

Thomas Aquinas, Exegete of the Letter to the Hebrews*

The Letter to the Hebrews is perhaps one of the most enigmatic parts of the New Testament. Very little is known with certainty regarding its historical context.¹ The authorship of the apostle Paul, for instance, was accepted in the East, either in the strict sense that Paul was the author (John Chrysostom) or in the sense that a disciple or secretary (e.g. Luke) either translated the text from a Semitic original (Clement of Alexandria) or expressed the core content of Paul's teaching in his own way. In the West, however, one was far more reluctant to accept Paul's authorship and it took until the last quarter of the fourth century to assure Hebrews's canonicity. In fact, none of the great Latin Fathers (Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, etc.) undertook a commentary on the text and the first, extensive commentary was written by John Chrysostom ca. 403/404 as a set of thirty-four homilies on Hebrews. Once its authorship (in the strict or in the broad sense) was assured, it was not until the sixteenth century that some (e.g. Erasmus, Cajetan) again questioned its Pauline authorship. Nowadays, its Pauline authorship, at least in the strict sense, is almost universally rejected although that does not solve the question to what extent the content of Hebrews can be described as Pauline.² Equally enigmatic is the question regarding the addressees of Hebrews. While many argue for a Jewish Christian readership in Rome, others have proposed a Gentile Christian readership in other locations. Still others have discarded this dichotomy and argued that the recipients are second generation Christians everywhere. The dating of Hebrews also remains debated with proponents in favor of a late dating in the 90s of the first century as well as proponents of an early dating in the 60s of the first century.³ Regarding its literary form, it is argued that Hebrews is intended for oral delivery to an audience with a good knowledge of the Septuagint and appreciative for the many literary devices employed by the author. Some have concluded, therefore, that Paul's Letter to the Hebrews could ironically be more accurately be called 'the Homily to the Hellenists'.⁴

Perhaps a more important explanation of the Letter's enigmatic character is the fact that the Letter presents the contemporary reader with significant challenges. The worldview of the Letters is one in which the world cannot be quantitatively measured, that is to say, a world in which the unseen is more powerful than the seen. This becomes apparent in the prominent role of the angels in Hebrews. Moreover, the portrayal of Jesus' divinity and humanity, of his suffering in obedience remains in many ways attractive, it also requires an appreciation of religious sacrifice which is to a large extent absent from our culture as well as from many forms of Christianity. Hebrews' suggestion, furthermore, that suffering is not merely

* To be translated into French for the French annotated translation to be published by Cerf, Paris, 2024. This text contains material funded by the National Science Centre, Poland, through the "OPUS" grant "Biblical Exegesis and Jewish-Christian relations from the perspective of Thomas Aquinas' Commentary on the Letter to the Hebrews" (no. 2019/35/B/ HS1/00305).

¹ For more information see Craig R. Koester, *Hebrews*, New Haven: Yale, 2001, (The Anchor Yale Bible 36), 19-63 and Erich Gräßer, *An die Hebräer. Vol. 1-3*, (Braunschweig-Neukirchen: Benzinger Verlag-Neukirchener Verlag, 1990-1993 (*Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament* XVII/1), Vol. 1, 13-18.

² A. Vanhoye, 'Hebräerbrief' in: *Theologische Realenzyklopädie* 14 (1985), 494-505.

³ M. Healey, *Hebrews* (Baker Academic: Grand Rapids, 2016) for instance proposes an early dating; Gräßer is in favor of a late dating.

⁴ M. Healey, *Hebrews*, 20.

something that falls upon people from outside but rather the inevitable concomitant of obedience to God's promises, as exemplified in Christ's passion, is a very demanding one.⁵

Hebrews has received much less attention by the Latin Church Fathers than did Paul's other Letters. Not only do we not possess a commentary by the great Latin Fathers (Jerome, Augustine⁶, Ambrose, etc.) but one of the earliest Latin commentaries by Alcuin (730-804) is highly indebted to the Latin translation of Chrysostom's homilies in the mid-sixth century.⁷ By the ninth century a number of extensive commentaries are written by Sedulius Scotus, Rabanus Maurus, Haimo of Auxerre and others. The rise of schools also mean a rise of commentaries, many of which are still unedited. Regarding Hebrews in particular, one should mention those by the Benedictine monk Hervaeus of Bourg-Dieu, the *quaestiones* by Robert of Melun and Pseudo-Hugo of St. Victor and the Cambridge commentary by the school of Petrus Abelard. The birth of the universities and the mendicant *studia* results in 13th century commentaries by Hugh of St. Cher, John of Rochelle, Guerric of St. Quentin, and Thomas's contemporaries Peter of Tarentaise and Nicholas of Gorran.⁸

Aquinas's commentary on Hebrews is possibly the result of his teaching at the Dominican convent in Naples during the final years of his life (1272-1273).⁹ The commentary has been handed down, either completely or in fragmentary form, in twenty-eight manuscripts. The commentary exists in two versions: a short version (the sc. *reportatio vulgata*) and a long version which extends from chapters one to seven.¹⁰ This long version was discovered by Remigio Nanni o.p. who inserted it in his printed edition of 1562 and marked them as such. From that moment onwards, the text produced by Nanni, became the standard text.¹¹ The most recent 1953 printed edition by Raphael Cai uses a smaller print and an asterisk to indicate these insertions. Remigio Nanni opted, however, to insert the long version only for the first six chapters and regarded subsequent differences between the two versions as negligible.¹² Further research will have to determine whether this evaluation is correct. The long version is thought to be by the hand of Thomas's trusted *socius* Reginald of Piperno.¹³

⁵ See Luke Timothy Johnson, *Hebrews: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 2-4.

⁶ On Augustine's limited use of Hebrews see Anne-Marie La Bonnardière, "L'Épître aux Hébreux dans l'oeuvre de saint Augustin", in *Revue des études augustinienne* 3 (1957), 137-162.

⁷ Eduard Riggenbach, *Die ältesten lateinischen Kommentare zum Hebräerbrief*. Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1907, 24. See also Rowan A. Greer, *The Captain of our Salvation: A Study in the Patristic Exegesis of Hebrews*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1973.

⁸ See the summary list of commentaries at the end of our introduction.

⁹ The date and place of his commentaries on the Corpus Paulinum is a much disputed question, especially after Robert Wielockx' contribution ("Au sujet du Commentaire de saint Thomas sur le 'Corpus Paulinum'. Critique littéraire", in *Doctor Communis* 2009, 150-177). For a summary of the discussion see Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Initiation à saint Thomas d'Aquin. Sa personne et son oeuvre. Nouvelle édition* (Paris: Cerf, 2015), pp. 320-330.

¹⁰ Fr. Gilles de Grandpré of the Leonine Commission regards M¹ (München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Clm. 21209) and Sb (Salzburg, Bibliothek des Benediktinerstiftes St. Peter b.x.9) as the two best manuscripts for this long version. Five other manuscripts contain extracts from the long version. I thank Marta Borgo of the Leonine Commission for providing me with this information.

¹¹ *Super Epistolas S. Pauli lectura, t. 2: Super Epistolam ad Hebraeos lectura*, ed. R. Cai (8^a ed.: Marietti, Taurini-Romae, 1953) p. 335-506.

¹² See note 326 on p. 407 of the Cai-edition: "...vel minimum, vel nullum discrimen inveni."

¹³ The best printed source on these issues is Antoine Guggenheim, *Jésus Christ, Grand Prêtre de l'Ancienne et de la nouvelle Alliance. Étude du Commentaire de saint Thomas d'Aquin sur l'Épître aux Hébreux* (Paris : Parole et Silence, 2004), in particular Annex 3 "Éléments de critique textuelle", pp. 747-756.

In what follows, we will examine the main exegetical methods used by Aquinas and in doing so bring to light some of the principal themes contained in Aquinas's commentary to Letter to the Hebrews.

1. Prologue

Thomas's commentary opens with a prologue, a practice which was common at the time and goes back to the patristic commentators but ultimately is rooted in the tradition of the philological and philosophical commentaries of late antiquity.¹⁴ Originally the prologue consisted of a brief description, often called *argumentum*, which became part of the versions of the Bible in use and of the glossed Bibles.¹⁵ In the case of Hebrews, this short description often deals with the issue of authorship and the literary style of the text. It is said, for instance, that the Apostle Paul out of humility did not include his name into the text nor mentioned that the author was an apostle. Paul also originally wrote the text in Hebrews after which Luke translated it into Greek.¹⁶

By the time of Thomas, these descriptions are developed into actual prologues which, as was the case for a homily, are introduced by a verse from Scripture, called a *thema*, which functions as an indicator of the principle topic (or *materia*) of the book of the Bible under investigation.¹⁷ The theme of the prologue to Hebrews is Ps. 85: 8 ("There is none among the gods like unto you, O Lord: and there is none according to your works"), a verse which occurs only a few times in Thomas's writings and only here in the prologue is used to indicate the excellence of Christ as the principle theme of the Letter.¹⁸ The "gods" (plural), mentioned in vs. 8, refer to the possibility of creatures to participate (*participative*) in God. Thomas corroborates this speculative claim with a number of texts from Scripture which write about angels, prophets and priests designating them by the word 'God' or 'gods' (e.g. John 10: 35; Ex. 22:8). But these three categories are not God by nature (*naturaliter*). Compared to them,

¹⁴ Thomas Prügl ("Thomas Aquinas as Interpreter of Scripture", in *The Theology of Thomas Aquinas*, ed. Rik Van Nieuwenhove and Joseph Wawrykow, Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 2005, 386-415) has drawn attention to the fact that the classical introductory questions of these prologues to the philological and philosophical commentaries, dealing with *titulus-nomen auctoris-intentio auctoris-modus agenda-ordo libri-utilitas*, are all more or less present in Thomas's commentaries. For the use of classical rhetoric in Aquinas's philosophical prologues, see Kevin White, "St. Thomas Aquinas on Prologues" in *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 98 (2005), 803-813.

