



## THOMISTIC VISION OF THE MEANING OF THE WILL IN ITS LOVE OF THE GOOD

### EL AMOR DE LA VOLUNTAD HACIA AL BIEN SEGÚN LA VISIÓN TOMISTA

*Kyla Mary Anne Macdonald\**

#### **ABSTRACT**

This study treats of the dynamic of the will which, as a spiritual faculty together with the intelligence, exists in a relationship with being; in its particular case, with being as goodness. Ontologically, this tendency is called natural love. In the ethical sphere, a love of choice is demanded, opening the theme of human liberty and its role in the meaning of human existence. In the Thomistic synthesis, it becomes clear that, although man is primarily a cognitive being, he cannot truly know himself without giving adequate significance to his volitive capacity.

#### **RESUMEN**

Este estudio trata de la dinámica de la voluntad que, como facultad espiritual junto con la inteligencia, existe en un relacionamiento con el ser; en el caso de la primera, con el ser como bondad, lo que ontológicamente se llama amor natural. Ahora bien, el mundo ético exige un amor de elección, lo que abre el tema de la libertad humana y su papel en el sentido de la existencia del hombre. En la síntesis tomista queda claro que, aunque el hombre es principalmente un ser cognitivo, él no puede conocerse plenamente sin dar significado

---

\* Licenciado Canónico en Filosofía de la Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana. Actualmente realiza estudios de doctorado en la misma Universidad. Miembro del Grupo Religión y Cultura UPB. Miembro de la Asociación Internacional de Derecho Pontificio Heraldos del Evangelio. De nacionalidad Canadiense, actualmente reside en São Paulo, Brasil. Dirección electrónica: [kylamacdonald@gmail.com](mailto:kylamacdonald@gmail.com)

Artículo recibido el día 10 de febrero de 2010 y aprobado por el Comité Editorial el día 19 de mayo de 2010.

It also becomes clear that the role of the will in human action cannot be understood without seeing its relation to its roots in being. Love of the good emerges as the identifying factor of the will in both ontology and ethics.

**KEY WORDS:**

Will, love, good, ontology, ethics

adecuado a su capacidad volitiva. También queda claro que el papel de la voluntad en la acción humana no puede ser comprendido sin ver la relación que la misma tiene con su raíz en el ser. En consecuencia se puede decir que el amor al bien surge como seña de identidad de la voluntad, tanto en Ontología cuanto en Ética.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:**

Voluntad, amor, bien, ontología, ética

---

### *Introduction*

In embarking on a study of a Thomistic nature, we are approaching a philosophy that undeniably bears both Aristotelian and medieval characteristics. While Aristotle can be said to have affected the *style* of St. Thomas, what most profoundly influenced his *thought* was that mark of all medieval philosophy of being firmly situated in a revealed religion, in which God is not only the “unmoved mover”, but more to the point, Creator (Koyré 20-21). The doctrine of creation, namely that of a “Creator-God, who was certainly a person, and who created men in his image and likeness, which is to say, as persons” (Arendt 345), is inseparable from the Thomistic vision of man. As Davies notes, even when St. Thomas speaks of the human person independently of Christian revelation, “he never thinks of people without thinking of them as creatures loved by God and destined for union with him” (1992 227).

There can be no doubt that St. Thomas *believed* in revelation; believed therefore “in the scriptural assertion that the name and nature of God is being” (Owens Cited by Kretzmann 1993a 48). Yet at the same time, it cannot be denied that he effectively used the natural light of reason to its maximum capacity to understand and to philosophically formulate and demonstrate what he believed (Gilson 1993 66). In the process, the Aristotelian legacy was put to use by St. Thomas even in the substantiation of principles that, in many cases, Aristotle had not himself reached.

One of these areas is the study of the human will. In his investigations, Aristotle divided the powers of the soul into two potencies, one being rational % understanding % and the other an irrational potency of desire. He determined that, along with reason or understanding, four distinct elements of volition were necessary in order to define moral or human action. Eight hundred years after St. Augustine had “discovered” *voluntas* as a *rational* potency of free choice, it was St. Thomas who was first to effectively establish among Aristotle’s volitive elements, one unified concept of the will that operates together with understanding in human action (Pich 179-182).

Today, roughly another eight hundred years later, what is to be gained by looking at the contributions of St. Thomas? And what particular benefit can a deeper understanding of the will offer? One thing is certain: in this age in which humanity is faced with perhaps more information than ever before, it seems to never have felt such a keen absence *meaning*.

In the Thomistic synthesis, the topic of the will is significant. It provides % especially in the dynamic of its love for the good % insight into the meaning of human existence, from origin to destiny. Turning to Thomistic thought, both within the original medieval and the current “neo-Thomistic” contexts, this investigation attempts to discover the meaning of the will in its love of the good. To this end, this study touches on ontology % to show what the will *is* % and ethics, which treats of what the will *does*. The first demonstrates the will’s relation to being, while the second applies these principles to the

will's role in human activity. A relationship is sought between these two aspects of the will. Here, the discussion is inserted into the current philosophical perspective, where it faces various conflicting views and seeks to provide reflections relevant to the contemporary reality. The will is not presented here as an exclusive and isolated function in a voluntarist (Marechal 283)<sup>1</sup> fashion. In St. Thomas, we discover precisely the possibility of approaching man not as mere matter, nor as pure intelligence, nor yet as pure will, but as an integral *person*.

## 1. *The Will and the Good in Being*

*"In the Thomistic synthesis, the good has an extraordinary importance. St. Thomas conceives it as the motive of creation and the end of the created"* (Forment 29)<sup>2</sup>.

The Aristotelian concept of the universe is one of order. Transferred into Thomistic thought, the resultant concept of the universe is one in which each part has some relation to each other part, inasmuch as all parts are ultimately linked with the Creator-God. It is thus that the purpose of the will emerges in light of its object.

### 1.1. *The Good*

It is in the first part of his *Summa Theologica*, in which St. Thomas treats of God and the divine attributes, that he first touches upon the idea of goodness. A superlative and causative goodness is imputed to God in the

---

<sup>1</sup> Marechal notes the "reciprocal causality" that St. Thomas establishes between the intellectual and appetitive functions based upon their mutual relation with being. Radical divisions between the two, resulting in irrational voluntarism, occurred outside of Thomistic schools.

