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DE LA DIPUTACIÓ DE BARCELONA

Director: Pau Monterde

Comissió de Publicacions:  
Montserrat Álvarez-Massó  
Sergi Belbel  
Josep M. Carandell  
Francesc Castells  
Feliu Formosa  
Jaume Melendres  
Pau Monterde  
Joan Ollé

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## Presentació

Francesc Massip

Secretari general de la SITM  
(1989-1992) i director del  
VII Col·loqui.  
Professor de la Universitat  
Rovira i Virgili  
Tarragona, Catalunya

L'estiu de 1992, mentre al cap i casal s'ultimaven els preparatius de les parafernàlies olímpiques, Girona acollia el VII Col·loqui de la *Société Internationale pour l'Étude du Théâtre Médiéval*, una associació que cada tres anys es reuneix a una ciutat del món per exposar i debatre les darreres recerques a l'entorn de l'espectacle medieval, i que per primera vegada ho feia en una localitat de jurisdicció hispànica (per segon cop en una població catalana).<sup>1</sup> La proposta s'havia formulat en l'anterior edició, i en la disputada elecció hi va influir, ben cert, el creixent interès que mostren els investigadors del drama medieval envers la notable riquesa del nostre teatre antic i les seves pervivències tradicionals. L'antiga Corona catalano-aragonesa havia tingut durant els segles de la seva existència independent (XII-XV) un esplendorós conreu dramàtic íntimament vinculat amb la cultura europea de l'època i que ha deixat un llegat important, ja sia en textos i documentació com, sobretot, en fets espectaculars d'origen medieval encara vigents com la *Festa d'Elx*, la *Patum* de Berga, la *Dansa de la Mort* de Verges, la *Sibilla* de Mallorca, les *Passions*, *Nativitats* i altres mostres escènico-festives. Una activitat que, tanmateix, només molt darrerament ha obtingut una adequada valoració en palestres internacionals gràcies, en part, a l'inici de desbloqueig de les cultures sense Estat que s'està produint a l'Europa democràtica, a pesar dels entrebancs dels jacobins de sempre que, temerosos de la diversitat, persisteixen a elevar a valor l'homogeneïtat, ni que aquesta s'hagi aconseguit amb el genocidi del distint.

### Les sessions científiques

Durant una intensa setmana, del 29 de juny al 4 de juliol, el Congrés va aplegar un centenar de participants italians, anglesos, escocessos, nord-americans dels Estats Units i del Canadà, holandesos, francesos, mexicans, irlandesos, danesos, alemanys, japonesos, espanyols, portuguesos, bascos i catalans. La setantena de comunicacions presentades, la majoria de les quals es recullen en el present volum, van girar a l'entorn de quatre blocs principals. En primer lloc, *L'espectacle ritual i les activitats paradramàtiques*, això és, un apartat dedicat a les cerimònies litúrgiques, processons imatjades, festivitats i ritus civils, populars o cortesans amb components espectaculars, és a dir, totes aquelles mostres que no tenen a la base un text dramàticament codificat, però que presenten una multitud d'elements de teatralitat (gestos i actituds, elements escenotècnics, articulació espacial, intervencions recitades o líriques, sen-

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Alessandro Arcangeli  
Historiador i musicòleg  
Verona, Itàlia

## *The confessor and the theatre*

The purpose of this paper is to contribute to our understanding of the attitude held by Christian moralists towards the performing or watching of a spectacle on the eve of the Reformation. The sources which I will be examining are Italian texts of moral theology, in particular, manuals devoted to the sacrament of penance, dating from the mid-fifteenth to the first quarter of the sixteenth century. My analysis appears to show: first, a lack of significant consideration of the world of spectacle as a subject of moral reflexion in its own right; and, second, a tendency to legitimize more than condemn performances, by proposing a series of circumstances which are to be avoided instead of a more general prohibition.

One of the broadest theological works of the period that I will start with is the *Summa theologica* written towards the mid-fifteenth century by St. Antoninus, Archbishop of Florence, and first printed in Venice in the 1470s. A prominent writer and member of the order of Dominican friars, he discusses spectacle from the moral point of view with references to a number of Christian authorities, in particular Thomas Aquinas, the leading Dominican theologian. Antoninus deals with the subject in the second part of his work, within a chapter devoted to the sin of *curiositas*, which he classifies as the first of twelve degrees of pride.

