

RUI GONÇALVES

Centre for Classical and Humanistic Studies, Portugal

FROM ARISTOTLE AND THOMAS AQUINAS TO FRANCISCO SUÁREZ: A SURVEY OF INFLUENTIAL TOPICS

Abstract:

Departing from the true process of *translatio studii* that we can find in the own roots of the connection established between philosophy and nature in the bosom of the XIIIth century European thought through the introduction in Paris via the Arabic Spain of works of Aristotle such as *Physics*, *Metaphysics* and *On the Soul*, several questions result pointed out in a new view as they were not since one entire millennium.

Among those until then unsuspected topics we could nominate the conciliation between faith and nature, almost unknown before the scholastic age of Saint Thomas Aquinas. According to Saint Peter Damian and his two centuries older dominant precept, only in God would be conceivable the omnipotent entity creative of the universe. In his turn was adopted by Thomas Aquinas the Aristotelian concept of the unmoved mover and he manage to fit it with his famous doctrine of the Five Ways (the “*Quinque Viae*” from the *Summa Theologiae*), as an extra manner to explain the substantive nature of God. According to him, not only we could find the divinity in the bosom of nature but also the faculty of locomotion of each different created being was an argument in addition to prove the entire creative work of God.

Also the subject arisen by the discussion around the determination of the eternity of world founds support in Master Aquinas in spite of having remained the positions sustained by him on the matter with no solution all along his life. Further themes like the possible intellect and the sensations were sought developed by the Dominican theologian while exploring the Avicenna’s theories concerning the same subject in matter of psychology, maintaining all along of such a process a kind of innovative analysis on matters until then despised or forgetful.

When we reach the age of the Jesuit grenadine father Francisco Suárez, and with him the plenitude of the second Spanish scholasticism, it becomes easy to verify that much of these elements crossed to or maintained their importance within this last setting. Among those acquainted as holder of decisive value over the Doctor Eximius we can account ethics, psychology, theodicy and metaphysics. Being perhaps opposed to some conceptualist ideas from the medieval scholastic domain, is due to Suárez the formulation of an authentic anthropocentric theory which was settled in the worry to consider all men as true beings without exception of race and civilization, an approach that made him much more close to the Scottish monk Duns Scotus and the English academic William of Ockham.

The way by which we know now having Suárez opened new perspectives to contemporary and future Wiseman (like Descartes, Leibniz, Spinoza and Thomas Hobbes, all from the rationalist century that saw his death in Lisbon, in 1617, after the professorship exerted by him in the University of Coimbra), witnesses us enough a proof of the flows that always travelled over each main epoch of the Aristotelian and Thomistic system of thought from the very beginning of the modern age almost to our days.

Keywords:

Aristotle, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Francisco Suárez, Aristotelianism, Thomism, Second Scholasticism