

The Problem of *affectiones* in the Texts of Thomas Aquinas

Słowa kluczowe: Thomas Aquinas, passions (*passiones*), *affectiones*, appetitive faculties of man, love

With *dilectio*, love proper to reasonable beings, in Thomas Aquinas' texts we find an interested, however barely explored by Thomists, topic of acts of the will, analogical to passions, which by Thomas himself are usually called *affectiones*. Thus he differs them from the emotions-*passions*, considered a reaction of a sensitive desire to a sensual apprehension of the good or evil of the same, sensual kind. *Affectiones* are reactions of the will for goodness or its deprivation, that is the evil, apprehended intellectually. Ho-

wever, according to fundamental theses of Thomas anthropology concerning both structural and functional union of body and spirit of personal human being, *affectiones* are usually accompanied by *passiones* and- as we may suggest- either it is them who attracts senses to follow, either senses attract the will to follow the goodness recognised by them. In their structure *affectiones* are simpler than passions, as the will is a simpler appetitive faculty than *appetitus sensitiva-* a spiritual desire:

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Amor et gaudium et alia huiusmodi, cum attribuantur Deo vel Angelis, aut hominibus secundum appetitum intellectivum, significant simplicem actum voluntatis cum similitudine effectus, absque passione¹.

When love and joy and the like are ascribed to God or the angels, or to man in respect of his intellectual appetite, they signify simple acts of the will having like effects, but without passion.

I. *Passiones* and *affectiones* in human *compositum*

Key for understanding both *passiones* and *affectiones* is Thomas' conception of man, especially with regard to appetitive faculties whose role is to subject both emotions and *affectiones*. Thomas explains

this issue when he speaks of love, because love- on its various stages- serves a principium for both, *passiones* and *affectiones*.

Manifestum est autem ex his quae supra de passionibus dicta sunt, quod amor est prima affectio appetitivae potentiae, ex qua sequitur et desiderium et gaudium².

Now it is evident from what we have said about the passions love is the first affection of the appetitive power, and that desire and joy follow from it.

The first observation we need to make is that Thomas applies his theory of love to anthropology, and with no hesi-

tation sketches the conception of "levels" of love- parallel- to "levels" human beings are organised into.

Amor est aliquid ad appetitum pertinens, cum utriusque obiectum sit bonum. Unde secundum differentiam appetitus est differentia amoris. Est enim quidam appetitus non consequens apprehensionem ipsius appetentis, sed alterius, et huiusmodi dicitur appetitus naturalis. Res enim naturales appetunt quod eis convenit secundum suam naturam, non per apprehensionem propriam, sed per apprehensionem instituentis naturam, ut in I libro dictum est. Alius autem est appetitus consequens apprehensionem ipsius appetentis, sed ex necessitate, non ex iudicio libero.

Love is something pertaining to the appetite; since good is the object of both. Wherefore love differs according to the difference of appetites. For there is an appetite which arises from an apprehension existing, not in the subject of the appetite, but in some other: and this is called the „natural appetite.“ Because natural things seek what is suitable to them according to their nature, by reason of an apprehension which is not in them, but in the Author of their nature, as stated in the FP, Question [6], Article [1], ad 2; FP, Question [103], Article [1], ad 1,3. And there is another appetite arising from an

¹ *S.th.*, I-II, q. 22, a. 3, ad 3. The texts of Thomas will be quoted according to a general pattern regarding their Latin edition available in its entirety at www.corpusthomicum.org. In this paper the sources are for the most part are limited to *Summa theologiae*. The issues we discuss are also analysed by Thomas in another his works, mostly in *Quaestiones disputate de veritate* (q. 25). <https://isidore.co/aquinas/summa/FS/FS022.html#FSQ22OUTP1>, access: 15.06.2022., <https://aquinas.cc/1a/en/~ST.I-II.Q26.A1.SC>

² *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 28, a. 4, co.