¹⁵ For examples see D. De Bruyne, *Préface de la Bible latine*, Namur, 1920, 243-254.

¹⁶ "In primis videndum est cur apostolus Paulus in hac epistola scribenda non servaverit morem suum, ut vel vocabulum nominis sui vel ordinis describeret dignitatem. Hec causa est quod ad eos scribens qui ex circumcissione crediderant quasi gentium Apostolus et non Hebreorum, sciens quoque eorum superbiam, suamque humilitatem ipse demonstrans, meritum officii sui noluit anteferre. Nam simili modo etiam Iohannes apostolus propter humilitatem in epistola sua nomen suum eadem ratione non pretulit. Hanc ergo epistolam fertur Apostolus ad Hebreos conscriptam hebraica lingua misisse cuius sensum et ordinem retinens Lucas evangelista, post excessum beati apostoli Pauli greco sermone composuit." 'Glossa ordinaria (Hbr. Prol.1)', in : *Glossae Scripturae Sacrae electronicae*, ed. Martin Morard, IRHT-CNRS, 2016-2018. Consultation du 13/08/2021. (permalink : http://gloss-e.irht.cnrs.fr/php/editions_chapitre.php?livre=../sources/editions/GLOSS-liber73.xml&chapitre=73_Prol.1)

¹⁷ Cf. Gilbert Dahan, 'Les prologues des commentaires bibliques (XIIIe-XIVe s.)', in *Les Prologues médiévaux*, ed. J. Hamesse, Brepols, Turnhout, 2000, 427-470 (see also Gilbert Dahan, *Lire la Bible au Moyen Âge - Essais d'herméneutique médiévale* (Genève : Droz, 2009), 57-101). For the use of a *thema* in Aquinas's sermons see Randall B. Smith, *Reading the Sermons of Thomas Aquinas*, Emmaeus Academic, Steubenville, 2016, ch. 3.

¹⁸ In ST I, q. 4, a. 3, ad 1 this verse is used to discuss the possibility of a creature to be like (*similis*) God. In the answer to the objection Thomas refers to Dionysius's De divinis nominibus IX where Dionysius argues that creatures can be like and unlike to God in so far as an effect imitates to a limited degree into its cause. See also DDN IX, lectio 3.

Christ's excellence is unique. But Christ's excellence, being the "splendor of the Father's glory" (Hebr. 1:3) and placed "above all principality and power" (Efes. 1:20) also shines forth in a unique way in Christ's works of creation, enlightenment and justifications, works which are impossible to do by any creature.

Having indicated the principle topic of the Letter, Thomas briefly describes how the Letter to the Hebrews differs from the other Pauline letters. The dividing principle, i.e. head, body, members, is identical to the one that can be found in the prologue to his commentary on Romans, where Thomas gives a more detailed rationale for the division of the Pauline Corpus into fourteen letters. The distinguishing feature of Hebrews is that its subject matter (*materia*) concerns Christ as Head of the mystical body of the Church whereas the other thirteen letters either deal with the mystical body itself or its principle members, the prelates.¹⁹ This division might seem artificial to a contemporary reader but such a perception rests on the assumption that Paul's letters are merely occasional letters in which Paul functions as their primary author. From Thomas's perspective, however, these assumptions are incorrect. In the prologue to his commentary on Romans, to which Thomas assigns as the biblical *thema* Acts 9: 15 ("And the Lord said to him: go your way; for this man is to me a vessel of election, to carry my name before the gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."), Thomas emphasizes that Paul functions as a divinely ordained "vessel of election" because he "taught the mysteries of the most lofty divinity, which pertain to wisdom He also has commended charity most excellently, . . . [and] he has instructed humans concerning the various virtues."²⁰ The apostle Paul is, moreover, compared to a vessel because he "carried Christ's name" not only in his body by imitating his life and suffering but also in his speech as well as by handing down the meaning of Scripture (*sensum Scripturae tradendo*) to future generations.²¹ By invoking Is. 8: 1 ("Take up a large book and write in it in a human style."), Thomas again underscores the importance of Paul as the chosen mediator of divine wisdom, chosen to express that wisdom in ways accessible to his hearers and readers. In other words, Paul's letters are not all merely occasional letters which have Paul as their primary author but the result of divinely revealed truths which, by divine decree, are mediated and expressed by Paul in order to make these truths accessible and to hand them down to future readers.²²

Thomas concludes his prologue with discussing objections to Paul's authorship. His responses in favor of Paul's authorship give a brief synthesis of the tradition before Thomas.²³ Franklin Harkins has observed that Thomas's response is not so much guided by the question of human authorship but rather by Thomas's earlier division of the Pauline writings. Hebrews holds a primary place among Paul's writings because of its subject matter, i.e. Christ as Head of the Church, and it is Paul who is elected to function as God's vessel to bring God's name to the gentiles and Israel (see Acts 9:15). "In short", Harkins concludes, "Aquinas seems to think

¹⁹ It is remarkable that ST III, q. 8, which deals with Christ's grace as Head of the Church, only mentions Hebrews on two occasions and not a single time as part of argumentation or reply but only on the level of an objection (q. 8, a. 3, obj. 3; q. 8, 4, obj. 1).

²⁰ *Ad Rom. Prol.* No. 2.

²¹ *Ad Rom. Prol.* Nos. 5-7.

²² For a similar argument see Franklin Harkins, "Docuit excellentissimae divinitatis mysteria: St. Paul in Thomas Aquinas," in *A Companion to St. Paul in the Middle Ages*, ed. Steven R. Cartwright (Leiden: Brill, 2013), pp. 235-63.

²³ The essential elements of Thomas's response can be found for instance in Hervé de Bourg-Dieu's 12th century commentary (PL 181, 1519-1520), Peter Lombard (PL 192, 399-400), Pseudo-Hugh of St. Victor (PL 175, 608-610) and Hugh of St. Cher (*Postilla*, ed. Venetis: Apud Nicolaum Pezzani, 1703, vol. 8, 237v.)

that if St. Paul had not penned the Epistle to the Hebrews, both his doctrine of grace and his work as God's instrument of revelation would have remained incomplete."²⁴

2. Textual criticism

Textual criticism, i.e. the critical comparison and analysis of textual variants in order to arrive at the most reliable text of the Bible, is not an invention of recent times nor of 16th century humanist authors but has been a constant element of the reading of the Bible throughout the ages.²⁵ On numerous occasions Thomas mentions and explores, with the means available to him, textual variants.²⁶ Throughout the commentary there are at least twenty occasions in which he mentions a variant, mostly introduced by *alia littera*.²⁷ Fourteen of these deal with a Latin textual variant, six with a Greek textual variant or an observation on the basis of the Greek text.²⁸ Among the latter Hebr. 4, 12 ("Vivus est sermo Dei") presents an interesting case. For Thomas notes the difficulty in understanding the meaning of *sermo* but refers to the Greek equivalent *logos* which Thomas identifies with *verbum*. Hence, and with the help of St. Augustine, Thomas is able to identify *sermo Dei* as the pre-existent Word and develop a *logos* Christology (no. 217).²⁹ In Hebr. 9, 1 the sanctification of the *sanctum saeculare* of the Old Covenant through regulations regarding the bodily worship (*latria*) of God is being discussed. Thomas notes that *saeculare* can mean 'temporal' so that the sanctification of the sanctuary of the Old Covenant is limited in duration. But Thomas disagrees because he notes that the Greek has *sanctum mundanum* (Gr. *kosmikos*). Thomas concludes that the difference between both Covenants does not have to do with the use of material things because both make use of them. Rather, the New Covenant contains grace, which works through visible things, while the Old does not contain grace in itself.³⁰ In Hebr. 9, 11-12 it is said that Christ, the High Priest, obtained eternal redemption by entering through the greater (*per amplius*) and more perfect tabernacle into the heavenly sanctuary. Thomas comments that *per amplius* can be taken as one word (*peramplius*) so that it has a spatial meaning, i.e. very large. He correctly notes, however, that the Greek original has *per* (Gr. *dia*) as a preposition so that *per amplius* is used here in an instrumental sense, i.e. through a superior tabernacle (no. 437).³¹ A final

²⁴ Harkins, "Docuit", 253.

²⁵ Cf. G. Dahan, *Lire la Bible au Moyen Âge. Essais d'herméneutique médiévale*, Genève, Droz, 2009, 161-195.

²⁶ This method is not limited to textual variants in Scripture. Thomas also made extensive use of different translations in his commentaries on Aristotle. In his commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* he uses no less than five different translations, indicated by *alia littera*. See James P. Reilly Jr., "The 'alia littera' in Thomas Aquinas's 'Sententia libri metaphysicae,'" *Medieval Studies* 50 (1998): 559-583.

²⁷ Here are the numbers: 102, 181, 217, 373, 395, 402, 412, 415, 437, 533, 549, 558, 568, 608, 628, 672, 704, 710, 720, 728.

