Part I
Thomism and Pluralism

IS THOMAS'S WAY OF PHILOSOPHIZING STILL VIABLE TODAY?

Gerald A. McCool, S.J.

The title of this is not an affirmation. It is a question, and those who, like myself, would be willing to give an affirmative answer to it are not as numerous as we used to be. As to the question's relevance, I cannot assume that a large number of philosophers outside the Thomist community would see much point in entertaining it. In fact, even in the larger Catholic community, I suspect, a fair number of philosophers might be counted for whom finding an answer to my question would not rank high on their intellectual agenda.

The Flowering of the Neo-Thomist Movement

That, of course, would not have been true when the American Catholic Philosophical Association was founded in 1926. By the third decade of this century neo-Thomism had become a vigorous and promising movement in North America. In the first four years of the society's existence Étienne Gilson had established himself in North America, the Institute of Mediaeval Studies at Toronto had received its pontifical charter, the Institute Saint Thomas d'Aquin had opened its doors at Ottawa, Laval University had set up a distinguished Thomistic graduate faculty in Quebec, and The Catholic University of America, the home of the independent group of American Thomists, who were the driving force behind the founding of the Association, had celebrated its fiftieth anniversary.[1]

The young and promising North American neo-Thomist movement could not have established itself as quickly as it did were it not for an earlier flowering of neo-Thomist philosophy on the other side of the Atlantic. Leo XIII's Encyclical, *Aeterni Patris*, published in 1879, is generally taken as the *magna charta* of neo-Thomism; but, despite the impetus which Leo XIII gave to the Thomistic revival, the neo-Thomist movement did not really pick up momentum until the final decade of the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth. In

1. Gerald A. McCool, S.J., "The Tradition of St. Thomas in North America: At 50 Years," *The Modern Schoolman* 65 (1988): 185-206.

those three decades Désiré Mercier founded his Higher Institute of Philosophy at Louvain, and set it on firm footing. Mercier, and the faculty which he had chosen and trained himself, were hard at work on Louvain's twofold agenda: historical recovery of Thomas's medieval heritage and the modernization and development of Thomas's philosophy in order to deal with the problems presented to Catholic intellectuals by the physical and social sciences.[2] From the 1930s to the 1960s many American Thomists received their graduate training at Louvain and the whole American Thomist community was indebted to its Higher Institute for the historical work of Maurice de Wulf, Fernand van Steenberghen, and Georges Van Riet, and for the speculative expansion of St. Thomas's thought by Désiré Nys, Nicolas Balthasar, Albert Dondeyene, Louis de Raeymaeker and Jacques Leclerque, for as our older philosophers may recall, a fair number of Louvain publications were translated into English and made available to readers in the United States and Canada.

In the same three decades a brilliant group of French Dominicans, all of whom had some connection with the renowned House of Studies at La Saulchoir, countered the challenge to St. Thomas's realistic philosophy of being posed by idealism, pragmatism, and Bergson's intuitionistic epistemology and process metaphysics. The founder of this Dominican school was Ambroise Gardeil and two of his better known disciples were M.-D. Roland-Gosselin and Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange.[3] As a group, they worked out a French Dominican approach to Thomism whose influence on Jacques Maritain is quite evident in the latter's *The Degrees of Knowledge*.

At the same time, Jesuit Thomists in France and Belgium took a very different approach to idealism and Bergsonian philosophy, and two of them, Pierre Rousselot and Joseph Maréchal, laid the foundations for another neo-Thomistic tradition which was later given the name of Transcendental Thomism.[4] By the 1920s Jacques Maritain had begun his

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2. Georges Van Riet, "Kardinal Desire Mercier (1851-1926) und das philosophische Institut in Lowen," in *Christliche Philosophie im katholischen Denken des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Emerich Coreth, S.J., Walter M. Neidle, George Pfliegersdorfer and Heinrich M. Schmidinger (Graz: Sytria, 1988), pp. 206-40. Attention should also be called to Armand Maurer's excellent monograph on Étienne Gilson in this volume, pp. 519-545.

