

Introduction

In his introductory monograph Aidan Nichols tentatively argued for a new renaissance in the study of the thought of Thomas Aquinas.¹ The large number of introductions to his thought and translations of his works, which have subsequently appeared, attest to the fact that a growing number of scholars today find his thought still worth reading and understanding.² From a Catholic perspective, this renaissance inevitably means engaging in reflections on the way in which Thomism can be renewed after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and what it means to be a Thomist today.³ Such a *post*-conciliar renewal of Thomism, in particular in a context of prolonged postmodernity, will exhibit the features of a new phenomenon which is being coined in relation to a previous form of thought.⁴

The typically modern separation of speculative theology and biblical exegesis is foreign to the mind of Thomas Aquinas.⁵ In fact, as Gilbert Dahan has observed,

¹ Aidan Nichols, *Discovering Aquinas. An Introduction to his Life, Work and Influence* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2002).

² Some recent examples are Philip McCosker & Denys Turner, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Summa Theologiae* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2016); Volker Leppin ed., *Thomas Handbuch* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck 2016); Jason Eberl, *The Routledge Guidebook to Aquinas' Summa Theologiae* (Oxford: Routledge 2016); Pasquale Porro, *Thomas Aquinas: a historical and philosophical profile* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press 2016).

³ See Joseph A. DiNoia, "Thomism After Thomism: Aquinas and the Future of Theology," in *The Future of Thomism*, ed. Deal W. Hudson and Dennis William Moran (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 231-245; John Haldane, "Thomism and the Future of Catholic Philosophy," *New Blackfriars* 80 (1999), 158-169; Serge-Thomas Bonino, "To be a Thomist," *Nova et Vetera* 4 (2010), 763-773; Idem, "Le thomisme de 1962 à 2012. Vue panoramique," *Nova et Vetera* (Fribourg) 87 (2012), 419-446; Thomas J. White, "Thomism after Vatican II," *Nova et Vetera* 12 (2014), 1045-1062.

⁴ Tracy Rowland, *Culture and the Thomist Tradition. After Vatican II* (Routledge: London-New York 2003).

⁵ Matthew Levering, *Participatory Biblical Exegesis: A Theology of Biblical Interpretation* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 2008). On the origins of this separation see C. Kevin Rawe and Richard B. Hayes, "Biblical Studies," *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, John

Thomas Aquinas is situated in the final phase of the process of differentiation of speculative theology and biblical exegesis, or in other words, he is still able to combine them despite their differences at a time when many of his contemporaries thought that the two disciplines would diverge and create alternative worlds.⁶ In fact, for a medieval *Magister in Sacra Pagina* such as Thomas Aquinas, the Master's threefold office of *lectio*, *disputatio* and *preaedicatio* constitute such a unity that the expressions *sacra doctrina*, *theologia* and *sacra Scriptura* are considered to be synonyms and "designate the whole of divine teaching foundation on Revelation."⁷

Thomas Aquinas is indeed a witness of the times in which the transition from the narrative typology of monastic theology, based on a *lectio divina*, to the scholastic version of biblical exegesis, emphasizing the *quaestio* as an interpretative tool for understanding Revelation, took place.⁸ The *sacra doctrina*, which grew out of this scholastic perspective, however, is not intended on 'freezing' the intellectual reflection on Revelation but remains located within a creative tension between biblical exegesis and speculative understanding. This creative tension offers a framework in which ever deepening reflection is not restricted but on the contrary functions as a fertile environment corresponding to, as Henri de Lubac observed, the Latin term *humus*.⁹ Aquinas' exegesis is explicitly and implicitly imbued with metaphysics for

Webster, Kathryn Tanner, and Iain Torrance eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 435-455.

⁶ Gilbert Dahan, "Thomas Aquinas: Exegesis and Hermeneutics," in *Reading Sacred Scripture with Thomas Aquinas. Hermeneutical Tools, Theological Questions and New Perspectives*, eds. Piotr Roszak and Jörgen Vijgen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 45-70, here 45. For an introduction into this *lectio divina* see Duncan Robertson, *Lectio Divina: The Medieval Experience of Reading* (Collegeville, Minn. : Liturgical Press, 2011).

