

# An AQUINAS READER

Edited with an Introduction and Five Sectional Essays by  
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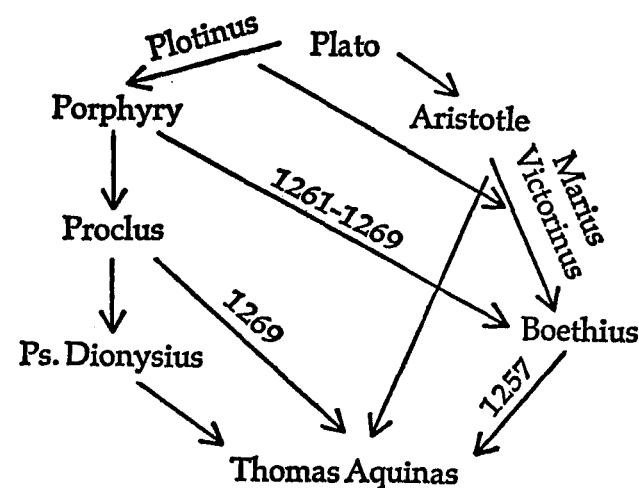
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- Returns to Naples as Master of Theology at the University and Dominican House of Studies.
- 1273 Has heavenly revelation on December 6 while celebrating Mass in chapel of St. Nicholas: ". . . such things have been revealed to me that all that I have written seems to me as so much straw."
- 1274 Summoned in January to Church Council at Lyons by Gregory IX.  
Falls ill on journey, stops at sister's house, then taken to Cistercian monastery of Fossanuova.
- 1274 Dies on March 7 at age of forty-nine.
- 1277 March 7: Stephen Tempier, Bishop of Paris, condemns 219 statements, including some of Thomas's.  
Robert Kilwardby, O.P., Archbishop of Canterbury, condemns philosophic positions that include Thomas's.
- 1278 General Chapter of Dominicans upholds Thomas's teaching.
- 1282 General Chapter of Franciscans prohibits reading of *Summa Theologiae* in Franciscan schools.
- 1284 John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury, censures Thomist statements.
- 1323 At Avignon, July 18, Thomas Aquinas canonized by Pope John XXII.
- 1325 Stephen Bourret, Archbishop of Paris, revokes the 1277 condemnation of Thomist theses by the former Bishop of Paris.

The following two charts show the philosophical and intellectual influences on Aquinas.

CHART I



Adapted, with permission, from: C. Fabro, *La Nozione Metafisica di Partecipazione Secondo S. Tommaso d'Aquino*, Rome, Società Editrice Internazionale.

In Chart I we see at a glance the major philosophical influences undergone by Aquinas. It is obvious that Neoplatonic influences predominate, directly through Porphyry as well as indirectly through Neoplatonic interpretations of Aristotelian texts as well as through Boethius, who inherited a Western Christian Neoplatonism from Marius Victorinus. We note a direct and full knowledge of Aristotle, but much indirect knowledge of Plato as well as the possibility that there was access to the *Timaeus*, *Phaedo*, and *Meno* that existed in Latin.

the pontificate of Leo XIII, did Thomas Aquinas reenter the universities and then only, very often, in the sketchy form of manuals, somewhat distorted by an imposed thesis format, shorn of his intellectual *Lebenswelt*, pulled out of perspective. From the time of Scotus and Ockham, through Nicholas of Autrecourt, Luther, Hobbes, Hume, and Montaigne, the scope of reason had been narrowed to confine itself eventually to the sensibly empirical. If the Scholastics did have too restricted a conception of human experience, the principles of Thomism that effectively united this-world values with other-worldly values could have provided built-in correctives operating in the course of time. Instead, religious reaction to wholesale empiricism showed itself in an overstress of ultimates. Christians concerned themselves not with persons but with souls. But because Aquinas offered a robust and buoyant philosophy of reality in opposition to the philosophy of signs and symbols (which short-circuited this world to arrive immediately at the next) favored by other medievals, there is ample reason for honoring him today as one whose existential realism makes him not only a scholar-saint but a saint of the secular—one who saw the sacred value of time, of this world.

Aquinas would be pleased also to have us recognize in him an upholder of unity—the ecumenical unity of East and West, the historical unity of time and eternity, the religious unity of created and Creator. It was on behalf of such unity that Aquinas made and used his fruitful philosophical distinctions. This unity of mankind, he would be the first to realize, is more than a theological task, more than an economic or political achievement; it is in fact a work of love. But then Thomas Aquinas's total theological framework was grounded not on static ideas but on a movement of exodus and apocalypse, outgo and return through the dynamism of love—the divine love of Creation and Redemption initiating that human love that reaches God by participating in the power of the Resurrection.

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Editor's Note: When not otherwise indicated, the translations have been made by the Editor from the Parma edition, or the Leonine edition where this exists (as of 1972).

Author references found in each sectional Introduction refer to books listed in the Bibliography at the end of the book.

## BRIEF CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF THOMAS AQUINAS

- 1225 Born at castle of Roccasecca near Naples.
- 1230 Enters Monte Cassino as Benedictine oblate.
- 1239 Leaves Monte Cassino.  
Goes to University of Naples for undergraduate arts studies.
- 1244 Receives Dominican habit at Naples.  
On way to Parisian House of Studies seized by brothers at Tuscany, imprisoned at Roccasecca; resisted temptations to give up vocation.
- 1245 Returns to Dominican House at Naples.  
Travels to Paris for early university studies at St. Jacques with Albert the Great.
- 1248 Goes to Cologne for theology under Albert the Great.  
Is ordained sometime between 1248 and 1252 at Cologne Cathedral.
- 1252 Returns to Paris for graduate studies.  
Biblical Bachelor (1252–54).  
Sententiary Bachelor (1254–56) and lecturer on Scripture.
- 1256 Promoted to master of theology by papal dispensation four years before required age.  
1257–July 1259: first Parisian teaching period in theology.
- 1259 Attends General Chapter at Valenciennes; revises Dominican Plan of Studies.  
Italian period: called to papal court at Anagni, Orvieto. Rome, Viterbo.
- 1260 Named preacher-general of Dominicans.
- 1265 Made regent master in Dominican House of Studies at Rome.
- 1267 Made *definitor* of Roman Province, theology master at University of Bologna.
- 1269 Attends General Chapter at Paris.  
January 1269–May 1272: second Parisian teaching period in theology.
- 1272 Attends General Chapter at Florence.