

The Influence of John of St. Thomas Upon the Thought of Jacques Maritain

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The Influence of John of St. Thomas Upon the Thought of Jacques Maritain

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Amid the many figures who number among the Thomists writing during the early 20th century period of revival in scholastic thought in the Roman Catholic Church in the wake of the encyclical letter *Aeterni Patris* (1879) of Leo XIII, there is numbered the French convert, Jacques Maritain (1882–1973). Over the course of his long lifetime, Maritain authored works covering a host of philosophical and theological topics: epistemology, the philosophy of the sciences and natural philosophy, aesthetics, moral philosophy, political philosophy, metaphysics, the philosophy of history, etc. The details concerning Maritain’s youth and conversion have been ably told by others and can be consulted by the interested reader.¹ Detailed bibliographies of his works are available for those interested in engaging the full breadth of his writing.²

1 See Jean-Luc Barré, *Jacques and Raïssa Maritain: Beggars for Heaven*, trans. Bernard E. Doering (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005); Ralph McInerny, *The Very Rich Hours of Jacques Maritain: A Spiritual Life* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003); Raïssa Maritain, *We Have Been Friends Together and Adventures in Grace*, trans. Julie Kernan (South Bend, IN: St. Augustine’s Press, 2016).

2 For a very comprehensive but incomplete biography (due to having been written prior to Maritain’s death in 1973), see Dona and Idella Gallagher, *The Achievement of Jacques and Raïssa Maritain: A Bibliography (1906–1961)* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1962); also, see the very detailed article by William F.X. Sweet, “Jacques Maritain,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2022 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta <<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2022/entries/maritain/>

In this article, I will focus on the particular shape of Maritain's Thomism and his place in the overall hermeneutics of the Thomistic tradition, in particular the debt that he owes to John Poinset (1589–1644), to whom he refers as “John of St. Thomas,” in accord with the standard appellations within the Thomistic tradition in which he wrote.³ Following a general account of Maritain's “style” of Thomism, I will provide a specific catalogue of some central themes in his thought that bear the clear impress of his engagement with the thought of John of St. Thomas. Without claiming to be exhaustive, this article intends to provide the reader with a sufficient appraisal of the main lines of influence exercised upon Maritain's thought by the Baroque Commentator, without whose philosophical and theological works Maritain's own labors would be unthinkable.

Which Kind of Thomism?

In a series of essays on the metaphysics of *esse*, published in English as *Existence and the Existent*, Maritain once remarked, somewhat whimsically but with reason, that he preferred to be referred to as a “paleo-Thomist,” not “a neo-Thomist.” Of course, the term “neo-Thomism” is a very ambiguous term. It is a historical-sociological label that is used to denominate a large host of figures from this period, spanning from the time of *Aeterni Patris* up to the Second Vatican Council (1961–5). As has been discussed by historians of Catholic thought, the “neo-Thomism” of this era is marked by an immense plurification of approaches to the philosophy

³For the sake of consistency, I will refer to Poinset as John of St. Thomas, not intending, however, to thereby enter into any controversy concerning the appropriate usage in our contemporary context.

and theology of Thomas Aquinas. Some, like Tracey Rowland, have numbered over a dozen forms of Thomism that flourished during this time period.⁴ To add to the confusion, the cartography of this intellectual domain is often divided in contestable ways, with various figures being lumped together for reasons that are, at best, dubious.

To this end, one could consider a classification that is at times attributed to Maritain. Among the various “flavors” of Thomism catalogued during the “neo-Scholastic” period, he is said to be a kind of “existentialist” Thomist. Alongside other figures during this period of time, Maritain did, in some texts, emphasize the importance and uniqueness of Thomas Aquinas’s philosophy of *esse*, or act of existence.⁵ Thus, some would place him in the same ranks as the French Medievalist-Thomist, Étienne Gilson, for whose own thought and that of the general school of Thomism that descended from him, the “metaphysics of *esse*” would play a central role in the presentation of Thomistic thought.⁶ And likewise, his sensitivity to the need to respond to Atheistic existentialism calls to mind similar concerns found in works by, for example, Fr. Cornelio Fabro.⁷

4 Tracey Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition: After Vatican II* (London: Routledge, 2003); *Catholic Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2017); Gerald A. McCool, *From Unity to Pluralism: The Internal Evolution of Thomism* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1999); *The Neo-Thomists* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1994). The present article does not share the same outlook concerning Thomism expressed by these authors, but they give a sense for some of the standard ways of considering different kinds of Thomism during the post-Leonine era. 5 Most famously, though not exclusively, see Jacques Maritain, *Existence and the Existent*, trans. Gerald B. Phelan and Lewis Galantiere (New York: Pantheon, 1948).

6 Étienne Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: PIMS, 2005). For a discussion of some of the lines involved in these debates see John Knasas, *Being and Some 20th Century Thomists* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2003). 7 See a number of the volumes of his collected works, being published in English translation by IVE Press.

However, upon closer inspection, this categorization does not hold, most importantly for our purposes in relation to Gilson.⁸ The particularities of Gilsonian metaphysics were based upon a deeper and more foundational approach to Thomism, one that ultimately was that of an intellectual historian. His style of Thomism was above all concerned with a careful recovery of the historical Thomas, within his medieval context, and on his own historical terms. For this reason, Gilson shared much in common with the historical labors of Fr. Marie-Dominique Chenu, OP whom Gilson befriended and supported in the midst of the controversies that arose in the 1930s and 40s concerning Chenu's leadership of the Parisian Dominican *studium* in Belgium.⁹ For thinkers like Gilson, Chenu, and a host of others, the central concern for a Thomist would be to faithfully delineate Thomas's thought with historical fidelity. In their own way, their methods could be classed "ressourcement," and no doubt this is why Gilson would come to feel a kind of kinship with certain Catholic Jesuit theological thinkers who became embroiled in the late 1940s debate concerning the so-called "nouvelle théologie."¹⁰

8 See McInerny, *The Very Rich Hours*, 125–128; *Praeambula Fidei: Thomism and the God of the Philosophers* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 35–125.

9 For a good introduction to this English, see Joseph Komonchak, "Introduction," in Marie-Dominique Chenu, *A School of Theology: Le Saulchoir* (Adelaide, Australia: ATF Press, 2004), vii–lii. For a comprehensive history, see Étienne Fouilloux, "L'affaire Chenu (1937–1943)," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 98, no. 2 (April–June 2014): 261–352; *Une église en quête de liberté* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1998).

10 See "Correspondence Étienne Gilson—Michel Labourdette," ed. Henri Donneaud, *Revue thomiste* 94 (1994): 479–529; Étienne Gilson and Henri de Lubac, *Letters of Etienne Gilson to Henri De Lubac*, trans. Mary Emily Hamilton (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988). This was a kinship that Maritain did not share, as his sentiments were with the Dominicans of Toulouse who were editors of the *Revue Thomiste* at the time. For more information on this relationship, see the various mentions of Maritain in Étienne Fouilloux's *Une église en quête de liberté*, cited in the previous note, and his "Dialogue théologique? (1946–1948)" in *Saint Thomas au XXe siècle: Actes du colloque Centenaire de la Revue*

Ultimately, Gilson, Chenu, and others were concerned with what has come to be referred to as a “Thomasian” style of expositing Thomas’s thought. This adjective, which has become a technical term in French writing concerning Thomas Aquinas, is meant to indicate a concern with expositing the historical position of Thomas Aquinas himself, in distinction from later scholastic and “neo-scholastic” interpretations. Thus, it seeks to indicate a desire to avoid implying a single doctrinal body shared by a single school that would be deemed “Thomistic.”¹¹ In this regard, Gilson shares with figures like Chenu clear opposition to the Renaissance and Baroque Thomistic commentators and disputers, who had come to be known, historically as the *schola Thomae*.¹² It is precisely on this point that a gulf opens up between Gilson and Maritain, the latter of whom retained until his last days—despite some qualifications and charitable criticisms—an affection for and devotion to the later Thomistic tradition.¹³ Although the two men retained a mutual esteem for each other unto their last

Thomiste; Toulouse, 25-28 mars 1993, ed. Serge-Thomas Bonino, 153–95 (Paris: Éditions Saint-Paul, 1994); Matthew K. Miner and John Kirwan, “Translators’ Introduction: A Dialogue Delayed,” in Michel-Marie Labourdette et al., *The Thomistic Response to the Nouvelle Théologie: Concerning the Truth of Dogma and the Nature of Theology*, ed. and trans. Jon Kirwan and Matthew K. Miner (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2023), 1–85.

