

Jaarboek 1999



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Secretariaat

Thomas Instituut te Utrecht
p/a KTU
Heidelberglaan 2
3584 CS Utrecht
tel. (0)30-2533129/2533214
url: <http://www.ktu.nl/thomas>

JAARBOEK 1999

Thomas Instituut te Utrecht



Henk J.M. Schoot (ed.)

Redactie

Dr. H.J.M. Schoot (hoofdredacteur)
Dr. W.G.B.M. Valkenberg, Drs. P.L. van Veldhuijsen
Dr. L.G.M. Winkeler, Prof. dr. J.B.M. Wissink

Druk

Peeters Orientaliste, Herent (België)

ISSN 09026-163X

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De Jaarboeken 1982-1988 van de Werkgroep Thomas van Aquino en de Jaarboeken van het Thomas Instituut te Utrecht vanaf 1989, voor zover voorradig, kunnen worden besteld bij het secretariaat.

Dit Jaarboek 1999 van het Thomas Instituut te Utrecht is te bestellen bij het secretariaat. De prijs is fl. 25,- (in Nederland), fl.35,- (in België) en fl. 50,- (overige landen). Het betreffende bedrag kan worden betaald op postrekening 3955950 van de Stichting Thomasfonds te Nijmegen, onder vermelding van 'Jaarboek 1999'.

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INTRODUCTION

This nineteenth Yearbook of the Thomas Institute starts with two contributions on interreligious interactions in the Middle Ages, a topic that has been introduced in the 1997 Yearbook by an article on Thomas Aquinas and interreligious dialogue by Pim Valkenberg. In this year's volume, Marcel Poorthuis who coordinates the research programme on the relation between Jews and Christians at the Catholic Theological University at Utrecht, gives a survey of this interreligious interaction in the Middle Ages by examining how writers from a Jewish, Christian or Muslim background wrote about the two other faiths. His bibliographical essay is meant to lay a foundation for future research projects in this field.

Next, Marcus van Loopik considers a famous example of interreligious interaction: the dispute between Nachmanides and Pablo Christiani, that was organised by the Dominican friars at Barcelona in 1263. As a publisher in the field of Judaism (cf. his editorship of *Tweespalt en verbondenheid. Joden en Christenen in historisch perspectief: joodse reacties op christelijke theologie*, Zoetermeer 1998), Marcus van Loopik sifts the different interpretations of Nachmanides' report of this dispute. In this manner, both authors who collaborate in the Folkertsma Fund for Talmudic Studies, stimulate further research into the Christian side of these interreligious interactions and more specifically into the role of some of Aquinas' immediate colleagues (e.g. Raymond of Peñafort and Raymond Martin) in these confrontations.

Upon these bibliographical and historical studies two contributions of a more theological nature follow. Herwi Rikhof, director of the Thomas Institute and full professor in systematic theology, prepares a book on the theology of the Trinity. In the course of this preparation Rikhof has studied extensively Aquinas' trinitarian theology. This study was formulated in a contribution to our Yearbook, in which Rikhof carefully reads question 43 of the *Prima*

Pars of the *Summa Theologiae*, against the background of broad, general questions and problems in modern trinitarian theology. Next is a study by Carlo Leget, post-doctoral researcher at our Utrecht Institute. Leget, moving in the direction of moral theology, examines Aquinas' theory of *passiones animae*, but from an uncommon perspective, i.e. not from 'above' but from 'below', not from the perspective of the intellect and the will, but from the perspective of the vegetative part of the human soul. In doing so he devotes considerable attention to Aquinas' employment of metaphorical language.

This Yearbook closes with a number of smaller contributions. There is a discussion between Rudi te Velde, professor of philosophy at the University of Amsterdam, and Ad Vennix, professor of philosophy at the Catholic University of Nijmegen, on the latter's interpretation of Aquinas' conception of truth in his dissertation which appeared in 1999. At first this discussion was held at a meeting of the Thomas Institute in May 1999. Next, Marc-Robin Hoogland, who prepares a dissertation in our Institute on Aquinas' theology of the suffering of Christ, gives a few observations on a recent book by Thomas Weinandy on the subject of God's suffering. As always, the Annual Report of the Thomas Institute closes the Yearbook.

On behalf of all those involved in this continuing project of the Yearbook of the Thomas Institute, we express our sincere thanks to each and everyone contributing to its well-being, and hope that in the near future further steps will be taken to ensure its enduring.

June 2000
Henk J.M. Schoot
Editor-in-Chief

THE THREE RINGS: JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

A bibliographical essay on their interaction in the
Eastern and the Western world

Marcel Poorthuis

1. Introduction*

Interaction between the three Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam, can be studied at several levels. Contemporary society with its challenges and problems has here and there brought together the three religions facing similar questions: fundamentalism, secularisation, ethical issues, human rights, etc. However, contemporary interaction is the outgrowth of a long shared history, during which these religions sometimes coexisted peacefully, but at other times vehemently clashed. First then there is the matter of origin: Judaism being the oldest religion has exercised a decisive influence upon nascent Christianity whereas both Christianity and Judaism have moulded the beginnings of Islam. The influence of the Bible upon the Koran is a subject that has been studied in depth several times. But this topic is easily connected with the question of (post-Biblical) Jewish influence upon the Koran. In addition to that, one can widen the topic even more by considering not only the Koran, but post-Koranic literature as well, such as the elaborate commentaries upon the Koran (tafsir), Islamic chronicles of world history (ta'rikh) and legends of the Biblical heroes and prophets (Kisas al-Anbiya) and New Testament figures, that have integrated a wealth of Jewish and Christian traditions akin to midrash, apocryphal gospels and pseudepigraphic literature. Similar studies can be devoted to Biblical motifs and customs in their post-Biblical Jewish, Christian and Islamic

* I thank the members of the research group *The Three Rings*, especially Pim Valkenberg, Barbara Roggema, Harm Goris and Karel Steenbrink, for their helpful comments.

ramifications.

Nor would it be correct to think of the influence of Judaism and of Christianity upon Islam as one-way traffic. Sometimes, older Jewish studies on the roots of Islam seem to presuppose that Islam was no more than a meltingpot of Jewish motifs and influences, without devoting attention to the inner-Islamic transformations of Jewish and/or Christian influences. Undoubtedly, Islam influenced Judaism from the outset as is testified in the redaction of some of the midrash collections. Some Jewish medieval apocalyptic texts are favourable toward the rise of Islam as a monotheistic religion challenging the Messianic pretensions of the Church. A Jewish liturgical poem (piyut) hails the Arab conquests as presaging the Messianic times.¹

In spite of these testimonies, explicit polemic of Judaism against the other religions is difficult to detect in the first centuries after the Talmudic period (after 600 CE). The matrix of Greek philosophy, enabling both polemic and exchange on a theological and speculative level, was not yet allowed full access into the Jewish tradition. However, gradually things began to change. Syriac translations of Greek works had appeared from 6th-8th centuries onward, to be supplemented by translations from Syriac into Arabic and from Greek into Arabic. The installation of the Abbasid dynasty and the settling of the caliphate in Baghdad (762) marked a period of increasing cultural exchange, that could not but involve the Jewish community of Baghdad, as well as the Christian community there.²

¹ B. Lewis, "On that day: A Jewish Apocalyptic Poem on the Arab Conquests", P. Salmon (ed.), *Mélanges d'Islamologie*, Leiden 1974, 197-200; J. Lamoreaux, "Early Eastern Christian Responses to Islam", J. Tolan (ed.), *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam*, New York 1996, 3-31.

² J.M. Fiey, *Chrétiens syriaques sous les Abbassides surtout à Bagdad (749-1258)*, Louvain 1980; F. Rosenthal, *Das Fortleben der Antike im Islam*, Zürich-Stuttgart 1965. Cf. D.S. Sassoon, *A History of the Jews in Baghdad*, Letchworth 1949; M. Allard, "Les chrétiens à Bagdad", *Arabica* IX, 1962; *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, s.v. 'Baghdad'; M. Smith, *Al-Muhasibi: an Early Mystic of Bagdad*, London 1935; R.M. Haddad, *Syrian Christians in Muslim Society. An interpretation*, Princeton N.J. 1970; M. Allard, "Les chrétiens à Bagdad", *Arabica* IX, 1962; Arnaldez, *À la croisée des trois monothéismes*, Paris 1993 (chap. III: "La civilisation de Bagdad").

In tenth century Judaism, the first Jewish philosophers since Philo began to develop their thought in continuous interaction with other religious and philosophical currents.³ Whereas some of the Jewish arguments against Christianity are similar to Moslem arguments and were influenced by the latter, such as arguments against the Trinity or against the divinity of Jesus, formal acknowledgement from Jewish side of both similarities and differences between Judaism and Islam occurred somewhat later. In Islam, a vast polemical literature developed, against both Christianity and Judaism. Again, some of the arguments against Christianity, such as rejection of Jesus' divine sonship, were similar to Jewish arguments, whereas other arguments such as the distortion of Scripture, concerned both Christianity and Judaism.

Christianity itself could now add to its *Adversus Judaeos* texts the polemic against Islam. Especially Eastern Christianity was able to exchange views with Moslem authors because they shared the Arabic language, like Jewish authors did. On the other hand, Western Christianity often had to satisfy itself with oral communications or with translations. This holds good both Christianity towards Islam as well as towards Judaism. The primary role of converts within this complex pattern should be acknowledged.⁴ They served as a kind of

³ The most prominent of them being Saadya Ga'on (882-942), who wrote in polemical vein against the Karaites (a Jewish sect that denied the validity of oral tradition), against the Jewish rationalist and Bible critic Hiwi al-Balki, and against the Christians. See for the latter: K. Middleton/M. Poorthuis, "Joodse kritiek op de christelijke Triniteitsidee", *Tijdschrift voor Theologie* 37/4 (1997), 343-367. Cf. H.A. Wolfson, *Repercussions of the Kalam in Jewish Philosophy*, Cambridge Mass. 1979, 3-4.

⁴ In general Jewish converts to Christianity served as opponents of Jews in religious polemics, such as the Franciscan Nicholas Donin in the disputation of Paris (1240), the Dominican Pablo Christiani in the disputation of Barcelona (1263), Petrus Alfonsi, Hieronymus de Santa Fide (disputation of Tortosa 1413); B. Blumenkranz, "Jüdische und christliche Konvertiten", *Miscellanea Mediaevalia* IV, Berlin 1966, 264-282; J. Cohen, "The Mentality of the Jewish Apostate: Peter Alfonsi, Hermann of Cologne and Pablo Christiani", T.M. Endelman (ed.), *Jewish Apostasy in the Modern World*, New York 1987, 20-47. See more specific for Jewish converts to Islam: M. Perlmann, "Islam", *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, 9, 101-102; I. Goldziher, *Die*

intermediary both in respect of the language and in respect of the contents of the former religion, often adding a good deal of resentment.

This situation of interaction between the three religions created a highly complex fabric of arguments where each of the three partners found themselves sometimes allied with the other against the third party, but at other times alone against the two others. In addition to that, this polemic fabric presupposed axioms shared by the three Abrahamic religions as well, such as the creation of the world, the possibility of revelation, and the belief of man being created in the image of God. Greek philosophy offered the matrix for this discussion although in all three religions hesitance as to the validity of Greek doctrine vis-à-vis revelation can be found. Next to Greek philosophy, mysticism formed another 'common ground'. The influence of Sufism upon Jewish authors such as Bahya Ibn Pakuda (second half 11th century) and Abraham Maimonides (son of Rambam) is unmistakable.⁵

To put things somewhat more systematic, the fabric of arguments originating between three partners: Judaism, Christianity and Islam, creates six possible 'interactions':

Judaism against Christianity⁶;

Judaism against Islam⁷;

Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegungen, Leiden 1952, 67-69.

⁵ In addition to that, compare F. Rosenthal, "A Judaeo-Arabic Work under Sufic Influence", *Hebrew Union College Annual* 15 (1940), 433-484. See for Christian-Sufi exchange: G.G. Blum, "Christlich-orientalische Mystik und Sufismus", *Symposium Syriacum* III (1980), 261-271; D.J. Sahas, "The Art and Non-art of Byzantine Polemics", M. Gervers/Ramzi Jibran Bikhazi, *Conversion and Continuity: Indigenous Christian Communities in Islamic Lands from the Eighth to Eighteenth Centuries*, Toronto 1990, 66-68.

⁶ See the overview and bibliography in D. Lasker, *Jewish Philosophical Polemics Against Christianity in the Middle Ages*, New York 1977, 13-23. J. Eisenstein, *Ozar Wikuhim*, Israel 1969, contains a non-critical anthology of Jewish polemics and disputations.

⁷ Cf. B. Lewis, *The Jews of Islam*, Princeton N.J. 1984; M. Perlmann, "Islam", *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 9, 102; R.G. Hoyland, *Seeing Islam as*

Christianity against Judaism⁸;
 Christianity against Islam⁹;
 Islam against Judaism¹⁰;
 Islam against Christianity¹¹.

These six interactions offer each of them a vast area of research.¹² In this bibliographical essay we will restrict ourselves to those writers belonging to one of the Abrahamic religions who deal with *both* other religions. This limitation is not only dictated by reasons of space, but

Others Saw It: a Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam, Princeton N.J., 1997.

⁸ H. Schreckenberg, *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos-Texte und ihr literarisches und historisches Umfeld*, 3 volumes, Frankfurt am Main 1982 ff.

⁹ G. Graf, "Christliche Polemik gegen den Islam", *Gelbe Hefte II* (1926), 826 ff; N.A. Newman, *The Early Christian-Muslim Dialogue (623-900 A.D.)*, Translations with Commentary, Hatfield 1993; A.Th. Khoury, *Les théologiens Byzantins et l'Islam: Textes et auteurs (VIII-XIIIe S.)*, Louvain/Paris 1969; idem, *Der theologische Streit der Byzantiner mit dem Islam*. Paderborn 1969; idem, *Polémique byzantine contre l'Islam (VIII-XIIIe S.)*, Leiden 1972; idem, *Apologétique byzantine contre l'Islam (VIII-XIIIe S.)*, Altenberge 1982. N. Daniel, *Islam and the West*, Edinburgh 1980.

¹⁰ C. Adang, *Muslim Writers on Judaism and the Hebrew Bible from Ibn Rabban to Ibn Hazm*, Nijmegen 1993; S.M. Wasserstrom, *Species of Misbelief: A History of Muslim Heresiography of the Jews*, Toronto 1985; J. Waardenburg (ed.), *Muslim Perceptions of Other Religions*. A Historical Survey, New York 1991 (+ bibl. p. 309-325).

¹¹ A. Bouamama, *La littérature polémique musulmane contre le christianisme depuis ses origines jusqu'au XIIIe siècle*, Algiers 1988; E. Fritsch, *Islam und Christentum im Mittelalter: Beiträge zur Geschichte der muslimischen Polemik gegen das Christentum in arabischer Sprache*, Breslau 1930 (Fritsch deals with some thirteen muslim authors, seven of them after Ibn Hazm); J. Brugman, *Godsdienstgesprekken tussen christenen en moslims in de vroege Islam*, Leiden 1970; D. Thomas, *Anti-Christian Polemic in Early Islam*, Cambridge 1992. Cf. bibliographical references in the journal *Islamochristiana*.

¹² See "Polemics, Jewish-Christian (D. Berger), Muslim-Jewish (M. Perlmann), Christian-Muslim (N. Daniel)", M. Eliade (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Religion* 11, New York 1987, 388-404. In fact these entries deal with no more than half of the possible relations.

serves a specific goal. It opens up a pattern of polemics wherein the arguments valid against one opponent may become complicated against the other opponent. For example, Christianity claiming to be the fulfilment of Judaism as the daughter religion finds itself in jeopardy towards Islam. Islam rejecting Jesus' divine sonship and his preexistence as the divine word, will find it difficult then to claim vis-à-vis Judaism the eternity of the Koran as Gods divine Word. Judaism claims towards Christianity and Islam the complete of revelation in the Torah, but still has to answer the question of the promised future prophet suggested in Dt 18,15 etc. Hence it seems fruitful to describe the polemics between the three Abrahamic faiths in this fashion. The bibliographical approach of this study will enable students of one specific area to discover similar patterns in other areas of research. Far from being exhaustive, this essay intends to offer access to the three religions and their main spokesmen enabling comparison and inviting further research. Most of the bibliographical references concern literature that is accessible in a modern European language. This approach should be supplemented by detailed research of the individual authors and by a systematic comparison of their arguments.¹³

As we are interested in the transition of the dialogue from East to West, we will not trace the Eastern developments after the 13th century. Moreover, on Jewish side, the Eastern cultural life declined rapidly after that period.

2. Jewish writers on Christianity and Islam¹⁴

It should come as no surprise that the first Jews who discussed Islam lived in an Arab-speaking environment.¹⁵ The city of Baghdad takes

¹³ The research group founded by dr. P. Valkenberg and myself, bearing the name of "The three rings", intends to edit a collection of texts relevant to this topic, supplemented by a commentary and discussion.

¹⁴ For general reference see M. Waxman, *A History of Jewish Literature*, New York 1960; I. Husik, *A History of Medieval Jewish Philosophy*, New York 1959 (+ bibl.); C. Sirat, *A History of Jewish Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge/Paris 1985; D.H. Frank/O. Leaman (eds.), *History of Jewish Philosophy*, London/New York 1997.

¹⁵ See for a history of Judaism in Islamic culture: B. Lewis *op.cit.*; D.

pride of place in this respect as has been noted before. Reports about Jewish philosophers in close contact with Moslem and Christian philosophers in all kinds of scholarly fields, such as medicine, are known. However, in these fields there is often hardly any difference between the scholars of different faiths. Specific religious controversies are reported from the tenth century onward.¹⁶

Al-Mukammis

Probably the first Jewish philosopher who has discussed Christianity and Islam is David ibn Marwan al-Mukammis (around 900).¹⁷ His treatise *The book of twenty tractates*, originally written in Arabic, has been discovered more than a century ago but remained long unpublished so that only parts of it were known from quotations by writers in Hebrew.¹⁸ He points out contradictions in the gospels and argues that the gospels as such contain no laws. Peter and Paul (whom he calls Abba Saul)¹⁹, were responsible for creating the laws. Al-

Lasker, "The Jewish Critique of Christianity under Islam in the Middle Ages", *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 57 (1990-91), 121-153; J.M. Cohen, *Jews under Islam. A Culture in Historical Perspective*, Amsterdam 1993; G.Newby, *A History of the Jews of Arabia from Ancient Times to their Eclipse under Islam*, Columbia 1988.

¹⁶ F. Rosenthal, "A Jewish Philosopher of the Tenth Century", *Hebrew Union College Annual* 21 (1948), 155-173 (on Wahb ben Ya'is ar-Rakki, quoted in Islamic works).

¹⁷ Cf. *Encyclopaedia Judaica* s.v. 'Al-Mukammis'; H.A. Wolfson, *Repercussions of the Kalam in Jewish Philosophy*, Cambridge Mass. 1979.

¹⁸ See now S. Stroumsa, *Dawud Ibn Marwan al-Muqammis's Twenty Chapters* ('Ishrun Maqala'), Leiden 1990.

¹⁹ This name, well-known in Rabbinic literature, is applied to Paul in the Jewish *Legend of Peter* ('Agada of Simon Kefas') and in Jehuda Hadassi (see below). Cf. A. Jellinek, *Beth Hamidrash*, Jerusalem 1938, VI, p. XI, 156. The Jewish Peter legends are related to the *Toledoth Jeshu* and the *Nestor hakomer*. The latter is a Jewish apologetic tract, purported to have been written by a Christian priest who secretly doubts the Christian dogmas. Cf. D. Lasker & Sara Stroumsa, *A Priest's Refutation of Christianity: Qissat Mujadalat al-Usqif and Sefer Nestor ha-Komer*, Leiden (forthcoming). The name of Nestorius had become associated with Judaising tendencies from the Council of Ephesus on. Cf. J. Parkes, *The Conflict of the Church and the*

Mukammis is a follower of the Mu'tazilites (cf. p. 15). Curiously, the Karaite Kirkisani (see below, p. 17) relates that the Jew Al-Mukammis converted to Christianity and studied under the Christian philosopher Nonnus of Nisibis.²⁰ But later on he returned to Judaism and wrote his anti-Christian tracts. In his refutation of the Trinity he draws upon the teachings of his master, especially regarding the equation of the persons of the Trinity with God's attributes.²¹ He demonstrates the truth of the prophet Moses by transposing arguments for the truth of Jesus.²² Al-Mukammis is derogatory towards Constantine, whom he nicknames 'the leprous', and considers the council of Nicaea a later development without any foundation in Scripture. He possibly influenced the next author, about whom we are much better informed.

Saadya Ga'on

Saadya (882-942) lived in Baghdad.²³ He was an eminent scholar in

Synagogue, London 1934, 300-303. Al-Mukammis may have influenced Nestor ha-Komer. Cf. S. Krauss/W. Horbury, *The Jewish-Christian Controversy*, Tübingen 1995, 236-238. On p. 60, Al-Mukammis is considered a Karaite, perhaps wrongly but still in accordance with the testimony of the Karaite Ibn Al-Hiti. Cf. Stroumsa, *op. cit.*, 16-19.

²⁰ Cf. L. Nemoy, "Al-Qirqisani's Account of the Jewish Sects", *Hebrew Union College Annual* 7 (1930), 366-369.

²¹ Cf. D. Lasker, *Jewish Religious Polemics against Christianity in the Middle Ages*, 53; cf. A. van Roey (ed.), *Nonnus de Nisibis, Traité Apologétique*, Louvain 1948.

²² C. Adang, *op. cit.*, 117-119.

²³ A contemporary Muslim describes: "There were people present not only from various Islamic sects, but also unbelievers, Magians, materialists, atheists, Jews and Christians, in short unbelievers of all kind. Each group had its own leader, whose task it was to defend its views, and every time one of the leaders entered the room, his followers rose to their feet and remained standing until he took his seat. In the meanwhile the hall had become overcrowded with people. One of the unbelievers rose and said to the assembly: we are meeting here for a discussion. The conditions are known to you all. You, Muslims, are not allowed to argue from your books and prophetic traditions, since we deny both. Everybody, therefore, has to limit himself to rational arguments. The whole assembly applauded these words. So you can imagine that after these words I decided to withdraw. They proposed

many fields of Judaism: grammar, philosophy and law. His major philosophical work, written in Arabic: *Kitab al-Mukhtar fi'l-amanat wa-al-I'tiqadat*, (*Book of Critically Chosen Beliefs and Convictions*, in Hebr.: *Sefer ha-Emunot we-ha-De'ot*),²⁴ contains an elaborate polemic with Christianity, within the context of 'God's unity'. This explains why Saadya deals with Christianity following his treatment of dualistic doctrines of the Manicheans. Saadya belonged himself to the Mu'tazilites, who hold a doctrine originating in Islam, which emphasised God's unity and rejected anthropomorphisms. Later on this view would be criticised by Maimonides.

Although to my knowledge Saadya does not deal explicitly with Islam, he was well acquainted with it. Numerous Muslim authors quote him.²⁵ Saadya's use of certain Arabic expressions can be interpreted as an implicit polemic, such as his rejection of the idea that in the story of Abraham and Isaac God changed his mind, hereby *abrogating* an earlier divine order (*naskh*).²⁶ Muslim writers were at that time perhaps not familiar enough with the Torah to argue for abrogation. Possibly Saadya combats in this respect the Jewish rationalist Hiwi al-Balki (9th century) who, himself neither a Rabbanite nor a Karaite, collected no less than 200 criticisms of Scripture.²⁷ Hiwi al-Balki's inner-Jewish rationalistic criticism upon

to me that I should attend another meeting in a different hall, but I found the same calamity there", quoted in B. Septimus, "A prudent ambiguity in Saadya Gaon's Book of Doctrines and Beliefs", *Harvard Theological Review* 76/2 (1983), 249.

²⁴ Ed. Y. Kafih, Jerusalem 1970, translated by S. Rosenblatt, New Haven 1948.

²⁵ C. Adang, *op. cit.*, 55, mentions Mas'udi, Maqdisi, al-Nadim, Ibn Hazm, al-Maqrizi, al-Andalusi.

²⁶ A. Rippin, "Saadya Ga'on and Genesis 22: Aspects of Jewish-Muslim Interaction and Polemic", W. Brinner/S. Ricks (eds.), *Studies in Islamic and Judaic Traditions*, Atlanta 1986, 33-46. See the extensive discussion of abrogation in Saadya and other authors: C. Adang, *op. cit.* 141-165; N. Roth, "Forgery and abrogation of the Torah: a Theme in Muslim and Christian Polemic in Spain", *Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research* 54 (1987), 203-236.

²⁷ *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 8, 792. J. Rosenthal, "Al-Balki: a Comparative Study", *Jewish Quarterly Review* n.s. 38 (1948) attempts to reconstruct Al-

the Bible mirrors Islamic rationalistic criticism (see Ibn Hazm further on).

Saadya's knowledge of Christianity is both profound and complicated; he is familiar with Eastern Christian (and Judeo-Christian) currents that are not absorbed into Western Christianity.²⁸ His vocabulary is strongly similar to that of the Christian theologian Yahya ibn Adi (Baghdad 894-974)²⁹, who, himself disciple of Al-Farabi, engaged into polemics with the 9th century Muslim author Abu Isa al-Warraq.³⁰ Saadya's most important opponent however was Karaism (a Jewish sect denying the validity of Rabbinic interpretations of Scripture as condensed in the 'oral' tradition). Saadya's refutation of Christianity is somewhat complicated by the fact that, apparently under the influence of the Islamic Mu'tazila, he deals with the idea of three divine attributes: wisdom, life and power.³¹ He spends quite

Balki's work. See for still another Jewish critic of the Torah: S. Schechter, "Geniza Specimens: The Oldest Collection of Bible Difficulties by a Jew", *Jewish Quarterly Review* 13 (1901), 345-357.

²⁸ See K. Middleton/M. Poorthuis, *op. cit.*, 354.

²⁹ G. Graf, *Die Philosophie des Jahja ibn 'Adi und spätere Autoren*, Münster 1910; A. Perier, *Yahya ben 'Adi, un philosophe arabe chrétien du Xe siècle*. Paris 1920. Cf. Yahya ibn 'Adi, *De l'incarnation*, translated by E. Platti (CSCO 491), Louvain 1987 (against Abu Isa al Warraq); E. Platti, *Yahya ibn Adi, théologien chrétien et philosophe arabe: Sa théologie de l'incarnation*, Louvain 1983.

³⁰ A. Abel, *Abu 'Isa Muhammad ben Harun al-Warraq. Le livre de la réfutation des trois sectes chrétiennes*, Brussel n.d.; D. Thomas (ed. and tr.), *Anti-Christian Polemic in Early Islam: Abu Isa al-Warraq's 'Against the Trinity'*, Cambridge 1992 (+ bibl.). The group around Al-Farabi is sometimes called the 'Islamic humanists'. See O. Leaman, "Islamic Humanism in the fourth/tenth century", S. Hossein Nasr/O. Leaman (eds.), *History of Islamic Philosophy I*, London 1996, 155-161. For other points of contact, see M. Khalifah, *Medieval Jewish-Muslim Contribution to the Academic Study of Religion: a Study in the Methodology of Saadia Al Fayyumi and Muhammed Al Sharastani*, Michigan (Ann Arbor, Microfilm) 1976.

³¹ H.A. Wolfson, *Repercussions of the Kalam in Jewish Philosophy*, Cambridge Mass. 1979, 10-11. See on Christian and Jewish Kalam as well his work: *The Philosophy of the Kalam*, Cambridge Mass. 1976, 79-111.

some effort in arguing against Christianity that these three attributes do not indicate the existence of three divine persons as they do not add anything to God's essence. Saadya argues both on speculative level and on the level of Scriptural proofs. Curiously, in his refutation of Christian Trinitarian exegesis, he completely passes over Rabbinic hermeneutics of the same Biblical texts.³² Saadya's opponent, the Karaite Jepheth ben Ali Ha-Levi (tenth century), polemises en passant against Christianity and Islam.³³

Kirkisani

Kirkisani lived in the first half of the tenth century and belonged to the Jewish sect of the Karaites.³⁴ Although primarily intended as a compendium of Karaite law, his *Kitab al-Anwar wa-al-Maraqib* (Book of Lights and Watch-towers) offers in its first discourse a history of Jewish sects, accumulating all knowledge from predecessors and from contemporary scholars available to him.³⁵ His somewhat encyclopedic

³² This is the main argument of K. Middleton/M. Poorthuis, *op. cit.*

³³ H. Schreckenberg, *op. cit.* I, 536 and 652.

³⁴ Z. Ankori, *Karaites in Byzantium*, New York 1959, offers an in depth treatment of Karaism; L. Nemoy, *Karaite Anthology*, New Haven 1963, is a collection of Karaite texts including some excerpts from Kirkisani. Cf. H. Ben-Shammai, "Between Ananites and Karaites: Observations on Early Medieval Jewish Sectarianism", *Studies in Muslim-Jewish relations* 1 (1993), 19-31; cf. the series of articles by G. Vajda on Kirkisani, quoted in C. Adang, *op. cit.*, bibliography. Cf. D. Lasker, "Rabbanism and Karaism: The Contest for Supremacy", R. Jospe/S. Wagner (eds.), *Great Schisms in Jewish History*, New York 1981, 47-73; idem, "Islamic Influences on Karaite Origins", W. Brinner/S. Ricks, *Studies in Islamic and Judaic Traditions II*, Atlanta 1989, 23-47.

³⁵ W. Bacher, "Qirqisani, the Karaite, and his work on Jewish sects", *Jewish Quarterly Review* o.s. 7 (1895), 687-710, republished in P. Birnbaum, *Karaite Studies*, New York 1971. An English translation of the section on Jewish sects appeared in *Hebrew Union College Annual* 7 (1930), 317-397. See for references to translations of other parts: *Jewish Encyclopaedia* 10, 1048. The complete text was published by L. Nemoy in five volumes (Yale Oriental Series, 1939-1943). Cf. B. Chiesa & W. Lockwood, *Ya'akub al-Qirqisani on Jewish Sects and Christianity*, Frankfurt a.M., Bern, New York 1984.

approach is a mixture of polemical aims and an attempt to describe the history of religions as it is. Kirkisani considers Christianity to be one of the Jewish sects, stating that Christianity as such arose with Paul and has little in common with the teachings of Jesus.³⁶ He pleads for the application of critical methods to religions. He himself was familiar with Mishnah and Talmud, with the Koran and with the New Testament.³⁷

In the third discourse of the *Kitab al-Anwar* he sets out to refute the doctrines of the various sects, including Christianity and Islam. As such, the Karaite Kirkisani may have been the first Jew to offer a comprehensive account of the two other religions together with a refutation of them.³⁸ He denounces the idea of abrogation (*naskh*) of the Law brought forward by both Muslims and Christians. At the same time he opposes the Jewish apologetic stand that the precepts of the Torah had already been promulgated from Adam onwards, as if Adam himself was already circumcised, celebrated Pesach and so on.³⁹ Kirkisani allows for historical development. He opposes the almost 'post-modern' idea brought forward by the messianic leader Abu Isa al-Isfahani, that Moses, Jesus and Mohammed were each sent to different nations, and that every nation worships God according to his particular precepts.⁴⁰ In the footsteps of Kirkisani, the Karaite Jehuda Hadassi wrote in polemical vein against Christianity and Islam.⁴¹

³⁶ *Jewish Encyclopaedia* 7, 509; Cf. L. Nemoj, "The Attitude of the Early Karaites towards Christianity", *S.W. Baron Jubilee Volume II*, Jerusalem 1974, 697-715.

³⁷ Cf. H. Lazarus-Yafeh, *op. cit.*, 143-160, who offers a survey of Jewish authors quoting the Koran.

³⁸ Unless the anonymous Jewish author of a polemic work written in Hebrew and found in the Geniza of Cairo, who entered into a debate with Samaritanism, Islam (quoting the Koran) and Christianity, lived earlier. See J. Mann, "An Early Theological-Polemical Work", *The Collected Articles III* (Karaite and Genizah Studies), Israel 1971, 411-459.

³⁹ C. Adang, *op. cit.*, 152-153.

⁴⁰ Cf. for similar ideas in European Christian accounts of Moslem theology, N. Daniel, *op. cit.*, 2-21.

⁴¹ Cf. Jehuda Hadassi (12th century), *Eshkol Hakkofer*. See the text of the

Kirkisani quotes from the Talmud and from mystical literature (Shiur Koma, Alphabet of Rabbi Akiba, Hechalot literature) strongly anthropomorphic passages to prove the 'absurdities' of the Rabbanites.

Judah Halevi

Using the history of the conversion of the kingdom of the Khazars to Judaism, Judah Halevi (Toledo 1075-1141) locates the three protagonists of the three Abrahamic faiths before the king of the Khazars.⁴² An angel had appeared to the king in a dream telling him that his intentions were good but his religious actions deficient. After rejecting the philosophical approach for its denying the validity of the dream and for its inability to relate to religious action, the king questions the three religions. The Christian does not convince at once because of the many elements that run against reason like the virgin birth, the Trinity and the Incarnation.⁴³ The Moslem refers to the truth of the Hebrew Bible and this induces the king to consult a Jew as well, although initially he did not expect very much from that side because of their sad plight. To his surprise the Jew rejects speculative theology and underscores the value of historical truth and of prophecy. Prophecy is not a natural faculty but grounded in the distinctive quality of the Jewish people as inherited from Adam on via the Patriarchs (the 'chain of light', possibly influenced by Shi'ite Islam and even by Manicheism).⁴⁴ Although the king of the Khazars voices some critical

relevant chapters in W. Bacher, "Inedited Chapters of Jehuda Hadassi's Eshkol Hakkofer", *Jewish Quarterly Review* o.s. 8 (1896), 431-444.

⁴² Judah Halevi, *Kitab al Khazari*, or: The Book of Argument and Proof in Defence of the Despised Faith, translated into English by H. Hirschfeld, *The Kuzari*, New York 1964; C. Touati (tr.), *Juda Hallevi: Le Kuzari*, Louvain - Paris 1994, offers a French translation. See for the historical background of the Khazars: D.M. Dunlop, *The History of the Jewish Khazars*, New York 1967; Z. Ankori, *op.cit.*, 58-86; S. Pines, "A Moslem Text concerning the Conversion of the Khazars to Judaism", *Journal of Jewish Studies* 13 (1962), 45-55 (*Collected Works* V, Jerusalem 1997, 306-316).

⁴³ This argument was taken up by Nahmanides in the Barcelona disputation with Pablo Christiani and by Jewish polemicists after him such as Troki and Albo: whatever is impossible cannot be believed. Cf. D. Lasker, *Jewish Philosophical Polemics*, 26-28.

⁴⁴ S. Pines, "Shi'ite Terms and Conceptions in Judah Halevi's Kuzari",

remarks ("Judaism has not exercised violence in its history because it had never the power to do so"), he is increasingly convinced. The Jew proceeds to expound Judaism and the literary style shifts from a dialogue towards a kind of compendium. The king decides to convert to Judaism. Judah Halevi was not the first to use the scenery of representatives of different religions before a king. A few decades earlier, in 1116, the Russian or Nestorian Chronicle relates the story of the conversion of prince Vladimir to Greek Christianity, after Mohammedans from Bulgaria and Jews from Khazaria (!) and Latin Christians ('Germans') had tried to persuade him. In comparison with the *Kuzari*, the theological level is quite unsophisticated: the Islamic abstinence from wine is unacceptable for Vladimir as is the suffering and dispersion of the Jews. A Greek philosopher expounds Christianity at length. The beauty of the Greek liturgy finally convinces Vladimir.⁴⁵ This chronicle is in its turn dependent upon the ninth century Slavonic *Life of St. Cyril* or *Constantine the Philosopher*, who according to this story had travelled to the court of the Khazars to discuss Judaism, Christianity and Islam.⁴⁶ In addition to that, 10th century Hebrew sources tell of the conversion of the Khazar king Bulan to Judaism in 740 CE. He asked each representative which of the two others he would prefer. Both the Christian and the Muslim preferred the Jew.⁴⁷

In his rejection of Aristotelian rationalism and philosophical speculation as a means to establish the truth of religion, Judah Halevi shows affinity with someone like Al-Ghazzali.⁴⁸ However, this does

Collected Works V, Jerusalem 1997, 219-273, points to Shi'ite Islamic parallels.

⁴⁵ *Nestorian Chronicle* (not to be confused with *Nestor Hakomer*) or *Povest' vremennykh let* (The Narrative of Bygone Years), translated by S.H. Cross & O. Sherbovitz-Wetzor, *The Russian Primary Chronicle*, Cambridge Mass. 1953.

⁴⁶ "Die Konstantiniva", J. Bujnoch (tr.), *Zwischen Rom und Byzanz*, Graz 1958, 27-80. Cf. W. van den Bercken, *Holy Russia and Christian Europe*, London 1999, 8-17.

⁴⁷ *Encyclopaedia Judaica* s.v. "Khazars" and "Bulan"; D.M. Dunlop, *op.cit.*, 116-170.

⁴⁸ A. Hyman, "Jewish Philosophy in the Islamic World", S. Hossein

not prevent him from an in-depth treatment of the philosophy of his days, especially of Aristotelian psychology, mediated to him by Ibn Sina.⁴⁹

The form of a dialogue was employed later on by the Spanish Jewish author Ha-Yizhari (15th century), in a work still in manuscript.⁵⁰

Maimonides

In his youth Maimonides had bitter experiences with Islam, but in spite of that he demonstrates more tolerance to it than to Christianity. In his view the latter, because of its Trinitarian belief, constitutes a form of idolatry (cf. *Mishneh Tora*: Hilkhot Avoda Zara 9,4)⁵¹. Muslims should not be considered idolaters, not even in their worship of the Ka'aba, for they direct their hearts to God, Maimonides argues.⁵² The three religions agree upon matters like the non-eternity of the world and the validity of miracles. Maimonides is influenced by Muslim philosophy of Ibn Sina and al-Farabi⁵³ (see Pines' introduction to *The Guide of the Perplexed*). But just like Thomas Aquinas, Maimonides seems to separate philosophical issues from

Nasr/O. Leaman (eds.), *op.cit.*, 684-685. Cf. B. Kogan, "Judah Halevi", *ib.* 718-724.

⁴⁹ I. Husik, *op.cit.*, 175.

⁵⁰ Cf. D. Lasker, *Jewish Philosophical Polemics*, 15.

⁵¹ D. Novak, "The Treatment of Islam and Muslims in the Legal Writings of Maimonides", W.M. Brinner/S.D. Ricks, *Studies in Islamic and Judaic Traditions*, Atlanta 1986, 233-250.

⁵² D. Novak, *op. cit.*, 238; M. Steinschneider, *Polemische und apologetische Literatur in arabischer Sprache zwischen Muslimen, Christen und Juden, nebst Anhängen verwandten Inhalts*, Leipzig 1877 (repr. Hildesheim 1966), 313. Other authors connect the Ka'aba with the worship of a goddess such as Venus/Aphrodite! Cf. D.S. Sahas, *John of Damascus on Islam*, Leiden 1972, 86; European Christian authors in N. Daniel, *op.cit.*, 309-313: the imputation of idolatry to Islam. On Christian images on the Ka'aba: S. Bashear, "The Images of Mecca", *Le Muséon* 105 (1992), 363-377.

⁵³ See lavish references to literature in J. Macy, "The Rule of Law and the Rule of Wisdom in Plato, Al-Farabi and Maimonides", Brinner/Ricks, *op. cit.*, 221.

social and religious affairs. This explains why in his *Letter to Yemen* (around 1172)⁵⁴ he is very negative about Mohammed whom he calls 'a madman'⁵⁵ and about Islam, "that persecuted us severely and passed baneful legislation against us". Apparently the urgency of the situation – Jews on the verge of becoming Muslims – as well as the medium of a letter prompted him to be freer than usual. In a more veiled way, Maimonides seems to inveigh some critical remarks to Islam in his *Guide of the Perplexed* (II, 40): "someone claiming to be a prophet who adopts the law of the prophet (Moses) – either the whole of it or a portion".⁵⁶ The charge of only partial adoption would apply to Islam. The true prophet renounces sexual pleasures, argues Maimonides in perhaps another coded rejection of Mohammed.

Maimonides considered Christianity and Islam as the forerunners of the Messianic time, as Judah Halevi had done before him (*Kuzari* IV,23). Although often quoted as a proof of Jewish tolerance, this may be a modern retrojection of what is not really present in Maimonides' thought: probably he was urged to explain the successful spread of both religions considered by their adherents as proof of Messianic truth in contrast with the more modest spread of Judaism.⁵⁷ In a passage that was removed later on by the Christian censor, Maimonides states that Jesus brought destruction upon Israel, changed the Torah and led the world astray by the service of someone else next to God. But all these matters concerning Jesus and "the Ishmaelite" Mohammed were meant to prepare the way for King Messiah. (*Hilkhot Melakhim* 11, ed. Rome 1480).

On the other hand, the harshness of the *Letter to the Jews of Yemen* reflects the Messianic excitement during the period of 1172,

⁵⁴ A.S. Halkin (ed.), *Epistle to Yemen*, Arabic and Hebrew. Translated by B. Cohen, New York 1952.

⁵⁵ Cf. M. Steinschneider, *op. cit.*, 302 for this epitheton of Mohammed, related to 'possessed' in Jewish authors. Cf. N. Daniel, *op.cit.*, 28 ff., on Mohammed's supposed epilepsy in European Christian authors.

⁵⁶ S. Pines (transl.) *Guide of the Perplexed*, Chicago 1963. Cf. G. Hourani, "Maimonides and Islam", W.M. Brinner/S.D. Ricks, *op. cit* 156-158.

⁵⁷ See for military success as sign of truth, E. Fritsch, *op.cit.* 53.

when Jews were pressed to accept Islam.⁵⁸

Ibn Kammuna

Again the city of Baghdad formed the stage for one of the most impressive encounters between the three religions. Still it remains a point of debate to what extent real discussions between protagonists of Islam and Christianity formed the basis of the work of the Jewish philosopher Ibn Kammuna (1215-1285). He lived in Baghdad and worked probably as a physician.⁵⁹ His 'Critical Inquiry into three faiths', was written in 1280 and claims to be an impartial description and evaluation of Judaism, Christianity and Islam.⁶⁰ In addition to that, he wrote on Judaism's internal dissension, on the differences between the Rabbanites and the Karaites.⁶¹ After a general chapter on prophecy, his 'Critical Inquiry' describes the three religions that are based upon it: Judaism, Christianity and Islam respectively, followed by a critique. Islam receives by far the most exhaustive treatment whereas Christianity is considered by Ibn Kammuna to be the weakest of the three.⁶² In spite of its aloofness the work roused the anger of

⁵⁸ E. Ashtor-Strauss, "Saladin and the Jews", *Hebrew Union College Annual* 27 (1956), 319.

⁵⁹ *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 8, 1186-1187. Cf. D.H. Baneth, "Ibn Kammuna", *Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 69 (1925), 295-311.

⁶⁰ M. Perlmann (transl.), *Ibn Kammuna's Examination of the Three Faiths*. A thirteenth century essay in the comparative study of religion, translated from the Arabic with an introduction and footnotes, Berkeley 1971.

⁶¹ L. Nemoj, "Ibn Kammunah's Treatise on the Differences between the Rabbanites and the Karaites", *Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research* 36 (1968), 107-165, who offers the Arabic text together with an English summary.

⁶² A Christian author wrote annotations on his work. See M. Perlmann, "Ibn al-Mahruma", *H.A. Wolfson Jubilee Volume*, Jerusalem 1965, II, 641-665; B. Roggema, "Jewish-Christian Debate in a Muslim Context: Ibn al-Mahruma's Notes to Ibn Kammuna", H. van Stiphout (ed.), *All those Nations. Cultural Encounters Within and With the Near East*, Studies Presented to Han Drijvers, Groningen 1999, 131-139, argues that Ibn Kammuna's alleged openness is in fact a rhetorical device. In addition to that, three Moslem authors dealt with Ibn Kammuna. See M. Perlmann, *Ibn Kammuna's*

the Moslem population of Baghdad and the author had to flee.

His treatment of Judaism is indebted to Judah Halevi's *Kuzari*, but Ibn Kammuna demonstrates his independent thought by bringing forward additional critical remarks toward Judaism. He deals at length with criticism of the Torah and its supposed unworthy contents, its anthropomorphism and faulty transmission, in order to rebut this criticism. Ibn Kammuna had taken these critical arguments against the Torah from Samau'al al-Maghribi, a Jew converted to Islam, to be mentioned later on. The rebuttals are inspired by both Judah Halevi and Maimonides.

