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Matteo d'Acquasparta's Arguments in Favor of Mary's Assumption into Heaven

Abstract: The aim of the current article is to highlight the original arguments through which the conspicuous 13th century Franciscan theologian Matteo d'Acquasparta (1240–1302) supports the belief in the Virgin Mary's immediate resurrection and her assumption with body and soul into heaven. To this end, we methodologically resort to primary sources through a detailed analysis of our author's Mariological writings on the subject. In this regard, we have followed his argumentative approaches step by step to base his defense of the Assumptionist thesis on the various essential aspects that structure it. Our analytical investigation thus reveals the originality and conviction with which this Franciscan scholar firmly defended the belief in the Assumption of Mary, with body and soul, into heaven.

Keywords: Mariology, Franciscan School, Christian tradition, resurrection, Assumption, heavenly exaltation, celestial Queen

1. Introduction

It is well known that from the first centuries of the Christian era the Church had to confront various heretical currents, among them the Arians, the Nestorians and the Docetists, regarding the true person and essence of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the Church convened the successive Ecumenical Councils of Nicaea (325), Ephesus (431), Chalcedon (451) and Constantinople II (553), in which it confirmed as dogmas that Christ has two natures, divine and human (duophysism), both essentially and indissolubly united in the unique person of Jesus Christ (hypostatic union). In necessary relation to these two main Christological dogmas, the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus (431) and Chalcedon (451) also confirmed as a Mariological dogma the virginal divine motherhood of Mary. In turn, the belief in

the perpetual virginity of Mary, although affirmed with conviction by believers from early on, only acquired the character of dogma in the Second Council of Constantinople (553), later ratified by Pope Martin I in the Lateran Synod of 649.

On the contrary, two others crucial Mariological beliefs – Mary's Immaculate Conception and her Assumption body and soul into Heaven – were, from the 6th and 7th centuries onward and for almost a millennium and a half, the subject of intense debate among Christian theologians. Only in relatively recent dates, in the last two centuries, did both become Catholic dogmas: the Immaculate Conception of Mary in 1854, decreed by Pope Pius IX with the bull *Ineffabilis Deus*; the Assumption of Mary into Heaven in 1950, proclaimed by Pope Pius XII with the bull *Munificentissimus Deus*.

With regard specifically to the dogma of the Assumption of Mary into Heaven, the central theme of this article, there is an immense scholarly literature on the argumentative contributions of numerous masters of Christian doctrine that led to the establishment of this dogma. Among the numerous studies on the history of the dogma of the Assumption, we can highlight those of José María Bover (1947), Adrien Malo and collaborators (1948), Aristide Serra (1986a, 147–51), Salvatore Meo (1986, 151–61), Danilo Sartor (1986, 161–65), Bernard Sesboué (1998, 513–28), Gaspar Calvo Moralejo, and Stefano M. Cecchin (2001), and Salvatore M. Perrella, and Stefano De Fiores (2009, 175–89). We too have dedicated several articles from various perspectives to the topic of the Assumption of Mary (Salvador-González 2012, 1–40; 2017a, 185–230; 2017b, 139–68).

Of great interest for our purposes in this article, some historians of the dogma of the Assumption focused their attention on the contributions that eminent members of the so-called Franciscan School of Philosophy and Theology made to make this popular Assumptionist belief triumph as dogma. Among these historians of Franciscan thought on the Assumption we can highlight Éphrem Longpré (1948, 203–30), Stefano M. Cecchin (2001, 585–646), Peter Damian Fehlner (2011, 301–57), and Stefano M. Cecchin (2021).

Going directly to the topic that interests us in this article, it is worth specifying that a large group of conspicuous Franciscan philosophers and theologians of the 13th century, founders of the

Franciscan School, contributed decisively to the development and argumentative support of the main Mariological theses and beliefs, especially the debated questions about the immaculate conception of Mary and her assumption, body and soul, into heaven. The members of that 13th century Franciscan School are, in chronological order: Saint Francis of Assisi (c. 1181/82–1226), Saint Anthony of Padua (c. 1191/95–1231), Jean de La Rochelle (c. 1200–1245), Alexander of Hales (c. 1185–1245), Robert Grosseteste (1175–1253), Saint Bonaventure of Bagnoregio (c. 1217/21–1274), Conrad of Saxony († 1279), Giacomo da Milano (13th century), Bartolomeo da Bologna († *post* 1294), Pietro di Giovanni Olivi (1248–1298), Servasanto da Faenza († c. 1300), Matteo d'Acquasparta (1240–1302), William of Ware († c. 1305) and John Duns Scotus (1266–1308).