11 For observations regarding the distinction between the terms “Thomasian” and “Thomistic,” see the remarks in Cajetan Cuddy, “Garrigou-Lagrange and the Renewal of Catholic Theology,” in Garrigou-Lagrange, *On Divine Revelation*, 2–3.

12 In particular, see the subsection “The ‘Liquidation’ of Baroque Theology” in Komonchak, xxi–xxvii. For a general history of figures in the “schola Thomae” see Romanus Cessario and Cajetan Cuddy, *Thomas and the Thomists: The Achievement of Thomas Aquinas and His Interpreters* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2017); for a detailed account of the early disciples of Thomas, see Frederick J. Roensch, *Early Thomistic School* (Dubuque, IA: The Priory Press, 1964).

13 On the differences between Gilson and Maritain, see McInerney, *The Very Rich Hours*, 125–128. McInerney should be partly balanced by what is said by Géry Prouvost in Étienne Gilson and Jacques Maritain, *Correspondance (1923–1971)* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1991), 275–295.

days,¹⁴ nonetheless, they were separated by a foundational difference in their approach to the thought of Thomas Aquinas.

In contrast to Gilson's historically focused Thomism, Maritain's outlook is well summarized by Fr. Marie-Michel Labourdette: "[He] judged that the thought of St. Thomas was powerful enough to have opened a veritable tradition, a tradition that remained alive by confronting new problems and old."¹⁵ And, late in life, Maritain himself remarked, in a letter to Jerzy Kalinowsky and Stefan Swiezawski:

Your severity with regard to Cajetan is expressed with a nuance and moderation that makes me grateful to you. You know that my position with regard to the great commentators is not the same as Gilson's. They are far from being infallible and have often hardened our differences. I gladly recognize the serious deficiencies of Cajetan. But it remains my position that these great minds (and especially John of St. Thomas—from whom on occasion, though, I do not hesitate to separate myself¹⁶) are very precious, optical instruments, which enable us to *see much more clearly* certain depths of St. Thomas's thought (even though other depths are given short shrift by them).¹⁷

Likewise, in his late life *cri de coeur*, *The Peasant of the*

14 In this regard, McNerny's contrast between methodologies and styles of Thomism should not lead the reader to think that the men did not feel mutual admiration for each other, despite their differences. The remarks of Gilson (made after Maritain's death) discussed by McNerny and Prouvost should not—at least, without grave qualifications—be allowed to mask the admiration that can be found throughout later writings of Gilson and in his biography by Lawrence Shook.

15 See McNerny, *The Very Rich Hours*, 126.

16 These points of difference will be discussed below in the general catalogue of dependencies.

17 Jacques Maritain, "A Letter on Philosophy at the Time of the Council," in *Untrammelled Approaches*, trans. Bernard Doering (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996), 67.

Garonne, we find him writing, in a tone that is simultaneously deferential and critical, about the way that theological culture created a kind of unfortunate stagnation in Thomistic thought:

There were, in the past, a good many excuses for this. I like to think back to the age of the great jousts and controversies when it was up to the Thomists to trade blows with the Scotists or Suarezians. These nice tournaments made it possible to safeguard precious truths and to deepen doctrine (sometimes by hardening it, or making it labyrinthine). Those men knew their business. How pleased I am with that Dominican—his name, I think, was Thomas de Lemos—who, in the course of the celebrated debates *de auxiliis* held in the presence of the Pope, so ardently flung his arms about *scientia media* that he had to be shut up in a glass cage. Yet, the fact remains that scholastic disputations, oratorical argumentation, the play of concepts, the victorious art of *distinguo*, and didacticism gained the upper hand so well that Thomists made little advance in their own line, hardly daring to change classical positions when the need arose, as St. Thomas would have done had he been present....

The loss of potential due to this loss of ever-alert intuitivity is the underlying cause of the baneful deterioration which has taken place in the direction of notionalism and a fixation upon abstract essences (hence, a metaphysics unmindful of the intuition of being) for which Gilson is doubtless right in regarding Cajetan

as particularly responsible. (It is not without a certain ruefulness that I admit this since, in other respects, I'm an admirer of this incomparable reasoner; he was, alas, a partisan of Aristotle in the very sense St. Thomas was not, and yet for all of that, a theologian of extraordinary power. But the Commentator with whom I fell in love—without being afraid to de-part from him whenever I have to—isn't Cajetan, it's John of Saint-Thomas, who, despite his interminable sentences and his charming fondness for logical technicalities, was himself basically an intuitive.)¹⁸

The Cajetan referred to here is, of course, Tommaso de Vio Cajetan (1469–1543), the Dominican master general who changed the pedagogical practices of the Order so that it would no longer follow the text of Peter Lombard in its theological instruction, but rather, would make use of Thomas Aquinas's *Summa theologiae* as the structural text for the formation of Friars. Throughout his many decades of writing, Maritain would likewise defer to Cajetan on many points, and the thought of the Dominican commentator would also reach him by the mediacy of John of St. Thomas and other Thomistic figures, for whom Cajetan's various commentaries and opuscula would be considered important landmarks in the articulation of Thomistic philosophy and theology, especially in response to the Scotist school.

However, more important for our purposes is the rev-

¹⁸ Jacques Maritain, *Peasant of the Garonne*, trans. Michael Cuddihy and Elizabeth Hughes (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), 148–149.

erence Maritain expresses for John of Saint Thomas even, here, late into his life.¹⁹ The old man thus echoes a sentiment that we can hear also as he recalls the gatherings of Thomist Circles which he, his wife Raïssa, and sister-in-law Vera would host at their personal residence, first in Versailles and then in Meudon:

These subjects always concerned great philosophical or theological problems, treated in all their technicality, with (at least during the first ten or twelve years)²⁰ readings of some texts of St. Thomas, and of long passages chosen from some *disputatio* of John of Saint Thomas—we considered this last of the Great Commentators as a kind of magical mine which, if one took enough trouble to hollow out corridors within it in order to extract the ore from the gangue (that is to say, in particular, from the interminable controversies with the classical adversaries of the Dominican school and with the lot of generally tedious and dusty contemporaries of the author) would put us in possession of the equipment most adapted to free the captive truths which we heard calling from their prisons. The fundamental idea was to bring into play at one and the same time, in the concrete problems and needs of our minds, things we knew to be diverse in essence but which we wanted to unify within us: reason and faith, philosophy and theology, metaphysics,

¹⁹ There is no reason to think that his opinion changed during the very last years of his life.
²⁰ After which time, younger friends and collaborators would take over the exposition, though always with a Thomist focus.

poetry, politics, and the great rush of new knowledge and of new questions brought by modern culture.²¹

This single passage serves as an excellent summary of the spirit in which Maritain drew upon John of St. Thomas's philosophical and theological writings. At once, he revered the great Portuguese thinker for the latter's profundity of thought and, simultaneously, believed that this thought was not merely a museum piece that might inspire completely new work today but, rather, an expression of perennial truth that, when extracted from the more historically bound contingencies of its composition and scholastic technicality, could serve by providing living thought that could aid contemporary reflection concerning new problems, which had not even been directly addressed by the Baroque commentator-disputer.²²

However, we must not think of Maritain as though he were a splendid, autodidactic genius, needing no tutelage in this tradition of Thomistic commentary and thought. Already in 1915, he can be found at the feet of Dominican Father Thomas Dehau, who would serve as a friend and spiritual counsel for the Maritains for a period of 25 years.²³ In his notebooks, Jacques writes: "As for me, I passed hours—priceless hours—reading John of St. Thomas to Father Dehau and listening to his commentaries. What keys he gave me, what

21 Jacques Maritain, *Notebooks*, trans Joseph W. Evans (Albany, NY: Magi Books, 1984), 135.

22 By way of a kind of artifice in this article, I will at times refer to Poinsoot as a "disputer." I do so based on the conviction that there is a difference between the earlier commentary style and the disputation style that was used (though not exclusively) by scholastics in this era. Granted, the genres overlap.

23 Also of importance early in Maritain's conversion was Fr. Humbert Clérissac, OP (1864–1914).

enlightenments I received from this brilliant intelligence!”²⁴ Maritain’s contact with the living tradition of Dominican Thomistic thought was founded not merely upon a self-directed engagement with texts but, rather, upon a living friendship with members of the Order of Preachers who, to some degree at least, functioned as masters in this particular tradition of philosophy and theology.

