ST. THOMAS, ANALOGY, AND THE SPEECH OF THE ANGELS

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Presented by J. Rebane

> If a lion could speak we would not understand him.
>
> L. Wittgenstein

> You cannot trust me when I tell you of what passes on earth; how will you be able to trust me when I tell you of what passes in heaven?
>
> John 3: 12.

The aim of the article is to make the first step towards developing a conception of angels' mind which could be used as a model for understanding some problems of communication by means of human language. In my paper I have postulated the existence of the ideal language phenomena (*locutio angelorum* of St. Thomas Aquinas) and analysed it from the point of view of L. Wittgenstein's language-game doctrine and J. Searle's speech act theory.

Key words: *Locutio angelorum*, analogy, understanding.

1. PRELIMINARY REMARKS

In this paper[1] I make an attempt to analyse Aquinas' doctrine of the angels' language, both as such and with regard to understanding the texts in which St. Thomas speaks about it.

The distinction of our knowledge in respect to its possible origin between *lumine divinae revelationis* and *lumine naturalis rationis* is fundamental, and covers all the "conceptual architectonic" of the *Summa Theologiae*. There are truths that transcend our natural reason but do not contradict it; these truths are the truths of revelation obtained by saints through the grace of God; these truths are evident to God, angels, and in some way to saints, but not to us.

In treating this epoch-making division, we must not overlook another distinction, overlapping the first one and playing, as I think, a no less important role in the *Summa*.

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[1] This is a revised version of my paper "Warum die Engeln sprechen?", presented in February 1992 in the workshop "Mittelalterliche Lehren zu Ursprung und Wesen der Sprache", which was held at Fribourg University, Switzerland. My gratitude belongs to Prof. Ruedi Imbach and Prof. Guido Küng (both Fribourg) for many useful insights and to Prof. Wim A. de Pater (Leuven) for helpful comments on an earlier draft. The responsibility for the possible mistakes is, of course, mine alone.

St. Thomas, following Aristotle [2], distinguishes two ways in which a mind can be in potentiality: (1) as it is before it has "learned or discovered", i.e. before acquiring knowledge; and (2) as it is "when it has acquired knowledge but is not yet reflecting on it".

I think that what has been said is essential for our problem. In the modern reception of Aquinas' texts, there are problems of understanding in which we need:

(a) to specify their factual or historico-theological background. Let us consider, for instance, Thomas' doctrine of *ecclesia* or his writings on the Jewish problem. I label such problems roughly as *historico-factual* problems.

(b) to reflect logically on what is already known. Father J. M. Bocheński and many commentators of Aquinas have demonstrated that sometimes behind the commonly understood passage the proper conceptual scheme reveals itself only if our reflection is assisted by some kind of "mental scalpel"—scrupulous logical analysis or some other technique of contemporary analytical philosophy. I would label such problems crudely as *logico-conceptual* ones.

In this paper I intend to restrict myself to the last point. This is neither a paper about angelology nor about the history of medieval ideas. My approach is not apologetic. That is, I will neither try to prove the rightfulness of St. Thomas' position nor to refute it. Instead of asking Aquinas' question: "*Utrum unus angelus alteri loquatur?*", let us ask: How would the mode of talking described by Thomas in the *Summa Theologiae* Ia.107, 1—5 be comprehended in the light of contemporary philosophy of language?

The effectiveness of my effort depends on the following subquestions:

(1) In St. Thomas' teaching about *locutio angelorum* it is highly complicated to understand his conception about how the angel's mind works in the exercise of his speech acts. What I shall try to do here is to discuss in some detail the idea of talking without a medium and of understanding the other without the smallest error. These problems will be in the centre of discussion.

(2) Since only human talk is commonly regarded as a language, the question arises: Can the term "language" designate properly (non-metaphorically) communication between separated substances? My answer is yes. But with the help and the reservations of St. Thomas' masterly method of thinking, namely analogy.

One last point. As far as I know, there exists only one paper devoted to our problem, which was published some years ago by B. Faes de Mottoni in *Miscellanea Mediaevalia*.[3]

Since I am tackling the problem from the point of view of contemporary philosophy of language, the accents and the kind of thinking in which B. Faes de Mottoni is involved in her interesting paper are different from mine.

Having made these remarks I can try to assess the main point of Aquinas' doctrine.

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[2] **Aristotle.** De Anima III, 7, 43 1a, 4—8.
[3] **Faes de Mottoni, B.** Thomas von Aquin und die Sprache der Engeln. — In: **Zimmermann, A.** (ed.). Miscellanea Mediaevalia, Vol. 19; **Thomas von Aquin.** Werk und Wirkung im Licht neuerer Forschungen. Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, 1988. 140—155.
　　After finishing my paper I was informed by professor W. A. de Pater about the presentation of **Herman Parett** La Voix Humaine, *Vox Quae Scribi Potest.*—In: Archivio de Filosofia (Colloque International E. Castelli, Roma, Università di Roma "La Sapienza", Instituto di Studi Filosofici, 3—6 janvier 1992), 1992, à paraître. This presentation deals with the problem of voice in the enunciation activity of God, angels, and human beings.

