

En este libro se reúnen, debidamente examinadas y revisadas, las aportaciones al *Expert Seminar* «¿Qué es la Segunda Escolástica?», celebrado en la Università Pontificia Salesiana de Roma los días 30 de junio-2 de julio de 2022, con el patrocinio de sus Facultades de Filosofía y de Teología, y coorganizado con el *Dipartimento di Antichità, Filosofia, Storia* (DAFIST) de la Università degli Studi di Genova, el *Centro Dipartimentale di studi su Descartes «Ettore Lojacono»* de la Università del Salento, y el *Instituto de Estudios Hispánicos en la Modernidad (IEHM)*, de la Universitat de les Illes Balears.

El seminario se planteó como una oportunidad para el examen crítico de la idea de «Segunda Escolástica» a partir del contraste de la opinión de diversos especialistas (Simona Langella, Jacob Schmutz, Rafael Ramis Barceló, Marco Forlivesi, Manuel Lázaro Pulido, José Ángel García Cuadrado, Mauro Mantovani, Josep-Ignasi Saranyana, Franco Todescan, Daniel Heider, Alessandro Ghisalberti, Cintia Faraco, León Gómez Rivas, Jean-Paul Coujou, Ulrich Leinsle, Mario Santiago de Carvalho, Alfredo Culleton, Francesco Marrone, Igor Agostini, Daniel Novotný y Emanuele Lacca, y Constantino Esposito). En sus contribuciones intentan responder a la pregunta «¿Qué es la Segunda Escolástica?», a partir del análisis de sus antecedentes, definición, desarrollo temático, geográfico y escolar y su comparación con otras nociones similares.



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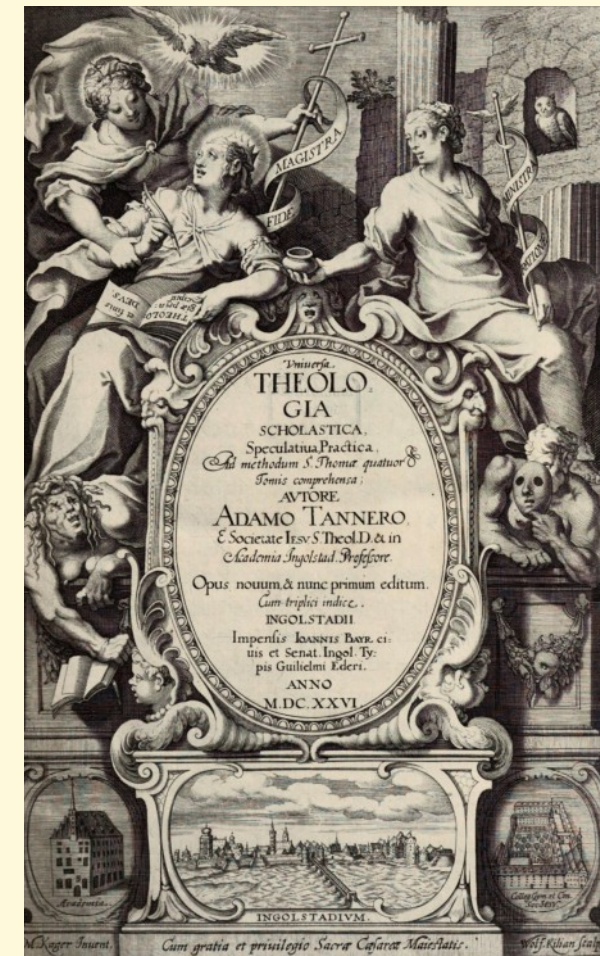


Instituto de Estudios
Hispánicos
en la Modernidad



¿QUÉ ES LA SEGUNDA ESCOLÁSTICA?

**SIMONA LANGELLA
RAFAEL RAMIS BARCELÓ
(EDS.)**



¿QUÉ ES LA SEGUNDA ESCOLÁSTICA?

Sindéresis^{editorial}

¿QUÉ ES LA SEGUNDA ESCOLÁSTICA?

COLECCIÓN

INSTITUTO DE ESTUDIOS HISPÁNICOS EN LA MODERNIDAD (IEHM)

Esta colección pretende recoger estudios que analicen desde las perspectivas filosófica, filológica, histórica, jurídica y teológica la historia de las ideas de origen hispánico desde el Renacimiento hasta la primera mitad del siglo XVIII. Por su naturaleza interdisciplinar, da cabida a trabajos de diferente orientación. Publica, de manera preferente, aquellas contribuciones propias de las líneas de investigación del Instituto de Estudios Hispánicos en la Modernidad. Además de los grandes temas del hispanismo moderno, la colección contempla también algunos estudios particulares sobre el caso balear.

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¿QUÉ ES LA SEGUNDA ESCOLÁSTICA?

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SECOND SCHOLASTICISM AS HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

La segunda escolástica como historia de la filosofía

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Abstract

It is commonly admitted that history of philosophy as an autonomous part of philosophy is a largely German and Protestant creation, associated with a figure such as Jakob Brucker. This paper argues that Catholic second scholasticism can be seen as a first attempt to historicize the earlier medieval scholastic tradition, by defending both a cumulative conception of history and a revisionist conception of knowledge.

Keywords: second scholasticism, early modern Catholicism, historiography, history of philosophy, Thomism, Scotism, Nominalism.

Resumen

Se admite comúnmente que la historia de la filosofía como parte autónoma de la filosofía es una creación mayoritariamente alemana y protestante, asociada a una figura como Jakob Brucker. Este artículo argumenta que la segunda escolástica católica puede verse como un primer intento de historizar la tradición escolástica medieval anterior, al defender tanto una concepción y cumulativa de la historia como una concepción revisionista del conocimiento.

Palabras clave: segunda escolástica, catolicismo moderno temprano, historiografía, historia de la filosofía, tomismo, escotismo, nominalismo.

