

Romanus Cessario, OP, “Hommage au Père Servais-Théodore Pinckaers, OP: The Significance of His Work,” *Nova et Vetera*, 5, no. 1 (2007): 1-16.

Father Servais Pinckaers, OP, is an exemplary friar and theologian. He has perpetuated the traditions of the order, particularly the staunch Thomism of the English and Belgian Dominicans since the modern period. The sources of his remarkable work have been his deep attraction to the Eucharist and devotion to the Word of God. He has labored strenuously to present the authentic moral teaching of Aquinas as a paradigm for renewal. Pinckaers’ work has stamped much of Catholic moral theology, including the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Rather than embracing theological antiquarianism he has striven to engage the whole breadth human experience, ancient and modern, for the renewal of Thomism.

Wayne Hankey, “Aquinas at the Origins of Secular Humanism? Sources and Innovation in *Summa Theologiae* I, Question 1, Article 1,” *Nova et Vetera* 5, no. 1 (2007): 17-40.

This essay locates in Aquinas a certain secular humanism: a legitimate independence of philosophy, as a way of life and a kind of imperfect happiness. To do so, the essay analyzes the history of various positions on the independence of philosophical enquiry in thinkers such as John Paul II, Bellarmine, Leo XIII, Milbank, and Alain de Libera. The former three have, for different reasons, tended to agree that a limited relative independence of philosophy is necessary for the health of both faith and reason. The latter two tend to collapse philosophy into theology. In fact, ST I Q.1 a.1 reveals that “Aquinas accepts and wills the existence of a complete philosophical account of reality, including philosophical theology, or metaphysics,” yet he removes the competition between sacred and secular by pointing out their two different perspectives, which differentiate their genera. Following Maimonides, he insists theology is not identical with philosophy because the former attains truths that reason cannot know unaided. This revolutionary position (for its medieval context) freed philosophy as a common space for intellectual exchange and ecumenism.

Kevin O’Reilly, “The Vision of Virtue and Knowledge of the Natural Law in Thomas Aquinas,” *Nova et Vetera*, 5, no. 1 (2007): 41-66.

Affectivity is integral to the perception of the human good, according to Aquinas. This means that despite the universality of natural law, ability to perceive it is particular. The life of virtue is itself the process of the discovery of the right rules guiding human conduct since knowledge even of self-evident truths comes via reflection on experience. Since, for Aquinas, the rationality of natural law is that of *practical* reason, whose condition is *appetitive*, the correctness of practical intellect means conformity in contingent matters to right appetite. Yet appetite influences man’s ability to judge; it has a “certain power of resistance” to reason. Habits (good or evil) confirm the apparent goodness of what accords with them. This leads to the concrete situation adduced by Aquinas: that the Germanic tribes, because of their habits of raiding, failed to consider theft wrong, although it is contrary to the natural law. Virtue theory and natural law theory are thus inseparable and mutually imply one another.

Harm Goris, "Steering Clear of Charybdis: Some Directions for Avoiding 'Grace Extrinsicism' in Aquinas," *Nova et Vetera*, 5, no. 1 (2007): 67-80.

The debate over the relationship between nature and grace results from the need to balance the gratuity of grace with its organic or harmonious connection to nature. Since the 1970's two approaches, Rahner's "supernatural existential" and de Lubac's supernaturalizing of human nature, have attempted to correct the supposed distortions by the commentators. This tradition supposedly yielded a two-layered "extrinsicist" model of nature and grace, treasonous both to Scripture and to Aquinas's true position. Feingold, however, carefully presents the commentatorial notion that the natural desire to see God is elicited and antecedent (wished abstractly but not chosen concretely), which is not the pre-intentional *pondus naturae* and hence not innate. This position is not necessarily extrinsicist, if we understand that because of the analogicity of being, desire for truth and goodness do not necessarily *entail* nor *exclude* desire for the First Truth and Highest Good (i.e., God). This doctrine of analogy assists maintenance of both the continuity and discontinuity between nature and grace.

Reinhard Hütter, "*Desiderium Naturale Visionis Dei---Est autem Duplex Hominis Beatitudo sive Felicitas*: Some Observations about Lawrence Feingold's and John Millbank's Recent Interventions in the Debate over the Natural Desire to See God," *Nova et Vetera*, 5, no. 1 (2007): 81-132.

Theologians typically give one of two types of answers to the question "What is man?" Some argue that rest in God as man's end entails a salvific economy in which all of God's actions are merely gradations of intensity in grace under the rubric of universal salvation. Others argue for man's limitation: there can be no *innate unelicited* desire for a salvation that is not owed. The controversy over la nouvelle théologie stems from the collision of these two positions (the former influenced by Gregory of Nyssa and Origen, the latter by Aquinas and the late Augustine). Feingold revives a metaphysicalist form of discourse less influenced by historical-contextualist considerations and so questions the nature of theological discourse. Milbank's criticisms of Feingold, on the other hand, result from an implausibly Dionysian, Origenist, and Bulgakovian reading of Aquinas that ignores later texts of the Roman and second Parisian periods. In fact, Feingold's presentation addresses the fundamental metaphysical issue: the contradiction in de Lubac between (1) the pre-grace imprinted form of supernatural finality and (2) the absence of ordination to the supernatural end without grace. In fact, form must entail ordination to the end.

Steven Long, "On the Loss, and the Recovery, of Nature as a Theonomic Principle: Reflections on the Nature / Grace Controversy," *Nova et Vetera*, 5, no. 1 (2007): 133-184.

The loss of nature as a theonomic principle within the modern world-view creates the situation out of which the controversy over nature and grace arose. The problem begins in reconciling two sets of Aquinas's texts: one for knowledge of God as the end of intellectual substances and the other for distinguishing between angels and men through differing proximate *natural* ends.

At stake in the collapsing of the nature-grace distinction is the conclusion that man is naturally deific; at issue is addressing the question metaphysically instead of merely historically. More specifically Gilson and de Lubac's errors regarding Aquinas's obediential potency, viz., that it is a mere susceptibility to miracle, precluded resolution of the problem--Aquinas's second set of texts did not even receive consideration, in spite of the more historical perspectives of de Lubac and Gilson. Yet de Lubac's mistake was born out of a desire to safeguard the theocentric character of reality in a modern age where nature was increasingly perceived as autonomous: the loss of nature as theonomic, as normative in theology. This loss defined human freedom in opposition to God rather than to proximate created causes.

Guy Mansini, OSB, "Lonergan on the Natural Desire in the Light of Feingold," *Nova et Vetera*, 5, no. 1 (2007): 185-198.

Feingold's book structures the debate over nature and grace in terms of three questions: whether the natural desire to see God is (1) innate or elicited, (2) conditional or unconditional, and (3) demonstrative of the possibility of seeing God or not. Lonergan, unlike Feingold, answers the first question with the answer "innate," specifically an innate tendency of *intellect*. Knowing this tendency requires revelation of man's supernatural end. Moreover, although the desire's fulfillment is conditional, the desire itself is not--precisely because it is natural, "structural," and "always on." In the end, Lonergan, unlike Aquinas, breaks up the connections between natural inclination, natural passive potency, and the debt of its fulfillment. For Lonergan, the desire is natural, in an obediential potency, and not owed. Yet Lonergan's position is also ambiguous: in some texts he characterizes it in a way that would make it elicited; in others he regards it as nothing other than the natural desire to understand the transcendentals, not God specifically. Lonergan, does however, reject the importance of the possibility of a state of pure nature. Yet it is hardly marginal: abandoning its possibility endangers the distinction between creature and creator, i.e., the divine transcendence.