²⁸ Here are the numbers dealing with a Greek variant or observation on the Greek text: 217, 415, 437, 568, 608, 710. Surprisingly Thomas does not mention the Greek textual variant for *gratia Dei* in Hebr. 2:9. A number of both Eastern and Western Fathers, and some later manuscripts, read the Greek as *chōris theou* ("apart from/except God") instead of *chariti theou* ("by the grace of God"). See Jürgen Vijgen, 'Saint Thomas Aquinas's Biblical Exegesis: Hebrews 2:9 as a Case Study', in: *Nova & Vetera* 19/1 (2021), 269-298.

²⁹ Contemporary exegetes are critical of the identification of the word of God with the pre-existent Word. Gräßer calls it an "outdated" identification (Gräßer, *An die Hebräer*. Vol. 1, p. 228. Johnson admits to the possibility of "implicit personification" (Johnson, *Hebrews*, 135); Healey (*Hebrews*, 93) has a similar view. Koester (*Hebrews*, 273) considers it "unlikely" precisely because in his view Hebrews does not have a *logos* Christology.

³⁰ Johnson (*Hebrews*, 218), for instance, argues that the meaning of *kosmikos* is not 'opposed to God' as in Titus 2, 12 but cosmological so that worship carried on earth and merely human is contrast to worship in heaven in the presence of God.

³¹ For a similar view see Koester, *Hebrews*, 408.

example concerns an expression in Hebr. 12: 23. Following Peter Lombard, Thomas distinguishes three versions: (1) “et spiritum iustorum perfectorum”; (2) “et spirituum iustorum perfectorum” and (3) “et spiritus iustorum perfectorum”.³² While Peter Lombard does not express a preference for one of these, Thomas regards the first one as “better and clearer” (*melior et planior*) because it concurs with the Greek text.³³ As such Hebrews 12: 23 says that “you have come to the Holy Spirit who makes the saints perfect in justice”. (no. 710).³⁴

Regarding the Latin variants we single out the definition of faith in Hebr. 11:1 (“Est autem fides sperandarum substantia rerum, argumentum non apparentium”). Towards the end of his analysis, Thomas mentions an *alia littera* for *argumentum*, i.e. *convictio* (no. 558). There is a large agreement among modern commentators that both *substantia* (*hypostasis*) and *argumentum* (*elenchos*) refer to an “objective proof”.³⁵ “Conviction”, Johnson writes, “in a subjective sense seems to stretch the term too far.”³⁶ We note that Thomas only uses the term *convictio* four times in all his writings. Apart from no. 558, one encounters the term in *ST II-II*, q. 4, a. 1 resp.; *De veritate* q. 14, a. 2 resp. and *Super II Thess.* c. 3, l. 2, no. 85. Nowhere, however, does Thomas imply to equate faith with a subjective opinion or feeling. On the contrary, the conviction is a result of God’s authority and God’s moving the intellect to assent. A final interesting case occurs when Hebr. 10:8 quotes a version of Hab. 2:4. Thomas notes two different versions (“non placebit animae meae” vs. “non erit recta anima eius”) but concludes that the sense is the same.³⁷ “Jerome says that wherever the Hebrew differs from the Septuagint, the Apostle uses what he learned from Gamaliel, at whose feet he learned the law.” (no. 549). Thomas refers to a passage in Jerome’s Letter 53 where Jerome writes about Paul’s instruction in Hebrew by Gamaliel, mentioned in Acts 22:3, but also Paul’s absorption of the Greek language while in Tarsus.³⁸

3. Semantical analysis

The semantical analysis of words in search for their meaning is an integral part of biblical exegesis then and now. Thomas often uses etymology but not in today’s sense as a search for the origin of words but in the sense of a “deepening of the meaning by way of a play upon words or paronomasia”.³⁹ For instance, the description of Christ as a merciful (*misericos*) High Priest in 2:17 occasions Thomas to give a very common analysis of *miser cordia*, which he found in Augustine’s *De Civitate Dei IX*, 5, as “having a heart grieved at another’s

³² Peter Lombard, *Collectanea in Hebr.* (PL 192, 508C).

³³ Thomas is in fact referring, not the commonly accepted *pneumasi* but to a textual variant *pneumati*.

³⁴ The source is again Peter Lombard. Both Thomas (“*Spiritum Sanctum, qui facit perfectos in iustitia*”) and Lombard (“*spiritum qui facit perfectos justos*”) use similar expressions. Primasius, however, is most explicit in identifying *spiritus* with the Holy Spirit: “*Spiritum perfectorum vocat Spiritum sanctum, per quem iusti vocantur omnes in baptisate accipientes ab illo remissionem omnium peccatorum.*” (PL 68, 783D). This identification is absent in modern commentators such as Graßer, Koester and Johnson.

³⁵ Graßer, *An die Hebräer*. Vol. 3, 98; Koester, *Hebrews*, 472; Alan C. Mitchell, *Hebrews*, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2006, 258 (*Sacra Pagina*).

³⁶ Johnson, *Hebrews*, 278.

³⁷ On the difficulties regarding this quote from Habakuk see Graßer, *An die Hebräer*. Vol. 3, 75-78 and Koester, *Hebrews*, 462.

³⁸ See Jerome, Letter 53: “*Paulus Apostolus ad pedes Gamalielis legem Moysi et Prophetas didicisse se*” (PL 22, 542). But, as suggested by P. Chojnacka, see also Comm. in Abacuc Lib 1, cap. 2 “*testimoniis quae a Gamalielle doctore legis didicerat*” (PL 25, col.1292 C).

³⁹ G. Dahan, “Thomas d’Aquin, exégète des Pastorales et de Philémon”, in Thomas d’Aquin, *Commentaires des Épîtres à Timothée I et II, à Tite et à Philémon* (Paris: Cerf, 2020), 18.

misfortune” (*miserum cor super aliena miseria*) (no. 153).⁴⁰ The use of *argumentum* in 11:1 also occasions a deepening of the meaning (*arguens mentem*) which emphasizes the process of assent due to the certainty of what is believed (no. 558). Thomas reads the use of *signum* and of *portentum* in Hebr. 2:4 as indicating a difference between lesser and greater miracles.⁴¹ The reading of *portentum* as indicating a causal exertion of influence from a distance (*porro vel procul tensum*) indicates the greatness of a miracle such as the raising of the dead (no. 99).⁴²

4. The division of the text (*divisio textus*)

One of the most striking features of scholastic biblical exegesis in general and Thomas’s reading of Scripture in particular is the division of the text into smaller units.⁴³ The aim of a *divisio textus* is to present the reader “with a logical net of coordinates within which all parts can be brought into relationship with one another”⁴⁴ and as such it serves a pedagogical and hermeneutical purpose.⁴⁵ Pedagogically, the division of the text into smaller units allows the reader/listener to identify the function of a passage within the whole of the text and to clarify its relation to other passages. Hermeneutically such a division allows the commentator to display the perspective, i.e. the interpretative options on the basis of which he reads a text. The division of the text is, however, not limited to the text as a whole but also consists of a division of the text which goes down to an individual verse or part of a verse. The *divisio textus* is therefore not to be overlooked but an essential part in understanding the work of the commentator.

According to Thomas, Hebrews is divided into two parts: (1) the first part (chs. 1-10) deals with the excellence of Christ, i.e. the excellence of the New Testament compared to the Old Testament whereas (2) the second part (chs. 11-13) concerns faith as that which unites the members to the head, i.e. Christ. Each part is further subdivided into three parts: (1.1.) The excellence of Christ over the angels by whom the law was handed down (chs. 1-2); (1.2.) The excellence of Christ over Moses by whom the law was given (chs. 3-4); (1.3.) The excellence of Christ over the Old Testament priesthood, by which the law was administered, especially Aaron (chs. 5-10). The second part is subdivided into (2.1.) The definition of faith (ch. 11:1); (2.2.) Various examples of faith (11:2-11:40); (2.3.) Moral admonitions (12:1-*Explicit*). This well-ordered division stands somewhat in contrast to the *divisio textus* proposed by his contemporaries Hugh of St. Cher and Peter of Tarentaise.⁴⁶ Thomas’s division is most closely resembled by Donald Guthrie’s twofold structure of doctrinal instruction (1:1-10:18) followed

⁴⁰ For an identical analysis see ST I, q. 21, a. 3 co; ST II-II, q. 30, a. 1 co; Super Mt. c. 15, l. 3.

⁴¹ See ST II-II, q. 178, a. 1, ad 3.

⁴² For other semantic analyses see for instance nos. 227, 621, 734.

⁴³ Gilbert Dahan has drawn attention to this feature many times. See for instance his *Étudier la Bible au Moyen Âge. Essais d’herméneutique médiévale II*, Droz, Genève, 2020, ch. 10 “Le schématisation dans l’exégèse médiévale ».

⁴⁴ Prügl, “Thomas as Interpreter of Scripture”, 401.

⁴⁵ See G. Dahan, “Introduction” in Thomas d’Aquin. *Commentaires des deux Épîtres aux Thessaloniens*, Cerf, Paris, 2016, 26-27.

