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978-0-521-02915-5 - Summa Theologiae: Volume 7 - Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
(1a. 33-43)

T. C. O'Brien

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The *Summa Theologiæ* ranks among the greatest documents of the Christian Church, and is a landmark of medieval western thought. It provides the framework for Catholic studies in systematic theology and for a classical Christian philosophy, and is regularly consulted by scholars of all faiths and none, across a range of academic disciplines. This paperback reissue of the classic Latin/English edition first published by the English Dominicans in the 1960s and 1970s, in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, has been undertaken in response to regular requests from readers and librarians around the world for the entire series of 61 volumes to be made available again. The original text is unchanged, except for the correction of a small number of typographical errors.

The original aim of this edition was not narrowly ecclesiastical. It sought to make this treasure of the Christian intellectual heritage available to theologians and philosophers of all backgrounds, including those who, without claiming to be believers themselves, appreciate a religious integrity which embodies hardbitten rationalism and who recognise in Thomas Aquinas a master of that perennial philosophy which forms the bedrock of European civilisation. Because of this the editors worked under specific instructions to bear in mind not only the professional theologian, but also the general reader with an interest in the 'reason' in Christianity. The parallel English and Latin texts can be used successfully by anybody with a basic knowledge of Latin, while the presence of the Latin text has allowed the translators a degree of freedom in adapting their English version for modern readers. Each volume contains a glossary of technical terms and is designed to be complete in itself to serve for private study or as a course text.

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ST THOMAS AQUINAS

SUMMA
THEOLOGIAE

Latin text and English translation,
Introductions, Notes, Appendices
and Glossaries



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IN AN AUDIENCE, 13 December 1963, to a group representing the Dominican Editors and the combined Publishers of the New English *Summa*, His Holiness Pope Paul VI warmly welcomed and encouraged their undertaking. A letter from His Eminence Cardinal Cicognani, Cardinal Secretary of State, 6 February 1968, expresses the continued interest of the Holy Father in the progress of the work, 'which does honour to the Dominican Order, and the Publishers, and is to be considered without doubt as greatly contributing to the growth and spread of a genuinely Catholic culture', and communicates his particular Apostolic Blessing. The assurance was repeated in a letter, 5 February 1973, from the present Secretary of State, His Eminence Cardinal Villot.

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VOLUME 7

FATHER, SON AND HOLY GHOST

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THE TEXT AND TRANSLATION

THE LATIN text corresponds at most points to that of the Leonine edition, with occasional substitutions, chiefly from the Piana text (modern edition Ottawa 1941-5); one notable departure from both is in 36, 3 (see note *e*). Paragraphing and punctuation of the Latin text are those of the editor. The English has been prepared to be read independently, but reference to the Latin text is obviously encouraged and facilitated in this edition. Clarity and fidelity are the goal of the translation. When, as so often is the case, the Questions centre on the meaning of Latin words, on Latin syntax, or on the lexicon of the schools, to try for a translation that smooths over their technicalities would be to neutralize the discourse. The translation required is one attentive to the meanings the mannered language evoked in its own medieval world.

FOOTNOTES AND APPENDICES

The footnotes signified by a superior number are, except for no. 1 the parallel readings, usually the references given by St. Thomas. They have been verified; those to Augustine and Hilary that derive from Peter Lombard, 1 *Sentences*, identified by giving the distinction number, then the chapter and page from Volume I of the Quaracchi edition (1916)); thus e.g. Lom 16, 2. 125 is 1 *Sent.* dist. 16, Ch. 2, Vol. 1, p. 125. Footnotes signified alphabetically are editorial references and explanatory remarks. The Appendices are meant as rather more extended footnotes.

REFERENCES

Biblical references are to the Vulgate; Patristic references to Migne (PG, Greek Fathers; PL, Latin Fathers). When the English titles are well known, references to the works of St Thomas and Aristotle are in English. Titles of St Thomas's works are abbreviated as follows:

Summa Theologiae, without title. Part, question, article, reply; e.g. 1a. 70, 1 ad 2. 2a2æ. 25, 4.