Ibn Kammuna's information on Christianity is likewise derived from Judah Halevi but supplemented by the Nicene Creed and the New Testament. He knows to distinguish between Jacobites, Nestorians and Melkites in respect to their christologies. Ibn Kammuna's attitude toward Jesus is reverent, but the Christian arguments he considers to be rather weak. He sets out to offer better arguments himself, ostensibly to strengthen the Christian cause. Nevertheless he claims that Christianity drifted away from Judaism due to Paul (cf. Kirkisani and Al-Mukammis above).⁶³

Samau'al's argument that only Islam credits all three prophets, Moses, Jesus and Mohammed and hence should be considered the true religion, receives an elegant rebuttal by Ibn Kammuna: only Moses is credited as a prophet by all three religions. Hence, only Moses can be considered to be a true prophet, as Judaism teaches. One is reminded of the story of the three rings: only the son who is most loved by the two others, possesses the true ring!

Ibn Kammuna is interesting for his rationality and

Examination, 8.

⁶³ This argument may reflect early Jewish-Christian antagonism against Paul, later on taken over by Islam and Karaism. Cf. M. Perlmann, *op. cit.*, 6 who refers to S. Pines, "The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries of Christianity According to a New Source", *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities*, II (1968), 237-309. See on the negative image of Paul in Islam, E. Fritsch, *Islam und Christentum im Mittelalter, Beiträge zur Geschichte der muslimischen Polemik gegen das Christentum in Arabischer Sprache*, Breslau 1930, 49: Paul as Iblis (devil), who created the different churches.

detachment, almost enabling him to take a critical stand toward *all three religions*.⁶⁴ He is one of the most remarkable Jewish polemical authors.⁶⁵

In Spanish environment Jewish Christian and Jewish Muslim polemics continued until the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492. Simeon ben Zemah Duran (1361-1444) directed a considerable part of his work *Keshet uMagen* (Bow and shield) against Islam. Joseph Albo (15th century) wrote the *Sefer ha'Ikkarim* (Book of Principles), which betrays knowledge of Thomas Aquinas and of Islam as is testified by scattered remarks. However, separate tracts by Jews against Islam are rare. Generally Jewish writings display greater affinity with Islam than with Christianity in spite of the Scripture they share with the latter. The Jewish polemics are relatively few in number and generally somewhat implicit, perhaps due to the position of Judaism as a minority. However, on closer scrutiny its arguments are in its sharpness well-matched to those of Christians and Muslims.

3. Muslim writers on Judaism and Christianity⁶⁶

The attitude of Muslim writers toward other religions varies between description and polemic. The encyclopedic works are generally descriptive, whereas the tracts have often an explicitly polemical aim. This survey, although far from complete, intends to give an impression of the wide variety of literature. Some of the Muslim

⁶⁴ Cf. F. Niewöhner, "Die Wahrheit ist ein Tochter der Zeit. Ibn Kammuna's historisch-kritischer Religionsvergleich aus dem Jahre 1280", B. Lewis/F. Niewöhner, *Religionsgespräche im Mittelalter*, Wiesbaden 1992, 357-369. But cf. B. Roggema, *op. cit.*

⁶⁵ Cf. The survey of Jewish-Islamic polemics in M. Perlmann, "The Medieval Polemics Between Islam and Judaism", S.D. Goitein, *Religion in a Religious Age*, Cambridge Mass. 1974, 103-129.

⁶⁶ For general reference see C. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Literatur*, Leiden 1898-1942. On Arabic philosophy: S. Hossein Nasr/O. Leaman (eds.), *op.cit.* C. Adang, *Muslim writers on Judaism*, treats Ibn Rabban al-Tabari, Ibn Qutayba, Al-Yaqubi, Al-Tabari, Al-Mas'udi, Al-Maqdisi, Al-Baqillani, Al-Biruni and the polemicist Ibn Hazm.

authors are an important source for Christian writers on Islam and are dealt with in spite of the fact that they do not always cover both Christianity and Judaism.

Ibn al-Kalbi

A somewhat phenomenological approach can be detected in Ibn al-Kalbi (737-821, died in Baghdad) who wrote in an irenic vein about pre-Islamic religions. He describes ancestor cults, stone worship (Ka'aba!) and female deities that may even have left their traces in the Koran itself, but he does not feel the necessity of wholesale apologetics.⁶⁷

Al-Tabari

Perhaps the most encyclopedic author of Islam is Al-Tabari (839-923). His major work, a history of the world: *History of messengers and kings* (Ta'rikh al-rusul wa'l-muluk), encompasses in English translation more than thirty volumes.⁶⁸ Al-Tabari meticulously supplies every quotation with an exact chain of transmission (*isnad*). A wealth of Jewish and Christian traditions and motifs have been included in this monument of learning. The same holds good for his commentary on the Koran (*Tafsir*), still considered one of the most authoritative commentaries until today.

Mas'udi

Of comparable encyclopedic outreach was al-Mas'udi (born in Baghdad 893) who used some 165 written sources, traveled widely to Persia and India, and met Christian thinkers. His principal work: *Golden meadows*, purports to be a universal history of the world, listing kings, rivers, countries, monuments, peoples, etc., and deals

⁶⁷ *Kitab al-Asnam*, translated by Nabih Amin Faris as: *The Book of Idols*, Princeton 1952. This work contains the notorious addition to the 'satanic verses' in the Koran, Sura 53,19: "They are lofty goddesses; their intercession is to be desired", a text that may have been expunged from the Koran later on. Cf. J. Waardenburg, *Zien met andermans ogen*, Inaugural lecture, november 6, 1975, The Hague, 5.

⁶⁸ F. Rosenthal/W. Brinner, *The History of Al-Tabari*, Albany 1989 ff. The first volume contains extensive biography and bibliography.

both with pre-Islamic and with Islamic history.⁶⁹ His account of a disputation between a Copt and a Jew is highly fascinating as the Copt displays some knowledge of Rabbinic sources. The Copt criticises the unworthy statements in the Torah about Lot committing incest, Moses refusing his mission, Daniel seeing an elderly man upon the throne and so on. Quoting the Talmud, Mas'udi is especially annoyed at the figure of Metatron, or 'Little Lord' who mourns the destruction of the Temple.⁷⁰ Mas'udi is the first author who mentions his Jewish opponents by name, among whom the celebrated Saadya Gaon. He informs us on the Karaites, a Jewish sect originating in 8th century Iraq and still in existence (see above under Kirkisani, p. 17).

*Abd al-Jabbar*⁷¹

Abd al-Jabbar (932-1025) wrote an encyclopedic work *Al-Mughni*. However, the way he treats Judaism and Christianity in different places betrays a more philosophical and polemical stand. In its fifth

⁶⁹ Edition Charles Pellat, 7 volumes, Beirut 1966-1979, translated into French by Barbier de Meynard, 1861-77, corrected by Pellat, 3 volumes, Paris 1962. Cf. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, s.v. 'Mas'udi'; A. Shboul, *Al-Mas'udi and his world*. A Muslim humanist and his interest in non-Muslims, London 1979 (includes bibliography). Equally famous is Ibn al Nadim, a tenth century bookseller who lived in Bagdad. He wrote the *Fihrist* (ed. G. Flügel, Leipzig 1871-72, translated by B. Dodge, New York 1970, 2 volumes), intended to be an index of all books in Arabic by Arabs and non-Arabs. The first six discourses deal with holy books of Jews, Christians and Muslims, grammar, history, poetry, 'kalam', and law. The last four deal with non-Islamic topics such as fables, philosophy, magic and the non-monotheistic creeds of Sabians, Manicheans, Hindus, Buddhists and Chinese. Cf. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, s.v. 'Ibn Nadim'.

⁷⁰ See the translation of this dispute in C. Adang, *op. cit.*, 51-52.

⁷¹ J. Peters, *God's created speech: a study in the speculative theology of the Mutazili Qadi l-Quda Abu l-Hasan Abd al-Jabbar bn Ahmad al-Hamadani*, Leiden 1976; J.K. Hecker, *Reason and responsibility: an explanatory translation of kitab al-tawlid from al-Mughni by Abd al-Jabbar*, with introduction and notes, Michigan (Ann Arbor, Microfilm) 1975; G.F. Hourani, *Islamic Rationalism: the Ethics of Abd al-Jabbar*, Oxford 1971; M. Heemskerck, *Pain and compensation in Mutazilite doctrine: Abd al-Gabbar's teaching and its adoption by Mankdim and Ibn Mattawayh*, Nijmegen 1995.

part he treats "those who think differently about the unity of God", referring to dualist heresies (Manicheans etc.), Mazdeans (followers of Zarathustra), Christians, Sabians and pre-Islamic religions including worshippers of statues.⁷² Apparently, Abd al-Jabbar sees no reason to treat Judaism and Christianity within the same context, but prefers to deal with Christianity in the context of the question of the unity of God. Between Judaism and Islam there was no problem in this respect.

In addition to this, Abd al-Jabbar wrote *The Proofs of Prophethood of Our Master Mohammed*, in which he indulges in anti-Christian polemics. According to Shlomo Pines, this work contains in reality hitherto unknown Jewish-Christian material which defends adherence to the Law and brands Paul as the culprit of Christian deviance from the commandments.⁷³

Al-Biruni

One of the most learned men of Islam, Al-Biruni (973-1048), wrote an encyclopaedia of science. He himself calculated the circumference of the earth, wrote on the cipher *pi* at the Indians, compared Christianity, Buddhism and Manicheism, dealt with the healing faculty of plants, and so on. In his *Chronology of ancient nations* he attempts to describe different religions, including Judaism and Christianity, and offers a wealth of customs, stories and folklore.⁷⁴ His aim is less

⁷² G. Monnot, "Sabéens et idolâtres selon Abd al-Jabbar", *Mélanges de l'institut dominicain d'études orientales du Caire* XIII (1975), 39-65. This theological context of discussing Christianity is very similar to the Jewish philosopher Saadya Gaon's treatment of it in his work *The book of opinions and beliefs*. See for other points of contact S. Pines, "'Israel, my firstborn' and the sonship of Jesus. A Theme of Anti-Christian Polemics", *Studies in Mysticism and Religion presented to Gershom Scholem*, Jerusalem 1967, 177-190.

⁷³ S. Pines, "The Jewish Christians of the Early Centuries of Christianity", *op.cit.*, 237-309. Cf. idem, "A Moslem Text Concerning the Conversion of the Khazars to Judaism", *Collected Works* V, 306-55. Similar Jewish Christian influence upon a Jewish author in idem, "Judaeo-Christian Materials in an Arabic Jewish Treatise", *Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research* 35 (1967), 187-217.

⁷⁴ This work was edited by E. Sachau (Leipzig 1878), and translated by

systematic and theological than the other Islamic authors mentioned here. Topics include: the common ancestry of mankind, different versions of the Old Testament, on the Jewish Purim feast, on the pagan Sabians in Harran⁷⁵, contradictions in the gospels, a baptismal ceremony in Byzantium, the fire miracle at Easter in Jerusalem, the Christian veneration of the Cross, Mani and Manicheism, an expedition to the legendary place of the 'seven sleepers'. Again there is the attempt to offer a comprehensive account of all the available knowledge of that time as well as a complete history of the world, which has its Christian counterparts as well.⁷⁶

Ibn Hazm

With Ibn Hazm (994-1064), we again enter Europe as we did with Judah Halevi. He was a man of letters and of encyclopedic knowledge. His style of criticism is vehement, attacking both Christianity and Judaism for their 'falsifications' of Scripture. His monumental *Book of Decision about Religions, Opinions and Sects*,

the same author (London 1879). An anthology of this and other works by Biruni, including a bibliography, was edited by G. Strohmaier, *In den Gärten der Wissenschaft* (Leipzig 1988). Cf. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, I, 1236, (s.v. 'Biruni'). Moslem authors divide Christianity in several groups: Melkite, Nestorian, Jacobite; or according to peoples: Greeks (*Rum*), and Copts (*Qibt*). See G. Troupeau, "La connaissance des chrétiens syriaques chez les auteurs musulmans", *Symposium Syriacum* III (1980), 273-280.

⁷⁵ These Sabians or Sabians formed a 'pagan' religion considered by the Koran to be a forerunner of Islam, together with Judaism and Christianity. They feature in several Islamic works as well as in Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed* III,29. Cf. D. Chwolson, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*, 2 vols. 1856.

⁷⁶ Cf. W.J. Fischel, "Ibn Khaldun: On the Bible, Judaism and the Jews", S. Loewinger (ed.), *Ignace Goldziher Memorial Volume* II, Jerusalem 1958, 150-151, on the Christian sources of Ibn Khaldun, such as Byzantine chronicles. Khaldun (1332-1406) is probably the Moslem author who wrote most extensively about post-Biblical Judaism because he could avail himself of the medieval Jewish chronicle *Sefer Yosippon* in Arabic translation. Perhaps he was also familiar with Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed*. Cf. S. Pines, "Ibn Khaldun and Maimonides", *Collected Works* V, Jerusalem 1997, 383-392.

the culmination of Islamic polemics, integrated earlier work of his in a massive history of religions and sects.⁷⁷ The text mentions a Jew Samuel, "the most learned and skilled in disputations". This Samuel ibn Nagrella (Cordoba, died 993) had even written a pamphlet critical of the Koran, that unfortunately has not survived. Ibn Hazm devoted in his turn a pamphlet to refute this Samuel.⁷⁸ In it the Koran's divine origin is defended and the Bible attacked for its unworthy passages. His *Book of Decision* was meant for Muslims, not for Jews and contained a long list of these 'unworthy' passages. Not only abounds the Bible in inaccuracy of numbers and geography, Scripture wants us to believe that Abraham doubted God's word, Sarah lied to God, Isaac and Esau were cheated by Jacob, who in his turn was cheated by Laban; the lineage of kings starts with incest and fornication, etc. To biblical prophets infallibility (*Isma*) should be attributed and as such they are above this kind of behaviour.⁷⁹ In addition to that, the Torah knows of plurality in the deity (*shirk*), and uses crass anthropomorphism. Hence the Scripture of the Jews shows distortion (*tahrif*). Ezra is blamed as the forger and the Jewish chain of tradition is considered untrustworthy compared to the Muslim chains.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Translated by Asin Palacios, *Abenhamazam de Cordoba y su historia critica de las ideas religiosas*, 5 vols. Madrid 1927-1932. See further M. Perlmann, "Andalusian authors on the Jews of Granada", *Proceedings of the American Academy of Jewish Research* 18 (1948-49), 269-290; Mohammed Abu Layla, *In pursuit of Virtue. The Moral Theology and Psychology of Ibn Hazm al-Andalusi*; C. Adang, *op. cit.* passim.

⁷⁸ An English translation seems to have been prepared by David Powers. Cf. C. Adang, *op. cit.*, 226.

⁷⁹ Cf. M. Zucker, "Can a Prophet Sin? The Problem of Isma - Prophetic Immunity to Sin and Error in Islamic and Jewish Literatures" (Hebr.), *Tarbiz* 35 (1965), 149-173. C. Touati, "Le problème de l'inerrance prophétique dans le théologie du Moyen Age", *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 174 (1968), 168-187.

⁸⁰ Medieval Judaism displays a growing interest in chains of tradition (*isnad*), possibly under Islamic influence. Cf. my article: "Tradition and religious authority", *Hebrew Union College Annual* 66 (1995), that deals with an Arabic Christian chain, heavily influenced by Jewish chains. Cf. C. Colpe, *Das Siegel der Propheten*, Historische Beziehungen zwischen Judentum,

It should be noted that some of these questions had been discussed already in the course of Jewish history. Third century midrash contains refutation of criticism of the Patriarchs, possibly from the side of gnostic or rationalist currents.⁸¹ In the second century, the apologetic Christian author Justin Martyr credits Ezra with the omission of some Bible verses. And even within Jewish circles, critical attitudes toward the Torah itself were not lacking, as the person of Hiwi al-Balki proves.⁸² Interesting is Ibn Hazm's criticism of post-Biblical Jewish literature such as the Talmud. Apparently he had no knowledge of the complete Talmud but served himself of excerpts, calling them 'old-wife tales'. He attacks the story of the Shekhina (God's 'indwelling'), mourning like a lion the destruction of the Temple and of rabbi Ishmael meeting Metatron, 'the little Lord'. This story, referring to the Talmud (Berakhot 3a) and mystical Hechalot literature (cf. 3 Henoch), was quoted already by Mas'udi and plays a role in Christian polemic as well.⁸³ After all,

Judenchristentum, Heidentum und frühem Islam, Berlin 1990; U. Rubin, "Prophets and Progenitors in the Early Shi'a Tradition", *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, Jerusalem 1979, 41-65.

⁸¹ Cf. Porphyrius' fragment 'Against the Christians', collected in M. Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors against Jews and Judaism* 2, Jerusalem 1980, 480, who suggests that before Ezra all of the Torah was burned together with the Temple.

⁸² For possible influence of Hiwi al-Balki upon Ibn Hazm, see D.S. Powers, "Reading/Misreading One Another's Scriptures: Ibn Hazm's Refutation of Ibn Nagrella's al-Yahudi", W. Brinner/S. Ricks (eds.), *Studies in Islamic and Judaic Traditions*, Atlanta 1986, 109-121. For possible Karaite influence upon Ibn Hazm, see Z. Ankori, *Karaites in Byzantium*, 39, n.32, for numerous authors who buttress this idea, although Ankori himself doubts it and points toward Christian influence.

⁸³ The first being Agobardus of Lyon (ninth century), quoting *Sefer Yetsira*, the anti-Christian *Toledoth Jeshu* and probably the mystical *Shi'ur Koma*. Cf. B. Blumenkranz, *Juifs et Chrétiens dans le monde occidental 430-1096*, Parijs 1960, 50-52. Peter the Venerable quotes Talmud as well, but probably also from excerpts. On the other hand, Karaite criticism concentrated upon post-Biblical writings, quoting both Talmud and Jewish mystical writings (Kirkisani). There may be a link between Karaite criticism of Rabbinic literature and Christian anti-Jewish polemic, although which one

Ibn Hazm lived in Spain, not in the East. With him and with Christian authors the question arises to what extent genuine knowledge of the Talmud prompted these criticisms. Ibn Hazm intersperses his criticism with blunt invectives: 'dirty, vile, and filthy' are the epithets he reserves for the Jews.

The reason for some other Muslim writers to adopt a more irenic approach to Judaism and Christianity may be due not only to the fact that they consider themselves historians (and not theologians), but also because of different theological standpoints. Some Muslim writers, like Ibn Hazm, accused Jews and Christians of *tahrif* (corruption of the Biblical text), other Muslim writers like Ibn Khaldun and Mas'udi, only of misinterpretation. The influence of philosophy and of mysticism sometimes brought Muslim thinkers to an irenic or even sceptical approach to religion as such.⁸⁴ But Ibn Hazm belonged definitely not to them.

Shahrastani

The thinker and historian Shahrastani (1086-1153) lived in Persia and studied in the cities of Nishapur, Baghdad and Marw. His most famous work is *Al-Milal wa 'l-nihal* (On religions and sects), a title that had been used more often for books with comparable contents.⁸⁵ This massive work sets out to describe the available knowledge on philosophy and Islamic sects as well as religions outside Islam: Christians, Jews, Mazdeans, Manicheans, hermeticists, Sabeans, ancient Arabic cults and Hindu sects. Shahrastani groups these together under two headings: religion based upon revelation in a book;

takes priority remains a matter of debate. See Z. Ankori, *Karaites in Byzantium*, 40, n.32; parallel independent development remains a possibility as well.

⁸⁴ Cf. S. Stroumsa, *Freethinkers of Medieval Islam*, Leiden 1999. The last chapter treats repercussions of freethinking upon Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

⁸⁵ W. Cureton (ed.), *Shahrastani: On Religions and Sects*, London 1842-46. Th. Haarbrücker (tr.), *Religionspartheien und Philosophenschulen*, 2 vols. Halle, 1850-51, repr. Wiesbaden 1969; D. Gimaret/J. Jolivet/G. Monnot, *Livre des religions et des sectes*, 2 vols. Louvain 1986-93; cf. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, s.v. "Milal" and "(al-)Shahrastani".

and religions based upon free thought. To the latter he reckons Sabceans, philosophers, pre-Islamic Arabs and Indians.⁸⁶

Samau'al al-Maghribi

The writer Samau'al ibn Abbas (ibn Yahya al-Maghribi, 1125-1175) was from Jewish descent. He was born in Baghdad and lived in Iraq, Syria and Persia.⁸⁷ He worked as a physician and as a mathematician. In Baghdad he received an excellent training under Abu al-Barakat, who however at the end of his life, converted to Islam. Samau'al al Maghribi likewise converted to Islam and wrote a highly critical pamphlet: *Iffham al-Yahud* (Silencing the Jews). Later on he revised this pamphlet adding to it an autobiographical account of his visions in which he met both the prophet Samuel and Mohammed.⁸⁸

Samau'al argues that a later revelation can abrogate an earlier one (*naskh*), even if they are both sent by God. Hence, Jesus could abrogate Moses and Mohammed could abrogate Jesus. In addition to that, a prophet has to show credentials for his claim to revelation. A religion should demonstrate a good transmission (*tawatur*), a chain of authorities. Judaism's chain regarding the Torah is quite untrustworthy, Samau'al claims.

His anti-Jewish arguments have as target Ezra the scribe whom he accuses to have distorted the original revelation of God and to have added unworthy stories of Lot's incest and of Judah and Tamar in order to prevent the Davidic dynasty from ruling in his days.⁸⁹ This kind of criticism may have older roots than Islam:

⁸⁶ Cf. B.B. Lawrence, *Shahrastani on the Indian Religions*, with a Preface by F. Rosenthal, The Hague 1976.

⁸⁷ *Encyclopedia Judaica* 14, 760.

⁸⁸ Samau'al al-Maghribi, *Iffham al-Yahud*, (Silencing the Jews), edited and translated by M. Perlmann, New York 1964. M. Schreiner, "Samau'al b. Jahja al -Magribi und seine Schrift Iffham al-Jahud", *Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 42 (1898); Nachträge, 43 (1899), 521-522.

⁸⁹ Cf. H. Lazarus-Yafeh, *op. cit.*, 45 and 69, who points to the similarity of these ideas to modern Bible criticism. The negative image of Ezra in Islam was inaugurated already by Ibn Hazm, who influenced Samau'al al-Maghribi

Karaism seems to have been acquainted with this argument as well, whereas even earlier heterodox Christian circles seemed to have entertained suspicion as to Ezra's rediscovery of the authentic Torah. According to these circles, Judaism possessed no longer the original Torah.⁹⁰ In addition to that, Hellenistic pagan arguments against Christianity had drawn upon the same argument!⁹¹

In medieval context this religious polemical topic was intensified by a growing awareness of the Bible as a composite document necessitating Biblical criticism. Even within Jewish circles the first veiled allusions to the different sources of the Pentateuch can be detected, as the example of the twelfth century scholar Abraham ibn Ezra proves.⁹² It would take another five centuries before Spinoza would develop this topic in his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*.

In spite of his critical attitude towards the Bible, Samau'al finds in it a number of announcements of the prophet Mohammed (e.g. Dt 18,15-18). In a remarkable train of logic he argues that the arguments for Moses' authority hold good as well for both Jesus and Mohammed. One should reject or accept all three of them. Rejection is unacceptable (here Samau'al avoids sceptic rationalism) as they taught mankind the good life. Hence one should accept all, as is done by Islam.

Although Monnot may be right in stating that "the history of the intellectual attitude of Islam, toward other religions rarely coincided with a history of dialogue",⁹³ the energy spent by these

in this respect.

⁹⁰ The original Torah was supposed to have been written in Syriac. See the *Syriac Cave of Treasures* (fourth century), 43-44; *Pseudo-Clementine Homilies* 3,47. Here already Ezra is considered a forger. Cf. M. Poorthuis, "Tradition and religious authority" (on an Arabic Christian text containing Jewish material), *Hebrew Union College Annual* 66 (1995), 196, for an account of how the *original* Tora is rediscovered. Cf. on IV Ezra in Arabic sources: A. Drint, *The Mount Sinai Arabic Version of IV Ezra*, Groningen 1994.

⁹¹ Porphyrius, *op.cit.*, 480. Cf. H. Lazarus-Yafeh, *op.cit.*, 63.

⁹² His son was a disciple of the above mentioned Abu al-Barakat and possibly converted to Islam as well.

⁹³ G. Monnot, "Penseurs musulmans et religions iraniens", *Abd al-Jabbar*

medieval Muslim scholars in assembling and studying data from other religions remains impressive and their knowledge quite often exceeds that of modern participants in dialogue. It is particularly interesting that Islam knows of more than one approach towards Christianity and Judaism, one polemical and another ethnological. It explains the sometimes surprisingly unbiased description of other religions.

4. Christian writers on Islam and Judaism⁹⁴

The Christian response to Islam is not uniform. In this respect it is important to distinguish between the different Eastern churches⁹⁵ and to assess which church is the dominant one. Soon after the death of Mohammed, the first confrontation between Christians and Moslems took place. The Jacobite patriarch John I, ruling from 635 until 648, was on the defence against Sa'id ibn 'Amir, governor of the city of Homs (Syria). Apparently, Arab Christians had translated the gospel from Syriac into Arabic to enable discussion.⁹⁶ Topics such as the Trinity, the divinity of Jesus and the alleged prophecies about Mohammed in John 15 (the Paraclete) are debated. The Muslim Sa'id ibn Amir attacks the concept of the Trinity as compromising God's unity. However, in future debates this topic between Christianity and

et ses dévanciers (Études musulmanes XVI) Paris 1974, 148.

⁹⁴ For general reference see *Lexikon des Mittelalters*; for Arab authors G. Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, 5 vols, Vatican 1944-1953.

⁹⁵ See the important overview in H. Teule/A. Wessels (eds.), *Oosterse christenen binnen de wereld van de Islam*, Kampen 1997; for Nestorians: B. Landron, *Chrétiens et musulmans en Irak: Attitudes Nestorienne vis-à-vis de l'Islam*, Paris 1994; for Greek-Byzantines A. Khoury (n. 9 above); cf. S.H. Griffith, "The Prophet Muhammad, his Scripture and his Message according to the Christian Apologies in Arabic and Syriac from the first Abbasid Century", *La vie du prophète Mahomet*, Straatsburg 1983, 99-146.

⁹⁶ F. Nau, *Un colloque du patriarche Jean avec l'émir des Agaréens*, Paris 1915. H. Lammens, "Un colloque entre le patriarche Jacobite Jean I et 'Amrou ibn al-'Asi", *Études sur le siècle des Omayyades*, Beirut 1930, 13-25; K. Shamir, "Qui est l'interlocuteur musulman du Patriarche Syrien Jean III (631-648)?" *Symposium Syriacum IV*, 387-400; A. Wessels, *De moslimse naaste*, Kampen 1978, 52.

Islam will appear to be more complicated (as it will appear to be with the Jewish philosopher Saadya). Certain Muslim theologians (possibly influenced by Christianity)⁹⁷ accepted the Mu'tazilite idea of three divine attributes (wisdom, power and life) that can be ascribed to God.⁹⁸ The Christian spokesman needed only to refer to this idea to make the idea of the Trinity more plausible to both Jews and Muslims who adhered to this school.

The works to be discussed show a variety of genres and approaches to other religions. Not all of them are specifically directed to Judaism and Islam, but they deserve some attention as they reveal the different contexts of the Christian approach towards other religions.

The Doctrine of Jacob Recently Baptised

This curious work, extant in Greek and Ethiopian⁹⁹, relates a dialogue between a Jew recently converted to Melkite Christianity, and his Jewish friend Justus, taking place on July 634. They discuss Messianic prophecies, especially the apocalyptic imagery of Daniel 7:23. The little horn, Hermolaus¹⁰⁰ Satan, is no other than Mohammed, Jacob argues, refuting any positive interpretation of Islam by his Jewish friend. Although this dialogue is probably wholly fictional, some real information about the initial positive reaction of Jews to Mohammed may have permeated it.¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Cf. S. Pines, "Some Traits of Christian Theological Writing in Relation to Moslem Kalam and to Jewish Thought", *Collected Works* III, Jerusalem 1996, 79-99, who investigates Maimonides' thesis that Kalam originated in Christianity (*Guide* I,71).

⁹⁸ Cf. R. Haddad, *La Trinité chez les arabes (750-1050)*, Paris 1974.

⁹⁹ *Doctrina Jacobi Nuper baptizati*. N. Bonwetsch (ed.), Berlin 1910; S. Grébaut (ed. and transl. of Ethiopic version), *Sargis d' Abergas*, *Patrologia orientalis* 4.4. (1909), 13.1 (1919); F. Nau (ed. and transl. of Greek version), *La didascalie de Jacob*, *Patrologia Orientalis* 8.5 (1911).

¹⁰⁰ Is this name related to Armilius, the Jewish name for the Antichrist, itself derived from Romulus?

¹⁰¹ J. Lamoreaux, "Early Eastern Christian Responses to Islam", J. Tolan (ed.), *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam*, New York 1996, 16.

John of Damascus

Christian polemic against the Jews had trained Christian authors for centuries in the style of polemicals, now to be broadened by the rise of Islam.¹⁰² Earlier than Jews and Muslims, John of Damascus († 754) wrote his monumental work *De Haeresibus*.¹⁰³ Curiously, 'the heresy of the Ishmaelites' forms chapter 101, whereas the book should encompass 100 heresies.¹⁰⁴ In addition to that, he wrote a *Disputatio* between a Muslim ('Saracene') and a Christian. According to Sahas, John of Damascus is familiar with the Koran, whereas other scholars doubt it. The eight century marks the dawn of Christian apologetic literature against Islam.¹⁰⁵

John of Damascus accuses Judaism of following the Antichrist, perhaps referring to Judaism's favourable attitude towards nascent Islam. He advocates the pedagogical (and hence, temporal) function of sabbath and circumcision.¹⁰⁶

A disciple of John of Damascus is the Arabic Christian writer Theodore Abu Qurrah († 825).¹⁰⁷ The *Disputatio* deals with the

¹⁰² G. Graf, "Christliche Polemik gegen den Islam", *Gelbe Hefte* II (1926), 826 ff. A.Th. Khoury, *op. cit.*, passim.

¹⁰³ D.S. Sahas, *John of Damascus on Islam*, Leiden 1972; R. Le Coz, *Jean Damascène. Ecrits sur l'Islam*, Paris 1992. *De Haeresibus* forms the second part of *The Fount of Knowledge*, the *Capita Philosophica or Dialectica* being the first and the *De Fide Orthodoxa* the third part.

¹⁰⁴ D.S. Sahas, *op. cit.*, 58 ff, argues against A. Abel for the originality of this chapter within the main body. The term 'heresy' should not be understood in our sense of the word as it comprises already in Epiphanius' Panarion pre-Christian philosophical schools, Jewish groups like Pharisees, and Christian sects. Cf. Sahas, *op. cit.*, 56-57. Still the identification of other religion and heresy is quite strong in Epiphanius. Cf. the Arabic titles of the works of Muslim authors mentioned above.

¹⁰⁵ M.N. Swanson, "Beyond Proof-texting: Approaches to the Qur'an in Some Early Arabic Christian Apologies", *The Muslim World* 88/3-4 (1988), 287-319; K. Samir/J. Nielsen, *Christian Arabic Apologetics during the Abbaside Period (750-1258)*, Leiden 1994.

¹⁰⁶ *De Fide orthodoxa* (PG 94, 1201-1206). Cf. H. Schreckenberg, *Die Adversus-Judaeos-Texte*, I, 473-474; 641.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Sahas, *op. cit.* 100, who points to similarities between Abu Qurrah's works and John of Damascus' *Disputatio*. Cf. S.H. Griffith,

question if God is the creator of both good and evil. The Muslim advocates that idea, probably to avoid dualist tendencies. However, man's free will is then jeopardised.¹⁰⁸

Theodore bar Konai

The East Syrian theologian Theodore bar Konai wrote around 791 a voluminous work: *Liber Scholiorum*¹⁰⁹, containing commentaries on the Bible and tracts against Christian groups considered heretical by him. The 11th *mimra* is directed against other religions and sects such as Gnosticism, Mandaeism and Manicheism, whereas the 10th *mimra* is directed against Islam.¹¹⁰ In this dialogue between a Christian and a Muslim, the Muslim's point of view is equated with a pagan philosophical standpoint. In its scopus this *Liber Scholiorum* may well be considered a Nestorian '*Summa contra Gentiles*'.

Timothy I

The Nestorian patriarch Timothy I (727-823) wrote in his apology to the Caliph al-Mahdi, that Mohammed walked in the path of the prophets.¹¹¹ The discussion was courteous and open minded, showing no trace of demonising Mohammed that was to become prevalent in Byzantine and Western European Christian polemics.¹¹² Timothy's Letter 34 contains extensive anti-Muslim apologetic

"Theodore Abu Qurrah's Arabic tract on the Christian practice of venerating images, *JAOS* 105 (1985), 66-67. Cf. Griffith's English translation of this text, including bibliography, Leuven 1997.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. M. Watt, *Free Will and Predestination in Early Islam*, London 1948.

¹⁰⁹ Ed A. Scher, *CSCO* 55,69 (1910-12); translation *CSCO* 431-432 (1982).

¹¹⁰ S.H. Griffith, "Chapter Ten of the Scholion: Theodore bar Koni's Apology for Christianity", *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 47 (1981), 158-188.

¹¹¹ A. Mingana, "The Apology of Timothy, the Patriarch before the Caliph Mahdi", *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 12 (1928), 137-298; Idem, *Timothy's Apology for Christianity* (Woodbrooke Studies 2), Cambridge 1928.

¹¹² H. Teule, "Oosterse christenen en de dialoog met de islam. Een historische beschouwing", H. Teule/A. Wessels (eds.), *op.cit.*, 360.

material. The Letter expounds why Jesus as the Incarnation of the Word of God, cannot be called a servant.¹¹³ The provenance of this 'Muslim-christology' of Jesus as God's servant remains a matter of debate: earlier Jewish-Christian groups may have contributed to it.

'The first Arabian Summa'

With the ninth century 'first Christian *Summa Theologiae*' in Arabic, as S.H. Griffith calls it, an unexpected treasure of Eastern Christianity comes to light.¹¹⁴ It reveals Christians anxious to avoid giving offence to the Muslims they lived among. They profess "no God but Allah" and avoid referring to the Trinity and to Jesus as the Son of God. Was this 'unitarian' Christianity a road to conversion? The anonymous author of the Arabian *Summa* considers these Christians neither Moslems nor Christians but waverers and hypocrites. And: "It is Judaism they enjoin, that with which Moses and the prophets after him were in accord - no more, no less". These Christians felt apparently attracted to the less complicated 'low Christology' of Islam. The author offers an orthodox treatment of the whole of the Christian faith. In spite of that, history attests that a considerable part of Islamic adherence came from Christian communities.¹¹⁵

The Risala or Apology of Al-Kindi

This curious document purports to be a ninth century Christian's response to the invitation of Al-Hashimi to convert to Islam.¹¹⁶ Both

¹¹³ T.R. Hurst, "The Epistle - Treatise: an Apologetic Vehicle; Letter 34 of Timothy I", *Symposium Syriacum IV* (1984), 367-382.

¹¹⁴ S.H. Griffith described this document, thus far extant only in manuscript, in several articles. See his article: "The First *Summa Theologiae* in Arabic: Christian Kalam in Ninth-Century Palestine", M. Gervers/R. Bikhazi (eds.), *op.cit.*, 15-32. Cf. his contribution in K. Samir/J. Nielsen, *op.cit.*

¹¹⁵ R.W. Bulliet, "Process and Status in Conversion and Continuity", *Ib.* 1-12.

¹¹⁶ W. Muir, *The Apology of Al-Kindi*, London 1882; complete translation in G. Tartar, *Dialogue islamo-chrétiens sous le calife al-Ma'mun. Les épîtres d'Al-Hashimi et d'Al-Kindi*, Paris 1985; G. Anawati, *Polémique, apologie et dialogue islamo-chrétiennes. Positions classiques médiévales et positions*

the invitation and the response have been preserved, but its genuineness may be doubted as the invitation has probably been written by a Christian. In spite of that, the tone of the invitation is earnest and full of concern. Abraham's monotheism has been abandoned by the Christians. Mohammed's mission has been authenticated even by Christian monks. Al-Hashimi claims an intimate knowledge from Old and New Testament and is aware of the existence of different churches. (Pseudo-)Al-Kindi's response is very elaborate, quoting the Koran. Especially the Trinity receives an elaborate treatment. He argues that Muslims themselves know of three divine attributes. Mohammed's claim to prophethood is refuted by the latter's moral conduct and by the course of history. The military success of Islam is no proof for its truth as peace is the hallmark of the true religion. The *Risala* became one of the most important sources for later Christian knowledge of Islam, as will become clear later on.

Elias bar Sinaja

The Nestorian metropolitan of Nisibis, Bar Sinaja († after 1049), wrote a book: *Proof of the Truth of Religion*. He defends Nestorian Christianity against Islam, Judaism and against other Christian groups. He relates how Jews in the Byzantine empire enjoy freedom of religion but nevertheless meet hatred and rejection.¹¹⁷

Dionysius bar Salibi

The Jacobite Syriac bishop Bar Salibi († 1171) was a prolific writer. Scattered are tracts against Jews, Nestorians, Chalcedonians, Muslims, Armenians and idolaters, that may have formed a single work, a kind of 'Confutatio Hereticorum'. The tract against the Jews has been published a long time ago¹¹⁸, whereas his tract against the Muslims

contemporaines, Rome 1969; A. Abel, "L'Apologie d 'Al-Kindi et sa place dans la polemique islamo-chretienne", *L'Oriente cristiana nella storia della civiltà*, Rome 1964, 501-523. For more literature and a summary of its contents: W.Z. Haddad, "Continuity and Change in Religious Adherence: Ninth-Century Baghdad", M. Gervers/R. Bikhazi (eds.), *op.cit.*, 33-53. Others advocate a tenth century anonymous author.

¹¹⁷ L. Horst (transl.), *Beweis der Wahrheits des Glaubens*, Colmar 1886. Schreckenber, *op. cit.*, I, 546 and 653; M. Steinschneider *op.cit.*, 51-55.

¹¹⁸ J. de Zwaan, *The Treatise of Dionysius bar Salibhi against the Jews*,

is still in manuscript.¹¹⁹ Bar Salibi does “not consider it suitable to engage in controversy with the ignorant among them, but with the dialecticians”. The Jewish author Saadya stated more or less the same in his refutation of the Christian Trinity!¹²⁰ Bar Salibi proceeds by tackling all kinds of questions: on the incarnation and the supposed impurity of God in proximity of a foetus; whether Jesus is God similar to Moses’ being called Pharaoh’s god, a well known polemical argument from Jewish side, etc. In his polemic against Judaism he counters attacks upon the Gospel with reference to the Hebrew Bible, which according to him contains changes in the original texts, additions and internal contradictions. One would expect this argument more from the side of Muslim authors than from a Christian author.

Before shifting our attention to Europe in order to catch the first echo’s of the Eastern trialogue there, we mention in passing two writers from the ‘Syrian Renaissance’, Bar Ebroyo (Bar-Hebraeus) and Michael the Syrian, whose chronicles, although not strictly theological, contain important data on Christian-Jewish-Muslim relations.

Michael the Syrian

Michael the Syrian was Jacobite patriarch of Antioch (12th century). His chronicle¹²¹ relates oppressive measures of Muslims against

Leiden 1906; translation: R.H. Petersen, *The Treatise of Dionysius bar Salibhi ‘Against the Jews’, a Translation and a Commentary*, Unpublished PhD dissertation, Duke University 1964. A summary of the contents and literature in H. Schreckenberg, *op. cit.* II, 214-217.

¹¹⁹ S.H. Griffith, “Bar Salibi on the Muslims”, *IV Symposium Syriacum* (1984), *Literary Genres in Syriac Literature*, Rome 1987. In it he announces an edition and translation. L.R. Sako, “Les genres littéraires Syriaques dans l’apologétique chrétienne vis-à-vis des musulmans”, *ib.*, p. 383-385, has collected no less than 30 Syriac tracts, half of them unpublished. Cf. *idem*, “Bibliographie du dialogue islamo-chrétien en langue syriaque”, *Islamochristiana* 10 (1984), 273-292.

¹²⁰ See K. Middleton/M. Poorthuis, *op.cit.*, 345.

¹²¹ J.B. Chabot (tr.), *Chronique de Michael le Syrien, patriarche jacobite d’Antioch*, 4 vols., Paris 1899-1910. The Greek chronologies of Cedrenus,

Christians and Jews. On the other hand, his view of the Muslims during the Byzantine period is favourable as they liberated his own church from the Byzantines.

Bar Hebraeus

Gregory Abul Faraj Bar Hebraeus (1226-1286) wrote among other works several chronicles: a Syriac chronography, divided into political¹²² and ecclesiastical history¹²³, and in addition to that an Arabic history.¹²⁴ His work incorporates important Jewish interpretations of Scripture about the Patriarchs and prophets. He deals not only with Muslim rulers and describes Christian pilgrimage to Jerusalem in terms of the *Hajj* (the pilgrimage to Mecca) and Christian prayers including prostrations, but also indulges in small details and curiosities, such as earthquakes, invasion of locusts, monsters of animals and astrology.¹²⁵

Peter Abelard

With Peter Abelard (1079-1142), the dialogue reaches Western Europe, be it in modest proportions. Abelard does not quote any Islamic literature and his knowledge of Jewish texts is modest. Using

Glycas, Syncellus and Georgios Monachos (Hamartolos) also deserve attention as sources for Jewish-Islamic-Christian relations. See K. Krumbacher, *op. cit.*, I, 352 ff. The same holds good for the *Annales* of the Melkite patriarch Eutychios (Ibn Atrik, 877-940) and for other works by this author; cf. Steinschneider, *op. cit.*, 120.

¹²² E.A. Wallis Budge (ed. and tr.), *The Chronography of Bar Hebraeus*, 2 vols., London 1932; cf. S.P. Brock, "Syriac Views of Emergent Islam", G. Juynboll (ed.), *Studies on the First Century of Islamic Society*, Carbondale-Edwardsville 1982, 9-21; R. Haddad, *Syrian Christians in Muslim Society*, *op. cit.*

¹²³ J.B. Abbeloos & Th. Lamy (ed. and tr.), *Gregorii Barhebraei Chronicon Ecclesiasticum*, Leuven 1872-1879.

¹²⁴ E. Pockock (ed. and latin tr.), *Historia Compendiosa Dynastiarum*, Oxford 1663.

¹²⁵ See E.R. Hambye, "Bar Ebroyo and the Byzantine Empire", *Symposium Syriacum V* (1988), 403-408, who argues that Bar Hebraeus does not mean: son of a Jew. H. Teule, "De syrisch-orthodoxe (jakobitische) kerk van Antiochië", H. Teule/A. Wessels (eds.), *op. cit.*, 157.

the fiction of a dream, Abelard describes a triologue between a Jew, a Christian and a philosopher in front of a judge, introduced as Abelard himself. The philosopher is monotheist but highly critical of any law added to the natural law. Sometimes his arguments coincide with well-known Christian arguments such as the assertion that Abraham and the other patriarchs were justified even without observing all the commandments. On the other hand, the philosopher's objection to circumcision is countered as follows: "You yourself even today keep the practice in imitation of Ishmael your father when you receive circumcision at the age of twelve". Here the philosopher appears to be a Muslim in disguise. The Jew defends tradition and the testimony of the community as valid arguments in a debate, quite similar to Judah Halevi's *Kuzari*.¹²⁶ The *Dialogue* remained unfinished. Whether Abelard's Jew is really well versed in his own tradition remains a matter of debate. Abelard's own knowledge of Hebrew seems to be poor and according to some even non-existent (he recommends learning Hebrew to Heloise). Most of his 'Jewish' interpretations are derived from earlier Patristic texts such as Jerome's. The triadic setting of the dialogue reminds of Jehuda Halevi's *Kuzari* as well.¹²⁷

A similar triadic setting forms the basis of the far less sophisticated late 12th century poem *Christianus Judaeus Sarracenus*. It describes how three men resting under a tree discuss which religion is the true one. A fourth, a gentile, is concerned about his fate after death and

¹²⁶ The opening of both works with the literary device of a dream and the parable of the king in a distant country are other similarities that invite further research. The Judeo-arabic writer Shem Tob ben Joseph ibn Falaquera (1224-1290) opens his book 'Treatise of the dream' (H. Malter (tr), *Jewish Quarterly Review* n.s. 1 (1910/11), 451-501) with a dream as well.