<sup>2</sup> *"En la síntesis tomista tiene una importancia extraordinaria el bien. Santo Tomás lo concibe como motive de la creación y como fin de lo creado"*.

description of His essential perfection and being. Referring to Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, St. Thomas states that God is called *universally* perfect since He cannot lack any perfection that is found in any other genus. For by reason of His being effective cause, He possesses all that the effect possesses. Continuing, he expounds:

God is existence itself, of itself subsistent. Consequently, He must contain within Himself the whole perfection of being. (...) Now all created perfections are included in the perfection of being, for things are perfect precisely so far as they have being after some fashion. It follows therefore that the perfection of no one thing is wanting to God. This line of argument, too, is implied by Dionysius (*loc. cit.*) when he says that 'God exists not in any single mode, but embraces all being within Himself, absolutely, without limitation, uniformly'; and afterward he adds that 'He is the very existence to subsisting things (*S. Theol.* I, q. 4 a 2)<sup>3</sup>.

This excerpt not only demonstrates the relation between being and perfection but also shows that a relation exists between created things, in their particular degrees of being and perfection, and God. This relation, in addition to being that of cause and effect, is one of a certain similarity: "all created things, so far as they are beings, are like God as the first and universal principal of being" (*Id.* q. 4 a 3)<sup>4</sup>. It follows, as a consequence, that: "Every being that is not God, is God's creature. Now every creature of God is good (1Tim 4:4): and God is the greatest good. Therefore every being is good" (*Id.* q. 5 a 3)<sup>5</sup>.

---

<sup>3</sup> "Deus est ipsum esse per se subsistens, ex quo oportet quod totam perfectionem essendi in se contineat.[...]. Omnium autem perfectiones pertinent ad perfectionem essendi, secundum hoc enim aliqua perfecta sunt, quod aliquo modo esse habent. Unde sequitur quod nullius rei perfectio Deo desit. Et hanc etiam rationem tangit Dionysius, cap. V de Div. Nom., dicens quod Deus non quodammodo est existens, sed simpliciter et incircumscripse totum in seipso uniformiter esse praeaccipit, et postea subdit quod ipse est esse subsistentibus".

<sup>4</sup> "Et hoc modo illa quae sunt a Deo, assimilantur ei in quantum sunt entia, ut primo et universali principio totius esse".

<sup>5</sup> "Omne ens quod non est Deus, est Dei creatura. Sed omnis creatura Dei est bona, ut dicitur 1 Ti4,4: Deus vero est maxime bonus. Ergo omne ens est bonum".

The infinite being and goodness of God is, therefore, represented in His work, His creation. However, creatures have but finite being and goodness; no one creature can adequately reflect the divine likeness. For this purpose, the existence of a multiplicity and variety of creatures are required (St. Thomas L. II, c. 45). The resultant distinction among creatures signifies unequal degrees of perfection, and where there are degrees of perfection there is necessarily a hierarchical order (Gilson 2002 205-206) which signifies a scale of greater or lesser participation of being. Living things have more being than things that merely exist without life. That which understands surpasses life without understanding (Forment 2005 45). By virtue of the concept of all being as good, the universe is likewise conceived as the ordination of distinct levels of goodness according to their participation in the good (*Id.* 30). Yet even seen thus, the most profound root is that of being; to have goodness, above all, is to have being.

The human person finds himself on the pinnacle of the material universe, % *perfectissimum in tota natura* (*De Pot.*, I,29,3) % since he is endowed with the highest level of being which comprises intelligence and free will (Rodríguez 19). Among creatures, only an intelligent, personal being that is devoid of all material % angelic nature % can surpass human nature (Sanchez 92). Yet in contrast with all created nature which has being in varying degrees, God is pure being, in such a way that He *is* His own being (Gilson 1993 18). Being as a nature is present only in God (Owens Cited by Kretzmann 1993a 48). Applying this principle to the goodness of God and creatures, God *is* His goodness while the goodness of creatures is a finite participation of the infinite goodness which is God (Gilson 2007 659-663).

In contrast with Manichean and other dualist philosophies, St. Thomas maintains that while God is the supreme and essential good that is the cause of all being and first principle of all good, there cannot be a supreme evil that is the first principle of all evil, since its very being would imply some good (*S. Theol.* I, q. 49, a 2). Evil, in the metaphysical sense, does not have positive existence, but can only be considered in a negative sense as

the privation of good in the same way that darkness is but lack of light (*Id.* q. 48, a 1). This concept will later be reconciled with the spectrum of moral good and evil, but for the present the ontological good is significant as we consider in its appetitive sense, as an object of the will.

### *1.2. The Will in The Genus of Appetite*

As a necessary foundation, we have thus far considered the good as being. This is, in effect, to consider good as a transcendental of being, thereby sharing % with oneness and truth % the same identity as being. But although the transcendentals are in reality the same as being, they are not identical in concept (Gardeil 1967 126). In what sense, then, is the notion of good distinct from that of mere being in Aristotelian and Thomistic thought?

Aristotle begins his *Nichomachean Ethics* with a definition of the good as that toward which all things tend: *quod omnia appetunt*. Thus, goodness refers to the relation between being and the appetite in the universal sense. In other words, goodness carries a nuance of meaning which the term being, alone, does not, namely, the aspect of appetibility (*Id.* 142-143). Accordingly, the very criterion of what is good is its appetibility. “Everything is good so far as it is desirable, and is a term of the movement of the appetite” (*S. Theol.* I, q. 5, a 6)<sup>6</sup>.

Given the metaphysical principle that every form elicits an inclination (Gardeil 1956 197), “appetition in general is a universal occurrence, existing in both inanimate and animate beings” (*Id.* 79). Since the good exists in varying degrees in all levels of being, it stands to reason that this appetition is likewise of unequal degrees. “All things in their own way % says St. Thomas % are inclined by appetite towards good, but in different ways” (*S. Theol.* I, q. 80, a 1)<sup>7</sup>.

---

<sup>6</sup> *Nam bonus est aliquid, in quantum est appetibile, et terminus motus appetitus.*

<sup>7</sup> *“Omnia suo modo per appetitum inclinantur in bonum, sed diversamode”.*

St. Thomas traces the presence of appetite throughout the various levels of being. Minerals or inanimate things and plants are inclined to good naturally and without knowledge; this inclination is called *natural appetite*. The next level is that of irrational animals which although without knowledge of the good in itself, apprehend some particular good by means of the senses, and the inclination which follows is duly named *sensitive appetite*. The most perfect inclination to what is good occurs in beings that have knowledge of the reason of goodness, goodness in its universal sense; in them this inclination is called *rational appetite* or *will* (*Ibid*).

Appetites are aptly divided, then, into those of beings with knowledge and beings without. Clearly, appetition follows apprehension; therefore, a higher level of apprehension determines a superior type of appetition, as the following explanation illustrates:

As forms exist in those things that have knowledge in a higher manner and above the manner of natural forms; so must there be in them an inclination surpassing the natural inclination which is called the natural appetite. And this superior inclination belongs to the appetitive power of the soul, through which the animal is able to desire what it apprehends, and not only that to which it is inclined by its natural form (*S. Theol. I, q. 80, a 1*)<sup>8</sup>.