3. For the philosophies of Gardeil, Roland-Gosselin and Garrigou-Lagrange see Georges Van Riet, *L'Épistemologie thomists* (Louvain: Publications de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie, 1946), pp. 249-62, 425-31: 432-72: 338-49. For the theologies of Gardeil and Garrigou-Lagrange see Roger Aubert, *Le probleme de l'acte de foi* (Louvain: Warny, 1950), pp. 393-435; 443-50.

4. See Gerald A. McCool, S.J., *From Unity to Pluralism: The Internal Evolution of*

independent work on the integration of knowledge through the epistemology and metaphysics of the Angelic Doctor, a project which would carry him in the course of his long career into moral and political philosophy, aesthetics, and philosophy of the person and community. And, by the year in which the ACPA was founded, Étienne Gilson had won an international reputation as a historian of medieval philosophy, and he had begun to work out his original interpretation of St. Thomas's epistemology and metaphysics, an interpretation which would lead, in the years after World War II, to the Gilsonian conception of Christian philosophy and to Gilsonian existential Thomism.[5]

During the next thirty years, between 1930 and 1960, the neo-Thomistic movement continued to flourish in Europe and North America. New Thomistic traditions arose to contest its leadership by French Dominican, Maritainian, and Transcendental Thomism. Among them were Gilson's existential Thomism and a current of personalist Thomism influenced by Gabriel Marcel. The important place which Platonic participation metaphysics had played in St. Thomas's own philosophy was rediscovered and changed the older conception of Thomism as a Christian Aristotelianism through the historical work of L.-B. Geiger and Cornelio Fabro,[6] and through the speculative metaphysics of Louis de Raeymaeker.[7] Graduate faculties in North America reflected the diversity of these European neo-Thomistic currents. Gilson's influence, for example, was strong at the Mediaeval Institute at Toronto and at Saint Louis University; Maritain's influence made itself felt at Notre Dame; Transcendental Thomism, the more recent Thomistic personalism, the new interest in the Platonic element in Thomism, and Gilson's existential Thomism were all represented in the graduate instruction at Fordham.[8] After the Second World War North America produced its

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Thomism (New York: Fordham University Press, 1988), pp. 39-113.

5. For an excellent summary of Gilson's philosophy and a collection of texts see Anton C. Pegis, ed., *A Gilson Reader* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday-Image Books, 1957). For Gilson's Christian philosophy see Armand Maurer, "The Legacy of Étienne Gilson," in *One Hundred Years of Thomism,* ed. Victor B. Brezik, C.S.B. (Houston, Texas: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1981), pp. 28-44. For Gilson's existential Thomism see his *Being and Some Philosophers* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1952).

6. L. B. Geiger, *La participation dans la philosophie de s. Thomas d'Aquin* (Paris: Vrin, 1953). Cornelio Fabro, *La Nozione Metafisica di Participazione secundo S. Tommaso d'Aquino* (Torino: Societa Editrice Internazionale, 1950).

7. Louis de Raeymaeker, *Philosophie de l'être* (Louvain: Publications de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie, 1942). English translation: *The Philosophy of Being* (St. Louis, Missouri: B. Herder, 1954).

8. McCool, "The Tradition of St. Thomas in North America: At 50 Years."

own distinguished group of neo-Thomists. Among them were the historians and speculative thinkers whose names are associated with the Mediaeval Institute at Toronto: Gerald Phelan, Anton Pegis, Vernon Bourke, Joseph Owens, Armand Maurer, and Edward Synan. There are other distinguished historians, of course, among the North American neo-Thomists. The names of James Collins and James Weisheipl, for example, come readily to mind. Other Thomists of reputation, George Klubertanz, to name but one, brought out clear and concise speculative expositions of Thomism for use in the North American classroom.