Summa Contra Gentiles, *CG*. Book, chapter; e.g. *CG* 11, 14.

Scriptum in IV Libros Sententiarum, *Sent.* Book, distinction, question, article, solution or *quæstiuncula*, reply; e.g. 11 *Sent.* 15, 1, 1, ii ad 3.

Compendium Theologiae, *Compend. theol.*

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Scriptural commentaries (*lecturae, expositiones, reportata*): Job, *In Job*; Psalms, *In Psal.*; Isaiah, *In Isa.*; Jeremiah, *In Jerem.*: St Matthew, *In Matt.*; St John, *In Joann.*; Epistles of St Paul, e.g. *In I Cor.* Chapter, verse, *lectio* as required.

Philosophical commentaries: On the *Liber de Causis*, *In De causis*. Aristotle: *Peri Hermeneias*, *In Periherm.*; Posterior Analytics, *In Poster.*; Physics, *In Physic.*; *De Caelo et Mundo*, *In De cael.*; *De Generatione et Corruptione*, *In De gen*; *Metereologica*, *In De metereor.*; *De anima*, *In De anima*; *De sensu et sensato*, *In De sensu*; *De memoria et reminiscencia*, *In De memor.*; *Metaphysics*, *In Meta.*; Nicomachean Ethics, *In Ethic.*; Politics, *In Pol.*, Book, chapter, *lectio* as required; also for Expositions on Boethius, *Liber de Hebdomadibus* and *Liber de Trinitate*, *In De hebd.* and *In De Trin.*, and on Dionysius, *De divinis nominibus*, *In De div. nom.* References to Aristotle give the Bekker numeration.

Quaestiones quodlibetales, *Quodl.*

Complete titles are given for other works, including the 10 series of *Quaestiones Disputatae*.

Denz refers to Denzinger-Schönmetzer, Freiburg, 1963.

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INTRODUCTION

1. The present volume is the companion to Vol. 6 in this series (ed. C. Velecky) since this edition follows the customary and editorially practical division of the Trinity treatise into Questions 27–32 and 33–43. The division, however, does not exactly match the emphases in the logical and pedagogical flow of the treatise, which moves always around its centre, the mystery of the persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In structure the treatise begins with a foundation (27–8) for expressing the meaning of ‘persons’ in divinity; moves then to the divine persons (29–43), but again with a discussion of foundational terms (29–32). The logical stages evidence a preparation of, as it were, preliminary categories with which to approach the concrete datum of faith. The reasoned discourse finds its main guides in three such generalities: processions of origin, co-relation, person. That in itself amounts to a principle of economy in the treatise: to keep as closely and as exclusively as possible to the import of these three. Accordingly this volume has been prepared in close consultation of Vol. 6, with care both for cross-referencing and for keeping to its translations of the specialized vocabulary (‘characteristic’ for *notio* is the most frequently occurring). Further, because the earlier Questions contain the main points on which the later ones draw, the Appendices of Vol. 6 serve as background to the sources, to the three main general concepts mentioned, and to the epistemology of the whole treatise.

Nothing could be more superficial, however, than remarks on skeletal, structural form. The real priorities are quite different. The ‘preliminary’ theological categories have their real provenance (see 1 *Sent.* 25, 1 ad 2) in the datum, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, presumed to be expressed in Scripture and rightly interpreted by the sense of the mystery in the living consciousness of the Church. To comprehend the kind of theology these central data imposed in the Questions at hand, a reader has to try to capture the attitudes of their author, a medieval man, a teacher. The *Summa* is not of equal excellence in all its Parts, nor is every line original; the master did not always intend to say the last word at every point or even to bear down with all his forces. The two words, ‘documentation’ and ‘dialectics’—the phases in the evolution and the traits of the method distinctive of medieval Scholasticism (*expositio* and *disputatio*)—signal what an informed approach to this Trinity treatise must include.¹