The irrational and hence inferior form of apprehension and inclination would hold little import for man if it were not for the fact that, since the human soul exists on the border of the spiritual and corporal worlds, it possesses the potencies of both one and the other order (*Id. I, q. 77, a 2*). As diverse as these various vegetative, sensitive and rational potencies are % the vegetative and sensitive being corporal and the rational being spiritual, they

---

<sup>8</sup> “*Sicut igitur formae altiori modo existunt in habentibus cognitionem supra modum formarum naturalium, ita oportet quod in eis sit inclinatio supra modum inclinationis naturalis, quae dicitur appetitus naturalis. Et haec superior inclinatio pertinet ad vim animae appetitivam, per quam animal appetere potest ea quae apprehendit, non solum ea ad quae inclinatur ex forma naturali*”.



are all present within the human soul, united as it is to the body as its one substantial form (Kretzmann 1993b 131).

The vegetative or nutritive nature present in man involves only corporal functions over which the intelligence and will have no direct dominion. Much more significant to our study, then, is the presence of sensitive life in man, since this, in addition to his spiritual nature implies two distinct faculties of knowledge, sense and intellect. These faculties being endowed with distinct means of knowing, they give rise to the correspondingly diverse sensitive appetite and the will (Gardeil 1967 198-199). In St. Thomas' own words: "Since what is apprehended by the intellect and what is apprehended by sense are generically different; consequently, the intellectual appetite is distinct from the sensitive" (*S. Theol.* I, q. 80, a 2)<sup>9</sup>.

Endowed with these distinct potencies that reflect his composition of matter and form % in this case, soul and body %, man is thus admirably equipped to live in a universe of which every part is made up of matter and form. For while the sensory perception is suited to capture the particular and individual aspect of things that present themselves in matter, the intellect is adapted to extract from this knowledge the universal, purely abstract aspect which is reserved in the form of a given object (Gilson 2007 666-668).

The will comes into play in response to an object that is represented to it by the intellect as good, just as the sensitive appetite desires only the good that one or other sense has captured. As a spiritual potency, the will is capable of desiring purely spiritual goods, such as knowledge and virtue. But the will would not be a human faculty and would be of little use to man in the material world if it were not also able to choose between things that exist as material singulars. But even so, it desires these according to some

---

<sup>9</sup> *"Quia igitur est alterius generis apprehensum per intellectum et apprehensum per sensum, consequens est quod appetitus intellectivus sit alia potentia a sensitivo".*

reason of the universal aspect of good (*bonum in universali*): either as an end (*bonum honestum*), or a means towards that end (*bonum utile*), and if successful, it rejoices in them as a good attained (*bonum delectabile*) (Gardeil 1967 199). Thus, the will's essential disposition emerges, fixed in the desire for good and an absolute incapacity of desiring evil:

From this, the will cannot escape, and since all action is nothing more than a manifestation of nature, in all action which is fruit of the will can be seen the mark of the good and its influence. (...) To want evil, would be, truly, not to want, given that to want is, by definition, the seeking for the good, being the manifestation of an appetite of the good naturally executed. It could be said: The will does not want the good because it wants; it wants the good because it is: To want the good, for the will, is to be (Sertillanges 213-214).

### *1.3. Love of The Final End*

The categorical tone of the above affirmation of Sertillanges may take one by surprise, since it seems to deny the idea of freedom commonly associated with the will. It must be remembered that as yet, the will is being considered from its nature, rooted in being, and sharing an essential characteristic with all being, namely that all things naturally and necessarily seek what is suitable to them according to their nature (*S. Theol.* I-II, q. 26, a 1). This is because, as Aristotle demonstrates, all of nature is ordered towards an end (*Physics* II, VIII). The "end" in this sense, Arendt explains, does not denote the future any more than "first principles" refer to the past; they are logical rather than a temporal designations (Arendt 349). Thus, since nothing can be complete ( $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\mu\acute{\iota}\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ ) if it does not have an end ( $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\epsilon\acute{\iota}\delta\omicron$ ); an end is a limit, a point at which nothing is lacking (*Physics* III, VI). It is in this way that the will is naturally and necessarily inclined to the good which for it has the nature of an end (*S. Theol.* I-II, q. 1, a 4), and it is thus that all things seek their own perfection, as an end. In Thomistic thought, the principle of movement of every appetite toward the end desired is called love, and so the natural force that causes everything, including man, to seek his end is called natural love (*Id.* q. 26, a 1).

For his ultimate end, man necessarily desires his perfect and crowning good (*Id.* q. 1, a 5) which can only be one: his complete happiness. All other loves, including the very desire to be and to live are ordained to the love of this end (*Id.* q. 10, a 2).

Edith Stein demonstrates the profound significance of this impetus towards the end in the very meaning of being. She defines appetite or “tendency” as an “existential orientation” that leads each created entity (finite being) to its own perfection in a process of “becoming”. To the various levels of entity, a determined degree of existential perfection is attainable, and it is toward this end which each tendency directs its efforts. In plants, tendency is evident in heliotropism. But something can represent good for an entity only inasmuch as it contributes to that entity’s perfection. The truth, for example, is only good to a creature who understands it; a rational being. In both one and the other case, tendency is a testimony of an “unfinished reality” that seeks to complete itself and it does this by seeking the good that another being affords it, and of which ultimately Being itself is the source. This entire dynamic, then, is in accord with an eternal and divine order (332-334).

For Von Balthasar, the constant interdependence of creatures upon one another, the seeking of one matched by the providing of another, is the mark of this divine goodness which willed to reveal itself in the order of the world: “Since the real is the action most proper to God and is based on the free Good, the result is that all, great and small, depend on his provident care of being: ‘All that has *esse*, is ordered by God to its end (which is He himself), as the Apostle says: Those things that are of God are well ordered’ (*S. Theol.* q. 21, a 2)” (367-368). This same idea is prevalent in Dionysius for whom in God the Creator, Goodness as well as Love are identical with his Being, and interchangeable as His name:

The very Author of all things, by reason of overflowing Goodness, loves all, makes all, perfects all, sustains all, attracts all; and even the Divine Love is Good of Good, by reason of the Good. For Love itself, the benefactor of things that have being, pre-existing overflowingly in the Good, did not permit itself to remain unproductive in itself, but moved itself to creation, as befits the overflow which is generative of all (IV, X).

