

“Contar a grandes rasgos la historia de la razón humana en los tiempos que anduvo separada de la revelación, para compararla con la historia de la misma razón iluminada por los resplandores de la fe divina.”

# DISCURSO

LEIDO EN LA

## APERTURA ANUAL DE LOS ESTUDIOS

DE LA

REAL Y PONTIFICIA UNIVERSIDAD DE SANTO TOMAS DE MANILA

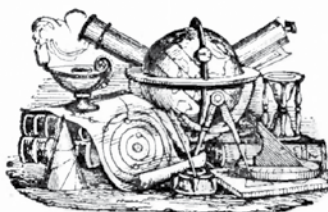
EL DIA 2 DE JULIO DE 1881

FOR EL

R. P. Fr. Genaro Buitrago de la Rosa

DEL ORDEN DE PREDICADORES

PROFESOR EN LA MISMA UNIVERSIDAD



~(Edición Oficial)~

MANILA

ESTABLECIMIENTO TIPOGRÁFICO DEL COLEGIO DE STO. TOMÁS

A CARGO DE D. GERVASIO MEMIJE

1881

## FOREWORD

### **BROADLY SPEAKING OF THE HISTORY OF HUMAN REASON IN THE TIMES OF ITS SEPARATION FROM THE REVELATION, TO COMPARE IT WITH THE HISTORY OF THE SAME REASON ILLUMINED BY THE BRIGHTNESS OF DIVINE FAITH**

*Belen Lorezca-Tangco, OP*

**T**he illustrious Lecturer and Professor, Rev. Fr. Jenaro Buitrago de la Rosa of the Order of Preachers expressed his sincerity in addressing the august body of professors and community of academics that honored him with their gracious presences.

He commenced with an update on the progress of teaching in the Royal and Pontifical University. A remarkable number of young students were recipients of medals and awards which reflected the high quality of teaching they were blessed with. He especially referred to the acquisition of new sets of equipment in the laboratories of the Physical and Natural Sciences which were so necessary for the best advancement of sciences in those times. In a little more than a year, there was an acquisition of a veritable wealth in the number of apparatus of ultimate perfection pertaining to agreements on experimental Physics.

In his opening discourse, Fr. Jenaro dwells on Rationalism, the origin of the beclouding errors in science, as well as the evils that afflict the contemporary society. He proposes to combat this monstrous error which despises all Divine Authority, and proclaiming the absolute independence of reason, misled it from the walking trails of truth and buried it into the rudest of abysmal errors.

To be more accessible to the young listeners, he opts to utilize historical

approach on the subject matter, rather than use philosophical or theological way. He broadly relates the history of human reason in the times of walking separately from the revelation, so as to compare this with the history of same reason illumined by the brightness of divine faith.

The noble origin of human reason is reaffirmed. He delights in that uncreated light that illumines and gives life and being to all creatures having been given the sceptre of creation to delight in the wonders of the wide sea, and sing the harmonies of heaven, and the beauties of the earth.

However, man became conceited with the knowledge of his nobility; he relished his being superb, and since then, and with the august sceptre broken in his hands, he lived in foreign lands, and sadly, tearfully walked by the difficult trails of life.

Sin darkened with its mists the beautiful sky of truth, and tarnished with its vapors the clear light of human intelligence. The history of the vicissitudes of that light is the history of the world.

Fr. Jenaro stresses thus in addressing the academic community:

What a history! Gentlemen. If ever we focus our sight on the peoples that fell on the other side of the Cross, or put anguish first in the heart, cover the blush on our cheeks, and spontaneously release from the breast this exclamation: How emaciated is human intelligence when it deviates from the ways of the Lord!

It would utter a lot of evil, a lot of wildness, and so degrading blindness which was natural to man to live covered in the silt of passions; that error was his intelligence's own nourishment; and his will would not be satiated except with the possession of all that is evil.

