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1. EARLY FRANCISCAN THEOLOGY: AN INTRODUCTION

For generations, the work of the early Franciscan intellectuals has been regarded as relatively unoriginal: a mere attempt to codify and systematize the ideas of earlier authorities, above all, Augustine.¹ Thus, the tradition of thought that was founded by the first scholars of the Franciscan order has been almost entirely neglected in scholarly literature. By contrast, the work of later Franciscans like John Duns Scotus and William of Ockham has garnered considerable attention, on the ground that they supposedly broke from their predecessors to develop innovative ideas that laid the foundations for the rise of modern theology and philosophy.²

The present volume proposes to make a case for the innovativeness of early Franciscan theology, that is, the theology that was formulated by first-generation Franciscans. These scholars flourished in the 1230s and 40s at the University of Paris, which was the centre for theological study at the time. In investigating the scholarly tradition they

¹ Artur Michael Landgraf, *Introduction à l'histoire de la littérature théologique de la scolastique naissante*, ed. A.M. Landry, trans. L.B. Geiger (Paris: Vrin, 1973). Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). Jacques LeClercq, 'The Renewal of Theology,' in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982). G.R. Evans, *Language and Logic of the Bible: The Earlier Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

² Hans Blumenberg, *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* (Cambridge: MIT, 1985). Olivier Boulnois, *Être et représentation: Une généalogie de la métaphysique moderne à l'époque de Duns Scot* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999). Louis Dupré, *Passage to Modernity: Essays in the Hermeneutics of Nature and Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, repr. 2012). Ludger Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens: Die formale Bestimmung der Seiendheit und Realität in der Metaphysik des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1990).

established, I will call attention to various aspects of the context in which they worked, most importantly, the intellectual context afforded by the recently established university, the context of the Franciscan order itself, and the philosophical context associated with the translation movement of the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, which witnessed the introduction of many Greco-Arabic philosophical sources in the West.

The exploration of these contextual factors over the course of the first three chapters of the book will help to contest the longstanding assumption that early Franciscans did little but systematize the tradition of Augustine, which had prevailed in the Latin West for most of the earlier Middle Ages. The subsequent chapters will treat the theological vision, theistic proof, doctrines of God and of the Trinity, Christology, Incarnational and moral theologies of the *Summa*. In the process, they will highlight how the friars enlisted Augustine to say nothing of many other authorities in the effort to bolster their own unique, indeed, innovative, system of thought. The present chapter sets the stage for the book's discussion in a number of ways. In the first place, I seek to define what I mean by 'early Franciscan thought' in light of the fact that there were numerous contributors to its development. For reasons that will soon become clear, I ultimately opt to focus on the so-called *Summa fratris Alexandri* or *Summa Halensis*, a multi-volume text that was co-authored by leading members of the early school.

As one of the first and arguably the most significant theological synthesis to date, the *Summa* project was taken up just ten years after Francis of Assisi's death in 1226 and mostly completed by 1245, twenty years before Thomas Aquinas even set his hand to the task of authoring his own *Summa Theologiae*, on which he worked between 1265-74. In many respects, therefore, the *Summa Halensis* laid the groundwork for the further development of the Franciscan intellectual tradition as well as for the establishment of the burgeoning discipline of systematic theology. Following a corollary discussion of the *Summa*'s historiography, I will evaluate the scholastic context in which it was written, laying the

groundwork for an explanation of my approach to its interpretation in the remaining chapters of this book.

Early Franciscan Theology and the 'Summa Halensis'

My first task in this book is to delineate the definition of early Franciscan thought that I will presuppose throughout the text. This is no easy task, because the boundaries of the early Franciscan school can be extended to include numerous thinkers who worked roughly before the time Bonaventure's career flourished in Paris, between around 1257-74, some of whom contributed to the *Summa Halensis*.

The production of this great work clearly distinguishes the Franciscan school at Paris from other Franciscan schools of thought at the time, the most academically active of which was based at the young University of Oxford.³ While English Franciscans and Franciscan confreres like Robert Grosseteste were certainly engaged in intensive scholarly work during the period of the *Summa*'s authorship, the Franciscan school at Oxford did not produce any text that could be likened in size or scope to the *Summa Halensis*.⁴

Although the study of the English Franciscan school is certainly worthwhile in its own right, and there are many lines of comparison with the Parisian school to be drawn, consequently, the focus of this volume will remain on the early Franciscan school at Paris,

³ A.G. Little, 'The Franciscan School at Oxford in the Thirteenth Century,' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 19 (1926), 803-74. Michael Robson (ed.), *The English Province of the Franciscans (1224-1350)* (Leiden: Brill, 2017).

⁴ James McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). Richard Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986). Daniel Callus, *Robert Grosseteste: Scholar and Bishop* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955).

which was truly the hub of theological activity at this time. First and foremost among the Parisian Franciscans was Alexander of Hales (1184-1245), an Englishman who undertook his education in Paris and likely assumed a chair in theology in 1220-1.⁵ From this time, Alexander appears to have taught Franciscan students in Paris, who did not have a school of their own until around 1231. In 1236, Alexander himself joined the Franciscan order, perhaps after realizing that the theology he had developed to that time resonated deeply with the ethos of the Franciscan students for whom he was responsible.⁶

When he joined the order, Alexander secured for the Franciscan house of studies the permanent chair that he occupied in the theology faculty, a post he either passed on to his chief collaborator, John of La Rochelle, in 1241 or held independently of John's status until 1245, when both passed away. At this time, Odo Rigaldi took over the post of regent master of the by then well-established Franciscan school in Paris and was himself succeeded by William of Melitona.⁷

At his death, Alexander left behind him a large body of work, including a 4-volume Gloss on Lombard's Sentences, completed prior to 1227;⁸ 3 volumes of disputed questions

⁵ *Magistri Alexandri de Hales Glossa in quatuor libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi* (Quaracchi: Collegii S Bonaventurae, 1951-7), vol. 1, 56-75. According to the prolegomena to Alexander's Gloss, Alexander was an Englishman born in Hales Owen, now in Shropshire, around 1185 to a fairly well-off but not noble rural family. He died at age 57 in Paris on 21 August 1245. After studying the arts in Paris, he became a master of the arts in 1210 and in the same year began teaching at Paris. Around 1215, he began to study theology, becoming a regent master around 1221-1.

⁶ Keenan B. Osborne, 'Alexander of Hales,' in *The History of Franciscan Theology* (St Bonaventure: The Franciscan Institute, 2007).

⁷ Adam Jeffrey Davis, *The Holy Bureaucrat: Eudes Rigaud and Religious Reform in Thirteenth-century Normandy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).

⁸ Victorin Doucet, 'A New Source of the 'Summa Fratris Alexandri,' *Franciscan Studies* 6 (1946), 403-417. As

dating from before he became a friar ('antequam esset frater');⁹ as well as disputed questions dating from after he became a friar ('postquam esset frater'), some of which have recently been edited, but many of which remain in need of an edition.¹⁰ For a long time, Alexander was also credited with the so-called *Summa fratris Alexandri* ('Summa of brother Alexander') or *Summa Halensis*, though we will soon see that the question of this text's authorship is rather more complicated than such a straightforward attribution would lead us to believe.¹¹

Although developed over a long career, Alexander's 'basic theological positions remained quite constant throughout his authentic writings.'¹² That said, they exhibit some unevenness in style. While the disputed questions provide relatively substantial analyses of Alexander's views on a limited set of issues, the Gloss works systematically through many key theological questions raised by Lombard and Alexander's contemporaries. Such Glossae

Doucet notes, the critical edition of Alexander's Gloss was produced between 1951-7; the Gloss itself was probably written after 1222 and completed before 1227.

⁹ *Magistri Alexandri de Hales Quaestiones disputatae 'Antequam esset frater'* (Quaracchi: Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1960).

¹⁰ *Alexandri di Hales Quaestiones disputatae quae ad rerum universitatem pertinent* (Bibliotheca Franciscana Scholastica medii aevi, XXIX), ed. H. M. Wierzbicki (Rome: Collegii S. Bonaventure, 2013). *Alexandri di Hales Quaestiones disputatae de peccato originali* (Bibliotheca Franciscana Scholastica medii aevi, XXX), ed. H. M. Wierzbicki (Rome: Collegii S. Bonaventure, 2013). *Alexandri di Hales Quaestiones disputatae de peccato veniali et de conscientia* (Bibliotheca Franciscana Scholastica medii aevi, XXXII), ed. H. M. Wierzbicki (Rome: Collegii S. Bonaventure, 2013). *Alexandri di Hales Quaestiones disputatae de lapsu angelorum ac protoparentum* (Bibliotheca Franciscana Scholastica medii aevi, XXXI), ed. H. M. Wierzbicki (Rome: Collegii S. Bonaventure, 2015).

¹¹ *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica* (Quaracchi: Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1924-48).

¹² Keenan B. Osborne, 'Alexander of Hales,' 21.

would usually provide only terse comments about points originally raised by Master Peter Lombard about whose work we will learn more soon. However, Alexander goes further in seeking to develop some of his own theological positions. Still, he does so in a cursory style and does not always provide significant detail on the topics he covers. This is likely because his Gloss is based upon student lecture notes that were not corrected later by Alexander himself.

While we know very little about the life and career of John of La Rochelle, he was certainly a prolific author.¹³ His first work appears to have been the *Summa de vitiis*, followed by the *Tractatus de divisione multiplici potentiarum animae* (c. 1233). John's *Summa de anima* (1235-6), the *Summa de articulis fidei*, the *Summa de praeceptis*, and *Summa de sacramentis* all appear to have been completed before Alexander entered the order. John also seems to have authored extensive biblical commentaries and sermons, not all of which are extant. While Alexander and John were undoubtedly the dominant figures in the early Franciscan school at Paris, we can count among them a number of others—mostly their students and successors—who also played a significant role in the school's early formation. These include the aforementioned Odo Rigaldi, William of Melitona, and even the early Bonaventure, who credits everything he has learned and written to his 'master and father', Alexander of Hales in the prologue to the second volume of his Sentences Commentary.¹⁴

Although these and other early Franciscan scholars hold many key ideas in common—on how to prove God's existence, for instance—they also contributed different intellectual abilities and emphases.¹⁵ For instance, John clearly entertains many philosophical

¹³ John of La Rochelle, *Summa de Anima*, ed. J.G. Bougerol (Paris: Vrin, 1995), 12.

¹⁴ Bonaventure, *Commentaria in quattuor libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi: in librum II* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), Prologue, Lib II, d 23, a 2, q e (II, 547).

¹⁵ Scott Matthews, *Reason, Community, and Religious Tradition: Anselm's Argument and the Friars* (Aldershot:

and legal or moral questions that do not appear to preoccupy Alexander. For this reason, the personal writings of such authors do not provide the optimal basis for determining whether the early Franciscan school had adopted a cohesive doctrinal core. By contrast, the *Summa Halensis* codifies a comprehensive account of all the main matters philosophical and theological that were debated in the day. This text was used in the education of gifted Franciscan novices at least through the time of Bonaventure and Duns Scotus.¹⁶

While Alexander gave his name to the project and apparently oversaw it, recent scholarship has confirmed that the text was a collaborative effort on the part of John of La Rochelle and other members of the early Franciscan school as well. As one author has noted, the project may have started out as an effort to turn Alexander's personal writings into a Summa, but since there were many questions which Alexander's work did not address, a team effort became necessary to fill in the gaps, and in the process of doing so, a larger, coherent system was borne which exhibits the ingenuity and originality of its authors, above all, Rochelle.¹⁷

The Summa in question, the first three volumes of which were prepared between 1236-45, consists of four massive volumes, which the English Franciscan Roger Bacon, a late contemporary of the Summists, sarcastically described as 'the size of a horse'.¹⁸ The first

Ashgate, 2001).

¹⁶ Bert Roest, *A History of Franciscan Education* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 126.

¹⁷ Kevin Patrick Keane, 'The Logic of Self-Diffusive Goodness in the Trinitarian Theology of the Summa Fratris Alexandri' (PhD, Fordham University, 1978), 19.

¹⁸ Roger Bacon, *Opus Minus*, in *Fr. Rogeri Bacon Opera hactenus inedita* I, ed. by J.S. Brewer (London, 1859), 326: *et adscripserunt ei magnam Summam illam, quae est plusquam pondus unius equi, quam ipse non fecit sed alii. Et tamen propter reverentiam adscripta fuit et vocatur Summa fratris Alexandri et si ipse eam fecisset vel magnam partem* (and they ascribed to him [Alexander] that large Summa, which weighs more than a horse, which he did not write but others did. And nevertheless, it was ascribed to him out of reverence and called the

volume primarily treats the nature of God, both one and Triune. The second volume is divided into two sub-volumes, which respectively cover creation and human nature, and evil and sin. The third volume deals with the Incarnation, moral life, and grace and faith. The fourth volume—as yet not critically edited—addresses questions pertaining to the sacraments.¹⁹

The critical edition of the first two volumes was prepared in the College of St Bonaventure in Quaracchi between 1924-30.²⁰ The critical edition of the third volume was prepared under the oversight of Victorin Doucet under the auspices of the same institution and was published in 1948. In the Prolegomena to that volume, the product of research conducted between 1931-48, Doucet assessed the work conducted by the editors of the first two volumes, publishing his analysis in English in a series of articles detailing ‘The History of the Problem of the Summa.’²¹ As Doucet notes here, the editors of the first two volumes

‘Summa fratris Alexandri’ as if he himself had written the better part of it). Amanda Power, *Roger Bacon and the Defence of Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

¹⁹ Several editions of the *Summa Halensis* exist, but the first truly critical edition was that of the Quaracchi editors, *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica*, which was completed between 1924-48. The other editions are as follows: Venice (1474-5); Nuremberg (1481-2); Papia (1489); Lyons (1515-6); Venice (1575-6); Koln (reprint of Venice, 1622). For a full list, see, Irenaeus Herscher, ‘A Bibliography of Alexander of Hales,’ *Franciscan Studies* 5 (1945), 434-54. The fourth volume can be found online in the Renaissance edition:

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=ucm.5316866248;view=1up;seq=3;size=150>.

²⁰ Barbara Faes de Mottoni provides a helpful reconstruction of the work of the Quaracchi editors before Doucet in, *Bonaventura da Bagnoregio: Un itinerario tra edizioni, ristampe e traduzioni* (Edizioni Biblioteca Francescana: Milano 2017).

²¹ Victorin Doucet, ‘Prolegomena in librum III necnon in libros I et II *Summa Fratris Alexandri*,’ *Alexandri de Hales Summa Theologica* (Quaracchi: Collegii S Bonaventurae, 1948); idem., ‘The History of the Problem of the Summa,’ *Franciscan Studies* 7 (1947), 26-41, 274-312.

operated on the assumption that Alexander of Hales was the sole author of the Summa, despite a growing body of evidence to the contrary.

Among this evidence was the testimony of Roger Bacon, who claimed that others besides Alexander had a hand in writing the Summa.²² Also relevant was the completion between 1882-1902 of the critical edition of Bonaventure's oeuvre, which revealed that some minor sections of the Summa were derived from the writings of Bonaventure himself.²³ These writings are found in the fourth volume of the Summa, which had not been finished by the time of the deaths of Alexander and John in 1245. The evidence for this is the Bull *De Fontibus Paradisi* (1255) in which Pope Alexander IV declared Alexander of Hales the author of the Summa and ordered William of Melitona to complete the work that remained after his death, a task in which Bonaventure and Odo Rigaldi appear to have provided minimal assistance.²⁴

As for the earlier volumes, Doucet and his team of editors determined on the basis of both writing style and content that volumes 1 and 3 were written by an author they called 'Inquirens', most likely John of La Rochelle.²⁵ An unknown author called 'Considerans' appears to have assembled volume 2, which bears the mark of Alexander's influence more than volumes 1 and 3, though it also draws extensively on John's work, most notably, his

²² Roger Bacon, *Opus Minus*, 326.

²³ Jacques G. Bougerol, 'The School of the Minors in Paris,' in *Introduction to the Works of Bonaventure* (Chicago: Franciscan Press, 1964), 13-21. In volume 4 of the Summa, the section on *De perfectio evangelica* was likely written by Bonaventure between 1253-6.

²⁴ Robert Prentice, O.F.M., 'The *De fontibus paradisi* of Alexander IV on the *Summa Theologica* of Alexander of Hales,' *Franciscan Studies* 5 (1945), 350-1.

²⁵ Victorin Doucet, 'Prolegomena in librum III,' 360-1; cf. idem, 'The History of the Problem of the Summa,' 310-11.

Summa de anima and *Summa de vitiis*.²⁶ In the course of their researches, Doucet and his team made the important discovery that, with the exception of two tractates inserted at the very end of volume 2.1 by William of Melitona, these three volumes were not subjected to any later corrections, additions, or subtractions.²⁷ This would seem to indicate that the initial three volumes were perceived at the time as a relatively cohesive and complete whole that was ready to withstand the scrutiny of an expert readership from 1245.²⁸

Further support for this suggestion can be found in manuscript evidence which illustrates that the first three volumes of the *Summa Halensis* were employed as a primary source in the decade intervening until the fourth volume's completion in 1256.²⁹ This was not the only *Summa* of the period to be utilized as a coherent body of work despite the fact that its final sections were missing. Many Summists of the period left incomplete Summae at their deaths, including Philip the Chancellor, Roland of Cremona, and even Thomas Aquinas. They could hardly help but do so given the ambitious scope of the projects they undertook, which were aimed at the mastery of all relevant material, rather like the Gothic Cathedrals for which the period became famous. In no case was the incompleteness of such texts taken as a reason to avoid or delay their study. This was no less true of the *Summa Halensis*.

Although this *Summa* inevitably bears the marks of multiple authors, such as minor inconsistencies in style between *Inquirens* and *Considerans*, it nonetheless presents a

²⁶ Victorin Doucet, 'Prolegomena in librum III,' 367.

²⁷ Ibid., 334-7. *SH*, Volume 1, *De missione visibile*, 514-18; Volume 2: *De corpore humano*, 501-630; *De coniuncto humano*, 631-784.

²⁸ Victorin Doucet, 'Prolegomena in librum III,' 133

²⁹ Victorin Doucet, 'The History of the Problem of the Summa,' 296-302.

coherent intellectual vision.³⁰ Neither the later editors of this text nor I myself have been able to detect a single substantial doctrinal contradiction within its pages. Of course, questions remain concerning its authorship, some of which will not be possible to answer until further critical editions are produced, especially of Alexander's 'postquam esset frater' questions and other works by John of La Rochelle, many of which are being edited as part of the European Research Council project this author is directing between 2017-2021. The availability of these works would make it possible to determine if and how they provided the basis for certain sections of the Summa. While the questions of authorship are certainly of historical interest, however, they do not negate the internal and external evidence outlined above, which confirms the unity and integrity of the text.

Put differently, the co-authored status of the Summa does not give cause or even an excuse that has been deployed in the past to refrain from researching it or to withhold judgment regarding its contents. To avoid its study on such grounds is ironically to contravene directly the manner in which the Halensian Summists intended their work to be received, namely, as the product of a joined-up school of thought, in which the role played by individual contributors were clearly too negligible to be worth mentioning. As Etienne Gilson writes, it is precisely because 'its component fragments are all borrowed from Franciscan theologians belonging to the same doctrinal school' that the Summa exhibits a 'unity of inspiration' and 'remarkably illustrates what may be called the 'spirit of the thirteenth-century Franciscan school of theology at the University of Paris. Even as a collective work,'

³⁰ The coherence of the work has been emphasized by Elisabeth Gössmann in *Metaphysik und Heilsgeschichte: Eine theologische Untersuchung der Summa Halensis (Alexander von Hales)* (München: Max Hueber, 1964).

Gilson elaborates, the *Summa Halensis* ‘has a distinctive signification,’³¹ precisely insofar as it is the indicator of the ‘collective mind’ of the early Franciscan school.

That is not to deny that the works of the Summa’s individual authors provide important background to the study of this text, or that these works extend the boundaries of early Franciscan thought, as the Summa outlines it. Rather, it is simply to acknowledge that such works do not themselves offer the holistic vision into which they were integrated in the *Summa Halensis*, which achieved far more than any one author could on their own. Though there is clearly more to the study of early Franciscan thought than the study of this text, consequently, I have chosen the Summa as a starting point for research on the school, for the sake of establishing the main points on which the contributors broadly agreed and which they most wanted to pass on to later generations of Franciscans.

In this connection, I focus primarily on the theology of the Summa, that is, the sections in the work that treat primarily of God and our knowledge of him in his own right. These topics are covered mainly within volumes 1 and 3. Although my discussion of the theological material in the Summa will be heavily informed by its account in volume 2 of the relationship between God and the world, the status of creation and of the human person, these are more ‘philosophical’ topics, which inquire into the status of beings other than God. Thus, it seems appropriate to reserve a more in-depth study of their details for another volume. What remains to be considered now is the historiography of the Summa, that is, the history of its interpretation in modern times.

The Historiography of Early Franciscan Theology

³¹ Etienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1955), 327-31, quote from 327.

This history is relatively brief, largely because the questions surrounding the Summa's authorship, which have been addressed above, have long downplayed the significance of the text to the history of thought. Another reason for the Summa's neglect has also been mentioned already, namely, the common perception that early Franciscan thought constitutes a relatively unoriginal effort to 'systematize' the longstanding intellectual tradition of Augustine in order to assert his authority at a time when Aristotle's recently re-discovered major works were rapidly rising in popularity.³² Prior to the appearance of the Summa's critical edition, scholars such as Franz Ehrle and Etienne Gilson had already described early Franciscan thought along these lines on the basis of the already available edition of Bonaventure, whose early intellectual formation was fostered by the *Summa Halensis*.³³ In his Prolegomena, consequently, Doucet simply reiterated the by then common opinion that:

The significance of the *Summa Halensis* consists in this, namely, that both its philosophy and theology collate the tradition of Augustine, and are ordained to its defense, even though Aristotle was on the rise. Thus, it is universally and rightly seen as the foundation of the Augustinian-Franciscan school in the thirteenth century.³⁴

³² Ignatius Brady, 'The *Summa Theologica* of Alexander of Hales (1245-1248),' *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 70 (1977), 437-47.

³³ Franz Ehrle, *Grundsätzliches zur Charakteristik der neueren und neuesten Scholastik* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1918) was among the first to label early Franciscans 'neo-Augustinians'. Etienne Gilson followed suit in his voluminous works, including his *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (New York: Random House, 1955), as did other leading medievalists like Bernard Vogt, in 'Der Ursprung und die Entwicklung der Franziskanerschule,' *Franziskanische Studien* 9 (1922).

³⁴ Victorin Doucet, 'Prolegomena in librum III,' 88: *sed momentum, ni fallimur, Summae Halensianae in hoc consistit, quod Omnia elementa, theologica scilicet et philosophica, huius traditionis augustinianae in ea*

This opinion continued to be perpetuated in some form by the major scholars of scholasticism in the early twentieth century, including not only Gilson and Ehrle, but also De Wulf, Mandonnet, and Grabmann. Following Gilson, many have credited Bonaventure with articulating in a mature form the ‘Augustinian-Franciscan’ system laid down by Alexander and his colleagues. As a result, Bonaventure has come to be regarded as the chief representative of early Franciscan thought, and the significance of his predecessors has been largely disregarded.³⁵ Even Bonaventure, however, has suffered relative neglect, owing to his perception as an immature counterpart to his Dominican contemporary Thomas Aquinas, and to his great Franciscan successor, John Duns Scotus.³⁶

In the effort to accommodate the Aristotelianism of the day, Scotus is said to have rejected or at least radically revised many of the ‘Augustinian’ positions of his predecessors, in ways that anticipated the rise of modern theology and philosophy. As the first truly pivotal medieval Franciscan thinker, Scotus has become the focal point for scholars working on the Franciscan school. As noted above, Bonaventure takes second place, given the relative unoriginality of his thought—and that of his generation—by comparison to Scotus and his. For the same reason, the study of Bonaventure’s thought has seemingly been taken to suffice in terms of the study of the early Franciscan school as a whole.

colliguntur, ordinantur atque defenduntur Aristotele licet iam invadente. Quare et merito fundamentum Scholae augustino-franciscanae saec. XIII communiter salutatur.

³⁵ Etienne Gilson, *The Philosophy of St Bonaventure* (Chicago: Franciscan Press, 1965). See also A-M. Hamelin, ‘L’école franciscaine de ses débuts jusqu’à l’occamisme,’ *Analecta mediaevalia Namurcensia* (Louvain: Nauwelaerts, 1961). Christopher Cullen, *Bonaventure* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

³⁶ This perception has been perpetuated most famously by Maurice de Wulf, *Medieval Philosophy: Illustrated from the System of Thomas Aquinas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1922).

For this reason, it is no surprise that only a handful of books and articles have been written on the *Summa Halensis* or its supposed authors since the study of scholasticism gained momentum in the late nineteenth century. The situation is starting to change, as new research is produced on specific topics in the *Summa* that acknowledges its nuances. This research is cited at appropriate places within the chapters of this book and on the bibliography. Also worth mentioning are two volumes on the *Summa Halensis* which the present author has edited on the basis of papers delivered at a series of conferences she organised in 2018, with financial support from the European Research Council.³⁷

These two volumes represent the first coherent and semi-comprehensive body of secondary literature on the text which takes recent advances in research into consideration. As for research conducted by earlier generations, most of this treats relatively detailed and even obscure topics in early Franciscan thought, and does not therefore provide a general assessment or re-assessment of the school's scholarly objectives or identity.³⁸ With some notable exceptions, any general studies that do exist tend to perpetuate longstanding assumptions about its relative unoriginality in what are ultimately only brief analyses of the early Franciscan school.³⁹

³⁷ These volumes are forthcoming with Brill in 2019/20.

³⁸ Michael W. Ashdowne, *The Development of the Notion of Satisfaction in the Theology of Redemption from St Anselm to the Summa Fratris Alexandri* (Rome: Gregorian University, 1964). Franciso Martinez Freseda, 'La doctrina de la plenitud de la gracia de Cristo en la Summa Halensis,' *Antonianum* 4:4 (1979), 622-80. Timothy J. Johnson, 'The *Summa Alexandri* Vol. IV and the Development of the Franciscan Theology of Prayer,' *Miscellanea Francescana* 93 (1993), 524-37.

³⁹ Leone Veuthey, 'Scuola Francescana: Filosofia, teologia, spiritualia,' in *Maestri Francescani* 7, ed. Lorenzo de Fonzo (Rome: Miscellanea Francescana, 1996). Antonio Poppi, *Studia sull'etica della Prima Scuola Francescana* (Padua: Centro Studi Antonini 24, 1996). Leonardo Sileo, 'I primi maestri francescani di Parigi e di Oxford,' in *Storia della teologia nel medioevo*, ed. G. d'Onofrio (Casale Monferrato: Piemme, 1996), 645-97.

In fairness, there is some basis for the claim that the *Summa* relies heavily on Augustine. As the Prolegomena to the third volume of the *Summa* confirm, the *Summa* text cites over 100 works by the Bishop of Hippo, with 4814 explicit and 1372 implicit quotations. In total, these quotations account for more than half of the quotations in the *Summa*. While some quotes are derived from spurious works, a large number of the references are genuine. That stated, a similar percentage of quotations from the Sentences of Peter Lombard, to say nothing of other early scholastic works, also consist of texts by Augustine. This raises the question what it means to be an ‘Augustinian’ or to quote Augustine or any other authority in the early scholastic period. That is the question I will address at the end of this chapter on the basis of the following discussion of the scholastic context of the *Summa Halensis*.

The Scholastic Context

The origins of medieval scholasticism have been variously located depending on how scholasticism itself is defined.⁴⁰ In the most basic sense, scholasticism can be understood simply to entail the use of reason or logic in explicating matters of faith. This basic form of scholasticism gained in popularity near the end of the tenth century, which witnessed a

A notable exception is James A. Weisheipl, ‘Albertus Magnus and Universal Hylomorphism: Avicbron—A Note on Thirteenth-Century Augustinianism,’ in *Albert the Great: Commemorative Essays*, ed. Francis J. Kovach and Robert W. Shahan (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 239-60.

⁴⁰ Martin Grabmann traced the origins of early scholasticism all the way to late antiquity in his famous *Die Geschichte der Scholastischen Methode*, 2 vols (Freiburg i.B.: Herder, 1909-11). Others identify a more formal beginning with Anselm, such as Richard Southern, *St Anselm: A Portrait in a Landscape* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972).

revival of interest in the available works of Aristotle, principally his *Organon* or logical works, along with Porphyry's *Isagoge*.⁴¹ Most of these texts had been translated in the sixth century by Boethius, who also produced commentaries on most of them, and on Cicero's *Topics*, along with his own treatises on syllogisms, definitions, and logical analysis.⁴²

An especially noteworthy proponent of early scholasticism was Anselm of Canterbury, who made it his mission to underline the profound logic of the Christian beliefs that God is 'the supreme good, needing no other yet needed by all others for their being and well-being,'⁴³ and indeed that he is as Triune and Incarnate.⁴⁴ Famously, Anselm invoked either 'necessary' or 'fitting' reasons for beliefs about God, and his Incarnation in particular. While the Incarnation is in some sense necessary if we parse it in an appropriate way, for example, creation, while a contingent or freely willed act of God, is nonetheless fitting in terms of his character.

As sophisticated as Anselm's reasoning in these respects was by comparison to many of his monastic forebears, it did not yet equate in formal terms to the methodology that would soon gain momentum at the impetus of Peter Abelard (1079-1142). Abelard and others like him represented part of a growing class in the twelfth century of independent scholars who were not associated with a monastic or cathedral school. Their rise to power was facilitated by the growth of towns and of an urban middle class, which required a basic level of literacy for work in various trades and crafts.

⁴¹ G.R. Evans, *Old Arts, New Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).

⁴² John Marenbon, *Boethius* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 17ff. That stated, some of Boethius' translations did not survive into the Middle Ages and were translated anew in the twelfth century.

⁴³ F.S. Schmitt, *S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi Opera Omnia* (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Friedrich Fromann Verlag, 1968), prologue to the *Proslogion*.

⁴⁴ See Anselm's *Monologion* on the Trinity and his *Cur Deus Homo* on the Incarnation.

While education was previously the prerogative mainly of those being groomed for monastic life or positions of power in the church, the independent masters catered to this new market of laypeople who could increasingly afford to pay them. These independent masters competed vigorously for students and thus for salaries that were often won over in the end by those who gained the greatest reputation for scholarly acumen and charisma. In this regard, Abelard enjoyed stunning success.⁴⁵ His work represents a milestone in the development of scholasticism, not least because of his efforts to formalize a method for using reason in exploring matters of faith.

In his *Sic et non*, most significantly, Abelard listed many quotations from key patristic authorities which seemed to argue both ‘for’ and ‘against’ different theological perspectives.⁴⁶ His purpose in preparing this work was evidently to produce a resource for reasoning through apparent contradictions in authoritative sources. Although he seems to have operated on the assumption that seemingly opposing viewpoints could in fact be reconciled, at least in a way that was consistent with his own theological commitments, nevertheless, some of Abelard’s critics, above all, Bernard of Clairvaux, believed that his way of opening authoritative opinions up to debate challenged the authority of authorities in ways that might eventually lead impressionable students to give up on the faith.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ On the scope of Abelard’s influence, see D.E. Luscombe, *The School of Peter Abelard* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

⁴⁶ Marcia L. Colish, ‘Peter Abelard and His Followers,’ in *Peter Lombard*, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 47-52.

⁴⁷ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition*, vol. 3: *The Growth of Medieval Theology 600-1300* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 223ff.

In voicing this view, Bernard gave expression to a concern that had dogged the growing interest in dialectic throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries.⁴⁸ Although the controversy continued, even into the early thirteenth century, Abelard's work inaugurated something like a point of no return in the trend towards reasoning about matters of faith, which would only gather momentum subsequently. In that sense, Abelard laid the foundations for the discipline of 'theology', which is in fact a Greek term that appears for the first time in Latin in Abelard's writings.⁴⁹ From his time, consequently, the discipline continued to develop rapidly as other more comprehensive compilations of authoritative citations were prepared to facilitate theological inquiries.⁵⁰

The most famous of these is the four books of Sentences by Peter Lombard, completed around 1150, with a final revision being finished between 1155-57.⁵¹ This work was unique for the way it cogently organized thoroughly-researched authoritative quotations, containing key patristic and Scriptural opinions ('*sententiae*'), according to theological topics

⁴⁸ On earlier debates over dialectic, see T.J. Holopainen, *Dialectic and Theology in the Eleventh Century* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1996).

⁴⁹ On Abelard, see John Marenbon, *Medieval Philosophy: An Historical and Philosophical Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2007).

⁴⁹ G.R. Evans, *Old Arts, New Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980).

Peter Abelard, *Theologia scolarium, Petri Abaelardi opera theologica: Corpus christianorum continuatio mediaevalis XIII*, ed. E. M. Buytaert and C. J. Mews (Turnhout: Brepols, 1987).

⁵⁰ Nancy Spatz, 'Approaches and Attitudes to a New Theology Textbook: The Sentences of Peter Lombard,' in *The Intellectual Climate of the Early University* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1997), 27-52. On page 29, Spatz discusses other compendia besides Abelard's *Sic et non* (1121-2), including the anonymous *Summa Sententiarum* (c. 1138-41), and the Sentences prepared by Gilbert of Poitiers (c. 1140s), Robert Pullen (c. 1142-4), Robert of Bologna (c. 1150), and Robert of Melun (c. 1152-60).

⁵¹ Philipp Rosemann, *Peter Lombard* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004). Marcia L. Colish, *Peter Lombard*, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 1994).

such as God (vol. 1), creation (vol. 2), redemption (vol. 3), and sacraments (vol. 4), where many earlier scholarly works revolved around the narrative of the Bible. In organizing citations according to these categories, Lombard became one of if not the first to impose a ‘systematic’ structure on questions of faith.

After Lombard, we witness a proliferation of works that are based in some way around this structure and indeed exhibit their own structuralizing tendencies. For instance, Peter of Poitiers and Praepositinus wrote *Summae* of sorts around 1168-70 and 1206-10, respectively. Though these works did not comment on the Sentences directly, they incorporated many of its main divisions and were otherwise based loosely upon Lombard’s model.⁵² In addition to these *Summae*, the Parisian scholar-turned-Cardinal Stephen Langton (c. 1150-1228) wrote an actual commentary on Lombard’s Sentences between 1206-7.⁵³

Where most *Glossae*—Alexander’s being something of exception—would have offered only terse remarks intended primarily to explain the teachings of the Lombard himself, Langton’s commentary set out to develop his own theological vision within a broadly Lombardian framework. Langton is also credited with having divided the Bible into the chapters that are still used today. Just prior to the appearance of Langton’s Commentary—more specifically, in 1200—the University of Paris came into semi-formal

⁵² Nancy Spatz, ‘Approaches and Attitudes to a New Theology Textbook,’ 29. Early *Summae* were based loosely on the Sentences and incorporated its main divisions but did not comment on the text per se: examples include Peter of Poitiers (c. 1168-70) and Praepositinus (c. 1206-10).

⁵³ Riccardo Quinto, ‘Stephen Langton,’ in *Medieval Commentaries of the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, ed. Philipp W. Rosemann (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 49. See also Philipp W. Rosemann’s account of Langton in, *The Story of a Great Medieval Book: Peter Lombard’s Sentences* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 55-60.

existence when King Philip II of France issued a charter that represents the first extant grant of privileges to masters who had gathered in the city.⁵⁴

In 1215, the guild of masters were formally recognized and statutes laid down to endow them with specific rights and privileges proper to their status as a *universitas magistrorum et scholarium*.⁵⁵ These rights, which were reinforced by Pope Gregory IX in the 1231 bull *Parens scientiarum*—the so-called ‘magna carta’ of the University of Paris—solidified the work that had been done by independent masters in Paris from the latter half of the twelfth century and gave new momentum to efforts to standardize the pedagogical practices and method education deployed there.⁵⁶

As is well known, Alexander of Hales deserves a great deal of credit for these developments, and indeed for institutionalizing Lombard’s systematized approach to the articles of faith, and thus the discipline of theology overall. Alexander produced his own Gloss on the Sentences—only the second of its kind—between 1220-1.⁵⁷ Between 1223-7,

⁵⁴ Gordon Leff, *Paris and Oxford Universities in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (London: Wiley, 1968), 28. See also the classic by Hastings Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, vol 1: Salerno-Bologna-Paris (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1895).

⁵⁵ See Nathalie Gorochoy, *Naissance de l’université: Les écoles de Paris d’Innocent III à Thomas d’Aquin (v. 1200-v. 1245)* (Paris: Honoré Champion 2016). Palemon Glorieux, *Repertoire des maîtres en theologie de Paris au XIIIe siècle*, 2 vols (Paris: Vrin, 1933-4). Ayelet Even Ezra, *Ecstasy in the Classroom: Trace, Self, and the Academic Profession in Medieval Paris* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2018).

⁵⁶ Spencer Young provides an excellent introduction to what he calls the *Parens scientiarum* generation in, *Scholarly Community at the Early University of Paris: Theologians, Education and Society, 1215-1248* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014). See also Ian Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University c. 1100-1330* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014). Richard W. Southern, in *Scholastic Humanism and the Unification of Europe*, 2 vols (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995-2001), describes the transition from monastic to scholastic pedagogical practices.

⁵⁷ On Alexander’s role in developing the Sentences Commentary tradition, see Nancy Spatz, ‘Approaches and

moreover, he grouped the many chapters of its four books into a smaller number of distinctions. This facilitated his efforts to employ the Sentences, in addition to the Bible, as a basis for his lectures and disputations in the university.

Initially, English scholars like Robert Grosseteste and Roger Bacon opposed this use of the Sentences as a textbook for teaching, on the ground that it might undermine the authority of the Bible, or at least the priority the Bible was given in terms of the morning lecture timetable. Nevertheless, Alexander persevered in establishing the Sentences as a central fixture of university theological education by the 1240s.⁵⁸ Furthermore, he advocated writing on the Sentences as the condition for gaining the title of ‘master in theology,’ the medieval equivalent to a doctoral degree. As a result of his efforts, the practice of commenting on the Sentences that began in the 1220s became a normal part of university tradition by the 1230’s and 40’s. Increasingly, moreover, authors of these commentaries offered more elaborate theological reflections than can be found in the terse remarks on authoritative *opinions* of the early Glossa.⁵⁹

In some cases, Sentences commentaries formed the basis for more extended theological *Summae*, which started to be written in a more concerted way.⁶⁰ The most significant *Summae* of the period include the *Summa de bono* (c. 1230) by Philip the Chancellor (c. 1160-1236) and the *Summa aurea* (1220-5) of William of Auxerre (d. 1231),

Attitudes to a New Theology Textbook,’ 27-52. Philipp W. Rosemann, *The Story of a Great Medieval Book*, 60-70.

⁵⁸ Nancy Spatz, ‘Approaches and Attitudes to a New Theology Textbook,’ 31.

⁵⁹ Marcia L. Colish, ‘The Sentence Collection and the Education of Professional Theologians in the Twelfth Century,’ in *The Intellectual Climate of the Early University: Essays in Honor of Otto Grundler* (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, 1997), 1-26.

⁶⁰ Marcia L. Colish, ‘From the Sentence Collection to the Sentence Commentary and the Summa: Parisian Scholastic Theology, 1130-1215, in *Studies in Scholasticism* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 1-29.

who themselves did not write Sentences Commentaries. These texts represent a significant development beyond earlier efforts of a similar nature. While they appropriate many questions and a systematizing drive from Lombard, they also exhibit marked creativity in terms of the way questions are organized within a broader framework of the author's devising.

Although such Summae represent a significant moment in the emergence of the genre of theological writing, they could not ultimately rival the *Summa Halensis* in terms of the scope and magnitude of the project undertaken. As Ayelet Even-Ezra has shown in the chart below, the number of questions the Summa addresses far exceeds other major Summae of the period like that of Praepositinus of Cremona and William of Auxerre, and this chart does not even capture the number of questions that are delineated within those questions.⁶¹ The sheer size of the Summa explains why a team was required to complete the text. As will be demonstrated below, its goals were far more ambitious than one or even two scholars—John and Alexander—could fulfil on the basis of a lifetime's worth of work.

⁶¹ Ayelet Even Ezra, 'The Organizing Principles of the *Summa Halensis*,' in *Early Franciscan Thought: Sources and Context*, ed. Lydia Schumacher (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming).

While some of the questions posed by the Summa were drawn from previous writings, including Lombard, and earlier contemporaries like Philip and Auxerre, many of them were presented by the Summa either in a new form or for the first time. In this regard, the Summa's interaction with the recently translated works of Aristotle and his Arabic interpreter Avicenna had a significant role to play. These authors introduced the West to a host of philosophical questions that the Summa became the first major systematic theological text to incorporate extensively. By the time of Bonaventure, these questions were taken for granted and thus their sources tended to be less explicitly acknowledged.

Since Bonaventure has been the focus of past research on the early Franciscan intellectual tradition, consequently, the extensive influence of Arabic sources particularly on the formation of Franciscan thought has been greatly overlooked. The main reason for the mushrooming size of the Summa is precisely this, namely, that it expanded the scope of theological inquiry to include philosophy, particularly as learned from Avicenna.⁶² That said, the arrangement of the questions it posed—philosophical or otherwise—and the structure of the text was in many ways unique. The authors of the Summa situated existing and new debates within their own larger conceptual framework.

In doing so, Alexander of Hales and his colleagues produced what can undoubtedly be described as the first great Summa of a period that quickly became known for its vast theological syntheses. This text served as a model for many of the great Summae that were composed by subsequent authors both in structural, methodological, and conceptual terms. The example it offered of bold, creative and structured thinking encouraged other authors to

⁶² As William J. Courtenay has shown, it would later become common for theologians to pursue philosophical inquiries, 'Philosophy in the Context of Sentences Commentaries,' in *Il Commento filosofico nell'occidente latino (secoli XIII-XV)*, ed. G. Fioravanti, C. Leonardi, and S. Perfetti (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), 445-67.

engage in similarly expansive and original projects. Moreover, the topics for debate and conversation that it introduced continued to preoccupy and animate successors for generations.

By way of illustration, it is worth noting the extent to which this *Summa* influenced Thomas Aquinas, who only began work on his magisterial *Summa Theologiae* twenty years after the *Summa Halensis* was itself completed. As a comparison of these two *Summae* confirms, Aquinas adopted many topics that had first been introduced in the *Summa*. Such topics include his famous ‘Five Ways’ to prove God’s existence, his treatment of natural and eternal law, and the structure of his account of the soul.⁶³ While Aquinas situated these topics within his own frame of reference, which reflected doctrinal positions that differed greatly from the *Summa*’s on many points, his reliance on them in formal terms is often very apparent.⁶⁴

As such an early model for theological and philosophical inquiry, the *Summa* inevitably does not exhibit the same level of polish and sophistication that can be found in later scholastics texts. At times, for instance, its conclusions and opinions are clearly stated, but in other cases, the *Summa*’s own position is somewhat ‘buried’ in an unexpected part of the text, such as a reply to an objection, rather than in the main body of the response to the question the text addresses. For a scholar approaching this work for the first time, it can take a while to discern the contours of the *Summa*’s arguments, and it can be tempting to jump to the conclusion that the *Summa* simply rehearses arguments from earlier authorities when in fact it does much more.

⁶³ Thomas Aquinas, *Quaestiones disputatae De anima*, ed. Bernardo Carlos Bazán (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1996).

⁶⁴ See for example Beryl Smalley, *Studies in Medieval Thought and Learning from Abelard to Wyclif* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1981), 121-211.

