

Aquinas and Simplicius on Dispositions – A Question in Fundamental Moral Theory

Vivian Boland OP

Introduction

One of the areas on which Fergus Kerr has kept a wise eye and to which he has made valued contributions over many years is moral philosophy. In fact he had the task of teaching ‘moral theology’ in the early years of his career but quickly moved on. He was quite relieved to do so, he told me once, not least because he found Shakespeare more relevant to morality than the geography of the fallopian tubes. Leaving behind moral theology in that sense did not mean his leaving behind a concern with moral questions. On the contrary, he has maintained great interest in developments in fundamental moral theory and in the centrality of morality for all theology.

In this he is faithful to Aquinas who, as Leonard Boyle has argued, envisaged *Summa Theologiae* as a work in which the moral is central. If, as Kerr himself has been arguing recently, *beatitudo* is a key to the unity of the *Summa*, then this is further support for what Boyle argued on historical and palaeographical grounds¹. This is not to claim that what Aquinas had in mind was anything like what moral theology came to describe later on, when a strict distinction and even separation of dogma and moral came to prevail especially in seminary training. Aquinas belongs to an earlier world, from which contemporary moral philosophers continue to learn, in which these later distinctions did not apply. The inherent difficulty in separating them is clear if one tries to answer the question whether the theology of grace belongs to ‘dogma’ or to ‘moral’.

One of the key areas in which Aquinas continues to contribute to debates in moral philosophy is in relation to virtue-theory. Anglo-Saxon moral philosophy has contributed with distinction to the revival of interest in the notion of virtue as mentioning the names Anscombe, Foot and Macintyre is enough to show. A crucial building block in Aquinas’s moral theory is the notion of *habitus* or disposition since for him, following Aristotle, a virtue is a kind of disposition. But this more philosophical part of his account of virtue has received little enough direct attention in recent times for reasons that may become clearer as we proceed. What I want to do in this paper is to look again at those questions in the *Summa* where Aquinas explains this notion of ‘*habitus*’ or disposition. It is important for his understanding of the human being as a moral agent as well as for his account of grace, and in particular of those gifts of faith, hope and charity which

Christian tradition calls 'theological virtues'. It is a text whose examination will lead us into a number of central and current questions about the nature of Aquinas's theological synthesis and about whether or not we may consider any of his work as purely philosophical, i.e. philosophical as distinct from theological.

Aquinas's Account of 'Habit' in ST I.II 49-54

It is important to begin with a note about terminology. Aristotle had used *hexis* for a virtue or skill and *diathesis* for a state or condition like being hot or ill. The difference between them is that the latter is more easily lost than the former. For Aquinas this distinction is a strong one (I.II 49 2 ad 3) and he uses the Latin terms *habitus* for *hexis* and *dispositio* for *diathesis*. It may be confusing that Anthony Kenny chooses the English terms *disposition* for *habitus/hexis* and *state* for *dispositio/diathesis*. But these English terms do catch the difference Aristotle is keen to stress and I follow Kenny's usage here. 'Every *hexis* is a *diathesis*', he writes, 'but not vice versa; a *hexis* is a more permanent *diathesis*'² – a disposition is a more permanent state.

For Aquinas a disposition is a quality by which a nature or capacity 'has itself' either absolutely or relatively. It involves a kind of self-possession (*se habere*) on the part of the nature or capacity and is ordered primarily to action. Dispositions are needed where there is a potentiality / actuality gap between the nature or capacity and that to which it is disposed, where this potentiality may be actualised in a number of possible ways and where the determination of how it is in fact actualised is due to more than one factor:

Because, therefore, there are many beings whose natures and actions cannot be brought to completion without the presence of many elements that can be combined in various proportions, it follows that it is necessary that there should be such things as dispositions (ST I.II 49 4).

Because life is rich and complex, therefore, with desire being drawn to many and diverse things, we need not only capacities for reacting to what the world presents to us but dispositions for putting some kind of personal shape on our lives. Life is not possible, Thomas says, unless our desire fix itself on actual goals and purposes and hence the need for those *qualitates inclinantes* which are called dispositions (ST I.II 50 5 ad 1).

As a moral agent the human being is receptive and initiating. His desiring powers are set in motion by his apprehension of a desirable object and his work of reasoning goes ahead under the influence of principles already known. Such actions, proceeding from an agent which 'in being moved, moves', bring about dispositions (ST I.II 51 2).