There is a recollection on man's fall - being thrown off the Garden of Eden. The Lord, in His compassion and mercy, did not allow human reason to be absolutely alone and abandoned to its own efforts. So, besides having conserved the deposit of primitive revelation, precious focus on divine light, containing the richest flow of all the necessary truths, could illumine all peoples of the world which had happened over the centuries, as well as it aroused from time to time men of extraordinary genius so they could purify the errors which human weakness could introduce in the fields of knowledge, and equip science with discovery of other truths.

The works of ancient philosophers and poets, when studied beside the most absurd error, brilliantly bare the most sublime truths. Two persons have to be distinguished: the philosopher who disputes in the Academes, and the orator or the historian who interprets popular beliefs. In effect, when they got inspired by the traditions of the people, Jupiter was not Jupiter of mythology, but Jehova, or little less, of

the Hebrews; it was God the greatest, the most perfect; as Cicero calls it, “Deus optimus maxitnus,” the eternal reason, the sovereign Lord: “ratio aeterna summi Jovis”; the author and preserver of towns, cities, and empires. Sophocles exclaims in the tragedy.

Oedipus, the sky wishes that I always keep the sanctity of my actions conforming to the sublime laws which have descended from heaven; because the author of these is the father of Olympus. Never will this be erased in memory because these laws do not proceed from men. He exclaims: “Oh my God! I invoke you, in you I put my hope to obtain all help.”

These beautiful words of Sophocles were received with grand applauses in Athens. All the time in theatrical replays. And it was that Athenians had the same beliefs of Sophocles, the poet enhanced in his verses.

With God removed from the world, the rational soul was destroyed, or deprived of immortality. Man was reduced to the category of the beasts.

A wise man said, “With God, everything becomes clear; without God, everything is chaos.”

This is what human reason could do when people lived separately from the lights of revelation.

The intelligence which parts with the Lord and negates Him attacks his own life and tends to destroy the truth in the world.

For a new and more complete restoration of the truth, it was sounded in eternal decrees; the absolute truth descended from heaven unto the earth. The Eternal Word, the wisdom of God in the heights was made flesh and lived among men. Jesus Christ appeared in history, and in due time, He reconciled humanity with His Eternal Father, and dispersed darkness that obscured the beautiful sky of truth, and the vapors that rendered the clear light of intelligence misty.

“I am the Way, the Truth and the Life,” He exclaimed with sublime accent.

“I have come to the world to give testimony to the truth. Everyone who is child of the truth hears my voice, and he who follows me will not walk in darkness but the light of life will shine on him” (Evang. Joannis, Cap. XIV. 6. y XVIII.37. y VIII.12).

The Divine voice resonated in a corner of Judea, and was flown much later by the wings of the wind to all areas of the world. Humanity, like waking up from a deep slumber of lethargy, was sighted flooded with light and clarity of that divine light. Christianity climbed the throne of the Caesars, situated in the highest point of the Capitol, extended its arms to unite with Christ, with a close and loving embrace to all peoples of the earth.

In effect: while outside of the Church, human reason, tired of combating the exasperating shadows of doubt, was forever speechless and breathed its last in the mire of passions; the Catholic reason was studying the philosophers of paganism, collecting the truths disseminated in their works and after putting these into the sieve of revelation, established schools, built Cathedrals, and formed that wonderful phalanx of incomparable wise men like Athanasius of Alexandria, Cyril of Alexandria, Basil of Caesarea, Ambrose of Milan, Augustine of Hippo, and others no less great.

Great and amazing were the advances that human reason had made in the ground truth. Immense was the distance that separated Catholic science and the science of paganism, and even if isolated, the Catholic science was exerting much efforts with the objective of synthesizing, methodologizing, and forming a compact body of doctrine, constructing thus a vast and gigantic organism of Catholic science in its more complete and more reverent expression.

So, there appeared the assemblies of Universities like the Universities of Paris, Oxford, Salamanca, Bologna, Padua, Siena, Cambridge and Rome, Naples, and Ferrara, empires of learning where human reason, preceded by the torch of faith, took a leap, travelled through the scale of beings and overcome all the skies, lay prostrate before the same plants of the Creator. There, it drank enough to satisfaction, from the pouring of that uncreated light; there it learned the most overwhelming of harmonies; there it acquired the typical notion of all beauty and loveliness.