In addition to the topics for discussion the Summa codified, the text appropriated an unprecedentedly broad range of sources. As we have already seen, it charted the way forward for the appropriation of newly discovered Greco-Arabic sources, which will be discussed at greater length in chapter three. At the same time, it paid homage to classic sources like Augustine, Ambrose, Boethius, Gregory the Great, Hilary of Poitiers, and other early Christian thinkers. Along with these, the Summa includes references to more recently recovered Greek patristic sources like Pseudo-Dionysius, John of Damascus, and Gregory of Nyssa. Also remarkable is its manner of incorporating many eleventh and twelfth-century works, some of which, most notably Anselm, had otherwise been largely neglected to that time.⁶⁵

As regards this period, it is worth mentioning not only Anselm but also Bernard of Clairvaux, Richard of St Victor and the aforementioned contemporaries like William of Auxerre and Philip the Chancellor, who remain important dialogue partners throughout the Summa. Not surprisingly, the Summa also draws heavily on Scripture, and in particular, the widely circulated *Glossa ordinaria*. This was the standard edition of the Vulgate Bible at the time, which also included a collection of marginal glosses from the Church Fathers.⁶⁶ From the Carolingian period to the fourteenth century, the Glossa was treated as the standard commentary on Scripture, although the most popular version of it in our period was credited to the school of Anselm of Laon c. 1120.

There are a number of reasons why the authors of the Summa may have set out to compose such a vast compendium of sources and questions. At one level, there was a need for an up-to-date version of the kind of work that had been composed by Peter Lombard, who

⁶⁵ Scott Matthews, *Reason, Community and Religious Tradition*, 54.

⁶⁶ E. Ann Matter, 'The Church Fathers and the *Glossa Ordinaria*,' in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West*, ed. Irena Backus (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 83-111.

endeavoured to assemble in an orderly fashion the source-texts and topics that were widely discussed at the time, although he did so with much theological creativity. The Summa likewise aimed to encompass not only longstanding but also cutting-edge sources and questions, which had become popular in the generation since Lombard's time. Through teamwork, the Summists ensured that no conceivable matter of contemporary theological or philosophical significance was left out. In this regard, volume 2.2 is particularly interesting for the way it seeks exhaustively—more exhaustively than any work to date—to catalogue all conceivable forms of sin that a person might commit.⁶⁷ This volume reveals not only a systematizing drive amongst the Summists but also their concern to provide a theological text, at least one part of which was relevant to the work of hearing confessions and administering corresponding acts of penance.

Although the Summa is devoted in part to cataloguing key texts and themes of interest in the day, its objectives were clearly broader and more ambitious than simply to compile the most comprehensive set of sources and questions to date. For instance, it was likely undertaken at least in part for the sake of showcasing exceptional creativity and intellectual prowess of early Franciscan intellectuals, not to say their superiority to the secular university masters who were opposed to the growing role they played in the life of the university.⁶⁸ This opposition was due not least to the fact that the teaching offered by the mendicants posed a threat to the seculars' quest to attract students and thereby maintain a sufficient salary.

⁶⁷ Odon Lottin, *Psychologie et morale au XII^e et XIII^e siècles*, vol. VI (Louvain: Abbaye du Mont César, 1960), 207-11).

⁶⁸ The quarrel is treated by Yves Congar, 'Aspects ecclésiologiques de la querelle entre mendicants et séculiers dans la seconde moitié du XIII^e siècle et le début du XIV^e, ' *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 28 (1961), 35-151.

In 1229-31, the conflict came to a head after a series of riots broke out amongst students during a festival. In an effort to restore order, queen regent Blanche of Castille dispatched soldiers who killed and wounded some of the students. In protest, the university suspended lectures and ordered all teaching in the city to cease for the foreseeable future. The entire body of university masters and students subsequently dispersed to other centres of learning in Europe, with the exception of the mendicants, who had been granted a status independent of the university by the Pope.⁶⁹ The strike was eventually resolved, and the university's members returned to Paris in April of 1231, when a number of papal directives were issued, in particular, the bull *Parens scientiarum*, which established the university's rights and independence of the city and especially the cathedral.

By the time these directives came into effect, however, the Dominicans in particular had already gained the upper hand on the Parisian educational scene. Although the Franciscans did not have a school of their own in the period of the 'great dispersion', the Dominicans opened the doors of theirs not only to their own novices but also to a broader clientele, including students who had remained in Paris after the strike. By charging very low fees, they colonized education in the city to an extent that made it difficult for the masters to recover their student base—and their salaries—on their return.

The tensions were exacerbated by the fact that the mendicants—first the Dominicans and later the Franciscans—gradually took over key chairs in the university faculty of theology, which then became a permanent possession of the relevant religious order. During the great dispersion, for instance, then Bishop William of Auxerre appointed the Dominican Roland of Cremona to a chair which he was not required to return in 1231. Thus, the chair eventually passed to a Dominican successor, Hugh of St Cher. Around the time of his

⁶⁹ Bert Roest, *A History of Franciscan Education*, 53.

appointment, Roland's master John of St Giles, an existing chair in theology, assumed the Dominican habit without relinquishing his chair, bringing another chair into the order.

Alexander of Hales did likewise when he joined the Franciscans in 1236.

While the mendicants held three chairs by this time, they had come to occupy twelve of the fifteen chairs that had been established by 1253, when another strike occurred with which the mendicants did not comply.⁷⁰ The intense controversy that ensued was only eventually resolved by papal fiat in 1257. In the midst of this controversy, it is no surprise that Pope Alexander ordered William of Melitona to complete the *Summa Halensis* in 1255 and to enlist all the help he needed from other leading Franciscan scholars. The goal of the Pope in so doing was surely to put an end to fabricated charges of heresy that were designed de-legitimize their involvement in the university by placing their orthodoxy and scholarly credentials on full display. The competition for chairs, for students, and for academic prestige was fierce.

The race was on to see which school of thought could prevail under the intellectual demands of the time, and the Franciscans sought to prove themselves apt to the challenge. Yet theirs was no mere lust for power. As recent research has shown, a scholarly reputation was quickly becoming the litmus test for religious, social, and political credibility overall, given the rising levels of literacy.⁷¹ In that sense, the preaching, ministry, and popular influence of the Franciscans depended heavily upon their ability to prove their worth as academics. This is something they arguably did in abundance with the *Summa Halensis*, which took advantage of Alexander and perhaps even more so, John's, scholastic achievements to set the stage for the further development of the burgeoning discipline of

⁷⁰ Ibid., 54.

⁷¹ Neslihan Senocak, *The Poor and the Perfect: The Rise of Learning in the Franciscan Order 1209-1310* (Ithaca: Cornell, 2012).

systematic theology.

The Scholastic Method

This Summa, like the Sentences commentaries that preceded it, employed a more advanced form of scholastic method that Abelard had earlier formulated. This method, also invoked in lectures and disputations, involved delineating arguments both for ('pro') and against ('contra') a given position. While these arguments were sometimes unattributed or 'self-made', they were other times drawn from a range of authoritative sources, from which brief quotations or *opinionones* were extracted. After marshalling these arguments, the author presented his own solution or response (*solutio/respondeo*) to the question, defending one or the other side of the argument. In this regard, he generally invoked further authorities or glossed those already quoted. Finally, he delivered a response to each of the objections or points raised—whether by an authority or by himself—in connection with the other side of the argument (*ad objecta*).

For scholars steeped in the tradition of source-research, this argumentative strategy can give the impression that scholastic thinkers actually endorsed or opposed the views of the authorities they cited in either the 'pro' or 'contra' sections of a given article and especially in the *solutio* or *respondeo* section. Thus, a medieval thinker who quotes, say, Augustine in positive terms is often supposed to be more or less 'Augustinian' on the topic under consideration. However, this way of thinking about scholastic texts is quickly problematized by the study of the texts themselves.

In the *Summa Halensis*, for example, there are many cases in which a source is used in inconsistent or even contradictory ways that bespeak a relative disregard for the accuracy of its interpretation. An introductory question in the Summa on the knowledge of God

contains 70 references to Augustine, who is by far the most quoted authority in this section; 34 of these references are to Augustine's *ep.* 147 and often to the same passages from it. Interestingly, these selections are used in both the 'pro' and 'contra' as well as 'respondeo' and 'ad objecta' sections. By thus placing Augustine in an argument with himself, the Summists clearly did not intend to interpret or bolster Augustine's own views but use him as a cipher for their own efforts to consider different sides of a matter on which they ultimately sought to present their own position. The use of Augustine in this instance performed what we might describe as a purely dialectical function.

While the Summa uses a similar strategy in treating other questions, its method is far from uniform, even in its invocation of one and the same authority across different contexts. In outlining the doctrine of the Trinity, for example, the Summa takes great care fairly accurately to represent good portions of Richard of St Victor's *De Trinitate*, as part of an effort to appropriate his doctrine of the Trinity. In another context, it offers a scathing critique of philosophers like Aristotle and Avicenna who failed to articulate a doctrine of the Trinity.⁷² At the same time, however, we will discover in a further chapter that the Summa imported many of Avicenna's positions in metaphysics and psychology into its own framework, often under the name of other authorities like Augustine. This was in keeping with a broader tendency to read ideas from one authority into the writings of another who for whatever reason was regarded as 'more authoritative'.

These examples and many more suggest that the Summists, like other scholastics at the time, were just as inclined to subject authorities to criticism, revision, eisegesis, distortion, or manipulation, as they were faithfully to employ them. But to what end? According to Marcia Colish, 'the biggest reason for their appeal to authorities was to marshal

⁷² *SH*, Vol. 1, Tr Int, Q2, M1, C3 (n. 10), 18.

support from them for their own campaigns.⁷³ As we have seen, the means they employed to these ends varied considerably. While there are some clear cases in which scholastics came out for or against a source whose contents are fairly accurately represented, there are many others in which authoritative quotations are simply used as ‘proof texts’ for personal opinions, without much regard for whether the authority in question actually held those opinions. The practice of proof-texting was facilitated by works like Lombard’s *Sentences*, which wrenched authoritative *sententiae* from their original context.⁷⁴

That is not to say that scholars at the time were necessarily unfamiliar with that context. A learned theologian like Alexander of Hales was likely well-acquainted with the works he cited, even though he and others at the time may have relied on compendia like the *Sentences* or even on memory as a more convenient point of reference. Whether or not a scholar was deeply familiar with his sources, however, the point of invoking them was not to restate them but to innovate by means of them. This does not mean that scholars at this time exhibited no regard for tradition. As Scott Matthews notes, the key to innovation for them ‘involved the interpretation of sources provided by tradition: they had to ‘find themselves’ within those sources.’⁷⁵

In doing so, they inevitably extrapolated conclusions that far surpassed those that can be found in the authorities themselves. But as Mary Carruthers has insightfully observed, authorities in this period were not authors but texts, and texts are not static entities but

⁷³ Marcia L. Colish, ‘The Sentence Collection and the Education of Professional Theologians in the Twelfth Century,’ 11.

⁷⁴ Richard Dales, ‘The Understanding of Aristotle’s Natural Philosophy by the Early Scholastics,’ in *The Intellectual Climate of the Early University* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1997), 145.

⁷⁵ Scott Matthews, *Reason, Community and Religious Tradition*, 50.

materials to be interpreted and digested by a reader.⁷⁶ In turn, the interpretation of the medieval reader, which was ineluctably designed to suit specific occasions or address specific questions, became part of the meaning of the text, ‘which was in a continual process of being understood, its plenitude of meaning being perfected and completed.’⁷⁷ As Carruthers notes, it is precisely the fact that the text generates further texts that renders it authoritative.⁷⁸ By giving new meanings of their own devising to authoritative quotations, in summary, scholastics believed themselves to be furthering the tradition rather than undermining it altogether.

In the example given above, for instance, it is obvious that the Summists would not have dared to devise a new theory of the knowledge of God without finding some way to situate their views within the larger, if loosely defined, tradition or stream of thought that is traceable to Augustine, the chief authority on the matter. In this regard, their strategy was evidently to illustrate that there are a number of ways to parse Augustine’s account and thereby to lend credibility to their own. A similar method is discharged when it comes to the Summists’ use of Anselm, whose arguments for God’s existence and the necessity of the Incarnation, among others, are creatively turned to new ends.

What we learn in such cases is that scholastics often developed their ideas in conversation with authorities who stood for a cause or represented a tradition of thought with which they wanted to associate themselves, or which they wanted to champion in a new way, in order to legitimize their own thinking. This certainly seems to be the case with the Summa’s use of Dionysius and Richard of St Victor, which allowed them to locate

⁷⁶ Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 235.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 262.

themselves with reference to the growing mystical and affective strand of the faith. The reason Augustine was so popular was that he was regarded as the founder and chief proponent of the longstanding and trusted intellectual tradition. To quote him was to situate oneself on the right side of Christian intellectual history.

As these examples indicate, authoritative support was paramount for making one's own case for a particular claim. At the same time, however, the case itself was always more than the sum or function of its sources. In fact, it was the product of a deliberately innovating thinker or school of thought. As Colish reiterates, the scholastics 'were not mere compilers who just recapitulated patristic authorities. Rather, they emerge as theologians with definite, independent and sometimes partisan views.'⁷⁹ They appealed to authorities in order to defend their own positions, first and foremost.

An especially noteworthy by-product of this approach was that scholars at the time tended to become associated with the authorities they commandeered, so that their opponents would ordinarily name those authorities rather than their contemporaries when responding to their views. For example, Thomas Aquinas famously rejected a version of Anselm's argument which was clearly the version developed by his Franciscan counterparts. In cases where there was no obvious authority to name, an opponent would simply go by the name of 'quidam', or 'a certain man'.⁸⁰ Evidently, it was not considered polite to name opponents personally.

Whatever the reason, the practice of using 'codenames' for colleagues has led to a great deal of confusion on the part of modern readers, who are primed to take the texts at face value. But this is precisely the method of reading which the analysis above has established as

⁷⁹ Marcia L. Colish, 'The Sentence Collection and the Education of Professional Theologians in the Twelfth Century,' 19.

⁸⁰ See Marcia L. Colish, 'Authority and Interpretation in Scholastic Theology,' in *Studies in Scholasticism*, 5.

inadequate to the interpretation of scholastic texts. As we have seen, these texts presuppose a complex attitude towards authorities that manifests in sophisticated and diverse forms of argument that are ultimately tailored towards the end of advancing a personal or party intellectual agenda. In this light, we must reconsider the common scholarly assumption, mentioned previously, that early Franciscans had no other aim than to ‘systematize’ Augustine.

Augustine’s Authority and Innovation in Early Franciscan Thought

In appealing extensively to Augustine’s authority, I have noted already that Franciscans were not alone. As a good deal of recent research has shown, many of the major authors in the medieval period, to say nothing of other periods, positioned their work in some way with reference to Augustine, the unquestionable ‘authority of authorities’.⁸¹ Thus, Anselm, Hugh of St Victor, Bernard of Clairvaux, Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, and even Aquinas, have all been described in some way as ‘Augustinians’.⁸² As the foregoing analysis would lead us to expect, however, these thinkers imported Augustine into their own frames of reference, supplementing his work with other sources with their own goals in mind. In the process, they tended to generate remarkably different and sometimes even

⁸¹ See Eric Saak, ‘Augustine and His Late Medieval Appropriations (1200-1500),’ in *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 39-50. See also Jeremy C. Thompson, ‘The Medieval Manuscript Tradition of Augustine’s Works: An Overview from 400-1200,’ in *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine*, 51-8.

⁸² Michael Dauphinas, Barry David and Matthew Levering (eds), *Aquinas the Augustinian* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University Press, 2007).

incompatible ‘Augustines’, watering down significantly the idea of what an Augustinian even is.

What, then, does it mean to be an Augustinian in the middle ages? The quest for a common denominator is likely to produce very little in the way of agreement on specific doctrinal issues. However, it does highlight the widespread acceptance of a broadly Christian Neo-Platonic outlook in which all things proceed from or rely on God and reflect or seek him in their turn. Although this outlook could manifest in a range of strands and forms, traceable even to thinkers other than Augustine, it turned at the most basic level on a top-down view of the world in which God himself is the basis for all things that exist and indeed for our knowledge of them.

In this connection, there was a common notion linked to Augustine that all knowledge starts from within: God impresses his image on the soul, and it is on this basis that we know him and everything else that he had made. Whether Augustine himself advocated the exact form of inside-out thinking that has been attributed to him is certainly open to question, as I have argued elsewhere.⁸³ Yet there are other reasons why we should think twice before assuming that medieval thinkers were working with the ‘real Augustine.’ As I will elaborate in the next chapter, his reception in this period was heavily mitigated by the wide circulation of spurious works that have almost no bearing on Augustine’s own thinking. When it comes to developing a theory of knowledge and knowledge of God, for example, virtually all of the heavy lifting in the *Summa Halensis* is accomplished through the invocation of the pseudo-Augustinian *De spiritu et anima*, which was probably written in 1161 by a Cistercian monk

⁸³ Lydia Schumacher, *Divine Illumination: The History and Future of Augustine’s Theory of Knowledge* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

Archer of Clairvaux to his colleague Isaac of Stella, although questions of authorship—single or otherwise—have been debated.⁸⁴

As I will elaborate in the chapter on philosophical context, the fact that this text had much in common with the work of Avicenna partly explains why theologians at the time, above all, Franciscans, apparently felt justified in using his work to parse some of Augustine's more opaque claims. The incorporation of Avicenna was precisely what allowed them to extend their theological inquiries to include more detailed questions about natural philosophy and human nature, without at once undermining their belief that all knowledge comes somehow from God.

This top-down way of thinking differed quite significantly from the approach Aquinas would develop a generation later, partly under the inspiration of Aristotle.⁸⁵ Admittedly, Aquinas remained broadly indebted to Neo-Platonism insofar as he believed all things come from and return to God. On this basis, he ultimately argued that faith is necessary for the perfection of knowledge, insofar as it establishes the divine source and end of what we know and thus in some ways reconfigures how we see it. Nevertheless, he did not regard faith as essential to knowledge as such. In his opinion, human reason is perfectly capable of exploring the world and even inferring God's existence on the basis of what is accessible to it in the empirical world.

For obvious reasons, Aquinas' method could not help but seem blasphemous by the conservative lights of his Franciscan contemporaries, for whom the impossibility of knowing

⁸⁴ G. Théry, 'L'authenticité du De spiritu et anima dans Saint Thomas et Albert le Grand,' *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 10 (1921), 373. On the authorship question see Bernard McGinn, *Three Treatises on Man: A Cistercian Anthropology* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1977), 65.

⁸⁵ Mark D. Jordan, *The Alleged Aristotelianism of Thomas Aquinas* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1992).

anything apart from divine aid and initiative was axiomatic. Because the works of Aristotle remained relatively untouched during the Summa's generation, however, the factions between Dominicans and Franciscans over bottom-up versus top-down ways of thinking had not yet fully emerged. In fact, there was considerable harmony between Dominicans like Hugh of St Cher and Guerric of St Quintin and Franciscans like Alexander of Hales and John of La Rochelle.⁸⁶

The same is true of William of Auxerre, Philip the Chancellor and Alexander of Hales, before he became a friar, all of whom the Summa quotes extensively. When we consider the work of this generation, in all its diversity, we also notice a remarkable synergy. This can arguably be traced to the broadly top-down outlook that motivated much scholarly work at the time. Although this outlook was to some extent common currency in the day, this book will evidence how Franciscans elaborated it in a unique and more mature way that cannot be found in any of their immediate predecessors or contemporaries. In this regard, we should not assume that their only motivation was to assert the legitimacy of their participation and even their primacy in the university context and in the world of intellectual and spiritual authorities more generally.

Their reasons for developing such an extensive intellectual system may have had something to do with their distinctive Franciscan spirituality, which appears to have resonated deeply with the major ideological trends of the time. This would certainly explain why Alexander of Hales—who was at the cutting edge of those trends—found it natural ultimately to join the Franciscan order—and to bring his many scholarly accolades with him. Whether there is any direct connection between the philosophical and theological positions early Franciscans developed and the spiritual and ministerial vision of Francis of Assisi is

⁸⁶ Hubert Philipp Weber, 'The Glossa in IV Libros Sententiarum by Alexander of Hales,' in *Medieval Commentaries of the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, ed. Philipp W. Rosemann (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 49.

naturally difficult to determine, not least because the authors of the Summa itself do not mention any specific reasons or motivating factors underlying the authorship of the text.

Nevertheless, I will show in subsequent chapters that there are many cases where we can at least identify compatibilities between the vision and persona of Francis, which will be described in the next chapter, and the scholarly positions the Summists formulated. Of course, the Summists themselves do not make explicit connections between their religious ethos and their intellectual tradition. This is because it was not in the nature of the Summa genre or university practice more generally to refer to the religious or other motives for writing.

As Bert Roest has shown, however, the Franciscans were steeped in the ethos of their tradition in their day-to-day lives, and so we should not be surprised let alone question whether they brought their spirituality to bear in everything they did.⁸⁷ Whatever the role Francis may have played in the development of early Franciscan thought, there is no doubt that the first Franciscan scholars worked from a desire to formulate a distinctly Franciscan scholarly identity at a time when there were many resources that lent themselves effectively to doing so.⁸⁸ The goal in other words was to lay down a Franciscan intellectual tradition for the very first time.

Here, it is worth recalling that the *Summa Halensis* was ultimately authored entirely by Franciscans. The exclusively Franciscan authorship of the Summa—at a time when there

⁸⁷ Bert Roest, 'Religious Life in the Franciscan School Network (13th Century),' in *Franciscan Learning, Preaching and Mission (c. 1220-1650)* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 64-5. On page 66, Roest notes that while a common scholarly opinion has been that learned friars were permitted to skip regular religious services in the order, this was only the case when services conflicted with lectures, or in the case of students at the University of Paris, who enjoyed more leniency to accommodate their studies.

⁸⁸ Bert Roest, *A History of Franciscan Education*, 125.

was very little evidence of the tensions between Franciscans and Dominicans that would later arise—serves to confirm that a certain style of top-down thinking was starting to become unique to the Franciscan school. As one author puts it, Franciscans at this time ‘were thinking like a community, not merely as a group of scholars who happened to be working at the same institution.’⁸⁹

The partial purpose of this work is to deconstruct the ‘Augustinian’ label that has long been tagged to the Franciscan school to downplay its significance and to show in the case of specific doctrines how early Franciscans harnessed a wide range of sources, not least Augustine, to the end of articulating and defending an intellectual tradition all their own.⁹⁰ Far from a mere rehearsal of prior tradition, the *Summa* in which they achieved this feat provided a basis for the formation of future Franciscans who in many cases merely built on and extrapolated the implications of the foundations it laid.

In light of its distinguished provenance, we might conclude that theirs was one of the most innovative and influential intellectual systems of all time. This system entails a unique theological vision, theistic proof, and an account of the divine nature, the Trinity, Christology, Incarnational and moral theology, which I will delineate in detail after the following two chapters which will respectively elucidate the Franciscan and philosophical contexts in which these doctrines were conceived.

⁸⁹ Scott Matthews, *Reason, Community and Religious Tradition*, 72.

⁹⁰ Jacques Bougerol makes this point about Bonaventure’s Franciscan use of the Victorines, Dionysius, Augustine, etc. in, ‘The Church Fathers and *Auctoritates*,’ 334. See also Bert Roest’s valuable deconstruction of Franciscan Augustinianism in chapter five of *Franciscan Learning, Preaching and Mission c. 1220-1650*, ‘Franciscan Augustinianism: Musings about Labels and Late Medieval School Formation,’ 111-31. Francois-Xavier Putallaz also queries the validity of the ‘Augustinian’ label for Bonaventure and later Franciscans in his *Figures franciscaines de Bonaventure a Duns Scot* (Paris: Cerf, 1997).

2. THE FRANCISCAN CONTEXT

Since modern research on the Franciscan school first started to gather momentum in the late nineteenth century, scholars have debated the so-called ‘Franciscan Question’, that is, the question as to which sources provide the most reliable picture of Francis of Assisi and early Franciscan life.⁹¹ The answer to this question is decisive for determining whether the early developments in the order that facilitated its institutionalization were ultimately consistent with the original vision of Francis or led to its perversion. One of the most significant of these developments involved the establishment of educational programmes.

As we have already seen, the composition of the *Summa Halensis* was part of a larger effort to get early Franciscan education off the ground and indeed to assert the authority of Franciscan scholars in the university context. Thus, the question arises whether the *Summa* itself was part of a larger process of departing from Francis’ original vision for his order, or whether it represents an authentic effort to lay down an intellectual tradition, whereby gifted novices and even seasoned scholars might be inducted into the Franciscan not to mention academic way of life.

The present chapter will work towards an answer to this question by seeking to understand what was known or believed about Francis and the nature of the Franciscan mission during the period of the *Summa*’s authorship.⁹² For reasons that will soon emerge,

⁹¹ Many thanks to William Short OFM for helpful comments on this chapter. An excellent survey of the Franciscan Question is provided by Jacques Dalarun, ‘The Magic Circle of the Franciscan Question,’ in *The Misadventure of Francis of Assisi*, trans. Edward Hagman (St Bonaventure: The Franciscan Institute, 2002), 21-58. See also the French version, Jacques Dalarun, *Vers une résolution de la question franciscaine: La Légende ombrienne de Thomas de Celano* (Paris: Fayard, 2007).

⁹² *Analecta Franciscana sive chronica allaque varia documenta ad historiam Fratrum Minorum spectantia*, vol

the texts that are most relevant for this purpose include the writings of Francis himself and the early biographies. Among Francis' writings, the most significant are undoubtedly the various rules for the order that he had a hand in composing as well as his final Testament. As Duncan Nimmo has shown in his study of Franciscan history, there is little evidence that the saint's other writings, which comprise only a very slim volume, were widely circulated at the time in question.⁹³ Thus, they will not form the focus of this study.

In addition to the Rule and Testament, I will examine the three official 'Lives of Francis' that Thomas of Celano was commissioned to write in 1228, 1232-9, 1244-7, respectively. By outlining the contours of these texts below and expanding upon the historical contexts in which they were written, I will expand on the Franciscan religious context in which the *Summa Halensis* was composed. Through these means, I aim ultimately to establish the *Summa Halensis* as part of an effort faithfully to work out Francis' vision in new and more complex circumstances.

10: *Legendae S. Francisci Assisensis saeculis XIII et XIV conscriptae* (Quaracchi: Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1887). *Fontes Franciscani*, ed. Enrico Menesto, Stefano Brufani, Giuseppe Cremascoli, Emore Paoli, Luigi Pellegrini, Stanislao da Compagnola, Giovanni Boccali (Sta. Maria degli Angeli: Edizione Porziuncula, 1995). Kajetan Esser, *Die opuscula des Hl. Franziskus von Assisi: Neue textkritische Edition* (Grottaferrata: Spicilegium Bonaventurianum XIII, 1976); republished in a smaller volume *Opuscula sancti patris Francisci Assisiensis* (Grottaferrata: Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1978). A new edition has been produced by Carlo Paolazzi, *Scripta Francisci Assisiensis* (Rome: Collegio S. Bonaventura, 2014). The best edition in English of the works and medieval writings about Francis is *St Francis of Assisi Early Documents: The Founder*, ed. Regis J. Armstrong, J.A. Wayne Hellman, William J. Short (Hyde Park: New City Press, 2001); *The Saint* (2000); *The Prophet* (2001).

⁹³ Duncan Nimmo, *Reform and Division in the Medieval Franciscan Order from St Francis to the Foundation of the Capuchins* (Rome: Biblioteca Seraphico-Capucina, 1987), 72.

At the same time, I will provide a basis for efforts I will make in subsequent chapters to highlight connections between the Franciscan ethos and Franciscan thought. As noted already, highlighting the connections between the example of Francis and early Franciscan thought will be part of my strategy for showing that, far from a mono-dimensional textbook of ‘Augustinian’ thought, the Summa engages a wide range of sources in the effort to fashion a wholly innovative and in many respects distinctly Franciscan intellectual tradition.

The Writings of Francis in Context

The Franciscan order began as a counter-cultural response to the trends of society at the time. In contrast to the growing phenomenon of urban development, Francis initially called his followers to work and preach in the countryside, far from the troubles and temptations of the city. Where city-dwellers sought to accumulate wealth that had previously been available only to the elite, Francis shunned all possessions and above all, money. In every sense of the term, he sought to defeat the wisdom of this world with the foolishness of God.

This strategy served him well in the early years of the order’s existence, when the brothers were only twelve in number and had reasonably few needs to speak of. On attaining this size in 1209, Francis and his followers travelled to Rome from their native Umbria to offer Pope Innocent III an oral presentation of the rule they observed, which evidently attained his verbal approval.⁹⁴ Although this rule does not survive in a written form, historians hypothesize that it contained a core vision outlining the friars’ intent literally to

⁹⁴ William J. Short, ‘The Rules of the Lesser Brothers,’ in *The Writings of Francis of Assisi, vol. 1: Rules, Testament and Admonitions Rules*, ed. Michael Blastie et al. (St. Bonaventure NY: Franciscan Institute, 2011), 17-220.

emulate the example of Christ, by giving up everything to identify with the poor, as Christ did for the human race; to work in exchange for daily provisions and to refuse money and all forms property, including permanent housing; to serve and give away whatever might be asked of them by others; and ultimately to call those they met to repent of worldly preoccupations in similar ways.⁹⁵

As time went on, this original Franciscan ideal of evangelical poverty was refined and elaborated. A key moment in this process occurred in 1215 when the fourth Lateran Council decreed that all new religious movements without a written Rule should adopt or revise an existing rule. Although the Franciscans were technically subject to this mandate, Francis emphatically rejected the Rules of Augustine, Benedict, and Bernard of Clairvaux, insisting on his call to a unique form of life. Because of the earlier approval he had received for it from Innocent III, which was later confirmed by Honorius III, however, Francis was evidently exempted from the Lateran mandate and permitted to uphold his evolving rule. This enjoyed official recognition even though an official rule for the order was only published in 1223.⁹⁶

By this time, the order had grown to include up to 5,000 members—largely uneducated laymen who were attracted by Francis’ charismatic message; by 1260, approximately 30,000 friars were likely enlisted.⁹⁷ The sheer size of the order meant that Francis’ ideal of begging from day to day for food and shelter could no longer be observed in a way that would not intrude on the friars’ mission to preach repentance and serve the poor

⁹⁵ J.A. Wayne Hellmann, ‘St Francis of Assisi: Saint, Founder, Prophet,’ in *Francis of Assisi, History, Hagiography and Hermeneutics in the Early Documents*, ed. Jay M. Hammond (Hyde Park: New City Press, 2004), 21.

⁹⁶ William Short made these comments in an earlier draft of this chapter.

⁹⁷ Rosalind Brooke, *Early Franciscan Government: Elias to Bonaventura* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, repr. 2004), 283.

and downtrodden of society.⁹⁸ The friars needed some form of housing, and thus, property, to avoid becoming an undue burden to benefactors and to have a site from which to minister. As became increasingly clear, moreover, their ministry itself could not easily be conducted outside the towns, where the needs for repentance and charitable service were most urgent.

In order to serve in these ways, new members of the order, both lay and learned, required training, which in turn necessitated books and other educational resources. What soon became clear was that the rule needed to be rewritten in a way that allowed for the order's ministry to continue in sheer practical terms. In this connection, Francis had willingly acknowledged early on his inability to manage an order that exceeded the size of the initial brotherhood. While insisting on maintaining certain standards for himself, he may have realised if not explicitly stated that his personal ideals were impractical and even incompatible with the thriving of his friars on a larger scale. In 1220, consequently, Francis abdicated his power over administrative matters to Brother Peter Caetani, to his vicar Brother Elias, and his own appointee as Protector of the order, Cardinal Ugolino.

The abdication took place at the so-called 'chapter of the mats', a general chapter of the order, which became known for the way the friars made dwellings out of woven reed panels around the Portiuncula, a church that had become their base. At this chapter, the rule came up as a central topic for discussion. As recent scholarship has shown, the original *forma vitae* had been subject to numerous additions, not subtractions, after 1209, and the voices that weighed in on its formulation during this period included many in addition to from Francis.⁹⁹ Although Francis had strictly speaking relinquished his right to determine the structure of his

⁹⁸ Michael Mollat, *The Poor in the Middle Ages*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New Haven Yale University Press 1986).

⁹⁹ This is shown by C. Paolazzi in *Scripta Francisci Assisiensis* and was pointed out to me by William Short.

order, his followers nonetheless deferred to him as the order's founder when it came to re-defining the terms of the order's existence.

In the text of 1221, therefore, Francis exercised his prerogative to reiterate his earlier bans on the ownership of property, money, books, and dwellings. Notwithstanding his apparent willingness to permit the order's structures to be adapted to the needs of growth, he obviously struggled to re-frame his vision in a more practicable way that seemingly departed from ideals to which he still held himself accountable. For reasons that are not entirely clear, however, the rule of 1221 did not become the official rule. The rule that was approved or *bullata* in 1223 is a shorter and much more polished version of the 1221 rule that was likely prepared with the involvement of Ugolino and Francis' vicar, Brother Elias. It remains the official rule of the order to this day.¹⁰⁰

Similar to the previous two rules, the rule of 1223 called would-be friars to give all their possessions to the poor and commit to a life of absolute poverty, humility, and simplicity, never accepting money or any possessions in a literal attempt to follow the example of Christ. The main substantial difference between this rule and that of 1221 concerns the fact that the former does not mention the use of books, although it re-iterates the command not to accept property. Additionally, the sanctioned rule makes only one statement about learning, namely, that those who do not know their letters should not be anxious to acquire them on entering the order, but should focus instead of the ministry of prayer. Later on, Francis' final Testament added in this connection that everyone who enters the order with a trade should continue to practice it, including clerics and academics.

¹⁰⁰ Michael W. Blastic, 'Minorite Life in the Regula Bullata: A Comparison with the Regula non Bullata,' in *The Rule of the Friars Minor 1209-2009*, ed. Michael Cusato (St Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2010), 99-120.

Although the 1223 rule does not depart significantly from Francis' own stated wishes, the very fact that that his rule of 1221 was supplanted has led scholars like John Moorman to conclude that Ugolino and Elias deliberately misplaced or concealed and re-wrote the 1221 text in an attempt to shape the order in ways Francis would not have approved, presumably after the model of the more academic Dominicans.¹⁰¹ In this regard, Moorman followed the lead of Paul Sabatier, whose biography of Francis in 1902 instigated a new wave of interest in Franciscan studies.

In this biography, Sabatier teased out a multi-faceted thesis according to which efforts on the part of the Pope and clerically-minded friars to institutionalize the order ultimately corrupted Francis' original vision. In this regard, Franciscan clerics were supposedly motivated not only by a desire to increase the power and prestige of the order but also, by the same token, to render it more useful in imposing the moral and pastoral reforms of Lateran IV, which the Roman Curia had little other means for successfully enacting at the time. Sabatier's basic thesis, no longer taken seriously by most scholars, has also been elaborated by other major Franciscan historians, such as Raphael Huber and more recently, Duncan Nimmo.¹⁰²

In contrast, the recent research of Raoul Manselli, Giovanni Micolli, Jacques Dalarun and others has cast 'the drama of Francis as an episode in the eternal conflict between ideals

¹⁰¹ E. Lempp, *Frere Elie de Cortone* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1901); John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 50.

¹⁰² Paul Sabatier, *Vie de S. Francois d'Assise* (Paris: Fischbacher, 1894). Paul Sabatier, *Life of St Francis of Assisi*, trans. Louise S. Houghton (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1902). John Moorman, *The Sources for the Life of St Francis of Assisi* (Manchester, 1940). John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order*. Raphael Huber, *A Documented History of the Franciscan Order from the Birth of St Francis to the Division of the Order 1182-1517* (Milwaukee: Nowiny Publishing Apostolate, 1944).

and the pressures of reality, rather than the result of a conflict between the Roman Curia and his [Francis'] original proposal.¹⁰³ According to these authors, Francis' original purposes were not undermined by leaders in his own order who disregarded them. The order simply struggled for a time, as any large and rapidly growing institution would, to translate vision into reality. As noted above, Francis was clearly aware of the tensions between ideal and reality that his followers encountered, and of his own inability to resolve them. Through reliance on and even submission to others, he committed himself to the resolution of those tensions, even while maintaining a certain lifestyle that was important for his own conscience.

This is evidenced by the final testament Francis wrote before he died.¹⁰⁴ Here, the 'little poor man' witnesses 'to the personal call he had received to model his life on the Gospel and briefly characterized the apostolic life as he had it written in the Rule.'¹⁰⁵ As Francis explains, he and his early followers made no claim to learning and refused to accept any property. After reminding his brothers how early members of the order had lived, Francis urged them to be content with poverty, not to seek privileges or concessions from the Roman Curia, even to preach, and to preach only with the permission of local bishops, to honour theologians and priests, and not to add any gloss or interpretation to the rule.

By some accounts, this testament was Francis' way of expressing dissatisfaction with recent developments towards the institutionalization of the order and the ways in which the

¹⁰³ Jacques Dalarun, *The Misadventure of Francis of Assisi*, 41-3. Raoul Manselli, *St Francis of Assisi*, trans. Paul Duggan (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1985). Giovanni Micolli, *Storia d'Italia, vol 2, part 1* (Turin, 1974), 761. S. Attal, *S. Francesco d'Assisi* (Padua: Il Messaggero di S. Antonio, 1947), 332-3

¹⁰⁴ J.A. Wayne Hellmann, 'The Testament,' in *The Writings of Francis of Assisi, vol. 1: Rules, Testament and Admonitions Rules*, ed. Michael Blastic et al. (St. Bonaventure NY: Franciscan Institute, 2011), 221-52.

¹⁰⁵ Rosalind Brooke, *The Coming of the Friars* (New York: American Council of Learned Societies, 2008), 24.

Roman Curia, not least the Pope, was intervening to make this possible. As Rosalind Brooke aptly observes, however, the testament is exactly that, namely, a brief account of Francis' personal calling and efforts to remain faithful it until his very end. In short, it contains Francis' autobiography, rather than a survey of the ideal he prescribed for his followers.¹⁰⁶

This is confirmed by the fact that the text fails to mention Francis' main prescriptive not to accept money. If anything, Francis' admonition at the end of his testament to adhere to the rule of 1223 entails implicit consent to the revisions his administrators had made to his own prescriptions. It suggests that Francis 'saw no essential difference between the various redactions of the rule',¹⁰⁷ which was ultimately perfected by those who were more competent to finalize its contents. In deferring along these lines to more learned friars, it could be argued, Francis decisively embodied Franciscan humility and left his followers to do the same, by finding new ways to organise the order in accordance with his founding principles.

An exceptional example of this humility concerns his willingness to accept the introduction of education into the order during his own lifetime. After 1223 and before his death, Francis wrote to Anthony of Padua, asking him to teach theology to the friars, provided this did not conflict with their ministry and prayer. This request clearly indicates that Francis was not opposed to learning in the order, notwithstanding the rather ambivalent statements about it in the rule, which indicates that friars should not own books other than

¹⁰⁶ Rosalind Brooke, *Early Franciscan Government: Elias to Bonaventura* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, repr. 2004), 106-7; idem., *The Coming of the Friars*, 24.

¹⁰⁷ Rosalind Brooke, *Early Franciscan Government*, 89; cf. William J. Short, 'The Rule and Life of the Friars Minor,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Francis of Assisi*, ed. Michael P. Robson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 50-67.

those necessary for their office, or pursue learning they did not already possess it.¹⁰⁸ Such statements seem to suggest that in the early 1220s, the question of how to educate novices without prior training had not really arisen in the order. Although Francis soon came to appreciate the importance of learning to his order's ministry, the rule does not pro-actively prescribe or prevent it, precisely because it was not originally part of Francis' mission.

The eventual rise of learning the order was likely precipitated in part by the reality that the very condition of the order's existence at a time when the church was sharply curtailing the activities of lay and thus largely unlearned initiatives was some baseline level of orthodox belief and teaching.¹⁰⁹ Above all, however, it was introduced by clerical members, who started joining the order early on, bringing with them the benefit of prior theological training. These members appear to have co-existed relatively peacefully with the predominantly lay and unlearned members of the order, who gained informal education during the early years as and when they could from the likes of Anthony or others, who were not necessarily Franciscans.

Such *ad hoc* instructors included Alexander of Hales, who held a chair at the University of Paris in the 1220s and permitted friars to attend his lectures.¹¹⁰ In 1224, Franciscans acquired the first of their own lectors when four English scholars at the University of Paris joined their ranks, namely, Haymo of Faversham, Simon of Sandwich,

¹⁰⁸ The books permitted included the breviary for cleric brothers and the Psalter for literate lay brothers; clerical brothers could presumably possess books needed for preaching and hearing confessions. Thanks to William Short for emphasizing this point. Pietro Maranesi, *Nescientes litteras. L'ammonizione della Regola Francescana e la questione degli studi nell'Ordine (sec. XIII-XVI)* (Biblioteca seraphico-capuccina, 61) (Rome: Istituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 2000).

¹⁰⁹ Bert Roest, 'Francis and the Pursuit of Learning,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Francis of Assisi*, 168.

¹¹⁰ Bert Roest, *A History of Franciscan Education* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 12.

Bartholomeus Anglicus, and Simon Anglicus. The development anticipated the official creation of the office of lector in 1227-8, which saw the instalment of Franciscan lectors in study houses around the Franciscan world.

By this time, the notion of Franciscan education had achieved a level of intelligibility that was lacking in the first days of the order's existence. The friars were set to become a learned order, of the kind their Dominican counterparts had envisaged from the beginning. That is not to say that they simply 'copied' the Dominican model as some have supposed.¹¹¹ The pathway to education is one they forged in their own way, and as we will discover over the course of this book, to their own ends. In this connection, Sabatier, Moorman, Nimmo, and the like have advanced the claim that a growing class of *literati* in the order staged an overthrow of the so-called *zelanti*, some of whom had known Francis and were passionate about preserving his original lifestyle. After Francis' death in 1226 particularly, their rise to power, aided by the Roman Curia, supposedly led to the demise of the original ideal of absolute poverty, humility, and simplicity.

However intriguing, this interpretation of the situation is not borne out by historical fact, and in particular, a request the friars collectively presented to Ugolino—now Pope Gregory IX—to issue a bull in 1230, namely, *Quo elongati*, that qualified the rule in ways that allowed them formally to remove all obstacles to education and their institutionalization more generally.¹¹² This bull stated that Franciscans were thenceforward permitted to make use of properties, including books, that were strictly speaking owned by certain emissaries or 'spiritual friends' (*nuntii*) of the order. At the request of the friars in 1245, Pope Innocent IV

¹¹¹ Marian Michèle Mulchahey, *First the Bow is Bent in Study: Dominican Education* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1998). Rosalind Brooke, *Early Franciscan Government*, 58.

¹¹² Neslihan Senocak, *The Poor and the Perfect: The Rise of Learning in the Franciscan Order 1209-1310* (Ithaca: Cornell, 2012), 63.

issued the further bull *Ordinem vestrum*, which permitted them to hold possessions and money not only for ‘use’, per *Quo elongati*, but also for ‘convenience’.

This bull additionally transferred the ownership of all ‘Franciscan’ property from the friars’ donors or representatives directly to the Holy See, giving the Franciscans complete independence in terms of the way they used money and goods. In 1260, Bonaventure permanently lifted the privileges entailed in this bull in order to counteract their abuse by some friars. What remained in force, however, was another decree the friars had requested of the Pope in 1230, which rendered Francis’ Testament, especially its command not to gloss the rule, non-legally-binding for the friars. In acquiescing to this request, Gregory IX freed the friars from any formal responsibility to live in the state of absolute dispossession about which Francis reminisces in this context.