⁷ Gilles Emery, "Biblical Exegesis and the Speculative Doctrine of the Trinity in St. Thomas Aquinas's Commentary on St. John," in *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas, Theological Exegesis and Speculative Theology*, ed. by Michael Dauphinais & Matthew Levering (Washington D.C.: CUA Press, 2005), 23-61, here 56. See also Petrus Cantor, *Verbum adbreuiatum*, textus prior, I: "In tribus igitur consistit exercitium sacre Scripture: circa lectionem, disputationem et predicationem [...]. Lectio autem est quasi fundamentum et substratorium sequentium quia per eam cetera utilitates comparantur. Disputatio quasi paries est in hoc exercicio et edificio ; quia "Nichil plene intelligitur fideliterue predicatur nisi prius dente disputationis frangatur". Predicatio uero, cui subseruiunt priora, quasi tectum est tegens fideles ab estu et a turbine uiciorum. Post lectionem igitur sacre Scripture et dubitabilium disputationem et inquisitionem, et non prius, predicandum est, ut sic cortina cortinam trahat, etc." (CCCM 196 A, 14-15, ll. 37-48).

⁸ Philip Rosemann, "What is an Author? Divine and Human Authorship in Some Mid-Thirteenth-Century Commentaries on the Book of Sentence," *Archa Verbi* 12 (2015), 35-64; Mireille Chazan, Gilbert Dahan eds., *Le méthode critique au Moyen Age* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006).

⁹ Henri de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis. Volume 1: The Four Senses of Scripture* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 75-82.

speculative reasoning is regarded as an integral tool for explicating the biblical message and not as a hindrance to its meaning.¹⁰ Many centuries before, Jerome already emphasized that the Gospel does not consist in the words of Scripture but in the meaning: “it is not [hidden] in the leaves of mere words but in the root of reason.”¹¹ Gadamer’s view that the task of hermeneutics should consist in awakening the word from its imprisonment in the text resembles Thomas’ idea of the task of exegesis and theology (*sacra doctrina*) which is born from reading Sacred Scripture. For Thomas theological reflection should ultimately contemplate the fittingness (*convenientia*) of God’s activity in history and try to discover that the Word is not a ‘dead’ text but is charged with interpretations which human words cannot fully exhaust. Such a theological reflection contains in itself therefore a pedagogical dimension, teaching how to respond to the self-revelation of God, whose testimony is Scripture.¹²

Towards defining Biblical Thomism

Among many attempts to deal with the heritage of Thomas Aquinas, there is one particular type of Thomism which tentatively starts to play its role, namely Biblical Thomism. Its origins may be found in the works of the Belgian Dominican Servais Pinckaers¹³ and have been creatively developed by Matthew Levering and others.

¹⁰ Influential in this respect is Matthew Levering, *Scripture and Metaphysics. Aquinas and the Renewal of Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell 2004). It is worthwhile emphasizing the central role of contemplation in theological practice and Christian biblical exegesis as preparing Aquinas’ position. It formed a crucial part in the exegesis of the School of St. Victor and in particular in Hugo of St. Victor’s *Didascalicon*. Cf. Piotr Roszak, “Exégesis y metafísica. En torno a la hermenéutica bíblica de Tomás de Aquino,” *Salmanticensis* 61 (2014), 301-323.

¹¹ Jerome, *Commentary on Galatians*, Book 1, trans. Andrew Cain (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press 2010), 127. Cf. Aline Canellis, “Jerome’s hermeneutics: how to exegete the Bible?,” in *Patristic Theories of Biblical Interpretation. The Latin Fathers*, ed. Tarmo Toom (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge 2016), 49-76.

¹² On the relationship between the Revelation and Holy Scripture in Thomas Aquinas’ works see Piotr Roszak, “Revelation and Scripture. Exploring the Scriptural Foundation of *sacra doctrina* in Thomas Aquinas,” *Angelicum* 93 (2016), 191-218.

