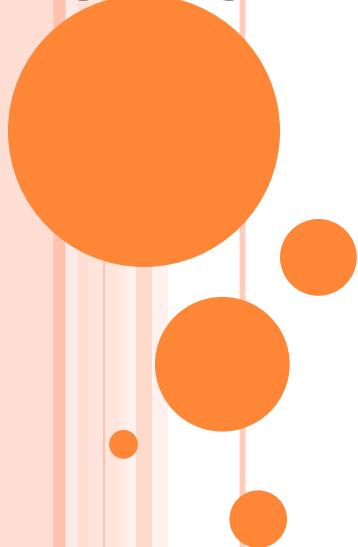


THOMAS AQUINAS



April 18, 2013

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

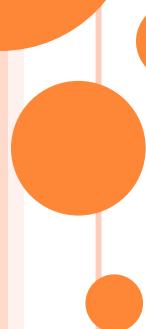
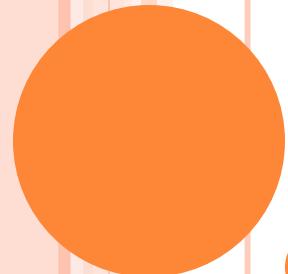
- Know the state of Medieval Philosophy in Aquinas' lifetime
- Know his major works
- Know that he reconciled philosophy and theology
- Summa Theologica
 - Question I the nature and domain of Sacred Doctrine
 - Question II The Existence of God
 - Philosophical proof of God
 - Nature of God



THOMAS AQUINAS (1227 – 1274)

- Noble family of part Italian and part German blood
- Became a Dominican friar
- Sent to Paris and Cologne to study
- Taught at Cologne and then
- Wrote two books that became the standard theological treaties of the Roman Catholic Church
 - *Summa Contra Gentiles*
 - *Summa Theologiae*





STATE OF MEDIEVAL PHILOSOPHY

REASON AND REVELATION

- Rationalism was breaking loose from the Church and its orthodoxy
- Universities - emerging and growing in influence
- New interest in natural science
- The West exposed to the works of the Islamic philosophers
- The West exposed to the works of Aristotle



REDISCOVERY OF GREEK PHILOSOPHY

- Aristotle's interest in natural science
- Issue was between naturalism and supernaturalism
- New interest in
 - This world
 - This life
- Natural reason and its new interest in natural science was breaking free from theology



HUMAN NATURE

- Classic view – Ideal was human dignity and nobility
- Christian view – People by nature “fallen”
 - Willfully wicked and ignoble
 - Incapable of anything else without the grace of god



THOMAS AQUINAS' TASK

- Attempting to reconcile reason and revelation, philosophy and theology, and Aristotle and Christ
- That he did so for his generation constitutes his “greatness”



SUMMA THEOLOGICA

- Question 1 The Nature and Domain of Sacred Doctrine (argument for Sacred Doctrine as a science)
 - Whether, besides the Philosophical Sciences, any further doctrine is required?
 - Whether the Sacred Doctrine is a Science?
 - Whether Sacred is One Science?
 - Whether Sacred Doctrine is a Practical Science?
 - Whether Sacred Doctrine is Nobler Than other Sciences?
 - Whether this Doctrine is a Wisdom?
 - Whether God is the subject-Matter of this science?
 - Whether Sacred Doctrine is Argumentative?
 - Whether Holy Scripture Should use metaphors?
 - Whether in Holy Scripture a Word May have Several Senses?

SUMMA THEOLOGICA - METHOD

- Thomas' method came to be characteristic of Scholasticism
 - First list objections to his view
 - Then state the contrary views
 - Next he would state his own view, which was presumed to reconcile the opposing views



BESIDES THE PHILOSOPHICAL SCIENCES ANY FURTHER DOCTRINE IS REQUIRED -OBJECTIONS

Objection 1. It seems that, besides philosophical science, we have no need of any further knowledge, for man should not seek to know what is above reason . . .

Objection 2. Further, knowledge can be concerned only with being, for nothing can be known, save what is... But everything that is, is treated of in philosophical science – even God himself: so that there is part of philosophy call theology, or the divine science, as is clear from Aristotle. . .

(*Summa Theologica First Article*)

On the contrary, it is written . . . “All scripture inspired of God is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice.” (2im.iii.) Now scripture, inspired of God, is no part of philosophical science. . . Therefore it is useful that besides philosophical science there should be other knowledge – i.e., inspired of God.

(*Summa Theologica* First Article)



I answer that, it was necessary for man's salvation that there should be a knowledge revealed by God, beside philosophical science . . . Firstly, indeed, because man is directed to God, as to an end that surpasses the grasp of reason. . . But the end must first be known by men who are to direct their thoughts and actions to the end. Hence it was necessary for the salvation of man that certain truths which exceed human reason should be made known to him by divine revelation.