Regarding the subject of the assumption of the Virgin into heaven, all Mariologists above admit this belief as true, although some do not treat it systematically or support it with rational arguments. Having already studied separately in two other papers the personal positions on this subject proposed by St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio (Salvador-González 2025a) and seven other Franciscan masters of the 13th century, we will dedicate this article to presenting the contributions offered in this regard by Matteo d'Acquasparta.

Matteo Bentivegna (or Bentivenga) dei Signori d'Acquasparta was born in 1240 in Acquasparta, Umbria, into one of the great families of the Terre Arnolfe. At a very early age he entered the Franciscan Order, where he soon proved to be very cultured, especially in theology, from which he obtained the highest degrees at the universities of Paris and Bologna, where he later taught: he taught at the University of Paris from 1277 to 1278, and at Bologna from 1278 to 1279. His reputation as an intellectual reached Rome, where he became *lector Sacri Palatii*, before going on to serve the Roman Curia until 1287, when he was elected Minister General of the Franciscan Order. A year later he was named Cardinal of the Church. In the internal conflicts of the Franciscan Order over poverty, Matteo d'Acquasparta was one of the main defenders of the majority current, the so-called Community, which opposed the rigorists of the “Spiritual” movement and defended a milder interpretation of the Rule on poverty. His political sagacity allowed him to quickly rise

in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. He was bishop of Porto and Santa Rufina, and sub-dean of the Sacred College of Cardinals. He died in Rome at the beginning of November 1302, and was buried in the Basilica of Santa Maria in Aracoeli. His contribution to the doctrine of the Assumption was very important, as will become clear at the end of this article, after we present and analyze the arguments of this Franciscan master in favor of the Virgin Mary's assumption.

Matteo d'Acquasparta's main Mariological writings are *Utrum Beata Virgo Maria fuit concepta cum originali peccato (quaesti. 7)*; *Utrum eius conceptio debeat celebrari (quaesti. 8)*,¹ and *Sermones de Beata Maria Virgine*.²

2. Matteo d'Acquasparta's Response to the Problems of Mary's Assumption, Body and Soul, into Heaven

Matteo d'Acquasparta seeks to give a personal response to the various problems inherent in the death, incorruption, early resurrection and bodily assumption of Mary into heaven. To this end, he wrote eight extensive sermons on the Assumption, in which he comments on this Marian event in terms of numerous biblical symbols and prefigurations of the Virgin Mary, such as the ark of the covenant, the woman of the Apocalypse and Noah's ark.³

2.1. On the Death of Mary

Regarding the first problem, our author confirms the death of Mary in his first sermon on the Assumption. He thus confirms it by assuring that the Virgin, "by virtue of human nature, really died: by the condition of the flesh, she emigrated from the body and, with death intervening, the soul was truly separated from the body."⁴

¹ Matthaëus ab Acquasparta 1975.

² Matthaëus ab Acquasparta 1962a.

³ Matthaëus ab Acquasparta 1962b.

⁴ "Non quod simul cum corpore assumpta fuerit sine morte media, sed quoniam etsi propter conditionem carnis migravit a corpore et interveniente morte anima vere fuit a corpore separata" (Matthaëus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 176).

2.2. On Mary's Incorruption

When he then turns to the subject of the incorruption of Mary's body, the analysed author says that, although the soul was separated from her body at death, both soul and body were assumed together into heaven, because Mary's body could not be held back by the chains of death and corruption.⁵

In this regard, the theologian from Acquasparta affirms that, even though there are no authoritative testimonies that support the incorruption of Mary's body, nevertheless, this incorruption does not contradict the authority of the Holy Scriptures. In this order of ideas, Matteo d'Acquasparta sets forth seven reasons, taken from a certain writing, to prove the incorruption of the Virgin,⁶ reasons that we will set forth later when dealing with the point of Mary's bodily assumption into heaven.

