JOHN OF ST. THOMAS
(1589–1644)

John of St. Thomas, the Spanish theologian and philosopher, was born John Poinsot, the son of an Austrian, at Lisbon, Portugal, and died at Fraga, Spain. When he entered the Dominican order he took his name from St. Thomas Aquinas. John studied philosophy at Coimbra, Portugal, and theology at Louvain, taught philosophy and theology in Dominican houses of study, at Alcalá de Henares (1613–1630), and from 1630 to 1643 was a professor at the University of Alcalá. Apart from certain Latin and vernacular works of devotion, his writings consist of two series of textbooks, one in philosophy, the *Cursus Philosophicus* (which comprises "Ars Logica," covering logic, and "Philosophia Naturalis," on natural philosophy), the other in theology, the *Cursus Theologicus* (a systematic commentary on Thomas's *Summa of Theology*).

The "Ars Logica" is fundamentally Aristotelian logic, but John developed the content of the course in two directions: toward a formal theory of correct reasoning and toward a material logic that attends to the meaning of the actual terms of a proposition and thus anticipates some of the problems of epistemology and semantics. John's terminology differs from that of modern logic (*propositio copulativa* is the modern conjunctive proposition; *propositio disiunctiva* the alternative proposition; *bona consequentia* means *implication*). However, it has been claimed, by J. J. Doyle, that the "Ars Logica" and Alfred North Whitehead and Bertrand Russell's *Principia Mathematica* are fundamentally similar as formal systems. Concerning material implication, John taught that one may infer from the particular proposition ("Some man is rational") to the universal proposition ("Every man is rational") in cases where the matter is necessary. To some extent he anticipated problems in the philosophy of science and the metasciences and also the theory of induction.

His philosophy of nature is a systematic exposition of a type of Thomism much influenced by the commentaries of Cajetan. Nature is the world of bodies, of being that is subject to change (*ens mobile*), explained in terms of the four Aristotelian causes, substance and accidents, act and potency, matter and form.

John treated certain questions in a novel way—for example, immanent action, the sort of activity that begins and ends within one agent and is typical of psychic functions (see *Cursus Philosophicus*, "Philosophia Naturalis," I, q. 14, a. 3). John had no separate treatise on metaphysics, but his views on the ultimate character of reality were frequently presented in his explanation of parallel problems (substance, causality, potency) in the "Philosophia Naturalis." The "Theological Course" also contains explanations of problems in speculative philosophy. Cognition, on the sensory and intellectual levels, is explained in terms of a metaphysics of causality (I, q. 1, disp. II, a. 12, n. 4). John was one source of the theory of the distinction between three degrees of knowledge—physical, mathematical, and metaphysical—popularized in the twentieth century by Jacques Maritain.

In his discussion of the gifts of the Holy Ghost (*Cursus Theologicus*, IV, disp. XVII), John had much to say on the relation of knowledge to wisdom. He viewed ethics and political philosophy as speculative sciences and did not write much on practical philosophy. On moral questions he adopted the position called "probabilism"; that is, in moral situations where a person is really in doubt about what he should do, he may solve his doubt by adopting any judgment that has been made by a prudent moralist concerning the proposed action (*Cursus Theologicus*, IV, disp. XII, a. 3, n. 4).

John's writings are useful for their historical information on later scholasticism. He influenced many recent Thomists, notably Maritain, J. M. Ramírez, Joseph Gredt, and Yves Simon.

See also Aristotelianism; Cajetan, Cardinal; Induction; Logic, History of; Maritain, Jacques; Philosophy of Science, History of; Russell, Bertrand Arthur William; Thomas Aquinas, St.; Whitehead, Alfred North.