⁴⁶ Hugh of St. Cher proposes a fourfold division: (1) The excellence of Christ compared to creatures (Chs. 1-6); (2) The excellence of Christ’s priesthood compared to the Levitical priesthood (Chs. 7-10); (3) The recommendation of faith as access to Christ (ch. 11); (4) Moral instruction (Chs. 12-13). Peter of Tarentaise proposes the following: (1) the excellence of Christ and the insufficiency and imperfection of the law (Chs. 1-7); (2) Recapitulation: the insufficiency and abolition of the Old Testament (Chs. 8-10:18); (3) Moral instruction (Chs. 10:19-13-17); (4) Conclusion (Ch. 13:18-25).

by an application (10:19-13:17).⁴⁷ Other scholars, however, have proposed a wide range of divisions. Ceslaus Spicq for instance divides Hebrews into four main divisions, bordered by an introduction (1:1-4) and an appendix (13:1-19). The divisions are entitled and run as follows: (1) “The incarnate Son of God is King of the Universe” (1:5-2:18); (2) “Jesus, faithful and compassionate High Priest” (3:1-5:10); (3) “The authentic Priesthood of Jesus Christ” (7:10-10:18); (4) “Persevering faith” (10:19-12:29). His division, however, remains close to that of Thomas in so far as he identifies Hebr. 10:19 and following as “a practical application” of the previous doctrinal discussion.⁴⁸ A different approach is taken by the influential work of Albert Vanhoye sj. He proposes five parts framed by an introduction (1:1-4) and conclusion (13: 20-21). The parts are (1) The superiority of Christ’s name to the angels (1:5-2:18); (2) Christ’s faithfulness and compassion (3:1-5:10); (3) the central exposition on sacrifice (5:11-10:39); (4) faith and endurance (11:1-12:13); and (5) the peaceful fruit of justice (12:14-13:19). What is more, Vanhoye arranges the five parts concentrically around the theme of Christ’s priesthood, which he thinks is the central point of the central section three and is identified by the author himself in 8:1.⁴⁹ Other approaches focus not on content or form but on the rhetorical forms displayed throughout the text so that in the case of Hebrews one discerns a fivefold division into (1) exordium (1:1-2:4); (2) proposition (2:5-9); (3) arguments (2:10-12:27); (4) peroration (12:28-13:21) and (5) epistolary postscript (13:22-25).⁵⁰ Numerous other divisions or amendments to these approaches have been proposed.⁵¹ The disagreement among contemporary scholars, however, as well as the closeness of the proposals by Guthrie and Spicq, validate the approach undertaken by Thomas.

There is not only the division of the text as a whole by which the listener/reader is introduced into the principle themes of the text but also the division of each lesson which situates the passage under review within the general division of the text and divides the passage in review in an orderly manner. For instance, no. 155 in chapter 3, lesson 1 introduces Thomas’s commentary on Hebr. 3:1-6. Thomas starts by referring back to chapter 1, lesson one, no. 6 to remind the reader/listener of the central theme, i.e. the excellence of Christ which manifests itself in the superiority of the New Testament over the Old Testament. More concretely, the excellence of Christ is manifested in His preeminence over (1) the angels, by whom the law was handed down, (2) Moses, by whom the law was given and (3) the priesthood, by which the law was administered. The first point, Christ’s preeminence over the angels, was established in chapters 1-2. Christ’s preeminence over Mozes is the topic of chapters 3-4 while His preeminence over the priesthood and in particular Aaron’s priesthood is treated in chapters 5-10. The passage under review (Hebr. 3:1-6) forms part therefore of Christ’s preeminence over Moses. More in particular Hebr. 3:1-6 gives the reasons for Christ’s preeminence over Moses whereas the remainder of chapter 3 concludes that Christ is most deserving of obedience (vs. 7-11) and discusses what Christ’s authority entails (vs. 12-19).

One can find an even more helpful pedagogical tool for the reader/listener in the beginning of chapter 9, lesson 3 dealing with Hebr. 9: 11-14. Thomas explains that Hebr. 9:1-10 has dealt with the Old Testament and the first tabernacle and that we are now entering into what

⁴⁷ Donald Guthrie, *Hebrews*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1983, 58-59.

⁴⁸ Ceslaus Spicq, *L’Épître aux Hébreux* (2 vols. : Paris : Gabalda, 1952), vol. I, p. 36.

⁴⁹ A. Vanhoye, *La structure littéraire de L’Épître aux Hébreux* (Paris : Desclée de Brouwer, 1963).

⁵⁰ Examples of this approach are Koester and Johnson.

⁵¹ See Barry Joslin, “Can Hebrews be structured? An assessment of eight approaches”, in: *Currents in Biblical Research* 6 (2007), 99-129.

belongs to the New Testament and the second tabernacle. Thomas adds an important observation, introduced by *sciendum est*, in which he explains that five things are already said of the first tabernacle which one can apply to the second tabernacle, i.e. who (*quis*) entered, his dignity and the condition of the place he entered, how (*quomodo*) he entered, when (*quando*) he entered and why (*quare*) he entered. A medieval reader/listener, trained in the *artes*, would immediately recall Aristotle's doctrine on the seven circumstances of an act in his Nicomachean Ethics, Book III (111a2-6) and which were known in the Middle Ages in the following verse: "Quis, quid, ubi, quibus auxiliis, cur, quomodo, quando".⁵²

There is also third kind of division or "micro-division" in the words of Gilbert Dahan which goes all the way down to a single verse or a part of a verse. By way of example we offer the division of Hebr. 1:3 which 1:3 reads: "Who, being the splendor of his glory and the figure of his substance and upholding all things by the word of his power, making purgation of sins, sits at the right hand of the majesty on high." Thomas divides this verse as follows:

1. Christ is worthy of his glory and dignity: "*Who, being the splendor of his glory and the figure of his substance and upholding all things by the word of his power, making purgation of sins*" (nos. 24-40).

1.1. First reason: the ease (*facilitas*) with which He acts (no. 25): "*Who, being the splendor of his glory and the figure of his substance and upholding all things by the word of his power*"

(a) Dignity with ease⁵³ requires three things:

1. Wisdom: "*splendor of his glory*"

2. Nobility: "*the figure of his substance*"

3. Power: "*upholding all things by the word of his power*"

(b) Reasons why these three things are present in Christ (nos. 26-36)

1.2. Second reason: the diligence (*industria*) and strenuousness (*strenuitas*) with which He acts (no. 37): "*making purgation of sins*"

(a) To cleanse from sin belongs (*convenit*) to Christ because of his divine nature (no. 38)

(b) To cleanse from sin belongs also to Christ by appropriation: four reasons why this is so (no. 39)

⁵² See ST I-II, q. 7, a. 3 and Leo Elders, *The Ethics of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington D.C.: CUA Press, 2019), 49-51 for an historical background. The mnemonic verse quoted by Thomas, "Quis, quid, ubi, quibus auxiliis, cur, quomodo, quando," is attributed to Matthew of Vendome, author of *Ars versificatoria* (R.-A. Gauthier and J. Y. Jolif, *L'Éthique a Nicomaque: Introduction, traduction et commentaire* [Louvain: Publications Universitaires de Louvain; Paris: Éditions Béatrice-Nauwelaerts, 1958-59, 2/1:186

⁵³ NOTE FOR THE FRENCH TRANSLATOR: The two existing English translations use "ease" for the Latin "facilitas" which suggest Christ acts in an easy way or "d'une manière facile" in French. But I think one has to distinguish between the features or characteristics of an action (starting with no 37) on the one hand and the esse, the being so to speak, which underlies these characteristics for action and express a disposition, on the basis of which Christ has the power to act with *industria* and *strenuitas*. The language "tria quae faciunt facilitatem" points to three habits or dispositions which enable Christ to act in a certain way, with *industria* and *strenuitas*. So I would suggest to use the French equivalent of "ability" or "readiness" and not "ease".

(c) Four ways Christ effected this cleansing from sin (no. 40)

2. Christ's glory and dignity is being disclosed: "*sits at the right hand of the majesty on high.*" (nos. 40)

2.1. "*sits*" implies (a) authority of the one seated, (b) stability of the one sitting and (c) humility (no. 41)

2.2. Objection: "*I see the heavens opened and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God*" (Acts 7:55) (no. 42)

2.3. "*at the right hand*" refers to both his divine and his human nature but as divine Christ has the same majesty as the Father: "*of the majesty*" (no. 43)

2.4. "*on high*": Christ's majesty excels all creatures (no. 44)

5. The "*quaestio*"

The *quaestio* is arguably the most recognizable feature of the scholastic method. While the form (raising of a question, arguments pro and contra, solution, response to the opposing difficulties) as one encounters it in Thomas's *Summa theologiae* or in his many *Quaestiones disputatae* is linked to the rise of the schools (12th century) and universities (13th century), the method is well known by the Church Fathers and is not limited to speculative theology.⁵⁴

While the Fathers limited themselves to questions immediately raised by the text and to questions dealing with textual matters, the rise of the schools and the universities and their engagement with a wide range of *auctoritates* resulted in the formulation of much broader questions as well as the *quaestio* being the preferred method of teaching and education. By way of example the *Quaestiones et Decisiones in Epistolas D. Pauli*, as printed in PL 175 and regarding Hebrews in particular (col. 607-634), formulate 113 questions raised by the text commented upon. The answers often contain expressions belonging to a formal *quaestio* such as "quaeritur", "solutio", "dicunt quidam", "sed dicit aliquis", etc.⁵⁵

Throughout Thomas's commentary on Hebrews one can find numerous instances of scholastic *quaestiones* (or parts of them) throughout the text.⁵⁶ A large number of these questions are aimed at harmonizing different Scripture passages. So for instance when Hebr. 1:11 says that "[the heavens] will perish" Thomas confronts this verse with Ecclesiastes I: 4 "the earth stands forever". On the basis of the Aristotelian principle "in every change there is a coming

⁵⁴ For a first introduction see William Hoyer, "Die mittelalterliche Methode der Quaestio" in: *Philosophie: Studium, Text und Argument*, eds. Norbert Herold, Bodo Kensmann and Sibille Mischer (Aschendorff; Münster, 1997, 155-178). Thomas recognizes in Boethius one of the sources of the *quaestio*: See *In De Hebdomadibus*, lectio 4, no.55.