With legal obstacles removed regarding the establishment of convents, study houses and other organizational structures, the order of the 1230’s entered a period of significant academic development. In Paris, this development was facilitated by the move of the Franciscans in 1231 from the humble accommodation they had previously occupied outside of Paris into the grand Couvent des Cordeliers, a gift from King Louis IX of France, which burned down in 1580.¹¹³ Thus established in Paris, the Franciscan academic cause was soon advanced further when Alexander of Hales entered the order in 1236, starting work immediately on the *Summa Halensis*, which was widely disseminated in both Franciscan and non-Franciscan study libraries and extensively consulted at least through the time of Duns Scotus.¹¹⁴

In addition to this text, Alexander along with John of La Rochelle, Odo Rigaldi, and

¹¹³ As William Short has noted to me, the convent was rebuilt after 1580 but then was largely destroyed again during the French Revolution.

¹¹⁴ Bert Roest, *A History of Franciscan Education*, 126.

Robert of Bastia co-wrote a commentary on the rule, clarifying questions that friars around the Franciscan world had raised with reference to it. The team was commissioned to undertake this task by Haymo of Faversham, the first Parisian master to serve as minister general of the order, a role he filled between 1240-44. After its completion in 1241-2, this commentary of the four masters (*Expositio quatuor magistrorum*) was evidently circulated to all the Franciscan provinces, which is suggestive of its extensive influence.¹¹⁵ What is notable about this commentary is that it makes no mention of the question of studies within the order. Instead, it focuses almost exclusively on the importance of observing the strictures of absolute poverty according to the terms of *Quo elongati*, advising friars not to pursue excessive privileges and relaxations beyond those already instated.

In these respects, the commentary serves to indicate that the question of learning had become separate from the question of poverty over the course of the order's early history. To be poor, humble, and simple was not to be unlearned but to pursue learning and other aspects of Franciscan life in a way that observed the principle of absolute poverty, as qualified by recent papal decrees. The upshot of the rule commentary, in summary, is that learning had been integrated into the friars' self-understanding and vocation to such an extent that the viability of Franciscan education was not even in doubt during this time. In fact, Franciscan scholars from the Halensian Summists onward ultimately determined that, insofar as devotion to Christ in the Franciscan manner is the key to acquiring wisdom regarding all things that exist through him, learning is essential to the Franciscan lifestyle, and indeed, the Franciscan

¹¹⁵ *Expositio Quatuor Magistrorum super Regulam Fratrum Minorum*, 1241-2, ed. P.L. Oliger (Rome: Storia e Letteratura 30, 1950). David Flood (ed.), 'The 1242 Commentary,' in *Early Commentaries on the Rule of the Friars Minor*, vol. 1 (St Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2014), 1-30.

outlook essential to all valid learning.¹¹⁶

According to Senocak, this ‘new Franciscan identity, essentially a combination of absolute poverty and learning, was in many ways a unique product of the thirteenth century.’¹¹⁷ The early Franciscan self-understanding is articulated most memorably in Bonaventure’s *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, which was written in 1259 to affirm the place of studies in achieving Franciscan ends. Far from questioning the legitimacy of learning in relation to the Franciscan ideal of absolute poverty, this text establishes incontrovertibly that friars of this period saw it as indispensable to achieving the sort of perfection Francis prescribed.

In keeping with this vision, Haymo of Faversham instituted a new policy in 1241 to admit to the order only friars who were learned or otherwise ‘useful’ to the order and exemplary in some way. There are a number of reasons why Haymo may have instigated this significant change in the recruitment strategy of the order, setting the stage for the eventual replacement of its lay population with more prestigious members, especially academics. The first and most fundamental reason was that education lent a level of authority to the friars, which was becoming essential to effective ministry in this period.

As noted previously, levels of literacy and education were rapidly rising amongst the general populace at the time. Although Lateran IV imposed reforms that called the secular clergy—those who were not members of religious orders—to rise to the challenge of interacting with a more learned laity, the success of this effort was marginal. The newfound intellectual and social freedoms they enjoyed combined with the relative moral and intellectual ineptitude of the clergy engendered new levels of disregard for the authority of

¹¹⁶ Lydia Schumacher, ‘Bonaventure’s *Journey of the Mind into God*: A Traditional Augustinian Ascent?’, *Medioevo* 37 (2012), 201-29.

¹¹⁷ Neslihan Senocak, *The Poor and the Perfect*, 143.

church.¹¹⁸ As a matter of fact, the growth of the university, especially at Paris, and the scholastic form of theology, had given rise to a new type of authority, namely, that of the university masters. Without a voice in this sector, the friars and other ministers lacked credence and leverage in the wider world.

A similar principle applied within the church itself, where able minds were needed not only to serve as lectors, ministers, preachers, and confessors, but also to engage in negotiations on Rome's behalf with secular clergy, monks, and even secular rulers.¹¹⁹ As members of an elite class that could competently serve in these respects, respected academic friars quickly came to be regarded as a sort of 'scholarly branch' of the Roman Curia: the arbiters of intellectual and even spiritual power.¹²⁰ Their role in ecclesial and church-state affairs became so essential that Senocak postulates that the relative decline or eclipse in this period of other religious orders, such as the Benedictines and Cistercians, may be attributable to their lack of scholarly status by comparison to their mendicant counterparts.

Not surprisingly, success bred success for the friars, insofar as their scholarly reputation tended to attract high-flying university academics, who in turn drew in students, who sought to study under the most prestigious masters of the day. The attraction of the Franciscan order for students was further enhanced by the prospect of a free education, for which considerable funding would otherwise be required—funding which some families

¹¹⁸ Alexander Murray, *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 302-3.

¹¹⁹ Amanda Power, 'Franciscan Advice to the Papacy in the Middle Ages,' *History Compass* 5.5 (2007), online journal; cf. Alexander Murray, *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages*, 265-6. William J. Courtenay, 'The Parisian Faculty of Theology in the Late Thirteenth and Early Fourteenth Centuries,' in *After the Condemnation of 1277: Philosophy and Theology at the University of Paris in the Last Quarter of the Thirteenth Century*, ed. J. Aertsen, K. Emery, A. Speer (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter, 2001), 235-47.

¹²⁰ Neslihan Senocak, *The Poor and the Perfect*, 170.

simply did not possess or did not want to devote to an education in theology, which was not always perceived as the most useful career path.¹²¹ In light of these considerations, it is not difficult to see why the Franciscans moved so swiftly not only to establish internal educational structures for the training of novices but also to create pathways to higher education in theology, and even to academic positions in the universities. Their involvement in the university ultimately proved key to gaining the followers and the voice that would allow them to further Francis' mission in the contemporary society.

The Biographies of Francis in Context

In the midst of the historical developments described above, the Franciscan order witnessed the proliferation of biographical material, which significantly formed the perception of Francis at the time. Foremost amongst these biographies is the life of Francis that Pope Gregory IX commissioned Thomas of Celano to write around the time of the saint's canonization in 1228. Although Thomas joined the order relatively early in its history—perhaps in 1215—and was among its first learned members, not much is known about his life except that he does not appear to have interacted with Francis extensively and therefore based his account primarily on the testimony of witnesses.

Nevertheless, the life Thomas completed in 1229 evidences his skill as a literary craftsman, amply suited to the task of depicting the character of Francis. As a papal initiative, this life was intended to promote the memory and emulation of Francis not only within the order but also within the Church as a whole.¹²² The idea was to capitalize in the best sense of the term on the recently departed saint's charisma for the purpose of inciting spiritual

¹²¹ Ibid., 183.

¹²² *St Francis of Assisi Early Documents: The Saint*, 174.

renewal. In this regard, Thomas provides what is undoubtedly the most complete and reliable account of Francis' life, consisting in three books which respectively describe his conversion and the early development of the order; his experience of receiving the stigmata or wounds of Christ towards the end of his life;¹²³ and his canonization.

Similar to other medieval legends, Celano's life sought to depict the saint *as a saint* and therefore did not shy away from references to the supernatural and the miraculous. That is not to say that its hagiographical and canonical nature undermines the historicity of the key moments in Francis' biography that Celano recounts, however. Although narrating historical events whether to do with the life of Francis or the early fraternity was not his main purpose, 'Thomas still presents a Francis situated in real places and connected to his concrete historical contemporaries including early followers.'¹²⁴ Following Francis' canonization, there was a need for new liturgical texts, to celebrate Francis especially on his feast day of 4 October—and the eight days following it—and at other relevant points in the year.¹²⁵

In 1230, consequently, Thomas drew on his first life to produce an abbreviated version for use within the celebration of the divine office, called the *Legend for Use in the Choir*. Shortly thereafter, Julian of Speyer completed a similar text based on *Celano I*, which was better suited to public reading during meals and gatherings of friars.¹²⁶ After Julian, other such accounts were produced for use in the feast day office, which was celebrated differently from friary to friary or from church to church, such that many different liturgical variations on Francis' story were soon produced.

¹²³ Octavian Schmucki, *The Stigmata of St Francis of Assisi: A Critical Investigation in Light of the 13th century Sources*, trans. Canisius Connors (St Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute, 1991).

¹²⁴ *St Francis of Assisi Early Documents: The Saint*, 176.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 311.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 363.

Another Celano biography has only recently been discovered; I will call it *Celano 3*.¹²⁷ The careful reconstruction of this long-lost text has evidenced that it was written for the exclusive use of the friars in the liturgical context. Most certainly, it was written between 1232-9 during the period when Elias was minister general of the Franciscan order, indeed, likely in the first years of his rule. Elias was deposed in complete disgrace in 1239 for his abuses of power, partly through the initiative of Alexander of Hales, John of La Rochelle, and Haymo of Faversham.¹²⁸ Thus, it is no surprise that Franciscans endeavoured to erase all memory of his reign, and of the special affection Francis had for him, to the point of blessing him uniquely on his death-bed.¹²⁹

Although it was destroyed in infamy, *Celano 3* displays certain unique features that render its significance ongoing. First of all, it provides a concise summary of the key events in the saint's life that were outlined in *Celano 1*. Because of the period of its authorship, moreover, it uniquely details certain historical events that had not transpired by the time *Celano 1* was completed, most importantly, the translation of Francis' body to the newly-constructed Basilica in Assisi on 25 May 1230.¹³⁰ As Dalarun notes in his introduction to *Celano 3*, however, 'the principal uniqueness of the rediscovered life is its thirty-three new posthumous miracles,'¹³¹ which recount how devotion to Francis or contact with relics led to immediate healing for many seriously ill persons.

¹²⁷ The French and English translations of the rediscovered life can respectively be found in Jacques Dalarun (ed.), *La Vie retrouvée de François d'Assise* (Paris: Editions Franciscaines, 2015) and *The Rediscovered Life of St Francis of Assisi by Thomas of Celano*, trans. Timothy J. Johnson (St Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2016).

¹²⁸ Rosalind Brooke, *Early Franciscan Government*, 154.

¹²⁹ C3, 30. Page references to *The Rediscovered Life of St Francis of Assisi by Thomas of Celano*.

¹³⁰ C3, xv.

¹³¹ C3, xvi.

Another significant emphasis of this work concerns Francis' love for animals, and in particular, his habit of treating them as though they possessed reason. The references to creation in this and other works by Celano suggest that Thomas had access to Francis' famous 'Canticle of Brother Sun' (1225), which exalts the Lord who makes himself known through the sun, moon, stars, wind, air, water, fire, and earth. From his narratives, we can also infer that he knew Francis' *Admonitions*, a collection of brief words of advice that the saint offered to others at different points in his life.

At the general chapter of the order in 1244, the minister general of the order—then Crescentius of Jesi—asked Thomas to write what has been known until now as the second life of Francis. As we have seen above, circumstances had changed significantly between 1228 and 1244, by which time the order had been firmly established as a learned institution and questions had arisen about how to undertake academic pursuits in keeping with the rule, on which Alexander and his colleagues had commented in 1242. In this historical context, the reason for the new commission was certainly not to contest the Franciscan life as it had come to be understood, but simply to re-iterate more emphatically the principles of poverty and charity to which Francis intended his followers to adhere, throughout changes in circumstance.¹³²

With this objective in view, Crescentius invited friars around the world, especially those who had known Francis, such as his three main companions, Leo, Rufino, and Angelo, to submit stories about experiences with the saint, which would inevitably be lost after the passing of the first generation of friars.¹³³ By ordering Thomas to commit these stories to writing, Crescentius sought to preserve Francis' legacy for future generations of friars. Where

¹³² Jacques Dalarun, *The Misadventure of Francis of Assisi*, 171.

¹³³ Raoul Manselli, *Nos qui cum eo fuimus: Contributo alla questione Francescana*, Bibliotheca Seraphico-Capuccina 28 (Rome: Istituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 1980).

Thomas' first life offered relatively complete coverage of the high points in Francis' biography, consequently, this life gives only a brief summary of his biography in a first book, which is followed by a much lengthier second book that gathers a vast range of anecdotes, which are organized under different headings.¹³⁴

Some of these headings bespeak Francis' unwillingness to accept property, books, and above all money, giving a clear window into the way of life he founded. Others illustrate his love of creation, and his gifts for intuition, prophesy, and human relations, setting him up as a model for relations amongst the friars and between the friars and the world. The text is heavily based, indirectly and directly, respectively, upon several earlier texts called the *Anonymous of Perugia* (1240-1) and the *Legend of Three Companions* (1241-7).¹³⁵ Both of these texts contain material sent to Crescentius in 1245 in response to his summons.¹³⁶

The *Anonymous* traces the growth of the order from the early fraternity of Francis into a significant religious movement.¹³⁷ While forty percent of the material is drawn from *Celano 1*, sixty percent is new and focuses on the fraternity more than on Francis himself. The *Legend of Three Companions* draws about a third of its material from *Celano 1*, a third from the *Anonymous*, and a third from an unknown source for knowledge of Francis.¹³⁸ It served possibly along with other testimonies from friars as the primary basis for *Celano 2*. Although Thomas did not complete his book until 1247 and thus after the main period of the Summa's

¹³⁴ The Celano translations in the *St Francis of Assisi Early Documents* volumes are based on the text of *Analecta Franciscana* X, 129-268.

¹³⁵ Maurice Causse, 'Des Sources Primitives de La Legende des Trois Compagnons,' *Collectanea Franciscana* 68:3/4 (1998), 469-91. As William Short noted to me, it is also even more likely that a good deal of material came from what later formed the basis for the *Assisi Compilation*.

¹³⁶ Jacques Dalarun, *The Misadventure of Francis of Assisi*, 175.

¹³⁷ *St Francis of Assisi Early Documents: The Founder*, 31.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 63.

authorship, it will factor into the present study, precisely because the material on which it was based was already either published in some form or circulated around the order during this time. Indeed, the remarkable feat Thomas achieves in this life is to capture the spirit of the order as it manifested itself during the time the Summa was being written.

That said, the Celano biographies have featured significantly, along with the Rule and Testament, in debates about the ‘Franciscan Question’. These debates have been intensified by longstanding confusion over the dating of the various biographies of Francis mentioned above. The confusion can be traced in many respects to Sabatier, who published a work called the *Mirror of Perfection* after publishing his *Life of Francis*. While Sabatier cites the *Mirror* as one of the early biographies of Francis, Theophile Desbonnets showed in a philological study published in 1988 that this work actually dates to 1318.¹³⁹ In this study, in fact, he provides for the first time a complete list of all medieval hagiographic sources about Francis with their dates. Even before the invaluable discoveries of Desbonnets, however, Sabatier’s dating had already been problematised by Ferdinand Delorme. In his 1922 edition of the *Assisi Compilation*, he shows that the *Mirror* draws heavily on this text, which is based upon stories prepared in response to Crescentius between 1244-60, but which was actually composed around 1311.¹⁴⁰

In collating these stories, the *Compilation* re-interprets them through the lens of controversies that arose in the early fourteenth century between the so-called ‘Spirituals’, who insisted upon the strict, literal observance of the original rule, and those later dubbed

¹³⁹ Theophile Desbonnets, *From Intuition to Institution: The Franciscans* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1988).

¹⁴⁰ Ferdinand Delorme, ‘Legenda antiqua S. Francisci du ms. 1046 de la bibliothèque de Pérouse,’ *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 15 (1922), 23-70, 278-332.

‘Conventuals’, who called for relaxations.¹⁴¹ Members of both parties—which eventually split—were accustomed to the organizational and educational structures that were firmly established by this time. However, they debated intensely the acceptance or even abuse of certain additional privileges, which were excessive even by the standard of established norms. For example, some friars had taken to receiving personal book donations, which held considerable monetary value.

As part of a campaign to curb friars who sought to profit from their status as friars, pro-Spiritual writers waxed nostalgic about the order’s original purity and sought re-capture a pristine Francis. In keeping with their polemical purposes, they were prone to exaggerate some of the historical realities, such as Francis’ opposition to learning or institutionalization.¹⁴² This was not because they envisaged a future in which education and organisation would be abolished in the order, but for the rhetorical effect of emphasising the grossness of any abuses of the benefits that Franciscans had come to enjoy. The hagiographical material which emphasizes most strongly Francis’ rigidity regarding practical matters can be found in the later works already mentioned, including the *Assisi Compilation* and the *Mirror of Perfection*, as well as the work of the Spiritual leaders Ubertino of Casale and Angelo Clareno, in particular, the latter’s *History of the Seven Tribulations of the Order of Brothers Minor*.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ David Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans: From Protest to Persecution in the Century after St Francis* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001).

¹⁴² Michael Robson, ‘The Growing Clamor for Reform,’ in *The Franciscans in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006), chapter 10, 119-29.

¹⁴³ David Burr (ed.), *Early Commentaries on the Rule of the Friars Minor, vol. 3: Angelo Clareno* (St Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute, 2014).

Although Sabatier did not know the *Compilation*, or for that matter, the *Anonymous*, his belief about the early authorship of the *Mirror* led him to conclude that the divisions it describes belonged to the time around and immediately following the life of Francis himself. As Neslihan Senocak has illustrated, Sabatier therefore instigated a tendency retrospectively to read Celano and other early texts in the light of the fourteenth-century controversies.¹⁴⁴ Thus, scholars like Moorman and Nimmo have since portrayed early Franciscan efforts to structure and educate the order as perversions of its original mission.

For his part, Dalarun stresses that the philological questions relating to the early biographies of Francis have all now been answered. The dates of these texts have been confirmed. Thus, the Franciscan Question regarding the earliest and most reliable version of those texts has been resolved. As a result, it is now possible clearly to differentiate—as Senocak has done recently—between the historical situation of the friars in the thirteenth versus the fourteenth centuries. While earlier Franciscans did inquire how best to observe the rule in its qualified form, they did not encounter the level of abuse—or extreme reactions against abuses—that began to emerge after their lifetime. For this reason, the biographies written during this period are not designed to counteract those abuses.

The most significant among these were of course the lives of Francis by Thomas of Celano, which were sanctioned by the order, and in at least one case, the papacy, and upon which all other reliable lives at the time were built. These lives along with all others in existence by that point were however ordered to be destroyed by the general chapter of Pisa in 1266. This mandate followed on from the previous chapter at Norbonne in 1260, where the

¹⁴⁴ Neslihan Senocak, *The Poor and the Perfect*, 8. See also Hilarin Felder, *Geschichte der wissenschaftlichen Studien im Franziskanerorden bis um die Mitte des 13. Jahrhunderts* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 1904).

then Minister General Bonaventure was commissioned to write an official life of Francis that would replace all prior *legendae*, a task Bonaventure completed between 1262-3.¹⁴⁵

Ultimately, it remains something of a mystery as to why the order would request a new legend from Bonaventure, let alone destroy all the others.¹⁴⁶ Yet the reasons that can be marshalled do not necessarily imply that there was something in the Celano biographies that was deemed necessary to erase from the institutional memory of the order. Indeed, one likely motivation for the new legend was simply to provide a more consistent picture of Francis and his way of life than can be inferred from the many different versions that now existed. As noted previously, every church and friary produced a different choral legend by which to remember Francis or celebrate his feast day.

The vast number of lives that resulted does not even include the writings, songs, or poems that were written under less official circumstances, many of which were far removed from the ethos of the order itself and so inevitably obscured the truth about Francis. As the number of inconsistent lives proliferated, the order seemingly needed to gain control on the portrait of Francis that circulated around the brotherhood, and indeed around the world. There was also an urgent need for a unified picture of Francis in the face of the charges levelled against the friars by the seculars, which were described in the previous chapter. Thus, the mandate to destroy all existing lives to which the Celano lives also tragically fell victim.

In producing a more unified portrait of the founder, however, Bonaventure relied heavily on the biographies that were officially sanctioned by the order. Most of his material derives from *Celano I*, which he synthesizes with the other Celano biographies, and to a lesser extent, Julian of Speyer's rendition of this text. In addition to his Major Legend, which was to be read during meals, he wrote a Minor Legend for liturgical celebrations, that is, for

¹⁴⁵ The best edition is the 1906 Quaracchi edition, published in *Analecta Franciscana* X.

¹⁴⁶ *St Francis of Assisi Early Documents: The Saint*, 495.

reading during the recitation of the office in the choir, or the area near the altar in a church. Considering Bonaventure's sources, the obliteration of the Celano legends cannot be taken to suggest that Franciscans regarded them as dubious. Rather, it reflects the perceived need for unity and order in the depiction of Francis, and a rather extreme approach to achieving it.

With that established, we can turn at last to the discussion of the Celano lives themselves. As the officially commissioned lives of the order and those upon which many other major lives are based, these texts are arguably the most relevant and reliable for an attempt to reconstruct the perception of Francis that prevailed during the period of the Summa's authorship. For the sake of painting the most coherent picture possible of the general perception of Francis across the period in question, I will integrate my account of the three Celano lives below, bearing in mind the key differences between them that have been highlighted above.

Thomas of Celano's Biographies of Francis

Like many accounts of saints' lives, the lives of Celano start out with a description of the relatively decadent life Francis led before his conversion, as the son of a comparatively wealthy cloth merchant. A series of supernatural encounters and a serious illness led him to call his former way of life into question. One particularly significant experience which Celano describes as crucial to Francis' conversion probably occurred some time in 1206, when Francis was riding near Assisi and encountered a leper on the road.

Although he naturally abhorred lepers, Francis was overwhelmed by compassion for the suffering of his fellow man, whom he suddenly recognized as his equal. Thus, he dismounted from his horse and kissed the leper. On turning to mount his horse again, Francis

looked around and realized the leper had miraculously disappeared.¹⁴⁷ In his Testament, Francis himself cites this experience as a turning point in his life, after which he was governed by a concern not only to serve the poor and downtrodden but even to identify with them in their poverty by giving up his own possessions.

As he sought direction on his new spiritual journey, Francis went frequently to pray at the ruined church of St Damiano outside Assisi. While praying one day, he suddenly heard the crucifix above the altar command him to ‘go and rebuild the ruined house of God’ three times. ‘From then on,’ Celano writes, ‘he could not hold back his tears, even weeping loudly over the Passion of Christ, as if it were constantly before his eyes.’¹⁴⁸ Thus, Celano tells a further story of a time when Francis randomly opened a Bible and landed directly on the story of the passion. When he opened the book time and again, it automatically turned to the same place. To Francis’ mind, this was a sign of his calling to a life of identification with Christ’s passion or suffering, which was a source of life to others.

While Francis initially took the mandate of the crucifix literally, and began physically to reconstruct the church at St Damiano, he later heard a sermon at the Chapel of Santa Maria degli Angeli, also called the Portiuncula, which changed his direction.¹⁴⁹ The sermon about Matthew 10:7-10, where Jesus calls his disciples to preach the gospel, and take nothing with them, finally solidified Francis’ mission, which was thereafter to live in complete poverty, humility, and simplicity, out of literal obedience to the words and example of Christ. As the condition for joining his order, consequently, Francis required would-be friars to renounce all possessions—with the exception of a tunic and a breviary—and give them to the poor.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ C2, 248-9; page references to *St Francis of Assisi Early Documents: The Founder*.

¹⁴⁸ C2, 249-50.

¹⁴⁹ C1, 201-2; page references to *St Francis of Assisi Early Documents: The Saint*.

¹⁵⁰ C2, 299-300.

In the early days of the order's existence, Francis and his followers wandered around Umbria, working for food and shelter wherever they could and preaching repentance as they went along. This lifestyle was consistent with Francis' commitment to a type of poverty that did not simply involve the relinquishment of personal property, as in the case of other religious orders of the past, but also the renouncement of communal property, down to food provisions, that would be held by the brotherhood from day to day. When their number reached that of Christ's brotherhood, namely, twelve, Francis and his brothers determined to clarify their role as servants of the church. With the help of the Bishop of Assisi, they received an audience with Pope Innocent III, who eventually sanctioned Francis' simple rule.¹⁵¹ In keeping with this rule, Celano recounts, Francis'

Chief object of concern was to live free from all things that are in the world, so that his inner serenity would not be disturbed even for a moment by contact with any of its dust. He made himself insensible to all outside noise, gathering his external senses into his inner being, and checking the impetus of his spirit, he emptied himself for God alone.¹⁵²

In this regard, Francis showed complete contempt for his own body, at least insofar as it was inclined to sin, referring to it as an enemy or 'Brother Ass'¹⁵³, the source of desires that could only become inordinate and distract him from God. To curb such desires, he refused all comforts, even when he was ill.¹⁵⁴ As a result of directing 'toward heaven his notable spirit,

¹⁵¹ C1, 210-11.

¹⁵² C1, 243.

¹⁵³ C2, 327-8.

¹⁵⁴ C2, 291.

which desired only to be dissolved and be with Christ,¹⁵⁵ ‘his spirit dominated the flesh which willingly followed him in all that he had done.’¹⁵⁶ Thus, Celano writes that Francis was characterized by complete purity of heart or singularity of will and desire.¹⁵⁷

Although he despised the temptations of the body and worldly goods, Francis paradoxically exhibited a profound appreciation for nature. In every work of the divine Artist, Celano states, Francis

Praises the Artist; whatever he discovers in creatures, he guides to the Creator. He rejoices in all the works of the Lord’s hands, and through their delightful display he gazes on their life-giving reason and cause. In beautiful things, he discerns Beauty Itself; all good things cry out to him: ‘the One who made us is the Best.’ Following the footprints imprinted on creatures, he follows his Beloved everywhere. Out of them all he makes for himself a ladder by which he might reach the Throne.¹⁵⁸

‘Due to the special love of the Creator with which he loved all creatures,’¹⁵⁹ Francis

preached to the flowers, forests, trees, and stones as if they were capable of reason. Crops and vines, the splendours of the field, plans of the garden, earth and fire, air and wind, he reminded them all with the sincerest purity to love the divine and urged

¹⁵⁵ C3, 28.

¹⁵⁶ C3, 28.

¹⁵⁷ C1, 222-3.

¹⁵⁸ C2, 354-5.

¹⁵⁹ C3, 15.

their willing service. Finally on account of their single principle [God] he called all creatures by a fraternal name.¹⁶⁰

Whether animate or inanimate, consequently, Francis addressed all beings by the name of ‘brother’ or ‘sister’.¹⁶¹ By virtue of being God’s creatures, Francis insisted, these beings share equally in a ‘single principle’¹⁶² and thus a ‘universal fraternity’¹⁶³ that renders every one no matter how lowly a distinct reflection of the divine that is worthy of our utmost care and respect. In their own turn, Celano relates that creatures responded to Francis in remarkable ways.¹⁶⁴ Indeed, ‘wild beasts recognized the affection of blessed Francis’ piety towards them as if they enjoyed reason.’¹⁶⁵ On one famous occasion, for instance, Francis ran eagerly towards a flock of birds, which to his surprise did not fly away, but patiently listened to his sermon, which commended them to glorify their creator.¹⁶⁶

Although Francis showed great compassion for the lowliest of creatures, Celano emphasises that ‘the charity of Christ made him more than a brother to those marked with the image of the Creator,’¹⁶⁷ namely, other human beings. In light of Christ’s death on the cross for humankind, Francis considered it his absolute priority to live a comparable life of complete self-sacrifice for the benefit of the those human beings who were most in need of Christ’s love. While Francis showed no favouritism, insisting that God loves the poor as

¹⁶⁰ C3, 24.

¹⁶¹ C1, 250-4.

¹⁶² C3, 24.

¹⁶³ J.A. Wayne Hellmann, ‘St Francis of Assisi: Saint, Founder, Prophet,’ 24.

¹⁶⁴ C2, 354-5.

¹⁶⁵ C3, 16.

¹⁶⁶ C1, 234-6.

¹⁶⁷ C2, 358-9.

much as the rich, Celano states that he nonetheless loved the souls that loved Christ with a special love.

That is why he so admired the doctors of sacred theology, whom he saw as sharing one office with him.¹⁶⁸ Even so, Francis taught that great clerics must on some level abandon their learning in order to enter his order, as possessions of all kinds conflict with the humility through which Christ is most effectively imitated.¹⁶⁹ At very least, he insisted in *Celano 2* that charity always take priority over study, such that any study should be ordered to facilitate a spirit of prayer and devotion. As Bert Roest notes, the internal evidence consistently suggests that Francis—who likely enjoyed a basic level of education himself—was not opposed to learning in principle, but simply urged his friars not to love studies for their own sake but for the sake of wisdom.¹⁷⁰

In this connection, *Celano 2* states that Francis ‘taught that in books, the testimony of the Lord, not value, should be sought, and edification rather than elegance. Nevertheless, he wanted few books kept, and these were to be available to the brothers who needed them.’¹⁷¹ Similarly, he insisted that the friars live in simple places, without much by way of furniture. He was even known to tear down houses that he considered too lavish for the friars.¹⁷² The friars were further permitted to own only one garment, and Francis himself was known for the way he often gave his own robe away or tore it in two for the sake of clothing one poorer

¹⁶⁸ C2, 371-2; cf. C2, 352.

¹⁶⁹ C2, 371-2.

¹⁷⁰ Bert Roest, ‘Francis and the Pursuit of Learning,’ 169. Oktavian Schmucki, ‘Ignorans sum et idiota: Das Ausmass der schulischen Bildung des hl. Franziskus von Assisi,’ in *Studia historico-ecclesiastica. Festgabe für prof. Luchesius G. Spatling O.F.M.* (Rome: Pontificium Athenaeum Antonianum, 1977), 283-310.

¹⁷¹ C2, 288.

¹⁷² C2, 284-5.

than himself.¹⁷³ In addition, the friars were not allowed to hold ecclesial offices.¹⁷⁴ Above all, Francis barred them from accepting money, to the extent that he would severely chastise those who even touched it.¹⁷⁵ As Celano summarizes, Francis longed for poverty in all respects with all his heart, as it was especially dear to the Son of God, who gave up everything for the benefit of his creatures.

Because the saint was free from cares for worldly things, and because he had brought his bodily desires into subjection, his mind was pure and free to consider heavenly things.¹⁷⁶ Indeed, Francis ‘was often suspended in such sweetness of contemplation that he was carried away above himself and experienced things beyond human understanding.’¹⁷⁷ Thus, ‘through unceasing prayer and frequently contemplation, he reached intimacy with God in an indescribable way.’¹⁷⁸ As Celano elaborates:

He sought this [intimacy] diligently and devoutly and longed to know in what manner, in what way, and with what desire he would be able to cling more perfectly to the Lord God according to his counsel and the good pleasure of his will. This was always is highest philosophy. This was the highest desire that always burned in him as long as he lived.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷³ C2, 293; C2, 247-8.

¹⁷⁴ C2, 340-1.

¹⁷⁵ C2, 290-1.

¹⁷⁶ C2, 283-4.

¹⁷⁷ C2, 312.

¹⁷⁸ C1, 261.

¹⁷⁹ C1, 261-2.

Through intimacy God, Francis gained access to the source of all knowledge and wisdom. As Celano writes:

Although this blessed man was not educated in scholarly disciplines, still he learned from God wisdom from above, and, enlightened by the splendours of eternal light, he understood Scripture deeply. His genius, pure and unstained, penetrated hidden mysteries. Where the knowledge of teachers is outside, the passion of the lover entered.¹⁸⁰

Because of the love that connected him to the wisdom of God, Celano elaborates that Francis was capable of prophesying what would happen to others and of knowing their thoughts.¹⁸¹ He was able to explain difficult questions to doctors of sacred theology—including Dominicans—to bishops, and cardinals, and even the pope, who sought him out for his wisdom and bold preaching.¹⁸² On account of his intuitive connection with God, moreover, he never needed to think in advance about what he would preach or say to an audience. ‘Sometimes he prepared for his talk with some meditation, but once the people gathered he could not remember what he had meditated about and had nothing to say.’¹⁸³ Nor did he have to read even Scripture regularly. Once he read a passage, it was burned onto his heart.

¹⁸⁰ C2, 314-15.

¹⁸¹ C2, 315; C1, 224-7.

¹⁸² C1, 288ff; cf. C2, 315-16.

¹⁸³ C1, 245.

Thus, ‘his memory took the place of books.’¹⁸⁴ His prayers for others were immediately fulfilled, and his words were so powerful that even their second-hand communication could move an audience.¹⁸⁵ Because of his deep love for God, in summary, Francis enjoyed a direct ‘line’ to God that rendered him a multi-faceted mouthpiece of the divine. By Francis’ own testimony, this line came through identification with the poor, crucified Christ who impoverished or sacrificed himself completely for the good of humanity.¹⁸⁶ Because of the connection with God through Christ that Francis maintained throughout his life, he was ultimately rewarded with an experience of union with God, just two years before his death.

This experience followed his famous vision of the enflamed six-winged seraph nailed to a cross, which occurred during a period of intense prayer on Mt Alverna, a place of retreat that had been donated to the friars. While one pair of the seraph’s wings extended above his head, two stretched outwards, and two were wrapped around the seraph’s body.¹⁸⁷ As the order of angels that represent the love of God, the seraphim come closest to God, whose most fundamental feature is Love itself. Thus, the wings arguably represent the means through which the visionary like Francis might achieve seraphic proximity to and even union with God. These means might be supposed to include the knowledge of God, the surrounding world, and the self and all it knows, which are represented by the three pairs of wings.

As Francis’ seraphic vision illustrates, however, such forms of knowing serve as means through which God manifests his love only to those who are filled with the all-consuming love of God—symbolized by the fiery appearance of the seraph—that was expressed most fully in Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. Thus, Francis was rewarded for his devotion to and

¹⁸⁴ C2, 314-15.

¹⁸⁵ C2, 318-9.

¹⁸⁶ C2, 316.

¹⁸⁷ C1, 263-5.

emulation of the crucified Christ, through which he acquired such profound understanding not only of God himself but also of all things, by the ultimate opportunity to encounter divine Love itself. After this vision, which, in Celano's words, provides 'evidence of the grandeur of a special love',¹⁸⁸ Francis was marked with the five stigmata or marks of Christ's suffering.¹⁸⁹

These confirmed his perfect conformity to the passion of Christ, which culminated in his cross, the ultimate symbol of the Lord's willingness to suffer and sacrifice himself for the good of his creation.¹⁹⁰ Following his stigmatization at Alverna, Francis became increasingly ill and within two years had died. At the point of his death, Celano tells us, the nails of the cross actually appeared in his hands and feet, while blood poured from his side.¹⁹¹ The signs of martyrdom for which Francis had always longed finally appeared. Far from any ordinary martyrdom, however, that of Francis rendered him an *alter Christus*, 'who reflects the image of the One, co-equal with the Father...who cleanses us all from sin.'¹⁹² After the example of both Christ and Francis, consequently, Celano exhorts his readers to exhibit pure intentions in all things, seeking to please God alone in everything through upright actions.¹⁹³

Conclusion

¹⁸⁸ C1, 258-63.

¹⁸⁹ Chiara Frugoni, *Francesco e l'invenzione delle stimmate: una storia per parole e immagini fino a Bonaventura e Giotto* (Turin: Einaudi, 1993).

¹⁹⁰ C1, 274-7.

¹⁹¹ C1, 279-84.

¹⁹² C1, 288.

¹⁹³ C1, 279-84.

Thus concludes Celano's account of Francis' life, which, together with Francis' own writings, provides a basis for understanding the picture of Francis' person, vision, and values that was prevalent at the time of the *Summa*'s authorship. In elucidating the historiography of these biographies, as well as the Franciscan Rule and Testament, I have sought to clarify that Francis' rather ambivalent statements about learning partly reflect the fact that scholarly activities were not originally part of his vision. They do not imply that such activities were inconsistent with that vision in the last analysis. To the contrary, the study of the context of early Franciscan thought undertaken above illuminates how scholarship emerged relatively naturally in the early thirteenth century as a key component of achieving Franciscan perfection.

The chief product of that scholarship in this period was of course the *Summa Halensis*, which can as such be interpreted as a legitimate and crucial undertaking in relation to the overall mission of the Franciscan order. In specific, it represents a concerted and collective effort to forge a distinct theological and philosophical identity, which was aligned with Franciscan principles and values. This scholarly identity afforded the Franciscans a resource for training new generations of Franciscan novices. Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, it provided an intellectual basis for their participation in the life of the university, where diverse renderings of theological and philosophical topics were constantly debated.

By founding an intellectual tradition in the *Summa*, in summary, Franciscans proved themselves capable of functioning at the highest eschelons of the intelligencia, albeit in a way that was true to their own characteristic vision and values. In the chapters that follow, I will explore possible correlations between that vision and those values and early Franciscan thought, in particular, the ideas developed in the *Summa Halensis*. First, however, I will proceed in the next chapter to evaluate one of the main resources the Halensian Summists

employed in the development of their intellectual system, that is, the work of the Arab scholar Avicenna.

3. THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONTEXT

In many accounts of Western intellectual history, the emergence of scholasticism is closely associated with the recovery of Aristotle's major philosophical works, which had been unavailable in the West in the earlier middle ages.¹⁹⁴ Actually, Alexander of Hales and the Halensian Summists have often been hailed as the first to incorporate Aristotle, though these claims have not really been substantiated by textual research. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that Aristotle was far from the only or even the most predominant philosophical influence during the great Latin translation movement, which spanned the century between 1150-1250.¹⁹⁵

In addition to Aristotle, this movement saw many works by Arabic scholars translated into Latin. My account of these translations immediately below will reveal the extent to which the Islamic scholar Avicenna in particular influenced early Franciscan thought and indeed the school's reading of Aristotle. In order to identify the areas of Avicenna's influence over the course of the book's chapters, I will provide a description of the key aspects of his thought that were studied at the time. In closing, I will revisit the thesis, initially proposed by the great medieval scholar Etienne Gilson, that the early Franciscan adoption of Avicenna was vital to the school's project of systematizing Augustine.

The Translation Movement

¹⁹⁴ Fernand Van Steenberghen, *Aristote en Occident: les origins de l'aristotélisme parisien* (Paris: Éditions de l'Institut supérieur de philosophie, 1946). Peter Dronke (ed.), *The History of Twelfth-Century Western Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

¹⁹⁵ I am deeply grateful to Amos Bertolacci for his helpful comments on this chapter.

Over the course of the eleventh century, all the major works of Aristotle became readily available through a series of religious Crusades, which saw the West recapture some key Islamic political and intellectual strongholds, in particular Sicily, Italy, and Toledo, Spain.¹⁹⁶ In the same instance, Western thinkers came into contact with a wealth of material by Arabic scholars, whose Classical Age began around the eighth century, and who were therefore more experienced at engaging with Aristotle's work. Most importantly, Latin scholars gained access to the major writings of Avicenna (d. 1037), who was the most prolific and prominent Islamic philosopher and theologian known in the West at the time. Although Avicenna is sometimes described as a 'commentator' on Aristotle, this term needs to be carefully qualified.¹⁹⁷

Admittedly, Avicenna framed many of his theories with reference to Aristotelian arguments. He even named the major treatises in his massive *Book of the Cure* after works by Aristotle, such as *De anima*, *Physics*, and *Metaphysics*, none of which were incidentally named by Aristotle himself. Nevertheless, Avicenna developed an approach to these topics that is markedly original, and in many cases opposed to the plain reading of Aristotle's texts. With good reason, therefore, Latin thinkers regarded Avicenna as a primary source in his own right and as a philosopher as worthy as esteem as Aristotle himself. This is confirmed by

¹⁹⁶ Bernard Dod, 'Aristoteles Latinus,' in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy: From the Rediscovery of Aristotle to the Disintegration of Scholasticism, 1100–1600*, Norman Kretzmann et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). M-T D'Alverny, 'Translations and Translators,' in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. R.L. Benson and G. Constable (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 421-62; idem., *Avicenne en Occident. Recueil d'articles* (Paris: Vrin, 1993).

¹⁹⁷ Amos Bertolacci, 'On the Latin Reception of Avicenna's Metaphysics before Albertus Magnus: An Attempt at Periodization,' in *The Arabic, Hebrew and Latin Reception of Avicenna's Metaphysics*, ed. Dag Nikolaus Hasse and Amos Bertolacci (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 213.

the fact that Avicenna's writings are never found together with Aristotle's in the medieval manuscript tradition, as would normally be the case with mere commentaries.¹⁹⁸

Between 1152-66, Toledo-based scholars led by Dominicus Gundisalvi or Gundissalinus produced a highly influential Latin translation of the doctrinal core of Avicenna's *Book of the Cure (al-Shifa)*, in particular, its tractates titled, *De anima*, *Metaphysics*, and *Physics* (I-III, 1).¹⁹⁹ Gundissalinus also produced a number of his own works which compiled ideas from Avicenna, first and foremost, as well as thinkers like the Spanish Jew Costa Ben Luca and the Arab Christian Avicbron, thereby mediating the work of these thinkers to the Latin West.²⁰⁰ According to Amos Bertolacci, a pioneer of scholarly inquiry into the Latin reception of Avicenna, 'the translators of the *Sifa* intended to provide Western scholars with a commentary on Aristotle's works.'²⁰¹ This was not a commentary in the strict sense, but a sort of expert guide to the same philosophical matters Aristotle himself considered. Through these translations, early scholastic thinkers came into possession of those of Avicenna's writings that were relevant to work in theology and philosophy.

In contrast, Aristotle's major writings were introduced to the West in fits and starts. By 1160, James of Venice, a man of Greek origin, had translated Aristotle's *De anima* and *Physics*.²⁰² But his *Nicomachean Ethics* circulated in multiple and mostly partial forms prior to Robert Grosseteste's translation in 1240-3, as did his *Metaphysics*, at least before the early

¹⁹⁸ Dag. N. Hasse, *Avicenna's De Anima in the Latin West* (London: The Warburg Institute, 2000), 226.

¹⁹⁹ Amos Bertolacci, 'A Community of Translators: The Latin Medieval Versions of Avicenna's Book of the Cure,' in *Communities of Learning: Networks and the Shaping of Intellectual Identity in Europe 1100-1500*, ed. Constant J. Mews and John N. Crossley (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011).

²⁰⁰ Alexander Fidora, 'Dominicus Gundissalinus and the Introduction of Metaphysics into the Latin West,' *Review of Metaphysics* 66:4 (June 2013), 691-712.

²⁰¹ Amos Bertolacci, 'A Community of Translators,' 52.