Dispositions are related to rationality since it is only beings with the capacity to reach beyond fixed stimulus-response type behaviour that are capable of the kind of actions for which dispositions are required. Even if they become 'second nature' as Aristotle and Aquinas liked to say,

dispositions are different to natural capacities. Those things that we call 'habits' are dispositions only to the extent that they involve the exercise of intelligence and freedom (*ST I.II 50 3*). At the same time Aquinas does not simply oppose nature to reason and will (or nature to nurture as we might say now). Dispositions by definition are not natural and yet people may be temperamentally disposed in some ways rather than others. It is part of human nature to be rational and free and so for a disposition to come about partly from nature and partly from an external influence is all still natural for the kind of creature we are (*ST I.II 51 1 ad 1*).

Aquinas next considers how dispositions may be said to grow or diminish. One often hears people say things like: 'my faith is stronger than it was ten years ago', or 'I find it easier to love that person than I used to', or 'I find myself more courageous than I was as a teenager'. The ease with which we use this kind of language may blind us to the fact that it is really quite strange and raises a lot of questions. When we talk about these kinds of changes in ourselves or hear others saying them about themselves what do we think is happening? Where do we think it is happening? Why do we think it is happening?

Thomas addresses such questions in considering how dispositions may be thought to grow and diminish. He is clear that a disposition is not established by one action and neither is it lost that way (*ST I.II 51 3*). Expansion, addition and suchlike terms belong properly to the physical world but in a transferred sense, he says, they may be used of intelligible and spiritual things (*ST I.II 52 1*). Then 'great' means 'perfect' and 'greatness' means 'goodness'.

He suggests we think of dispositions objectively and subjectively (*ST I.II 52 2*). Knowledge objectively considered can grow in extension. There can be more of it. But subjectively considered knowledge will vary according to the diverse aptitudes of the different subjects who participate more or less in it. In this sense a disposition grows not by addition but by the subject participating more or less perfectly in the form. In this way it is better to think of knowledge becoming greater (*maius*) rather than bigger (*magis*).

A person can act against a disposition or in a way not consistent with its intensity in him. Aquinas seems to fall back on a fairly simple physical analogy by saying that an act proportionate to the intensity of a disposition or beyond that intensity either augments the disposition or disposes to its augmentation. Not every act of courage increases our courage but the repetition of acts of courage causes the disposition to grow. At the same time an act of less intensity than that of the disposition disposes to its diminution. This seems to suggest that if we do not continue to exercise the dispositions we have, at something like the intensity with which we have them, then we are in danger of losing them (*ST I.II 52 3*). Again the language is common and seems reasonable but what exactly does the intensity of a disposition mean?

Dispositions may also diminish in strength (*ST I.II 53*). False beliefs or reasoning may corrupt our knowledge. Ignorance, passion or choice may lead us to execute a moral judgement against the direction of a disposition we already have. The same distinctions applied in thinking about their growth may be appealed to in thinking about their decline. Objectively justice remains justice but subjectively a man can become less just than he was before (*ST I.II 53 2*). Thomas agrees that a neglected disposition will diminish. Dispositions that are not growing or being maintained by practice become less and, given sufficient time, may even disappear (*ST I.II 53 3*).

In distinguishing different kinds of disposition, the most important difference is between dispositions considered good because appropriate to the nature of the agent and those considered bad because inappropriate to the nature of the agent. Virtues are dispositions that are appropriate to human nature because they are in accordance with reason. Vices are dispositions that are discordant with human nature and are not in accordance with what is reasonable (*ST I.II 54 3*).

Aquinas's Use of Simplicius

ST I.II 49-54 shows a number of unusual features. Some of the articles have no parallel elsewhere in Aquinas' works and some of them are considerably longer than articles in the *Summa* tend to be. There is a sense of fresh work being undertaken and new material being integrated. Again this is not true of much of the *Summa* which, masterpiece of synthesis though it is, does not contain Aquinas' most extensive considerations of many questions³.