⁵⁵ These *Quaestiones* (PL 175, 607-634), composed ca. 1155-1165 in Paris were mistakenly attributed to the Victorine School. They are, according to Glorieux (Essai sur les « Quaestiones in epistolas Pauli » du Ps.-Hugues de Saint-Victor", in *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 19 (1952), pp. 48-59) highly depended upon Robert of Melun's *Quaestiones de Epistolis Pauli* (*Oeuvres de Robert de Melun. II*, ed. Raymond M. Martin, Louvain 1932). This can be confirmed also with regard to Hebrews: question XVII of the *Quaestiones* in PL 175, col. 613 is identical to Robert of Melun (ed. Martin, p. 290).

⁵⁶ Typical expressions used are "respondeo" (91 times), "sed contra" (51 times), "numquid" (43 times) but also expressions such as "quaestio" (7 times), "dubium" (6 times) or "sciendum est" are often used in the context of the formulation of a question.

into existence and a ceasing to exist”⁵⁷ the “will perish” (*peribunt*) cannot refer to the substance, as is testified by Job 37:18 (“The heavens are most strong...”) but to their state as is said in Rev. 21:1 (“a new heaven and a new earth) and 1 Cor. 7:31 (“the *fashion* of the world passes away”). Thomas concludes therefore that at the last judgement everything will perish in a certain way (*quodammodo*), i.e. from the state in which they are now, whereas only God remains eternally the same: “But you, O Lord, endure forever” (Ps. 102:13) (no. 72).

Hebr. 2:14 suggests that the devil possesses the power of death which seems to contradict 1 Sam. 2:6 (“The Lord kills and makes alive”) and Deut. 32:39 (I will kill and I will make alive”), verses which suggest that killing is God’s prerogative. Thomas distinguishes between ‘inflicting death’ which belongs to a judge and ‘deserving death’ which belongs to the criminal. It is in the former sense that the power of death belongs to God and in the latter sense to the devil by whom death came into the world (Wis 2:24) (no.141). Hebr. 6:2 speaks of “the doctrine of baptisms (*baptismatum*)”. The plural ‘baptisms’ seems to contradict Ephes. 4:5 “one faith, one baptism” (no. 283). Contemporary commentators have offered various interpretations⁵⁸ for the use of the plural. Thomas repeats the solution offered by Peter Lombard that there are three kinds of baptism, i.e. of water, of desire and of blood but the latter two only produce an effect if the first, the baptism of water, is intended (*in proposito*).⁵⁹

Sometimes these attempts to harmonize Scripture can develop into a more complex (set of) questions. So for instance the claim in Hebr. 8:11 that with the coming of the New Testament there shall no longer be the need to teach because “all shall know me” seems to contradict St. Paul’s self-description as teacher of the gentiles (*doctorem gentium*). Thomas distinguishes between the present state and the future state in heaven. In the present state the Apostles were not instructed by others but received directly from Christ infused wisdom. In the future state there will no longer be a need for instruction because the end of instruction, knowledge, will be perfectly acquired (no. 408). This solution is offered by Peter Lombard as well.⁶⁰ Thomas, however, adds an additional difficulty, absent from Hugh of St. Cher’s Postilla as well but also from Peter of Tarentaise. If angels can teach one other, as Dionysius says, than surely a man in heaven in his future, glorious state.⁶¹ Thomas again distinguishes between the angels’ knowledge of the divinity as such, which is a beatifying knowledge, and a knowledge of something distinct from God, such as His effects, which does not cause beatitude.⁶² Regarding the former kind of knowledge there is no need for instruction whereas regarding the latter there is “perhaps until the end of the world, as long as the execution of God’s effects continues.” (no. 409).

Another example of a complex question regards Hebr. 1:3 “by the word of his power” and in particular to what “the word” refers to (no 34). Thomas mentions the view of Basil, as he did

⁵⁷ See *In V Phys.* Lectio 1, no. 641.

⁵⁸ Spicq (Vol. II, 148) offers as possibilities: triple immersions for the Trinity or baptism relative to water, blood and desire or outer washings and inner purifications; see also Gräßer vol I, 341-342.

⁵⁹ Peter Lombard, *In Epistolam ad Hebraeos* PL 192, 440D-441A. For Thomas’ systematic treatment see ST III, q. 60, aa. 11-12. The *sed contra* of art. 11 explicitly mentions Hebr. 6 in the Gloss. These three kinds of baptism were already mentioned by John of Damascene, *De fide orthodoxa*, Bk. 4, ch. 9 (PG 94:1124).

⁶⁰ *In Epistolam ad Hebraeos* PL 192, 462D-463A

⁶¹ Thomas relies on Dionysius’ *Celestial Hierarchy*, ch. 8, § 1 (PG 3, 240).

⁶² See ST I, q. 106, a. 1 on angelic illumination.

on other occasions⁶³, for whom it refers to the Holy Spirit but rejects it because for him the Spirit proceeds not as a concept of the intellect but as love issuing from the will. He mentions the alternative explanation given by the Gloss, i.e. “the word” refers to the Son’s authority. But Thomas continues and asks about the nature of this “word”. He argues that it cannot be other than the eternal Word for two eternal Words would be blasphemous. Finally, he relies on the explanation of Augustine to argue that “the word” refers to the Word of the Father.⁶⁴

A final example of a complex set of questions regards the faith of Enoch in Hebr. 11:5-6 (nos. 570-577). Here one can clearly notice an additional feature of Aquinas’s method of posing and responding to a question, i.e. the use of syllogistic logic. Hebr. 11:5-6 reads thus: “By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death: and he was not found because God had translated him. For before his translation he had testimony that he pleased God. 6. But without faith it is impossible to please God. For he that comes to God must believe that he is: and is a rewarder to those who seek him.” Relying on Gen. 5:24 and Ps. 88:49 Thomas explains that, because Enoch pleased God by the merit of faith, his death has been deferred and has entered into paradise.⁶⁵ This conclusion rests on two premises. The major, i.e. Enoch has entered paradise because he pleased God, is supported by the authority of Scripture and in particular Sir 44: 16 (“Enoch pleased God and was translated into paradise, that he may give repentance to the nations”). The second part of the major, i.e. the pleasing of God, finds support in Scripture by equating ‘pleasing’ with ‘walking with God’ and applying Mal 2:6 (“he walked with me in peace and in equity”) and Ps. 101:6 (“the man that walked in the perfect way, he served me.”) to Enoch. The minor finds support in Sir 1:34 (“faith is agreeable to him”) and Rom. 3:28 (“for we account a man to be justified by faith.”). The proof of the first part of the minor premise which Scripture itself offers in Hebr. 11:6 (“for he that comes to God must believe that he is”) happens by connecting ‘to please’ with ‘to have faith’ via ‘to draw near to God’ on the basis of James 4:8 (“draw near to God and he will draw near to you”) and Ps. 34:6 (“draw near to him and be enlightened.”). At this point (no. 575) Thomas adds a comparison between final causality as established in philosophy and the movement of drawing near to God in order to establish that the terminus of such a movement must be God himself.

Having established the existence of God as part of the content of the faith which ‘pleases God’, Thomas continues with the second part of the minor: “and is a rewarder to those who seek him”. Through a number of Scriptural references Thomas argues that the reward that is being sought can only be God himself. At this point Thomas raises the question whether

⁶³ See *De veritate* q. 4, a. 3, obj. 1 and *ST I*, q. 34, a. 2, ad 5. The reference is to Basil, *Adversus Eunomium* V (PG 29, 732A) and the critical apparatus of the Leonine edition, vol. XX/1, fasc. 2, p. 126. Note that in both DV and ST Thomas takes a more nuanced approach to Basil, arguing that Basil speaks figuratively (*improprie et figurate locutus est*) in applying “word” to the Holy Spirit.

⁶⁴ This final question is not raised by Hugh or Peter nor do they mention Basil.

⁶⁵ Enoch shares this privilege with Elijah as a prefiguration within the Old Testament of the promises of the New Testament realized in Christ. Contrary to Christ, however, Enoch and Elijah will eventually be put to death by the Antichrist, so Thomas argues (no. 571), before their resurrection. Although widespread in the thirteenth century (see David Burr, “The Antichrist and the Jews in four thirteenth-century Apocalypse commentaries” in *The Friars and the Jews in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, ed. by Steven J. McMichael and Susan E. Myers, Leiden: Brill, 2004, 23-38) and going back to the early Christian writers Tertullian and Hippolyte (see Rodney L. Petersen, *Preaching in the Last Days* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993, 28-57), Peter Lombard does not mention this claim. The origins of the claim lie in Apoc. 11:7 and the apocryphal text Apocalypse of Elijah. See Richard Bauckham, “The Martyrdom of Enoch and Elijah: Jewish or Christian?” in *Journal of Biblical Literature* 95 (1976, 447-458).

belief in the existence of God as a rewarder is sufficient for salvation. Peter Lombard made the same claim but did not develop an argument⁶⁶ whereas the slightly earlier *Summa sententiarum* confesses ignorance on the matter (*divino iudicio relinquamus*).⁶⁷ Robert of Melun mentions an alternative position, i.e. that the term ‘rewarder’ can be understood to mean ‘savior’ because ‘faith’ in Hebr. 11:1 is exhaustively defined,⁶⁸ something which Pseudo-Hugo, however, denies.⁶⁹ Hugh of St. Cher remains entirely silent whereas Peter of Tarentaise briefly notes that “perhaps” it is sufficient to explicitly belief in God as a rewarder and only implicitly the other articles of the faith.⁷⁰ Thomas elaborates this position in more detail according to the guiding principle that the necessary faith in Christ the Mediator “varies as far as the mode of belief is concerned, according to the diversity of times and states.” (no. 576). Hence, in a time when more is being revealed, more is explicitly to be believed and vice versa. Thomas raises an objection regarding the possibility to believe in God’s existence when His existence can at the same time be demonstrated. In his answer he distinguishes between the existence of one God on the one hand, which indeed does not fall under faith, and the worship of God alone which the Jews believed and what Christ revealed about the Triune God on the other hand which is to be believed only (no. 577).

