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Thomas Aquinas and the Greek Fathers, hg. v. Michael DAUPHINAIS / Andrew HOFER / Roger W. NUTT. – Sapientia Press: Ave Maria, FL 2019. 360 S., geb. \$ 44,95
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This collection of essays comes from a 2018 conference at Ave Maria Univ. (Florida) on the title theme. Except where noted below, the contributors of the fifteen pieces are professors in some branch of theology. All are identified with Catholic institutions in the USA, except two (the Netherlands, Italy).

Although the volume offers no definition of who counts as “Greek Fathers,” it can be said that those explored in relation to the Angelic Doctor are all significant teachers of the Christian faith tradition whose writing is mainly in Greek. In all but a few cases, they predate the thirteenth century. Figures receiving a substantial treatment in the volume, roughly in descending order of the extent of attention paid to them, include John Chrysostom, John Damascene, Dionysius, Origen, Cyril of Alexandria, Gregory Nazianzen, Theophylact of Ochrid, Gregory Palamas, Basil the Great, Athanasius of Alexandria, Maximus the Confessor, and Gregory of Nyssa.

Broadly speaking, there are two chief modes by which the dozen contributions relate St Thomas Aquinas’s thought to that of the Greeks. One is conceptual *comparison*, whereby an author considers how St Thomas’s thought is either aligned with or contrasts with that of some particular Greek father(s) on a given topic, the better to understand or elucidate the thinking of Aquinas and sometimes of one or more of the figures compared. The other mode is to consider the historical *reception* of a certain Greek source or set of sources by St Thomas, sometimes discerning developments in Aquinas’s thought due to the influence of the Greek sources. In some essays, one or the other mode predominates, while in others, both are employed to some extent.

The book’s twelve chapters, varying in length (from 14 to 30 pp., with one exception), cover a considerable range of topics in theology, including Christology, Trinity, theological anthropology (soteriology, mystical theology, and beatific vision), the doctrine of analogy, worship, and sacramental theology. We will now summarize each, in order.

The first chapter of the book, by *Dominic Legge*, studies the Transfiguration in Aquinas, showing how he draws from several Greek fathers in a way that is traditional but with also a distinctive synthesis. Next, *Jörgen Vijgen* (professor of philosophy) offers a wide ranging and extensive (59 pp.) consideration of Thomas’s complex reception of the work of Origen, meticulously classifying the ways Aquinas approved or critiqued that work according to his assessment of its accord with Catholic teaching. In his essay, *Khaled Anatolios*, rejecting a simplistic dismissal of Aquinas’s soteriology as “juridical” as contrasted with the Eastern “ontological” approach, shows that Aquinas shares much with Athanasius, with both figures significantly accounting both for ontology and for

God's justice. He also finds Aquinas's account of the dynamics of the salvation offered through Christ's interior personal divine-human structure constitutes an important contribution to soteriology. *John Baptist Ku* compares Aquinas with Gregory Nazianzen on the divine paternity, finding a consonance between the two doctors while also noting important differences. *Gerald P. Boersma* compares Aquinas to the Greek fathers on the vision of the divine essence. Then, *Brian Dunkle* shows that the Common Doctor engaged with the work of St John Chrysostom extensively when he offered "perhaps the most innovative" (152) christological contribution of his career, namely, the development of a theology of the actions and passions of Christ's public life. *Stephen M. Fields* (professor of philosophy and theology) shows how both Dionysius and Aquinas offer a balance between the apophatic and the kataphatic in their respective works, such that they both steer a middle course between onto-theology and fideism. *Bernhard Blankenhorn* compares St Thomas's teaching on mystical "union with God" in this life (182) with that of Maximos the Confessor, particularly with respect to the role of Christ in that union, finding significant similarities. *Marcus Plested* attributes a "Greek patristic turn" to Aquinas in his engagement with John Damascene when he interprets the light emitted from Jesus at the Transfiguration, proposing that Aquinas's position becomes closer to what would become the Palamite position than to the anti-Palamite one. Then, *John Sehorn* compares Thomas's teaching on the worship that is to be offered to images of Christ with the teaching of Nicaea II, finding that, although the language of that council should take precedence over St Thomas's, nevertheless the latter's "approximation" to the substance of the conciliar teaching should be appreciated (242). *Jane Sloan Peters* (a doctoral candidate in theology) thoroughly documents how Thomas made use of Theophylact of Ochrid not only in his own *Catena Aurea* compilation but also extensively in his commentary on the Gospel of John. She classifies and points out the ways in which this contributes to Aquinas's interpretations, most notably regarding the "literal sense" of the scriptural text, as understood by Thomas. Finally, *Joseph Wawrykow* shows how Thomas made use of many different Greek sources for his teaching on the Eucharist.

Many articles note that St Thomas drew more extensively from Greek sources as his career progressed, spurred by his reading, selecting, compiling, and arranging of the contents of the *Catena Aurea*. Although that conclusion is not a new one, several essays in the book document, analyze, and evaluate one or more examples where such increased engagement helped Thomas develop his own thought. However, the book is of value not only for such specific insights, whether historical or doctrinal; indeed, its three "framing" essays help suggest how it may serve theology more generally. The brief "Foreword" by *Matthew Levering* explains at least one key motive for the collection: since the Greek fathers offer a wisdom from which "later theologians must constantly draw," today we can learn from the example of a "medieval spiritual master" who did precisely that (xvii, xviii). *Roger W. Nutt's* "Introduction" proposes three services that the volume's offerings can render: (1) to help dispel the inaccurate stereotype of Aquinas as having little interest in historical/positive theological sources, including Greek ones; (2) to correct false contrasts between Aquinas and the Greek fathers, and (3) to show the "deep connections and points of continuity, and at times discontinuity" between Aquinas and these Eastern patristic sources. Finally, in an integrating "Conclusion" to the volume, *Andrew Hofer* suggests that looking at the connections between Thomas Aquinas and the Greek fathers can help renew (1) Thomistic studies, (2) Greek patristics, (3) "Orthodox-Catholic or Greek-Latin theological dialogue," and (4) Catholic theology more broadly, especially for priestly formation (306).

This collection serves these stated aims well; the essays in it are consistently competent in scholarship, many of them offering extensive and deep engagement with the work of the figures studied and/or with the secondary literature. The book will contribute to the understanding of Thomas's thought in its relation to, and reception of, Greek patristic teachings. Professors and other researchers in theology should find it useful, but its essays should also be helpful for graduate and advanced undergraduate theology students. For all of these, its use of footnotes (rather than endnotes), its "Select Bibliography" (>300 entries), and its combined name and subject matter index will increase its utility. If Thomas's engagement with the thought of Greek teachers of the faith is "only now becoming more widely appreciated" (2), this volume will allow that appreciation to become broader and deeper.

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