No account of such friendship would be complete without reference to Maritain’s relationship with the highly influential and prolific professor from the Dominican college, “Angelicum,” in Rome: Fr. Réginald Garrigou-Lagrance. In fact, it was Garrigou-Lagrance who had first recommended to Fr. Dehau that he attend the lectures of Maritain at the Institut Catholique de Paris,²⁵ and for over a decade, the Roman professor would serve as a preacher and spiritual guide for the annual retreat offered at the Maritain residence as part of the Thomistic Circles.²⁶ Throughout Jacques’ works written in the 1920s and 1930s the presence of the Dominican theologian’s thought is conspicuous, and even as references dwindle with the passage of time (and due to the change of focus to political matters, concerning which the two men famously disagreed²⁷), nonetheless, on many points the philosophical and theological dependence remains obvious to the end of Maritain’s life.²⁸ In *The Peasant of the Garonne*, even amid his

24 Maritain, *Notebooks*, 79.

25 See *ibid.*, 78.

26 See *ibid.*, 139–140.

27 For what was nearly the final dénouement in this disagreement, see Philippe Chenaux, “Maritain devant le Saint-Office: le rôle du père Garrigou-Lagrance, OP” *Archives Fratrum Praedicatorum* (2021): 401–420; also, “Jacques Maritain et le P. Garrigou-Lagrance,” *Revue thomiste* 111 (2011): 263–277.

28 And Maritain himself, upon the death of Garrigou-Lagrance, remembered him warmly,

critiques of the dogmatic stagnation that he deplored in the history of Thomism, he prefaces his remarks by means of an homage to those whom he viewed as having been providentially provided teachers of the tradition of Thomistic thought: “When one speaks in general terms, as I have been forced to do in this book, it is impossible to avoid a certain amount of injustice. I’m not much, but what would I be without the undeserved luck of having been taught by masters like Père Clérissac, Père Déhau, and Père Garrigou-Lagrange?”²⁹ In the winter of Maritain’s life, we here catch an echo of a sentiment he had expressed over 30 years earlier in a letter to a youthful Yves Simon, who had, in Maritain’s estimation, unjustly critiqued Garrigou-Lagrange’s style and thought: “If we have understood something regarding Thomism, it is thanks to him—you know this to be true. We must not forget this fact, as well as the work of *mittentes in lacrymis semina sua* [those who are sowing their seeds in tears]. Ungrateful youth!”³⁰

It is quite evident to anybody who reads the works of Garrigou-Lagrange that his Thomism is indebted to the Dominican tradition, not merely citing Cajetan, who would be at hand while reading the Leonine Edition of the *Summa theologiae*, but readily engaging with thinkers throughout Dominican scholasticism, up to the start of the 20th century. In point of fact, as is to be expected from a Dominican theologian of his era, his point of entry for the theological tradition is

despite the painful differences that separated them from the time of the Spanish Civil War. See his annotation in Maritain, *Notebooks*, 168–169.

29 Maritain, *Peasant of the Garonne* 146

30 Jacques Maritain and Yves Simon, *Correspondance*, vol. 1 *Les années françaises (1927–1940)*, ed. Florian Michel (Tours: CLD, 2008), 109 (August 28, 1932).

the *Summa sancti thomae* of Charles René Billuart, which functioned a sufficiently technical, multi-volume compendium of the whole of the Thomist tradition for use in the teaching of theology.³¹ Similarly too the *Clypeus theologiae thomisticae contra novos eius impugnatores* by Jean-Baptiste Gonet also appears to play an important role for Garrigou-Lagrange's entry into the Thomist tradition. In philosophy, he shows dependence upon both John of St. Thomas's *Cursus philosophicus*, Antoine Goudin's *Philosophia juxta inconcussa tutissimaque divi Thomae dogmata*, Thomas Aquinas's commentaries on the works of Aristotle, and 19th and 20th century philosophy manuals penned by fellow Dominicans.³² He is not afraid to critique someone like Cajetan, but the sense that the reader always has is one of deference toward a general tradition of interpretation.³³ Such deference calls to mind an amusing story told by Maritain (dating to 1918), in which the Dominican theologian took umbrage at the words of Cardinal Louis Billot and stormed out from a meeting with the eminent Jesuit theologian: "A few days previously, [Billot] had received Father Garrigou-Lagrange, and, discussing theology with him, had declared that Cajetan was 'a bastard' and John of Saint

31 On Billuart, see in particular Leo Flynn, "Billuart and His Summa Sancti Thomae," S.T.D. Dissertation, Angelicum (Rome), 1938.

32 The brief manuals of Zigliara (*Summa philosophica in usum scholarum*, in three volumes) are referenced on occasion, and the reader can form a very good sense for the general philosophical outlook of Garrigou by skimming the much ampler philosophical manuals of his fellow professor at the Angelicum, Édouard Hugon, for which provided official approval for publication (*Cursus philosophiae thomisticae ad theologiam Doctoris Angelici Propaedeuticus*, in four volumes).

33 For example, see Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *The Sense of Mystery: Clarity and Obscurity in the Intellectual Life*, trans. Matthew K. Miner (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2017), 180–81: "Here, Cajetan, like certain virtuosos, seems to have forced the note a bit and to have misplaced the accent a little..." Also, see *On Divine Revelation*, vol. 1, trans. Matthew K. Miner (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2022), 600–610.

Thomas a ‘double bastard.’ Upon which Father Garrigou, not being able to tolerate this offense to the great Commentators, had taken his hat, and the door.’³⁴ Whatever might be said concerning this predisposition to deference, it is incontestable that Garrigou-Lagrange’s thought, deeply shaped by the debates of the *schola Thomae*, was an important and complex vector by which the later Thomistic school influenced Maritain’s own thought.

Finally, in the same passage from the *Peasant of the Garonne* cited above, Maritain sets aside other, still-living persons whom he might name from the same era,³⁵ making one exception, however, for a collaborator whom he had known from 1922 onward: Charles Journet, who at the time of the writing of *Peasant* had been named a cardinal by Pope St. Paul VI. Over the course of their long lives, the two men exchanged extensive correspondence, totaling many thousands of pages,³⁶ and together they founded the Swiss journal *Nova et Vetera*, the spirit of which echoes Maritain and Journet’s desire for a living Thomism that remains, nonetheless, in vital contact with earlier Thomistic thought. Throughout his many works, Journet shows himself to be a close reader of Renaissance, Baroque, and later scholastic thinkers.³⁷

³⁴ Maritain, *Notebooks*, 93–94.

³⁵ One might think of the Dominicans Marie-Michel Labourdette, Marie-Joseph Nicolas, Jean-Héré Nicolas (whom he cites regularly in this section of *Peasant*), and doubtlessly others.

³⁶ The correspondence has been published in six volumes by Éditions Universitaires of the University of Fribourg, Éditions Saint Paul, and Éditions Saint Augustin, from 1996 to 2009.

³⁷ Journet is best known for his massive *L’église du verbe incarnée*, which at the of the writing of this article is being translated into English for the first time (exception made for the first volume of the work, which already exists in translation). For a full bibliography of the many volumes and articles penned by Journet, see Dominique et René Mougel, “Bibliographie des oeuvres de Charles Journet,” December 2012, <https://fondation-journet.ch/images/Pdf/biblioJournetGenerale2012.pdf>.

In sum, one must always remember that for Maritain, engagement with the Thomist tradition involved laboring among a great host of voices, engaged in speculative inquiry over the course of the centuries. Although John of St. Thomas was a central reference point for him, nonetheless, through figures like Garrigou-Lagrange, Dehau, Journet, and others, Maritain engaged with a host of figures in the history of Thomism, all of whom functioned as “loci” as he sounded out the many problems that he reflected upon over the course of his long and fruitful writing career. Obviously, there were the commentators who had been favored by publication in the official leonine editions of the *Summa contra gentiles* and *Summa theologiae*, Sylvester of Ferrara (d. 1534) and Tommaso da Vio Cajetan, as well as the venerable John Capreolus (d. 1444), whose commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard is cited only on rare occasion by Maritain, though the later Thomists who were dear to the latter are unthinkable without reference to this important theologian’s labors in response to the controversies of the 14th century. Moreover, in the immediate Iberian context, we will readily find him citing Domingo Bañez (d. 1604) and the Salamanca Discalced Carmelites (the *Salmanticenses*). Figures such as Charles René Billuart (d. 1757) and Jean-Baptist Gonet (d. 1681) do not fail to come to his pen on occasion as well. And through someone like Garrigou-Lagrange, Maritain would become the implicit inheritor of someone like, for example, Tommaso Maria Zigliara (d. 1893), whose philosophical and apologetic works provided an important skeleton for Garrigou-Lagrange’s own massive work *De revelatione per ecclesiam Catholicam Proposita*, which

exercised important influence on Maritain's understanding of the relationship between faith and reason.