2. *QUAESTIO* 107. PRELIMINARY REFLECTIONS

2.1. Let me, first, present extracts from *Quaestio* 107 by Thomas, starting with three passages which are the most central, as I think, and continuing with passage **(D)** which is related with the others.

(A) "... *voluntas movet intellectum ad suam operationem. Intelligibile autem est in intellectu tripliciter: primo quidem habitualiter vel secundum memoriam, ut Augustinus dicit; secundo autem ut in actu consideratum vel conceptum; tertio, ut ad aliud relatum. Manifestum est autem quod de primo gradu in secundum transfertur intelligibile per imperium voluntatis ...*
Similiter autem de secundo gradu transfertur in tertium per voluntatem; nam per voluntatem conceptus mentis ordinatur ad alterum ..."[4]

(B) "... *in nobis interior mentis conceptus quasi duplici obstaculo clauditur. Primo quidem ipsa voluntate, qua conceptum intellectus potest retinere interius vel ad extra ordinare ... Secundo autem clauditur mens hominis ab alio homine per grossitiem corporis. Unde cum etiam voluntas ordinat conceptum mentis ad manifestandum alteri, non statim cognoscitur ab alio sed oportet aliquod signum sensibile adhibere ... Hoc autem obstaculum non habet angelus. Et ideo quam cito vult manifestare suum conceptum, statim alius cognoscit.*"[5]

(C) "*Unde non convenit (locutio exterior—M.R.) angelo, sed sola locutio interior, ad quam pertinet non solum quod loquatur sibi interius concipiendo sed etiam quod ordinet per voluntatem ad alterius manifestationem.*"[6]

(D) "... *in mente angeli sunt similitudines creaturarum, non quidem ab ipsis creaturis acceptae, sed a Deo, qui est creaturarum causa, et in quo primo similitudines rerum existunt.*"[7]

2.2. Well, how does one angel speak with another? After Thomas' passage **(A)**, the philosopher could form the opinion that in the angel's mind the volitions play the role of some kind of Janus-headed go-between faculty, through which thinking acts are transformed step by step into the practice of speaking. This scheme of Thomas reflects evidently the classical Platonian theory of mind, according to which the mind has three parts—thought, feelings, and will—and the will functions as executive mental processes, putting the tongue to speak or the hand to move. In our time, this traditional conception of volitions was attacked powerfully and convincingly by G. Ryle in his *Concept of Mind*[8]. It may be shown that with a few modifications some of Ryle's critical arguments are applicable to the angels' case. If so, I do not need to concentrate myself especially on the problem of volitions as executive mental processes. I will put my accent elsewhere.

After reading passages **(B)** and **(C)**, we could say that *locutio angelorum* is an enigmatic language, without voice and gesture, despite the perfect communication between the angels, taking place in absolute silence.

[4] **St. Thomas Aquinas.** Summa Theologiae. Blackfriars, London, 1975, Vol. 14, Ia. 107, 1.
[5] Ibid., Ia. 107, 1 *ad primum.*
[6] Ibid., Ia. 107, 1 *ad secundum.* On some other texts by Aquinas concerning the speech of the angels, see bibliography of de Mottoni, *Op. cit.*, 147.
[7] **St. Thomas Aquinas.** Summa Theologiae, Ia.55, 2.
[8] **Ryle, G.** The Concept of Mind. Hutchinson's University Library, New York, 1950, Ch. III.

This mysterious and fascinating picture is coherent with Thomas' general theory of the angels and must be regarded especially in the context of his doctrine of the angels' nature and knowledge, developed most profoundly in *Summa Theologiae* Ia, 50—59. According to Thomistic angelology, angels are non-material forms, existing on their own in the state of actual intelligibility[9]: i.e. every angel understands himself *per essentiam*[10] —through his angelic substance, so to speak. But not all the angels' knowledge is obtained in this way: the substance of angels, being of the definite, limited kind, cannot itself contain everything.[11] In order to come to understand the mysteries of grace—which angels do not know to the same degree—illuminations and intelligible forms (in which they know things other than themselves) must be used.[12]

Further, I have the impression in reading Aquinas that there is something like a learning process in heaven. Angels are involved in discussions in order to clarify God's great secrets.[13] This discussion is in no way discursive[14], angels comprehend each other in simple and single visions and in their conversations they can never fall into error.[15] Every angel has a *volitio*[16], but does not possess the smallest ability of imagination.[17] At last, a good angel always loves his discussion partner.[18]

The conclusion of all this sounds quite enigmatic: the richness and deepness of the God's creation are reflected best by the simplest mind and discussed by the angels in absolute silence.

