

Inaugural lecture:

Becoming and being a person through others: African Philosophy's *ubuntu* and Aquinas' *mutual indwelling* in comparative discourse

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Abstract

African Philosophy and St Thomas Aquinas have both been taught in African universities, but the engagement between the continent's indigenous philosophical tradition and the Catholic intellectual tradition's preeminent strand, has not been thorough. Presupposing that plural philosophical traditions contribute to the search to better understand, this research embarks upon a comparative analysis of the perspectives of the African *ubuntu* philosophy and Thomist philosophical conceptualisations of human becoming and being. Through analysis of dimensions of both traditions, it is contended that human fulness arises through relationality. It is argued that in centring on the interpersonal encounter and the consequent recognition of another's being through mutual engagement, these philosophical traditions open to each other. Further, both traditions contribute toward the ontology of personhood in *ubuntu* and the good of mutual indwelling, respectively. (Words: 130)

Dear colleagues, colleagues from other universities, invited guests and friends, and my family (wherever you may be): sincere and humble thanks for you having given of your time to listen to these musings. I also recognise my colleagues, especially those with whom I work in the Discipline of Philosophy, our broader department, and thanks to our School Director, Prof. Rothney Tshaka, who agreed to be respondent. The journey to truth begins by unassumingly assuming self-ignorance, a place I frequent, despite the University having honoured me with the rank of professor.

1. Introduction

Last June, the English-born Sheila Seleoane was buried in South Africa by her relatives who had never met her. Her skeletal remains had been discovered in her flat in London in February 2022 by police entering her home to resolve a complaint from neighbours: her banging veranda doors had disturbed them.ⁱ Seleoane's death is disturbing, but more than just for her dying alone; though her neighbours had complained of the odour impregnating their homes and the flies and maggots in the building over the preceding two years, there was never any formal complaint filed that she – whose name neighbours had not known — had not been seen.ⁱⁱ The complaints were about neighbours' discomfort, not of concern for Sheila who had lain dead for two years.ⁱⁱⁱ In her anonymity, left to decompose, Sheila's humanity had been stripped. Her end, though, is African, for by her remains returning to her people who lovingly laid her to rest in their ancestral burial plot^{iv}, her personhood was restored.

Seleoane's passing forms part of the consequence of Modern, Western individualism, wherethrough human being is intentionally directed back to

the individual and not outward for others.^v However, the human requires intersubjective relationality for identity formation and for good living.^{vi} Individualism images the human as sociologically isolated^{vii}, however, human being is bound up in embedded situatedness as human relational existence forms an ever-becoming communal being.^{viii} Living and dying alone, through the COVID-19 lockdowns or the case of Ms Seleokane, is un-human.^{ix} Reflecting upon the pandemic's redefinition of the human existential experience highlights how significant humans are to other humans. To be human is to be in association. Philosophers have long recognised this human need.^x This directs me to a point of intersection between African Philosophy and Thomism, concerning the social dimension of becoming and being a person which both traditions further.

The discernment of a meeting point between African Philosophy and Aquinas is significant for the African Thomist.^{xi} Philosophy in the African Academy is at an exciting point: decolonising, Africanising and de-Westernising.^{xii} As Thomism is part of the dominant Western canon, it must engage with contemporary and contextual philosophy.

I will propose that the engagement between Aquinas and African Philosophy has thus far been scant. Through the demonstration of features salient to both traditions, I intend to contribute to a positive engagement. Using the methodology of comparative philosophy – assuming epistemic pluralism – I will engage each paradigm's valuing of human relationality for the end of the becoming of and being human. I argue that this leads to points of contiguity and consequently delineates further shared dimensions of philosophical discourse that transcend accidentals.

2. Does St Thomas subjugate African philosophy?

Consideration must be undertaken of the use of Western discourse – the hegemonic, white, oppressive narrative – in the African context. More than a decade ago, Samantha Vice inferred a critique hereon by her challenge to the white person’s living well in white-caused racist South Africa.^{xiii} Beyond South Africa, Linda Martín Alcoff considers the world as arranged to benefit white people, who cannot recognise white structural privilege, but need to.^{xiv} Vice views whiteness as a problem to be recognised and as a personal, epistemic moral struggle against a normative, hidden in plain view, immoral phenomenon.^{xv xvi}

Western Modernity undergirds “white” systematic oppression through the West’s unquestioned epistemic, economic and moral superiority^{xvii} and biological racism.^{xviii} Racism is ideologically ordinary in the West and her former colonies.^{xix} Its roots lie in Enlightenment scholars who were simultaneously, sardonically theorising about equality.^{xx xxi} At their crudest, Modern ideologies removed the humanity of “others”.^{xxii} Western epistemologies, consequently, lack credibility because of the domination they have meted out. Within the decolonising academic space, then, contestation and problematisations of validity arise when Modern, Western theories are propagated.

This is a wound for South Africa, as the anthropological injuries sustained by centuries of injustice remain. To apply a healing balm on these lacerations, indigenous epistemic wealth must be safeguarded. But, should the ideas of the master still be taught, studied, and researched in Africa? We who do non-African philosophical discourse on the continent

must grapple with this,^{xxiii} and be aware of the institutionalisation of epistemicide in our context, which gives situatedness to this lecture.

“Strangeness” – Vice’s diagnosis for oppressive South Africa^{xxiv} – is not epistemically negative; the realisation of the “otherness” that being or ideas are embedded in, is fodder for philosophical contemplation. Doing Scholasticism in Africa – a supposedly entrenched Western philosophical paradigm – is an oddity. However, South Africa is diverse in its thoroughly, accidentally heterogenous people, so strangeness may be the ordinary way of being. In similar diverse fashion, Thomism does not oppose non-Western or decolonial philosophy. Aquinas was influenced by Arabic philosophy and utilised it, deeming philosophy *qua* philosophy regardless of any theory’s origins.^{xxv xxvi xxvii} Moreover, whilst Thomism has emerged as a tradition of Western philosophy, it predates Modernity and coloniality.^{xxviii}