²⁰² Bernard G. Dod, 'Aristoteles latinus,' 46; cf. M-T D'Alverny, 'Translations and Translators,' 436.

thirteenth century.²⁰³ By 1210, in fact, two Latin versions of the latter text were available: the so-called *Metaphysica vetusissima* by James of Venice included up to chapter four of book four. The second, anonymous translation—or *Anonyma sive Media*—probably produced in the late twelfth century, included the first eleven of the twelve books in total, though it did not start to be circulated widely until the mid-thirteenth century.²⁰⁴

In his periodization of Avicenna's reception, Bertolacci observes that Avicenna's major works, not least his *Metaphysics*, were simply taken as substitutes for those of Aristotle in the late twelfth century. Possibly, they were even circulated under Aristotle's name.²⁰⁵ The situation did not change dramatically, however, when the Aristotelian works like *Metaphysics* and *De anima* that were most relevant to scholastic inquiry became readily available in the thirteenth century. While Aristotle's works were now regarded as the main texts on philosophical matters, Avicenna nonetheless continued to offer a 'privileged way of access to Aristotle's work and its main tool of interpretation.'²⁰⁶

For this reason, figures like Robert Grosseteste, William of Auvergne, Roland of Cremona, Roger Bacon, and the Halensian *Summists* tended to read Aristotle through the lens of Avicenna. In some cases, they simply cited Aristotle when actually quoting Avicenna.²⁰⁷ As Lesley Smith confirms, 'a citation of Aristotle might mean either a genuine text or an

²⁰³ Alexander Murray offers a valuable explanation as to why Grosseteste translated this work in, *Conscience and Authority in the Medieval Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 78-80.

²⁰⁴ Amos Bertolacci, 'On the Latin Reception of Avicenna's *Metaphysics* before Albertus Magnus,' 204.

²⁰⁵ M-T D'Alverny, 'Translations and Translators,' 451.

²⁰⁶ Amos Bertolacci, 'On the Latin Reception of Avicenna's *Metaphysics* before Albertus Magnus,' 202.

²⁰⁷ Dag. N. Hasse, *Avicenna's De Anima in the Latin West*, 63. Amos Bertolacci, 'On the Latin Reception of Avicenna's *Metaphysics* before Albertus Magnus: An Attempt at Periodization,' 254.

opinion of Avicenna or even a pseudonymous work' in this period.'²⁰⁸ There are a number of possible reasons for the ongoing dependence on Avicenna over Aristotle in what Bertolacci identified as the second phase in Avicenna's reception, which was marked by the joint consideration of Aristotelian and Avicennian works.

In the first place, we have seen, Avicenna had been introduced and subsequently interpreted in the second half of the twelfth century as the key to interpreting Aristotle, or even as a substitute for Aristotle. Although Aristotle's personal works eventually came to the fore of scholarly discussion, the reluctance to engage with them apart from intermediaries proved difficult to discard. As Etienne Gilson notes in his discussion of Alexander of Hales: 'his work seems to belong to a time when no collective theological effort was yet being made in order to assimilate the newly discovered Aristotelian world'.²⁰⁹

Among the many hindrances to reading Aristotle in this period was the lack of a consistent and totally correct translation of the Aristotelian corpus. As is well known, Latin scholars in the late middle ages did not generally have a high level of proficiency in Greek—and in most cases, they had no knowledge of it at all—owing partly to severed ties with Byzantium in 1054. Although the widespread ignorance of Greek may not have impacted on the quality of the translations that specialists produced, it undermined at very least the general scholarly ability to gauge that quality with confidence. Thus, Roger Bacon believed that 'unspecified flaws in the Latin versions of Aristotle gave him license to attribute to Aristotle any doctrine which he felt that the philosopher must have taught.'²¹⁰

²⁰⁸ Lesley Smith, 'The Theological Framework,' *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, vol 4: 1100-1500, ed. Miri Rubin and Walter Simons (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 82-3.

²⁰⁹ Etienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, 328.

²¹⁰ Richard Dales, 'The Understanding of Aristotle's Natural Philosophy,' 144. Daniel Callus, 'Introduction of Aristotelian Learning to Oxford,' *Proceedings of the British Academy* (London, 1944), 37-8.

By contrast, the Latin translations from Arabic were produced by scholars who were highly conversant in Arabic. From at least the tenth century, Latins had travelled to Spain in order to study texts not otherwise available to them. Thus, a population of Arabic-speaking Christians grew up in Muslim territories over time. When these fell to the West in 1185 through the Crusades, consequently, there was already a body of indigenous experts available to make translations into Latin. The result was a higher level of confidence in the Avicennian translations and a corresponding tendency to project Avicenna's ideas on to Aristotle in one way or another. Such flagrant misreading of Aristotle was not altogether deliberate, however. For the understanding of Aristotle at the time was highly confused by the wide circulation of spurious works.²¹¹ In particular, the popular *Liber de causis*, translated by Gerard of Cremona in Toledo around 1170, was falsely attributed to Aristotle and was only recognized by Aquinas in 1268 as a Neo-Platonic amalgam of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*.²¹²

The so-called *Theology of Aristotle* was in fact a ninth-century Arabic adaptation of Plotinus' *Enneads* 4-6. Although it was not translated into Latin until 1519, it affected Latin thought nonetheless, insofar as Islamic scholars like Avicenna commented on it as part of the Aristotelian corpus and felt constrained because of it to reconcile Aristotle and Plotinus.²¹³ Another work that contributed to the confusion was the *De spiritu et anima*, which was commonly attributed to Augustine, above all, by early Franciscans like Alexander of Hales.

²¹¹ Richard Dales, 'The Understanding of Aristotle's Natural Philosophy,' 144.

²¹² Cristina D'Ancona, 'The *Liber de causis*,' in *Interpreting Proclus: From Antiquity to the Renaissance*, ed. Stephen Gersh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 137-61.

²¹³ Cristina D'Ancona, 'The Textual Tradition of the Graeco-Arabic Plotinus,' in *The Letter Before the Spirit: The Importance of Text Traditions for the Study of the Reception of Aristotle*, ed. Aafke M. I. van Oppenraaii (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 46. Cristina D'Ancona, 'The Theology Attributed to Aristotle: Sources, Structure, Influence,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Philosophy*, 8-29.

In a fascinating article on the topic, G. Théry shows that already before 1246, Albert the Great had rejected the notion in his Sentences Commentary and in other works that the text was by Augustine. He attributed it instead to a Cistercian called ‘William’.

Although some of his later writings do attribute passages from the text to Augustine, this is not an indication that Albert changed his mind about the authorship. Rather, it reflects his awareness of the fact that there are some authentic extracts from Augustine within the work, which is ultimately a mis-mash of different sources, that is not itself the product of Augustine’s hand.²¹⁴ As evidence of this, Albert noted that the text is not mentioned in Augustine’s famous *Retractationes*, where the Bishop reflects at the end of his life on everything he has written.²¹⁵ This evidence would have been available to early Franciscans as well, which serves to suggest, as Théry insists, that they maintained the attribution of Augustine in spite of evidence to the contrary, in an effort to advance their own scholarly agenda.

In many respects, early Franciscans were trying to reclaim the recently recovered works of Aristotle in a way that could be passed off as consistent with Augustine’s teachings. The *De spiritu et anima*, if it was by Augustine, formed the optimal link between his work and the Avicennian texts they wanted to use to interpret Aristotle.²¹⁶ In response to the rejoinder that Albert and Thomas Aquinas also quote the *De spiritu et anima*, Théry points out that they do not do so affirmatively, but only in order to respond to their Franciscan

²¹⁴ G. Théry, ‘L’authenticité du *De spiritu et anima* dans Saint Thomas et Albert le Grand,’ *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 10 (1921), 376.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 377.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 376.

counterparts, who quote the text endlessly.²¹⁷ Like his teacher, Aquinas rejected the Augustinian provenance of the text.

As noted above, the contents of these and other works were quite compatible with Avicenna's own outlook, which was 'open to Neoplatonic accretions in psychology and metaphysics, despite its strong Aristotelian basis in logic and natural philosophy.'²¹⁸ Indeed, Arabic-speaking scholars like Avicenna had long enjoyed access to the Neo-Platonic curriculum into which Aristotle had been incorporated between the third and sixth centuries.²¹⁹ In this context, Aristotle's writings were studied in preparation for reading Plato, with whom Aristotle was believed to be largely in agreement.²²⁰ As a result, Aristotle's thought was skewed in a way that eventually became the common understanding of most Muslim authors. These authors, not least Avicenna, in turn passed their perception of Aristotle on to Latin scholars, who tended genuinely to believe that it was correct, even when it contradicted the obvious meaning of Aristotle's own texts.²²¹ Plato's remained almost totally unavailable until the Renaissance.

The broadly Neo-Platonic sympathies the scholastics had adopted by indirect means played an important role in their initial reception of Aristotle. By necessity, early thirteenth century scholars were adapting to the idea of basing their writings and debates around systematic theological themes and not only the Bible. Still, they hesitated to pursue natural or

²¹⁷ Ibid, 377.

²¹⁸ This is a quote from Amos Bertolacci, taken from his comments on this chapter.

²¹⁹ See Cristina D'Ancona, 'Greek into Arabic: Neoplatonism in Translation,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, ed. Peter Adamson and Richard Taylor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

²²⁰ George E. Karamanolis, *Plato and Aristotle in Agreement? Platonists on Aristotle from Antiochus to Porphyry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

²²¹ Richard Dales, 'The Understanding of Aristotle's Natural Philosophy,' 142-3.

philosophical explanations such as they found in Aristotle, which did not ultimately presuppose the authority of Scripture and the faith. In this context, the philosophy of Avicenna was appealing precisely because of its religious nature.²²² As a Neoplatonist of sorts, he presented a sort of ‘top-down’ way of thinking in which all things come from, depend upon, and in turn reflect God, although his way of construing this top-down relationship was highly idiosyncratic.

At another level, Avicenna provided a model that was lacking in the Christian tradition for the sort of comprehensive philosophical and theological work that was quickly becoming the chief ambition and hallmark of scholastic thought. In that sense, Avicenna gave Latin scholastics the tool they needed not only to systematize a way of thinking that was Augustinian in the loose sense of the term but also to pay lip service to the idea of appropriating philosophical inquiries and indeed Aristotle’s philosophy in a way that was compatible with and even advanced their efforts to attribute primacy to theological considerations.

Although the habit of reading Aristotle in terms of Avicenna became common from the turn of the thirteenth century, it was hindered and complicated by the condemnation of Aristotle’s writings in 1210 and again in 1215, which prohibited lecturing albeit not private reading of Aristotle.²²³ These condemnations, in which Avicenna’s works were probably implicated, came into effect only at Paris, and were likely supported by the university theologians who were concerned about growing interest in Aristotle amongst members of the

²²² Alain de Libera, *La querelle des universaux: De Platon à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1996), chapter 4: La scolastique arabe, 223-29; idem., *Penser au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Seuil, 1991), 112.

²²³ Leland Edward Wilshire, ‘The Condemnations of 1277 and the Intellectual Climate of the Medieval University,’ in *The Intellectual Climate of the Early University* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1997), 162.

arts faculty.²²⁴

The sympathies underlying this opposition were deeply conservative. They had to do with the perceived threat Aristotelian thought posed to traditional Christian doctrines such as the Trinity and creation *ex nihilo*. On account of these concerns, there is very little evidence of direct engagement with Aristotle, even through Avicenna, around the time of the condemnations, for instance, in the works of Stephen Langton and contemporaries such as Peter Comestor, Godfrey of Poitiers, Robert de Courcon, and Peter the Chanter.²²⁵

Rather quickly, however, circumstances changed dramatically. Even scholars like William of Auvergne (b. before 1290, d. 1249), Bishop of Paris from 1228-49, who was critical of Aristotle and Avicenna on topics like the eternity of the world and God's freedom in creation, became attracted to Avicenna's broader religious-philosophical perspective. William quickly recognized this as compatible in many respects with his own Christian worldview, which is developed most memorably in his *Magisterium divinale et sapientiale*.²²⁶ As works like this evidence, the actual opposition to Aristotle—or the number of those who believed his thought to be heretical—had quickly dissipated. Although lecturing on Aristotle and related works was forbidden, it is clear that theologians were reading these works from about 1220 onwards.²²⁷ When Pope Gregory IX renewed the condemnation in 1228, consequently, it largely fell on deaf ears. By 1231, therefore, Gregory revoked his ban, and the reading of Aristotle that was already happening began publicly to flourish.

²²⁴ Amos Bertolacci, 'On the Latin Reception of Avicenna's Metaphysics before Albertus Magnus,' 212, 217.

²²⁵ Gordon Leff, *Paris and Oxford Universities*, 197.

²²⁶ Roland Teske, 'William of Auvergne's Debt to Avicenna,' *Studies in the Philosophy of William of Auvergne, Bishop of Paris (1228-1249)* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2006), 217-38.

²²⁷ Lesley Smith, 'The Theological Framework,' 84.

Once again, however, this reading was deeply colored by the reading of Avicenna, at least until William of Moerbeke, a colleague of Thomas Aquinas, translated anew or revised earlier Aristotelian translations from the 1250-60s. The impetus behind this request was evidently the assumption that earlier Latin translations had been influenced by Averroes who was regarded at this time as the source of philosophical and theological errors that needed to be uprooted.

After these translations appeared—and Thomas started to identify spurious works—scholars began to engage with Aristotle on his own terms and to realize the stark contrast between his thought and that of Avicenna. Their efforts in this regard were helped considerably by Michael Scot's translation of Averroes' commentaries on Aristotle in the 1220s and 30s.²²⁸ These were commentaries in the strict sense of the term that were designed to facilitate, and encouraged, the close study of Aristotle. Although some of the first references—and there is only one—to 'the commentator' can be found in Philip the Chancellor, it evidently took some time, well into the 1240s, before Latin thinkers truly began to grasp his project, perhaps owing to their limited grasp of Aristotle.

The *Summa Halensis* provides good evidence of this in that references to Averroes are relatively few and do not bear substantially on the Summa's doctrinal positions.²²⁹ A particularly fascinating phenomenon regarding Averroes can be discerned in parts of Summa volume 2.1 which were added after 1255, when Averroes would have been much better

²²⁸ R.A. Gauthier, 'Notes sur les débuts (1225-1240) du premier Averroïsme,' *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 66 (1982), 321-73.

²²⁹ It was not uncommon for Averroes to be used in this way, as is observed by B. Carlos Bazán, 'Was There Ever a First Averroism?' in *Geistesleben im 13. Jahrhundert*, ed. Jan A. Aertsen and Andreas Speer (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2000), 31-53.

known.²³⁰ By this time, in fact, the title of ‘the Commentator’ had come to refer almost exclusively to Averroes, who was now regarded as the privileged interpreter of Aristotle’s works. In its own discussion, however, the *Summa* reserves this title for Maximus Confessor, whose commentary on Dionysius had been available since Eriugena translated it and was known to the earlier Summists.

While one can only speculate about motives, the Franciscan use of the term ‘commentator’ for anyone other than Averroes may serve to indicate an already brewing Franciscan disenchantment with Aristotle and especially an Averroestic reading of him, such as is expressed most powerfully in Bonaventure’s *Hexameron*. Albeit subtly, the later added sections of the *Summa* offer a sort of referendum on the preoccupation with Aristotle that had come to dominate in the second half of the thirteenth century. For their part, the Franciscans forged their tradition in the quarter of the century, which was a time when scholars were released from the condemnations that dogged the first quarter, not to from the ignorance of Aristotle that plagued the twelfth, but continued to read him through a thoroughly Avicennian perspective.

While many thinkers at the time drew heavily on the work of this Persian philosopher, the Franciscans were the most prominent school of thought to do so and did so most extensively. This would seem to suggest that there was something about his manner of thinking that resonated with their own scholarly charism. In short, there was a happy coincidence between the Franciscan intellectual identity and the thought of Avicenna. The philosopher’s influence, while apparent, is clearly less pervasive in the work of William of

²³⁰ R. de Vaux, ‘La première entrée d’Averroes chez les Latins,’ *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 2 (May 1933), 193-242. Dominique Salman, ‘Note sur la première influence d’Averroès,’ *Revue néo-scholastique de philosophie* 2:54 (1937), 203-12; idem., ‘Jean de la Rochelle et les débuts de l’averroïsme Latin,’ *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* (1947-8), 133-44.

Auvergne, whose attraction to Avicenna has already been mentioned; and it must be carefully qualified in the writings of the first great Dominican scholar, Albert the Great.²³¹

Although Albert quotes extensively from Avicenna, who remained the leading philosophical authority during Albert's early career, he became increasingly preoccupied with his pioneering effort to make all of Aristotle's works intelligible to the Christian world. As is well known, he began to do so under considerable opposition in Paris in the 1240s and continued his efforts in Germany in the 1250s and 60s in an increasingly hospitable intellectual environment.²³² Further developing the approach of his master, Thomas Aquinas made limited and critical use of Avicenna, pursuing instead his affinity for Aristotle, which he often read through Averroistic lenses. In this regard, however, Thomas Aquinas proved exceptional. The wider trend in thirteenth-century theological scholarship, dominated by Franciscans, was to prefer the 'pious' Avicenna over the 'atheist' Averroes, even after the turn to Aristotle had occurred.²³³

Eventually, the dichotomy became a major point of contention between the two parties. In fact, Aquinas paid dearly for his progressive proclivities, which were implicated in

²³¹ Amos Bertolacci, 'Subtilius speculando. Le citazioni della *Philosophia Prima* di Avicenna nel Commento alla *Metafisica* di Alberto Magno,' *Documenti e Studi sulla Tradizione Filosofica Medievale* 9 (1998), 261-339. Idem., 'Le citazioni implicite testuali della *Philosophia prima* di Avicenna nel Commento alla *Metafisica* di Alberto Magno: analisi tipologica,' *Documenti e Studi sulla Tradizione Filosofica Medievale* 12 (2001), 179-274. Idem., 'Averroes ubique Avicennam persequitur: Albert the Great's Approach to the Physics of the *Šifā*' in the Light of Averroes' Criticisms,' in *The Arabic, Hebrew and Latin Reception of Avicenna's Physics and Cosmology*, ed. D. N. Hasse, A. Bertolacci (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012).

²³² Gordon Leff, *Paris and Oxford Universities*, 214.

²³³ Amos Bertolacci, 'A New Phase in the Reception of Aristotle in the Latin West: Albertus Magnus and His Use of Arabic Sources in the Commentaries on Aristotle,' ed. Ludger Honnefelder, *Albertus Magnus und der Ursprung der Universitätsidee* (Berlin University Press, 2011), 275.

the 1277 condemnation of Averroist Aristotelianism.²³⁴ In the meantime, the Franciscans and their sympathizers experienced a revival of explicit interest in Avicenna. Thus, it remains to consider the high points of Avicenna's thought that were initially drawn into their tradition by the authors of the Halensian Summa, often without explicit acknowledgement, starting with his *Metaphysics* and then turning to his *De anima*.

Avicenna's Thought

Metaphysics

Avicenna's *Metaphysics* turns on a fundamental distinction between necessary and possible being.²³⁵ What is necessary, on his account, is what actually exists.²³⁶ By contrast, what is possible or contingent merely possesses a potential to exist that can only be realized or rendered necessary through the causality of another.²³⁷ Although they cannot be found in the real world, such possible existents may exist in the mind—as when I imagine something that is not the case.²³⁸ First and foremost, however, they exist in what Avicenna calls the 'Giver of Forms'.²³⁹ While this Giver is effectively the sub-lunar world's creator, Avicenna

²³⁴ Jan A. Aertsen, Kent Emery, Jr. and Andreas Speer (eds.), *Nach der Verurteilung von 1277. Philosophie und Theologie an der Universität von Paris im letzten Viertel des 13. Jahrhunderts. Studien und Texte* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2001).

²³⁵ *Avicenna Latinus: Liber de Philosophia Prima sive Scientia Divina I-IV*, ed. Simone Van Riet (Leiden: Brill, 1977), I, 6.

²³⁶ *Meta.* I, 5.

²³⁷ *Meta.* I, 6.

²³⁸ *Meta.* V, 5.

²³⁹ Jon McGinnis, *Avicenna* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 195.

does not equate it with God, on the ground that direct contact with diverse creatures would undermine divine unity. Instead, he locates the Giver as last in a series of celestial intelligences that emanate from God in a way that allows for increasing multiplicity, and ultimately, contact with material creation.²⁴⁰

Notwithstanding its sub-divine nature, the Giver functions like the mind of God which contains the forms after which all finite things that do and could exist are modeled.²⁴¹ In that sense, the conceptual content of the divine mind is infinite.²⁴² In this connection, Avicenna elaborates that the forms in the mind of God subsist conceptually in the fully realized or totalized way that is proper to God himself. When a form is instantiated in the real world, consequently, it conforms completely to the divine model after which it is patterned. This conformity is brought about by the Giver, who bestows the property or perfection of existence to a given essence, causing it to subsist in reality—not merely conceptually—as he does in act.

In affirming this shared mode of being, Avicenna upholds a univocal understanding of the relationship between creatures and the God who is ultimately responsible for creation.²⁴³

²⁴⁰ Ibid., 173: ‘the Necessary Existent knows individuals inasmuch as it knows [itself and] that to which its causal efficacy extends.’

²⁴¹ Jules Janssens, ‘Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), Latin Translations of,’ in *An Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy: Philosophy between 500 and 1500*, vol. 1, ed. Henrik Lagerlund (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010), 519.

²⁴² Jon McGinnis, ‘Avicennan Infinity: A Select History of the Infinite through Avicenna,’ *Documenti e Studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 21 (2010), 199-222; cf. Avicenna, *The Physics of the Healing*, trans. Jon McGinnis (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 2009), III.10, IV.15.

²⁴³ On univocity in Avicenna, see Stephen Menn, ‘Avicenna’s Metaphysics,’ in *Interpreting Avicenna: Critical Essays*, ed. Peter Adamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). Thérèse-Anne Druart, ‘Ibn Sīnā and the Ambiguity of Being’s Univocity,’ in *Views on the Philosophy of Ibn Sīnā and Mullā Sadrā Shīrāzī*, ed. Mokdad Arfa Mensia (Tunis: The Tunisian Academy of Sciences, 2014), 15-24. Alexander Treiger, ‘Notion of

On his account, the difference between the two poles of being comes down to the fact that God is the one on whom all forms rely for their existence, while he relies upon none but himself for his own. Although both are immutable—and thus not subject to growth or development—Avicenna does not deny that creatures change. In order to explain how change occurs, he develops a version of substance dualism in which every being possesses two main substantial forms.

The first is the form of a soul, whether vegetative, as in plants, sensitive, as in animals, or rational, as in human beings.²⁴⁴ This form predisposes the being in question to assume a second, bodily form, which Avicenna calls the ‘form of corporeality’. This form is derived from what Avicenna calls ‘prime matter,’²⁴⁵ which has yet to be formed into an actually existing being of a particular kind. Although prime matter does not exist in its own right unless it is joined to forms, it creates the necessary potential for their instantiation. As such, it underlies all created beings in a way that testifies to their interdependence and indeed to their dependence on the one that gave them being in the first place.

On instantiation in prime matter, the substantial form of the soul becomes predisposed to assume forms of another sort, namely, accidental forms or properties, to do with quality, quantity, location, relation, and so on.²⁴⁶ Although these forms are not capable of existing independently of the subject in which they inhere, they nonetheless possess a sort of *esse* or

Transcendental Modulation of Existence (*taškīk al-wuğūd*) and its Greek and Arabic Sources,’ in *Studies in Honor of Dimitri Gutas*, ed. Felicitas Opwis and David Reisman (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 327-363. T. Koutzarova, *Das Transzendente bei Ibn Sīnā. Zur Metaphysik als Wissenschaft erster Begriffs und Urteilsprinzipien* (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

²⁴⁴ *Meta.* II, 1.

²⁴⁵ *Meta.* IV, 2; cf. *Physics* I.1, XIV, 4-5; John McGinnis, *Avicenna*, 55.

²⁴⁶ *Meta.* II, 1; John McGinnis, *Avicenna*, 183.

thing-hood in their own right. In that sense, accidental forms multiply the number of forms in any given subject, without proliferating subjects themselves. At any given time, a being is what it is by virtue of the unique ‘bundle’ of substantial and accidental forms that it possesses.

Any change in the constitution of the bundle results from the coming or going of an accidental form, which transitions in the process from potential to actual or necessary existence. Although change on this showing might seem to precipitate constant shifts in identity, Avicenna insists that the soul preserves the unity of a being throughout reconfigurations of the constellation of accidental forms that attach to it at any given time. On the assumption that God alone is able to bestow the perfection of existence to a form or essence of any kind, Avicenna describes changes, no matter how minute, as instigated directly by God as efficient cause.²⁴⁷ Thus, he concludes that created beings merely represent the occasion for divine activity.²⁴⁸

This understanding of change differs significantly from that of Aquinas, who advocates the unicity theory of form that can be found in Aristotle rather than the plurality theory of Avicenna.²⁴⁹ According to this theory, as Aquinas presents it, living beings possess only one form, namely, the soul. This form is not separate from that of the body but instead entails embodiment, apart from which the soul in his view has no means of self-expression.

²⁴⁷ Étienne Gilson, ‘Avicenne et les origines de la notion de cause efficiente,’ in *Aristotelismo padovano e filosofia aristotelica* (Firenze: Sansoni, 1960), 121-30. M. Marmura, ‘The Metaphysics of Efficient Causality in Avicenna,’ in *Islamic Theology and Philosophy*, ed. M. Marmura (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 172-87.

²⁴⁸ *Meta.* VI, 1-2.

²⁴⁹ Lydia Schumacher, ‘Ontology,’ in *Rationality as Virtue* (London: Routledge, 2015), chapter 2. Jon McGinnis, *Avicenna*, 186-8.

For Aquinas, in fact, soul and body—form and matter—represent two inseparable aspects of one phenomenon, namely, a living being. When a form is instantiated on this account, it possesses an as-yet-unrealized potential to become a certain kind of being. Through change, this potential is actualized.

In this connection, Aquinas allows that accidents contribute *esse* to beings, as that by which beings come to exist in new and improved states. However, these accidents are numerically identical to the subject in which they inhere and do not possess an *esse* or ‘thinghood’ that multiplies the forms that constitute the composite itself.²⁵⁰ Here, consequently, the comings and goings of accidents do not signify a movement into being or non-being of forms that can only be imparted by God, as per the Avicennian theory. They only denote the natural development of the being into a fuller or more mature instance of a single substantial form. While God as the initial giver of form is indirectly responsible for this development, Aquinas denies that he is the direct agent of every creaturely activity. Such activities fall under the purview of creatures themselves, which enjoy a capacity for autonomous movement that is nonetheless attributable to divine gift.

Psychology

Avicenna’s metaphysics complements and is complemented by his psychology or theory of knowledge. Avicenna speaks of three levels or modes of knowledge that cooperate to facilitate human knowledge of the world. The first is sense perception, or the ‘external

²⁵⁰ Richard Cross, *The Metaphysics of the Incarnation: Thomas Aquinas to Duns Scotus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 41.

sense', which includes the abilities to see, hear, smell, taste, and touch.²⁵¹ The second faculty is that the imagination, which entails five internal senses.²⁵² The first of the internal senses is the common sense. The common sense receives all of the empirical data that is transferred to it from the five external senses.²⁵³ It apprehends the objects of those senses exactly as they have been perceived. On this score, Avicenna states that the common sense coordinates the different qualities or aspects of its object so as to render it a cohesive whole. Without it, Avicenna affirms that the mind would only be able to see the forms that comprise different objects individually. For example, it would see hardness, roughness, brownness, woodenness, and so on, instead of a tree.

Although the common sense represents sense objects in a cohesive way, it is unable to do so past the moment of perception. Thus, the retentive imagination preserves the memory of sense objects after the external senses have lost contact with them. The images stored in the retentive imagination are transmitted to the compositive imagination in animals and the cogitative faculty in humans. This faculty makes it possible to separate the particular forms that constitute any given being, to recombine forms that have been separated, and formulate images of things that have not yet been experienced or that may not even exist.

The next faculty of estimation assigns positive or negative connotations to the objects that have been apprehended. It identifies things as helpful or as dangerous, for instance, and thus transforms the images of objects into what Avicenna calls 'intentions'. These intentions

²⁵¹ *Avicenna Latinus: Liber de Anima seu Sextus de Naturalibus I-III*, ed. Simone Van Riet (Leiden: Brill, 1972), II, 1; cf. *Avicenna's De Anima*, ed. Fazlur Rahman (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), 23, cf. 25-9.

²⁵² *Avicenna Latinus: Liber de Anima seu Sextus de Naturalibus IV-V*, ed. Simone Van Riet (Leiden: Brill, 1968), IV, 1.

²⁵³ *De an.* IV, 1.

enable a sheep, for example, to anticipate that a wolf on the horizon is dangerous and run for safety.²⁵⁴ According to Avicenna, an intention is the final product of external and internal sensation: the perfect image of an object that has been encountered through experience. Although the intention enables what Avicenna calls the ‘animal soul’ to consider objects independently of their material instantiations, he stresses that these objects are still known as particulars at this phase in the cognitive process.

While the intention provides an essential basis for the process of abstracting universals that apply to all particulars of a kind, consequently, that process remains to be completed by those that possess a rational and not only an animal soul.²⁵⁵ To this end, intentions are stored in the fifth and final faculty associated with the internal senses – the memory – where they are made available to the rational soul. According to Avicenna, there are two ‘faces’ to the rational soul: a theoretical and a practical.²⁵⁶ The theoretical face is turned upwards toward the realm of universal forms, while the practical face is turned downwards. It uses the universals acquired by the theoretical faculty to deal with matters pertaining to bodily life.

Although the theoretical intellect obtains from the memory the intentions – ultimately based on sense perceptions – that provide the material for its operations, Avicenna stresses that it does not require the body or any of the senses in order to perform its proper operations.²⁵⁷ Thus, the theoretical faculty is utterly disconnected from the body and could only be hindered by interference from the body. Any relation to the body can only be mentioned with reference to the practical faculty. This argument for a rather strong form of

²⁵⁴ *De an.* IV, 3; cf. *Avicenna’s De Anima*, 30-1.

²⁵⁵ *Meta.* V, 1.

²⁵⁶ *De an.* V, 1; cf. *Avicenna’s De Anima*, 32; *Meta.* I, 1-2; cf. I, 10.

²⁵⁷ *De an.* V, 2; *Avicenna’s De Anima*, 49-56. Dag Hasse, *Avicenna’s De anima*, 175, citing *De an.* V, 2.

mind-body dualism is further reinforced by the ‘flying man’ illustration that Avicenna introduces in the context of the *De anima* as well as elsewhere in his writings.²⁵⁸

In presenting this thought experiment, which has been compared to Descartes’ famous *cogito ergo sum* (‘I think therefore I am’), Avicenna wonders if a man who was created flying in the air and who could not therefore feel his body would still affirm the existence of his rational soul. The philosopher insists that the ‘flying man’ would indeed do so, because his inability to feel his body has no bearing on and poses no hindrance to his ability to sense with his mind. In positing that the rational soul is effectively detachable from the body, Avicenna argues implicitly for the immortality of the soul, that is, for the mind’s ability to survive after the death of the body.²⁵⁹

Following this discussion, Avicenna explains how the theoretical faculty abstracts universals.²⁶⁰ By his account, there are four intellects involved in abstraction, or better, four phases in the process of procuring an abstract concept.²⁶¹ The first three create the potential for obtaining such a concept; as such, they constitute the ‘potential intellect’. The last is the

²⁵⁸ R. Arnaldez, ‘Un precedent avicennien du “cogito” Cartesien?’ *Annales Islamologiques* 2 (1972), 341-9. Dag Hasse, *Avicenna’s De anima*, 80ff. Michael E. Marmura, ‘Avicenna’s Flying Man in Context,’ *The Monist* 69 (1986), 383-95.

²⁵⁹ *De an.* V, 4; cf. *Avicenna’s De Anima*, 58-64; Thérèse-Anne Druart, ‘The Soul and Body Problem: Avicenna and Descartes,’ in *Arabic Philosophy and the West: Continuity and Interaction*, ed. Thérèse-Anne Druart (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1988). Idem., ‘The Human Soul’s Individuation and its Survival after the Body’s Death: Avicenna on the Causal Relation Between Body and Soul,’ *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy* 10 (2000), 259-73.

²⁶⁰ Dag Nikolaus Hasse, ‘Avicenna on Abstraction,’ in *Aspects of Avicenna*, ed. Robert Wisnovsky (Princeton; NJ: Markus Wiener, 2001), 39-72. Peter Heath, *Allegory and Philosophy in Avicenna* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), 2.4-5.

²⁶¹ *De an.* V, 6. Dag Hasse, *Avicenna’s De anima*, 178.

stage in which the abstract concept is actually acquired; for this reason, it is called the acquired intellect. The first intellect is called the material intellect (*intellectus materialis*). Avicenna likens it to the primitive intellectual state of human beings before they reach the age of reason, or more concretely, to the potential an infant has eventually to learn to write.

When the soul reaches the age of reason, the material intellect receives what Avicenna calls ‘primary intelligibles’, which are analogous to the knowledge of the principles of writing, such as the letters of the alphabet or the proper use of writing instruments, which heighten the human person’s potential to write.²⁶² The primary intelligible forms or innate concepts that are possessed by what is now called the habitual intellect (*intellectus in habitu*) correspond to certain properties that are ‘transcendental’ or common to all beings. First and foremost, and thus also ‘first known’ (*primum cognitum*) among these is the property of being or ‘existence’, which is in Avicenna’s account the very subject of metaphysics.²⁶³ After all, existence is the one property that is common to all states and sensible objects of our experience.²⁶⁴

This property is determined by two others, namely, ‘thing’ and ‘necessary’. These respectively denote what a thing is, or its ‘essence’ and that it actually possesses the property of ‘existence’. In some passages, Avicenna also mentions ‘one’ as a property, which further highlights that any given thing is what it is in virtue of being one thing as distinct from another.²⁶⁵ In enumerating these transcendental properties of all beings, it has been argued

²⁶² Michael E. Marmura, ‘Avicenna on Primary Concepts,’ in *Logos Islamikos: Studia Islamica in Honorem Georgii Michaelis Wickens*, ed. R.M. Savory and D.A. Agius (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies Press, 1984), 219-39.

²⁶³ *Meta.* I, 1.

²⁶⁴ *Meta.* I, 2.

²⁶⁵ *Meta.* I, 5.

that Avicenna gave metaphysics or ‘first philosophy a new and comprehensive structure.’²⁶⁶

That is not to say that his transcendental thinking was altogether unprecedented. As Jan Aertsen observes in his study of the transcendentals in the Middle Ages, ancient philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, and Boethius had also referred to transcendentals in terms of the most basic metaphysical principles that can be identified in all things.

According to Plato, these principles ultimately reduce to the Form of the Good; for Aristotle and Boethius respectively, however, they are best likened to the convertible notions of ‘being’ and ‘one’ or ‘being’ and goodness’.²⁶⁷ Although such properties are attributable to all natural realities, many thinkers in antiquity and the Middle Ages further associated them with a transcendent or divine source of all reality. This is particularly true of Christian thinkers like Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius and Anselm, who respectively regarded transcendentals like goodness, beauty and truth as, first and foremost, names for God.

While these thinkers gestured towards what Aertsen calls a ‘philosophy of the transcendent’, they nevertheless did not yet devise anything like Avicenna’s transcendental philosophy. This was distinguished by the substitution of being or existence for God, which was previously the main subject of metaphysics, a move that completely reconfigured the shape and goals of the discipline, as we will see in the section below on theology. With good reason, therefore Aertsen claims that Avicenna inaugurated a ‘second beginning of metaphysics’²⁶⁸

The epistemological dimension of Avicenna’s doctrine was also wholly innovative. Whereas transcendentals previously performed an exclusively metaphysical function—as the most fundamental principles by which beings are what they are—we have seen that Avicenna

²⁶⁶ Jan A. Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 76.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 54-75: on Aristotle; 38-44: on Boethius.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 75.

insisted on a correspondence between the orders of being and knowing. In his account, consequently, the transcendentals and especially Being—rather than empirical beings or even God—constitute the first objects of the intellect, which give the mind power to know beings.

This doctrine of ‘first known’ concepts or ‘primary notions’ (*prima intentiones, primae conceptionae, prima intelligibilia*) simply cannot be found in Aristotle, even though the philosopher advocated the idea of ten categories of being.²⁶⁹ Without such primary notions as existence, essence, necessity, and unity, Avicenna insisted, there would be an infinite regress in our efforts thus to demonstrate the nature of the things we know, and certainty in knowledge would never be obtained. As this suggests, Avicenna saw the transcendentals, above all, being, as the essential basis for understanding one being as distinct from another. For him, in other words, they are not themselves the objects of knowledge or universal concepts that will result from abstraction, which Avicenna calls ‘secondary intelligibles’.²⁷⁰

Instead, they serve as means or guides in the process of abstraction, which involves stripping an intention of all its particularizing features or material determinations (location, time, shape, and so on), so as to seize conceptual hold of the essence that is at the core of the intention. Through this process, the mind arrives at the bare reality behind the intention and thus grasps the abstract or disembodied concept that constitutes the secondary intelligible form: the universal concept.²⁷¹ For this purpose, Avicenna insists that only one intention is needed. This is because created beings fully instantiate the models after which they are patterned. As a result, all that is required to perceive the ‘thing in itself’ is to remove the attachments that obscure what it is as a bare being.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 84.

²⁷⁰ *Meta.* I, 5.

²⁷¹ Étienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (New York: Random House, 1955), 200.

Whenever the mind perceives the thing in itself in this way, Avicenna affirms that it makes contact with the essence as it subsists in the Giver of Forms. In this context, the Giver goes by the name of the ‘Active Intellect’, which is the one and only intellect that is always in act and thus constantly knows all things as they are.²⁷² According to many scholars of Avicenna, the mind makes a connection with the Active Intellect not so much because it actively formulates its own concepts but simply because it rids itself of the material distractions that inhibit its ability passively to receive knowledge of things in their disembodied or completely abstract form, that is, in the form in which the Active Intellect always knows them.²⁷³

What is proper to human beings on this account is merely the tripartite passive intellect. The only time the human mind can rightly be called active is when it gets in touch with the Active Intellect by purging itself of the material distractions that prevent it from making that connection in the first place. In that sense, human beings are not the agents of their own cognitive acts but merely represent the occasion for the divine cognition. Strictly speaking, they do not possess individualized active intellects but are guided towards knowledge by the Active Intellect itself, working through the primary intelligibles in what is at best a cooperative effort or shared *concursus*.

In his work on Avicenna’s *De anima*, Dag Hasse takes issue with this common interpretation of Avicenna on abstraction, stressing that intellectual forms are derived from imagined forms, or intentions, which are squarely of the mind’s own making.²⁷⁴ These

²⁷² *De an.* V, 5. Dag Hasse, *Avicenna’s De anima*, 187-8.

²⁷³ *Meta.* III, 8. Étienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, 205.

²⁷⁴ Dag Hasse, *Avicenna’s De anima*, 185. Hasse’s argument contests that of Deborah Black, Herbert A. Davison, and F. Rahman. His argument is taken further by Tommaso Alpina, ‘Intellectual Knowledge, Active Intellect and Intellectual Memory in Avicenna’s *Kitab al-Nafs* and Its Aristotelian Background,’ *Documenti e*

imagined forms already go a long way towards disposing the soul to receive the intellectual forms that emanate from the Active Intellect. The Active Intellect merely serves as a medium for the mind's attainment of a thought constructed largely of its own accord. Thus, it is incorrect in his opinion to say that the human mind does not engage in abstraction.

In concluding this discussion of abstraction, it is worth noting some key ways in which Avicenna parts ways with Aristotle's work on this topic. As is well known, Aristotle considered it to be axiomatic that all knowledge begins with the senses. In his account, the imagination makes images (*phantasmata* or sense species) of its empirical objects, which are stored in the passive intellect.²⁷⁵ This intellect is so called because the mind does not usually have much control over the experiences that come to it from the outside, which will end up being its resources for intellectual cognition.

The knowledge of a singular entity described above is contrasted with the act in which the agent intellect infers a universal concept or intelligible species on the basis of multiple images of related things. The intelligible species – an idea or universal – is stored in the possible intellect or memory, where it can be drawn upon in future efforts to make sense of new experiences. Through new experiences, conversely, the mind expands and revises the original species.

So construed, abstraction is an on-going process of forming and reforming ideas on the basis of many different experiences. On this showing, consequently the senses and the intellect remain in constant communication, albeit through the mediation of the imagination. Here, there is no hint of the dualism that characterizes the account of Avicenna. In defining abstraction as the event by which the human mind receives the disembodied form of an object

studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale 25 (2014), 131-83.

²⁷⁵ A Leen Spruit, *Species intelligibilis: From Perception to Knowledge*, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), introduction and chapter 1.

from above rather than formulating it through the operations of human reason, Avicenna completely redefines the Aristotelian idea of abstraction.²⁷⁶

The abstract concept as Avicenna understands it is ultimately preserved by the effective intellect (*intellectus in effectu*), which is the third of the potential intellects and thus technically prior to the fourth and active intellect. The philosopher likens the effective intellect to the state of one who has learned to write and has written in the past but is not presently doing so. Although the secondary intelligible idea itself is not retained, the connection to the divine that is needed to access it is. Thus, the mind can automatically re-make the connection whenever it pleases, as opposed to going through the whole process of acquiring the abstract concept again. Here, Avicenna observes that knowing is analogous to sight, because we stop seeing an object when it disappears, but see it again whenever it is brought anew to our attention.

For many, the process of connecting with and receiving from the Active Intellect is laborious and lengthy; it requires a great deal of practice and instruction. For those who possess what Avicenna calls the ‘sacred intellect’, however, it is a virtually effortless.²⁷⁷ The sacred intellect—the highest form of prophet-hood—allows those who possess it to bypass the phases of potency in knowledge and maintain an almost constant connection with the Active Intellect, which affords immediate insight into the meaning of all things. According to

²⁷⁶ This has been recognized by Olivier Boulnois, *Etre et representation: Une généalogie de la métaphysique moderne à l’époque de Duns Scot* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999). David Burrell, *Knowing the Unknowable God: Ibn-Sina, Maimonides, Aquinas* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986), 29. Etienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, 205. Henrik Lagerlund (ed.), *Representation and Objects of Thought in Medieval Philosophy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007). Leen Spruit, *Species intelligibilis*, 79ff.

²⁷⁷ *De an.* V, 6.

Avicenna, this capacity for intuition can be either inborn or enhanced throughout life through rites of purification like prayer.

In addition to this prophetic power, Avicenna mentions two others that are of interest.²⁷⁸ The first is based in the imaginative faculty, which separates and combines sense data. In some persons, this faculty is so powerful—and the soul's connection with the divine so strong—that it is capable of producing visible and audible apparitions during waking life, as when Francis of Assisi witnessed the crucifix above the altar at San Damiano chapel come alive and call him to rebuild the ruined house of God. Another form of prophesy Avicenna mentions is based in the power of the will, which through its close connection with higher principles and complete control over the impulses of its own body becomes capable of affecting external bodies and the surrounding environment through a sheer act of the will and without any physical contact. Those with this power may heal the sick from afar or, in the case of Francis, command a flock of birds to listen to a sermon. Although Avicenna does not seem to think a single person need possess all these three prophetic powers in order to possess any of them, the attainment of all three is certainly a possibility.

Theology

As mentioned above, Avicenna defines being or existence as the subject of metaphysics.²⁷⁹ In doing so, he parts ways with Aristotle and other Arabic scholars, especially the slightly later Averroes, who described God as the subject of metaphysics, a view later adopted by Thomas Aquinas. Avicenna objected to this position on the grounds that it implies that God's existence is either presupposed in metaphysics and proven a priori

²⁷⁸ *De an.* IV, 4.

²⁷⁹ *Meta.* I, 1.

science, namely, physics, or not proven at all. In his opinion, however, God's existence cannot be demonstrated through physics, or cosmologically, since what is corporeal does not lead to a conclusion about an incorporeal cause of all existence; nor is it self-evident, since God is by definition unknowable.