In short, Maritain's engagement with John of St. Thomas is as someone who thinks within in a living tradition, in which the Portuguese commentator figured as an important author. For this reason, it seems correct for Maritain to have said that he was more a "paleo-Thomist" than a "neo-Thomist,"³⁸ and despite his many innovative thoughts over the course of a fruitful career, he wished to retain a continuously vital—living, not slavish—contact with the tradition of Thomists, above all Dominicans and Carmelites, who were for him "precious, optical instruments, which enable us to *see much more clearly* certain depths of St. Thomas's thought," and what is most important, to see in St. Thomas something much greater than St. Thomas to be received and defended, a sentiment that he directly draws from the words of John of St. Thomas himself.³⁹

Particular Topics and Works Bearing the Mark of the Influence of John of St. Thomas

What follows is a catalog of important themes that can be found throughout the works of Maritain, in which he either directly cites John of St. Thomas or is clearly dependent upon him. The following topics will be discussed below:

38 See Maritain, *Existence and the Existent*, 1. Cf. *A Preface to Metaphysics: Seven Lectures on Being* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1945), 13.

39 Peasant, 166; see the introduction to the treatise devoted to the ecclesiastical approval and authority of Thomas in *Cursus theologicus*, vol. 1, ed. Beatus Reiser (Paris: Desclée et Socii, 1931), p. 222: "Nec enim defensio doctrinae Divi Thomae et vindicatio eius ab erroribus et ab improbabilitate sentiendi, est solius privatae personae vindication, sed totius Ecclesiae iudicii et Apostolicae approbationis assertio. Quare maius aliquid in Thoma quam Thomas suscipitur et defenditur."

- *Logic*
- *Philosophy of Knowledge*
- *Philosophy of Art*
- *Moral Cognition*
- *Adequate Consideration of Moral Philosophy*
- *Human Freedom*
- *The Philosophy of the Sciences*
- *Practical Signs and Language*
- *Analogy*
- *The Divine Names*
- *Subsistence*
- *The Nature of Theology and Mystical Experience*
- *Nature and Grace*
- *Predestination*
- *Angelic Sin and Christ's Grace and Knowledge as a Wayfarer*
- *The Church*
- *Superanalogy*
- *The Moral Virtues in a Person in a State of Mortal Sin*

The reader will undoubtedly note that one point of conspicuous absence in this list is the political philosophy of Maritain. It is striking, that in many of his political works he does not cite John of St. Thomas. In part, this is due to the fact that John's own corpus is not as focused on political matters as can be found in other scholastics concerned with matters of church and state or the Papacy, topics regularly giving rise to discussions of political matters by scholastic theologians (e.g., Cajetan, Juan de Torquemada, Robert Bellarmine,

et al.).⁴⁰ However, surely Maritain's presuppositions concerning the nature of moral knowledge, moral philosophy, human freedom, and moral virtue all influence, his political thought, thereby mediately bringing to bear John's influence. Moreover, Maritain's analysis of "the first act of freedom" (to be discussed below) is clearly dependent upon John and the scholastic tradition more broadly. This analysis has many implications for what Maritain holds concerning the possibilities for practical cooperation amid speculative disagreement, as well as the question concerning "good faith atheism," which comes up in some of his political writing as well. Also, his insistence upon the "infravalent" (i.e., subordinate, but non-instrumental) character of political life in relationship to the Church almost certainly must draw upon scholastic, discussions of the distinction between the acquired and infused moral virtues, the former of which have a particularly political teleology.⁴¹

Given the global nature of his dependence upon the baroque philosopher-theologian, the list below can only be considered partial and preliminary. Nonetheless, I have attempted to be as comprehensive as possible. Future additions of this article will continue to update the documentation of these dependencies. At the end of this catalog, I will provide a bibliography of the text editions used in the parenthetical citations. In a future edition of this article, it is hoped that I will be able to add cross references to the original in the critical

40 For some sense of possible influence here, the reader should consider consulting the lengthy work by Charles Journet, *Les exigences chrétiennes en politique*, 2nd edition (Saint-Maurice, Switzerland: Éditions Saint-Augustin, 1996), as well as Journet's other writings.

41 Like nearly all other Thomists of his time and in the prior tradition, Maritain did not hold the position that can be found today in some moral theologians who deny that the acquired moral virtues remain immediately operative in the person who is in a state of grace.

edition of Maritain's works. Moreover, in a future edition, I hope to add detailed textual references to the various works of John of St. Thomas either cited by Maritain or in the background of his thought.

Logic

Early in his writing career, Maritain had planned to write a series of pedagogically aimed introductory philosophical texts. The project only came to fruition in a general introduction to philosophy⁴² and a text of formal logic. Neither volume is purely introductory in content or tone, though this is particularly true for his logic text, in which the reader can find many technical excursions of great interest to mature philosophers, although perhaps inappropriate for the beginners that should be aimed at in a textbook.

It is evident throughout the footnotes of his *Formal Logic* that he is depending structurally upon John of St. Thomas's own introduction to formal logic and technical questions concerning this part of scholastic logic.⁴³ What is more, even

42 See Jacques Maritain, *An Introduction to Philosophy*, trans. E.I. Watkin (London: Sheed and Ward, 1932).

43 It is quite understandable that a Thomistic account of logic would need to draw from later thinkers. Thomas Aquinas did not himself leave behind a unified and cohesive corpus of logical writing. This fact is attested to, indirectly, by the fact that Dominican authors felt the need to pseudonymously pen various logical texts, as can be seen in catalogues of the works attributed to Thomas once upon a time. Moreover, the development of nominalist logic (the "via moderna") placed pressures on the Thomists to produce an account of logic that was more fully formulated than in the works directly penned by Thomas, whose texts provided many tools but also stood in need of systematization in this domain of philosophy. For a list of the many logical texts once upon a time attributed to Thomas, see Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, vol. 1 *The Person and His Work*, 3rd ed., trans. Matthew K. Minerd and Robert Royal (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press), 435–6. Some of these texts (e.g., *De natura generis* and *Summa totius logicae Aristotelis*) were presumed by John of St. Thomas to be authentic texts of Thomas. Only a purely historical methodology and focus would disqualify his use of such texts in articulating a more developed logical corpus, necessary for answering new questions that faced scholastics of his era.

in this relatively early-career text we find him engaging in detail with various points drawn from throughout the works of John of St. Thomas. Thus, already anticipating important discussions later in the century regarding judgment and existence, he draws upon the *Cursus philosophicus* to discuss the relationship of definitions and complex terms to enunciations and judgments (*Formal Logic*, p. 16, *Degrees*, p.103n61, 133n120). His discussion of *supposition* is unthinkable without John of St. Thomas, whom he synthesizes, though with an eye to Vincent Ferrer's *De suppositionibus* (*Formal Logic*, p. 56–74, 226). In the background, the reader continually senses the philosophical psychology explicated by John of St. Thomas regarding topics such as: the role of the internal word (*Formal Logic*, p. 17); knowledge of individuals through reflex concepts (*Formal Logic*, p. 41 and *Degrees*, 30n12); the distinction between statements and judgments, both of which are formed by the second operation of the intellect (*Formal Logic*, p. 87–88), giving rise to a unique kind of internal word (*Formal Logic*, p. 92). And he draws profoundly upon both the *Cursus philosophicus* and *Cursus theologicus* in an important analysis regarding the causality exercised by the intellect in syllogistic reasoning, carefully explaining how such discourse involves something more than mere succession or association (*Formal Logic*, p. 149–155). He shows himself to be a careful reader of the Thomist tradition, for example, subtly contrasting John's understanding of reduplication to that of Goudin (*Formal Logic*, p. 108), and late in the book he provides brief but insightful remarks concerning induction, both as a form of reasoning and as a form of insight (*Formal Logic*, p. 264, 272–4, 280, 283).