3. UNSOLVABLE?

Can we have a clear understanding of *locutio angelorum*? It might be thought that not. Moreover, the following agnostic objection seems to be unavoidable: We can not in principle have a satisfactory understanding of what a phenomenon *locutio angelorum* is, because there is something wrong with the problem itself. Some of the questions are *difficult* or very difficult (like Fermat's great theorem), some questions are simply *senseless* and, therefore, unsolvable (like the problem: "Is the square root of my sandwich greater than Schopenhauer's dog?"). But there exist also questions which are *logically unsolvable*: for example, a system of mathematical equations containing too many unknown variables. Might this not be the case? We do not have any information concerning the syntax and semantics of angels' language; we do not know if the speech of the angels is rule-governed or not. And so on.

In order to avoid an agnostic collapse and to develop my strategy, I want to turn the tables and argue that the difficulties we have in understanding *locutio angelorum* are rooted in certain difficulties which we have already in understanding the phenomena of human language. Moreover, when reading Thomas' text I have the impression that his conception of *locutio angelorum* can avoid many of these difficulties.

[9] **St. Thomas Aquinas.** Summa Theologiae, Ia.56, 1. On general Thomistic angelology see also: **Collins, J.** The Thomistic Philosophy of Angels, Catholic University of America, Washington, 1947, and **Gilson, E.** Le thomisme, introduction à la philosophie médiévale. Paris, 6-éd. revue, 1965.
[10] **St. Thomas Aquinas.** Summa Theologiae, Ia.56, 1.
[11] Ibid., Ia.55, 1.
[12] Ibid., Ia.55, 2.
[13] Ibid., Ia.57, 5.
[14] Ibid., Ia.58, 3.
[15] Ibid., Ia.58, 5.
[16] Ibid., Ia.59, 1.
[17] Ibid., Ia.55, 3.
[18] Ibid., Ia.60, 4.

This is one side of the matter. The other concerns my strategy. In general it is quite simple: if there seems to be something like an unsolvable problem, then it is always meaningful to ask what exactly makes it unsolvable. After all, there are numerous failures in philosophy, and even from the failures of the philosopher we can learn something of value.

4. THE ANTHROPOMORPHIC (TRIVIAL) SOLUTION OF OUR PROBLEM

An anthropomorphic philosopher has his own point of view. He claims the question about *locutio angelorum* to be solvable, but only in a negative way, i.e. the *locutio angelorum* is not a language, at least not in the proper meaning of the term. The language of man is a highly complicated semiotic system, manifesting itself in a plurality of different forms and it is incarnated in beautiful edifices of the human spirit. Think of the great variety of things in which human language has materialized: the poems of Shakespeare, written or sung; the works of Kant; the theorems of Galois . . . Think, at last, of the ordinary man performing his everyday speech acts when polemizing with his friend about mountain-bike advances or of the student writing on his computer. In what a great number of different forms human speech manifests itself!

One thing that characterizes human speech and—I wish to say— grounds the very possibility of language phenomena, is the fact that speaking involves regularity. There exist syntax and semantics; in language we make linguistic characterizations and linguistic explications, so that language reflects itself and this reflection forms an important part of human culture. Further, speaking a language is a rule-governed activity performed through a sensually registrable medium.

Nothing like this seems to occur in the case of the angels. No sign on paper; no voice in the air; no error; no imagination. Only silence. If so, then the speech of angels and the speech of man belong to fundamentally different categories and our problem has found its solution. *Locutio angelorum* is not language, it is simply *aequivocum a casu*—accidental equivocity or perhaps a metaphorical expression like *"lingua angelorum"* used by Thomas in the context of *Quaestio* 107.

There is only one kind of language, namely human language. For me the solution of the anthropomorphist does not seem a very interesting one. I call it trivial.

5. LOOKING MORE DEEPLY. NECESSARY CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

5.1. Where there are conclusions, there are premises. And it is, in most cases, possible to change the arguments and move the centre of discussion. In order to do so, I make the following move. Let us postulate that Thomas' *locutio angelorum* is analogous to the human speech, but assume that this is not an evident or obvious truth (or at least not obvious for some kind of "thoughtful" philosopher). Confronted with the above-mentioned difficulties, we should look for a better solution by adding philosophico-conceptual premises and explications which can make this postulated analogy more obvious for us.

5.2. To put it clearly, let me schematize the **characteristic features** of Aquinas' doctrine:

(1) *Locutio angelorum* is a non-discursive way of speaking.

(2) *Locutio angelorum* does not consist of any material sign or sensually registrable expression.

(3) A communicative act among angels is performed if there exist at least:

      a) a speaker conversing with himself in his inner thought,
      b) his will to communicate with others.

The next step. I intend to go deeper and look for the **essential points** in angels' speech, lying behind these prime characteristic features and determining them. Where should we look? So far the topic has been discussed largely in terms of Thomas' claims. But we need not be absolutely bound to his ideas. I begin to break away from them by underlining the difference between points (1)—(3) of *locutio angelorum* and some essential points of human speech. One way of approaching this is by means of contrast. I find J. Searle's speech act theory[19] to be very heuristic and clear to this purpose.

5.3. Imagine the following "precision-game" taking place between a contemporary Thomist (**T**) and a disciple of J. Searle (**S**).

S: What a strange conception of language! Can you explain more exactly what "talking to another *angelus*" means?