Et talis est appetitus sensitivus in brutis, qui tamen in hominibus aliquid libertatis participat, in quantum obedit rationi. Alius autem est appetitus consequens apprehensionem appetentis secundum liberum iudicium. Et talis est appetitus rationalis sive intellectivus, qui dicitur voluntas ³.

apprehension in the subject of the appetite, but from necessity and not from free-will. Such is, in irrational animals, the „sensitive appetite,” which, however, in man, has a certain share of liberty, in so far as it obeys reason. Again, there is another appetite following freely from an apprehension in the subject of the appetite. And this is the rational or intellectual appetite, which is called the „will”.

Division of appetite and love conducted by Thomas can be presented as follows:

COGNITION	APPETITE	LOVE
by the Cause of nature	natural	natural
sensual	sensual	sensual (passions)
intellectual	intellectual (the will)	intellectual (<i>dilectio</i>)

In the above passage Thomas turns attention to the fact that human sensitive appetite can to some extent, when under control of reason, participate in freedom. It shows mutual relations not only of the intellect and will, when the freedom of the will is the result of the intellectual appetite and also dependen-

cy of emotions from the intellect and will, let us add, an interesting dependency: emotions subjected to reason participate in some respect in the freedom of the will. It shows hence, that there is a connection between emotions and the will.

In passionibus accipitur medium virtutis per hoc quod attingitur ratio recta, et in hoc etiam consistit ratio virtutis ⁴.

In the passions, the mean of virtue depends on right reason being attained, wherein also consists the essence of virtue.

It seems that in this fragment Aquinas slightly touches the questions of our interest when he suggests that it can be something common for both the sensitive appetite and the will. However, the topic of *affectiones* is directly related to the will and therefore love which denotes affections is personal love- *dilectio*, as Aquinas says *dilectio non est in concupisci-*

*bili, sed in voluntate tantum, et est in sola rationali natura*⁵ (“*dilectio* is not in the concupiscible power, but only in the will, and only in the rational nature”).

Hence the context of research on *affectiones* should be- apart from the problem of emotions- a problem of love – *dilectio*. At first however, we need to take into consideration anthropological

³ Ibid, I-II, q. 26, a. 1, co.

⁴ Ibid, II-II, q. 17, a. 1, ad 1.

⁵ Ibid, I-II, q. 26, a. 3, co., <https://aquinas.cc/la/en/~ST.I-II.Q26.A3>

fundaments for both *passiones* and *affectiones*, which is what Aquinas does when he analyses the topic of love in general. As he claims, love is the cause of sadness,

and other passions of the soul (*amor est causa tristitiae, sicut et aliarum affectionum animae*⁶).

2. *Passiones* vs *affectiones*

Love, as we have already mentioned is, for each of these three sorts of appetites,

Ex amore causantur et desiderium et tristitia et delectatio, et per consequens omnes aliae passioness⁷.

a fundament of pursuit for the beloved goal.

Desire, sadness and pleasure, and consequently all the other passions of the soul, result from love.

Another difficulty we find in mutual penetration of particular ranges of love. Love of *dilectio*- is accompanied by emotions and we could hardly claim that goals set by the nature of being are not fulfilled in this kind of love. We observe that Thomas clearly wants to stress- as we have said- that a distinctive feature of passions is to be directed to their own wellbeing. "Even if we help someone- we do so because it gives us satisfaction, when we keep friendly relations- we do so due to safety or joy we receive"⁸.

Emotion of love, understood as above, is a principium and generator of the entire group of emotions, because we desire that what we love, we enjoy when

Nomen gaudii non habet locum nisi in delectatione quae consequitur rationem, unde gaudium non attribuimus brutis animalibus, sed solum nomen delectationis⁹.

we achieve this, further, we avoid and fight with everything that is impediment to love. Similarly, with regard to spiritual love: we desire its subject and enjoy when we achieve it, consistently- we suffer when we lose it.

Love in the sphere of *affectiones*, similarly to a domain of *passiones*, is a principium of striving for beloved good, called a desire. The same love, when it is a relief in the achieved good is called joy. In like manner we explain *affectiones* which act against evil.

The question of desire and joy is explained even more specifically when Thomas says:

We do not speak of joy except when delight follows reason; and so we do not ascribe joy to irrational animals, but only delight.

On relation of *passiones* and *affectiones* Aquinas says:

⁶ *S.th.*, I-II, q. 36, a. 1, arg. 3.

⁷ *S.th.*, I-II, q. 28, a. 6, ad 2.

