

Words *of* Wisdom

A PHILOSOPHICAL DICTIONARY
FOR THE PERENNIAL TRADITION



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INTRODUCTION

The Nature of This Dictionary

The present volume offers students and other interested readers a dictionary of philosophical terms. Its distinctiveness lies, in part, in its being shaped by the understanding of rational reflection—and of wisdom—expressed in John Paul II’s *Fides et ratio*.¹ This dictionary focuses on terms central to what the encyclical called the “enduringly valid philosophical tradition” (*Fides et ratio*, #106). Although he was careful to note that the Catholic Church does not tie itself to any particular “school” of philosophy, it is clear—both from his own philosophical writings and from remarks in the encyclical itself—that John Paul II (as well as his predecessors throughout the late 19th and 20th centuries) accorded a special place to the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas.²

Aquinas’s thought itself of course stood within a broader tradition—one that John Paul II sometimes called simply the “great tradition” (see, e.g., *Fides et ratio*, #85). The latter might be characterized more fully, following an expression of Cardinal Avery Dulles, S.J., as the tradition of “integral Christian wisdom.” This approach to wisdom, wrote Cardinal Dulles, “draws on the full resources of reason and revelation alike.”³

Where John Paul II spoke of a philosophical tradition that is “enduringly valid,” many Thomists (i.e., thinkers who adopt the central concepts and principles of St. Thomas) have spoken of one that is “perennial.” Jacques Maritain, for example, described the latter as a tradition which, although rooted in ancient and medieval sources, nonetheless “is eternally young and always inventive, and involves a fundamental need, inherent in its very being, to grow and renew itself” in every age.⁴

There are many signs that a renewal of this perennial tradition now in fact is under way.⁵ If the full fruits of this movement are to be reaped—especially as these fruits were contemplated by John Paul II—two points

need to be borne in mind. First, throughout most of its history, this tradition has drawn from and contributed to a wider body of Christian reflection. And so it often does today. In discussing what he calls a contemporary “Thomistic renaissance,” Aidan Nichols, O.P., notes that a “distinguishing feature of the new movement” is its “desire to integrate the philosophy more thoroughly within an essentially theological vision.”⁶ Second, in addition to being true to its sources, a revitalization of this enduringly valid philosophy requires engagement with various elements of contemporary intellectual culture. This includes awareness of movements of thought that are fundamentally incompatible with the perennial tradition; it also includes efforts to incorporate into the tradition recent philosophical themes and approaches of genuine value. (As is well known, John Paul II, under his given name Karol Wojtyła, himself was especially interested in incorporating insights of the 20th-century movements called phenomenology and personalism.)

Putting these various lines of reflection together, John Paul II remarked in a key passage in *Fides et ratio* that “philosophers who wish to respond today to the demands which the word of God [i.e., Christian revelation] makes on human thinking should develop their thought . . . in organic continuity with the great tradition which, beginning with the ancients, passes through the Fathers of the Church and the masters of Scholasticism and includes the fundamental achievements of modern and contemporary thought” (#85). He also noted that, within this “great tradition,” the work of Aquinas occupies a special place (although not a point of final completion): “In an age when Christian thinkers were rediscovering the treasures of ancient philosophy, and more particularly of Aristotle, Thomas had the great merit of giving pride of place to the harmony which exists between faith and reason”—and to ways in which reason, when properly attuned to reality, can make substantive contributions to this harmony. Thus “the Church has been justified in consistently proposing St. Thomas” as a “master” of Christian wisdom and a “model” for other thinkers to follow (#43).

In accordance with the above, this dictionary seeks—through the exposition, discussion, and noting of relations among terms—to contribute to the ongoing renewal of the perennial philosophy,⁷ as well as the broader tradition of integral Christian wisdom in which it has flourished; as a structured wordbook, it seeks especially to help make an understanding of the terminology of this tradition available to students.

In order to specify this project further, let us situate it within the overall genre of the specialized dictionary.

Among materials developed to facilitate student learning, as well as scholarly activity, specialized dictionaries have come to occupy an important place. This perhaps is most obvious in relation to disciplines of the natural sciences, along with associated areas of technology and biomedical practice. In these areas, positive knowledge and the language used to express it make regular and commonly agreed upon advances—advances that need to be accessible in an organized fashion to students, practitioners, and others. For somewhat similar reasons, one also finds dictionaries of technical terms related to law and other areas of professional practice.

What should be said in this regard about specialized wordbooks related to philosophy? Here well-crafted dictionaries also can play an important role—although in somewhat different ways and for somewhat different reasons.

As its etymology suggests, philosophy (the “love of wisdom”) is best understood as a disciplined search for, and attempt to articulate, answers to most basic questions—in particular, questions about how things ultimately are (the subject matter of “speculative” philosophy), as well as questions about the good to be done or about how human persons, both as individuals and as societies, should act (the subject matters of “practical” and especially moral philosophy). Philosophy does not—except in an incidental way (i.e., via the history of its theories and systems)—result in a body of positive, factual knowledge. Moreover, given the intrinsic difficulty of philosophical topics, along with a variety of cultural factors, this enterprise, while disciplined, only rarely produces commonly agreed-upon advances. (This is not to say that philosophy cannot result in profound truths; for proponents of the perennial tradition, it certainly can. But such truths are seen to be of a different “order” than ones developed in the empirical or positive sciences.)