Maritain had also begun work on a modern text of material logic, which however, remained only an outline for future work, with only the beginnings of the text having been penned.⁴⁴ In what content we have (nearly one hundred pages), which he seems to have reworked over the course of more than two decades, we do not find extensive discussion and citation from John of St. Thomas. However, one is justified in judging that the final edition of the text would have drawn extensively from John's *Logica materialis*. To be convinced of this, one need only consult the preface that he wrote in 1953 for the English translation of extensive portions of this section of the *Cursus Philosophicus*. In fact, this brief introduction not only praises the translation and the content as a necessary doctrine to fill out a much needed area of logical pedagogy but, moreover, is a very clear statement regarding Maritain's conviction that the later commentators are necessary for Thomistic thought, that they develop something new in the tradition, but that they do so in a way that is a development not a discontinuity.⁴⁵

The Philosophy of Knowledge

The influence of John of St. Thomas upon Maritain's epistemological writing is immense, so much so that arguably in all speculative and practical matters one cannot philosophically follow Jacques if one refuses to follow John. In an article such as the present one, it would be impossible to catalog all

44 Jacques Maritain, "Grande Logic (logica major)" in *Oeuvres complètes* vol. 2 (Fribourg, Switzerland / Paris: Éditions Universitaires / Éditions Saint Paul, 1987), 667–763 (767ff for outline).

45 See John of St. Thomas, *Material Logic of John of St. Thomas*, trans. Yves R. Simon, John J. Glanville, and G. Donald Hollenhorst (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), v–viii.

of the themes that emerge merely in a text like his masterpiece of Thomistic “noetics,” *The Degrees of Knowledge*. There, we find him developing the Thomist notion of three degrees of abstraction in a way that engages questions concerning the modern sciences. We will take this up in more detail in another section below. Moreover, half of the book is a profound analysis of the epistemology of the supernatural order, in matters of faith, theology, and mysticism. And, of the greatest importance for his thought (as we will see again when we return to the philosophy of art) is his philosophical analysis of the uttering of the “internal word,” a topic in philosophical psychology developed by later Thomists, especially John of St. Thomas, though with foundations in texts of St. Thomas, especially those dedicated to questions related to the Trinity.⁴⁶ In a lengthy appendix, he discusses a number of texts in St. Thomas dedicated to this topic (*Degrees*, p. 411–441; *Réflexions sur l’intelligence*, 3rd ed., p. 27–77⁴⁷). In a footnote, drawing from both John of St. Thomas and Cajetan, he makes a careful distinction between the virtual productivity and transitivity involved in the intellect’s production of the internal word and the qualitative actuation that is the act of intellection, which is a formally immanent act (*Degrees*, p. 121, cf. 133n119). And although it cannot be ruled out that he on occasion refers to the concept as “that by which”⁴⁸ we

46 Moreover, the analogies used by St. Thomas presume that this notion is first natural, though employed in theological reflection. For that reason, it seems historically (an arguably speculatively) wrong to deny its importance as a philosophical teaching, as John P. O’Callaghan does in “*Verbum Mentis: Philosophical or Theological Doctrine in Aquinas?*” *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 74 (2000): 103–119.

47 Also, see his discussion of Blondel starting on page 78 of *Réflexions sur l’intelligence* cited below in the accompanying bibliography.

48 Although, one should note that when he refers to the concept as “quo” in the chart on *De-*

know what we know, he clearly recognizes that the concept or internal word is the *terminus in quo* of knowledge (e.g., *Degrees*, p. 278n42, 440–441; *Réflexions sur l'intelligence*, 3rd ed., p. 59).⁴⁹ A very good parallel to his deployment of themes from John of St. Thomas can be found in the work of his protégé, Yves Simon, written (as a dissertation, partly under the guidance of Maritain) at the time of the writing of *Degrees*, published in English as *Introduction to Metaphysics of Knowledge*.⁵⁰

Philosophy of Art

Among the various topics in which Maritain deployed traditional Thomism for the ends of exploring new topics, he is well known for his engagement in questions pertaining to the philosophy of art, especially the fine arts.⁵¹ In *Art and Scholasticism*, he provides what could be considered a first sketch of a Thomistic “critique of practico-technical” knowledge.⁵² As is also clear with regard to the nature of moral cognition (which we will discuss more below), Maritain was sensitive to the Aristotelian and Thomistic assertion that artistic knowledge must

grees, 30, he is aware that this is an *in quo*, not an *quo* in the manner of a *species impressa*.

⁴⁹ On this topic, see the strenuous but important observations in John N. Deely, *Intentionality and Semiotics: A Story of Mutual Fecundation* (Scranton, PA: University of Scranton Press, 2007), 56–71. See the entire entry for “quo/quod fallacy” in the index to the same work.

⁵⁰ See Yves R. Simon, *Introduction to Metaphysics of Knowledge*, trans. Vukan Kuic and Richard J. Thompson (New York: Fordham University Press, 1990).

⁵¹ A lacuna, or at least deficiency, in most scholastic accounts of the arts is their overriding focus on the fine arts. It bespeaks the classism that insinuates itself into the professoriate all too readily. The pervasive existence of artifacts of all sorts throughout our experience calls for a much ampler “philosophy of art.”

⁵² For perhaps the unsurpassed Thomistic treatment of these matters, influenced by Maritain, even though differing variously, see Marie-Dominique Philippe, *L'activité Artistique*, 2 vols. (Paris: Beauchense, 1969). (The author acknowledges the sad fact of the post-mortem revelations concerning deeds purportedly committed by Fr. Philippe in his old age.)

not be confused with the exact epistemological processes involved in speculative knowledge. In these matters, he is clearly influenced by the analysis of practical knowledge (both moral and artistic) articulated by Cajetan and John (e.g., *Art and Scholasticism*, fn.14, 107): practical knowledge finds its truth according to the rule and measure of what is to be brought about, not according to that which already exists. Human freedom brings into existence something new, whether morally or artistically, either in conformity or deformity to a rule (see *Art and Scholasticism*, chs. 2–4; *The Situation of Poetry*, p. 47–50; *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, p. 75–98). This is a kind of dominating principle throughout his treatment of moral and artistic matters.

Of particular interest in this context is a theme that he develops, drawing upon the psychology of speculative intellection articulated in John of St. Thomas's subtle treatment of the "internal word." In a number of Maritain's mature works, he considers what he refers to as the spiritual "supra-consciousness" or pre-consciousness of the intellect, as a kind of spiritual complement to the embodied elements of cognition falling under the title of "subconscious" or "unconscious" (for his contrast between the supraconscious and the subconscious, see *Scholasticism and Politics*, p. 144–169). His analysis of such an intellectual "supra-consciousness" is founded on certain implications that he divines to be present in the distinction between the impression of knowledge and its expression (see *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, p. 66–74), as well as in the theme of connaturality which he would develop in various domains of moral and spiritual

matters, drawing in particular upon John of St. Thomas's own development of the theology of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, a topic to be discussed more below. In a number of works, however, he deploys the notion of a spiritual "supra-consciousness" in interesting and fruitful ways in the domains of both speculative and practical knowledge (*Loi naturelle ou loi non écrite*, p. 43 and 243–44; *Scholasticism and Politics*, p. 3, 164–6; *The Situation of Poetry*, p. 60; "The Substitute for Theology Among the Simple," *Untrammelled Approaches*, p. 284–88, 293; "No Knowledge without Intuitivity," *Untrammelled Approaches*, p. 319–320; *Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*, p. 55–59), as well as to theological questions regarding Christ's knowledge as a wayfarer (*On the Grace and Humanity of Jesus*, p. 48–50, 54–61, et passim.) This theme is connected also with an observation that can be found in several texts in which he remarks in passing (with references to St. Thomas) to the fact that the agent intellect is operative even after abstraction (cf. *Degrees*, p. 134n121; "No Knowledge without Intuitivity," *Untrammelled Approaches*, p. 319n12; *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, p. 308n24). His reference (in the passage just cited from *The Degrees of Knowledge*) to Cajetan, concerning the knowledge had by the soul in separation from the body, makes one wonder what also might be the influences from John of St. Thomas operative in this matter.⁵³

⁵³ For example, one might see the entries in volume three of the Reiser edition of *Cursus philosophicus* related to the agent intellect, a number of which refer to texts that may have played some role in the forming of this theme in Maritain's mind.