The new material Aquinas uses here is from Simplicius, a 6th century CE Neoplatonist commentator on Aristotle whose works were being translated by William of Moerbeke and others during Thomas's lifetime. A translation of Simplicius' commentary on the *Categories* [*Predicamenta*] was available from March 1266 and this is the text of particular interest to us. A translation of his commentary on the *Peri Hermeneias* [*Super de Interpretatione*] was completed in 1268. His translation of Simplicius's commentary on the *De Anima* was the most influential of William's translations⁴. His translation of Simplicius' commentary on *De Caelo* was completed in June 1271. After Thomas's death the University of Paris, in its letter of sympathy to the Dominican general chapter asked, among other things, that a copy of this translation, which Thomas had promised to send them, would now be forwarded⁵. Many of Thomas's later works – *Summa Theologiae*, *QD de Malo*, *De Spiritualis Creaturis*, *In de Caelo et Mundo* – show how he benefited from his reading of these translations of Simplicius⁶.

Simplicius studied first at Alexandria under Ammonius son of Hermeias (fl.c.485-c.530) and his commentaries owe much to what he learned there, to the scholarship for which Alexandria was renowned and to the interest in Aristotle that was encouraged there. Ammonius had

studied with Proclus at Athens and Simplicius in turn went there to work with Damascius, the last successor of Plato at the Academy. Justinian closed the academy in 529, perhaps because it was enjoying a revival under Damascius, after which Simplicius and others went with him to the court of Chosroes king of Persia⁷.

The philosophy behind the Aristotelian commentaries Simplicius produced in the 530s is that of Proclus and the Athenian school. They were written in a time of enforced leisure when he was not allowed to teach and they were composed for readers rather than as lectures or as lecture notes⁸. The neoplatonists preferred to commentate the works of Aristotle rather than those of Plato because they raised fewer controversial metaphysical points. Aristotle was theologically more neutral than Plato, another reason why the Alexandrians devoted so much attention to him, and this too perhaps had an impact on Simplicius. The Alexandrians tended to think that Plato and Aristotle could be more easily reconciled than the Athenians who regarded Plato as clearly superior to Aristotle. Simplicius, though more an Athenian than an Alexandrian, tended to agree with Ammonius and the Alexandrians about this⁹.

Modern scholars in the historical field are indebted to Simplicius for preserving numerous fragments of the Presocratics, middle Platonist and other Hellenistic philosophers that would otherwise certainly have been lost. The text of Thomas under consideration here reveals his debt to Simplicius for a growing acquaintance with the philosophical tradition, with views of Alexander of Aphrodisias (I.II 50 1 in c), Plotinus (I.II 52 1), Porphyry (I.II 50 1 ad 3) and 'other philosophers' (I.II 50 1 ad 3; 50 4 ad 1). Hankey believes we can even identify in Aquinas's works a move away from Averroes as 'the Commentator' and towards Simplicius as a more reliable guide to the history of philosophy, especially to what is proper to the *via Platonica* and the *via Aristotelica* and on the question of the reconcilability of Plato and Aristotle¹⁰.

I want to argue that his use of Simplicius is important not only for helping us to date some of Aquinas's works and not only for helping us to see how his understanding of the history of philosophy developed but for helping him to develop his account of what dispositions are. If we look at those places in our text where Thomas appeals to Simplicius we will see how the Neoplatonist commentator is of substantive help to the 13th century Dominican.

His first use of Simplicius is straightforward enough (I.II 49 1 ad 3). What Aristotle says in *Categories* 8 (8b25-29) about the difference between states and dispositions is straightforward but it seems to be confused by what he says on the same point at *Metaphysics* V.19-20 (1022b1-14). Simplicius helps Thomas to reconcile these two texts.

In I.II 49 2 in c Thomas uses a substantial quotation from Simplicius to begin a discussion of the four types of quality about which Aristotle

speaks in *Categories* 8 (8b25-11a37). Simplicius suggests a distinction between natural and adventitious qualities as a way of clarifying the Aristotelian text but Thomas rejects it as not really satisfactory in distinguishing states and dispositions from other qualities. Instead he appeals to Augustine for whom a quality is a modification of a subject, the actualisation of a potentiality. Augustine and Aristotle seem to agree in thinking about qualities in this way and it enables Thomas to assign states and dispositions to the first type of quality where good and bad, transience and duration are all relevant. It would be too much to say that Augustine plays a key role here but he does provide a stimulus for what Thomas finds in a range of Aristotelian texts: *Physics* II.7 (198b3-4), VII.3 (245b3-248a9); *Metaphysics* V.20 (1022b10-12) and *Ethics* II.5 (1105b19-1106a13). In these texts Aristotle talks about 'nature', 'activity' and 'excellence (virtue)' and they provide Aquinas with the substance of his own interpretation of the kind of quality a disposition must be. He seems to quote Simplicius only to reject what he has to say but later in the same article (49 2 ad 1) Aquinas reveals that he is still relying on Simplicius for his knowledge of other points of view and he refers his own readers to Simplicius for that same purpose.