On this basis, Avicenna concludes that proof for God—while not the subject of metaphysics proper—is the object of its quest regarding the nature of being.²⁸⁰ To demonstrate this, he appeals to the modal metaphysics outlined above. In specific, Avicenna notes, there are clearly many things that are possible through themselves. After all, we see how many of them have been made necessary or actual through another in the real world. On his account, the whole or sum total of these actually existing things exists precisely through the beings themselves. As such, therefore, it cannot exist through itself. Instead, it must exist through another, which subsists outside the whole. Since all possible existents are included in this whole, the external entity in question cannot be possible in itself but rather something that exists necessarily, through itself.²⁸¹

This is how Avicenna proves the reality of the Necessary Existent.²⁸² Although he employs a common strategy for doing so throughout his many writings, scholars have noted that his most significant work, namely, the *Book of the Cure*, presents the argument in a rather disparate form, which must be pieced together from books I and VIII especially—the

²⁸⁰ *Meta.* I, 1. Herbert Davidson, 'Avicenna's Proof of the Existence of God as a Necessarily Existent Being,' in *Islamic Philosophical Theology*, ed. Parviz Morewedge (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1979), 165-87.

²⁸¹ *Meta.* VIII, 1.

²⁸² Michael E. Marmura, 'Avicenna's Proof from Contingency for God's Existence in the Metaphysics of the *Shif â'*,' *Medieval Studies* 42 (1980), 337-52. As Marmura notes, this most famous proof by Avicenna which is straightforwardly presented in a number of his works is somewhat scattered through his major work, *The Book of the Cure*, in I, 5-6; IV, 1; VI, 2; VIII, 1.

books that deal in the most concerted manner with the question of the NE. Though reflection on things possible in themselves and necessary through another serves as the catalyst for inferring that there is a NE, Avicenna insists that his is not a cosmological argument but one that succeeds through the workings of the mind alone, independent of sense experience.²⁸³

As shown above, his proof for a Necessary Existent simply extrapolates the implications of the innate ideas of necessity and existence. Because existence is included in the very definition of what it means to be the NE, Avicenna infers that we cannot *not* know that the NE exists.²⁸⁴ Naturally, we can think of things possible in themselves as not actually existing, or in terms of essence without existence; for example, there is nothing about humanness that demands instantiation in a specific human. However, Avicenna emphatically denies that the same is true of the NE precisely because its essence is to exist through itself. The only way to fail to appreciate the reality of the NE is to willfully reject the truth.

In Avicenna's account, the proof for a NE is at once a proof for a first efficient cause of creation.²⁸⁵ As we have seen, the first proof turns on showing that things possible and in themselves and necessary through another cannot ultimately explain their own existence. Only a necessary existent can do so. Apart from this being, there would be an infinite regress of causes that are possible in themselves but necessary through another—which is impossible.²⁸⁶ Thus, the chain of causes must ultimately terminate at the NE, on which the realization of all possible beings, whether corporeal or incorporeal, depends in the last analysis.

²⁸³ *Meta.* I, 3.

²⁸⁴ *Meta.* VIII, 4-5.

²⁸⁵ *Meta.* VIII, 3.

²⁸⁶ *Meta.* VIII, 1.

In a landmark series of articles, as well as in some of his major works, the leading medievalist Etienne Gilson called attention cursorily to Avicenna's influence on early Franciscan thought.²⁸⁷ In particular, he argued that early Franciscans adopted a 'doctrinal complex' from Avicenna, which included the plurality theory of forms, and a top-down philosophy involving the doctrine of God as Agent intellect.²⁸⁸ With the exception of the latter, however, Gilson regarded the early Franciscan appropriation of Avicenna as part of, and highly conducive to, the broader effort to systematize Augustine.²⁸⁹ Thus, the story of Avicenna's influence on the school has become part of a narrative that ultimately downplays its significance in the history of thought.

In this light, it is no wonder that the early Franciscan reception of Avicenna has been largely neglected ever since. While scholars at times will gesture towards it, as in the case of Walter Principe's multi-volume study of the hypostatic union in the early thirteenth century, they do not generally pursue any line of investigation that leads to clearer understanding of the precise ways in which early Franciscans were and were not influenced by Avicenna. The relevance of attending to the Avicennian background has been overlooked for another reason, namely, that early Franciscans including Bonaventure do not always cite Avicenna explicitly.

²⁸⁷ Building on earlier research by Otto Keicher, 'Zur Lehre der ältesten Franziskanertheologen vom intellectus agens,' in *Abhandlung aus dem Gebiete der Philosophie und ihrer Geschichte: Ein Festgabe zum 70. Geburtstag Georg Freiherrn von Hertling*, ed. Matthias Baumgartner et al. (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 1913), 173-82.

Geburtstag Georg Freiherrn von Hertling, ed. Matthias Baumgartner et al. (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 1913), 173-82.

²⁸⁸ Étienne Gilson, 'Les sources Greco-arabes de l'augustinisme avicennisant,' *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 4 (1929), 5-107.

²⁸⁹ Étienne Gilson, 'Pourquoi saint Thomas a critiqué saint Augustin,' *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 1 (1926-7), 5-127.

As the discussion above established, however, the lack of overt references does not necessarily signify the absence of any influence. For the Summists and their contemporaries exhibit a marked tendency to ascribe Avicennian views to Aristotle, Augustine, to say nothing of other authorities. For this reason, it will be one goal of some of the further chapters of this book to confirm the precise nature and extent of Avicenna's influence, and its relationship to the many other sources of the *Summa Halensis*. In the process of doing this, it will become obvious from the sophisticated intellectual moves the Summists make that their Avicennian leanings do not simply generate a system inspired by Augustine. What the Summists place on offer ultimately amounts to far more than even the appropriation of Avicenna could have made possible, namely, a system of their own invention.

4. THEOLOGICAL VISION

In addition to Arabic philosophers like Avicenna, Latin thinkers working in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries gained better access to Greek Christian authors like Pseudo-Dionysius and John of Damascus. The works of these authors laid a much stronger emphasis on the mystery and unknowability of God than can be found in the Western tradition dominated by Augustine, who argued along with other Latin Fathers like Hilary of Poitiers and Gregory the Great that God is present to the soul in a way that anticipates a direct vision of him in the life to come.²⁹⁰ In their eagerness to master new sources, Western scholars in the late twelfth century incorporated references to the inadequacy of human knowledge to God without always parsing their meaning sufficiently in terms of what can be positively known about God, whether now or in the life to come.²⁹¹

By the early thirteenth century, the question remained largely unanswered as to how exactly the mind can aspire to the vision of God in heaven in the way Peter Lombard for one continued to affirm.²⁹² However, the problem did not come to a head until rising interest in Avicenna in the 1230s began to expose the inherent conflict between the cherished Western belief in a beatific vision and Greek negative theology, albeit a somewhat exaggerated version of it.²⁹³ As we have seen, Avicenna taught that the best we can achieve in terms of knowing God is a connection with the Active Intellect, which is not fully divine and by some

²⁹⁰ Simon Tugwell, *Albert and Thomas: Selected Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 41; cf. Antoine Côté, *L'infinité divine*, 34.

²⁹¹ Simon Tugwell, *Albert and Thomas*, 47.

²⁹² Peter Lombard, *Sent. 1, d 1, c 3.2*.

²⁹³ P.-M. De Contenson, 'Avicennisme latin et vision de Dieu au début du XIII^e siècle,' *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 34 (1959), 29-97.

accounts is nothing but a supreme creature. The Aristotelian solution was no better insofar as it posited a union with the knower and the known that blurred the distinction between God and creatures, leading to a form of pantheism that had already been condemned in 1210.²⁹⁴

In vastly under and over-underestimating the prospects of an ultimate beatific vision of God, these theories drew attention to the need for philosophical arguments explaining its possibility. In their quest to meet this need, scholars in this period such as William of Auvergne, Alexander of Hales, Gueric of St Quintin, and Hugh of St Cher all sought to clarify in some way how God is both known and unknown in the coming life.²⁹⁵ Their solutions respectively posited that we will see God ultimately only through a likeness, through intellectual creatures, under some other guise than his essence, or not at all.²⁹⁶ Notwithstanding his initial proposal, William, then Bishop of Paris, ultimately recognized such solutions as unsatisfactory in terms of allowing a genuine encounter with God himself.

As an impetus to resolve the matter conclusively, William formed a small theological commission, including Alexander of Hales, which condemned 10 propositions, the first of which rejected the claim that the divine essence will not be seen by human beings at any point.²⁹⁷ The actual focus of this condemnation, though not named, was likely John Chrysostom, whose homilies on the Gospel of John had been translated by Burgundio of Pisa

²⁹⁴ Bernard Blackenhorn, *The Mystery of Union with God: Dionysian Mysticism in Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2016), 101-10.

²⁹⁵ Simon Tugwell, *Albert and Thomas*, 51.

²⁹⁶ Henri F. Dondaine, 'L'objet et le 'medium' de la vision béatifique chez les théologiens du XIII^e siècle,' *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 19 (1952), 60-130.

²⁹⁷ Marie-Dominique Chenu, 'Le dernier avatar de la théologie orientale in Occident au XIII^e siècle,' in *Mélanges Auguste Pelzer: études d'histoire littéraire et doctrinale de la scolastique médiévale offertes à Auguste Pelzer à l'occasion de son soixante-dixième anniversaire* (Louvain: Bibliothèque de l'Université, 1947), 159-81.

between 1171-3 and who advocated the condemned position most famously and most clearly.²⁹⁸ Following the condemnation, the authors of the *Summa*, among others, worked hard to counteract negative theology with positive claims about the knowability of God, which came to represent the linchpin of the *Summa*'s theological vision.

In an introductory article on this topic, Augustine is by far the most quoted authority, with 75 quotations, 5 from pseudo-Augustinian works, and 34 to Augustine's ep. 147, otherwise known as the 'Book of the Vision of God' (*De videndo Dei*), which contains what is possibly Augustine's most significant and focused writing on the beatific vision. By invoking this text repeatedly, the *Summa* clearly situates itself on the side of the Western tradition that affirms the possibility of knowing God, not least in the life to come. When it comes to developing the contours of its account, however, the *Summa* ironically turns to Avicenna to resolve the problem to which the reading of his very work had given rise.

As I will demonstrate in this chapter, Avicenna's doctrine of the transcendentals offered the tools the Summists needed to explain how the soul knows God in this life in a way that anticipates the possibility of knowing God in the life to come. Although the *Summa*'s initial discussion makes much of its allegiance to Augustine, consequently, its substantial claims are presented in a completely innovative, Avicennian, and distinctly non-Augustinian way that ultimately seems to lend itself to expressing the experience of Francis of knowing God and reality and to the affective and practical vision by which he lived. These aspects of this vision will be considered after the discussion of the transcendentals below.

²⁹⁸ György Geréby, 'Hidden Themes in Fourteenth-Century Byzantine and Latin Theological debates: Monarchianism and Crypto-Dyophysitism,' in *Greeks, Latins and Intellectual History 1204-1500*, ed. Martin Hinterburger and Chris Schabel (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 195. See also Riccardo Saccenti, *Un Nuovo lessico morale medievale: il contributo di Burgundio da Pisa* (Aricca: Aracne, 2016).

Although Avicenna provided the fundamental building blocks for the transcendental vision of the Halensian Summists, his insights did not come to them without an intermediary. The key figure in this respect was Philip the Chancellor, whose *Summa de Bono* codified a Christian version of the theory that influenced the Summists significantly.²⁹⁹ Though he preserved the primacy that Avicenna had attributed to being, Philip jettisoned the Persian philosopher's account of 'one' and thing' as the main qualities or first determinations of being and turned instead to Latin sources which identified them with unity, truth, and goodness. As he understands them, these three notions respectively account for the efficient, formal, and final causation of beings. In turn, this three-fold causality is traceable to God, and in specific, to the members of the Triune God, that is, the Father, Son and Spirit, respectively.³⁰⁰

Thus, Philip subsequently elucidates the relations amongst these primary notions, insofar as they mimic the relations amongst the persons of the Godhead. Finally, he spells out their relation to the highest, divine, good, as well as that good's relation to created goods. Here, Philip was undoubtedly motivated by a desire to refute the Cathar heresy, which posited a good God as the creator of spiritual being and an 'evil' God as the creator of

²⁹⁹ The first to point out Philip's originality was Henri Pouillon, in 'Le premier trait des proprits transcendentales, La *Summa de bono* du Chancelier Philippe,' *Revue noscolastique de philosophie* 42 (1939), 40-77.

³⁰⁰ Antonella Fani, 'Communit, trascendentali e Trinit: da Filippo il Cancelliere alla prima scuola francescana,' *Il Santo: Rivista Francescana de storia dottrina arte* 49:1 (2009), 131-54.

matter.³⁰¹ Such dualism posed a considerable threat to orthodoxy at the time, and in particular, to the Christian notion that God created all things good. Thus, the rationale for Philip's defence of the good in the *Summa de bono* and his larger efforts to construct a transcendental theory to ground his affirmation of goodness.

Following predecessors who had engaged in transcendental thinking, Philip nowhere uses the term *transcendens* in his writings and instead refers to what he calls the common properties (*communissima*) or first intentions (*primae intentiones*) of beings. Nevertheless, he offered the first systematic account of the transcendentals in the Latin West and thereby laid the foundation for further scholastic work on this topic. As the first attempt at Christian transcendental theory, however, Philip's 'account bears the marks of a first draft; it is rather terse and sometimes little explicit.'³⁰² Thus, it remained for later thinkers, above all, the authors of the *Summa Halensis*, to give a full-fledged account of the transcendental notions that Philip had codified.³⁰³

The point of departure for the *Summa*'s discussion of the transcendentals is the epistemological dimension of Avicenna's account. In this regard, the *Summa* unabashedly claims at the outset that 'being is the first object of the intellect,'³⁰⁴ quoting Avicenna as its explicit source. This being, we will discover, is ultimately God.³⁰⁵ Whereas Avicenna

³⁰¹ Jan A. Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought: From Philip the Chancellor to Francisco Suarez* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 112.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 128.

³⁰³ The anonymous *Tractatus de transcendentalibus entis conditionibus*, ed. Dieter Halcour, in *Franziskanische Studien* 41 (1959), 41-106, was for a while attributed to Bonaventure but this authorship has proven uncertain. It seems to be an excerpt from the *Summa Halensis*, elaborated by a student of Alexander of Hales.

³⁰⁴ *SH* Vol 1, Tr3, Q1, M1, C1, Respondeo II (n. 72), 113: *Dicendum quod cum sit ens primum intelligibile eius intentio apud intellectum est nota* (Avicenna, *Meta* I.6); cf. Vol 2.1, In1, S1, Q1, C2 (n. 2), 3.

³⁰⁵ Vol. 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, C2, Ar2, Solutio (n. 352), 522: *Deus sicut efficiens, primum*

identified ‘one’ and ‘thing’ as the first determinations of being, however, the Summa takes up Philip’s notion that the transcendental properties of being primarily include unity, truth, and goodness. In the Summa, however, these properties do not merely characterize beings. They also count as innate concepts of the mind, which respectively make it possible to identify any given thing as one, or indivisible in itself and distinct from other beings; as true, or intelligible in terms of what it is; and good, or fit for a certain purpose.³⁰⁶ Thus, being is the most fundamental concept, from which unity, truth, and goodness subsequently unfold at decreasing levels of fundamentality.³⁰⁷

In relation to the soul, the Summa elaborates, these basic concepts are respectively ordained to the memory, understanding, and the will—a psychological triad that the Summa derives from Augustine.³⁰⁸ While memory is the faculty that retains the picture of what a thing is as distinct from or related to others, intelligence is what perceives the truth, and the will is what loves or approves what is good.³⁰⁹ Together, the Summa contends, these three concepts form the image of God, and indeed, the Triune God, on the mind. They enable memory, understanding, and will, respectively to recognize the Father as the efficient or generating cause of unity, the Son as the formal or exemplar cause of truth, and the Spirit as the final or purpose-giving cause of goodness in beings. While non-rational beings are what the Summa describes as mere ‘vestiges’ of the Trinity insofar as they exhibit unity, truth and

eius nomen est ens.

³⁰⁶ Vol 1, Tr3, Q1, M1, C2, Respondeo (n. 73), 114-5: The nature and relationship of unity, truth, and goodness; cf. Vol 1, Tr3, Q2, M1, C2, Respondeo (n. 88), 140.

³⁰⁷ Vol 1, Tr3, Q1, M1, C2, IV (n. 73), 116.

³⁰⁸ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr 1, S1, Qu3, T1, C5, Ar6, Solutio (n. 341), 414: Memory, understanding will; cf. Augustine, *De Trinitate* X.

³⁰⁹ Vol 1, Tr3, Q1, M1, C2, Respondeo (n. 73), 114-5: Unity, truth, and goodness in the memory, understanding and will.

goodness, only rational beings are capable in virtue of their innate knowledge of being and its transcendental properties, that is, the image of God, to understand other beings in relation to their efficient, formal, and final cause.³¹⁰

According to the Summa, this image renders every human being an ‘express likeness’³¹¹ of God, that is, a genuine expression of Godself outside himself. As such, the human mind or soul, while not made of the substance of God himself, involves a nonetheless immediate and intimate connection with God. As we will discover, this provides a basis for correctly understanding realities as he does and for at once discerning him to be the efficient, formal, and final cause of unity, truth, and goodness in beings, respectively. In explaining what this discernment involves, the Summa stresses that the transcendental concepts do not represent the objects of human knowledge as such but rather the means by which objects of experience are rendered intelligible. Precisely because the transcendentals are known prior to experience, however, the Summa elaborates that they cannot themselves be known through anything anterior to themselves.

Thus, the knowledge of the transcendentals can only be triggered by experience itself, which allows us to draw inferences about what is one, true, or God either by abnegation or from effects to a cause.³¹² In the mode of abnegation, the Summa states that the transcendentals are known in terms of formal qualities that diametrically oppose those of

³¹⁰ Vol 1, Tr3, Q1, M1, C2, Respondeo (n. 73), 114-5: Father, Son and Spirit as efficient, formal, and final cause of unity, truth, and goodness in creatures.

³¹¹ Vol 2.1, In1, S2, Q1, M2, C3, Contra 1 (n. 36), 46: *Imago est expressa similitudo*. See also the rest of the chapter on the distinction between a vestige and an image; cf. Vol 2.1 (n. 322), 391: we are the image of the Son who is the image of God; Vol 2.1 (n. 337), 409-10: the image of God is only in humans; Vol 2.1 (n. 343), 417: the image of God is immediately related to God.

³¹² Vol 1, Tr3, Q1, M1, C1, Respondeo II (n. 72), 113: Knowledge through abnegation or effects.

empirical objects. Where the latter are finite, temporal, and so on, the transcendentals and their divine source are infinite and eternal. As effects of a cause, natural realities testify on the one hand to the infinite and eternal being that is their source: that is, they bespeak their relationship to the divine and thereby, his existence. By the same token, however, they give insight into his nature through a finite lens.

Here, the Summa strongly affirms here the possibility of a direct and positive or ‘kataphatic’ knowledge of God through creatures.³¹³ In doing so, it repudiated the stance of the Greek Christian thinkers who denied that human beings can gain insight into God under any circumstances. While the Summa would be the first to insist that God in his totality cannot be captured by the human mind, it asserts the mind’s ability to grasp God’s presence in a partial but nonetheless positive way through the things God has made.³¹⁴ To illustrate how, the Summa observes how a line leading to the centre of a circle touches the centre but does not circumscribe it. Although its circumference alone can do this, there is a conceivably infinite number of lines which can lead to the centre and touch on it in some way.

In a similar fashion, the created intellect is like a line leading to the centre, or the divine substance, insofar as it traces creatures to their divine source and captures an aspect of that source at the point of converging with it. The difference between God and a normal sphere, as Alan of Lille affirms, is that ‘God is an intelligible sphere, whose centre is

³¹³ Jacob W. Wood, ‘Kataphasis and Apophasis in Thirteenth Century Theology: The Anthropological Context of the *Triplex Via* in the *Summa fratris Alexandri* and Albert the Great,’ *The Heythrop Journal* 57 (2016), 293-311

³¹⁴ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr2, Q2, C1, Solutio (n. 36), 59: Apprehension vs. comprehension, citing Augustine, *De videndo Dei* 9.21 and *Ad Paulinam*; cf. Vol 1 (n. 8), 16: to see an aspect vs. comprehend a whole.

everywhere and his circumference is nowhere.³¹⁵ Thus, the possible means of knowing him finitely are ultimately infinite. After all, there are infinite possibilities for finite beings in the mind of God who is as Damascus called him, a ‘sea of infinite substance.’³¹⁶

As we have seen, the key to gaining a finite glimpse into the infinite God is adherence to the ‘inner light’ of transcendental knowledge.³¹⁷ When explaining how this light operates in a treatise on human knowledge, the mechanics of Avicenna’s psychology come into play. In this regard, the *Summa* adopts almost completely the Arab philosopher’s theory of external and internal senses that produce an image or ‘intention’ regarding sense experiences. This was not uncommon in a day when this was the most sophisticated and advanced account of sensation on offer.³¹⁸

When it comes to the theory of the intellect, however, things become more complicated. As Dag Hasse has noted, Avicenna’s psychology met with a strong indigenous

³¹⁵ Alan of Lille, *Theologiae Regulae* (PL, 210), 7: *Deus est sphaera intelligibilis, cuius centrum est ubique circumferentia nusquam.*

³¹⁶ Vol 1, Tr Intro, Q2, M3, C2, Respondeo 2 (n. 21), 32; John of Damascus, *De fide* I.9.

³¹⁷ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q2, C4, Contra 2 (n. 90), 146: *Veritas est lux interior.* See also Respondeo 2: *veritas prima lux interior dicitur...est vis animae interior...quantum ad suam essentiam, attingit omne quod est, sicut ponit Augustinus (In Ion 2.1.19) exemplum de caeco posito in sole, quod praesens est ei lux, ipse tamen absens est ab illa. Ita ipsa summa sapientia, quae est prima veritas, omni iniquo praesens est, quamvis ipse absens* (The first truth is called an interior light, and it is the interior power of the soul. Its essence extends to all that is, as Augustine posits in the example of a blind man who is placed in the light so that the light is present to him, but he is absent from the light. In this way, the highest wisdom, that is, the first truth, is present to every sinner even though they are absent from the light).

³¹⁸ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q2, T1, M1, C2 (n. 355), 432: Avicenna on the five external senses; Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q2, T1, M2, C1 (n. 357), 434-5: Avicenna on the internal senses, including estimation (n. 359), 436.

tradition for classifying intellectual functions.³¹⁹ Augustine, John of Damascus, Aristotle, and numerous others all elaborated schemata for explaining the work of the mind. Thus, the Summa's aim for mastery obligated its authors to run through the other possibilities available. Because of the confusion surrounding Aristotle and Augustine at this time, what is ultimately offered by the Summa is a reading of the two thinkers that is distinctly Avicennian in nature, and which is often justified by appeals to *De spiritu et anima*.³²⁰

Although somewhat convoluted, this strategy was far from unusual at a time when Avicenna's conceptualization of the intellect's work carried so much sway, and yet there were other schemata to which it somehow had to be terminologically reconciled.³²¹ As Hasse writes, the success of Avicenna's doctrine of four intellects 'was based less on quotations of his terminology—the scholastic terminology of intellects follows its own paths—but on the criteria given by Avicenna for the distinction between the intellects. These criteria and the

³¹⁹ Dag Nikolaus Hasse, *Avicenna's De anima in the Latin West* (London: Warburg, 2001), 189-91. Avicenna's doctrine of four intellects was hugely influential in the West not so much through terminology but in terms of the understanding of how the intellect works.

³²⁰ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, T1, M1, C1, Solutio (n. 368), 447-8: Aristotle's account of three intellects, namely, material, possible, and agent. See also the discussion of the five intellects treated in the pseudo-Augustinian *De anima et spiritu* in Vol 1, Tr Intro, Q2, M2, C4, Contra 1 (n. 17), 27: sense, imagination, reason, intellect, intelligence.

³²¹ Dag Nikolaus Hasse, *Avicenna's De anima*, 200: Avicenna's theory of the four intellects was transformed rather than accepted wholesale, as was the case with Avicenna's theory of the internal and external senses. See also Leen Spruit, *Species intelligibilis: From Perception to Knowledge* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 122: 'Alexander though rejecting the notion of a separate agent intellect, accepts Avicenna's abstraction theory.' Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, T1, M2, C4, Art 2, Solutio (n. 380), 458: the four types of intellect according to Avicenna.

functions they define ensured that the theory survived for a long time as a coherent doctrine,³²² not least in the Franciscan school.

For its part, the *Summa* follows Avicenna in describing the work of abstraction itself as a matter of stripping a form of material and accidental elements to behold the object, as it is presumably known by God.³²³ On this score, it states: if this ‘intelligible species’ i.e. a species that ‘is entirely and absolutely abstracted from corporeality, is understood as it is, it is understood only by an intellectual power that is entirely and absolutely detached from the body and from the corporeal mass.’³²⁴ Through precisely this species, we acquire knowledge of the finite way in which the infinite God manifests himself in a creature. Again, we do this through a certain ‘habit of the finite to the infinite’, namely, the innate knowledge of the transcendentals, whereby finite things capture the infinite not as it is but finitely.³²⁵

³²² Dag Nikolaus Hasse, *Avicenna's De anima*, 191.

³²³ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q1, C2, Respondeo 2 (n. 368), 387: *Secundum intellectum fit abstractio speciei a materia* (The intellect makes an abstraction of the species from matter). Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q2, T1, M1, C1, Solutio 2 (n. 354), 431: *Intellectus convertit se ad formas abstractas a materia, sensus autem convertit se ad formas in materia* (The intellect conforms itself to the forms abstracted from matter, however the sense turns itself to the forms in matter). Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q2, C4, Ad objecta 3 (n. 90), 146: *Esse sensibilis, ut iudicatur et accipitur sensu, semper apprehenditur cum conditionibus materiae; veritas autem eius apprehenditur absque omni conditione materiae et ideo solo intellectu vel mente* (The being of a sensible thing, as judged and accepted by the sense, is always apprehended with the conditions of matter. However, its truth is apprehended without any condition of matter and therefore only by the intellect or mind).

³²⁴ Vol 1, Tr Intro, Q2, M1, C5, 4 (n. 12), 21: *Species omnino abstracta et absoluta a corporeitate si intelligitur sicuti est, non intelligitur nisi a vi intellectiva omnino absoluta a corpore et expedita a mole corporea*.

³²⁵ Vol 1, Tr Intro, Q2, M3, C2, Respondeo 2 (n. 21), 32: *Et sic est accipere aliquam habitudinem finiti ad infinitum, non ut est in se, sed ut est finiens* (And so we accept a certain relation of the finite to the infinite, not as he is, but as he is limiting all things).

Because of these transcendentals, the mind is able to gain a glimpse of God's unity, truth, and goodness, through the limited unity, truth, and goodness of a natural being.³²⁶ As the Summa puts it, these two forms of unity for instance are 'co-comprehended', albeit the one in terms of the other.³²⁷ This comprehension arguably corresponds to Avicenna's secondary intelligible or abstract object, which can be distinguished from the primary intelligibles or transcendentals. According to the Summa, these are stored in the memory and applied at the impetus of the will for the sake of completing an act of abstraction, the product of which is stored in the memory in turn. Thus, the Summa distinguishes between what it calls the innate versus the acquired memory, the first of which preserves the knowledge of the transcendentals, and the second of which preserves the concepts of objects abstracted with the help of the transcendentals.³²⁸

³²⁶ Vol 1, Tr3, Q1, M1, C1, Respondeo II (n. 72), 113.

³²⁷ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q1, C2, Ad objec1a 1.c (n. 2), 4: *Dicunt enim divinam substantiam aliquid cointelligendo, nullam autem rei compositionem circa ipsum principium designando* (Attributions refer to the divine essence by way of co-understanding something, i.e. a creature, with it).

³²⁸ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q3, C5, Ar7, Respondeo (n. 342), 415: *Est memoria innata et acquisita. Memoria veritatis innata est principium intelligentiae et voluntatis: est enim sicut dictum est vis conservativa similitudinis primae veritatis impressae a creatione et secundum hoc memoria attribuitur Patri, intelligentia Filio, voluntas Spiritui Sancto. Memoria vero acquisita primae veritatis potest considerari duobis modis, quia quantum ad fieri aut quantum ad esse. Quantum ad fieri naturaliter procedit acquisita memoria ex intellectu et voluntate: et secundum hoc intellectus, qui est generans veritatem, attribuitur Patri, voluntas, quae est genita, Filio, memoria, ex utroque procedens, Spiritui Sancto. Quantum ad esse vero, memoria veritatis acquisita potest esse principium veritatis intelligentiae et voluntatis* (The innate memory of the truth is the principle of understanding and will: for as is said, it is the power that conserves the likeness of the first truth that is impressed from creation. And in this way, memory is attributed to the Father, intelligence to the Son, and will to the Holy Spirit. The acquired memory of the first truth can be considered in two ways, insofar as it acts or insofar as it exists. Insofar as it acts, acquired memory naturally proceeds from the [operation] of the intellect and will. Thus, the

According to the Summa, such acts of abstraction can be completed without the co-operation of the body, once an intention or image of a natural object has been produced by the external and internal senses. In this regard, the Summa upholds a quasi-Avicennian form of body-soul dualism in which the soul acts as a ‘mover’ for the body which it can ultimately survive without in a purely spiritual form. As ‘a sailor substantially is separate from his ship, as he moves the ship and is thereby accidentally moved by it, so the soul in its substance is divided from the body, and if it is moved, it is only accidentally so; therefore, the soul is a substance beyond the body.’³²⁹ This dualism was mistakenly believed to be compatible with an Augustinian viewpoint, insofar as it was represented in the spurious *De spiritu et anima*.³³⁰ For a while, it was also attributed to Aristotle, on the basis of a distorted version of his famous sailor/ship analogy in the *De anima* II.1.

intellect, which is what generates truth, is attributed to the Father, will, which is the cause of what is generated, to the Son, and memory, which proceeds from both, to the Holy Spirit. As regards its essence, the acquired memory of truth is the principle of truth of understanding and will).

³²⁹ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q1, C2, II Respondeo b (n. 321), 386: *Sed nauta secundum substantiam dividitur a navi, cum movet navim et secundum accidens movetur; ergo anima secundum substantiam dividitur a corpore, et si movetur, secundum accidens movetur; ergo anima est substantia praeter corpus*. Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q3, T2, C1, Ar2, Solutio (n. 345), 420: *anima rationalis coniungitur suo corpori ut motor mobili*. Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q3, T2, C1, Ar3 (n. 346), 421: the union of body and soul. Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q3, T2, C2, Solutio (n. 348), 423: *Est enim quoddam intelligere non dependens aliquo modo a corpore* (For there is some understanding that is not dependent in any way on the body).

³³⁰ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q1, C2, Respondeo V (n. 321), 387 (Quoting *De spiritu et anima*): *Anima est spiritus intellectualis, rationalis, semper vivens, semper in motu bonae malaeque voluntatis capax* (The soul is an intellectual spirit, rational, always living, always in motion, capable of both good and evil will). Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q1, C2, II (n. 321), 385 (quoting *De spiritu et anima* 1): *Anima est substantia quaedam rationis particeps, regendo corpori accomodata* (The soul is a substance which participates in reason, accommodated/suited to ruling the body).

Although the Summa relies heavily on Avicenna's psychology, it does not do so uncritically. One significant way in which the Summa's account of the intellect breaks new ground has to do with the doctrine of the Agent Intellect. In some ways, the Summa solves the problem in Avicenna of a merely mediated vision of God by linking God and the Active Intellect. On this account, the mind connects with God whenever it tunes in to the transcendentals that are the condition of possibility for knowing all things. Although God is the giver of these transcendentals, through a sort of natural interior light or illumination, the Summa seems to part ways with Avicenna over his tendency to conflate the divine and human agent intellects, although other Franciscans both before and after the time of the Summa went so far as to affirm that God is the agent intellect, including John of La Rochelle.³³¹ For the Summists, by contrast, human cognition is not a matter of the divine intellect operating on behalf of the mind. Rather, it is a function of the mind's own operation with the help of the transcendentals given by God. Thus, the Summa concludes that 'it is not necessary to posit an agent intellect that is separate in substance, as physical light is separate in substance from sensible things. For this same spirit [the agent intellect] has in itself a certain natural light, by reason of which it is capable of the act of understanding.'³³²

In affirming this, the Summa endeavours to circumnavigate the self-contradictory notion that natural acts of cognition can only be accomplished through supernatural aid. Though it takes considerable strides towards affirming the integrity of the human intellect in this way, the immediate connection to God it posits through the transcendentals left the

³³¹ John Pecham, Roger Marston, Roger Bacon, John of La Rochelle. See Etienne Gilson, 'Roger Marston: un cas d'augustinisme avicennisant,' *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 8 (1933), 37-42.

³³² Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, T1, M2, C2, Ar2, Solutio (n. 372), 452: *Nec oportet ponere intellectum agentem separatum in substantia ab ipsa anima, sicut lux in sensu separata est in substantia ab ipso sensitivo. Est enim ipse spiritus in se habens lumen quoddam naturale, ratione cuius habet actum intelligibilem.*

relationship between the divine and human intellects rather too close for comfort in the estimation of later generations of Franciscans. In particular, John Duns Scotus followed a series of immediate Franciscan predecessors in denouncing the notion that the transcendentals are a sign of the image of God or of his illumination. He instead declared the innate knowledge of being and its properties as completely natural powers of the mind, which instil it with the ability to grasp realities in correspondence to their models entirely of its own accord.³³³ In his view, this was the only way to avoid insinuating that the human intellect is a defunct creation which is unable to perform its natural operations without divine aid.

That said, Scotus would agree to some extent with his predecessors that divine intervention is required to know matters pertaining to God himself, at least matters of revelation. For their part, the Summists believed that the human agent intellect could only strictly speaking operate properly with respect to things ‘below’ the mind, that is, non-rational creation. When it came to things ‘next to’ and ‘above’ the mind, such as the self, angels, and God, the assistance of the divine Active Intellect was obviously needed, since God alone has the power to clarify his own nature and that of his image.³³⁴ Even their claims

³³³ See Lydia Schumacher, *Divine Illumination: The History and Future of Augustine’s Theory of Knowledge* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 194-201.

³³⁴ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, T1, M2, C1, II (n. 370), 450: *Sint intelligibilia quaedam infra, quaedam iuxta, quaedam intra, quaedam supra, ut narrat Augustinus (De spiritu et anima 12)*; cf. Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, T1, M2, C2, Ar2, Solutio (n. 372), 452. Some scholars nonetheless assert that John develops the theory that the Active Intellect is God, as he does in his own works. See John Marenbon, *Later Medieval Philosophy (1150-1350)* (London: Routledge, 1987), 116. Others suggest that he accepts this doctrine hesitantly in the *Summa*: Margaret M. Curtin, ‘The Intellectus Agens in the ‘Summa’ of Alexander of Hales,’ *Franciscan Studies* 5 (1945), 418-33. Leonard J. Bowman, ‘The Development of the Doctrine of the Agent Intellect in the Franciscan School of the Thirteenth Century,’ *The Modern Schoolman* 50 (1973), 251-79. Gilson, Grabmann, and VanSteenberghen argue that he makes it part of the soul; cf. Dag Hasse, *Avicenna’s De Anima*, 216.

about the natural knowability of ordinary creatures ‘below’ the mind were however made with a considerable caveat, which I will explore below in treating the affective dimension of the Summa’s theological vision, that is, the aspect of it that is concerned not merely with the knowledge but the love of God.

In closing this section firstly, it is worth noting how the innate knowledge of the transcendentals relates to the condemnation of 1241. As we have seen, this knowledge forges an immediate or intuitive connection with God that facilitates correct knowledge of things in the world in relation to God. In doing so, however, it simultaneously lays the groundwork for a direct vision of him in the life to come.³³⁵ For when the things of this world pass away, the transcendentals which currently allow us to gain a direct if limited vision of God through creatures will make it possible for us to gain a direct vision of God in himself.³³⁶ This vision will likewise be limited, insofar as contact with the infinite, according to Boethius, always occurs in the mode of the knower, which is finite, rather than in the mode of the thing known, which in this case is God.³³⁷ Though the ultimate vision of God will not be exhaustive or all-encompassing, consequently, it will be nonetheless immediate and real, in just the way Augustine allegedly envisaged.

An Affective Vision

For the Summa, however, there are conditions on the acquisition of knowledge, above all, of God, at all phases in human existence. The conditions pertain to what the Summa

³³⁵ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1 S1, Q2, T1, M1, Solutio (n. 322), 390: *Anima non est de Deo sed est creata de nihilo* (The soul is not created from the substance of God but from nothing).

³³⁶ Vol 1, Tr Intro, Q2, C5, Contra c (n. 12), 22. Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr2, Q2, C2 (n. 37), 61: The beatific vision.

³³⁷ Vol 1, Tr Intro, Q2, M1, C1, Ad objeca 4 (n. 8), 16.

describes as an ‘upright’ will that is turned first and foremost towards God (*sursum*) instead of towards the world (*deorsum*).³³⁸ As we will see, this overriding love for God is what opens access to the transcendentals in the first place. In affirming this, the Summa deployed a further strategy for escaping the 1241 condemnation, which involved appealing to strand of the Dionysian tradition, proffered by the likes of William of St Thierry and Thomas Gallus, that was somehow unscathed by it.³³⁹ This tradition integrated claims about the impossibility of knowing God fully in this life with the notion that we can know God only by loving him. While the Summa certainly applies this principle to things that stand above and next to the soul, it also ultimately affirmed its pertinence to knowing things below the soul which cannot after all be rightly understood except in terms of their divine cause.

In explaining how love affords knowledge that is otherwise unattainable, the Summa offers an interpretation of Augustine’s doctrine of superior and inferior or higher and lower reason, which likely draws more inspiration from Avicenna’s distinction between the theoretical and practical intellects, given the extent, illustrated above, to which the Summa adopts other aspects of Avicenna’s psychology.³⁴⁰ For the Summa, superior reason is the locus of the image of God and thus of the transcendentals that constitute it.³⁴¹ The person who loves God therefore enjoys ready access to the knowledge of the self as his image and

³³⁸ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q3, T1, C6, Ad objecta 3 (n. 343), 417.

³³⁹ Simon Tugwell, *Albert and Thomas*, 53.

³⁴⁰ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q2, T1, C6, Ad objecta 3 (n. 343), 417. Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M2, C4, Respondeo (n. 17), 28: *Superior pars est ad contemplandum Deum et aeterna, inferior ad contemplandas creaturas et temporalia. Ad superiorem pertinet sapientia, ad inferiorem scientia* (The superior part [of reason] contemplates God and eternal things, the inferior part, creatures and temporal things. Wisdom pertains to the superior part, science to the inferior).

³⁴¹ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q3, T1, C5, A6, Solutio (n. 340), 413: *Proprie loquendo imago dicitur secundum superiorem partem* (Properly speaking the ‘image’ refers to the superior part [of reason]).

thus to the transcendentals themselves. As a result, they cannot help but obtain correct knowledge of the finite things they know, and thereby catch a limited glimpse of their infinite source.³⁴² As the Summa elaborates, ‘vestiges lead to the one of whom they are vestiges...insofar as they have beauty from that which is supremely beautiful and delightfulness from the highest object of delight.’³⁴³

When the mind loves things other than God first and foremost, by contrast, it ceases to know itself as his image and becomes ignorant of the transcendentals which are the conditions for genuine knowledge.³⁴⁴ This loss of access to the resources of superior reason has a profound effect on the capacities of lower reason, which is exclusively ordered towards material goods and is in no way able to apprehend the form of a thing abstracted from matter on its own.³⁴⁵ For this reason, lower reason operating of its own accord is unable accurately to know lower goods in light of the higher principles of unity, truth and goodness, and thus to discern the way in which they are vestiges of God.³⁴⁶ In the words of the Summa, we cannot help but err when we ‘consider these things in terms of their beauty or delightfulness, not referring them to God from whom they have these qualities.’³⁴⁷

³⁴² Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q3, T1, C5, A6, Respondeo II (n. 342), 415.

³⁴³ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q1, C7, Solutio (n. 40), 49: *Alio vero modo in quantum habent pulcritudinem a summe pulcro et delectabilitatem a summe delectabili: et secundum hunc modum vestigia manuducunt ad illam cuius sunt vestigia.*

³⁴⁴ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q2, T2, C2, A3, Solutio (n. 365), 442.

³⁴⁵ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M1, C1, Ad objecta 5 (n. 8), 16.

³⁴⁶ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, T2, C2 (n. 388), 465.

³⁴⁷ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q1, C7, Solutio (n. 40), 49: *Contingit enim eas considerare ratione pulcritudinis sive delectabilitatis quae est in eis, non referendo illam ad Deum a quo habent: et secundum hunc modum est occasio erroris* (For when things are considered in accordance of their beauty or delightfulness, and are not referred to the God from whom they have these properties, this is the occasion for error).

The lower reason has a natural tendency to become detached from higher reason along these lines, precisely because the body and soul are fundamentally different substances which tend downwards and upwards respectively.³⁴⁸ As the Summa is quick to point out, however, the corresponding ‘inability to know truth and avoid falsehood’³⁴⁹ does not result from losing the mind’s status as the image of God. This image can never be effaced or varied in any way, as that would imply a defect or inconsistency in God himself and in his ability to make himself knowable to human beings.³⁵⁰ Through excessive preoccupation with things other than God, rather, the mind merely becomes unaware of God and the transcendental power he gives to know all things. As the Summa concludes, consequently, there is never ‘a defect on the part of the thing [known], but there is a defect on the part of our intellect,’ which lacks the resources to ‘draw a conclusion as to what is true.’³⁵¹

³⁴⁸ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q1, b (n. 320), 384: *Cum enim alia corpora animalium sint inclinata ad terram naturaliter, corpus humanum est naturaliter erectum ad caelum* (For while the bodies of other animals are naturally inclined to the earth, the human body is naturally erect towards the heavens).

³⁴⁹ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q1, M3, C1 (n. 96), 154: falsity. Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q1, C2, A2, Solutio (n. 98), 156: *Est intellectus rectus et non rectus.*

³⁵⁰ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M3, C2, 4 (n. 21), 32: *Cum anima nata sit ad intelligendum primam veritatem, non est defectus ex parte eius; sed lux divina semper est ei praesens* (Also, since the soul is naturally capable of understanding the first truth, there is no lack on the part of the soul; however, the divine light is always present; therefore, the soul sees it always and with no intermediaries).

³⁵¹ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M1, C3, Ad tertium (n. 10), 19: *Non est ergo defectus ex parte rei, sed est defectus ex parte rationis conferentis, id est intellectus nostri, qui non potest ipsum medium invenire et inventum conferre ad concludendum veritatem.*

Although it is almost impossible to avoid succumbing at some point to the warring tendencies of lower reason, the Summa notes that the ‘innate habit’³⁵² of the transcendentals, that is, the image of God, which is obscured through sin can also be ‘infused’ again by grace.³⁵³ Such grace consists in the free movement of God’s will, which summons us in love to conform our wills to his by seeking to love him above all else. When we respond to this summons, the image is reawakened and transformed into God’s likeness. More specifically, access to the transcendentals on higher reason—and the knowledge of God—is restored.³⁵⁴ At this point, the general presence whereby his image exists innately in all minds becomes a special presence in the mind where the image is graciously re-infused.³⁵⁵

As we have seen, this image is impressed in the same way in all, lest it be subject to any variation or deterioration, which is improper to God himself. Thus, the success of human knowledge is not attributable to an individual’s innate capacity for knowing but to the will of the knower and the extent to which it is conformed to God in love. Those who cultivate a desire for God more than anything else gradually purge themselves of all carnal affections and die to the world.³⁵⁶ In this way, they forswear all hindrances to accessing the riches of

³⁵² Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, M1, C2 (n. 369), 449: *A parte superiori per illuminationem sive a principio datam quae dicitur cognitio innata* (From the superior part of reason, by means of illumination, or what is given from the beginning, [there is a cognitive power] which is called innate cognition).