Moral Cognition

As was already noted above, Maritain's aesthetic theory parallels a sensitivity that can be found in his writings concerning the nature of moral knowledge. In an important appendix in *Degrees of Knowledge* (p. 481–489, 331–335 cf. p. 331n2), he develops a number of themes concerning the nature of practical truth, drawing upon the analyses of Cajetan, John of St. Thomas, and also (via Garrigou-Lagrange) the *Salmanticenses*. (The last is most important in what will be said below regarding his discussion of the nature of freedom.) In this text and all throughout his many works, Maritain presupposes a theory of knowledge that emphasizes the irreducibility of moral knowledge to speculative knowledge (though he never denies that the former presupposes the latter). This same theme is operative in his theories regarding the knowledge of the natural law, which he holds is known through “connaturality” (e.g., *Natural Law: Reflections on Theory and Practice*, ed. Sweet, 13–38⁵⁴) a notion he draws from Thomas's own remarks concerning the knowledge had by morally upright persons, though also developing a theme from John of St. Thomas's treatment of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, where John explains the role of the theological virtue of charity in the order of cognitional specification (objective extrinsic formal causality), according to the maxim cited variously by Maritain, Garrigou-Lagrange, Simon, and others: *amor transit in conditionem objecti* (e.g. *Degrees*, p. 278n42, 312; *Réflexions sur l'intelligence*, 3rd ed., p. 110; *Creative Intuition*

⁵⁴ This theme concerning connaturality can be found in a host of his works.

in *Art and Poetry*, p. 86–90; etc.).⁵⁵ He would also put this theory to use, albeit briefly, in relation to our knowledge that we have of others in their subjectivity by way of love (*Existence and the Existent*, p. 84).

Adequate Consideration of Moral Philosophy

Amid the debates over Christian philosophy,⁵⁶ Maritain took a unique position regarding the nature of moral philosophy “adequately considered.”⁵⁷ Utilizing the logical notion of subalteration in the form developed within John of St. Thomas’s *Cursus Philosophicus* and *Cursus Theologicus*, he proposed a conception of moral philosophy that would be dependent, for some data, upon theological knowledge regarding the actual existential state of the human person (see *An Essay on Christian Philosophy*, p. 38–49 and 61–100; *Science and Wisdom*, p. 137–241). Throughout these texts, he is also clearly indebted to the notion of theology articulated by John of St. Thomas and cites him on a variety of other related topics as well. In these same texts, where Maritain discusses the more general question of “Christian philosophy,” he clearly draws from John of St. Thomas and echoes observations from John that can also be found in *The Dream of Descartes* con-

⁵⁵ The theme is regularly revisited in his works

⁵⁶ We cannot here be complete in the bibliography necessary for this immensely important debate. For an introduction to this debate, with some texts in translation along with further references, see Gregory Sadler, *Reason Fulfilled by Revelation: The 1930s Christian Philosophy Debate in France* (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011).

⁵⁷ Concerning this topic, see “Revisiting Maritain’s Moral Philosophy Adequately Considered” *Nova et Vetera* 16, no. 2 (Spring, 2018): 489–510; Ralph McInerny, *The Question of Christian Ethics* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1993); Denis J. M. Bradley, *Aquinas on the Twofold Human Good: Reason and Human Happiness in Aquinas’s Moral Science* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1997), 495–506.

cerning the way that faith enables reason itself to bring forward conclusions with greater force (p. 68; cf. *Degrees*, p. 304). Also, his entire theory of apologetics articulated in *An Essay on Christian Philosophy* is indebted, in all of its substantial claims, to Garrigou-Lagrange's *De revelatione per ecclesiam Catholicam proposita*, itself deeply dependent upon John of St. Thomas among others in the *schola Thomae*.

Human Freedom

In two particularly powerful essays concerning the nature of human freedom, Maritain develops a theory concerning the relationship between intellect and will which he draws immediately from John of Saint Thomas and other Thomistic commentators and mediately from works of Garrigou-Lagrange.⁵⁸ In *Bergsonian Philosophy and Thomism* (p. 266–277), he presents what is arguably a summary (albeit developed in Maritain's own voice) of a much lengthier discussion of freedom found in Garrigou-Lagrange's *God: His Existence and His Nature*.⁵⁹ Maritain's other discussion of this topic can be found in a chapter entitled "Action" in *Existence and the Existent* (p. 47–61). Further developments are also found in "The Thomist Idea of Freedom" (*Scholasticism and*

58 In addition to the text cited in the next note, see Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, "Prudence's Place in the Organism of the Virtues," *Philosophizing in Faith: Essays on the Beginning and End of Wisdom*, ed. and trans. Matthew K. Minerd (Providence, RI: Cluny Media, 2019), 153–170; "Remarks Concerning the Metaphysical Character of St. Thomas's Moral Theology, in Particular as It Is Related to Prudence and Conscience," *Nova et Vetera* 17, no. 1 (Winter, 2019): 245–270; *Order of Things: The Realism of the Principle of Finality*, trans. Matthew K. Minerd (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2020), 319–347 (also, see 273–286, which is basically a reproduction of the aforementioned article published in translation).

59 See Garrigou-Lagrange, *God: His Existence and His Nature: A Thomistic Solution of Certain Agnostic Antinomies*, vol. 2, trans. Bede Rose (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1949), 306–338 and 370–72.

Politics, 118–143; *De Bergson à Thomas D'Aquin: Essais de Métaphysique et de Morale*, 153–201).

In several texts, Maritain draws upon John of St. Thomas to make a striking observation concerning human freedom: precisely in the exercise of freedom, spiritual beings are not part of the universe; they stand face-to-face with God (*Degrees* p. 272n25; *The Person and the Common Good*, p. 15–30, esp. p. 20). This is drawn from an analysis of the reasons why angels cannot know “secrets of the heart.” In his political writings, he uses the same point to articulate the limitations of the temporal-political common good in relation to the complete development of the human person, even in the natural order.⁶⁰

In an essay entitled “The Immanent Dialectic of the First Act of Freedom,” Maritain considers the phenomenon of the primordial act of self-reflection in relation to the ultimate moral end (see *Range of Reason*, p. 66–85; also *An Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*, 132–144). This essay, founded on certain remarks by Thomas Aquinas in ST I-II, q. 89, a. 6 and q. 109, a. 3, along with analyses drawn from Cajetan and John of St. Thomas, engages Maritain in difficult philosophical and theological problems concerning nature and grace, as well as predestination and God’s antecedent will that all be saved. In it, he enriches the concept of implic-

⁶⁰ Interestingly, in the 1940s, one can find even Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange making the same remarks concerning this same matter, in fact, in the midst of a discussion of the relationship between citizen and state, in which he even personally utilizes the individual-person distinction (in)famously connected to Maritain. See Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, “The Subordination of the State to the Perfection of the Human Person According to St. Thomas” 183–203 (here 201–202). He cites St. Thomas, but the details of his assertion seems to indicate that he also has John of St. Thomas in mind.

it faith (though in ways already implied in Thomas Aquinas himself) in order to deal with the problem of those who have received grace though outside of the Church, perhaps even as persons who hold a sort of speculative atheism. The theory might remind some readers of the notion of “anonymous Christianity” explicated by someone like Karl Rahner, though Maritain’s position importantly differs from Rahner’s insofar as his account does not presuppose a kind of native initial orientation toward the supernatural end. Maritain’s theory was deployed in important ways by the ecclesologist Charles Journet,⁶¹ was generally accepted by Jean-Hervé Nicolas⁶² and is echoed, in a mitigated form and only with partial dependence upon Maritain, by Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange.⁶³

The Philosophy of the Sciences

Within contemporary Thomism there remains a divide between those thinkers who hold that the basic division of sciences found in the Aristotelian tradition can be applied to contemporary science⁶⁴ and those who follow thinkers like Mari-

61 See Charles Journet, *L’Église du verbe incarné*, vol. 3 (Saint Maurice: Éditions Saint-Augustin, 2000), 1263–1313 and especially 1313–17, as well as much of what follows thereafter.

62 See Jean-Hervé Nicolas, *Catholic Dogmatic Theology: A Synthesis*, vol. 3 (*On the Church and the Sacraments*), trans. Matthew K. Miner (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2024), §693.

63 Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *Our Savior and His Love for Us*, trans. A. Bouchard (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1951), 355–384; *On Divine Revelation*, vol. 1, 526–7, 644n60, 806n80. And, in *The Sense of Mystery* 252–253, he appeals to the exact same texts as Maritain in the latter’s later article. One may also find a brief repetition of this in Garrigou-Lagrange’s commentary on the theological virtue of faith and on grace. Maritain’s position (and implicitly the other authors cited here) has been critiqued by See Lawrence Dewan, “Natural Law and the First Act of Freedom: Maritain Revisited,” in *Wisdom, Law and Virtue: Essays in Thomistic Ethics* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 221–4; Thomas Crean, “Jacques Maritain’s Anonymous Christianity,” *New Blackfriars* 99 (2018): 287–97.