6. Alternative explanations

On almost every page of the commentary one can find alternative explanations, introduced by *vel, aliter, vel aliter, dupliciter legitur* or some similar expression. This shows, as Gilbert Dahan has observed, the freedom of the medieval exegete to develop his own reflections, albeit within a certain hermeneutical framework.⁷¹ Thomas also has an apologetic interest, in particular regarding questions which touch on the natural sciences, in so far as holding on to one singular explanation runs the risk of exposing Scripture to the ridicule of unbelievers once the natural sciences prove the impossibility of a certain explanation.⁷² But one must also take into account the fact that Scripture as the Word of God transcends both human comprehension as well as the power to express it using human concepts. Thomas notes this when commenting on Hebr. 5: 11 (“[God] Of whom we have much to say and hard to be intelligibly uttered: because you are become weak to hear.”) Even leaving aside culpable negligence (“because you are become weak to hear”), “the things of Christ” cannot be perfectly explained because He is “above all praise” (Sir. 43:32) and even then it stands in need of an interpretation which, Thomas writes, is a gift of the Holy Spirit (no. 263).

Among the numerous instances of these alternative explanations, we mention the following. The “diverse miracles” of Hebr. 2:4 can refer to physical miracles or the miracles of faith, hope and charity which, so Thomas the Dominican friar notes, are given to God’s preachers (no. 99). The expression “son of man” in Hebr. 2:6 receives multiple explanations (no. 108),

⁶⁶ Peter Lombard, *In Epistolam ad Hebraeos* (PL 192, 491B).

⁶⁷ *Summa sententiarum*, tr. V, c. VI (PL 176, 133A).

⁶⁸ Ed. Martin, p. 313.

⁶⁹ *Quaestiones* (PL 175, 630A)

⁷⁰ Peter of Tarentaise: “sed forte ante legem sufficiebat credere haec duo explicite, cum fide implicita aliorum articolorum” (*In omni Divi Pauli Epistolas elucidatio*, Antverpiae, 1617, 592-686, here 660).

⁷¹ Gilbert Dahan, “Tradition patristique, autorité et progrès dans l’exégèse médiévale », in *Les réceptions des Pères de l’Église au Moyen Âge*, ed. R. Berndt and M. Fédou (Münster: Aschendorff, 2013), 349-368 (See also Gilbert Dahan, *Étudier la Bible au Moyen Âge. Essais d’Herméneutique Médiévale II*, Genève : Droz, 2021, 125-148.

⁷² See ST I, q. 68, a. 1.

as well as the difference between the tools used by Moses in 9:19 and Ex. 24 to sprinkle the people (no. 456). The expression “through the veil” in Hebr. 10:20 can refer to Christ’s incarnated flesh or to the Eucharistic host (no. 502). On several occasions Thomas, using *melius* or an equivalent, expresses his own preference for one of the alternative explanations.⁷³ So for instance, the “therefore” in Hebr. 1:9 (“therefore, God, your God, has anointed you”) is better understood to refer to a final cause rather than a meritorious cause in order to avoid the erroneous impression, which Thomas attributes to Origen, that Christ merited to be God by the merit of his passion (no. 63). The “heavenly things” of which Hebr. 9:23 speaks do not so much refer to the Church here on earth as the Gloss would read it but to the heavenly home (no. 463). A similar correction of the Gloss appears in no. 489 and no. 516.

7. *Against errors and heretics*

In his systematical writings on the nature and goal of sacred doctrine, the “destruction of errors” is a recurrent theme and constitutes, together with the “manifestation of the truth”, an integral part of St. Thomas’ sapiential theology.⁷⁴ He finds support for this approach in Aristotle’s demonstration by refutation of the principle of non-contradiction in his *Metaphysics* IV, chapters 4–5.⁷⁵ Even more important is a frequently cited passage from Aristotle’s *Sophistical Refutations* in which Aristotle writes that two things pertain to the work of a wise man, namely: not to lie about things he knows and to be able to refute the one who does lie.⁷⁶ St. Thomas uses this passage from Aristotle to corroborate both 2 Timothy 3:16 (“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness”) as well as when commenting on Titus 1:9 about the bishop’s task to “hold firm to the sure word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to confute those who contradict it.”⁷⁷ In other words, not only should a sapiential reading and preaching of the Word of God include the destruction of errors but Scripture contains already in itself the motive, content and argumentation to refute those who contradict it.

It should not be surprising therefore that St. Thomas’ biblical commentaries as well contain numerous instances in which he notes that a certain biblical passage is explicitly written to refute an error or observes that the Apostle Paul uses a certain concept or phrase to

⁷³ We have counted at least fourteen such occasions: nos. 63, 339, 381, 386, 459, 463, 489, 490, 516, 546, 549, 594, 650, 710. Note that chapters 2-6 do not contain such preferential readings introduced by *melius* or other equivalents.

⁷⁴ These expressions are taken from *Summa contra Gentiles* I, ch. 9. For a more detailed analysis see Jürgen Vijgen, “Scripture as a Guidepost for How Not to Read Scripture. Aquinas on the Apologetic Function of Scripture”, in: *Thomas Aquinas, Biblical Theologian*, ed. by Roger Nutt and Michael Dauphinais (Emmaus Academic: Steubenville, 2021), 133-160.

⁷⁵ See *Super Boethium De Trinitate*, q. 2, a. 2, ad 4 (LE 50, 96): “Articuli autem fidei in hac scientia non sunt quasi conclusiones, set quasi principia, que etiam defenduntur ab impugnantibus sicut Philosophus in IV Metaphisice disputat contra negantes principia . . .” and a. 3 (LE 50, 99): “. . . ;tertio ad resistendum his que contra fidem dicuntur, siue ostendendo ea esse falsa, siue ostendendo ea non esse necessaria.”

⁷⁶ Aristotle, *De Sophisticis Elenchis*, a Boethio transl. I, 165a24–27 (AL VI 1-3, 6): “Est autem, ut sit ad unum dicere, in unoquoque opus scientis non mentiri quidem eum de quibus novit, mentientem autem manifestare posse.” See also *SCG* I, 9: “Ex praemissis igitur evidenter apparet sapientis intentionem circa duplicem veritatem divinatorum debere versari, et circa errores contrarios destruendos...”

⁷⁷ Cf. *Super Tit.* 1, lec. 3, no. 24; *Super II Tim.* 3, lec. 3, no. 127; *Principium biblicum (De commendatione et partitione Sacrae Scripturae)*, pars 2.

exclude an error.⁷⁸ Moreover, for St. Thomas both the Letter to the Hebrews as well as the first four propositions of the Prologue to John's Gospel are in their entirety written with the refutation of errors in mind.⁷⁹

Regarding his commentary on Hebrews, one can find that, as in his other biblical commentaries, Manichaeism is Thomas' principal adversary, featuring nine times. Already the opening verses (Hebr. 1:1-2: "speaking in times past to the fathers in the prophets... , Last of all, in these days, has spoken to us by his Son...by whom he also made the world") clearly demonstrate that, despite the New Testament's eminence over the Old Testament, both have God as the same author (no. 19). Hebrews itself, in fact, confirms this fact when it ascribes to the Holy Spirit the words Psalm 94: 8-11 (no. 171). But it also demonstrates that God did indeed create temporal things (no. 23) which are subjected to Him and not to an evil god (no. 103). Another principal error he attributes to Mani regards the reality of Christ's flesh and death. Christ did partake in the flesh and blood of men (Hebr. 2:14). It did not merely appear to be so as if imagined by the spectators but rather "in like manner", that is to say, according to the truth of the thing (*secundum rei veritatem*) or "in a personal and substantial way (*personaliter et substantialiter*)" (nos. 138-139). No was Christ's death imaginary (*phantastica*) but rather did He taste death (Hebr. 2:9; no. 126). Discussing the "translation of the law" in Hebr. 7:12, Thomas anticipates an objection which he attributes to Mani regarding the connection between divine providence and an immutable law for, as would seem to follow from Hebr. 7:12, a changed law cannot be the effect of divine providence but only an immutable law like the Old Law can. In his response Thomas makes the crucial distinction between an immutable divine providence and the Law which is changed "on account of the change of time" so that God is said to be a "dispenser" who, according to the same providence, gives "according to a diversity of times and persons now some, now other precepts." (no. 352).