Early modern scholastics did not consider themselves «second»¹ to anybody: they called themselves *scholastici novi*, *recenti* or *moderni*, sometimes even *liberi*, or were referred to as *recentiores*, *neoterici* or *novatores*. They were conscious that they were in the middle of yet another, perhaps particularly dramatic, staging of the opposition between the ancients and the moderns, which had provided the rhythm of the Western intellectual tradition since the days of Cassiodorus². Fourteenth century scholastics considered themselves as *moderni*: but to the eyes of the sixteenth and seventeenth century scholastics, they were already seen as *antiqui*. This play could have gone on forever, if second scholasticism wasn't marking in a certain way a break. In this contribution, I will argue that the specific «modernity» of Catholic «second» scholasticism comes from the fact that it includes a level of historical self-consciousness that is still largely lacking in the earlier forms of scholasticism. To put it a bit simply, medieval scholastics, when they commented an authoritative text such as Aristotle, considered that their key task was to «clarify» (*declarare*) the atemporal truth contained in the text. Early modern scholastics, on the contrary, consciously argued that the scholastic activity was to create new concepts and to uncover new problems, unknown to their predecessors³. This evolution was clearly perceptible in the progressive abandonment of the form of the commentary in favor of the triumphant new literary form of early modern scholasticism, namely the source-independent *cursus* or the *tractatus*⁴. An avid reader of the scholastics himself, Leibniz had observed the creativity of these early modern scholastics in the foreword of his *Theodicy*: «For sundry dogmas, such as those of physical predetermination, of middle knowledge, philosophical sin, objective precisions, and many other dogmas in speculative theology and even in the practical theology of cases of conscience, came into currency even after the Council of Trent»⁵.

By introducing so many new concepts, Catholic early modern scholastics were necessarily drawn into developing a more sophisticated history of philosophy than was ever practiced before, and whose quality could match the

¹ For the emergence and the pertinence of the expression 'second' scholasticism, championed by Giacon, 1944–50, see the critical discussion in Schmutz, 2000, and foremost Forlivesi, 2017, and the contribution of Rafael Ramis Barceló in this present volume.

² On this topic and its medieval uses, see essays in Zimmerman, 1974; Courtenay, 1987 and Oberman, 1987, for late medieval uses of the distinction, as well as remarks and examples in Pomplun, 2016, pp. 357–358. Still relevant is the old study by Rigault, 1876, and on the origins of the term *modernus* in the time of Cassiodorus, see Curtius, 1990, p. 254.

³ See a recent collection of essays arguing for this point in Lehner, 2021.

⁴ On the development of the *cursus*, see Blum 1988, and more recently an excellent synthesis in Knebel, 2011, pp. 51–60 («Cursus philosophicus»).

⁵ Leibniz, 1710, § 6, transl. E.M. Huggard, slightly modified.

historiographical achievement produced by Protestant and Reformed scholastics. There is an almost universal historiographical consensus today that Protestant and Reformed scholasticism was at the root of the practice of the *historia philosophica*, producing the first global histories of philosophy, whose most famous example is the work of Johann Jakob Brucker (1696–1770), whose first volume appeared in 1741 – a tradition closely linked to the University of Jena, where later G.W.F. Hegel would transform history of philosophy into a full-blown philosophy of history. If we look at the most comprehensive history of philosophical historiography, the volumes produced in the school of Giovanni Santinello (1922–2003) and Gregorio Piaia at the university of Padua⁶, we can only be impressed by the fact that the prism of the first volume (original Italian edition 1981) was almost 90% German and Protestant. 10% or even less were dedicated to a couple of Catholic authors, but only to mention the rather trivial doxographic approach of authors such as Francisco de Toledo (1532–96) and Benet Perera (1535–1610) in their presentation of the philosophers from Antiquity. The second volume, dedicated to the «Cartesian age» (original Italian edition 1979), does not present any single Catholic scholastic individually, mentioning just the secular histories of philosophy emerging in Paris, such as the history of Aristotelianism in Paris (1653) by Jean de Launoy (1603–78)⁷. In the third volume finally (original Italian edition, 1988), dedicated to the eighteenth century, we find some contributions on the historiographical achievements of several authors of the Catholic Enlightenment, to which I shall return towards the end of this study.

I would like to challenge this historiographical consensus and look at Catholic second scholasticism as defining itself as the culminating point of an endogenous doctrinal history of philosophy and theology that has medieval and Renaissance roots, but which comes into its full expression only during the seventeenth century. To understand this, we need to look at the self-definition given by the early modern scholastics as authors who were clearly conscious of constituting a *new* moment in the long story of scholastic method. This argument can be divided into two sub-claims:

First, I will argue that second scholasticism defends a *cumulative* view of history. It does not see it itself as the reenactment of previous forms, of a

⁶ For the English versions, see Santinello, 1993 (vol. 1), Piaia and Santinello, 2011 (vol. 2), Piaia and Santinello, 2015 (vol. 3). More generally, on the birth of the *historia philosophica* in Protestant Germany, see Micheli 1993, and a good synthesis in Lehmann-Brauns, 2004; on Brucker specifically, see also essays in Schmidt-Biggemann and Stammen, 1998; Meliadò, 2018. On the heritage of this tradition in the emergence of professional ‘medievalism’ in German and French academia, see König-Pralong, 2016.

⁷ Cf. Launoy, 1653, with several reprints, including in Protestant Germany.

supposed past Golden Age, but rather as its continuation or continuous enhancement. This claim is directed against the pervasive «decline and fall» narrative which was as central to the early Protestant histories as well as to the grand neo-Thomist narrative of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including Giacon's legacy himself.

Second, I will argue that second scholasticism defends a *revisionist* view of knowledge. By this, I mean that the main ambition of the early modern scholastics was to refine and to revise the doctrines of their fathers, not just repeating them, thereby making them relevant to their own historical situation. Scholasticism was much more open to the extra-academic world than is commonly assumed: early modern scholastics continuously submitted new discoveries in the fields of politics, anthropology, social practices, experimental science to their method of rational inquiry. This claim is directed against the «repetition» narrative, i.e. the presentation of early-modern scholasticism as an anachronistic return to past medieval doctrines in the age of religious and scientific revolutions.

