



## Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* and the moral instruction in the 13<sup>th</sup> century<sup>1</sup>

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**ABSTRACT.** We analyzed part of *Suma Theologiae's* Vices and Sins by Thomas Aquinas (1224? -1274). We intended to highlight and consider aspects related to the knowledge production, education and moral formation of novices from the Order of Preachers in the thirteenth century. The *Summa Theologiae* is a theology compendium that has been read, fought and defended over the centuries. We believe that by highlighting its internal structure and the arrangement of the arguments employed by Thomas Aquinas we may provide an important instrument to studies on these elements. Based on the deadly sins, we came to the conclusion that, for instance, we can analyze moral and theological issues concerning sin and the development process of a work that is proposed as a compendium to organize the disorder in which the sacred science was, according to the theologian.

**Keywords:** sins, theology, Dominicans.

### A *Suma Teológica* de Tomás de Aquino e a instrução moral no século XIII

**RESUMO.** Analisamos a parte dos Vícios e dos Pecados na *Suma Teológica* de Tomás de Aquino (1224?-1274). Pretendemos evidenciar e considerar aspectos relacionados à produção de conhecimento, ensino e formação moral dos iniciantes em teologia da Ordem dos Pregadores no século XIII. A *Suma Teológica* é um compêndio de teologia que foi lido, combatido e defendido ao longo de séculos. Acreditamos que ao iluminar sua estrutura interna e a disposição dos argumentos utilizados por Tomás de Aquino fornecemos um importante instrumento para os estudos sobre esses elementos. Concluímos que a partir do tema dos pecados capitais, por exemplo, podemos analisar questões teológicas e morais sobre o pecado e o processo de elaboração de uma obra que se propõe como um compêndio para organizar a desordem na qual a ciência sagrada se encontrava, segundo o teólogo.

**Palavras-chave:** pecados, teologia, Dominicanos.

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**RESUMEN.** Analizamos la parte de los Vicios y los Pecados en la *Suma Teológica* de Tomás de Aquino (1224?-1274). Pretendemos evidenciar y considerar aspectos relacionados a la producción de conocimiento, enseñanza y formación moral de los principiantes en teología de la Orden de los Predicadores en el siglo XIII. La *Suma Teológica* es un compendio de teología que fue leído, combatido y defendido a lo largo de siglos. Creemos que al iluminar su estructura interna y la disposición de los argumentos utilizados por Tomás de Aquino proporcionamos un importante instrumento para los estudios sobre estos elementos. Concluimos que a partir del tema de los pecados capitales, por ejemplo, podemos analizar cuestiones teológicas y morales sobre el pecado y el proceso de elaboración de una obra que se propone como un compendio para organizar el desorden en el cual la ciencia sagrada se encontraba, según el teólogo.

**Palabras clave:** pecados, teología, Dominicanos.

#### Introduction

This article presents some remarks on Saint Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* (ST). The objectives are to present and discuss the chaining of

ideas and arguments employed by the theologian in the construction of the 'vices and sins' section, with special attention to carnal sins and prostitution. We seek to insert Aquinas' work into its context of production, avoiding the risk of self-explanation for the work and/or preventing the context from being offered as the only source for interpretation of ideas. In this way, the text is subdivided into two thematic blocks: the first one presents biographical data on Aquinas'

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journey; the second one presents elements for the comprehension and analysis of the ST, with highlight to the treaty on vices and sins.

A key concept in this proposal is that of 'intellectual'. It refers to the environment of production of the analyzed documentation, of formation of the investigation's historical subject, as well as to the target audience of its reflections. According to Jacques Le Goff, said term does not come from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, but identifies school teachers that had as their craft to think and to teach their thinking (LE GOFF, 2003). To Jacques Paul, the intellectual lived within an education system that transmitted a type of knowledge that was not learned through imitation, possessing a language, methods and 'curricula' (PAUL, 2003). Nevertheless, Jacques Verger accuses the anachronism of the term that, by itself, would reveal its explanatory insufficiency. To the author, the most adequate category would be 'gens du livre' or 'men of knowledge'. According to him, the expression comprises two elements that characterize the group that Thomas Aquinas has certainly composed: the mastery of a level of knowledge and the claim for practical competences founded on acquired pieces of knowledge (VERGER, 1999).

Analyzing the two definitions (intellectual and men of knowledge), we believe that both are complementary and equally anachronistic. However, as analytical categories, they are equally useful. Taking as example the terms used by St. Thomas Aquinas in the ST's Foreword (*eruditionem incipientium e doctrinae novitius*), it is possible to infer that those expressions do not lose the employed sense. In this way, to 'facilitate', we opted for 'intellectual', as its current association with specific socio-professional groups makes the identification with the men of knowledge to which Thomas Aquinas wrote and of which he was part more straightforward (TOMÁS DE AQUINO, 2001-2006)<sup>2</sup>.