Second in line with five references is Origen. Hebr. 1:9 writes about the Son being anointed, seemingly as the result of (*propterea*) loving justice and hating iniquity, quoting Ps. 44:8. Thomas notes that this anointing is a spiritual anointing, i.e. a being filled with the Holy Spirit. But this raises the question whether Christ merited this grace which is contrary to Rom. 11:6 but also to John 1:14 where it is said that Christ was "full of grace and truth" at his conception. Thomas inserts what he calls an "error of Origen" who not only argued for the preexistence of Christ's soul but also for the fact that Christ's soul merited a greater grace than other spiritual substances by loving God more than those other spiritual substances. Thomas declares the preexistence of Christ's soul to be an heretical position. But this does not solve the use of "therefore" (*propterea*) in Hebr. 1:9. At this point Thomas notes that the Gloss seems to agree with Origen. Thomas is most likely referring to the Gloss's as well as Peter Lombard's use of "praemium" in this context.⁸⁰ Thomas proposes two solutions of which he prefers the second one. The first solution "saves" the idea of a meritorious cause implied by the Gloss but argues that Scriptures sometimes equates 'to be' with 'to be made known'. Hence, Christ merited grace by his passion not in the sense that grace came into existence by his passion but in the sense that it became manifest. But Thomas prefers (*melius*) the solution by which *propterea* does not refer to a meritorious cause but to a final cause so that Christ was anointed in order that he might possess a throne and scepter (no. 63).⁸¹

⁷⁸ Cf. e.g. *Super Colos.* 1, lec. 4, no. 32: "Hoc autem excludit apostolus..."; *Super II Cor.* 3, lec. 1, no. 32: "Et hoc est contra Pelagianos dicentes..."; *Super Phil.* 2, lec. 2, no. 62: "Et per hoc etiam excluditur error Photini..."; *Super Hebr.* 1, lec. 1, no. 23: "In hoc ergo removet errorem Manichaei...".

⁷⁹ Cf. *Super Hebr.* 1, lec. 1, no. "Scripsit autem epistolam istam contra errores...".

⁸⁰ *In Epistolam ad Hebraeos* (PL 192, 441A). Hugh of St. Cher (*Postilla*, ed. Venetis: Apud Nicolaum Pezzani, 1703, vol. 8, 239v) also speaks about a reward (*praemium*).

⁸¹ *In Psalm.* 44, n. 5 contains an almost identical explanation but there Thomas connects the first solution to the final cause and the second to the efficient cause and does not mention a meritorious cause.

Another error attributed to Origen occurs when discussing Ps. 109:1 (“sit on my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool”) as quoted in Hebr. 1:13. Explaining that ‘footstool’ denotes complete subjection, Thomas inserts another of Origen’s errors. For because Origen equated ‘subjection’ with ‘being saved’ he concluded that, in order for all things to be subjected to Christ, even the devils would be saved.⁸² Thomas distinguishes once again between the type of subjection which occurs by the will of the subjects and another type of subjection occurring by the will of the master. Only those who exhibit the former type possess the goodness necessary to be saved whereas those of the latter type do not. Nevertheless they remain subjected to Christ because “because Christ will accomplish his will in their regard by punishing those who refused to do his will here.” (no. 82).

A final error attributed to Origen occurs when commenting on the paraphrase of Haggai 2:6 in Hebrews 12:26 and in particular on the use of “once more” (*semel*). For Thomas the use of “once more” connotes a definitive action that will not be repeated.⁸³ Thomas adds: “This is against Origen who believed that the world will be renewed an infinitude of times and be recovered.” (no. 721).⁸⁴

Thomas mentions a number of other heretics from the early Church by name⁸⁵ but also the “Poor Men of Lyons” (no. 343), i.e. the followers of the 12th century leader of the Waldensians, Peter Waldo (ca. 1140-ca. 1205) who questioned the need for the existence of an ordained clergy. Thomas details their position when commenting on Hebr. 7:7 (“And without any contradiction, that which is less is blessed by the better.”) The Poor Men of Lyons, according to Thomas, reject the principle that the better bless that which is less and consequently they hold “every just man is a priest and no sinner is a priest.” Thomas rejects this error in the most strong words and calls it a “pernicious” opinion because it deprives the faithful of any certainty about their salvation in general and their baptism in particular given that it is impossible to know if a priest is just. On the basis of 1 Cor. 4:1 (*ministros Christi, dispensatores Dei*), Thomas argues that priests do not act in virtue of his own authority but only in virtue of Christ so that the priest’s moral character or the lack thereof is irrelevant.⁸⁶

Conclusion

In this introduction we have discussed the principal exegetical techniques with which Aquinas approaches Scripture and in doing so highlighted a few of the principal themes of his commentary. The entire Letter and Thomas’s commentary deserve much more attention in order to understand and appreciate Thomas’s use of his sources⁸⁷ and the doctrine he develops

⁸² See also *In Hebr.* 2, lectio 4, no. 141.

⁸³ Koester, *Hebrews*, 547 is of the same opinion.

⁸⁴ For more see J. Vijgen, “Aquinas’s Reception of Origen. A Preliminary Study”, in: *Thomas Aquinas and the Greek Fathers*, eds. M. Dauphinais, R. Nutt & A. Hofer (Ave Maria: Sapientia Press, 2019), 30-88.

⁸⁵ Novatianus (no. 291), Apollinaris (no. 126), Priscilla and Montanus (no. 17), Pelagius (no. 689), Nestorius (nos. 138-139).

⁸⁶ Gilles Emery suggests Thomas may have encountered the Poor Men of Lyons through the works of his fellow Dominicans Moneta of Cremona and Raynier Sacconi. See *Thomas d’Aquin, Traités : Les raisons de la foi ; Les articles de la foi et Les sacraments de l’Eglise*, Introduction, traduction du latin et annotation par Gilles Emery (Paris : Cerf, 1999), p. 290. This richly annotated translation gives ample information on various heresies mentioned in the works of Aquinas.

⁸⁷ The majority of the explicit sources come from Augustine (56 times) and Peter Lombard’s *Glossa* (44 times). Other Fathers and authors include Gregory (16), Dionysius (15), Jerome (12), John Chrysostome (7), Basil (2), Bernard (2), John Damascene (1), Ambrose (1), Athanasius (1) and Lactantius (1). Although it seems these authors are often quoted by way of Peter Lombard’s *Glossa* further research (continuing the work of Guggenheim (see note 13) is needed. The reference to Lactantius for instance in no. 285 does not occur in Lombard nor in Hugh of St. Cher or Peter of Tarentaise. In no. 271 Thomas disagrees with the *Glossa* and Augustine on the accessibility for human reason of the Incarnation which Thomas sees as relatively easy

regarding creation and its future (eschatology), the role of Christ in history and in particular Christ's priesthood, the relation of the Old and New Covenants and the role therein of faith and the sacraments. But, as Leo Elders remarked, Aquinas's commentary is not merely a biblical-theological study of the Letter to the Hebrews but also offers a spiritual theology and invites the reader to meditate on these words of Scripture.⁸⁸

Summary list of commentaries on the Letter to the Hebrews until the end of the 13th century

The preceding number (S) refers to F. Stegmüller (and K. Reinhardt), *Repertorium biblicum medii aevi*, t. I-XI, Madrid-Barcelone, 1950-1980 (S). We refer to the *Patrologia Latina* (PL) and *Patrologia Graeca* (PG) and more recent editions. For specific listings of sermons and homilies, see H. J. Sieben, *Kirchenväterhomilien zum Neuen Testament*, Turnhout, 1991, pp. 174-178.

- S 6222,10 ORIGEN OF ALEXANDRIA (ca. 184-ca. 253), *Fragmenta*

PG 14, 1307-1309

- S 4397 JOHANNES CHRYSOSTOMOS (ca. 347-407)

PG 63, 13-236; ed. F. Field, vol. 7, Oxford 1862

-THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA (ca. 350-428)

Ed. K. Staab, *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, Münster 1933, 200-212

-CYRILLUS OF ALEXANDRIA (ca. 376-444)

PG 74, 953-1005

-THEODORET OF CYRUS (ca. 393-ca. 458/466)

PG 82, 673-785

- S 1910 CASSIODORUS (Vth cent)

PL 70, 1357-1362.

- s 7002 CASSIODORUS (school of) (VIth cent).

PL 68, 685-794 (sub nomine Primasius, bishop of Hadrumetum).

-S 3455 PSEUDO-HIERONYMUS (VI cent.)

Ms Paris, BnF lat. 1762 (XI; Blois) f. 279-322

- JOHANNES DAMASCENUS (ca. 675-749)

compared to the presence of the Word as Son in God. The reference to Damascene in no. 149 ("Quod est hominibus mors, est angelis casus, ut dicit Damascenus" = De Fide Orthodoxa ch. 18 (versio Burgundionis); PG 94, 878) is a well-known phrase and occurs in Alexander of Hales, Albert the Great, Bonaventure and Duns Scotus.

⁸⁸ Leo Elders, "La 'Lectura super epistolam ad Hebraeos' de Santo Tomás de Aquino", in *Scripta Theologica* 41/3 (2009) p. 785-809, here p. 808.

PG 95, 929-997

- S 6368 PELAGIUS [Pseudo-] (VIIth-VIIIth cent.)

Ed. H. Zimmer, *Pelagius in Ireland*, Berlin 1901, 420-448.

-S 6368, 1 PELAGIUS [Pseudo-] on Hebr. 2,2-3, 7 (VI-VIIIth cent.)

Ed. A. Souter, A fragment of an unpublished latin text of the epistle to the Hebrews (Hebr. 1, 1-4, 3), with a brief exposition (Hebr. 2, 14-3, 7), *Miscellanea Fr. Ehrle I* (Studi e Testi 37), 1924, 43-46.

- OECUMENIUS (VIIth cent.)

Ed. K. Staab, *Pauluskommentare aus der griechischen Kirche*, Münster 1933, 462-469.

-S 6148 OECUMENIUS [PSEUDO-]

PG 119, 280-452

-s 1099 ALCUINUS (730-804)

PL 100, 1031-1084 [until 10:36]

- s 7621 SEDULIUS SCOTUS (ob. post 858), *Collectaneum*

PL 103, 249-270, ed. H. J. Frede and H. Stanjek (Freiburg, 1997).