The school tradition meant commentators commenting not only on the text of, say, Aristotle but also on the interpretations offered by earlier members of the school. So in I.II 50 1 on the connection between dispositions and the body Thomas engages with Aristotle's text, with Simplicius' views on it and with the views of Porphyry and Alexander of Aphrodisias as reported by Simplicius. Thomas disagrees with Alexander on the basis of Aristotle's text, once again by placing *Physics* VII.3 alongside *Categories* 8. A further difficulty was about the possibility of change in dispositions if they are qualities of the first type. Porphyry suggested a distinction 'per intensionem et remissionem' rather than between being and becoming as some unnamed group of philosophers had already said (I.II 50 1 ad 3). Whatever about that, Simplicius criticises Porphyry's suggestion of 'intensio et remissio' because it focuses only on how a subject possesses a quality (or form as he now says) rather than on difference in the form itself. Thomas and Simplicius propose a different solution. If a disposition is constituted by a proportionate combination of qualities appropriate to a nature, then change in the underlying bodily (*passible*) qualities means change in the disposition too even though essentially the disposition (because now thought about as a 'form') has not changed in itself.

If this seems unclear then this is probably because it is unclear. Thomas has not resolved this difficulty which arises because of the limited range of examples of dispositions on offer in Aristotle's texts and the fact that physical realities are inextricably involved in the ones he does suggest (health and illness, for example). What is important from the point of view

of this paper is how Simplicius helps Aquinas on these issues. Here, for example, Simplicius presents Aquinas with a distinction between whereby a disposition may be considered objectively or subjectively, 'in itself' and 'by participation' to use less anachronistic language. We will see the use Thomas makes of this distinction when we consider I.II 52 1 below.

Simplicius reports that some interpreters of Aristotle concluded that dispositions must be 'of the whole man' so that one may not speak, for example, about dispositions of the intellect (I.II 50 4 ad 1). Once again Thomas is happy to use Simplicius and to agree with him that such reasoning is faulty. A disposition is not about how an object relates to a power but about how a power relates to an object, he says. The source of action is a disposition of a power and various texts of Aristotle in *De Anima* support the view that we may speak about 'dispositions of the intellect'.

In the article devoted to the angels (I.II 50 6 in c) Thomas summons a choir of neoplatonists, pagan and Christian, in support of the view that there are dispositions in the angels. Aristotle makes a brief but insignificant appearance: this is work for Ps.Dionysius and the author of *Liber de Causis*. Simplicius is quoted as agreeing with Maximus Confessor that angels or pure intellects will not have dispositions because what we predicate of them is said essentially or substantially. The quote from Simplicius neatly illustrates the neoplatonist tendency to identify the spiritual and the divine. (The correction of Simplicius's text by Kenny, p.47, note 'b' strengthens rather than weakens my point here.) Aquinas says the view of Maximus and Simplicius is 'partly true and partly false'. Immateriality is not equivalent to divinity and to be pure actuality is a prerogative of God alone. To the extent that there is potentiality in the angels there is room for dispositions in them. It is true that, as Simplicius says, the dispositions of spiritual substances differ from those of corporeal beings, that they are more like the simple and immaterial forms that 'the spiritual substance contains'. In a familiar neoplatonist 'ascent' higher spiritual beings will have less potentiality than lower ones. But this does not mean, says Thomas, that those which approach pure actuality, could ever reach pure actuality. Here it is certainly not a question of degree because of the distance between Creator and creature is infinite (*in infinitum distat*). No angel reaches the perfection of God because God creates all angels. Which is why Ps.Dionysius speaks of their dispositions as 'deiform' rather than 'divine'.