¹²⁷ A. Grabois, "Une chapitre de tolérance intellectuelle dans la société occidentale au xii^e siècle: le 'Dialogus' de Pierre Abélard et le 'Kuzari' de Yehuda Halévi", R. Louis, J. Jolivet & J. Chatillon (eds.), *Pierre Abélard - Pierre le Vénérable*, Paris 1975, 641-654; H. Liebeschütz, "Die Stellung des Judentums im Dialogus des Peter Abaelard", *Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 83 (1939), 390-405; R. Thomas, *Der philosophisch-theologische Erkenntnisweg Peter Abaelards im Dialogus inter Philosophum, Judaeum et Christianum*, Bonn 1966.

counsels the three. He rejects the idea of women in the Muslim's Paradise, as his own wife bothers him enough; he likewise rejects the dishes of the Jew because of pain in his stomach. Finally he accepts Christianity for its spiritual bliss.¹²⁸

*Peter the Venerable*¹²⁹

Spain had been for the Islam the entrance to Europe. From the year 711 on, Islam influenced the Spanish church. It is even argued that so-called Spanish adoptianism (the man Christ adopted as Son of God) at the end of the eighth century was an attempt to accommodate christology to Islam.¹³⁰ However, the first Latin translations of 'lives' of Mohammed appeared only around 850.¹³¹ It took another three centuries for the following documents from Islam to be translated into Latin. Al-Kindi, an Arab Christian writer who exchanged letters with his Moslem friend about the true faith, was translated as early as 1140 into Latin by Peter of Toledo.¹³² The Koran itself was translated in 1143 upon instigation of Peter the Venerable. For the first time, Western Europe could form an opinion about Islam from its own sources.¹³³

Simultaneously, this twelfth century witnessed a renaissance

¹²⁸ See a summary and literature in Schreckenberg, *op. cit.* II, 223-224.

¹²⁹ J. Kritzeck, *Peter the Venerable and Islam*, Princeton 1964; Petrus Venerabilis, *Schriften zur Islam*, R. Gleis (ed. and tr.), Corpus Islamo-Christianum, Series Latina 1, Altenberge 1985.

¹³⁰ J. McWilliam, "The Context of the Spanish Adoptianism: A Review", M. Gervers/Ramzi Jibrān Bikhāzi, *op. cit.*, 75-88. He doubts the theological influence of Islam.

¹³¹ K.B. Wolf, "The Earliest Lives of Muhammad", M. Gervers/Ramzi Jibrān Bikhāzi, *op. cit.*, 89-101.

¹³² See on this so-called 'Toledan Collection': J. Kritzeck, "Peter the Venerable and the Toledan Collection", *Studia Anselmiana* 40 Rome 1956, 176-201; N. Daniel, *op. cit.*, 6-7 and index s.v. 'd'Alverny'. Cf. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, s.v. "Kindi"; G. Tartar, *Dialogue Islamo-Chrétien sous le calife Al-Ma'mun (813-834)*, Paris 1985.

¹³³ R.W. Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages*. Cambridge Mass., 1962. M. de Espalza, "Notes pour une histoire des polémiques anti-chrétiennes dans l'Occident musulman", *Arabica* XVIII (1971).

of Jewish studies by Western Christian scholars who actually started to read Jewish texts, either in the original language or in translations. These facts herald a new episode in the Western attitude towards other religions. The scene of our dialogue shifted - as far as the Christian partner concerns - to Europe, without however coming to an end in the East. The role of translators into Latin, both of classical texts (Aristotle!) and of Arabic and Hebrew texts, became increasingly important.¹³⁴ In this field Jews were often the intermediaries between East and West.

On the one hand European Christian knowledge of other religions grew, on the other hand the vehemence of the polemic increased as well. Economic and political stability fostered the study of letters but contributed as well to the ideal of 'Christianitas', to which the Moslems (from outside) and the Jews (from inside) formed a threat. No longer was the interpretation of the Bible the sole target of European Christian - Jewish polemics, but post-Biblical Jewish literature was drawn into the discussion as well. Ironically, the first burning of the Talmud took place in 1236, instigated by the Jewish apostate Nicholas Donin.

There is a striking correspondence between the emergence of a Christian humanism of the 12th century and the demonisation of non-Christians as hardly human creatures: demons or animals.¹³⁵ The identification of Christianity with reason as such makes any deviation from it an irrational act.¹³⁶ The words Peter the Venerable uses to describe Jews and Muslims often refer to the metaphor of animals which to the Christian believer of that time may not have been

¹³⁴ J. Hamesse/M. Fattori (eds.), *Rencontres de cultures dans la philosophie médiévale. Traductions et traducteurs de l'Antiquité tardive au XVIe siècle*, Louvain 1990.

¹³⁵ This is the central thesis of the book of A. Sapir Abulafia, *Christians and Jews in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance*, perpetuating and refining Funkenstein's study: "The Changing Pattern of Religious Polemics Between Jews and Christians in the 12th Century", *Zion* 33 (1968), 125-144 (hebr.).

¹³⁶ However, this argument was used vice versa: see Judah Halevi's objection against Christianity as contrary to reason. D. Lasker, *Jewish Philosophical polemics*, devotes a separate chapter to the Jewish polemic against Christianity as contrary to reason.

metaphoric at all. This connection between Jew and Muslim explains as well how they became a common target of the Crusaders.¹³⁷ Christianity accused Muslim thinkers of not believing what the Koran professed. Apparently Christianity had detected the emergence of a spirit of rational inquiry in Islam (Bible criticism!). Generally, the rational arguments are a kind of fourth partner in the trialogue. Sometimes it serves as a kind of common ground and as a 'tribunal and judge' for all three protagonists, hereby creating an atmosphere of mutual tolerance. But when one of the protagonists claims the rational foundation only for himself and applies the critical inquiry only to the others, these others are no longer in a shared universe of understanding. Peter the Venerable may be considered to represent such an attitude. But no doubt, such attitudes may be found in all three religions (cf. Judah Halevi; Ibn Hazm).

*Petrus Alfonsi*¹³⁸

Born in Spain as Moises Sefardi, after his baptism in 1106, Petrus Alfonsi inaugurated the increase of Jewish and Arabic knowledge in Europe. Petrus Alfonsi's *Disciplina Clericalis* served as the vehicle through which stories of erotic and humorous nature, derived from Indian and Arabic patterns, passed to medieval Europe. European collections of stories like the *Gesta Romanorum* and Boccaccio's *Decamerone*¹³⁹ owe their debt to Alfonsi, who served as a bridge between East and West. Many European stories can be traced to the East: even Decamerone's famous story of the three rings (I,3) that became famous by Lessing's rendering of it in *Nathan der Weise* and relates how three brothers possess all three a ring without knowing which one is the true ring bequeathed to them by their father, may have older roots, possibly outside the European Christian fold. Is Alfonsi here the bridge for Arabic (and possibly Indian) stories to Europe, other collections of stories that became known in Europe sometimes contain Jewish elements in Arabic garb, such as the *Tales*

¹³⁷ B. Kedar, *Crusade and Mission: European Approaches toward the Muslims*, Princeton 1984; N. Daniel, *op.cit.*

¹³⁸ G. Monnot, "Les citations Coraniques dans le 'Dialogus' de Pierre Alfonse", *Islam et Chrétiens du Midi*, Toulouse 1983, 261-277.

¹³⁹ M. Landau, *Die Quellen des Dekameron*, Stuttgart 1884.

of *Thousand and One Nights*.¹⁴⁰

The Arab literary genre of the *Maqama*, a story in rhymed prose with many rhetorical figures and ingenious quotations from the Koran, profoundly influenced Jewish storytellers, such as Al-Harizi's *Tahkemoni*.¹⁴¹ Jacob ben Eleazar's *Kalila wa-dimna* (derived from the Indian Pantchatantra), Ibn Zabara's *Sefer Sha'ashu'im*¹⁴² and *The Tales of Sendebār*¹⁴³ are other examples of the intertwined relations of Jewish and Arabic literature influencing European folktales and courtly stories.

Alfonsi's *Dialogue* describes an encounter between a Jew Moyses and an Christian Petrus.¹⁴⁴ In the *Praefatio*, Alfonsi gives an autobiographical account of his 'conversion'. The Jew Moyses poses critical questions but his opposition serves a rhetorical purpose: to emphasise the truth of Christianity. In spite of that, Alfonsi is not derogatory towards Judaism and uses traditional invectives as blinded, stubborn etc. only sparingly. However, his criticism of the miraculous and anthropomorphic character of Talmudic stories shows a lack of genuine understanding and betrays the spirit of rationalistic philosophy, an inner-Jewish phenomenon as well (cf. Kirkisani). The fifth chapter of the *Dialogue* is directed against Islam and has been borrowed from the *Apology of Al-Kindi*.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁰ J. Perles, "Rabbinische Agadas in 1001 Nacht", *Monatschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums* 22 (1873), 14-34; 61-85; 116-125; 332-336.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Solomon Ibn Saqbel, "Asher in the Harem", translated in D. Stern/M. Mirsky, *Rabbinic Fantasies*, New Haven 1990.

¹⁴² Josef ibn Zabarah, *The Book of Delight*, translated by Moses Hadas, New York 1960. Cf. H. Schwarzbaum, "International Folklore motifs in Joseph Ibn Zabarah's 'Sepher Sha'shu'im'", *op.cit.*, 359-385. Some of these stories demonstrate a remarkable misogynist tendency.

¹⁴³ M. Epstein, *Tales of Sendebār*, Philadelphia 1967. This text is part of the so-called *Stories of the seven sages*. Here as well the misogyny of some stories is noteworthy.

¹⁴⁴ PL 157, 535-672. A convenient summary in Schreckenberg, *Die christlichen Adversus-Judaeos Texte II*, 70-83 (+ bibl.). Cf. M. Kniewasser, "Die antijüdische Polemik des Petrus Alphonsi (getauft 1106) und des Abtes Petrus Venerabilis von Cluny († 1156)", *Kairos n.s.* 22 (1980), 34-76.

¹⁴⁵ P. van Koningsveld, "Petrus Alfonsi, een twaalfde eeuwse schakel

Thomas Aquinas

The topic of Judaism and Islam in relation to Aquinas can be studied in a systematic way, without a specific focus upon possible historical influences.¹⁴⁶ On the other hand, historical relations can be studied in two ways: which Islamic and/or Jewish sources influenced Thomas? and: which Islamic and Jewish authors underwent the influence of Thomas?¹⁴⁷

In addition to that, here we limit ourselves to what Thomas actually said about Judaism and Islam. It is curious to note how Thomas quotes with respect the Jewish philosopher Maimonides ('Rabbi Moyses' or 'Rabbi'), even deriving from his *Guide of the Perplexed* (translated in 1240 as *Dux Neutorum*)¹⁴⁸ a good deal of the idea of the pedagogical function of the ceremonial law (cf. the beginning of the *Summa Contra Gentiles*)¹⁴⁹, whereas denouncing at

tussen islam en christendom in Spanje", idem (ed.), *Historische betrekkingen tussen moslims en christenen*, Nijmegen 1982, 127-146.

¹⁴⁶ E.g. M. Fakhry, "The 'antinomy' of the eternity of the world in Averroes, Maimonides and Aquinas", *Muséon* LXVI (1953), 139-155; David Burrell, *Freedom and Creation in Three Traditions*, Notre Dame 1993, and others publications by this author.

¹⁴⁷ See for Thomas' influence upon subsequent Jewish authors, such as Hillel ben Samuel and Judah Romano: W. Reedijk, "Some Observations on the Influence of Christian Scholastic Authors on Jewish Thinkers in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century", *Bijdragen* 51 (1990) 382-396. Ibn Adret, Hillel ben Samuel, Hasdai Crescas, Joseph Albo, Isaac Abarbanel and Leon Modena polemised with Thomas. Cf. S. Pines, "Scholasticism after Thomas Aquinas and the Teachings of Hasdai Crescas and his Predecessors", *Collected Works* V, Jerusalem 1997, 489-589.

¹⁴⁸ W. Kluxen, "Die Geschichte des Maimonides im lateinischen Abendland als Beispiel einer christlich-jüdischen Begegnung", P. Wilpert (ed.), *Judentum im Mittelalter. Beiträge zum christlich-jüdischen Gespräch*, Berlin 1966, 151-166. H. Greive, "Thomas von Aquin in der philosophisch-theologischen Diskussion des Judentums", W.P. Eckert, *Thomas von Aquin: Interpretation und Rezeption*, Mainz 1974, 913-932 (includes bibliography); S. Pines, "Maimonide et la philosophie latine", *Collected Works* V, Jerusalem 1997, 393-403; J.Y.B. Hood, *Aquinas and the Jews*, Philadelphia 1995.

¹⁴⁹ A. Funkenstein, "Gesetz und Geschichte: zur historisierenden Hermeneutik bei Moses Maimonides und Thomas von Aquin", *Viator* I

the same time Judaism in strong terms. However, Thomas has not dealt with Judaism extensively. His advice was sought for the issue of levying taxes on Jews. In this context Thomas reproduces the persuasion that slavery is the proper position for Jews in the Christian world, an idea with serious social implications. However, Thomas rejects an overly hard policy against the Jews and recommends the same treatment for Jews and non-Jews (cf. *De regimine Iudaeorum* (1271), probably written for Margaret of Constantinople, countess of Flanders).¹⁵⁰

The same holds good for Thomas' intellectual appreciation for Muslim thinkers such as Averroes and Avicenna in contrast with Thomas' gross repudiation of Islam. It seems as if Thomas himself separated these philosophical thinkers from their religious antecedents.

The idea that the *Summa contra Gentiles* (1258-1264) itself was written against Islam, should probably be rejected.¹⁵¹ On the other hand, a philosophical and Islamic standpoint could sometimes be identified by a Christian author (as we have seen in Abelard; it is a matter of debate in Anselm's *Cur deus homo*)¹⁵², especially because Scriptural arguments had no weight (cf. *ScG* 1.2, 2.4).¹⁵³ However, refusal of Christianity came to be identical with animal or demonic behaviour. Thomas introduces an argument against Judaism that was new: Judaism, at least its leaders, had been aware of the true nature of Christ and in that respect can be equated with demons: both know Christ but Jews refuse to acknowledge it (*ST* III, 47, 5). Hence Hebrew Scripture itself attests of the truth of Christianity for Judaism.

With Islam things are different. Thomas uses only rational

(1970), 147-178.

¹⁵⁰ J.P. Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas I, The Person and his Work*, Washington 1996, 218-219.

¹⁵¹ See the lucid account of the different positions in P. Valkenberg, "How to Talk to Strangers. Aquinas and Interreligious Dialogue in the Middle Ages", *Jaarboek 1997 Thomas Instituut Utrecht* (1998), 28.

¹⁵² A. Sapir Abulafia, *Christians and Jews in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance*, London 1995, 43 and 170 n.6.

¹⁵³ For the appeal to reason in confrontation with Islam, see R.I. Burns, "Christian-Islamic Confrontation in the West: The Thirteenth Century Dream of Conversion", *American Historical Review* 76 (1971), 1386-1434.

argumentation towards both pagans and Muslims since both do not recognise the authority of Scriptural proof (ScG I,2). Thomas draws upon traditional apologetics against Islam: Mohammed has led the people astray with his hedonistic promises, but failed to show any miracles (ScG I,6).¹⁵⁴ One argument, the uneducated level of the first believers, seems to backfire upon Christianity itself: Mohammed's followers were no sages but animal-like people who lived in the desert. However, Christianity had boasted of the divine origin of the gospels with the argument that simple fishermen could not have written such things by themselves!

Shortly after the ScG, Aquinas wrote a tract more explicit on Islam: *De rationibus fidei* (1266).¹⁵⁵ Thomas' knowledge of Islam is poor but betrays some genuine contacts, probably via other Dominicans who had started to study the Koran seriously in order to combat Islam. In the same period the Dominicans had undertaken a huge project in order to attack Judaism with its own weapons, i.e. to prove the truth of Christianity from Jewish sources.¹⁵⁶ Next to the religious polemics already mentioned, the Dominican Raimundo Martini prepared in 1278 the *Pugio Fidei* (Dagger of Faith), a thesaurus of Rabbinic texts together with a Latin translation, directed against the Jews and the Saracenes.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ See for the Christian argument of lack of miracles in Mohammed, N. Daniel, *op.cit.*, 73-77.

¹⁵⁵ P. Valkenberg, *op. cit.*, 35. English translation in *Islamochristiana* 22 (1996), 31-52; cf. J. Waltz, "Muhammad and the Muslims in St. Thomas Aquinas", *Muslim World* LXVI (1976), 82 ff; E. Platti, "Il contesto teologico dell' apprezzamento dell'Islam di S. Tomasso", *Istituto San Tomasso, Studi* 1995, Rome 1995, 294-307.

¹⁵⁶ See the important study by J. Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews The Evolution of Medieval Anti-Judaism*, Ithaca & London, 1982; cf. J. Richard, "L'enseignement des langues orientales en Occident au Moyen Age", *Revue des Études Islamiques* 44 (1976) (Medieval Education in Islam and the West), 149 and the fundamental studies of B. Altaner on the Dominican mission quoted there.

¹⁵⁷ R. Chazan, *Daggers of Faith: Thirteenth Century Christian Missionizing and Jewish Response*, Berkeley & Los Angeles 1989, 115-158; T. Willi/I. Willi-Plein, *Glaubensdolch und Messiasbeweis: Die Begegnung von Judentum, Christentum und Islam im 13. Jahrhundert in Spanien*,

The zenith of Jewish-Christian-Muslim encounter had now shifted definitely from the East to Western Europe, with Spain as the bridge between the two cultures. Not only the geography but also the nature of the encounter had changed radically. No longer were the encounters the fruit of a shared language and culture, in which the different groups sometimes clashed and sometimes lived together peacefully. The shared Semitic background was no longer the common ground. This new encounter was much more strategically planned and constituted a deliberate policy by the budding mendicant Orders of the Franciscans and Dominicans.¹⁵⁸ The Arabic language was no longer a shared heritage but was acquired by monks through assiduous learning. Latin remained for Christians the language for polemic whereas Jews hardly ever used that language. With the *Pugio Fidei*, Christianity had copied *post-biblical* Jewish texts in Hebrew - for the first time in history -. The Bible itself was no longer the battlefield as the strategy of the debate changed: Jews were no longer ignorant of the right interpretation of the Bible, but their own books (Talmud and midrash) proved that they were perfectly aware of the Christian truth but refused to admit it.

Some decades before, the same Raymundo Martini had published a *Summa* against Islam and an Arabic lexicon. No doubt the knowledge of Judaism and Islam increased immensely among Christian theologians in 13th century Europe. However, this century also witnessed the first burning of the Talmud and other Jewish books,¹⁵⁹

Neukirchen 1980.

¹⁵⁸ J. Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews*, 33-50. Cathars, Jews and Muslims formed the target. Cf. already Alanus ab Insulis (†1203), who wrote against Cathars, Waldensians, Jews and Muslims (Schreckenber, *op. cit.* II, 360; Krauss/Horbury, *The Jewish-Christian Controversy*, 78 bibl.). Curiously, a 13th century Jewish polemicist wrote against both orthodox Christianity and against the Cathars. See F. Talmage, "A Hebrew Polemical Treatise, Anti-Cathar and anti-Orthodox", *Harvard Theological Review* 60 (1967), 323-348. (This *Vikuah Radaq* is wrongly attributed to David Kimhi). See on the other hand for supposed connections between Jews and Cathars, the literature quoted in J. Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews*, 48, n. 37.

¹⁵⁹ Maimonides' *Guide* may have been the first, instigated by anti-Aristotelian Jews and performed by Dominicans who likewise rejected

as well as the notorious public religious debates between Jews and Dominicans (often former Jews). Not seldom these debates ended with restrictive measures against the Jewish community, if not worse. Ironically, some of the most interesting Jewish influences upon Christian authors took shape in this period: the Franciscan Nicolas of Lyra wrote his *Postilla* on the Bible, quoting the Jewish commentator Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac of Troyes (Rashi) time and again.

Raymond Lull¹⁶⁰ studied Arabic, knew Jewish sources and around 1270 wrote *The Gentile and the three wise men*.¹⁶¹ It borrowed again from Al-Kindi's Apology, as Alfonsi had done earlier.¹⁶² Lull's debate is courteous and remains undecided. But on the other hand, and again together with Nicholas of Lyra, the same Raymond Lull advocated a Christian Europe with no Jews in it who would stick to their persuasion. This grim anti-Judaism, combining theological disqualification with a policy of marginalising, constitutes in my opinion an altogether new feature of the Jewish-Christian-Muslim dialogue. As such this altogether new era warrants a separate

Aristotelianism, in the city of Montpellier (1233). See D.J. Silver, *Maimonidean Criticism and the Maimonidean Controversy 1180-1240*, Leiden 1965.

¹⁶⁰ S.M. Zwemer, *Raymond Lull. First missionary to the Moslems*, New York 1902. J.N. Hillgarth, *Ramon Lull and Lullism in Fourteenth Century France*, Oxford 1971; C. Colomer, "Die Beziehung des Ramon Lull zum Judentum im Rahmen des Spanischen Mittelalters", P. Wilpert (ed.), *op.cit.*, 183-227; J.C. Lavajo, "Raymond Marti and Raymond Lull", *Islamochristiana* 11 (1985), 155-176.

¹⁶¹ Some scholars assume influence by Halevi's *Kuzari*, others by Abelard's *Dialogue*. But the theme of the three representatives had inspired other authors as well: a queen sending her servants on a journey who upon returning confesses each of them a monotheistic faith. Cf. for more Jewish counterparts J. Cohen, *op. cit.*, 208, n.17. The three rings received different applications as well. Cf. M. Steinschneider, *op.cit.*, 319-320; 360; 370; 374.

¹⁶² T.E. Burman, "'Tathlith al-wahdaniyah' and the twelfth-Century Andalusian Approach to Islam", J. Tolan (ed.), *Medieval Christian Perceptions of Islam*, New York 1996, 109-128. Incidentally, Burman quotes two 12th century anti-Islamic Spanish Christian works in Arabic, one of them containing Hebrew and Aramaic. Cf. idem, *Religious Polemic and the Intellectual History of the Mozarabs*, c. 1050-1200, Leiden 1994.

study.

We have seen that most of the dialogues consist actually of four parties: Judaism, Christianity, Islam; and rational criticism. Some thinkers were prepared to allow the fourth party access into their own religion; others applied rational criticism only to other persuasions. In the first case a common ground of tolerance could be detected whereas in the other case intolerance based upon arguments of reason itself was the result.

In addition to that, a certain ethnological non-polemical approach to other religions was obvious in some Islamic authors and in some Eastern Christian authors, whereas it was completely absent in Western European authors. This fact may shed some new light upon the issue of religion and tolerance. On the other hand, for all its particularism Judaism showed itself to be the most moderate in religious polemics, in respect both of quantity and quality. This may be partly due to its position as a minority, partly due to a particular combination of exclusiveness and tolerance. Hopefully, this historical survey will facilitate research into precisely these vital questions.

RABBI MOSCHE BEN NACHMAN - RAMBAN

Eine Jüdische Propagandaschrift BARCELONA 1263

Marcus van Loopik

1. Einleitung

Im vierten Jahrhundert lebten schon Juden in Spanien. Sie kamen aus dem Orient, aus Italien und aus Afrika. Im darauffolgenden Jahrhundert haben sich Westgoten in Spanien niedergelassen. Sie gehörten zu den arianischen Christen. Die römischen Christen in Spanien begegneten den Neuankömmlingen sehr feindlich und betrachteten sie als Ketzer. Wegen dieses Konflikts wurde die jüdische Gemeinschaft einigermaßen in Ruhe gelassen. In dieser milderen Atmosphäre konnten jüdische Gemeinschaften zur vollen Blüte gelangen. Aber am Ende des sechsten Jahrhunderts änderte sich diese günstige Situation unerwartet, als König Reckared sich offiziell zum römisch-katholischen Christentum bekannte. Es folgte eine Periode von ernsthaftem Rückschlag für die Juden, die seitdem zusammen mit den arianischen Christen Verfolgungen und Demütigungen ausgesetzt waren.

Das achte Jahrhundert brachte Erleichterung, als die Muslime unter Führung von Tarik die Meeresenge von Gibraltar überquerten. Viele jüdischen Siedler fuhren in ihrem Kielwasser mit. Die muslimischen Eroberer trieben die Christen nach Norden zurück. Die schon dort lebenden jüdischen Gemeinschaften begrüßten sie als ihre Befreier und sie lebten in großer Toleranz. Als die Muslime im elften Jahrhundert zu streiten begannen, nahm ihre Macht ab. Die Christen nutzten diese Gelegenheit aus, um neu ihren Einfluß nach Süden auszubreiten. Andalusien blieb unter muslimischer Herrschaft, aber die Christen waren jetzt für immer Herr und Meister in Toledo und im nördlicher liegenden spanischen Gebiet. Im dreizehnten Jahrhundert

gelang es ihnen, auch Südspanien zu erobern.

Die christliche Geistlichkeit bewies, daß sie über ein scharfes Gedächtnis verfügte. Sie erinnerte sich der Sympathie und der Begeisterung, mit der die Juden ehemals ihre muslimischen Befreier begrüßt hatten. Diese Erinnerung steigerte ihre schon immer gehegte Feindseligkeit den Juden gegenüber.

Die spanischen Könige dagegen waren den Juden ziemlich wohlgesinnt, vor allem König Alphons VII (1126-1157). Die Juden leisteten der spanischen Wirtschaft einen bedeutenden Beitrag und sie boten ein willkommenes Gegengewicht gegen den starken Einfluß des römisch-katholischen Klerus.

1.1 Dominikanische Judenmission - Hintergrund des Disputs mit Nachmanides

Die hier geschilderte historische Lage bildete den Hintergrund des Disputs, den der jüdische Torahgelehrte und Philosoph Rabbi Moschè ben Nachman (Ramban: 1194-1270) im Jahr 1263 in Barcelona gegen seine christlichen Gegner geführt hat. Der Disput fand auf Befehl des Königs statt, doch in Wirklichkeit war es die Initiative des römisch-katholischen Klerus. Der Disput wies alle Merkmale eines klassischen Dramas auf. Das Verlieren des Streitgesprächs hätte für die Juden den Zwang zur Folge gehabt, sich massenhaft zum Christentum zu bekennen. Aber auch das Gewinnen hätte große Gefahren mit sich gebracht.

Der wichtigste Veranlasser des Disputs war der Dominikaner Raymund de Peñaforte. Als Führer der Judenmission änderte er die Art, in der die Missionare die Juden bis dahin angesprochen hatten. Sie klagten die Juden nicht länger an, für den Tod Jesu verantwortlich zu sein und ihn in der rabbinischen Literatur herabzuwürdigen. Sie konfrontierten ihre jüdischen Gesprächspartner nicht nur wie vorher mit Bibelstellen, wie in ihrer seit Jahrhunderten geübten typologischen Exegese des Alten Testaments, sondern auch - und das war neu - mit Zitaten aus Talmud und Midrasch. Die angeführten Texte sollten die christlichen Glaubenswahrheiten bestätigen. Sie erwarteten, daß die Juden - einmal überzeugt von Beweisstellen und Argumenten aus ihrer eigenen Tradition - sich dem christlichen Glauben übergeben würden. Mit Vorliebe benutzten die dominikanischen Missionare dazu abtrünnige Juden, die sich in der rabbinischen Tradition zu Hause

fühlten. Diese sollten ihre ehemaligen Glaubensgenossen mit den "eigenen Waffen" schlagen.

So war auch Ramban gezwungen, das Kampffeld zu betreten und sich gegen den zum Christentum übergelaufenen Juden Pablo Christiani zu verteidigen. Wenn er verlieren sollte - so war der Plan - würden Pablo und seine Mitstreiter die jüdische Gemeinschaft leicht zwingen können, sich taufen zu lassen.

1.2 *Zwei Beschreibungen - zwei Meinungen*

Ramban hat seinen Bericht über den Disput, Séphèr ha-Wikkuach - das Buch des Disputs, wahrscheinlich persönlich in den Jahren 1263-1264 geschrieben.¹ Der hebräischen Version vorangehend soll Ramban im Auftrag des Bischofs von Gerona, Peter van Castellnou, eine andere Version des Berichts hergestellt haben. Diesen ersten Bericht hat er wahrscheinlich in spanischer oder katalanischer Sprache verfaßt. So konnten der Bischof und die Dominikaner Rambans Sicht der Dinge vernehmen. Diese erste Version ist leider verloren gegangen. Der Verlust wiegt schwer, weil ein christlicher Bericht² des Disputs ein Bild zeichnet, das sich in fast jeder Hinsicht von Rambans Beschreibung unterscheidet. Wo Ramban sich selbst als den ruhmreichen Gewinner der Diskussion zeichnet, spricht aus dem christlichen und lateinischen Bericht die Szene von Rambans gnadenlosem Mißerfolg: Ramban soll das Streitgespräch auf allen Fronten verloren haben.

Die Frage nach dem Verhältnis zwischen Séphèr ha-Wikkuach und dem lateinischen Bericht stellt sich um so nachdrücklicher, weil wir auch nicht genau entdecken können, inwiefern der Inhalt von

¹ Publiziert in: *Tela Ignea Satanae* (Subtitel: Arcani et horribiles Judaeorum adversus Christum Deum et christianam religionem libri [!]), von J.C. Wagenseil, Altdorf 1681; Neudruck in editio Constantinopel 1710, zusammen mit anderen Disputationen unter dem Titel *Milchemet Choba*; eine bessere Textausgabe von M. Steinschneider, Stettin-Berlin 1860; J.D. Eisenstein in: *Otzar Wikkuchim*, New York 1928.

² Dieser Bericht ist aus dem Lateinischen übersetzt worden von Y. Baer, *Tarbiz* II (1930-1931) 185-187. Vorher publiziert von J. Villanueva, *Viaje Literario a las Iglesias de España* XIII (1850) 332-335; und von C. Girbal, *Los Judíos de Gerona*, Gerona 1870.

Sépher ha-Wikkuach - in der Form, über die wir jetzt verfügen - mit dem Bericht, den Ramban selbst geschrieben hat, übereinstimmt. Auch wenn wir unterstellen, daß Ramban Sépher ha-Wikkuach persönlich verfaßt hat, erkennen wir darin Teile, die eindeutig von späteren Kopisten hinzugefügt worden sind.³

1.3 Wissenschaftliche Polemik - Wer war der Sieger des Disputs?

Im neunzehnten Jahrhundert entspann sich eine wissenschaftliche Auseinandersetzung über das Verhältnis zwischen dem hebräischen und dem lateinischen Bericht des Disputs. Der Ton war polemisch. Die Diskussion bewegte sich um die Frage, wer den Disput gewonnen hätte: Ramban oder sein Gegner Pablo Christiani.

H. Graetz vertritt in seinem Buch *Geschichte der Juden* die Meinung, daß Ramban ruhmreich triumphierte.⁴ Darauf reagierte der Pater Heinrich Denifle mit einem Artikel, in dem er Graetz leidenschaftlich angriff. Denifle wollte gerade Ramban als Lügner demaskieren.

Der jüdische Gelehrte I. Loeb nahm in dieser Diskussion Partei zu Gunsten von H. Graetz.⁵ Loeb machte dabei aber denselben Fehler, in den Denifle verfallen war. Er verteidigte Ramban sehr parteiisch als Gewinner. Außerdem übte er ungemein scharfe Kritik am lateinischen Bericht des Disputs. Y. Baer hat darauf von jüdischer Seite versucht, die polemische Stellungnahme von Loeb mehr zu nuancieren.⁶ Obwohl Baer die Seite von Ramban wählte, hat er die Nuancierung in mancher Hinsicht so weit durchgeführt, daß er Ramban tatsächlich Unrecht tat. C. Roth hat das wissenschaftliche 'Spiel von für und gegen' durchbrechen wollen. Mit recht stellte er mit Nachdruck fest, daß man über den Disput nicht ohne weiteres im Sinne von Gewinnen oder Verlieren reden darf.⁷ Aus ihrem eigenen

³ Z.B. ein ziemlich langer Abschnitt über Jesus und fünf seiner Jünger, mit dem der hebräische Bericht anfängt.

⁴ H. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, Leipzig 1893.

⁵ I. Loeb, 'La Controverse de 1263 à Barcelone', *Revue des Etudes Juives* XV (1887) 1-18.

⁶ Y. Baer, 'Über die Streitgespräche von R. Yechi'el aus Paris und von R. Mosjè ben Nachman' (hebräisch), *Tarbiz* II, 172-187.

⁷ C. Roth, 'The Disputation of Barcelona' (1263), *Harvard Theological*

Gesichtspunkt beurteilt und auf Grund ihrer eigenen Prinzipien konnten sowohl Ramban als auch Pablo sich selbst als Gewinner des Disputats betrachten. Roth versuchte aufrichtig ein objektives Bild zu skizzieren. Zu wenig aber war er sich dessen bewußt, daß eine spätere Generation den Disputat aus eigener Sicht beurteilen darf. Mit einer Distanz, die im Laufe langer Zeit gewachsen ist, können wir den Argumenten von Ramban eine größere Überzeugungskraft beimessen.

Diese Schlußfolgerung stimmt auch mit dem Standpunkt überein, den H. Maccoby in einer kürzlich erschienenen Studie verteidigt. Maccoby kritisiert vor allem die ziemlich radikale Meinung von M. A. Cohen. Cohen kennzeichnet den jüdischen Bericht als suggestiv und lügnerisch. Er beurteilt den christlichen Bericht als die aufrichtigste Darstellung von dem, was wirklich passiert ist. Er meint ebenso, daß Ramban das Streitgespräch auf schmäbliche Weise verloren hat.⁸ Auch die Betrachtungsweise von Maccoby - obwohl ich manches seiner Kritik an Cohen unterschreibe - soll hier und da korrigiert werden, weil er Ramban wieder zuviel Glauben schenkt.⁹ Wissenschaftler scheinen bis zum Ende der Tage dazu verurteilt, hier auf dem schmalen Seil von Argumenten weiter zu balancieren, bis sie das definitive Gleichgewicht erreicht haben.

In diesem Artikel werden wir die verschiedenen Gesichtspunkte nochmals anhand der überlieferten Manuskripte prüfen. Unser Ausgangspunkt dabei ist der hebräische Bericht *Séphèr ha-Wikkuach*.¹⁰ Der Entschluß, nicht von dem lateinischen Bericht auszugehen, bekundet keine Voreingenommenheit. Trotz der Kritik, die man an *Sèfèr ha-Wikkuach* üben mag, zeichnet diese Schrift ein zusammenhängenderes Bild. Nur hier erkennen wir die Linie, die das Streitgespräch verfolgt. Der christliche Bericht muß ohne Kenntnis von

Review XLIII, 117-144.

⁸ M.A. Cohen, 'Reflections on the text and Context of the Disputation of Barcelone', *Hebrew Union College Annual XXXV* (1964) 157-192.

⁹ H. Maccoby, *Judaism on Trial, Jewish-Christian Disputations in the Middle Ages*, London/Washington 1993.

¹⁰ Hier ist die Ausgabe, herausgegeben von C.D. Chavel (ed.), *Kitvé Rabbenu Moschè ben Nachman I*, Jerusalem 1973, 299-320, benutzt worden; englische Übersetzung: C.D. [B.] Chavel (ed.), *Ramban (Nachmanides) Writings and Discourses II*, New York 1978, 656-696.

Séfèr ha-Wikkuach unverständlich bleiben.

Ramban hat deutlich nicht den Eindruck erwecken wollen, daß er seine Gegner überzeugt hat. Der christliche Bericht dagegen ist tendenziös, und die Schreiber rühmen sich, mit Hilfe von Pablo einen schallenden Sieg gewonnen zu haben. Pablo sollte seinen jüdischen Gegner unter seiner mündlichen Gewalt völlig zerschmettert haben. Schon dieser Unterschied zwischen den beiden Berichten plädiert für die größere Objektivität von Séphèr ha-Wikkuach.¹¹

2. Séphèr ha-Wikkuach - ein kurzer Überblick

2.1 Die Tagesordnung

Der Disput findet statt, nachdem König Jakobus I. offiziell einen Befehl dazu gegeben hat: 'Unser Herr, der König, hat mir befohlen, mit Fra Pul¹² in seinem Palast zu diskutieren, in seiner Anwesenheit und in Anwesenheit seiner Ratgeber in Barcelona. Ich antwortete und sprach: "Ich werde tun wie der König befohlen hat, falls sie mir erlauben, in Freiheit zu reden." (Séphèr ha-Wikkuach § 2.) Auch der lateinische Bericht bestätigt, daß Ramban zum Disputieren gezwungen war. Auf Anregung von dominikanischen Geistlichen fordert König Jakobus Ramban auf, am Disput teilzunehmen. Ramban steht als einzelner einer ganzen Schar von Gegnern gegenüber. Er soll sich selbst, seinen Glauben und seine Gemeinschaft in einer nicht von ihm gewählten Umgebung verteidigen. Die Tagesordnung des Disputs behauptet, in gegenseitiger Beratung bestimmt zu sein, ist aber in Wirklichkeit von den Gegnern Rambans diktiert worden. Sie sind es, die ihn an den Inhalt der Tagesordnung erinnern. Der für Ramban wichtigste Punkt wird erst als letzter zur Sprache gebracht: 'Sie alle antworteten mit den Worten: "Du hast richtig gesprochen. Wir haben also vereinbart, erstens über die Frage des Messias zu reden, ob er entweder schon gekommen ist in Übereinstimmung mit dem christlichen Glauben, oder in der Zukunft kommen wird, wie die Juden glauben. Danach werden wir über die Frage reden, ob der

¹¹ Siehe dagegen M.A. Cohen, 'Reflections', 159-160.

¹² Das heißt: mit Fra (Frater) Paul oder Fra Pablo Christiani. Ramban nennt ihn hier auf hebräisch 'Fra Pul'.

Messias entweder wirklich Gott ist oder ganz und gar Mensch ist, aus einem Mann und aus einer Frau geboren. Und nachher werden wir über die Frage reden, ob entweder die Juden die wahre Torah besitzen oder die Christen sie tun” (ibid. § 6). Die Wiedergabe der Tagesordnung in dem lateinischen Bericht scheint zuverlässiger zu sein. Ohne Zweifel haben die Dominikaner ihre christlichen Glaubenssätze nicht zur Erörterung stellen wollen, so wie Ramban uns glauben lassen möchte. Die Themen werden zweifellos genauso apodiktisch formuliert gewesen sein, wie sie in dem lateinischen Bericht erscheinen: ‘Daß der Messias, den die Juden erwarten, mit Sicherheit schon gekommen ist ...daß die gesetzlichen Regeln oder zeremoniellen Sachen nach dem Kommen des vorhergesagten Messias aufhörten und aufhören mußten.’ Beweist die abweichende Wiedergabe der Tagesordnung von Ramban dessen Unzuverlässigkeit, wie Baer und vor allem Cohen suggerieren? Keineswegs! Wie können wir es Ramban verübeln, daß er im Gegensatz zu seinen dominikanischen Gegnern die Gesprächsthemen nicht als unanfechtbare Glaubenssätze formuliert, sondern als Themen, die zur Erörterung stehen? Mit dem Ausdruck ‘daß die Christen sie tun’ (ha-notzrim ‘osim ‘otah) reformuliert Ramban behutsam, was seine Gesprächspartner in Wirklichkeit gesagt haben. Sehr subtil äußert er hier Kritik an der christlichen Haltung gegenüber der Torah. Die Torah ist für einen Juden nicht an erster Stelle eine Glaubenssache sondern Aufforderung zum Tun. Diese Aufforderung sollten seiner Meinung nach auch die Christen betonen. Das dritte und letzte Gesprächsthema berührt Ramban zufolge die Frage: Ist die christliche typologische Erklärung der Torah, welche die Erfüllung der Torah in der Person Jesu erkennt, die richtige Exegese oder gerade die jüdische Erklärungsweise, mit der die Rabbiner auf die Praxis der Gebote zielen? Der Theologie der christlichen Disputanten zufolge hat Jesus die Torah abgeschafft. Die genaue Gesetztreue der Juden sollte den Beweis ihres Unglaubens liefern und sollte wo möglich hintertrieben werden. Als Experte rabbinischer Exegese versucht Ramban, gerade dieses letzte Thema ins Gespräch zu bringen, damit er es bestreiten kann. Sein Versuch war vergebens, weil seine Gegner bewirken, daß er die Bedeutung der Torah und Mitswot kaum erwähnen kann. Die Torah ist als letzter Punkt auf die Tagesordnung gesetzt worden. Möglicherweise erweist sich hier die Absicht der Dominikaner, dieses Thema kaum zur

Sprache kommen zu lassen.¹³

Ramban hat die Themen hinterher in seinem Séfer ha-Wikkuach so formuliert, wie er sie selber lieber in Worte hätte fassen wollen. Der Meinung von Cohen nach möchte Ramban jedoch den Eindruck festigen, daß er auf die Tagesordnung einen derartigen Einfluß ausgeübt hat, daß nur christliche Glaubenssätze zur Erörterung standen und er sich in einer vorteilhaften Situation befand.¹⁴ Diese Betrachtungsweise ist falsch. Ramban hat die Gesprächsthemen zwar aus seinem jüdischen Gesichtspunkt heraus formuliert, aber wenn er die Wahl gehabt hätte, hätte er als Jude selbstverständlich andere Themen bevorzugt.

Baer und Cohen beschuldigen Ramban, seine Leser glauben zu lassen, daß er mit mehr Freiheit geredet hat als es in Wirklichkeit der Fall gewesen ist. Diese Ansicht ist zweifelhaft. Deutlich beschreibt Ramban, wie man ihm - trotz der Zusage, sich frei äußern zu können - wiederholt den Mund verboten hat. Außerdem gibt Ramban zu, daß König Jakobus sich absolut nicht von seinen jüdischen Argumenten überzeugen ließ! Diese Tatsachen sprechen für die Aufrichtigkeit von Ramban. Ein Brief von König Jakobus (datiert auf den 12. April 1265 in Barcelona) bestätigt, daß Ramban Meinungsfreiheit genossen hat.¹⁵ Die Dominikaner erlaubten ihm bloß aus Eigennutz, frei zu reden. Nur so konnten sie sich selbst vor den Augen des Publikums einen überzeugenden Sieg andichten. Das Versprechen bedeutete aber nicht, daß Ramban ohne schwere Konsequenzen alles sagen konnte, was ihm am Herzen lag. Ramban widerspricht sich nicht, aber in seiner Beschreibung erkennen wir den Unterschied zwischen Schein und Praxis.

Der lateinische Bericht nennt noch ein zusätzliches Gesprächsthema: 'Daß er [der Messias] wirklich gelitten hat und gestorben ist wegen der Erlösung der Menschheit'. Nach Meinung Cohens übergibt Ramban dieses Thema absichtlich mit Schweigen.

¹³ Möglicherweise hat man über dieses Thema nach dem offiziellen Abschluß des Disputs in einer kleineren Gesellschaft diskutiert; siehe H. Maccoby, *Judaism on Trial*, o.c., 142.

¹⁴ M.A. Cohen, 'The Disputation', o.c., 164.

¹⁵ Siehe in diesem Zusammenhang H. Maccoby, *Judaism on Trial*, o.c., 59-60.

Diese Behauptung ist aber nicht haltbar, wenn man sieht, wie sehr Ramban innerhalb seines Berichts gerade dem Streitgespräch über dieses Thema Aufmerksamkeit widmet.

