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Remapping Scholasticism

by

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Once upon a time there were two competing story-lines for medieval intellectual history, each writing a major role for scholasticism into its script. Although these story-lines were created independently and reflected different concerns, they sometimes overlapped and gave each other aid and comfort. Both exerted considerable influence on the way historians of medieval speculative thought conceptualized their subject in the first half of the twentieth century. Both versions of the map drawn by these two sets of cartographers illustrated what Wallace K. Ferguson later described as “the revolt of the medievalists.”¹ One was confined largely to the academy and appealed to a wide variety of medievalists, while the other had a somewhat narrower draw and reflected political and confessional, as well as academic, concerns. The first was the anti-Burckhardtian effort to push Renaissance humanism, understood as combining a knowledge and love of the classics with “the discovery of the world and of man,” back into the Middle Ages. The second was inspired by the neo-Thomist revival launched by Pope Leo XIII, and was inhabited almost exclusively by Roman Catholic scholars. While concurring in their praise of Aquinas, and in the notion that his *summae* were the pilgrimage sites on the map of medieval thought toward which all right-thinking travelers were headed, the neo-Thomists still found issues to disagree about, among themselves. Particularly noticeable were the debates between the Dominican and Jesuit schools, each claiming that they alone had read the Angelic Doctor correctly since the days of Cajetan and Suárez.

While it is possible to document vestiges of both of these story-lines in the work of recent medievalists, in most of the precincts currently being

¹ Wallace K. Ferguson, *The Renaissance in Historical Thought: Five Centuries of Interpretation* (Boston, 1948), ch. 11.

heard from it is clear that they have lost their earlier ability to inspire loyalty, or even credibility. With reference to scholasticism, newer maps are being drawn, often with different topographical features unknown to or ignored by the older cartographers, with different times, places, and thinkers as the privileged destinations, and, indeed, different understandings of why it is desirable to traverse this terrain in the first place.

Before we can grasp the nature and significance of this remapping process, and describe the lineaments of the emerging new landscapes, we need to recall briefly what the now superseded story-lines looked like. For, in this case, the “new” does not invariably entail the complete rejection of the “old.” It sometimes involves a reevaluation of the old. The first story-line to which I referred is the one cemented into place by Charles Homer Haskins in *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*, published in 1927 and still in print. Mounting his offensive against the view of the Middle Ages as the “Dark Ages” first voiced by Petrarch and popularized in modern times by Jakob Burckhardt, Haskins agreed that “renaissance” requires a mind-set uniting classicism, secularism, and individualism. His strategy was to annex, to the Middle Ages, these very indicators. In so doing, Haskins also adopted the humanists’ classical bias. As he put it, “From the fall of the Roman Empire down well into modern times, the Latin classics furnished the best barometer of the culture of Western Europe.”² In accord with this bias, he gave literature pride of place as an index of culture. At the same time, and herein lies his relevance to the mapping of scholasticism, Haskins widened the scope of classicism to include philosophy, law, and science. He portrayed these disciplines as the amphibious landing craft enabling medieval thinkers to establish beachheads on the shores of secularism and individualism. For Haskins, legal study provided more than tools for the bureaucratization of governments, more than the weapons arming church and state in their jurisdictional clashes. It also enabled laymen learned in the law to replace clerics as bureaucrats and advisors. Thus, political secularization was a consequence of this aspect of the twelfth-century renaissance. Even more fundamental, the translation of

² Charles Homer Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, MA, 1927 [reprint. New York, 1957]), p. 93.

Greco-Arabic philosophy and science presented medieval thinkers with a complete world view based on human reason. This led to a confrontation with the world view based on Christian revelation and, eventually, to the secularization of European philosophy and science. One peculiar note struck by Haskins in his appraisal of Greco-Arabic thought was his disesteem for logic, although logic was just as classical as the other subjects becoming available in the Latin philosophical curriculum. His dislike of logic stems from his belief that it was the “enemy” of literary humanism.³ But, logic aside, the reception of Greco-Arabic thought, starting in the twelfth century, enabled the high Middle Ages to lay claim to classicism, and, by means of it, to acquire a secular world view.

Before indicating how Haskins’ map of twelfth-century culture has been problematized by recent scholarship, it is worth flagging those aspects of that culture notable for their absence from his story-line. For if Haskins widened considerably the concept of “classical,” in comparison with the previous humanist tradition, he also excluded some of the major hallmarks of the twelfth century, for his own polemical reasons. Thus, despite its close affiliation with Roman law, canon law is absent from his account. Likewise omitted is the flowering of religious reform, new religious orders, and new devotional interests. Most peculiar of all, given Haskins’ passing acknowledgment of its development and of its interactions with Latin literature, is vernacular literature.⁴ This is a highly telling omission, considering the importance of vernacular literature as a site of the third theme Haskins wanted to triangulate with classicism and secularism, individualism.

Both Haskins’ take on classical revival, and the themes he stressed and ignored, reflect his desire to “humanize” the high Middle Ages, in Renaissance and Burckhardtian terms. As is often the case with polemics of this sort, he replicated many of the limits of the view he criticized. Invaluable as the classical component in the European intellectual tradition has been, its use as the barometer of culture has few takers today.

³ Ibid., p. 94.

⁴ Ibid., p. 8.