The disposition of the subject in this particular chapter derives from Aquinas, and might require explanation, as there is a theological debate behind it. One of the starting points for Christian reflexion on this matter is Augustine's *Confessions*, book 6, chapter 8. Here the Church father tells the story of his friend Alypius, who hated gladiatorial contests. But on one occasion some friends of his dragged him to the arena. Alypius protested that even though they could force his body, they could not make his soul or his eyes watch. He sat there at the arena, «the doors of his eyes closed», apparently ignoring what was happening around him. But he could not close his ears. Suddenly, at a turning point in the contest, the crowd gasped and, overcome with curiosity, Alypius opened his eyes. Now he could no longer control himself: his soul caved in, wounded even more severely than the body of the gladiator. And after that day he became addicted to these bloody entertainments. Curiosity is what moved Alypius to open his eyes. Human beings' curiosity is an effect of the lust of the eyes (*concupiscentia oculorum*) —as Augustine says again in another text, his *De vera religione*, while commenting on a passage of the *First letter of John* (ii, 16). Three centuries later, the Venerable Bede, in his commentary on the same passage, mentioned specifically watching spectacles as one of the manifestations of lust of the eyes. It is by quoting from Augustine and Bede that Aquinas constructed the section in which he posed and answered a question about spectacle. This comes in his *Secunda secundae* —that

is to say, the second half of the central part of his *Summa theologiae*— within *quaestio* 167, whose subject was precisely *curiositas*, a vice opposed to *studiositas* (in the tradition of the Catholic doctrine, one form of the virtue of modesty). The topic was divided into two articles, one concerning curiosity in the field of intellectual knowledge and the other in that of sensory knowledge. Here, in the sensory field, one of the more specific doubts was formulated in the following way: is there a form of curiosity in watching plays and games? The ensuing discussion followed the structure of any medieval scholastic analysis: first answer (not necessarily shared by the writer); objections to the first answer (not necessarily the author's either); finally, author's solution. Here the thesis, the first given answer, affirmed that watching spectacles was pleasant and was not a form of curiosity. Drawing from different authorities, the objection stated the contrary. Thomas' answer observed that attending spectacles became a sin to the extent that, because of things represented, the spectator became inclined (*pronus*) to the vices of lust or cruelty. The implication was that this activity was not always sinful, but it might become so in these specific circumstances. From antiquity to the present day's censorship of films, that which creates a moral dilemma has been seen to be sex and violence.<sup>1</sup>

To return to the fifteenth century and to Antoninus. Watching a spectacle, he wrote, was a form of curiosity, a lust of the eyes, sight being the one of our five senses which gave the most opportunity for sin. The question of whether attending the theatre or any sort of spectacle was or was not a mortal sin received first an affirmative answer based on canon law. But the contrary was stated by another major Dominican *magister* quoted by Antoninus, Albertus Magnus. This German philosopher of the thirteenth century had affirmed that spectacles should be tolerated if they are performed under the correct conditions, that is to say by laymen, neither in a holy place nor at a forbidden time. And Aquinas, who had been his pupil at the University of Paris, agreed that there was sin only when the performance provoked the audience to evil. With these precedents, Antoninus was able to give a full final answer, where he distinguished between different genres of spectacle. «Some of them —he observed— are representations of events of holy history, such as the adoration of the Magi, the massacre of the holy innocents, the passion of Christ, the ascension, the descent of the Holy Spirit, and so on». This genre is lawful in itself (*de se*), both for performers and spectators. However, vain elements that sometimes are incorporated into it must be excised, particularly if obscene acts are committed by young people while in rehearsal. Conversely, if the subject is secular, spectacles come under one of three other categories. As they involve different moral judgments (i) according to given circumstances and (ii) in respect of the performer or the spectator, it may be useful to arrange them in a scheme as following:

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Spectacles forbidden by law (where there is a probable danger of life, or serious injury)   | 2. Spectacles not expressly forbidden by law, but which include many obscene representations | 3. Vain and amusing spectacles, provided that they do not mock church, clergy, or religion |
| examples: tournaments, duels<br>performance: mortal sin<br>attendance: not usually a mortal sin; it becomes so when somebody<br>(i) is «disorderly affected» by them, or<br>(ii) for watching them neglects his religious duties, or<br>(iii) assists in any way with their organization | performance: mortal sin<br>attendance: mortal sin if voluntary (except if unwittingly)       | example: masquerades<br>performance and attendance: neither are mortal sins                |