### **Thomas Aquinas in evidence: a controversial, polemical and saint intellectual**

According to Guilherme de Tocco, first Aquinas' hagiographer, those were the words uttered by a 'spiritu vir', of good name, that appeared to Aquinas' mother, Teodora, when she was pregnant. Her son and the journey of his life are announced: him being sending to the monastery in Monte Cassino, his

admittance to the Order of Preachers and his wisdom and holiness when alive to the point that none of his contemporaries could imitate or be similar to him (GUILIELMO DE TOCCO, 1668). Written for Aquinas' canonization, between 1319 and 1323, this *vita* indicates that, between the death of the character in 1274 and his papal recognition, fifty years have passed. In that period, he was the target of controversies, such as the 1277 condemnations by the Paris' bishop, Étienne Tempier. If we include the period in which he lived, 1224?-1274, there are other controversies as well, as the quarrelling on beggars in 1254-1256, when the young Thomas wrote the 'Contra impugnantes Dei cultum et religionem' (Against Those who Assail the Worship of God and Religion) defending the religious calling of beggars and its compatibility with university teaching and the receipt by the services provided. In this text, the theologian defended that the brotherhood of preachers would form a 'societas studii' (FORTES, 2011).

Son of Landolfo and Teodora – nobles of Aquinas' county (Kingdom of the Two Sicilies) –, Thomas Aquinas was born in a numerous family: his father was in his second marriage and had brought three children from the first one. With Teodora he had four men (Thomas was the youngest one) and five women. At the age of five, Thomas Aquinas was taken to Monte Cassino's abbey, where he stayed until around 1239 (NASCIMENTO, 1992). Then, he went to Napoli, where he studied.

According to Otto H. Pesch, Thomas was a distant relative to Federico II on his mother's side. Two of his brothers served in the army of that emperor. The relationship with Federico II and the papacy were marked by conflicts and land disputes, as well as by his excommunication in 1227, which was canceled by Gregory IX in 1230, after the conquest of Jerusalem in the Crusade headed by the emperor. In that very same decade, the Pope started a campaign against the emperor due to the Constitutions of Melfi (1231), which regulated the rights of ownership in imperial lands. In 1241, after the death of Gregory IX, his successor Innocent IV excommunicated Federico again, and even dethroned him in 1245 (PESCH, 1992).

While the emperor was fighting against the pope, in 1244 Thomas Aquinas joined the Order of Dominicans. According to Pesch, "[...] sería algo así como si dicho hijo de un gran industrial fuese a vivir en una comuna" (PESCH, 1992, p. 87). Landolfo had just died and Teodora took on the family's control. Unhappy with the attitude of her son, she

<sup>2</sup>The usual forms for reference to the work were followed for the location, in the source, of the cited excerpts. For instance, I, Q. 23, a.1, sol., vol. 1, 450-451. It reads: First Part, Question 23, article 1, solution to the question... terms like 'obj.1', 'rep.1', 'r. arg' will appear, meaning 'objection 1', 'reply to objection 1' and 'reverse argument', respectively, always followed by volume and corresponding pages.

asked the other two that were fighting with Federico II to kidnap their brother. Thomas stayed secluded for about a year.

Between 1245 and 1252 he lived in Paris and Cologne. In that period, he became a disciple and assistant to Alberto Magno. In 1252, before the recommended age for being granted the title of 'magister' (30 years), Thomas Aquinas experienced the quarrelling on beggars in Paris. According to Pesch, in 1256 lay people did not allow students to attend the inaugural class of the new teacher. In 1259, already recognized for his intellectual acuity, Thomas Aquinas was invited to return to his homeland. He was a theologian to Pope Clement IV, between 1265 and 1267, in Orvieto and Viterbo, when he took on the direction of the Roman house of the Order (PESCH, 1992).

Aquinas' last years of life were spent between the North of the Italian Peninsula and Paris. In that city, once again, he lived conflicts related to the university, from 1269 to 1272. This time, the problem was in the theses influenced by the Aristotelian philosophy. In 1272, the Order delegated him to create a 'stadium'. The place chosen was Napoli and, thus, Thomas returned to his place of origin. There he stayed until 1274, when, on the way to Lyon, he died in Fossanova's Fountains Abbey<sup>3</sup>.

In this introductory note, we emphasize the following aspects: his constant displacements and his relationship with both political and 'academic' conflicts<sup>4</sup>. Additionally, there is the magnitude of his work and the periods of composition of *Summae*, Questions, Treaties and Comments. For instance, between 1252 and 1256, he wrote his first work, *Commentary on the Sentences*. Between 1258 and 1264, he wrote the *Summa contra Gentiles*. Between 1265 and 1268, he would write the first part of the *Summa Theologiae*. The second part was composed between 1268 and 1272 and, from that year until his death, he would have started the third part (unfinished) of the work (NASCIMENTO, 1992; TORRELL, 1999). We can conclude that he was an active intellectual who was constantly producing.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to Otto Pesch's biography, cited in the text, it is important to mention the work by Jean-Pierre Torrell, originally published in 1993. The dates of Thomas Aquinas's journey, in said work, coincide with those of Pesch. We highlight, besides the content, the clearness with which Torrell presents the relationship between the life and work of Thomas Aquinas. In addition, at the end of the book there is a chronology and a list with the catalog of the theologian's work. (TORRELL, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> More information can be found in the texts by Terezinha Oliveira. From the vast work of the author, we highlight two texts in which there are relevant elements to the present proposal. The author carries out an interesting analysis on the notion of respect in the *Summa Theologiae* (2013) and a propositional synthesis about the memory and the history of universities in the Middle Ages, taking as example the university of Paris in the 13<sup>th</sup> century (2007).

### The *Summa Theologiae*: encyclopedial knowledge, product of its time

We have taken into consideration the fact that newcomers to this study are commonly hampered by the writings of different authors--(i) partly because of the proliferation of superfluous questions, articles, and arguments, (ii) partly because the things they need to know are taught not according to the order of learning, but instead as is required by the exposition of given texts or as opportunities arise for disputing given questions, and (iii) partly because frequent repetition has generated both antipathy and confusion in the minds of the listeners (*I-Prologus*, v. 1, p. 135).