To be sure, this approach survives in the work of classicists, interested in the Middle Ages only because they have to be, in reconstructing the *Nachleben* of ancient literature. With Haskins, they measure the success of the medieval renaissance and conclude that it had completed its mission by 1250, a mission largely understood as the passive reception and absorption of the classics.⁵ Some medievalists continue to subscribe to this interpretation, offering the same terminal date-line.⁶ But, for the most part, it has been abandoned. In the field of Latin literature, scholars like Janet Martin have accented the increasingly non-classical styles and tastes of twelfth-century writers,⁷ while Peter Dronke has underscored the originality and even the subversiveness of medieval Latin poets; for them, as he notes in a trenchant phrase, the classics supplied “oxygen, rather than bricks.”⁸ Equally important in destabilizing the Haskins perspective is the frontal attack on the classical bias that has come from Renaissance scholarship itself. At issue is the claim, stated most succinctly by Erwin Panofsky, that, in contrast with earlier renaissances, only in the *quattrocento* were the classics revived in a “chemically pure form.”⁹ In contrast, the work of Anthony Grafton, which extends from the Italian Renaissance to the rise of *Altertumswissenschaft* in nineteenth-century

⁵ Good examples are R. R. Bolgar, *The Classical Tradition and Its Beneficiaries* (Cambridge, 1958); L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature*, 3rd ed. (Oxford, 1991).

⁶ See, for example, Michael Haren, *Medieval Thought: The Western Intellectual Tradition from Antiquity to the Thirteenth Century*, 2nd ed. (Toronto, 1980); John B. Morrall, *Political Thought in Medieval Times* (Toronto, 1980).

⁷ Janet Martin, “Classicism and Style in Latin Literature,” in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Robert L. Benson, Giles Constable, and Carol Lanham (Cambridge, MA, 1982), pp. 537-68.

⁸ Peter Dronke, *Medieval Latin and the Rise of European Love Lyric*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1968), 1: 181; more generally, see idem, *Poetic Individuality in the Middle Ages: New Departures in Poetry, 1000-1150*, 2nd ed. (London, 1986); idem, “Profane Elements in Literature,” in *Renaissance and Renewal*, pp. 569-92; idem, *The Medieval Poet and His World* (Roma, 1984).

⁹ Erwin Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art* (New York, 1972), p. 202.

Germany, has demonstrated that, even as humanists revived the classics and sought to purify ancient texts, they also lost and destroyed classical manuscripts and forged “classical” texts; at all times they put the classics to the service of their personal, confessional, or political agendas.¹⁰

With respect to the scientific, legal, and philosophical elements in Haskins’ renaissance, the limits of his approach were already signalized in the second old story-line requiring our attention, the one sparked by the neo-Thomist revival. Whatever their internal disagreements, participants in this revival were convinced that medieval speculative thought was important not as a mere receptacle or conveyer-belt of classical ideas. Rather, they maintained that medieval thinkers should be studied because they had made creative and valuable applications of their classical legacy. The most prominent figures launching neo-Thomism were French, or at least Francophone, and German. In differing ways and degrees, their advocacy of scholasticism was conditioned by politics, within their own countries, as well as by their own sense of having been present at the creation, or at the creation plus one generation, of the movement inspiring a new mood of confidence in the Catholic intelligentsia. It is worth keeping in mind that, in this context, while the boundary between “medieval” and “modern” was thought to be the divide between “religious” and “secular,” it was not understood in terms of the Middle Ages versus the Italian Renaissance but in terms of the Old Regime versus revolution, the established church and monarchy versus republicanism, reactionary politics versus liberal politics, obscurantism versus enlightenment. Especially in France, these antinomies defined the atmosphere in which the earliest neo-Thomists worked, in the wake of France’s defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, the Revolution of 1870, and the aggressively secular Third Republic. The clash between the Catholic church and secular republicanism raised the very question of whether Catholics

¹⁰ From his extensive oeuvre, see in particular Anthony T. Grafton, *Forgers and Critics: Creativity and Duplicity in Western Scholarship* (Princeton, 1990); idem, *Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Scholarship in an Age of Science* (Cambridge, MA, 1991); idem, *Commerce with the Classics: Ancient Books and Renaissance Readers* (Ann Arbor, 1997).

could claim intellectual respectability. To such founders of French neo-Thomism as Maurice DeWulf and Jacques Maritain, the appeal of Aquinas was partly that he was indisputably rational, and brilliant. Espousing his teachings, they told their readers in so many words, would in no sense bar one from a place in the republic, or the republic of letters.

On the German side of the Rhine, a different set of political issues converged with the excitement of the neo-Thomist revival that could have shaped the scholarship of the leading medievalists of the early twentieth-century, Artur Michael Landgraf and Martin Grabmann. In Germany, the issue was not a stand-off between the Catholic church and republican or left-wing politics. But, as German Catholics, these scholars might well have been caught in the crossfire of the Second Reich's *Kulturkampf*. Having committed itself to a *kleindeutsch* version of German unification in 1871, the Prussian leadership of the new Reich criticized Catholicism as unpatriotic, a throwback to the *grossdeutsch* empire centered at Vienna which the unification movement had just succeeded in circumventing. Landgraf largely avoided being stigmatized in this way by the fact that he served as a priest, and eventually as bishop of Bamberg, in the largely Catholic southern part of the new Germany. Grabmann, as well, managed to sidestep such polemics, since he spent most of his teaching career in Vienna. In addition, both of these scholars can be contrasted with their Francophone contemporaries in that they were trained in theology as well as philosophy. Also, they were expert palaeographers. They saw it as essential to improve early modern editions of scholastics and to edit and publish scholastic texts that remained in manuscript. Both used unpublished manuscript material extensively in their interpretive studies. While both scholars were deep admirers of Aquinas, their work was not so closely focused on the need to advance Thomism as a perennial philosophy as was true of some of their compeers. To be sure, Landgraf is well known for developing the concept of *Frühscholastik*. He agreed that the thought of Aquinas was the terminus of that trend, often selecting the themes he studied in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries because they had a pay-off in the thought of the Angelic Doctor. But he also provided an impetus, still felt today, to the recovery and study of early scholastic figures and themes as historically interesting and important in their own right.