In light of all this, a dictionary of philosophy will have other purposes, and will gain its importance in other ways, than a dictionary of science or technology or of professional practice. At one level, of course, a philosophical dictionary (like other specialized wordbooks) presents and defines terms; but its deeper purpose is to serve as a resource for those who wish to master—and perhaps to participate in—a comprehensive tradition (or traditions) of thought.⁸

In their efforts to address ultimate questions, philosophers often have used everyday words in extended or novel ways. In addition, new forms of language are regularly developed to express a philosopher's or a tradition's insights. The result is a profuse outgrowth of conflicting terminologies (or of conflicting interpretations of terms used in common). This in turn makes it difficult for the student—and even, at times, for the academic specialist—to follow philosophical discussions with confidence.

In part to address the need for clarity and understanding, a number of philosophical dictionaries have appeared in English in recent years. Those in print at the time of this writing include the following: *Adler's Philosophical Dictionary*, by Mortimer J. Adler, ed. Betsy Radin (New York: Touchstone, 1996); *Blackwell Dictionary of Western Philosophy*, by Nicholas Bunnin and Jiyuan Yu (New York: Blackwell, 2004); *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, rev. ed., general ed. Robert Audi (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999); *A Dictionary of Common Philosophical Terms*, by Gregory Pence (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2000); *A Dictionary of Continental Philosophy*, ed. John Protevi (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006); *A Dictionary of Philosophy*, ed. Antony Flew and Stephen Priest (London: Pan Books Limited, 2002); *The Dictionary of Philosophy*, ed. Dagobert D. Runes (New York: Citadel Press Reprint, 2001); *Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion: Eastern and Western Thought*, expanded ed., by William L. Reese (New York: Humanity Books, 1998); *The HarperCollins Dictionary of Philosophy*, 2nd ed., by Peter A. Angeles (New York: HarperCollins, 1992); *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*, new ed., ed. Ted Honderich (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, rev. ed., by Simon Blackburn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); *The Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy*, 2nd ed., by Thomas Mautner (London: Penguin Books, 2005); *Philosophical Dictionary*, enlarged ed., by Mario Bunge (Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus Books, 2003); *The Philosopher's Dictionary*, 3rd ed., by Robert M. Martin (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2003); *The Routledge Dictionary of Philosophy*, 4th ed. (formerly *A Dictionary of Philosophy*), by Michael Proudfoot and A. R. Lacey (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2010); and *A World of Ideas: A Dictionary of Important Theories, Concepts, Beliefs, and Thinkers*, by Chris Rohmann (New York: Ballantine Books, 2000).

More focused dictionaries have also been produced that are devoted to the specialized terminologies of individual historical figures, as well as

glossaries appended to introductory textbooks in philosophical subject areas and to volumes of selected writings.⁹

The dictionaries of philosophy listed above manifest great diversity in both style and content. Some of them (e.g., *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* and *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*) might more accurately be characterized as one-volume encyclopedias.¹⁰ These works incorporate articles (some of them quite lengthy) by scholars representing various schools and areas of interest. The articles themselves are generally self-contained and only minimally connected with one another. Moreover, while these volumes certainly undertake some explanation of philosophical terms, their focus is rather on the topics, approaches, and thinkers being surveyed.

Other recent philosophical dictionaries focus more directly on terms and their meanings. However, in general they make little effort to give a systematically ordered presentation—let alone one that coheres with integral Christian wisdom. Indeed, a search of these volumes' entries for terms of special importance to the perennial tradition (e.g., **act, being, conscience, end, existence, good, intellect, moral precept, natural, perfection, subsistence, transcendental, voluntary, and wisdom**) reveals that, although they contain useful information, they are only marginally helpful for the reader whose aim is to master the type of philosophy for which Aquinas serves as a source and model.¹¹

Moreover, while glossaries of terms are welcome additions to recent philosophical texts, they are neither sufficiently broad nor sufficiently detailed for present purposes; even the most accurate of them do not facilitate a grasp of the present tradition in its comprehensiveness and depth, or in the complexity of relations among its key concepts.

Another genre of scholarly dictionary merits attention: that of the linguist or literary scholar. Such a work contains very detailed accounts of all words (sometimes including an exhaustive list of their actual occurrences) that appear in the original writings of a historical figure or movement. An excellent example of such a literary dictionary—and one relevant to our own subject matter—is the magisterial *A Lexicon of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, prepared by Roy J. Deferrari et al., originally published by The Catholic University of America Press in 1948–49, and recently reprinted by Loretto Publications.¹² For all its value, however, a dictionary such as this is not designed to elucidate matters of philosophical significance and complexity,

such as is needed for a renewal of the perennial tradition. It also will prove forbidding to typical students, especially undergraduates and others who are new to philosophical studies.

