

Basic Ideology of Thomas Aquinas in the Colleague Period

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ABSTRACT: “*Scholastic*” is a term derived from the Ancient Greek word σχολαστικός (Scholasticos), translated into Latin as “*Scholastica*”, meaning “belonging to research, scholarship”. This is a way of thinking and scientific reasoning, developed among Latin scholars in the Middle Ages (5th – 15th century). The basic content refers to a spirit that wants to use reason to serve religion. Therefore, the method of discovering traces of God according to this trend is to emphasize the relationship between two types of science: the science of reason (consciousness comes from nature in humans) and the science of faith (human consciousness comes from enlightenment from God). When discussing this topic in this period, the most profound thinker was probably Thomas Aquinas. Grandfather is considered the greatest scholastic theologian of the 13th century in Western Europe. With the rich content of his thoughts, he was not only officially recognized by the Christian Church as an orthodox thought, but his thoughts also had a profound influence on philosophers following the trend of religious philosophy. His best known works are *Summa Theologica* and *Summa contra Gentiles*. He was recognized by the Christian Church. *veneration, beatification and canonization.*

KEYWORDS: Christ brings salvation to man, not philosophy; Philosophy and theology are closely related; Philosophy and theology cannot be identified with each other.

Before going into the study and research of the basic ideological content of theologians of the Scholastic period, we must clarify the term “*Philosophy*”. and the term “*Theology*”, from the perspective of philosophers in the Scholastic period. In general, Greek philosophers as well as Theologians of this period were in agreement: If “*Philosophy*” belongs to human reason and that reason proves a certain truth through its internal evidence in a direct or indirect form (the current understanding is that that knowledge is proven from scientific reasoning). Or philosophy is understood as the truth of reason. Then “*Theology*” belongs to human belief in God revealing the world (God's revelation to humans to perceive and explore that world), theology is the truth of faith. On the basis of unifying terminology, the author analyzes the basic contents of Thomas Aquinas as follows:

First, it is Christ who brings salvation to man, not philosophy, because philosophy is after all only an attempt of man to find God in an uncertain way. Saint Paul has shown us salvation in Jesus himself. Jesus is the only source of salvation for all people. He is both true God and true man and the way, the only Mediator between God and man, the Lamb of God and the One who takes away the sin of the world [see John 1:29].

To see God's salvation for mankind, not just philosophy, we must understand God's plan expressed through God's covenants with mankind in each specific historical period. Covenant is the main theme of the content of the Old and New *Testaments*. In Greek, it is “*diathēkē*” G1242, transliterated as/ di-a-phē-kê /, which means “covenant” or “testament”. The term covenant in Hebrew, the word בְּרִית (berith) means covenant. This word is equivalent to the Greek word 'διαθήκη' (diatheke).

Thereby, we must affirm that the term covenant is used to refer to the agreement and binding between two or more people or two or more groups of people about something. Including rights, obligations and sanctions with each other. However, in history as well as today, many scholars studying the Bible rely on different aspects and perspectives and believe that there are covenants such as: The covenant between God and Adam and Eve [see Genesis 1:26-2:3]; Noah and his family [see Genesis 9:8-17]; Abraham and his lineage [see Genesis 12:1-3; 17:1-14; 22:16-18]; Moses and the Israelites [see Exodus 19:5-6; 3:4-10; 6:7]; King David and the kingdom of Israel [see Genesis 19:5-6; 3:4-10; 6:7] 2 Sm 7,8-19]; Jesus and the Church [see Mt 26,28; 16,17-19].

Through the covenants we see the rich and profound content of God's love and forgiveness for sins of doubt, disobedience and human arrogance reflected in detail by God through the plan of salvation for humans through the covenants. Among them, the *new covenant in the blood of Jesus Christ is the covenant* that has shown its outstanding sacredness and completeness. The new covenant established by Jesus is also the covenant of the shedding of the blood of Jesus, the Son of God who came to earth as a human [Mt 26,26-29; Mc 14,22-25; Lc 22,19-20; 1 Cor 11,23-25]. This is the covenant Blood brings salvation to mankind and that covenant is considered by mankind as *the Charter of the Kingdom of Heaven.*

The content of the new covenant is reported in the Gospel of Matthew, recounting Jesus on the night he was betrayed as follows: While they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them, saying: “**Take and eat; this is my body**”. Then

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he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying: **“Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins”** [Mt 26:26-29].

