

General Introduction

Ever since the publication of Darwin's work in which he proposed the framework of the theory of evolution, his suggested model of species transformation became the subject of a vivid analysis and debate concerning its metaphysical presuppositions, as well as both philosophical and theological consequences. Questions concerning the relation between evolution and creation remained actual along the transition from Darwinism to neo-Darwinism, to twentieth-century evolutionary synthesis, and to the most recent transformations of the latter.

One particular aspect of this discussion brings into consideration the tradition of the classical Aristotelian-Thomistic system of philosophy and theology, asking whether it is capable of receiving the theory of evolution and to what extent such an encounter might be beneficial for both sides of the conversation. A number of important works on this topic have been published over the course of more than one hundred and fifty years of the history of the evolutionary theory. Among more significant contributors, we should mention Mortimer J. Adler, Nicanor Pier Giorgio Austriaco, F. F. Centore, William E. Carroll, Michael Chaberek, John N. Deely, Charles DeKoninck, Joseph Donceel, Ryan Fáinche, Étienne Gilson, James R. Hofmann, Marie-Dalmace Leroy, Norbert Luyten, Jacques Maritain, St. George J. Mivart, Ernan Mc Mullin, Antonio Moreno, Raymond J. Nogar, Fran O'Rourke, Edward T. Oakes, Mariusz Tabaczek, Gerard M. Verschuuren, and John Augustine Zahm.

This issue of *Nova et Vetera* brings to the English-speaking reader an important debate that took place after the publication of the Polish translation of *Thomistic Evolution: A Catholic Approach to Understanding Evolution in the Light of Faith* by Nicanor Pier Giorgio Austriaco, O.P., James Brent, O.P., Thomas Davenport, O.P., and John Baptist Ku, O.P. The debate was inspired by the afterword to the Polish edition of the book, written by Mariusz Tabaczek, O.P. A critical evaluation of this text was offered by Tabaczek's confrere, Michael Chaberek, O.P. At the invitation of the Polish *Annals of Philosophy*, Tabaczek wrote a response to Chaberek's critique. We

publish English translations of all three texts. We hope they will contribute to the rich and ongoing conversation concerning the relation among Aristotelianism, Thomism, and the theory of evolution.

**Works by Aristotle, St. Augustine, and St. Thomas Aquinas
Cited in This Interchange**

Aristotle

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Augustine

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Aquinas

De ente = *De ente et essentia*. Vol. 43 of the Leonine edition, 131–57. English translation: *Aquinas on Being and Essence: A Translation and Interpretation*. Translated by Joseph Bobik. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1965.

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- ST* = *Summa theologiae*. Rome: Editiones Paulinae, 1962. English translation: *Summa Theologica*. Translated by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province. 3 vols. New York: Benziger, 1946.