⁸ A. Andrzejuk, *Prawda o dobru. Problem filozoficznych podstaw etyki tomistycznej*, Warszawa 2000, p. 239.

⁹ *S.th.*, I-II, q. 31, a. 3, co.

Delectatio respondeat concupiscentiae, et gaudium respondeat desiderio, quod magis videtur pertinere ad concupiscentiam animalem¹⁰.

Delight corresponds to concupiscence, while joy corresponds to desire, which seems to pertain more to concupiscence of the soul.

On the basis of the above passages we may compare particular *affectiones* with *passiones* accompanying them.

PASIONES	AFFECTIONES
love <i>amor</i>	love: friendship, <i>dilectio</i> , <i>caritas</i> <i>amor</i> : <i>amicitia</i> , <i>dilectio</i> , <i>caritas</i>
concupiscence <i>concupiscentia</i>	desire <i>desiderium</i>
delight <i>delectatio</i>	joy <i>gaudium</i>
pain <i>dolor</i>	sorrow <i>tristitia</i>

Further, we may consider whether hope and anger could be classified in the group of *affectiones*. Although hope was the subject of analysis in Thomas' *Treatise on the Passions*, where its sensual aspect is exposed. Thomas proves that

Spes praesupponit desiderium, sicut et omnes passionēs irascibilis praesupponunt passionēs concupisibilis¹¹.

we may speak of *quasi*-hope even with regard to animals, nevertheless we observe some hesitance in Thomas' statements where he conjoins hope with desire, and at the same time he calls them passions (*passiones*).

Hope presupposes desire: just as all irascible passions presuppose the passions of the concupiscible faculty.

The cause of this hesitance is – as it seems – the fact that hope is classified as theological virtues along with faith and love. Nevertheless, when Aquinas turns to analysing the hope from the perspective of theological virtue, he clearly shows that its object is the mind (*spes de qua nunc loquimur non sit passio, sed habitus mentis*¹²) and that the source of developing the emotion of hope into supernatural virtue

inherent in God. *Spes de qua loquimur attingit Deum innitens eius auxilio ad consequendum bonum speratum*¹³.

Anger then, is situated on the tangent point of emotions and justice, what, similarly to the hope, generates the vast area of problems.

Leaving aside the conclusion on the question of hope we turn to concise presentation of the *affectiones* mentioned below.

¹⁰ Ibid, ad 2.

¹¹ Ibid, a. 1, co.

¹² *Summa theologiae*, II-II, q. 17, a. 1, ad 1.

¹³ Ibid, a. 2, co. Hope we mean reaches God on the basis of His help in attaining the good we expect.

3. Desire (*desiderium*) and joy (*gaudium*)

Desire (*desiderium*) of the will is proportionate to concupiscence (*concupiscentia*) which belongs to sensitive appetite.

*Desiderium magis pertinere potest, proprie loquendo, non solum ad inferiorem appetitum, sed etiam ad superiorem. Non enim importat aliquam consociationem in cupiendo, sicut concupiscentia; sed simplicem motum in rem desideratam*¹⁴.

It seems that within the frame of desire we may classify activities of the will similar to the emotion of hope, because in that sense it would not be nothing else but a sort of "planned desire".

It is worth to notice that Aquinas says that desire may be considered not only as sensitive desire but also intellectual one, however in his explanation he employs vague terms such as "higher desire" and "lower desire", what would indicate natural and sensitive desire, but the sole description of desire, which is a simple (*simplicem*) desire, undoubtedly shows that Thomas speaks of the will.

*Gaudium et amor passiones quaedam esse dicuntur: Sed haec inveniuntur in appetitu intellectivo, et non solum in sensitivo, alioquin non attribuerentur in Scripturis Deo et Angelis*¹⁵.

Aquinas turns a significant deal of attention to pleasure and joy when he spe-

Desire may be not only in the lower, but also in the higher appetite. For it does not imply fellowship in craving, as concupiscence does; but simply movement towards the thing desired.

In gathering in his short utterance words indicating ambiguity of matter or indecisive stance of the author (*potest, non solum, aliquam*) Thomas wants to turn reader's attention to the fact that "not in every utterance should we expect the same level of precision [...] When it comes to subject of our interest it is sufficient if it achieves that level of clarity which is possible for that particular subject".