In situating the present volume within the above context, the following points may be highlighted. First, this dictionary is less universal in scope than the philosophical encyclopedias and even some (although not all) of the other genuine dictionaries.¹³ At the same time, however, it is more systematically organized than current instances of either type of volume. For example, while many of the other dictionaries offer accounts of key philosophical terms, none of them note the terms' respective parts of speech—or the significant differences in meaning that can attend a single word when it is used as different parts of speech. As indicated below, the present dictionary takes care to do these things. Moreover, regarding the tradition on which it focuses, this wordbook in fact is significantly more comprehensive than any other philosophical dictionary in print. It also, of course, is both more comprehensive and more systematic than the topical or historical glossaries. And, while it is less exhaustive in its treatment of linguistic items than the work of a literary scholar, this is due to its being grounded in a distinctive set of intellectual concerns and its being aimed at a distinctive set of audiences. These last points call for elaboration.

As a comprehensive dictionary, this volume seeks to present a relatively complete account of the (sometimes multiple) uses of philosophical terms regularly employed within the perennial tradition, with attention to their interrelations as well as their theoretical contexts. Further, the present volume seeks to equip readers to compare and contrast these philosophical ideas with those of other traditions—especially ones with which it competes in our day. It also treats a number of recently developed concepts that show promise of contributing to the perennial philosophy. In all of this, the book proceeds in a systematic manner and from a consistent point of view.

Such features are perhaps especially appropriate in a work that seeks to contribute to a renewal of the tradition shaped by St. Thomas Aquinas. As Yves R. Simon remarked, for Thomists there can be no substitute for “clarity in the statement of questions and principles, firmness in inference, appropriateness in predication, integral preservation of past developments, lucid order, and the unique defense against error that rational forms alone can provide.”¹⁴

As far as the present writer can determine, the last attempt to produce a comprehensive dictionary of terms for this tradition was undertaken over

a half-century ago by Bernard Wuellner, S.J., in his *Dictionary of Scholastic Philosophy*.¹⁵ Wuellner's volume, while still useful, has long been out of print. Moreover, given certain dramatic changes in Western intellectual culture, as well as developments within the "great tradition" itself, a new effort along this line seems eminently warranted.

As already noted, one key development within the perennial tradition during recent decades has been a renewed recognition of the historical importance of situating philosophy within the broader stream of integral Christian wisdom.¹⁶ Such a recognition coheres fully with John Paul II's understanding of relations between reason and faith. In *Fides et ratio*, he referred to certain "requirements of the word of God" for philosophers who wish their work to contribute to Christian reflection—for example, that they seek to develop a philosophy of "genuinely metaphysical range" (see ##80–84). He also referred to certain "demands of philosophical reason" regarding the work of theology—for example, that theological concepts be formulated in a critical and universally communicable way (##64–67). Significantly, in an extended discussion of this encyclical, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger—later to become Pope Benedict XVI—stressed these very points; he also remarked that, given Christianity's universal claims and universal destiny, "it must stand in dialogue with philosophy."¹⁷

Commenting on John Paul II's vision, Cardinal Dulles suggested that—due to inhospitable features within the contemporary intellectual climate—"philosophers and theologians who wish to implement [this vision] must resolutely struggle against mighty odds;" but he also proposed that "a measure of success is attainable, especially in universities that stand within the Christian and Catholic tradition." He added that "a revitalized Christian philosophy could reinvigorate our nation and our culture."¹⁸

Regarding the intended audience, or audiences, for this dictionary, first mention goes to students of philosophy (and also of theology) who wish to participate in—or at least grasp more clearly—the historically central philosophical strand of integral Christian wisdom. It seems likely that, as Cardinal Dulles suggested, such students, and their teachers, will be found primarily at institutions that maintain a Catholic identity. Second, the volume may be of interest to other philosophers and students of philosophy—whether favorably or unfavorably disposed toward Thomism, or toward classical philosophy more generally—insofar as it offers (by contrast with other recent philosophical dictionaries) a full and accurate presentation of terms typically used in the perennial tradition. A third audience for the

dictionary consists of broadly educated readers with some knowledge of this approach to philosophy (e.g., through basic undergraduate courses, or through adult religious education programs) who wish to appreciate it in greater comprehensiveness and depth. Finally, but importantly, the author hopes that Catholic seminaries and institutes of theological formation—as well as their graduates in the ministerial priesthood—will find the volume a useful resource.

Regarding the last-mentioned audience, the Catholic hierarchy regularly has commended the pursuit of integral Christian wisdom in the training of priests. The fathers of the Second Vatican Council wrote, “Philosophical subjects should be taught in such a way that students are first of all gradually led to a solid and coherent account of human nature, the world and God, guided by the philosophical tradition of lasting value [i.e., at least as the present writer would interpret the text, the perennial tradition]” (*Optatam totius*, #15). In accord with this statement, John Paul II frequently called for the philosophy principally associated with the great tradition—suitably open to newer forms of reflection—to be an important part of priestly formation. Near the end of *Fides et ratio*, he spoke of the “grave responsibility to provide for the appropriate training of those charged with teaching philosophy both in seminaries and ecclesiastical faculties;” he added that “teaching in this field [viz., philosophy] necessarily entails . . . a systematic presentation of the great heritage of the Christian tradition and due discernment in the light of the current needs of the Church and the world” (#105).¹⁹ Also worthy of note is the revised Program of Priestly Formation adopted by the American Catholic Bishops in June of 2005. In addition to retaining philosophy requirements in the college seminary curriculum, the bishops called for the completion of a minimum thirty credits in philosophy as part of a two-year pre-theology program for candidates who enter the seminary after completing undergraduate studies.²⁰

Selection and Internal Structure of Entries

The present volume contains 1,173 distinct entries, not counting those that simply refer the reader to other entries. Each entry is a term—that is, a word or phrase, together with its philosophical use(s)—judged to be significant

in light of the intellectual concerns articulated above. Terms of the following general types have been selected for inclusion in this dictionary.