For a while I was afraid that our collective memory of neo-Thomism's contribution to Christian philosophy would be lost, but, fortunately, in the past few years its history has begun to be written. Father Laurence Shook's magnificent biography of Étienne Gilson was published in 1984. More recently, in 1988, another significant contribution to the history of neo-Thomism was made in Austria. The second volume of *Christian Philosophy in Catholic Thought in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* [*Christliche Philosophie im katholischen Denken des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*] was brought out in Graz by a team of editors headed by Father Emerich Coreth.[9] In a series of concise and scholarly monographs this volume recounts the whole history of neo-Thomism from its early days to the present time. And, as some of you may know, I have been at work myself, in a more modest way, on the history of European and North American neo-Thomism.[10] Some record will remain then in accessible form of this important period in Catholic intellectual life and in the history of our own Association.

Has the Tradition of St. Thomas Ceased to be Relevant?

But what does the history of the neo-Thomist movement tell us who have spent some time studying it about the viability of St. Thomas's philosophy in a new intellectual climate in which the Angelic Doctor no longer plays a major role in Catholic thought? Is it true, as we have been told, that St. Thomas's metaphysics of being has lost its relevance because it cannot deal with historical reality as a contemporary philosophy must do? In a world in which we are told that philosophers have no work left to do beyond judging the coherence of diverse language games, what work is there left for Thomas? After Heidegger's destruc-

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9. See note 2.

10. Notably two books, *Catholic Theology in the Nineteenth Century: The Quest for a Unitary Method* (New York: Seabury, 1977, republished as *Nineteenth-Century Scholasticism: The Search for a Unitary Method* [New York: Fordham University Press, 1989]), and *From Unity to Pluralism.*

tion of metaphysics, can St. Thomas, any more than Plato or Aristotle, still claim to have grasped the authentic meaning of truth and being? In a post-Heideggerian, post-foundational deconstructionist age, why should anyone in his right mind look to St. Thomas for useful philosophical ideas? These are daunting questions for a disciple of St. Thomas. Yet, in spite of them, a case can still be made, I would argue, that, even in a vastly changed philosophical world, St. Thomas has still a few words left to say. One of the reasons for my confidence is that, thanks to the historical study of neo-Thomism, which is still going on, St. Thomas's disciples are learning to identify those words more surely and to understand why they are still worth hearing.

It may seem strange for a historian of neo-Thomism to say that, given the history which he has studied. It is disturbing for him to realize that he might never have had a neo-Thomist movement to study, if the first neo-Thomists had not misunderstood both the nature of St. Thomas's thought and its relation to the Second Scholasticism, the great Scholastic revival in Spain and Italy in the decades before and after the Council of Trent. As a result, the success of the program of medieval studies which Leo XIII linked to the neo-Thomist movement progressively undermined the conception of the tradition of St. Thomas which had moved the pope to launch it. Far from being the common philosophy shared by all the medieval doctors, Scholasticism turned out to be little more than a common name under which a plurality of systematically diverse philosophies could be grouped. And what was true of the First Scholasticism turned out to be true of the Second Scholasticism as well. Suarezianism and Second Scholasticism Thomism, which Leo's advisers took to be essentially the same philosophy, were shown to be irreducibly distinct systems. More unsettling still, significant divergences from St. Thomas's own thought were found in the systems of Thomas's great Dominican Commentators. And so, in their philosophy of knowledge and being, and in their theologies of grace and nature, the great Thomistic systems of the Second Scholasticism and St. Thomas's own philosophical theology were not, as the early neo-Thomist thought, identical. Furthermore, to complete the demolition of Leo's view of the tradition of St. Thomas, the transition between patristic and Scholastic thought in the thirteenth century had not taken place, as *Aeterni Patris* would have us think, with no notable change in method or loss in content. The change which it had worked in philosophical and theological method has been radical and, in the areas of history, spirituality, and even doctrine, losses of no small moment counterbalanced the gains which St. Thomas's scientific rigor had brought to Catholic philosophy and theology. These disturbing facts, of course, have been known for

decades. Neo-Thomists did not learn them from their enemies. They learned them from the historical research of scholars like Étienne Gilson, Marie-Dominique Chenu, Henri de Lubac, and Henri Bouillard, all of whom were affectionate disciples of the Angelic Doctor. The outcome of their work was a progressive and profound change in the self-understanding of the tradition of St. Thomas.