T: *Nihil est enim aliud loqui ad alterum quam conceptum mentis alteri manifestare.*

S: Well, I begin to see your point. In my technical language I would say rather that speaking a language is performing speech acts, such as making statements, giving commands, asking questions, making promises...

T: What you said does not annul my definition, does it?

S: No, but speaking consists characteristically of utterance acts, propositional acts, and illocutionary acts. In general, illocutionary acts are performed only within language and by virtue of certain constitutive rules. It is obscure for me how utterance acts could be performed in *locutio angelorum*?

T: It is not a difficult question. *Locutio angelorum* consists only of performing illocutionary acts. Utterance acts and propositional acts are not necessary.

S: A rather extravagant description! It is not understandable how it is possible to perform illocutionary acts without the medium. Moreover, it is not clear what kind of rules govern the performance of illocutionary acts in *locutio angelorum*. Is there understanding between the angels?

T: What is understood is exactly what is meant to be said.

S: In the case of human speech whatever can be meant can be said (the principle of expressibility). It's not at all clear to me what you mean. Must I sum up that *locutio angelorum* is a language having no medium and equipped with hyper-expressibility?

T: Exactly.

Some explanatory words should be added. First, I can imagine that some traditional philosophers of medieval philosophy may refute all these confinements as violations of St. Thomas' own complete philosophical account and say: Yours is an invitation to play a contemporary conceptual game, but it is a game with fewer pieces than are provided by Aquinas' chess. My answer is this: It is always better to play with fewer pieces than with more squares provided by chess. Moreover, to put our pieces on the chess table, is to compare them with some well-working language conception.

Secondly, the problem of the possibility of hypothetical languages (private language, for example) is the problem of how words mean. If

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[19] **Searle, J.** Speech Acts. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1988. (First edition 1969.)

there are **rules** according to which the words mean and speech acts are performed, then there can possibly be a language. If not, the hypothetical "language" can not be regarded as a language.

Since our case is special and *locutio angelorum* is a hypothetical language without a medium, the question stands in a reduced form: "How can there be a language without a medium?" I will add to it another question: "How can there be a language with hyper-expressibility?"

I think that we have received a clear enough insight of the essential points of *locutio angelorum*. What we need next is a reflection on them.

6. *PARTIM DIVERSA ET PARTIM EADEM*

6.1. Our previous argumentation was based on the propositions that: (a) if there are two things X and Y which have a common name, but the definitions of concept corresponding to the name are fundamentally different, then the name is used equivocally; (b) some characteristic features of *locutio angelorum*, summarized and compared with human speech in 4. and 5.3, show us what kind of communication phenomenon *locutio angelorum* might be, it **differs greatly** from what a normal human speech is. Consequently, either our problem is simply unsolvable or the term "locutio" is predicated by Thomas to angels as accidental equivocity. This determines the dilemma of agnosticism and anthropomorphism.

6.2. What is meant by "to be different from"? There are a large number of clever theories of unity and difference in philosophy. Presently I do not need to consult them; I rather intend to turn to things every ordinary schoolboy knows.

To say that one thing is different from others is to express *at least* one of three very different kinds of relations. Imagine, for example, a mathematical circle and a mathematical square. In a certain sense they manifest the logic of the geometrical room, whose different cases they both are. However, a quadrangle and an ellipse do it more generally than a circle and a square. Now, the difference between (1) a square and a quadrangle is not the same difference that exists between (2) a square and a roundsquare. Neither is it the difference between (3) a square and a circle. The first is the relation between the genus and a species. The third is the relation between two different logical objects, both belonging to the same logical universe. But obviously a roundsquare diverges from a square in a very particular way: roundsquares do not belong to the logical universe and do not describe the logic of the geometrical space; neither more generally than a square nor at the same level. Roundsquares do not describe logical reality at all.

What I want to say is: I argue that the difference between *locutio angelorum* and the human language is **difference in unity**, more like the relation between a quadrangle and a square and not like the difference between a roundsquare and a square. *Locutio angelorum* is not an illogical conception. Indeed, what are a sphere and a cube for a two-dimensional man?

7. *ANALOGIA ATTRIBUTIONIS*

Some of our puzzles may become less complicated if we look at *Quaestio* 107 in the light of text **D** cited above. The form of analogy used by Thomas in his angelology is known as *analogia attributionis*, which is defined by Cajetan:

> *"quorum nomen est commune, ratio autem secundum illud nomen est eadem secundum terminum, et diversa secundum habitudines ad illum."*[20]

Or as Thomas himself puts it in *De principiis naturae*:

> "Something is predicated of several things in a three-fold way: univocally (*univoce*), equivocally (*aequivoce*), analogically (...). Something is predicated analogically of several things which differ in their *ratio* but which are ordered toward (*attribuuntur*) one and the same thing."[21]

Analogia attributionis presupposes a "focal" point, God as the "first" *analogatorum* which has created after himself the "seconds".