When teaching philosophy, Aquinas appears. In many African universities, African Philosophy is taught. However, the interaction between Thomism and African Philosophy in tuition does not occur. There is scant evidence of research between Thomism and African philosophy.^{xxix} Placide Tempels does not specifically mention St Thomas or Thomism^{xxx}, but is criticised for his “Thomistic flavour”.^{xxxi} Similarly, the Rwandese philosopher Alexis Kagame was challenged for fitting African philosophy into Aristotelian-Thomism^{xxxii}, but he does not draw comparison. An analogous project is found in Mavunza Lwanga Mayola’s Aristotelian-Thomist interpretation of Luba ontology.^{xxxiii} Although developing comparisons between Thomism and African Philosophy, John Aniagwu^{xxxiv} and Mathew Akoni-Mensah^{xxxv} focus on different themes than myself. Augustine Shutte would employ Aristotelian-Thomist

methodology^{xxxvi}, of which Mogobe Ramose is critical^{xxxvii xxxviii}, as Shutte considered it as a tool for correcting Western subjectivism by using “*contemporary Thomist philosophers*”^{xxxix xl} – not Aquinas directly – to identify commonalities between African Philosophy and Thomism. He discerned two:

... [1] the conviction that human persons transcend the realm of the merely material, and... [2] to develop as persons we need to be empowered by others... [because humans bear] complete dependence on others for our development.^{xli}

Patrick Giddy refers to Shutte’s work as “African Thomism”^{xlii xliii}, but does not develop “African Thomism”, instead defending Shutte.^{xliv} Like Shutte, Giddy does not consider how *Ubuntu* and Thomism relate to one another.^{xlv}

Here, I will engage Aquinas with *Ubuntu*, in relation to Shutte’s second point.^{xlvi} Mindful of Ramose’s critique^{xlvii}, I clarify: African Philosophy is Philosophy, and Thomism does not add any systematisation to African Philosophy. Rather, I contend that seeking points of intersection between different systems can liberate and unite, when it is focused upon universally cogent themes, like becoming and being human and relationality, etc. This undertaking is conscious of limits wherein one epistemology oppresses others, of prejudices, and of significant points of logical incompatibility.

3. Comparative philosophy: a methodological consideration and application

Globalisation implies the merging of epistemologies as people bump up against one another – thus, the comparison of “pure” cultural philosophies lessens^{xlviii} – though, in this instance, there are distinctions between African Philosophy and Thomism.

With its roots in the “East-West dialogue”, the “comparative philosophy” method supposes that a plurality of perspectives rather than hegemony is positive, as no philosophical tradition is complete^{xlix} or can be permitted dominance, whilst recognising the “... *objective universality of human reason*”, regardless of tradition of origin.^l Hence, comparison contributes to broadening “philosophy”^{li} by bringing aspects of culturally different philosophical traditions into dialogue.^{lii} This is accomplished through methodological players engaging in facilitated moments of encounter to determine similarities, dissimilarities, or commonalities; and the generation of relationships.^{liii} But, this method requires caution: Westerners must tread sensitively because our epistemic position is privileged.^{liv} As an onlooker peering into another’s epistemic milieu, the Westerner can only analogously comprehend what she perceives. Thus, a contradiction: while seeking out particularities and pluralities, the philosopher’s ideological context is epistemically universal and hegemonic.^{lv} A further difficulty is the loss of meaning in translation.^{lvi} Thence, if concepts are to be recognised, not reduced or transformed, the privileged epistemic position must be attempted to be set aside.^{lvii}

4. Becoming a person through relationship

Mindful of these methodological hazards, I present an articulation of African Philosophy’s radix, the multifaceted southern African ontological, epistemological, and ethical category, *ubuntu*.^{lviii} This Nguni term has

variants in Basotho, Batswana, Emaswati, Zimbabwean, Kenyan, Tanzanian, Mozambican, Angolan and Congolese languages.^{lix} I will focus on the relational dimensions of *ubuntu* and the theme of becoming a person – the permanent state of the human’s being.

As South Africa’s evil *Apartheid* state fell, a new way of being South African arose, so *ubuntu* became popularly known^{lxi}, but a distortion occurred as *ubuntu* was connoted as a communitarian ethic^{lxii}, so obfuscating its meaning by limitation to moral philosophy in the proliferation of *ubuntu* in applied ethics.^{lxiii} However, Ramose’s treatment of *ubuntu* challenges these interpretations, emphasising the metaphysics in the etymology of the term, dividing it into prefix and suffix: “*ubu-ntu*”^{lxiv}^{lxv}, the ontological and the epistemological dimensions respectively.^{lxvi} “*Ubu*” has the potential to be brought into existence and tends towards “*concrete manifestation*”: to “*being becoming*”.^{lxvii} “*Ntu*” is what is tangibly knowable, to what *ubu* is directed.^{lxviii} And the person – “*umuntu*” – has an irrevocable bond with *ubuntu*, as the being able to consciously reflect upon being-becoming – on *ubu-ntu* – from within the human experience.^{lxix} *Ubu* is inseparable from *umuntu*, as the aphorism expresses: “*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*”.^{lxx} ^{lxxi}

Mpho Tshivashe thinks this conceptualisation of *ubuntu* anthropocentric, contending that *ubuntu* cannot solely be humanly defined.^{lxxii} Although this debate is beyond this research, *ubuntu* is not homogenously articulated.^{lxxiii} The expression “*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*” can be broadly expressed as: “*I am because we are; and since we are, therefore I am*”^{lxxiv}, because this translation captures that *ubu* tends toward *ntu* in the happening of human being, a mode of self-declared existence in

relation with other self-attesting human beings by their being-together, as Ramose articulates:

[T]o be a human being is to affirm one's humanity by recognising the humanity of others and, on that basis, establish humane relationships with them.^{lxxv}

Consequently, *ubuntu* is both a possessed quality of the person and an approach to community living.^{lxxvi} Within community, Fainos Mangena insists, moral character formation occurs through interpersonal, “dialogical” encounters as the being of one person grabs hold of the being of another in mutual recognition of humanity.^{lxxvii} In these moments — through an awareness of embedded-caught-upness — the subject develops self-knowledge, leading to the communal determination of morality.^{lxxviii} But, more originary is the experience of *ubuntu* through the disclosure of personhood-to-personhood, in the mutual recognition of personhood, and by the living out of the interconnected sensibility between people.^{lxxix}