In the depth of Thomas Aquinas's thought in particular and the thought of the Scholastic period in general, always go into analysis to give the reasons for the blood covenant of Jesus in the Bible. From there, go into explaining the power of God and determine the position and role of philosophy in relation to theology. Thomas Aquinas discusses faith and faith, he reminds us never to forget that theology because theology is the source of all truth. For him, God is the ultimate object of all philosophy. Faith is universal, and that faith is not only expressed by Thomas Aquinas through words but also vividly expressed in his life and his fervent devotion to God as follows: *“Grant me, O Lord my God, a mind to know you, a heart to seek you, wisdom to find you, conduct pleasing to you, faithful perseverance in waiting for you, and a hope of finally embracing you”*.

Besides, Thomas Aquinas also focused on explaining that it was the love of God that saved mankind. That love is linked to the new covenant where the Savior actually shed his blood. For Thomas Aquinas, the covenant of Jesus is called the new covenant because it is expressed by new love, a love that surpasses the perception of everyone in the human family. The blood of the new covenant is the blood that cleanses mankind from all sins, pulling mankind from the fate of eternal death, because Jesus died and destroyed death once and for all. When talking about faith in God as the source of salvation, Saint Thomas Aquinas wrote: "No one can know how much Christ has loved us." Because the love of Christ, like His peace, surpasses all understanding [cf. Phil 4:7; cf. Eph 3:19]. Here we need to understand *that love goes hand in hand with salvation*.

So who is God? When does God save us? For Thomas Aquinas, the convincing, rational answer to the question of God is not a precise analysis of the philosophical perspective (proving reality) but **prayer**. People who think they do not believe in God are often right when they say they want to pray but do not know to whom?, what to pray for? and whether their prayers will be answered. To address these doubts, Thomas Aquinas explains: “Look, if you become a believer, a Christian, everything will change. You will come to understand the One to whom you are praying.” Not at all! Perhaps the saint would say to such people: “If you become a Christian, you will no longer be surprised or embarrassed by your situation. You will be happy with it. For faith can assure you that you *cannot* know what God is until he reveals himself to us openly and transparently”.

To understand and believe and to keep faith in man, Thomas Aquinas assessed that for a Christian, praying without knowing, or waiting to know, then perhaps the One you are praying to is the way of human knowledge and that knowledge is normal and philosophical. For now, the important issue is not philosophical knowledge; the important issue is faith and trust in God's love for us, and the courage to share and communicate that love to others, until God's promise is fulfilled. "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known" [1 Cor 13:12].

When discussing truth, Thomas Aquinas argued that God is the ultimate object of philosophy and theology, the fundamental source of all truth. So what is truth according to Thomas Aquinas? And where does truth come from? Perhaps, not only Thomas Aquinas conceived of truth as **truth** or **truth**, but humanity itself also agrees. The concept of truth is as easy as the question of the origin of truth. However, for Thomas Aquinas, truth originates from God: *God's truth is the measure of all truth. All truths of reason need to be measured by God's truth*. Thereby, he denied the role of philosophy in seeking the origin of truth from within humans themselves. When speaking of the belief in Christ that brings salvation to mankind, legend has it that: One day, while praying, Thomas Aquinas suddenly heard these words coming from the statue of the Crucified Christ: Thomas, you have written well about Me. What reward do you want from Me for your work? The saint replied: Lord, I want nothing but You alone. Yes! **Having You is having everything**. Apart from You, everything is useless. From faith led Thomas Aquinas to obedience, submission and service.

By faith from God, Christ brought salvation to mankind. That faith was used by Thomas Aquinas from philosophy to analyze "consubstantiality" to explain the uniqueness **"Father, Son, Holy Spirit are consubstantial with each other"**. This convincing explanation will have great significance in expanding faith, strengthening faith and developing the faith of humanity. Thomas Aquinas explained that the Triune God has a close relationship with each other. The three persons exist together, in each other and for each other. When talking about the Triune God as love, bringing salvation, within that inner being there will be a lover and an object of love. Thomas Aquinas said: "The Father is the lover, the source of love, the active person who loves; and the Son is the beloved, receiving love, responding to love, the active person who loves; the love of the Father and the Son, the bond of love is the Holy Spirit".