Thomists could no longer confuse the wisdom of the Angelic Doctor with a rigidly unitary system of theology which remained unchanged in its essentials from the age of the Fathers up to the present day. And, if history had shown that there had been pluralism in what Leo XIII described as the wisdom of St. Thomas, the evolution of that wisdom in its dialogue led to another manifestation of pluralism. Neo-Thomism did not develop into a strongly unitary system of modern philosophy as Leo XIII had hoped. It evolved instead into an irreducible diversity of competing Thomistic systems. Thomists differed with one another, for example, about Thomas's relation to Plato and to Aristotle. One leading Dominican Thomist, Gallus Manser, argued that the essence of Thomism was to be found in Thomas's Aristotelian metaphysics of act and potency.[11] Earlier on, the Jesuit neo-Thomist had taken the opposite tack. For Rousselot, Thomas's significant contribution to philosophy was an epistemology of insight of *intellectus*, reminiscent of St. Augustine, which the Angelic Doctor had linked to a Platonic participation metaphysics.[12] Whether Thomas was a Platonist or not was an issue which divided his disciples on this side of the Atlantic too. Anton Pegis, as you may recall, was not receptive to the idea of a Platonic Thomism. On the other hand, my Fordham colleague, William Norris Clarke, emphasized the importance of what the Irish Thomist Arthur Little had called the Platonic heritage of Thomism.[13]

From the early years of the century Kantian idealism and the usefulness of Kant's Transcendental Method had become another apple of discord in the neo-Thomist movement. Étienne Gilson told Thomists to steer clear of Kant. Rightly understood and consistently applied, Kant's Transcendental Method, he assured them, was a straight path to idealism. Any Thomist who thought that Kantian method could lead him to realism was a victim of either historical ignorance or intellectual

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11. Bernhard Braun, "Gallus Manser (1866-1950)" in *Christliche Philosophie*, 2: 623-29.

12. Pierre Rousselot, S.J., *L'intellectualisme de Saint Thomas* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1924). The first edition was published in 1908.

13. W. Norris Clarke, S.J., "The Limitation of Act by Potency: Aristotelianism or Neo-Platonism?" *The New Scholasticism* 26 (1952): 167-94.

confusion.[14] But Joseph Maréchal and the Transcendental Thomists who followed him took a more optimistic view. Kant landed in idealism, they explained in soothing tones, only because he had not been consistent enough in the use of his own method. Once you went all the way with it, and took Kant's method as far as consistent use of it would let you, it led with logical necessity to Thomas's realistic metaphysics of being.[15]

After World War II, Thomas's metaphysics of existence led to another Thomistic "division of the house." Once Gilson had worked out the consequences of his metaphysics of existence and defined the role which he claimed that the judgment of existence must play in our grasp of being, Gilsonian Thomism, which had already separated itself from Transcendental Thomism, could no longer be reconciled with the Dominican Thomism, in the tradition of Gardeil, whose best known representative was Garrigou-Lagrange. Maritain admired that Dominican tradition and his own Thomism had been influenced by it. Gilson and Maritain were never eager to discuss their philosophical differences but that did not mean that their versions of Thomism always fitted easily together.

By mid-century then it was clear that irreconcilable differences, in their interpretation of the tradition of St. Thomas had emerged among the neo-Thomists. Some Thomists in fact were not content simply to observe that fact. Philosophical pluralism within Thomism, they claimed, was a legitimate exigence of St. Thomas's own epistemology and metaphysics. That, at least, was the position defended by the Jesuit Transcendental Thomists, Henri Bouillard and Jean-Marie Le Blond, in their well publicized debate with Garrigou-Lagrange and with two other Dominican Thomists, Marie-Michel Labourdette and Marie-Joseph Nicolas, whose understanding of Thomism had been shaped by Maritain's *The Degrees of Knowledge*.[16] With this radical division in its ranks, at the time of the "New Theology" crisis, the neo-Thomist movement, understood as the quest for a single, rigidly unitary, philosophical system, came to its end.