Both claims imply that early modern scholasticism could only flourish with a strong historical program supporting it: recovering the texts of the classical authorities, listing the disciples, investigating the sources. I will try to give a few insights into the realization of this program, and thereby offer a different perspective from the standard reconstruction of scholasticism which had been produced by influential Protestant writers, and which had also been adopted by a number of rather extra-scholastic Catholic writers, in particular in the French Jansenist tradition. As the late Riccardo Quinto (1961–2004) has shown in his beautiful book *Scholastica*⁸, and as it has been refined by other scholars since, the first Protestant historians have actually adopted a strong «decline and fall» paradigm, very different from the cumulative model outlined above. The French-born Calvinist Lambert Daneau (1530–95), active in Geneva, is often credited to have produced the first early modern history of scholastic theology and method in the preface of his commentary of the *Sentences* – a rare reformed case of the genre⁹. Daneau distinguished famously scholastic history in three periods, called respectively old, middle and new: the old one corresponds to the period from Lanfranc of Pavia (1005–89) to Albert the Great (ca. 1200–80), the second from Albert the Great to Durandus of Saint-Pourçain (ca. 1270–1334), and the third from Durandus to 1514 – a date in which one recognizes of course the beginning

⁸ Quinto, 2001.

⁹ Cf. Daneau, 1580. On Daneau's role in the emergence of this *triplex aetas* model, see Quinto, 2001, p. 224–226, 229, 304–319; Ricklin, 2002; Pomplun, 2016, pp. 358–359. On Daneau's *Sentences* commentary in context, see Zahnd, 2016.

of Luther's preaching activity. This tripartite rhythm is understood according to a narrative of growth followed by «decline and fall»: the first period is remembered as a golden age, and the last part is just decadence and fall. Adjectives used by Daneau to describe the «new scholasticism» of the third *aetas* are unambiguous: *ultima*, *pessima*, *imprudentissima*, because this specific brand of late medieval scholasticism is full of useless subtleties and distinctions, which lead the believer to doubt the words of the gospel. This model remained extremely popular in Protestant circles. David Sytsma has closely analyzed the similar adjectives (*graviores*, *saniores*, *cordatiores*, *meliores*, *prudenciores*, etc.) used by several Protestant authors of the sixteenth century to designate older scholastics, again contrasting them with the later ones¹⁰. As Mario Meliadò has recently shown, Johann Jakob Brucker's own declination of the *triplex aetas*-model can be read as a variation of what he calls a «regressive principle of decadence»¹¹. Although his own division of the three periods is different from Daneau's, with the Middle Ages constituting the entire second period between the rise of philosophy in Antiquity and its restoration in the early modern age, Brucker shares Daneau's extremely negative view of the *scholastica nova*. He blames in particular the pernicious influence of John Duns Scotus, whose school was so corrupted that it «has driven this scholastic insanity to previously unknown levels»¹². Well before Brucker, Daneau's distrust of late medieval philosophy was mirrored by a number of anti-scholastic minded Catholic writers of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century. One can already find in the works of the Jesuit René Rapin (1621–87), one of the promoters of an anti-scholastic stance at the Collège Louis-le-Grand in Paris, who used also the *triplex aetas* model his *Réflexions sur la philosophie ancienne et moderne* (1676), which finished of course not with a celebration of Luther, but with the French heroes of the «new philosophy», such as Descartes and Gassendi¹³. The early eighteenth century promoters of ecclesiastical history, such as Louis-Ellies du Pin (1657–1719) and Claude Fleury (1640–1723), the tutor to the young King Louis XV, followed the same model, and the latter was equally despaired about «les sophismes de la scholastique moderne», formulated by the armies of these «docteur oisifs, qui ne cherchent qu'à subtiliser et à renchérir les uns sur les autres par des nouvelles questions»¹⁴. On the eve of the French Revolution, this

¹⁰ Cf. Sytsma, 2021, pp. 130-132.

¹¹ Meliadò, 2018, p. 776.

¹² Brucker, 1747, p. 430 : «... ex Scoti schola ita corrupta, ut scholasticam insaniam ad apicem perduceret».

¹³ Cf. Rapin, 1676.

¹⁴ Fleury, 1724, p. 191.

model could still be found in the textbook published by abbott Pierre-Michel Hauchecorne (1754–1820), a professor of the Collège des Quatre-Nations¹⁵.

The self-understanding of Catholic second scholastic writers was a clear rejection of this narrative, based on the two claims I just made above: first they do not acknowledge the narrative of «decline and fall», and second, they did not necessarily deem their philosophy to be incompatible with the advancement in the sciences and new discoveries. An idea championed by many of the progressive scholastic writers of the seventeenth century was the cumulative idea that each generation of scholastics did better than the previous one. Among most second scholastic schools, the *tripartite* model was therefore replaced by a return to a new version of the classical *bipartite* model opposing a *scholastica antiqua* and *scholastica recens*, opposing authors qualified *veteres* or *antiquiores* to others *recentiores* or *novatores*. There is no sense of a replacement of the ancients by the «new» moderns: since the sixteenth century, Catholic writers rather defend the idea that the moderns build upon the solid foundations of the *antiqui*. Just as in Daneau, adjectives are here important: the *Antiquiores* are for instance considered *solidi* or *solidiores*, whereas the modern ones are called *ingeniossimi* or *gravissimi*.

Of course, this does not correspond to *all* early-modern Catholic scholastic authors and traditions; nor is Brucker's negative attitude against late medieval philosophy and scholasticism representative of all Protestant and Reformed writers¹⁶. Protestant just as Catholic second scholasticism produced reactionaries and ultra-conservatives as much as it did produce liberals and progressives. In each school, remarked Juan Caramuel Lobkowitz (1606–08), himself a very eclectic Cistercian and a fine observer of school formation in his time, one can find hardliners and liberals, as well as the strange third group of those who adopt a position just out of pure institutional conformism, in order to contradict others they dislike – like in the almost mechanical Dominican-Franciscan disputes¹⁷. I shall here concentrate myself on certain examples of such a *schola libera* – an expression which has regularly been used since the seventeenth century to describe the Jesuit culture of the *delectus opinionum*, the free choice of

¹⁵ Cf. Hauchecorne, 1784, p. I-IL, who is directly influenced by Brucker, whom he quotes p. XXXII («on peut dire avec le savant Brucker que l'ignorance fut la mère de la scolastique»). Hauchecorne's tripartition was however different, since he based it on a linguistic criterium: first the Greeks, then the Romans (which include the Catholics), then the Vernacular authors, from Dante to Descartes.