64 For a statement of the “River Forest” position, see William Wallace, *The Modelling of Nature* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996); for an outline of the Laval position, see John G. Brungardt, “Charles De Koninck and the Sapiential Character

tain and Simon, holding that it is necessary to make further internal distinctions regarding the nature of modern scientific knowledge, within the Thomistic “first degree of abstraction”. To defend this latter claim, Maritain notes the way that already in scholastics like John of St. Thomas one can find a distinction within the mathematical second degree of abstraction, between discrete and continuous quantity (*Degrees*, p. 39n26). Similarly, he notes the way that John explains the difference of abstraction involved between, for example, the philosophy of nature and medicine (*Degrees*, p. 190n69). As a regular refrain, one can find Maritain referring to q. 26 and 27 of the Material Logic section of the *Cursus philosophicus*. Among numerous other important points that he draws from this text (and from the natural philosophy section of the *Cursus Philosophicus*), he observes that abstraction is manifested through the mode of defining (e.g., *Degrees*, 39n26, 190n69; *The Philosophy of Nature*, p. 90–92).⁶⁵

The implications that he draws from this regarding the differentiation of the sciences will be at the center of his concerns in a number of texts, especially in the *Degrees of Knowledge* (p. 23–72, 145–224), *Science and Wisdom* (p. 34–69), and at length in the whole of *The Philosophy of Nature*, which is his most cohesive work concerning this topic. Together with the notion of the *scientiae mediae*, or physi-

of Natural Philosophy,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 90, no. 1 (2016): 1–24.
 65 A very good explanation of the point can be found in Yves Simon’s article at the end of the edition of Maritain’s *The Philosophy of Nature* cited below in the bibliography. Also see Yves R. Simon, “Philosophers and Facts,” in *The Great Dialogue of Nature and Space*, ed. Gerard J. Dalcourt (Albany, NY: Magi Books, 1970), 139–62; Jacques Maritain, “The Philosophy of the Organism: Notes on the Function of Nutrition,” *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition 19, no. 2 (Winter, 2021): 633–651.

co-mathematical subalternate sciences (such as mathematical physics, optics, etc.),⁶⁶ Maritain proposes that a sub distinction must be made within the so-called “first degree” of abstraction, leading to a differentiation between the philosophical knowledge articulated in the philosophy of nature and the more observationally-directed knowledge articulated in the modern sciences, which represent a kind of further differentiation within the epistemological structure of the “first degree” (a kind of “empirioschematic” knowledge, alongside the “empiriometric” knowledge already implied in the classic *scientiae mediae*). In his opinion, this is a legitimate development that took place over the course of the history of thought, and it represents an important independence that must be granted to new scientific disciplines which have come into existence, with their own formal objects and methods. However, he also holds that the philosophy of nature (the Aristotelian “*physica*”) plays an essential role in mediating between such scientific knowledge and metaphysics.⁶⁷ As is quite clear in the texts cited above, when articulating his position regarding these matters, Maritain draws extensively upon John of St. Thomas and Cajetan’s notion of science, formal objects, and the like.

⁶⁶ On this topic, see James Weisheipl, *The Development of Physical Theory in the Middle Ages* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1960); Zvi Biener, “The Unity of Science in Early-Modern Philosophy: Subalternation, Metaphysics and the Geometrical Manner in Scholasticism, Galileo and Descartes,” (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2008); Bernard Mullahy, “Subalternation and Mathematical Physics,” *Laval théologique et philosophique* 2 (1946): 89–107.

⁶⁷ Even though Maritain does not develop theme in the philosophy of nature with the same depth as do some writers in the vein of “Laval” and “River Forest” Thomism, it seems unfortunate that these groups see themselves as being in irreparable opposition to each other. For some discussion concerning Maritain on these matters, see John C. Cahalan, “Thomism’s Conceptual Structure and Modern Science,” in *Facts are Stubborn Things*, ed. Matthew Miner (Washington, DC: American Maritain Association, 2021), 40–68.

Practical Signs and Language

Although Maritain does not develop a complete semiotic theory, his discussion of signs in the essay “Sign and Symbol” (in *Ransoming the Time*, p. 191–199, 268–276) deserves mention apart. Although the essay is concerned with certain questions regarding myth and anthropology in relation to the state of intellection in less developed cultures, this essay opens with a very important discussion of practical signs and closes with an extensive listing of texts from John of St. Thomas. On this topic, Maritain shows himself to be completely dependent upon the final (posthumously compiled) volume of the *Cursus theologicus*, wherein discussions related to sacramental theology give way to subtle discussions concerning the nature of practical signification.⁶⁸ John represents a very important moment of development in the scholastic philosophy and theology of practical signification. Although Western theological debates had long discussed semiotic matters in this general context of the sacraments, in John we find a very clear and detailed distinction between *signa speculativa* and *signa practica*, a distinction which was at best treated in a cursory manner prior to this (at least as far as the present author has been able to trace historically). The indications that we can find in him and in Maritain arguably could furnish a complete revolution in semiotic theory if developed and analyzed in the context of contemporary theories of social construction and related topics. Also, the reader can find

⁶⁸ At the time of the writing of the present article, the author has found no comparable discussion at this depth in other scholastics.

further discussion of related matters in his essay “Language and the Theory of Sign” (*Frontiers in Semiotics*, p. 51–62) edited by John Deely.⁶⁹

Other Philosophical Topics

Analogy. Even late into his career (e.g., “Divine Aseity,” *Untrammeled Approaches*, 83; “Reflections on Theological Knowledge,” *Untrammeled Approaches*, 248), Maritain maintained that a Thomistic account of analogy prioritizes the notion of “proper proportionality”, associated with Cajetan’s *De nominum analogia*, though variously developed by later Thomists, including John of St. Thomas. A general outline of Maritain’s thought about analogy can be found in *Degrees of Knowledge* (p. 224–232, 442–445). There, the reader finds him articulating his thought amid debates in the 1920s and 30s pertaining to certain critiques of the Thomist school, with Maritain defending the essential theses of the latter.

The Divine Names. Many times throughout his career, Maritain discusses the topic concerning the “divine names,” namely how human knowledge expresses the reality of what God is and is not, both philosophically and theologically considered (e.g, *Degrees*, p. 249–259; “Divine Aseity,” *Untrammeled Approaches*, 69–84; “Reflections on Theological Knowledge,” *Untrammeled Approaches*, p. 248–264). It is clear that from early on (*Bergsonian Philosophy and Thomism*, p. 193–196), he received his basic formation concerning these

⁶⁹ Regarding the metaphysics of relation, Maritain on at least one occasion refers to relation as something that is “between-things” or “between-two.” However, in the same text, he immediately qualifies this so as to make clear the essence of relation as supersubjectivity (*ad aliud*), whether or not the relation in question is “real” (see *Degrees*, 143n140, 151n13).

matters by reading Garrigou-Lagrange's *God: His Existence and His Nature*,⁷⁰ where the Dominican master presents the technically developed and elaborated theory of divine naming found in the later Thomistic tradition.

Subsistence. Regarding the philosophical and theological notion of subsistence (which was developed in scholastic thought because of certain necessities in Christology), Maritain did not hesitate to alter his thought over the course of his writing. In a very dense article dedicated to this topic, in which he engages critiques raised against his own earlier embracing of Cajetan's theory of subsistence (generally taken up by later Thomists as well), he alters his thought and, on this point, departs from the main stream of the *schola Thomae*, though on the basis of detailed concerns related to the metaphysics of *esse* (see *Degrees*, p. 454–468; *Existence and the Existent*, p. 62–84).

The Nature of Theology and Mystical Experience

The concept of theology that Maritain espouses in his works is clearly that of the later Thomist school mediated to him through the works of Garrigou-Lagrange. Many pages in the second half of the *Degrees of Knowledge* bear witness to the direct and indirect influence of John of St. Thomas on these matters. Merely to catalogue such themes in that particular volume: the supereminence of the Deity (p. 242n32); God *sub ratione deitatis* as the primary object of faith, theology, etc. (p. 265, cf. *An Essay on Christian Philosophy*,

⁷⁰ See Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, *God: His Existence and His Nature*, vol. 2, trans. Bede Rose (St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1955), 3–267.

p. 88, 106n41); grace's bestowal of a new root of spiritual operation, having the divine essence as its object (p. 271n21); the imperfect state of charity in wayfarers prior to heaven (p. 271n22); the formally-eminently speculative and practical nature of theology (p. 332); the relationship between theology and charity (p. 337n17). Similar themes drawn from John of St. Thomas are found in his *Dream of Descartes*: on the nature of science, as more than mere accumulation of knowledge, but, rather, a deeper penetration and extension of knowledge of conclusions (p. 39n59–60); faith's orientation to the vision of the Divine essence in heaven (p. 48–9); the nature of the elevation of natural knowledge for use in theological knowledge (p. 54); the imperfect state of certain subalternated sciences (including theology) (p. 58–9). In point of fact, almost anywhere that Maritain speaks of the nature of faith and theological science, it is safe to assume that significant aspects of what he says are indebted to John of St. Thomas.