¹³ Tracey Rowland, *Ratzinger’s Faith. The Theology of Pope Benedict XVI* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 27. In this regard Rowland notes that a central element in Pinckaers’ thought is a focus on the telos of the human person in light of the believer’s response to the call of the Triune God as revealed in Scriptures and tradition. See also John Berkman, C. Steven Titus (eds.), *The Pinckaers Reader* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2005). It was Thomas O’Meara who coined this term in his description of Servais Pinckaers’ Thomistic ethics: “Interpreting Thomas Aquinas: Aspects of the Dominican School of Moral Theology in the

Although the study of Scripture, and in particular Thomas Aquinas' interpretation, and of the Church Fathers¹⁴ set the tone, Biblical Thomism does not intend to introduce yet another type of Thomism as the use of the adjective 'biblical' might suggest. Nor is it primarily concerned with materially retrieving Aquinas' thought or to present his biblical exegesis as a culmination point in the history of biblical exegesis. It rather seeks to understand and employ the praxis of *sacra doctrina*, as exemplified primarily by Thomas Aquinas, and the pivotal role of Scripture in such a speculative engagement with Revelation as a way to overcome modern separations.¹⁵ Hans Urs von Balthasar once observed that modern liberal exegesis functions as an intellectual cordon, paradoxically making access to Jesus more difficult. He compared it to the crowd and its scribes and Pharisees, the exegetes of the Old Law, who surrounded Christ and formed a cordon which made it difficult for Mary and Jesus' relatives to approach Christ.¹⁶ Biblical Thomism thus aims at a vision of the *whole* of Scripture.

The whole of Scripture includes the role of the *auctoritates*, an insight which is paradoxical from the modern viewpoint of a separation between disciplines. For Aquinas *sacra doctrina* is understood as the link that maintains a life-giving relationship with other branches of knowledge. In other words, theology cannot be the 'queen of the sciences' once it isolates itself from other spheres of knowledge. The authority of these sources is not negative as in closing an investigation nor dialectical as in demonstrating the existence of contrary or even contradictory positions but rather follows the logic of the *catena*, the chain, in which each link is important and cannot be ignored on the way to the truth. Engaging the thought of Aquinas or practicing theology with Aquinas without taking into consideration his approach to the *auctoritates* and concentrating on his solutions runs the risk of repeating without understanding.¹⁷ For this reason the exegesis of the Church Fathers plays an im-

Twentieth Century," in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. Stephen J. Pope (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 363–366.

¹⁴ See also Reinhard Hütter and Matthew Levering eds., *Ressourcement Thomism: Sacra Doctrina, the Sacraments, and the Moral Life* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2010).

¹⁵ Piotr Roszak, "Biblia i metafizyka: ku tomizmowi biblijnemu," in Tomasz z Akwinu, *Wykład Listu do Kolosan, Super Epistolam B. Pauli ad Colossenses lectura* (Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe UMK, 2012), 9–21.

¹⁶ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Does Jesus know us? Do we know Him?* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1983); for an analysis of Balthasar's highly nuanced position on the historical-critical method see Edward T. Oakes, "Balthasar's Critique of the Historical-Critical Method," in *Glory, Grace and Culture. The Work of Hans Urs von Balthasar*, ed. Ed Block jr. (Mahwah NJ : Paulist Press, 2005), 150–174.

¹⁷ Juan J. De Miguel, "Los Padres de la Iglesia en la criteriología de Santo Tomás de Aquino," *Scripta Theologica* 7 (1975), 125–161; Leo Elders, "Thomas Aquinas and the Fathers of the

portant part in Biblical Thomism. Thomistic biblical exegesis, moreover, draws our attention to the ecclesial nature of biblical exegesis, that is to the community of the Church as the proper hermeneutical space for reading Scripture (*in medio Ecclesiae*).