Being *umuntu* reveals a motivation that undergirds *ubuntu* as a moral theory – according to Tshivashe – impartial love, because the *ubuntu* way of being-in-community transcends concern only for people one consciously loves.^{lxxx} Tshivashe disentangles the human from *ubuntu*, such that *ubuntu* stands “... even when no one aspires to or champions it or even when no community benefits from it.”^{lxxxxi} I am not inclined to disagree that love could be foundational to lived *ubuntu*, however, without the precedence of the agent of love, can love exist? Moreover, if *ubuntu* is articulated in terms of *abantu*, can the concept stand alone? No. *Ntu* is fundamental to *ubuntu*. Verily, in the metaphysical system of *ubuntu*, it cannot be severed from *abantu* or from the metaphysical *uMveliqangi* with

which *abantu* are bound up.^{lxxxii} In Nguni metaphysics, “*uMveliqangi*”^{lxxxiii} – the “most high,” “the first to appear,” the creator – is immaterial, invisible, and eternal being, from which all being emerges.^{lxxxiv} Contingent beings – including people – are dependent for being in the being of *uMveliqangi*, participating in *uMveliqangi*’s being, such that *uMveliqangi* is personified in the being of every human.^{lxxxv} Because *uMveliqangi* has manifested being in the person, the person can reflect being to others.^{lxxxvi} In this dynamic is the potential to perceive being present in others and to recognise a kinship with other humans, which is the virtue of *ubuntu*.^{lxxxvii} Jordan Ngubane’s metaphysical account of *uMveliqangi* and *umuntu* emphasises that the good life incorporates the other as part of oneself^{lxxxviii}, so that the person is ordered to the relational “*nature of reality*”.^{lxxxix} In this state of “*relational personhood*,” the person becomes by binding their personhood with that of others.^{xc}

In this psychology of “personhood,” the person is not simply born a person^{xc}; personhood is acquired through communal processes.^{xcii} In psychologist Augustine Nwoye’s estimation, all people, regardless of culture, are formed by dialogical social influences.^{xciii} However, the categorical distinction between personhood conceptualised in an African mode and that of the West, is that the human is not grounded in the self, but in the metaphysical and in others.^{xciv}

The formation of the African person is a holistic process, reliant on community embeddedness.^{xcv} Exposure to and actualisation of African personhood occurs through socialisation, especially storytelling, dance, and other rituals.^{xcvi} The acute awareness in the African experience of person formation through cultural transmission marks Africa as unique. By the internalisation of the values, customs, etc., of a community, situated

personhood is formed. Consequently, being a person is for the sake of the community: those one temporally lives with now and metaphysically with one's ancestors. Western psychology imagines the human mind as a data-processor, whereas the African perspective challenges by conceptualising the human as a community-embedded co-constructor of meaning.^{xcvii} Formed strongly for community, a resilience that stands in contrast to the being of the isolated Westerner arises, as the person's existence is intimately entwined with that of others. Precisely due to *ubuntu* ontology bonding the person to their community, a deep care for community is evident.^{xcviii} This is manifest through the virtuous characteristics of the person enacting "... *generosity, caring and consideration toward others*".^{xcix} In practising these behaviours, the *ubuntu*-character of personhood is embedded.

Ubuntu is a basic ontological feature of what it is to be a person. That *ubuntu* and personhood cannot be separated from one another, I claim that personhood is not self-referential but is an ongoing happening, which takes its form in interpersonal relationships wherethrough human being is recognised through the being of another person.

5. Relational indwelling in the habit of friendship

Friendship is a form of relationality essential to the human.^c Perhaps inspired by Aristotle^{ci}, Aquinas gave considerable attention to friendship in his *Summa Theologiae*.^{cii} In Aristotelianism, friendship serves the human as a habit-forming virtue which contributes to living the good life.^{ciii}

Differently, Aquinas sees friendship as having a theological orientation,^{civ} developing his definition of "friendship" by relating it to "charity".^{cv cvi cvii}

Considering objections, Aquinas notes that it has been argued that if charity pertains to the relationship between God and angels, charity is not friendship between people.^{cxviii} Further, if one is expected to love one's enemies^{cxix} – logically not one's friends – one cannot bind charity to friendship either.^{cx} Finally, if friendship is to be conceived as a virtue, then friendship cannot be related to charity, because charity infers a love of the unvirtuous.^{cx} Consequently, Aquinas' detractors propose that love does not necessarily relate to friendship.^{cxii cxiii}

However, Aquinas argues that benevolent love – love that yearns for the good of the beloved – undergirds friendship.^{cxiv} This diverges from the selfish desire of the good of self alone, because friendship is not for the sake of utility.^{cxv} So paramount is love to friendship, that an indispensable component to friendship is mutuality: the reciprocal love whereby both friends desire one another's good.^{cxvi} For mutuality, charitable and communicative encounters between friends are necessary.^{cxvii} The charitable love between friends is, thus, pivotal for friendship that fosters meaningful ends between friends.^{cxviii} It follows, then, that “... *charity is friendship*”.^{cxix}

For Aquinas, friendship between all people arises because of Divine engagement in the charity that brings about friendship.^{cxx} Whilst friendship is “direct,” it can also transcend relationships, and take on an indirect mode.^{cxxi} Syllogistically, Aquinas proposes, all people are effectively friends with one another through their loving relationship with the Divine: if we love God as a friend, and if God loves all God's creation as friends, it follows that “... *we love [all] out of charity in relation to God...*”, for whether the person is virtuous or not, they are loved by God and

consequently we should love, too.^{cxxii} In this sense, charity is the singular virtue that directs all other virtues to their end.^{cxxiii}

In interpersonal relationships, the friend can recognise in another both the good of themselves and the good of the other.^{cxxiv} In the loving encounter with a friend the subject discerns a teleological good.^{cxxv} In loving another, the friend who is loved is conceived as an end, so inferring that that person is a good.^{cxxvi} In loving friendship, there is hence a recognition of the innate dignity of the one loved.^{cxxvii}

To the negative, though, the impulse to love another may arise from the initial recognition that through the establishment of a relationship, a self-serving end can be achieved. But this motivation aids teleology, because it is – at least at the initial stage of attraction – not for the sake of the other that one loves.^{cxxviii} So, is friendship reductively utilitarian if the impulse to “friendship” is one’s own wellbeing? Not in Aquinas’ estimation. Though self-interest may lie at the first impulse, in friendship one desires the fulfilment of the ends of all friends, because love is unitive.^{cxxix} Friendship potentially redeems itself through two types of union between the lover and the loved.^{cxxx} The first, “real union,” is the proximate union between the two that is the product of desire.^{cxxxi} The second, a meta-union, is “affective union”: when a formal, cognitive apprehension is made of the unity between the lover and the loved.^{cxxxii} The love that exists between friends naturally leads the friends to recognise their unity.^{cxxxiii}