¹⁶ As David Sytsma again has shown, Durandus of Saint-Pourçain or Gregory of Rimini could be included among the *saniores* by several authors, such as for instance Girolamo Zanchi (Sytsma, 2021, p. 132-133). Thomas Aquinas enjoyed in particular an enthusiastic followship in Anglican and Lutheran circles – see Mayes 2021 for a recent synthesis on this aspect.

¹⁷ Caramuel, 1668, p. 42.

intellectual references, but whose outlook was certainly not restricted to the Jesuits: most of the new religious orders – such as the various congregations of regular clerics, like the Teatini or Somaschi in Italy, Capuchins or Oratorians were conscious that their scholastic practice had to be something unprecedented. A similar attitude could also be found among representatives of the traditional medieval orders, such as the Cistercians, Franciscans, Carmelites and even Dominicans, who all underwent strong movements of intellectual reform during the early modern period, modifying sometimes their classical authorities. In each of them we can find individual scholastics assuming the cumulative and revisionist agenda outlined above. Two main lines of argument can be identified in favor of this double agenda. The first line of argument has to do with the objects of the thought, the second with a revision of the traditional way of handling authority in scholastic argumentation.

The first argument is based upon the idea that the human mind is continuously discovering new entities, new facts or new events, unknown to the previous generations. It is because Aquinas had not yet grasped all realities that new concepts could emerge in the seventeenth century – for Spaniards, the metaphor of the discovery of America became here a commonplace. It had been used already by John Mair (1467–1550) in Paris, who famously claimed in his commentary of the *Sentences*: «Hasn't Amerigo Vespucci discovered lands unknown to Ptolemy, Pliny and other geographers up to the present? Why shouldn't the same be the case in other matters?»¹⁸. We are facing an interesting use of the meaning of *inventio* in early-modern Latin: early-modern scholastics do not suggest that we create new ideas and concepts from nothing, but that the human mind uncovers either constituents of the reality or methods to explain it that were either hidden or just badly formulated by the past authors. Let's take the example of a theological concept such as «middle knowledge», proposed by Luis de Molina (1535–1600) in his *Concordia* (1588), and which sparked almost ten years of debates over grace and freedom during the Roman *De auxiliis* congregations (1598–1607). The *scientia media* was perceived as a typical novelty of early modern theology, and it stands high in Leibniz's list quoted above. To reconcile human freedom and divine foreknowledge, Luis de Molina suggested to admit a *scientia media* in God, or «middle knowledge», mediating between God's knowledge of simple intelligence and knowledge of vision. Through this middle knowledge, God knows what a creature would do if it was placed in whatever circumstances or «possible worlds», as they would be later

¹⁸ Cf. Mair, 1509, f. 1v.

known, prior to his own decree to concur to this action¹⁹. Was this concept then totally new? Did authors previous to Molina hold it, or could it be seen as already anticipated in some Patristic authorities? To answer these questions, the Castilian Jesuit Gabriel de Henao (1612–1702), whose career revolved around the Jesuit colleges of Valladolid and Salamanca, wrote an original 100-page history of middle knowledge (*scientia media*). In this book he says wearing the mantle of the «historicum theologum», the theologian-historian, and ensures not to be arguing neither *scholastice* nor *theologice*²⁰. His concern was not religious orthodoxy, but historical accuracy. Contrary to the Protestant historiographers who could use the argument of the reformation as a break and as a recovery of Christian wisdom obliterated by the «decadent» late medieval scholastics, Henao was concerned to show that the development of a scholastic novelty such as *scientia media* was actually the result of a process of maturation which involved a long tradition. Unsurprisingly, Gabriel de Henao compares in conclusion Luis de Molina to Amerigo Vespucci, the *inventor* of America: not that he had «created» the territory he discovered, but for having given his proper name to a territory which had already been touched by others before him²¹. The same argument could be made for the discovery of new entities in natural philosophy or in metaphysics (as one can see in the long scholastic discussions about modes, objective precisions, negative facts, futuritions, states of affairs, etc.), or even of new mental or moral attitudes unknown or unbelievable previously: *multa in humanis disciplinis recens excogitata, cum laude*, said the French Jesuit Théophile Raynaud (1587–1663), who dedicated large parts of his treatise on «good and bad books» to this question of novelty in scholasticism²². In the context of the European conquest of America, Molina, was for instance once more original in the history of scholasticism for having argued that it was possible to admit nations without even a simple natural knowledge of God, such as the native Brazilians of his time. For the Catholics, the Christian message

¹⁹ The bibliography on Molina and «middle knowledge» is vast and largely repetitive. For a standard presentation in English, see the relevant chapter in Craig, 1988, pp. 169–273. For a complete list of the philosophical novelties associated with the concept and a reconstruction of the subsequent debate, see the seminal study by Knebel, 1991, to be completed by Knebel, 2021.

²⁰ Henao, 1655, Pref., n.p.. This first book of Henao was clearly stating its *historical* ambition – and must be distinguished from a *theological* defense of middle knowledge, to which he would dedicate two later volumes (Henao, 1674–75). He explains that he conceived the book as a historical response to claims by an Alcalá Scotist, Francisco Félix (1592–ca. 1650) who had criticized middle knowledge on the basis of its lack of historical foundations. Cf. Félix, 1646. The importance of Henao’s historical reconstruction has recently been underlined by Gaetano, 2021, p. 260, 267. Gaetano’s study also show how much we are still indebted today to these early modern histories in order to understand the *De auxiliis* congregations.

²¹ Henao, 1655, p. 90.