First, the great majority of entries are ones that have specific meanings for philosophers who continue the intellectual tradition of St. Thomas Aquinas. Where no other indication is given, the reader may assume that the term in question, together with its definition or definitions, represents standard usage within this tradition. Regarding certain terms, and the issues that incorporate them, there has been development, and even dispute, among proponents of perennial thought. Indeed, development took place through the course of Aquinas's own writings.²¹ In formulating entries for this dictionary, the present author occasionally has alluded to points of these sorts. In general, however, the *Summa Theologiae* has been taken as expressing Aquinas's mature philosophical (as well as theological) perspective; and, where interpretive choices have been necessary, the writings of Jacques Maritain and Yves R. Simon²²—as well as more recent scholars who maintain and develop themes of these 20th-century Thomists—have been relied upon for authentic understandings of Aquinas's terminology. Of course, a number of philosophical terms (e.g., basic terms of logic such as **deduction**, **premise**, and **validity**) are shared by diverse intellectual traditions. Thus there is nothing peculiarly Thomist—or Catholic or Christian—about them.

Second, a number of terms are included that are related to other major figures and movements in Western philosophy, especially ones with which the Christian tradition has had significant interaction. Among these terms are adjectival forms of the names of key historical figures (e.g., **Cartesian**, **Humean**, and **Kantian**), as well as standard designations for certain doctrines associated with them (e.g., **rationalism**, **empiricism**, and **deontology**). As explicitly noted in many entries, the latter doctrines usually present significant contrasts with positions developed within the perennial philosophy.

Third, there are various terms representing what John Paul II called “the fundamental achievements of modern and contemporary thought.” He urged that these achievements be incorporated as fully as possible within the ongoing tradition. Examples from this category would be the names of certain recent philosophical movements (e.g., **phenomenology**, **personalism**, and **analytic philosophy**), together with technical concepts developed within these movements but now commonly used by thinkers of the

perennial tradition as well (e.g., **self-transcendence**, **being vs. having**, and **necessary and sufficient conditions**).

Fourth, terms are included that represent significant contemporary challenges to a philosophy (and also, therefore, a theology) rooted in the ancient and medieval authors. As it happens, a number of these challenges are mentioned in passing in *Fides et ratio* itself (see especially ## 86–91)—for example, **eclecticism**, **historicism**, **scientism**, **postmodernism**, and **nihilism**. Contemporary students of the perennial philosophy should have access to the meanings of these contrary views, as well as to their intellectual backgrounds.

Fifth, in light of this dictionary’s setting within Christian and specifically Catholic intellectual life, there are certain terms that have arisen in theological and doctrinal contexts—for example, **gifts of integrity and grace** (including the technical concept “natural”), **Incarnation** (including the technical concept “hypostatic union”), and **Real Presence** (including the technical concept “transubstantiation”).²³ In all such cases, the author’s judgment has been that the terms merit inclusion because they represent significant and still pertinent encounters between the perennial philosophy and Christian faith.

Four additional sets of remarks should be made at this point.

1) It frequently happens that a single root word gives rise to more than one term of philosophical significance. In such cases, if the meanings of the terms in question differ importantly from one another, each is given its own entry in the present volume (e.g., **act**, **action**, **active**, and **actual**). Similarly, in cases where a single word is used as more than one part of speech, and the meaning in the second instance is not simply derivative from that in the first, each part of speech is given its own entry—for example, **abstract** (adj.) and **abstract** (v.). On the other hand, in cases where root-related words are such that one of them can be regarded as primary, and the meanings of the others can readily be construed by reference to it, the latter words (and/or parts of speech)—unless explicitly referred to in other dictionary entries—are simply gathered together at the end of the single entry. In such cases, the identification of the “primary” word has been made in part by way of an assessment of the frequency of the words’ respective occurrences, and in part by way of an assessment of the structures of and relations among the words’ respective meanings.²⁴ Judgments of these sorts are, of course, fallible—and even, in some cases, arbitrary. The author’s

chief concern in dealing with such matters has been to ensure that all relevant words (and parts of speech) are somehow represented, and that their respective meanings are rendered intelligible, without thereby producing any unnecessary multiplication of entries.

2) This dictionary is intended to serve as an adjunct to—not a substitute for—a careful reading of actual texts of Aquinas and others in the “great tradition.” Of course, the intelligent apprehension of these very texts sometimes will involve identifying which of the various meanings identified in this volume best fits particular occurrences of key terms.

3) The present volume does not contain entries for words of interest used in non-Western philosophies or in other world religions (e.g., “Atman,” “Brahman,” “karma,” “moksha,” “samsara,” “Tao”). This is not because of disdain for these other traditions; indeed, the reverse is the case. (As John Paul II himself frequently noted, proponents of the perennial philosophy and of integral Christian wisdom more generally must increasingly come to engage in fruitful contact with these other traditions.) Rather, the absence of terms such as those listed above is due to their treatment in other dictionaries and glossaries—for example, specialized volumes devoted to Eastern philosophies and religions, as well as comprehensive volumes such as Reese’s *Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion: Eastern and Western Thought*.²⁵ Such works serve quite adequately the need for resources to facilitate comparison and contrast with the tradition of integral Christian wisdom.