Documentation, the use of theology’s proper authorities, has an especial

¹See *Quodl.* IV, 18; Vol. 1, ed. T. Gilby, Appendix 1; M.D. Chenu, *Towards Understanding St Thomas* (tr. A. M. Landry, D. Hughes; Chicago, 1964), pp. 79–96

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precedence over reasoned discourse; fair in the middle the treatise notes that here reason is at its feeblest.² To St Thomas's mind the higher theology rises the more conservative, literally, the theologian must be:

It is incumbent upon us not only to preserve those things handed down to us in sacred Scripture, but also the explanations (*dicta*) given by those holy teachers who have conserved sacred Scripture in all its purity.³

Scripture and the *sancti doctores* (in the widest sense given to that term, so that it includes the received and normative texts, patristic, pastoral, canonical, liturgical)⁴ provide those 'principles' from which theology argues in its most typical fashion, its *auctoritates*. From the articles of faith according to the canonical Scriptures it argues 'as from its own' and conclusively; from the 'teachers in the Church,' it argues as from its own, *sed probabiliter*.⁵

The weighted value given to theology's proper principles has its most obvious impact in the acknowledgement of the absoluteness of Scripture as the first and infallible rule of faith. And the chief effect of this appears in the Questions on the names proper to the divine persons. Their argumentation develops entirely out of the priority of Scripture (see Appendix 1). As to the understanding of Scripture, however, the enormous difference between medieval and modern biblical exegesis hardly needs stating; doubtless on his own principle of the primacy of the biblical word, a St Thomas aware of that modern commonplace in exegesis, that 'God' (*ho theos*) in the New Testament means almost always 'the Father', or sharing fully the perplexities surrounding the name *logos* in *John* or *pneuma* ('spirit') throughout the New Testament, would have fashioned a quite different theology. Of his exegetical and hermeneutical principles⁶ one of special note here is the pre-eminence given to the literal sense of Scripture and the accepted rule or 'analogy' of faith, whereby one point cannot conflict with any other.⁷ This treatise repeatedly states (1a. 29, 3 ad 1; 32, 2 ad 1; 36, 2 ad 1; 39, 2 ad 2) that fidelity to the biblical word is not a bald literalism, but a respect for what is given in sense, if not in words. The determination of that sense for the preferred names of the persons is clearly not independent or 'original'. Convictions about the meaning of the

²See 1a. 32, 1 & ad 2; also *In De Trin.* II, 3; *De potentia* VIII, 1 ad 12, which speaks of reasoning here as 'conjecture through simile' (*per simile conjecturare*)

³*In de div. nom.* 2, lect. I. *Quodl.* XII, 26 notes that the Holy Spirit, its author, is the inspirer of a right interpretation of Scripture

⁴The medieval 'technique of authorities' is supremely important here; see Chenu op cit 126-49. Vol. 41 of this series, ed. T. C. O'Brien, Introduction pp. xv-xvi

⁵1a. 1, 8 ad 2; cf *In De div. nom.* 1, lect. 1

⁶See C. Spicq, 'Saint Thomas d'Aquin, Exégète', *DTC*, 15, 694-738

⁷See 1a. 1, 9 ad 2; 10 ad 1, ad 2. *Quodl.* VII, 14-16. Vol. 1, ed. T. Gilby, Appendix 12