Once more, the utilitarian problem arises, for the desire that emanates from within a person for friendship is for the good of the self. But friendship prevents utilitarianism from becoming the sole *raison d’être* of the relationship, for the love of friendship always concerns the good of the

other.^{cxxxiv} Thomistically, a friend is redefined as neither a fleeting associate nor just another being separate from the self. A friend is one whose self is extended into the being of the loved, and the being of the loved into the being of the lover to the degree that a friend becomes part of the self, as an effect of the unitive love of friendship.^{cxxxv} This unitive dimension – “mutual indwelling” – is fundamental to friendship because love always seeks to unite, such that without unity, love cannot be.^{cxxxvi}

Aquinas’ interlocutors disagree because he considered “mutual indwelling” as a consequence of love, i.e., that in friendship it is not just an extension of the existence of the lover and the loved into one another that occurs, but a more complete *connation* of the being of each other.^{cxxxvii} The critical argument contends: if the beloved is always loved by the lover, then the lover cannot love the indwelled loved, since the indwelled loved would not be another entirely other to love.^{cxxxviii} Consequently, indwelling cannot be an effect of love.^{cxxxix} Aquinas uses an expression from St Paul in counterargument – “*I have you in my heart*”^{cxl} – an illustration of an affective unity in the dynamic of the lover’s beholding of the loved in the identification of the other, and the possession of the loved within the lover’s affectivity.^{cxli} In this containment, the lover wishes only benevolence upon the loved for the good of the loved.^{cxlii}

... [I]n the love of friendship, the lover is in the beloved, inasmuch as he [sic] reckons what is good or evil to his friend, as being so to himself.^{cxliii}

In the affective experience, the one who loves, experiences the joy and happiness, the pain, and the sorrows of their friend, because of their mutual indwelling.^{cxliv} This is the quality of friendship: nothing apart from friendship “... *is necessary for happiness*”^{cxlv}, although counterintuitively,

this needs to be understood from the perspective of the loved as opposed to the lover. For although the human needs friends, the need for friends deflects away from the needs of the befriender. Friendship is needed for the operative sake of living and enabling the good of both the loved and the lover by doing “*good to them*”.^{cxlvi} Friendship, so cast, operates teleologically for the sake of the other, such that their end can be met, and in this way that the friend who lives her good is able to be happy.^{cxlvii}

In mutual indwelling with another in friendship, both persons can move closer to their good, reaching outside the self through love manifest in friendship, cooperating with another in actualising both their ends. Being friends implies that the person is ever becoming human, since — partly — through friendship the *telos* of the human person can be brought about.

6. A relational interface for African Philosophy and Aquinas:

The epistemic boundaries of African Philosophy and Aquinas have been kept separate so that each paradigm could be rendered for its features. The parallel argument developed enables the comparison of the respective systems to demonstrate common themes: philosophical anthropology, causal metaphysics, and teleological ontology.^{cxlviii}

The primordial intersection between, African Philosophy and Aquinas occurs in these schools’ conceptualisations of human relations, i.e., in *ubuntu* and *mutual indwelling*, made manifest in relational personhood and friendship, respectively. The point of engagement is in the philosophical anthropology of both, wherein the human *qua* human is conceived as a being, whose *telos* is manifest through relationships with other humans.

A second point of intersection arises when the causality that undergirds the being of the human is analysed in both philosophical schools, for in neither school is the human conceived as self-subsistent. A metaphysically causative common feature is identified in that African Philosophy and Thomistic Philosophy both deem an extra-cause of human being. Were one to consider the theological dynamics thereof, there would be multiple accidental divergences between the construed African and Thomistic understandings of metaphysical cause. Philosophically – since my interest is not in dogmatic imaginings of the nature of the metaphysical cause – discussion of this intersection can remain on the general plane.

In African metaphysics, the person is inseparable from the person's cause, i.e., the eternal, creative being, to the extent that the creator is present through the existence of the human.^{cxlix} A further congruence between the two schools arises in this causal metaphysics when Aquinas' consideration of the emergence of the human being is placed alongside it. He argued that all beings owe their existence to God by participation, who alone exists without cause.^{cl} Like the creator in *ubuntu* philosophy – “*uMveliqangi*” or “*uNkulunkulu*” – Aquinas' “God” is similarly creator.^{cli} And, *uMveliqangi* is present in the being of the created, likewise, Aquinas views the Divine cause as present in the created.^{clii} Consequently, both *ubuntu's* relational personhood and Aquinas' mutual indwelling – which have their origin in contingent human being – are dependent for existence upon transcendent metaphysical cause.

I now turn to the human within the interpersonal milieu wherein humans have their being. In African metaphysics, the creator gives being to the

contingent person that in turn reflects their being to other persons, whose contingent being is itself reflected back to the perceiver.^{cliii} Aquinas identifies a similar dynamic in that the contingent person beholds another, recognises the shared humanity of the beheld, and perceives the good towards which the other person's life is directed. In Thomism, this desire for the telos of the other arises through friendship.^{cliv} This relational mutuality is not a restricted hope to an individual but extends to all that form part of a friendship network.^{clv} Seeking the good of others, which is a dimension of mutuality that embraces all people –akin to *ubuntu's* recognition of imminent, shared personhood – love is the Thomistic metaphysically-founded dynamic that expands human friendships to an all-embracing state of people.^{clvi} Indeed, in Aquinas' imagining of human becoming, the person's being expands into the being of others such that their existence is *connated* by mutual indwelling.^{clvii} The ontology of African personhood stands divergent to Western ontology – since to be, one's being is bound up with the existence of others.^{clviii} Yet, whilst individualism is indicative of Modernity, the expression “*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu,*” could be interpreted to characterise Thomas' mutual indwelling, as he could have expressed “mutual indwelling” as “*homo est homo ab hominibus*”^{clix}!

From individually transcendent human ontology, virtues emerge out of Thomism and African Philosophy. From the vantage point of African Philosophy, the person-in-community is strongly morally positioned for the good of others, taking its form in solidarity, care, etc.^{clx} Within the Thomist paradigm, however, it is not possible to identify a community of mutual indwelling which has been formed into a moral community by Thomist ontology. *Ubuntu*, is an existential reality not simply a noble idea^{clxi}, and so has much to teach the West. *Ubuntu* is, for instance, the unspoken

impulse behind the resolution to the desperate story of liberal individualism that this address began with, wherethrough people who never met their kinswoman could lovingly restore her dignity in death – this is lived *ubuntu*, which could be interpreted as the effect of mutual indwelling, too.