With the last genre were equated watching dancing, jumping, running, performing athletic disciplines or other games; none of which were a mortal sin, though it was vain, and a waste of time. However, it might become mortal *per accidens*, should something evil happen, even in the sphere of intentions, as in the case of somebody who, while watching women dancing, is

driven to desire them. Members of the clergy, the Archbishop of Florence concluded, were proscribed from attending under any circumstances; and it was their duty to warn the Christian faithful against the dangers of the performing arts.<sup>2</sup>

With its rather moderate tone, this text of Saint Antoninus' provided a representative indication of the attitude of the clergy current at that time. However, it is found in a systematic work of theology, which probably could not have been easily accessible to most priests. Nevertheless, the age of the printing press brought with it a new development and diffusion of the genre of the *summae* for confessors, where every member of the clergy who was able to read Latin had the opportunity to consult a key-word, and find the suggested penance in individual cases of conscience. It is at some of the most popular sources of this genre that we are going to look now, in order to analyse their treatment of the subject of spectacle. All the texts I will quote were first printed by 1525.<sup>3</sup>

To begin with, Antoninus himself wrote more than one manual for confessors or penitents, which were astonishingly successful at the time (it has been calculated that some 160 editions had appeared in Italy before the end of the sixteenth century). Among these shorter treatises, the closest to the casuistic genre was one addressed to confessors, which is usually referred to as the *Defecerunt* confessional. Its arrangement of subjects was systematic. It included instructions on questioning of the penitent according to given lists: the ten commandments, the seven capital sins and their different kinds, the various types of penitents according to their social status. The most specific section for our purpose is a very brief one concerning actors (*de histrionibus*), in the series of professions. Here Antoninus said that an actor committed a sin when his jokes and representations included obscene words or acts, or were performed at the wrong time or place, such as in a church. And that the sin was more or less serious «depending on the quantity» (*secundum quantitatem*), that is to say, the gravity of the infraction. No other special treatment was given to spectacle. Nevertheless, in a chapter dedicated to the «daughters of pride», a page was devoted to curiosity. This is where the Archbishop of Florence summarized his position. Watching games and spectacles, he said, was usually a venial sin, unless (i) there was a danger of «spiritual, or temporal death»; or, (ii) somebody was so much delighted by them, that his mind turned away from God, and in order to watch spectacles he would be ready to transgress the laws of God and of the church. However, Antoninus remarked, the last condition is not a special feature of this subject. On the contrary, it can be applied correctly to any venial sin: an exaggerated attachment makes the fault worse.<sup>4</sup>

A model for this genre of religious texts was represented by the *Summa Pisana* or *Pisanella*, written at the beginning of the fourteenth century by the Dominican friar Bartolomeo da San Concordio, and based in its turn on the work of another Dominican, Jean de Fribourg. As well as being published separately, the *Pisanella* was enlarged in the mid-fifteenth century by the *Supplementum* of an Observant Franciscan, Nicolò da Osimo; and in this form it was printed some twenty times in northern Italy (mainly Venice) during the last quarter of that century. There had been a thirteenth century precedent, the (Franciscan) *Summa Monaldina*; but it is particularly after the *Pisanella* that the usage of arranging the entries in alphabetic order developed. In this way the material lost its characteristic moralizing structure, but it became easier for the reader to find solutions to single problems. Though the enlarged *Pisanella* had no entry for spectacle itself, at its place in the alphabetic order it provided the reader with the indication: «as regards spectacles, singing, playing musical instruments and similar see «play and game» (*ludus et iocus*) and see «dance» (*chorea*)». Unlike theatre, dance had in fact by this time found a standard treatment in this genre of religious texts. What in the *ludus et iocus* entry was more relevant to the field of spectacle were a specific and strong condemnation, based on canon law, of masking oneself as a monk or a nun for reasons of amusement (a position agreed on by every religious writer). And a final question on whether watching spectacles was a sin, which was solved by repeating Aquinas' warning against spectacles suggestive of lust or cruelty (which also occurred earlier in the manual at the end of the entry *curiositas*). To that the *Supplementum* added: «and [it is a sin also] as much as it stops people from performing that which is useful and good». The *Pisanella* had an entry for «actor» too. Here again the basis was a discussion of this profession found in Aquinas, who considered it not unlawful, provided that a certain number of conditions were respected.<sup>5</sup>