The same can be said of the work of Odon Lottin in Belgium.¹¹ As for Grabmann, he did not identify scholasticism primarily with the teachings of a single master or school. Rather, he presented scholasticism as a set of intellectual methods, whose use and development cut across other categories and informed all players in the game.¹² And, with respect to Thomas, he focused less on the normative value of his solutions, *semper et ubique*, than on how to learn from him how to be as well-informed and open-minded a Christian thinker in the here and now as Thomas had been in his own day.

Having mentioned “Christian thinker,” it now behoves us to return to Francophone territory. For it was here that the most important battle lines were drawn within the ranks of the neo-Thomists. Sidelining all the other intra-confessional debates among them was the stand-off between two sets of scholars. One group wanted to present scholastic thought as philosophy, tout court. Despite the fact that most medieval philosophers had been theologians, they insisted that the scholastics’ religious beliefs and professional responsibilities had in no way prevented them from being real philosophers. On the other side of the debate stood scholars who argued that, far from being a potential obstacle to philosophizing, Christian belief actually stimulated philosophical speculation, since it presented scholastics with issues requiring rational reflection that were not in the ancient Greek syllabus. Further, they asserted, the main achievement of scholasticism, at least in its golden age, had not been rationalism as such but the synthesis of reason and revelation. As this audience does not have to be reminded, a leading exponent of the first outlook was Fernand Van Steenberghen, while the chief defender of the second view was Etienne Gilson.¹³ If the decades-long war of attrition fought by Gilson and Van

¹¹ See, in particular, Artur Michael Landgraf, *Dogmengeschichte der Früh-scholastik*, 4 vols in 9 (Regensburg, 1952-56); *Introduction à l’histoire de la littérature théologique de la scolastique naissante*, trans. Louis-B. Geiger, ed. Albert-M. Landry (Montréal/Paris, 1973); Odon Lottin, *Psychologie et morale aux XIIIe et XIIIe siècles*, 5 vols. (Louvain, 1942-60).

¹² See, in particular, Martin Grabmann, *Die Geschichte der scholastischen Method: Nach den gedruckten und ungedruckten Quellen*, 2 vols. (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1909 [reprt. Berlin, 1988]).

¹³ No attempt can be made here to list the dozens of publications that

Steenberghen failed to win converts on either side, they still agreed, with the rest of the neo-Thomists, that the thought of Aquinas had towered over that of all his predecessors. And, since once you have reached an apex, any movement from that point is movement downward, the scholastics who came after Aquinas, many of whom criticized him sharply, had led to intellectual decline and fall. This judgment also applied to fellow Dominicans who had broken ranks with Thomism, following the teachings of Albert the Great instead. Thus, a neo-Thomist revival was needed to rescue Catholic intellectual life from the doldrums, by alerting readers to the fact that Aquinas was *the* greatest thinker in the Christian tradition and also that he had solved in advance all the problems of the modern world.

So much for the second of the outmoded story-lines. In considering how this particular map has been redrawn, we must recognize that revisionism began within the very bosom of the Catholic intellectual establishment. There are several characteristics of this in-house revisionism that deserve attention, since they emerged well before Vatican II signaled the dethroning of the neo-Thomists of the strict observance in the Catholic church more generally. One major approach was to focus attention on religious life, mysticism, and devotion, not only because it enriched religious praxis but also because it drew upon and stimulated theology and philosophy alike. To be sure, Grabmann included these topics in his work. But equally seminal was Marie-Dominique Chenu, who devoted fully half of his study on the twelfth century to what he termed “the evangelical dawn.”¹⁴ That Christian Europe’s religious life was a

document this debate, but we suggest, as exemplary, Fernand Van Steenberghen, *Aristotle in the West: The Origins of Latin Aristotelianism*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1970); idem, *La philosophie au XIII^e siècle*, 2nd ed. (Louvain, 1991); Etienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1953); idem, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1938 [reprint. 1950]). For an overview of this and other debates, see John Inglis, *Spheres of Philosophical Inquiry and the Historiography of Medieval Philosophy* (Leiden, 1998).

¹⁴ Marie-Dominique Chenu, *La théologie au douzième siècle* (Paris, 1957), part 2. See also Martin Grabmann, *Mittelalterliches Geistesleben*, 3 vols. (München, 1936).

genuine site of the twelfth-century renaissance has been elaborated by more recent scholars with no confessional stake in medieval Catholicism, such as Richard Southern and Giles Constable,¹⁵ as well as by those with such a stake, and a thoroughly anti-scholastic one at that, such as Jean Leclercq.¹⁶