4) Finally, many words of significance for philosophy do not appear in this—or in any—philosophical dictionary. These are words that form the common heritage of educated persons. In fact, it seems likely that, at least for many readers, a full understanding of the accounts offered in this volume will require occasional consultation with another, more general, word-book. Thus the adept student of philosophy (like the adept student of most other disciplines) will have access to a good standard dictionary of the English language.

∞ The entries in this volume are constructed according to a common pattern. Each includes some or all of the following elements, arranged in the order indicated.

1) The term is introduced in **bold** type, with its (primary) part(s) of speech indicated in parentheses. In keeping with typical scholarly practice, terms from languages other than English are printed in italics. Standard

abbreviations for parts of speech are used: “adj.” for “adjective,” “n.” for “noun,” “v.” for “verb,” and “adv.” for “adverb.” (A number of entries here treated as linguistic units are, from the standpoint of grammar, compound terms or phrases rather than individual words and parts of speech.) After this basic information, there sometimes follows an etymological note. Given historical factors related to the Christian tradition, many philosophical terms that have been selected for the dictionary are of Greek or Latin origin. Where Greek origins are noted, the words in question are transliterated and anglicized according to the usual custom; readers interested in the Greek orthography should consult a dictionary of Ancient Greek or a Greek/English lexicon.²⁶

2) An account of the term’s meaning follows. Where a term has more than one meaning of philosophical significance, these are introduced separately by Arabic numerals: for example, “**absolutely** (adv.): (1) . . . (2) . . .” and “**natural** (adj.): (1) . . . (2) . . . (3) . . . (4) . . .” Within each account, any English word placed in *italics* has an entry of its own, to which the interested reader may refer. This system of internal cross-referencing, it is hoped, will be an especially helpful feature of the present dictionary. Of course, not all possible cross-references are explicitly indicated—if they were, many terms would have definitions expressed almost entirely in italics! Rather, terms selected for cross-referencing were judged to have special importance and/or to be ones whose connections might otherwise be overlooked. In cases where an italicized term has two or more distinct and numerically separated meanings, the one in question is indicated by a subscript numeral in parentheses: for example, “*being*₍₂₎” or “*matter*₍₃₎.”

3) An explanation of meaning may be followed by a phrase or phrases that illustrate the term in actual use. Such phrases are marked by diamond-shaped brackets (i.e., “< . . . >”). (For example, under **absolute** (adj.) the reader finds “<One’s absolute duty in a concrete situation. God’s existence as absolute.>”)

4) In some cases the entry includes further elaboration and discussion. Where such discussion serves primarily to clarify the meaning of the term by way of historical or other information, it is placed in parentheses: that is, “(. . .).” Where such discussion involves critical comments from the standpoint of Thomist philosophy, or the tradition of integral Christian wisdom more generally, it is placed in square brackets: that is, “[. . .].” (Thus under **being of reason** a note about the distinction between concepts of “first” and “second” intention is set off by parentheses; whereas

under **compatibilism** a comment that this view, as well as its opposite—**incompatibilism**—are regarded by followers of St. Thomas as missing a key insight is marked by square brackets.)

5) After the explanation of the meaning(s) and the additional discussion(s), if any, there sometimes occur indications of synonyms (preceded by “Syn:”) or antonyms (preceded by “Ant:”), as well as other entries of special relevance (preceded by “Compare,” “Contrast,” or “See”). All such entries are printed in **bold** and placed in parentheses.

6) Finally, words of philosophical interest that are formed from the same root, but do not receive distinct entries because their meanings are derivative and readily construed in light of the meaning(s) already given, are listed together, along with their parts of speech, as follows: “Also:.”

Following the dictionary proper is a comprehensive bibliography. It is divided into three parts: first, writings by St. Thomas Aquinas available in English; second, resources of recent vintage that represent expressions of or commentaries upon the perennial tradition; and third, works of other individuals and movements of thought that either may be contrasted with this tradition or show promise of contributing to its ongoing development. All authors mentioned in individual dictionary entries have appropriate items listed in the bibliography.

Notes

1. John Paul II, *Fides et ratio* (On the Relationship between Faith and Reason), Vatican Translation (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 1998).