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14. Étienne Gilson, *Thomist Realism and the Critique of Knowledge* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), pp. 129-48. Original French version, *Réalisme thomiste et critique de connaissance* (Paris: Vrin, 1939).

15. See Joseph Donceel, S.J., *A Maréchal Reader* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970).

16. For the details of this debate see McCool, *From Unity to Pluralism*, pp. 200-33.

The Clearer Self-Understanding of the Tradition of St. Thomas

Why should that history of a movement which began with misunderstanding and ended with the disappointment of its early hopes lead me to the optimistic view that the tradition of St. Thomas still remains a live option for a contemporary philosopher and that St. Thomas still has something to say to our contemporary community? One reason is the more accurate self-understanding which the tradition has acquired precisely through the historical and speculative work done in the neo-Thomist movement. We know now that St. Thomas was a highly original philosophical theologian, original enough to be condemned in 1277 and largely neglected after that. The link between Thomas and the Thomists of the Second Scholasticism was not a link of unbroken continuity. The Second Scholasticism was the revival of a long forgotten Thomas in a changed intellectual world faced with a new set of philosophical and theological problems. The Third Scholasticism of the neo-Thomist movement was a second revival after a second long period of oblivion. At the dawn of the nineteenth century St. Thomas was virtually unknown. The world of the Third Scholasticism was completely different from the world of the Second. It was the intellectual universe which antifoundationalist and postmodern philosophers call the modern world, the world whose view of reality is shaped by the concerns of modern science and by the post-Cartesian philosophy created to deal with them.

If Gilson, Chenu, de Lubac, and Lonergan are right, no philosophical theology of the Second Scholasticism could be totally identified with Thomas's own thought, and the same, I think, can be said of the diverse philosophies of the neo-Thomist movement. Philosophical pluralism within Thomism is a fact. Yet, despite that fact, a clearly discernible unity marks all its leading philosophers and theologians as followers of the Angelic Doctor. All are in the tradition of St. Thomas. Despite their misunderstandings of St. Thomas and the disagreements caused by their effort to adapt St. Thomas's thought to problems which he had never tried to solve, the Thomists of the Second and Third Scholasticism, without exception, claimed St. Thomas as their master. And not without evidence to vindicate their claim. For in their philosophy of knowledge, man, and being, the systems of these Thomists could clearly be distinguished from the rival philosophies of Augustinians, Scotists, Ockhamites, Cartesians, Empiricists, Kantians, Husserlian phenomenologists, and Whiteheadian process metaphysics. Thomists of Second and Third Scholasticism might be criticized for deficiencies in their interpretation of St. Thomas. No follower is the equal of a great

master but, if these Thomists were not in the tradition of St. Thomas, what were they? They were closer to their master than to anybody else.

A discernible unity in their philosophy of knowledge, man, and being linked them both to St. Thomas and to one another. Since they were not intellectual archaeologists but practitioners of a living, working philosophy, they extended and modified what they took to be St. Thomas's thought and, at times, failed to do it full justice. But that occurs in every great tradition, whether the tradition be that of Plato, Aristotle, Kant, or Hegel. Traditions are great traditions precisely because, although disciples constantly endeavor to make their master's thought their own, no one of them or no group of them can exhaust that thought or indeed do it full justice.[17]