2.2 *Eröffnung des Streitgesprächs. Das erste Thema: Ist der Messias schon gekommen?*

Pablo Christiani eröffnet das Streitgespräch. Er behauptet, über Texte zu verfügen, mit denen er eindeutig beweisen kann, wie auch dem Talmud zufolge der Messias schon längst gekommen ist. Ramban ist von Anfang an in die Defensive gedrängt. Er verteidigt sich mit Weitschweifigkeit und bemerkt, daß keiner der jüdischen Weisen sich zum Glauben an Jesus bekehrt hat. Sie bewahrten alle ihre Treue zur mosaischen Religion und den jüdischen Bräuchen. Von Anfang an möchte Ramban das Gespräch auf die bleibende Gültigkeit aller Torahgebote bringen: 'Denn der ganze Talmud dient nur dazu, die Gebräuche von Torah und Gebote zu unterrichten, und wie unsere Vorfahren diese in der Zeit des Tempels praktiziert haben ...' (ibid § 8). Um zu verhindern, daß Ramban den Fortgang des Disputs beherrscht, unterbricht Pablo dessen Wortschwall unmittelbar: 'Dies sind weitschweifige Ausführungen, mit denen er die Disputation fruchtlos machen möchte' (ibid. § 9). Auch Roth meint, in solcher Weitschweifigkeit Rambans, die *Sêfêr ha-Wikkuach* wiederholt aufweist, ein Zeichen von Schwäche zu erkennen, die seiner Sache nicht zugute gekommen ist.¹⁶ In dieser Kritik steckt gewiß ein Kern von Wahrheit. Die 'schwache' Lage von Ramban war jedoch nicht die Folge einer Schwäche der Argumente, sondern war das Resultat der defensiven Rolle, die man ihm auferlegt hat, und der wohlüberlegten Gesprächsanlage seiner Gegner.

Erste These: 'Es wird das Zepter nicht von Juda weichen'

Zur Ordnung gerufen, wird Ramban mit dem ersten 'Beweis' konfrontiert. Pablo beginnt mit dem oft gesprochenen Vers aus dem Segen Jakobs: 'Es wird das Zepter nicht von Juda weichen noch der Herrscherstab von seinen Füßen, bis daß Schilo kommt' (I Mos. 49,10). Er erklärt diesen Vers von dem Blickpunkt christlicher

¹⁶ H. Maccoby nennt diese Kritik 'unfair' - *Judaism*, o.c., 67.

Substitutionslehre aus. Seit Schilo gekommen ist, der Messias, ist das Zepter von Juda gewichen. Seit Jesus würde die Kirche wie das neue und wahre Israel die Stelle des alten Volkes Israel ersetzen. Den ersten Angriff konnte Ramban seiner eigenen Meinung nach gewandt parieren. Die wahre Absicht dieses Verses war, vorherzusagen, daß das Zepter der davidischen Herrschaft nie völlig von Juda weichen wird. Immer werden die Königswürde und Oberherrschaft über ganz Israel zu Juda zurückkehren, wie lange sie auch unterbrochen gewesen sind. Der Bruch in Macht und Herrschaft Judas hat faktisch schon lange vor der Geburt Jesu stattgefunden. Damit bestreitet Ramban den Kern von Pablos Behauptung, weil Pablo die Macht Judas erst mit Jesus aufhören läßt. Nach dem babylonischen Exil (70 Jahre) folgte eine nicht gering zu schätzende Periode von 380 Jahren ohne davidische Herrschaft!¹⁷ Irgendwann wenn der Messias kommt, wird wieder ein Nachkomme Davids den Thron ersteigen. Nur vorübergehend ist das Zepter von Juda gewichen und ausschließlich wegen des Volkes, damit es in Exil und Erdrückung umkehrt. Einmal wird Juda das Zepter wieder in die Hand nehmen.

Das 'Zepter' erklärt Pablo nicht als Königswürde wie Ramban; er möchte ihm die viel umfassendere Bedeutung von Führung oder Autorität beimessen. Er deutet darauf hin, daß nie irgendeine Form von Obrigkeit gefehlt hat. Mit diesem Argument möchte Pablo die Erwiderungen von Ramban entkräften, der behauptet, Judas Herrschaft sei schon lange vor Jesus weggefallen. Triumphierend kann Pablo auf eine rabbinische Überlieferung hinweisen, in der 'das Zepter von Juda' eine Anspielung auf (mit Handauflegung - *Semicha*) ordinierte Rabbiner und auf die Autorität der babylonischen Exilarchen macht. Auf den ersten Blick scheint es eine spitzfindige Darlegung zu sein. Schon die Tatsache, daß Ramban die Existenz dieser Traditionen nicht leugnen kann, betrachten seine Gegner als ihren ersten Sieg. Ihr Argument beinhaltet aber eine unüberwindliche Schwierigkeit. Ramban

¹⁷ Nachmanides gibt hier die rabbinische Tradition wieder. Die ägyptisch/syrische Gewaltherrschaft soll 180 Jahre gedauert haben, die Verwaltung der Haschmonäern 103 Jahre und die Regierung der Herodianer ebenfalls 103 Jahre (zusammen 386). Nach den Kriterien der heutigen Wissenschaft dauerte dieser Zeitabschnitt sogar 400 Jahre, von 330 vor unserer Zeitrechnung bis zum Jahre 70 unserer Zeitrechnung.

erklärt grazil, wie Pablo sich selbst widerspricht: 'Dieser Brauch¹⁸ der Weisen des Talmuds existierte bis mehr als vierhundert Jahre nach Jesus.'¹⁹ Es ergibt sich, daß seit Jesus die Macht noch lange nicht von Juda gewichen ist. Der Meinung Rambans nach konnte Pablo diese Argumente nicht widerlegen.

Zweifellos gibt Ramban hier das Streitgespräch nur teilweise wieder und beschreibt vor allem die Teile des Gesprächs, die seine Lage bestätigen. Er läßt vor allem sich selbst das große Wort führen. Das abrupte Ende dieses Teiles des Streitgesprächs könnte auf diese Taktik hinweisen. Ramban machte *Séfer ha-Wikkuach* zu einer Propagandaschrift zum Ruhm der jüdischen Sache, mit der er seinen Glaubensgenossen Mut machen wollte. Dieses bedeutet aber nicht, daß er mit seiner Beschreibung ein unwahres Bild zeichnet. Ramban wurde - ungeachtet der scharfen Angriffe von dominikanischer Seite - anfänglich auch nicht beschuldigt, eine unwahre Beschreibung des Disputs geliefert zu haben. Wenn er sich wirklich Geschichtverfälschung hätte zuschulden kommen lassen, hätte man ihn gleich dafür zur Verantwortung gezogen.²⁰

Zweite These: Der Messias ist während der Vernichtung von Jerusalem geboren worden

Pablo introduziert seinen zweiten Beweis und verweist seinen Gegner auf einen rabbinischen Midrasch, aus dem sich ergibt, daß auch nach der jüdischen Tradition der Messias schon in einer ferneren Vergangenheit geboren worden ist (*ibid.* § 19). Er verweist auf eine rabbinische Erzählung, in der beschrieben wird, wie der Messias genau in dem Augenblick zur Welt kam, in dem Jerusalem vernichtet

¹⁸ Ramban verweist hier auf den Brauch von 'Semicha' (Handauflegung). Dieser Brauch soll bis ungefähr um die Mitte des vierten Jahrhunderts aufrechterhalten worden sein (siehe die Notizen von Ramban zu *Séfer ha-Mitswot* von Maimonides, no. 153). Sowohl die Patriarche aus dem Hause Hillels als die Exilarche in Babylonien gewährten dem Brauch der Semicha Autorität.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* § 14. Nach Maimonides kann man eine ununterbrochene Linie der Semicha von Moses bis in zur Zeit des Zweiten Tempels ziehen; Maimonides, *Misjné Tora*, Hilchot Sanhedrin IV,2.

²⁰ Siehe diesbezüglich H. Maccoby, *Judaism*, o.c., 59-60.

wurde.²¹ Ramban leugnet nicht, daß es diese Geschichte gibt, aber er erklärt sie nicht als ein historisches Zeugnis: 'Ich schenke dieser Aggada keinen Glauben, aber sie bildet [gerade] den Beweis meiner Worte' (ibid. § 20).²² Möglicherweise hat Ramban diese Erzählung als Metapher und Ausdruck der Erfahrung aufgefaßt, wie gerade während der tiefsten Katastrophe ein Keim neuer Hoffnung sprießt. Er versteht den Midrasch auf einer tieferen Ebene als den buchstäblichen Satz: 'In Wahrheit glaube ich nicht, daß der Messias am Tage der Verwüstung geboren ist; und die Aggada ist entweder nicht wahr oder du sollst sie in Übereinstimmung mit den Geheimnissen der Weisen erklären (ibid. § 22). Vielleicht zielt Ramban hier auch auf eine kabbalistische und allegorische Exegese. Er sieht ein, wie eine solche Erklärung seinen Gegnern gegenüber nicht ins Gewicht fallen wird, und wohlweislich geht er darauf nicht weiter ein.

Ramban deutet auf andere Aggadot hin, wonach der Messias noch geboren werden wird. Pablo ignoriert dieses Argument und wählt sich nur die aggadischen Überlieferungen, die seiner Meinung nach die christlichen Glaubenssätze bestätigen. Er kennzeichnet Rambans Reaktion als Untreue gegenüber seiner jüdischen Tradition: 'Siehe wie er ihre [eigenen] Bücher leugnet' (ibid. § 21). Darum trägt Pablo hier nach eigener Überzeugung den Sieg davon. In Wirklichkeit manipuliert er und gebraucht eine Gesprächstechnik, die der jüdischen Tradition in keinsten Weise gerecht wird. Hyam Maccoby hat die Unempfindlichkeit Pablos in bezug auf die tiefere, pluriforme und poetische Bedeutung der Midrasch sehr treffend formuliert: 'But the point is that, precisely because of its profundity, the Aggadah could not be quoted in support of hard-and-fast doctrine. It would be like quoting a Keats sonnet in support of a theorem in geometry.'²³

Die Entgegnung Rambans enthüllt eine unerwartete und

²¹ Diese Erzählung ist in Echa Rabbati, sim. 57, Kommentar zu Klageel. 1,15 (der Messias wird dort Menachem ben Ammi'el genannt) überliefert worden sowie in jBerachot II, h.4 [5a] (dort: Menachem ben Hizkia); siehe auch die Besprechung von J.E.Sh. (Jehuda 'Eben Schmu'el) Kaufmann, *Midresché Ge'ula*, Tel-Aviv 1943, 291 ff.

²² Andere Version: 'Ich stimme dieser Aggada nicht zu'; siehe die Fortsetzung der Erörterung.

²³ H. Maccoby, *Judaism*, o.c., 44.

doppelte Kraft. Gerade wenn er trotzdem die buchstäbliche Erklärung der Geschichte als Ausgangspunkt wählt, kann er damit das Gegenteil dessen beweisen, was Pablo nachweisen will. Aus dieser Geschichte ergibt sich immerhin, daß Jesus unmöglich die Person sein kann, die während der Verwüstung des Tempels zur Welt gekommen ist. Ramban weist mit Nachdruck darauf hin, daß Jesus lange vor der Verwüstung zur Welt kam: "Seine Geburt hat ungefähr 200 Jahre²⁴ vor der Verwüstung stattgefunden und nach ihrer Berechnung 73 (ibid. § 22).

In diesem Moment des Streitgesprächs greift Meister Wilhelm ein. Er ist Jurist des Königs Jakobus: 'Das Thema der Diskussion in diesem Augenblick betrifft nicht Jesus [ob er der Messias war oder nicht], sondern betrifft die Frage, ob der Messias schon gekommen sei oder nicht' (ibid. § 23). Diese Reaktion vertieft die Einsicht in die wohlüberlegte Befragungstaktik der dominikanischen Missionare. Sie haben absichtlich nur die Frage, ob der Messias schon gekommen sei, in den Disput eingeführt. Die Frage, ob man mittels historischer Argumente Jesus mit messianischen Personen in der Aggada identifizieren kann, soll ganz bewußt aus der Diskussion herausgehalten werden. So sind sie gegenüber Ramban in der Lage 'ein Tor zu schießen', obwohl sie in Wirklichkeit ganz unberechtigt seine historischen Argumente als nicht zur Sache gehörend abweisen. Sie argumentieren: Wenn wir einmal bewiesen haben, daß der rabbinischen Tradition zufolge der Messias schon gekommen ist, verliert die jüdische messianische Zukunfterwartung ihren Sinn und ihre Existenzberechtigung.

Wiederholt versucht Ramban während des Disputs eine Beziehung zwischen dem Messias in den von Pablo angeführten rabbinischen Texten und Jesus zu leugnen, denn nur so kann er beweisen, daß Jesus nicht Messias gewesen sein kann.²⁵ Cohen gibt ein treffendes Bild von der unglücklichen Lage, in der Ramban sich befand, wenn er sagt: 'In the succeeding days of the debate

²⁴ Wahrscheinlich spielt Ramban hier auf die Überlieferung in bSota47a an, wonach Jesus ein Schüler von Rabbi Jehoschua ben Perachja (etwa 100 vor unserer Zeitrechnung) gewesen ist.

²⁵ Siehe M.A. Cohen ('The Disputation', o.c., 168) und die Kritik von H. Maccoby am Standpunkt von M.A. Cohen, *Judaism*, o.c., 111.

Nahmanides, at every opportunity, insisted desperately that Jesus was not and could not have been the Messiah whom they were discussing, but this words fell on deaf ears.²⁶ Seine Gegner verhindern Rambans Versuche, mit rationellen und historischen Argumenten dem Angriff zu begegnen, obwohl sie selbst Jesus ganz sicher mit dem Messias in den rabbinischen Aggadot identifizieren wollen.²⁷

Wenn wir uns die christliche Version des Disputs ansehen, erweist sich hier sowohl die ungerechte Taktik der Dominikaner als auch ihre Verdrehung der Tatsachen: 'And [Ramban] added that the Messiah and Christ are the same, and if it could be proved to him that the Messiah had come, this ought to be believed about no other than him, to wit Jesus Christ, in whom Christians believe ...' Es ist undenkbar, daß Ramban diese Bedingung akzeptiert hat. Die Formulierung besagt wenig über die Art seiner Argumentation, aber um so mehr über die raffinierte Strategie seiner Gegner.²⁸

Zur Ergänzung seiner Darlegung führt Ramban noch einen wichtigen Punkt ins Feld. Die rabbinische Erzählung erwähnt die *Geburt* des Messias, nicht sein *Kommen*. Mit diesem Kommen ist sein Auftreten als Gesalbter gemeint, Bevollmächtigter des Ewigen. Erst wenn der Gesalbte als politischer Vermittler auftritt und die Zustimmung der Völker gewinnt, Israel in das Land ihrer Väter zurückkehren zu lassen, kann man sagen, daß der Messias gekommen sei: 'Dann,²⁹ wenn er zum Papst geht, um uns zu befreien, dann wird man [erst] sagen, er sei gekommen' (ibid. § 24). Diese Entgegnung wird fast keinen Eindruck gemacht haben. Es fehlte an Sensibilität und Willen.

Diskurs: Ist Jesus der 'leidende Knecht Gottes' aus dem Buch Jesaja?
Meister Wilhelm deutet auf die Möglichkeit hin, daß der leidende Knecht im Buch Jesaja das Leiden und die Überwindung von Jesus vorausagt: 'Siehe, ein Knecht wird erfolgreich sein' (Jes 52,13; ibid.

²⁶ M.A. Cohen, 'The Disputation', o.c., 168.

²⁷ Während des Disputs zeigt sich auch wiederholt, daß die Dominikaner Jesus ganz bestimmt mit dem Messias in der Agada identifizieren wollen; es ist entscheidend für deren Widerlegung (vgl. zum Beispiel § 25).

²⁸ So die Übersetzung von H. Maccoby, *Judaism*, o.c., 148.

²⁹ Nachdem er vom Propheten Elia gesalbt worden ist.

§ 25). Ramban erwidert, Jesaja habe das Bild des leidenden Knechtes als eine metaphorische Darstellung vom Leiden Israels benutzt. Als deutlichen Beweis für seine Behauptung zitiert er Jes 41,8 ('Israel Mein Knecht') und Jes 14,1 (O, Jakob Mein Knecht').

Mit Recht verallgemeinert Ramban hier die Fakten, weil die meisten jüdischen Überlieferungen diese Erklärung bieten.³⁰ Pablo kann seinem jüdischen Gegner jetzt triumphal vor Augen halten, daß manche rabbinische Überlieferungen ganz bestimmt die Vorhersage des kommenden Messias in dem leidenden Knecht erkennen. Augenscheinlich zwingt er Ramban mit Widerwillen dazu, die Existenz solcher Überlieferungen zu bestätigen. In Wirklichkeit aber hat Ramban nie verbergen wollen, daß es solche Erklärungen gibt. Warum sollte er auch? Er hat nur die geläufigste rabbinische Erklärung angeführt. Außerdem deutet er auf einen bemerkenswerten Unterschied zwischen dieser Erklärung und christlichen Interpretationen hin. Nirgendwo in der rabbinischen Tradition erfährt man, daß der Messias aus dem davidischen Hause³¹ sterben wird oder daß man ihn inmitten der Gottlosen beerdigen wird, wie die Christen anlässlich des Verses 'Und man gab ihm bei Gottlosen sein Grab und bei einem Reichen seine Gruft' (Jes 53,9) behaupten.³²

³⁰ Siehe in diesem Zusammenhang H.A. Fischel, 'Die deuterocesajanischen Gottesknechtlieder in der jüdischen Auslegung', *Hebrew Union College Annual XVIII* (1944) 53-76. Jüdische Überlieferungen identifizieren den leidenden Gottesknecht mit: Moses, Jesaja, Jeremia, Hizkia, einem Prophet, den Propheten, einem Gerechten, den Gerechten, Israel, dem Messias. Nur eine kleine Minderheit der Erklärungen erwähnen den Messias, und außerdem nur im Zusammenhang mit Schriftstellen, die seine ruhmreiche Königswürde bestätigen. Siehe auch K. Koch, 'Messias und Sündenvergebung in Jesaja 53 Targum', *Journal for the Study of Judaism III* (1972) 117-148. Nur einzelne Überlieferungen bringen den 'leidenden Knecht' mit einem leidenden Messias in Zusammenhang, wie Jalkut Jesaja § 476 und Tanchuma Toledot § 14.

³¹ Ramban erläutert diese Sache explizit um ihn vom Messias ben Joseph zu unterscheiden, einer apokalyptischen Figur, die während des Endkampfes am Ende der Zeiten sterben wird.

³² Christliche Bibelexegeten sehen diesen Vers als einen Hinweis auf den Tod Jesu und auf seine Grablegung in das Grab des Joseph von Arimathea (Mt 27,57 und Mk 15,27). Diese Erklärung ist problematisch, weil sie mit der

Was mit dem leidenden Knecht passiert ist, stimmt also in mancher Hinsicht nicht mit dem Leben Jesu überein. Die Weissagungen eines Prophets sollen aber bis ins kleinste Detail übereinstimmen. Auf den Vorschlag von Ramban bei Jes 52,13 die Sache ausführlicher zu erörtern, sind seine Gegner seiner Meinung nach nicht eingegangen. Diese Bemerkung dürfen wir als ein 'understatement' verstehen, aus dem uns klar wird, daß seine Gegner von seiner Ausführung vollkommen unbeeindruckt waren.

Dritte These: Der Messias ist gekommen und wartet am Tor der Stadt Rom

Nach dem Diskurs über den leidenden Knecht, einer Initiative von Meister Wilhelm, introduziert Pablo eine zusätzliche Tradition, aus der sich aufs neue ergeben soll, daß der Messias schon längst gekommen sei. Er beschreibt die talmudische Erzählung einer Begegnung von Rabbi Jehoschua ben Levi mit dem Messias am Tor von Rom.³³ Ramban erklärt auch diese Aggada nicht auf historischer Ebene. Für ihn bezieht sich die Erzählung nur auf die Frage: Wann wird der Messias kommen?³⁴ Aus der Geschichte erweist sich nicht, daß er schon gekommen ist: 'Soll man [gerade] daraus nicht schließen, daß er nicht gekommen ist? Er fragte ja den Elia, wann er kommen wird! Und so fragte er auch ihn selbst [den Messias]: Wann wird mein Herr kommen? Wenn dieses so ist, ist er nicht gekommen. Er wurde zwar in Übereinstimmung mit der buchstäblichen Bedeutung der Aggadot geboren, aber ich glaube nicht daran' (ibid. § 30).

Wiederholt unterscheidet Ramban Geburt und Kommen. Das jüdische, messianische Ideal ist historisch und bleibt auf die nationale Zukunftserwartung von Israel, wie man sie bei den Propheten findet, bezogen. Ramban distanziert sich von der vergeistigten Heilserwartung

Überlieferung, nach dem der Messias inmitten der Gottlosen begraben worden ist, unvereinbar ist.

³³ Diese Erzählung ist in bSanhedrin 98a überliefert worden. Als ein an Hautkrankheit leidender Bettler wartet der Messias am Tor von Rom, bis der Augenblick der Erlösung anbrechen wird.

³⁴ Der Mittelpunkt der Erzählung im Talmud ist Ps 95,8 'Heute, wenn ihr auf seine Stimme höret'. Der Messias wird erst kommen, wenn die Gemeinschaft den Weg dazu bereitet, indem sie die Gebote erfüllt.

seiner christlichen Gesprächspartner. Solange das Schicksal Israels und die Situation der Welt sich nicht zum Guten geändert haben, kann der Messias noch nicht gekommen sein. Der Unterschied zwischen Geburt und Kommen spielt für seine Gegner keine Rolle, weil sie das messianische Königreich nicht als 'ein Königreich dieser Welt' betrachten. Auch die Erwiderung von Ramban, wie berechtigt sie mit Rücksicht auf die greifbare Zukunfterwartung der Propheten auch sein mag, wird seine Gegner aus dem Dominikanerorden kaum beeindruckt haben.

Der König fragt Ramban jetzt, wie der Messias, von dem Ramban gesteht, daß er während der Verwüstung des Tempels geboren ist, als sterblicher Mensch so lange Zeit leben kann. Auch aus dieser Frage zeigt sich das mangelnde Verständnis für die tiefere Bedeutungsebene im rabbinischen Midrasch. Nachmanides wird dazu gezwungen, hierauf mit einer bedeutungslosen Bemerkung, bezugnehmend auf das lange Leben von Metuschalach, einzugehen. Wider Willen muß Ramban sich mit dieser Antwort lächerlich machen. So endet der erste Tag des Streitgesprächs.

2.3. *Der zweite Tag des Disputs - eine Auseinandersetzung von Ramban*

Der zweite Tag des Streitgesprächs findet in einem der Klöster von Barcelona statt. Ramban steht einsam einer Übermacht von Priestern und Predigern gegenüber. Seine Bitte, als erster reden zu dürfen, wird nicht bewilligt. Pablo darf als Ankläger mit seiner Befragung das Gespräch wieder öffnen (ibid. § 36). Ramban beschreibt, wie er dennoch das Gespräch des zweiten Tages mit einer ausschweifenden Darlegung eröffnen durfte. In der jetzt folgenden Rede gleicht er zwei schwache Stellen der Verteidigung des vorhergehenden Tages aus. Nochmals läßt er sich auf die mehrdeutige Midrasch-Exegese und auf den allegorischen und freien Charakter der Aggada ein: 'Und was dieses Buch angeht (das heißt: der Midrasch, aus dem die Aggada zitiert wird), wenn jemand nicht daran glaubt, ist es in Ordnung, und wenn jemand doch daran glauben möchte, wird es ihm nicht schaden' (ibid. § 39).

Ramban distanziert sich hier tatsächlich weiter von der Aggada als sonst. Diese Distanz von einer Aggada deutet zwar auf eine wohlüberlegte Verteidigungstaktik, beweist aber bestimmt nicht

seine Unwahrhaftigkeit und noch weniger seine Schwäche. Rabbinische Aggada ist ganz einfach keine Basis für eine zusammenhängende Theologie. Die tiefe Wahrheit der Aggada besteht gerade darin, daß sie (wie in der Quantenmechanik) eine andere Wahrheit nicht ausschließt. Wenn Ramban Aggada als eine Predigt (sermon) kennzeichnet, sagt er aufrichtig die Wahrheit. Nichts kann ihn von seinem jüdischen Standpunkt aus dazu zwingen, sich mit der faktischen Richtigkeit einer bestimmten aggadischen Erzählung einverstanden zu erklären. Seine Gegner haben das subtiles Spiel von Scherz und Ernst in der Aggada nicht verstanden. Seine relativierende Meinung über die Aggada ist kein Zugeständnis aus Schwäche. Zur Verteidigung seiner Lage braucht Ramban diese Relativierung sogar nicht. Seine Taktik ist zweifach: Ich glaube nicht an die buchstäbliche Bedeutung dieser Aggada, aber sogar wenn ich die buchstäbliche Bedeutung zum Ausgangspunkt meiner Argumentation mache, bin ich in der Lage, mein Recht zu beweisen.

Ramban deutet auf alternative Aggadot hin, in denen gesagt wird, daß der Messias erst am Ende der Zeiten geboren wird (§ 39). Jedoch ausgehend von dem von Pablo zitierten Midrasch, erklärt Ramban, wie der Messias so lange, bis zum Ende der Geschichte, am Leben bleiben kann. Er kann das, weil er nicht ständig in Rom, wohl aber im Gan Eden, verbleibt (§ 40). Diese Bemerkung über den Aufenthalt des Messias im Paradies scheint im Widerspruch mit Rambans Glauben daran zu stehen, daß der Messias noch geboren werden soll. Mindestens lief er - wenn es wirklich seine Worte gewesen sind - mit seinen Bemerkungen Gefahr, großer Widersprüche innerhalb seiner Darlegung beschuldigt zu werden. Dies erweckt beim unbefangenen Beobachter den Eindruck, daß die ganze Passage, in der Ramban als erster das Wort führt, um einige Sachen des vorhergehenden Tages richtigzustellen, später hinzugefügt worden ist, speziell im Hinblick auf die jüdischen Leser. Dieser Eindruck wird bestätigt von der Bemerkung: 'Dieses³⁵ war, weil ich ihnen nicht erzählen möchte, was die Aggada sagt: daß der Messias in Rom bleiben wird bis er die Stadt vernichten wird' (ibid. § 42). Falls Ramban diese Bemerkung wirklich selbst aufgezeichnet hat, beweisen

³⁵ Das heißt: die Bemerkung über das Paradies.

sie seine mißliche Lage und zeigen, wie er sich seiner Schwäche in den Augen seiner Gegner bewußt war.

Vor allem Baer und Cohen glauben, daß Ramban sich selbst hier eine zynische Gegenrede zuschreibt, die er sich in Wirklichkeit niemals hätte erlauben können. Diese Kritik an Ramban ist an sich richtig, aber es kann sein, daß ein Teil dieser Passage oder vielleicht auch die ganze Passage nicht zum ursprünglichen hebräischen Bericht gehörte und von späteren Kopisten hinzugefügt worden ist. Außerdem wird Ramban ganz bestimmt während des Disputs Bemerkungen gemacht haben, deren kaum verschleierte und ätzende Ironie seine Gegner gespürt haben. Ramban ist sowohl während des Disputs als nachher blasphemischer Aussagen über das Christentum beschuldigt worden. Da ihm nicht unmittelbar Geschichtsverfälschung vorgeworfen ist, darf man vorsichtig glauben, daß der polemische und ironisierende Ton an mancher Stelle in *Séfèr ha-Wikkuach* ein wahrheitsgetreues Bild zeichnet.³⁶

Auch die philosophische Auseinandersetzung hinsichtlich der Erbsünde gehört nicht zur Tagesordnung (§ 45). Sie hat keine Spuren im lateinischen Bericht über die Tagesordnung hinterlassen. Es darf also nicht unterstellt werden, daß Ramban dieses Thema aus eigener Anregung so ausführlich darstellen konnte. Wahrscheinlich ist dieser Teil zur Belehrung jüdischer Leser hinzugefügt worden.

Pablo steht auf und führt wieder die Behauptung ins Feld, daß der rabbinischen Tradition zufolge der Messias schon gekommen sei (ibid. § 46). Von der andauernden Zuspitzung des Gesprächs auf den Messias verstimmt, versucht Ramban andere Themen in das Streitgespräch einzubringen. (ibid. § 47). Der Glaube an den Messias gehört seiner Meinung nach nicht zu den grundlegenden Glaubenssätzen des Judentums. Das Tun von 'Mitsvot' (Gebote) gerade in der Unterdrückung des Exils bildet den eigentlichen Kern des jüdischen Glaubens.³⁷ Dies ist kein Gegensatz zu der großen Frage, ob der Messias schon gekommen sei (Ramban wollte nur über

³⁶ Siehe diesbezüglich vor allem H. Maccoby, *Judaism*, o.c., 59-60.

³⁷ Zu Unrecht sieht B. Netanyahu (*Don Isaac Abrabanel*, Philadelphia 1968, 201) diesen Standpunkt von Ramban [und Josef Albo] als eine Niederlage gegenüber christlichen Polemisten. Alte rabbinische Überlieferungen bestätigen aber ihren Standpunkt.

Hauptsachen und Kernwahrheiten des Glaubens reden [§ 5]). Der Gegensatz besteht nur, wenn man wie Cohen davon ausgeht, daß Ramban dieses Thema aus eigener Anregung gewählt hat. Gerade das ist nicht anzunehmen. Das Gesprächsthema ist nur gewählt worden, weil die dominikanischen Gegendisputanten die Rechtmäßigkeit ihrer Lehre beweisen wollten.

Nicht der Augenblick seines Kommens, sondern die göttliche Natur von Jesus bildet Ramban zufolge den Kern des Konflikts zwischen Christen und Juden: 'Aber der Kern des Verfahrens und der Polemik zwischen Juden und Christen ist, was Ihr über den grundlegenden Charakter der Gottheit sagt, eine schwer verdauliche Sache' (ibid. § 47).

Ramban wettete gegen die Glaubenssätze der jungfräulichen Geburt und der Auferstehung. Er kennzeichnete diese als nichtrationelle Vorstellungen.³⁸ Auf's neue negiert Pablo die Argumentation seines Gegners und fragt Ramban jetzt nach seiner persönlichen Meinung: Ist der Messias gekommen oder nicht (ibid. § 48)?

Ramban antwortet jetzt scharf und treffend. Nur das Judentum hat der historischen Zukunftserwartung der Propheten die Treue gehalten. Es hat das Königreich Gottes nicht zu einem spirituellen Ereignis reduziert. Der wahre Messias wird die Welt beherrschen (Ps. 72,8). Die Macht von Rom hingegen ist seit Jesus nur zurückgegangen. Prophetie und Torakennntnis werden in messianischen Zeiten zum Gemeingut (Jer. 31,33 und Jes. 11,9). "Wenn der Messias kommt, werden alle Völker friedlich zusammenleben." (Jes. 2,4). Israels Feinde und die Gottlosen erwartet eine Verurteilung. Nichts von allen diesen Verheißungen hat sich erfüllt. Im Gegenteil: Die Entstehung des Christentums hat die Gewalt und das Blutvergießen in der Welt nur vermehrt. Pablo reagiert nicht auf diese scharfe Erwiderung, aber als Befrager verfolgt er kaltblütig eine vorher ausgedachte Taktik: Ist der Messias schon gekommen oder nicht? Der König bringt Ramban jetzt sogar zum Schweigen. Er soll sich beschränken und nur die ihm vorgelegten Fragen beantworten. (§ 51).

³⁸ Siehe in Zusammenhang mit der Authentizität dieses Teiles vor allem H. Maccoby, *Judaism*, o.c., 55.

Die göttliche Natur des Messias

Pablo führt jetzt das zweite Thema ins Feld: Die göttliche Natur des Messias. Seine Beweisstelle ist Jes. 52,13, ein Vers, den auch die Rabbiner als eine Verherrlichung des Messias erklären: "Siehe, Mein Knecht wird hoch und erhaben sein, außergewöhnlich groß."³⁹ Wird der Messias der Aggada zufolge nicht höher stehen als die Engel und erscheint das nicht als schlüssiger Beweis seiner göttlichen Natur?

Ramban erwidert, daß die Rabbiner jeden Gerechten für über alle Engel erhaben halten.⁴⁰ Jemanden mit einem Engel zu vergleichen, ergibt also bestimmt nicht den Beweis seiner Göttlichkeit. Der Vers von Jesaja sagt keine göttliche Natur voraus, sondern die erfolgreichen politischen Taten des Messias. Dieser wird dem Papst gegenüber die Einwilligung erzwingen, sein Volk nach *Eretz Jisra'el* zu führen. Das ist die Erhabenheit, von der Jesaja gesprochen hat.

Pablo spielt jetzt einen seiner Haupttrümpfe und bringt eine Überlieferung zur Sprache, in der der Messias als Leidender die Übertretungen seines Volkes auf sich nehmen wird. Er identifiziert diesen leidenden Messias mit Jesus.⁴¹ Ramban weist zurecht darauf hin, daß der Messias dieser Überlieferung sein Leiden nur unter der Bedingung bejaht, daß alle Verstorbenen seiner Generation wieder zum Leben auferweckt werden. Seit Jesus gekommen ist, hat sich dies nicht ereignet und auch andere historische Prophezeiungen haben sich nicht erfüllt. Darum kann er nicht der Messias gewesen sein (ibid. § 55).

Das Jahr seines Kommens ist vorhergesagt worden

Um die ständig wiederholten historischen Argumente von Ramban auszugleichen, fährt Pablo auch einen historischen 'Beweis' an. Im Buch Daniel (9,24 ff.) würde die Geburt Jesu genau prophezeit sein. Erst nach siebenzig Jahrwochen - insgesamt 490 Jahren - wird die Strafe

³⁹ Vgl. Jalkut Jesaja § 476.

⁴⁰ Vgl. in diesem Zusammenhang zum Beispiel bSanhedrin 93a und bChullin 91b.

⁴¹ Pablo verweist auf Traditionen, die wir aus Pesikta Rabbati XXXVI (XXXIV und XXXVII) kennen. Diese Überlieferungen verschmelzen den Messias ben Josef und den Messias ben David in der merkwürdigen Person des leidenden Messias ben Efraïm.

von Jerusalem beendet sein. Nach den 70 Jahren des Exils und den 420 Jahren, in denen der zweite Tempel existierte, ist der Messias (Jesus) gekommen. Ramban macht ihn jedoch auf einen schweren Denkfehler aufmerksam. Sogar wenn man diesen Vers aus Daniel auffassen würde, wie Christen ihn verstehen, bezieht man diese Prophezeiung auf eine Zeit, die erst siebenzig Jahre (zehn Jahrwochen) nach der Geburt von Jesus angebrochen ist.⁴²

Pablo versucht sein Glück aufs neue und identifiziert den 'gesalbten Fürst' aus Dan 9,25 mit Jesus. Dieses Argument kann Ramban leicht entkräften, weil dieser Fürst dem Text zufolge schon nach sieben Jahrwochen (vom Anfang des Exils an) erscheinen wird. Er kann also unmöglich Jesus sein. Daniel prophezeit das Kommen des jüdischen Statthalters Zerubabel, 49 Jahre 'vom Erlaß des Befehls zum Wiederaufbau Jerusalems' (Dan 9,25).

In einer ausführlichen Darlegung erklärt Ramban, daß der Messias den Prophezeiungen im Buche Daniel zufolge eben noch kommen soll. Daniel macht eine geheimnisvolle Vorhersage über 1290 und 1335 Tage (Dan. 12,11-12), so lange wird die Verwüstung des Tempels andauern. Die Tage von Daniel interpretiert Ramban als Jahre von der Verwüstung im Jahre 70 der christlichen Zeitrechnung ab. Der Unterschied von 45 Jahren zwischen diesen beiden Prophezeiungen stimmt mit der Zeit überein, in der der Messias sein Volk als ein zweiter Mose nach Eretz Jisra'el zurückleiten wird. (ibid. § 61).⁴³ Kern seiner Darlegung ist, daß dem Buche Daniel zufolge

⁴² Ramban deutet auf den Beweis hin, infolge dessen der Messias während der Verwüstung Jerusalems geboren worden ist. In Wirklichkeit müssen wir die Vorhersage von Daniel in bezug auf die Rebellion der Makkabäer deuten. Siehe Dan. 9,24ff. Der gesalbte Prinz, der nach sieben Jahrwochen (Zeit des babylonischer Exils) erscheinen wird, ist Zerubbabel oder Cyrus (587 - 539 = 48/49); 62 Wochen von Wiederherstellung läßt der Schreiber mit dem Zeitabschnitt zwischen Wiederherstellung des Tempels (516) und dem Jahre 170 übereinstimmen. Die Vernichtung eines Gesalbten verweist auf den Tod von Onias III. im Jahre 170. Diese letzte Jahrwoche (die die Zahl 70 voll macht) ist die Zeitspanne, die zwischen Onias' Sterben und der neuen Einweihung des Tempels im Jahre 164 vor der Zeitrechnung liegt.

⁴³ Ursprünglich verweist das Buch Daniel mit diesen Zahlen auf die etwa drei Jahre (eine halbe Jahrwoche von ungefähr 1295 Tagen), die der

der Messias immer noch kommen soll.⁴⁴

Nach einer unnötigen Diskussion über die allegorische oder die buchstäbliche Bedeutung des Wortes 'Tag' in den Prophezeiungen Daniels beginnt Pablo nochmal über die Göttlichkeit des Messias zu reden. In Übereinstimmung mit der Aggada verbleibt der Messias im Gan Eden, im himmlischen Paradies. Der Messias ist dorthin gebracht worden, damit er der Abgötterei seiner Generation entkommen kann (ibid. § 69).⁴⁵ Mit Überzeugung⁴⁶ urteilt Ramban, daß derartige Überlieferungen gerade die Menschlichkeit des Messias unterstreichen (ibid. § 70). Von vielen Menschen wird gesagt, daß sie im Gan Eden verbleiben. Dort hält sich auch der Messias zusammen mit anderen 'Sterblichen' auf.

2.4 *Der dritte Tag des Disputs - ist der Messias sterblich?*

Am dritten Tag des Disputs findet das Streitgespräch im Palast des Königs statt. Ramban gibt nur eine auffällig kurze Beschreibung, vielleicht weil die Argumente sich jetzt endlos wiederholen. Oder faßt Ramban sich so kurz, weil dieser Teil des Streitgesprächs für ihn schlecht abgelaufen ist? Pablo zitiert Maimonides. Maimonides behauptete, daß auch der Messias genau wie alle anderen sterblichen Menschen sterben wird.⁴⁷ Diese Behauptung steht im Gegensatz zu dem von Ramban erklärten und zitierten Midrasch (§ 40), in dem

Wiedereinweihung des Tempels im Jahre 164 vorangehen.

⁴⁴ Auf Grund dieser Berechnung erwartete Ramban den Messias im Jahr 1358. Siehe u.a. Kommentare zu I Mos. 2,3 und *Sefer ha-Ge'ula*, ed. C.D. Chavel, *Writings and Discourses I*, New York 1978, 637-638; A.H. Silver, *A History of Messianic Speculation*, Boston 1959, 84.

⁴⁵ Wahrscheinlich deutet Pablo auf eine Überlieferung in Derech Erets Zuta I hin, wonach der Messias zusammen mit einer Gruppe anderer Personen im himmlischen Paradies verbleibt. Siehe in diesem Zusammenhang auch meinen Kommentar zu Derech Erets: M. van Loopik, *The Ways of the Sages and the Way of the World*, Tübingen 1991, 205 ff.

⁴⁶ Siehe die vorangehende Anmerkung!

⁴⁷ Pablo zitiert den Teil Schophetim aus der *Mischné Tora*; in Wirklichkeit aber hat Ramban seine Bemerkung in seiner Schrift *Techijjat ha-Metim* (Auferstehung der Toten, Kap. VI) und in der Einleitung von seinem Misjna-kommentar zum zehnten Kapittel von Massechet Sanhedrin (pèrèk chèlèk) gemacht.

gesagt wird, der Messias sei nicht sterblich. Der Widerspruch beweist, wie Ramban sich während des Gesprächs krümmen und winden mußte, um sich aufrecht zu halten. Von einer wirklichen Folgewidrigkeit dürfen wir aber nicht reden. Es besteht nun einmal ein Gegensatz zwischen Aggadot. Ramban bestätigt seinen Glauben an die rationale Vorstellung Rambams und faßt die Gelegenheit beim Schopfe, den historischen Charakter der messianischen Zeit noch einmal zu unterstreichen. Der wahre Messias wird die Verbannten sammeln, er wird den Tempel wieder aufrichten, er wird über alle Völker herrschen und er wird Israels Feinde verurteilen und bestrafen. Mit dem Kommen Jesu hat sich, so Ramban, nichts von diesen Prophezeiungen erfüllt.

2.5 *Der vierte Tag des Disputs - ist der Messias Gott oder Mensch?*

Ramban äußert seine Angst, das Streitgespräch weiterzuführen. Sowohl von jüdischer als vor allem von christlicher Seite ist ihm geraten worden, den Disput zu beenden (ibid. § 79). Nur der Befehl des Königs brachte ihn dazu, trotzdem fortzufahren. War seine Lage schwächer, als er uns in seiner Beschreibung des Disputs vorspiegelt? Das erweist sich jedenfalls nicht aus der Reaktion adliger Leute: 'Auch viele Ritter Ihres [königlichen] Hauses, mein Herr der König, haben mir gesagt, ich verursache Böses, wenn ich in Ihrer Anwesenheit Worte rede, die gegen Ihren Glauben gerichtet sind.' Die Argumente Rambans haben ganz bestimmt Erfolg gehabt. Er selber war sich seiner Sache nicht gewiß. Diese Unsicherheit ist jedoch nicht auf die Schwäche seiner Verteidigung zurückzuführen, sondern auf die Tatsache, daß seine Gegner seine Erwiderungen völlig ignorierten.

Über die Wirkung seiner Argumente unsicher geworden, erbat Ramban dazu Zustimmung, daß er während der nächsten Runde des Gesprächs als erster das Wort führen dürfe. Der König faßte aber einen anderen Entschluß, und Ramban wurde gezwungen, in der ihm zugeteilten defensiven Rolle zu verharren: Pablo blieb der offizielle 'Ankläger' und der Jude Ramban sollte sich weiter verteidigen (ibid. § 83).

Pablo stellt jetzt die Frage über die göttliche Natur des Messias (ibid. § 83). Ramban zufolge hat die Diskussion über diese Frage keinen Zweck, wenn nicht vorher bewiesen worden ist, der

Messias sei schon gekommen. In diesem Punkt fühlt er sich unbesiegt. Seinem Gegner ist es nicht gelungen, die Rechtmäßigkeit ihrer Einlassung zu beweisen. So lange die Wahrheit des ersten Themas nicht nachgewiesen ist, bleibt es sinnlos, eine Diskussion über das zweite Thema anzufangen (ibid. § 85). Juristen des Königs stimmten Ramban bei (§ 86). Aus dieser Tatsache dürfen wir schließen, daß sie die Argumente Rambans für stichhaltig hielten.

Der König greift ein und zwingt Ramban, Pablo trotzdem zu antworten. Ramban beschreibt jetzt die menschliche Natur des Messias als Nachkommen und Erben des davidischen Hauses. Gen 49,10 - 'bis Schilo kommt' - deutet er so: bis der Nachkomme von David (*sjè lo* - der ihm gehört)⁴⁸ kommen wird. Ramban deutet hier auf eine Schwachstelle in der christlichen Dogmatik hin. Die davidische Abstammung läuft nur über Vater und Sohn (Mt 1). Wenn Jesus der Sohn Gottes war (und nicht Josephs Sohn), war er auch nicht davidischer Abstammung, eine 'conditio sine qua non', um Messias zu sein.

Pablo introduziert eine andere Beweisführung und zitiert Ps. 110,1: 'Der Ewige sprach zu meinem Herrn: Setze dich zu meiner Rechten.' Diese Worte erklärt Pablo so: Gott redet den Messias an mit 'mein Herr' und nötigt ihn, sich zu seiner Rechten zu setzen. Wer so erhaben ist, muß einfach göttlich sein (ibid. § 89).

Ramban verhöhnt die Einfältigkeit dieser Ansicht (ibid. § 91). David hat den Psalm so gedichtet, damit die Leviten ihn singen konnten. Nicht ein göttliches Wesen, sondern David oder seine messianischen Nachkommen besingt der levitische Sänger als 'mein Herr'. Das Bild ist nur eine Allegorie um die Begünstigung und den Schutz des davidischen Hauses darzustellen. (ibid. § 93).

In seiner Entgegnung verteidigt Pablo auch hier die buchstäbliche Bedeutung und er zitiert eine Aggada, die das Psalmzitat auf den Messias anwendet und wörtlich nimmt.⁴⁹ Ramban läßt sich

⁴⁸ Midrasch Lekach Tov zu I Mose. 49,10; vgl. den Kommentar von David Kimchi und von Ibn Ezra.