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JOHN OF SALISBURY
(c. 1115–1180)

John of Salisbury, the scholar, humanist, and bishop, was born at Old Sarum (Wiltshire), England. After primary instruction from a rural priest he went to France to study in 1136. He read dialectic first under Peter Abelard, during the latter's last period at Paris, then under Alberic and Robert of Melun. In 1138 he began the study of grammar under Richard of Arranches, probably at Chartres, where he also studied under William of Conches; at Chartres too he studied rhetoric and part of the quadrivium. In 1141 he took up theology at Paris under Gilbert of Poitiers and Robert Pullen and made the acquaintance of other masters. He was then probably secretary for a short time to Abbot Peter of Celle (1147–1148). He was a member of the Roman Curia, and in 1148 attended the Council of Rheims, where he knew well both Bernard of Clairvaux and Gilbert of Poitiers. That year he was introduced by St. Bernard to Theobald, archbishop of Canterbury, with whom he spent a short time. Between 1149 and 1153 John was a member of the Roman Curia in Apulia and elsewhere and was on terms of intimacy with Pope Adrian IV (Nicholas Breakspear). From 1153/1154 to 1161 he was the trusted secretary of Archbishop Theobald and was one of a distinguished household that included Thomas Becket, Roger of Pont l'Évêque, later archbishop of York, and the Italian lawyer Vacarius. He advised and represented the archbishop and wrote his letters, many of which dealt with business of the Curia.

After Theobald's death, John entered the service of Thomas Becket, to whom he remained a loyal, although not blind, supporter during Thomas's later controversy with King Henry. Accused by King Henry II of encouraging appeals to Rome, John preceded his patron into exile in 1163 and spent some years in Rheims living with Peter of Celle, then abbot of St. Rémy, and working in Thomas's interest with King Louis VII of France. He rejoined Thomas shortly before the latter's return to England in December 1170 and preceded him to Canterbury.

John was at dinner with the archbishop when the knights arrived and was present, although perhaps in concealment, at Thomas's murder in the cathedral. He subsequently worked for Thomas's canonization and, in return, was invited by King Louis in July 1176 to become bishop of Chartres. He attended the third Lateran Council in 1179 and died the following year at Chartres, where he was buried.

John was author of a multitude of letters as well as short lives of Anselm and Thomas Becket, the latter a jejune work that is doubly disappointing in view of the writer's literary skill and intimate knowledge of his subject. His *Historia Pontificalis* is a continuation of the *Chronicle* of Sigebert of Gembloux and covers the years 1148–1152. As a scholar he composed the versified *Entheticus de Dog-mate Philosophorum* (1155), a rehearsal of his knowledge of ancient philosophy, as well as the two works on which his medieval reputation rested: the *Policraticus* (The statesman) and *Metalogicon*.

The *Policraticus,* subtitled *De Nugis Curialium et Vestigiis Philosophorum* (Concerning the vain purposes of courtiers and the traditions of philosophers), is a disorderly, rambling work without detailed plan. Dealing in part with such faults and follies of the great as hunting, gaming, dreams, and astrology and with witchcraft, it contains a variety of anecdotes and personal experiences. Books 6–10 deal with the character and duties of a prince, and the work has consequently been called—somewhat misleadingly—the first medieval treatise on political thought. It is, in fact, a sociological study, but it contains a well-known passage on the ministerial function of the prince, who holds the sword in order to perform duties beneath the dignity of the priesthood, which John always considers the superior power, even when emphasizing the virtue of patriotism. The passage shows no clear indication of acquaintance with the almost contemporary teaching of St. Bernard on the possession of two swords by the papacy. In the last book John proclaims the right and duty of citizens to kill a tyrant. The passage has often been quoted in later centuries as authoritative, but it is probably merely an echo of Roman republican rhetoric without any practical application to the world of the twelfth century.

The *Metalogicon* (1159–1160) was written at almost the same time as the *Policraticus*. It is an apologia for true logic, or rather for philosophical training as an introduction to a civilized way of life, contrasted with the technical logic of the schools, which was fit only for sciolists or such careerists as Cornificius, whose name recurs as an unidentified opponent of humane learning. John