2. For example, in “The Human Person and Natural Law,” reprinted in *Person and Community*, trans. Theresa Sandok, O. S. M. (New York: Peter Lang, 1993), 181–82, the future pope, Karol Wojtyła, wrote, “We in the Thomistic school, the school of ‘perennial philosophy,’ are accustomed [to stress] . . . nature in the metaphysical sense, which is more or less equivalent to the essence of a thing taken as the basis of all the actualization of the thing.” And in other essays in that volume (e.g., “Thomistic Personalism”), he was explicitly concerned with articulating Thomist views in ways that benefit from engagement with phenomenological and personalist thought. Moreover, in the preface to *The Acting Person*, ed. Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka, trans. Andrzej Potocki (Dordrecht and Boston: D. Reidel, 1979), John Paul II mentioned the philosophical anthropology of St. Thomas Aquinas as one of the two main sources of his enterprise (the other, of course, being the phenomenological method he had adapted from Edmund Husserl and his followers). Regarding *Fides et ratio* itself, it is significant that John Paul II devoted two full sections

(##43–44) to Aquinas’s achievements, and that his emphasis throughout was on the need for a revitalization of a metaphysics of realism and a theory of knowledge according to which the human mind can reach to “the very being of the object which is known” (##82–83). He also called for an “ethics [and thus a moral theology] which looks to the truth of the good”—which in turn “presupposes a philosophical anthropology and a metaphysics of the good” (#98). (In his 1993 encyclical on fundamental moral theology, *Veritatis splendor*, he also drew heavily on Thomist themes.) Finally, John Paul II expressed the Church’s understanding of revealed truth as a “splendor emanating from subsistent Being itself” (#79).

3. Avery Dulles, S.J., “Can Philosophy Be Christian?” in *The Two Wings of Catholic Thought: Essays on Fides et ratio*, ed. David Ruel Foster & Joseph W. Koterski, S.J. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of American Press, 2003), 20.

4. Jacques Maritain, *A Preface to Metaphysics* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1945), 2. See also the discussion by Ralph McInerny (“RM”) in the article “*Philosophia perennis*,” in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, general ed. Robert Audi (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 580. Note as well Karol Wojtyła’s own use of “perennial philosophy” in the essay quoted in note 2, above; and note the heading he gives his discussion of Aquinas’s work in *Fides et ratio*, ##43–44: “*Perennis sancti Thomae Aquinatis sententiarum novitas*”—with the Latin *perennis* expressing the enduring character of this tradition and *novitas* expressing its openness to new insights. Unfortunately, during the past century the phrase “perennial philosophy” has come to be equivocal in its use, insofar as it also is applied to a range of esoteric and syncretistic religious movements—the latter use stimulated in part by Aldous Huxley’s 1946 book with the very title *The Perennial Philosophy*. For the distinction between and a discussion of the phrase’s two diverse senses, see James S. Custinger, “Christianity and the Perennial Philosophy,” in *Christianity: The Complete Guide*, ed. John Bowden (New York: Continuum Press, 2007), 912–14.

5. Among such signs are the following:

First, as can be gathered from section II of this dictionary’s bibliography (Recent Commentaries and Elaborations on Perennial Themes), a large number of titles recently published in English are devoted to the range of Aquinas’s philosophical work and to its revitalization and relevance for theology.

Second, works of key figures from the previous generation of Thomist scholars have been maintained in print or reissued. Examples here include Jacques Maritain (the full corpus of his writings is being published in 20 volumes by The Jacques Maritain Center at the University of Notre Dame), Yves R. Simon, and Josef Pieper. Moreover, the past two decades have seen the translation and publication of works by Polish Thomists, under the general title “Catholic Thought from Lublin.” Authors here include M. A. Krapiec, O.P., Stefan Swiezawski, and, of course, Karol Wojtyła. Also worthy of note are the reprints of classical textbooks by 20th-century Jesuit teacher-scholars (e.g., Austin Fagothey and George P. Klubertanz).

A third sign involves new initiatives to make the writings of St. Thomas even more widely accessible in English. Two important examples are Aquinas transla-

tion projects being undertaken by The Catholic University of America Press and by Hackett Publishing Co. Another example is the reissue by Dumb Ox Books, in conjunction with St. Augustine's Press, of English translations of Aquinas's commentaries on Aristotle's basic works. These and other print editions of Aquinas's writings now are supplemented by online versions, notably the full text of the *Summa Theologiae* (trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province) at <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/> and an annotated, slightly abridged text of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* (trans. Joseph Rickaby, S.J.), at <http://www2.nd.edu/Departments/Maritain/etext/gc.htm>. Also noteworthy are other internet translation projects, as well as English-language websites devoted to the perennial tradition. See, for example, the websites of Thomas International Center at <http://www.ticenter.net>; the Society for Aristotelian Studies at <http://www.aristotle-aquinas.org>; the Jacques Maritain Center, University of Notre Dame, at <http://www2.nd.edu/Departments/Maritain>; Joseph M. Magee's website, Thomistic Philosophy, at <http://www.aquinasonline.com>; Mark Johnson's website at <http://thomistica.net>; Francisco Romero Carrasquillo's *Ite ad Thomam*, at <http://iteadthomam.blogspot.com>; the philosophy section of James Arraj's Inner Explorations at <http://www.innerexplorations.com>; and John C. Cahalan's Resources for Modern Aristotelians, at <http://www.foraristotelians.info/>.

Finally, the author would note a renewed vitality in professional societies that focus on the perennial philosophy—notably the American Catholic Philosophical Association and the American Maritain Association (both of which maintain websites and publish annual proceedings)—and smaller groups such as the Gilson Society and the Society for Thomistic Natural Philosophy. Additionally, a large number of pertinent articles regularly appear in such journals as *The Thomist*, *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, *The Modern Schoolman*, and the English edition of *Nova et Vetera*.