⁴⁹ Aus der Fortsetzung ergibt sich, daß Pablo Jalkut Tehillim § 869 zitierte. Auch von Rabbi Akiva ist eine Aussage bekannt, daß der Messias neben dem Thron des Ewigen sitzt; siehe bChagiga 14a en bSanhedrin 38b (namens Bar Naphle; vielleicht eine Entstellung von 'huios nepheloon' und

das Buch aushändigen und liest die Aggada vor. Der Gedanke, daß beide zur Seite Gottes sitzen werden, beweist auf keinsten Weise ihre Göttlichkeit. Der Midrasch läßt zwar den Messias zur Rechten Gottes Platz nehmen,⁵⁰ deutet aber gleichzeitig auf seine Menschlichkeit hin. Abraham sitzt zur Linken und ist neidisch auf den Messias, der zur Rechten sitzen darf. Auf einen göttlichen Sohn würde Abraham nie eifersüchtig gewesen sein! Außerdem beschreibt diese Aggada keine Vergangenheit, sondern die ferne Zukunft (ibid. § 96).

Das letzte Argument war nicht effektiv, weil Pablo das Zitat aus den Psalmen sicher als eine ferne Vorhersage über Jesus aufgefaßt hat, den er trotz aller Kritik von Ramban als einen Nachkommen aus dem Hause Davids betrachtete.

Pablo schießt seine letzten Pfeile ab (ibid. § 97). Ein Passus im Buche Leviticus - III Mose 26,12: 'Und ich will unter euch wandeln' - sollte die christliche Vorstellung bestätigen, wonach Gott in den Körper eines Menschen inkarniert worden ist und auf Erden lebte. Der rabbinische Midrasch würde diese Erklärung bestätigen.⁵¹ Wieder einmal weist Ramban darauf hin, daß der Midrasch die messianische Zukunft schildert. Außerdem ist es nur eine Parabel, wie ihren Anfang bekundet: "Man kann es vergleichen mit ..." . Das Gleichnis beschreibt, wie die Seelen der Gerechten im Garten Eden Gottes unmittelbare Nähe erleben werden (Ibid. § 98).

Es bleibt die offene Frage, wieviel Eindruck diese Erwiderung auf seine Gegner gemacht hat. Aus taktischen Gründen zeigten sie sich vollkommen unempfindlich gegenüber den tieferen Bedeutungsebenen der Aggada.

Pablo fährt fort, Texte anzuführen, die die Göttlichkeit des Messias beweisen sollen. Er konfrontiert Ramban mit der rabbinischen Auslegung, wonach "der Geist Gottes" (der über den Wassern schwebte) am Anfang der Schöpfungsgeschichte die Seele (Geist) des Messias war.⁵² Ramban kann auch die Existenz dieser Tradition nicht

eine Anspielung auf den Menschensohn im Buch Daniel; vgl. bSanhedrin 96b). In diesem Zusammenhang ist es bestimmt interessant zu wissen, daß Rabbi José ha-Gelili Akiva wegen dieser Worte schroff getadelt hat. Rabbi José betrachtete die Vorstellung Akivas offensichtlich als sektiererisch.

⁵⁰ Jalkut Tehillim § 869.

⁵¹ Pablo verweist auf ein Gleichnis in Jalkut zu III Mose § 672.

⁵² Diese Erklärung finden wir in Beresjit Rabba II,4, Pesikta Rabbati

leugnen, verweist aber immer wieder auf die mehrdeutige Exegese in der Aggada. Denselbe 'Geist Gottes' identifiziert der Midrasch auch mit der Seele Adams, von dem man doch auch nicht sagen kann, er sei Gott (ibid. § 100). Ramban zufolge bezieht sich auch dieser Midrasch auf die messianische Zukunft. Wieder konnte er seine Gegner nicht überzeugen, da sie den Torahvers als eine Prophezeiung über die Inkarnation Gottes in dem Menschen Jesus betrachteten.

Mit dieser letzten Erörterung war dem Bericht Rambans zufolge der offizielle Teil des öffentlichen Streitgesprächs beendet.⁵³ Es ist jedoch kaum vorstellbar, daß man Ramban tatsächlich das letzte Wort gegönnt hat. Auch am Ende seines Berichtes erweist sich, daß er vor allem von seiner eigenen Verteidigung vor den Augen seiner jüdischen Leser viel Aufhebens machen wollte. Er schreibt übrigens, daß er den Disput vollständig und korrekt wiedergegeben hat: 'Dieses ist der Inhalt aller Diskussionen. Meines Wissens nach habe ich kein Wort davon geändert.'

Ende des öffentlichen Disputs

Der König Jakobus äußert Verständnis für die kenntnisreiche Weise, in der Ramban seiner Verteidigung Gestalt gegeben hat: 'Laß das Streitgespräch [hierbei] bleiben,⁵⁴ denn ich habe keinen Menschen gesehen, der - nicht in seinem Recht stehend - dieses [Recht] so gut plädiert hat, wie du es getan hast' (§ 102). König Jakobus hat sich aber keinesfalls von dem Plädoyer überzeugen lassen. Ramban gibt diese Tatsache großzügig zu!

Warum ist der letzte Punkt der Tagesordnung - über Torah und Gebote - nicht mehr zur Sprache gebracht worden? Der lateinische

XXXIII, ed. M. Friedmann 152b: 'Man findet, daß der König Messias gleich am Anfang der Welt geboren worden ist'.

⁵³ Ramban beschreibt noch eine ausführliche Diskussion über das Dogma der Trinität, die er acht Tage nach dem öffentlichen Disput geführt haben soll, als der König und eine Anzahl von Geistlichen am Tage des Sabbats die Synagoge besuchten. Weil dieser Teil des Streitgesprächs nicht mehr zum öffentlichen Disput gehörte und dieses Thema auch nicht auf der Tagesordnung stand, lassen wir diese Diskussion außer Betracht.

⁵⁴ Jisj'ar ha-wikkuach - das heißt: wir lassen die Diskussion dahingestellt und schließen hier ab.

Bericht erzählt, wie Ramban vorzeitig und während der Abwesenheit des Königs geflüchtet ist, darum wäre der Disput so abrupt abgebrochen. Vor allem in diesem Punkt erweist sich die Unzuverlässigkeit des lateinischen Berichts. Zweifellos hat Ramban Barcelona nicht unmittelbar verlassen. Dem Ende von Sêfêr ha-Wikkuach nach hat er nach einer Unterbrechung von acht Tagen mit dem König und einer Gruppe von Geistlichen anlässlich ihres Besuches bei der Synagoge ausführlich über das Dogma der Trinität diskutiert. Dieses Geschehen kann Ramban unmöglich ungestraft in seiner Phantasie erfunden haben.⁵⁵

3. **Schlußfolgerung**

Welche Schlußfolgerung dürfen wir auf Grund dieses kurzen Überblickes des Streitgesprächs ziehen? Aufs neue ist klar geworden, daß wir im allgemeinen Sinn über Gewinner und Verlierer nicht reden können. Mehr als Sêfêr ha-Wikkuach erhebt der lateinische Bericht Anspruch auf den Sieg in diesem Streitgespräch. Aus Rambans Sicht besteht dieser Anspruch nicht zu Recht. Ebenso wie Pablo Christiani kann auch Ramban den Sieg nicht ohne weiteres davontragen. Der König fällte sein Urteil über Ramban von seiner eigenen begrenzten Perspektive aus, aber auch das Urteil von Ramban über den eigenen Erfolg war nicht objektiv. Eine genaue Analyse und ein Vergleich von Sêfêr ha-Wikkuach mit dem lateinischen Bericht sollen das rosenfarbene wenig objektive Bild korrigieren, mit dem Untersucher wie Graetz, Loeb und mehr oder weniger Maccoby Rambans Lage schildern.

Ramban versucht deutlich, die Angriffe seines Gegners Pablo lächerlich zu machen, ebenso wie es der lateinische Bericht mit Rambans verteidigendem Plädoyer macht. Pablos Anteil an der Diskussion spielte Ramban herunter. In verschiedenen Punkten gab Ramban auf Grund taktischer Überlegungen seine innere Gedanken nicht preis. Er war dazu gezwungen, dieses Streitgespräch zu führen. Einige ironische Stellen werden denn auch von ihm selbst oder von

⁵⁵ Der lateinische Bericht nimmt das Gespräch über die Trinität in den Disput auf, obwohl dieses Gespräch erst nachher stattgefunden hat.

späteren Kopisten nachher hinzugefügt worden sein. Sie sind nicht authentisch. Momente, in denen Rambans Verteidigung schwach war, hat er ausgelassen. Ramban hat mit Absicht in Séfèr ha-Wikkuach einzelne Passagen ausgelassen, übertrieben, seinem Gegner nicht ganz recht getan, ihn herabgesetzt und seine eigene Stellung im Streitgespräch vergrößert.

Ebenso wie der lateinische Bericht hat Séfèr ha-Wikkuach den Charakter einer für das jüdische Publikum gedachten Streitschrift.

Trotz allem bevorzugen wir den Séfèr ha-Wikkuach als unsere Hauptquelle, um der Wahrheit nahe zu kommen. Ramban ist objektiver und gibt auch seine Schwäche unumwunden zu. Er verhehlt nicht das Unvermögen, seine Gegner von ihrem Unrecht zu überzeugen. Auch seine mißliche Lage als Beklagter, der einfach nur beantworten soll, was er gefragt wird, hat er nicht verheimlicht. Nur in Séfèr ha-Wikkuach erkennen wir die Linie, an der entlang sich das Gespräch entwickelt hat. Trotz einiger schwacher Momente darf man den Argumenten von Ramban nach heutigen, objektiveren, Maßstäben eine größere Überzeugungskraft beimessen.

Der lateinische Bericht gibt die Tagesordnung zwar genauer wieder, ist aber undifferenziert und sehr partiisch, ist ungeordnet und nimmt Angelegenheiten in das öffentliche Gespräch auf, die sehr deutlich dort nicht hineingehören.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Siehe Anmerkung 55.

TRINITY IN THOMAS

Reading the *Summa Theologiae* against the background of modern problems

Herwi Rikhof

Cognitio divinarum personarum fuit necessaria pro nobis dupliciter. Uno modo ad recte sentiendum de creatione rerum.... Alio modo et principalius ad recte sentiendum de salute generis humani, quae perficitur per Filium incarnatum et per donum Spiritus Sancti¹

Over the last thirty years one can notice a renaissance of the theology of the Trinity. Part of this renewed interest in what is commonly considered to be the heart of Christianity and Christian theology is a diagnosis of what went wrong in the previous periods. How could the centre of faith become so irrelevant to spirituality and theology alike?

One of the answers given is that a generic understanding of God, typical of modern thought and prominent within the philosophy since Descartes, has influenced determinedly religious experience and theological reflection. Theologians more or less generally accept this diagnosis. But among them, there are several who point to earlier and more importantly to theological roots of this process in which the reflection upon the unity of God is severed from the reflection on the Trinity of persons. Some, like K. Rahner, blame Thomas Aquinas, since in the *Summa Theologiae* he reversed the traditional order to be found in e.g. Peter Lombard's Sentences. Instead of beginning his doctrine of God with the Trinity of persons, Aquinas starts with a treatment of God's unity. Since the topics he discusses with regard to God's unity are those concerning God's dealing with our reality, and

¹ ST I, 32, 1 ad 3.

since the topics he discusses with regard to the Trinity of persons are mainly concerned with inner-Trinitarian problems, this reversal amounts in fact to more than just a prevalence for the order of teaching, the *ordo disciplinae*, over the order of invention. When the *Summa Theologiae* becomes the official textbook, replacing Lombard's Sentences, this reversal becomes decisive and fatal. The result is that the theology of the Trinity receives only attention after all the important issues are discussed: the theology of the Trinity is relegated to a secondary level and is made irrelevant to the history of salvation and the life of the believers.²

Others, like C. Gunton and M. Corbin, blame Augustine.³ In his books on the Trinity, one finds a predominant interest in the unity of God and his search for psychological analogies enforces this emphasis. As with so many other topics in theology, Augustine's views were in the West the views discussed over and over again and so they influenced profoundly and decisively Latin theology from the early Middle Ages until deep in the modern period

C. LaCugna blames the post-nicean theologians from east and west.⁴ They started a type of reflection that averted the attention from the history of salvation, to another realm, to God in himself; they changed the perspective from the *oikonomia* to the *theologia*. Consequently, in her analysis of 'the emergence and defeat of the doctrine of the Trinity' Palamas in the east and Aquinas in the west are but the concluding representatives of a movement that started in the 4th century and that is in principle responsible for a theological

² K. Rahner, "Der Dreifaltige Gott als transzendenter Urgrund der Heilsgeschichte", *Mysterium Salutis*, Bd. 2, 317-401, esp. 318-327.

³ C. Gunton, *The Promise of Trinitarian Theology*, Edinburgh 1991, 31-57; M. Corbin, *La Trinité ou l'Excès de Dieu*, Paris 1997. For a different and more positive interpretation of Augustine see E. Hill *The Mystery of the Trinity*, London 1985 (he is critical about the way the scholastic method has been used in modern textbooks and catechesis: 'Loosing sight of the Mystery', 145-159); cf. also J. Verhees, *God in beweging. Een onderzoek naar de pneumatologie van Augustinus*, Wageningen 1968 for an 'economical' interpretation of Augustine's Trinitarian theology.

⁴ C. LaCugna, *God for Us. The Trinity and Christian Life*. San Francisco 1993 (1991)

reflection on God which is different from, and, more seriously, divorced from the way Scripture talks about the Triune God.

In much of the current theology of the Trinity, this criticism on Aquinas, Augustine and the post-nicean theologians in general is repeated. But there are some theologians who question this tendency to find a 'bad guy'.⁵ They sometimes question also the picture, often in the background, of a Latin theology dominated or even obsessed by the attention to divine unity and focussed on the inner divine life, the *theologia*, and a Greek theology characterised by a sensitivity towards God acting in the history of salvation, the *oikonomia*, and an attention for the Trinity of persons.⁶

In this article, I want to join these critical voices, cautioning against such striking simplifications. I want to show that Thomas does not fit exactly and nicely into the picture drawn by Rahner, Corbin or LaCugna. I want to do that by having a closer look at some texts in the *Summa Theologiae*, since that book is always negatively mentioned in this context. I will not repeat what others already have said about the structure of the *Summa Theologiae*, which has some bearing on this issue.⁷ Nor will I extensively discuss the *ordo disciplinae* and the order Thomas repeatedly uses in the *Summa* of first sharpening the tools and analysing the relevant concepts before he tackles the theological problems provoked by Scripture and by faith, although I will point to this order on the micro-level of a quaestio. Instead, I will read some articles from q. 43 of the *Prima Pars*

I have chosen this text as point of departure not only for the reason just mentioned but with some other discussions in contemporary theology in mind as well. One of the often-repeated grievances by theologians nowadays is that the H. Spirit is the unknown person of the Trinity and forgotten in the main theological

⁵ D. Cunningham, *These Three are One. The Practice of Trinitarian Theology*. Oxford 1998, 31-35.

⁶ E.g. J. Verhees, *God in beweging*, o.c., esp. 348

⁷ For a recent view and literature see W. Metz, *Die Architektonik der Summa Theologiae des Thomas von Aquins. Zur Gesamtsicht des thomasischen Gedankens*, Hamburg 1998, esp. 192-204; see also H.J.M. Schoot, *Christ the 'Name' of God. Thomas Aquinas on naming Christ*, Louvain 1993, 4 for some additional literature.

discourses.⁸ This complaint is linked with the criticism on the irrelevancy of Trinitarian thought within faith and within theology earlier referred to. It is also linked to the already mentioned difference between Latin and Greek theology. While in Greek (or Orthodox) theology the Spirit plays an important part of his own, in Latin theology the Spirit plays at the most a secondary role subsidiary to Christ.⁹

Thomas, in the *Summa Theologiae*, clearly pays much explicit attention to Christ (see *Tertia Pars*, qq. 1- 59) and a similar attention to the Spirit is absent. Nevertheless, there are indications that the Spirit is more present in his theology than this general negative picture of Latin theology would suggest. An important discussion about the Spirit is to be found in the second part of his doctrine of God.¹⁰

After discussing three closely related concepts (*processio*, *relatio*, *persona*) by way of introduction, Thomas turns his attention to the three persons. He dedicates three *quaestiones* to the Spirit: one about the term or name Holy Spirit, and two about names: *amor* and *donum*. These *quaestiones* belong at first sight to the *theologia*, but both *amor* and *donum* are also terms that belong to the *oikonomia*. Moreover, they are biblical terms. Thomas' favourite biblical saying about the Spirit, *Caritas Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris per Spiritum sanctum, qui datus est nobis* (Ro 5,5), contains both elements or names. The same comment can be made about the two terms he discusses when he reflects upon the Son: *imago* and *verbum*. Although discussed within the *theologia*, those terms belong also to the *oikonomia* and they are biblical terms, too.

But the presence of the Spirit in Thomas' theology becomes more apparent when one looks at the discussion that takes place at the end of the series of *quaestiones* about the divine persons. Thomas then turns his attention to the *missiones*, the sending of Son and Spirit in our reality, to the activity of Son and Spirit in our history. In that

⁸ Cf. e.g. J. Freitag, *Geist-vergessen - Geist-erinnern. VL. Losskys Pneumatologie als Herausforderung westlicher Theologie*, Würzburg 1995.

⁹ The controversy about the *filioque* is a focal point in this discussion. The latin theology is characterised as christomonism.

¹⁰ For the division of the doctrine of God see intro q. 2.

discussion Thomas uses again the biblical terms he analysed earlier: *verbum, amor, donum*. The discussion of the *missiones* is a discussion on the level of *oikonomia*, but presupposes the earlier discussion of *processiones* and *relationes*, discussions on the level of *theologia*. Although these earlier 'theological' discussions have an interest of their own, namely mapping out the grammar *in divinis*, they are also and, I would like to suggest, mainly, preparations for the discussion about the *missiones*. This discussion is at the same time the final and ultimate discussion of Thomas' second part of the doctrine of God and the transition to the third part that is concerned with the *processio* of the creatures from God. Given this position the *quaestio* about the *missiones* is a crucial one in the doctrine of God.¹¹

Therefore, by selecting q. 43 I have not selected just a *quaestio* but one in which Thomas in very general and abstract terms sketches the pattern of God's dealing with humanity. It contains therefore the key to understanding those *quaestiones* in which he concentrates upon aspects of the *oikonomia* like the theology of grace or the theology of the sacraments. The matter of fact reference to grace and sacraments in a. 6 (ad 2 and ad 4) should therefore not come as a surprise. If I can show that the Spirit plays a prominent role in this general pattern, I can at least cast a little doubt on that cliché about the absence of the Spirit in Latin theology and at the same time I can strengthen the suggestion that an interpretation of Thomas' theology of grace and of the sacraments that is not sensitive to the presence of the Spirit is not an adequate one.

The need to read q. 43 carefully arose also from various reasons connected with earlier theological discussions about the inhabitation of the Trinity and about a proper role of the Spirit in the inhabitation. Those discussions do not only show a bewildering variety of interpretations and views, but also opposite conclusions.¹²

¹¹ H. Schmidbauer, *Personarum Trinitas. Die trinitarische Gotteslehre des heiligen Thomas von Aquin*, St. Ottilien 1995, 645, rightly qualifies this *quaestio* as pivotal ('Scharnierkapitel').

¹² See e.g. the historical survey with which Roberto a S. Teresia a Jesu Infante O.C.D. starts his *De Habitatione SS Trinitatis Doctrina S. Thomae in Scripto Super Sententiis*. Roma, 1961. Cf. K. Rahner, o.c., note 2, for literature concerning the period 1940-1965. Cf. also F. Cunningham OP, *The*

Moreover, these discussions are often conducted with especially developed conceptual tools ('quasi formal causality'). It might be necessary to develop such tools as instruments for interpretation, but in this case, they seem to function somewhat independently and they therefore burden the issues more than that they enlighten them. Lastly, in those discussions certain views about appropriation, *proprium* and the meaning of the axiom that *ad extra* the Trinity acts as one, play a sometimes decisive role, but whether those views are also Aquinas's is questionable.

Missiones: q. 43

Thomas' discussion of the *missiones* in q. 43 can only be understood against the background of biblical data and the questions these data provoke. So, before analysing Thomas' discussion, I will give a brief outline of these data and these problems.

1. *Background*

In the New Testament, 'to send' or 'sending' are used in four different contexts, three of which are relevant for the present purpose. It is used, first, for Jesus. He is the one who is being sent. In the parable of the evil winegrowers, that in each of the synoptic gospels is placed at a crucial moment of Jesus' ministry (Mt 21,33-43; Mk 12,1-11; Lk 20,9-19) this mission is placed in the line of the prophets, whose messages were rejected by the people of Israel. Through the whole of John's gospel runs the theme that Jesus is the one who is being sent. The purpose of his sending is expressed differently in the gospels. In Luke, Jesus, at the beginning of his ministry, reads a text from the prophet Isaiah that contains elements characteristic of Jesus' ministry: 'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted, he has sent me

Indwelling of the Trinity. A Historico-Doctrinal Study of the Theory of St. Thomas Aquinas, Dubuque 1955, for a variety of explanations about the differences between Thomas' views expressed in *Scriptum* and *Summa Theologiae*.

to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour' (61,1-2; Lk 4,18-19). In Matthew the purpose is less peaceful, reflecting the actual reception of the gospel and the hostile reaction to the mission of the disciples (Mt 10,34-42). In the gospel of John, both aspects are related: God sends the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him (Jn 3,17). In the first letter of John, the sending of Jesus is the sign of God's love and its purpose is the expiation of sins (I Jn 4,9-10.14). In the gospels Jesus' mission is to the people of Israel (Mt 15,24), while in Paul's letters his sending becomes a universal one (Gal 4,4; Rom 8,3).

Secondly, the Spirit is being sent. In the discourse and prayer Jesus pronounces at the Last Supper, he promises the disciples the coming of the Spirit, the Paraclete. The Spirit will be sent by the Father in Jesus' name (Jn 14,26), or from the Father by Jesus (15,26 cf. 16,7). In addition, on the evening of Easterday, this promise is fulfilled, when the risen Lord breathes on the disciples (Jn 20,22). Paul talks about God who sends the Spirit of his Son into the hearts of the believers (Gal 4,6).

Thirdly, Jesus refers to the Father as the One who sends him. In the synoptic gospels this reference is linked to the sending of the disciples, indicating an extra dimension, a transcendent transparency: 'who receives you, receives me and who receives me, receives him who sends me' (Mt 10,40; Mk 9,37; Lk 9,48; 10,16). In the gospel of John, the phrase returns again and again as a general characterisation of Jesus' life (5,30; 6,38.39.57; 7,28.29; 7,34; 8,16.42; 9,4; 10,36; 17,3.8), in discussions about his authority (5,36.37.38; 8,18; 12,49; 14,24), in relation to believing Jesus (6,29; 11,42) and to accepting his teaching (7,16.18). As in the synoptic gospels, there is a transcendent transparency related to the disciples (13,20), but the transparency of Jesus self is accentuated too: 'who sees me, sees him who sent me' (12,44-45; 14,9; cf. 5,23-24) And, perhaps most importantly, the phrase is used almost as a name for the Father (6,44; 8,16.26.29; 15,21; 16,5; 17,21.23.25).¹³

¹³ The fourth context are the disciples; they are sent as part of Jesus'

Linked to 'to send' are other verbs and expressions. 'To send' is close in meaning to 'to come' and 'to go'. The questions where Jesus comes from and goes to return again and again in John's gospel. (cf. e.g. 7,25-29; 9,29-33; 14,3-7) 'To send' is also close to 'to give' and 'to pour out', verbs used by Paul in connection with the Spirit (Rom 5,5; 8,15.23; 1 Cor 2,12; 6,19; 2 Cor 1,22; 5,5; Gal 3,2.14; Eph 1,17; 1 Thes 4,8). Finally, related to 'to send' is 'to remain', 'to inhabit'. Referring to Jesus' baptism John the Baptist reports that he saw the Spirit come and remain. (Jn 1,32-33) In the farewell-discourse, Jesus promises not only the coming of the Spirit, but also the remaining of the Helper and the indwelling of the Spirit. (Jn 14,16-17; cf. 15,26, 16,13) He promises, too, that the Father and he shall come to those who keep his words, and that they shall make their home with them (14,23). Paul uses several images to convey the indwelling of the Spirit: temple (1 Cor 3,16; 6,19; Eph 2,22), seal (Eph. 1,14; 4,30), first instalment (2 Cor 1,22; 5,5).

2. *Problems*

These biblical data have promoted further questions, provoked discussions and even controversies, not just in the early Church, but throughout the history of theology till the present day.

How should one understand a text in which coming is combined with being already there like "The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. He was in the world and the world was made through him, yet the world knew him not. He came to his own home, and his own people received him not (Jn 1,9-10)?" How to relate the texts about the coming of the Spirit to those texts in which the Spirit is said to be fundamental to reality (Ps 104,29-30; Job 34,13-15)? This question becomes even more pressing against the background of certain conceptions about divine immutability and unchangeability.

Another problem became clear during the Arian and

ministry (Mt 10,5; Mk 3,14; 6,7) or as a continuation of his ministry (John 17,18; 20,21; cf. Mt 28,29-20).

Pneumatomachean controversies. Mission-texts were used to argue that the Logos or the Pneuma were not divine, but creatures, for 'to send' and 'to be sent' imply authority and obedience, an hierarchy of higher and lower, of knowing and not knowing. Such a view would imply that the salvation by the mission of Son and of Spirit would be not divine and therefore a dubious salvation.

Yet another question is concerned with the relationship between the *missio* of the Son and the *missio* of the Spirit. In John's gospel, there is a suggestion of a continuation: the sending of the Spirit follows the sending of the Son. If so, is it not necessary to say more about that relationship? Are there criteria to judge whether some expressions of the spirit are really of the Spirit. Paul, confronted with these questions and problems in Corinth, talks about the Spirit of Jesus Christ, but is that all that can or needs to be said? The West responded to this kind of questions by inserting the *filioque* in the creed. This was one of the causes of the schism between East and West and it still is a divisive topic, as ecumenical discussions show.

Moreover, how should one understand the indwelling of the Spirit and the images of temple and seal? How incisive should one take the inhabitation of the Spirit? Could one understand it as a kind of parallel to the incarnation of the Son? What does the inhabitation of the Spirit imply for the dignity of the believer and for the spiritual life? Does it really change the person?

These questions are asked throughout the history of church and theology, not because of an intellectual desire to fill gaps or because of an internal pressure to construct a system, but because these questions were (and are) closely related to salvation. These questions determine the way Thomas discusses the missions of Son and Spirit.

3. *A reading of q. 43*

3.1 *A conceptual clarification*

Thomas starts the whole discussion about the missions with a conceptual clarification. The need for such a conceptual clarification is indicated on the one hand by the use in Scripture of *missio*-terminology (*sed contra*) and on the other hand by some theological arguments. The theological arguments Thomas mentions in the

objectiones are related to the grammar *in divinis* he has outlined in the opening *quaestiones* of the Summa and to the heart of Trinitarian theology. In the opening *quaestiones*, Thomas has shown that all language indicating movement, becoming or change can not be used properly for God, since this type of language does not sufficiently safeguard the distinction between God and created reality. Movement and change are concepts typical and characteristic of created reality and should therefore be denied of God. To the heart of Trinitarian theology belongs the concept of *circuminsessio* or *perichoresis*. It is developed and used to capture two elements that were discussed vehemently in the early church: the inseparability of the three divine persons and their equality.

So, the way Thomas introduces the problems on the one hand confirms the biblical basis of *missio* and on the other hand questions in a radical way the convenience of the way Scripture talks about Son and Spirit and the adequacy of *missio*-terminology as a central part of Trinitarian theology.

In his *responsio*, Thomas gives first a general analysis of *missio* appealing to ordinary language use. *Missio* can be considered either from the point of departure, the *a quo*, or from the point of arrival, the *ad quem*. In the first case, there is some kind of *processio* and Thomas quotes a few examples to illustrate the variety of kinds: command, advice, origination. These examples are carefully chosen. The relationship between servant and master and between councillor and king in the example of command and council indicate a hierarchy and exemplify the suggestion contained in the first *objectio* of higher and lower. The relationship between tree and blossom in the example of origination, however, does not contain these associations.

Considered from the point of arrival *missio* indicates some kind of beginning of a presence. Thomas specifies two kinds of presence: place and way. Either the one sent was previously not at that place or not there in this way. Here Thomas does not give examples but any form of travel would do as example of place, while any form of starting in a new capacity would fit the second kind (e.g. consul) The distinction is important since the second kind does not (necessarily) entail movement or change of location.

When Thomas applies this general analysis to theological language, he singles out one kind of *processio* (the one that does not

entail an hierarchy) and one kind of presence (the one that does not entail movement) and argues that *missio* should be understood in this way. So, in his argument for the convenience of *missio* language Thomas does not introduce some new, special, technical or peculiar meaning of the word, unconnected with ordinary use, but points to various elements of meaning present and specifies which are used when *missio* is used in talking about God. Because the elements Thomas specifies do not contain the damaging associations mentioned in the objections, there is no problem about the use of *missio*.

In the second article, Thomas raises another fundamental problem that he discusses also in the opening *quaestiones* of the *Summa*: time and eternity and immutability. This question arises because in the previous article Thomas has argued that some kind of proceeding, origination, determines the meaning of *missio*. *Processio* and *origo* are also terms used in Trinitarian theology to specify the relationship of Son to Father and of Spirit to Son and Father. As such, they are crucial terms distinguishing the divine persons.¹⁴ Because they are used *in divinis* the *processiones* are not temporal (but eternal, cf. obj. 3 and 1). So the suggestion is that *missio* is also eternal and thus an inadequate and inappropriate term to use in the context of the history of salvation.

But apart from these associations linked to Trinitarian theology and connected to the perspective from the *a quo*, there is another reason why the question has to be discussed, although this is not so clear from the way Thomas formulates the problem in the *objectiones* and the *sed contra*. In the determination of *missio* Thomas has also pointed to the *ad quem* and specified it in terms of being present in a new way. This specification might eliminate the unwanted spatial associations; it does not eliminate the unwanted temporal associations. According to Scripture, both Son and Spirit are already present in the world. How can they nevertheless be said to be sent? Therefore, from both perspectives a further clarification of meaning is required.

In his answer, Thomas maps out the relational language *in divinis*. He does not question the central role of *origo* in the

¹⁴ Cf. *ST* I, 27, 2-3; 28, 3; 29, 4.

Trinitarian theology; on the contrary, he takes that as his central starting point. But he does call attention to the three different ways this *origo* is mentioned. First, there are terms that only indicate the *origo*, the relationship to the origin, like *processio* and *exitus*. Second, there are terms that indicate the (eternal) ending point of the origination as well: *generatio* and *spiratio*. Third, there are terms that indicate the temporal term of the origination as well: *missio* and *datio*. Although Thomas might seem to determine somewhat arbitrarily (or report a somewhat arbitrary decision made by theologians in earlier periods) that certain terms have a non-temporal or a temporal meaning, there is a biblical foundation for the third category. The ministry of Jesus is seen in the gospels as a mission, as is the coming of the Spirit. But the presence of the Spirit is, especially in Paul, even more fundamentally connected with giving and gift. An awareness of this can be seen in the second part of Thomas' answer: there he repeats the three aspects but adds that *processio* and *exitus* are used both in a atemporal and a temporal sense, reflecting the use in John. The result of these conceptual clarifications is that the way Scripture talks about *missio* is convenient if *missio* is properly understood

3.2 *Visibilis-invisibilis*

In the discussion following the conceptual clarification, Thomas does not concentrate on establishing the fact of the *missiones*, but concentrates upon understanding that fact. A central role in this search for understanding is given to the distinction visible-invisible. The formulation of the questions to be discussed at the beginning of the *quaestio* shows that Thomas' main interest goes towards the invisible mission. He mentions *invisibilis* three times (3,5 and 6) and *visibilis* once (7). If one compares these formulations with the questions formulated in the various articles one can see that this interest is even more pronounced. Article 5 is about the convenience of the invisible mission of the Son, and the *objectiones* show that the question is about grace and about the relationship between the mission of the Son and the mission of the Spirit within grace (obj. 1 and 3). Article 7 is about the convenience of the visible mission of the Spirit. As the *objectiones* show the discussion is again about the relationship between the two missions, stressing the difference and emphasising the visible character of the mission of the Son (obj. 1, 2 and 4). In his response Thomas

does not (just) argue for the convenience of the visible mission of the Spirit, but argues for the convenience of the visible as pointer to the invisible. So, the emphasis is on the invisible mission and the invisible mission suggests primarily the mission of the Spirit. In articles 5 and 7 Thomas does not reject that suggestion, but specifies and augments it.

3.3 *The central article: a.3*

The central article in the discussion of the invisible mission is a.3. An analysis of this article will show, again, that it is primarily, but not exclusively, a discussion about the Spirit. In the introduction, Thomas formulates the discussion as one concerning *secundum quid*, the basis or the way a person is sent. As the formulation of the question in the article suggests the point discussed is more determined: 'whether the *missio* takes place only on the basis of sanctifying grace or not'. From the arguments in the *objectiones*, it becomes clear that the question is really about the only (*solum*). The first two *objectiones* argue that the divine person self is involved as well, the second two that also charismatic grace (*gratia gratis data*) is given. The *sed contra* maintains that without sanctifying grace there is no *missio*. So, there are three candidates for the *secundum quid*: the charismatic gifts, sanctifying grace and the divine person(s). Put in this order, the question becomes one about the depth or impact of the *missio*. Does the *missio* mean that the creature on the receiving end becomes someone who is an instrument of grace, edifying and helping others? Does the *missio* mean that the creature on the receiving end becomes a graceful and holy person? Does the *missio* mean that the divine person is given? Apparently, there is a tendency to select one of these and to argue that that is exclusively the basis. However, the *objectiones* and the *sed contra* show something else as well. In three of the four *objectiones* and in the *sed contra* the Spirit and only the Spirit is mentioned explicitly, and, the quotation from Scripture is Rom 5,5, Thomas' favourite quotation about the Spirit. And even the one *objectio* referring to the Son is also about the *missio* of the Spirit, as Thomas reveals in his reaction to it: he alludes then to the discussion in article 5, where he discusses the invisible mission of the Son and shows that this is tied up with the invisible mission of the Spirit. (a. 5 ad 1m, ad 2m, ad 3m). So, the discussion is about the depth or the impact of the *missio*, especially about the depth or impact of the

missio of the Spirit.

Thomas in his *responsio* defends the thesis that the invisible mission involves both the gift of the person and the sanctifying grace. In addition, he argues in his reaction to the *objectiones* about the charismatic grace that the apostles' working of miracles was due to sanctifying grace and the presence of the Spirit (ad 4m). So, Thomas rejects any of the exclusive claims and argues for a view which combines all three, be it that his main interest is in the combination between sanctifying grace and the gift or presence of the divine person. Thomas argues for this view by giving an analysis of 'to send' and 'to give'. His argument is rather condensed and for a better understanding, some unpacking is required.

As said, Thomas presents his argument via an analysis of 'to send' and 'to give'. The fact that he gives two, more or less parallel analyses to defend his thesis, while one, namely the analysis of 'to send', would be sufficient, reveals the biblical inspiration of the argument and points more specifically to the central role of the Spirit. For, while 'to send' is the biblical term used for both Son and Spirit, 'to give' is in Scripture the term associated with the Spirit. The fact that Thomas in the analysis of 'to give' implicitly refers to his earlier analysis of *donum* and explicitly mentions the Spirit supports this observation. A further confirmation of this attention to the Spirit can be found in the way Thomas uses the term *habitare* in both the analysis of 'to send' and 'to give'. In the first analysis he uses the phrase *habitare in ea sicut in templo suo*. It is a phrase which recalls Paul's sayings about the Spirit. In the context of the analysis of 'to give' Thomas explicitly links *habitare* and Spirit: *Spiritus Sanctus habetur et inhabitat hominem*.

In the analysis of 'to send', Thomas concentrates, not surprisingly but still significantly, on the result: the presence. He first distinguishes between a presence of God in all things and a presence in the rational creature. The first is a presence that belongs to creation, as the qualifier 'all' indicates. Although Thomas does not say anything here about the relationship of the *missiones* to this common presence, the special presence he clearly links with the *missiones*: he characterises this special presence not only as 'over and above' (*super*), but also as a new way (*novo modo*) employing the formula he used in the conceptual clarification of a.1 and 2.

The next step is to specify this presence further. Thomas does that, first, by establishing the fittingness (*convenit*) between mission and rational creature. He points explicitly to two features characteristic of rational creatures: knowing and willing, but what or who is sent remains implicit. It is clear, however, from his earlier analyses and from the comments he makes in a. 5, that those two features on the side of the rational creature correspond to the missions of Word (Son) and Love (Spirit).

Thomas further specifies this new way of being present by dealing with the intensity of this knowing and loving. He does that in two moves. First, he turns to the side of the rational creature, more precisely, to the operations of knowing and loving. The object known and loved is in the knower or in the lover and therefore the knower or lover reaches or touches the object itself. Applied to the creature knowing and loving God, this means that the rational creature by these characteristic operations touches Godself (*atingit ad ipsum Deum*). Second, he turns to God's side. He refers implicitly to Scripture talking (*dicitur*) about God's indwelling in the rational creature as in a temple and contrasts this special way again with the presence of God in all creatures. Given this intensity of presence, Thomas concludes that the mission must be according to sanctifying grace.

In the second analysis, the analysis of 'to give', Thomas also concentrates on the result: on 'having'. Here, too, the argument is condensed and needs some unpacking. Again, Thomas appeals to a distinction, 'to enjoy' (*frui*) and 'to use' (*uti*), but he does not really introduce or clarify it.¹⁵ Both *uti* and *frui* are presented as ways of having. In the rest of his argument *uti* does not figure. Thomas mentions only *frui* and connects it with the Spirit. The importance of this becomes clear when one realises that Thomas earlier, in his analysis of *donum* as name of the Spirit, has used the same distinction and linked *uti* to the effects of the divine person and *frui* to the divine person self. There Thomas also explains the link between *uti-frui* presupposed in this later analysis. The power to have and to enjoy a

¹⁵ Augustine introduced this distinction in theology. The roots are to be found in Cicero. Cf. G. Pfilgerdorffer, "Zu den Grundlagen des augustinischen Begriffspaars *uti-frui*", *Wiener Studien* 84 (1987) 195-224.

divine person is not something a rational creature can have by its own resources, but has to be given from above. We use the phrase 'is given to us' to indicate that what we have is from someone or somewhere else.¹⁶ Thomas in fact summarises this earlier analysis when he states that a divine person can only be enjoyed on the basis of sanctifying grace.

To this argument, Thomas adds a remark. He introduces it with *sed tamen*. So, one could qualify it as a *nota bene*. In the gift of the sanctifying grace the Spirit is possessed and the Spirit dwells in a person. Again, Thomas rejects the suggestion of an exclusive view.

So, in a. 3 Thomas indicates the depth and intensity of the mission: it is neither only about some gifts, nor only about sanctifying grace: it is also and foremost about the coming and staying of the divine person. In addition, because he concentrates upon the Spirit, Thomas establishes the link between mission and indwelling. But there are other biblical data concerning the divine indwelling that do not seem to fit this concentration on the Spirit. In John, one finds Jesus talking about the Father and him coming to the believer and making home with him. (Jn, 14,23) And, so, Thomas in the next article questions and refines this first presentation by inquiring into the role of the Father (a.4) and the role of the Son. (a.5).

3.4 *A further refinement: a. 4 and a. 5*

In the discussions of a. 4 and a. 5, the text from John just referred to plays an important role. Thomas interprets this saying as one concerning the whole Trinity (a. 4 obj. 2/ad 2m; a. 5c). In both discussions, biblical data are mentioned in the *sed contra*. So, the discussion about the relationship between *missio* and *inhabitatio* is a discussion about biblical themes and the interpretation of biblical texts. In the *responsio* of a. 4, Thomas recalls elements from his earlier analysis of *missio*, namely that it denotes some kind of *processio* (origin). Since the Father is not *ab alio* but unoriginated, *missio* in no way fits him. In the response to the second *objectio* he deals with the relationship between mission and indwelling, but more or less restates the problem: the Father like the Son and the Spirit inhabit by grace

¹⁶ ST I, 38, 1.

but the Father is not sent (cf. also a. 5c).

In a. 5, Thomas concentrates on the invisible mission of the Son. The arguments in the *objectiones* show that the problem is not just the general question 'whether an invisible mission fits the Son', but a more precise and pertinent one. Given the invisible mission of the Spirit, is then another mission required (obj.3)? Given that that mission makes the human person graceful (a. 3), is that not typical the work of the Spirit, as Paul indicates (obj. 2 and 3)? In his *responsio*, though, Thomas answers only the general question by repeating relevant elements from his conceptual clarification (having an *origo* from another, presence in a new capacity). But in his reactions to the *objectiones* one finds his views on the more precise questions. In the *ad 1* Thomas argues that all gifts as gifts are attributed to the Spirit, while some, because of their meaning, are attributed to the Son. To understand this statement, one has to take fully into account the distinctions Thomas makes. He makes two distinctions: between all (*omnia*) and some (*aliqua*), and between gift as a general concept (*dona in quantum dona*) and specific gifts (*dona secundum proprias rationes*). The argument is therefore not about two kinds, or two species of gifts, more or less on a par, but about *the* genus and *a* species. The genus is linked to the mission of the Spirit, the species to the mission of the Son. So, this statement confirms the interpretation given of a. 3 as mainly concerned with the mission of the Spirit. Thomas does not retract his position taken in a. 3, but refines it. The scope of this refinement becomes clear when one tries to think about another species of gifts parallel to the species attributed to the Son. What would the *ratio propria* for such a species be but *charitas*?

A further confirmation of the prominent place of the mission of the Spirit can be found in Thomas' reaction to the second objection. Moreover, this reaction shows his profound Trinitarian understanding of grace. Thomas starts with the general thesis that the soul through grace becomes God-like (*conformatur Deo*). He then specifies this process via the mission of a divine person. The human person becomes assimilated to the divine person sent through some gift of grace. It would be incorrect to construe this opening as if Thomas first talks de Deo Uno, and then adds some more or less irrelevant remarks de Deo Trino. When he later in the *Summa* discusses the essence of grace, he talks about the participation to the divine good, which is

Godself, a participation to God's *cognitio* and *amor*.¹⁷ The next step Thomas takes is to concretise this process of assimilation. But the way Thomas does this is remarkable. He first talks about the Spirit as *Amor* and second about the Son as *Verbum*. And, more importantly, he talks rather differently about these two assimilations. With regard to the Spirit he talks straightforwardly. He just states that by the gift of the *charitas* the soul is assimilated to the Spirit. But with regard to the Son, he qualifies explicitly the name *Verbum* (*non quaecumque, sed*): the Word is not just any word, it is the Word breathing Love. An implicit reference to the scene of the first Easterday described in John: the risen Lord enters the closed room wishes his disciples peace and then says: "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you". And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them "receive the Holy Spirit" (20,21-22). And Thomas explains this *Verbum spirans Amorem* further by quoting Augustine's saying that he wants the meaning of 'Word' understood as 'knowledge with love' (*Verbum quod insinuare intendimus cum amore notitia est*) and by stressing (*non igitur*) that the mission of the Son is not about some intellectual perfection, but about 'an enlightening that bursts forth into love' (*secundum talem instructionem intellectus qua prorumpat in affectum amoris*).

Conclusion

In my attempt to question some of the presuppositions present in contemporary theology of the Trinity with regard to the history of theology I have analysed one major text by Aquinas. I have shown that in this crucial *quaestio* Thomas is not only firmly based in Scripture, but that he also gives the Spirit a prominent role in this fundamental account of the oikonomia. But this attempt is only a beginning. A reading sensitive to this dimension of Thomas' theology is required of the theology of grace and the theology of sacraments. It is also required of Thomas' theology of creation, especially of his understanding of the *imago dei*, as became clear from his remarks about the soul becoming God-like.

¹⁷ *ST* I-II, 110, 1 c. and 4 c. The basis for this can be found in Thomas' clearly Trinitarian understanding of *imago Dei*: *ST* I, 45, 7 and 93, 5.