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guiding scriptural passages reflect the earlier Trinitarian literature. Given, for example, the dominance of Augustine on the eternal *Verbum* being imaged by the 'word' in human knowledge, the literal meaning of *Verbum* in the Latin version of *John's* prologue is simply taken for granted. The same kind of presumption with respect to *caritas* as Love being a name proper to the Holy Spirit was present because of Augustine's approach to the meaning of *Romans* 5, 5 (see 37, 1, note *a*). In John Damascene there is the clear statement that 'fatherhood', 'sonship', 'procession' are not names applied to divinity by human invention but are handed down in Scripture.⁸ An awareness of orthodox rebuttal of heretical interpretations also clearly helped to determine the reading of the proper sense of many biblical texts.⁹ This explains for example the statement (36, 2 ad 1) that whatever is said in Scripture of one person applies to the three 'even where there is a restrictive term added'. Finally, of course, the determinant in the use of Scripture is the understanding of the Church, the Church 'taught by these sacred Scriptures' as *CG* IV, 17 notes.¹⁰ Most clearly this comes out in connection with the *Filioque*; and in the final appeal for the right understanding of Scripture about the Holy Spirit to the authority of the Pope (36, 2 ad 2 & note *u*).

'Documentation' means, as well, the reverent employment of received texts, the *auctoritates*, of the holy teachers in the Church. At the level of theological epistemology an *authentica scriptura* (35, 2, note *c*) has such a standing because and to the degree that it witnesses the meaning of Scripture and the Church community's right sense of that meaning. A reverent and judicious reserve is the criterion apparent in the oft-repeated canon that awkward passages are not to be exploited, but brought round to show the orthodox intention of their author (36, 2 ad 3 & note *w*, 39, 5 ad 1). On the actual documentation G. Geenen's statement in the '40's, that the study of St Thomas's patristic sources has hardly begun, might need to be tempered, but not much.¹¹ A study of St Thomas's work with sources reveals a 'scholarship' quite different from its modern meaning. His unquestionable, attentive concern in principle for documents often does

⁸*De fide orthodoxa* 1, 8 (citing *Ephesians* 3, 14-15). PG 94, 830

⁹Because of the dominance of patristic literature the heresies of the early centuries were treated as most 'actual'; for St Thomas's knowledge of them, beside the *Summa*, see *Catena aurea*, proem. *CG* IV, 4-7. *De articulis fidei* 1. *Expositio primae decretalis. In Joann.* 1, lect. 1 (see also Spicq, op cit, 723)

¹⁰There is the whole Scripture and the whole usage of the Church which so names the three persons.' 1 *Sent.* 10,1, *in contrarium*. And, 'The verse speaks in the person of the whole Church from whom the Gospel is received'. *In Joann.* 21, lect. 6

¹¹Saint Thomas d'Aquin et les Pères' *DTC* 15 (1946) 738. cf A. Malet, *Personne et amour dans la théologie Trinitaire de Saint Thomas d'Aquin* (*Bibl.Thomiste* xxxii, Paris, 1956) pp. 180-7, a brief table of Greek patristic sources on the Trinity

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not show up in the actual written treatise.¹² As witness to a respect for documents, the formidable achievement of the *Catena aurea*¹³ evidences of devotion to the Fathers; the abandonment of the Trinitarian texts alleged to be from the Greek Fathers found in the *Contra errores Græcorum* marks a critical intent and sense that are of particular interest to the Trinity treatise.¹⁴ Questions 33–43 on the Trinity, however, exhibit a different level of working from sources.

Their most clearly original use is the direct quotations from the first five ecumenical councils (see 36, 2, note *r*). For Augustine and Hilary, the *auctoritates* who dominate because of the history of Latin theology, the dependence on Peter Lombard's *Sentences* (c. 1150) is clear. As for Augustine the choice of texts, the paraphrases and conflation repeated clearly mirror the Lombard's work.¹⁵ As for Hilary's *De Trinitate* there is the same correspondence and dependence;¹⁶ the texts from the *De synodis*, which Lombard himself cites rarely, for the most part derive from marginal or interpolated glosses on the *Sentences*.¹⁷ As in the *Summa* this source does not distinguish between the *acta* of the Eastern synods and Hilary's own comments.

