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Summary of the doctoral dissertation
Man as *Imago Trinitatis* in the *Summa Theologiae*
of Saint Thomas Aquinas

The aim of the considerations contained in this dissertation was to show the greatness of human dignity resulting from the fact that man was created by One God in the Holy Trinity, "in His image and likeness" (Gen 1: 26-27) and destined to become God's adopted child (cf. Eph 1: 4-5) in imitation of the image of his Firstborn Son (cf. Rom 8:29).

The question posed in this dissertation is: How does St. Thomas show man as the image of the Holy Trinity? The answer to this question is based on the Thomistic personalist anthropology which in turn based on the concept of person taken from Boethius and on the metaphysics of Aristotle. The subject of the research was the discovery of various constitutive elements of the image of the Holy Trinity in man and its variable, dynamic elements, manifested in human activity. It has been shown that these constant elements and variable elements make up a living and dynamic image of the Holy Trinity in man. The considerations began with the presentation of the Person of God in the Holy Trinity as an unparalleled Model which constitutes the "answer" to the questions of who is man and what is his beginning and purpose of existence. The image of the Holy Trinity in man was also considered in the aspect of relational transcendentals: beauty, good and truth, which were shown in man, especially in the Persons of Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary. The dissertation indicates the necessity to follow the visible pattern of the Holy Trinity, which is Jesus Christ, and emphasizes the ability of man to cooperate with sanctifying grace.

The collected material was arranged and placed appropriately in three chapters, which were marked according to the "key" to understanding the mystery described in the title of this dissertation as "man as *imago Trinitatis*". The "key" was

given by St. Thomas on the issue 93 *prima pars Summa Theologiae* (STh, I, q. 93): trace-image-similarity – *vestigium-imago-similitudo*.

In the first chapter, entitled *Vestigia. Traces at the Beginning of the Image of the Holy Trinity in Man*, the first element of the above-mentioned triad was presented, ie the trace, that is, something "that goes" in front of the image (*preambulum*) and is an integral part of the *imago Trinitatis*, without which this "image" could not exist. The *Preambulum* concerns the similarity that is common to all creatures, and must necessarily be contained in the image of man - e.g. existence.

In the second chapter, entitled *Imago. Man as Imago Trinitatis in Nature and in Grace*, the concept of *imago*, that is the second element of the *vestigium-imago-similitudo* triad, was placed at the center of the discussion. Man has been presented as *imago Trinitatis* in human nature, in its ontological structure, together with the indestructible elements of this image that are part of the good of nature, such as the intellectual and appetitive powers. The image of the Holy Trinity in man was also shown in the relationship between a man and a woman as a metaphysical relation. Then the most perfect uncreated Image - the Firstborn Son – was presented.

In the third chapter entitled: *Similitudo. Man in the Image of the Holy Trinity - Likeness in Grace and Glory*, the subject of reflection was the concept of *similitudo*, i.e. the third element from the *vestigium-imago-similitudo* triad. The type of similarity known as *similitudo* is something "that follows" the image (*sequens*). It is a kind of similarity which is already the perfection of the image, which concerns a person who is particularly good because of the perfection of his/her virtue. As the model of a human-being created in the most perfect image of the Holy Trinity, the Mother of God is depicted, in whom the resemblance to the image of God has reached such a degree that she is called *the masterpiece of The Holy Trinity*.

This work is a kind of synthesis of the problem of human-being as *imago Trinitatis*, which can be reduced to three types of images of God in man: in the light of reason, in the light of grace and in the light of glory, which corresponds to Thomas' triad: *creatio-recreatio-similitudo*.

The presented analysis of the problem includes a very broad and detailed spectrum of research: from the first definition of man as a being created in the image of the Supreme Being, participating in His existence, to the most perfect image of a man participating in the nature of the Holy Trinity in eternity, called *visio beatifica*.

This dissertation also shows the complete dependence of man on God, starting from the act of creation, keeping human-beings in existence, helping them to accept the gift of grace, to meeting them in the glory of heaven. The mystery of man was presented and explained in the light Revelation - as the truth of faith - and in the light the realistic philosophy - as the truth of reason.

This dissertation shows the path leading to the perfection of the image of Holy Trinity in man, who is created "in the image and likeness" of God, but remains in a state of nature polluted by sin. Supernatural life, the spiritual organism of a human-being, sanctifying grace, spiritual adoption, contemplation and *visio beatifica*, which belong to the spiritual image of man were based on a solid foundation of realistic philosophy, which is a combination of natural reason and supernatural reality.

The combination of natural reason and supernatural reality guarantees that this dissertation bears the value of an interdisciplinary work in the field of theology and philosophy. This approach ensures a broad and innovative study of the subject based on the guidelines contained in the issue 93 *prima pars Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas.

This dissertation shows the truth that it is impossible to understand the mystery of man without knowing the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Human nature and the supernatural have been endowed with all goods that exist first in the Holy Trinity - both in Its nature and in Its inner relations - and are reflected in man, created in Its image and likeness.