In short, through the arguments of Thomas Aquinas mentioned above, we realize that a true Christianity has entered human history. Perhaps those steps are not resounding and decisive by an armed force, but only a seed silently sown into the ground, growing and developing. That is a meaningful maturity of the humanistic and humane qualities of Christian history. Indeed, with the Christian faith bringing salvation, philosophy helps people recognize that salvation. Jesus said: “Again I say to you: Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened ” [Luke 11: 9-10] .

Second, Philosophy and Theology are closely related. Philosophy and theology are closely related to each other. Christian theology uses philosophy as the foundation of natural knowledge; conversely, philosophy, with its new discoveries in real life,

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creates new and theological meanings that become an effective method to explore supernatural revelation, not just stopping at exploring natural revelation as its inherent nature.

St. Thomas writes at the beginning of his *Summa Theologiae* that “We must remember that there are two kinds of sciences. Some sciences proceed from principles known by the natural light of reason.... Some sciences from principles known by higher sciences.... And so divine teaching is a science because it proceeds from principles known by the light of a higher science, that is, from the knowledge of God and the saints”. Thomas Aquinas explains as follows:

Faith needs an alliance with philosophy. With the good intention of unifying ideas about a single truth. In drawing the relationship between philosophy and theology, Thomas Aquinas is facing the views on the relationship between reason and faith of medieval philosophers such as: P. Abelard's view of valuing reason; The view of two truths (theology and science) by the Averroists; The view of separation in terms of object between theology and science is expressed especially in the view of Joannes Salisberius; The view of completely denying the values of science, especially in Tertullianus, the best solution is Thomas Aquinas reconciled this relationship in his philosophical system based on Aristotle's view. Christian philosophy has its classics and its Bible. The scholastics revived and popularized the tradition of thinking in philosophical language. The Bible is the most precious book for Thomas Aquinas as well as for all believers. A book containing the perfect truth about grace and goodness. The Bible is the Word of God revealed to man, the spiritual support of Christian life, the potential source of vitality for philosophy and theology. But for the Christian faith to be solid and accepted by man, it needs to be explained and demonstrated by reason to make the Christian faith more transparent. In that spirit, Christianity needs an alliance with philosophy, using philosophical thoughts and language to explain and comment on the content of the Bible. However, in religion, there is not only an alliance with philosophy, but vice versa, philosophy also needs the active participation of religious faith; so that the role of philosophy is clearly shown in its field of activity. A tradition with only reason allows people to perceive themselves, to perceive the issues around them such as the universe - humans.

On the path of searching for God, people need to have reason to guide their faith so that it is not blind or misguided. On the other hand, belief is also a form of reflection. Perhaps, more than anyone else when discussing this topic, it is Thomas Aquinas. He saw that between faith and reason there is a dialectical and interconnected interaction. Through faith, man knows God, through reason he understands the Supreme Being who is the cause of all things.

Faith illuminates philosophy. Thomas Aquinas not only recognize the positive points of philosophy and apply it in building faith in people, but also properly recognize the role and correlation between reason and faith. This is a meaningful stage in the deepest integration of faith and reason. We see that the desire to understand is a common characteristic of all people. Intelligence can help us believe and believe more firmly. On the other hand, the world and what happens in it, as well as the ups and downs of history are realities that are recognized, judged and explained by the means of philosophy. But faith does not stand aside as *an indifferent guest*, nor is it *a guest* before a new event that occurs in reality. Faith participating in it does not lessen the autonomy of philosophy or limit its field, but faith makes philosophy, human understanding stronger, deeper and more effective. Faith sharpens the inner vision and helps philosophy discover the presence of God who arranges everything in every event of life.

When speaking about the relationship between philosophy and theology or in other words between faith and reason of Thomas Aquinas. Saint John Paul II put the main idea of Thomas Aquinas's dictum most elegantly: *"Closer study shows that even in the philosophical thinking of those who have helped to push faith and reason further apart, one sometimes finds precious and subtle insights which, if pursued and developed with a mind and heart properly adjusted, can lead to the discovery of the path of truth"*.