For our present purpose I want to bring out, without much discussion, two things: (1) Analogy of Thomas is more of the *heuristic strategy* than of a formal method: analogy-language aims to evoke religious (cosmic) disclosures[22]. Analogy is in this sense *directional*, it develops "insight" and does not tell us exactly that "this is this"; the saint speaking by means of analogy is not like the professor of mathematics calculating with the multiplication table. (2) Likeness between the human mind and that of angels *cannot be searched directly*, but only through God.

To postulate analogy between *locutio angelorum* and human speech is to look for **unity in difference**[23] and to understand the world as something other than a mere collection of isolated and disconnected domains of being.[24] Analogy prepares the middle way between the agnostic/anthropomorphic dilemma. I shall apply it heuristically to the two central problems mentioned in 5.2

8. COMMUNICATION WITHOUT THE MEDIA?

8.1. Why have we been unable to decide whether *locutio angelorum* is a language in a proper meaning of the term or not? (Analogy, used as a heuristic principle, cannot prove anything.) As it may be anticipated, our natural inclination is to reply: We cannot determine whether *locutio angelorum* is a language or not as it is a communication without the medium.

But is it really the main (or at least only) reason of our "failure"? If, for example, I fail to decide the rightfulness of the statement: *"Deux et trois font cinq"*, then the reason of my failure lies obviously not in my arithmetical knowledge but in my inability to understand French.

Now, I want to suggest that if the absence of the medium in *locutio angelorum* is the reason why no definitive proof could be received, it would serve equally as the ground why our postulate can not be refuted.

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[20] **de Vio Caietanus, Th.** De nominum analogia.—In: **de Maria, M.** S. Thomae Aquinatis(...) opusculum De ente et essentia, Commentariis Caietani illustratum; accendit eiusdem Caietani tractatus De nominum analogia. Pontificia Officina Typographica, Romae, 1907, 251. Cited in **de Pater, W. A.** Analogy, Disclosures and Narrative Theology. Uitgeverij Acco, Leuven, 1988, 14.

[21] Cited in **de Vries, J.** Grundbegriffe der Scholastik. Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt, 1980, 28.

[22] See in this connection **Ramsey, I.** Christian Discourse. Some logical explorations. Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1965.

[23] **St. Thomas Aquinas.** Summa Theologiae, Ia.13, 5.

[24] On the role of analogy in theology see: **de Pater, W. A.** Analogy, Disclosures and Narrative Theology.

8.2. Let us assume that suddenly through some miracle (like an apparition of the fingers of an invisible hand writing on the palace wall of King Baltassar[25]), certain communication processes between the angels will become registrable to us. So, *locutio angelorum* would be visible or audible. How exactly the manifestation took place—in some form of strange signs, written on the wall or on the beach, sequence of voices in the air, or as a combination of gestures, or in some other mode—is quite unimportant.

Now suppose that such an event were to happen. Imagine a philosopher having a close-up view of these strange signs on a wall and trying to decide whether they manifest the existence of some kind of language. Could he be capable of determining whether the alien signs are symbols of language or not? I think our philosopher is not able to determine this: the phenomenon of language rests on *regularity* and on *agreement* with the use of signs. But how can our philosopher verify, looking only at particular cases, that there exists regularity? How can he verify the agreement in the use? Can he begin by assuming that *locutio angelorum* is like human language? Obviously not. We should not follow Descartes in his basic confusion and not assume that human mind works like an angels' mind.[26] The only conceivable standard would be angels' own use, that is, their use of signs. But our philosopher could have no reason to say that there is regularity (or the opposite), i.e. that any particular utterance of angels' visible speech is or is not in conflict with any other unless some specific linguistic framework is being taken for granted.[27]

Similar considerations have been made in Wittgensteinian tradition by Professor Rush Rhees to show the undecidability of the idea of "private language":

> "When we talk about something, our language does not point to it, nor mirror it. Pointing or mirroring could refer to things only within a convention, anyway: only when there is a way in which pointing is understood and a way in which mirroring is understood. I point for the sake of someone who understands it. Apart from that it were an idle ceremony; as idle as making sounds in front of things.
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> "Our words refer to things by the way they enter in discourse; by their connections with what people are saying and doing, for instance, and by the way they affect what is said and done."[28]

Summing up, we can say that our philosopher, looking at particular cases in which *locutio angelorum* appears to him, must conclude that no universally valid standard could be found. What he fails to understand is the way how the speech of the angels is connected with the being of angels and the things they do. So far as he does not possess this understanding, there could not be any definitive proof or refutation concerning rules and regularity.

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[25] **Daniel** 5:5.

[26] *"Le péché de Descartes est un péché d'angélisme, il a fait de la Connaissance et de la Pensée une Perplexité sans remède, un abîme d'inquiétude, parce qu'il a conçu la Pensée humaine sur le type de la Pensée angélique. Pour tout dire en trois mots: INDÉPENDANCE À L'ÉGARD DES CHOSES."* **Maritain, J.** Trois réformateurs. Luther-Descartes-Rousseau.—In: **Maritain, J.** R. Oeuvres Complètes. Saint-Paul, Paris, 1975, Vol. III, 487.