One of the late fifteenth century publications in the field was the *Summa Rosella*, written by the Observant Franciscan Battista Trovamala, and published, in Italy, half a dozen times from the 1480s to the mid-sixteenth century. It had no entry for «spectacle» either; however, at the word «actor» (*histrion*), it indicated to the reader: «see flattery» (*adulatio*). The peculiar positioning of the subject had a foundation in the treatment of flattery proposed by Aquinas in his *Secunda secundae*, question 115. Here the Dominican doctor considered praising somebody else an action not blameworthy in itself, unless exaggerated; but listed giving praise for payment as one of the conditions sufficient to turn it into a sin. With praise was equated amusing somebody either by words or acts, and therefore comedy. In the *Summa Rosella* the *quaestio* proposed was «whether it is a sin to pay flatterers or actors» (*utrum peccatum sit dare adulatoribus vel histrionibus*). Formally the question concerned the position of the paying spectator; in fact the answer was orientated towards defining that of the actor. Battista Trovamala believed that actors behaved in an evil way, mixing in their performances obscene elements and making holy things ridiculous. Therefore their art had to be forbidden. Contrasting more lax positions, the author claimed, together with other canonists, that acting twice in public was enough to be labelled as infamous (a question that by canon law was being discussed as a specific doubt: can an actor, after doing penance, become an ecclesiastic?). As the entry *adulatio* did not discuss anything else except the actor, in this particular way the subject had its own place in the *summa*.<sup>6</sup>

One of the most important texts of this genre was undoubtedly the *Summa Angelica*, the work of another Observant Franciscan, Angelo da Chivasso, an authoritative preacher. It was published more than twenty times between the 1480s and the 1590s in Italy; and, in its diffusion elsewhere in Europe, was revised and edited by such an outstanding humanist as Sebastian Brant. Among other reasons for its popularity, was the fact that it was publicly burnt by Martin Luther. As in the *Summa Pisanella*, the *Angelica* directed the reader, searching for an entry under «spectacle», to other parts of the manual, by indicating: «vide ludus et chorea». *Ludus et iocus* is an entry of considerable length, concerning a variety of entertainments. It divided the whole range of plays and games into three different classes. The first was *ludus spiritualis et divinus*. Its example was David dancing before the Ark (*II Samuel*, VI) which was holy and virtuous. The second was *ludus humanus*. This was done either for one's own or somebody else's recreation, or else for exercise. The third was *ludus diabolicus*, invented by the devil to induce human beings to sin. Games of hazard were the main subject of the last section. Theatre belonged to the second category, for which the moral treatment was the following. It was not forbidden in itself, however sometimes it was, according, as usual, to a list of aggravating circumstances, the first of which was place, i. e. a church. Passions and other such holy representations occurred to Angelo's mind; and the expediency he adopted to legitimize them stated that they were not *ludi* properly speaking. Second, danger for life, his opinion being that the gravity of this moral offence depended on the frequency with which fatalities occurred: if there was a high probability, then the game was unlawful and the sin mortal. That is to say: the death of the body and that of the soul march together. Third, person, i. e. priests or, worse, monks. Fourth, scandal. Which, again, may be provoked by clergymen playing in public. Fifth, covetousness (*cupiditas*). This mainly referred to games involving money. Sixth, time: holydays by precept. For more than one of these circumstances Angelo made further distinctions, and tried to avoid too general prohibitions. The final statement was that, provided those unlawful circumstances were avoided, *ludus humanus* was not a mortal sin: it might be either venial or not sinful at all.

In a special entry devoted to *histrion*, the *Angelica* started with a definition of the actor as one «who makes a play of his own person» (*ille qui de persona sua ludum facit*). The basis of the following argumentation was another *quaestio* of Aquinas', number 168, concerning «modesty in the exterior gestures of the body» (*De modestia secundum quod consistit in exterioribus motibus corporis*). Here the subject of most of the articles was playing games (*ludus*); therefore this, more properly than adulation, was the place to look for Aquinas' position. When it was a question of discussing comedy, he said that some recreation was necessary for human life. As actors' performances were meant to entertain, their profession in itself was lawful, and they were not in a condition of sin. This playful activity had to be used moderately, without any unlawful words or gestures, avoiding inappropriate situations. Therefore paying for them

was not inappropriate either. What had to be avoided was spending too much, and supporting actors playing in an evil way. The latter were to be given something only if they were in a condition of extreme necessity. The fifteenth-century *summa* borrowed this quite tolerant standpoint of Aquinas'. As a consequence, a spectacle was a mortal sin only when it involved obscene elements or was performed at a forbidden time. Another position borrowed from other canonist texts was the authorization to pay an actor in order to avoid being mocked. Angelo also tackled the subject of actors' *infamia*. In the thirteenth century, Pope Innocent IV had declared that only he who held the position of jester in a court (*in curia*), or with whom it was habitual, had to be considered infamous. Angelo agreed with this position, which was less strict than Trovamala's.<sup>7</sup>