MORAL THEOLOGY UPSIDE DOWN

Aquinas' treatise *de passionibus animae* considered through the lens of its spatial metaphors

Carlo Leget

"La vraie philosophie est de rapprendre à voir le monde"
Maurice Merleau-Ponty¹

1. Introduction

This paper is written as a sort of therapy. There is no doubt that human beings are moral beings since their nature is rational. Rationality is fundamental to human freedom since it enables human beings to know and choose the ends they want to strive at. In this way their Creator designed them. In this way they are *imago Dei* as Thomas Aquinas states in the prologue to the *Secunda Pars* of his *Summa Theologiae*.²

Although undeniably reasonable and true, this point of departure of doing moral theology usually has a less reasonable and desirable side effect. All attention is almost completely focused on rationality, ignoring those realms of human nature that are not essentially rational. In the history of philosophy and theology this side effect was endorsed by various traditions in which the relation between emotions and rationality was seen as - putting it mildly - 'problematic'.

Aquinas can be located in the Aristotelian strand that gives effort to emphasise the positive and important role of emotions³ in

¹ *Phénoménologie de la perception*, Paris 1945, xvi.

² *ST I-II* prol.: "consideremus de eius [=Dei] imagine, idest de homine, secundum quod et ipse est suorum operum principium, quasi liberum arbitrium habens et suorum operum potestatem."

³ Thomas does not speak of 'emotions', but of *passiones animae*. I follow

moral life. Moreover, the attention Thomas paid to the emotions was considerable and has never been equalled by later thomists or neo-thomists.⁴ Nevertheless, interpreting Aquinas one constantly has to be aware of the impact of emotions in moral life. The systematic and well defined presentation of Thomas' thought in the *Summa Theologiae* easily tempts one to consider single treatises as isolated parts. In this way one misses the overtones from other treatises that resonate and give Aquinas' thought its balanced and broad character.

With regard to the role of emotions in moral theology, it is a peculiar fact that the immense attention to virtue-ethics of the last two decades, due to Alasdair MacIntyre's work, has increased the study of Aquinas among philosophers and theologians without taking notice of the corporeal basis of virtues that made Thomas devote no less than 27 quaestiones in his *Summa Theologiae* to emotions.⁵ Taking on

the argument of Eric d'Arcy in vol. 19 of the Blackfriars-edition of the *Summa Theologiae* (xix-xxxii) where he chooses to translate *passiones* with 'emotions' and not with 'affections' (too narrow), 'feelings' (too broad) or 'passions' (too vehement, and not covering all 11 *passiones*). It is, however, important to notice from the beginning that in our day the word 'emotion' is usually associated with the perception of a special type of feelings that one experiences, whereas Aquinas' word *passio* refers merely to a reaction of the *appetitus sensitivus*. Putting it differently: emotion is more 'subjective' than *passio*, which is more 'objective'.

⁴ Thomas' treatises on the *passiones animae* in *De Veritate* 25-26 and *Summa Theologiae* I-II, qq. 22-48 are the most comprehensive systematic ones of the Middle Ages (A. Brungs, *Metaphysik der Sinnlichkeit. Das System der Passiones Animae bei Thomas von Aquin* [Unpublished 'Inaugural-Dissertation' Erlangen-Nürnberg 1999], 3.) Later thomist commentators did not follow Aquinas' attention to the *passiones animae* as M. Grabmann complained in 1917 (quoted by Brungs, *o.c.*, 1). Nevertheless, during the 20th century authors like Stephan Pfürtner in Germany and Albert Plé in France did some import work.

⁵ Cf. S. Pinckaers, "Les passions et la morale", *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques* 74 (1990) 379-391. In the case of MacIntyre's *After Virtue* this is all the more a missed opportunity since he searches for an antidote to emotivism. A thorough reflection on the role of emotions in ethics can offer such an antidote, as the work of Aquinas shows. In the last few years a growing interest in emotions in ethics is mirrored in a growing

seriously the role of emotions in moral life, however, is a desideratum in ethics for the sake of doing justice to the practical character of morality. Human beings are corporeal beings who are deeply affected and influenced by the corporeal dimensions of any practical situation. One's emotional response to a state of affairs, largely determined by the resonance of earlier experiences, affects one's appreciation and evaluation of what is good or bad. Ethical reflection that forgets this primordial truth misses the connection to praxis and thus betrays its nature of *scientia practica*.

In this paper all attention is focused on Thomas Aquinas' dealing with emotions, or rather what he called the *passiones animae*. Its therapeutical intention is to look at Aquinas' moral theology from the perspective of his treatise on emotions, as he composed it in his *Summa Theologiae*. Following the structure of this latter work, the study of emotions in this paper is aimed at a better comprehension of virtues. An effort is made to make audible the corporeal overtones of human action in the realm of virtues, or putting it more formally, to show the inherently corporeal dimension of human rationality as embodied in the virtues.

Aquinas approaches the *passiones* departing from the way they appear in their bodily dimension. In his view, there is a direct relationship between emotions and their physical appearance. Corporeal changes are conform of and proportioned to the movement of the *appetitus*, because they are proportioned to each other as matter to form.⁶ Thus, the physical reality of human emotions is of direct importance for their essence. In this respect Aquinas – and the predecessors⁷ he uses as source – already knew what would become a

stream of publications. In Europe the *Societas Ethica* dedicated its annual conference 1999 to this theme. Cf. *Societas Ethica Jahresbericht 1999*.

⁶ *ST* I-II, 37, 4 c.: “Est autem attendendum in omnibus animae passionibus, quod transmutatio corporalis, quae est in eis materialis, est conformis et proportionata motui appetitus, qui est formalis: sicut in omnibus materia proportionatur formae.” *ST* I-II, 33, 1 c.: “latitudo est quaedam dimensio magnitudinis corporalis: unde in affectionibus animae non nisi secundum metaphorum dicitur.” Cf. also *ST* I-II, 22, 2 ad 3.

⁷ Cf. The latest study is of A. Brungs, *o.c.*, who offers some useful corrections to the classical study of St. Pfürtner, *Trieleben und sittliche*

point of disagreement in later philosophy and psychology: that emotions have a physical and a spiritual side.⁸

The model Thomas uses for studying emotions is that of *motus*. This model helps him to analyse emotional episodes in terms of inclinations, movements, rest, etc., and offers a framework for classifying them.⁹ In our 'therapeutic' approach, we will take a specific perspective on this model, locating it in a more comprising use of spatial metaphors¹⁰ with regard to the soul that can be found in Aquinas' analysis. As a method of investigation we will concentrate on the 'corporeal' dimension of the *passiones* by focusing on the spatial metaphors that Thomas uses. As for Aquinas' texts we will confine ourselves to the *Summa Theologiae*.¹¹ Within these limits we will be able to gradually 'climb' from the corporeal to the spiritual and rational dimension that is usually taken as point of departure of moral theological reflection.

This approach, however, has a serious disadvantage in the form of a risk: proceeding in this way, one might gain the impression

Vollendung. Eine moralpsychologische Untersuchung nach Thomas von Aquin, Freiburg 1958. Brungs, however, does not take into account the essay of Mark Jordan, "Aquinas's Construction of a Moral Account of the Passions", *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 33 (1986), 71-97.

⁸ Cf. Simon G. Harak, *Virtuous Passions. The Formation of Christian Character*, New York/Mahwah 1993.

⁹ Eric d'Arcy, *o.c.*, notes that despite the possibilities this model offers, critical questions can be asked as well: (1) some emotions (like e.g. 'wonder', that in Descartes' analysis is considered to be the first of all passions, *Traité des passions de l'âme* II.53) do not fit in the architecture imposed by the model used; (2) models do not have the flexibility that is characteristic for our experiences expressed in every day language, and (3) Aquinas nowhere offers any argument for choosing this model, whereas its naturalness can be questioned.

¹⁰ Although there has been done research on metaphors in psychology (cf. D.E. Leary (ed.) *Metaphors in the History of Psychology*, Cambridge 1990) to my knowledge Aquinas' treatise *de passionibus animae* never has been subject to such an approach.

¹¹ Places in other works where Thomas explicitly deals with the *passiones* are: 3 *Sent* 26.1, *De Ver* 22.4, *De Ver* 25-26, *In II De Anima* 5 and III, 14, *In II Eth* 5 and III *Eth* 5.

that in Aquinas' view emotion and reason are two separated and independent realms. I hope to correct this impression at the end of this paper and show how both permeate each other in the one soul of human beings.¹²

2. Spatial metaphors

In his treatise on the *passiones*, Thomas uses three kinds of spatial metaphors: metaphors of place, such as *superior* and *inferior*; metaphors of direction, such as *appetere*; and metaphors of dimension that include terms like *dilatatio*, *aggravatio*, *amplitudo* and *contractio*. These metaphors express certain images of human emotional life. In some respects these images are helpful for understanding what takes part in affectivity. In other respects, they can be misleading because of the connotations they have. Usually in the literature on Aquinas the metaphors of direction are studied most elaborately, which is explained by their organising role. In our 'therapeutical reading' the metaphors of dimension will be given more attention.

2.1 Metaphors of place

Like the title of this paper suggests, metaphors of place play an important organising role in Aquinas' view on the human soul. Following Aristotle in his treatise on the soul, Thomas distinguishes between 'lower' and 'higher' realms of the soul. Being located in between the *pars vegetativa* and the *pars intellectiva*, the *passiones* are considered to be *superior* to the first and *inferior* to the latter. The *pars sensitiva*, of which the *passiones* represent the striving part, is located in between the rational and the vegetative part of the soul.

SCHEME 1: THE HUMAN SOUL

	<i>verum</i>	<i>bonum</i>	
pars intellectiva	intellectus	voluntas	
pars sensitiva	sensus	concupiscibile	irascibile
pars vegetativa	nutritiva	augmentiva	generativa

¹² Cf. S. Pinckaers, *o.c.*, 383.

Because the terms *superior* and *inferior* suggest a hierarchy and an assessment, it is important to be aware of the exact content and applicability of these metaphors. The key for understanding Thomas' hierarchy of faculties is the formal object according to which they are discerned: the *ens* or *bonum*. The higher a faculty, the more it is able to abstract from concrete objects and the more open it is to the universal. This scale goes along with a shift from the material to the immaterial. Thus, whereas the *pars vegetativa* is directed towards the body it inheres in, the *pars sensitiva* is involved with all possible external material 'objects'. The range of the *pars intellectiva* can be characterised by the Aristotelian saying *anima quodammodo omnia est*.

Although a higher faculty implies more freedom, in human beings it also implies a greater complexity.¹³ Unlike angels whose rational nature is not limited by material existence, the rational faculties of human beings are rooted in their corporeal basis.¹⁴ This implies that higher faculties are based upon the lower ones, or putting it in terms of morality: human freedom is rooted in and limited by the corporeal realm of human beings.

In this respect, according to what its location suggests, the *pars sensitiva* performs a mediating role between the *pars vegetativa* and the *pars intellectiva*, and there is a complex interrelation between the *pars sensitiva* and the *pars intellectiva*. Both types of interaction are relevant to moral theology. In accordance with the programmatic title of this paper, the matter will be approached from the perspective of the *pars inferior*.

2.1.1 *Mediation between the vegetative and the intellectual*

The vegetative powers have as their only object the body to which

¹³ *ST I*, 78, 1 c.: "Genera vero potentiarum animae distinguuntur secundum obiecta. Quanto enim potentia est altior, tanto respicit universalius obiectum." Cf. also *ST I*, 77, 3 ad 4.

¹⁴ *ST I*, 76, 5 c.: "Natura autem nulli deest in necessariis: unde oportuit quod anima intellectiva non solum haberet virtutem intelligendi, sed etiam virtutem sentiendi. Actio autem sensus non fit sine corporeo instrumento. Oportuit igitur animam intellectivam tali corpori uniri, quod possit esse conveniens organum sensus."

they are united.¹⁵ The three faculties that pertain to this part of the soul are the *vis nutritiva*, *augmentativa* and *generativa*, enabling human nutrition, growth and reproduction.¹⁶ None of these powers is subject to the will. Their drive is one of nature and called *appetitus naturalis*.¹⁷ Because they cannot be influenced by the rational part of the soul, the vegetative powers have no morally good or bad status. This, however, does not imply that they have no importance for moral action. Belonging to that part of corporeal existence that is exempt from one's control, they set the co-ordinates for one's behaviour. Human beings are endowed with very strong vegetative powers that cannot be denied or ignored.

The relation between the powers of the vegetative part of the soul on the one hand and the sensitive part on the other, is embodied in the fact that the most powerful delights are connected with the most natural operations of human beings: the conservation of the individual by food and drink, and the conservation of the species by reproduction. Both delights are rooted in the touch, the most fundamental one of the five external senses.¹⁸ Thus the fact that corporeal delights connected with nutrition and sexuality are the most powerful, is written in the corporeal constitution of human beings: it belongs to the essence of rational human nature, paradoxical as it may seem at first. Human reason, however high a degree of abstraction it may attain, is enabled by and rooted in corporeal faculties.

The intermediary role of the *pars sensitiva* in between the

¹⁵ *ST I*, 78, 1.

¹⁶ *ST I*, 78, 2.

¹⁷ *ST I-II*, 17, 8.

¹⁸ *ST II-II*, 141, 4 c.: "Et quia delectatio consequitur operationem connaturalem, tanto aliquae delectationes sunt vehementiores quanto consequuntur operationes magis naturales. Maxime autem naturales animalibus sunt operationes quibus conservatur natura individui per cibum et potum, et natura speciei per coniunctionem maris et feminae. (...) Huiusmodi autem delectationes consequuntur sensum tactus." Cf. also *ST I*, 31, 6 c. On the touch as most fundamental of the five senses, cf. *ST I*, 76, 5 c.: (continuing the quote from the previous footnote) "Omnes autem alii sensus fundatur supra tactum" and *ST I*, 91, 3 ad 1: "tactus, qui est fundamentum aliorum sensuum, est perfectior in homine quam in aliquo alio animali."

vegetative and the rational part of the soul, is evident by the fact that one comes to know about the drives of one's *pars vegetativa* by one's feeling. The sensitive part is the bridge between the corporeal and the spiritual, both of which comprise human beings by their nature.¹⁹ The needs of the very same body that enables human beings to know the world and act freely in it, present themselves in the form of affective *passiones*.

The connection between the vegetative and the rational by means of the sensitive as intermediary culminates in Aquinas' appreciation of the cardinal virtues *temperantia* and *fortitudo* as concerning precisely resp. the corporeal delights that accompany the vital drive towards the conservation of the individual (nutrition) and species (sexuality) on the one hand and the conservation of one's life in defence of the evil of death on the other. As we will see later in this paper one's emotional life plays a key-role, connecting central vegetative and rational interests.

2.1.2 *Interrelation between the sensitive and the rational*

Apart from its intermediary role between the vegetative and the rational part of the soul, the *pars sensitiva* is involved in an interaction with the *pars intellectiva*. In this case the interrelation of the *pars inferior* and *superior* is one of mutual influence. For what concerns the way in which the *appetitus rationalis* or *voluntas* has influence on the passions of the soul, Aquinas is quite clear. Thomas follows Aristotle, who compares the rational part of the soul with a king or political leader who is in charge, but who - contrary to the despotic ruler - leaves some freedom for the people to do as they prefer.²⁰

¹⁹ Cf. *ST* I, 22, 2 c.: "[anima humana] est in confinio spiritualium et corporalium creaturarum, et ideo concurrunt in ipsa virtutes utrarumque creaturarum."

²⁰ *ST* I-II, 9, 2 ad 3: "sicut Philosophus dicit in I Politicorum 2.2 (1254b5) ratio, in quo est voluntas, movet suo imperio irascibilem et concupiscibilem, non quidem despotico principatu, sicut movetur servus a domino; sed principatu regali seu politico, sicut liberi homines reguntur a gubernante, qui tamen possunt contra movere." On this political metaphor cf. F.J.H. Vosman, "The Political-Ethical Character of Emotions: From Aristotle to Aquinas", *Societas Ethica Jahresbericht 1999*, 279-288.

In spite of what the metaphor of the democratic ruler suggests, this moderate independence of the sensitive part is not due to a sympathetic gesture of the *voluntas* permitting other faculties to act freely. The reason for this is the fact that the act of a power that uses a corporeal organ is dependent on the condition of this organ. Thus the act of the sensitive appetite is both dependent on the striving power and the corporeal condition.²¹

Considered from the perspective of the *pars sensitiva*, Thomas states that the *irascibile* and the *concupiscibile* are obedient to the *pars rationalis* in two ways: for what concerns the reason and for what concerns the will.²² For what concerns the first: the *appetitus sensitivus* is designed to be moved by the *virtus aestimativa*. In human beings this estimating power is rational.²³ It is called the *ratio particularis*, named after its applying the concrete and particular. This *ratio particularis* is designed to be moved by the *ratio universalis*. And this, Aquinas says, can be experienced in oneself: for more universal considerations can mitigate emotions like anger or fear.²⁴

The *appetitus sensitivus* is also obedient to the will for what concerns the performance of an action. Whereas animals move promptly as a result of the movement of the *appetitus sensitivus*, human actions depend on the will that must agree.

The influence taking place in the opposite direction - from the *inferior* to the *superior* - is usually less focused on in secondary literature. Nevertheless, its consequences are far-reaching and relevant to moral theology. For the will is moved by any object that is apprehended as good and appropriate. The possibility for this to happen depends on both the object presented and the faculty that perceives the object.²⁵ By the *passiones animae* human beings are put

²¹ *ST* I-II, 17, 7 c.: "appetitus sensitivus est virtus organi corporalis."

²² *ST* I, 81, 3.

²³ Cf. *ST* I, 78, 4.

²⁴ *ST* I, 78, 4 c.: "Hoc etiam quilibet experiri potest in seipso: applicando enim aliquas universales considerationes, mitigatur ira aut timor aut aliquid huiusmodi, vel etiam instigatur."

²⁵ *ST* I-II, 9, 2 c.: "id quod apprehenditur sub ratione bonum en conveniens, movet voluntatem per modum objecti. Quod autem aliquid videatur bonum et conveniens, ex duobus contingit: scilicet ex conditione eius

into a certain disposition. Emotions make appear good or appropriate, what does not seem good or appropriate to the one who does not have this *passio*. Thus emotions move the will departing from the (appreciation of the) object.²⁶

The amount to which the will is moved by emotions varies. It can happen with such vehemence that rationality is bound, or to such a degree that reason is not fully absorbed by the *passio*. In this case an emotion only inclines towards a certain object: the will, however, remains free.²⁷

Nevertheless, with regard to the intellect, the relation between emotion and rationality stays ambiguous. On the one hand Thomas points to the fact that a certain amount of delight, brought about by the activity of the intellect, helps the intellect to function better, because delight increases one's attention. On the other, he mentions three reasons why corporeal delights hinder the use of the intellect. Firstly, because they distract one's attention from the object considered by the intellect (and this reason is serious because corporeal delights have a very strong impact). Secondly, because corporeal delights (if vehement) are likely to follow their own order, which is not that of rationality. Thirdly, because the corporeal changes that accompany emotions in a certain way 'bind' the intellect, as is shown e.g. by people who are drunk.²⁸

From this perspective it becomes evident that one's appreciation of the good, and thus the movement of our 'free' will, is influenced by - cutting it short - the constitution of one's body. Rational and free action is always accompanied by emotional and corporeal overtones that determine and influence its quality. This can be clarified further by turning to the next categories of spatial

quod proponitur, et eius cui proponitur...conveniens enim secundum relationem dicitur."

²⁶ ST I-II, 9, 2 c.: "Manifestum est autem quod secundum passionem appetitus sensitivi, immutatur homo ad aliquam dispositionem. Unde secundum quod homo est in passione aliqua, videtur sibi aliquid conveniens, quod non videtur extra passionem existenti: sicut irato videtur bonum, quod non videtur quieto."

²⁷ ST I-II, 10, 3.

²⁸ ST I-II, 33, 3 c.

metaphors.

2.2 *Metaphors of direction*

Metaphors of direction are to be found throughout Thomas' treatise on the *passiones* of the soul. In both, his view on the *vis concupiscibilis* and the *vis irascibilis*, metaphors like *inclinatio*, *motus*, *accessus* and *recessus* play an organising role (cf. schemes below).

SCHEME 2: THE POWER OF CONCUPISCIBLE STRIVING

	<i>bonum secundum se</i>	<i>malum secundum se</i>
inclinatio	amor	odium
motus	desiderium (concupiscentia)	fuga (abominatio)
quietas	gaudium (delectatio)	tristitia (dolor)

SCHEME 3: THE POWER OF IRASCIBLE STRIVING

	<i>bonum secundum arduum</i>	<i>malum secundum arduum</i>
accessus	spes	audacia
recessus	desperatio	timor
praesens	[gaudium]	ira

The dynamism of the *passiones animae* which is expressed in the metaphors of direction, is based on what makes *amor* the most basic of the *passiones animae*: the movement towards the object appreciated as good or appropriate because of a certain connaturality or aptitude.²⁹ As striving powers, all passions of the soul take part in

²⁹ *ST* I-II, 26, 1 c.: "In unumquoque autem horum appetituum, amor dicitur illud quod est principium motus tendentis in finem amatum." And *ST* I-II, 27, 4 c.: "nulla alia passio animae est quae non praesupponat aliquem

this dynamism regarding the good. Since *ens et bonum convertuntur*, all created being appears as attracting or repulsing to the *pars sensitiva animae*. Thus, emotions play an important cognitive role in determining an attitude towards the objects by which one is surrounded. The movements of inclination, approach, withdrawal, etc., reveal a certain rationality in dialogue with apparent goods or evils.

Although the good displays its attractive power on the three levels of the human soul, there is a difference in the way the various categories of *bona* appeal to one's striving powers. Spiritual goods are 'higher' and more satisfying, but sensually perceptible goods have more impact on human beings by means of their attraction.³⁰ They cause a more vehement reaction and this reaction is accompanied by corporeal change. This corporeal dimension gives the *passiones* a certain extra weight by means of duration in time and change of perception.

The metaphors of direction express that *passiones animae* belong to the part of the soul which potencies are qualified as *appetitus*. Thus human beings find in themselves a dynamism following its own 'logic' of attraction (*bonum*) and repulsion (*malum*) by which they relate to the created beings around them. This dynamism can be found on all three levels of the human soul, ranging from the 'blind' orexis, striving, of the *appetitus naturalis* to the 'free' *appetitus rationalis* that is called *voluntas*. Adopting the 'upside down'-perspective, one becomes aware of the fact that whereas the amount of freedom and self-control increases in the 'higher' levels of the soul, in Aquinas' appreciation even the free will is considered as *appetitus*. The dynamism of human freedom is made possible by the very created structures that limit it.

2.3. *Metaphors of dimension*

Metaphors of dimension play a role in Aquinas' account of what he

amorem." On Aquinas' analogical use of *amor* on different ontological levels, cf. A. Ilien, *Wesen und Funktion der Liebe bei Thomas von Aquin*, Freiburg/Basel/Wien 1975.

³⁰ Cf. *ST* I-II, 33, 2 and *ST* I-II, 31, 5.

considers to be the principle *passiones*: joy (pleasure), sorrow, hope and fear.³¹ These metaphors express how emotions colour one's appreciation of the surrounding world. They transpose one's perception in a particular key and determine the registers of action that are likely to be played.

According to the biological theories Aquinas adopted from Aristotle, the changes in mood and perception expressed by the metaphors of dimension are accompanied by physical changes in which the human heart plays a pivotal role. Therefore, this corporeal side of emotions will be sketched in this context as well.³² Thomas was aware of the fact that the way in which human beings differ with regard to their corporeal constitution, has a direct effect on their emotional life. Some people are more easily enjoying life, other are more prone to aggression or anger. These differences have impact on they way the world is appreciated and the way one is likely to respond to certain situations. The spatial metaphors Thomas uses picture these processes rather sharply. Because they are hardly discussed in secondary literature, the metaphors of dimension will be painted in detail here.

2.3.1 Joy

Etymologically Thomas connects the Latin word *delectatio* with *dilatate*, to expand or to enlarge, and *laetitia* with *latitia*, breadth or width. This spatial metaphor expresses in two ways what happens to the soul that experiences joy. The first is considered from the perspective of the apprehensive power that experiences the conjunction with an appropriate good. Possessing the good is experienced as perfection. The soul 'grows' from this. The second is considered from the point of view of the striving power that experiences the pleasant thing that it inheres to. Again the metaphor of growing is appropriate, this time, however, in order to express the idea of the affective power

³¹ ST I-II, 25, 4.

³² During the 20th century the relation between the corporeal and the spiritual side of emotions has been the subject of a long discussion raised by William James' 1884 article *What is an emotion?* (Cf. G. Simon Harak, *o.c.*, 12ff). Cf. also J. Barad, "Aquinas on the Role of Emotions in Judgment and Activity", *The Thomist* 55 (1991) 397-413.

containing - as it were - the good which it enjoys.³³

This 'growing' of the soul has a certain impact on the use of the rational capacities. The joy that accompanies the activities of the intellect corroborates the use of reason. Joy increases the amount of attention to the object that is enjoyed. Attention helps reason in functioning well.³⁴ Physical joy, however, hinders the use of the intellect. Aquinas gives three reasons for this. The first reason is distraction: physical joy distracts the attention of the intellect. This distraction may be so strong that the entire use of the intellect is hindered. Secondly, physical delights can be contrary to the right order of reason. Thirdly, the physical changes that involve joy heavily affect the *appetitus* because of the strong impact of the presence of the object that is enjoyed.

2.3.2 *Pain and sorrow*

Pain is considered as one of the principle passions, because it is the crown on all passions with regard to evil.³⁵ Thomas defines pain as the conjunction to an evil, combined with the appreciation of it. Pain that is felt by the external senses is called *dolor* (pain, smart, and ache); pain experienced by the internal is known as *tristitia* (sorrow, sadness, and grief). Both, however, are in the broad sense used as synonyms for that emotion which is opposed to *delectatio* (amusement, delight, and enjoyment).³⁶

Studying its effects, Aquinas reveals a lot about the interplay between the corporal and the spiritual. Pain can take away the ability to learn.³⁷ It is a natural phenomenon that in case of pain, all attention is drawn towards repelling the object that causes the pain.

³³ *ST I-II*, 31, 3 ad 3; *ST I-II*, 33, 1 c. G. Simon Harak, *o.c.*, 93, offers an interesting paraphrase: "we must be trained on our way back to God, trained by the various 'delights' that God gives us, until our hearts are 'dilated' enough, expansive enough, to embrace God."

³⁴ *ST I-II*, 33, 3 c.; *ST I-II*, 33, 4 ad 1.

³⁵ *ST I-II*, 25, 4.

³⁶ *ST I-II*, 35, 2. The internal *tristitia* extends to more objects than the external *dolor*. Thomas discerns four species of sorrow in *ST I-II*, 35, 8: *misericordia*, *invidia*, *anxietas* and *acedia*.

³⁷ *ST I-II*, 37, 1.

Since all faculties of the soul are rooted in its unique essence, one's attention cannot be divided. It is drawn towards the object that is experienced the most intense. Whereas *delectatio* also heavily affects one's attention, the effect of pain is stronger. The reason for this is that - as in natural things - what is contrary has a greater impact and draws more attention than what is connatural.

Both physical and spiritual pain make the soul weigh down.³⁸ They run contrary to the dynamism of the soul. The metaphorical language here is revealing. The presence of the evil has a paralysing influence on the will. It works as a weight oppressing the motion of the will. As long as there is some hope for finally escaping the present evil, the will can preserve a motion of resistance. When this hope fails, the distressed soul (Thomas speaks of *angustiatus*, bearing overtones of 'narrowed') is hindered in its internal movement. Sometimes this impediment even affects external corporeal movement, and one is left stunned, enclosed in oneself.

Although pain not always has such a paralysing effect on human action - a small amount of pain can even be an incitation to attack the cause of pain - what is done in pain or labour, is always done less well than what is done with delight.³⁹ This thought will be developed further in Aquinas' appreciation of virtues. The reason for this brings in the will - the principle of human action - again: actions which cause or are associated with pain are done more reluctantly and thus less well.

Concluding his discussion of the effects of sorrow, Thomas is very clear: it is more harmful to the body than any of the other passions.⁴⁰ It directly runs contrary to the specific motion that characterises human life. Whereas passions such as love and joy are in accordance with the motion of *appetitus* which strives for the good - a motion originating in the heart and being spread towards all limbs - sorrow directly runs contrary to this motion. Therefore, it is harmful to the body.

Having described pain and sorrow as harmful to the body,

³⁸ ST I-II, 37, 2.

³⁹ ST I-II, 37, 3.

⁴⁰ ST I-II, 37, 4.

opposite to the natural dynamism of *appetitus*, diminishing the quality of actions, paralysing one's capacity to react and taking away the ability to learn, Thomas shows himself very much aware of the effect these *passiones* have on human beings as moral agents. It is obvious that he does not try to play down or deny the impact of human emotional life on our freedom. In fact he shows great sensitivity to what emotions mean for human wellbeing. The same sensitivity is shown when he continues asking what remedies can mitigate the pain or sorrow just discussed.

In general, pain can be mitigated by joy.⁴¹ Sorrow can be seen as a kind of weariness or illness of the striving powers. Joy, to the contrary, is more like an abiding of the striving power with the good that it strives for. Thus the 'rest' which characterises joy can mitigate the 'fatigue' of sorrow. Having clarified this general principle, he continues to discuss four concrete remedies for pain of sorrow.

The first remedy, weeping, brings in the spatial metaphors again.⁴² The first reason why weeping helps mitigating sorrow, is because it helps diffusing the attention of the soul to external things. A harmful evil that is enclosed in the soul is increasingly painful because the soul's attention to the harm continues to multiply itself. External manifestation of the sorrow - by weeping, crying or just words - helps to relieve the pain and sorrow. The second reason is related to the first one: natural reactions cause delight, weeping is a natural reaction in case of sorrow, and delight helps diminishing sorrow.

The second, compassion from friends, continues using the spatial metaphor of a weight depressing the one in sorrow. Thomas borrows two explanations from Aristotle.⁴³ The first is that friends who show compassion help to 'lift the burden' which depresses the one in sorrow. Carried together, a burden seems to be lighter than carried alone. Thus compassion relieves. The other, and more preferable reason according to Thomas, is that friends make one aware of being loved. Being loved is delightful, because it makes one realise

⁴¹ *ST* I-II, 38, 1.

⁴² *ST* I-II, 38, 2.

⁴³ *ST* I-II, 38, 3 c. Aristotle's explanations are taken from IX Eth. 4.5 (1166a31).

the good one possesses. Thus friends help promoting the *aestimatio propriae bonitatis*.⁴⁴ This delight relieves sorrow.

The third and fourth reason Thomas adduces, display the mutual influence of the 'higher' and 'lower' parts of the soul. That physical pain can be mitigated by the contemplation of the truth is possible because the joy of contemplation of the truth - which constitutes the greatest joy - can overflow in the lower, sensitive part of the soul where physical pain is experienced.⁴⁵ That sorrow can be mitigated by sleeping and bathing is not so strange when one realises that these activities help restoring the vital motions of the body, which are harmed by pain and sorrow. The delight of this restoration helps mitigating physical pain and overflows to the heart as centre of physical motion.⁴⁶

2.3.3 Hope

Like joy, Thomas connects hope to the metaphor of enlarging. In case of hope the heart is enlarged by the spirits. And by the enlarging of the heart people tend to things that are difficult to attain.⁴⁷ Here Thomas spots a similarity between the young and the drunk: both are full of warmth and spirits, both are full of hope as regards the things that are difficult to attain. The same corporeal changes are to be found in the daring (*audaces*), who are full of hope and lack fear.⁴⁸

2.3.4 Fear

Thomas considers fear, next to sorrow, a passion in the proper sense.⁴⁹ It is a motion of the striving power, accompanied by some physical change and involving some harm done to the soul. Because fear has to do with a future evil, it ranks after pain or sorrow that deal with present evil. Fear displays a certain victory of the future evil

⁴⁴ This expression stems from *ST* I-II, 32, 5.

⁴⁵ *ST* I-II, 38, 4 c. and ad 3.

⁴⁶ *ST* I-II, 38, 5 c. and ad 3. Cf also O.H. Pesch, *Thomas von Aquin. Grenze und Größe mittelalterlicher Theologie*, Mainz 1988, 228-231.

⁴⁷ *ST* I-II, 40, 6.

⁴⁸ *ST* I-II, 45, 3.

⁴⁹ *ST* I-II, 41, 1. John of Damascus' reflection is found in II *De fide orthodoxa* 23.

over the good. The spatial metaphor that is appropriate here is contraction as Thomas learns from John of Damascus. The root of this contraction is situated in the power of imagination that presents a future evil as too strong to overcome. As a reaction to this, a withdrawal of the *appetitus* takes place. Aquinas compares this contraction with the moribund and the menaced city in which a withdrawal can be perceived because of the weakness of powers.

To the person who experiences fear, the contraction has both spiritual and corporal effects. The physical side of this contraction expresses itself in all kinds of shaking. Contrary to the dynamism of hope, by which the heart grows bigger and fuller of spirits, in the case of fear the warmth is contracted and one's limbs lack warmth and strength.⁵⁰ Dependent upon the amount of shaking, this uncontrolled movement can be a serious impediment to physical action.

The impact of fear on the rational part of the soul, again, depends upon the amount of fear.⁵¹ When the fear is moderate, the intellect will be incited to find ways of avoiding the evil by which it is threatened and a certain increase of attention and concentration takes place. The more, however, the amount of fear increases, the more one's perception of the menace is affected. The one who fears paints the evil as more terrible than it is in reality.⁵²

Having studied the different spatial metaphors in Aquinas' account of virtues, their different roles can be determined. The metaphors of place enable to discuss the interaction between the material/corporeal and the spiritual dimension of human beings. The metaphors of direction are used to make intelligible the relation between the emotion and its object. The metaphors of dimension describe the influence of the object on the emotion studied. This last type of metaphors is the one that approaches the dimension of experience most.

⁵⁰ *ST I-II*, 44, 3.

⁵¹ *ST I-II*, 44, 2 and 4.

⁵² *ST I-II*, 44, 2.

3. The role of reason

Human emotions deserve the adjective 'human' to the degree that they are integrated with the rational potency of the soul. Because of the 'therapeutic' intention of this paper, the choice was made to suspend this central conviction of Aquinas' theory on emotions. We chose to follow the path from the perspective of the lower parts of the soul by studying the spatial metaphors Thomas uses. Now we have arrived at the rational level, what does this level look like from our 'upside-down perspective'?

From the perspective of the corporeally rooted passions, giving impulses and incitations by which one perceives all sensory perceptible goods and evils, reason appears in the form of freedom. As we have seen, on the level of the vegetative part of the soul the *appetitus naturalis* is directed at the particular body it animates. The *appetitus sensitivus* reacts on all impulses perceived by the senses. The role of reason brings about a certain broadening by which human beings are able to withdraw from the impact of the immediately sensible. The openness that is thus created enables the moral agent to re-reflect (in the literal sense) on the corporeal and emotional changes that are taking place. This widening creates new possibilities of reacting, exempt from the direction in which one is urged by the dynamism of one's emotions.⁵³

From the perspective of human nature, in Aquinas' view it belongs to the good order of creation that man's emotions are perfected by reason. Maintaining our 'upside down'-perspective, it must be stressed that this 'perfection' leaves intact the dynamism of the different *appetitus* that can be discerned. In fact, in Thomas' view, reason helps rather than frustrates the *appetitus naturalis* and *sensitivus* to be fully in service of the organism of which they are a part. Reason alone is capable of guiding the enormous powers of the *appetitus naturalis* and *sensitivus* without suppressing them (which they will not allow) or let them control one another (which is either

⁵³ If not guided by reason, emotions easily push towards sin. Cf. *ST I-II*, 75, 1 c.: "voluntas carens directione regulae rationis et legis divinae, intendens aliquod bonum commutabile, causat actum quidem peccati per se."

non-humane or sickening).⁵⁴

This psychological and pedagogical wisdom prevents Thomas from any kind of rigorism in moral theology or ethics.⁵⁵ In fact, as we shall see in the following paragraph, it belongs to the essence of the category of virtue - which Thomas places in the centre of his moral theology - that one's capacities are respected and developed in accordance with the *appetitus* that animates them. Therefore, any interpretation of the role of reason solely in terms of 'control' over the *passiones animae*, tends to obscure Aquinas' positive appreciation of the dynamic role human *appetitus* play in the journey towards God.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Here we touch upon important lessons that moral theology can draw from moral psychology, or rather: in which Thomas' psychological insight was confirmed by Sigmund Freud's discoveries. Already in 1935 W.J.A.J. Duynstee ("De verdringingstheorie, beoordeeld vanuit thomistisch standpunt", reprinted in: idem, *Verspreide opstellen*, Roermond/Maaseik 1963, 8-23) pointed out that repression of *appetitus sensitivus* (what Freud calls 'neurosis') is contrary to Thomas' view that the *appetitus sensitivus* should be governed by the rational powers of the soul. Thus Duynstee paved the way for integrating Freud's insights in thomistic psychology. Duynstee's ideas were worked out by psychiatrist A.A.A. Terruwe (*De neurose in het licht der rationele psychologie*, Roermond/Maaseik 1949; English translation: *The Neurosis in the Light of the Rational Psychology*, New York 1960). Although the ideas of Duynstee and Terruwe caused enormous upheaval in the 1950's and 1960's, the fuss was more due to socio-psychological and church political causes than to a misunderstanding of Aquinas and Freud. In fact, their interpretation of Aquinas is both very fruitful and based on the text of Aquinas instead of on later thomistic traditions.

⁵⁵ Cf. *ST* I-II, 96, 2, 2 ad 2: "lex humana intendit homines inducere ad virtutem, non subito, sed gradatim. Et ideo non statim multitudini imperfectorum imponit ea quae sunt iam virtuosorum, ut scilicet ab omnibus malis absteant. Alioquin imperfecti, huiusmodi praecepta ferre non valentes, in deteriora mala prorumperent." (quoted by A. Plé, "Saint Thomas et la psychologie contemporaine", *Actualité de Saint Thomas*, Paris 1972, 59-73).

⁵⁶ Cf. G. Simon Harak's critique on Mark Jordan's paper (falsely addressed as Mark 'Jones'), *o.c.*, 164, note 133.

4. From emotions to virtues

Considering the human soul through the lens of the metaphors of place that Aquinas uses, the picture thus obtained perfectly reflects the position of human nature in creation (cf. scheme 1). Human beings comprise the material and the spiritual, they are meant to take part in the temporal and the eternal. In human nature two worlds meet. In our reading so far we tried to make visible that Thomas gives great efforts to take seriously the unity of human nature in the sense that he displays great sensitivity for the way the material and the spiritual are intertwined and constantly interact.

Now we have arrived at the level of virtues, the question arises what these rational perfections look like from the viewpoint of the 'upside down' perspective. What has become of the 'transposing qualities' of emotions that Aquinas expresses by the metaphors of dimension?

One of the definitions of virtue Aquinas uses stems from Aristotle: *virtus est quae bonum facit habentem et opus eius bonum reddit*.⁵⁷ What does it mean that a virtue makes the one possessing it a good person? In Aquinas' moral theology, it means that someone knows what to do in practical situations, and does so *prompte, facilliter* and *delectabiliter*. As the last one of these three qualifications witnesses, morally good action indeed has a certain amount of emotional satisfaction to it.⁵⁸ This implies that the different kinds of *appetitus* are brought in balance with each other.

Of course this emotional satisfaction is not equal in all virtues. Some virtues, like e.g. *prudentia* and *justitia*, concern human rational faculties and are primarily accompanied by spiritual joy. This spiritual joy can 'resonate' in one's corporeal and emotional life by means of *redundantia*. This, however, differs from the way virtues qualify the powers of the *pars sensitiva*. How then do virtues have impact on the irascible and concupiscible powers? Which place is

⁵⁷ Cf. *ST* I-II, 56, 1 obj. 1. Aristotle's version can be found in II *Eth* 5 (1106a15-23). The other definition goes back to Augustine, cf. *ST* I-II, 56, 4.

⁵⁸ Cf. *ST* I-II, 34, 4 c.: "secundum delectationem voluntatis humanae, praecipue iudicatur homo bonus vel malus: est enim bonus et virtuosus qui gaudet in operibus virtutum".

assigned to the qualifications that Thomas expressed by means of the metaphors of dimension?

When Thomas turns to discussing the virtues that concern the *pars sensitiva* of the human soul, he begins with stressing that the human good consists in living in accordance with reason. Intellectual virtues make reason itself reasonable, *iustitia* - a virtue of the will - brings about reasonable proportions in human affairs, and the virtues that concern emotional life guarantee that the human vocation to follow reason is not made impossible by the attraction of delight or a repulsion by menace.⁵⁹ By this division the role of the virtues that are located in the *pars sensitiva* of the human soul, are considered as auxiliary with regard to those located in the *pars intellectiva*. The good to be done which is determined by *prudencia* and put into practice by *iustitia* asks for virtues that moderate one's emotional life in accordance with reason. This moderation is necessary because of two great drives which are rooted in the vegetative part of the soul and present themselves strongly in terms of emotions: the tendency to preserve one's life (presenting itself in the fear for death) and the striving for nutrition and procreation (most acutely felt in the intense pleasure that accompanies the most basic of the human sense organs: touch).⁶⁰

Taking seriously the fear of death and the drive for sexuality as they are deeply rooted in the corporeal dimension of human nature, Thomas assigns a specific cardinal virtue to both of them: *fortitudo* and *temperantia*. For the sake of brevity, I will focus on the virtue *fortitudo*.

Fortitudo is prior to *temperantia*, because the fear of death is more compelling and likely to act against reason than the attraction of the delights of touch. The fear of death is natural to human beings, because death is the greatest of all corporeal evils, taking away the basis of natural life.⁶¹ In accordance with his analysis that *amor* is the most basic of all *passiones*, Thomas explains that fear is born out of love: a certain good is threatened to be lost and this threat - which

⁵⁹ *ST II-II*, 123, 1.

⁶⁰ *ST II-II*, 123, 12.

⁶¹ *ST II-II*, 123, 4.

is experienced as such because there is a wish to preserve the good in case - causes fear. As we have seen the love for one's own life is deeply rooted in the corporeal constitution of human nature. Meeting a *malum* that is life-threatening one is heavily affected by either an experience of contraction (fear) or enlarging (audacity).⁶² Both experiences affect one's appreciation of the object and one's possibilities of action. Therefore, being able to respond adequately to an object is related to experiencing the right amount of contraction or enlarging. Only then one's reaction can be *prompte, faciliter* and *delectabiliter*. Thus, whoever possesses a virtue, appreciates objects differently. Emotional life is shaped in a certain way, directing one's attention and feeling in a way that promotes morally good action.

Attaining this right attitude towards the menacing evil, however, presupposes a broader perspective than the evil in itself. Human beings are rational beings: they have more options than the sheep that has no choice left but to run from each and every wolf. Only when the good of one's own life is balanced against other goods, like e.g. the common good of one's country or the church, the love for different goods can be weighed against one another. Not every *bonum apparens* is a *bonum* that is to be strived at immediately. Again emotions are involved, because balancing goods is a matter of balancing different objects of love. And thus the dynamism of *fortitudo*, by which the impediment to good action is taken away, has an auxiliary role in relation to a dynamism of love for a good which possibly outweighs the loss of the good of life. The widening of one's horizon of experience, which is brought about by reason, paves the way for humanising the *pars sensitiva* in the light of all goods that transcend the possibilities of perception of this mediating part of the soul. This enables Thomas to state that martyrdom is to be considered as the action which most properly belongs to *fortitudo*.⁶³

But being the proper act of a virtue implies possessing the three qualities mentioned above. Can martyrdom ever be *delectabile*?

⁶² Cf. *ST* II-II, 123, 6 c.: fighting against fear is more difficult than mitigating audacity, because a menacing evil represses audacity and promotes fear.

⁶³ Cf. also C. Leget, *Living with God. Thomas Aquinas on the Relation between Life on Earth and 'Life' after Death*, Leuven 1997, 176-180.

Aquinas is very realistic on this subject. The spiritual joy of acting virtuously does not take away the great spiritual and corporeal sorrow of losing the great good of one's life. Moreover, the spiritual joy will not be felt because of the great physical pain which is experienced. It may occur that God's grace elevates the spirit to enjoy the divine as the example of the blessed Tiburtius shows, but this is not a natural state of affairs. The virtue of *fortitudo* merely accomplishes that the soul is not 'absorbed' by physical pain.⁶⁴

The approach of virtues from an 'upside down' perspective, brings out the emotional and corporeal dimensions of human action. In this way the dimension of experience is assigned a place in reflection. In the case of Aquinas' theory of emotions this is achieved in a manner that maintains a certain 'objectivation' by means of the formal description of what happens to the *passiones animae*. The spatial metaphors can be seen as the grammar which enables Thomas to express and organise human emotional life.