These indications will perhaps be allowed in support of an evaluation of Questions 33–43 as the documentation simply of a teacher in his times. There is little resemblance to the 'complete scholar' isolated with primary sources, intent on scrupulous referencing, reaching a critical last word on his sources or his subject. Perhaps there is such a St Thomas in the background. But that is not the one discernible through the written work. These Questions remain notably close to the *Sentences*. There is some reason to think that at the period to which they belong, Italy 1266–7, the author discarded a revision of his commentary on Peter Lombard,¹⁸ in favour of the *Summa*, in order, as its Prologue indicates, to improve the teaching of sacred doctrine.

¹²The remark of Spicq applies generally, that St Thomas often is in contact with sources only through the medium of *une érudition de seconde main et souvent fautive*, op cit, 708

¹³His *Glossa continua super Evangelia* (1262–7) woven from the writings of 28 Latin and 57 Greek Fathers; see the remarks, perhaps exaggerated, of M. Pattison in *St Thomas Aquinas, Commentary on the Four Gospels I* (Oxford, 1870), pp. lii–iv

¹⁴None of these spurious texts are used in the *Summa*; they were concocted by Nicholas of Cotrone in his *Libellus de fide Sanctæ Trinitatis*, which, at the request of Pope Urban IV, St Thomas's work (1263; the title was invented by editors) examines. See the prefaces of R. Verardo in the Marietti edition (*Opuscula theologica I*, 1954) and H. Dondaine in the Leonine *Omnia opera* (Vol. 40, 1967); J. A. Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas d'Aquino* (New York, 1974) pp. 168–71, 389

¹⁵See 35, 1, note 2; 39, 2, note 6; 8, note 13; 41, 3, note 17 & *j*; 42, 3, note 12; 4, note 11

¹⁶See 33, 4, note 2; 36, 1 notes 2 & *e*; 40, 3, note 3; 41, 5, note 4; 42, 5, note 5

¹⁷The Quaracchi edition sets these off typographically from the rest of the text

¹⁸See Weisheipl, op cit, pp. 216–17

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In its beginnings especially it is quite natural that as a new departure the *Summa* should have been developed with an eye to the *Sentences*, the quasi-official textbook of theology at Paris, the intellectual centre of Europe. Obviously far superior to the *Sentences* in its organization, the *Summa* yet adheres to the author's conserving intent to hand down Trinitarian teaching from received texts. It seems to presuppose familiarity with the common state of the question (see, e.g., 43, 7) in order to achieve that succinctness and brevity proposed in its Prologue. The documentation does put the student in the picture with the main traditions of Latin theology. The dependence on the Lombard is not slap-dash; the texts quoted are chosen out of longer quotations; the notable Augustinian texts not from Lombard are on craggier points in Augustine's analysis of the mental word. (See 34, 1, obj. 1, Reply & ad 2; 3 *sed contra*; 43, 5 ad 2.) Because of its currency an embarrassing text of Hilary also not found in Lombard is included. (See 36, 4, obj. 7 & note *f*; ad 7 & note *p*.) Still the *Summa* is a work, not of aloof erudition but of its stated pedagogic purpose. In employing the traditionally given sources and language, these Questions do evince a marked progress in the author's own thought: in the abandoning of the old distinction of procession by way of nature and by way of will; in showing why 'Word' and 'Love' are names of persons. Even so, in contrast, e.g., to *CG* IV, 11, there is a care to shape psychological terms to those of Augustine, rather than to give full rein to the author's own theories on knowledge and will. A study of the documentation, while a material preliminary, will yet alert us to the fact that although the *intentio* of an author is a main principle in St Thomas's interpretation of texts,¹⁹ the prime purpose of quoting them is pedagogic. The hermeneutical problem is not so much to evaluate his fidelity to the original meaning and context as to recognize the effect on his own discourse of the language and association of the texts incorporated. Recognition of the method of documentation cautions against a misportrayal of St Thomas as either the technically expert 'scholar', who has utterly assimilated the proper spirit and genius of the authors he cites and who unerringly distills the best from a study of primary sources; or as an ahistorical theoretician with his own pure vision, superior to the texts with which he deferentially and eclectically adorns his work.