Some years after, another popular compilation was the *Summa Sylvestrina*, written by the Dominican Silvestro da Prierio, and published in Italy a dozen times between 1515 and 1612. Here again the reader was sent from «spectacle» to «play» and «dance». His *ludus* adopted a tripartition (*triplex est ludus*) similar to Angelo's. It included a *ludus devotus*; a *recreativus*, «honestly performed for reason of recreation»; and last (in fact first in his actual order) a *turpis ut theatralis*, provoking lust. In such a scheme, comedy seems to have been considered as obscenity par excellence, which did not require more discussion. What he explained in further detail, by proposing internal subdivision of the genre and giving moral instruction, was the *recreativus*. Later, he considered the morals of *ludus humanus* (a phrase he had not defined or used at the beginning); which showed a stricter use of Angelo's criteria of classification. Therefore Silvestro moved to a similar argumentation as his predecessor's, openly stating that playing was not only, generally speaking, lawful, but even virtuous, as Aquinas had said before. And he gave a list of circumstances to avoid, where his attitude was slightly more liberal than Angelo's. A further criterion of organization of the subject was adopted by Silvestro when he discussed, in a special question, the morals of watching spectacles. Here, after having discussed other positions, he borrowed from Antoninus the complex classification of the different sorts of spectacle I presented above.

Silvestro's treatment of the actor was placed within a broader entry devoted to professions (*de artibus et artificibus*). It was quite similar to Angelo's; and stressed that amusement was necessary for life «as much as salt for food». Enchantments occurred among the elements he mentioned as being necessary to avoid in spectacles.<sup>8</sup>

A further publication in the same genre was the *Summa Tabiena*, by the Dominican Giovanni Cagnazzo, first printed in Bologna in 1517. As with the previous texts, it had an entry *de histrione* and referred the reader from «spectacula» to *ludus*. *Histrion* looked like the corresponding entries in the *Angelica* and the *Sylvestrina*, and depended even more strictly on Aquinas. Like Antoninus and hence, also, Silvestro, Cagnazzo referred to statements of Augustine's where watching huntsmen and actors were condemned together. In the twelfth century these sentences had been included in Gratian's *Decretum*. One in particular (c. 10 D. LXXXVI), extracted from Augustine's *Commentaries on Psalms*, said that «those who enjoy themselves while watching huntsmen, will grieve while seeing our Saviour». To limit the prohibitive conclusions that might have been drawn from that canon, Cagnazzo specified that it had to be understood as concerning unlawful actors only. He also answered, at the end, as a specific question, the problem of physically dangerous performances. While in other authors the reference was to tournaments, Cagnazzo had something different in mind, and gave the example of rope dancing (*qui gradiuntur per cordas in sublimi*). His judgment, like Angelo's (and Silvestro's), was based on the probability of death.

His entry for *ludus* exhibited the usual identification of theatre with the obscene and the diabolic. His reference was, however, more precisely to ancient comedy as, while giving the example, he makes use of the past tense (*ludi qui in teatris agebantur ad luxuriam provocantes*). As in the other *summae*, the *Tabiena* gave aggravating circumstances of persons and places to be avoided. The actor being infamous, his performance was not necessarily a mortal sin. As for conditions in which it was less of an offence, he listed that it did not provoke scandal, it was not paid, and was done either for the amusement of a banquet or as a local tradition (*causa consuetudinis*). Cagnazzo's treatment of watching spectacles depended, as did everybody else's, on Aquinas. To the obscene and the cruel he added, as evil consequences to avoid,

being kept from doing good actions (a suggestion we have already found in Nicolò da Osimo), and being attracted to an unlawful amusement.<sup>9</sup>