2.3. On Mary's Resurrection

In his first sermon on the Assumption, our author also defends the resurrection and the bodily assumption of Mary into heaven, since, referring to the text of the collect *Veneranda*, he states bluntly:

The Virgin Mother [...] is raised to this sublimity not only in her soul, but also in her body, "although she could not be held back by the chains of death." On the contrary, resurrected and

⁵ "IV. Ad hanc sublimitatem Virgo Mater, quae per arcam designatur, ex gratiae plenitudine quae per multiplicationem aquarum intelligitur, elevata est non tantum in anima, sed etiam in corpore. Non quod simul cum corpore assumpta fuerit sine morte media, sed quoniam etsi propter conditionem carnis migravit a corpore et interveniente morte anima vere fuit a corpore separata, «tamen mortis nexibus teneri non potuit»" (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 176).

⁶ "Et licet de hoc expressa non inveniatur auctoritas, non tamen Scripturae auctoritati repugnat, sed consonat; et multiplex ratio persuadet, quoniam hoc Deus potuit facere et cum sic facere decuit. Sunt autem in universo septem rationes, quarum aliquae ex libello praefato possunt elici Augustini" (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 177).

her body taken back, she reigns in heaven, glorified equally in her body and in her soul, and clothed in the stole of immortality.⁷

In his third sermon on the Assumption, Matteo d'Acquasparta reaffirms his position in favor of the resurrection of the Virgin and her immediate glorification in heaven. In this regard, he declares that soul was separated from her body by death and was glorified in heaven, while her buried body is piously believed to have been resurrected incorrupt, as St. Augustine affirms, at the same time that her soul was assumed into heaven and placed at the right hand of her Son above every other creature.⁸

It is true that Saint Augustine did not explicitly affirm the Assumption of Mary. However, his assertions about the supreme sanctity, absolute purity, and sublime dignity of Mary above all other creatures contributed to the development of Assumptionist doctrine. His ideas about the privileged grace that God granted to Mary paved the way for later theologians to formalize various Mariological dogmas, including the Assumption. In the context of this inspirational dynamic conventionally accepted by medieval Christian thinkers, Matteo d'Acquasparta refers generically to the present "Assumptionist assertion" of Saint Augustine, although without being able to present any concrete arguments from the Bishop of Hippo.

The Franciscan master goes on to say that, although it is not known for certain how long she was resurrected, it is thought – and it is said that this was revealed to someone – that Mary was resurrected on the fortieth day after her death, so that, the resurrection having

⁷ "Ad hanc sublimitatem Virgo Mater [...] elevata est non tantum in anima, sed etiam in corpore, «tamen mortis nexibus teneri non potuit». Immo resuscitata et resumpto corpore ac in corpore pariter et in anima glorificata atque stola immortalitatis vestita regnat in caelis" (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 176).

⁸ "Anima autem a corpore separata per mortem, sed anima glorificata in caelis, corpore vero, ut praedictum [est], tumulato, postmodum – quamvis videatur eximius doctor Hieronymus dubitasse – pie creditur ab omnibus modo, et hoc ipsum asserit doctor egregius Augustinus, corpore illo incorrupto et anima beata invicem reunitis ac per hoc in corpore vere resuscitata, assumptam in caelum et ad dexteram Filii collocatam super omnem creaturam" (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962d, 226).

been perfectly completed in her, and having been glorified in body and soul, she now governs eternally as Queen of heaven.⁹

According to the analysed author, this is entirely reasonable and coherent because of the identity of the flesh of the mother and that of the Son, since the flesh of both is the same, since the flesh of the Son was formed from the flesh of Mary by the work of the Holy Spirit; therefore, it would seem inappropriate to separate both, when, on the contrary, it is appropriate that where the Son is, the mother is also. Furthermore – the author continues – it would be entirely inappropriate for the incorruptible flesh of Christ to be assumed into heaven, while the flesh of his mother was corrupted and turned into ashes or was food for worms.¹⁰

