

# **Participation as a theory of explaining creative causation according to Thomas Aquinas.**

## **Summary**

Thomas Aquinas, in order to justify the *ex nihilo* creation, completed the Aristotle's theory of four causes with the reformulated theory of Plato's participation. This theory enabled him to describe how unnecessary beings receive existence. Although Aquinas did not formulate participation separately in any of his works, nevertheless I have tried to show that it was the essential theory, showing the real relations between unnecessary beings and the Absolute. The aim of this dissertation is to emphasize the total nature of participation and to indicate its meaning. Participation allowed Aquinas to formulate a coherent theory of "introducing beings into *ex nihilo* existence". It had foundations in his concept of being and was the result of an adequate view of reality.

In this dissertation I tried to show, that interpretations of participation indicate, that it is a theory justifying the entire being of a thing. It is a theory of total causation and I emphasized its importance in formulating a coherent *creatio ex nihilo* theory. I have formulated my research in five chapters. I started with the platonic roots of participation. For Plato, participation made it possible to justify that what is material, has features of reality thanks to participation in ideas, therefore in real beings. It enabled him to justify the multiplicity of beings in the world. However, as it has been shown, his concept lacked coherence. Therefore, he referred to the myth of Demiurge, in order to explain the relationship between ideas and material beings. Aristotle, applying the theory of four causes, described the reality in a more adequate way. His description concerned the essence of things. It did not concern the problem of the existence of beings. The problem of existence was taken up by St. Thomas Aquinas. It indicated that existence, together with the essence of things, constitutes the most important existential composition. It was in the context of his concept of a being that he used participation as a theory. It made it possible to argue relations between being and the Absolute.

Aquinas did not leave any creation describing participation. At the beginning of the 20th century, attempts were made to describe it as a whole. The first to describe this were Louise Geiger and Cornelio Fabro. Subsequent authors referred to their interpretations

of participation. Zofia Zdybicka is one of them. She pointed to participation as a theory consistent with existential concept of being that belonged to Thomas Aquinas. Participation allows to explain the relation 'Absolute – being' and indicates the complete dependence of being on the Absolute. It also indicates the purposefulness and reasonableness of beings.

Piotr Stoll