These words summarize Aquinas' proposal in his theology summa: to present the sacred doctrine in the least confusing way and without repeating themes in order not to confuse or exhaust the listeners. This foreword also reveals that the gathering of pieces of knowledge on the same subject in a work that intends to be a summary was one of the ordinary practices of Dominicans. Just as Thomas did with theology, Jacopo de Varazze would have done to hagiography in his *The Golden Legend*. In addition, the term 'auditorium' and the evident knowledge of the theologian in writing to theology newcomers shows, in a way, how this knowledge was transmitted. That is, the master presented the arguments in accordance with the order of the discipline, trying not to exhaust or confusing his listeners.

Thomas Aquinas dressed himself with the habit of the Order of Preachers from 1244. The Order was founded by Saint Dominic in Toulouse, in the year of 1216. The principles of the Order were to associate the apostolic life with fathers living in communities, as well as the regular discipline of monasteries, liturgical prayer sang along and preaching associated with poverty. In addition, religious demands coming from the transformations of previous centuries made it necessary to advance against heretic movements. Thereby, Saint Dominic's initiative comprehended intellectual formation so the brothers of the Order were prepared to refute heresies, to preach and to confess (PAUL, 2003). This is relevant as the Dominicans organized their own teaching system in which *letores* taught lessons at training centers, the 'studia generalia'. The production of knowledge in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and, consequently, the intellectual action of Thomas Aquinas, is spanned by the process of constitution of these spaces.

Initially, Thomas Aquinas was also linked to the University. Probably, in Napoli, he started with grammar, then arts and logics, natural philosophy, Sacred Scripture and, finally, Theology (VERGER,

1999). The studies were based on a bookish method, but also included the mastery of words and rhetoric. As for the study methods, Le Goff considered the scholastic concern with the vocabulary, the dialectics and the appealing to authorities; with the relationship between the meaning and the word, the concept and the object, and with grammar. It also involved oral exercises to which students were subjected and through which they listened to their masters: *lectio, quaestio, disputatio* (LE GOFF, 2003). According to Verger, by means of the *lectio* exercise, the *lector* transmitted to listeners a complete knowledge of the texts read. In Aquinas' times, this exercise was carried out in the form of comments or sentences. The former extracted questions from the read texts, and the disputes revolved around those questions, following the rules of the dialects. Sentences were grammatical and logical comments that aimed at the literal comprehension of the text. Concerning *quaestio* and *disputatio* exercises, they were more 'original'. They originated from a text and/or 'imagination' of the master. They used to take place at the end of every morning, in private sections. When the assistants raised questions, the exercise was *quodlibet* (VERGER, 2001).

The encyclopedial practice or the gathering of knowledge on a theme in a *Summa* also saw its pinnacle in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Aquinas' text gathers characteristics of the intellectual production of his time: the form of the text and of the representation of arguments in conformity with the *quaestio*, the appealing to authorities, etc. According to De Boni, the *quaestio* became a generic exposition model and a method for deepening the scientific work: it starts with the title, as an interrogation, in Latin, indicated by the word *utrum*. Then comes the opinion by authorities in favor and against it. Afterwards, the master gives his answer. Finally, contrary objections are replied (DE BONI, 1988).

During our researches, we prepared a record sheet that we believe to be valid for the understanding of this structural question of the *Summa Theologiae* like we can see at the Figure 1:

| <i>Summa Theologiae</i>    |           |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Part:                      | Treaty:   |
| Total Questions:           |           |
| Question x:                |           |
| Beginning of the Question: |           |
| Article x:                 |           |
| Obj x:                     | Rep. x:   |
| Obj xx:                    | Rep. xx:  |
| Obj xxx:                   | Rep. xxx: |
| R. Arg.:                   |           |
| Sol:                       |           |

**Figure 1.** Methodological instrument to read the *quaestio* in Aquinas' *Summae Theologiae*

Learning the structure into which the researched work is organized allows considering that ideas of hierarchy and order could be embedded in another objective of the theologian, namely, moral formation. This means considering that some of the addressed themes relate to the moment experienced by the Order in the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century and the cities in which the 'studia generalia' were installed, such as Paris and Bologne.

The relationship between Christianity and moral in the intellectual production during the 13<sup>th</sup> century, according to Alain de Libera, can be observed in three pillars: work, nature and sex (LIBERA, 1999). Moreover, the presence of Aristotle's ideas in the comments had become disturbing as well<sup>5</sup>. Naturalism, for instance, inspired conceptions and debates on the inapplicability of marriage to intellectuals, to the point of being considered as unnatural, just as sodomy (LIBERA, 1999).

Based on the six out of the 219 theses condemned by Étienne Tempier in 1277, Alain de Libera concluded that philosophy resuscitated in the Middle Ages from the sexual moral. According to the author, these six theses are anti-Christian and anti-monastic. They also mark a rebirth of the philosophical asceticism (LIBERA, 1999). From this text, which is one of the chapters of the book *Thinking in the Middle Ages*, the author works on questions related to censorship in the university environment of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Libera analyzes, from the definition of 'sin against nature', what Thomas wrote, for instance, about luxury and the relationship of these writings with the 1277 condemnations (LIBERA, 1999). It is from this perspective concerning the relationship between sexuality, moral and philosophy that, therefore, the vices and sins in Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* are analyzed.

