

The river is high with respect to the readings. And so, it is not recommended to those coming, for example, to the topics of rational choice, free will, or weakness of will for the first time. However, it is highly recommended to those whose research deals with such topics, or is in the field of the history of philosophy of mind.

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Robert Pasnau. *Thomas Aquinas on Human Nature: A Philosophical Study of Summa Theologiae Ia*, 75–89. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002. Pp. xi + 500. Cloth, \$75.00. Paper, \$28.00.

This “philosophical study of *Summa Theologiae* Ia 75–89” on human nature has three parts, *Essential Features*, *Capacities*, and *Functions*. Spread across these parts are twelve chapters that include such standard topics as *Body and Soul*, *Immateriality of Soul*, *Unity of Body and Soul*, *Sensation*, *Desire and Freedom*, *Mind and Reality*, and so on. While a work on these topics is welcome, it is difficult to know what to make of this one because of the author’s ahistorical method. Pasnau is not primarily interested in Aquinas’ written work. He intends to help Aquinas out by constructing on his behalf his “ideal philosophy,” tak[ing] each of Aquinas’s texts as just one more rough draft on the way toward the “ideal” (6). Still, he must justify looking primarily at only one of these drafts, the theological *Summa*, while arguing that for all practical purposes Aquinas’ commentaries on Aristotle ought to be neglected (10–16). He warns against taking “at face value” (15) Aquinas’ justification for employing philosophy within theology. Theology isn’t even really about the revelation of God, as “the real heart of Aquinas’s theological project corresponds quite closely with what we consider the project of philosophy” (16). “The [ideal] history of medieval philosophy is the history of medieval theology, minus the theological stuff” (11). Aquinas’ appeals to scripture and the Church fathers are little more than “theological bedtime stories” (372).

The most remarkable instance of this method is chapter four, which includes among its references Daniel Goldhagen’s *Hitler’s Willing Executioners*. Aquinas’ crude quasi-biological-cum-philosophical account of fetal development is not discussed in q.75–89; neither are his views on abortion. Indeed, Pasnau knows that Aquinas’ rare statements on abortion did not depend upon his fetal account, and that they were unequivocally negative. Yet these facts must reflect the failure of these drafts. Aquinas’ “ideal” philosophy should be enlisted on *behalf* of abortion (105–25). The highly critical tone of the chapter reads like a polemic, particularly with Pasnau’s opinions on the “trade-offs” “we” must now be willing to make when it comes to killing human lives (125). Whatever the merits of such claims in other contexts, it is quite out of place in a study of Ia 75–89.

Generally this rewrite is unnecessary, as one does not have to falsify the theological history in order to examine critically the philosophical arguments within it. Indeed, the broad danger of such falsification is that it leads to misreadings of the philosophy that does take place within the theological contexts. Pasnau claims that according to Aquinas “the theologian looks to the created world to understand God. . . .” (19). On the contrary, Aquinas holds that theology proceeds from an understanding of God through revelation to a better understanding of creation (ST Ia 1), while the philosopher looks to the created world to understand God better. The *Summa* follows the theological order, even as it uses philosophical resources. There are many examples, but consider two. At the beginning of q.75 Aquinas explains that he intends to limit his discussion of philosophical issues, and follow a theological order given his needs as a theologian. *Prima facie* this procedure explains why in the discussion of the passivity of intellect (Ia 79.2) he begins with the impassivity of God, then angels, then only by contrast with them, human beings. Read as philosophy the discussion looks like the groundless *a priori* speculation that our contemporaries find so abhorrent in medieval thought. On the contrary, as reflection upon a theological tradition grounded in scripture, employing philosophical resources as the theologian sees

fit, it is simply what Aquinas said he intended to do; *qua* theologian he is acting in epistemic good faith. Yet for the sake of the philosophers, Aquinas himself directs his reader to Aristotle's *De anima*, and implicitly his own commentary, where there is no prior discussion of God and angels. Pasnau's discussion simply misses what is happening here (334–35). Indeed, the same thing happens concerning Universals and *Intelligere* (318–29) where Pasnau writes, “it is helpful at first to consider the case of God” (319) before considering the human. Just how does a philosopher consider God first? According to Aquinas he can't (ST Ia.12).

On divine illumination Aquinas says that the agent intellect is a certain “participation” in the divine light; it is clear from the text that this must be understood against the background of his philosophical discussion of how God acts generally within natural causes (ST Ia.79.4). Pasnau refrains from pursuing this lead into the metaphysics of divine causation (306–7). Instead, he collects mostly unanalyzed texts from numerous works often written many years apart without regard for development, only to conclude that the action of the agent intellect is “miraculous” (310), “a kind of magic” (318) in human life. Here a properly philosophical discussion is rendered theological in the rewrite, presumably because mention of God is part of the “bedtime stories.” However, since Aquinas holds that all the workings of nature are participations in the agency of God as secondary to primary cause, Pasnau's account rendered general would imply that “ideally” there is no real creaturely causality at all; it is “magical and inexplicable” (323) all the way down, a result quite foreign to Aquinas. Pasnau is not simply ignoring the theological context, but as a result is misreading what is and is not genuinely philosophical in that context.

When there are discussions that he handles fairly well, as for example sensation, and the mind's reflection upon itself, the analysis is pretty much a straightforward paraphrase of Aquinas. Just as often, when he is explicitly constructing the “ideal” the result is confused. Finally, there is a false accusation of plagiarism in the work (405). He did not bother to check the “Authors' Foreword” where they declare their particular debt to the other author in question.

Unless one is going to take seriously the actual writings of historical figures as real interlocutors, it is difficult to see what the *philosophical* point of studying them is. Unfortunately, the result here is a text that for all its length is difficult to take seriously, with some exceptions, as a study of Aquinas' account of human nature.

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Kathy Eden. *Friends Hold All Things in Common: Tradition, Intellectual Property, and the Adages of Erasmus*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001. Pp. ix + 194. Cloth, \$35.00.

When Erasmus returned from England to the continent in 1500 almost all his money was confiscated before he embarked, although his patron, Lord Mountjoy, had assured him that customs regulations applied only to English currency. Upon his arrival in Paris—poor as a church mouse and feeling rather unwell—he immediately set out writing a new gift for his patron, lest Mountjoy would assume that the humanist was angry with him. A few days later Erasmus had gathered a modest collection of 818 proverbs or *adagia*, a “treasury or storehouse of the accumulated wealth of classical antiquity collected for common use and thus one of his principal contributions to a cultural program for cooperation,” as Kathy Eden defines them (4); not a material but an intellectual wealth, a wisdom transmitted throughout generations and civilizations in the form of proverbs.

This *Adagiorum Collectanea* became a bestseller because it provided both humanists and careerists with numerous *bon mots* to embellish their (Latin) style and to enhance their arguments. During his first visit to Italy Erasmus spent a few months in the household of the famous humanist and printer Aldus Manutius in Venice. This resulted in a reissue in