Joy (*gaudium*) of the will corresponds to the pleasure (*delectatio*) in sensual desire.

Joy and love are said to be passions. But these are to be found in the intellectual and not only in the sensitive appetite: else they would not be ascribed by the Scriptures to God and the angels.

aks of a different kinds of pleasure, its causes and results and moral value.

4. Sadness (*tristitia*) and anger (*ira*)

On pain and sadness Aquinas speaks similarly to the topic of pleasure and joy:

broad understanding of feelings allows to speak of pain as genus for which sad-

¹⁴ Ibid, q. 30, a. 1, ad 2.

¹⁵ *S.th.*, I-II, q. 22, a. 3, arg. 3

ness is species, similarly to joy who is species for pleasure. Hence because the object for pain and sadness is evil, whereas the object for pleasure and joy is goodness, and further, pain and evil directly contradicts pleasure and joy- on the

Sic igitur si dolor accipiatur pro corporali dolore, quod usitatus est, dolor ex opposito dividitur contra tristitiam, secundum distinctionem apprehensionis interioris et exterioris; licet, quantum ad obiecta, delectatio ad plura se extendat quam dolor corporalis. Si vero dolor accipiatur communiter, sic dolor est genus tristitiae¹⁶.

Differentiation of outward cognition which causes pain and inward cognition which causes sadness is the next simi-

Causa enim doloris exterioris est malum coniunctum quod repugnat corpori, causa autem interioris doloris est malum coniunctum quod repugnat appetitui. Dolor etiam exterior sequitur apprehensionem sensus, et specialiter tactus, dolor autem interior sequitur apprehensionem interiorem, imaginationis scilicet vel etiam rationis¹⁷.

Outward pain is, according to Thomas, solely related to sense of touch; thus his concern is human body only. Internal pain, which originates in the apprehension or in the imaginative power or reason, Thomas calls sadness. It is worth to mention that both unity with sensual evil, experienced by sensual appetite and unity with spiritual evil, obtained in reason and experienced by the will, Thomas would call sadness. Hence the movement of sensitive appetite caused by touch and related to bodily change, Thomas calls pain. He

level of genus pain contradicts joy, and on the level of species sadness renders joy. Obviously we easily observe that analogy in this point is not simple, because pleasure is wider phenomenon than pain.

So then if pain be taken as denoting bodily pain, which is its more usual meaning, then it is contrasted with sorrow, according to the distinction of interior and exterior apprehension; although, on the part of the objects, pleasure extends further than does bodily pain. But if pain be taken in a wide sense, then it is the genus of sorrow, as stated above.

ilarity to pleasure and joy. Thomas analyses this topic deeper.

For the cause of outward pain is a conjoined evil repugnant to the body; while the cause of inward pain is a conjoined evil repugnant to the appetite. Again, outward pain arises from an apprehension of sense, chiefly of touch; while inward pain arises from an interior apprehension, of the imagination or of the reason.

does not differentiate between sadness of sensual appetite and sadness on the level of the will. But it seems that this distinction is of crucial importance. Sadness on the level of the intellect is conscious, "rationalised"- thus it differs from sadness of sensitive appetite. For that reason Mieczysław Gogacz calls that kind of conscious sadness sorrow and claims that "thanks to elevation of sadness from the level of psychic into level of soul" man is protected from detrimental results of pain. Thomas' differentiation of four kinds of sadness cast

¹⁶ Ibid, q. 35, a. 2, ad 3.