[27] This idea was brought to my attention by Prof. Lars Herzberg (Abo Academy). See **Herzberg, L.** Wittgenstein and the Sharing of Language. Manuscript 1989, 4.

[28] **Rhees, R.** Can there be a Private Language?.—In: **Rhees, R.** Discussions of Wittgenstein. Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1970, 55.

8.3. We have obtained this result by assuming that *locutio angelorum* becomes in some miraculous way "visible" to us. We could have come to the same conclusion from the other end, namely by supposing that utterance acts of normal human speech are disappearing step by step or are existing in very minimized forms.

Consider some situations:

(1) A dog standing at the door, wanting to go out and looking questioningly at his master.

(2) A boy standing at the door and looking questioningly at his father, wishing to go out to play football with his friends.

What, it may be asked, is the difference between the standing dog and the standing boy? Let us assume that even the behaviourist could not see or hear anything special which distinguishes the behaviour of the former from that of the latter. They both are wishing to be out, they both are performing illocutionary acts, the dog in its normal way, the boy in his abnormal-minimized way. Yet the boy's father understands not only: "My child looks at me, he wishes to be out", but also: "My child thinks that I understand him and I really understand him"; perhaps even: "My boy understands that I am thinking about his volition and therefore thinking so assumes that I may comprehend that . . ." And so on. How does the knowledge of the father come up? Why does he not expect the same from the dog? The answer is clear to Cartesian: "Animals, we incline to think, do not have multiplex intentions." The dog does not think: "I am thinking now", on "my master is thinking about my volitio and consequently . . ." The dog is just only a dog. The point of departure may be generalized:

> "When I take a noise or a mark on a piece of paper to be an instance of linguistic communication, as a message, one of the things I must assume is that the noise or mark was produced by a being or beings more or less like myself and produced with certain kinds of intentions. If I regard the noise or mark as a natural phenomenon like the wind in the trees or a stain on the paper, I exclude it from the class of linguistic communication, even though the noise or mark may be indistinguishable from spoken or written words."[29]

It must be added that the **mode of intention** is very peculiar to human speech acts. So, the boy standing silent at the door and waiting his father's opinion is related in another way to his intention than when I'm standing at my chamber window and looking absent-mindedly St. Nicolaus' cathedral.[30]

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[29] **Searle, J.** Speech Acts, 16.

[30] It seems to be difficult to believe that speaking by angels is the same phenomenon as thinking and the analysis of angels' speech might be described only in vogue of pure conciousness and intentionality.

I think it is not so and we can avoid falling into Cartesian *camera obscura*: (1) Thomas is always very careful in his choice of terminology, and this is certainly true when he is investigating philosophical problems. Now, devoting special part to *locutio angelorum* and distinguishing it from the problems of angels' knowledge, he must have had some non-trivial reason to do so. (2) Thomas predicates to angels' movement and position in space. This shows that although angels are purely spiritual beings, some aspects of their existence might be considered by analogy with the corporeal world. (**St. Thomas Aquinas.** Summa Theologiae, Ia.52, 1—2.) (3) Even if there is certain "hollowness" of angels' speech activity (omitting of utterance acts, for example), then the situation can be described in terms of "negative actions theory" of G. Ryle: "Not muscular, because inner" may give place to "Not muscular, because both *supra* and negative." (**Ryle, G.** Negative "Actions".—In: **Ryle, G.** On Thinking. Rowan and Littlefield, New Yersey, 1979, 119).

However, the problem remains: How does the father know that in the case of his son there is an actually performed highly complicated speech act and in the case of the dog a very simple one? He knows that his son is a human being, **like himself**, like all "normal" men, sharing his intellect, needs and volitions in some extent with other people. But if I do not know what kind of intentions alien beings possess, I cannot understand their language. This was the reason why Wittgenstein said that if a lion could speak we would not understand him.

What about angels? Do we understand their intentions better? Do we share their volitions to some extent? I turn to Thomas and leave the right to answer to my dear reader:

> "*Quaedam vero inclinantur ad bonum cum cognitione qua cognoscunt ipsam boni rationem, quod est proprium intellectus; et haec perfectissime inclinantur in bonum; non quidem quasi ab alio solummodo directa in bonum, sicut ea quae cognitione carent; neque in bonum particulariter tantum sicut ea quibus est sola sensitiva cognitio; sed quasi inclinata in ipsum universale bonum. Et haec inclinatio dicitur voluntas.*"[31]

9. THE PRINCIPLE OF HYPER-EXPRESSIBILITY (PHE)

9.1. Another reason for excluding *locutio angelorum* from the class of the languages is the principle of hyper-expressibility.

According to John Searle's speech act theory the principle of expressibility states in the case of human speech:

> "For any meaning X and any speaker S whenever S means X then it is possible that there is some expression E such that E is an exact expression of the formulation of X."[32]

This principle of Searle's (which seems to me strongly idealized) does not imply that (1) expression E produces all effects in the hearer that the speaker would produce. (2) Neither is it possible for any hearer to always understand E.