(*Summa Theologica* First Article)

NATURE AND DOMAIN OF SACRED DOCTRINE

- It is a science - it proceeds from principles made known by the light of a higher science – the science of God
- It is one science – considers some things under the formality of being revealed, all things which have been divinely revealed have in common the formality of the object of this science
- Sacred doctrine is both a speculative and practical science; as God, by one and the same science knows both Himself and His works



SACRED DOCTRINE AS SCIENCE

- It is nobler than both speculative and practical sciences which it transcends
 - By Reason of the greater certitude – from the light of the divine knowledge which cannot err
 - By reason of the higher dignity of its subject-matter
- This doctrine is wisdom above all human wisdoms absolutely
- God is the subject-matter of this science.
- Sacred Scripture – has no science about itself, disputes argumentatively with one who denies its principles only if the opponent admits some at least of the truths obtained through divine revelation



NATURE AND DOMAIN OF SACRED DOCTRINE

- It is befitting Holy Scripture to use metaphors - to put forward divine and spiritual truths by means of comparisons with material things
 - Humans obtain intellectual truths through sensible things, because all of our knowledge comes from the senses
 - By putting spiritual truths by means of figures taken from corporeal things even the simple will be able to understand it
- In the Holy Scripture a word may have several senses (literal and spiritual senses)



SUMMA THEOLOGICA - GOD'S EXISTENCE

- Five cogent arguments for the existence of God
 1. From motion to an unmoved mover
 2. Necessity of a first efficient cause
 3. From possibility to necessity
 4. Accounting for the gradation to be found in things
 5. From consideration of the design in the structure of the world



I - MOTION

- All things in nature that are in motion are moved by something other than themselves
- The cause of motion must be some actuality
- The moved and the mover must be two different things
- There must be something which itself is not in motion which causes all other motion – contains within itself the initial power to move.
- This everyone understands as God



II - FIRST EFFICIENT CAUSE

- Effective cause is that which actually produces an effect
- Every effect requires a cause
- Must posit an uncaused cause capable of setting all cause in motion
- This cause - everyone understands as God



III FROM POSSIBILITY TO NECESSITY

- All things in nature exist through something else already existing
- Must have been a time when nothing existed
- Must be something eternal
 - Whose being is “necessary” and not capable of not-being
 - Upon which all possible contingent beings rest
 - From which, by efficient cause and motion, they proceed and are the effects
- Such a necessary being is God



IV - GRADATION IN THINGS

- Some things are more and some less good, true, beautiful etc.
- Not just in contrast to each other – in respect to some maximum
- The maximum of any genus is the “cause” of all that genus
- Must be something which is ultimate being, ultimate truth, ultimate goodness, ultimate power, ultimate life, ultimate wisdom
- That ultimate is God and he must exist



V - DESIGN IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE WORLD

- Observe some things that lack intelligence and knowledge but, nevertheless, act for an end
- Must be designed and directed by some other being of intelligence
- All natural things must be directed by some intelligence – that is God



NATURE OF GOD

- God is simple, without composition of parts
- God is perfect, lacking nothing
- God is infinite - not finite in the ways that created beings are physically, intellectually, and emotionally limited
- God is immutable, incapable of change on the levels of God's essence and character
- God is one, without diversification within God's self. The unity of God is such that God's essence is the same as God's existence



REASON'S LIMITATIONS

- Reason can not discover the nature of God
- Reason is unable to establish more than general propositions
- Need to add to reason's conclusion what revelation alone can supply
- Thus Philosophy is subordinate to faith
- Matters of revelation lie beyond, not in conflict with reason



FAITH BASED ON REVELATION

- Knows things that are *above* reason
- That are beyond reason's unaided power to establish
- Faith still needs reason
- Nothing should be accepted by faith that is contrary to reason
 - Demonstrated that for Christians – no risk in this approach
 - Christian revelation – built upon principles of Reason



RECONCILE PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

- Philosophy begins with the world of sense experience – by the exercise of scientific reflection (reason) ascends to God
- Theology begins with the revealed truths that are from God and descend to humankind and the world
- Reason and revelation unite to make known to us the nature and character of God



HUMAN INTELLECT

- Image of God in mankind and mankind's essential nature - found in the human intellect
- The nature and end of intellect is knowledge
 - Highest knowledge is knowledge of God
 - Yet the intellect is limited and faulty
 - Perfect knowledge is a gift of God - received in the mystic vision of God
 - Transcends both intellect and faith



AQUINAS & ARISTOTLE

- Reshaped the “received” Hebrew-Christian tradition to fit Aristotle’s dualism
- Hebraic elements sees the human person as a unity
- Aquinas followed Aristotle
 - Body and soul always separate – but necessary to each other
 - Soul immortal – needs the body to develop and maintain characteristics of an individual self
- Question of when the soul enters the body



SUMMARY

- Reason and Revelation – State of philosophy in the Medieval World – exposure to Aristotle and Islamic Philosophers
- Thomas' method characteristic of Scholasticism
- *Summa Theologica*
 - Sought to prove the nature of Sacred Doctrine as a science
 - Sought to prove existence of God through reason
- Reconciliation of philosophy and theology