³⁵³ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M3, C5, Respondeo (n. 24), 36: innate vs. infused habit. Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr2, Q3, T3, M2, C1, Solutio (n. 50), 77: *Cum se habet anima per conformitatem ad Deum in similitudine expressa, dicitur Deus inhabitare in ipsa per gratiam* (When the soul through conformity to God has an expressed likeness to him, God is said to inhabit it through grace). Quoting Augustine *De praesentia Dei; Ad Darandum; ep.* 187, 6.19.

³⁵⁴ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q3, T1, C5, Ar4 (n. 339), 411: Likeness versus image.

³⁵⁵ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr2, Q3, T3, M2, C1, Ad objecta 1 (n. 50), 77.

³⁵⁶ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M1, C5, Ad objecta 1-4 (n. 12), 22: *Etiam nunc, in quantum Dei Sapientiam, per quam facta sunt omnia, spiritualiter intelligimus, in tantum carnalibus affectibus morimur, ut mortuum nobis hunc*

wisdom and knowledge that the transcendentals offer and put themselves in the optimal position to gain insight into the world and thereby to God. As the Summa quotes Augustine in affirming: ‘blessed are the pure in heart because they will see God.’³⁵⁷

In the past, scholars have tended to identify the voluntarism of early Franciscans—their emphasis on a rightly ordered will as the key to knowledge—as an offspring of genuine Augustinianism. However, recent research has shown that it grew up only as a result of the influence of Arabic texts and translations in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries.³⁵⁸ The radical disparity between the early Franciscan and Augustinian positions on the will becomes decisively clear in the Summa’s account of the free will (*liberum arbitrium*).³⁵⁹ For the Summa, as for Augustine and many scholastics following him, *liberum arbitrium* is comprised of both reason and will, where *liberum* refers to the freedom of the will or *voluntas*, and *arbitrium* to the deliberations of reason.³⁶⁰

While Augustine saw the exercise of free will as a matter of both faculties co-operating, however, the Summa insists that decisions as to how to deploy reason are ultimately taken by the will. As such, the will rather than reason takes the lead in directing

mundum deputantes (Even now we die to carnal desires to the extent that we understand in a spiritual way the Wisdom of God through which all things have been made, so that we consider this world for/to us as dead).

³⁵⁷ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M1, C1, Respondeo (n. 8), 16: citing Augustine *ep. 147*, 15.37, *Si quaeris utrum possit Deus videri, respondeo: potest. Si quaeris unde hoc sciam, respondeo: quia in veracissima Scriptura legitur (Matt. 5:8): beati mundo corde, quoniam ipsi Deum videbunt.*

³⁵⁸ James A. Weisheipl, ‘Albertus Magnus and Universal Hylomorphism: Avicbron—A Note on Thirteenth Century Augustinianism,’ in *Albert the Great: Commemorative Essays*, ed. Francis J. Kovach and Robert W. Shahan (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), 239-60.

³⁵⁹ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, T3, C4, Contra a (n. 405), 482.

³⁶⁰ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, T3, M1, C1, Contra a (n. 390), 468.

their joint operations.³⁶¹ For the Summa, moreover, the human will, like that of the divine, is entirely unconstrained: it is characterized by the flexibility (*flexibilitas*) to prefer either good or evil.³⁶² This view represents what is perhaps the Summa's most significant departure in the doctrine of the will from Augustine and later figures like Anselm and Aquinas, who argued that the will is fundamentally ordered to the good. In their view, to will evil is strictly speaking not to will at all because it is to opt for something which ultimately enslaves our desires and constraints our freedom of choice.

As one author has noted, the early Franciscan perspective on the will represents a rather extreme take on the position of John of Damascus, perhaps mediated by John Blund, which is nonetheless elaborated in an entirely original way by the Summa.³⁶³ 'Looking at John of Damascus' account shows us that he does not construe choice as inherently a choice between two options, the good and the evil.'³⁶⁴ In keeping with the custom at the time, the Summists pay lip service to the traditional Augustinian position, noting that God made us with a good will and ordered the will properly and originally towards the good. As beings

³⁶¹ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, T3, C3, Ar2, Respondeo (n. 398), 476: *Libertas arbitrii principaliter est ex parte voluntatis*. Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q1, C3, Ar1, Ad objecta 1 (n. 3), 6: *Bonum et malum reducuntur ad unum principium, scilicet voluntatem* (good and evil are reduced to one principle, namely the will). Cf. Ad objecta 2, 5.

³⁶² Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, T3, M1, Respondeo (n. 389), 467: *Liberum arbitrium secundum quod est flexibile ad bonum et malum sit in creatura rationali*. Cf. Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q1, C3, Ad objecta 2 (n. 36), 46: *Nam creatura intellectualis naturaliter vertibilis est in bonum et in malum*.

³⁶³ Denise Ryan, 'An Examination of a Thirteenth-Century Treatise on the Mind-Body Dichotomy: Jean de la Rochelle on the Soul and its Powers' (PhD Thesis, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, 2010), 173.

³⁶⁴ Michael Frede, 'John of Damascus on Human Action, the Will, and Human Freedom,' in *Byzantine Philosophy and its Ancient Sources*, ed. Katerina Ierodiakonou (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 63-95.

that differ from him in nature, however, humans are changeable (*vertibile*) in ways that allow in principle for disregarding his intents.³⁶⁵

On this basis, the Summists infer that both before and after the fall, *liberum arbitrium* was characterised by the ability to vacillate between good and evil. Although God originally created us in the hope that we would choose the good, we by possess by nature the fundamental capacity to consent or refuse to do so. The freedom of the will has always been absolute. The logical corollary of this account is that merit is accumulated on the basis of the preferences of the will or *voluntas*. Because we have complete freedom to choose between good and evil, in other words, what stands us in good stead is to choose the good. On this basis, the Summa affirms that post-lapsarian knowledge is superior to the knowledge Adam had of God through creatures before the fall.³⁶⁶

In some sense, the Summa admits, Adam's knowledge was superior to ours insofar as his capacity to know God through the world was not yet obscured by the failure of the will to which he would soon succumb. Nevertheless, the prospects for merit are greater now than they were before the fall, when love for God and the knowledge that came along with it was essentially automatic. This is because a deliberate and difficult movement of the will is

³⁶⁵ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, T3, M1, Ad objecta 1 (n. 389), 467: *Deus est voluntate bonus et fecit hominem ad imaginem suam, quod fecit eum voluntate bonum, quia creatura cum sit ex nihilo vertibilis est et ita oppositionem habet ad necessitatem quia necessitas est ex parte perfectae potentiae et ita solum in Deo, non in creatura cum ibi sit defectus potentiae, et ideo non sequitur quod si Deus est necessario bonus quod homo existens ad imaginem eius sit necessario bonus* (God is by will good and made humans in his image, such that he made them with good will. Because creatures are from nothing, however, they are changeable and thus not necessitated [in the good], because necessity belongs to the perfect power that is only in God, not in creatures where there is a defect of power. Thus it does not follow that if God is necessarily good that humans in his image are necessarily good). Cf. Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, T3, C2, Ar1, Pr3 (n. 395), 474.

³⁶⁶ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M2, C5, Ar1, Respondeo (n. 18), 29.

presently required to obtain sound knowledge.³⁶⁷ Although sin was certainly not a good in its own right, consequently, the Summa insists that God made something good of it through the opportunity it afforded human beings meritoriously, if laboriously, to exercise the free will needed to regain recourse to the truth.

The more merit is acquired through the appropriate orientation of the will towards God, the more uninhibited the mind's access to the truth becomes.³⁶⁸ The natural image of God in humans becomes an increasingly clear likeness to God's own self.³⁶⁹ By the same token, the human mind becomes better attuned to seeing the traces of the divine that can be found in the world. In that sense, it grows in intimacy with God to the point of being able to encounter him directly, in the way Francis did when he received the stigmata toward the end of his life. This famous episode is most famously recounted in Bonaventure's *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*. Here, Bonaventure explains how Francis' cognitive connection with God enabled him to discern the love and wisdom of God in all things, and to do so with such consistency that his knowledge ultimately gave way to an ecstatic union with God himself.

While the Summa does not lay out the pathway to God which Francis traversed so clearly as Bonaventure, the basis for the Seraphic Doctor's vision of 'the mind's journey into God' is already available there. After all, the Summa clearly explains how the conformity of the will to God heightens the chances of experiencing him in ways that exceed the natural capacities of reason and give a glimpse of him in his essence, which is simply Love. Thus the Summa quotes John 14:21: 'the one who loves me will be loved by my father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.'³⁷⁰ Further echoing Augustine's *De videndo Dei*, the Summa

³⁶⁷ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M2, C5, Art2, Respondeo (n. 19), 29.

³⁶⁸ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, T3, M7, Solutio (n. 416), 490.

³⁶⁹ Vol 2.1, In4, Tr1, S2, Q3, T3, M4, C1, Respondeo (n. 407), 484-5.

³⁷⁰ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M1, C1, Ad objecta 2 (n. 8), 16.

concludes that the invisible God can make himself known in exceptional ways to those whose wills are fully conformed to him, when he wills to do so.³⁷¹

The kind of special revelation in question can take one of a number of forms. In the first place, the *Summa* speaks of Moses who allegedly saw God's 'backside'.³⁷² Here, God appeared not in his own form but in a natural form or figure. Thus, the vision of Moses of Mount Sinai is described as a vision of the imagination or of the body, which represents something that is in principle natural through an intelligible species that in fact is imparted by God rather than extracted from experience in the world.

There is another kind of vision, purely intellectual, which was experienced by the Apostle Paul, who had a vision of God in which his mind seemed to be abstracted from the body. Such an experience is generally reserved for the beatific vision, since the vision of God as he is, abstracted from the body, requires that human beings are no longer weighed down by their own bodies.³⁷³ However, it has been enjoyed by a few holy men like Paul and presumably Francis on Mount La Verna.³⁷⁴ Although the precedent for these two types of vision, imaginative and intellectual, is found primarily in the biblical tradition, there are some possible links with Avicenna's discussion of prophesy, particularly when it comes to the vision of the imagination, such as Francis experienced when he witnessed the crucifix speak to him at the St Damiano altar. More evident however is the influence of Avicenna's first form of prophesy, which is based on the knowledge of the transcendentals and the insight into reality they provide a person who is always attuned to the Active Intellect, in this case, God, through a rightly ordered will.

³⁷¹ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M1, C1, Ad objecta 1 (n. 8), 16: Citing Augustine, *ep.* 147, 6.18.

³⁷² Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M1, C4, Respondeo (n. 11), 20-1.

³⁷³ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M1, C5, 4 (n. 12), 21.

³⁷⁴ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M1, C5, Contra b (n. 12), 21.

There are many examples of this kind of prophesy which can be found in the life of Francis, who is said to have shown remarkable insight into matters moral, spiritual, and practical, regarding which he had no formal training. This insight in all cases derived from the intuitive connection with God that he enjoyed on account of the full conformity of his will to God. While such volitional conformity is the means of knowing not only God but also anything whatever, such knowledge we have seen is also designed to give us contact with God whether through creatures or through other revelations with God that increases our level of intimacy with him: and the prospects of a special vision of him. Thus, love is the beginning and the end of knowledge on the Franciscan understanding. The practical purpose of theology in the *Summa*, as I will explain below, is to cultivate that love and so facilitate our restoration to God's image and likeness, that is, salvation.

A Practical Vision

In the scholastic period, it was becoming common practice in theological treatises to begin with a discussion of the status of theology as a science or field of inquiry. In fact, the *Summa Halensis* was among the first to do so, aside perhaps from Roland of Cremona, largely under the impetus of Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, which was increasingly becoming a topic of discussion in the 1240s.³⁷⁵ The purpose of that text in large part is to outline the conditions for determining whether any sphere of inquiry meets the criteria for a genuine 'science'.³⁷⁶ As usual, however, the *Summa*'s own approach to the topic may have

³⁷⁵ C.R. Hess, 'Roland of Cremona's Place in the History of Thought,' *Angelicum* 45 (1968), 429-77, 453. See 'Quid sit subiectum theologiae,' in *Summae Magistri Rolandi Cremonensis, O.P. Liber Primus* (Bergamo: Umberto Midali, 2015-7), 22-4.

³⁷⁶ B. Niederbacher and G. Leibold (eds.), *Theologie als Wissenschaft im Mittelalter: Texte, Übersetzungen*,

been informed by Avicenna's distinction between speculative and practical knowledge, as it seems particularly concerned to determine which kind of knowledge theology entails.

At the outset, the *Summa* states that the purpose of theology is to articulate revealed truths received 'from God', thus teaching us what we should believe 'about God', thereby leading us 'towards God'.³⁷⁷ While the first two functions of theology are speculative in nature, the latter raises the question as to how exactly theology achieves the practical feat of inspiring piety or devotion to God.³⁷⁸ Although the *Summa* leaves the answer to this question to some extent unclear, the working assumption of the text seems to be that speculative theology, or efforts to explain the nature and work of God, incite awe and love at his efforts on our behalf, first through creation and above all through our restoration or salvation. In elucidating these matters, theology inspires 'fear and love at God's justice and mercy'³⁷⁹, which in turn move us to the practice of our faith.³⁸⁰

Kommentare (Münster: Aschendorff, 2006). Christian Trottman, *Théologie et noétique au XIIIe siècle* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1999). U. Köpf, *Die Anfänge der theologischen Wissenschaftstheorie im 13. Jhr.* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1974).

³⁷⁷ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q1, C2, Ad objecta 1-4 (n. 2), 5. Boyd Taylor Coolman, 'On the Subject Matter of Theology in the *Summa Halensis* and St Thomas Aquinas,' *The Thomist* 79 (2015), 439-66.

³⁷⁸ See a superb article on this topic by Oleg Bychkov, 'The Nature of Theology in Duns Scotus and His Franciscan Predecessors,' *Franciscan Studies* 66 (2008), 5-62. Stephen Dumont, 'Theology as a Science and Duns Scotus's Distinction Between Intuitive and Abstractive Cognition,' *Speculum* 64:3 (1989), 579-99. Angelo Marchesi, 'La teologia come scientia practica nella *Lectura Oxoniensis* e nella *Ordinatio* di G. Duns Scoto,' in *Knowledge and the Sciences in Medieval Philosophy* (Helsinki: The Finnish Society for Missiology and Ecumenics, 1987).

³⁷⁹ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q1, C2, Contra f (n. 2), 5.

³⁸⁰ Mikołaj Olszewski, 'Beginning of the Discussion of Practical or Theoretical Character of Theology: The Positions of Alexander of Hales, Thomas Aquinas, Albert the Great, and Giles of Rome,' *Studia Mediewistyczne* 34-35 (1999-2000), 129-46.

This is particularly true of theological discussion concerning the person and work of Christ, which receives a great deal of attention in the Summa. Without Christ, we would not know God or how he intends—and Christ enabled—us to live. On this basis, the Summa concludes that ‘theology is a science about the divine substance that must be cognized through Christ in the course of his work of restoration or salvation.’³⁸¹ The term ‘theology’ in this context, as in many others at the time, is employed interchangeably with the phrase, ‘Sacred Scripture’.³⁸² The purpose of Scripture in the Summa’s account is not merely to recount stories of individual lives but in doing so to disclose universal principles regarding how we should understand God and live in light of this understanding.³⁸³

On this account, consequently, theology performs a related function of inferring those principles, especially from the stories about Christ, who teaches us how we should think about God and operate in light of this understanding. In this regard, theology differs in a key way from other sciences, the purpose of which is to ‘perfect our cognition by way of [knowing] truth.’³⁸⁴ By contrast to such ordinary sciences, we have seen, the pursuit of understanding in theology is orientated primarily to ‘perfect the soul by way of affection, moving it towards the good through the principles of fear and love’³⁸⁵ for God. In short, theology ‘instructs the soul in those matters that pertain to salvation.’³⁸⁶

³⁸¹ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q1, C3, Respondeo (n. 3), 6: *Theologia est Scientia de substantia divina cognoscenda per Christum in opere reparationis.*

³⁸² C.R. Hess, ‘Roland of Cremona’s Place in the History of Thought,’ 460.

³⁸³ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q1, C1, Ad objecta 1 (n. 1), 2.

³⁸⁴ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q1, C2, Solutio (n. 1), 2.

³⁸⁵ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q1, C2, Solutio (n. 1), 2: *Theologia igitur, quae perficit animam secundum affectionem movendo ad bonum per principia timoris et amoris.*

³⁸⁶ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q1, C4, Ar1, Respondeo (n. 4), 8.

Whereas ordinary sciences are properly so-called, consequently, the work of theology is more appropriately and mainly described in terms of the pursuit of wisdom. After all, wisdom does not entail the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake but for the purpose of human betterment or indeed salvation. Theology, therefore, is wisdom rather than science, ‘for it consists rather in virtue and practical efficiency than in contemplation and [speculative] knowledge.’³⁸⁷ While science ‘operates by way of grasping truth through human reason, [wisdom] operates by way of eliciting the affection of piety through what is divinely inspired...by way of precepts, examples, admonitions, revelation and prayer, because it is these things that are appropriate for eliciting the affection of piety.’³⁸⁸ The main example and revelation is again that of Christ, and the main precept or admonition is of course the way that he taught us to live, which might be why moral questions, like Christological ones, consume a great deal of attention in the *Summa Halensis*.

In a subsequent turn of the argument, the *Summa* makes this initially surprising claim: ‘that which is known through divine inspiration is more truly known than that which is known through human reasoning. Therefore, since knowledge in theology is divinely inspired, it is a truer science than other sciences.’³⁸⁹ At face value, this assertion may seem implausible, given that the object of theology is inaccessible to the human mind, whereas the objects of human reason are often empirical and thus manifestly knowable.³⁹⁰ What then is

³⁸⁷ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q1, C4, Ar2, Ad objecta 2 (n. 5), 9: *[Haec scientia] magis enim consistit in virtute et efficacia quam in contemplatione et notitia.*

³⁸⁸ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q1, C4, Ar1, Ad objecta 2 (n. 4), 8.

³⁸⁹ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q1, C1, Contra a (n. 1), p. 2: *Quod cognoscitur per divinam inspirationem verius scitur quam quod per humanam ratiocinationem...ergo, cum cognitio theologiae sit edita inspiratione divina...verius est scientia quam veterae scientiae.*

³⁹⁰ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M3, C5, Respondeo (n. 24), 36.

the basis for the claim that theological knowledge is more certain than ordinary knowledge?

The answer to this question implicitly returns to the matter of the transcendentals, which provide the basis for all knowledge, both of the world and of God.

As we have seen, these concepts can only be bestowed by God through a sort of natural or general illumination. After sin, they are re-awakened through a special illumination given to those who willingly accept them as grace. Since what comes from God above and thus from outside our cognitive reach is the basis for all true and certain knowledge of reality, it is intrinsically more certain than any knowledge of reality itself. By the same token, proving an effect through a cause is a more certain approach than proving a cause through an effect, because the cause is the basis for the effect rather than the other way around.³⁹¹

This is the ground on which the Summa advances the claim that, ‘the way of knowing through inspiration is more certain than the one through human rational thought. Also, what is known from the testimony of the Spirit is more certain than what is known from the evidence gathered from creatures.’³⁹² Because our access to the transcendentals, received through divine inspiration or illumination, is by way of love, it follows that: what is known by way of taste or affection is more certain than what is known by way of sight or rational thought.³⁹³

Therefore, since the way of sacred Scripture is the way of knowing through

³⁹¹ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M3, C4, Ad objecta 3 (n. 23), 35.

³⁹² Vol 1, Tr Int, Q1, C4, Ar2, Contra a (n. 5), 9: *Certior est modus sciendi per inspirationem quam per ratiocinationem. Item, certius est quod scitur testimonio spiritus quam quod testimonio creaturarum.*

³⁹³ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q2, M3, C4, Ad objecta 3 (n. 23), 35: *Est certitudo secundum speculationem intellectus, quae est per modum visus, et est certitudo secundum sensum affectus, quae est per modum adhaerentiae, voluntatis scilicet vel amoris.*

inspiration, from the testimony of the Spirit, and by way of taste, while in other sciences the way of knowing is through rational thinking, from the evidence gathered from creatures, and by way of sight, it is clear that the way of knowing in theology is more certain than in other sciences.³⁹⁴

With these words, the Summa completely overturns any presumption regarding the superiority of knowledge of visible to invisible things. At the same time, it implicitly undermines any approach to theology which does not assume its own affective and practical orientation. What it achieves in summary is the subjection of all knowledge to the wisdom which is attained by ‘the pure in heart’. When it turns to treat its precise understanding of what a ‘pure life’, that is, to delineate the precepts of a Christ-like or moral life, it becomes clear that the kind of piety the Summa has in mind—both as the precondition and product of theological knowledge—is distinctly Franciscan in its character.

Not surprisingly, for instance, the question of poverty or property ownership proves central to the Summa’s understanding of what it means to follow Christ. As Christ gave up the glories of heaven to come to earth, so the Summa insists that we must abandon everything we have in order to live as he designed. This is done most perfectly in the way of the friars, who literally own nothing. But it can also be accomplished in a more limited way by the laity who donate all superfluous goods beyond those needed for bare survival to the poor.³⁹⁵ According to the Summa, any failure to do this was out of line with Christ’s example and

³⁹⁴ Vol 1, Tr Int, Q1, C4, Ar2, Contra a (n. 5), 9: *Cum ergo modus sacrae Scripturae sit modus sciendi per inspirationem per testimonium Spiritus, per modum gustus, in aliis vero modus sciendi per ratiocinationem, per testimonium creaturae, per modum visus manifestum est quod certior est modus sciendi in Theologia quam in aliis scientiis.*

³⁹⁵ Vol. 3, P2, I4 Tr2, Q3, T3, C4, 909.

thus unjust as it is to receive benefits beyond one's lot, which is usury.³⁹⁶ The reason for this is that almsgiving is the means God has ordained for us to be cleansed from sin and, as noted, to imitate Christ.³⁹⁷

This is just one of a number of ways that the Summa reveals to its reader that the practical result of theology which it envisages is one that looks very much like the Franciscan lifestyle, whether lay or professional. Other examples include loving enemies, which the Summa insists is far more meritorious than loving friends, because the sacrifice involved in loving enemies is so much greater.³⁹⁸ This example in particular harks back again to that of Christ, who came to serve those who were not like him and could not benefit him but whom he alone could benefit. The principle of complete self-sacrifice as the standard of love—for God or anyone—always looms large and informs the Summa's understanding of what the text means by the 'affection of piety.' Clearly, this is not just any affection but one that takes the form of physical and practical self-sacrifice similar to that of Francis and indeed Christ himself.

Such affection is fostered by following yet another precept, whereby we are instructed to cultivate simplicity of intention, forsaking all cares and desires of the body in order to focus on loving God.³⁹⁹ While the Summa does not explicitly prescribe in this context the sorts of self-denial and spiritual focus that Francis advocated and practiced, it is not difficult to imagine that this is the kind of thing it had in mind. When interpreted in the light of such moral precepts, theology at its best, and as the Halensian Summists understand it, is evidently designed to feed back into and further Franciscan practices and the Franciscan charisma.

³⁹⁶ Vol. 3, P2, In4, Tr2, Q3, T3, M1, C1, Ar2, 907: *Utrum necessarium an superfluum praecipitur dari.*

³⁹⁷ Vol. 3, P2, In4, Tr2, Q3, T3, C5, 910-11: *Quare eleemosynae specialiter attribuatur omnia mundare.*

³⁹⁸ Vol. 3, P2, Inq 4, Tr2, Q3, T4, C4, 920: *Utrum maius sit diligere amicos quam inimicos.*

³⁹⁹ Vol. 3, P2, In4, Tr2, Q4, M2, C1, 930-3: On simplicity of intentions.

Thus, it is no wonder that the *Summa* concludes that it would be a contradiction in terms to pursue the science of theology and fail to observe its moral precepts. Since the whole aim of theology is practical, to theologize in a vacuum would defeat the purpose.⁴⁰⁰

Conclusion

In many respects, the theological vision of the *Summa Halensis* is a matter of historical accident. As Simon Tugwell writes:

The attempt to provide a viable epistemological account of how we know God had apparently reached an impasse in the 1240s, and had in the process brought negative theology into a certain disrepute; the only way that was unaffected was one which posited a non-intellectual way of knowing God by love which by passed rather than settled the epistemological problem.⁴⁰¹

In the wake of the 1241 condemnation, the Summists capitalized on the pro-Augustine atmosphere and cultivated strongly kataphatic persuasions that steered entirely clear of the supposed dangers of negative theology. They incorporated this approach into the affective methodology that remained unscathed by the condemnation and thereby elaborated its epistemological dimension extensively for the first time. At the time and under the circumstances, this must have seemed like a monumental intellectual feat and a remarkable solution to a longstanding and central problem in the theological tradition. For the Franciscans themselves, however, it was arguably much more than that. In light of what has

⁴⁰⁰ Vol. 3, P2, In4, Tr2, Q4, M3, C2, Ar2, 938-9: *Utrum praedicator teneatur facere quod dicet*.

⁴⁰¹ Simon Tugwell, *Albert and Thomas*, 55.

been outlined above, one cannot help but perceive a convenient coincidence of historical accident and Franciscan ethos.

While the affective-practical vision of the *Summa* was in one sense the ultimate solution to the religious-epistemological problems of the day, it also gives expression to some of the most cherished spiritual values of the order itself. The notion of an innate knowledge of the transcendentals—and ultimately God—corresponds nicely for instance to the celebrated intimacy Francis enjoyed with God. This intimacy afforded him a special ability to appreciate every aspect of God’s creation. The kataphatic element of the *Summa*’s vision certainly encapsulates, therefore, even if by accident, the attitude of a man who sought to find a trace of God’s love or a footprint of the divine in creatures great and small.

The notion of an affective ‘way in’ to such knowledge, as already noted, is also highly consistent with Francis’ remarkable learning, despite his lack of formal theological training. As his early biographer Thomas of Celano writes:

Although this blessed man was not educated in scholarly disciplines, still he learned from God wisdom from above, and, enlightened by the splendours of eternal light...his genius, pure and unstained, penetrated hidden mysteries. Where the knowledge of teachers is outside, the passion of the lover entered.⁴⁰²

As Celano elaborates elsewhere, Francis always stressed that learning is not an end in its own right but a means to loving God. To construe the speculative work of theology as ultimately possessing a practical orientation towards facilitating that love certainly does not seem like an accident in that light. The authors of the *Summa* clearly wish to convey that the

⁴⁰² C2, 314-15.

intellectual cogency of their theological system has the power to inspire affection for its divine object, and the cultivation of that affection, in turn, is the motivation for inquiry. While those who pursue knowledge for its own sake attend to reality as if from the outside, love for God who is the source of all reality gives wisdom or insight into all things, not least God. This is what waits to be discovered in the next chapter on theistic proof.

5. THEISTIC PROOF

Since the late medieval period, Anselm of Canterbury has been heralded in the West as the first proponent of the so-called ontological argument for God's existence. This kind of argument purports to provide proof for the reality of God, which is derived from the very definition of God as the supreme being. As such a being, ontological arguments presume, God must possess all perfections—including the perfection of existence. Thus, one need only think about what he is to know that he exists. In that sense, ontological arguments are purely rational: they have no other source than human reason. Over the centuries, philosophers have formulated many different versions of this basic argument; however, most of them are framed with reference to a broader tradition of thought that supposedly began with Anselm.⁴⁰³

Although Anselm's work has garnered considerable attention in the late medieval and modern periods, it was largely neglected in the century between his death and the beginnings of the University of Paris in the early thirteenth century. A few other precedents notwithstanding, Alexander of Hales and the authors of the *Summa Halensis* were the first extensively to appropriate and popularise the work of Anselm, not least, the famous argument which can be found in chapters 2-3 of his *Proslogion*. In writings completed both before and during the period of the *Summa*'s authorship between 1236-45, these first Franciscan

⁴⁰³ Variations on an ontological argument have been offered by Norman Malcolm, 'Anselm's Ontological Arguments,' *The Philosophical Review* 69:1 (1960), 41-62. Graham Oppy, *Ontological Arguments and Belief in God* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995). Alvin Plantinga, *God and Other Minds* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967). Alvin Plantinga *The Nature of Necessity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974). Charles Hartshorne, *Anselm's Discovery: A Re-Examination of the Ontological Proof for God's Existence* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1965). Rene Descartes, fifth meditation in *Discourse on Method and The Meditations*, trans. F. Sutcliffe (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1968). Gottfried Leibniz, *New Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, trans. A. Langley (New York: Macmillan, 1709/1896).

intellectuals developed a common approach to reading Anselm's argument which is expressed most fully in the *Summa* itself.⁴⁰⁴ As this suggests, early Franciscans functioned 'as a community, and not merely as a group of scholars who happened to be working at the same institution.'⁴⁰⁵

In this case as in so many others, moreover, the *Summa Halensis* stands as the clearest expression of their collective mind. When articulating their uniquely Franciscan perspectives, we have learned that the Halensian Summists tended to quote authorities not merely as a matter of unequivocal endorsement but with a view to locating their own opinions within larger traditions or streams of thought which could legitimize them. The example of the *Summa*'s appropriation of Anselm's argument is no exception to this rule. As I will demonstrate in this chapter, the *Summa*'s version of Anselm's argument represents a significant development beyond Anselm's own iteration.⁴⁰⁶ In order to bolster this claim, I will start by examining Anselm's argument, attending carefully to the pastoral or pedagogical objectives he outlines in his 26-chapter *Proslogion*. This discussion will cast doubt on the claim that the famous argument can be interpreted in exclusively ontological terms.

Following this, I will analyse the sources in addition to Anselm that inform the Franciscan interpretation of his argument. These sources include Avicenna, whose celebrated proof for the necessary existent is the closest forerunner of which I am aware for what is

⁴⁰⁴ Scott Matthews, *Reason, Community, and Religious Tradition: Anselm's Argument and the Friars* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), 46-80, especially 62.

⁴⁰⁵ Scott Matthews, *Reason, Community, and Religious Tradition*, 72.

⁴⁰⁶ In his own way, Jean Chatillon has demonstrated this in his 'De Guillaume d'Auxerre à saint Thomas d'Aquin: l'argument de saint Anselme chez les premiers scolastiques duxième siècle,' *Spicilegium Beccense* I (Paris, 1959), 209-31, especially 226-7. See also Anton Pegis, 'The Bonaventurian Way to God,' *Mediaeval Studies* 29 (1967), 206-42, especially page 211.

known today as the ontological argument. As a perceived associate of the Augustinian tradition, Anselm was not immune to an Avicennian interpretation. This interpretation became possible through the mediation of the twelfth-century mystical theologian Richard of St Victor, who was perhaps the first to assess Anselm's argument without reference to the broader context of the *Proslogion*.

By de-contextualising Anselm's argument, Richard established a precedent which later allowed early Franciscans to attribute something like Avicenna's argument to Anselm, albeit without acknowledgement, in what was ultimately an argument of their own invention. This Franciscan version of the argument is the one to which Thomas Aquinas likely, and famously, objected, in objecting to what he referred to as Anselm's argument. At the same time, this rendition of the argument is closer to the one that is associated with Anselm's legacy to this day. Through the *Summa Halensis* and its authors, consequently, it is fair to say that the West was introduced for the first time in intellectual history to what has come to be known as Anselm's ontological argument.

Reading Anselm's Argument

In recent years, a growing body of literature has cast doubt on the notion that Anselm offered nothing but an ontological argument for God's existence such as we understand it today, whether to foster faith seeking understanding in believers or to persuade non-believers to believe. While this is not the place to explore that literature in full, I do want to consider some textual evidence which supports an alternative reading, starting with the argument from chapter two itself, which can be stated as follows:⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰⁷ Lydia Schumacher, 'The Lost Legacy of Anselm's Argument: Rethinking the Purpose of Proofs for the Existence of God,' *Modern Theology* 27:1 (2011), 87-101.

God is a being than which nothing greater can be conceived (i.e. the supreme being).

It is better to exist in reality than in the mind alone.

God is whatever it is best to be.

Therefore, God exists in reality as well as in the mind.

In formulating this argument, Anselm asserts unequivocally that all who apprehend the definition of God as supreme being must affirm that he exists. After all, God is whatever it is best to be, and existence in reality is better than existence in the mind, rather like the existence of wealth is superior to the mere thought of possessing it. On this basis, Anselm goes on to argue in chapter three that those who apprehend the meaning of the word ‘God’ cannot logically deny that he exists. As chapter four elaborates, it is only possible for the fool to say in his heart, ‘there is no God’, insofar as it is possible in principle to think a thought that does not bear on reality.

So construed, Anselm’s argument could in fact be construed as an ontological proof for God’s existence. The fact that his own detractor Gaunilo interpreted it as such suggests that it was indeed ripe for consideration in this way, and Anselm’s reply to Gaunilo indicates that he was aware of and accepted that. Nevertheless, the broader context of the *Proslogion* summons us to read the proof in a different light. The text begins with a prayer in which Anselm professes his inability to know God and pleads with God to restore in him the image of God that is effaced by sin.⁴⁰⁸ When referring to this process of renewal at later points in the text, Anselm notably continues to operate on the assumption that God himself remains

⁴⁰⁸ *Proslogion*, Prologue.

altogether unknowable, insofar as the divine nature exceeds the spatio-temporal constraints of human knowledge.⁴⁰⁹

Thus, the restoration Anselm has in mind does not reinstate knowledge of God in his own right but an ability to reflect the image of a God who never ceases to know himself as highest good, in the only context possible for human beings, namely, that of ordinary knowledge and life. What is restored, in other words, is an ability to think and act in reality in keeping with the belief in God as ‘highest good’ that is held in the mind. The exercise of such an ability has a highly significant effect when it comes to assessing objects and circumstances in the world. For the knowledge that God alone is absolutely significant prevents persons from ascribing too much significance to these matters and thus from perceiving them in ways that are inconsistent with reality, and a personal ability to flourish therein. In sum, the knowledge of God checks the human tendency to engage in the sinful patterns of thinking and acting whereby the image of God is effaced. By the same token, it replaces them with patterns of appreciating things for what they really are, as God made them to be.⁴¹⁰

In that sense, the knowledge of God that Anselm perceives as realistically attainable is a knowledge of things other than God, assessed in the light of faith in his absolute significance. By Anselm’s account, this ‘mediated’ knowledge of God can only be gained progressively, as the eyes of the mind gradually re-adjust to the vision of the world in God’s light, just as physical eyes must become accustomed to brighter levels of light.⁴¹¹ So

⁴⁰⁹ *Proslogion* 1, 13, 16.

⁴¹⁰ See compatible readings of Anselm in Scott Matthews, ‘Anselm and Tradition,’ in *Reason, Community, and Religious Tradition*, 1-14. Lydia Schumacher, ‘The Lost Legacy of Anselm’s Argument,’ 87-101. Robert Sokolowski, ‘Beginning with St Anselm,’ in *The God of Faith and Reason* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995), 1-11.

⁴¹¹ *Proslogion* 26.

conceived, Anselm's argument is ultimately a resource for bringing a professed belief in God to bear in reality, and thereby for cultivating a habit of seeing the world in the light of faith. In doing this, believers gradually conform to the image of a God who always thinks and acts in the knowledge of his supreme goodness.⁴¹² At the same time, Anselm concludes in the final chapters of the *Proslogion* that they become ready to gaze upon the reality of God himself in the life to come.⁴¹³

This 'pedagogical' way of interpreting Anselm's argument as a 'formula' of sorts for applying belief in God is borne out by many passages in the wider text of the *Proslogion* that tend to be neglected on the standard reading. In chapter two itself, for example, Anselm provides an illustration as to how his argument is meant to function. More specifically, he notes that, 'when a painter plans beforehand what he is going to execute, he has the picture in his mind, but he does not yet think that it actually exists, because he has not yet executed it. However, when he has actually painted it, then he both has it in his mind and understands that it exists because he has now made it.' As a mental picture provides a painter with the resource needed to transform that picture into a reality, so this illustration confirms that Anselm's argument is a tool that for allowing belief in God to form and transform ordinary thoughts and actions.

In keeping with the ancient tradition of spiritual exercises, consequently, Anselm seemingly delineates a sort of 'practical syllogism' through which we may apply the belief that that God is 'whatever it is best to be' in assessing the worth of objects and circumstances we encounter in the world. By these means, we ensure that God does not merely exist notionally in the mind but also plays a vivid part in our dealings with reality. This is arguably what Anselm has in mind when he claims that 'existence in reality is better than mere

⁴¹² *Proslogion* 13-21.

⁴¹³ *Proslogion* 24-6.

existence in the mind', namely, that it is better to operate in reality like God exists than simply to say that one believes that he does, and act as if he does not.

While it is clearly foolish on Anselm's view to deny that God exists altogether, it is likewise foolish nominally to acknowledge his reality as the supreme being and then fail to live in accordance with what is professed to be true. In short, it is foolish because it is inconsistent and thus irrational, not to say hypocritical. So construed, Anselm's argument provides a remedy against hypocrisy because it facilitates an increase in the consistency between the belief Christians profess or hold in the mind about who God is as the sole being of absolute significance and the way they live in reality. Insofar as its application reveals the difference belief in God makes to the way we understand everything that is not God, it may be said to provide a sort of 'personal proof' for the reality of God. To make both believers and through them, unbelievers aware of this difference is arguably what Anselm's project of *faith seeking understanding* is all about.

The Sources of the Summa's Proof

Although Anselm's argument thus interpreted is not wholly lacking in potential to reinforce belief in the reality of God, a reading of his whole *Proslogion* refutes the notion that it does nothing but deliver the sort of ontological proof for God's existence that it has long been supposed to provide. How then did such a reading of his thought emerge? To answer this question, we must look not only to the sources of early Franciscan thinkers, who were the first in the West not only to incorporate Anselm but also to defend a so-called proof for a necessary existent. As noted in the chapter on philosophical context, this proof was one of Avicenna's most celebrated contributions to the history of philosophy. In what follows, I will review briefly the contours of Avicenna's argument, before examining the proof for the

necessary existence of one God, whereby Richard of St Victor paved the way for the Franciscan appropriation of Avicenna.

The proof for the NE that Avicenna presents in his *Book of the Cure*, which is the text that Latin scholars at this time would have known, starts from encounters with possible or ‘contingent beings’. These are beings that did not have to exist, and which cannot therefore be the source of their own existence, goodness, truth, or whatever. The existence of such beings suggests that there is a further being through whom they exist, which is itself the cause of its own existence and which is necessary in that sense. In Avicenna’s account, this proof engenders the further conclusion that there cannot be an infinite chain of beings that cause one another, but that there must be an initial, uncaused cause at which they all terminate.

Though reflection on things possible in themselves and necessary through another serves as the catalyst for concluding that there is a NE, Avicenna insists that his is not a cosmological argument that infers the necessary existent from empirical realities.⁴¹⁴ Rather, it is a purely metaphysical proof which can be worked out simply through rational reflection on what it means to be a necessary being that exists through itself and through which other things have their existence. Such a being cannot *not* exist, insofar as it is part of its definition to cause its own existence. Since we are innately aware of what it means to be a necessary being, moreover, we cannot fail to know this being not only as the cause of itself but also of everything else.

On this showing, contingent beings do not so much prove the reality of God as trigger the latent awareness of the one through whom they have their existence, who in turn exists through himself.⁴¹⁵ That stated, it is a matter for debate whether and to what extent an

⁴¹⁴ Avicenna, *Meta.*, I, 3.

⁴¹⁵ Anton Pegis, ‘The Bonaventurian Way to God,’ 216, quoting Etienne Gilson, *La philosophie de saint Bonaventure*, 2nd ed., (Paris, 1943), 108: ‘All knowledge comes from prior knowledge, and the apparently

Avicennian proof has something in common with ontological arguments let alone the one attributed to Anselm. While both arguments move from the definition of God to his reality, this only establishes them as members of the same species or genre, not as argumentative twins.⁴¹⁶ Those who specialise in Avicenna will be better placed to address this debate, which is not the primary focus here. The main goal in the present context is instead to trace how early Franciscans came to project Avicenna's proof for the necessary existent on to Anselm.

For this purpose, we must turn to the argument for the necessary existence of one God that Richard of St Victor offers in the first chapter of his *De Trinitate*, the overarching project of which is to establish the necessity of God's unity and ultimately Trinity. One of the key assumptions underlying Richard's project is that, 'we do not hold anything more firmly than that which we grasp by a resolute faith.'⁴¹⁷ Although this assumption may seem counter-intuitive, since God subsists beyond the reach of human experience, Richard seems to think it holds true in an objective sense, insofar as God is the source of all beings, and thus the only being that must exist.

Since 'it seems utterly impossible that things that are necessary lack of a necessary reason,' Richard further argues, there must be not only plausible but also necessary reasons for the things we believe about God.⁴¹⁸ Here, he borrows a distinction between 'necessary' and 'fitting' reasons that Anselm had invoked in explaining why God became man, and

immediate and primitive recognition of the contingent supposes the prior knowledge of the necessary. Now the necessary is nothing other than God; human intelligence, therefore, experiences the fact that it already possesses the knowledge of the first being at the very moment when it undertakes to prove it.'

⁴¹⁶ Peter Adamson, 'From the Necessary Existent to God,' in *Interpreting Avicenna: Critical Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 170: 'proving the existence of a necessary existent is different from proving the existence of God,' and neither Avicenna nor the Franciscans seemingly intend to do the latter.

⁴¹⁷ Richard of St Victor, *DT* I.2.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, IV.

which notably does not feature in his *Proslogion*. In the chapter where Richard deploys such reasons, I have noted, the belief at issue is the oneness of God—and the corresponding impossibility of positing more than one God. Richard’s argument for divine unity turns on a preceding argument in favour of divine necessity.

In this regard, Richard notes that everything that exists must either exist from eternity or in time and must receive its being out of another or from itself. On this basis, he concludes that a being, such as God, that is from eternity must also be from itself, because nothing that is eternal is preceded by and thus derived from another. By contrast, creatures which exist in time necessarily come from God rather than from themselves.⁴¹⁹ Precisely because God is a being who derives from no other, Richard further argues, there cannot be more than one God, otherwise there would be multiple beings that do not come from another. However, the sheer existence of multiple beings would suggest that one came from the other, which entails a contradiction.⁴²⁰

Although Richard does not quote the *Proslogion* or any other source explicitly in developing these arguments—a practice quite common in this type of writing and also used by Anselm—he makes implicit reference to Anselm in affirming that ‘it is essential that something supreme should exist,’ and ‘we define as supreme over all things, that of which nothing is greater, nothing is better. Without a doubt, the rational nature is better than the reasonless nature. It is indispensable, then, that a rational substance be supreme above everything.’⁴²¹ As he later posits, ‘divine knowledge cannot conceive anything on the

⁴¹⁹ Ibid., XII.

⁴²⁰ Ibid., XVII.

⁴²¹ Ibid., XI.

intellectual plane more perfect than God. Even less, then, human understanding can imagine something greater and better than God.⁴²²

In this context, it seems clear that Richard imports the main claims Anselm makes in chapter two of his *Proslogion* into his own argument for the necessary existence of a singular being that is ‘from itself’ and is, as such, from eternity. By the same token, Richard removes Anselm’s argument from the broader context of the *Proslogion*, jettisoning the rest of the 26-chapter text in what has now become a relatively common practice. In doing so, he set the stage for the Halensian Summists to go a step further and deploy Anselm’s argument not merely to defend a proof for the necessary existence of *one* God but the necessary existence of God in himself, along the lines of Avicenna. The justification for this conflation was already seemingly provided by Richard when he invoked Anselm’s ‘necessary reasons’ to argue that there is only one God. In what follows, we will see how the *Summa* brings its sources together while moving beyond them in an innovative way.