#### The *Summa Theologiae* of the deadly (capital) sins:

Sin is all that which is said, done, or desired against the law of God.

(I-II, Q.71, a.6, vol.4, 300)

The human race is subject to three kinds of sin: of thought, word and deed.

(I-II, Q.72, a.7, r. arg, vol.4, 316)

The beginning of all sin is pride

(I-II, Q.85, a.2, r. arg., vol.4, 451)

[...]They are called "capital" because they engender other sins, other vices.

(I-II, Q.85, a.4, rep.5, vol.4, 457)

<sup>5</sup> We highlight a series of work addressing these issues: Brown et al. (2009), Iribarren (2005) and Piron (2011).

These extracts dimension both the type of text that Thomas Aquinas wrote and the situation of the sins theme in that period. In the first aspect, the extracts reveal the use of authorities – Augustine, Jerome, the ‘Bible’ and Gregorio Magno, respectively; as for the compilation – read in sets – we notice that the excerpts indicate that, to Thomas Aquinas, there is not only the definition of one or another, but rather the conjugation of distinct references, especially regarding the number of sins. Observing these two points in the historical analysis of sins in the Middle Ages, we see that, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, at the same time that Gregorio’s septenary was abandoned in the dogma plan, the Augustinian ternary of the sins of deed, word and thought was winning space.

The discourse on vices is a concern coming from monastic environments of the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries in the Eastern World. Being vices an omnipresent obstacle in the life of monks, overcoming them would be one of the elements of the path towards perfection. As of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, transformations occurred in the dynamics of cities, commercial rebirth and universities emerged as new areas for religious intervention and the need for talking to lay people about vices and sins. A renewed discourse, therefore, would take place in relation to both the audience and to the definition and categorization of sins. This would explain and can be explained by numerical variations of sins: the Gregorian septenary, the metaphor of the two opposing trees (Conrad de Hirsau, 12<sup>th</sup> century), the metaphor of the animals, of diseases and of trip (the *Divine Comedy*, for example). There was also Cassiano’s numerical organization into eight sins, the ternary (thought, word and deed) and the Ten Commandments (Decalogue) (CASAGRANDE; VECCHIO, 2003).

The influence of Saint Augustine, according to Casagrande & Vecchio, was decisive in the scholastic thinking as it introduced the ‘sin of the tongue’ category. When resuming this reference from the beginning of Christianity, the authors would cite the Gregorian septenary only as an authority. In this sense, the debates about the categorization and the exact number of deadly sins have never been unanimous (CASAGRANDE; VECCHIO, 2003). As for Aquinas’ contribution on this matter, the authors defended that the categorization of virtues was meaningful. This is because the theologian considered that among the four cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude) and the three theological virtues (faith, hope and charity) there were two opposing vices: in excess or lacking, which would result in a total of fourteen. However,

one question remains unanswered before this statement by Casagrande and Vecchio: why do the authors not cite excerpts from the ST?

Let us see, then, how Aquinas thought of the system of virtues and how this can assist in the comprehension of his definitions of sins. Before, it is necessary to have in mind what the definition of ‘virtue’ the work brings: it is the manner and way towards an upright life that, as a God’s product, is the vehicle to reach Him, which causes the desire or the free will to be a subject of the virtue (I-II, Q.56, a.6, r. arg, vol.4, 113).

The Treaties on Habits and Virtues compose the set of nineteen Questions in the first section of the Second Part of the ST (I-II, Q.49-67, vol.3, 37-236). It is important to highlight that the Treaties on Vices, in the ST, comes after that on virtues, being also preceded by the Treaties on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. This order was set by the theologian to explain the connection between the virtues, the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the sins as opposing.

From the first Question of the Treaty (Q. 49) to the six (Q. 54), Thomas wrote about habits and worked on aspects such as: 1) The substance of habits; 2) The subject; 3) The cause on the part of the generation; 4) The increase in habits; 5) The destruction and reduction of habits and 6) The distinction of habits. From Question 55 to 67, the focus is on the characteristics, distinctions, comparisons, denominations and connections of virtues. The relationship between habit and virtue, in the ST, exists because, according to Thomas, it is a habit of deed and a good quality of mind, which makes one live uprightly, and of which everyone makes good use, as it was produced by God in the man without the man (I-II, Q.55, a.4, vol.3, 99-102).

We see that Thomas divided the virtues into three groups: intellectual, cardinal (or moral) and theological ones. They compose an ordered system of connection from the main theological virtue, which is charity. The latter depends on and is generated by the other two theological virtues: hope and faith (in this order), which can exist without charity, but charity cannot exist without them. Such connection is also present in the intellectual and cardinal virtues in relation to charity. That is, without charity there is no wisdom, science and intellect (intellectual virtues), nor prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance (cardinal virtues). This set of seven virtues stands in the middle ground, because, according to Thomas, one can sin for excess and lack of them, which does not happen with the theological ones, as they are directly related to the orientation towards God and are impossible to be achieved.

Only when it comes to cardinal virtues one can sin for lack or for excess. Eliminating this possibility for theological ones, would duplication not be reduced to eight sins? Initially, yes, but since the virtues are also related to the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the system has seven possibilities of duplication again, which results in fourteen oppositions. Even so, this number is not closed, because there are ways to sin against theological sins for the absence of them, which suggests three more sins, thus resulting in seventeen.