In this picture of the universe, the capacity of every creature to love is essentially an ordination towards God. But this has radically diverse significations for rational and irrational creatures. With their natural and sensitive appetites, non-rational beings can only come into contact with a finite participation of Divine Goodness in some particular good, and in this way fulfill their ends. However, a rational being can know of and desire God in Himself (*S. Theol.* I, q. 6, a 1). Beings without understanding are moved towards their ends by another, while rational beings move themselves towards their end (*Id.* I-II, q. 1 a 2). That is, while man's natural orientation to the end is not in itself subject to choice, he freely chooses his trajectory %the means % towards that end (*Id.* I, q. 82, a 1)<sup>10</sup>.

Forment sums up the situation of the freedom of the will as two distinct levels of liberty: "The will of the last end in itself, in a natural and necessary way % the first level of liberty % differs, therefore, from the free-will, the will of the means % the second level of liberty % in rationality and in election. The first liberty is to *will the good*; the second is to *will the elected good*" (52)<sup>11</sup>. The world of choice opens up an new aspect of the good and with it a new dimension of the human will which demands a further investigation in the following part.

<sup>10</sup> "*Electio autem non est de fine, sed de his quae sunt ad finem, ut dicitur in III Etic.*"

<sup>11</sup> "*La voluntad del fin último por sí mismo, de modo natural y necesario % el primer grado de libertad %, difiere, por tanto, del libre albedrío, la voluntad de los medios % segundo grado de la libertad %, en la racionalidad y en la elección. La primera libertad es querer el bien, la segunda es querer el bien elegido.*" (Personal translation).

## 2. *The Will and The Good in Life*

After having provided a brief overview of the ontological aspect of the will in the previous chapter, we now turn our attention to the role of the will in the second level of human liberty, namely to will the elected good. This topic has taken on special interest in today's world, an interest which is naturally reflected in current philosophy's emphasis on ethics<sup>12</sup>.

The advent of globalism, together with advances in technology has opened more choices to society than it has ever before faced. This development has, in turn, fomented an axiological crisis. The present weight given to ethics and values seems to represent a search for a system that will provide parameters and possibly a response to the question: what should I choose? Not far beneath the surface of this inquiry can be detected an underlying question: what is good?

It is a question that can only occur to a rational being. Animals do not seek their own perfection by inquiring into what it is, but only by following their sensitive appetite. This concrete distinction between man and animals is manifested in the fact that man is not moved to act immediately by his sensitive appetite as are animals, but rather the lower appetite must wait for the command of the superior appetite which is the will ( *S. Theol.* I, q. 82, a 3) (Arendt 351). If we inquire, then, into what is the perfection proper to man, we must recognize from the outset that human perfection is distinct from that of animals<sup>13</sup>.

---

<sup>12</sup> John Paul II demonstrates how contemporary human concerns are naturally reflected in contemporary philosophy: "Men and women have at their disposal an array of resources for generating greater knowledge of truth so that their lives may be ever more human. Among these is *philosophy*, which is directly concerned with asking the question of life's meaning and sketching an answer to it".

<sup>13</sup> St. Thomas notes that this is all the more evident if we consider that even among animals, the perfection of one species is not identical to that of another (St. Thomas *Opúsculos y cuestiones selectas.* a.4 45) Falta año

According to Forment, man attains to a triple perfection. The first two perfections which man can claim are innate; every human being possesses them, *ipso facto*: they are that of having a *rational nature*, and that of being a *person*. The third human perfection is ethics. This is a perfection that is only possible given the first two, but it differs from these in that it is not ours automatically; it must be achieved (65).

Ethics, then, allows man live according to his *quid*: *what* he is by virtue of rational nature and *who* he is as a person. The ontological goodness inherent in the person does not guarantee moral/ethical goodness, but calls for it. The will, says St. Thomas, by its nature is good, as well as its natural act of wanting to be, to live and to be happy. But in relation to the moral good, the will is in itself neither good nor evil; rather it is a faculty capable of both (a. 3)<sup>14</sup>.

St. Thomas specifies the will, then, as “the source of all morality” (*S. Theol.* I, q. 48 a 1)<sup>15</sup>. “The will stands between the intellect and the external action: for the intellect proposes to the will its object, and the will causes the external action” (*Id.* I-II, q. 13, a 5)<sup>16</sup>. The moral good comes into play precisely in human action, as per the Aristotelian definition, “Human beings insofar as they are voluntarily acting for an end” (*Nicomachean Ethics* I, 1.3). Such deliberate acts are by that very reason moral acts and as such, incur moral responsibility. Moral responsibility can be detected when the agent can answer the question “why?” regarding an action (Mcinerny 196-198). The answer would evidently reveal the proximate end for which the action was performed, and this, in turn, would serve as the criterion of the moral good of the action: “If the end is good,

<sup>14</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas. *Opúsculos y cuestiones selectas*. a. 3.

<sup>15</sup> “*voluntatis, a qua moralia dependent*”.

<sup>16</sup> “*Voluntas media est inter intellectum et exteriorem operationem: nam intellectus proponit voluntati suum obiectum, et ipsa voluntas causat exteriorem actionem*”.

the thing is good, and if the end be evil, the thing also is evil” (Boethius Cited by St. Thomas, *S. Theol.* I-II, q. 18, a 4)<sup>17</sup>.

Maritain points out the central role of the will in the development of the person, emphasising its necessity to dominate the sensitive appetite:

Man must realize through his will that of which nature is but a sketch. In terms of a commonplace % and a very profound one % which goes back to Pindar, man must become what he is. And this he must do at sorrowful cost and with formidable risks. He himself, in the moral order, must win his liberty and his personality (...) If the development occurs in the direction of spiritual personality, man will be orientated towards the generous self of the heroes and saints. Thus, man will be truly a person only in so far as the life of the spirit and of liberty reigns over that of the senses and passions (1973 44).

## 2.1. *Ethics: A Love of Choice*

The contrast between the “naturalness” of the ontological good and the more arduous character of the moral good to which man is called is as perceptible in Maritain’s words as it is in our own experience. For indeed, we observe that all of nature unwaveringly does good and flies from evil; yet the same first principle, once transposed into moral law, “do good and avoid evil” % virtually present in every tenet of ethics (Garrigou-Lagrange 1945 336) % begins to present difficulties. The task of the will, so simple in theory, is a veritable drama in practice. This conflict is eloquently expressed in these words of St. Paul: “I do not understand my own actions. (...) For I do not do the good that I want, but the evil that I do not want” (*Cf.* Rm 7 15-19). St. Paul’s plight finds a clear echo in St. Augustine’s: “But then again I said ‘Who made me? Was it not you, my God, who art not merely good, but goodness itself? Whence comes it, then, that I will evil, and do not will the good?’” (*Confessions* VII, 3).