Now, in the case of *locutio angelorum*, the respective principle holds:

> For any speaker S, any hearer H, and any meaning X (S intends to communicate to H) there is always H understanding Y, such that necessarily X = Y.

The principle of hyper-expressibility can be formulated without mentioning some expression E (medium) through which the meaning is conveyed, but this does not yet prove that communication without a medium is possible. This topic was tackled partly however in 8.0. I turn now to the difficulty.

9.2. What is meant by "understanding each other profoundly"? One of the reasons why we possess a language is that sometimes we misinterpret the meaning of the expressions. Since there can be misunderstanding in the speaking process, it is meaningful to use the phrases like "This word means...", or "That word can't be used in this way.[33] As the speaker does not simply repeat correctly the sentences one after the other like a parrot, but having learned to speak, he can *tell something about himself*, a "new movement" in the language appears. Since the speaker, telling

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[31] **St. Thomas Aquinas.** Summa Theologiae, Ia.59, 1.
[32] **Searle, J.** Speech Acts, 20.
[33] See **Herzberg, L.** Wittgenstein and the Sharing of Language, 7.

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about himself, brings something new to the conversation, misinterpretations and linguistic explanations are unavoidable and even very essential to the existence of language phenomena. PHE eliminates all this; that is: it is hard to understand in which sense one can speak about the "language" when any "meaning" (meaning of what?) the speaker intends to communicate is always comprehended by the hearer thoroughly, without the smallest error. Since there exists such perfect understanding without the medium, the function of language itself has become senseless.

This is a powerful objection or at least so it seems to me. It might be thought that I have treated our postulated analogy in a wrong way. Is it really so? I want to overcome the difficulty step by step. First by idealizing Searle's principle of expressibility; secondly by asking what it means to have human language or to speak with another person.

9.3. Imagine a tribe of mathematicians speaking with one another by means of mathematical concepts and never in any other way. Imagine further that if the speaker of that strange tribe performs an expression (i.e. mathematical concept), the hearer understands all the theorems concerning that concept. If, for example, the speaker performs the word "triangle", he does not mean only the triangle but the set of all possible theorems concerning the triangle actually proved in mathematics. And the same knowledge falls into the hearers' understanding. It may be said that the PHE is satisfied with this language. The people of the tribe never err. They understand each other thoroughly. What is understood by the hearer is exactly the same what is meant by the speaker.

Moreover, can you imagine that this is the only language the people of the tribe speak? Can you imagine men *acting* with such a language, teaching their children, doing business, and fighting in battles? Of course we must reply: This imagined situation describes only one form of language game.

In *Philosophische Untersuchungen* Wittgenstein describes two men working with building stones. One of them shouts orders, the other reacts to the orders. Wittgenstein says this might be not only the language but the entire language of the tribe. How can it be? Can it really be that the imagined language game is the *only* language used by the tribe of mathematicians? Can it be the real human speech used in their everyday life? If not, why not? I find in R. Rhees's arguments and his critics of Wittgenstein some assistance to explaining my point.

> "I feel there is something wrong here. The trouble is not to imagine a people with a language of such of the limited vocabulary. The trouble is to imagine that they spoke the language only to give these special orders on this job and otherwise never spoke at all. I do not think it would be speaking a language. ... If it is an actual building job, it will not always go according to plan; there will be snags. But when these builders come on a snag which holds up the work and baffles them, then although they have been speaking to one another in the course of their routine, they do not speak while they are trying to find what the trouble is. What they have learned are *signals* which cannot be used in any other way."[34]

Let us ask why we are so sure that the language game that Wittgenstein's builders play cannot be considered as a complete system of language or why the infallible "language" that the mathematical tribe speaks cannot be analogical to the human language that we ordinarily speak? The

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[34] **Rhees, R.** Wittgenstein Builders.—In: **Rhees, R.** Discussions of Wittgenstein, 77.

answer is simple: To understand a language is to comprehend the way it is used. We do not consider them to be languages because we do not understand how they are related with the forms of life in which the people of the tribe discuss their problems, teach their children, and defend their position.

9.4. To understand the language is to comprehend how speaking is *related to the lives which people lead*. And this is exactly the reason why we do not incline to consider *locutio angelorum* as a language. Maybe there is a language game in heaven, but it is not our language. If there is a language game in heaven, then probably there are some rules (perhaps even constitutive rules) according to which the play goes. Possibly. But if I am an ordinary man and not a saint then I cannot understand how the rules are related with angelic substance and determined by volition which angels lead.[35] And unable to comprehend angelic forms of life, I am no more able to understand the ways how the angels put the questions, make exclamations, or express their love.

This misunderstanding, however, as I have tried to show, differs somehow from misunderstandings that I have with roundsquares and married bachelors.

10. CONCLUSION

Can there be a speech of the angels? Is *locutio angelorum* rule-governed or not? Our analysis seems to show that there can be in principle no such definitive answers. First, I want to sum up my strategy of analysis.

