

PRESENTATION

On 21 and 22 April 2023, an international scientific conference organised by the Pontifical Universities of St Thomas Aquinas and the Santa Croce together with the Angelicum Thomistic Institute took place in Rome on *The Concept of ius in Thomas Aquinas*. The conference aimed to explore the Thomistic concept of *ius* understood as the object of the virtue of justice and as a just thing in itself (*ip-sa res iusta*) from the *Secunda Secundae* of the *Summa Theologiae*. This analysis considered Aquinas' study of the *lex* from the *Prima Secundae* of the *Summa Theologiae*, the intrinsic connection between justice as the object of *ius* – the juridical aspect of *iustitia* – and the broader issues of the divine-salvific and moral aspects of justice. The perspective of the jus-philosophical reception of Aquinas' legal thought in our times was also considered, as well as the study of the relevance of that thought for the Church's social doctrine and canon law. The papers of the conference, which was held in both Italian and English, will soon appear in an Italian version with EDUSC (Rome), and in an English version with the Catholic University of America Press (Washington), edited by Löic-Marie Le Bot and Petar Popović.

We are now publishing some of the numerous contributed papers in Italian or English that were received at the conference, with the participation of scholars from various countries and different specialisations. The texts have been grouped into three sections. The first is devoted to topics of a more general nature, in which the Thomistic conception of *ius* proves to be very timely in addressing fundamental legal issues: the determination of law (Ancona), the exercise of public power (Bazán Mogollón, Chang Chuyes), constitutional law (Hendrianto), the sources of law through the study of the causes of *res iusta* (Riofrío), and the relationship between social justice in the ecclesiastical magisterium and the notions

of legal and general justice in Aquinas (M. Savarese). The second section includes studies of a historical nature in which, however, there is a great theoretical depth that transcends history: the comparison between the definitions of law in Dante and Aquinas (P. Savarese), the relationship between Vitoria's doctrine of law and the moral and social problems of his time (Torres), Suárez's relationship with Aquinas in his view of law (Hecht), and the debate about the pre-eminence of the common good in Aquinas with particular reference to De Koninck (Petagine). The third and final section presents two applications of Thomist doctrine to particular issues: the ethics of war (Bauzon) and bio-legal problems (Lodevole).

These essays give an idea of the fruitfulness of revisiting the thought of Thomas Aquinas on law and of the fact that so many issues legal issues of our time can receive much light from contact with the thought of an author who undoubtedly occupies a place of great prominence in the history of the notion of *ius*.

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