On the other hand – Matteo d'Acquasparta completes his argument – this resurrection is reasonable because of the honor of the mother, because, as the Holy Scriptures teach, God commanded the son to honor his mother. Thus, Christ fulfilled in his own mother what he commanded to do for other mothers; therefore, since it was possible, convenient, and wanted, he honored his mother in body and soul, and in both together.¹¹ Therefore, just as he glorified his mother in soul, so he also glorified her in body and preserved

⁹ “Sed quanto post tempore ipse novit. Putatur tamen et dicitur alicui revelatum quod quadragesimo die post eius mortem, id est corporis ab anima separationem et e converso, resuscitata, ut sit in ea perfecte completa resurrectio et in anima glorificata et corpore regnat in aeternum regina mundi” (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962d, 226).

¹⁰ “Et hoc quidem omnino rationabile videtur et congruum propter identitatem carnis matris et prolis. Certum est enim quod eadem est caro prolis et matris, quia de carne matris caro filii est formata Spiritus Sancti potentia et virtute; et is ideo indecens videtur ab invicem separari, sed decet ut ubi est proles ibidem sit et mater. – Rursus, omnino inconveniens videtur ut caro illa unde assumpta est vel decisa caro Christi, immo quae eadem est cum carne Christi, corrumpatur vel incineretur aut esca vermibus detur, cum caro filii non viderit corruptionem” (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962d, 227).

¹¹ “Rationabile est etiam propter servandum honorem matris. Ipse enim filius mandavit matrem honorari; ita enim dixit: *Honora matrem tuam*, Ex. 20, 12, et Deut. 5, 16. Si igitur servavit in matre propria quod mandavit et praecepit in aliena, ergo quia potuit, decuit et voluit, matrem honoravit in corpore et in anima, et in utroque” (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962d, 227–28).

her completely from putrefaction; all this in order that, as the Son is at the right hand of God the Father, so the mother, glorified in body and soul, may sit at the right hand of her Son as a queen at the right hand of the king, according to the saying of David, “The queen is at your right hand.”¹² Thus – the theologian of Acquasparta concludes – just as Christ, according to the prophecies, rose from the dead and ascended to heaven to his rest, so also the Virgin Mary would rise not only with her soul, but also with her body, and be exalted in the same rest as Christ.¹³

2.4. On the Assumption of Mary’s Body

Regarding the problem of Mary’s bodily assumption into heaven, Matteo d’Acquasparta argues with all force that, by the fullness of her grace, the Virgin Mary was taken up into heaven not only with her soul, but also with her body. In his opinion, after her resurrection and her soul returning to her body, Mary was glorified together in her soul and in her body with the assumption, and for this reason she now reigns in heaven with the stole of immortality.¹⁴

The Franciscan theologian also points out that, although at one time the bodily assumption of Mary was doubted and St. Jerome himself spoke about it in an ambiguous way, nevertheless, everyone piously believes it to be a true fact, which seems to be confirmed

¹² “Quemadmodum igitur eam glorificavit in anima, ita glorificavit eam in corpore et a corruptione penitus praeservavit, ut velut filius est ad dexteram Patris, ita mater glorificata in corpore et in anima resideat ad dexteram filii tamquam regina a dextris regis, ut impicatur illa prophetia David: *Astitit regina a dextris tuis* etc.” (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962d, 227–28).

¹³ “Et hoc ipsum auctoritas proposita importare videtur, ut sicut Christus, de quo propheta loquitur, surrexit in corpore vere a mortuis et ascendit in caelum in requiem suam, ita non tantum in anima, sed et in corpore Virgo resurrexerit, atque in eadem sit requie exaltata” (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962d, 228).