The variety of these voices expresses Thomas' conviction that the Word of God has unlimited possibilities which can never be exhausted. Its nature is infinite like God himself who does not only speak in words but also through the events of salvation history. Thomas is convinced that the Bible is a unique book because, unlike other books, it includes not only 'words' but also 'events.' God uses both words and events which the words describe. What happened in the past is rendered with the help of inspired words and opens interpretative possibilities which are handed down through the literal and spiritual meanings. As such medieval biblical hermeneutics does not treat history in a modern, linear way but emphasizes its participatory function within God's providential plan.¹⁸ Thomas' reading of the Bible originates from this insight and is therefore based on the primacy of the 'event' over the 'text', of the *res* over the *enuntiabile*.¹⁹ Given the infinite nature of God and His Word, Thomas does not view the Bible *unisono* but allows for the multiplicity of interpretations on different levels. His favorite *Denkform* is that of 'symphonicity' in which the same truth is illuminated from many perspectives and resounds in many tunes. For this reason, the frequent use of the Latin *vel* (or) in his search for the meaning of a biblical passage is not indicative of an intellectual incapacity but is a characteristic feature of his exegesis.

It is because of this symphonicity that Thomas' exegesis constantly displays a shift of perspectives and offers options of alternative interpretations which are rarely judged in terms of being right or wrong although Thomas frequently states that a given interpretation is better (*melior est*). His exegetical procedures play an important role here. One of these is citing or juxtaposing several quotations from different books of Scripture. These are not meant as a mere documentation but as a confirmation of the correctness of his interpretation, a kind of a "railroad switch" which frequently guides to an unexpected track.²⁰ Mutual conversation and interaction between citations serves the purpose of embedding the reader in a new interpretative

Church," in *Theological innovation and the Shaping of Tradition. The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West from the Carolingians to the Maurists*, ed. Ignaz Backus (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 337-366; Piotr Roszak, "Wokół konceptu auctoritas w teologii św. Tomasza z Akwinu," *Człowiek w Kulturze* 22 (2011/2012), 67-90.

¹⁸ *Participatory Biblical Exegesis: A Theology of Biblical Interpretation* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008).

¹⁹ *ST I-II*, q. 1, a. 2 arg. 2.

²⁰ For a more detailed analysis see Piotr Roszak, "The Place and Function of Biblical Citations in Thomas Aquinas' exegesis," in *Reading Sacred Scripture with Thomas Aquinas. Hermeneutical*

context as if searching for a better light to illuminate a biblical passage and in doing so to facilitate contemplation. After all, the outcome of this exegetical practice is not the intellectual fulfillment of the reader but an intense *praedicatio*, namely the proclamation of the kerygma which results in a change of life.

Aquinas's biblical commentaries versus the Summa Theologiae

Biblical commentaries do not constitute an isolated area of Thomas' work but are deeply connected to other forms of doing theology and in particular to his *Summa Theologiae*. One only has to recall that the writing of biblical commentaries and systematical works were often parallel efforts. For instance, in Orvieto he simultaneously interpreted the Book of Job, worked on the Third Book of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* and made preparations for the *Secunda Pars* of his *Summa Theologiae*. He worked in a similar manner on the commentary on the Letter of Paul to the Romans and the treatise on grace in the *Summa*.²¹ But there is more. His deeper penetration of certain passages from Scripture leads Aquinas to develop his thought. As Daria Spezzano²² has shown with reference to 2 Peter 1:4 ("Thus he has given us, through these things, his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of lust, and may become participants of the divine nature"), Thomas at some stages of his life emphasizes more the first part of the quotation, namely the greatness of promises given to man in Christ and at other stages the second part of the passage, i.e. the results of these promises: the participation in the divine nature. This example shows that for Thomas the interaction with Scripture as part of his academic duties of *lectio* and *praedicatio* allowed for a multiplicity of theological questions but it also shows that biblical citations do not merely function as ornaments nor as arguments but also constitute a trace of the origin of a particular insight of Aquinas. His biblical commentaries can also be helpful in understanding his *Summa*. In the *sed contra* there are citations which Thomas does not develop. In order to reconstruct his thought and understand the argumentative force of the citation, it is therefore necessary to return to the com-

Tools, Theological Questions and New Perspectives, eds. Piotr Roszak and Jürgen Vijgen (Brepols, Turnhout 2015), 115-139.

²¹ Shawn M. Colberg, "Aquinas and the Grace of Auxilium," *Modern Theology* 32 (2016), 187-210.

