



Dynamic Transcendentals: Truth, Goodness, and Beauty from a Thomistic Perspective

Alice M. Ramos

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Addressing contemporary interest in the relationship between metaphysics and ethics, as well as the significance of beauty for ethics, Alice Ramos presents an accessible study of the transcendentals and provides a dynamic rather than static view of truth, goodness, and beauty. She emphasizes the role played by the human person in the perfection of the universe, in the return of all things to their source, and relies on the philosophical and theological wisdom of Thomas Aquinas as well as contemporary thinkers such as Jacques Maritain, John Paul II, and others.

For Aquinas, the human being is the image of an exemplary cause, made in the image of God, who is also the final cause. We are made with a dynamic nature that pursues perfection and union with God. As we realize our end, we bring about the intensification of our participation in the transcendentals. Ramos explains that in pursuing truth, goodness, and beauty and in acting from love of the true good, we are actually pursuing God, the exemplar and end of the human person. This study of the transcendentals helps us to make the connection between the metaphysical order and the moral order, and also sheds light on contemporary culture and moral questions.

The book is divided into three parts, the first of which is focused on the transcendental of truth. It presents themes in Aristotelian metaphysics as developed by Aquinas and shows the importance of an ethics of knowing. The second part focuses on beauty and teleology and discusses human and divine providence, evil and suffering, the experience of vulnerability and shame, and the relationship between the good and glory. The final section considers moral beauty, the ugliness of vice, and the role of art for human perfection.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Alice M. Ramos is professor of philosophy at St. John's University. She is the editor of *Faith, Scholarship, and Culture in the 21st Century* (with Marie I. George) and *Beauty, Art, and the Polis*, both published by the American Maritain Association.

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK:

"If, as we commonly do, we think of the good or the true without also thinking of the beautiful, we will be apt to misunderstand all three. Alice Ramos draws on Aquinas to show how fundamental a mistake this is. She puts us all in her debt."—Alasdair MacIntyre, Rev. John A. O'Brien Senior Research Professor of Philosophy Emeritus, University of Notre Dame

"Ramos' vision of unifying aesthetics and transcendental theory is decidedly innovative, even bold. Indeed Ramos' unifying vision pervades the whole of *Dynamic Transcendentals*, and as a result, it amply rewards extended study." *The Bibliographia*

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