¹⁴ “Ad hanc sublimitatem Virgo Mater, quae per arcam designatur, ex gratiae plenitudine quae per multiplicationem aquarum intelligitur, elevata est non tantum in anima, sed etiam in corpore., « tamen mortis nexibus teneri non potuit ». Immo resuscitata et resumpto corpore ac in corpore pariter et in anima glorificata atque stola immortalitatis vestita regnat in caelis” (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 176).

also by a certain writing of St. Augustine on the Assumption.¹⁵ As he did when mentioning Saint Augustine, Matteo d'Acquasparta's reference to Saint Jerome also seems imprecise and insubstantial: in fact, the Franciscan Mariologist does not specify the basis of Jerome's alleged ambiguity regarding the Assumption. In reality, the text to which Matteo d'Acquasparta seems to allude – a text that pointed to the existence of two opinions on the Assumption, one defending the assumption with the soul alone, and another affirming the assumption in body and soul – is not authentically by Saint Jerome, but by an unknown author designated as Pseudo-Jerome. In this order of ideas, the Franciscan thinker assures that affirming the assumption of Mary in body and soul to heaven, although no authority supports it, far from contradicting the truth of the Holy Scriptures, agrees with them, and many reasons incline us to believe that God “could” do it and “it was convenient” that he did it.¹⁶

Matteo d'Acquasparta gives seven reasons for God to make possible the bodily assumption of the Virgin to heaven:

1. The first derives from “the unity of the substance of the flesh in the mother and in the offspring”, because, as the flesh of the son comes from that of the mother, it is the same substance of flesh in both cases. Therefore, although Christ did not exempt his mother from death – from which he himself did not want to exempt himself, for which reason the Son and his mother died – nevertheless, just as the flesh of the Son Christ, as the Scriptures say, was not corrupted, so the flesh of his mother should not be corrupted either. And so, this

¹⁵ “Quamvis enim de hoc aliquando fuerit dubitatum, et venerabile doctor Hieronymus satis loquatur ambigue, tamen modo pie ab omnibus creditur, et hoc videtur asserere in sermone vel libello quem de assumptione edidit sanctae memoriae doctor egregius Augustinus” (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 176–77).

¹⁶ “Et licet de hoc expressa non inveniatur auctoritas, non tamen Scripturae auctoritati repugnat, sed consonat; et multiplex ratio persuadet, quoniam hoc Deus potuit facere et eum sic facere decuit. Sunt autem in universo septem rationes, quarum aliquae ex libello praefato possunt elici Augustini” (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 177).

flesh being reunited with her soul, Mary was simultaneously glorified in body and soul in heaven.¹⁷

2. The author's second reason for defending the Virgin's bodily assumption into heaven is derived from her virginal integrity, in the sense that God the Son exempted his mother from the burdens borne by other women, of having to conceive through copulation with a man and giving birth in pain; for this reason, God decided that Mary should conceive by the work of the Holy Spirit and give birth without pain, always preserving her virginity.¹⁸ Therefore, the one who could and willed (God the Son) that, contrary to the laws of nature that affect other women, his mother should not be subject to the corruption of her virginity in conceiving and giving birth, was able, willed, and found it fitting to preserve her from the corruption of her body in the tomb.¹⁹

¹⁷ "1. Et prima ratio est propter unitatem substantiae carnis in matre et in prole. Quia enim ex carne matris caro prolis discinditur, eadem est utriusque substantia carnis. Ergo a generali sententia mortis quamvis Christus Dei filius non exemerit matrem – quia ab illa nullus nec ipse voluit esse alienus ac per hoc mortuus est filius, mortua est et mater – tamen sicut caro prolis non fuit corrupta, quoniam dicit sanctus David: *Non dabis sanctum tuum videre corruptionem*, et Petrus in Actibus: *Caro eius non vidit corruptionem*, ita non debuit corrompi, incinerati seu in pulverem redigi caro matris, unde caro filii est assumpta. Ergo caro est animae reunita, et Maria simul in anima et corpore glorificata" (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 178).

¹⁸ "2. Secunda ratio est propter integritatem incorruptionis. Multiplex enim sententia lata fuit in mulierem: prima contra reliquas mulieres; scribitur enim in libro Geneseos: *Multiplicabo aerumnas tuas et conceptus tuos; in dolore paries filios et sub viri potestate eris*. Mariae aerumnas multiplicavit, quando animam eius doloris ex passione filii gladius pertransivit; conceptus non multiplicavit, nec sub viri potestate fuit, quia nec sub viri potestate deguit quae integerrimis visceribus et virginitatis integritate manente, de Spiritu Sancto virgo concepit, quem quia sine peccati colluvione et virilis admixtionis detrimento suscepit, sine dolore peperit, et sine integritatis violatione, pudore virginitatis integra permansit" (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 178–79).