The Figures 2 and 3 below attempt to reproduce briefly how this system would be according to the ST. In the Figure 2, we see the correspondence between virtues and gifts of the Holy Spirit. In the Figure 3, there are some possibilities of association and opposition between Virtues, the seven gifts, and vices. Information referring to the two representations below is found in the Treatises dedicated to each one of the virtues in the Second Section of the Second Part of the ST.

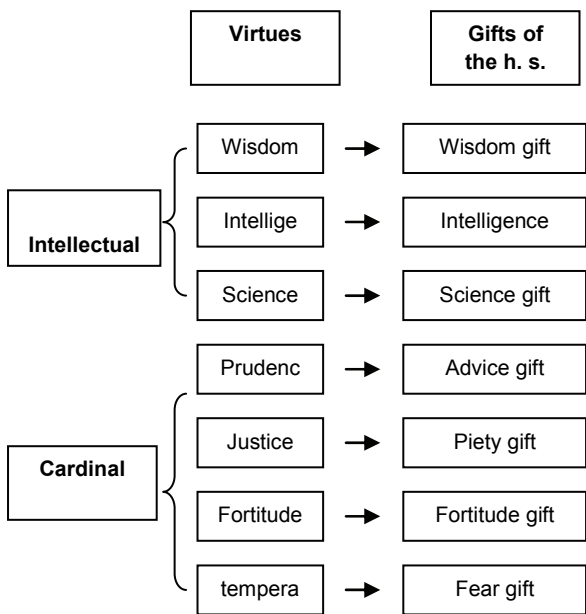


Figure 2. Intellectual and cardinal virtues with the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the *Summa Theologiae*.

Some safeguards should be considered: the first one is that not all possible vices pointed by Thomas are listed. The objective was to evidence that their multiplication surpasses the ‘sins for excess – middle-ground virtues – sins for absence’ opposition, and the number resulting from this multiplication is not exact, as it appeared to be when the result was 14, as Carla Casagrande and Silvana Vecchio indicated. Another aspect that points to this surmounting, for instance, is the denomination itself of the ‘daughters’ of each of the deadly sins.

Based on these charts, it is possible to notice that Thomas did not consider only the septenary, but also the sins regarded in word, deed and feeling. Moreover, these sins are subdivided into innumerable ‘daughters’, as it is possible to see in cases of greed sins. The conclusion drawn is that Thomas, in addition to using the Gregorian septenary – differing from it, as already analyzed, in some aspects – expands the conception of it, but does not nullify the reference of deadly sins as being seven.

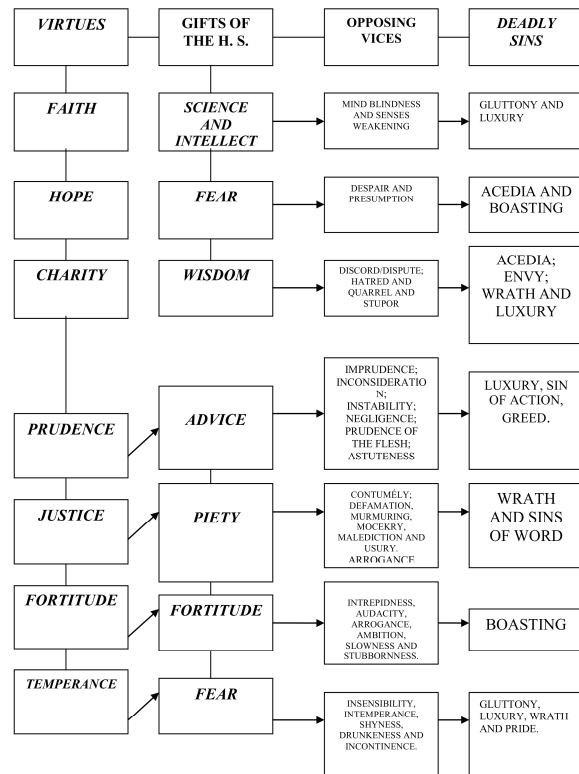


Figure 3. Virtues, gifts of the Holy Spirit, vices and deadly sins in the *Summa Theologiae*.

**Vices and sins:**

In the ST, the treat on vices and sins comprehends Questions 71 to 89 of the First Section of the Second Part. In them, Aquinas discussed about the definition, characterization, distinction, relationship and sentence to sins and sinful deeds. They are 18 Questions organized in 108 articles into three interconnected parts: 1) The sin as such (Q. 71-74); 2) The causes of sin (75-84) and 3) The effects of sin (86-89).

Question 71 addresses the following aspects on vices: a) they oppose virtue; b) vicious deeds are worse than the habit of vice as the habit not always implies the deed; c) as a habit, vices can

coexist with virtues (I-II, Q.71, a.1 a 4, vol.4, 290-297)<sup>6</sup>. These three points culminate with Aquinas' affirmations in the fifth and sixth articles about the relationship between sinful acts and the Augustinian triple definition mentioned earlier. According to the text, even if not acting, one can sin. It is the sin by omission that, for instance, occurs when one does not go to the church when he or she should do so. For the omission sin it is necessary that there is the condition of being possible or not to go to the Church. In other words, the sinner voluntarily adheres to the act of not going even in an occasion in which he or she not only should but also could go (I-II, Q.71, a.5, sol., vol.4, 298). Existing without the action, the first and main cause of sin, according to Thomas, is the will (I-II, Q.71, a.6, rep.2, vol.4, 301)<sup>7</sup>. Questions 72 and 73 distinguish and compare sins. About the distinction, it is worth stressing the following aspects: a) carnal and spiritual; b) against God, against the neighbor and against oneself; and c) sins of thought, words and deeds. The differentiation of sins by their objects results from the division between spiritual sins and carnal sins, because, to Thomas, there are spiritual and carnal pleasures as well (I-II, Q.72, a. 1 e 2, vol.4, 303-306). Analyzing this positioning is important, because Thomas confirms the existence of two carnal and five spiritual sins (I-II, Q.72, a. 2. r. arg., vol.4, 305).