(1) If there seems to be something like an unsolvable problem, then it is meaningful to clarify what exactly makes it unsolvable.

(2) In order to avoid the collapse of the Agnosticist and to look more deeply than the Anthropomorphist we have postulated *locutio angelorum* to be analogous to human speech, and reflected on the arguments that could refute our postulated analogy.

My conclusions, in brief, are the following:

I. Although the human language gives a very weak imitation of *locutio angelorum*, the essential points of human language can through analogy be a clue toward understanding communicational ways of angels.

II. Some of first-hand "refutations" of *locutio angelorum* might be diminished or avoided because: a) they are already rooted in certain difficulties which we have in understanding the phenomenon of human language, b) as normal human beings we do not understand how the speech of the angels is related to the life the angels lead.

Is it surprising, then, that for a better understanding of *Sacra Doctrina* we must turn to analogy and disclosure-talk used by saints?

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[35] Note that this does not design an argument against traditional *sacra doctrina* as *scientia*. As Father Bocheński pointed out in his logical commentary on the first question of the *Summa Theologica*: "A scientific system may be based on non-evident axioms. ... The axioms of a scientific system do not need to be evident to us, to living men. It is enough that they be evident to God and the saints." Faith and Science.—In: **Schurz, G. and Dorn, G. W.** (eds.). Advances in Scientific Philosophy. Rodopi, Amsterdam, 1991, 540.

AQUINO THOMAS, ANALOOGIA JA INGLITE KEEL
Mart RAUKAS

Artiklis vaadeldud probleemi ajalooliseks lähtekohaks on Aquino Thomase «Summa Theologiae's» esitatud ingliteadvuse kontseptsioon. Seda kontseptsiooni aluseks võttes olen ma postuleerinud hüpoteetilise ideaalkeele — *locutio angelorum*'i — ja analüüsinud seda L. Wittgensteini keelemängu doktriini ja J. Searle'i kõneakti teooria seisukohalt.

Locutio angelorum on keelemudel, mille puhul

a) keele illokutiivsete kõneaktide edastamine toimub sõltumata meediumist (propositsionaalsetest kõneaktidest ja väljendusaktidest);

b) keele suhtes on rahuldatud hüperväljendatavuse tingimus, s. t. kõneakti tähendus, mida kuulaja mõistab, on igas kommunikatsioonisituatsioonis identne sellega, mida kõneleja kuulajale edastada soovib.

Mida tähendab esitada kõneakt või mida tähendab, et kuulaja mingit keelt kuuldes seda mõistab? L. Wittgensteini keelemängu doktriini vaatepunktist öelduna: mõista keelt tähendab näha viisi, kuidas keel oma rakenduse leiab. Seesama vastus J. Searle'i terminoloogias: mõista konstitutiivseid reegleid, millele kõneaktid toetuvad.

Kasutades *locutio angelorum*'it ideaalkeele mudelina, olen ma juhtinud tähelepanu vajadusele eksplitseerida teadvuse baasintentsioonid, mis moodustavad aluse keelekasutuse konstitutiivsetele reeglitele. Ilma nende baasintentsioonide olemasoluta ei ole võimalik kõneakti esitamine ega kõneakti mõistmine. Uudse elemendina analüüsitehnikas olen ma kasutanud Aquino Thomase atributiivse analoogia (*analogia attributionis*) printsiipi.

СВЯТОЙ ФОМА, АНАЛОГИИ И ЯЗЫК АНГЕЛОВ
Март РАУКАС

Мыслить о языке — значит мыслить о реальности, на что указывает структура языка. Темой статьи является концепция языка ангелов (locutio angelorum) Фомы Аквинского, которая проанализирована с точки зрения теории речевых актов Сэрля и теории игр Виттгенштейна.

Что означает осуществить акт речи? Как истолковать феномен того, что при восприятии какого-нибудь языка слушающий его понимает? Locutio angelorum Фомы Аквинского интерпретируется автором в качестве гипотетического идеального языка, которым пользуется мыслящая субстанция. При этом:

а) передача иллокутивных актов речи производится независимо от медиума (от пропозициональных актов и актов выражения);

б) по отношению к языку действует принцип гипервыражения, т. е. значение акта речи, который слушающим воспринимается, всегда идентично тому, что говорящий желает передать.

С точки зрения теории игр Виттгенштейна, понимать язык — значит осознать способ его употребления в речи. То же самое в терминологии Сэрля: понимать акты речи и конститутивные правила, как опирающиеся на акты речи и регулирующиеся ими. Однако — и в этом основной вывод статьи — использование вышеназванных правил в речи предполагает, в свою очередь, наличие имплицитных базовых интенсий. Поскольку в основе языковой модели Сэрля лежит всеми нами употребляемый естественный язык, то в теории речевых актов Сэрля базовые интенсии не эксплицированы. Необходимость в их экспликации, без чего язык не может функционировать и быть понятым, объясняется нашим анализом идеального языка (locutio angelorum) как пограничного случая. В качестве одного из элементов техники анализа в статье применен принцип analogia attributionis Фомы Аквинского.