In matters concerning mystical experience, he shows himself to be a close disciple of Garrigou-Lagrange and Ambroise Gardeil, both of whom draw extensively from John of St. Thomas.⁷¹ His wife, Raïssa, translated John's disputations on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, a text that Maritain cites in many works over the course of his whole writing career. Merely limiting ourselves to his use of John in *Degrees of Knowl-*

⁷¹ He is not afraid to differ with Gardeil, for example, concerning the question of the immediacy of mystical experience. On this topic, he sides with Garrigou-Lagrange. See Maritain, *Degrees of Knowledge*, 469–474. For some citations from the Thomist tradition regarding this matter, at least indirectly influencing Maritain, see Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, "Whether the Mind Knows Itself Through its Essence or Through Some Species," *Philosophizing in Faith*, 79–100. Further consultation of the spiritual theological writings of Garrigou-Lagrange might provide further points of contact with the earlier tradition as well.

edge, Maritain cites him concerning: the nature of experiential knowledge had in mystical cognition (p. 274n28, 281⁷²); on the Divine indwelling through grace (p. 275n31); the relationship between the theological virtues and the gifts of the Holy Spirit (p. 279n43–44, 350); connaturality and mystical experience (p. 312); the practical aspect of the Holy Spirit's gift of knowledge, though with some qualifications (p. 315n5). Moreover, these texts bear witness to another mediation of John of St. Thomas's thought that should be taken into account, namely, the various Carmelite and Dominican mystical theologians whom Maritain cites or who are utilized by Garrigou-Lagrange in texts cited from the latter by Maritain.

Nature and Grace.

Among the hotly debated topics in mid-20th-century Scholasticism, the relationship between nature and grace (or “the natural” and “the supernatural”) is certainly one that has had repercussions to our present day.⁷³ For his part, Maritain always maintained the basic structure of the later Thomistic position concerning the inefficacy and non-supernaturality of the natural desire to see God. In the *Degrees of Knowledge*, he directly draws up on John of St. Thomas regarding the formal object of the intellect and our openness to the vision of God (p. 227), and in a somewhat bombastic footnote he brushes aside, those who claim that the Thomists pres-

⁷² Although he is directly relying on John of St. Thomas, it is also likely the case that he has Gardeil directly in mind here, as the latter powerfully represented this analogy in his *La structure de l'âme et l'expérience mystique*, 3rd ed., 2 vols. (Paris: V. Lecoffre, 1927).

⁷³ See Serge-Thomas Bonino, *Surnatural: A Controversy at the Heart of Twentieth-Century Thomistic Thought*, trans. Robert Williams and Matthew Levering (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia Press, 2007).

ent the supernatural order as a mere “superimposition” (like a second, independent tier) upon the natural order, citing a very dense set of texts on the “light of glory” and the beatific vision in John of St. Thomas’s *Cursus theologicus* (*Degrees*, p.12n11). Maritain would later come to refer to this desire as “transnatural” (e.g., *Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*, 117–8; *Approaches to God*, 109–114; *On the Church of Christ*, 226) and would strikingly discuss the way that nature is fulfilled by the supernatural (“Beginning with a Reverie: Eschatological Ideas,” *Untrammeled Approaches*, 14n15; “Along Unbeaten Pathways,” *Untrammeled Approaches*, 411). In fact, in at least one text, if not more, he acknowledges that the felicity that would be had in a state of “pure nature” would be only an imperfect “felicity in motion,” there drawing directly upon John of St. Thomas (*Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*, 107–115, 130n2–3). In all of this, however, he seems never to have departed from the basic assertions that one finds him citing from John in the texts from *Degrees* just mentioned above.

Other Theological Topics

Predestination. It is well-known, and has been the subject of recent discussion,⁷⁴ that Maritain engaged in a lengthy set of debates from the 1940s until the 1960s concerning the philosophy and theology of predestination and providence. In all of these texts, his knowledge of the later

⁷⁴ See Michael Torre, *Do Not Resist the Spirit’s Call: Francisco Marín-Sola on Sufficient Grace*, (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2013); Taylor Patrick O’Neill, *Grace, Predestination, and the Permission of Sin: A Thomistic Analysis* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2019).

Thomistic controversies is clear, both in view of the content of his arguments, as well as in citations made in passing. This topic was first taken up in his work *Existence and the Existent* (p. 85–122) and then a short book length treatment in *God and the Permission of Evil*. He is well aware of his departure from the main Thomistic line, though he believes that he is nuancing certain points that they failed to develop correctly due to what he calls a “cyclopean” focus on being in a domain (i.e., the problem of evil) where non-being must be taken very seriously.⁷⁵

Angelic Sin and Christ’s Grace and Knowledge as a Wayfarer. As is already clear in the question concerning predestination, Maritain was not afraid to differ from the Thomistic tradition on particular points. This is also evident in his work *The Sin of the Angel* (also, see also *An Introduction to the Basic Problems of Moral Philosophy*, p.145–7), where he dissents concerning the question regarding whether or not the angels would have been incapable of sin if they have been created in a state of “pure nature.” Unlike the vast majority of the Thomistic tradition, he answered that they would indeed have been “peccable.” And as regards the fullness of grace and knowledge that Christ had as a man prior to the resurrection, he also differed from St. Thomas and the school, holding that Christ would have intrinsically grown in knowledge and grace.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ He does not assert that they are completely unaware of the privative nature of evil, of course. But he believes that the logic of their arguments imports too much “positive” being into the domain of the problem of evil.

⁷⁶ For a discussion of this latter matter, Jean-Hervé Nicolas, *Catholic Dogmatic Theology: A Synthesis*, vol. 2 (*On Christ and the Redemption*), trans. Matthew K. Miner (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2023), 154–59

Ecclesiology. His work on the Church, *On the Church of Christ*, was profoundly influenced by the writings of Charles Journet (and also exercised an influence upon Journet in return). Although John of St. Thomas does not figure in the notes in this volume, nonetheless, through the mediacy of Journet, Maritain received much influence from debates in Christology and other topics discussed in the writings of John of St. Thomas and other Scholastics.

Superanalogy. In several texts, Maritain develops a notion of “superanalogy” to be applied to knowledge had through supernatural faith (*Degrees*, p. 256–259; “Reflections on Theological Knowledge,” *Untrammelled Approaches*, p. 250–252). His presentation is brief, though it was taken up by some other thinkers, including Journet, Jean-Hervé Nicolas, and Marie-Michel Labourdette. It is arguable⁷⁷ that key elements of his theory are drawn from earlier discussions concerning the relationship between natural knowledge and supernatural truth found in thinkers like Garrigou-Lagrange and Édouard Hugon. In the latter, elements of the later tradition are to be found, not only from the disputations concerning the theological virtue of faith, but also very important from the theory of the “internal word” which is centrally important for the philosophical psychology set forth by John of St. Thomas.

The Moral Virtues in a Person in a State of Mortal Sin. As shown in an article by Garrigou-Lagrange written in defense of Maritain,⁷⁸ the latter’s assertion concerning the

77 See Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, “The Instability of the Acquired Moral Virtues in the State of Mortal Sin,” *Philosophizing in Faith*, 171–182.

78 This question has been revisited in works by Brian Shanley, Angela Knobel and others. See Angela McKay Knobel, “Aquinas and the Pagan Virtues,” *International Philosophical*

state of moral virtues in a subject deprived of grace draws upon not only the texts of Thomas but also various later Thomists, including John of St. Thomas (*Science and Wisdom*, 224–225). In short, on the basis of this tradition, Maritain held that natural moral virtue is had as a virtue in a dispositional state (or as some Thomists referred to it, *in statu facile mobilis*). The texts of Garrigou-Lagrange provide the best articulation of his position for the interested reader.

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