A grand epoch it was of the mid-centuries that were made greater by the geniuses to whom glorious pedestals were made. And much greater yet was the Catholic Church which knew how to give science and the world those men so huge in prowess and brilliance to render to the centuries grandeur and glory.

To comprehend the incomparable era, a man embodying glory and grandeur was easily identified. St. Thomas Aquinas, a genius, great, immense, profound, Angelic Doctor of the Church, Patron of Catholic Schools, and lustre of the Order of Preachers, outstanding Dominican. His grand writings were products of his powerful intelligence that soared in the horizon of knowledge and of inextinguishable lighthouse of truth.

Fr. Jenaro clarified to the academic community that he was not speaking about physical and experimental sciences, but about the philosophical and social philosophies which are absolutely necessary to the world because to these sciences the resolution of the problems that most interest humanity is entrusted.

He ended his discourse in the inculcation of the harmony that exists between faith and reason: that the truths that understanding can discover, will never be standing against the revealed truths because the truth is one: "The Word of God in the heights" luminous from where radiate the rays of light to illuminate created intelligences.**PS**

*Jenaro Buitrago De La Rosa, O.P. (1849-1921)*

A native of Ahigal de los Aceiteros (Salamanca), born on December 23, 1849, Jenaro Buitrago de la Rosa, received his habit at the Convent –College of Sto. Domingo de Ocaña on December 17, 1865, where he had his Simple Profession on December 23, 1866 and his Solemn Profession on January 14, 1870. A deacon and a fourth- year student of Theology, he arrived in Manila, and was ordained to the priesthood on September 20, 1873. Then, he was first named Lecturer of secondary education in the Colegio de San Juan de Letran (Manila), and thereafter, Lecturer of secondary education in the University of Santo Tomas in 1875. In 1877, he was promoted to being a Lecturer of Philosophy, but, he was at once sent to the ministries of the Province of Pangasinan, assigned to Binmaley. In 1878, he was reappointed Professor of Philosophy and, in 1882, he was also entrusted with the professorship of the Extended Physics. He was named General Preacher and Trustee of the Province by the Chapter of 1886, retaining at the same time his professorship in the University, by which he was named Vice-Rector on May 08, 1887. In 1890, he was appointed Vicar of the Beaterio de Sta. Catalina, assigned to Colegio de San Juan de Letran, at the same time that he was chosen as Socius to the Prior Provincial Fr. Santiago Paya, to the General Chapter of Lyon (France) in 1891. After the Chapter, he was sent with other various Religious of the Province to found a house in Valencia, and was named as Superior of the house. He remained there till that house was ceded to the Dominican Province of Aragon in 1911, so, being transferred to the Convent of Sto. Domingo de Ocaña. From October in 1913 till the Chapter of 1917, he was Chaplain of the Dominican Sisters of Albacete. He returned to Ocaña, and stayed there until his death on July 10, 1921.

Writings: “Discurso de apertura en la Universidad de Sto. Tomás,” Manila 1883, “Memoria sobre la influencia del Catolicismo en la civilization de Filipinas” (para la Exposición de Amsterdam) Manila 1883; “Meditaciones del Rosario” (versión del francés de la obra del P. Monsabré OP, Manila 1887); “El Hipnotismo” (versión de la obra en francés del P. Coconnier); “Panegírico del Bto. Joaquín Royo,” Valencia 1894 (Imp. Hijos de Amargos); “Armonía entre la fe y la razón,” Valencia 1895 (Imp. De T. Lico); “El Hipnotismo” (3 artículos publicados en La Ciencia Tomista, 1910-1911); “Biografía del Bto. Jacinto Castañeda OP,” Valencia 1906 (Imp. Moderna); “Estudio sobre los principios constitutivos de los cuerpos,” Manila 1882; Discursos y artículos en varios periódicos y revistas (MV V 28-30). (Neira, O.P., *Misioneros Dominicos En El Extremo Oriente, 1836-1940*, 166).