Since our object of study is the sin and its relations and implications with prostitution, it is also worth analyzing how Thomas dealt with the two carnal sins. Three Questions were dedicated to gluttony and luxury. In the *Summa*, the theologian constantly states the 'less serious' condition for carnal sins (II-II, Q.154, a.3, r. arg., vol.7, 314). Gluttony is attenuated due to the need for and the difficulty in discerning and moderating this need (II-II, Q.148, a.3, arg. s. c., vol.7, 257-258).

Taking into account the amount of articles that Thomas wrote about luxury, we infer that it was a subject more complex than gluttony. Regarding the first Question on the theme, the enumeration of the 'daughters of luxury' is of greater interest: a) mental blindness, b) irreflexion, c) instability, d) precipitation, e) selfishness, f) hatred towards God,

g) attachment to the present life and h) the horror or hopelessness of the future life (II-II, Q.153, a.5, vol.7, 303-306). They are unfolded in the following Question about the species of luxury: 1) simple fornication, 2) adultery, 3) incest, 4) rape, 5) seduction and 6) the unnatural vice. The six species are hierarchized by Thomas from the last to the first one (II-II, Q.154, a.12, sol., vol.7, 333-334), and defined in a greater relation with the female 'natural passiveness' in the sexual intercourse in comparison with the case of men (II-II, Q.154, a.1, sol., vol.7, 308). That is because, in the regulation of sex, the only form without sin is the relationship between a man and a woman united through marriage, aiming at procreation. That is why going against nature is the most serious species. 'Contra natura' can be masturbation, bestiality, sodomy and use of instruments (II-II, Q.154, a.11, sol., vol.7, 331-332). In other species of luxury, Thomas considered deeds of men – as active power – that somehow reach women – passive power. In this sense, luxurious sins of women are mainly restricted to prostitution (BRUNDAGE, 2000; KARRAS, 2012; MUMMEY, 2014; CADEN, 2013).

Question 74, which ends this first moment, is dedicated to the subject of sins. To exemplify his conclusions, Thomas cited the sins of Adam and Eve. In case the sin resided only in the inferior domain, Eve's sin would suffice. However, by accepting and eating the fruit, Adam sinned as well. This act comes from the deliberate judgment and consent of the superior domain, which lies on the male (I-II, Q.74, a.7, r. arg., vol.4, 353-354). In the eighth article, Thomas was concerned about establishing the relationship between the consent of the delight with the sins (mortal and venial). According to the text, it is a mortal sin – because the sins of thought will also be judged and condemned (which only happens with mortal sins). However, the thought itself can only be venial sin. What leads to the characterization as mortal is the consent and inclination of the affection to delight, as, for instance, the one who thinks about fornicating and delights himself or herself in the fornication, making the affection inclined to fornicate. According to Thomas, deliberating that the affection conforms to that which is mortal sin itself is a mortal sin (I-II, Q.74, a.8, sol., vol.4, 358). In addition, Thomas affirmed that the consent to sin can also be venial if it is directed to a deed of venial sin, and that in the superior domain there can be this type of sin when its disorder does not refer to eternal domains. In the following Questions, Thomas uses the original sin

<sup>6</sup>In article 4 Thomas distinguishes mortal from venial sins to oppose them to acquired and infused virtues. Mortal virtues can coexist only with acquired virtues. That is because any mortal sin is contrary to charity – root of the other infused virtues – and this contrariness makes all of them disappear, except the acquired virtues. Differently, the venial sin, for not being contrary to charity, does not exclude the virtues and can coexist with both the acquired and the infused ones.

<sup>7</sup>Will for both Augustine and Thomas is the heart of the considerations on one's habits and deeds. Jacques Le Goff regarded the importance of the concept of free will and of *voluntas* when exposing that, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, sin could be defined as the consent moment of the sinner to that which is evil, which the author called 'intentio mala' (LE GOFF, 1987).

