of the texts. Making use of the most recent translations of Aristotle and his commentators, he shows them how much “Averroes” (in reality, Averroes “re-read” by the theologians) is opposed simultaneously both to Aristotle’s doctrine and the Christian faith. He challenges them therefore to take into account this data of common experience: *Hic homo singularis intelligit.*

The argument seems to have troubled them, Siger notably, since he was already a reader of the Thomas of the Sentences. Siger was led to read Thomas frequently, and seems to have evolved afterward toward less heterodox positions. We know that in his *De anima intellectiva,* which appeared after the *De unitate intellectus,* while continuing to pit his own exegesis of Aristotle against Thomas’s, he names Thomas in company with Saint Albert as being, both of them, *praeceps vir in philosophia* and concedes that the intellect “intelligendo est operans principium ad corpus per suam naturam.” Going still further, he will write in his *Super De causis:* “Intellectus . . . naturaliter est unitus corpori . . . anima intellectiva est corporis perfectio et forma.” This writing manifestly uses Thomas’s *Super De causis,* as well as the *Prima Pars* and the *Super Physicam.*

These discussions, too briefly described here, are not of purely intellectual interest; they are also important to an understanding of Thomas’s personality. The biographical sources underline Thomas’s good will and his humility in confrontation with Pecham in spite of the latter’s impetuosity, and it is true that Pecham himself (a propos of another episode?) emphasizes Thomas’s humility. But we should also stress that in these controversies Thomas appears himself again: a battler who does not hesitate to fight when it is necessary and who is ready to respond to any challenge. Loyal and rigorous certainly, but also impatient in polemics when faced with adversaries who do not understand the weight of an argument, indignant when they question things involving the faith and even ironic, as when he addresses himself to them, paraphrasing *Job 12:2,* as if they were the only reasonable beings among whom wisdom had appeared.

More than these character traits, however, which do not show Thomas in the best light but do translate in their way the ardor of the controversy and the concern of the believer at these questionings, we retain from all this Thomas’s desire not to compromise the faith—under pretext of defending it—by ineffective argument. This occurs sometimes in theological circles, when the faith is surreptitiously invoked to give a force to arguments that they themselves do not always have. Thomas thinks about the image that theology gives of itself to some redoubtable dialecticians in the faculty of arts and, at the risk of rendering the task temporarily more difficult, he refuses to depreciate the demands of reason.

Thus he not only gives a proof of his intellectual loyalty but also elicits respect from his toughest adversaries, who will thus accept dialogue with him—Siger for example. He thinks also of God’s transcendence, which inadequate apologists render ridiculous. This is not simply the attitude of

a thinker and professor, it is also that of a concerned preacher of the faith to a faithful people. In the sermon *Attendite a falsis prophetis*, which denounces *illi qui dicunt quod mundus est aeternus*, he puts on guard those who raise objections that they do not know how to resolve, for one thus gives over reason to the adversary: "*Idem est dubitationem movere et eam non solvere, quod eam concedere.*"68


CHAPTER XI

The Second Period of Teaching at Paris

(1268–1272)

The motives for Thomas's return to Paris have led us to speak first of his engagement in contemporary controversies. It is important, nevertheless, not to commit a frequent error of perspective and to imagine that he was mixed up in these matters to such an extent that he dedicated all his time to them. Far from it! His principal occupation remained teaching *sacra pagina*, and it is to this period that we owe some of his most celebrated works: the scriptural commentaries and disputed questions.

I: Scriptural Commentaries and Disputed Questions

We already know that we must situate during this sojourn the lectures on the Gospel of Saint Matthew, reported on by Peter d'Andria and Léger de Besançon, which to all appearances were the subject of Thomas's courses in the academic year 1269–70.1 It still remains for us to situate the two great works: the lectures on the Fourth Gospel and on the Epistles of Saint Paul. The questions about these works are numerous and they will remain so for a long time until the critical edition of the texts will have allowed us to replace hypotheses, if not always with certitude, then at least with more certain data.

1. Cf. above, our chap. IV.