¹⁹ "Qui ergo potuit et voluit matrem ab integritatis corruptione et pudoris violatione in conceptu et partu ultra sententiam latam contra omnes mulieres servare immunem, potuit et velle decuit praeservare a corruptione resolutionis et incinerationis praeter, immo ultra generalem conditionem naturae humanae. Sic igitur

3. The third reason for justifying Mary's bodily assumption is, according to the analysed author, the command to honor parents, required by divine law, which Christ came to fulfill completely; therefore, just as Christ honors his divine Father, so he also honors his mother.²⁰ Now, since it is a great disgrace to the human condition that the body, when dying, should putrefy and be eaten by worms, a disgrace from which Christ was exempt, he ought to have kept Mary immune from this disgrace, since she was his very flesh and he her child. Therefore, just as in life he honored her by allowing her to conceive and bear a child supernaturally, so we hold it beyond doubt that he honored her in death with the special grace of incorruption.²¹
4. The fourth reason why the Mariologist of Acquasparta justifies the bodily assumption of the Virgin is derived from the "multiple prerogatives of the dignity and sanctity" of Mary, which were so great that she deserved to be the mother of the Holy of Holies, the *Sancta Sanctorum*, the bed of God, the throne of God.²² In our opinion, such great holiness demands that Mary not suffer the corruption of her body.

dicimus matrem Domini humanae sortis mortem subiisse, ut tamen mortis nexibus non potuerit detineri, per quam Dominus concipi et nasci voluit sine corruptione" (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 179).

²⁰ "3. Tertia ratio est propter servandum honorem matris. Scriptum quippe est in Lege: *Honora patrem tuum et matrem tuam*; si autem Christus non venit *solvere Legem, sed adimplere*, quemadmodum Patrem, ut potuit, honorificavit, sicut dicit in Ioanne: *Ego honorifico Patrem meum*, ita debuit matrem quo potuit honore honorare" (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 179).

²¹ "Si ergo opprobrium humanae conditionis est et vituperium putredo et vermibus, sicut ab isto opprobrio ipse exstitit alienus, ita matrem debuit conservare immunem, cum sit eadem caro matris et prolis. Sicut igitur in vita gratia eam conceptus et partus prae ceteris honoravit, ita indubitanter sentiendum est in morte eam speciali gratia honorasse" (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 179).

²² "4. Quarta ratio est propter multiplicem praerogativam dignitatis et sanctitatis. Tanta enim fuit Mariae dignitas, ut mereretur esse mater Sancti sanctorum; sicut autem filius est Sanctus sanctorum, ita constar quod mater, quae ipsum portavit, est Sancta sanctorum, in qua erat pretiosus ille thesaurus, tabernaculum Dei, thalamus Dei, thronus Dei" (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 179–80).

For, since her most holy body is the one from which Christ received flesh and in which the divine nature was united with the human so that the Word of God might become flesh and dwell among us, it was not possible for this body to become food for the worms of putrefaction.²³

5. The fifth reason for making possible the bodily assumption of the Virgin into heaven is confirmed, according to the author, by the “perfect imitation and conformity” of the mother to the Son. The mother conformed perfectly to the Son and imitated him completely: Mary was a perfect imitator of Christ, not so much by having followed him with her feet, but by the piety, faith and ardent love with which she followed him with veneration. And, after having accompanied Christ more than all others throughout his life, she also followed him in heaven with the prerogatives that she enjoyed on earth.²⁴

The theologian of Acquasparta emphasizes this idea even more, when he affirms that, after having been the “administrator of Christ”, having conceived, gestated, given birth to, nursed, carried and hidden him from Herod, she had to be where Christ is, and not only in the same way as the other saints, but with some special prerogative in accordance with her works.²⁵ For this reason – the theologian from

²³ “Tantum autem sanctitatem, tantam dignitatem nulla debet sequi corruptio putredinis, nulla resolutio incinerationis. Nullo modo ergo dignum videtur aut consentaneum rationi quod illud sacratissimum corpus, de quo Christus carnem suscepit et in quo naturam divinam naturae humanae univit, ut *Verbum caro* fieret et habitaret *in nobis*, escam vermibus tradi et post vermes pulverem abiectissimam fieri” (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 180).