as argument. According to the text, Eve, representing (to Thomas) the inferior domain, interfered with Adam's judgment (superior) on the desirable object (fruit) and led him to the mistake. From that, it is possible to conclude, more ahead, that the sin of passion is a sin of weakness (I-II, Q.77, a.3, vol.4, 385-387), especially the weakness that symbolizes the disordered love of oneself. However, passion, in addition to pride, also comprises the concupiscence of the flesh and of the eyes. According to Thomas, the former is natural, as it is related to the sustenance of the body for the preservation of the individual and of the species; the latter is animal, as it has as object the things that please the imagination, like money (I-II, Q.77, a.5, sol., vol.4, 389-390). When it comes to the generation or preservation of the species, in Question 81, to Thomas, the transmission of the sin from a man to another is done in a special manner, by the generation. It is important to stress that only the first sin is transmitted to the descendants by the generation, because the latter guarantees the continuation of the species, not of the individuals (I-II, Q.81, a.2, sol., vol.4, 426). The five articles of the Question approach this theme. In the solution of the first article Thomas evidences that this transmission is a subject of the Catholic faith and that, due to this faith, newborns are baptized (I-II, Q.81, a.1, sol., vol.4, 422). In the third article, the theologian reinforced this argument, considering that, as for the second objection, it should be said that through baptism the original sin is taken away regarding the subject, and his soul, in its original part, recovers grace; however, the original sin remains active concerning the inclination of the disorder of the inferior parts of the soul and of the body itself, by which the man generates, not by the spirit. For this reason, the ones who are baptized transmit the original sin, because they do not generate when they were renewed through the baptism but when they keep something of the first sin (I-II, Q.81, a.3, rep.2, vol.4, 429)

The transmission of the original sin, however, according to the text, is not related to this condition of the generation only, because, as element of faith, the biblical condition that legitimizes such transmission is necessary. In the last two articles the human condition for sin is evidenced and, especially, the importance of the active generating power, which is Adam. That is because, according to Thomas, there would not be transmission of this sin if a being was miraculously formed from human flesh (I-II, Q.81, a.4, sol., vol.4, 430). In addition, if

only Eve had sinned, the descendants would not contract it, because she (women) is assigned with the passive transmission of the matter (I-II, Q.81, a.5, vol.4, 431-432).

We can problematize these considerations from the following question: how does the transmission and/or participation of Eve in relation to the Original Sin relate to prostitution in the *Summa Theologiae*? It is important that we resume that, to Thomas, luxury sins are greater related to the active power, that is, the man/male, and that the woman's deliberately sinful action would be more evident in prostitution. However, Alain de Libera presents an important argument related to the way that Thomas Aquinas understood/categorized the possibilities of luxury sins. According to the French philosopher, the two important notions to understand the systematization of the luxury sin in the ST are those of determined woman and determinable woman: in the first one, she is a woman who legally belongs to a man within a legal context, that is, marriage; in the second one, the case is when nothing prevents her from belonging to somebody (LIBERA, 1999). To the author, it is the non-determinable condition that constitutes the woman's luxury sin. In order to better understand this theme, then, it is worth presenting and analyzing how the theologian addressed the theme.

#### **Prostitution in the *Summa Theologiae*: sin and usury**

There are six species of luxury, according to Thomas: simple fornication, adultery, incest, rape, seduction and unnatural vice (II-II, Q.154, a.1, sol., vol.7, 308). Mário Pilosu evidenced that among these six species some sins can also be committed by women: adultery, homosexuality and use of instruments, contraceptive practices, abortion and infanticide (PILOSU, 1995). But as for prostitution, what category does it fit in? Simple fornication? What sparked our interest in the *Summa Theologiae* on the theme, however, was not the categorization of the species of luxury sins and their degrees of gravity. We were interested in how Thomas Aquinas treated of the theme based also on economic and social questions, as we will see next.

The perspective presented by Jacques Le Goff about the relationship between licit and illicit professions with the conceptions about sins can assist in the comprehension of a possible transformation in the discourse on prostitution. According to the author, until the 11<sup>th</sup> century, luxury served as a motive for the condemnation of those who lived the execrable ecstasy of wine, gamble and dance, which comprehended a varied group of people (LE GOFF, 1977). The social and



economic aspects related to prostitution were strictly linked to poverty. Jacques Roussiaud also defended that this association has not changed throughout history, being misery the great provider of prostitution workforce (ROSSIAUD, 1991). Le Goff stated, however, that from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, with the growth and emergence of new professional categories, strong in number and importance, which claimed for more space and legitimacy, there was a transformation in the discourse on prostitution. In those times, then, the despise period would have ended thanks the review done by the scholasticism, which, in addition to separating illicit occupations into 'ex natura' (by nature) and 'ex occasione' (occasionally), caused the number of 'ex natura' ones to go down considerably and progressively. Le Goff argued that immediately-banned individuals included tricksters and prostitutes, but that, when it comes to the latter, several theologians went after a socio-professional regulation, as it was the case of Thomas de Chobham in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, who wrote in his confession manual that prostitutes should be included among mercenaries, as they do not behave appropriately as prostitutes, but not in relation to what they receive for their services (LE GOFF, 1977).

The writing of Thomas Aquinas on this matter follows a similar line and, according to Roussiaud, is one of the western milestones in the religious discourse (ROSSIAUD, 1991). Thomas did not dedicate a specific Question to prostitution. It was approached by the theologian in articles in different moments of the Second Part of the *Summa Theologiae*. According to Vincent M. Dever, what distinguishes Thomas from other thinkers with similar ideas is the fact that the theologian points the limits of civil statutes to legislate the behavior. Dever (1997) analyzed prostitution general traits in the ST and, by the content indicated in the Questions, highlighted that it was a subject that evidences the relationship between natural law and civil statutes, or human law and its limits to control some sins condemned by the divine law. That is because, considering the division of human acts into internal and external ones, the human law can only judge external acts. Being vices and virtues within the internal acts sphere, the human law, for this reason, allows things to happen in society without control (DEVER, 1997). Another relevant aspect in Dever's remarks is that the human law aims at temporal tranquility and only bans things that destroy the social intercourse. The divine law, however, bans everything that goes against virtue. Among the acts that are not punished by human law Thomas cites

simple fornication, which is the lightest luxury species and into which prostitution is inserted.