Third , philosophy and theology cannot be identified with each other, because the object of philosophy is being as such, so one can only use it to search for the first and transcendental cause of things. Therefore, the mission of discovering God and proving God belongs to theologians, not to philosophers.

Thomas Aquinas does not recognize the contradictions between philosophy (science) and faith and the approach to philosophical knowledge from the perspective of perception, perception from the consciousness of the human being and must be proven by practice. As for the religious truths revealed to each person of faith, they do not require proof and sharp intelligence. The question of thinkers, including philosophers and theologians of this period, is always raised here, has the human being, with his consciousness, perceived all phenomena in the material world? And has that philosophy found the eternal truth? Perhaps, this question is a bit biased towards theologians. By one's own belief according to Thomas Aquinas The acquisition of scientific knowledge does not help people avoid mistakes, even leading them to painful doubts about the existence of God. Therefore, Thomas Aquinas concluded: Religion is more important than science, faith is superior to reason, science and philosophy are "disciples" of Theology.

More than anyone else, Thomas Aquinas used the positive points of philosophy to justify and defend faith. He placed an important position for philosophy with the noble mission of defending truth (faith). Thomas Aquinas 's position is that philosophy must lead to fear and trust in God, and bring true happiness (truth) to humans. That is also Thomas Aquinas's explanation when he said that philosophy, although it cannot replace faith, it prepares the human soul to receive faith. Thomas Aquinas presented Christian faith as a true philosophy. Knowledge and faith are united, but in that unity the advantage leans towards faith, without faith there is no knowledge, but faith without knowledge is like a foundation without a house built on it. The path of philosophy is the path from

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scattered truths to unified truths, eliminating doubts and misconceptions, of which faith is its destination. True philosophy is the knowledge of divine and human beings, the science that studies the relationship between God – man – the universe.

Influenced by Aristotle's epistemology, Thomas Aquinas sometimes argued that humans have the ability to perceive the world (that is, he also considered the position and role of philosophy). With this view, in contrast to Plato and Augustine, he did not completely deny the value of sensory perception (philosophy). On the contrary, he repeatedly affirmed that all natural knowledge originates from sensation and experience. If Augustine believed that the truth resides in humans and must penetrate there to perceive, Thomas Aquinas believed that, although the purpose of perception is predetermined, the cognitive process still begins with sensation. Here, Aristotle's empiricism was interpreted in the spirit of Christianity. Thomas Aquinas distinguished two types of "sensuous form" and "rational form", the close relationship between them and divided, clearly stating the role of sensory perception organs: touch, taste, smell and the highest is sight.

Thus, in this relationship, Thomas Aquinas again rates philosophy lower than theology. Philosophy is lower than theology just as human reason cannot be equal to God's wisdom. Therefore, "to be liberated, man must know how to escape from his reason through God's revelation". Although these two sciences follow two different paths and cannot be assimilated with each other. However, these two sciences are related to each other, in the end, the science of reason only aims to explain, serving the science of faith.

Speaking of this relationship, Saint John Paul II commented on Thomas Aquinas: *Saint Thomas knowing that there is only one truth and that the truth of faith can never contradict reason (philosophy), but reason can help to draw some people to faith and help clarify theological principles for believers. He did not believe that the noble philosophy of noble people diluted the faith, but rather that those who use the philosophical doctrines of the Bible to serve the faith should not mix water with wine, but replace the water with wine.*

In short, reason and faith are not separate and do not make people lose the ability to know themselves, to know the world around them, and importantly, to know the One who made the world orderly, the almighty, all-good and all-beautiful God. Moreover, faith is not a *dead idea* or a one-time perception, but requires reason to always explore and seek. Philosophy helps people to be consistent in thinking and steadfast in faith, not just a kind of knowledge that is contrary to religious faith. Once again, the basic harmony of philosophical knowledge with the sense of faith was reinforced by theologians of the scholastic period. In lieu of a conclusion, the author quotes Saint Thomas Aquinas: "what is most perfect in all nature, that is, a man who lives in accordance with reason" [*Summa Theologica*, Ia, q.29, a.3].

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