THOMAS AQUINAS ON THE PASSIONS

The *Summa theologiae* is Thomas Aquinas’ undisputed masterwork, and it includes his thoughts on the elemental forces in human life. Feelings such as love, hatred, pleasure, pain, hope, and despair were described by Aquinas as “passions,” representing the different ways in which happiness could be affected. But what causes the passions? What impact do they have on the person who suffers them? Can they be shaped and reshaped in order to promote human flourishing? The aim of this book is to provide a better understanding of Aquinas’ account of the passions. It identifies the Aristotelian influences that lie at the heart of the *Summa Theologiae*, and it enters into a dialogue with contemporary thinking about the nature of emotion. The study argues that Aquinas’ work is still important today, and shows why for Aquinas both the understanding and the attainment of happiness require prolonged reflection on the passions.

Robert Miner is Associate Professor of Philosophy at Baylor University.
Contents

List of figures    page vii
List of tables    viii
Acknowledgments  ix
A note on the texts xi

Introduction  1

PART I  THE PASSIONS IN GENERAL  11
  1 The sensitive appetite  13
  2 The definition of passion  29
  3 The activation of passion  58
  4 The morality of the passions  88

PART 2   PARTICULAR PASSIONS: THE CONCUPISCIBLE PASSIONS  109
  5 Love  111
  6 Hatred and concupiscence  140
  7 Pleasure  160
  8 Sorrow  188

PART 3   PARTICULAR PASSIONS: THE IRASCIBLE PASSIONS  213
  9 Hope and despair  215
  10 Fear  231
Contents

11 Daring 252
12 Anger 268

Epilogue: The passions, the virtues, and happiness 287

Bibliography 300
Index 308
Figures

2.1 The narrative structure of the concupiscible passions  page 42
2.2 The passions as ordered pairs (coniugationes)  54
3.1 Appetition follows sense apprehension  67
3.2 Appetition follows sensation and imagination  69
3.3 The estimative power, activated by sensation and imagination  74
3.4 Passions in the order of generation: a simple scheme  83
3.5 Passions in the order of generation: adding sorrow and anger  84
3.6 Passions in the order of generation: a “final” diagram  86
### Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Types of soul, activities, modes of living</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>The concupiscible passions according to their formal objects</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>The irascible passions (except for anger) according to their formal objects</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>The particular passions in order of appearance in the 1a2ae</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ep.1</td>
<td>Moral virtues in relation to the objects of the passions</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I am pleased to thank the National Endowment for the Humanities for awarding me a 2005 Summer Stipend. I am also grateful to Baylor University for a sabbatical in spring 2005. The generosity of both institutions was instrumental to progress in research.

Learning about the passions comes not only from reading, but also from conversing with friends. Discussions with David and Elizabeth Corey have been a constant source of inspiration and renewal. I am glad to acknowledge a special debt to Margaret Watkins, who read the entire manuscript and whose insights have improved the whole. Thanks are also due to the decanal side of the Honors College, Thomas Hibbs and Alden Smith, and to my colleagues in Great Texts: Scott Moore, Barry Harvey, Peter Candler, Phillip Donnelly, Michael Foley, Doug Henry, Sarah-Jane Murray, Amy Vail, and William Weaver.

Over and above my colleagues at Baylor, I wish to thank the exceptionally inquisitive students in the Honors College. Teaching them has contributed much to my understanding of Thomas Aquinas and *sacra doctrina*. Their willingness to read an initially forbidding author, and to respond to him in unpredictable and creative ways, has taught me much.

Various forms of support in and around Baylor have been provided by the following individuals: Michele Anderson, Katharine Boswell, Anne-Marie Bowery, Darin Davis, Paulette Edwards, Jeff Fish, Doris Kelly, Bob Kruschwitz, Mark Long, Luis Noble, Anna Shaw, Haley Stewart, Daniel Stewart, and Amanda Weppler. Beyond Waco, I wish to thank Michael Barrett, David Burrell, Kerry Cronin, Rebecca DeYoung, Greg MacIsaac, Sean McCrossin, Paul McNellis, Giuseppe Mazzotta, Christian Moevs, Kevin Ormand, David Solomon, Lou Solomon, John Stroup, Ronald Tacelli, Jason Taylor, and John von Heyking. Special acknowledgment is due to Mark Jordan. I am profoundly grateful for his encouragement over the years to read and teach Thomas Aquinas.
Acknowledgments

Editorial guidance of a particularly valuable kind was provided by Kate Brett of Cambridge University Press. I appreciate her early and unstinting support for the project. I am also grateful to Nicholas Healy and Robert Pasnau, who read the manuscript for the Press. Both made insightful comments and suggestions that led to substantive improvements and the avoidance of any number of mistakes. The errors that remain are the ones I cannot bear to abandon.

Most of all, I am grateful for the constant support of my parents, Mary Miner and Bob Miner. Thanks also to Christopher Miner, Meredith Miner, Morgan Miner, Laura Lusk, Brad Lusk, Tammy Miner, and Jeanette Moseley.

Finally, but in no sense as an afterthought, I should like to acknowledge the blessing of my children: Anne, Sebastian, Sophia, Emma, Maria, Louisa, and Lily. All seven have provided occasions for insights into all the passions, but especially love, prima radix omnium passionum.
A note on the texts

References to ST 1a2ae cite the question, article, and portion of article (e.g. 35.3.co).

References to other parts of ST are the same, except that an initial part number is prefixed (e.g. 1.78.4.co).

References to InDA, InNE, InMet, and InPh cite the book number of the Aristotelian text, followed by numerals referring to the lectio and the paragraph divisions as they appear in Alarcón’s editions.

Unless indicated otherwise, I am working with the Latin texts as established by Enrique Alarcón, whose electronic version of Aquinas’ opera omnia, published at www.corpusthomisticum.org, is the most complete, accurate, and up-to-date edition that currently exists. Alarcón has taken over where Roberto Busa left off. Readers of Aquinas everywhere are indebted to both men.

All translations of Aquinas’ texts are my own. Latin nouns that appear in the text have generally been converted to their nominative forms, unless they appear within a clause with their grammatically correct cases.

The following titles of Aquinas’ texts are cited by these abbreviations:

InDA Sententia libri De anima
InMet Sententia libri Metaphysicae
InNE Sententia libri Ethicorum
InPh In libros Physicorum
QDA Questiones disputae de anima
QDM Questiones disputatae de malo
QDV Quaestiones disputate de veritate
ST Summa theologiae

1a = first part; 1a2ae = first part of second part, etc.; pr. = prologue; arg. N = Nth argument or “objection”; sc = argument sed contra; co = body of article; ad Nm = reply to the Nth argument.

PL and PG refer to J.-P. Migne, Patrologia latina and Patrologia graeca (see Bibliography).