The Proof for a Necessary Existent

The very first question addressed in the *Summa Halensis*, after introductory material on the status of theology as a science and the nature of knowledge of God, inquires whether God exists necessarily, or is a necessary existent. The very fact that this question, not previously posed in a scholastic text of which I am aware, is posed here is quite striking. It is hard to imagine that the question could have occurred to the Franciscans in a vacuum: they found it in their inheritance of Avicenna. The *Summa*’s answer to this question is itself delivered across two main sections of the text. The first argues that the divine substance

⁴²² Ibid., XIX.

exists by necessity (*quod necesse est divinam substantiam esse*). The second contends that God cannot be thought not to exist (*quod non potest cogitari Deum non esse*). As a matter of fact, however, the first article presents five main arguments why God necessarily exists.

Although most readers today tend to associate the idea of delineating ‘five ways’ to prove God’s existence with Thomas Aquinas, the *Summa Halensis* was the first text to implement this approach, with arguments taken from the notions of being, causality, truth, goodness, and eminence.⁴²³ The first way of proving the necessary existence of God, from being or existence, is elucidated with reference to arguments from Richard of St Victor, largely rehearsed above, which assert that all things that are or could be either existed from eternity or began to be in time, and have their being either from themselves, or from another that exists of its own accord.⁴²⁴

On this basis, Richard distinguishes between four different ways in which a being can exist, namely, from eternity and from itself; neither from eternity nor from itself; from eternity, but not from itself; or from itself but not from eternity. According to Richard, the last option is impossible: nothing is able to exist from itself and not from eternity, else there would have been nothing to bring into existence all that began to exist and continues to exist in time. By the same token, something had to exist from eternity and from itself to give existence to other things. In the account of the Summist, this ‘something’ is the divine substance.

The second, closely related, way to prove the necessity of the divine, namely, from causality, takes an insight from John of Damascus as its point of departure. According to John, all that exists is either caused or uncaused, that is, created or uncreated. But all that is

⁴²³ *SH* Vol 1, Tr1, Q1, C1, I, II, III, IV, V (n. 25), 40-2. Lydia Schumacher, ‘Aquinas’s Five Ways: A Pastoral Interpretation,’ *Theology* 119: 1 (2016), 26-33.

⁴²⁴ Quoting *DT* I.6. Vol 1, Tr1, Q1, C1, I (n. 25), 40.

causable is changeable; that is to say, it moves from non-being into being. But nothing can cause itself. Therefore, there must be an uncaused substance, namely, God.

The third way, concerning truth, refers primarily to Anselm's *De Veritate*. There, Anselm writes that if truth had a beginning or an end, then even before it began to be true, it would have been true that truth did not exist at some point in time. After truth comes to an end, moreover, he writes that it will be true that 'there is no truth'. Since truth cannot therefore exist or even cease to exist unless there is truth, truth exists eternally, and the truth is God.

The fourth way, from goodness, turns specifically to Anselm's most famous rendering of his argument in *Proslogion* 2, in order to affirm him as the supreme good that is the source of all goods. As such a good 'than which nothing greater can be conceived' (TTWNGCBC), he exists not only in the mind but also in reality, because existence in reality is better than mere existence in the mind, and God is whatever it is best to be. Only such a good can give rise to others. In elaborating this interpretation, fascinatingly, the Summa acknowledges that its reading of Anselm is not based directly on his main text, but is to some extent eked out of his reply to Gaunilo. There is as clear an admission as one could hope for that the Summa's understanding of Anselm was not necessarily the primary one that Anselm intended.

The fifth way, from eminence, draws on Anselm's *Monologion* 4, with a corroborating quotation from Richard of St Victor, which calls attention to the fact that there are degrees of being, in which higher grades of being serve as causes for those that are lower. As the Summa observes, these causes cannot regress infinitely but must terminate in an ultimate cause. On this basis, the Summist concludes with Anselm that there is a super-eminent being, which is superior to all other natures, and is ranked inferior to none. And this is God.

In summary, there are five ways to establish the necessity of the divine being. The first does so by appealing to the necessity of an eternal being that can give rise to temporal beings; the second, to something uncaused and unchanging that can engender things that are caused and changing; the third, to an eternal truth that is the condition of possibility for all finite truths, even the truth that truth may begin or end; the fourth, to a good that is the source of all goods; and the fifth, to the necessity of a super-eminent being that supersedes all grades of finite being.

At face value, these five ways might seem like cosmological ways of the sort provided by Thomas Aquinas. After all, they infer the existence of God on the basis of empirical things that are temporal, caused, true, good, and exist at inferior grades of being. In the second article of the *Summa*'s discussion, however, it becomes clear that such a bottom-up approach to establishing the divine reality is not what the Summists have in mind. Here, the *Summa* follows the precedent set by Richard of St Victor in his *De Trinitate* to remove Anselm's argument from the broader context of the *Proslogion*. For his part, we have seen, Richard deployed this argument to argue for the necessity of one God.

In the Franciscan account, by contrast, the argument for divine necessity becomes an end in its own right. That is not to suggest that the Summists actually entertain doubts about God's existence. This would have been highly unlikely at the time. Rather, they seek to give a reasoned explanation for the belief in God that they take to be true. This explanation turns on the assumption that our knowledge of God is prior to that of anything else: we possess it before we even encounter things in the world. This is because the human mind is the image of God and is, as such, 'naturally directed...toward that being in whose image it exists.'⁴²⁵ As Anton Pegis has noted, this is a very strong interpretation of what John of Damascus meant

⁴²⁵ Anton Pegis, 'The Bonaventurian Way to God,' 225.

when he insisted that all human beings enjoy an innate knowledge of God, namely, that if God is the light of reason, we cannot help but know God.

For these Franciscans, God's image is the locus of our capacity not only to know God himself but also to know all the things in the world that he has made. We cannot know the world before we know him because we have no recourse to true understanding of reality without aid from the one who made it. At the background here is the doctrine of the innate knowledge of the transcendentals which the *Summa* also adapts from Avicenna. According to the Franciscan version of this doctrine, we have an innate knowledge of being and its first determinations, which makes it possible for us to comprehend beings accurately in their own right and thereby in terms of the way they reflect their creator.

When we reflect on God as the very source of such cognitive powers, or on ourselves as his images, consequently, we cannot help but know him as necessarily existent. We alight upon a proof for God's existence that is purely rational or based solely upon sources derived from the human mind itself. These are the very resources through which we can draw the further inference that God must exist on his own terms. As he is the source of our being, the *Summa* reasons, he must likewise be the source of his own. In confirming this, the *Summa* restates Anselm's argument as follows: God is whatever it is best to be; that than which no better can be conceived; the supreme being. Since existence in reality is better than existence in the mind or imagination only, God necessarily exists.

This conclusion does not apply to any being other than God, the *Summa* echoes Anselm's reply to Gaunilo in affirming, insofar as beings besides God have a beginning and end in time and can therefore in principle be thought not to exist.⁴²⁶ While it is possible for this reason to think of such beings in abstraction from the question whether they actually

⁴²⁶ Vol 1, Tr1, Q1, C2, A2, Solutio, 44-5.

exist, God cannot be regarded as non-existing, precisely because the definition of his being is to exist through himself, or to exist necessarily, and so to be one through whom other beings exist, insofar as they do so.

Once God has been established as self-subsistent along these lines, he can be further recognized as the one through whom all other things exist, are good, and so forth, with the help of the five ways. We can see God as the Supreme Being that is reflected in created beings; the Cause of what is caused; the Good that is in ordinary goods, the supreme Truth that is in truths, and so on. The innate knowledge of God which we access either through reflection on ourselves or himself is the key to discovering his presence in the world, albeit finitely, but in a nonetheless direct or univocal way as we will discover in the next chapter.

In the aforementioned respects, we can discern how creatures testify to his reality, not so much by establishing it on empirical grounds as by triggering the awareness of him that is always present in the mind as his image. As Etienne Gilson put it, the proofs from creatures are proofs on this understanding because ‘they set in motion intelligible notions that imply the existence of God.’⁴²⁷ Thus, he goes on to say, ‘it is only *in appearance* that our reasoning takes its origin in the recognition of sensible data.’⁴²⁸ Since we have an innate idea of God, the sensible world will never aid us in constructing it; it can only offer us the occasion to recover it.’⁴²⁹

So construed, the five ways are clearly founded on one purely rational or ontological way of proving God’s existence. This can itself take two forms, depending on whether we reflect on God in his image or in terms of who he is in himself. In affirming this, incidentally,

⁴²⁷ Anton Pegis, ‘The Bonaventurian Way to God,’ 216, quoting Etienne Gilson, *La philosophie de saint Bonaventure*, 2nd ed., (Paris, 1943), 108.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

the Summa anticipates Bonaventure's three-pronged approach to proving God's existence on the basis of God's interior image, the world, or the very definition of God: what is inside, outside, or above the self.⁴³⁰ As we have seen, all these ways are founded on the innate knowledge of God as the one through whom we ourselves possess our characteristic powers: who is closer to us than we are to ourselves and is therefore not unknowable by us. This knowledge in turn enables us to see that he exists in himself—his essence is his existence, as scholastics put it—and that he is as such the giver or existence to all things which testify to his reality in turn.

There is only one way we can fail to recognise God's existence in any of the aforementioned ways. In illustrating this point, the Summa distinguishes between knowledge insofar as it pertains to the knower versus the object known. In his own right, as the object known, God cannot be thought not to exist. To understand the meaning of the word 'God' is after all to understand that he cannot *not* exist: that the perfection of existence is part of what it means for him to be the supreme and self-subsistent being through whom all other beings have their being.

As knowers, however, we may refuse to acknowledge that we subsist through one that is self-subsistent: that the divine being is the very condition for our existence. In denying this, we inevitably become ignorant of the testimony to God's existence that derives not only from the self as his image but also from creatures and from reflection on the very meaning of the term 'God', which entails existence by definition.⁴³¹ According to the Summa, this is what Anselm means when he allows that the fool may say in their heart, 'there is no God': not that God can be objectively regarded as non-existent, but that we can refuse to accept his place in our lives, as the source of our life, our powers, and of all things.

⁴³⁰ Anton Pegis, *The Bonaventurian Way to God*, 206-42, especially 210ff.

⁴³¹ Vol 1, Tr1, Q1, C2, A1, Solutio, 43-4.

This is what is at stake in a further distinction the Summa draws between understanding of a thing in universal or particular terms, or in terms of its universal but not its proper reason. As the Summa notes, many individuals understand that beatitude is happiness. While they therefore understand what beatitude is in universal terms, they may still believe that it specifically consists in wealth, honor, or other worldly goods. Thus, they may fail to appreciate what beatitude is in proper terms, and so to grasp that it turns on the vision of God. By the same token, idolaters recognize God in universal terms, as the principal and omnipotent being, but overlook what he is in proper or specific terms, elevating false images or false gods as objects of worship. In this way, they give to something that is not God a place that he alone should have in our lives.

The only way to overcome the ignorance of him that results is through repentance from sin, which restores recourse to the innate knowledge of God through which we can know that he exists in the three main ways. When we accept that he alone can satisfy the conditions for our own and all possible forms of existence, as a matter of fact, we cannot actually avoid acknowledging that God is self-subsistent, and, as such, necessarily exists. As we have seen, the basic argument that underlies this conclusion is similar to that of Avicenna: it starts from the innate assumption that all things that exist, including the self itself, must do so through a being that exists through itself and is necessary in that sense.

In order to draw this type of argument into the Christian tradition of thought, the Summists project something like Avicenna's proof for a necessary existent on to Anselm by removing chapters 2, not to mention 3 and 4, of the *Proslogion* from its larger context. In this regard, they followed the example of Richard of St Victor, who had done something similar previously in order to establish that there is necessarily only *one* God. The further de-contextualisation of Anselm's discussion of 'necessary reasons' to support this conclusion

arguably lay the groundwork for the Summists later to read Avicenna's proof into a text by Anselm that simply does not contain anything exactly like it.

Although the Summa is indebted to such sources, its proof for God's necessary existence is clearly more than the sum or function of them. As in other cases of scholastic thought, the Summists worked with their own objectives in mind and turned their sources precisely to that end. What they produce as a result is an argument the exact form of which cannot be found in any of the authorities they employ, including Anselm. That is not to suggest that the Summists or even Richard mishandled Anselm's writings or any others in recasting their meaning. As we have seen, the manipulation of sources was standard and even required practice at a time when the accepted way of thinking creatively and innovatively involved locating personal opinions within larger, if loosely defined traditions or streams of thought, elaborating and even redefining them in the process.

In the case of the first Franciscans, this is precisely what happened with Anselm's *Proslogion*. By excising chapter two from this text and recasting it as a proof for the necessary existent, the Summists bequeathed to subsequent thinkers an understanding of Anselm that has dominated in some capacity ever since. As far as the Western tradition is concerned, consequently, the Franciscans, not Anselm, must be regarded as the real innovators of Anselm's ontological argument. In closing, therefore, it is worth considering exactly what may have motivated the early Franciscans *as* Franciscans to articulate a theistic proof in this novel manner.

The Franciscan Nature of the Proof

Although the authors of the Summa do not elaborate explicitly on the motivation for their work, it stands to reason that their intent was at least in part to articulate philosophical

and theological positions that were consistent with the spiritual ideals of the order's founder, Francis of Assisi. This would have been necessary for survival in their institutional home at the University of Paris. Furthermore, it was essential to training up the next generation of Franciscans in a distinctly Franciscan way of thinking. This generation included the likes of Bonaventure, who claims to have learned all his good ideas from his Parisian Franciscan teachers, first and foremost, Alexander of Hales.

For these founders of the Franciscan school of thought, Avicenna's argument was not only conveniently accessible, but also particularly well suited to capturing the example of Francis of Assisi. Famously, the saint maintained a constant consciousness of God's presence that gave him insight into the way all creatures testify to their Creator. In a description of the Franciscan argument, Scott Matthews affirms that 'it is this teaching above all that fundamentally expresses Francis's experience of God, as immanent within the nature and intimately related to the soul.'⁴³²

According to the Franciscan tradition of thought, we have seen that the ability to know God in these ways can never be lost, even in the wake of sin, lest God be charged with failing to render himself eminently knowable to all human beings. By this account, consequently, sin simply makes us ignorant of the knowledge of God we nonetheless always possess. As such, it is a defect of the will to exhibit the love of God that opens up access to the knowledge of God, not a defect on the part of the intellect as regards the knowledge of God himself. By leading us to love things other than God more than God, in summary, sin obscures our intuitive awareness of God.

For the early Franciscans, this awareness of God can only be restored through the rekindling of the will to love God and thereby to regain immediate access to the innate

⁴³² Scott Matthews, *Reason, Community, and Religious Tradition*, 53.

knowledge of him that was never lost. In addition to explaining and holding Franciscans accountable to maintain the intuitive, personal connection with God that Francis enjoyed, this way of putting things may have been designed to assert the legitimacy and even primacy of Franciscan thought at a time when the very idea of a Franciscan intellectual tradition was being called into question both within and outside the order, by those who believed intellectual pursuits to be incompatible with Francis' intentions for his followers.

By positing love—and undoubtedly a Franciscan understanding of it—as the 'key' to knowledge not only of God but also, through him, of everything else, the Summists implicitly declared that a Franciscan attitude, and even a Franciscan lifestyle, is the means to all true knowledge, of the world, the self, or God. In turn, they suggested that such knowledge is constitutive of the Franciscan perspective and Franciscan lifestyle.⁴³³ In this way, they refuted objections to a Franciscan intellectual tradition at the level of that tradition's own development. By the same token, the Summists codified an approach to natural theology that would become a fixture not only in the later Franciscan intellectual tradition but even, arguably, in modernity.

⁴³³ Matthews, 'Encountering God Within: Anselm's Argument Among the Early Franciscans in Paris,' 71-3.

6. DIVINE NATURE

The doctrine of God remains one of the most fundamental and significant areas of early Franciscan innovation, not least under the influence of Avicenna. Since Augustine, medieval thinkers in the West had largely identified ‘simplicity’ as the most fundamental feature of the divine nature. Thus, the doctrine of divine simplicity, now frequently referred to as ‘classical theism’, had been propounded by such noteworthy figures as Hilary of Poitiers, Anselm of Canterbury, Peter Lombard, and Thomas Aquinas, who articulated this doctrine in its mature form.⁴³⁴ Against the otherwise relatively continuous Western tradition of thinking about the general nature of God, this chapter will demonstrate that the *Summa Halensis* developed a second and separate line of thought on the matter.

This new tradition stressed God’s immensity or infinity where the preceding one had emphasized his basic simplicity. In doing so, I would argue, it instigated a fundamental shift in the way of conceiving the nature of God that correlated strongly to Francis’ own theological outlook.⁴³⁵ In order to substantiate this claim, I will start by offering an overview of the unique structure of the early Franciscan doctrine of God and its historical sources and context. This analysis will highlight the respects in which early Franciscan theologians appear to have departed from or developed past traditions in treating the nature of God, under the influence of the recently encountered Greek Christian tradition.

In a second part of the chapter, I will briefly outline the traditional teaching on divine simplicity, as advocated by Augustine, by way of a foil that will throw into relief the innovativeness of the early Franciscan doctrine of divine immensity, which I will then treat in

⁴³⁴ Peter Lombard, *Sent.* I, 7.

⁴³⁵ Anne Davenport, *The Measure of a Different Greatness: The Intensive Infinite, 1250-1650* (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

more detail. This analysis will give considerable weight to the claim that the authors of the *Summa* were not mere followers of Augustine's tradition. To reinforce this point, I will then show how John Duns Scotus developed their intuitions about divine infinity to render them more consistent. Finally, I will reiterate my suggestion that the early Franciscan doctrine of God as immense served to paint a picture of God as Francis of Assisi understood him.

The Summa's Doctrine of God and its Sources

The treatise on the One God that follows immediately on the introductory material in the *Summa Halensis* consists of six tractates. The first covers the necessity or essentiality, immutability, and simplicity of the divine in a mere 13 pages; the second deals with divine immensity in nearly 60 pages; the third covers the unity, truth, and goodness of God in almost 100 pages; the fourth, fifth, and sixth sections deal with God's power, knowledge, and will, respectively, in approximately 200 further pages. The coverage of some of these topics, such as divine immutability and simplicity as well as divine power, knowledge, and will, is relatively unremarkable. These topics are dealt with in Lombard's *Sentences*.⁴³⁶ Moreover, they are treated albeit in more disparate fashion in the works of Augustine and Anselm, not to mention Aquinas.

Far more extraordinary is the primacy given to divine necessity and the amount of space devoted to the discussion of the so-called 'transcendentals' of unity, truth, and goodness. While these doctrines have been considered in the last two chapters, the present chapter is concerned with the equally unusual phenomenon of the *Summa's* dealing with the doctrine of divine immensity, a term early scholastics used interchangeably with infinity,

⁴³⁶ Peter Lombard, *Sent.* I, 8: Simplicity; I, 35: God's knowledge; I, 42-4: God's omnipotence; I, 45-8: God's will.

both of which imply absence of measure or limit.⁴³⁷ Prior to the twelfth century, very few references to the notion of divine infinity can be found in Latin writings, as a search through the volumes of the *Corpus Christianorum*, *Series Latina*, and the *Patrologia Latina* confirms. In his brief treatment of the matter, Peter Lombard cites Hilary of Poitiers, as below:⁴³⁸

But God is a living Force, of infinite power, present everywhere and nowhere absent, and manifests his whole self through his own, and signifies that his own are naught else than himself, so that where they are he may be understood to be himself. Yet we must not think that, after a corporeal fashion, when he is in one place he ceases to be everywhere, for through his own things he is still present in all places.

Similar references to divine infinity can be found in several other passages of Hilary's *De Trinitate*, which is the leading source next to Augustine, not least for Lombard, on the doctrine of divine simplicity. The common refrain of these passages is that God is infinite in the sense that 'nothing contains him, and he contains all things.'⁴³⁹ For Hilary, and indeed for Lombard, this proximity-in-distance from creatures is first and foremost a sign of God's presence in the world, which is manifest in all that he creates and upholds.⁴⁴⁰ This tendency to link divine infinity with divine presence was subsequently adopted by other key figures in

⁴³⁷ Two books on the topic that are of limited use are: Meldon C. Wass, *The Infinite God and the 'Summa fratris Alexandri'* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1964). Leo Sweeney, *Divine Infinity in Greek and Medieval Thought* (New York: Peter Land, 1996).

⁴³⁸ Hilary of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* 8.24 (Translation from New Advent); Peter Lombard, *Sent.* I, 37.

⁴³⁹ Hilary of Poitiers, *De Trinitate* 2.6. John M. McDermott, 'Hilary of Poitiers: The Infinite Nature of God,' *Vigiliae Christianae* 27:3 (Sept. 1973), 172-202.

⁴⁴⁰ Antoine Côté, *L'infinité divine dans la théologie médiévale, 1220-1255* (Paris: Vrin, 2002), 29; cf. Peter Lombard, *Sent.* I. 43.

the early medieval tradition like Isidore of Seville, whose discussion of divine omnipotence echoes that of Hilary.⁴⁴¹

The immensity of the divine greatness is such that we understand him to be inside everything, but not enclosed [in it]; outside everything, but not excluded [from it]. He is inside in such a way that he holds everything together; he is outside in such a way that he includes all things by the uncircumscribed immensity of his magnitude. Thus, his exteriority shows that he is the creator. But his interiority proves that he governs everything.

As this quotation re-confirms, the doctrine of divine immensity provided a way for Latin thinkers to affirm the simultaneous immanence and transcendence of God with respect to all created things. While the ubiquity of God's presence in creation was perhaps a logical outworking of divine simplicity in their understanding, it was arguably only one of any number of attributes that could be derived from that doctrine. In short, it was not necessarily central in the manner of divine simplicity itself. This situation appears to change dramatically in the twelfth century as a result of the popularization of the works of numerous Greek Christian authors, above all, the sixth-century author, Pseudo-Dionysius. In the ninth century—by 862 to be exact—John Scottus Erigena had translated the complete works of

⁴⁴¹ Isidore of Seville, *Sententiae*, I, 2-3: *Immensitas divinae magnitudinis ita est, ut intelligamus eum intra omnia, sed non inclusum; extra omnia, sed non exclusum. Et ideo interiorem, ut omnia contineat; ideo exteriorem, ut incircumscripita magnitudinis suae immensitate omnia concludat. Per id ergo, quod exterior est, ostenditur esse creator; per id vero quod interior, gubernare omnia demonstratur. Ac ne ea quae creata sunt sine Deo essent, Deus intra omnia est. Verum ne extra Deum essent, Deus exterior est, ut omnia concludantur* (There are 8 references to divine immensity in total in the *Sententiae*).

Pseudo-Dionysius into Latin, along with the *Ambigua* of Maximus the Confessor and the *De imagine* (*De hominis opificio*) of Gregory of Nyssa.⁴⁴²

To accompany Maximus' work, Eriugena composed a commentary of his own on Dionysius' *Celestial Hierarchy*, which became part of the Dionysian corpus that was available to later thinkers, as well as his personal masterpiece, the *Periphyseon*.⁴⁴³ Although this work was condemned in 1225 and was not cited subsequently as a result of its apparent promotion of pantheism, it continued to exert influence on Latin thinkers through Honorius Augustodunensis, who produced a precis of Eriugena's *magnum opus* in his own *Clavis Physicae*.⁴⁴⁴ In this work and the others mentioned above, we have seen, Latin thinkers encountered a much stronger emphasis on the mystery and unknowability of God than can be found in the Western tradition.⁴⁴⁵ Like Augustine, Latin Fathers such as Hilary of Poitiers and Gregory the Great held that God is present to the soul in a way that makes him somehow knowable in this life and also anticipates a direct vision of him in the life to come.⁴⁴⁶

The contrasting Greek emphasis on God's incomprehensibility stemmed from a firm belief in the 'immeasurability' (*immensurabilitas*) of God, to which one finds frequent references throughout the Dionysian Latin corpus. This is certainly also true of the *De fide*

⁴⁴² The form in which the Dionysian corpus was available is indicated by Henri F. Dondaine, *Le corpus Dionysien de l'Université de Paris au XIII siècle* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e letteratura, 1953), 124. In addition to the tradition of Eriugena, Nyssa existed also in an earlier translation by Dionysius Exiguus; see Philip Levine, 'Two Early Latin Versions of St. Gregory of Nyssa's *περί κατασκευῆς ἀνθρώπου*,' *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 63 (1958), 473-92.

⁴⁴³ Antoine Côté, *L'infinité divine*, 40.

⁴⁴⁴ P. Lucentini, *Honorius Augustodunensis: Clavis Physicae* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e letteratura, 1974).

⁴⁴⁵ Antoine Côté, *L'infinité divine*, 35.

⁴⁴⁶ Simon Tugwell, *Albert and Thomas: Selected Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), 41; cf. Antoine Côté, *L'infinité divine*, 34-5.

orthodoxa of John of Damascus, which was first incorporated extensively by Peter Lombard;⁴⁴⁷ and which is the most frequently invoked scholastic source on the relation of infinity and incomprehensibility aside from Dionysius.⁴⁴⁸ In such sources, the immensity—also referred to as the infinity—of God is not simply a property of the divine presence, but a central property of God himself.⁴⁴⁹ As Dionysius and Damascus came into wider circulation in the twelfth century, this centralization of infinity began to grip the imagination of thinkers like John Sarrazin (fl. 1140-70), who produced a new translation of Dionysius, and Hugh of St Victor (1096-1141), who spearheaded the scholastic tradition of commenting on his works. In a commentary on Dionysius' *Celestial Hierarchy*, for instance, Hugh of St Victor affirms this relationship in his comments on divine *immensitas*, which cannot be captured by the human mind.⁴⁵⁰ While the doctrine of immensity is not the main focus of Hugh's theology, it seems to enter through him, among others, onto the theological scene, recurring in a number of Hugh's other writings, including his great *De sacramentis fidei*.

The initial introduction of immensity by these means evidently proved a considerable inspiration to Hugh's successor, Richard of St Victor (d. 1173), who in turn influenced Alexander of Hales' account of God in the Glossa.⁴⁵¹ In his *De Trinitate*, Richard bemoans the fact that he finds in the Western tradition no fully satisfying, purely rational explanation as to how God can be both one and three, even though he finds that the Tri-unity of God is

⁴⁴⁷ Jacques-Guy Bougerol, 'The Church Fathers and the Sentences of Peter Lombard,' in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West*, ed. Irena Backus (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 113-64, esp. 133-7.

⁴⁴⁸ Antoine Côté, *L'infinité divine*, 44.

⁴⁴⁹ Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Celestial Hierarchy*, 2. The connection between infinity and incomprehensibility comes from Macrobius, Hermes Trismegistus, Chalcidius, Dionysius, Eriugena.

⁴⁵⁰ Hugh of St Victor, *Summa Sententiarum* (PL 176, 972D-973A); cited by Antoine Côté, *L'infinité divine*, 23.

⁴⁵¹ Alexander of Hales, *Glossa* I, XIX, p. 373.

constantly affirmed on authoritative grounds. As a result, Richard sets out to provide such an explanation, which he subsequently works out entirely in terms that can be accessed by reason.⁴⁵² In this regard, he initially seeks to defend the claim that God is one.⁴⁵³ Here, the doctrine of divine immensity quickly comes to the fore of his discussion, albeit in the wake of an argument for the necessary existence of only one God.

To support his claims, Richard postulates three possible modes of being, seemingly drawn from the work of John Scotus Eriugena, whose interest in Greek thought is well known, and whose translation of the Dionysian corpus would have been the one of several available translations which Richard would likely have consulted.⁴⁵⁴ These modes of being are: from eternity and deriving its existence from itself; neither from eternity nor from itself; or from eternity but not from itself. According to Richard, a fourth possibility—the opposite of this last one—is impossible, because there cannot be any being that is not from eternity but which is nevertheless from itself, lest there have been a time when nothing existed that could have given rise to the existence of other things.

In Richard's account, two such non-identical beings cannot exist, otherwise one would be superior to the other, and would not therefore be the most powerful being.⁴⁵⁵ On the basis of this four-fold distinction, consequently, Richard concludes that a single, supreme being, both eternal and from itself, necessarily exists. To bolster this conclusion, he invokes

⁴⁵² Richard of St Victor, *De Trinitate: texte critique avec introduction, notes et tables*, ed. Jean Ribaillier (Paris: J. Vrin, 1958). See also the version of *De Trinitate*, in *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 196, ed. J.P. Migne (Paris, 1855), III.I, 115. Translation by Ruben Angelici. *Richard of St Victor: On the Trinity* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2011).

⁴⁵³ *DT*, I.V,

⁴⁵⁴ *DT*, I.VIII; cf. John Scotus Eriugena, *Divisione* I.1, 441b.

⁴⁵⁵ *DT*, I.XIV.

Anselm's famous argument and thereby appropriates it for the purposes of defending divine necessity, in a way the Franciscans take up in their own discussion of this matter.⁴⁵⁶

In this context, Richard further contends that since God is infinite in terms of his eternity, he must also be infinite as regards his greatness.⁴⁵⁷ That is to say, he is immense—there is no measure to his goodness, which cannot be comprehended. As such a being, God is immutable: he cannot deteriorate or improve, since his greatness is unsurpassable.⁴⁵⁸ Once again, Richard insists, there can only be one immense being, otherwise there would be multiple beings that cannot be comprehended by others, and each would be superior to the others, which entails a contradiction.⁴⁵⁹

Such a supreme being cannot lack any desirable attributes: his definition is to be all that is good.⁴⁶⁰ In that sense, Richard follows a longstanding tradition, upheld by Anselm, which posits an identity of God's essence and his attributes.⁴⁶¹ According to this tradition, God is or is the definition of the properties he has—he has them in their fullness—whereas creatures simply have those properties in limited or qualified ways. God is whatever it is best to be. As such, he is one thing, and simple, not subject to the complex components or alterations that characterize his creatures.⁴⁶²

Thus, Richard concludes his discussion of divine infinity in an attempt to reconcile it with simplicity. The shift worth noting here is the then still relatively novel tendency to

⁴⁵⁶ *DT*, I.XI.

⁴⁵⁷ *DT*, II.V.

⁴⁵⁸ *DT*, II.III.

⁴⁵⁹ *DT*, II.VI.

⁴⁶⁰ *DT*, II.XVI.

⁴⁶¹ *DT*, II.XVIII.

⁴⁶² *DT*, II.XX.

describe infinity along with simplicity as a central feature of the divine essence or nature, not merely a property of the divine presence. A similar approach can be detected in the work of Richard's later contemporary, Alan of Lille (1128-1202/3).⁴⁶³ For Alan, both doctrines reinforce the unknowability of God—simplicity, as regards God in his own right, and infinity, as regards his reach into the world as the efficient cause of all things who is thereby in them through his essence (*essentialiter*).⁴⁶⁴ In the latter respect, Alan became famous, not least among the Halensian Summists, for introducing the West to the ancient adage first attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, according to which 'God is an infinite sphere, whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere.'⁴⁶⁵ According to Alan, who replaces the term 'infinite' with 'intelligible':

Creation is called the centre because, as time compared to eternity is like one moment, so creation compared with God's immensity is a point, or the 'centre'. The immensity of God, then, is called a 'circumference', because it 'circumscribes' everything by arranging it in some way, and [because] it embraces everything under his immensity. There is however a difference between a corporeal and an intelligible sphere: that corporeal spheres have an immobile centre but a moving circumference; by contrast, an intelligible sphere gives movement to everything because God remains stable.⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁶³ E. Sweeney, *Logic Theology and Poetry in Boethius, Anselm, Abelard and Alan of Lille* (Pgrave McMillan, 2006), 129.

⁴⁶⁴ Antoine Côté, *L'infinité divine*, 19.

⁴⁶⁵ Karsten Harries, 'The Infinite Sphere: Comments on the History of a Metaphor,' *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 13:1 (January 1975), 5-15.

⁴⁶⁶ Alan of Lille, *Regulae Theologicae* (PL 210), VII. *Deus est spaera intelligibilis, cuius centrum ubique,*

After Alan, efforts continued to link simplicity and infinity as key features of the divine. Over time, however, infinity came increasingly to the fore of theological inquiry, at least in the Franciscan tradition. The Dominican contemporaries of the Summists tended to take the more traditional line of linking divine infinity to the doctrine of divine presence, while giving primacy to God's simplicity.⁴⁶⁷ This brings us to a discussion of the Franciscan doctrine of infinity, which I will contrast in the first instance with the traditional doctrine of divine simplicity, as articulated by Augustine.

The Summa Halensis on Divine Infinity

In his *De Trinitate*, Augustine explains the doctrine of divine simplicity by offering examples of things that are not simple.⁴⁶⁸ As he notes, bodily substances are not simple because they are comprised of parts which are subject to accidental changes, that is, changes in the properties of shape, color, etc. In his view, even the human soul is composed of parts in

circumferentia nusquam. Centrum dicitur creatura, quia sicut tempus collatum aeternitati reputatur momentum, sic creatura immensitati Dei comparata, punctum, vel centrum. Immensitas ergo Dei circumferentia dicitur, quia omnia disponendo quodam modo omnibus circumfertur, et omnia infra suam immensitatem complectitur. Haec etiam alia differentia inter spaeram corporalem, et intelligibilem, quia spaerae corporalis centrum immobile, circumferentia mobilis; in spaera intelligibili contra, quia Deus 'stabilis manens dat cuncta moveri' (this last phrase is a quote from Boethius, *Consolation of Philosophy* III, 67).

⁴⁶⁷ Antoine Côté, 'Guerric de Saint-Quentin et le problème de l'infini divine,' in *Les philosophies morales et politiques au Moyen Âge*, t. III (Ottawa: Legas, 1995), 1132-48. R McCaslin, 'Divine Infinity in Some Texts of Hugh of St Cher,' *The Modern Schoolman* 42 (1964), 47-69.

⁴⁶⁸ *DT*, VI.6.

the sense that it is present throughout the body, while not located at any one place in the body, and it is subject to changes in thoughts or feelings.

By contrast to embodied beings, God is incorporeal and thus invisible. As such, he is not composed of parts.⁴⁶⁹ For the same reason, he is not changeable, given that change implies an alteration in the accidents or properties that are attributed to a substance or entity and a corresponding adjustment in the shape or size of its component parts. Thus, he cannot become wiser or more merciful, or become just where he previously was not. In fact, all of the properties that can be associated with him are not attributed to him as accidents, which are subject to alteration, but to his substance. As many medieval authors famously quipped, in attempting to summarise the tradition of Augustine and Anselm, ‘God is what he has: his essence is his accidents’.⁴⁷⁰ Once again, this means that God is whatever it is best to be, and is always completely so. To sum up: God always completely is what he is, which is the essence and source of all that is good.

As noted already, the Franciscan Summa treats the idea of divine simplicity, albeit in a mere four pages, in a section on the essentiality or necessity, immutability, and simplicity of God. Although the placement of this discussion just prior to that of divine immensity does suggest a certain deference to longstanding tradition, the Summa’s approach to the question of simplicity represents quite an unusual theological departure. The account here focuses on a conceivable threat to the possibility of a simple God, namely, the Christian assertion that God subsists in multiple persons, which could be taken to imply that God is composed of parts and therefore fails to count as simple.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁶⁹ *DT*, V.1-2.

⁴⁷⁰ *DT*, VI.7.

⁴⁷¹ *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica* (Florence: Quaracchi, 1924), Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr 1, Qu 3, Ch 1, Ad 2 (n. 31), 50.

With this threat in view, the Summist insists that the three persons in God do not undermine divine simplicity, because they do not represent diverse substances but rather diverse modes of relation in God, which actually enact his simplicity. In supporting this contention, the Summist appeals to Richard of St Victor, who is the key authority for early Franciscan Trinitarian theology. In his *De Trinitate*, Richard argued that a plurality of persons does not detract from the unity of the divine nature, just as a plurality of substances—specifically, body and soul—does not detract from the unity of a human person.⁴⁷² For early Franciscans, consequently, the doctrine of divine simplicity is less a statement about the fundamental nature of God than a ground-clearing exercise, whereby they illustrated that their belief in the Trinity can be reconciled with the unity of God.

When it comes to determining the most basic attribute of this one God, the early Franciscans turn—straightaway from the discussion of simplicity—to elaborate on the immensity of God. For all practical purposes, consequently, they appear to have substituted immensity for simplicity as the defining feature of the one God. Thus, it remains to consider what the founding fathers of the Franciscan school have to say about the immense nature of the divine. The first chapter of the first part of this discussion inquires whether the divine essence is infinite, as Greek fathers like Dionysius and Damascus affirm.⁴⁷³ Here, the *Summa* notes that the terms ‘finite’ and ‘infinite’ imply quantity. However, God is not a being that can be quantified in terms of shape or size, like creatures.⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷² Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr 1, Qu 3, Ch 2, Respondeo (n. 32), 52.

⁴⁷³ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr 2, Qu 1, Ch 1, 54-7. *SH*, Tr 2, Qu 1, Ch 1, Solutio (n. 34), 56; cf. Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Divine Names* I.1: *Universaliter non audendum dicere aliquid de insuperabili et occulta divinitate, quam ea quae nobis divinitus ex sacris Eloquiis claruerint*. John of Damascus, *De fide* 1.8: *Deus est incircumscriptus, increatus, infinitus*.

⁴⁷⁴ Augustine, *De quantitate animae* 3.

In order to affirm God's infinity, consequently, the Summa distinguishes between two ways of understanding quantity: dimensionally and in terms of character.⁴⁷⁵ Obviously, God is not infinite in dimensional terms, because he is not a physical being. When it comes to dimensionality, he is infinite simply because he is not finite. As regards his character or nature, however, he is infinite, because he is the cause and end of all that exists or could exist; he is that which 'finishes' or makes them complete.⁴⁷⁶ On this basis, the Summa concludes that he is infinite so far as he is 'not included in all things but fills them.'⁴⁷⁷ The only sense in which he can here be regarded as finite is the Aristotelian one, which defines infinity as a lack of order or completion and thus as an imperfection.

Infinity and God's Knowledge

After establishing that God, while not finite in any but the Aristotelian sense, is the source of all finite beings, the Summa raises the question of the relationship between the infinite and the finite, first and foremost, in the mind of God. Here, it signals its intent, inspired by Avicenna, to recast the Greek Christian teaching according to which there is no commensurability of finite and infinite. This teaching sprang from a negative definition of infinity as that which lacks limits and cannot for this reason be traversed or captured by beings which possess them. By contrast, Avicenna presented a more positive account of infinity as 'a quantity or something possessing a quantity such that anything you take from it

⁴⁷⁵ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr 2, Qu 1, Ch 1, 54-7. *SH*, Tr 2, Qu 1, Ch 1, Ad objecta 1 (n. 34), 56; Citing Augustine's *De quantitate animae* 3 (PL 32, 1037).

⁴⁷⁶ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr 2, Qu 1, Ch 1, 54-7. *SH*, Tr 2, Qu 1, Ch 1, F (n. 34), 55.

⁴⁷⁷ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr 2, Qu 1, Ch 1, 54-7. *SH*, Tr 2, Qu 1, Ch 1, Solutio (n. 34), 56: *Est in omnibus non inclusa et implens illa, immo infinita.*

you also find something of it different from what you took and you never reach something beyond which there is nothing of it.⁴⁷⁸

Following Avicenna, if implicitly, the Summa describes what is infinite as follows:⁴⁷⁹

Since there is no end to the divisions that can be made in continuous things, we say that such things are divisible unto infinity or infinite in division. Likewise, because there is no end to numbers that can be added one to another, we say that number is infinite in addition. Similarly, place is said to be finite or infinite with regard to circumscription, and time is finite or infinite in duration.

Although the Franciscans like Avicenna deny that the infinite so construed can ever be fully exhausted or traversed, their rendering of his view seems to suggest that the infinite is populated by innumerable possible realities which subsist in a positive sense. In this regard, they may have been influenced by the longstanding Neo-Platonic tradition, represented not only by Damascus and Dionysius but also by the *Liber de Causis*, which defines the divine being as infinite.⁴⁸⁰ Along the lines of this tradition, the Summa posits an infinite number of ideas for things in God.⁴⁸¹ While this might seem to imply that the mind of

⁴⁷⁸ Jon McGinnis, 'Avicennan Infinity: A Select History of the Infinite through Avicenna,' *Documenti e Studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 21 (2010), 199-222. Avicenna, *Physics* III.10, IV.15.

⁴⁷⁹ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr 2, Qu 1, Ch 1, 54-7. *SH*, Tr 2, Qu 1, Ch 1, Ad objecta 1 (n. 34), 56: *Quia enim in continuo non est terminus suae divisionis, dicimus ipsum divisibile in infinitum sive infinitum divisione; similiter, quia in numero non est terminus in addendo, dicimus ipsum esse infinitum additione; similiter iuxta locum dicitur finitum et infinitum circumscriptione, et iuxta tempus finitum et infinitum duratione.*

⁴⁸⁰ John Rist, *Plotinus: The Road to Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967). *Liber de causis* XV-XVI.

⁴⁸¹ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q2, T1, C3, Contra b (n. 11), 19.

God is subject to multiplicity, the Summa asserts the orthodox position that there is only one proper object of God's knowledge, namely, God himself.⁴⁸²

As the cause of all created realities, however, the Summa echoes Dionysius in affirming that 'God knows all things in himself.' On this basis, the Summa states that the divine ideas or exemplars are one and the same with the essence of God.⁴⁸³ That does not mean that creatures as exemplata are one with his essence, however, for they are in him only as their cause.⁴⁸⁴ This means that they are capable of conveying an aspect of his essence without actually instantiating his very substance. As different means of signifying who God is, the divine ideas are obviously subject to plurality.⁴⁸⁵

However, this plurality does not subsist on the side of the divine cause but on the part of that which can be caused.⁴⁸⁶ As the Summa states, a 'plurality in the essences of things exemplified does not entail a plurality in the essence of the exemplar: for there is no plurality there.'⁴⁸⁷ The analogy that the Summa invokes to explain this phenomenon is that of a point or centre of a circle, at which many lines terminate. 'For as all straight lines leading from anywhere to the circumference terminate in one point, which is the centre, so by a certain

⁴⁸² Rega Wood, 'Distinct Ideas and Perfect Solicitude: Alexander of Hales, Richard Rufus, and Odo Rigaldus,' *Franciscan Studies* 53:7 (1997).

⁴⁸³ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr5, S1, Q1, M2, C4, Solutio (n. 166), 250. Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr5, S1, Q1, M4, C1, Respondeo 1 (n. 175), 259; cf. Vol 2.1, 17, Solutio.

⁴⁸⁴ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q2, T1, C5 (n. 13), 23, 4.

⁴⁸⁵ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q2, M2, C1, Respondeo (n. 91), 147. Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q2, M2, C2, Respondeo (n. 92), 149. Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q1, M2, C4, Solutio, Ad objecta 1, 3 (n. 80), 130-1.

⁴⁸⁶ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr5, S1, Q1, M4, C1 (n. 175), 258-60.