The final article in which Thomas uses Simplicius here is concerned with the growth or expansion of dispositions (52 1 in c). He presents three arguments from Aristotle against the idea that dispositions can grow or change. Against this he cites *Luke* 17.5, 'Lord increase our faith', the second of only two citations of the Bible in these questions. (The other is of *2 Peter* 1.4 at 50 2 in c.) We are obliged to use 'quantitative concepts' in speaking about dispositions, Thomas says, but this is in a transferred sense. Augustine is his source for this. But the next

distinction is the one we saw him learn from Simplicius a little earlier: we can distinguish the perfection of a form in itself, in which case it can be greater or not so great, or as possessed by its possessor, in which case it can be more or less. (English offers us just the one word, 'less', to mean not as great and not as big.) He adds an Aristotelian qualification immediately: 'this is not to say that a form can exist outside matter or without a subject', although Thomas says we may 'consider form as such and form as participated by a subject'.

He continues by quoting Simplicius' account of four opinions on the question of dispositions growing. Some quoting Aristotle say that forms are like numbers, belonging to clearly defined species by some criterion internal to themselves. Differences of degree are possible when they are defined on the grounds of (external) relationships because then they may vary in their relations to that to which they are all related or they may vary in relation to various combinations where more than one condition is relevant. As possessed by subjects, some qualities do not admit of difference or change (those which belong more or less to the substance of something) where others do admit of change and difference (those which concern activity and passivity and are more or less distant from the substance).

This is all getting a bit complex as Thomas senses too and he begins again, explaining the same point at greater length. He concludes that states and dispositions do not serve to assign their subjects to particular species nor do they include 'precision' (Kenny's translation of *indivisibilitas*) in their basic idea, which means that they do admit of growth and change. It is not necessary to enter further into the details here. Thomas himself refers the reader to a later treatment, *ST I.II 66 1*, on whether virtue can be greater or less. It is enough for our purposes to have shown how Simplicius is not just a token by which to date the writings of Aquinas but a significant teacher and interlocutor for him throughout these questions.

The text we have been examining here provides a good illustration of how Thomas gets himself into the 'school discussions' so popular among the neoplatonists and other philosophical schools of late antiquity. It is a reminder that Thomas's 'Aristotle' was still quite different to the one we can study. In spite of the improving quality of translations available, Thomas's access to Aristotle was still heavily mediated through traditions of commentary and translation that sometimes changed significantly what Aristotle thought. His writings are also notoriously aporetic, leaving much room for confusion and interpretation during the course of centuries. At the same time work continues on what may be referred to loosely as Aquinas's Platonist and neoplatonist sources. There is growing realisation that sources such as Simplicius are important for examining how Aquinas set about his work

of learning, teaching and writing, as well as for understanding the development and synthetic power of his thought.

Is Aquinas a Philosopher?

Is Aquinas then doing philosophy as he engages in this way with the texts of Aristotle and his commentators? Recent interpreters of Aquinas seem keen to dismiss the idea that there is anything in his work that can be regarded as purely philosophical. Some contemporary voices say he is only and always a theologian using philosophy and never simply a philosopher¹.

The questions of the *Summa* about which I have been speaking have been cited in support of the view that Aquinas has no account of 'natural virtue' prior to his consideration of theological virtue and apart from his concern with grace. Jordan argues that Aquinas's first analogy for virtue, and so his principal definition, is theological virtue rather than the Aristotelian civic virtues (p.238). He uses this as one illustration of his more general thesis that Thomas is always a theologian using philosophy and never simply a philosopher. Thomas must rework the notion of habit he has carefully constructed in I.II 49-54, Jordan argues, where already his over-riding theological concern makes a number of what seem like premature entrances – Jordan refers to 50,2; 51,4; 52,1 sc.

It is true that Aquinas seems drawn on, as it were, by a desire to get round to talking about virtue and grace but it is also true, as Jordan acknowledges, that it is Aristotle and Simplicius for the most part who provide the philosophical tools for his account of *habitus*:

Of the nineteen *sed contra*s that cite an authority in Questions 49-54, fifteen cite Aristotle and not merely for an intermediate premiss. Another sign is the concerted attention to the exegesis of Aristotle's texts, marked particularly by the reliance on Simplicius. Simplicius is cited eight times in these questions (49,1 ad 3; 49,2 in c; 49,2 ad 2; 50,1 in c; 50,1 ad 3; 50,4 ad 1; 50,6; 52,1). At least three of these passages contain lines of direct quotation, and one of them (49,2) uses a long quotation from Simplicius as a starting point for Aquinas's reformulation of an important distinction¹².