---

<sup>17</sup> *“cuius finis bonus est, ipsum quoque bonum est: et cuius finis malus est, ipsum quoque malum est”.*

The occurrence of sin seems like a paradox, for a faculty of the good, since it would appear to be a love of evil. However, St. Thomas is clear in stating that only good is the cause of love, and evil never loved in itself, but always under the appearance of good (*S. Theol.* I-II q, 27 a 1). St. Francis de Sales provides an interesting explanation of how the human will is incapable of entertaining two conflicting loves with equal strength; one or the other must take priority. When a merely apparent good is desired over the true good, the love of the true good is impeded by its incompatibility with the other love (70-71). It seems that moral goodness is a question of prioritization of love: “a right will is well-directed love, and a wrong will is ill-directed love” (St. Augustine Cited by St. Thomas, *S. Theol.* I-II, q. 26 a 3)<sup>18</sup>.

Whatever be the choice in human action, then, some kind of love is the essential motive: “Every agent acts for an end, as stated above. Now the end is the good desired and loved by each one. Wherefore it is evident that every agent, whatever it be, does every action from love of some kind” (*S. Theol.* I-II, q. 28 a 6)<sup>19</sup>. “Certainly % reflects Pieper % as the ancients well recognized, all willing is, right from the start, is marked with love; all decisions of choice and all other acts of the will are sustained by the fundamental act of approval: love. Augustine expressed this in the following way: *Ex amore suo quisque vivit*, everyone lives according to his love” (167).

It becomes increasingly evident then, that because of its causative role in human action, love of choice holds a central place in ethics and is what allows a person to attain to moral goodness. If, true to the old adage, nothing that is worthwhile is easy to obtain, then it is not surprising that

---

<sup>18</sup> “*Recta Voluntas est bonus amor, et perversa voluntas est malus amor*”.

<sup>19</sup> “*Omne agens agit propter finem aliquem, ut supra dictum est. Finis autem est bonum desideratum et amatum unicuique. Unde manifestum est quod omne agens, quodcumque sit, agit quamcumque actionem ex aliquo amore*”.



“the moral good is, in a certain way, a greater good than the natural good, that is, insofar as it is act and perfection of the natural good” (St. Thomas, *De Malo*, q. 2, a.5, ad 2. Cited by Forment 2005)<sup>20</sup>.

This statement provides a valuable key to understanding the ethics of St. Thomas, one that differentiates it from many others; namely that the moral sphere is not isolated from the natural sphere. The moral good has its foundation in the natural good, and the natural good finds its perfection in the moral good. As a consequence, St. Thomas shows that natural love is the principle of love of choice: “Therefore, the love of that good which a man naturally wills as an end, is his natural love; but the love *which comes of this*, which is of something loved *for the end's sake* is the love of choice” (*S. Theol.* I, q. 60 a 2)<sup>21</sup> (emphasis mine). By the same token, since nature is first in everything, all moral precepts of the law come from the law of nature (*Id.* q. 60 a 5).

## 2.2. *The “Purification” of Ethics*

The Thomistic vision promotes an acceptance towards the complexity of human existence, as a component of the ordered complexity of creation, and endeavours to see the many relations that exist among its parts. Here we have just seen an inseparability between man's ontological and moral reality. As long as this cohesion is respected, human existence has meaning, since it takes into account both origin and end. And the will, for its part, in its love for the good, has a clear role. Conversely, Gilson notes a trend in contemporary thought that seeks to “purify” one element of existence of all relation with another, in order to obtain its concrete essence. This is metaphysically impossible, he insists, since pure self-subsisting essences

---

<sup>20</sup> “El bien moral es, de algún modo, un bien mayor que el bien natural, es decir, en cuanto es acto y perfección del bien natural” (personal translation).

<sup>21</sup> “Dilectio igitur boni quod homo naturaliter vult sicut finem, est dilectio autem ab hac derivata, quae est boni quod diligitur propter finem, est dilection electiva”.

do not exist in human experience, but rather “each concrete essence is a sharing of several different essences” (210)<sup>22</sup>.

Much confusion in the field of ethics has been the result of such attempts. There is the attempt, for example, in the world of values to “purify” values such as the good, which have commonly been known as transcendentals, of all connection with being. For this reason, Grenet claims that the contemporary philosophy of values undermines the very foundation of ethics since in it, “axiology, which speaks of what must be done, opposes ontology, which speaks of what is” (216 personal translation). The “discovery” of values as such declares, in fact, to have been possible only when these were separated from their traditional association with being (Frondizi 11)<sup>23</sup>.

Now if the criterion for the goodness of an action cannot be traced to any previously established order of things, wherein lies its value? Value becomes an arbitrary designation for a good that has been emptied of any connection with Goodness. Frondizi effectively confirms this: “Current philosophy has been cured of the traditional tendency to transform all constitutive elements of reality into nouns. Today, in exchange, verbs, adjectives and even adverbs have gained importance” (*Id.* 17)<sup>24</sup>. While this statement may appear, on

---

<sup>22</sup> “Contemporary thought seems to be beset by a passionate desire for purity, and the purity it aims to achieve is always that of some essence. (...) All such attempts are bound ultimately to fail, because concreteness is but another name for essential impurity. All that which is concrete is metaphysically impure. In human experience there are no such things as pure self-subsisting essences, and man himself is far from being one: mind and body, forms and matter, substances and accidents are simultaneously given in actual complexes of mutual determinations. Each concrete essence is a sharing in several different essences and it not from looking at them in particular that we can see how they can fit together. Existence is the catalyser of essences. Because it itself is act in a higher order than that of essences, it can melt them together in the unity of a single being.

<sup>23</sup> “This discovery is one of the most important of recent philosophy and consists, fundamentally, in distinguishing being from value”. (Personal translation.) “*Este descubrimiento es uno de los más importantes de la filosofía reciente y consiste, en lo fundamental, en distinguir el ser del valer*”.

<sup>24</sup> “*La filosofía actual se ha curado de la tendencia tradicional de sustantivar todos los elementos constitutivos de la realidad. Hoy han adquirido importancia, en cambio, los verbos, los adjetivos y aun los adverbios*” (Personal translation).

the surface, to be of merely grammatical consequence, let us observe what transpires when we apply this principle to the traditional noun: goodness, the good. As a noun, it presupposes a certain existence of its own. It *is*, and can be referred to in its own right. For in Ontology, it is in its source a *proper* noun: Goodness, which is a name, a divine name. It is that Infinite Goodness which is identical with the Infinite Being, which gives all finite being its participated goodness. Restricted to use as an adjective, “good” may describe any number of things, but it does not transcend to discover *the* good, a higher good, the common good, the universal good. And if considered as an adjective, necessarily changing its name to “well” in the process, good becomes something that only we can bring into existence by our action.