Disciples of a great master should not be scorned. It can make great sense at times for a philosopher engaged in serious philosophizing of his own to turn to a great tradition for the resources which he needs to cope with the problems of his time. In the tradition of St. Thomas philosophers turned to the Angelic Doctor twice in two distinct revivals of his thought, the Second and the Third Scholasticism. For that reason there are two histories of St. Thomas: the history of his own thought, and the "effective history," or *Wirkungsgeschichte,* of St. Thomas's thought reflected through the philosophies and theologies of his disciples. To appreciate the relevance of the Angelic Doctor's thought, I would argue, we should study both. The effective history of St. Thomas, as it passed through two great revival movements, is instructive. It has shown us that the unity and the vitality of this great tradition should not be confused with the unity of any individual's interpretation of St. Thomas's thought or with the uniformity sought by a revival movement within it. The same can be said of the vitality of this great tradition. The life span of a revival movement within a tradition should not be equated with the life span of the tradition itself.

The Relevance of Thomas's Philosophy of the Person

Traditions remain alive or come back to life when philosophers find in them resources they need to address the problems of their time. One of the reasons then why I am still optimistic about the viability of the tradition of St. Thomas is the recovery and speculative development of St. Thomas's philosophy of the person we owe to a number of neo-Thomists. Thomas's human person, they have shown us, was an autonomous human nature. But, in the tradition of the Fathers, that person was

17. See Gerald A. McCool, S.J., "Neo-Thomism and the Tradition of St. Thomas," *Thought* 62 (1987): 131-46.

also the image of God ordered to union with his infinite Creator through a life of sensitive, intellectual, and volitional activity lived in a community of faith. Thomas inherited his Platonic participation metaphysics from Augustine and from his own master, Albert the Great; but he also took over from Albert an uncompromisingly Aristotelian philosophy of man. Thus, although Thomas's participated act of existence was limited by the essence which received it, in man that human essence was composite of primary matter and a single substantial form. There could be no place in Thomas's epistemology then for the mitigated form of divine illumination which the medieval Augustinians linked to their plurality of substantial forms. Knowledge of reality in the judgment—even of divine reality—relied on the concepts which an Aristotelian active intellect abstracted from sense experience. Nonetheless, in sharp opposition to what was perhaps the more authentic Aristotelianism of Averroes, Thomas maintained that the human knower knew himself, the world, and God. The reason was that Thomas's knower could perform the act of understanding. *Hic homo intelligit.*[18]

In other words, as Thomas explained in *De Veritate* 1.9, each individual human, moved to achieve its end as God's image by knowing and loving the Infinite *Esse* in which it participated, had immediate implicit awareness of its own activity. That immediate awareness was due to the intuitive intellectual power which Aristotle called *nous* and which Thomas called *intellectus*. Reflecting on the activity understood through *intellectus* the mind could come to know its own finality; and, when it did, it would realize that, as a faculty of knowing, it was ordered to a knowledge of being made present through its abstracted concept. And a mind which could know being could know all reality, even infinite reality.

Despite their differences about its speculative extension, neo-Thomists found themselves constantly drawn back to the epistemology of *De Veritate* and to the role assigned in it to Aristotelian *nous* and to Aristotelian finality in its account of our knowledge of being. Joseph Kleutgen turned to *De Veritate* in his nineteenth-century neo-Scholastic epistemology. Ambroise Gardeil used it in a very different theory of knowledge to justify the analogy of being. Pierre Rousselot built his intellectualism and his theology of faith on it. Maritain extended it to develop his aesthetics, ethics, and philosophy of the person. Without it

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18. In *De unitate intellectus contra averroistas pariensienses* written about 1270. For the background of this work see James A. Weisheipl, O.P., *Friar Thomas d'Aquino: His Life, Thought and Works* (New York: Doubleday, 1974), pp. 272-82. See also Fernand van Steenberghen, *The Philosophical Movement in the Thirteenth Century* (Edinburgh: Nelson, 1955), pp. 75-93.