¹⁷ Ibid, a. 7, co.

some light on these issues. We might present them in the following chart:

LATIN	TRANSLATION	CHARACTERISTICS
<i>misericordia</i>	pity (compassion)	sadness for someone else's evil
<i>invidia</i>	envy (jealousy)	sadness for someone else's goodness
<i>anxietas; angustia</i>	anxiety; anguish	sadness which impedes to avoid evil
<i>acedia</i>	acedia (discouragement)	incapacitating sadness

Detailed analysis of Thomas' utterances on sadness, its divisions, causes, results and prevention allows to make several conclusions. At first, Aquinas focuses on functional approach toward the "phenomenon" of sadness, limiting his analysis to prior results with regard to its structure and its subject. Behind that is Thomas' definite negative stance on sadness. Although he admits occasionally that in some circumstances there are no reasons for joy, he maintains however, that sadness has the most harmful influence on man, and therefore it should be eradicated in various possible manners. The question whether the character of sadness is more of emotion (*passio*) or affection remains open. It seems that we cannot answer this question simply without turning to a wider anthropological and even theological perspective. As we need to ask, at first, about evil which is the cause of sadness. It can be physical evil (which causes pain the most frequently), outward evil and even spiritual evil. There cannot be evil contrary to the greatest human goodness, which is joy from contemplation of God. Thus God is unlosable goodness. For that

reason Thomas refrains from conducting the complete analogy between pleasure and joy, pain and sadness. There is joy from cognizing God face-to-face, of which Thomas speaks as the greatest human joy. This particular good has no contrary parallel evil, and hence, sadness, even that which is touching those condemned in hell is not the most serious human evil. There we find- as we might assume- the lack of explicit statement on the faculty subjecting sadness, instead, there is only a suggestion that sadness can regard both, sensitive cognition and reason.

As we have already said, anger has a particular position among emotions. It is active reaction to evil experienced as *appetitus vindictae*¹⁸ (desire of vengeance). It arises when man in experiencing evil does not surrender, what would result in sadness, but instead desires revenge and retrieves his loss as a consequence of the experienced evil. That is why Thomas writes that anger is compound of sadness and desire (*ira dicitur componi ex tristitia et desiderio*¹⁹), sadness as a result of the experienced harm and desire for revenge.

¹⁸ Ibid, q. 46, a. 3, co.; ibid, a. 4, co.

¹⁹ Ibid, a. 3, ad 3.

We may ask whether anger is only an emotion or it is *affectio*? The issue is complicated, as complicated is anger itself.

Singulare est in passione irae, quod non potest habere contrarium, neque secundum accessum et recessum, neque secundum contrarietatem boni et mali. Causatur enim ira ex malo difficili iam iniacente. Ad cuius praesentiam, necesse est quod aut appetitus succumbat, et sic non exit terminos tristitiae, quae est passio concupiscibilis, aut habet motum ad invadendum malum laesivum, quod pertinet ad iram²⁰.

Thomas clearly shows that in following evil, which caused anger, and resignation from the fight, which is the essence of anger, is the reason of falling into sadness. Sadness thus is rather mo-

Nec post adeptionem boni remanet alius motus, nisi quietatio appetitus in bono adepto, quae pertinet ad gaudium, quod est passio concupiscibilis²¹.

Thus, research shows that sadness and joy (not pain and happiness) are feelings specifically "parallel" to anger. We may assume that anger is more of emotion than "sheer" feeling (*passio*). This assumption could be affirmed by Thomas' statement where he turns attention to the relation of anger and reason. Hence anger to some extent cooperates with reason, as juxtaposition of experien-

The passion of anger is peculiar in this, that it cannot have a contrary, either according to approach and withdrawal, or according to the contrariety of good and evil. For anger is caused by a difficult evil already present: and when such an evil is present, the appetite must needs either succumb, so that it does not go beyond the limits of „sadness," which is a concupiscible passion; or else it has a movement of attack on the hurtful evil, which movement is that of anger.

re of *affectio* than simple *passio*. Similarly Thomas speaks of the reverse situation: man undertakes fight, which is anger, eliminates evil which causes that anger and therefore achieves some good.

When once good is obtained, does there remain any other movement, except the appetite's repose in the good obtained; which repose belongs to joy, which is a passion of the "concupiscible" faculty.

ced harm and desired vengeance is a *quasi-syllogism* conducted by reason, at the same time it is anger that the most of all emotions clouds the reason. Moreover, in its essence the anger, understood as desire for vengeance, appeals to a domain of justice. The conducted analysis shows that anger is closer to *affectiones* than to *passiones*.

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What is thus peculiar in St. Thomas' approach to *affectiones*? It seems that the

most significant achievement of Aquinas is pointing out at diversity of the acts of

²⁰ Ibid, q. 23, a. 3, co.