²² Raynaud, 1652, p. 251. On the career and the context of Raynaud’s extraordinary publishing activity, see the recent monograph by Gay, 2018.

itself could be read in such an historical and traditional way: since popes and councils, by their decisions, continuously define new limits to the faith, declaring for instance new saints, one should not be afraid to see scholasticism follow a similar path and continuously evolve. This attitude which I have so far labeled «revisionism» has been expressed by various Latin terms: *addere* (to add), *excogitare* (to invent, imagine, conceive), *evolvere* (to evolve, develop), *inaedificare* (build upon something), etc. Théophile Raynaud sees for instance a way to distinguish legitimate from illegitimate innovations by the fact that the new authors (*recentiores*) make the old ones (*antiqui*) «evolve»²³. By *improving* or *revising* insights of the older scholastics, the *recentiores* practice a legitimate use of novelty. A beautiful text in the preface of the acclaimed *Cursus philosophicus* (1632) by the Jesuit Rodrigo de Arriaga (1592–1667), who was also trained in Valladolid and an immediate source of Gabriel de Henao, perfectly summarizes this attitude:

You should not fear the novelty of opinions and reject them just because they are new (...). Remember that there was a day when the doctrine of the Christian religion itself was a great novelty, and this does not make it less true. (...) Human intelligence (*ingenium*) did not stop with Plato and Aristotle, neither has it been interrupted (*abbreviata*) by the hand of the Lord. And there was as much if not more intelligence in Aquinas, Cajetan, Molina, Suárez, and so many others...²⁴

The second line of arguments has to do with the way scholastics modified their attitude towards the argument of authority, which has always been a central element in scholastic discourse. As members of constituted schools, early modern scholastics had to their disposal a wide range of opinions of past masters and doctors that they could use to defend a new position in philosophical or theological matters, as long as these opinions could be presented as probable. We have now at our disposition an extensive literature on late medieval and early modern school formation, not only for the Dominican and Franciscan case, but also for many other religious orders, documenting the varying degrees of dependence and independence specific medieval scholastics could have, in particular in the wake of humanism. The famous phrase of Horace, that nobody is compelled to swear the words of a master (*nullius addictus iurare in verba*

²³ Raynaud, 1652, p. 243: «... recentiores, qui tamen scripta antiquorum evolverint».

²⁴ Arriaga, 1632, Pref., n.p. The difficult question of the handling of novelties has been treated extensively by several other scholars: see in particular Leinsle, 1997, for the case of the Jesuits, and a good case study on the relationship between the *delectus opinionum* and the rise of probabilism using the example of Juan Azor (1536–1603) in Tutino, 2017, pp. 89–147. Other congregations had similar discussion, see for instance Lehner, 2001 on how eighteenth-century German Benedictines handled novelties. On the scope and limits of censorship among the early Jesuits, see Sander, 2019. For a seventeenth century discussion of the limits to novelty admitted in books, see Raynaud, 1652.

magistri) (*Ep.* I, 1, 18), was not only chosen as a motto by the Royal Society (1660), but had been continuously repeated by scholastic masters themselves to guarantee the freedom of students and masters— famously for instance by Melchor Cano in his *Locis theologicis*²⁵. During the sixteenth and seventeenth century, this remained a central issue that allowed to distinguish between for instance different sorts of Thomists, «hard» (*strictiores, rigidiore*s) or «soft» (*molliore*s)²⁶. One author who has particularly well documented these debates within the various schools of his time was the Spanish-born Cistercian Juan Caramuel Lobkowitz (1606–82). He warns against any temptation to make a valid inference between the doctrine of a master and the doctrine of the schoolmen in his tradition:

There are some people who look for the doctrines (*sententias*) of the masters among their students, and others who look for the doctrines of the students among their masters; and finally, there are those who believe that such a research (*examen*) is fallible and uncertain. And for this reason you can ask yourself whether these consequences are valid? I. *It is the doctrine of Christ, therefore of all Christians*. II. *It is the doctrine of Christ, therefore of all Romans or Catholics*. III. *It is the doctrine of the Aristotle, therefore of all Peripatetics*. IV. *It is the doctrine of Augustine, therefore of all Augustinians*. V. *It is the doctrine of Saint Benedict, therefore of all Benedictines*. VI. *It is the doctrine of Saint Bernard, therefore of all Cistercians*. VII. *It is the doctrine of Saint Thomas, therefore of all Dominicans*. VIII. *It is the doctrine of Scotus, therefore of all Franciscans*. And we can proceed to the heretics and infidels: IX. *It is the doctrine of Muhammad, therefore of all the Moors, Turks and Persians*. X. *It is the doctrine of Luther, therefore of all Lutherans*. XI. *It is the doctrine of Calvin, therefore of all Calvinists*²⁷.

In the following pages, Caramuel goes through each of these eleven schools proving always the same point: schools are not monolithic traditions that live through the centuries without modifying their basic opinions, repeating mechanically some supposed authoritative doctor. As a result, there are as many sects and divisions among the Thomists than there are among the Muslims: «many opinions of Aquinas are today rejected (*explodi*) by the Dominicans, who

²⁵ Cano, 1563, XII, Prol., p. 385b: «Non enim ullam, non Divi Thomae, dico sed ne magistri mei opinionem quidem revocavi ad arbitrium meum: nec cordi tamen fuit jurare in verba magistri». A few lines further up, he gives his own version of it saying «Theologo nihil est necesse in cuiusquam iurare leges». On this attitude in the school of Salamanca, see Orrego Sánchez 2008, pp. 127–128, in particular.

²⁶ For a more thorough analysis of the variety of references to Thomas Aquinas among early modern ‘Thomists’, see Schmutz, 2008; De Franceschi, 2010; De Franceschi, 2018; Schmutz, 2018; Schmutz, forthcoming.

²⁷ Caramuel Lobkowitz, 1668, p. 39.

are against the opinions of the older Thomists.»²⁸ Himself a fervent admirer of Duns Scotus, Caramuel recalls that Duns Scotus only made a small number of real «decisions» (*decisiones Scoti esse paucissimas*), and that he therefore left to the genius of his disciples the duty to resolve the unsettled questions (*indecisa*). A recurrent argument is the necessity to be confident in the quality of the new generations of scholastics, «as if there were not today such noble minds, that they could not correct ancient errors», writes Caramuel. He also regularly insists on the cumulative dimension of scholastic knowledge: the recent scholastic authors should be trusted because they can potentially know more than the older ones.