6. Aidan Nichols, O.P., *Discovering Aquinas* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002), 142.

7. It is not possible to set precise boundaries around the concept “perennial”—or, for that matter, the concept “Thomist.” To be a Thomist is to adopt the essential concepts, principles, and philosophical positions that informed Aquinas's work. But sometimes it is a complex matter to distinguish what is essential from what is inessential. Clearly, Aquinas's (along with his contemporaries') acceptance of the ancient theory of the “four elements”—earth, air, fire, and water—is *not* essential to his philosophical or theological themes. Clearly, too, his teaching that terms designating “transcendentals” (being, goodness, intelligibility, etc.) are analogous in their instantiations *is* an essential feature of his framework. But other topics are more difficult to place—for example, the view that physical reality manifests what have been called “essentially subordinated” series of causality. This general view forms part of the background of Aquinas's first and second ways of reasoning to God, and thus is clearly significant; but can one be a Thomist while holding that, in light of contemporary science, there in fact is only one such series, and indeed

that this series is comprised of only two members—the whole, complex network of natural causes and effects, and God as ontologically First Cause? (For a discussion of this topic, see John W. Carlson, *Understanding Our Being: Introduction to Speculative Philosophy in the Perennial Tradition* [Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2008], 197–98.) Similarly, according to some usages the term “perennial” is more or less equivalent to “Thomist” (recall the first quotation from Karol Wojtyła in note 2, above). But according to others it has a wider extension—although how much wider is not readily agreed upon or easily specified. For purposes of the present dictionary, the following convention will be adopted: concepts, principles, and philosophical positions will be identified as part of the perennial tradition either if they arguably have been central to the work of Aquinas and his close followers or if, although arising within other—especially recent—schools of thought, they arguably express themes that are consistent with this tradition and have shown promise for enriching its contemporary renewal and exposition (whether or not the result is formally termed “Thomist”).

8. As we shall see just below, the word “dictionary” is sometimes applied to volumes that in effect are encyclopedias; in the case of the latter works, the aims are somewhat different from those articulated here.

9. Regarding historical figures, see the Blackwell Philosopher Dictionaries Series, which currently includes volumes on the specialized terminologies of Descartes, Rousseau, Hobbes, Hegel, and Wittgenstein. (Significantly, there are no such works devoted to Aquinas or other Scholastics.) For glossaries appended to introductory texts, see, for example, the ones by Louis P. Pojman in *Ethical Theory: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, 4th ed. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth/Thomson, 2002); and by the present author in *Understanding Our Being*. For glossaries in editions of selected writings, see in particular that by Peter Kreeft in *A Summa of the Summa* [i.e., the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas] (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1990); and those by Richard J. Regan, S.J., in *Thomas Aquinas: On Law, Morality, and Politics*, 2nd ed., and in *Thomas Aquinas: A Summary of Philosophy* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002 and 2003, respectively). See as well the glossaries appended to the sixty volumes of the mid-20th-century Blackfriars edition of the entire *Summa Theologiae*, by the Dominicans of the English Province and their associates, general ed. Thomas Gilby, O.P. (London: Blackfriars, 1963 et seq.). (A difficulty sometimes arises in relation to the last-mentioned set: since each volume’s explanation of terms was prepared by the individual translator of the text in question, when one reads across the respective glossaries one sometimes discovers that a single term is given rather different accounts.)

10. For more formally encyclopedic works, see *The Shorter Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward Craig (New York: Routledge/Taylor and Francis, 2005), as well as the older, but still useful, eight volumes of *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, editor in chief Paul Edwards (New York: Macmillan, 1967). Also to be noted are the online sources *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, at <http://www.iep.utm.edu>, and *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, at <http://plato.stanford.edu>.

11. To take just one range of examples—but a crucial one. The present dictionary develops complex accounts of **be** (v.), **become** (v.), **being** (n.), **essence** (n.), **exist** (v.), and **existence** (n.). It also has separate entries on **act** or **actuality** (n.), **reality** (n.), and **subsistence** (n.), as well as on **time** (n.) and **eternity** (n.) as modes of existence (or, more strictly, of duration). Regarding “being” in particular, five different uses are distinguished: 1) as a term that corresponds to “that which is;” 2) as a term that refers to the first of the transcendental perfections; 3) as a term that names the formal subject matter of metaphysics; 4) as a term that indicates the very act through which a thing exists; and, in the context of logic, 5) as a term that expresses the uniting of a predicate with a subject. Now, some of the dictionaries mentioned earlier (e.g., Runes’s *The Dictionary of Philosophy*, and Reese’s *Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion*), although not marking all of these distinctions, provide helpful discussions of historical approaches to the topic of being, including those of Aristotle and Aquinas and other medieval Scholastics. Other dictionaries, however, are from the present perspective truly disappointing. For example, the *Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy* offers no account of either “be” or “being,” and its entry for “existence” simply identifies this concept as “the main subject matter of metaphysics” (186). Again, in *The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, Blackburn opens his discussion of “being” with the following statements: “Everything real and nothing unreal belongs to the domain of Being. But there is little useful that can be said about everything that is real, especially from within the philosopher’s study, so it is not apparent that there can be such a subject as Being by itself.” And he adds, “A central mistake in the area is to treat Being as a noun that identifies a particularly deep subject matter” (1996 ed., 40). From the standpoint of the perennial philosophy, such remarks themselves reveal a deep misunderstanding. Finally, in the entry for “existence” in his *Philosophical Dictionary*, Bunge distinguishes “conceptual” from “material” existence, then offers the opinion that “an object exists materially (or *really*) iff [short for ‘if and only if’] it is changeable” (97, emphasis added)—and thus he rules out by definition the very type of existence (namely, unchanging and eternal) that Aquinas and his tradition have identified as supremely real and the source of all other existence!