Another area, of even more consuming interest to recent scholars on scholasticism, and one to which Chenu, Grabmann, and Landgraf alike made early, and seminal, contributions, was the history of logic and semantics, and their connection to theology.¹⁷ This subdivision of medieval philosophy has been seized on by more recent generations of scholars and studied intensively. Swiftly recognizing that logic had received less attention than it deserved from earlier historians of scholasticism, despite the fact that logic was the most creative and fastest growing branch of medieval philosophy, some recent students of medieval logic have also been fueled in their zeal by the discovery that this was a field in which scholastics, and even pre-scholastics, had found Aristotle wanting. Even before the reception of the full logical corpus of the Stagirite in the second half of the twelfth century, medieval logicians had managed to develop a post-Aristotelian formal logic, which increasingly highlighted themes found in modern logic. On the other hand, the original insight that logic and semantics were linked to theology in the Middle Ages has been

¹⁵ Richard W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (New Haven, 1953 [reprint, 1962]), esp. ch. 3-5; Giles Constable, *The Reformation of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1996). This work reprises and extends earlier studies such as idem, "Renewal and Reform in Religious Life," in *Ren. and Renewal*, pp. 37-67; idem, *Three Studies in Religious and Social Thought* (Cambridge, 1995).

¹⁶ Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, 3rd ed., trans. Catherine Misrahi (New York, 1982).

¹⁷ Chenu, "Grammaire et théologie," *La théol. au douzième siècle*, pp. 90-107, a section omitted from the English translation, *Man, Nature, and Society in the Twelfth Century*, trans. Jerome Taylor and Lester K. Little (Chicago, 1968); Martin Grabmann, "Die Geschichte der mittelalterlichen Sprachphilosophie und Sprachlogik," in *Mélanges Joseph de Ghellinck* (Gembloux, 1951), 2: 421-34; Artur Michael Landgraf, "Nominalismus in den theologischen Werken der zweiten Hälfte der zwölften Jahrhunderts," *Traditio* 1 (1943): 192-93, 199.

cultivated, and influentially so, by Jean Jolivet.¹⁸ Indeed, the attention that logic, semantics, and speculative grammar received in the second half of the twentieth century so threatened to overwhelm the study of medieval philosophy in general that the standard reference work on later medieval philosophy edited by Norman Kretzmann and his associates¹⁹ was nicknamed in some quarters *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Logic*.

Finally, as a reaction against the attempt of neo-Thomists to marginalize, or even to demonize, scholastics in the Franciscan tradition, researchers from that order leapt into the fray, the single most important being Philotheus Boehner. In addition to focusing, in his own studies, on his order's most original and influential figure, William of Ockham, and on other leading Franciscans,²⁰ accenting their importance to the history of logic in particular, Boehner was also a founding father of the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University, the moving spirit behind its critical edition of the complete works of Ockham, and the continuation of its mission with the edition of John Duns Scotus in association with the International Scotus Commission. Together with the labors of the Collegium Sanctae Bonaventurae at Grottaferrata and of the Antonianum in Rome, these scholarly activities have been making the retrieval of the thought of the medieval Franciscan scholastics increasingly complete.

¹⁸ From an extensive and substantial oeuvre the following titles may be mentioned: Jean Jolivet, *Godescalc d'Orbais et la Trinité: La méthode de la théologie à l'époque carolingienne* (Paris, 1958); idem, *Abélard ou la philosophie dans le langage* (Paris, 1969); idem, *Arts du langage et théologie chez Abélard*, 2nd ed. (Paris, 1982). No attempt can be made here to survey the enormous and still burgeoning field of studies on medieval logic. Good starting points are E. J. Ashworth, *The Tradition of Medieval Logic and Speculative Grammar from Anselm to the End of the Seventeenth Century: A Bibliography from 1836 Onward* (Toronto, 1978), updated by Fabienne Pironet, *The Tradition of Medieval Logic and Speculative Grammar from Anselm to the Beginning of the Seventeenth Century* (1977-1994) (Turnhout, 1997).

¹⁹ Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny, and Jan Pinborg, ed., *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1982 [reprint 1988]).

²⁰ Philotheus Boehner, *Collected Articles on Ockham*, ed. Eligius M. Buytaert (St. Bonaventure, NY, 1958); idem, *Medieval Logic: An Outline of Its Development from 1250 to c. 1400* (Chicago, 1952 [reprint Westport, CT, 1959]).

While the neo-Thomists may, at first, have dismissed the work of Boehner and his colleagues as Franciscan special pleading, its value, in and of itself and in its capacity to shift scholarly attention to Scotus and Ockham, is now uncontested. The neo-Thomist dismissal of later medieval thought, much of it Franciscan, has itself been dismissed. Major recent studies of Scotus, Ockham, their immediate predecessors, and thinkers in their immediate environments, have revalued this entire chapter of scholastic thought, giving it a new prominence as a major destination on the map, in place of the neo-Thomists' stigmatization of it as a thorny passage travelers needed to negotiate, but in a "know your enemy" mode. Moreover, and this is an excellent index of how the new mapping of scholasticism has preserved some of the perspectives of the old, recent scholars studying Scotus and Ockham agree with one of Gilson's most strongly defended positions, the need to grasp both the theology and the philosophy of these figures if one is to understand not only their solutions but also their mind-sets and points of departure.²¹

All of this makes a date-line in the third quarter of the thirteenth century as the cut-off point for constructive scholastic thought, Gilson's "golden age," seem rather antiquated. Yet, in a parallel set of developments, the very decentering of Aquinas as *the* destination on the scholastic map has led, in recent scholarship, to several other developments. One is the reappraisal of twelfth-century scholasticism. In part, the current interest in logic contributes to this trend. But in part, it reflects the idea that twelfth-century thought is interesting in its own historical context, whether or not it can also be read as a preface to later scholasticism. It has been recognized, with no apologies, that some twelfth-century scholastic developments did not flow into the thirteenth century,