5. Conclusion

At the end of our reading of Aquinas' treatise on emotions the question arises as to what insights this therapeutical exercise may offer. Concluding this paper I shall do two things. First, a short indication will be given of the perspectives opened by this approach with respect to a style of doing moral theology that seeks to be in dialogue with other disciplines. Secondly, two remarks will be made concerning the use of Aquinas' theory of emotions in our day.

5.1 *A fruitful perspective*

Reading Thomas' treatise on emotions in the *Summa Theologiae* one is impressed by the attentiveness and patience displayed in mapping out the various *passiones* of the soul. Doing this, Thomas makes sure that the theologian does not forget that in the human being who is studied two worlds meet. And if those two worlds, the corporeal and the spiritual, are really to meet, this asks for attentiveness in both directions. Attentiveness towards the spiritual dimension and being

⁶⁴ ST II-II, 123, 8 c.

directed towards the realm of God is natural to the theologian. Taking serious the unity of human nature, however, one should also be attentive towards the corporeal and emotional level of human existence. Being created as corporeal beings, human beings are called to be united to God as a unity: from the 'lowest' to the 'highest' levels. For even in the most corporeal and blind natural strivings, a dynamism is at work that is part of the process.

Being sensitive to the different levels of striving within human nature Aquinas acknowledges the importance of knowing oneself as an instrument of union with God, an instrument that is perfected by human action and God's grace. Mapping out the various strivings and elucidating to what goods they are directed, Thomas is able to remain close to human reality and bring about an understanding of the internal battles taking place. From this perspective human rational faculties appear as a seat of freedom that enable the various strivings to be recognised and become humanised. Being acknowledged as part of oneself, these strivings can be weighed and integrated into the process of accepting God's invitation to real *beatitudo*.

Approaching Aquinas' moral reflections from the perspective of emotions, one cannot fail to observe how pedagogical and pastoral their nature is. His broad perspective and patient 'mapping out' the entire waver of emotions enables him to appreciate the moral agent in his or her specific emotional state or situation. Preventing him from the blunders of rationalism, rigorism or heroism on the one hand, his approach does not run the risk of comfort overclouding challenge on the other. Finding a balance like this in doing moral theology is a challenge for every time, a challenge which in our day asks for a dialogue with other disciplines.

5.2 *Two remarks concerning the use of Aquinas' theory of emotion nowadays*

In spite of the fruitful perspective Thomas offers, a direct application to the problems of our day asks for some additional reflection. Two final remarks should be made here, inviting to further reflection, which cannot be undertaken here.

In the first place, one should not forget that Aquinas' account of emotions is based upon the physics and biology of Aristotle. One must not rule out on beforehand that Aristotle's approach may cast

light on aspects of reality that are left in the shadow by contemporary models of science. Nevertheless, medical science and chemistry have developed in a way the ancient and medieval world could never have dreamt of. With regard to the interrelation between the corporeal and the spiritual dimension of emotions the research done in contemporary biology and psychology should be taken into account. Moreover, one should engage in philosophical reflection that critically examines the presuppositions of the models that contemporary science applies.⁶⁵

In the second place, in Thomas' treatise on emotions apparently very little or no attention is paid to the opaque nature of human affectivity. Since Sigmund Freud's work, in which the polyvalence of human affectivity was studied, the hermeneutic complexity of human emotions has become object of research and philosophical reflection.⁶⁶ This has added a dimension to the study of emotion that is not explicitly thematised by Aquinas.

Both problems ask for a philosophical reflection, mediating between Aquinas' insights and contemporary science and philosophy.⁶⁷ Both problems cannot be worked out here. Taking seriously, however, or rather honouring Thomas' own restless intellectual search for understanding and clarity, his theory of emotions deserves a critical study that deals with the limits that were sketched above. Especially when taken into account the importance of emotions for moral theology as - I hope - has been displayed by doing moral theology 'upside down.'

⁶⁵ G. Simon Harak, *o.c.*, does some important work with regard to a critical appraisal of models used in contemporary science on emotions.

⁶⁶ Cf. e.g. Paul Ricoeur's *Freud and Philosophy: an Essay on Interpretation*, New Haven and London 1970 (originally published as: *De l'interprétation. Essai sur Freud*, Paris 1965).

⁶⁷ I follow Theo Beemer in the conviction that the work of Paul Ricoeur can offer such a theoretical and critical appraisal of contemporary theories of emotions: cf. Th. Beemer, "Onze emoties en onze toewijding. Een pleidooi voor verstandhouding tussen psychologie en moraaltheologie ten dienste van een christelijke levensstijl", F. Haarsma (ed), *Tussen hemel en aarde. Naar nieuwe vormen van spiritualiteit*, Baarn 1988, 112.

WAT IS WAARHEID?

Rudi te Velde

“Wat is waarheid?” is een prachtig boek over de waarheidsvraag benaderd vanuit de klassieke waarheidsopvatting van Thomas van Aquino.¹ Centraal in Thomas’ opvatting staat de these dat waarheid een transcendentale zijneigenschap is: *ens et verum convertuntur*. De uitleg die Vennix in zijn boek aan deze these geeft acht ik discutabel. In het volgende zal ik laten zien wat er mijns inziens in Vennix’ weergave en interpretatie mis gaat en hoe Thomas’ uiteenzetting op betreffende punten wel begrepen moet worden.

Maar allereerst iets over het onderwerp van Vennix’ proefschrift en de aanpak die hij volgt. Op het eerste gezicht is het een studie die handelt over de waarheidsopvatting van Thomas. Maar het boek presenteert zich iets anders: als een verslag van een wijsgerige bezinning over de vraag ‘wat is waarheid?’ in het licht van wat Thomas hierover te zeggen heeft. Het gaat Vennix, gelet op de ondertitel, om de *virtus quaestionis*, d.i. de strekking en de draagwijdte van de wijsgerige vraag naar waarheid, en wel benaderd vanuit het werk van Thomas, die de auteur dient als een soort *auctoritas* bij zijn onderzoek. ‘Auctoritas’ heeft voor Vennix de middeleeuwse betekenis: dus niet in de zin dat Thomas altijd en vanzelfsprekend gelijk heeft en ons zo ontheft van de noodzaak om zelf na te denken, maar als *auctoritas* is hij vooral een betrouwbare gids die een mogelijk vruchtbare weg in het denken over waarheid toont en begaanbaar maakt. Vennix zelf noemt zijn benadering een ‘omzichtige’. Dat wil zeggen: hij volgt in zijn boek een zekere stapsgewijze benadering die hem langs allerlei met de waarheidsvraag verbonden thema’s en kwesties voert die stuk voor stuk onderwerp worden van een uitvoerig en gedetailleerd onderzoek, soms iets te gedetailleerd naar mijn smaak. Het boek is in deze zin een verslag van

¹ Ad Vennix, *Wat is waarheid? De virtus quaestionis in het licht van Thomas van Aquino*, Best: Damon 1998 (proefschrift KUN).

een jarenlange intensieve omgang met het werk van Thomas. Het verheldert, ontrafelt en analyseert tal van typisch scholastieke theorieën, begrippen en distincties die men al lezende bij Thomas tegenkomt. En dat op een manier die wijsgerig boeiend blijft. De auteur raakt niet verstrikt in het oerwoud van de scholastiek maar is voortdurend alert op de filosofische portee en zin van wat het technisch-scholastiek apparaat van Thomas' denken allemaal bevat.

Ik wil twee punten aan de orde stellen, die weliswaar nauw met elkaar samenhangen maar omwille van de duidelijkheid apart besproken zullen worden. Het eerste punt betreft de aard van de relatie die de notie 'waar' toevoegt aan het zijnde en de vraag of deze relatie gelijk gesteld mag worden aan de kenverhouding, de relatie tussen kenner en het gekende.² Het tweede punt betreft de verhouding tussen dingwaarheid (*veritas rei*) en zijnswaarheid, d.i. de waarheid die aan de orde is in het adagium *ens et verum convertuntur* (vgl. blz. 287).

Het moet nog opgemerkt worden dat mijn kritische opmerkingen niet uitsluitend Vennix's interpretatie treffen. Zijn interpretatie wijkt niet wezenlijk af van de gangbare opvattingen. Zijn boek biedt niet een geheel nieuw beeld van Thomas' waarheidstheorie en zo is het ook niet bedoeld. Eerder is het zo dat mijn eigen uitleg op bepaalde punten afwijkt van wat algemeen aanvaard lijkt te zijn en formuleringen bevat die bij sommigen wat bevreemdend zullen overkomen. Dat heeft te maken met mijn zorg het 'formele' van Thomas' reflectie op waarheid voldoende tot uiting te laten komen. Thomas' manier van denken kenmerkt zich door een zuiver metafysische gerichtheid op wezensverhoudingen, op zo'n manier echter dat de reflectie een zeker uitwendig (beschrijvend) karakter behoudt, die in de uitleg versterkt kan worden tot een uitwendig schema. En dan dreigt precies het 'formele' verloren te gaan (vgl. *Thomas semper loquitur formaliter*).

² Hoofdstuk 4 begint met een uiteenzetting over de 'niet-wederkerige relatie', die een variant is van de rationele relatie. Een van de toepassingen van de niet-wederkerige relatie is de relatie tussen kenner en gekende. Zonder dit expliciet gezegd wordt, maak ik o.a. uit de titel van 4.1 ('waarheid als niet-wederkerige relatie') op dat Vennix de rationele relatie van waarheid identificeert met de niet-wederkerige relatie tussen kenner en gekende.

1. Het probleem van de extrinsieke denominatie

We beginnen met de presentatie van Thomas' positie zoals hij die formuleert in *De veritate* 21,1. Het eigenlijke onderwerp van deze tekst is het begrip van het goede. De gestelde vraag luidt of "het goede iets toevoegt aan het zijnde" (*utrum bonum aliquid addat super ens*). Thomas betreft in zijn uiteenzetting echter ook de transcendentale term *verum*. De reflectie vertrekt vanuit de constatering dat beide termen 'goed' en 'waar' iets toevoegen aan 'zijnde'. Het is geen tautologische uitspraak om van iets dat is te zeggen dat het 'waar' c.q. 'goed' is.

Maar indien het niet hetzelfde betekent om te zeggen van een x dat het is en dat het waar is, wat voegt 'waar' dan toe aan 'zijnde'? Wat zegt 'waar' meer dan het gestelde 'zijn' van x ? Thomas' stelling luidt dat *verum* een relatie toevoegt, en wel een relatie die louter gedacht (*relatio rationis tantum*) is. Want alleen zo kunnen we een 'toevoeging' denken die niet een beperking impliceert. Indien 'waar' iets reëls zou toevoegen, dan zou 'zijnde' door de toevoeging van 'waar' gecontraheerd worden. De gedachte relatie die de notie 'waar' toevoegt aan 'zijnde' bestaat, nader beschouwd, in de relatie tot het kenvermogen: 'waar' betekent het zijnde als gedacht onder het opzicht van de betrekking tot de kennis.

De niet-reële aard van de relatie vormt aanleiding tot een probleem dat Vennix in zijn boek ter sprake brengt: in hoeverre brengt deze niet-reële relatie het intrinsieke karakter van de zijnswaarheid in gevaar? Vennix formuleert het probleem als volgt: "...de combinatie van de stellingen, (1) dat een zijnde slechts 'waar' wordt genoemd, omdat en voor zover het in betrekking tot een kenvermogen staat en (2) dat deze betrekking van het zijnde tot het kenvermogen geen reële maar slechts een louter rationele relatie kan zijn, lijkt onvermijdelijk tot de conclusie te leiden, dat de benaming 'zijnswaarheid' een louter extrinsieke denominatie is. Een zijnde zou dan immers niet 'waar' genoemd worden omdat en voor zover het is, maar omdat en voor zover het gekend wordt; dus niet op grond van een intrinsieke vorm, maar enkel en alleen op grond van een toevallige, niet-reële en dus volkomen uitwendige betrekking." (blz. 243).

Ik merk op dat in deze formulering van het probleem 'niet-reëel' in één adem wordt genoemd met 'toevallig' en 'volkomen

uitwendig'. Daarmee wordt impliciet verwezen naar de wijze waarop het reële ding extrinsiek genoemd kan worden ten opzichte van de orde van het kennen: het gekend-zijn van een ding berust op een extrinsieke denominatie, want het reële ding (buiten de ziel) wordt door de kenactiviteit van het verstand zelf niet geraakt. Vennix spreekt voorts ook van 'toevallig'. Dit lijkt te verwijzen naar 'accidenteel', een woord dat Thomas gebruikt waar hij zegt dat het gekende ding zich accidenteel verhoudt tot het verstand waar het qua zijn niet van afhangt (zoals het zijn van een natuurding niet afhangt van het menselijk theoretisch verstand). Mijn vraag is: spelen hier niet verschillende kwesties door elkaar? Zijn alle relaties waarvan hier sprake is wel onder één noemer te brengen?

Bij de formulering van Vennix kan men nog een andere kanttekening plaatsen. Vennix spreekt over "een zijnde dat 'waar' wordt genoemd". Het gebruik van het onbepaalde lidwoord maakt dat 'zijnde' hier in materiële zin wordt genomen, in de zin van een concreet bestaand iets. Zo opgevat dreigt 'zijnde' de betekenis te krijgen van 'ding', een reële toedracht in de werkelijkheid die door het verstand gekend kan worden en in een propositie tot uitdrukking kan worden gebracht. Zoals verderop aan de orde komt is dit voor Thomas een specifieke zin van waarheid (*veritas rei*), die niet samenvalt met zijnswaarheid.

Het gevaar van de extrinsieke denominatie wordt door Vennix ontweken door de zijnswaarheid der dingen primair te plaatsen in hun relatie tot het goddelijk verstand. "Men kan dingen 'waar' noemen omdat ze gekend worden door God en op grond daarvan gekend kunnen worden door de mens."³ De zijnswaarheid is gefundeerd, niet in het menselijk verstand, maar in het goddelijk verstand.

Deze voorstelling van zaken vind ik niet overtuigend, niet in de laatste plaats omdat de relatie van het menselijk verstand tot de werkelijkheid toevallig en uitwendig blijft. Naar mijn idee worden er verschillende zaken door elkaar gehaald, waardoor het zicht op wat Thomas bedoelt met 'zijnswaarheid' vertroebeld wordt. Allereerst dient zich de vraag aan of hier dingwaarheid en zijnswaarheid niet te veel op een lijn met elkaar worden gesteld. 'Dingwaarheid' (*veritas*

³ Wat is waarheid?, blz. 291.

rei) is voor Thomas een afgeleide en secundaire zin van waarheid: vanuit de waarheid van de kennis wordt het ding dat gekend wordt 'waar' genoemd. De dingvorm van waarheid is aan de orde waar men spreekt van iets dat waar is zonder dat het zich reflexief verhoudt tot zijn waarheid, dus zonder dat het zichzelf als waar-zijnde kent. 'Ding' geeft hier uitdrukking aan een formele structuur en mag niet in een meer concrete aanwijzende zin opgevat worden als de 'objecten in de wereld buiten ons'.

De dingwaarheid of de dingvorm van waarheid sluit altijd een relatie in tot kennis. In deze zin is het een relatieve vorm van waarheid die een absoluut gezegde vorm van waarheid (de kenniswaarheid - *veritas intellectus*) vooronderstelt. Stel dat er geen verstand bestaat, dan zou niets 'waar' genoemd kunnen worden. Want iets dat geen verstand is kan slechts 'waar' genoemd worden in relatie tot een verstand. Maar hieruit volgt niet dat volgens Thomas "een zijnde slechts waar kan worden genoemd in relatie tot een verstand". Het gaat er niet om dat *een zijnde* 'waar' wordt genoemd; 'zijnswaarheid' wil zeggen dat beide termen 'waar' en 'zijnde' hetzelfde betekenen, ieder volgens een eigen *ratio*. *Verum* is hetzelfde als *ens*, maar het verschil is dat *verum* een betrekking uitdrukt. Vanuit deze betrekking gezien worden de beide polen - verstand en ding - waar genoemd. Zijnswaarheid wordt dus geëxpliciteerd in twee zinnen van waarheid, de primaire zin van verstandswaarheid en de secundaire zin van dingwaarheid.

Ik kom straks terug op de verhouding van dingwaarheid en zijnswaarheid. Nu allereerst het probleem van het eventuele extrinsieke karakter van de zijnswaarheid. Volgens mij berust dit probleem op een misverstand dat ontstaat wanneer niet scherp genoeg wordt onderscheiden tussen de volgende drie relaties:

Ten eerste de relatie in verband met de toevoeging van 'waar' aan 'zijnde'. 'Waar' is niet geheel synoniem met 'zijnde', maar voegt er iets aan toe. Te zeggen van iets dat het *waar* is houdt meer in dan alleen te zeggen dat het *is*. Nu kan men zeggen: in de uitdrukking 'is waar' voegt 'waar' een gedachte relatie toe aan 'is'; dat moet wel, anders krijg je een toevoeging in de trant van 'is wit' of 'is mens', en dan wordt 'is' ingeperkt. Dit hoeft helemaal niet in te houden dat 'waar' toevallig en uitwendig met 'is' wordt verbonden. Het uitgangspunt is toch dat 'waar' hetzelfde betekent als 'zijnde'. De

kwestie van 'toevoeging' kan echter ook op een andere manier uitgewerkt worden, waarbij de suggestie dat er iets van buitenaf wordt toegevoegd vermeden wordt. Zo spreekt Thomas in *De veritate* 1,1 van 'modus expressus', d.w.z. het ware is een bepaalde uitdrukkingwijze van het zijnde. Men kan van iets (bv. 'waar') zeggen dat het toevoegt aan 'zijnde' in de zin dat het een wijze van zijnde uitdrukt die door de naam 'zijnde' niet uitgedrukt wordt. Het gaat hier om een naam die voor hetzelfde staat als de naam 'zijnde' ofwel dezelfde zaak betekent, maar deze zaak uitdrukt naar een *modus* die door de naam 'zijnde' niet uitgedrukt wordt. Met de term 'waar' wordt het zijnde uitgedrukt op de wijze van een onderscheiden relatie van verstand en ding.

Ten tweede: van de niet-reële relatie moet onderscheiden worden de niet-wederkerige relatie tussen de kennis en het gekende ding. Als voorbeeld van een niet-wederkerige relatie noemt Thomas de relatie van *scibile* en *scientia*. De relatie van *scientia* tot *scibile* is een reële relatie, de relatie van *scibile* tot *scientia* is de gedachte keerzijde van deze reële relatie. Door iets te benoemen als 'scibile' wordt dat iets in relatie gesteld tot 'scientia', want 'scibile' betekent 'object van scientia'. Maar 'object zijn van scientia' is niet iets dat behoort tot de realiteit van iets, als zou het daardoor gedefinieerd worden. 'Scibile' is dus een voorbeeld van een extrinsieke denominatie, wat helemaal niet wil zeggen dat het object niet krachtens zijn vorm ervoor vatbaar is om gekend te worden. In *De veritate* 21,1 noemt Thomas dit voorbeeld ter verduidelijking van wat hij bedoelt met een *relatio tantum rationis*. Hij bedoelt hier niet te zeggen dat de waarheidsrelatie samenvalt met de relatie van *scibile* tot de *scientia*. Het zijn twee verschillende zaken die hier aan de orde zijn.

De derde relatie betreft de mogelijke concretisering van de waarheidsrelatie. Beide polen van de relatie worden 'waar' genoemd overeenkomstig de wijze waarop ze zich tot de relatie verhouden. Het verstand is absoluut genomen 'waar', niet in relatie tot iets anders. Maar het ding is alleen relatief genomen 'waar'. De relatie van een ding tot een verstand wordt dan gedifferentieerd volgens de aard van het verstand, hetzij theoretisch, hetzij praktisch, hetzij menselijk, hetzij goddelijk. In deze context wordt gesproken over het ding dat zich accidenteel verhoudt tot een theoretisch verstand dat zijn kennis ontleent aan het ding, of over het ding dat zich wezenlijk verhoudt tot

een praktisch verstand dat het ding produceert. 'Schepselen' zijn een voorbeeld van dingen die geproduceerd worden door het goddelijk verstand, 'artefacten' zijn dingen die geproduceerd worden door het menselijke verstand. Een schepsel is waar in relatie tot het goddelijk verstand, een menselijk artefact is waar in relatie tot het menselijk verstand dat het gemaakt heeft. Maar dit staat als zodanig los van de rationele relatie die het begrip 'waar' toevoegt aan zijnde. De relatie waarin het begrip 'waar' bestaat valt niet samen met de accidentele relatie die bestaat tussen een natuurding en het menselijk verstand.

Wat ik dus wil beweren is dat de kenverhouding, met de niet-wederkerigheid die hierin aanwezig is tussen de kenorde (de sfeer van de logische immanentie) en de orde van de dingen buiten de ziel (*ens naturae*), niet verward mag worden met de waarheidsrelatie, d.w.z. de slechts gedachte relatie die het ware qua begrip toevoegt aan het zijnde.

Het heeft iets ironisch dat het mooie en scherpzinnige gedeelte over het kennen als niet-materiële receptie van de vorm (4.2) zijn aanleiding heeft in het misverstand dat de niet-wederkerige relatie die gefundeerd is in de immanente activiteit van het kennen gelijk is aan de niet-reële relatie die de notie 'waar' toevoegt aan het zijnde.

2. Verstand en ding als polen van de waarheidsbetrekking

De vraag is of het spreken van een 'slechts gedachte relatie' de zijnswaarheid niet uitholt tot een extrinsieke denominatie. Vennix meent dat een extrinsieke denominatie geen recht doet aan de stelling van Thomas dat het zijnde als zodanig waar is. Een extrinsieke denominatie lijkt in te houden dat het zijnde alleen 'waar' genoemd kan worden wanneer er een intellect in de buurt komt dat het zijnde tot voorwerp van kennis neemt. In dat geval wordt het zijnde actueel gekend. Maar of het zijnde al dan niet gekend wordt laat het zijnde zelf koud. Van de waarheidstheorie van Thomas verwachten we echter meer. Een van de redenen waarom Thomas' waarheidstheorie ons de indruk wekt filosofisch belangrijk te zijn ligt toch in de suggestie dat waarheid niet beperkt is tot de logische sfeer van menselijke kennis maar een diepere ontologische fundering heeft. Het is niet pas het feit van de mens dat binnen het universum waarheid, kennis en betekenis introduceert, maar de werkelijkheid zelf getuigt van een

'transcendentale transparantie' die maakt dat ze erop aangelegd is zich naar haar eigen zin en betekenis te manifesteren aan de menselijke geest. Maar als we de werkelijkheid een intrinsieke intelligibiliteit toekennen op grond waarvan ze als toegankelijk voor de menselijke kennis gedacht kan worden, zo dat het verstand die intelligibiliteit in het voorwerp van zijn kennis in zekere zin *aantreft* maar niet sticht, moeten we dan niet zeggen dat het zijnde het werk is van een 'goddelijke geest' en dat het zijnde precies als ontsprongen aan een goddelijk denken de transcendentale transparantie heeft die de anders raadselachtig blijvende overeenstemming in onze kennis mogelijk maakt? Zo bezien leidt de ontologische waarheid, die we aan Thomas willen toeschrijven, tot een onto-theologische waarheid: ieder zijnde (*ens creatum*) is waar omdat het geschapen is conform zijn idee in het goddelijk verstand. Het is een voorstelling die past binnen het gangbare idee van het metafysisch-religieuze wereldbeeld van de Middeleeuwen, waarin het denken nog niet de sceptische ervaring heeft ondergaan die ertoe geleid heeft dat in de moderne filosofie de mens zelf de regie van zijn cognitieve betrekking tot de wereld in handen neemt en deze uit zichzelf tracht te rechtvaardigen.

Deze voorstelling van zaken geeft naar mijn overtuiging een vertekend beeld van Thomas' theorie van waarheid. Niet dat zij zonder meer onjuist is, maar ze geeft teveel een moderne visie op een voormoderne waarheidstheorie als een theorie die de transcendentale mogelijkheidsvoorwaarde van menselijk kennis objectief onto-theologisch fundeert. Wat opvalt in de relevante teksten over het waarheidsbegrip is de afwezigheid van enige interesse in het funderen van de mogelijkheid van ware kennis. Thomas hangt de zin van de stelling '*ens et verum convertuntur*' nergens op aan het goddelijk verstand.

Laat ik nu eerst de manier waarop Thomas zijn begrip van waarheid construeert proberen te schetsen.

(1) We beginnen met de these dat het ware hetzelfde is als het zijnde. Dit is ook het startpunt van *De veritate* 1,1. 'Waar' en 'zijnde' zijn onderling inwisselbaar. Maar toch niet zo dat ze zondermeer synoniem zijn en dat 'waar zijnde' neerkomt op de zinloze herhaling 'zijnde zijnde'. 'Waar' en 'zijnde' betekenen hetzelfde (*idem secundum rem*) maar niet op dezelfde wijze (*diversum secundum rationem*). 'Waar' betekent het zijnde onder het opzicht van de betrekking tot het

verstand. Dit opzicht constitueert de eigen *ratio* van de term 'waar'. Let wel: de term 'waar' betekent niet uitsluitend de betrekking maar ze betekent het zijnde onder het opzicht van zijn betrekking tot het verstand ofwel *als* betrokken op het verstand. Welk verstand? Op dit niveau doet dat er niet toe. Waarheid wordt gedefinieerd in relatie tot kennis überhaupt, dus tot het verstand als vermogen van een transcendentale reikwijdte, niet tot de menselijke wijze van kennen, als zou het menselijk kennen een eigen vorm van waarheid met zich mee brengen. Op dit niveau van de allereerste bepaling van waarheid is er dan ook geen sprake van een tegenoverstelling tussen het kennend subject en de objectieve werkelijkheid. Waar hier gesproken wordt over 'zijnde' geldt dit als een absolute (transcendentale) bepaling, niet als een bepaling waarmee het object op zichzelf gesteld wordt voor het kennend subject. Het behoort tot het begrip van 'waar' dat het identiek is met het zijnde, alleen drukt het deze identiteit op een bepaalde manier uit, in de vorm van een betrekking. Het zijnde is als zodanig waar; maar het kan niet als waar begrepen worden tenzij in relatie tot een open zijnsvorm die in zekere zin alles is (*quodammodo omnia*).

(2) De *ratio* van het ware drukt de betrekking van verstand en ding uit: *adaequatio rei et intellectus*. De *adaequatio*-definitie heeft op dit punt nog een zeer formele status. Zij is van toepassing overal waar sprake is van 'ware kennis', dus zelfs in het geval van God die zichzelf kent. Thomas stelt nu dat deze betrekking *in* het verstand is, in zoverre het verstand de betrekking van overeenstemming *kent en zegt*. Het verstand is dus niet alleen pool van de betrekking maar tevens omvat het in zichzelf de gehele betrekking in zoverre het deze betrekking (van conformiteit) kent en *als* betrekking uitdrukt in het oordeel.⁴ De betrekking bestaat niet buiten het kennen om maar is er als zodanig aan immanent. In deze zin kan men zeggen dat de waarheidsbetrekking een logische zijnswijze heeft. Vandaar dat Thomas zegt dat het verstand in primaire zin 'waar' is (*veritas intellectus*), en indien het gaat om een verstand dat zich verwerkelijkt door twee operaties (begrip en oordeel), is het het oordelende verstand dat in primaire zin 'waar' is, want hier pas wordt het ware *gekend en*

⁴ Vgl. *S.Th.I*, q.16, a.2: "...quando iudicat rem ita se habere sicut est forma quam de re apprehendit, tunc primo cognoscit et dicit verum."

gezegd. Het verstand is waar, indien het in zijn kennis overeenstemt met het gekende ding; maar het kent zijn waarheid, indien het zijn betrekking tot het gekende ding beoordeelt en uitspreekt. En dit behoort tot de volle zin van waarheid.

In secundaire en afgeleide zin is ook het ding dat gekend wordt 'waar' (*veritas rei*). Waarom? Is het niet voldoende alleen de kennis c.q. de propositie 'waar' te noemen? Thomas zou misschien zeggen: in de kennis wordt toch het ding gekend. Waarheid is niet alleen een kwestie van de logische vorm van de kennis, maar het is precies wat het ding is dat in de kennis tot uitdrukking komt.

Beide polen van de betrekking verhouden zich, zo zien we, ieder op een andere wijze tot dezelfde waarheidsbetrekking en worden derhalve beide in analoge zin 'waar' genoemd. Belangrijk is dat beide polen niet los van hun betrekking gezien mogen worden. Het gaat immers om het ding dat gekend wordt (door het verstand) en het verstand dat (het ding) kent. Men zou dit kunnen formuleren door te zeggen dat het 'ding' de gehele betrekking is naar het moment van de bijzondere bepaaldheid en dat het 'verstand' de betrekking is als betrekking (moment van algemeenheid). Ze zijn slechts wat ze zijn als pool van hun onderlinge betrekking, en wel ieder op een andere manier. Of zoals Thomas het formuleert: waarheid bestaat enerzijds in iets als *in eo quod est verum* (dingwaarheid), en anderzijds in iets als *in dicente vel cognoscente verum* (verstandswaarheid).⁵

(3) De zogenaamde '*veritas rei*' is een bepaalde zin van waarheid die hierin bestaat dat iets waar *is* zonder dat het zich reflexief tot zijn waarheid verhoudt. De *veritas rei* geeft een mogelijk antwoord op de vraag in welke zin iets waar genoemd wordt. Bijvoorbeeld: ook het menselijk verstand is 'waar' te noemen in de zin van de *veritas rei*, nl. het verstand in zijn eerste operatie wanneer het conform *is* met het gekende ding maar zijn conformiteit nog niet als zodanig kent en het expliciet betreft op (en dus onderscheidt van) het ding. De *veritas rei* verwijst op een bepaalde manier naar de waarheidsbetrekking, maar zo dat die betrekking op een niet-betrekkelijke manier wordt beschouwd. De dingvorm van waarheid mag niet buiten de betrekking geplaatst worden. Het 'ding', als term

⁵ *Ibid.*

van de waarheidsbetrekking, is in zekere zin de betrekking, maar dan als ding beschouwd. Anders gezegd: 'ding' staat voor de bepaaldheid van de waarheidsbetrekking, sluit dus de betrekking in, maar zo dat de betrekking nog samenvalt met de bijzondere zijnsbepaaldheid, en er nog niet reflexief van onderscheiden is.

3. Zijnswaarheid en dingwaarheid

Mijn tweede punt van kritiek op Vennix betreft zijn omschrijving van 'zijnswaarheid' in verhouding tot 'dingwaarheid'. Het lijkt mij van belang deze twee formeel te onderscheiden, hoewel ze natuurlijk niet te scheiden zijn en in bepaalde teksten van Thomas ook wel dicht in elkaars buurt lijken te komen. Vennix doet een poging 'zijnswaarheid' en 'dingwaarheid' van elkaar te onderscheiden. Met de manier waarop hij dat doet ben ik het niet eens.

Voor de bespreking van Vennix' interpretatie van zijnswaarheid baseer ik me op paragraaf 4.2.3, die als titel heeft: 'Kenniswaarheid, zijnswaarheid en zaakwaarheid'. In het geheel van het boek is dit een cruciale paragraaf. Want het is hier dat Vennix een oplossing wil geven van twee centrale problemen, ten eerste het probleem van de verhouding tussen zijnswaarheid en kenniswaarheid, en ten tweede het probleem van de verhouding tussen zijnswaarheid en zaakwaarheid.

Allereerst, wat bedoelen we met 'zijnswaarheid'? "Zijnswaarheid is die waarheid, die wordt uitgedrukt in het adagium '*ens et verum convertuntur*': het zijnde en het ware zijn convertibel." (blz. 287). Met deze omschrijving kan ik instemmen, mits men in de gaten houdt dat het hier niet gaat om een type waarheid. Het drukt de transcendentale betrokkenheid van het denken op de werkelijkheid uit. Vervolgens bepaalt Vennix de betekenis van 'zijnswaarheid' nader aan de hand van een tekst waarin wordt gesproken over de 'natuurlijke dingen' die gesteld zijn tussen twee intellecten, enerzijds het menselijk intellect dat zich receptief verhoudt tot de dingen, anderzijds het goddelijk intellect dat zich productief (scheppend) verhoudt tot de dingen.⁶ Vennix concludeert op basis van deze tekst: "Met betrekking

⁶ *De ver.* 1,2: "Res ergo naturalis, inter duos intellectus constituta,

tot het *goddelijke* verstand betekent 'zijnswaarheid', dat alle dingen of alle zijnden overeenstemmen met de goddelijke ideeën. (...) Maar met betrekking tot het *menselijke* verstand betekent 'zijnswaarheid' niet dat alle dingen actueel door het menselijk verstand gekend worden, maar dat alle dingen *kenbaar* (*cognoscibilis, intelligibiles*) zijn. De dingen zijn er als het ware van huis uit op aangelegd door de mens gekend te worden, ze hebben een soort transcendentale transparantie voor het menselijk verstand: ze zijn 'conformabel' aan het verstand."

Wat Vennix zegt is dat 'zijnswaarheid' de waarheid is van *dingen* (of: *natuurlijke* dingen) en dat deze waarheid van de dingen tweevoudig uitgelegd kan worden volgens de dubbele betrekking waarin de dingen staan, enerzijds tot het goddelijke verstand, anderzijds tot het menselijke verstand. Nu is ook het gevaar van de mogelijke extrinsieke denominatie bezworen. De benaming 'zijnswaarheid' berust niet op een extrinsieke denominatie, omdat de zijnswaarheid gefundeerd is in de relatie van de zijnden tot het goddelijk verstand.

Vennix lijkt zijnswaarheid te vereenzelvigen met de waarheid van de geschapen dingen. Hij maakt evenwel met betrekking tot de waarheid van dingen nog het volgende onderscheid: "(1) Men kan dingen 'waar' noemen omdat ze *gekend worden* door God en op grond daarvan principieel *gekend kunnen worden* door de mens (zijnswaarheid). (2) Men kan dingen 'waar' noemen voorzover ze op grond van hun *uitwendige verschijningsvorm* voor het menselijk verstand *aanleiding* geven tot een *waar oordeel* (zaakwaarheid)." (blz. 291). Maar deze onderscheiding geeft geen enkele grond in de teksten van Thomas. Wat Vennix hier 'zaakwaarheid' noemt is bij Thomas een toegespitste omschrijving van de zin waarin men *natuurlijke dingen* 'waar' (of 'onwaar') kan noemen in relatie tot het menselijk verstand dat gewoon is te oordelen over dingen op grond van hun uiterlijke verschijningsvorm (vgl. *S.Th.* I, q.17, a.1), dus een verstand dat kent op basis van de zintuiglijkheid. De notie 'dingwaarheid' (of 'zaakwaarheid') is echter al veel eerder geïntroduceerd op een abstracter en algemener niveau, nl. als afgeleide van de waarheid van de kennis, die altijd kennis van *iets* is.

secundum adaequationem ad utrumque vera dicitur."

Vennix' bepaling van de zijnswaarheid laat zien dat hij 'zijnde' begrijpt naar het model van het ding, en dat vervolgens voorwerpeijk opvat in plaats van naar zijn transcendentale zin. De waarheidsbetrekking is dan iets dat erbij komt, aan het zijnde toegevoegd wordt, met alle problemen van dien. Om deze reden geef ik zelf de voorkeur aan de misschien onthomistische formulering: 'waar' drukt het zijnde uit in de vorm van een betrekking tussen verstand en ding. Het gaat om een betrekking, maar niet tussen onderscheiden werkelijkheden. In de notie 'waar' worden de beide momenten van 'verstand' en 'ding' in een verhouding tot elkaar geplaatst. Niet zo dat twee zaken bij elkaar komen die oorspronkelijk gescheiden zijn. Maar de beide aspecten van 'verstand' en 'ding' zijn in het zijnde aanwezig, alleen niet in de vorm van een gereflecteerde verhouding. Men kan in dit verband denken aan de intelligibele vorm. Het intellect, in de zin van het reflexieve kenvermogen, rijst ontologisch op uit de vorm, en wel de vorm die, volledig in zichzelf teruggekeerd (*reditio completa*), niet afhankelijk is van de materie. Zo zien we dat in al het zijnde een zekere aanleg, een gerichtheid op kennis, op een reflexieve zelfbetrekking aanwezig is, die dan daar als zodanig vrij komt waar de zijnsvorm haar veruitwendiging in de materie overwint.

WAARHEID ALS MAATVERHOUDING

Repliek op Te Velde

Ad Vennix

Te Velde's bespreking van mijn proefschrift roept gemengde gevoelens bij me op. De omvang zou als een compliment kunnen worden opgevat, ware het niet dat het grootste deel ervan in beslag genomen wordt door een polemieek op één of twee onderdelen die de auteur kennelijk na aan het hart liggen, maar door de onevenredige uitvergroting waarvan gemakkelijk een karikatuur van mijn boek zou kunnen ontstaan. De vele bladzijden die Te Velde besteedt aan de opbouw van zijn eigen betoog staan in schrill contrast met de ene alinea die hij wijdt aan mijn boek als geheel: een wanverhouding waardoor die alinea, inclusief de lovende woorden die daarin worden gesproken, ietwat obliagaat aandoet. In feite wekt Te Velde's aanpak sterk de indruk dat hij mijn proefschrift slechts als aanleiding gebruikt om zijn eigen opvattingen naar voren te brengen. Geen woord over de door mij gekozen weg - van het *nomen* via de *ratio* naar de *res* - en de gevolgde methode; geen woord over de verschillende aspecten van waarheid die achtereenvolgens in hun onderlinge samenhang aan het licht komen - waarheid als *analoge term*, als *transcendentale notie*, als *rationele relatie* en als *maatverhouding* - en de daarmee corresponderende hoofdstukken; geen woord over de steeds aanwezige spanningsverhouding tussen logica en metafysica, tussen de abstractieve en de sublimatieve methode; geen woord over de nauwgezette uitwerking van de additieproblematiek en de relatieproblematiek; geen woord ook over de vruchtbare aanwending van al deze zaken in het laatste hoofdstuk, waarin het onderzoek naar de *virtus quaestionis* tenslotte verkeert in een *quaestio de virtute* en uitmondt in het vraagstuk van de samenhang tussen waarheid en vrijheid, waarmee een brug wordt geslagen naar de moderne waarheidsproblematiek. Ik moet eerlijk zeggen dat ik vind dat mijn boek een meer evenwichtige bespreking had verdiend.

Ik kan me niet aan de indruk onttrekken dat deze selectieve benadering zich wreekt in de wijze waarop Te Velde kritiek uitoefent op mijn weergave en interpretatie van Thomas' waarheidsopvatting. Hij concentreert zich op het laatste hoofdstuk, maar besteedt daarbij niet de geringste aandacht aan het eigenlijke thema van dat hoofdstuk, nl. *waarheid als maatverhouding*, terwijl dat toch het door Thomas zélf aangereikte kader vormt, waaraan per slot van rekening elke interpretatie getoetst dient te worden. Uit dit verzuim blijkt dat Te Velde niet alleen in zijn lezing van mijn tekst, maar ook in zijn gebruik van de teksten van Thomas enigszins selectief te werk gaat.

Te Velde merkt op dat zijn eigen uitleg van Thomas niet in het bijzonder tegen mijn opvatting is gericht, maar op bepaalde punten afwijkt van wat algemeen aanvaard lijkt te zijn en formuleringen bevat die bij sommigen wat bevreemdend zullen overkomen. Hij schrijft dit toe aan zijn zorg het 'formele' van Thomas' reflectie op waarheid voldoende tot uiting te laten komen (een zorg die bij anderen kennelijk ontbreekt). Ik ben veeleer de mening toegedaan dat zijn hier en daar eigenzinnige uitleg en zijn soms ondoorgroondelijke formuleringen geen recht doen aan wat Thomas zelf in doorgaans heldere bewoordingen te berde brengt. Over het geheel genomen vind ik de visie van Te Velde tamelijk speculatief en weinig ondersteund door de teksten van Thomas.

In wat volgt, zal ik - deels vanuit het vierde hoofdstuk van mijn boek, deels vanuit teksten van Thomas - ingaan op een aantal beweringen en formuleringen in de tekst van Te Velde, waartegen ik om uiteenlopende redenen bezwaren heb.

1. **Waarheid als maatverhouding: de niet-wederkerige betrekking**

De rode draad van het vierde hoofdstuk van mijn boek, waarin de aard van de rationele relatie die 'waar' aan 'zijnde' toevoegt wordt uitgewerkt, is waarheid als *maatverhouding*. Ik hecht eraan dit te benadrukken, want in Te Velde's kritiek wordt er met geen woord over gerept. En dat is jammer, want het is juist in het perspectief van Thomas' uiteenzettingen over waarheid als maatverhouding dat begrijpelijk wordt, waarom de rationele relatie die 'waar' aan 'zijnde' toevoegt wel degelijk gezocht moet worden in de sfeer van de niet-

wederkerigheid van de kenverhouding. Dat is de reden waarom in het vierde hoofdstuk zoveel plaats is ingeruimd voor een onderzoek naar de (menselijke) kennis als maatverhouding, dat, via een bespreking van de formules *anima est quodam modo omnia* en *veritas est adaequatio intellectus et rei*, gevolgd door een discussie met het representationisme, termineert in een analyse van het oordeel, waarin de menselijke geest tot zichzelf komt en zijn eigen verhouding tot de werkelijkheid kent. Vandaaruit kon volledig recht gedaan worden aan de these, dat de waarheid primair in het verstand - en met name in het oordeel - gevonden wordt, omdat eerst in het oordeel de *waarheid als zodanig gekend* wordt.

Te Velde begint zijn kritiek met een presentatie van Thomas' positie zoals hij die formuleert in *De veritate* 21, 1, maar hij laat in het vervolg van zijn betoog dit artikel niet integraal tot zijn recht komen. Had hij dat wel gedaan, dan had hij gezien dat juist aan dit artikel een belangrijk argument ontleend kan worden ten gunste van de stelling, dat de rationele relatie die 'waar' toevoegt aan 'zijnde' volstrekt niet vreemd is aan de louter gedachte betrekking van het gekende ding t.o.v. de menselijke kenner.

Het voorbeeld dat Thomas geeft, is de niet-wederkerige verhouding tussen *scientia* en *scibile*. Volgens Te Velde (blz. 132) heeft Thomas daarmee niets méér op het oog dan een verduidelijking van wat hij bedoelt met een *relatio rationis tantum*. Te Velde geeft echter geen enkel argument voor deze bewering en ze is volgens mij ook onjuist. Zoals ik in mijn boek (blz. 245 e.v.) laat zien, onderscheidt Thomas op verschillende plaatsen in zijn werk vier varianten van de rationele relatie, waarvan de niet-wederkerige relatie er één is. Zou het toevallig zijn dat hij i.v.m. waarheid altijd deze laatste - en tamelijk gecompliceerde - relatie als voorbeeld noemt? Het komt me voor dat de gang van het betoog in *De veritate* 21, 1 iets anders laat zien: nl. dat de keuze van de niet-wederkerige relatie als voorbeeld van de rationele relatie allesbehalve toevallig is.