12. Roy J. Deferrari, Sr. M. Inviolata Berry, C. D. P., and Ignatius McGuiness, O.P., *A Lexicon of Saint Thomas Aquinas* (Fitzwilliam, N.H. and Boonville, N.Y.: Loretto Publications and Preserving Christian Publications, 2004). See also the abridged version, first published in 1960: Roy J. Deferrari, *A Latin-English Dictionary of St. Thomas Aquinas*, St. Paul Editions reprint (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1986).

13. In particular, the present dictionary treats considerably more terms than those of either Adler or Pence, mentioned above. (This of course is not to deny the value of those volumes. Adler, in particular, gives well-crafted and engaging discussions of 125 key terms in his dictionary.)

14. Yves R. Simon, from the foreword to *The Material Logic of John of St. Thomas*, trans. Simon et al. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), xxiii.

15. Bernard Wuellner, S.J., *Dictionary of Scholastic Philosophy* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1956). One might note as well two books published during the succeeding decades. The first, called *Thomas Aquinas Dictionary*, ed. Morris Stockhammer (New York: Philosophical Library, 1965), consisted entirely of quotations from Aquinas's works—without any comment or elaboration—related to an alphabetized list of words from “Abstinence” to “Zeal.” The second, called *Philosophical Dictionary*, was an encyclopedic volume originally published in German by Walter Brugger, S.J., and translated and adapted for American readers by Kenneth Baker, S.J. (Spokane, Wash.: Gonzaga University Press, 1972). Like Wuellner's dictionary, these volumes have been out of print for several decades.

16. See again Aidan Nichols, O.P., *Discovering Aquinas*, especially Chapters 9 and 10.

17. See Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, “Culture and Truth: Some Reflections on the Encyclical Letter, *Fides et Ratio*,” given as a lecture at St. Patrick's Seminary, Menlo Park, Calif., and published in the seminary quarterly *The Patrician* (Winter, 1999). Compare his treatment of these issues in *Truth and Tolerance*, trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 183–209. Finally, note this admirable passage in Cardinal Ratzinger's *Principles of Catholic Theology*, trans. Sister Mary Frances McCarthy, S. N. D. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987): “The Christian mission [from the earliest period] sought to persuade men to abandon false religions and turn to the true one. . . . In the struggle for the human soul it regarded, not the existing religions, but rational philosophy as its partner, and, in the constant disputes among the various groups, it aligned itself with philosophy” (327).

18. Avery Dulles, S.J., “Can Philosophy Be Christian?” 20–21.

19. See also similar remarks in John Paul II's *Sapientia Christiana* (1979), *Ex corde ecclesiae* (1990), and *Pastores dabo vobis* (1992).

20. *Program of Priestly Formation*, 5th ed. (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006). In 2010, Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Maryland hosted a conference on the role of philosophy in seminary education. The keynote speaker, Msgr. Robert Sokolowski (mentioned in certain dictionary entries as well as the bibliography), emphasized the central role of the perennial tradition in the philosophical training of future priests.

21. For an overview of Aquinas's work, including some discussion of internal developments, see Jean-Pierre Torrell, O.P., *St. Thomas Aquinas*. Vol. 1, *The Person and His Work*, rev. ed., trans. Robert Royal (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005).

22. See the many works by these authors listed in the comprehensive bibliography appended to this volume. In *Fides et ratio*, #74, John Paul II mentions Maritain (along with other 20th-century figures such as Etienne Gilson and St. Edith Stein) as a principal example of a thinker rooted in the perennial tradition but at the same time fully engaged with contemporary intellectual culture.

23. As sources for these matters, the author has relied on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997); and *Our Sun-*

day Visitor's Encyclopedia of Catholic Doctrine, ed. Russell Shaw (Huntington, Ind.: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1997).

24. In many cases this has resulted in taking a noun form as primary in relation to an adjectival form—for example, “abundance” in relation to “abundant,” and “agnosticism” in relation to “agnostic” (but see “alienable” in relation to “alienability”). Similarly, in many cases this has resulted in listing a shorter word form as primary in relation to a longer word form—for example, “act” in relation to “active,” and “accidental” in relation to “accidentally” (but see “aversion” in relation to “averse [to]”).

25. Regarding specialized treatments of non-Western terms, see a number of volumes in the series “Historical Dictionaries of Religions, Philosophies, and Movements” published by Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. Among the more general reference works, see the revised second edition of *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* (1999), which includes a number of articles related to non-Western movements and topics.

26. Standard examples of such volumes are S. C. Woodhouse, *English-Greek Dictionary: A Vocabulary of the Attic Language* (London and New York: Taylor and Francis, 1972); and H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed., with a revised supplement (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). Although less distinctive, features of Latin orthography also are missing from typical anglicized versions. For details of the Latin, see, for example, Roy J. Deferrari et al., *A Lexicon of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, cited in note 12.