A further degree of dissonance between these philosophical schools rests upon friendship. Though I have argued from the Thomistic position that the extension of friendship is necessary for mutual indwelling, Tshivashe considers friendship as a hindrance to *ubuntu*.^{clxii} The critique contrary to Tshivashe's theorisation has already been discussed.

7. Conclusion:

Both scholars of African Philosophy and of Thomas Aquinas have had to defend their existence.^{clxiii} That Africa could have its own philosophical tradition was unthinkable throughout European colonisation and is frequently insufficiently regarded to be taught even in current times. Of Aquinas, Yves Congar notes that if scholars thought that the Second Vatican Council had killed Aquinas, it was the Council of Lyons who had in 1274!^{clxiv} Hyperbole aside, the question of Aquinas' contemporary viability may only be interesting to Thomists.^{clxv} The fate may be similar for African Philosophy, in the still Western-dominated academy. Regardless of their liminalities, however, I argue that in bringing African Philosophy and Aquinas into conversation, these disparate schools direct to common philosophical features of the human experience.

Both traditions exhibit epistemic pluralism as they centre on the complexities of the irreducible human. Congar argued for Aquinas' own

pluralism in that "... [h]e was obsessed by the desire to give recognition to every glimmer of truth..."^{clxvi} A year before Congar, the African Philosopher, Paulin Hountondji argued that African philosophical thought is openly pluralistic, for "... *tradition does not exclude but rather... implies a system of discontinuities*".^{clxvii}

Defending that a plural "Western" mode of philosophy need not necessarily subjugate pluralist African Philosophy, and armed with the method of comparative philosophy – which vividly embraces plural perspectives on philosophical discourse – I set out to identify points of congruence between the traditions.

Given the authority borne by *ubuntu* in African Philosophy this was a natural locale to begin. The focus argued for was on *ubuntu* as the ontological manner through which humans become and the mode of human being. Moreover, attention was given to the metaphysical foundation of *ubuntu*, which draws a parallel to the foundation of being in Aquinas' philosophical conceptualisation of human existence. In that St Thomas develops the idea of "mutual indwelling" between people as the *connation* of their being as part of the state of their becoming the good of being human, a more African way of existence is conceived than a Western liberal, individualistic vision of humanity.

This has been an exercise in global philosophy, highlighting similar ideas of human being that transcend the particularities of paradigms forged in different human contexts. Through the comparative – and not hermeneutically fusionary approach – a richer understanding of global human perspectives arises, whilst their integrity as independent systems has been retained. Both St Thomas and African Philosophy consider the

human as a social creature, whose becoming and being must be relational for its humanity.

Words: 4705 (excluding footnotes)

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ⁱ Laura Sharman, "Moment Police Break into Flat Where Woman's Body Found after More than Two Years," *Mirror* (February 23, 2022), <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/moment-police-break-flat-womans-26312011>.

ⁱⁱ Sharman, Moment police, 2022; Amelia Gentleman, "What Times We Live in That Nobody Missed Her: The Tragedy of Sheila Seleokane," *The Guardian* (July 18, 2022), <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/jul/18/what-times-we-live-in-that-nobody-missed-her-the-tragedy-of-sheila-seleokane>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Sharman, Moment police, 2022; Gentleman, What times, 2022.

^{iv} Se-Anne Rall, "Woman Who Lay Dead in Her London Flat for Nearly 3 Years, Buried in SA," *IOL* (July 18, 2022), <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/eastern-cape/woman-who-lay-dead-in-her-london-flat-for-nearly-3-years-buried-in-sa-0b9ae1c3-031c-41ce-843f-84da484689cd>.

^v Jessica Benjamin, "Recognition and Destruction: An Outline of Intersubjectivity," in *Like Subjects, Love Objects: Essays on Recognition and Sexual Difference*, ed. Jessica Benjamin (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 27–48; Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim, *Individualization: Institutionalized Individualism and Its Social and Political Consequences* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd., 2002).

^{vi} Benjamin, *Recognition and Destruction*, 1995; Wendy Hollway, "Relationality: The Intersubjective Foundations of Identity," in *Sage Handbook of Identities*, ed. Margaret Wetherell and Chandra Mohanty (London: Sage, 2010), 216–32.

^{vii} Hollway, *Relationality*, 2010.

^{viii} *Ibid.*, 217–18.

^{ix} A. Padmanabhanunni and T.B. Pretorius, "The Unbearable Loneliness of COVID-19: COVID-19-Related Correlates of Loneliness in South Africa in Young Adults," *Psychiatry Research* 296 (February, 2021): 113658. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2020.113658>; Charikleia Lampraki, Adar Hoffman, Angélique Roquet, and Daniela S. Jopp, "Loneliness during COVID-19: Development and Influencing Factors," *PLOS ONE* 17, no. 3 (2022): e0265900, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0265900>.

^x Aristotle, *Aristotle's Politics: Books I. III. IV. (VII.): The text of Bekker*, trans. W.E. Bolland (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1877), Book I, Cap. 2, 1253a.

^{xi} Thomism is the Catholic intellectual tradition's most influential paradigm (Pope Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris: encyclical letter on the restoration of Christian philosophy* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1879), https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_04081879_aeterni-patris.html, §31; Pope John Paul II, *Fides et ratio: encyclical letter on the relationship between faith and reason* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998), https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091998_fides-et-ratio.html, §§43-44), which attempts to consider and advance the systematic approach developed by Aquinas (CE 1225-1274) and his followers. Given that the African Catholic population increased by over 33 million people in 2018-2019 (Agenzia Fides: Information service of the Pontifical Mission Societies, "Vatican – Catholic Church Statistics – 2021" (21 October 2021), http://www.fides.org/en/news/71000-VATICAN_CATHOLIC_CHURCH_STATISTICS_2021), it is a priority for scholars of the Catholic intellectual tradition to engage with the philosophical perspectives of Africa. Without an encounter with indigenous philosophical traditions, the Church is parochialized and risks being part of neo-colonial forces as missionaries of the past who accompanied colonisers.

^{xii} Walter Mignolo, *The Politics of Decolonial Investigations* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2021), 315.