²² Daria Spezzano, *The Glory of God's Grace. Deification according to St. Thomas Aquinas* (Ave Maria FL: Sapientia Press, 2015).

mentaries and understand the whole context of his thought. Biblical commentaries reveal the importance and priority of Revelation in Scripture for theological reflection but also the place of philosophical reflection, for the insertion of philosophical arguments within his biblical commentaries show an exegete and theologian at work trying to bring faith and reason into harmony.²³

Trying to establish the value of the biblical commentaries for understanding Aquinas' thought should not therefore proceed according to the part: part principle. That is to say, the complementary nature of both types of works is not of primary importance but more so the reconstruction of a specific chain of thought (*catena*) originating from the Bible. In other words, the goal is not to look for what is missing from his commentaries or from the *Summa* but to understand more clearly the way in which Aquinas does theology.

The contribution of this volume

The essays in this volume are intended as a continuation of earlier research.²⁴ In Part One, three essays approach Aquinas' exegesis from the perspective of the heuristic tools he employs to engage with Scripture.

Anthony Giambrone investigates the function of the prologues to Aquinas' fourteen commentaries on the Letters of Paul. Historically, he argues for a strong conceptual link between these prologues and Aquinas' inaugural lecture *Hic est Liber*. In terms of the formal conventions and innovations, he explores the ways in which the prologues form a mendicant fusion of the monastic and school traditions. In Aquinas' identification of ecclesial grace in Head and Members as the comprehensive subject of the Pauline corpus, Giambrone sees a theological aesthetic at work which assumes the Scriptures' harmonious polyphony. On the basis of these insights he proposes two ways in which modern insights into the Pauline corpus can be put in dialogue with Thomas' reading.

Randall Smith argues that an analysis of Aquinas' inception address as Regent Master in Theology at the University of Paris (1256), known as *Rigans montes*, provides us with a valuable clue to how these medieval masters viewed the Scriptures but also with important insights into how medieval theologians were trained and

²³ Jörgen Vijgen, "The use of Aristotle in Aquinas's biblical commentaries," in *Reading Sacred Scripture with Thomas Aquinas. Hermeneutical Tools, Theological Questions and New Perspectives*, eds. Piotr Roszak and Jörgen Vijgen (Turnhout: Brepols 2015), 287-346.

²⁴ Piotr Roszak, Jörgen Vijgen (eds.), *Reading Sacred Scripture with Thomas Aquinas. Hermeneutical Tools, Theological Questions and New perspectives*, Brepols, Turnhout 2015.

what habits of mind they developed, that is, what conditions ought to characterize masters and students and how the doctrine of Scriptures ought to be communicated. Smith argues that Aquinas has an implicitly incarnational approach to teaching and learning based on a sacramental metaphysics of teaching.

The contribution by Michał Mrozek intends to offer us an exhaustive and detailed quantitative and qualitative analysis of the use of Scripture in the *Summa Theologiae* I-II, qq. 49-70, a large treatise dealing with habits, virtues, gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit and the beatitudes and in which both philosophy, and in particular Aristotle, and Scripture are the dominant sources for Aquinas. Following the work of Pim Valkenberg, he distinguishes between three levels (macro-level, meso-level, and micro-level) of the use of Scripture according to its function in the text. For Mrozek, Scripture allows Aquinas to reread and refine Aristotle but Aquinas also reads Scripture through the lens of mainly Aristotelian categories. There exists therefore a real and deeply reciprocal influence between Scripture and philosophy.

In Part Two of the volume, two contributions deal with various aspects of Aquinas' Christology. Piotr Roszak analyses Aquinas' eschatological terminology for describing the 'last judgment' in his biblical commentaries. The analysis reveals both his understanding of history and salvation as well as Christ's dignity as judge of history. After discussing the nature of divine judgment and its criteria (the priority of the good and the fruits of human life under grace, understood as *pondus animae*), Roszak discusses the features of Aquinas' eschatology and its consequences for the Christian moral life.

Mateusz Przanowski engages in a careful textual comparative analysis of Aquinas' commentary on Philippians 2:7 and John 1:14 as exhibiting two seemingly opposed Christological traditions. He argues that Aquinas' method of biblical exegesis and in particular his manner of citing Scriptural passages *per ideam* enables Aquinas to overcome this opposition but also to place Phil 2:6-11 in a broader context than contemporary exegesis is able to do.