But lacking a reference point that is independent of human action and previous to human liberty (Grenet 222), the idea of goodness loses its flavour and more importantly, its significance. Referring to Ontology, Gilson offers the following principle which seems to adjust perfectly to axiology: “A principle of universal value must always be kept in mind: that the greater or lesser can only be appraised and classified in relation to the maximum, the relative in relation to the absolute” (458 Personal translation). Removing the notion of “*l’eterno Valore*” (Dante Cited by Grenet 22), values become a field of relativism.

A similar process has taken place within the dynamic of the will itself: its love of choice has been “purified” of its natural love of goodness in general, in an attempt to achieve essential liberty.

In her discussion on the will’s role in ethics, Stump draws attention to the contrast between the position of St. Thomas on the will as a faculty that “God has created as a hunger for the good”, and that of contemporary philosophers who tend to consider the will as being a sort of “steering wheel of the mind”; a faculty that directs other parts of the person but that is completely neutral in itself (30). That is, that the will operates with no previous inclination for goodness.

Rodriguez, on the other hand, demonstrates how the natural perfective tendency is linked to the moral perfective spectrum of the will's love of the good: "God calls man into this life, not totally complete finished and perfect, but rather with an enormous capacity for free and responsible auto-realization. (...) Human liberty is not *pure actuality*, as is God's, but nor is it *total indetermination*; it is an exercise of auto-determination, born of a will given as a faculty of the good, with the risk of being employed for evil, but with norms of perfective realization" (117)<sup>25</sup>.

For the perfective process is realized in the presence of various degrees of being, which presuppose the experience of reality as connected to human action and therefore to ethics. It is precisely on this point % the existence of a world that is exterior to and independent of the subject % that idealism has differed; on the postulation that man is sufficient in himself and has no necessity for such an exterior reality (Espinoza 2006).

Scola also treats of the link between the free choice of the will and *amor naturalis*; the natural and original tendency towards perfection. On the other hand, he asserts, to reduce the experience of liberty to a pure election of the will, placing the human being in a position of indifference in face of *res* is, at the root, a nihilist denial of reality, or our experience of it (521-527). But nihilism takes the denial of reality a step further, according to Caturelli's account. He identifies in the contemporary *sofistica* a "Nothing Hermeneutic", an elimination of being and an embracing of emptiness so complete that it merits the name "*Pleroma* of nothing" % bitter fruits of the seeds of despair sown by Cioran. In place of love of the goodness of being, his rejection of both can only demonstrate itself in hatred (2003): "I hate

---

<sup>25</sup> "Dios llama al hombre a la vida no totalmente hecho, acabado, perfecto, sino con una enorme capacidad de autorrealización libre y responsable (...) La libertad humana no es *pura actualidad*, como es la de Dios; pero tampoco es *total indeterminación*, es un ejercicio de autodeterminación, nacido de una voluntad dada, como facultad del bien, con riesgo de emplearse en el mal, pero con normas de realización perfectiva (Personal translation).

myself: I am a man, I hate myself absolutely” (Cioran 2000 172 Cited by Caturelli). This rabid rejection of existence calls to mind the principle that if total evil could exist, it would destroy itself (*S. Theol.* I, q. 49 a 3). In such a tragic attitude, there appears something of a futile aspiration to embody this complete evil, anticipating the obligation to destroy oneself that comes with it.

How is such revulsion towards one’s own being possible? A reflection of Plínio Corrêa de Oliveira is elucidative. Elaborating upon the Thomistic idea of a universe in which every element inter-relates with every other, he illustrates how consequently, no one part of the universe separated from the whole, maintains its true beauty or perfection. Taking as an example the purportedly perfect nose of Apollo of Bevedere, he imagines the effect of this nose sculpted on a wall: “An absolute nose is an absolute monstrosity. It would be beautiful because of its harmony within the whole face. No one would say of a nose cut off and thrown on the ground: ‘What a beautiful nose!’ nor of an eye torn from its socket: ‘what a lovely colour this eye has!’ Isolated, a nose or an eye causes horror, while it might cause admiration when seen in the whole of a face” (11)<sup>26</sup>. In the same way, the human person, whose innate goodness and beauty should inspire love for oneself and others, when separate from the order of being considered in its entirety, becomes a loathsome enigma.

### 2.3. *An Integral Ethics*

Julián Marías detected a “strange desire for annihilation” in today’s widespread denial of life after death. He attributes this unnatural “fear of survival” to an underlying fear of responsibility which consists, ultimately, in the duty to

---

<sup>26</sup> “*Um nariz absoluto é um monstruosidade absoluto. Ele será bonito por causa de sua harmonia com o conjunto da face. Ninguém dirá de um nariz cortado e lançado no chão: ‘Que lindo nariz!, nem de um olho que foi arrancado de um semblante: ‘Que linda cor tinha esse olho!’. Isolados, nariz e olho causam horror, enquanto que podem causar admiração quando visto no todo de uma face*” (Personal translation).

love (116-117). This observation is relevant, and we may use it as a starting point to see in what way love is an ethical duty, as well as how the idea of love as a “unitive force” (Dionysius Cited by St. Thomas, *S. Theol.* I-II, q. 27 a 1) can contribute towards a more integral approach to human existence.

By its very nature, love affirms existence. Love is a fundamental act of the will that communicates approval; the expression of love of a person contains the tacit exclamation: “It is good that you exist!” (Pieper 198). In acknowledging and loving the good that is present in creation, one recognizes the good of the Author and identifies himself, in effect, with the approval of the Creator who saw that the whole creation was very good (*Id.* 171, *Cf.* Gen. 1 31).

Love does not seek to isolate one component from another, but rather it involves the whole human person, and naturally seeks its source:

It is characteristic of mature love that it calls into play all man’s potentialities; it engages the whole man, so to speak. Contact with the visible manifestations of God’s love can awaken within us a feeling of joy born of the experience of being loved. But this encounter also engages our will and our intellect. Acknowledgment of the living God is one path towards love, and the “yes” of our will to his will unites our intellect, will and sentiments in the all-embracing act of love (Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas est* I 17).

Here love is shown to be a unifying factor within man’s hylomorphic dimensions. This is possible for St. Thomas since he does not set the spiritual in opposition to the material, conserving rather a consistent vision of the *compositum*. Thus, the soul relies on the body, notably the senses, for the full exercise of many spiritual functions. The body, for its part lives, as it were, in participation of and attuned to the mind or spirit (Sertillanges 200-202). It is the specific mission of the will to procure the good of each human faculty, while at the same time and above all seeking the unified good of the whole man (Manser 325).