²¹ Here, too, from a burgeoning bibliography, we single out a handful of exemplary titles: Allan B. Wolter, *The Philosophical Theology of John Duns Scotus*, ed. Marilyn McCord Adams (Ithaca, 1990) and Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus* (Oxford, 1999) on the Subtle Doctor; and Marilyn McCord Adams, *William Ockham*, 2 vols. (Notre Dame, 1987) and Armand Maurer, *The Philosophy of William of Ockham in the Light of Its Principles* (Toronto, 1999) on the Venerable Inceptor.

at least not with the same meanings attached to the terms. An excellent case in point is nominalism, a semantic theory used by some twelfth-century thinkers to argue for divine omnipotence. Their position was that nouns and verbs in oblique cases and in past and future tenses consignify the same things and actions as are signified by the same nouns and verbs in the nominative case and present tense. Thus, what God could do once, He can do always. At that time, nominalism had nothing to do with the debate over universals, to which this term was later annexed.²² Another example of a topic that has inspired scholarly attention is the thought of Gilbert of Poitiers, although its influence was largely confined to the twelfth century.²³ Interest in such themes and figures now holds its own, side by side with interest in the thought of twelfth-century scholastics who did cast a long shadow. What is new and different here, however, is that scholars have focused increasingly on the theologians, seen as just as exciting and influential as the philosophers. They are now credited, even more than the canonists, with having developed the critical approach to authorities viewed as central to the scholastic enterprise as such. And, these remappings have retrieved the importance of Peter Lombard,²⁴ a Mt. Fuji regarded for centuries by scholastics themselves as a peak it was necessary to scale, yet a topographical feature overlooked or underestimated by neo-Thomist cartographers, despite their interest in his commentators.

Even more striking is the fact that the decentering of Aquinas, with the demise of the neo-Thomist story-line, has encouraged scholars who are

²² See, on this topic, the contributions to the special issue of *Vivarium* 30:1 (1992) on twelfth-century nominalism.

²³ A convenient introduction to the earlier bibliography on Gilbert can be found in the contributions to *Gilbert de Poitiers et ses contemporains: Aux origines de la logica modernorum*, ed. Jean Jolivet and Alain de Libera (Napoli, 1987); more recently, see John Marenbon, "Gilbert of Poitiers," in *A History of Twelfth-Century Philosophy*, ed. Peter Dronke (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 328-52.

²⁴ See Marcia L. Colish, "*Quae hodie locum non habent*: Scholastic Theologians Reflect on Their Authorities," in *Proceedings of the PMR Conference*, 15, ed. Phillip Pulsiano (Villanova, 1991), pp. 1-17; eadem, *Peter Lombard*, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1994).

interested in the Angelic Doctor, for the simple reason that he is one of the great minds of the Middle Ages and thus merits attention, to study him unencumbered by neo-Thomist baggage. We are witnessing the emergence of a fine crop of post-neo-Thomist studies of Aquinas.²⁵ They have several other things in common besides a disinterest in claiming that his thought is the perennial philosophy. First, and here we can see a parallel with recent studies of Scotus and Ockham, their authors treat Aquinas as a theologian as well as a philosopher, thus vindicating that particular aspect of Gilson's legacy. Second, they are alert to issues in Aquinas' thought that remain of continuing interest to current philosophers, a point to which I will return. In addition, and here they may be contrasted sharply with the earlier neo-Thomists, they write clearly and accessibly, avoiding the rebarbative jargon that Thomists used to employ. This is something that always used to perplex me. For, while insisting that readers had to embrace Thomism, if they were going to get it right in this world and the next, his defenders often wrote in a style that barred access to his thought to all but their fellow mandarins.

There are three other important new developments that have contributed to the remapping of scholasticism in our time, decentering older understandings of what, and who, constitute the itineraries and landmarks along the way. One of these is the emergence of the history of science as a sub-discipline of historical studies. Agreeing that there was a major paradigm shift in the seventeenth century, at least for physics, astronomy, and mathematics, historians of science have discovered precursors of and continuities with these discoveries in high and late medieval thought. This perception has had the effect of disrupting previous understandings of how this history is to be plotted, both from the standpoint of the older story-lines of medievalists and from the story-lines of early modern historians. Late medieval scholastics used to receive a bad press for their sterile logic-chopping. Yet, for historians of science, it is precisely the scholastics'

²⁵ Examples include Mark D. Jordan, *The Hierarchy of Philosophical Discourses in Aquinas* (Notre Dame, 1986); Brian Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford, 1992).

ability to think rigorously about counter-factuals and to imagine the possible worlds God might have created, out of His absolute power to have created a universe different from the one we know, that laid the groundwork for the departures from the Aristotelian world view that culminated in Galileo and Newton. Also of great importance, for the historians of science, is the rise of mathematical logic as a means of verifying scientific hypotheses and the quantification of processes and phenomena that Aristotle understood qualitatively, found in Robert Grosseteste, Roger Bacon, and the later Oxford “Calculators.”²⁶ Less at