The Third Part of the volume deals with important aspects of the moral life. Michael Sherwin offers a preliminary "sketch" of the manner in which Thomas Aquinas in his biblical commentaries employs the psychology of love he develops in his systematic works. His investigation shows that the two main elements of his systematical psychology of love can also be found in these commentaries, i.e. love as an affective principle of action and the will's love as a twofold love (loving something for itself and loving something in relation to another), whereby one wills good to another. Although Thomas avoids some of the technical vocabulary he employs in the *Scriptum* and the *Summa*, he nonetheless applies his understanding of love as passive

principle and of love as act to help the reader better understand the biblical message concerning love, both human and divine.

Enrique Alarcón argues that the harmony of faith and reason, which Thomas illustrated on the basis of Aristotle's philosophy, also extends to the coherence between Aristotelian ethics and the evangelical morality of the Beatitudes. Although Thomas holds that ultimately happiness is beyond even the most perfect natural human life and is only given by a supernatural participation in the very life of God, the morality of Aristotle is, as Thomas explains, not contrary to it.

In his contribution Cajetan Cuddy starts by recounting, with the help of Joseph Ratzinger, how the promised renewal of postconciliar moral theology resulted in the abandonment of both the Bible and the natural law. The Pontifical Biblical Commission's 2008 document *The Bible and Morality: Biblical Roots of Christian Conduct* attempts to overcome this abandonment. Cuddy turns to Thomas Aquinas for some direction with regard to the document's main thesis: the relationship between the Bible and the natural law in moral theology. He analyzes Aquinas' comments on Romans 1:18-32 and 2:14-15 in relation to his summary of natural law inclinations in *Summa theologiae* I-II, q. 94, a. 2 and argues for a theonomic orientation within natural law.

Paul Rogers draws on Aquinas' commentary on chapters 12 and 14 of Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians in order to shed light on how Aquinas sees the social function of prophecy in the Church (and, by extension, the Church's function in the world) to testify to the truths of the Christian faith and, especially, to moral truth. He argues that Thomas' treatment of Paul's teaching about the superiority of prophecy over the gift of tongues revives an important theme for moral theology today: namely, how the members of the Church are called to live as effective witnesses to the truths of faith and, particularly, to moral truths as taught within and by the ecclesial community and shaped especially by prayer — both public and private.

Jörgen Vijgen deals with an often-neglected aspect of Aquinas' and the Catholic Church's understanding of marriage as a *remedium concupiscentiae*. Drawing on Thomas' commentary on 1 Corinthians 7: 1-9 he explores five presuppositions at work in the background of this text: medicinal grace, the hierarchy among essential ends, the nature of concupiscence and pleasure, the need for sacramental grace and original sin. A correct and comprehensive account of these presuppositions is needed, so he argues, to account for the intelligibility of marriage as *remedium concupiscentiae*.

Matthew Levering offers an extensive systematical and biblical analysis of Aquinas' reasons for the indissolubility of marriage. He first explores Thomas Aquinas' arguments for the natural indissolubility of marriage, as these arguments are found in his systematical work. Second, he investigates his view on supernatural

or sacramental indissolubility, especially in light of his Commentary on Ephesians (specifically Ephesians 5). Third, he examines Aquinas's discussion of two seeming exceptions to the indissolubility of marriage: the so-called "Pauline privilege," which allows the marriage of unbaptized persons to be dissolved, and Jesus' allowance for divorce in cases of porneia in Matthew 19:9. In doing so, he attends both to his Commentary on the Sentences as well as to his Commentary on Matthew. As a final step, he compares Aquinas's position with that of leading contemporary historical-critical scholarship. In doing so, he argues for a fruitful interplay of Aquinas's philosophical theology with biblical exegesis.

It will be clear that the essays share a perspective on Aquinas' thought as rooted in and emerging from Scripture. Precisely as a theological and speculative exegesis of Scripture, Aquinas' thought can contribute to building a bridge between biblical and systematic theology.