Besides this relationship with the absence of punishment by the human law, Thomas was also concerned about addressing prostitution as a commercial relationship and repeated the thinking of previous centuries about the prostitute as a mercenary, that is, what she does is an illegal action, but receiving for it is not so. We find affirmations like that in Questions about alms, restitution and tithes. Thomas defines prostitution as a vile profit that does not serve to the sacrifice or to offerings brought to the altar, but serves as alms (I-II, Q.32, a.7, sol., vol.5, 444). One of the reasons why the profit from prostitution can be given as alms is the fact that it does not require restitution to whom has paid it, because even if it is an illicit donation, the prostitute is not obligated to give it back, unless she has extorted it by fraud or deceit (II-II, Q.62, a. 5, rep. 2, vol.6, 114).

The same principle applies to the payment of tithe with money from prostitution. According to Thomas, the only safeguard is that the Church receives the payment after sin is extirpated in order not to be a participant of it (II-II, Q.87, a.2, rep.2, vol.6, 366). Thomas also used prostitution as an example when talking about the daughters of greed and included it in the list of non-liberal acts (II-II, Q.118, a.8, rep.4, vol.6, 681).

Vincent Dever defended that Thomas' originality is in evidencing the limits of the human law for the punishment of all wrong actions. This author used two expressions to characterize the way that the theologian categorized prostitution: as illegal action and shameful occupation (DEVER, 1997). But why the relationship with justice and with the sphere of occupations? This question is answered in a simple way: Thomas was not concerned about banning, extirpating and/or condemning prostitutes and prostitution. His interest was in regulating and inserting them into the economic relations that existed between occupations and the Church. Why? We defend that this aspect is related to the activity of the Preacher Brothers within the urban and school environment. In other words: if the monastic movement of early Christianity and even the Cluniac revolution in the Central Middle Ages defended the escape from the world, greater respect to the rules and, with this, alienated monks from social life, the Mendicant Orders of the 13<sup>th</sup> century faced the world. In the case of the Preacher Brothers, or Dominicans, this world was the closest possible to cities with important knowledge centers, such as Bologne and Paris. In the case of Paris, there

was a geographical and demographic expansion when Thomas Aquinas lived there: certainly a city that sheltered the rich and the poor, men and women, licit and illicit professions that were the target of analysis, reflection, in addition to religious and theological regulation attempts. In this sense, also, the *Summa*, for being intended to the reading and instruction of novices, was certainly a moral instructional manual.

### Final considerations

Since the beginning of our academic journey, we have carried out works and readings about Thomas Aquinas' production, especially the *Summa Theologiae*. It is interesting to observe how much the theologian and his works are constantly referenced by historians. However, a historian that is initiating research and even deeper Master's and doctoral studies does not find, among his or her peers, specialists to dialogue. How can one read a *Summa*, the conceptions of science, the relationship between faith and science, the structural riches of scholastic productions, the audience to which this production has been intended? We have found, indeed, studies on the social history of students, of universities, but why does the historian not face theological texts? This article, part of what we have developed in our researches, is related to this need to establish in the field of history of the medieval historiography produced in Brazil readings about works like the *Summa Theologiae* by Thomas Aquinas.

And what do these readings reveal to us? The article was presented into three blocks basically: biographical, contextual and thematic. In the first one, we sought to present the intellectual formation and the participation of Thomas Aquinas in some events that were decisive to the history of the Order of Preachers, to the theologian's biography and to the production of knowledge and instruction of novices from the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, with highlight to the Quarrel on Beggars and Thomas' statement about the *societas studii*. In the second block, from the topic on the *Summa Theologiae* as a product of its time to the topic on vices and sins, we presented and analyzed the operation carried out by Thomas Aquinas in the treatment given to one of the most important system of values in the Western Christianity: the deadly sins. In this sense, we identified the resources used by the theologian: authorities, biblical history, questions of the Aristotelian philosophy and the materialization of this discourse from the textual structure of the *Summa Theologiae*. Finally, concerning prostitution, we evidenced the social treatment related to a data that is more economic than sexual for the matter.

In face of what was presented, we can consider that: as a work proposed to organize the discipline – Theology –, the *Summa Theologiae* presents a plan of contents and logical sequencing of arguments that is in consonance with the structural viewpoint of other similar and contemporary productions.

Regarding the use of the Christian tradition about sins (including here the definitions, numbers, the deadly and the original sin), Thomas Aquinas proposes a set of statements that are not restricted to the repetition of the authorities as Augustine and Gregorio, and establish differentiations that include, for instance, the active powers (in man) and passive powers (woman) to define the subjects of the sins.

In the definitions of luxury species, namely: simple fornication, adultery, incest, rape, kidnap and vice against nature, according to Thomas Aquinas, the greater possibility of sin lies on the man as the sin mainly relates to the desire to act, therefore to the intellect. Being the head of the woman, then, men would be more prone to sin. These remarks, however, acquire a more complex characteristic when the theologian analyzes the 'whys' of the original sin.

As for prostitution, understood in the *Summa Theologiae* as a species of simple fornication, we can conclude that it is a lighter species of one of the lightest sins (luxury, in the septenary hierarchy). Prostitution, however, fits another situation of sin that involves moral questions in the relationship with the church, believers, tithe, alms and the money obtained from sexually condemnable relations.

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