²⁴ “5. Quinta ratio est propter perfectam imitationem et conformitatem matris et prolis. Mater enim fuit perfecte filio conformis et fuit praecipua Christi imitatrix; [...] Maria, praecipua Christi imitatrix, non tantum gressibus pedum, sed pro reverentia ipsum Dominum secuta est affectu pietatis, fide religionis et ardentissimo amore caritatis, ut numquam ab eius fide et dilectione avelli potuerit, quem de Spiritu Sancto, angelo nuntiante, sciebat se concepisse” (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 180).

²⁵ “Maria nihilominus ministratrix Christi [fuit] specialium operum qualitate, nam ipsum concepit, portavit, peperit, lactavit, baiulavit, a facie Herodis abscondit;

Acquasparta states – if the death of all the saints is precious, the death of the Virgin is most precious, considering how much grace it was accompanied with. If, therefore, during Mary's life she was granted grace above all human beings, when she died her grace would not diminish, but she should be placed body and soul where Christ is.²⁶

Furthermore – our author confirms – if Mary conformed herself completely to Christ as a mother in her purity, so also in royal dignity the mother should not separate herself from the Son, nor the queen from the King, and not only mentally, but also bodily. Therefore, the Virgin, mother of Christ, Queen of heaven, should have been placed by Christ in heaven glorified with her body.²⁷

6. Matteo d'Acquasparta finds the sixth reason for demonstrating Mary's bodily assumption into heaven in the need to guarantee the security of the resurrection for both sexes. In his opinion, just as this guarantee was manifested for the male sex with the resurrection of Christ, in no woman could God, should have, or was it convenient to manifest with greater pertinence the guarantee of resurrection to the female sex than in the mother of Christ, who in life was free from all corruption.²⁸

ergo non debuit esse nisi ubi Christus est, et non tantum quomodo alii sancti sunt, sed aliqua speciali praerogativa, quoniam ipse *reddit unicuique secundum opera sua*" (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 180–81).

²⁶ "Si igitur omnium *sanctorum mors est pretiosa*, mors Mariae fuit pretiosissima, quam tanta comitata est gratia. Si igitur in vita Mariae prae omnibus donata est gratia, in morte non est minuenda, sed ubi Christus est, mente et corpore collocanda" (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 181).

²⁷ "Rursus, si Maria Christo fuit conformissima, tamquam mater, in puritate, in regia dignitate, nec debet mater a filio, regina a rege, non tantum mentaliter, sed nec corporaliter separari. Ergo Maria, mater Christi, regina caeli, Christo debuit glorificata in corpore in caelestibus collocari" (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 181).

²⁸ "6. Sexta ratio est propter perfectum testimonium resurrectionis. Ut enim dicit Augustinus, «Christus Dominus noster utrumque sexum curaturus advenit», et ideo virum susceperit, natus tamen ex femina. Perfecta autem curatio, perfecta liberatio manifestatur in resurrectione; ergo resurrectio in utroque sexu debuit

In that order of ideas, the Franciscan theologian interpreting the verse of the Psalm “His throne is like the sun before me, and like a perfect moon for eternity, and there is a faithful witness in heaven,” our author assures that the mother Mary is the throne of her Son Jesus, who is before Him like a shining sun as regards the stole (beauty) of her soul, and like a perfect moon as regards the stole of her body without defect; therefore, she is a faithful witness of the resurrection.²⁹

7. Matteo d’Acquasparta takes the last argument to justify the bodily assumption of the Virgin into heaven from the complement of happiness, in the sense that, since the soul of Christ was substantially united to the Word of God in a single person, it (the soul) could not suffer any detriment in glory, for which reason the complement of its glory was the resurrection of its body.³⁰ However – our thinker adds – it would be inappropriate and unworthy for the Mother of God and Queen of Heaven to suffer any loss in her glory. Therefore, it was necessary that, although Mary’s soul was separated from her body at death, it was nevertheless necessary that shortly afterwards it be glorified together with her body.³¹

manifestari ad perfectum testimonium curationis. Sicut igitur quantum ad sexum virile in manifestata est et apparuit in Christo, in nulla alia femina manifestari congruentius potuit vel debuit et decuit quam in matre Christi, quae ab omni corruptione in vita libera exstitit” (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 181–82).