The modest claims for the reasoned discourse on how what is taught by the *auctoritates* is true (*Quodl.* IV, 18), may best be respected by designating this as a treatise *de divinis nominibus*; not on the names imposed on God by a philosophic evaluation of created effects—the topic in 1a. 13—but on the names God has given himself by his revelation in Jesus Christ (39, 7; 1

¹⁹See Chenu, *op cit*, pp. 153–5

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Sent. 31, 1, 2; *In De div. nom.* 1, lect. 2). As in Vol. 6 the noticeable use of quotation marks may serve to stress this viewpoint of the Questions. In dealing with divine names they divide themselves into a consideration of terms, the names of the persons (33–8); and of propositions or predications made in scriptural, patristic or scholastic, language, about them (39–43).

The study, then, is an inquiry into religious language, the language that was the 'given' for their author. Christian theology in the 20th century approaches the topics here from a position 180° removed from that imposed by such data and prefers to confine its Trinitarian interests to the (differently understood) biblical message about Christ. The *Summa* treatise is not *the* Catholic theology of the Trinity; it is *a* theology. Yet, however remote from modern ways of thinking, the problems it raises are legitimate, not simply because they are always 'there' for the human mind, but also because they were the kinds of questions inherited from the history of the belief and the thinking-with-belief in the Christian community.

For medieval theology the language expressing that experience was a major concern; so then was a conservative caution about it. Less than anywhere else in the *Summa* should innovation and originality be expected here. There can be no doubt that St Thomas shared the universal medieval sentiment expressed in a text (wrongly attributed to Jerome) he repeatedly cites, *People fall into heresy from uttering ill-considered words* (39, 7, obj. 1, note 2). An almost better translation of *inordinate prolatis* would be simply 'saying too much', because the mystery of the godhead so surpasses understanding; only the inner life of Father, Son and Holy Spirit expresses the unique, proper meaning of the divine names.²⁰ Certainly in dealing with what has been said in expression and defence of orthodox faith, the author intended to keep to the fewest necessary elements, and with marked restraint. The principle of economy mentioned earlier is respected because procession of origin, relation and person are to his mind intrinsically and inseparably linked with the dogma.²¹ The simpler, earlier stages of medieval theology, when, before the full possession of Aristotle's works on nature, man and being, the tools of its discourse were grammar and logic, are discernible in these Questions. Their dominance justifies describing the Questions as a study *de divinis nominibus*. It is not simply because grammar and logic are appropriate for determining the accuracy of language; it is a fact as well that the Questions have close links to the actual history of Latin Trinitarian theology. We need only recall that the famous medieval philosophical problem of universals was bound up with Trinitarian specu-

²⁰See *CG* I, 31

²¹For procession, see 1a. 27, 1; for relation, *De potentia* VIII, 1; for person, *ibid* IX, 4 (below, note 26)

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lation (39, 4, note *h*); and to notice in these Questions that the sketchy dialogue with the *quidam*, the medieval masters, largely deals with points of grammar (nouns, verbs, adjectives, prepositions, gerunds) and logic (the rules of predication, the distribution and supposition of terms, fallacies in reasoning). For interpreting the language and thrust of argument the textbooks for the trivium, Priscian's grammar (37, 3, note *e*), Boethius' translations of the *logica vetus*, and the adages of the dialecticians (*sophistæ*) are more needed resources than the philosophical principles of Aristotle's psychology or metaphysics. In part at least such points mark the ties of these Questions with their own past.