Bernard Lonergan would have no basis for his new method in theology.[19]

Nous, intuitive *intellectus*, and the freedom of the will, both made possible through the ordination of the mind and will to infinite truth and goodness as their goal, distinguished Thomas's ethics from the ethics of post-Cartesian rationalism and empiricism. In St. Thomas's philosophy of art and prudence, as Jacques Maritain showed us years ago in *Art and Scholasticism*, truth does not consist in the conformity of an impersonal intellect to the ready-made essences mirrored in universal concepts.[20] For, in Thomas's Aristotelian practical intellect, *nous* or *intellectus*, directed by right appetite, gains intellectual knowledge of a singular, a concrete work to be made or done. Furthermore, as Maritain reminded us in his aesthetics, and as Rousselot pointed out in his theological classic, *The Eyes of Faith*, *nous* or *intellectus*, when it operates in the realm of faith or of artistic and moral values, depends for the soundness of its knowledge on past free choices made by a personal agent.[21] And it depends as well on the influence of the community in which that personal agent lives. For soundness in artistic and prudential judgments requires sensitivity to moral and cultural values acquired by the agent's connaturality to them. If you want a sound judgment about chastity, St. Thomas tells us in a famous text, ask the chaste man.[22]

Jacques Maritain was well aware of that. In Thomas's practical science of ethics, he pointed out, moral universals are reached by generalization from the prudential judgments of good men connatural to the values at stake. Thus ethics ascends to its general principles from the *nous* and connaturality operative in good free agents; and it must descend to its concrete applications by the same route. For St. Thomas then ethics is not—and cannot be—the impersonal purely deductive science which John Locke, and many philosophers after him, imagined that it was. Practical science though it may be, St. Thomas's ethics depends on personal knowledge. Sound ethical knowledge for the

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19. Lonergan's epistemology, metaphysics, and his method in theology have been inspired to a large extent by Lonergan's textual study of *intellectus* in St. Thomas. See Bernard J. Lonergan, S.J., *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967).

20. Jacques Maritain, *Art and Scholasticism and the Frontiers of Poetry* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1974). See also Ralph McInerny, *Art and Prudence: Studies in the Thought of Jacques Maritain* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988).

21. Pierre Rousselot, "Les yeux de la foi," *Recherches de Science Religieuse* 1 (1910): 241-59; 44-75.

22. Rousselot, *L'intellectualisme de Saint Thomas*, pp. 70-2.

Angelic Doctor is due to connaturality to the virtues on the part of free agents. And, since connaturality is affected by the interaction of agents in a community, sound ethics depends on interpersonal communal knowledge too. Maritain knew that too when he subordinated his practical science of ethics to moral theology.[23] Maritain's ethics was the ethics of a believer who lived in a community of faith.

Earlier in the century Pierre Rousselot argued that the wisdom of St. Thomas was an intellectualism linked to a philosophy of the person. Since Thomas's pure act of existence was personal, our knowledge of being in its most perfect form meant sharing in the life of another person.[24] Following the same inspiration more recently, William Norris Clarke has argued that personal being should be the model of reality on which a Thomistic analogy of being is built.[25] Furthermore, Clarke tells us, the mind's intuitive grasp of its own judging and evaluating activity through *intellectus* provides the ground on which our analogous knowledge of God is justified.[26] It follows then that, like Thomas's practical science of ethics, Thomas's speculative science of metaphysics and his philosophical theology operate inside a larger framework. They are surrounded by the personal and interpersonal knowledge of a free agent living with other free agents in a community. Inside that framework abstract impersonal knowledge is illumined, fed, and supported by personal knowledge.

Thomas and Foundationalism

That is why Thomas could never be a Cartesian or a Post-Cartesian foundationalist.[27] The Cartesian project would have no appeal to him. Nourished by the personal and interpersonal life of a religious community in the larger community of a Church, the Angelic Doctor responded to God's free call through the believer's free assent of faith. Consequently Thomas would find the Cartesian call for apodictic certainty—acquired

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23. Jacques Maritain, *Science and Wisdom* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940). For more of Maritain's ethics, see McCool, *From Unity to Pluralism*, pp. 141-45.