While Aquinas is anxious to give what seems like a straightforward philosophical account of the notion of *habitus*, virtue is the only kind of disposition that is of any real interest to him Jordan concludes¹³. I hope that the fuller account given here of the content and methodology of these questions, as well as the role of Simplicius in them, might justify some reconsideration of their properly philosophical character.

O'Meara for his part argues that Aquinas's over-riding interest in his account of morality is grace and that everything else in his moral theory is to be understood in the light of that. Otherwise one fails to take account of the theological character of his work. He quotes Otto

Hermann Pesch with approval:

The decisive motive for introducing the teaching on habits is not to be found in the treatment of the virtues in general or in that on the theological virtues but in the teaching on grace where Aquinas inquires into grace as a 'qualitas'¹⁴.

The Aristotelian psychology of habits is simply precursor and background for a theology of habits and actions, O'Meara concludes.

O'Meara is concerned that Aquinas's moral theology will be understood naturalistically and without sufficient attention to its theological character. At the same time one inevitably recalls Aquinas's comment in *ST* I 1,8 ad 2 that 'grace does not scrap nature but brings it to perfection', a comment rightly cherished by what O'Meara calls 'the Dominican school'. It is not immediately obvious how this is to be understood in practice but it is sufficiently central to Aquinas's distinctive approach to warn us, I believe, against a subsuming of nature into grace. The difficulty of speaking non-dualistically about the relationship between reason and faith, or philosophy and theology, or (most fundamentally) nature and grace, can lead us to run another risk, that of collapsing one into the other in which case it is more likely that grace will swamp nature than that nature will reduce grace although the latter is not unknown either.

The student of Thomas will be struck by his careful presentation of philosophy and theology as distinct but co-operating and even overlapping activities. One of the strengths of the virtue tradition is that it enables and ennobles the natural order of things. Peter Geach writes well about this in the opening pages of his wonderful little book on the virtues: any society which hopes to build civil and civilized life requires of its members those dispositions which the western tradition calls courage, temperance, fortitude and justice¹⁵. This is 'before' we talk about life in the kingdom of God and is not, I believe, to be downgraded by theology. Similarly Aquinas's distinction between faith, hope and charity as the virtues of true 'religion' over against the virtue of religion itself I take to be not simply an opportunity for him to talk about vices like superstition and magic as O'Meara suggests, but a way of acknowledging something good in paganism, something good about the world or *saeculum* which, again, is not to be downgraded by theology. The value Aquinas places on philosophy as an undertaking distinct from *sacra doctrina* and which is equipped to arrive at truth in ways appropriate to its interests and methodology: this seems important too as an aspect of his conviction that nature is not scrapped by grace but is brought to perfection by it.

Concluding Comment

Philo of Alexandria is just one witness in a long tradition of Jewish, Christian, Islamic and pagan teachers who agree that 'the perfect man is the man of gradual improvement' (Alleg. Inter. III, 140-144). The questions from *Summa theologiae* that we have considered here form part of Aquinas' attempt to understand how human nature is equipped to respond and to grow in a world of complex attractions and desires.

Whether or not we can change is, of course, a very important question for all kinds of reasons. We continue to speak of psychological or spiritual realities growing bigger or becoming smaller, strengthening or dying, being deep in us or not, manifesting themselves with more or less energy and with varying power. Nowadays people tend to look more to psychotherapy and its practices for understanding in this area and Aquinas' language may initially seem foreign and distant to what goes on there. But I believe it will prove possible to bring his reflections in philosophical psychology into dialogue with the kinds of language that are used now. There are three key advantages in going to school with Aquinas at any time: we are in the company of a remarkable student and can see him at work; we learn a lot about earlier generations too and the wisdom they accumulated about human experience; and the reality of God the Creator is never forgotten since, for Aquinas, all human desires and thoughts lead inevitably to some inkling of the goodness and truth which is God.