²⁶ See, in particular, Amos Funkenstein, *Theology and the Scientific Imagination from the Middle Ages to the Seventeenth Century* (Princeton, 1986); David E. Lindberg, *The Beginnings of Western Science: The European Scientific Tradition in Philosophical, Religious, and Institutional Contexts, 600 BC to AD 1450* (Chicago, 1992); Edward Grant, *Physical Science in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1977) and especially idem, *The Foundations of Modern Science in the Middle Ages: Their Religious, Intellectual, and Institutional Contexts* (Cambridge, 1996); James McEvoy, *The Philosophy of Robert Grosseteste* (Oxford, 1982); John E. Murdoch, “*Mathesis in philosophiam scholasticam introducta*: The Rise and Development of the Application of Mathematics in Fourteenth-Century Philosophy and Theology,” in *Arts libéraux et philosophie au moyen âge* (Montréal/Paris, 1969), pp. 215-54; Edith Sylla, “Galileo and the Oxford *Calculatores*: Analytical Languages and the Mean-Speed Theorem for Accelerated Motion,” in *Reinterpreting Galileo*, ed. William A. Wallace (Washington, 1986), pp. 53-108; eadem, “Medieval Concepts of the Latitude of Forms: The Oxford Calculators,” *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 40 (1973): 225-83; eadem, “Medieval Quantification of Qualities,” *Archive for History of Exact Sciences* 8 (1971): 9-39. On the influence of the ordained-absolute power of God theme, see William J. Courtenay, *Capacity and Volition: A History of the Distinction of Absolute and Ordained Power* (Bergamo, 1990); Lawrence Moonan, *Divine Power: The Medieval Power Distinction up to Its Adoption by Albert, Bonaventure, and Aquinas* (Oxford, 1994); Francis Oakley, *Omnipotence, Covenant, and Order: An Excursion in the History of Ideas from Abelard to Leibniz* (Ithaca, 1984); idem, “The Absolute and Ordained Power of God in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth Theology,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 59 (July 1998): 437-61; idem, “The Absolute Power of God and King in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries: Philosophy, Science, Politics,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 59 (October 1998): 669-90; Eugenio Randi, *Il sovrano e l'orologio: Due immagini di Dio nel dibattito sulla “potentia absoluta” fra XIII e XIV secolo* (Firenze, 1987).

issue here is the carryover of specific medieval ideas into seventeenth-century science than the development of a mind-set willing to criticize and reject past authorities, especially Aristotle. Also noteworthy, in the work of the recent historians of science, is their location of that attitude in scholastic theology as much as in philosophy, a position challenging one of Haskins' leading assumptions as well as the neo-Thomist story-line.

On another level, in another remapping of scholasticism that is both trail blazing and groundbreaking, Katherine H. Tachau has shown how the epistemological convictions of scholastics working in one branch of science, optics, enabled them to maintain a countervailing position in the teeth of Ockham's epistemology, despite its influence in the later Middle Ages. In addition to showing the irrelevance, to her theme, of presumed turning points like the Parisian condemnations of the 1270s and 1340s, which proved to be blips on the screen rather than intellectual watersheds, Tachau demonstrates that figures such as Peter Auriol and Peter Olivi are more important to her story than the allegedly bigger names, and that Ockham was less influential in his own day and in the immediate sequel than had been supposed.²⁷ Thus, it was not just ancient authorities but more recent *moderni* who came under the scrutiny of the scholastics, and who were rejected if they were found wanting.

The second new development, one whose emergence we can date with unusual precision, is the rise of philosophy of religion as a sub-specialty in the field of philosophy. Motivated in part by their terminal impatience with the claim, on the part of analytic philosophers, that theological language is solipsistic gibberish even though it remains

²⁷ Katherine H. Tachau, *Vision and Certitude in the Age of Ockham: Optics, Epistemology, and the Foundations of Semantics, 1265-1345* (Leiden, 1988). Another scholar who has shown that Ockham was less immediately influential than had been thought is William J. Courtenay, "The Reception of Ockham's Thought at the University of Paris," in *Logique, ontologie, théologie au XIVe siècle: Preuve et raison à l'Université de Paris*, ed. Zenon Kaluza and Paul Vignaux (Paris, 1984), pp. 43-64; idem, "The Reception of Ockham's Thought in Fourteenth-Century England," in *From Ockham to Wyclif*, ed. Anne Hudson and Michael Wilks (Studies in Church History, Subsidia, 5 (Oxford, 1987), pp. 89-107.

meaningful to believers, and in part by the desire to engage in *fides quaerens intellectum* with respect to their own beliefs, a new group, the Society of Christian Philosophers, began publishing a new journal, *Faith and Philosophy*, in 1984. Members of the Society hail from various Christian confessions. They swiftly found that their new journal was by no means the only organ where they could place their publications. One of the founders was Norman Kretzmann, mentioned above. The trajectory of his own career is reflected in the work of some other Society members, who have shifted what was a virtually preclusive interest in the history of logic in their early publications to a philosophy of religion emphasizing metaphysics, ethics, and natural theology. In some cases this has led them to—or back to—Aquinas. The editors of a recent Festschrift dedicated to Kretzmann explain why this is so: “The clear and careful philosophical scrutiny of the ideas and arguments of the best minds of the Middle Ages can be expected not only to yield insights into the history of philosophy but also to provide invaluable resources for discovering, refining, and resolving the philosophical puzzles and problems of our own day.”²⁸ The contributors to this volume offer a sampler of post-neo-Thomist scholarship on Aquinas. Among them the two most interesting papers are by Anthony Kenny and Eleonore Stump. Stump argues that Aquinas’ analysis of the vice of folly provides a theoretical understanding of the “banality of evil” problem, that is, how people can develop into perpetrators of evils despised by their societies without feeling shame.²⁹ If it is startling to see Aquinas used to explicate Adolph Eichmann and his ilk, Kenny’s reasons for returning to the Angelic Doctor are even less predictable. On reading Aristotle, he observes, some contemporary philosophers are so eager to make the *Nicomachean Ethics* fall in with their own concerns and preconceptions that they distort him terribly. On the

²⁸ Scott MacDonald and Eleonore Stump, ed., *Aquinas’s Moral Theory: Essays in Honor of Norman Kretzmann* (Ithaca, 1998), p. 11. See also Eleonore Stump, ed., *Reasoned Faith: Essays in Philosophical Theology in Honor of Norman Kretzmann* (Ithaca, 1993), pp. 1-13.