Love is also the factor of union between the will and its exterior object (*S. Theol.* I-II q. 26 a 2); it is that outward movement by which man seeks the good which exists outside of himself. Metaphysically, this course completes a perfect circle, the first half of which represents the interiorizing “movement” of the intelligence’s apprehension of the object (Molinaro 90). The circle complete, the will is united with its object. It can be noted that since this takes place outside of the subject, the unity achieved by authentic love is essentially non-egoistic.

However, the will tends to want unlimited goods. Since it is illuminated by an intellect which apprehends the existence of an infinite good, the will is inclined to love that good with a corresponding love. Thus, while the human will as a human faculty is finite in itself, it attains to an *intentional* infinity. In effect, the human will can be said to be adapted for love without limits (Garrigou-Lagrange 24-29). Thus man cannot, like an animal, be completely satisfied with any particular or finite good. That is, the spiritual aspirations of his will pervade even his sensitive nature and impel him to seek the infinite in everything, leaving him habitually unsatisfied with the limitations which his intelligence immediately recognizes in all material and sensitive goods (Clá Dias 8-9).

For these reasons, it is comprehended that the human will is eminently inclined to be ruled by love. The moral good of the will must consist, then, in directing its flight accordingly towards the higher good, ultimately the highest good (Garrigou-Lagrange 336-337) In this way, the love that rules men’s hearts may achieve the harmony envisioned by Boethius:

Through Love the universe with constancy makes changes all without discord: earth’s elements, though contrary, abide in treaty bound: Phoebus in his golden car leads up the glowing day; his sister rules the night that Hesperus brought: the greedy sea confines its waves in bounds, lest the earth’s borders be changed by its beating on them: all these are firmly bound by Love, which rules both earth and sea, and has its empire in the heavens too. If Love should slacken its hold, all mutual love would change to war; and these would strive to undo the scheme which now

their glorious movements carry out with trust and with accord. By Love are peoples too kept bound together by a treaty which they may not break. Love binds with pure affection the sacred tie of wedlock, and speaks its bidding to all trusty friends. O happy race of mortals, if your hearts are ruled as is the universe, by Love! (Cp. Bk. I. Prose IV 10).

Is this moral demand in keeping with nature, since nature demands that man seeks his own happiness? The Thomistic concept is that the moral good and therefore moral law does not contradict the natural, and therefore man's moral good must be fulfilled in attaining to his final end naturally desired. How does this take place?

In desiring his own perfect good, man naturally loves himself. And yet already in this primary love, since he is spiritually attuned to the infinite and he finds that he himself is finite, he perceives that even self-love is not enough to fill the void that exists in his will, as expressed by St. Augustine, "You have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you" (Confessions I 1). The will's "direct ordination to God transcends every created common good", for "With Him, it possesses a common good, the divine Good Itself" (Maritain 1973 15). For this reason Maritain says that ours is a moral of happiness or beatitude, "but first and foremost it is a morality of the divine Good supremely loved" (1964 79). Although it would not be accurate to say that there is a moral obligation to be happy, "there is a moral obligation to choose the true happiness % it is at this point that the universe of freedom inserts itself into the universe of nature" (*Id.* 100).

### *3. Conclusions*

From the outset, this investigation has undertaken to show how the will's love of the good is fundamentally only one love since all good has one common source in the Divine Goodness. In the process, it has come to light that, in the Thomistic perspective, this tendency is one to which man is inexorably bound. This contrasts with the contemporary reality's tendency



to consider the human will as an absolute power of choice with no fixed necessity for the good, and whose every choice of is a complexly isolated and independent act. From the standpoint of this perspective, the intention to treat of the will in its love of the good appears to be a limited view; to examine only a portion of the will's full capacity, or to impose an undue stricture upon its full range of activity. At the same time, contemporary man seems to have reached an impasse in the primordial search to know himself, succumbing to the post-modern proposal that "the time of certainties is irrevocably past, and the human being must now learn to live in a horizon of total absence of meaning, where everything is provisional and ephemeral" (Jhon Paul II. *Fides et Ratio* 3).

The mentality that promotes an absolute liberty of the will seems, in its roots, to seek "freedom" from the natural order of the soul, wherein the intelligence guides the will and the will governs the sensibility and its passions. What is sought as total liberty is often an inversion of this order, in which the passions reign supreme over the intelligence and will (Correa 32). The resultant "freedom" thus experienced is really only a slavery to the uncontrolled passions, since as has been seen, the human soul, attuned to the infinite, is limitless in its demands. The current culture is replete with examples of excesses that can be traced to this search for the infinite in the material particular. In effect, man is still ruled by his love of the good.

While it is clear that St. Thomas offers a dramatically different proposal, we have attempted here to avoid placing a barrier between "contemporary" and "Thomistic" philosophy, not only because St. Thomas is very much alive in contemporary thought, but precisely because his philosophical synthesis is eminently relevant to the specific concerns of the contemporary reality. In this synthesis, goodness "is not a 'value' added to being, or attributed to it by the subject who desires it; goodness is his ontological relation with being" (Gilson 314 Personal translation). The natural love of the good which St. Thomas holds to be virtually present in the love of choice is essentially a sign of human finitude, contingency: "The causality of all will (including human) is simple determination. But in man's case, it is not a determination

of pure will, because every determination of his will is led by a desire, that is, by something preceding volition itself” (Zubiri 413)<sup>27</sup>.

The tonic note of the Thomistic vision of human existence is one of a harmonious if delicate harmony among the powers of the human soul, and in turn between the human soul and the entire reality of which it is part. This visualization invites contemporary philosophy to examine man, not as a being fragmented within himself and truncated from external reality, but rather to see the meaning of every part of this reality in view of the unity that exists among multiple essences. In turn, human existence demands not to be isolated from its origin and destiny: Goodness itself and Love itself. To understand the will in its love of the good is to comprehend the human cognitive and volitive faculties in light of a “pre-reflexive and pre-elective” bond between God and man, which concerns “the implicit presence of God as truth and goodness in the first intuitions of the intellect % the first infallible principles % and in the radical appetency of good or initial love of the good in common % *bonum in communi* % from which all human dynamism is born” (Rodríguez 61)<sup>28</sup>.