One can find these two lines of argument perfectly summarized by a lesser-known French Jesuit of the seventeenth century, Jean Martinon (1586–1662), who taught at the college of Bordeaux and was strongly engaged in anti-Jansenist polemics, in a posthumous volume of his theology (1663). Since the late sixteenth century, the emergence of probabilism in moral theology had prompted a close association between the humanist conception of the freedom of opinions with the question of the truth-related authority of scholastic doctors. Among the key criteria for admitting an opinion as «probable» and licit to follow, one would have to produce at least some form of authoritative argument among the possible choice of contradictory opinions²⁹. This prompted scholastics to important historical and textual research: looking for older scholastics holding such opinion in favor of their conclusion, or contrasting the different works of one authority (for instance Aquinas's *Sentences* against the *Summa*), or even questioning the authority of the transmitted version, by pointing at uncertain textual traditions or even plagiarism³⁰. In the generation of Martinon, Arriaga, Henao and Raynaud, the success of probabilism thereby became a powerful incentive to develop a real *history* of philosophical and theological doctrines among early modern Catholic scholastics. Martinon's contribution is here particularly relevant because he stresses the *cumulative* dimension of this history: it is not just picking and choosing the best possible opinion, and it is certainly not the *older* authorities which should be preferred if we can find *newer* or *more recent* authorities. In the following text, he gives the

²⁸ Caramuel Lobkowitz, 1668, p. 41.

²⁹ Among the vast bibliography on the development of sixteenth century probabilistic moral theology, this aspect is well underlined in Schüssler, 2019a and Schüssler, 2019b; Tutino, 2017, as quoted above on the *delectus opinionum*; Schwartz, 2019.

³⁰ In his numerous works on Thomism and Jansenism, Sylvio De Franceschi has regularly stressed the fact that the attempt to support or condemn Jansenism with the authority of Aquinas has provoked a fantastic progress in historical and textual scholarship on the Angelic Doctor during the sixteenth century. Dominican erudition became thereby a tool for doctrinal argumentation. For a synthesis, see De Franceschi, 2018.

following three arguments in order to prefer the *recentiores* over the *antiquiores*. The first has to do with the objects of the thought, the two others with the method of the scholastics in handling authority:

Among theologians who disagree about the probability of opinions, one should rather follow the recent writers once they have been ascertained (*recentiores scriptores exacti*) than the older ones (*antiquiores*), as Giles of Rome has rightfully argued. There are three reasons for this: first, because there are numerous new things that are defined by the Church on a daily basis (*non pauca quotidie de novo*), things that were just plainly unknown to the ancients (*plane incognita antiquioribus*), as we can see it in the case of numerous papal decrees. Second, because every day new questions and difficulties appear, which were not solved by the ancients. (...) Third, because educated and wise recent authors (*recentiores docti & accurati*) see many more things [than they ancients]: not only do they see all what the ancients had written, but also all what has been added to them by the recent authors. (...) However, if the opinion of recent authors is less favorable, then one should not just abandon the probable opinion of the older authors, especially if it was common³¹.

The ongoing controversies in seventeenth century moral theology produced an enormous demand of historical research: to sustain or refute an opinion, early modern Catholic scholastics had to delve into the vast corpuses of the Church Fathers and medieval authors. Melchor Cano had famously argued in his *Locis* that both philosophy and history were legitimate commonplaces for theological reasoning: writing the history of theological doctrines could therefore be seen as a necessary handmaiden for the establishment of doctrinal authority. The success and rapid development of positive theology, i.e. the careful listing of authorities of the past, would prompt many Catholic authors to develop their own version of scholastic history.

As a result, most of the scholastic traditions linked to the religious orders started constructing their own internal histories, with a list of their achievements over the centuries and the different ways they related to the foundational texts. Dominicans produced the first histories of Thomism, of which the most

³¹ Martinon, 1663, p. 179: «Inter theologos autem (...) dissentientes de probabilitate opinionum, sequendi potius sunt recentiores scriptores exacti, quam antiquiores, ut recte docet Aegidius Romanus in II *Sent.*, dist. 35, q. 1, a. 3. Ratio est prima quia non pauca quotidie de novo statuuntur aut definiuntur in Ecclesia, quae antiquioribus fuerunt plane incognita, ut testantur quotidiana plurimorum summorum Pontificum decreta. Secundo, quia oriuntur in dies novae quaestiones, & difficultas, quae tempore antiquorum adhuc latebant. In dies enim res magis magisque examinantur. Tertio, quia recentiores docti & accurati plura vident: nam & omnia vident quae antiquiores scripserunt, & omnia quae his addiderunt recentiores. (...) Si tamen opinio recentiorum est minus favorabilis, non est propterea deserenda probabilis opinio antiquiorum, praesertim communis.» I could not locate the quote by Giles of Rome so far.

remarkable one is the little-known *Bibliotheca interpretum* (1638) by the Venetian Sante Mariales (ca. 1580–1660), in which he draws the most complete list of who could count as Thomist during the middle ages, the Renaissance down to his age. On the Franciscan side, although no such thorough histories were produced to my knowledge, it is important to recall that Luke Wadding (1588–1657), the famous editor of Scotus's complete works at Saint Isidore's College in Rome, dedicated a large section of his *Annals* listing all the relevant names of the medieval and Renaissance Scotist school, with also a reflection on its impossible doctrinal unity, recalling that many Scotists did not follow the opinion of the Subtle Doctor ('omnes hi auditores, sed non per omnia sectatores')³². An Aragonese Franciscan, Jerónimo Lorte y Escartín (†1721), from the Convent of San Diego in Zaragoza, published a more ambitious 'subtle map' in order to travel on the 'Marian planet' (*Orbis marianus*), listing also all the historical authorities of the Scotist school³³. Even a scholastic tradition that could not claim an official 'heir', such as medieval nominalism, received its first historians: in his *Philosophia nominalium vindicata* (1651), the rather mysterious French cleric Salabert (ca. 1600–65) made the first explicit attempt to see what could unite the nominalism of Peter Abelard and William of Ockham, offered a reflection on the transmission of nominalist ideas, and proposed a quasi-critical discussion of the Parisian *statute* of 1481³⁴.