- xiii Samantha Vice. "How Do I Live in This Strange Place?," *Journal of Social Philosophy* 41, no. 3 (2010): 323.
- xiv Linda Martín Alcoff, "What Should White People Do?," *Hypatia* 13, no. 3 (1998): 8, 25.
- xv Vice, *Strange Place*, 324.
- xvi *Ibid.*, 324, 326, 328.
- xvii Hans Haferkamp and Neil J Smelser (eds.), *Social Change and Modernity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992), 12-13; Satnam Virdee, "Racialized Capitalism: An Account of Its Contested Origins and Consolidation," *The Sociological Review* 67, no. 1 (2019): 9.
- xviii Geraldine L. Palmer, Jesica Siham Fernández, Gordon Lee, Hana Masud, Sonja Hilson, Catalina Tang, Dominique Thomas, Latriece Clark, Bianca Guzman, and Ileri Bernai, "Oppression and Power," *Introduction to Community Psychology: Becoming an Agent of Change*, 2019, <https://press.rebus.community/introductiontocommunitypsychology/chapter/oppression-and-power/>.
- xix Phia S. Salter, Glenn Adams, and Michael J. Perez, "Racism in the Structure of Everyday Worlds: A Cultural-Psychological Perspective," *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 27, no. 3 (2018): 151.
- xx Lucy Allais, "Kant's Racism," *Philosophical Papers* 45, no. 1–2, (2016): 2.
- xxi Immanuel Kant (CE 1724-1804) is a racist Enlightenment figure (Jon M. Mikkelsen, *Kant and the Concept of Race* (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 2013; Allais, *Kant's Racism*, 2–5) who *inconsistently* argued for universal human dignity (Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. & ed. Mary Gregor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 37. The similar racism of G.W.F. Hegel (CE 1770-1831) – another pivotal figure in Modernity – is elicited through his caricature of the African: childish, disposed against freedom, animistic, violent, and backward (Robert Bernasconi, "Hegel at the Court of the Ashanti," in *Hegel After Derrida*, ed. Stuart Barnett (London: Routledge, 1998), 50). The depravity of Hegel's account is not surprising; he infamously viewed Africa as having "... no historical interest of its own..." (Georg W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 174).
- xxii Mogobe B. Ramose, "The Struggle for Reason in Africa," in *The African Philosophy Reader*, eds. Pieter H. Coetzee and A.P.J. Roux (London: Routledge, 2003b), 1–9.
- xxiii Callum David Scott, "The Decolonial Aquinas? Discerning Epistemic Worth for Aquinas in the Decolonial Academy," *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 38, no. 1, (2019): 42.
- xxiv Vice, *Strange Place*, 323.
- xxv Scott, *The Decolonial Aquinas*, 48.
- xxvi Pascah Mungwini, "African Renaissance, Coloniality and the Quest for a Polycentric Global Epistemology," in *African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific – AFSAAP: 36th Annual Conference* (Perth, Australia, 26-28 November 2013), <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.688.7866&rep=rep1&type=pdf>, 12.
- xxvii Scott *The Decolonial Aquinas*, 45.
- xxviii *Ibid.*, 48.
- xxix "... [T]he role of Aquinas, for instance in Africa, awaits an African Thomism" (Thomas F. O'Meara, *Aquinas: Theologian* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), 250).
- xxx Sebastian Tempels, *Bantu Philosophy* (Paris: Présence Africaine, 1959).
- xxxi Stephen O. Okafor, "Bantu Philosophy: Placide Tempels Revisited," *Journal of Religion in Africa* XIII, no. 2 (1982): 84.
- xxxii Alexis Kagame, *La Philosophie Bantu-Rwandaise de l'Être* (Bruxelles: Académie royale des sciences coloniales, 1956): 8; D.A. Masolo, "Alexis Kagame (1912-1981) and «La Philosophie Bantu-Rwandaise de l'Être»," *Africa: Rivista Trimestrale Di Studi e Documentazione Dell'Istituto Italiani per l'Africa e l'Oriente* 38, no. 3 (1983): 449; Liboire Kagabo, "Alexis Kagame (1912–1981): Life and Thought," in *A Companion to African Philosophy*, ed. Kwame Wiredu (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2004), 239.
- xxxiii Mavunza Lwanga Mayola, "L'aristotélico-Thomisme Dans La Notion Lobe Bantoue de l'être de Lufuluabo Mizeka," *Afrique et Philosophie: Revue Du Cercle Philosophique de Kinshasa* 7 (1983): 18–42.
- xxxiv John F.K.A. Aniagwu, "Towards a Philosophy for Nigerian Education: Contributions from the Thomistic, Teilhardian and African Philosophical Stand-Points," Doctor of Philosophy thesis, (University of Lagos, 1983).
- xxxv Matthew Akoni-Mensah, *Alasdair MacIntyre's Idea of Tradition as a Virtue: Its Thomistic Influence and Application to Sub-Saharan African Reality* (Braga: Axioma - Publicações de Faculdade de Filosofia, 2020).
- xxxvi Augustine Shutte, *Philosophy for Africa* (Rondebosch: UCT Press, 1993), 9.
- xxxvii *Ibid.*