²⁹ “Et hoc est quod in Psalmo dicitur: *Thronus eius sicut sol in conspectu meo, et sicut luna perfecta in aeternum, et testis in caelo fidelis*. Thronus filii mater est, quae est in conspectu eius sicut [sol] fulgens quantum ad stolam animae, et sicut luna perfecta quantum ad stolam corporis sine defectu; et ideo est testis fidelis resurrectionis” (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 182).

³⁰ “7. Septima ratio est propter complementum beatitudinis, nam ut dicit Augustinus in fine *Super Genesim ad litteram* «propter appetitum administrandi corpus, animae retardantur, ne totaliter ferantur in illud summum caelum», excepta sola anima Christi, quae unita erat Verbo in unitate personae, quae propter unionem personalem in nullo retardabatur aut patiebatur gloriae detrimentum. Igitur complementum gloriae est in resumptione secundae stolae” (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 182–83).

³¹ “Inconveniens autem videtur et indecens ut mater Dei, regina caeli, aliquod detrimentum gloriae patiat; ergo necesse fuit, ut licet propter conditionem carnis

Conclusion

Our research on the answers given by Matteo d'Acquasparta to the problems raised by the thesis of the bodily Assumption of Mary into heaven can be summarized in the following conclusions:

Our author confirms the certainty of the death of the Virgin, because, by her human nature, she really died like every human being, including Christ.

Regarding the incorruption of Mary's body, our author says that, although the soul of the Virgin was separated from her body at death, both soul and body were assumed together into heaven, because Mary's body could not be retained by death and corruption.

Matteo d'Acquasparta also defends the early resurrection of Mary to heaven. In his opinion, Mary's soul was separated from her body at death, and was glorified in heaven, while it is firmly believed that her buried body was resurrected incorrupt, probably forty days after her death.

The theologian of Acquasparta also maintains that, by the fullness of her grace, the Virgin Mary was assumed into heaven with her soul as well as her body. According to him, after Mary's soul had returned to her body by resurrection, Mary was glorified jointly in her soul and body with the assumption, and for this reason she now reigns immortally as Queen of heaven. Our author assures in this regard that affirming the assumption of Mary in body and soul into heaven, although no authority supports it, agrees with the truth of the Holy Scriptures, and many reasons incline us to believe that God "could" do it and "it was convenient" for Him to do it. In this sense, Matteo d'Acquasparta sets forth seven interesting reasons why God makes possible the bodily assumption of the Virgin into heaven.

Argumenty Matteo d'Acquasparty na rzecz wniebowzięcia Maryi

Abstrakt: Celem niniejszego artykułu jest przedstawienie oryginalnych argumentów, za pomocą których Matteo d'Acquasparta (1240–1302), wybitny trzynastowieczny teolog

anima fuerit a corpore separata, tamen postmodum una cum corpore fuit glorificata” (Matthaeus ab Acquasparta 1962c, 183).

franciszkański, popiera wiarę w natychmiastowe zmartwychwstanie Najświętszej Maryi Panny oraz jej wniebowzięcie z duszą i ciałem. W tym celu metodologicznie sięgamy do tekstów źródłowych, przeprowadzając szczegółową analizę mariologicznych pism naszego autora na ten temat. W tym zakresie, krok po kroku, śledzimy jego argumentację, aby oprzeć jego obronę tezy o Wniebowzięciu na różnych istotnych aspektach, które ją strukturyzują. Nasze badania analityczne ujawniają zatem oryginalność i przekonanie, z jakim ten franciszkański uczony stanowczo bronił wiary we wniebowzięcie Maryi, z ciałem i duszą, do nieba.

Słowa kluczowe: mariologia, szkoła franciszkańska, tradycja chrześcijańska, zmartwychwstanie, wniebowzięcie, wyniesienie do nieba, niebiańska Królowa

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