From the Thomistic perspective, to consider the will as a power to love only the good is not to diminish its liberty; it is precisely to recognize the only true freedom of which it is capable: the freedom to choose the adequate means to his end. Seen thus, human existence has definite purpose and meaning that nothing on earth can diminish. For whatever may be his circumstances, man’s spirit is always free to love the good; and with love he can overcome all obstacles to reach the Infinite Goodness for which his soul naturally longs. e

<sup>27</sup> “La causalidad de toda voluntad (incluso de la humana) es simple determinación. Sólo que en el caso del hombre no es una determinación de pura voluntad, porque toda determinación suya está vehiculada por un deseo, esto es, por algo anterior a la volición misma” (Personal translation).

<sup>28</sup> “La presencia implícita de Dios como verdad y como bien en las primeras intuiciones del intelecto % los primeros principios infalibles % y en la apetencia radical del bien o amor inicial del bien en común % *bonum in communi* % del que nace todo el dinamismo humano” (Personal translation).

## *Bibliography*

- Arendt, Hannah. *La vida del espíritu*. Barcelona: Paidós, 2002.
- Aristotle. *Physics: Books I and II*. Clarendon Aristotle Series. New York: Oxford University, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Physics: Books III and IV*. Clarendon Aristotle Series. New York: Oxford University, 1983.
- Benedict XVI. *Encyclical Leter Deus Caritas est*. 16 mar. 2009 < [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20051225\\_deus-caritas-est\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est_en.html)>.
- Boethius. *The Consolation of Philosophy*. Minneapolis: Filiquarian, 2007,
- Caturelli, Alberto. *El humanismo católico y el futuro*. Rome: Congresso Tomista Internazionale, 2003 <<http://e-aquinas.net/pdf/caturelli.pdf>>.
- Clá Dias, João Scognamiglio. "A maior felicidade". *Revista Arautos do Evangelho*. 55, (2006): 8-14.
- Corrêa De Oliveira, Plinio. "A hierarquia na criação". *Dr. Plinio*. 10, 117 (2007): 10-13.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Revolução e contra-revolução*. 2a. ed. São Paulo: Diário das Leis, 1982.
- Davies, Brian. *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.
- De Sales, Francis. *Treatise on the love of God*. Rockford: Tan, 1975.

Espinoza Lolas, Ricardo. En torno al problema de Dios... desde la biografía del joven Zubiri. *The Xavier Zubiri Review*. 8 (2006). 30 mar. 2009 <<http://www.zubiri.org/general/xzreview/2006/pdf/espinoza06.pdf>>.

Forment, Eudaldo. *Principios fundamentales del pensamiento de Santo Tomás*. 2. ed. Pamplona : Fundación Gratis Date, 2005.

Fronzizi, Risieri. *¿Qué son los valores?* México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1995.

Gardeil, H.D. *Introduction to the Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas: Metaphysics*. Vol. 4. St. Louis: Herder Book, 1967.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Introduction to the Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas: Psychology*. Vol. 3. St. Louis: Herder Book, 1956.

Garrigou-Lagrange, Réginald. *El sentido común: la filosofía del ser y las fórmulas dogmáticas*. Buenos Aires: Desclée, de Brouwer, 1945.

\_\_\_\_\_. *O homem e a eternidade*. Lisboa: Aster, 1959.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought*. St. Louis: Herder, 1950.

Gilson, Étienne. *A filosofia na idade média*. 2a. ed. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2007.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Being and some philosophers*. 2a. ed. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1952.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Christian Philosophy*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1993.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *Elementos de filosofía cristiana*. Madrid: Rialp, 1970.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *El tomismo*. 4a. ed. Pamplona: Universidad de Navarra, 2002.
- Grenet, P.B. *Ontología: curso de filosofía tomista*. Barcelona: Herder, 1965.
- Holy Bible*. New Revised Standard Version: Catholic Edition. Tennessee: Catholic Bible Press, 1993.
- John Paul II. *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio*, 3. 16 mar. 2009 <[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_15101998\\_fides-et-ratio\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_15101998_fides-et-ratio_en.html)>.
- Koyré, Alexandre. *Estudios de la historia del pensamiento científico*. Madrid: Siglo XXI, 1977.
- Kretzmann, Norman and Stump, Eleonore. *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Macdonald, Scott and Stump, Eleonore. *Aquinas's Moral Theory : Essays in Honour of Norman Kretzmann*. New York : Cornell University, 1998.
- Manser, G. M. *La esencia del tomismo*. 2a. ed. Madrid: Selecciones Gráficas, 1953.
- Marechal, Joseph. *El punto de partida de la metafísica*. Madrid: Biblioteca Hispánica de Filosofía, 1957.
- Marías, Julián. *La perspectiva cristiana*. Madrid: Alianza, 1999.
- Maritain, Jacques. *Moral Philosophy: An historical and critical survey of the great systems*. New York, Scribner, 1964.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Person and the Common Good*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1973.

Molinaro, Aniceto. *Metafísica: curso sistemático*. 2a. ed. São Paulo: Paulus, 2004.

Pich, Roberto Hofmeister. "Agostinho e a 'Descoberta' da vontade: primeiro estudo". *Veritas revista de Filosofia*. 50, 2. (Jun., 2005): 175-206.

Pieper, Josef. *Faith, hope, love: On love*. San Francisco: Ignatius, 1997.

Pseudo Dionisio Areopagita. *Obras Completas*. Madrid: B.A.C, 1990.

Rodríguez, Victorino. *Temas clave de humanismo cristiano*. Madrid: Speiro, 1984.

Saint Augustine. *Confessions*. London: Image, 1960.

Saint Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologica I*. Notre Dame: Christian Classics, 1981.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Summa Theologica II*. Notre Dame: Christian Classics, 1981.

Sanchez De Leon, Pilar. *30 Temas de iniciación filosófica*. Bogotá: Universidad de la Sabana, 1990.

Santo Tomás de Aquino. *Opúsculos y cuestiones selectas IV: teología*. Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 2007.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Suma contra los gentiles*. Libro II. Buenos Aires: Club de Lectores, 1951.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *Summa Theologiae*. Edição bilíngüe. São Paulo: Loyola, 2005.
- Scola, Angelo. Libertad, gracia y destino. *Communio*. 26, 4. (Oct. – Dec., 2002): 515-534.
- Sertillanges, A. D. *Foundations of Thomistic Philosophy*. St Louis: Herder, 1931.
- \_\_\_\_\_. A. D. *Santo Tomas de Aquino*. Vol. 2. Buenos Aires: Desclée de Brouwer, 1946.
- Stein, Edith. *Ser finito y ser eterno: ensayo de una ascensión al sentido del ser*. México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1994.
- Von Balthasar, Hans Urs. *Gloria: metafísica*. Madrid: Encuentro, 1986.
- Zubiri, Xavier. *Naturaleza, historia, Dios*. 9a. ed. Madrid: Alianza, 1987.