²⁹ Eleonore Stump, “Wisdom: Will, Belief, and Moral Goodness,” in *Aquinas’s Moral Theory*, pp. 53-59.

other hand, medieval commentators, such as Aquinas, offer a more correct reading of the Stagirite.³⁰

Aside from ethics, an interest in themes like God's knowledge and action and natural theology have drawn recent philosophers of religion to Aquinas. Before his untimely death, Kretzmann was able to publish two volumes of his projected three-part study of the first three books of the *Summa contra gentiles*. In explaining why a late twentieth-century philosopher should take this text seriously, he simply announces that it is "the fullest and most promising natural theology ever produced..."³¹ Not only natural theology but also natural law ethics has drawn some contemporary philosophers to Aquinas. In their case, however, this is a rear-guard effort to oppose a newer group of moral philosophers, proponents of divine command ethics. Several versions of divine command ethics have already appeared. Whatever their differences, their supporters agree that Kant's claim that, in ethics, we can arrive at workable categorical imperatives on our own is a failure, and that obedience to divine commands is a philosophically cogent alternative.³² This notion has inspired dévotés of divine command ethics to return to the voluntarist tradition in medieval scholasticism, with Scotus and Ockham as their

³⁰ Anthony Kenny, "Aquinas on Aristotelian Happiness," in *ibid.*, pp. 15-27.

³¹ Norman Kretzmann, *The Metaphysics of Theism: Aquinas' Natural Theology in Summa contra gentiles I* (Oxford, 1997); *idem*, *The Metaphysics of Creation: Aquinas' Natural Theology in Summa contra gentiles II* (Oxford, 1999); the quotation appears in the second vol., p. vii.

³² For some varieties of this position, see Robert M. Adams, "Divine Command Metaethics Modified Again," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 7 (1979): 66-79; William P. Alston, "Some Suggestions for Divine Command Theorists," in *Divine Nature and Human Language: Essays in Philosophical Theology* (Ithaca, 1989), pp. 253-73; the contributors to Paul Helms, ed., *Divine Command and Morality* (Oxford, 1981); Philip Quinn, *Divine Commands and Moral Requirements* (Oxford, 1978); *idem*, "Divine Command Ethics: A Causal Theory," in *Divine Command Morality: Historical and Contemporary Readings*, ed. Janine Marie Idziak (New York, 1979), pp. 305-25; *idem*, "The Recent Revival of Divine Command Ethics," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 1 (1990): 345-65; Paul Rooney, *Divine Command Morality* (Brookfield, VT, 1996).

prime models; in response, Aquinas arms the critique of their position by the defenders of natural law ethics.³³

There is, finally, an index of how contemporary philosophers are remapping scholasticism that is even more striking, since it comes from a group of scholars who do not consider themselves philosophers of religion. This is the appropriation of the dogmatic theology of the scholastics by erstwhile specialists on medieval logic. We can gain a quick sense of this trend by considering a few of the contributions to the Eleventh International Symposium on Medieval Logic and Semantics held in San Marino in 1994, whose proceedings were published in 1997. Hitherto, participants in these gatherings easily met the description of philosophers interested in medieval logic because of its perceived proleptic qualities. They acknowledged that there were medieval logicians from Anselm of Canterbury to Robert Holcot who also wrote theology. But, they were happy to note, many logicians had not. The study of logic, therefore, was a means by which they could help philosophy throw off her chains as a mere handmaiden to theology. Given this group's earlier orientation, it is remarkable to find three contributors, Alain de Libera, Irène Rosier-Catach, and Paul Bakker, presenting papers on the way medieval theologians analyzed the Eucharistic consecration formula, or even just its initial word, *hoc*. Aside from showing that, notwithstanding the Lateran IV decree of 1215, the *causa* was scarcely *finita* when it came to the scholastics' actual understanding of what the consecration formula meant, these scholars are mainly interested in the philosophical issues embedded in these debates. These matters go beyond semiotics to include logic and metaphysics. And, the philosophical themes that emerge, such as the development of *sine qua non* causation theory and the willingness to compromise the principle of non-contradiction, show that the scholastics

³³ See, for example, Scott MacDonald, "Egoistic Rationalism: Aquinas's Basis for Christian Morality," in *Christian Theism and the Problems of Philosophy*, ed. Michael D. Beaty (Notre Dame, 1990), pp. 237-54. It should be noted that not all Scotus and Ockham scholars accept the appropriation of their authors' views by the divine command ethicists as accurate readings of them; cf. Cross, *Duns Scotus*, pp. 89-95.

used these controversies on Eucharistic theology to think outside the Aristotelian box.³⁴ Here, too, consideration of this theme has inspired a remapping of the landscape. For it is scholastics like William of Champeaux, Stephen Langton, and Peter Auriol who provided the benchmark positions affecting the development of the debate, not their more famous colleagues.