Wanneer Thomas heeft vastgesteld dat 'waar' en 'goed' slechts een louter rationele relatie aan 'zijnde' toevoegen, geeft hij het voorbeeld van de niet-wederkerige verhouding tussen *scientia* en *scibile*, en hij besluit als volgt (zie mijn boek, blz. 249): "Want volgens Aristoteles noemt men het weetbare niet gerelateerd omdat het zelf op iets anders betrokken zou zijn, maar omdat iets anders

betrokken is op het weetbare. *Hetzelfde geldt m.b.t. alle andere dingen die zich verhouden als de maat en het gemetene of als het vervolmakende en het vervolmaakbare.*” (De ver. 21, 1). In directe aansluiting op het voorbeeld van *scientia* en *scibile* zegt Thomas dus, dat hetzelfde geldt m.b.t. alle andere dingen die zich verhouden als *mensura et mensuratum* of als *perfectivum et perfectibile*. En onmiddellijk daarna concludeert hij daaruit, dat het ware en het goede aan de notie ‘zijnde’ de betrekking van het vervolmakende (*respectum perfectivi*) toevoegen. In de daarop volgende alinea wordt duidelijk welke wijze van vervolmaking het ware aan het zijnde toevoegt: *“unumquodque ens in tantum dicitur verum in quantum est conformatum vel conformabile intellectui”*. (Merk op dat Thomas hier ‘ens’ zegt, niet ‘res’). Het lijkt dus weinig twijfel dat de rationele relatie die ‘waar’ toevoegt aan ‘zijnde’ die relatie is, waarbij in het subject een fundament voor een reële betrekking ontbreekt, zoals dat het geval is bij *scibile* t.o.v. *scientia*: want het gemetene (het vervolmaakte of het geprincipieerde) is wel afhankelijk van en dus reëel gerelateerd aan de maat (het vervolmakende of het principe), maar niet omgekeerd (zie mijn boek, blz. 292 e.v.). En wie toch nog mocht twijfelen of Thomas in verband met de waarheidsrelatie werkelijk de kenverhouding op het oog heeft, kan wellicht overtuigd worden door andere tekstpassages.¹

Het is dan ook bepaald niet toevallig dat Thomas juist in deze context altijd uitdrukkelijk onderscheid maakt tussen het goddelijk intellect (maatgevend maar niet gemeten), het menselijke theoretische intellect (gemeten door de natuurdingen) en het menselijke praktische

¹ Bijv.: “... secundum quod [verum] dicitur de rebus convertitur cum ente per praedicationem, - omne enim ens est adaequatum intellectui divino et potens adaequare sibi intellectum humanum, et e converso ...”, *De ver.* 1, 2 ad 1. Duidelijker nog is de volgende passage: “Quaedam ... sunt quae habent fundamentum in re extra animam, sed complementum rationis eorum quantum ad id quod est formale est *per operationem animae*, sicut patet in universali. (...) Similiter dico de veritate quod habet fundamentum in re, sed ratio eius completur *per actionem intellectus*, quando scilicet apprehenditur eo modo quo est. (...) *et in ipsa operatione intellectus accipientis esse rei sicut est per quamdam similationem ad ipsum*, completur relatio adaequationis, in qua consistit ratio veritatis”, *In I Sent.* 19, 5, 1 (Curs. A.V.).

intellect (maatgevend t.o.v. de artefacten). En Te Velde heeft volgens mij ongelijk wanneer hij n.a.v. dit onderscheid zegt (blz. 133): "Maar dit staat als zodanig los van de rationele relatie die het begrip 'waar' toevoegt aan zijnde. De relatie waarin het begrip 'waar' bestaat valt niet samen met de accidentele relatie die bestaat tussen een natuurding en het menselijk verstand."² De rationele relatie die het begrip 'waar' connoteert valt wel degelijk samen met de accidentele relatie die bestaat tussen het natuurding (hier op te vatten als onderscheiden van het kunstding of het artefact, dus als *ens creatum*) en het menselijk verstand, zij het niet formeel, maar materieel. Gezien vanuit het zijnde dat door het menselijke theoretische verstand gekend wordt, is de betrekking tot dat verstand zowel *per accidens* (of *per aliud*: het door de mens gekend worden komt er niet *per se* aan toe, d.w.z. het ligt niet in de *ratio* van het zijnde opgesloten) als *rationeel* (want in het zijnde is geen reëel fundament voorhanden voor de verhouding van het gekend-worden door het menselijk verstand). Wanneer Te Velde dan ook zegt (blz. 130), dat in mijn uitleg "de relatie van het menselijk verstand tot de werkelijkheid toevallig en uitwendig blijft", zet hij de zaak op zijn kop. Het is immers precies omgekeerd: de relatie van de (gekende) werkelijkheid tot het menselijk verstand blijft toevallig en uitwendig.³

Maar wordt op deze manier de definitie van waarheid niet te veel gekoppeld aan een specifiek intellect, nl. het menselijke verstand? Te Velde zegt in zijn reconstructie op basis van *De veritate* 1, 1 (blz. 135): "Waarheid wordt gedefinieerd in relatie tot kennis überhaupt, dus tot het verstand als vermogen van een transcendentale reikwijdte, niet tot de menselijke wijze van kennen, als zou het menselijk kennen een eigen vorm van waarheid met zich meebrengen." En enigszins verder: "Het zijnde is als zodanig waar; maar het kan niet als waar

² Ik ga voorbij aan het feit dat het begrip 'waar' niet in een relatie *bestaat*, maar dat het een relatie *connoteert* (Te Velde wijst daar zelf op, blz. 135 e.v.).

³ Dat blijkt niet alleen uit de teksten die ik in mijn boek citeer i.v.m. de niet-wederkerigheid van de kenverhouding, maar ook uit Thomas' uitleg van Augustinus' opvatting m.b.t. de *veritas rei*: "... [Augustinus] excludit a ratione huius veritatis comparationem ad intellectum nostrum. Nam id quod est per accidens ab unaquaque definitione excluditur", *ST I*, 16, 1 ad 1.

begrepen worden tenzij in relatie tot een open zijnsvorm die in zekere zin alles is." Maar dat is volgens mij niet wat Thomas in *De veritate* 1, 1 zegt. Thomas zegt dat een overeenkomst (*convenientia*) van het ene zijnde met het andere zijnde slechts mogelijk is, wanneer men aanneemt dat er iets is dat geëigend is met elk zijnde overeen te komen; en, zo voegt hij er onmiddellijk aan toe, *dat is de ziel (hoc autem est anima)*, die op een of andere wijze alle dingen is. Geen sprake dus van 'kennis überhaupt'. Geen moment blijft open dat Thomas in deze context een welbepaald intellect op het oog heeft en welk intellect dat is, nl. het menselijke. Welnu, in dat licht moet ook de aard van de door 'waar' aan 'zijnde' toegevoegde rationele relatie gezien worden.⁴

Wat maakt Te Velde van de rationele relatie die door 'waar' aan 'zijnde' wordt toegevoegd? "De gedachte relatie die de notie 'waar' aan 'zijnde' toevoegt", aldus te Velde (blz. 129), "bestaat, nader beschouwd, in de relatie tot het kenvermogen: 'waar' betekent het zijnde *als gedacht* onder het opzicht van de betrekking tot de kennis." (curs. A.V.) Laat ik om te beginnen opmerken dat in het tweede deel van deze zin iets anders gezegd wordt dan in het eerste deel. Met het eerste gedeelte kan ik instemmen, maar het tweede gedeelte is volgens mij niet correct. 'Waar' betekent niet: het zijnde *als gedacht* onder het opzicht van de betrekking tot de kennis, maar 'waar' betekent: het zijnde onder het opzicht van de betrekking tot de kennis. Dat deze betrekking een *gedachte* relatie is, behoort immers volstrekt niet tot de constituenten van de notie van zijnswaarheid, maar volgt eerst uit een uitvoerige reflectie op die notie (zie mijn boek, hfst. 3). Deze onzorgvuldigheid had voorkomen kunnen worden als Te Velde aandacht had besteed aan het onderscheid tussen (1) de rationele relaties die het intellect min of meer kunstmatig construeert (*adinventae per intellectum*) en toeschrijft aan de dingen als gekend (*prout sunt intellectae*), en (2) de rationele relaties die onvermijdelijk

⁴ Dat in *De ver.* 1, 1 het menselijk intellect het referentiepunt is, blijkt m.i. ook uit de driedelige omschrijving van waarheid waarmee het artikel wordt afgesloten: (1) *secundum illud quod praecedit rationem veritatis* et in quo verum *fundatur*, (2) *secundum id in quo formaliter ratio veri perficitur*, en (3) *secundum effectum consequentem*.

volgen op onze wijze van kennen (*ex quadam necessitate consequuntur modum intelligendi*) en die het intellect spontaan toeschrijft aan de dingen zelf (*attributae ei quod est in re*) (zie mijn boek, blz. 245-246). De rationele relatie die 'waar' toevoegt aan 'zijnde' behoort stellig tot het laatste type. Om een voorbeeld te geven: De benaming 'species' (die behoort tot het eerste type rationele relaties) passen we niet toe op willekeurig welke ezel, maar op het begrip 'ezel'; maar de benaming 'waar' (die behoort tot het tweede type) passen we niet toe op het begrip 'zijnde', maar op willekeurig welk zijnde zélf.

Er is nog een ander bezwaar tegen de hierboven weergegeven tekst van Te Velde. Daarin wordt nl. de indruk gewekt dat een relatie rationeel is, louter en alleen vanwege het feit dat ze *gedacht* wordt. Maar zoals ik op blz. 216-217 van mijn boek uiteenzet, kan elke *res* zowel extramentaal als intramentaal bestaan, - en in het laatste geval is ze niet minder dan in het eerste geval een *ens reale*, niet een *ens rationis*. Wat de relatie die 'waar' toevoegt aan 'zijnde' tot een louter rationele relatie maakt, is dus niet het feit dat ze gedacht wordt, maar het feit dat er in het subject van deze relatie (het gekende zijnde) geen reëel fundament voorhanden is, d.w.z. geen reële *passio* die zou beantwoorden aan de activiteit van het kennen.

Het is jammer dat Te Velde zo weinig oog heeft voor deze technische details en dat mijn uiteenzettingen naar zijn smaak soms zelfs iets te gedetailleerd zijn. Want ik beschouw Thomas' opvatting van de immanentie van het kennen, wegens het verhelderende licht dat daardoor geworpen wordt op de eigen aard van de causale verhouding tussen het ding en het intellect en de rol van de menselijke vrijheid, als één van de meest vruchtbare en actuele onderdelen van zijn filosofie.

2. Extrinsicke denominatie

Als de rationele relatie die 'waar' aan 'zijnde' toevoegt inderdaad gezocht moet worden in de sfeer van de niet-wederkerige relaties, rijst onvermijdelijk de vraag of het 'zijnde' dan slechts op grond van een extrinsicke denominatie 'waar' genoemd wordt.

Volgens Te Velde (blz. 132) berust het probleem van de extrinsicke denominatie op een misverstand dat ontstaat wanneer niet scherp genoeg onderscheiden wordt tussen (1) de relatie i.v.m. de

toevoeging van 'waar' aan 'zijnde', (2) de niet-wederkerige relatie tussen de kennis en het gekende ding en (3) de mogelijke concretisering van de waarheidsrelatie. Boven ben ik op alle punten al gedeeltelijk ingegaan, maar enkele zaken zijn nog onbesproken gebleven.

M.b.t. het eerste punt zegt Te Velde (blz. 132): "De kwestie van 'toevoeging' kan echter ook op een andere manier uitgewerkt worden, waarbij de suggestie dat er iets van buitenaf wordt toegevoegd vermeden wordt. Zo spreekt Thomas in *De veritate* 1, 1 van 'modus expressus', d.w.z. het ware is een bepaalde uitdrukkingwijze van het zijnde." Nu schieten we daar niet veel mee op, want de vraag is nu juist, wat er in zo'n *modus expressus* precies wordt uitgedrukt. Het antwoord van Thomas is ondubbelzinnig: wat de transcendentale notie 'waar' aan de notie 'zijnde' uitdrukkelijk maakt, is de *relatio adaequationis*. En daarmee duikt opnieuw het probleem van de extrinsieke denominatie op. De formulering waarmee Te Velde dit punt besluit, vind ik eerlijk gezegd nogal raadselachtig: "Met de term 'waar' wordt het zijnde uitgedrukt op de wijze van een onderscheiden relatie van verstand en ding". Onderscheiden waarvan?

Ook onder het derde punt - de mogelijke concretisering van de waarheidsrelatie - stuit men op een raadselachtige en zelfs inconsistente formulering (blz. 132): "Beide polen van de relatie worden 'waar' genoemd overeenkomstig de wijze waarop ze zich tot de relatie verhouden. Het verstand is absoluut genomen 'waar', niet in relatie tot iets anders. Maar het ding is alleen relatief genomen waar." (Een vergelijkbare formulering vindt men op blz. 136.) Wat wordt hier nu precies gezegd? In de eerste zin wordt gezegd dat beide polen 'waar' genoemd worden overeenkomstig de wijze waarop ze zich tot de relatie verhouden. Wat in de daarop volgende zin gezegd wordt, is daarmee volkomen in strijd: Het verstand is *absoluut* genomen 'waar', niet in relatie tot iets anders (dus ook niet in verhouding tot de relatie, zou ik zeggen). In de derde zin wordt dan weer gezegd, dat het ding alleen *relatief* genomen waar is. Maar relatief ten opzichte van wat? Ten opzichte van de relatie? Of ten opzichte van het verstand?

Formuleringen als deze zijn bij Thomas nergens terug te vinden. In feite moet Thomas niet veel hebben van polen die zich tot hun relaties verhouden (zie mijn boek, blz. 247-248), en beperkt hij zich tot polen die zich tot de andere pool verhouden. De beide polen

van de relatie worden dan ook niet waar genoemd overeenkomstig de wijze waarop ze zich tot de *relatie* verhouden, zoals Te Velde zegt, maar overeenkomstig de wijze waarop ze zich tot *elkaar* verhouden of waarop zich *de ene tot de andere* verhoudt. De verhouding die Te Velde construeert (en die inderdaad louter rationeel is), is geheel en al parasitair t.o.v. deze voorafgaande relatie: en dát is de waarheidsrelatie.

Voorts tekent Te Velde bezwaar aan tegen de 'ontotheologische' oplossing van het probleem van de extrinsieke denominatie. "Wat opvalt in de relevante teksten over het waarheidsbegrip", zegt Te Velde (blz. 134), "is de afwezigheid van enige interesse in het funderen van de mogelijkheid van ware kennis. Thomas hangt de zin van de stelling '*ens et verum convertuntur*' nergens op aan het goddelijk verstand." Natuurlijk zou het hoe dan ook onvoorzichtig zijn het moderne interesse zonder meer op Thomas te projecteren. Men dient echter te bedenken dat het in de moderne filosofie niet gaat om het 'funderen van de mogelijkheid van ware kennis', maar om (1) het aantonen van de mogelijkheid van ware kennis (tegen het scepticisme) en (2) het blootleggen van de fundamenteën of mogelijkheidsvoorwaarden van ware kennis. Thomas heeft zich m.i. zowel met het eerste als met het tweede bezig gehouden. En dat Thomas de zin van de stelling '*ens et verum convertuntur*' nergens ophangt aan het goddelijk verstand, zoals Te Velde beweert, is volgens mij simpelweg onwaar. In zijn commentaar op de *Perihermeneias* zegt Thomas: "Aangezien alle natuurdingen betrokken worden op het goddelijke verstand, zoals de artefacten op de kunst, volgt dat van ieder willekeurig ding gezegd wordt dat het waar is naargelang het een eigen vorm heeft, volgens welke het de goddelijke kunst nabootst. Want het valse goud is het ware koper. *En op deze wijze zijn het zijnde en het ware convertibel, aangezien elk willekeurig natuurding door zijn vorm betrokken is op de goddelijke kunst*".⁵

⁵ "...quia omnia etiam naturalia comparantur ad intellectum divinum, sicut artificiatia ad artem, consequens est ut quaelibet res dicatur esse vera secundum quod habet propriam formam, secundum quam imitatur artem divinam. Nam falsum aurum est verum aurichalchum. Et hoc modo ens et verum convertuntur: quia quaelibet res naturalis per suam formam arti divinae comparatur", *In I Perih.*, lect. 3, nr. 30(8).

(curs. A.V.) Merk op dat Thomas het adagium *ens et verum convertuntur* niet alleen verbindt aan het goddelijke verstand, maar dat hij het ook op één lijn stelt met de dingwaarheid, die Te Velde zo graag wil onderscheiden van zijnswaarheid. En wat te denken van de volgende passage: "Daarom zouden de dingen, ook als er geen menselijk intellect zou bestaan, toch waar genoemd worden met betrekking tot het goddelijk intellect; als we ons echter beide intellecten als opgeheven zouden denken terwijl de dingen bleven bestaan - wat onmogelijk is - , zou er geen enkele zin van waarheid overblijven."⁶ Hoe kan men deze teksten lezen en tegelijkertijd ontkennen, dat de zin van zijnswaarheid wordt 'opgehangen' aan het goddelijk verstand? Dat m.a.w. het goddelijk verstand gezien wordt als fundamenteel en mogelijkheidsvoorwaarde ervan?

De aanzet tot een oplossing van de kwestie van de extrinsieke denominatie is m.i. simpel en ligt bevat in het slot van *De veritate* 1, 4. Thomas zegt daar dat het ding waar genoemd wordt (1) ofwel naar de waarheid in het goddelijke of in het menselijke verstand, zoals het voedsel gezond genoemd wordt naar de gezondheid die in het dierlijk organisme is; (2) ofwel naar de waarheid die in het ding zelf is en die niets anders is dan de zijndheid die overeenstemt met het intellect of die het intellect met zich doet overeenstemmen (*entitas intellectui adaequata vel intellectum sibi adaequans*), zoals het voedsel gezond genoemd wordt naar zijn eigen kwaliteit. In het tweede geval wordt het ding waar genoemd op grond van een inherente vorm, maar in het eerste geval niet, daar de waarheid van het (goddelijke of menselijke) intellect nu eenmaal niet in het ding is. Alleen in het eerste geval heeft het dus zin te spreken van een extrinsieke denominatie. Daaruit blijkt dat *wel* de zijnswaarheid, maar *niet* de kenniswaarheid intrinsiek in de dingen is.

⁶ "...unde, etiam si intellectus humanus non esset, adhuc res verae dicerentur in ordine ad intellectum divinum; sed si uterque intellectus, rebus remanentibus per impossibile, intelligeretur auferri, nullo modo ratio veritatis remaneret", *De ver.* 1, 2.

3. Zijnswaarheid en dingwaarheid

Laat ik tot besluit kort ingaan op de kwestie van de verhouding van zijnswaarheid en dingwaarheid. Te Velde benadrukt verschillende malen dat de *veritas rei* een afgeleide zin van waarheid is. Voorts bestaat de *veritas rei* volgens Te Velde hierin dat iets waar *is* zonder dat het zich reflexief tot zijn waarheid verhoudt (blz. 136). Dat moge zo zijn, maar nergens wordt de dingwaarheid door Thomas aldus gedefinieerd. Waar het gaat om dingwaarheid, verwijst Thomas steevast naar de verhouding van het ding tot het goddelijke verstand enerzijds en het menselijke verstand anderzijds. Het ding is waar primair m.b.t. het goddelijke verstand en secundair m.b.t. het menselijke verstand (zie o.a. *De ver.* 1, 2). Of het zich al dan niet reflexief tot zijn waarheid verhoudt, is nauwelijks ter zake. Thomas brengt deze reflexiviteit alleen maar ter sprake omdat er een zekere overeenkomst is tussen de waarheid van het menselijk intellect in zijn eerste operatie (waarin het 'domweg' waar is; zie mijn boek, blz. 342-354) en de waarheid van het ding, en om zo het eigen karakter van de waarheid van het intellect in zijn tweede operatie te verduidelijken. Te Velde zegt: "... ook het menselijk verstand is 'waar' te noemen in de zin van *veritas rei*, nl. het verstand in zijn eerste operatie wanneer het conform *is* met het gekende ding maar zijn conformiteit nog niet als zodanig kent en het expliciet betreft op (en dus onderscheidt van) het ding." Maar daarmee wordt m.i. een misleidend beeld gegeven van de dingwaarheid zoals Thomas die opvat. Want volgens Thomas kunnen *alle* dingen die tot het intellect behoren - dus *alle* operaties en producten daarvan, inclusief het oordeel en de uitspraak - beschouwd worden als ding (*secundum sunt res quaedam*); en zo beschouwd heeft *elk* dezelfde dingwaarheid als elk ander ding, die gefundeerd is in het goddelijke verstand (*quia implet hoc quod accepit in mente divina retinendo naturam suam*).⁷ Het verschil tussen de waarheid van het intellect in zijn eerste en in zijn tweede operatie bestaat er dan ook niet in dat er in het eerste geval sprake is van *dingwaarheid* en in het tweede geval van *kenniswaarheid*. Integendeel, afhankelijk van onze beschouwingswijze kan in beide gevallen gesproken worden van

⁷ Zie *De ver.* 1, 7 ad 2. Cf. *ST I*, 16, 8 ad 3.

dingwaarheid en kan in beide gevallen gesproken worden van kenniswaarheid. Wat het betekent het verstand in zijn eerste operatie te beschouwen vanuit het gezichtspunt van kenniswaarheid, heb ik uitvoerig uitgewerkt in de laatste paragraaf van mijn boek.

Het komt me dan ook voor dat niet ik, maar dat Te Velde verzuimt 'ding' consequent als uitdrukking van een formele structuur te nemen. Dat blijkt ook uit de volgende overweging. De formele structuur waarvoor 'ding' (*res*) staat, is nu juist datgene waardoor 'ding' een transcendentale notie is, die evenals 'waar' convertibel is met 'zijnde'. Zou Te Velde 'res' werkelijk formeel nemen, dan wordt zijn bezwaar tegen het op één lijn stellen van zijnswaarheid (*ens et verum convertuntur*) en dingwaarheid (*veritas rei*) volkomen onbegrijpelijk. Immers als *ens* en *verum* convertibel zijn en als *ens* en *res* convertibel zijn, dan moeten ook *res* en *verum* convertibel zijn.

Ik ben dan ook van mening dat het weinig zin heeft de *veritas rei* krampachtig te onderscheiden van de zijnswaarheid, - behalve waar dingwaarheid gedefinieerd wordt vanuit de verhouding tussen de *uitwendige verschijningsvorm* en het *innerlijke wezen* van een ding. Want alleen daar is het mogelijk en zinvol zowel van de *waarheid* als van de *valsheid* van dingen te spreken. Welnu, de dingwaarheid die bestaat in de geschiktheid van een ding om op grond van zijn uitwendige verschijningsvorm een waar oordeel te weeg te brengen (en die staat tegenover dingvalsheid), moet volgens mij niet verward worden met de dingwaarheid die primair bestaat in het gekend worden door God, die de maat van alle dingen is, en secundair in het kenbaar zijn voor de mens, wiens kenniswaarheid door de dingen gemeten wordt.

THE PASSIONATE GOD OF CHRIST, SOME REMARKS

Mark-Robin Hoogland cp

How is God related to human suffering? It is a question posed as long as religion exists. Since the Great War, mass-destruction weapons and concentration camps and as our knowledge of these and all kinds of tragedies of many ages all over the world increased, this question has become more and more pressing. Even in such a way, that to many it has become an obstacle to believing.

Through the second half of this century we have seen a strong movement of theologians coming up, who in the light of this hold that, since God is love (1Jn 4,16), He cannot be but affected by our sufferings. That God therefore is suffering along with us, as also Holy Scripture seems to testify. For in the Old Testament it is written that God is compassionate and affected by what and how His people are doing. And in the New Testament it is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who suffers - and it seems that the incarnation has not been real, if these sufferings would have affected only His humanity. That therefore through, with and in Christ God in His divinity suffers.

However, a minority of the theologians in our days tries to formulate a theology which remains faithful to the tradition of about nineteen centuries of Christian theology, holding that God does not suffer as we do. Attesting this nowadays means much explanation is needed, since the use of negative words as "immutability" and "impassibility" for God, are not self-evident anymore to us¹ as they were to the Church Fathers and medieval theologians, like Thomas Aquinas. However, according to these contemporary theologians these

¹ By attributing immutability and impassibility as descriptions of how God is and not as indications of how God is *not*, as the Church Fathers did, we would conceive God as a rock - not in the sense of Psalms 18,3, 31,3 and 71,3, but as static and inert.

words are needed in order to convey the mystery of the divinity of God.

One of these theologians is Thomas G. Weinandy ofm cap., Professor at the University of Oxford. In January 2000 he published *Does God Suffer?*², a study on the relationship of God to humankind in respect of suffering.

In his book Weinandy has pursued to formulate the traditional Christian view on this matter in a “academically sound” and “emotionally compelling” way, as he writes in the preface (page viii). He does this by first describing the arguments in favour of a passible and suffering God. Although this overview may not be complete, it depicts the context in the scope of which the following chapters are written. In these he refutes the arguments in favour of a suffering God and their underlying thoughts by offering a positive Christian view. Thomas Aquinas’ thoughts play an important role in Weinandy’s theology. Weinandy argues by discussing various topics concerning God’s (im)passibility in Holy Scripture and early Christian theology. But first he explains the method used. Following Maritain and Marcel he makes the fundamental distinction between approaching a field of inquiry either as a problem (to be solved) or as a mystery (which cannot be fully understood by us). Theology’s task, Weinandy contends, is not solving theological problems, but discerning what the *mystery* of faith is and clarifying and developing our understanding (not: comprehension!) of it. By stating this, Weinandy implicitly says that theology cannot be disconnected from the faith of the Church.

This is the context and the methodological starting point of Weinandy’s new book. By writing and publishing this book he has contributed greatly to contemporary Christian theology, I think, for many theologians have either avoided the subject or advocated a passible ‘God’ in recent years.

In this contribution I want to put forward two points, with reference to Weinandy’s book concerning the use of Aquinas when theologizing about *Deus* and *passio*. The first is about the use of the word

² Thomas G. Weinandy ofm cap., *Does God Suffer?*, Edinburgh 2000 (X - 310).

“passion” and its semantic field. The second, more fundamental point affects the order of theological inquiry.

1. *Passio* and Passion

Can we ascribe passion to God? To many theologians nowadays it seems we not only can, but even must ascribe passion to God; how otherwise can be said that God is “love”?³

Yet Thomas Aquinas emphatically denies passion in God. In the *Prima Pars* of the *Summa Theologiae* he asks in *quaestio* 20 article 1 whether love is in God. In explaining 1Jn 4,16 - “God is love” (the *sed contra*) - Aquinas strictly distinguishes between love and passion: Love is the first movement of the intellectual appetite, called the will, and (therefore) of every appetitive force towards the common good⁴; a passion is an act of sensitive appetite caused by the will. A passion then always causes a physical change.⁵ In brief this is why God is ultimately loving and yet totally devoid of passion.

Now Weinandy’s formulation of his position is somewhat confusing to me. He writes on page 119/120, although emphatically maintaining God’s immutability and impassibility, that the triune God is “impassible” and yet absolutely and completely “passionate”. Further on he continues:

“While God is not passionate in the sense that there are passible passionate changes within him, he can be said,

³ Exactly the same argumentation (but with the opposite conclusion) Aquinas himself formulates in *ST* I, 20, 1 obj. 1.

⁴ “motus voluntatis et cuiuslibet appetitivae virtutis est amor. Amor autem respicit bonum in communi” (*ST* I, 20, 1 c.).

⁵ “appetitus intellectivus, qui dicitur voluntas, movet in nobis mediante appetitu sensitivo. Unde semper actum appetitus sensitivi concomitatur aliqua transmutatio corporis. Sic igitur actus appetitus sensitivi, in quantum habent transmutationem corporalem annexam, passiones dicuntur.” (ibidem a. 1, ad 1) In *ST* I, 9, 1 Aquinas has already shown how there cannot be *passio* in God, because of His being *actus purus*, because of His being one (*in Deo nulla est compositio*) and because of His being perfect. In *ST* I, 3, 1 he explains in the light of Jn 4,24 (God is Spirit) why God cannot be conceived as corporeal.

although Aquinas does not say this, to be passionate in the sense that his will is fully and wholly fixed on the good as loved." (page 126)

"Although Aquinas does not say this" is an important parenthesis. For Aquinas does not say this, because what Weinandy calls "passionate", is called "love" in the *Summa Theologiae* (see note 4).

By using the word "passionate" in this way, the distinction between love and passion whilst discussing Aquinas' thoughts and their meaning for us today, becomes unclear. And: In the English language "passionate" means "filled with/ marked by/ dominated by/ expressing/ swayed by/ affected with passion(s)".⁶ So it seems that calling God "passionate", does not really advance the understanding of the mystery of God, but rather confuses it. In consideration of this a closer examination of Aquinas' view of love and passion and a thorough evaluation of its significance for contemporary theology seems to be preferable to calling God "passionate".

It seems that Weinandy chose to ascribe the quality "passionate" to God primarily in order to avoid the possible interpretation of God being static c.q. in order to make his theology more "emotionally compelling". And in a sense it does, I must say. But the price paid is in my view too high: confusion i.e. "academic injury" instead of his pursued "academic soundness".

2. The order of theological inquiry

Weinandy notices that many theologians nowadays teach that God suffers. What I find 'somewhat strange' so to say, is that quite a few of these men and women, although considering themselves *Christian*, do not address the issue of Christ's sufferings and how these are related to the Trinity and to humankind. Strange the more, since the Gospels and also other parts of Holy Scripture are literally permeated by it.

In *Does God Suffer?* Weinandy dedicated three chapters to Christ's sufferings. The *last* three, not the first three. By doing so he

⁶ *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language*, Unabridged (1986), Volume II, 1651, col.2

seems to follow the order of inquiry in the *Summa Theologiae*: starting with God (as in the *Prima Pars*) and ending with Christ (as in the *Tertia Pars*). However, I advance the thesis that in order to do more justice to (the structure of) Aquinas' thoughts on this subject *nowadays*, we ought to *start* with the sufferings of Christ and move from there to the question what they may mean for our thinking about God. I will advocate this in the light of the provisional structure of my dissertation, on the interrelation of Christ's Passion and the almightiness of God.

When the starting point of the inquiry is the Passion of Christ itself and how Thomas Aquinas does evaluate it, one is immediately confronted with some peculiarities. For instance that Aquinas starts with the question "why" (q.46) and only then discusses the "how" of Christ's Passion (q.47). In order to understand why Aquinas does this, one needs to know the context in which Aquinas discusses this subject: the *Tertia Pars* and the *Summa Theologiae* as a whole; how inseparable Christ-talk and God-talk are in his theology; how closely Christ's Passion is related to incarnation, divinity/humanity and liberation/redemption.

In the light of this it is also remarkable that Aquinas is extremely careful ascribing *passio* to Christ; quaestio 46 contains 12(!) articles and culminates in the question of how passion and divinity are interrelated in Christ.

Speaking about Christ's Passion then raises questions about the triune God: How is God related to passion in general and to the Passion of Christ in particular and, in the framework of the inquiry mentioned: How is His omnipotence related to this mystery? Closely connected with these questions are matters of language: What is meant by Aquinas, when he uses words like *passio* and *compassio*, *perfectio*, *caritas* and *omnipotentia*? How can we speak about Christ and God? What is negative theology and what is it not? And: If the triune God is almighty, then what does this mean for Christ? Is He, and if so, in what way, almighty too? And how then is this connected with His Passion?

Again, the point I am making is about the order and the focus of the inquiry: If one starts, when studying the interrelation between God and suffering, with the suffering of Christ, the direction of

movement is from Christ to God: What does the suffering/Passion⁷ of Christ tell us about (the suffering of) God? In this way the Passion of Christ becomes starting point of Christian theology as locus of the ultimate (self-)revelation of God.

One may ask whether nowadays this approach does also do more justice to Aquinas' thoughts on this subject. I advance the thesis that it does, for three reasons: First of all this approach makes clearer that Aquinas always speaks of God in connection with Christ; God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Who reveals Himself as He is in Christ (Col 1,15). Several more recent studies exemplify that Aquinas from the very beginning of the *Prima Pars* teaches about the triune God (and not first about *De Deo Uno* and then about *De Deo Trino*).

The second reason is that, it seems that to many contemporary Christians and even Christian theologians the connection between God and Christ is not self-evident anymore. My proposed approach of Thomas Aquinas' theology may elucidate that as a Christian one cannot speak about one without the other.

Finally, in the light of these two reasons this approach seems to be particularly fruitful with regard to the theme of suffering: Still 'Christian' theologians and philosophers write - even when commenting on Aquinas - about God's sufferings and ours without even mentioning Christ's! And I cannot imagine providing board for all regular churchgoers who hold that their sufferings and Christ's have nothing whatsoever to do with one another. Therefore starting with Christ's sufferings/Passion in a study on suffering and God, in which Thomas Aquinas' thoughts are central, may emphasize how tight they are interrelated, in Aquinas' theology as well as in Christian theology in general.

Aquinas' insights, the distinctions he made, his use of the language and the Christian tradition may indeed help us today whilst we consider the mystery of God with regard to the sufferings of Christ and humankind. For as Christian theologians we are not called to invent something new, but to formulate and explain the mysteries of

⁷ The Latin word *passio* means passion as well as suffering, enduring and undergoing.

our faith in a such a way, that it supports our faith. Therefore in order to do justice to what Aquinas is saying and to evaluate its usefulness for us, we can neither just run away with the method he used nor litterally repeat his words.

ANNUAL REPORT 1999

H.W.M. Rikhof, Director

1. Study and research in the Thomas Instituut

On May 28 a morning of study was organized, concentrated on the thesis of Ad Vennix, Department of Philosophy of the Catholic University of Nijmegen, dealing with, among other things, Aquinas's conception of truth. Rudi te Velde formulated some criticism on this interpretation. Both scholars author a contribution on that very topic in this Jaarboek.

On October 1st a day of study was devoted to the reception of Aquinas's thought. This day of study was intended to be the first fruit of three new post-doc projects that were started in 1998: the projects of Van Geest, Goris, and Leget. Van Geest concentrated on Gabriel Biel, Goris on Henry of Gorkum and Leget on Paul Ricoeur. Study and discussion were a first exercise on the way to the international congress of the Institute in the year 2000.

On February 26 Rudi te Velde delivered his inaugural lecture upon accepting a chair on the relations between christendom and philosophy, a chair under the auspices of the (so-called) Radboud foundation, at the University of Amsterdam. His lecture was entitled "The love of Socrates", and deals with the metaphysical foundation of the experience of and desire for meaning.

As of November a German doctoral student from Erlangen, Stefan Gradl, temporarily conducts his research in the Thomas Instituut, for a period of about a year. Gradl is preparing a dissertation on Aquinas and Luther on Happiness, under the guidance of prof. dr. H.G. Ulrich, Erlangen.

From January through June, prof. dr. H.W.M. Rikhof, director of the Institute, enjoyed a sabbatical leave, which was spent on writing a book on the theology of the Holy Trinity, in Oxford. During his absence he was replaced by dr. H.J.M. Schoot.

In the course of the year a number of research projects were stopped. This applies to the project of dr. J.B.M. Wissink, who was

appointed ordinary professor of Practical Theology at the Catholic Theological University of Utrecht. Dr. Wissink, however, will remain a member of the Institute. Dr. F.J.H. Vosman replaced his research in moral theology to the group of philosophers attached to the Catholic Theological University of Utrecht. The doctoral research of Angela Holleboom was stopped, due to urgent tasks in her community.

2. The board of the Institute and the Foundation

There were no personal mutations in the Board, convening on April 19, which applies as well to the Board of the Thomas Foundation, which convened on June 1 and November 2. Apart from the activities mentioned elsewhere in this report, the board of the Institute further prepared the interuniversitarian status of the Institute, and the consequent hiring of a new secretary of studies. To this end a delegation from the Institute met a delegation of the University on June 21, discussing an overview of publications by members of the Institute over the past five years, drafted for this occasion especially. The overview contained 141 publications. It also compared the contributions by the Utrecht (KTU) members over the past five years, with the results of the years 1989-1993; as it turned out the results almost doubled.

3. Jaarboek Thomas Instituut

The Jaarboek 1998 appeared in time in 1999. There were no personal mutations in the editorial board.

4. Series of Publications

Dr. W.G.B.M. Valkenberg prepared a reworked and rewritten version of his doctoral thesis, which was defended in 1990 and never formally published, on Aquinas' use of Scripture. With the financial support of both the Thomas foundation and the University of Nijmegen, Valkenberg was able to submit his manuscript in the summer of 1999. The book was released as Volume 6 of the Series, and due to the policy of the editor dated with the year 2000.

5. Translation Series

Thanks to the support of the Thomas Foundation, in the year under review the first volume in a new series of Dutch translations appeared. Carlo Leget published a translation, briefly introduced and annotated, of the *Collationes in decem praeceptis*, containing the Latin original as well (Meinema, Zoetermeer, 112pp.). The intent of the Institute is to publish a translation each year, and to concentrate on the smaller, more catechetical work of Aquinas. Translations of Aquinas' homilies on the Our Father and on the Apostles' Creed and the sacraments are in preparation.

6. Congress on "Aquinas as Authority?"

The Institute prepares for its second international congress, to be held in Leusden, the Netherlands, December 14 - 16, 2000. The Congress will be devoted to the reception of Aquinas' thought, and will be organised by the three post-doc researchers engaged in the research into the reception of parts of Aquinas' thought: Van Geest, Goris and Leget. The congress will have an international format, with an international call for papers and key speakers from England (Fergus Kerr), France (Serge-Thomas Bonino), Germany (Heribert zur Mühlen, Otto-Hermann Pesch) and the U.S.A. (Mark Jordan).

7. Members of the Thomas Instituut

December 31, 1999

Catholic	staff	— Prof. dr. H.W.M. Rikhof
Theological		— Prof. dr. J.B.M. Wissink
University		— Dr. H.J.M. Schoot
Utrecht		— Dr. F.J.H. Vosman
	post-docs	— Dr. P. van Geest
		— Dr. H.J.M.J. Goris
		— Dr. C.J.W. Leget
	candidates for a doctorate	— Drs. Tj. Jansen s.j.
		— Drs. F.G.B. Luijten
		— Drs. M.-R. Hoogland c.p.

- S. Gradl s.s.t.t. (Erlangen)
- Catholic University of Nijmegen staff
- Prof. dr. H.A.G. Braakhuis (Philosophy)
 — Prof. dr. P.J.M. van Tongeren (Philosophy)
 — Prof. dr. P.G.J.M. Raedts s.j. (History)
 — Dr. W.G.B.M. Valkenberg (Theology)
 — Prof. mr. dr. B.P.M. Vermeulen (Law)
- Tilburg Theological Faculty staff
- Prof. dr. K.-W. Merks
 — Prof. Dr. R.A. te Velde (University of Amsterdam, and Free University, Philosophy, as well)
- Utrecht University staff
- Dr. A. Vos (Theology)
 — Prof. dr. A. Orbán (Letters: late Latin)
- and
- Prof. dr. J.A. Aertsen (Thomas Institut, Cologne)
 — Prof. dr. Th.C.J. Beemer (emeritus Catholic University of Nijmegen — Theology)
 — Dr. J.G.J. van den Eijnden o.f.m. (Franciscan Centre of Studies, Utrecht)
 — Prof. dr. F.J.A. de Grijs (emeritus Catholic Theological University of Utrecht)
 — Drs. J.W.C.M. van Reisen (Augustinian Institute, Eindhoven)
 — Drs. P.L. van Veldhuijsen

— Dr. L.G.M. Winkeler (Catholic Documentation Centre, Nijmegen).

8. Research programmes and research projects

The projects mentioned are the ones that are carried out by members of the Institute. Each programme consists of several projects.

The theology of Thomas Aquinas, its sources and its influence on subsequent theology

(Catholic Theological University of Utrecht)

Reception of Aquinas' doctrine of sacraments by Matthias Scheeben

— H.W.M. Rikhof

Forgiveness as gift of the Spirit. Thomas on the sacrament of confession.

— F.G.B. Luijten, H.W.M. Rikhof

Embodying grace. An analysis of the texts of the feast of Corpus Christi

— Tj. Jansen

Christologia Recepta. On the reception of Aquinas' christology 1300-1600

— H.J.M. Schoot

God's crucial almightiness. Thomas on the relation between God's almightiness and the passion of Christ

— M.R. Hoogland, H.W.M. Rikhof

Life is always a good

- C.J.W. Leget

The theological relevance of Kalam and falsifa for human God-talk in the medieval dialogue between Muslims and Christians

- W.G.B.M. Valkenberg

Gabriel Biel, a devout theologian. Research into the interrelatedness of spirituality of the Devotio Moderna and academic theology in the work of Gabriel Biel

- P. van Geest

The reception of Aquinas' doctrine of God in the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth century

- H.J.M.J. Goris

Current processes of transformation in theological ethics

(Tilburg Theological Faculty)

Current meaning of Aquinas' ethics

— K.-W. Merks

Metaphysics in Aquinas and the Thomist tradition

— R.A. te Velde

Individual Projects

The question of the eternity of the world in Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Siger of Brabant and Boethius of Dacia

— P.L. van Veldhuijsen

Catholicism as religious and social component in Dutch history

— L.G.M. Winkeler

Subject and normativity (programme)

— P.J.M. van Tongeren

'De passionibus animae' in Thomas Aquinas

— Th.C.J. Beemer

9. Publications in 1999

Scientific publications

Geest, P. van - Einige Bemerkungen zur R. Weinbrenner, Klosterreform im 15. Jahrhundert zwischen Ideal und Praxis. Der Augustinereremit Andreas Proles (1429-1503) und die privilegierte Observanz - Augustiniana (1998) 286-291

Leget, C.J.W. - Thomas van Aquino. Over de Tien Geboden. Ingeleid, vertaald en geannoteerd door Carlo Leget - Meinema/Zoetermeer (1999) 112 pp

Rikhof, H.W.M. - Linguaggio e analogia nella teologia trinitaria - A. Danese, G.P. di Nicola (red) Il Machile e la Teologia, Bologna (1999) 67-80

Rikhof, H.W.M. - Onvermoede waardigheid. Over het kinschap Gods en de inwoning van de Heilige Geest - J. Haers, T.

- Merrigan, P. De Mey (red) 'Het volk van God en de gemeenschap van de gelovigen'. Pleidooien voor een zorgzame kerkopbouw aangeboden aan professor Robrecht Michiels bij zijn emeritaat, Leuven (1999).
- Schoot, H.J.M. (red.) - Jaarboek 1998 Thomas Instituut te Utrecht - Utrecht (1999) 153pp (Introduction, 7-9)
- Schoot, H.J.M. - Christologia recepta: Fray Luis de León, Deel II - Jaarboek 1998 Thomas Instituut te Utrecht - Utrecht (1999), 95-129
- Schoot, H.J.M. - Is God de Eeuwige? - Speling (1999) nr.4, 36-43
- Velde, R.A. te - Een wijzing van de natuur? Over de natuurlijke zedenwet - W. Derkse, P.A. van Gennip, S. Waanders (red), Ontmoetingen van geloof en wereld. Perspectieven op katholieke levensbeschouwing - Damon/Best, (1999) 213-232
- Velde, R.A. te - De liefde van Socrates. Oratie uitgesproken bij de aanvaarding van het ambt van bijzonder hoogleraar vanwege de Radboudstichting in de betrekkingen tussen christendom en wijsbegeerte aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam op vrijdag 26 februari 1999 - Vossiuspers AUP/Amsterdam, 32pp.
- Velde, R.A. te - Thomas over de plaats en betekenis van matigheid binnen een christelijke levenswijze - Communio, internationaal katholiek tijdschrift 24/5 (1999) 339-358.
- Velde, R.A. te - The Concept of the Good according tot Thomas Aquinas - Wouter Goris (hrsg.), Die Metaphysik und das Gute. Aufsätze zu ihrem Verhältnis in Antike und Mittelalter, Jan A. Aertsen zu Ehren - Peeters/Leuven (1999) 79-104.
- Velde, R.A. te - Een redelijk wezen van vlees en bloed. Thomas over de verhouding van passie en rede - Th. de Boer e.a., De razende Socrates. Hartstocht en rede in de filosofie van Socrates tot Derrida - Agora/Baarn (1999) 43-66.
- Vosman, F.J.H. - Macht en geweld in het pastoraat. Een bijdrage aan theorievorming over normatieve professionaliteit- Praktische Humanistiek 8,3 (1999) 33-49
- Vosman, F.J.H. - Zwijgen over wat goed bleek te zijn. Het spreken van de Rooms-Katholieke Kerk over homoseksuele betrekkingen- A.-M. Korte, F. Vosman, Th. De Wit (red.), De ordening van het verlangen. Vriendschap, verwantschap en (homo)seksualiteit in joodse en christelijke tradities, Meinema

/Zoetermeer (1999) 45-67.

- Wissink, J.B.M. - Katholieke levensbeschouwing - filosofie en theologie. Beschouwingen vanuit de theologie - W. Derkse, P.A. van Gennip, S. Waanders (red) - Ontmoetingen van geloof en wereld. Perspectieven op katholieke levensbeschouwing - Damon/Best (1999), 33-49
- Wissink, J.B.M. - Rome, heilige stad, H. Heymans e.a. (red) Wereldsteden. Stadswandelingen door filosofie en theologie - Gooi & Sticht (1999) 53-66
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