²¹ *S.th.*, I-II, q. 23, a. 3, co.

the will. We notice that, according to him, *appetitus intellectivus* is not only an automatic mechanism choosing from the variety of options offered by the intellect, as might be assumed from the Thomistic scheme of taking decision and the model of relations of the intellect and the will implying from the one. Also, love as the act of the will was understood as obedience to the God's command. However, *dilectio* as love on the intellectual level is simply an act of freedom *par excellence*. It is pleasure from good recognised by the intellect. Both the intellect and the will are indetermined in their acts, what actually is the essence of freedom. Paradoxically hence, the intellectual love is more free than emotion of love determined by sensitive appetite and organic elements such as temperament, for instance.

This love- *dilectio* is obviously considered to be *simplex motus voluntatis*, but it functions on the mode of love, hence it initiates all proper reactions dictated by the relation of desire to a desired good. We desire our good, when it is absent, we enjoy when we possess the one

and we are sad after losing it. There is no automatism in that kind of activity, but in each separate case we may speak of a particular, strictly individual and even intimate experience of the utmost importance for man.

Human experience has also its organic aspect. It is not, however, separated from the entire human composite. The will influences emotions, attracts them and entails them into its goals. It can be otherwise: the will is influenced by emotions and follows with all its power toward goals indicated by emotion. The above three situations are by Thomas denoted as *affectiones*. Obviously the term denotes indicates elements in them. This is how we grasp the issue from the perspective of the structure of *affectiones*.

These issues have only been signalled in this paper. Further explanation on how feelings, emotions and decisions function, needs deeper study on the problem of the human will understood as *appetitus intellectivus*. Saint Thomas Aquinas' theory of the will, abundantly layered, is still awaiting its source research.

Problem *affectiones* w tekstach Tomasza z Akwinu

Słowa kluczowe: Tomasz z Akwinu, uczucia (*passiones*), *affectiones*, władze pożądawcze człowieka, miłość

Z miłością-*dilectio*, czyli miłością właściwą dla bytów rozumnych, wiązać się będzie w tekstach Tomasza z Akwinu ciekawy i rzadko podejmowany przez tomistów temat aktów woli analogicznych do uczuć, które Tomasz zazwyczaj nazywa *affectiones*. W ten sposób odróżnia je od uczuć – *passiones* – które stanowią zareagowanie pożądania zmysłowego na ujęcie w poznaniu zmysłowym takiegoż samego, czyli zmysłowego, dobra lub zła. *Affectiones* są reakcjami woli na dobro lub jego brak, czyli zło, ujęte intelektualnie. Jednakże, zgodnie z podstawowymi tezami Tomaszowej antropologii, dotyczącymi duchowo-cieleśnej jedności osobowego bytu ludzkiego, tak strukturalnej jak i funkcjonalnej, *affectiones* zazwyczaj towarzyszą *passiones* i – jak się wydaje – albo to one pociągają za sobą zmysły, albo też zmysły skłaniają wolę do skierowania się ku postrzeganemu przez nie dobru. Same *affectiones* są prostsze od uczuć, tak jak wola jest prostszą władzą

pożądawczą od *appetitus sensitivus* – pożądania zmysłowego. Zaslugą Akwinaty jest zwrócenie uwagi na różnorodność aktów woli.

Miłość-*dilectio* stanowi *simplex motus voluntatis*, ale funkcjonując na sposób miłości, wyzwała wszystkie właściwe zareagowania podyktowane stosunkiem pożądania do pożądanego dobra. Pragniemy naszego dobra, gdy jest nieobecne, radujemy się, gdy je posiadamy i smucimy, gdy zostanie utracone. W przypadku człowieka to przeżywanie ma również swój aspekt organiczny. Nie jest on jednak oddzielony od całości ludzkiego *compositum*. Wola wpływa na uczucia, pociąga je za sobą, wprzęgając w swoje cele. Może być też odwrotnie: wola ulega uczuciom, dążąc swoją mocą do wskazywanych przez nie celów. Wszystkie te trzy sytuacje Tomasz określa mianem *affectiones*. Oczywiście miano to dotyczy w nich ich wolitywnego komponentu.

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