There is nothing surprising in the label *de divinis nominibus*; it is a reminder that in the development of the Trinity treatise, at least from Hugh of St Victor on, the viewpoint taken was marked by a cautious reserve against any claim to comprehend the divine reality. St Thomas himself placed high value on such reserve in the *Divine Names* by the Pseudo-Dionysius (37, 1, note *a*).²² Peter of Poitiers, of the preceding generation, had elaborated his own Trinity treatise according to the classification of divine names that the *Summa* incorporates (33, 2, note *a*), and Alexander of Hales' *Summa theologica* deals with the corresponding matter under the heading of 'the names by which the tongue confesses faith in the Trinity'. The designation calls attention to the reverent agnosticism, the apophatic element in theology, that was a legacy for St Thomas, and that must qualify any claim to think or speak about God's own self. But Christian theology is not agnostic or mute; it is a *sermo de Deo*.²³ St Thomas in adhering to the theological tradition has a distinctively clear evaluation of the issue in this talk about God; to call his work a treatise on divine names is not to reduce it to a pure nominalism.²⁴ The specific problems raised often do not hold either interest or appeal for 20th-century theology. But the intent to determine the true and orthodox meaning of language that sounds in the recurring theme, *utrum in divinis possit dici*, is bound up with a conviction about the function of thought and language in the dynamics of faith: a conviction, that looks from God to man and from man to God.²⁵ With regard to the first, names and even some propositions are accepted as divinely invested with a meaning that truly, if inadequately, expresses the reality of the divine itself. Which is simply to say that God has revealed himself by speaking a human word as well as by becoming the human Word. That explains why the inquiries into the propriety of certain of the divine

²²See *In De div. nom.* 1, lect. 1 & 2; 2 lect. 1

²³See 1a. 13, 2, 4, 5. *In De div. nom.* 1, lect. 1

²⁴Much less to his own description that 'the Sabellians reduced the Trinity to a mere distinction of names.' *Expositio primæ decretalis*

²⁵cf 3a. 60, 5

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names proceed from the priority and literalness of the names as given in Scripture. The same conviction extends even to the acceptance of the positive value, not to say sacredness, of terms and formulas fashioned by the Church's understanding of Scripture.²⁶ Looking from the believer to God, as well, St Thomas indicates his conviction that the thought and language accompanying the assent of faith are not merely conventional and subjective. 'The act of the believer terminates not in a proposition but in the reality.'²⁷ But the *enuntiabile*, the mental concept which is expressed in language, is a required, subjective medium. The act of faith is not based on the mind's insight into the reality for which the concept mediates; but the existence of theology and the need of it are based on the relevance of thought and language about God to God as to what they signify, however alien to the divine their mode of signifying is. Relevance, too, in the sense that the act of faith can be threatened by a distortion of thought that would involve contradiction or the irrational, and that the quest of faith for ultimate vision can be supported by clarification and penetration of faith's formulas.²⁸ Not all the names and propositions examined in this treatise are matters of faith, connected with faith inextricably and forever. But St Thomas does stand for an acceptance of a belief that has content; that tends toward the divine reality, veiled, yet pointed to through human language. A name that does not have one meaning has no meaning.²⁹ The theology he writes comes from a conviction that those signed with the profession of these names by Christ in baptism,³⁰ are, by the belief they *confess* and live, tending toward the reality in which alone man is to find joyful rest, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.³¹ And so the treatise ends with its most 'real' Question, on the presence of the divine reality invoked under those names. The final Question opens out on to that singular accomplishment of St Thomas, the *Secunda Pars*, which centres around union with God by grace and points to the experience, beyond naming, of God with us, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

²⁶*De potentia* IX, 4, 'For it is not without basis in the proper meaning of the noun "person" that the holy Fathers under divine inspiration have settled on this term to express their confession of true faith.'

²⁷2a2æ. I, 2 & ad 2; see Vol. 31, ed. T. C. O'Brien, Appendix 3 & 4. cf I *Sent.* 29, I, 1 quoting Hilary, *De Trin* IV, 14. PL 10, 107 that our words are to be subject to the realities not vice versa

²⁸See 2a2æ. 2, 10; Vol. 31, Appendix 4

²⁹Aristotle, *Metaphysics* IV, 4. 1006b5-10; cf Ia. 13, 5 ad 1

³⁰*Expositio primæ decretalis*

³¹Augustine, *De doctrina christiana* I, 5. PL 34, 21