

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, we have witnessed a renewed interest in the thought of Thomas Aquinas. This issue of *Anuario Filosófico* presents the present-day status of Thomism via three major thematic areas: Thomistic institutions, the current state of research, and the editing and linguistic analysis of Aquinas works.

Keywords: Thomas Aquinas, Thomism, history, institutions, research, works, editions, linguistic analysis

In its 750 years of existence, Thomism has lived through high and low points in parallel with the institutions that gave it birth: the university and the Church. Very influential from the time of its origins up through the mid 17th century, Thomism later suffered from the decadence of the universities, and of the Scholastic philosophy which made the university its home. There followed a slow process of recuperation in ecclesiastical circles during the 18th century, which a century later culminated in Thomism receiving the official support of the Holy See. The resulting emphasis on forming Catholics in the thought of St. Thomas was followed by a notable prestige and influence of Catholic intellectuals in the first half of the 20th century. In this way, an interest in Thomas Aquinas was transmitted to the academic arena, where Thomism came to constitute one of the most vigorous philosophical currents between the years of 1930 and 1960, approximately. The end of this stage, in academic circles, was a result of a certain incapacity to renew the topics of discussion and the manner of confronting problems; this stagnation was first evident in the prevalence of reiteration in Thomistic research, and later in a loss of interest in Thomism and its marginalization in the scholarly world. At the same time, in the

ecclesiastical realm, the open crisis that the Church experienced during the 60's diluted the intellectual inspiration of Thomism in many Church institutions.

Now that nearly half a century has passed, we are seeing a renewed interest in Thomas Aquinas. It will be sufficient to cite a few recent examples:

- In recent years, the number of publications related to Thomism has increased notably, growing from around 300 to nearly 1000 annually¹.
- New specialized journals have been founded, and continue to appear, such as *Doctor Angelicus* in Germany, *e-aquinas* in Spain, *Aquinate* in Brazil, *Tomismo essenziale* in Italy, and *Jaarboek Thomas Instituut te Utrecht* in the Netherlands.
- New collections of books with a strong Thomistic influence are appearing, such as *Pensamiento Medieval y Renacentista* in Pamplona, *Opere di S. Tommaso in italiano* in Bologna, *Opere di Cornelio Fabro* in Rome, *Radical Orthodoxy* in London, *Doctor Humanitatis* in the Netherlands, *Saint Thomas et les thomistes* in Paris, and *Thomas Aquinas in Translation* in Washington.
- Through the influence of the *Società Internazionale Tommaso d'Aquino*, new Thomistic academic societies have been recently founded in Germany, the Czech Republic, Spain, the Netherlands, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Switzerland, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, the United States, Uruguay, Venezuela, etc.
- A number of vigorous new intellectual movements inspired by Thomism have arisen, including, among others, Analytic

1. Cf. R. INGARDIA, *Thomas Aquinas International Bibliography 1977-1990*, Philosophy Documentation Center, Bowling Green [Ohio], 1993, and the annual bibliography published since 2001 in the journal *Doctor Angelicus* of Cologne.

Thomism², *Radical Orthodoxy*³, and the so-called New Natural Law Theory⁴.

- In addition, some of the most significant landmarks in the application of information technologies within the Humanities have been related to Thomism, such as the monumental database *Index Thomisticus*⁵, a pioneering project in its field.

We are witnessing, in fact, a new stage of vigor within a great current of philosophy, which has remained alive and influential over its seven centuries of history.

In this special issue of *Anuario Filosófico* we wish to contribute to the body of knowledge about contemporary Thomism. Therefore, we have adopted a wider perspective than that which is typical in this kind of publication. Normally, a journal will present the current state of a school of thought, by means of articles which discuss the main lines of research or the interpretations which are the most novel or most influential. But the current state of a school of philosophy cannot be limited to these central questions, but also must include, among other aspects, the activities and mission of the most representative institutions, critical editions of texts, and—in recent years—the application of information technologies. This was the perspective adopted for the congress *A Panorama of Current Research on Thomas Aquinas*, held at the University of

2. See e.g. B. SMITH (ed.), “Analytical Thomism”, *The Monist*, 80/4 (1997), pp. 485-623; C. PATERSON; M. S. PUGH (eds.), *Analytical Thomism: Traditions in Dialogue*, Ashgate, Aldershot-Burlington, 2006.

3. See e.g. A. PABST; O. T. VENARD, *Radical Orthodoxy. Pour une révolution théologique*, Ad Solem, Genève, 2004, 159 pp.

4. See e.g. S. DAVIS, “Doing What Comes Naturally: Recent Work on Thomas Aquinas and the New Natural Law Theory”, *Religion*, 31 (2001), pp. 407-433; S. F. PARSONS, “Concerning Natural Law: The Turn in American Aquinas Scholarship”, in F. KERR (ed.), *Contemplating Aquinas: On the Varieties of Interpretation*, SCM Press, London, 2003, pp. 163-184.

5 R. BUSA, *Index Thomisticus*, Frommann-Holzboog, Stuttgart, 1974-1980, 49 vol. Its last edition, by E. Bernot and E. Alarcón, is available online at <http://www.corpusthomisticum.org/it/>

Navarra from April 25 through 27 of 2005. We include here the English texts of the principal papers presented at the congress (with one exception that we will mention later).

The first two articles discuss the most widely influential Thomistic institutions. Fr. Abelardo Lobato OP, President Emeritus of the Pontifical Roman Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas writes about the past and present of this institution. Dr. Enrique Martínez, General Secretary of the International Society of Thomas Aquinas, describes its character and history.

The following contributions deal with the current stage of Thomistic research in four large topical areas: two historical and two systematic. Dr. David Berger, Director of the German journal *Doctor Angelicus*, describes the interpretations which Thomism has received throughout its history. Dr. Enrique Alarcón, editor of the *Corpus Thomisticum*, presents the principal advances in historical research concerning Thomas Aquinas. Dr. Ángel Luis González, Chair in Metaphysics at the University of Navarra, provides an overview of the diverse contemporary interpretations of St. Thomas's Metaphysics. Finally, Fr. Leo J. Elders S.V.D. highlights the principal aspects of Thomistic ethics and discusses its contemporary relevance.

The third group of contributions have to do with the linguistic analysis and the critical editions of the Thomistic corpus. During the aforementioned congress, Fr. Roberto Busa SJ provided a lively description of the history and objectives of the *Index Thomisticus*. Due to the lack of a corresponding written text, and with the express permission of Dr. Luigi Dadda, we have included in its place an article signed by Dadda and other notable Italian researchers concerning the scientific legacy of Fr. Busa.

Continuing in this third group of contributions, Dr. John Boyle, of the University of St. Thomas (St. Paul, Minnesota), editor of the *Lectura Romana*, the latest major unpublished work attributed to St. Thomas, presents the history of this text along with the arguments supporting its Thomistic authorship. Finally, Fr. Adriano Oliva, President of the Leonine Commission, describes the Commission's history and current projects.

We wish to express our special gratitude for their assistance to Mr. Erik Norvelle, who was in charge of the English translations, and to Ms. María Jesús Nicolay, who formatted the texts. In addition, we are profoundly grateful to those institutions which collaborated in the organization of the congress itself: the Fundación Tomás de Aquino, the Instituto Sto. Tomás of the Fundación Balmesiana, the Società CAEL and the Department of Philosophy of the University of Navarra.

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