The edition of the *Summa Tabiena* was dedicated to Cardinal Cajetan, leading theologian and General of the Dominican order. And Cajetan's own *Summula de peccatis* is the final text in this genre that we will be considering. It was first published in Rome in 1525, and reprinted several times. Supported by the background of the author's philosophical thought, the entry *ludere* displayed an arrangement perhaps clearer than others, by distinguishing the possibility of sin in two cases. Play which was sinful because of its own genre; and play which became so only when performed under inappropriate circumstances. The first category included plays which either were obscene, or endangered a neighbour (his body, or reputation), or mockery of any saintly deeds. The condemnation of that which is dangerous was cautious, allowing those moderate armed games that were usual to military discipline and which could be considered as physical exercise. The second part listed seven aggravating circumstances, similar to those given by other authors. The general trend was rather more liberal. In discussing the type of play (*qualitas*), he stated that some amusements were forbidden to members of the clergy, none being prohibited for laymen, unless by local tradition. Another circumstance was abuse: for example, playing mainly for money was to be considered sinful (even if usually not a serious fault), because it diverted the activity from its proper function, which was recreation. But describing this offence gave the Dominican theologian the chance to state that playing for recreation in itself was not only lawful, but «*holy*» too (*licitus et sanctus*).

Another entry of Cajetan's was «actors' sins» (*histrionum peccata*). Here he put it clearly that there was no sin in exercising their profession (*in exercitio histrionatus*). And he defined the profession to which he was referring, the aspects and skills it involved, as «to apply oneself to amuse other people with gestures, words, new ideas» (*vacare ut gestibus, verbis, novis adinventionibus delectationem aliis praebeat*). Therefore, a moral consideration of this field consists only in a consideration of the conditions that have to be respected, and here Cajetan offered the usual list. The main element was the subject of the spectacle (*materia*), which must not be inappropriate. The author added a further element of moderation in his judgment by stating: «I could not easily tell when in this field may occur a mortal sin, as these things are said and done playfully» (*iocose*).

In addition to those more traditional entries, Cajetan's *Summula* had a shorter special one for spectacle. To be more precise, it concerned «spectacula impudica, crudelia, aut irreligiosa»; which was quite a specific theme, and showed clearly its dependence on Aquinas' discourse. As the definition of the subject clearly suggested, these spectacles could not be either performed or watched without sin. This would become mortal under certain given circumstances (for example, if the attendance of a spectator from a particular social position could provoke scandal). Otherwise it might be venial, provided that the spectator did not enjoy the proscribed elements, and was previously unaware of any scandalous scenes. To conclude this subject, Cajetan added a remark which gave his moral judgement the tone of a self-examination of the faithful's conscience, saying that in the last case, of the unexpectedly immoral scene, «everybody will find for himself the reason for which he did not leave».<sup>10</sup>

An authoritative text where Cardinal Cajetan expressed the same clear standpoint was in his famous commentary on Aquinas. The occasion for discussing the morals of the spectacle came in the 167th question of Aquinas' *Secunda secundae*, whose subject is—as we have already mentioned—curiosity. While reviewing the internal subdivisions of the *quaestio*, he arrived at the point concerning watching spectacles. Here, again, he stated that the quality of the subject matter was decisive from the moral point of view: if the content was lascivious or cruel, the performance would naturally incline the spectator to vice, therefore it was the opposite of good behaviour; and he who watches it committed a sin. For reasons of scandal and setting a bad example, the gravity of the fault increased in direct proportion to the social role of the sinner, being most serious if he was a member of the clergy. The author's conclusion was that if you knew in advance that a spectacle would be indecent, you must not attend, even if invited. If you were unaware beforehand, and if such a scene was to be performed, his advice was to leave the place. If that was not possible, to behave like Alypius, the disciple of Augustine's, and close your eyes. You would then be safe, and could advise other people of the

danger they were facing. But Cajetan seemed unperturbed by the fact that in Alypius' case the barrier of eyelids failed, being only interested in giving a suggestion for an extreme situation, an emergency exit from moral danger.