The fact that the reconstruction and the classification of past opinions and traditions played such a big role in the seventeenth century shows that «second» scholasticism clearly had a stronger historical self-consciousness than «first» scholasticism. Aquinas and Scotus did not conceive themselves as having revised or enhanced their predecessors, but only as having formally expressed the truth. Early modern scholastics were certainly equally concerned with expressing the truth, but they considered it already as a form of truth revealing itself in history, by means of the endless disputes and discussions of the scholastic generations following each other. During the eighteenth century, this attitude has led to several reconstructions of the achievements of the scholastic tradition, which challenged openly the Protestant «decline and fall» narrative and stressed on the contrary the constant progress of scholastic thinking. These works, which have been studied among others by Ilario Tolomio, were clearly born out of an apologetic perspective, since scholasticism was now openly attacked by Enlightenment philosophy. But it would be wrong to reduce them

³² Wadding 1733, p. 131–139, here § 68, p. 138

³³ Cf. Lorte y Escartín, 1696. More generally, for a survey of the Scotistic school in the seventeenth century, see Schmutz, 2002.

³⁴ Salabert, 1651.

their apologetical intent³⁵. I shall here take only one example, because it proposes a clear vindication of the cumulative and revisionist character of early-modern scholasticism: the *Scholastica Vindicata, seu dissertatio historico-chronologica-critico-apologetica pro theologia scholastica*, published in Genua (1766) by Joan Baptista Gener (1711–81), a Catalan Jesuit who taught in various colleges of the Province of Aragon (Lérida, Valencia, Gandía and Girona mainly), before seeking refuge in Italy after the expulsion of the Society from Spain³⁶. It is perhaps an unwritten rule of history that the most lucid analysis of one's life is always achieved in the wake of one's death: this seems clearly the case for the scholastic tradition, since Gener provides one of the most original descriptions of the evolution of scholasticism during the centuries at the very moment of its slow institutional death in Europe. In the preface, he clearly advocates the continuistic and cumulative conception of scholasticism which we encountered since the seventeenth century. Gener frontally attacks exactly the *triplex aetas* division inherited from Lambert Daneau (which he does not mention by name in this passage, but attributes it to the British encyclopedist Ephraim Chambers, 1680–1740, who had reproduced it in the entry 'scholastic divinity' of his *Cyclopaedia*, 1728), a division he calls 'incorrect' and 'anachronistic' (*incongrua est anachronismos patitur*)³⁷. It is incorrect, because in terms of method, there is no real difference between Peter Lombard and Durandus, since they all used the *Sentences* as the basis for the teaching of scholastic theology. Should there be a break, argues Gener, then one should place it with the adoption of the *Summa*, as it was with the case of Francisco de Vitoria in Salamanca (1483–1546). It is anachronistic, because the durations proposed by Daneau (200 years for the first period and 100 years for the second³⁸) do absolutely not correspond to reality. Gener argues that we need a better division between the epochs of scholasticism, with a specific criterion: the level of their respective adaptation to the questions and challenges of their age. He proposes the following tripartition: first «old» scholasticism, which lasts until the Renaissance (1540), since there was never truly a major change in method; second «recent» scholasticism (1540–1700), which corresponds fundamentally to the rise of the *cursus philosophicus* which and who was largely focused

³⁵ Tolomio, 2015, p. 249: «The apologetic intent reached its peak in the re-evocation of Scholasticism».

³⁶ Gener's contribution to philosophical historiography is briefly mentioned by Tolomio, 2015, p. 245, 249, and is well acknowledged by Pomplun, 2016, pp. 382–383. Pena González, 2015, p. 115, has argued that Gener was one of the first to have provided a critical concept of the notion of «School of Salamanca», not just restricted to the Dominicans of San Esteban.

³⁷ Gener, 1766, 29. Pomplun, 2016, p. 382, however strangely writes that Gener «accepted the standard periodization of medieval philosophy, even citing Lambert Daneau».

³⁸ Cf. Daneau, 1580, ProI., n.p.

focalized on commenting and revising Aquinas, to the point that – with the exception of the Scotis – this recent scholasticism could also be «Thomistic» scholasticism. And finally there is the third and last period, «supernew» scholasticism (*novissima scholastica*), which corresponds to the tradition of his own contemporaries (since approximatively 1700) that have fully integrated the novelties of the age into their courses of philosophy, composed *ad saeculi gustum et genium*. The birth of scholasticism in the eleventh century could according to Gener even serve as the basis for a new calendar, in which we could renumber our centuries according to scholastic progress. The seventeenth century corresponds for Gener to the sixth century of scholasticism, of which he says:

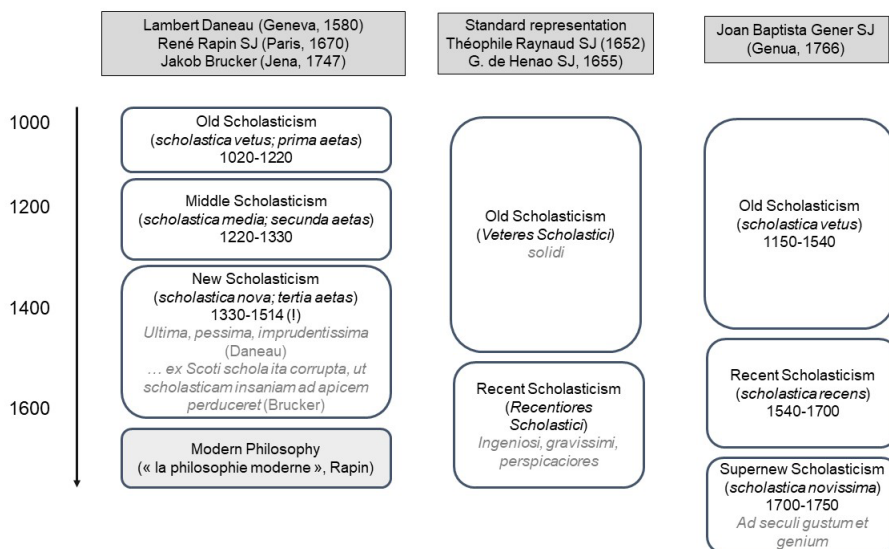
We have now reached the sixth century of scholasticism, the seventeenth after the death of Christ. It corresponds to the years 1601–1700. It was perhaps the most flourishing ever for scholastic theology, be it because of the writings of outstanding authors, the sheer number of works, their ingenuity and deepness, the profusion of schools all over the world, and their splendor, foremost in Spain, and because of a number of the most famous controversies the human mind can remember, such as those on grace in Rome³⁹.