24. Rousselot, *L'intellectualisme de Saint Thomas*, pp. x-xii.

25. For Clarke's original Thomistic synthesis see Gerald A. McCool, S.J., ed., *The Universe as Journey: Conversations with William Norris Clarke*, S.J. (New York: Fordham University Press, 1988).

26. William Norris Clarke, S.J., *The Philosophical Approach to God* (Winston-Salem, North Carolina: Wake Forest University Press, 1979), pp. 49-61.

27. Alvin Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff have argued that Thomas can be charged with foundationalism. For a firm denial of this accusation by Henry Veatch and others see Leonard B. Kennedy, C.S.B., ed., *Thomistic Papers IV* (Houston, Texas: University of St. Thomas, 1987).

through methodic universal doubt—incompatible with his own lived experience. In the life of a community, the other persons, encountered through the symbols of art, the signs of love, and the shared prayer of the liturgy, cannot be bracketed. The men and women who share their love in a community know through *intellectus*'s knowledge of the singular both *that* they love and *who it is* they love. Knowing this, they also know that Cartesian apodictic foundationalism cannot be the only norm of truth. The knowledge of our selves and of the free persons we love, given to us by *intellectus*, is too rich to be restricted to a lifeless world of universals. For Thomas Cartesian foundationalism would lead to a separated philosophy, separated not only from theology but separated from life.

The personal knowledge made possible by *intellectus* can do more than preserve us from foundationalism; it can unify our knowledge of the transcendent God and of human history. As William Norris Clarke used insight or *intellectus* in the mind's intuitive grasp of its own activity to vindicate analogous knowledge of God against the objections of linguistic philosophers, Bernard Lonergan extended Thomas's epistemology of *intellectus*, which Lonergan called the act of insight, to show how a nonrelativistic Thomistic philosophy of being could still control the meaning of philosophical and theological statements, even if those statements had been made in logically disconnected form within diverse historical frameworks. Hermeneutics and metaphysics need not be taken as antithetical to one another. For, as these two Thomists have shown us, resources remain in the tradition of St. Thomas to reconcile transcendence and abiding truth with history.[28]

There are resources also, I believe, in Thomas's philosophy of personal and interpersonal knowledge to answer some of the difficulties of more recent antifoundationalist philosophers. In an interpersonal world the Cartesian lonely mind is seen to be an illusion. If other persons cannot be bracketed, the problem of "constituting other persons" does not arise. Neither does the failure of post-Cartesian foundationalism imprison us in a set of ungroundable language games.[29] For Thomas's free person, who *understands* both himself and the other person whom he loves, as real interacting persons, there is always more to know than can be expressed in a language game.

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28. Bernard J. F. Lonergan, S.J., *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), pp. 57-99.

29. Richard Rorty, "Epistemological Behaviorism and the De-Transcendentalization of Analytical Philosophy," in *Hermeneutics and Praxis*, ed. Robert Hollinger (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985), pp. 89-121.

Some Concluding Reflections

The Third Scholasticism may have gone its way like the Second Scholasticism before it, and the neo-Thomist movement may well be over. Not everything in it was of lasting value. Before the distinction between a rigid system and a philosophical tradition was understood, too much time may have been spent deciding which philosophers could be called authentic Thomists. Too much time may have been spent as well debating whether or not St. Thomas's philosophy of being and the person, which transcends the narrow limits of Cartesian foundationalism, could be justified within the constraints imposed on it by a Cartesian or a Kantian method. Those may be quarrels of the past. No historian of the neo-Thomistic movement, however, can deny that, for the better part of a century, the work of the neo-Thomists enriched an already rich tradition. The thought of a forgotten philosophical genius was recovered, adapted, and speculatively extended. The tradition of St. Thomas, as it still exists today, has inherited from the neo-Thomists a number of valuable resources, among which, I would argue, one of the greatest is Thomas's philosophy, if younger philosophers still exist with the historical knowledge, speculative skill, and intellectual courage required to think independently in the tradition of St. Thomas.