So, that is what Cajetan had to say about immoral spectacles. Conversely, if subjects were pious or divine, plays were consonant with virtue and religion. Moreover, the Dominican theologian emphasized his position by putting this discussion of the difference between spectacles of opposite value within a further theoretical framework. To consider watching spectacles—he said—required taking into account different elements, which occurred together in the performance. One was the subject (*res presentatae*), which I have just summarized. Inevitably, the first element of all was the spectacle itself (*repraesentatio ipsa*). As in his *Summula de peccatis*, Cajetan stated that it was not a sin at all. To make it clear, he quoted again a sentence of Aristotle, which had occurred in St. Thomas' text: representation—said the «prince of philosophers»—«*naturaliter animum delectat*».<sup>11</sup>

In conclusion, theological literature on the eve of the Reformation seems to show a certain lack of specific consideration for the problems connected with the performing arts. Nevertheless the theme was undergoing a reconsideration, and attracted the attention of Christian moralists in more than one entry of their manuals. Furthermore, one should not forget to take into account that the authors we have presented were facing the world of spectacle as it was before Renaissance theatre.

The genre of the Latin *summa* for confessors underwent a crisis after 1525, due partly to the more general political and economical crisis of Italian towns and of their printing presses in that period, and partly to a more specific diminution of the importance of that kind of religious literature. But the influence of the texts we have been considering reemerged strongly after the Council of Trent, when the fight against the Reformation suggested a renewed stress on the sacrament of penance, and the earlier manuals worked as models for new publications. Under the new conditions, catholic moralists often found the attitude shown by the earlier authors embarrassing, as they had usually tended to make distinctions and legitimize actions more than condemn them utterly. But this is a different scene from the one we have been contemplating in this paper.

## Notes

1. S. Thomas Aquinas, *Opera omnia*, vol. X, Romae 1899, pp. 345-48. Cf. St. Augustin, *Confessions*, ed. P. de Labriolle, Paris 1947, pp. 130-31; S. Augustinus, *De vera religione*, 38, in *Patrologiae cursus completus, series Latina*, ed. J. P. Migne, XXXIV, Paris 1887, col. 153; Venerabilis Beda, *Expositio in Primam Epistolam S. Joannis*, *ibid.*, XCII, Paris 1862, col. 92.

2. S. Antoninus, *Summa theologica*, ed. P. Ballerini, Verona 1740, vol. II, cols. 491-94.

3. A few bibliographical references on this tradition should include: P. Michaud-Quantin, *Sommes de casuistique et manuels de confession au moyen âge (XIIe-XVIe siècles)*, Louvain - Lille - Montréal 1962; T. N. Tentler, *Sin and confession in the eve of the Reformation*, Princeton, New Jersey, 1977; M. Turrini, *La coscienza e le leggi. Morale e diritto nei testi per la confessione della prima età moderna*. Bologna 1991.

4. Antoninus, *Summa confessionalis*, Lugduni 1555, pp. 312 (*De histrionibus*), 261 (*De curiositate*).

5. Nicolaus de Ausmo, *Supplementum*, Venetiis 1476, pages not numbered. I do not discuss here the treatment of dance in the tradition of the *summae* for confessors, as I have already dealt with the subject elsewhere: see A. Arcangeli, *L'opuscolo contro la danza attribuito a Carlo borromeo*, in «Quadrivium», nuova serie, I (1990), pp. 35-76; and my unpublished doctoral dissertation (University of Pisa, 1991), devoted to the subject of dance in the early modern cultural debate.

6. B. Trovamala, *Summa Rosella*, Venetiis 1495, fol. 27r-v. Cf. S. Thomas Aquinas, vol. IX, Romae 1897, pp. 444-46.

7. Angelus de Clavasio, *Summa Angelica de casibus conscientie*, ed. S. Brant, [Strasburg] 1520, fols. C1r (*histrion*), LCv-LCiv (*ludus*). Cf. S. Thomas Aquinas, vol. X, pp. 349-55; Innocentius IV, *In quinque libros Decretalium [...] commentaria*, Augustae Taurinorum 1581, fol. 143r.

8. [S. Mazzolini], *Summa summarum, que Silvestrina dicitur*, Bononie 1515, fols. 38r-v (*de artibus et artificibus*), 417v-421v (*de ludo*).

9. Ioannes Tabiensis, *Summae Tabienae pars prima*, Venetiis 1572, p. 824 (*de histrione*); *ibid.*, *pars secunda*, pp. 323-27 (*de ludo*). For the canon on huntsmen, cf. *Corpus iuris canonici*, ed. Aem. Friedberg, I, Leipzig 1879, col. 300 (reprint Graz 1959).

10. T. de Vio, *Summula de peccatis*, Lugduni 1538, sig. q7r-v (*histrionum peccata*), v5r-v (*ludere*), C4v (*spectacula*).

11. S. Thomas Aquinas (see note 1).