- xxxviii Mogobe B. Ramose, "I Doubt, Therefore African Philosophy Exists," *South African Journal of Philosophy* 22, no. 2 (2003a): 113–27.
- xxxix Shutte, *Philosophy for Africa*, 8, 59.
- xl *Ibid.*, 60, 66–70.
- xli *Ibid.*, 9.
- xlii Patrick Giddy, "Philosophy for Africa - Another View," *Social Dynamics* 21, no. 2 (1995): 129–30.
- xliii This delineation appears a few times in the literature, but more in Thomist theological discourse (O'Meara, *Aquinas: Theologian*, 282; Mika Vähäkangas, *In Search of Foundations for African Catholicism: Charles Nyamiti's Theological Methodology* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 282). Giddy predates these (Giddy, *Another View*, 129–30).
- xliiv Giddy, *Another View*, 118, 127.
- xliv Shutte, *Philosophy for Africa*.
- xlvi *Ibid.*, 9, 60, 66–70.
- xlvii Ramose, *I doubt*.
- xlviii Jesse Fleming, "Comparative Philosophy: Its Aims And Methods," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 30, no. 2 (2003): 264; Joseph Kaipayil, "Comparative Philosophy," in *ACPI Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Johnson J. Puthenpurackal (Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 2010), 297.
- lix Kaipayil, *Comparative Philosophy*, 296, 298.
- i Daya Krishna, "Comparative Philosophy: What It Is and What It Ought to Be," *Diogenes* 34, no. 136 (1986): 65, 68.
- ii Fleming, *Comparative Philosophy*, 260–61.
- iii Raimundo Panikkar, "What Is Comparative Philosophy Comparing?," in *Interpreting Across Boundaries: New Essays in Comparative Philosophy*, ed. Gerald James Larson and Eliot Deutsch (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 122; Kaipayil, *Comparative Philosophy*, 296.
- iiii Ralph Weber, "Comparative Philosophy and the Tertium: Comparing What with What, and in What Respect?," *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy* 13, no. 2 (2014): 152.
- liv Krishna, *Comparative Philosophy*, 59.
- lv *Ibid.*
- lvi *Ibid.*, 65.
- lvii *Ibid.*
- lviii Mogobe B. Ramose, *African Philosophy Through Ubuntu* (Harare: Mond Books, 1999), 35, 37; Sabelo Mhlambi, *From Rationality to Relationality: Ubuntu as an Ethical and Human Rights Framework for Artificial Intelligence Governance*, (Cambridge, MA: Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard University, 2020), https://carrcenter.hks.harvard.edu/files/cchr/files/ccdp_2020-009_sabelo_b.pdf, 12.
- lix Nkonko M. Kamwangamalu, "Ubuntu in South Africa: A Sociolinguistic Perspective to a Pan-African Concept," *Critical Arts* 13, no. 2 (1999): 25.
- lx "Ubuntu's" written development dates its appearance to 1846 (Christian B.N. Gade, "The Historical Development of the Written Discourses on Ubuntu," *South African Journal of Philosophy* 30, no. 3 (2011): 306). Given the oral nature of the linguistic communities within which it emerged, the concept surely predates this. In the colonial writings of the hundred years that followed, an understanding emerged that *ubuntu* concerned a human quality (Gade, *Historical Development*, 303, 307–8). In the next century, a shift in meaning to one of a more philosophical character emerged (*Ibid.*, 309). The inference cannot be made that the Nguni oral cultures did not have a philosophical conceptualisation, thereof, however.
- lxi *Ibid.*, 311.
- lxii Cf. e.g., Augustine Shutte, *Ubuntu: An Ethic for a New South Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001); Augustine Shutte, "Ubuntu as the African Ethical Vision," in *African Ethics: An Anthology for Comparative and Applied Ethics*, ed. Munyaradzi Felix Murove (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2009), 85–99; Thaddeus Metz, "Ubuntu as a Moral Theory: Reply to Four Critics," *South African Journal of Philosophy* 26, no. 4 (2007a): 369–87; Thaddeus Metz, "Toward an African Moral Theory," *Journal of Political Philosophy* 15, no. 3 (2007b): 321–41; Thaddeus Metz and Joseph B.R. Gaie, "The African Ethic of Ubuntu/Botho: Implications for Research on Morality," *Journal of Moral Education* 39, no. 3 (2010): 273–90; Nkiruka Ahiauzu, "Ubuntu," in *Encyclopedia of Global Justice*, ed. D.K. Chatterjee (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2011), , 1101–2; Cornelius Ewuoso and Susan Hall, "Core Aspects of Ubuntu: A Systematic Review," *South African Journal of Bioethics and Law* 12, no. 2 (2019): 93; Motsamai Molefe, *African Personhood and Applied Ethics* (Makhanda: NISC (Pty) Ltd., 2020).
- lxiii *Ubuntu's* application to applied ethics includes information ethics (Rafael Capurro, "Information Ethics for and from Africa," *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*

- 59, no. 7 (2008): 1162–70), business ethics (Andrew West, “Ubuntu and Business Ethics: Problems, Perspectives and Prospects,” *Journal of Business Ethics*, 121, no. 1 (2014)), governance (T.I. Nzimakwe, “Practising Ubuntu and Leadership for Good Governance: The South African and Continental Dialogue,” *African Journal of Public Affairs* 7, no. 4 (2014): 30–41), healthcare (Evanson Z. Sambala, Sara Cooper, and Lenore Manderson, “Ubuntu as a Framework for Ethical Decision Making in Africa: Responding to Epidemics,” *Ethics & Behavior*, 30, no. 1, (2020): 1–13.), privacy (Urbano Reviglio, and Rogers Alunge, “‘I Am Datafied Because We Are Datafied’: An Ubuntu Perspective on (Relational) Privacy,” *Philosophy & Technology* 33, no. 4 (2020): 595–612), and big data (Cornelius Ewuoso, “An African Relational Approach to Healthcare and Big Data Challenges,” *Science and Engineering Ethics* 27, no. 3 (2021): 34).
- lxiv Ramose, *African Philosophy*, 35–36.
- lxv Morphologically, *ubuntu* “... consists of the augmented prefix u-, the abstract noun prefix bu-, and the noun stem -ntu...” (Kamwangamalu, *Ubuntu*, 25).
- lxvi Ramose, *African Philosophy*, 36.
- lxvii *Ibid.*
- lxviii *Ibid.*
- lxix *Ibid.*
- lxx *Ibid.*, 37.
- lxxi Prior to the 1995 publication of the American edition of Shutte’s book, “*Philosophy for Africa*”, there was no published link between “*ubuntu*” and the proverb (Gade, *Historical Development*, 313–14).
- lxxii Mpho Tshivhase, “Love as the Foundation of Ubuntu,” *Synthesis Philosophica*, 33, no. 1 (2018): 202.
- lxxiii Christian Gade, “What Is Ubuntu? Different Interpretations among South Africans of African Descent,” *South African Journal of Philosophy* 31, no. 3 (2012): 487.
- lxxiv John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy* (New York, NY: Anchor Books, 1970), 141.
- lxxv Ramose, *African Philosophy*, 37.
- lxxvi Gade, *What Is Ubuntu*, 484, 487.
- lxxvii Fainos Mangena, “Towards a Hunhu/Ubuntu Dialogical Moral Theory,” *Phronimon: Journal of the South African Society for Greek Philosophy and the Humanities* 13, no. 2 (2012): 9–10.
- lxxviii Mbiti, *African Religions*, 141; Mangena, *Towards a Hunhu/Ubuntu*, 11.
- lxxix Tshivhase, *Love*, 198.
- lxxx *Ibid.*, 198–99.
- lxxxi *Ibid.*, 204.
- lxxxii Mhlambi, *From Rationality to Relationality*, 13.
- lxxxiii “*uNkulunkulu*” is synonymous.
- lxxxiv Jordan K. Ngubane, *An African Explains Apartheid* (New York, NY: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1963), 75.
- lxxxv Ngubane, *An African Explains*, 75.
- lxxxvi *Ibid.*, 76.
- lxxxvii *Ibid.*
- lxxxviii *Ibid.*
- lxxxix Mhlambi, *From Rationality to Relationality*, 13.
- xc *Ibid.*, 13.
- xcI Augustine Nwoye, “An Africentric Theory of Human Personhood,” *Psychology in Society* 54 (2017): 42.
- xcii Ifeanyi A. Menkiti, “Person and Community in African Traditional Thought,” in *African Philosophy*, ed. Richard A. Wright (New York, NY: University Press of America, 1984), 172; Ramose, *African Philosophy*, 81.
- xciii Nwoye, *An Africentric Theory*, 45.
- xciv *Ibid.*, 50, 54–55.
- xcv *Ibid.*, 47–49.
- xcvi *Ibid.*, 54–55.
- xcvii *Ibid.*, 56.
- xcviii Robert Kudakwashe Chigangaidze, Anesu Aggrey Matanga, and Tafadzwa Roniah Katsuro, “Ubuntu Philosophy as a Humanistic–Existential Framework for the Fight Against the COVID-19 Pandemic,” *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 62, no. 3 (2022), 323.
- xcix Chigangaidze, *et al.*, *Ubuntu Philosophy*, 324.
- c Wherever humans are, the need for relationships is apparent, particularly in the form of friendship (David M.G. Lewis, Laith Al-Shawaf, Eric M. Russell, and David M. Buss, “Friends and Happiness: an Evolutionary Perspective on Friendship,” in *Friendship and Happiness*, ed. M. Demir (Dordrecht:

Springer Science+Business Media, 2015), 37-38; William K. Rawlins, "Foreword," in *The Psychology of Friendship*. Eds. Mahzad Hojjat & Anne Moyer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), ix. Psychological studies have linked friendship to evolutionary survival and to happiness (Lewis et al., *Friends and Happiness*, 37; Daniel Perlman, "Friendship: An Echo, a Hurrah, and Other Reflections," in *The Psychology of Friendship*, eds. Mahzad Hojjat and Anne Moyer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 284). Moreover, friendships contribute to the health and psychological well-being of people (Perlman, *Friendship*, 289). Rawlins identifies five characteristics of friendships apparent across cultures: voluntary, personal, affective, mutual, and equal (Rawlins, *Foreward*, x).

ci Jonathan Canary, "Transforming Friendship: Thomas Aquinas on Charity as Friendship with God," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 85, no. 4 (2020): 372.

cii St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (Kindle, 1911), I-II, q. 26, a. 3

ciii Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 2009; Helm 2021; Aristotle 2009; Marie T. Farrell, "Thomas Aquinas and Friendship with God," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 61, no. 3-4 (1995): 213.

civ Lorraine Smith Pangle, *Aristotle and the Philosophy of Friendship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2.

cv Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 23, a. 1,

cvi Canary, "Transforming Friendship, 370.

cvi This interpretation of "charity" is rooted in the Latin "*caritas*", i.e., "love". Herein "love" and "charity" are used interchangeably.

cvi Canary, "Transforming Friendship, 370.

cix cf. Mt 5:44.

cx Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 23, a. 1

cxii *Ibid.*

cxiii *Ibid.*

cxiii Aristotle had also considered this in *The Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VIII, §§2-3.

cxiv Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 23, a. 1.

cxv *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 23, a. 1.

cxvi *Ibid.*

cxvii *Ibid.*

cxviii *Ibid.*

cxix *Ibid.*

cxx *Ibid.*

cxxi *Ibid.*

cxxii *Ibid.*

cxxiii *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 23, a. 8.

cxxiv *Ibid.*

cxxv *Ibid.*

cxxvi *Ibid.*

cxxvii *Ibid.*

cxxviii *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 62, a. 4.

cxxix *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 28, a. 1.

xxx *Ibid.*

xxxi *Ibid.*

xxxii *Ibid.*

xxxiii *Ibid.*

xxxiv *Ibid.*

xxxv *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 62, a. 4.

xxxvi *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 28, a. 1.

xxxvii *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 28, a. 2.

xxxviii *Ibid.*

xxxix *Ibid.*

cxli Phil 1:7.

cxli Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 28, a. 2.

cxlii *Ibid.*

cxliii *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 28, a. 2.

cxliv *Ibid.*

cxlv *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 4, a. 8.

cxlvi *Ibid.*

cxlvii Canary, "Transforming Friendship, 371.

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- cxlviii I utilise Greek philosophical categories, though I am mindful that approach can be critiqued as an imposition upon African Philosophy by a Western Philosopher, but I note that “Western” categories are used beyond Western Philosophy (cf. e.g., Roy W. Perrett (ed.), *Indian Philosophy: a collection of readings: Metaphysics* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2001); Munyaradzi F. Murove (ed.), *African Ethics: an anthology of comparative and applied ethics* (Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2009); Yong Huang (ed.), *Ernest Sosa Encountering Chinese Philosophy: A Cross-Cultural Approach to Virtue Epistemology* (London: Bloomsbury, 2022).
- cxlix Ngubane, *An African Explains*, 75.
- cl Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 44, a. 1.
- cli *Ibid.*, I, q. 44, a. 2; q. 45, a. 2 and 5.
- clii *Ibid.*, I, q. 45, a. 7.
- cliii Ngubane, *An African Explains*, 75–76.
- cliv Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I–II, a. 62, 4.
- clv *Ibid.*, II–II, q. 23, a. 1.
- clvi *Ibid.*
- clvii *Ibid.*, II–II, q. 28, a. 2.
- clviii Nwoye, *An Africentric Theory*, 50, 54–55.
- clix Translated into English as: “A person is a person through other people.”
- clx Nwoye, *An Africentric Theory*, 56; Chigangaidze, *et al.*, *Ubuntu Philosophy*, 323.
- clxi Mungi Ngomane, *Everyday Ubuntu: Living Better Together the African Way* (London: Harper Design, 2019).
- clxii Tshivhase, *Love*.
- clxiii Ramose, *I doubt*; Ramose, *The struggle*; Dennis Masaka, “African Philosophy and the Challenge from Hegemonic Philosophy,” *Education as Change* 22, no. 3 (2018); Yves Congar, “Saint Thomas Aquinas and the Spirit of Ecumenism,” *New Blackfriars* 55, no. 648 (1974): 196–209; Gerald A. McCool, “Is Thomas’s Way of Philosophizing Still Viable Today?,” in *The Future of Thomism*, eds. Deal W. Hudson and Dennis W. Moran, 51–64 (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992).
- clxiv Congar, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 207.
- clxv McCool, *Is Thomas’s Way*, 51.
- clxvi Congar, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 205.
- clxvii Paulin Hountondji, “Pluralism – true and false.”, *Diogenes*, 21, no. 84 (1973), 109.