Gener himself was a man of the seventh century of scholasticism, which he characterizes by its all-encompassing erudition, its severe judgment, its elegant style, its culture achieved by its absolutely clear method⁴⁰. The book then contains a long chronological list of all the important scholastic authors active during these seven centuries. As Trent Pomplun has aptly concluded, «for Gener, in quiet contrast to the previous two centuries of better-known historians, Scholasticism was living, growing tradition, even in the second half of the eighteenth century»⁴¹.

³⁹ Gener, 1766, p. 18: «His successit Seculum VI. Scholasticum, a Christi Seculi xvii., anno 1601 adusque 1700, ac fortasse prae ceteris Theologiae Scholasticae florentissimum; tum ob praegrandium Authorum copiam; tum ob operum multitudine ferme innumerabilium praestantiam, inventionem, nitorem, acumen; tum ob Scholarum fere ubique gentium, maxime in Hispania florentium splendorem; tum ob Scholasticas Romae controversias de Auxiliis, ut vocant, post hominum memoriam celebratissimas.»

⁴⁰ Gener, 1766, p. 20 : «Hoc quippe Saeculum, alioqui omnigena eruditione, severiori criterio, stilo eleganti, nitidissimaque methodo excultissimum...»

⁴¹ Pomplun, 2016, p. 383.



A summary of the three early modern ways to present the history of scholasticism

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I have argued that Catholic early-modern scholasticism had made an important but often overlooked contribution to the emergence of the history of philosophy and theology. I have tried to show that early modern scholastic authors had a cumulative and revisionist attitude towards the past: the older authorities need to be collected as a reserve of arguments, and the ideas expressed by them must continue to be developed and clarified. An often-quoted common place on the role of authority in scholastic history is the famous saying attributed to Bernard of Chartres in the twelfth century, that we are «dwarves on the shoulders of giants». The exact interpretation of this saying is however ambiguous: it can both mean that we should be humbled by the authority of the Ancients and the Bible, but it can also be seen as an invitation to grow beyond these shadows that are dwarfing us. In the seventeenth century, it was clearly the second option that was favoured by the «liberal» scholastics that have been the subject of this contribution. The Jesuit Jean Martinon went even as far as using another famous aphorism to justify the right to provide new interpretations of ancient doctrines: *quanto iuniores, tanto perspicaciores*, «the younger, the more perspicacious»⁴². This was of course not any form of blind confidence in the

⁴² Martinon, 1663, p. 179, as well as Théophile Raynaud (1652, pp. 246-247) consider this aphorism a «common axiom of the lawyers» (*commune axioma iurisconsultorum*), and refer it to a

intelligence of the youth, but it was an invitation to make the doctrine of the ancients «evolve»: to do so, it was however necessary to first reconstruct the texts, identify correctly the authors, by means of historical inquiry. Then only one could «build upon» these texts by commenting, analyzing and even «inventing»⁴³.

One should certainly not underestimate the value of these histories, but also editions and even catalogues produced by seventeenth and eighteenth century Catholic scholastics: their specific lists of names, their arrangements and periodizations of schools and traditions were used widely beyond their confessional environment and their time. Among the Protestant and Reformed authors who had a more positive attitude towards the late medieval scholastics in particular, their knowledge of medieval texts was rarely first-hand, but thanks to the use of the important Catholic manuals in Germany, Holland or the British Isles. When the English nonconformist Richard Baxter (1615–91) quotes mountains of scholastic references, both medieval and early modern, he took them largely from Spanish, Portuguese and Italian *cursus*⁴⁴. Their historical achievements remained also largely the basis for nineteenth century reconstructions of both medieval and early modern scholasticism, and not only in neo-scholastic circles. In France, Barthélémy Hauréau (1812–96), pioneer of the historiography of medieval philosophy, still used histories such as those from Launoy and Salabert to construct his image of Aristotelianism and nominalism⁴⁵. Among neo-scholastics, Joseph Kleutgen (1811–83), himself a Jesuit, was one of the last to defend this cumulative and revisionist vision, identifying the Jesuit generations between Francisco Suárez (1548–1617) and Juan de Lugo (1583–1660) as the paramount synthesis of scholastic thought. The reason this narrative is today so forgotten is largely due to the fact that in later generations, many Catholic neo-scholastics or secular philosophers embraced, for a number of historical and socio-political reasons, the largely Protestant (!) «decline and fall» narrative, in which Scotism and nominalism are the names for all evil, and adopt a stricter form of Aquinas-centered neo-Thomism⁴⁶, throwing thereby the historical achievements of the early modern scholastics into oblivion.

gloss of the Justinian Code (*ad l. Gallus, ff. de liber. & posthumis*, § 1 V). Note that it was also used by Priscian, in the Preface of his *Institutiones grammaticae*, precisely to justify the creation of a new grammatical treatise. I owe this remark to Mews & Williams, 2017, p. 299.

⁴³ Raynaud, 1652, p. 247: «Evoluisse porro intelliguntur, non ut ea nude transcriberent, sed ut iis suas commentationes, & perscrutationes, ac inventa inaedificarent».

⁴⁴ Cf. for instance Baxter, 1676, p. 44.

⁴⁵ Hauréau, 1872, pp. 82–83 for his use of Salabert.

⁴⁶ The continuity between sixteenth century negative visions of Scotus and the neo-Thomist agenda is also admirably documented by Pomplun, 2016. See in particular his remark p. 383 on the «cunning of reason» constituted by the Catholic adoption of Protestant narratives. On the

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contrasting attitudes in nineteenth and twentieth century Jesuit historiography, between those faithful to the cumulative model and those who embraced the strictly 'primitivist' neo-Thomist agenda, see Schmutz, 2018b.

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