-s 7077 RABANUS MAURUS, osb (776-856)

PL 112, 711-834

-S. 6938 FLORUS OF LYON (IX cent.)

PL 119, 411-420

-S 3141 HAIMO OF AUXERRE (ob. 865)

PL 117, 821-938; sub nomine Primasius: PL 68, 685-794

-S 1973 CLAUDIUS OF TURIN (IX cent.)

PL 134, 725-834, sub nomine Hatton of Verceil

-S 7244 REMIGIUS OF AUXERRE (ca. 841-908)

Ms. Vat. Ottob. lat. 278 (XII) f. 214-220.

-S 5383 LANFRANCUS OF CANTERBURY (ob. 1089)

PL150, 375-406

-THEOPHYLACT OF OHRID (ca. 1055-ca. 1107)

PG 125, 186-405

- s 1830 BRUNO THE CARTHUSIAN (ob. 1101) [Pseudo-]

PL 153, 489-566

– S. 11841-11844 *Glossa ordinaria*

impr. A. Rusch, *Biblia Latina cum Glossa ordinaria*, t. IV, Strasbourg, 1480-81 [repr. Turnhout, 1992]

-S. 1219 ALULFUS OF TOURNAI (ob. 1141)

PL 79, 1377-1382

- S. 6316 PSEUDO- PATERIUS, *Hebr. cap. 1-4*.

PL 79, 1135-1136.

- S. 3289 HERVAEUS OF BOURG-DIEU (ob. 1150)

PL 181, 1519-1692.

- S. 3844 PSEUDO- HUGO OF ST. VICTOR, *Quaestiones*

PL 175, 607-634.

- S. 2528 GILBERT OF POITIERS (ca. 1076-1154) = *Media glossatura*

mss Paris, BnF lat. 311; 2580; 12028; 14441, etc.

- S. 8983 CAMBRIDGE COMMENTARY (disciple of Abelard).

Ed. A. Landgraf, *Commentarius Cantabrigiensis in epistolas Pauli e schola Petri Abaelardi*, Notre Dame (Ind.), t. 2,4 (1945) 653-860.

-s. 7141 RAOUL OF LAON (ob. 1131)

Ms. Paris BnF lat. 647, f. 136r-143r

-S 7460 ROBERT OF MELUN (ca. 1000-1167), *Quaestiones*

Ed. R. M .Martin, *Œuvres de R. de M., t. II, Quaestiones [theologicae] de epistolis Pauli*, Louvain, 1938, p. 283-318.

-S 6395 PSEUDO - PETRUS LOMBARDUS

Ms. Paris, BnF lat. 2543 f. 30v-39r.

-S. 6668 PETRUS LOMBARDUS (ob. 1160) = Magna glossatura

PL 192, 399-520.

-S. 7382 ROBERT OF BRIDLINGTON (ob. ca. 1180)

mss Cambridge, Univ. 448 ; Cambridge, Emmanuel College 8.

-S. 6592 PSEUDO - PETRUS COMESTOR (ob. 1178)

Ms. Paris, BnF lat. 651, f. 76r-95v.

- S. 6523 PETRUS CANTOR (ca. 1130-1197)

Ms. Avignon 74 f. 87r-103v

- S. 7920 STEPHEN LANGTON (ob. 1228), *Glossa in Glossam Petri Lombardi*

Ms Paris, BnF lat. 14443, f. 209v-234r

- S. 3740 HUGO OF ST. CHER (ob. 1264), *Postilla*

Ed. Venice, 1703, t. VII, fol. 237-277

- S. 4914 JOHN OF ROCHELLE (ob. 1245)

Ms. Paris, BnF lat. 15603 f. 148-167; 174-175 [Hebr. 2,17-13,13].

- S. 2713 GUERRIC OF ST. QUENTIN (ob. 1245)

Ms. Paris, BnF lat. 15603; Naples, Bibl. Nazionale, VII A 16, etc.

- S. 2385 GAUFRIDUS OF BLENELLO (ob. 1250)

Ms. Paris, Mazarine 180, fol. 120-132.

- S. 8064 THOMAS AQUINAS (ob. 1274)

ed. R. Cai, Turin (Marietti), 8^e éd. 1953, t. II, p. 335-506.

- S. 6882-6895 PETRUS DE TARANTASIA (ob. 1276)

Ms Paris, BnF lat. 15276 (*red. secunda*), etc.

Ed. (sub nomine Nicholas de Gorran), Cologne, 1478; Hagenau, 1502; Antwerp, 1617, p. 592-686.

- S. 5798 NICHOLAS DE GORRAN (ob. 1295)

Ms Paris, BnF lat. 14443, fol. 190r-241r

Selected list of secondary literature on Aquinas's Commentary on the Letter to the Hebrews

Bandera, A., "La redención de la humanidad a la luz de la oblación de Cristo al Padre en el Espíritu eterno (cf. Heb. 9, 14)", in: *Actas del IV Congreso Internacional de la SITA*, Cordoba, 1999, 69-115

--, "Universal mediación de Cristo: una cuestión en torno a la carta a los Hebreos", in: *Verdad y vida* 61 (2003), 339-348.

Berceville, G., "Le sacerdoce du Christ dans le 'Commentaire de l'Épître aux Hébreux' de saint Thomas d'Aquin", in: *Revue Thomiste* 99 (1999) 143-158.

Biffi, I., "Aspetti della figura di Cristo nel commento di Tommaso alla Lettera agli Ebrei", in *Doctor Communis N.S.* 13 (2009), 76-91.

Cabrera, J. M., "El sacerdocio de Jesucristo en el Comentario de santo Tomás a la Carta a los Hebreos", in: *Studium. Filosofía y Teología* vol. 24 (2021), 21-45.

Cooper, A. G., "Hope, a mode of faith: Aquinas, Luther and Benedict XVI on Hebrews 11:1", in: *Heythrop journal* 53 (2012), 182-190.

Dhôtel, J.C., “La sanctification du Christ d’après Hébreux 2, 11. Interprétations des Pères et des scolastiques médiévaux”, in : *Recherches de science religieuse* 47 (1959), 515-543 and 48 (1960), 420-452.

Elders, L. J., “La ‘Lectura super epistolam ad Hebraeos’ de Santo Tomás de Aquino”, in: *Scripta Theologica* 41/3 (2009) 785–815.

Ferraro, G., “Il tema del ‘sangue’ nel commento di San Tommaso D’Aquino all’epistola agli Ebrei (aspetti dottrinali ed esegetici)”, in *Sangue e antropologia biblica. Atti della settimana, Roma, 10-15 marzo 1980. Vol. 2*, Rome, 1981, 831-850.

Guggenheim, A., “Le Christ Grand Prêtre et l’unité de l’ancienne et de la nouvelle Alliance dans le Commentaire de saint Thomas d’Aquin sur l’Épître aux Hébreux (8-10)”, in *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques* 87/3 (2003), 499–523.

--, *Jésus Christ, Grand Prêtre de l’Ancienne et de la Nouvelle Alliance. Étude théologique et herméneutique du Commentaire de saint Thomas d’Aquin sur l’Épître aux Hébreux* (Parole et Silence, Paris, 2007).

- “Histoire, théologie, théologie de l’accomplissement : Hugues de Saint-Victor et saint Thomas d’Aquin”, in *L’Ecole de Saint-Victor de Paris. Influence et rayonnement du moyen âge à l’époque moderne, Actes du Colloque international du C.N.R.S. pour le neuvième centenaire de la fondation (1108-2008) au Collège des Bernardins*, ed. D. Poirel, Brepols, Turnhout, 2010, 245-284.

--, “La Loi et le pardon dans la Lettre aux Hébreux. la ‘lectio’ de Thomas d’Aquin”, in: *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 138/2 (2016), 177–201.

Keating, D., “Thomas Aquinas and the Epistle to the Hebrews: ‘The Excellence of Christ’”, in: *Christology, Hermeneutics, and Hebrews: Profiles from the History of Interpretation*, ed. J. C. Laansma, T&T Clark, New York, 2012, 84-99.

Levering, M., “Blood, Death, and Sacrifice in the Epistle to the Hebrews According to Thomas Aquinas”, in: *So Great a Salvation. A Dialogue on the Atonement in Hebrews*, eds. J. C. Laansma, G. H. Guthrie and C. Long, T&T Clark, London, 2019, 120-143.

Lugmayr, M., “Welcher Glaubensinhalt genügt für das Heil? Die Bedeutung von Heb. 11,6 im Werk des hl. Thomas von Aquin”, in *Doctor Angelicus* 2 (2002), 84–96.

Ryan, F., “Thomas Aquinas and the Priesthood of All the Believers: Aquinas’ Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews”, in: *Biblica et Patristica Thoruniesia* 9 (2016), 133-148.

Tapie, M., *Aquinas on Israel and the Church*, Pickwick, Eugene, 2014, esp. 60-84.

Tonon, F., “L’Alliance Nouvelle’ dans l’Épître aux Hébreux et son Commentaire par Thomas d’Aquin”, in: *Revue des Sciences Religieuses* 82 (2008), 179–197.

Weinandy, T. G., “The Supremacy of Christ: Aquinas’ Commentary on Hebrews”, in: *Aquinas on Scripture: An Introduction to His Biblical Commentaries*, eds. Weinandy, T. G., Keating, D. A. and Yocum, J. P., T&T Clark, London, 2005, 223–244.

- Explicit -