- 1 Leonard Boyle OP, *The Setting of the Summa theologiae of Saint Thomas*, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, Toronto, 1982 and Fergus Kerr OP, 'Thomas Aquinas', in G.R.Evans, editor, *The Medieval Theologians*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, 2001, pp.209-20, 215-16. Some scholars have argued against Boyle's understanding of who the 'beginners' mentioned at the beginning of *ST* are but these arguments leave untouched the other part of his thesis, that *ST* is a work in which the moral is central.
- 2 Blackfriars *Summa*, Volume 22, 1964, p.5, note 'b'. See also I.II 50,1 ad 3.
- 3 Compare for example *ST* I 15 with *QD de Veritate* 3 on 'ideas' or *ST* I 66 1 with *QD de Potentia* 4 2 on the creation of matter.
- 4 See John Marenbon, *Later Medieval Philosophy*, Routledge, London and New York, 1987, p.52.
- 5 See James A.Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas d'Aquino*, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, 1975, p.332 and Jan A.Aertsen, 'Aquinas's Philosophy in its Historical Setting', in Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump, editors, *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, p.14.
- 6 See Wayne J.Hankey, 'Why Philosophy Abides For Aquinas', *Heythrop Journal* 42 (2001) p.330. Other works of Simplicius that survive are his commentaries on Aristotle's *Physics* and on the *Enchiridion*, an arrangement by Arrian of arguments from Epictetus: see Jaap Mansfeld, *Prolegomena. Questions to be Settled Before the Study of an Author, or a Text*, Leiden, Brill, 1994, p.110.
- 7 See R.T.Wallis, *Neoplatonism*, London, Duckworth, 1972, pp.141-42 and

- The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, edited by A.H.Armstrong, Cambridge University Press, 1991, p.313.
- 8 Wallis, p.138 and *The Cambridge History*, p.317.
 - 9 Wallis, p.142.
 - 10 Hankey, pp.332-34.
 - 11 I am thinking particularly of Mark D.Jordan, 'Theology and Philosophy', in Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump, editors, *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, pp.232-251 and Thomas F.O'Meara OP, 'Virtues in the Theology of Thomas Aquinas', *Theological Studies* 58 (1997) 254-285. O'Meara adds a couple of striking quotations to this effect from R.A.Gauthier and Reudi Imbach: p.277, n.60.
 - 12 Jordan, p.250, n.36.
 - 13 *QD de Virtutibus in communi* 1 bypasses the careful account of *habitus* given in ST and gets straight down to virtue as *dispositio perfecti ad optimum* – but for this definition Thomas is still indebted to Aristotle: *Physics* VII.3.
 - 14 O'Meara, p.263, n.25 quoting Pesch, *Thomas von Aquin: Grenze und Grosse mittelaltlicher Theologie*, Mainz, Matthias-Grunewald, 1988, p.241.
 - 15 Peter Geach, *The Virtues*, Cambridge University Press, 1977

Publications

1 Books:

Theology after Wittgenstein (Basil Blackwell Oxford 1986) xi + 202 pages; (Second Edition SPCK London 1997) xii + 225 pages. Translated as *La théologie après Wittgenstein* Cerf Paris 1991; *La Teologia dopo Wittgenstein*, Brescia Queriniana 1992.

Immortal Longings: Versions of Transcending Humanity (SPCK London and University of Notre Dame Press 1997) x + 213 pages..

After Aquinas: Conflicting Versions of Thomism (Basil Blackwell Oxford forthcoming).

2 Contributions to books:

Multiple Echo: Explorations in Theology, by Cornelius Ernst edited by Fergus Kerr and Timothy Radcliffe (Darton Longman & Todd London 1979).

'Theology', in *The Church Now: An Inquiry into the present state of the Catholic Church in Britain and Ireland* edited by John Cumming and Paul Burns (Gill and Macmillan Dublin 1980): 199–210.

'Charity as friendship', in *Language Meaning and God: Essays in honour of Herbert McCabe* edited by Brian Davies (Geoffrey Chapman London 1987): 1–23

'Idealism and realism: an old controversy dissolved', in *Christ, Ethics and Tragedy: Essays in honour of Donald MacKinnon* edited by Kenneth Surin (Cambridge University Press 1989): 15–33

'Did Newman answer Gladstone?', in *John Henry Newman: Reason, Rhetoric and Romanticism* edited by David Nicholls and Fergus Kerr (Bristol Classical Press 1991): 135–152