Equally notable is another contribution to the same symposium, by Claude Panaccio, on angelic language from Aquinas to Ockham. What Panaccio finds of interest here is philosophy of mind, with its openness to “thought experiments,” and, even more relevant, the philosophy of mental language. The scholastics considered viewed angels as purely spiritual beings. To be sure, when angels serve as God’s messengers to humankind, they take on bodies and communicate in our physically produced and received language. But, how do angels communicate with each other? Panaccio observes that, in addressing this question, the scholastics offer valuable insights on how the thought of one individual’s mind can be

³⁴ Alain de Libera and Irène Rosier-Catach, “L’analyse scotiste de la formule de la consécration eucharistique,” in *Vestigia, Imagines, Verba: Semiotics and Logic in Medieval Theological Texts (XIIIth-XIVth Century)*, ed. Costantino Marmo, *Semiotic and Cognitive Studies* 4, ed. Umberto Eco and Patrizia Viola (Turnhout, 1997), pp. 171-201; Paul J. J. M. Bakker, “*Hoc est corpus meum*: L’analyse de la formule de consécration chez les théologiens du XIVe et XVe siècles,” in *ibid.*, pp. 427-51. See also the more general study by Alain de Libera and Irène Rosier-Catach, “Les enjeux logico-linguistique de l’analyse de la formule de la consécration eucharistique au moyen âge,” *Cahiers de l’Institut du moyen-âge grec et latin* 67 (1997): 33-77. The shift from her more purely semantic focus can be seen by comparing this study with Irène Rosier, *La parole comme acte: Sur la grammaire et sémantique au XIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1994), where her point of reference is speech-act theory. On *sine qua non* causation, see William J. Courtenay, “The King and the Leaden Coin: The Economic Background of ‘sine qua non’ Causality,” *Traditio* 28 (1972): 185-209, reprt. in *idem*, *Covenant and Causality in Medieval Thought* (London, 1984), ch. 6. For the variant interpretations of transubstantiation among orthodox theologians after 1215, see Gary Macy, “The Dogma of Transubstantiation in the Middle Ages,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 45 (1994): 11-41, reprt. in *idem*, *Treasures from the Storeroom: Medieval Religion and the Eucharist* (Collegeville, MN, 1999), pp. 81-119.

transparent and immediate to the mind of another individual, without any contingent physical conditions. Modern analogies, such as radio waves and wireless telephone transmissions, he finds, help to explain what the scholastics mean by “angelic language”—and vice versa.³⁵

My research, far from exhaustive as it has been, has also turned up another scholastic theological debate in which contemporary philosophers find a rich trove of philosophical speculation, the doctrine of the hypostatic union. The philosophical themes at issue here are the problem of coherence, the problem of non-contradiction, the question of what constitute essential and accidental attributes in the incarnate Christ, and the question of nature and person—how the incarnate Christ can be regarded as like us in all but sin since, while He possessed a human nature, He lacked a human person. Also, since what was not assumed cannot be saved, does this mean that we are saved by nature, but not as individual persons? As we can see, this topic is of interest both theologically and philosophically. Among those scholars who take it up, Aquinas and Scotus both receive high praise, with Scotus ahead by a nose; in the estimate of Richard Cross, Scotus offers “the most philosophically astute defense of orthodox Christology there is.”³⁶

For these contemporary philosophers, although not all of them are practitioners of philosophy of religion, scholastic theology yields important arguments and insights into the problems they seek to address. The proponents of philosophy of religion find much ammunition for their own causes in scholastic philosophy and theology alike. The concerns of both groups, like those of the historians of science, have sometimes had the effect of privileging Aquinas in a new way. But, more often this is not the case, whether the topographical features they identify as critical to the maps they draw are other big names, like Scotus and Ockham, or less

³⁵ Claude Panaccio, “Angels’ Talk, Mental Language, and the Transparency of the Mind,” in *Vestigia, Imagines, Verba*, pp. 323-35.

³⁶ Cross, *Duns Scotus*, pp. 114, 125-26 (the quotation is on p. 125); see also idem, “Aquinas on Nature, Hypostasis, and the Metaphysics of the Incarnation,” *The Thomist* 60 (1996): 171-202; Thomas V. Morris, *The Logic of God Incarnate* (Ithaca, 1986), ch. 3.

famous ones, like William of Champeaux, Stephen Langton, Peter Auriol, Peter Olivi, and the anonymous contributors to the *logica modernorum*. As historians without any particular theological or philosophical cards to play or axes to grind continue to contextualize the big names and to fill in the many gaps that still remain in our knowledge of medieval speculative thought, it seems likely that the multiple emerging story-lines that have replaced those of Haskins and the neo-Thomists will continue to proliferate, depending on the paths through the terrain that a new generation of researchers will clear and traverse. At this moment, two hypotheses or future projections seem probable. First, except in the quarters of the hard-shell logicians, it is unlikely that the conception of scholastic philosophy as remote from, and as removable from, theology will make much headway. If anything, the traffic, of late, has been moving in the opposite direction. In that sense, one of the major battles fought by Etienne Gilson has been won. Second, in considering some of the multiple story-lines which this brief survey has been able to present, it would seem that current scholarship has committed itself to recovering the multiple itineraries through the scholastic landscape that actually existed in the medieval period itself, with their own particular destinations and landmarks. Now, as then, no single grid or template is capable of homogenizing these assorted maps of scholasticism. And that, I conclude, is all to the good. Our scholastic forebears could live with, and could institutionalize at their universities, the principle *diversi sed non adversi*. We should be ready and willing to do no less, in our efforts to understand and appreciate them.