⁴⁸⁷ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q2, T1, C2 (n. 10), 19, Ad objecta 1: *Pluralitas in essentia in exemplari non accipitur ex pluralitate essentiae in exemplatis: non enim est ibi pluralitas in essentia.*

analogy, all things which are in the world, tend to one end, which is called the end of ends.⁴⁸⁸

Although the centre serves as the end of the conceivably infinite lines that derive from it, and comprehends them by its circumference, it remains nonetheless one in its own right, and not circumscribed by any line in particular. This illustration—adapted from Pseudo-Dionysius—is the means the Summa employs time and again to explain how God’s unity is preserved, even while he knows all things or indeed includes multiple persons. By this account, it is more perfect to know many through one than many through many or one through one, because such knowledge requires a greater feat of unification.⁴⁸⁹ Since whatever is best is attributed to God, this is the way in which he invariably knows.⁴⁹⁰ More specifically, he knows himself in terms of his own nature. By the same token, we have seen, he knows creatures not in terms of their natures but in terms of himself as their cause.⁴⁹¹

That is not to say that he only knows beings in a more distant or mediated way than is possible for human beings who abstract universal concepts on the basis of sense experience. As the artificer of all things great and small, God knows every single creature in individual or singular terms, precisely because he knows them not through the senses or an abstract concept but through the ideal or model that is himself.⁴⁹² On some level, the Summa notes, the knowledge of God also includes the knowledge of evil. To explain how so, the Summa

⁴⁸⁸ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr, S1, Q2, T1, M3, C1, Ad objecta 1 (n. 14), 24; cf. Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q1, C6, Ad objecta 2 (n. 173), 256; cf. Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Divine Names* 2.5, 5.6: *Sicut enim ad unum punctum, qui est centrum, omnes lineae rectae ductae ad circumferentiam ex omni parte terminantur, sic et per quamdam similitudinem omnia, quae sunt in universo, tendunt ad unum finem, et ille dicitur finis finium.*

⁴⁸⁹ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q1, M2, Ch 1, Solutio (n. 76), 122-3. Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q2, T1, C2, c (n. 10), 19.

⁴⁹⁰ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr5, S1, Q1, C2, Respondeo (n. 165), 249.

⁴⁹¹ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr5, S1, Q1, C2, Respondeo (n. 170), 252.

⁴⁹² Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr5, S1, Q1, M3, C6, Contra a (n. 173), 256; cf. Ad objecta 1.

distinguishes between simple knowledge and a form of knowledge that entails approval.

While God does not know evil in the second way, he is aware of it in the first.⁴⁹³

This does not mean that God is the cause of evil, because evil entails a privation of what should exist, and God is only the cause of what exists.⁴⁹⁴ Though God is not therefore the cause of evil, he nonetheless allows it by giving human beings the freedom to choose or reject what is good. In doing so, he makes it possible for evil to be made good, not without qualification or *simpliciter*, but by reason of that which human beings elicit from evil circumstances.⁴⁹⁵ While evil is not good, useful, or expedient in itself, consequently, it can become good when it is ordered towards a good end by a human will that is conformed to the will of God, who is the cause of all good things.⁴⁹⁶

On this showing, God is closer to creatures than they are to themselves, because he is the first principle of all, who holds all things together, and in whom all things live and move and have their being.⁴⁹⁷ In this connection, the Summa elaborates, God knows both things that do exist and that do not but could exist.⁴⁹⁸ This is because his knowledge extends as far as his power to exhibit causality and thus includes what has not yet been brought into being.⁴⁹⁹ Hence, God's knowledge is infinite, as God himself is infinite, because he knows what he has not willed to create in addition to what he has created.⁵⁰⁰

⁴⁹³ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr5, S1, Q1, M3, C3, Respondeo 1 (n. 170), 253.

⁴⁹⁴ Vol 1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q2, T1, M2, C4, Respondendum (n. 12), 21.

⁴⁹⁵ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr6, Qu 4, C2 (n. 284), 402-3.

⁴⁹⁶ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr6, Qu 4, C2 (n. 285), 404.

⁴⁹⁷ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr2, Q2, T1, C1, Solutio (n. 54), 67.

⁴⁹⁸ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q2, T1, C3 (n. 11), 20.

⁴⁹⁹ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr5, S1, Q1, M3, C1, Ad objecta 1 (n. 168), 251.

⁵⁰⁰ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr5, S1, Q1, M3, C1, Respondeo (n. 169), 252.

That said, the Summa observes, his disposition or will to create is finite: God therefore possesses many ideas which are not instantiated, just as an architect possesses ideas for things he could but does not create.⁵⁰¹ This affirmation reinforces the fact that there is always more to be discovered about God than what is evident in creation and emphasizes that creation is something God does not out of necessity but the freedom of his will.⁵⁰² In short, it is important for avoiding pantheism, or the idea that God fully reduplicates his very self in the world, which had been strongly condemned since 1210.

Infinity and God's Power

In a section on the immensity of divine power, the Summist elaborates on the distinction between the ideas God chooses and does not choose to instantiate. This discussion nicely illustrates how immensity has here become the central divine property from which others like divine power follow, rather than the other way around. In elaborating on the distinction, newly codified in the generation of the Summa, between God's absolute versus his ordained power, he differentiates between what is possible *de facto* or in principle and what is possible *de jure*, that is, by will or permission.⁵⁰³

While a human being is only able to do what is permissible without penalty—for instance, one may wish in principle to disobey laws without legally having scope to do so—there is no difference between what is possible *de jure* and *de facto* for God, because he is the

⁵⁰¹ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr5, S1, Q1, M3, C1, Respondeo (n. 168), 250-1.

⁵⁰² Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q3, C5, A3, Solutio II (n. 122), 192.

⁵⁰³ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr4, Q1, C2, Respondeo II (n. 135), 207; cf. Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr2, Q3, T3, C5, Ad ultimum (n. 45), 70. William Courtenay, 'The Dialectic of Omnipotence in the High and Late Middle Ages,' in *Divine Omniscience and Omnipotence in Medieval Philosophy*, ed. T. Rudavsky (D. Reidel Publishing, 1985), 243-69.

one who determines what is permissible or forbidden in the first place. On these grounds, the Summa concludes that God's power is not limited by any factor. In short, it is absolute. Nevertheless, the Summa entertains conceivable arguments for limitations on God's power, in the form of the following syllogism:

1. At the initial moment of creation (A), God was either able to create all that can be created, or he was not.⁵⁰⁴
2. If not, then his power is limited in creating.
3. If so, then he is able to create everything creatable in A.
4. But if God creates everything creatable in A, then he is not able to create anything after A, which implies that his power is limited by his initial action.

In response to this line of reasoning, the Summist contends that the affirmation that 'God makes everything creatable in A' does not necessarily imply that he is not able to create anything after A. For he only exhausts what he is able to do in the case of A, and even that limit is not essential to his nature but to the boundaries of A itself. After insisting that God's action does not limit his immense power, the Summist goes on to bolster the more extraordinary claim that God's power is not limited even by his own justice, goodness or wisdom. While God evidently does all things justly, because that is what he has ordained or willed to do, he is not unable to do anything unless it is just, because to attribute this inability to him would be to limit him.⁵⁰⁵

In fact, he is able to do whatever he wills, whatever that may entail. One theologically surprising implication of this claim is that God is capable in virtue of his absolute power, or

⁵⁰⁴ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr4, Q2, M2, C1, I.1 (n. 140), 218.

⁵⁰⁵ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr4, Q2, M2, C2, Ad objecta I.1-3 (n. 141), 220.

de facto, to damn those who are good and save those who are wicked. Although he declines to do this by his ordained power, he does not derogate his power in doing so. Rather, he illustrates the immutability of his ordained power which functions in keeping with the justice of his will. A related section further assesses what is possible for the divine power. Here, the Summist distinguishes between the usage of the term ‘possible’ *de dicto* or *de re*.⁵⁰⁶

On his understanding, the *de dicto* application of a term refers to general categories of being rather than specific beings or states of affairs. By contrast, what is possible *de re* can be defined either as proper or characteristic of a thing (*proprie*) or as appropriated to it (*appropriate*). What is appropriated is made possible by a superior cause, but what is proper is possible by its inferior or intrinsic cause. While it is not possible, for example, for a virgin to conceive and a blind person to see in terms of an inferior cause, it is possible by way of a superior cause. Thus, such things are only possible unconditionally (*simpliciter*) where there is a superior cause, namely, God.

Infinity and God’s Will

The inferior causes or ideas God chooses to enact through this ordained power, that is, his unconstrained will, are imposed on prime matter.⁵⁰⁷ This is more fitting than God fashioning creation from his own substance, as if it were a material cause, which would result in pantheism.⁵⁰⁸ As we learned in the discussion of Avicenna, prime matter creates the potential for being. Precisely because it lacks form, however, it possesses no being in its own

⁵⁰⁶ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr4, Q2, M2, C2, Ad objecta III (n. 141), 221. See Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr4, Q3, C1, Respondeo (n. 151), 230.

⁵⁰⁷ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr2, Q1, C1, Ad objecta 5 (n. 34), p. 57; cf. Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q3, C2, Ar1, 2 (n. 116), 183.

⁵⁰⁸ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q2, T1, M1, Solutio (n. 20), 31.

right.⁵⁰⁹ Since what moves from a state of potency to actual existence can only come about by virtue of what is always in act, God rather than prime matter is the first principle of all creation.⁵¹⁰ Through his work in this regard, creatures come to be comprised of two distinct substances or forms, better known as ‘substantial forms’.

The first of these forms is the soul, which in the period of the Summa’s authorship was understood to be that part of any being, not just the human being, that determined its proper body. The second form was that of corporeality, which comes to exist on account of, and simultaneously with, the soul’s instantiation in prime matter.⁵¹¹ Through the impression of a soul in this matter, God was understood to transform nothing into ‘something’, which, while not the same as his essence, bears it nonetheless in the world. On this matter, the Summa invokes a longstanding tradition, stemming at least from Pseudo-Dionysius, and familiar to Hugh and Alan, of affirming that God is in things by essence, power, and presence, citing numerous sources in favour of this opinion.⁵¹²

While he is in things by essence insofar as he makes them to be what they are, he is in them by power in terms of the abilities he gives them, and by presence, through their

⁵⁰⁹ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q1, C3, Ar3, 4 (n. 4), 11-13.

⁵¹⁰ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q1, C3, Ar3, 5, Ad objecta 4 (n. 4), 12-13.

⁵¹¹ Vol 2.1, n. 347, Ad objecta 1-7, 422: *Actus naturalis corporis completi in forma naturali, quae forma dicitur forma corporalis* (The act of the natural body is completed in a natural form, which is called the form of corporeity); cf. 93, 7. Arthur Hyman, ‘Aristotle’s First Matter and Avicenna’s and Averroes’ Corporeal Form,’ in *Harry Austryn Wolfson Jubilee Volume* (Jerusalem: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1965).

⁵¹² Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr2, T3, M1, C2, I.a, b, c, II.1 (n. 46), 71; cf. *De spiritu et anima* 12; Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Celestial Hierarchy* 11; Richard of St Victor, *DT* II, 23; Anselm, *Monologion* 13. Peter Lombard also treats this topic in his *Sent.*, distinctions 36-7, which cover the presence of things in God and God in things. Cf. Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q1, M1, C7, Solutio (n. 33), 43-4.

corresponding acts or operations.⁵¹³ Since God is in things in these three ways, the Summa claims, it bears considering whether they exist in him in those three ways as well.⁵¹⁴ Here, the Summist contends that things are in God by presence, because they are in his knowledge, and by power, because they are in him as their cause. However, creatures do not subsist in the essence of God, otherwise God's existence would depend on that of creatures, which cannot give him being insofar as they depend on him for their own.⁵¹⁵

By virtue of this dependence, creatures are said to participate in God, whose being does not hinge on participation in other beings, for it is derived from himself.⁵¹⁶ What it means thus to participate has already been hinted at above: it involves fully instantiating and thus corresponding to an idea in the mind of God, at the behest of God's causal activity. Put differently, it entails 'capturing a part' of who God is'.⁵¹⁷ That is not to say that God is composed of parts. For as we have already seen, the multiplicity in question does not exist on the part of God who is the infinite cause of all effects but on the part of the effects themselves, which bespeak his causal work in one way or another.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹³ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr2, T3, M1, C2, Solutio (n. 46), 72-3.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.

⁵¹⁵ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr2, T3, M1, C4, II, Respondeo (n. 48), 75-6; cf. Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q1, C4, Ad objecta 4 (n. 80), 131.

⁵¹⁶ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr2, T3, M1, C2, II.2 (n. 46), 72.

⁵¹⁷ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q3, C2, Ar2, 2 (n. 117), 184. Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q3, Ad objecta 5 (n. 105), 166.

⁵¹⁸ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q3, C2, Ar2, Ad objecta 2 (n. 117), 185: *Dicendum quod divina bonitas in se ipsa simplicissima est nec habens partem et partem. Item, divina bonitas infinita est quantum ad effectus: unde si quaeratur quantum extenditur bonitas divina, non potest dici tantum; nam in infinitum extenditur; ideo bonitas divina non dicitur esse tanta, quia quantum ad effectus non est limitata nec in se ipsa...Quod ergo dicitur quod bonitas creata participat bonitatem increatam, hoc non est dicere quod bonitas increata dividatur per partes in*

This definition of participation chimes with the Summa's discussion of the difference between the analogy or univocity of being.⁵¹⁹ At an initial level, the Summa denies that the relationship between God and creatures is univocal, because this would supposedly require a complete correlation between the finite and the infinite, which is impossible. As the Summa reiterates, finite things only exhibit a partial correlation to the infinite, insofar as they mirror one of the divine ideas. Since they are proportional to the infinite in a limited way, the Summa concludes, their relationship to it must be analogous.

Although the Summa thus rejects univocity, the 'analogy of proportionality' theory it puts forward instead is already much closer to the conception of univocity advocated by later Franciscans. For it allows that God and created forms exist in the exact the same—totalized or fully actualised—sense, albeit infinitely and finitely, respectively.⁵²⁰ So construed, all forms, great and small, stand in a direct if limited relationship to God and are in some sense equal and equally valuable in his sight. Though they all participate fully in him, the Summa acknowledges that they do so at different degrees of complexity, in keeping with different purposes. As this suggests, the Summa's participatory scheme is also hierarchical.

While vegetative and sentient beings, that is, plants and animals, are described on this scheme as 'vestiges' or 'footprints'⁵²¹ of God, because they make him known in some way, human beings are called 'images of God', because they are capable of knowing like God

singularibus bonitatibus creatis, sed hoc est dictum quod bonitas creata capit partem in effectu, quia haec capit istum effectum primae bonitatis, alia alium.

⁵¹⁹ Vol 1, Tr Intro, Q2, M3, C2, Respondeo (n. 21), 32.

⁵²⁰ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q1, C4, Ad objecta (n. 31), 42.

⁵²¹ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q1, M2, C1, Contra a (n. 34), 44: *Figurae pedis* (footprint); cf. Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q1, M2, C2, 1 (n. 35), 45.

what creatures make known about their source.⁵²² According to the Summa, these vestiges and images stand in a relationship of mutual inter-dependence which contests any notion of superiority or inferiority that might be attributed to the hierarchy.⁵²³ After all, there would be no means by which rational beings could discover traces of God in the world apart from vestiges which make him known. By the same token, vestiges would have no chance of consummation with their creator apart from the work of human beings to cognize them in relation to their divine exemplars.⁵²⁴ Although God in his absolute power could have created beings without any hierarchical variation, consequently, he did so in his ordained power for the betterment of the universe and all the beings that subsist within it.⁵²⁵

As we have seen, these beings are comprised of two substantial forms—of the soul and of the body—that can technically exist independently of one another though in this life they do not do so in practice. To explain how the soul-body composite undergoes change, the Summa introduces the Avicennian understanding of accidental forms, which are added to the substantial forms of soul and body and qualify them in different ways. While these forms enjoy the state of being (*esse*) or thinghood that is characteristic of substantial forms, they differ in that they cannot exist independently of the subject in which they inhere. Through their comings and goings, they allow creatures to undergo development, without compromising the individuality of distinctness of every form involved in the process.

⁵²² Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q1, C3, Ar2 (n. 4), Respondendum 1, 9. Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q1, C4, Contra b (n. 36), 47; cf. pp. 48-9. Vol 2.1, In2, Tr3, S2, Q1, T2, C4, Solutio (n. 126), 172.

⁵²³ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr2, Q5, C3, Ar2 (n. 94), 117.

⁵²⁴ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr2, Q4, C3 (n. 88), 111-12.

⁵²⁵ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q3, C5, Ar2 (n. 121), 191; cf. Ar3, Solutio I (n. 122), 192; Vol 2.1, In1, Tr2, Q5, C3, Ar2 (n. 94), 117: *Utrum sine minoribus creaturis esset perfectum universum*.

So construed, accidental forms multiply the forms in any given subject without at once multiplying subjects. At any given moment, consequently, a being can be described as the sum total or ‘bundle’ of substantial and accidental forms that constitute it. While the constant flux in the constellation of forms that comprise this bundle might seem to threaten the unity of the being, the Summa insists that this is preserved by the soul, which maintains the identity of a being over time.⁵²⁶ Ultimately, it is upheld by God, who is the only one capable of imposing a form, whether accidental or substantial, on matter. The significant upshot of this reality is that every single change that occurs in creatures is directly brought about by the divine action and thus the divine will.⁵²⁷ This might seem to suggest that the Summa leaves little room for secondary causality, whereby creatures who receive their powers from a primary divine cause are able effectively to employ them of their own accord.

As we have seen in the earlier discussion of human knowledge, the Summa certainly leaves scope for autonomy; yet this is always enacted and upheld by the divine, to such an extent that creaturely actions cannot be envisaged which do not entail, at very least, some form of co-operation with God.⁵²⁸ In this regard, the Summa contends, all three persons of the Trinity are fully active.⁵²⁹ While the Father serves as the efficient cause of beings insofar as he gives them one form as opposed to another; the Son is the exemplar cause whereby beings become intelligible as one such thing; and the Spirit is the final cause through which beings possess a particular value or purpose.

⁵²⁶ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q2, M1, C1, Respondendum (n. 41), p. 50. Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q2, M1, C5, Solutio (n. 45), 54. Vol 2.1, In1, Tr2, Q2, T3, C1 (n. 63), 78.

⁵²⁷ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr2, Q2, T3, C3 (n. 64), 81.

⁵²⁸ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, C8 (n. 48), 56. Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q2, T1, C8, 4, Solutio (n. 20), 29-30. Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q2, T2, C2, Contra (n. 22), 34.

⁵²⁹ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q2, T1, M1, C1 (n. 6), 14-15; cf. C2 (n. 7), 16.

Together, consequently, and thus as one ultimate or first cause, these Persons bring beings into being and render them vestiges not only of God but of a God who is Triune.⁵³⁰ As such vestiges, beings possess the transcendental properties of unity, truth, and goodness that result from being fashioned as one thing over another by the Father, rendered intelligible as such by the Son, and fit for a purpose by the Spirit; they also exhibit the qualities of mode, species and order, which relate beings to their first cause;⁵³¹ and measure, number and weight, which Augustine inferred from his reading of Proverbs 11:21 to account for the natures creatures have in themselves.⁵³² According to the Summa, there can be no more than three properties in each of these sets of properties, because the properties in question respond to a three-fold cause in the Trinity, who is the maker of all things, and therefore renders them vestiges of himself.⁵³³

Whether by essence, power, presence; unity, truth, goodness; or any other triad, consequently, creatures testify to their participation in the Trinity. As the Summa nicely puts it, ‘the sensible world responds to an archetype, as an exemplum to an exemplar; but the archetype is God.’⁵³⁴ Moreover, it is only by understanding the exemplum in relation to the divine exemplar that we can understand it in the correct way.⁵³⁵ Ultimately, therefore, the vision the Summa casts is one in which there is a correspondence not only between created realities and ideas in the mind of God but also between human and divine ideas. As we

⁵³⁰ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q1, C5, Respondendum (n. 38), 48; cf. C6 (n. 39), 48. Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q1, C3, Ar2, Respondendum (n. 4), 9. Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q2, T1, M1, C1, Ad contrarium a (n. 6), 15.

⁵³¹ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q1, C7 (n. 33), 43-4.

⁵³² Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q3, M3, C1, Ar1, Solutio (n. 111), 174; cf. Ar3 (n. 113), 176-9.

⁵³³ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q1, C5, Solutio (n. 31), 42.

⁵³⁴ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q1, C3, Ar2, In contrarium a (n. 4), 8.

Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q1, M2, C2, Ad contrarium a (n. 10), 19.

⁵³⁵ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q1, C6, Respondendum (n. 32), 43.

learned in the fourth chapter, this correspondence on the part of the human mind is made possible by the innate knowledge of the transcendentals, which guide human thinking about empirical realities so as to ensure their accuracy in relation to God's. In what follows, I will consider how this knowledge of things as God knows them relates to knowledge of God himself.

Infinity and the Knowability of God

Before the time of the *Summa*, the Western theological tradition had regarded divine infinity as a barrier to the knowledge of God. By transitioning from a Greek 'negative' to a more positive 'Avicennian' understanding of infinity, however, the *Summa* transformed the doctrine of divine infinity into a basis for positing a limited but nonetheless actual or one might say 'univocal' relationship between creatures and God. In doing so, it laid the foundation for showing how the human mind can know God in finite respects through creatures while acknowledging that he can never be known in full.⁵³⁶ The decisive move of the *Summa Halensis*, consequently, was to unhinge the doctrine of divine infinity from that of divine incomprehensibility and to render it the locus of some partial knowledge of God.⁵³⁷

In doing this, the *Summa* solved the problem of divine incomprehensibility through the very means that had initially created it, namely, the notion that God is unknowable because he is infinite.⁵³⁸ The resolution of one problem however apparently generated another, namely, how to reconcile infinity and simplicity. As we have seen, authors working prior to the Halensian Summists were greatly preoccupied with this project and managed to

⁵³⁶ Antoine Côté, *L'infinité divine*, 58, 70.

⁵³⁷ Vol, Tr Int, C2, M1, C6, Respondeo 2 (n. 13), 23.

⁵³⁸ Vol, Tr Int, C2, M1, C6, Respondeo 2 (n. 13), 23.

avoid a conflict between the two doctrines by linking them both to divine incomprehensibility and remaining vague on the details as to how God can actually be known, not least in the life to come. The condemnation of 1241 stripped the Summists of the luxury of ambiguity and forced clarity on the nature of God's knowability. In the process, it encouraged the Summa's efforts discussed above to bring divine infinity more to the fore and to recast it as the basis for knowing the infinite through the finite.

While the Summa is careful in developing its account to avoid insinuating that the infinite God is merely the positive sum total of his possible and actual finite expressions and emphatically denies repeatedly that he is composed of parts, it never clarifies how precisely the relationship between the divine unity and the created multiplicity can be maintained. The best it offers is the repeated insistence that God's knowledge is one when referred to himself and multiplied to the point of infinity when referred to creatures: he has knowledge of all actual and possible beings but is more than all of that knowledge entails.⁵³⁹

By positing some proportionality of the finite to the infinite, however, it suggests that there must be something in God or in his knowledge to which the finite corresponds. In order to uphold the notion that God is simple, however, the Summa declines to explain what this is. In the effort to attribute new primacy to infinity, consequently, the Summa leaves open and indeed exacerbates the problem of reconciling infinity and simplicity—or the complete transcendence of God in relation to the created order—that had been recognized already in the twelfth century. Within the Franciscan tradition, the problem was not fully resolved until John Duns Scotus, who invoked the notion of infinity in the context of developing his own doctrine of the transcendentals, which will be treated briefly below.

⁵³⁹ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q2, T1, C3 (n. 12), 10, Ad objec1a 1: *Scientia divina est rerum existentium, ut eorum quae sunt vel fuerunt vel erunt, et ita non possibilium tantum* (The divine knowledge is of existing things, both those that are and were and will be, and not of possible things only).

Although Latin scholars from Philip the Chancellor forward developed distinct accounts of the transcendentals, being and its properties were not explicitly referred to as such until John Duns Scotus coined the phrase '*scientia transcendentium*' or science of the transcendentals to describe his metaphysics.⁵⁴⁰ In his account of metaphysics or the 'science of the transcendentals', Scotus starts by arguing that being must be divided into finite and infinite, before being is divided into the ten categories listed by Aristotle, such as place, time, quality and quantity, all of which are attributable only to finite beings.⁵⁴¹

Thus, he makes explicit an apparent assumption of his Franciscan predecessors that being is what is common to the finite and the infinite. Aquinas objected to this construal, on the ground that being is what is common to the ten categories and thus to finite beings only. In his mind, any proposed commonality between finite and infinite would imply that God falls under the same genus or category as creatures, as though he were the greatest of all known beings rather than a being that transcends knowledge. Within his own frame of reference, however, Scotus preserves the otherness of God by dividing finite being into the ten categories only after dividing being itself into finite and infinite.⁵⁴²

As a result of this maneuver, Scotus is able to affirm that all the properties that can be predicated of being before it is divided into finite and infinite are outside any genus or are

⁵⁴⁰ Ludger Honnefelder, 'Metaphysics as a Discipline: From the Transcendental Philosophy of the Ancients to Kant's Notion of Transcendental Philosophy,' 59. John Duns Scotus, 'Concerning Metaphysics,' in *Duns Scotus: Philosophical Writings* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1987). Text taken from *Opus oxoniense* I.8.3.

⁵⁴¹ Duns Scotus, 'Concerning Metaphysics,' 2-3.

⁵⁴² Jan A. Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 382-3

transcendental. For this reason, they may be predicated univocally or in the same sense of both finite and infinite beings. When what Scotus calls the ‘coextensive’ transcendentals of being, unity, truth, and goodness, are said to pertain to God, consequently, they are infinite.⁵⁴³ However, when they belong to creatures, they are finite. A similar principle applies to the so-called disjunctive transcendentals which represent Scotus’ unique contribution to transcendental theory. These transcendentals, such as act and potency, necessity and contingency, prior and posterior, cause and caused, substance or accident, dependent or independent, absolute or relative, simple or composed, one or many, equal or unequal, all apply to Being in general, though one side of the disjunction always applies for obvious reasons to finite and the other to infinite being.⁵⁴⁴

Although Scotus’ Franciscan predecessors simply conflated God with the Infinite Being that is innately known by mind and thus argued on the basis of reason alone that God exists, we have seen that Scotus himself rejects the notion that the first object of the intellect is anything but Being alone. In his view, the claim that Being ultimately *is* God suggests that the divine or supernatural aid is needed to undertake natural acts of knowing.⁵⁴⁵ This entails a contradiction in his estimation, insofar as it undermines the ability of human nature to perform its natural cognitive operations—something that a God who creates all things with integrity presumably would not do.

Though Scotus does not immediately conflate Infinite Being with God, his affirmation of the univocity of being nonetheless allows him to argue relatively straightforwardly that the only candidate deserving of the title ‘Infinite Being’ is in fact

⁵⁴³ Duns Scotus, ‘De metaphysica,’ 3. Jan A. Aertsen, *Medieval Philosophy as Transcendental Thought*, 387, ff.

⁵⁴⁴ A. B. Wolter, ‘The Disjunctive Transcendentals,’ in *The Transcendentals and their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus* (St Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute Press, 1946), 128-63.

⁵⁴⁵ Duns Scotus, ‘Concerning Human Knowledge,’ in *Duns Scotus: Philosophical Writings*, 96-132.

God.⁵⁴⁶ After all, the very definition of the term ‘God’ is not to be constrained in the manner of finite beings but instead to be the source of them all, and thus, an Infinite Being. Since the relationship between finite and infinite being is univocal, therefore, all it takes to demonstrate that God exists is a radical act of abstraction from finite beings to the Infinite Being with which finite beings have being and other transcendentals in common.⁵⁴⁷

This feat is facilitated by the innate knowledge of Being that all possess. Although Scotus’ rejection of the notion that this knowledge is of God entails a departure from the ontological argument of Scotus’ predecessors, he clearly advocates a closely related form of cosmological argument for the existence of God which involves a short and almost negligible step from the innate knowledge of Being to the knowledge of the divine Being. As we have seen, this step is made possible by an inference from finite beings, to which predicates can be applied in common with God insofar as they are applicable to being which is indifferent or prior to the division between finite and infinite.⁵⁴⁸

In arguing along these lines, Scotus finally renders the work of his predecessors more consistent and doctrinally sound. As regards the doctrine of God as infinite in his own right, his most significant move pertains to his argument that being is common to what is finite and infinite. Only after being divided into these extremes does it take on the qualities of immanence or transcendence, respectively. Thus, he preserves the complete otherness of God not through the doctrine of divine simplicity but through a revised rendering of the early Franciscan doctrine of divine infinity.

⁵⁴⁶ Idem., ‘The Unicity of God,’ in *Duns Scotus: Philosophical Writings*, 82-95.

⁵⁴⁷ Idem., ‘The Existence of God,’ in *Duns Scotus: Philosophical Writings*, 34-81.

⁵⁴⁸ Idem., ‘Man’s Natural Knowledge of God,’ in *Duns Scotus: Philosophical Writings*, 13-33.

Conclusion

When laid out along these lines, the early Franciscan reasons for adopting the doctrine of divine immensity—not to mention the notion of an innate human knowledge of Being, which is clearly derived from Avicenna—can hardly be ignored.⁵⁴⁹ In perusing the biographies of Francis that circulated around this time, not to mention Francis' own writings—most famously the *Canticle of Brother Sun*—what we find depicted is a man with a profound sense of the love of God that is poured out in creating and sustaining beings of all shapes and sizes—beings that reflect his love in turn. This was coupled with a deep feeling of responsibility to care for all creatures as individuals, regardless of their status, after the manner of the divine. On this theme, Celano recounts the famous legends in which Francis kisses a leper,⁵⁵⁰ calls both inanimate and animate creatures by the name of 'brother' or 'sister',⁵⁵¹ and even preaches to an attentive flock of birds.⁵⁵² As Celano writes in more general terms, Francis saw in every work of the divine artist a reason to

Praise the Artist; whatever he found in the things made, he referred to the Maker. He rejoiced in all the works of the hands of the Lord and saw behind things pleasant to behold their life-giving reason and cause. In beautiful things he saw Beauty itself. All things were to him good. 'He who made us is the best' they cried out to him. Through

⁵⁴⁹ See Dag Nikolaus Hasse, *Avicenna's De anima in the Latin West* (London: The Warburg Institute, 2001).

⁵⁵⁰ C2, in *St Francis of Assisi: Early Documents: The Founder*, ed. Regis J. Armstrong, J.A. Wayne Hellman and William J. Short (New York: New City Press, 2000), 248-9.

⁵⁵¹ C1, 250-4.

⁵⁵² C1, 234-6.

his footprints impressed upon things, he followed the Beloved everywhere. He made for himself from all things a ladder by which to come even to his throne.⁵⁵³

In light of this brief excursus on the early understanding of Francis, we can infer that the doctrine of divine immensity gave first-generation Franciscans a perfect resource for capturing the nature of the God as Francis envisaged it, and indeed for capturing Francis' vision as to what it meant to imitate the life of the Son of God on earth: reducing ourselves to identify with, and find God, in all creatures, great and small. At the same time, the doctrine of divine infinity contributed to Franciscan efforts to assert the positive knowableness of God in the wake of the 1241 condemnations, even while affirming his absolute transcendence. Ironically, then, the Summists deployed a heavily Greek and Arabic tradition of thinking in terms of his infinitude to resolve a problem to which that tradition had given rise in terms of denouncing God's knowability. In this case, as in the others that have been discussed, there was a happy coincidence between the accidents of historical context, the dominant sources and intellectual trends, and the needs and objectives of the Franciscan order regarding the perpetuation and advance of the Franciscan spirituality and mission.

⁵⁵³ C2, 353-4.

7. TRINITY: CONTEXT

In his magisterial history of Trinitarian doctrine, Théodore de Régnon defended the then novel thesis that the late middle ages witnessed the branching off of a new tradition of Trinitarian theological thinking from the previously relatively continuous tradition of Western Trinitarianism founded by Augustine.⁵⁵⁴ From this time forward, he contends, there were two main traditions of Western Trinitarian thought, including the original tradition of Augustine, which was carried forward by the likes of Anselm, Peter Lombard, and Aquinas, who expressed it in its mature form; and the new tradition, initially formulated by Richard of St Victor and later developed more fully by the Franciscans, who adhere to it to this day.⁵⁵⁵

Although some of De Regnon's other theses have since come into question—most notably, his tendency to insist on the incommensurability of the Greek and Latin patristic Trinitarian traditions—his suggestions regarding the medieval development of the doctrine of the Trinity in the West have withstood the tests of time and further research.⁵⁵⁶ Under the inspiration of the completely innovative account of the Trinity formulated by Richard of St Victor, the first Franciscans developed this account in greater detail and popularized it. In doing so, they proffered a conception of the Trinity that is distinctly Western in many key respects. As we will see, for example, their theory employs a psychological model that has

⁵⁵⁴ Th. de Regnon. *Études de théologie positive sur la Sainte Trinité*, vols I and II. Paris, 1892.

⁵⁵⁵ Russell Friedman distinguishes these two traditions in volume 1 of his *Intellectual Traditions at the Medieval University: The Use of Philosophical Psychology in Trinitarian Theology among the Franciscans and Dominicans, 1250-1350*, 2 vols (Leiden: Brill, 2013), describing them as 'relation' and 'emanation' accounts of the Trinity, respectively.

⁵⁵⁶ Lewis Ayres, *Nicaea and Its Legacy: An Approach to Fourth-Century Trinitarian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

commonly been associated with Western Trinitarianism. Moreover, it emphatically affirms the *filioque*, that is, the procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son.

In other ways, however, obvious signs of what seems like a substantial Greek influence can be detected throughout the Franciscan account. For instance, this approach lays emphasis on the monarchical nature or primacy of the Father in the Trinity, and it defines the persons of the Trinity firstly in terms of their origins rather than in terms of their relations, as was common in the West. Most interestingly, it incorporates into its psychological model a social model such as has been associated more commonly with Eastern Trinitarian theology. In ways that are far from contradictory and that result in a wholly coherent and orthodox but nonetheless original account of the Trinity, consequently, the early Franciscans effectively found ways to marry some of the key Trinitarian insights and explanatory locutions of East and West.

By these means, they highlighted the compatibility that arguably always existed between these two traditions: the fact that they represent two different means to the same end, as recent scholarship has shown. The purpose of the next chapter is to illustrate precisely how the Summists innovatively reconciled the psychological and social—or Western and Eastern—understandings of the Trinity, which became increasingly at odds in later medieval and modern times. However, the execution of this task necessitates a careful preliminary analysis and comparison of the relevant accounts of the Trinity. Thus, this first of two chapters on the Trinity in early Franciscan thought will begin with an analysis of the fundamentally Augustinian doctrine of the Trinity developed most fully by Aquinas. While the Summists themselves would not have recourse to Aquinas' discussion, his account most effectively serves the rhetorical purposes of this chapter, insofar as it highlights most clearly and fully the key contours of the Western account that earlier Western thinkers from Augustine had advocated.

The discussion of Aquinas will be followed by a summary of the Trinitarian account of John of Damascus, who along with Dionysius was the primary Greek source available to and invoked by Latin thinkers at this time, and who is often supposed to have developed fully the early Greek account stated first and foremost by the Cappadocian fathers. Finally, I will describe Richard of St Victor's doctrine of the Trinity, highlighting the way it seemingly marries key aspects of the Greek and Latin traditions. In a final section of this first chapter, I will outline the Trinitarian vision that can be identified throughout the *Summa Halensis*. Although the doctrine of the Trinity proper only appears towards the end of this volume, we have already seen how earlier sections anticipate this ultimate discussion through the proffering of various Trinitarian analogies.

Thomas Aquinas on the Trinity

In his *Summa Theologiae*, Bonaventure's Dominican counterpart Aquinas (1225-1274)—follows the tradition, well established by his time, of treating the doctrine of the Trinity in terms of the fact that it entails:⁵⁵⁷

ONE God

TWO Processions (generation, spiration)

THREE Persons (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)

FOUR Relations (paternity, filiation, spiration, procession), and

FIVE Notions (innascibility, paternity, filiation, spiration, procession)

⁵⁵⁷ Gilles Emery, *The Trinitarian Theology of St Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

Russell L. Friedman, *Medieval Trinitarian Thought from Aquinas to Ockham* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

In recent theological history, Aquinas has been accused of inappropriately separating *deus unus* from *deus trinus*, rendering the Trinity a mere theological after-thought. What I will show here, however, is that his account of these matters is designed to illustrate how the doctrine of the Trinity ultimately enacts the reality of the one God. For this purpose, it is arguably insufficient simply to affirm that God is one or simple. In order to demonstrate his ability to be such a being, the divine being must also be shown to be capable of knowing and communicating himself as such a being—to will to be and thus to act like the supreme being that he is.

In his account, Aquinas explains how the doctrine of the Trinity upholds the unity of the divine being, knowledge, word, will, and action by undertaking to discuss the two divine processions, or ways of coming forth from the first principle of the Trinity, that is, God the Father. While the First person of the Trinity alone is innascible, not begotten or produced in any way by another, the Second person or the Son is believed to proceed from the Father by way of knowledge or intellect, because his relationship to the Father is like that of one known by a knower.⁵⁵⁸

When the Father knows the Son, he is said to generate a thought of himself, that is, his image, or a word of self-expression.⁵⁵⁹ After all, God is simple and is as such the highest object of knowledge, such that his supreme knowledge as God can consist in the knowledge of nothing other than himself. Since the Father's knowledge of the Son is therefore reflexive, it can be likened to self-knowledge. Thus, the Son can conversely be said to know and make known the Father in the very experience of being known by him.

⁵⁵⁸ *ST* 1.33.

⁵⁵⁹ *ST* 1.27.2; cf. 1.34–5.

On the assumption that a good withheld is not truly good, Aquinas argues that a good incapable of communicating itself along these lines could not be considered the highest good. Because the communication of goodness is an expression of love, Aquinas identifies love as the ultimate attribute of the Trinity in which the Father and the Son communicate God's goodness to one another.⁵⁶⁰ This brings us to the role in the Godhead of the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and the Son not by way of intellect but by way of the will—or love and desire—for that which is known, namely, the Son by the Father, and the Father, in turn, by the Son.⁵⁶¹

In Aquinas' account, the Father's knowing of the Son and the Son's knowing of the Father ultimately reflect their mutual desire to know one another, that is, God's desire, consisting in the Holy Spirit, to know himself and make himself known as the highest good that he is. Since the Spirit is indicative of the Father's will to make himself known in the Son, and the Son's will to know and make known the Father, he is generally described as the 'Love' or the 'Gift' exchanged between the Father and Son.⁵⁶² As such, Spirit is spirated or breathed out by the Father and the Son (*filioque*), thus binding them in unity.⁵⁶³

Because this spiration enacts the knowledge shared by the knower and the known, the Spirit is said to constitute the very life or indeed the Spirit of the Trinity, which consists in honoring or loving God as the highest good or object of devotion and adoration, which he is known to be. On the ground that God is the highest object of love, who as God loves himself as much as he could possibly be loved, Aquinas stresses that God could not have created the world out of necessity, in order to complete himself or satisfy some need for love of his own.

⁵⁶⁰ *ST* 1.37.

⁵⁶¹ *ST* 1.36.

⁵⁶² *ST* 1.37–8

⁵⁶³ *ST* 1.27.3–4.

Aquinas discredits this notion, by delineating a doctrine of the Trinity, which gives an account of God's self-sufficiency to love himself, as the ultimate subject and object of love.⁵⁶⁴

As the foregoing discussion of this doctrine suggests, an appeal to the processions of the Son and Spirit from the Father generates an account of one God who is truly worthy of the name 'God,' because it affirms the perfect correspondence between who God is, what he knows, what he communicates, what he wants, and what he does. This is the upshot of Aquinas' affirmation that God *is* his act of understanding, such that whatever is understood by God is the very living or life of God, namely, that God always completely is what he is, which is to be and to know and to say and to desire and to do all that is good, or consistent with love.⁵⁶⁵

Further support for this contention can be derived from a discussion of the four different types of relation, which characterize each of the three persons of the Trinity. These relations include: paternity, proper to the Father; procession, proper to both Son and Spirit; filiation, proper to the Son, who proceeds from the Father; and spiration, proper to the Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and the Son.⁵⁶⁶ According to Aquinas, each person is identified and distinguished by its mode of relation to the others. Thus, Aquinas speaks of the persons as subsisting in their relations or as 'subsistent relations.'⁵⁶⁷ On this showing, the Son is the individual person of the Godhead he is because he proceeds from the Father and is the second source of the procession of the Spirit.

⁵⁶⁴ Thomas Weinandy, *Does God Suffer?* (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000), 142.

⁵⁶⁵ *ST* 1.18.4.

⁵⁶⁶ *ST* 1.28.

⁵⁶⁷ *ST* 1.29; cf. 1.40.

By contrast to the divine relations, which are essential to the being of the divine persons, human relations are accidental or contingent. That is to say, they are not necessary to the identity of human beings. This is contrary to what some scholars have supposed in arguing that subsistent relations are common to human and divine persons.⁵⁶⁸ Though human beings obviously depend on other human beings, are formed by their social situations, and require relationships to instigate the expression of their individual personalities and abilities, nevertheless they are ‘always more than the sum total of their relationships.’⁵⁶⁹ They are not defined or wholly constructed by their relations or social circumstances. Otherwise, it would be necessary to draw the absurd conclusion that a mother has no personal identity without her children, and those brought up in poverty can never overcome it, to take just two examples.

The reason human beings cannot be reduced or limited to their relations in these ways concerns the fact that their personalities—which predispose them to relate to others—are limited. Although the human inability to relate fully to others renders it largely impossible for human beings to find complete fulfillment in their relationships, it has the advantage of rendering illegitimate any attempt inappropriately to constrict human beings in accordance with their relationships or communities of upbringing. As God is an unlimited being, by contrast, the three personalities that constitute his being are not subject to limitations, although they are distinct in their modes of relation. On account of this unlimited-ness-in-difference, the three persons enjoy a capacity to relate to one another completely.⁵⁷⁰ Thus,

⁵⁶⁸ Kathryn Tanner, ‘Social Trinitarianism and its Critics,’ in *Rethinking Trinitarian Theology*, ed. Robert J. Wozniak and Giulio Maspero (London: T & T Clark, 2012).

⁵⁶⁹ Thomas Weinandy, *Does God Suffer?* 116; *The Father’s Spirit of Sonship: Reconceiving the Trinity* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1995).

⁵⁷⁰ *ST* 1.28.

there is nothing about the Father that is not known by the Son in the Spirit, and nothing that is not known by the Son about the Father in the Spirit.

For precisely this reason, the Father, Son, and Spirit, are described by Aquinas as ‘persons’ in the fullest sense of the term. According to the traditional philosophical definition, a person is an ‘individual substance of a rational nature’ (*hypostasis*), where rationality presumably entails both the intellect that knows and the will that motivates the intellect to pursue knowledge.⁵⁷¹ While this definition applies to human beings and to God, since both operate by means of intellect and will, the limited nature of human personalities—which generates a limited capacity to relate to others—suggests that human beings only possess their personalities in a qualified or circumscribed sense which is not applicable to God.⁵⁷²

Because God subsists in three persons who in distinct ways possess an unlimited capacity to relate to one another, by contrast, these persons can ultimately be said to stand in the one and only relationship that exists without remainder and thus to constitute the one and only being that is personal in the fullest sense of the term.⁵⁷³ In elaborating his understanding of the three persons’ subsistent relations, Aquinas points out that these are closely related to the persons’ varying origins, or ways of deriving if at all from one another.⁵⁷⁴ While the Son is said to be begotten by or to proceed from the Father, for instance, and thus to originate in him, who alone is unoriginate or unbegotten, the Spirit proceeds or originates from the Father

⁵⁷¹ Boethius, *Contra Eutychen*, in *Theological Tractates. The Consolation of Philosophy*, H.F. Stewart, E.K. Rand, and S.J. Tester (trans.), in Loeb Classical Library 74 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), c. 2.

⁵⁷² *ST* 1.29.3.

⁵⁷³ *ST* 1.39.6.

⁵⁷⁴ *ST* 1.41.

in the Father's begetting of the Son, and from the Son in his own expression of the Spirit he receives from the Father. In treating the five notions of origin, namely, innascibility ('ungenerateness'), paternity, filiation, spiration, and procession, that factor into his account of the Trinity, Aquinas writes that:

The person of the Father cannot be known by the fact that he is from another; but by the fact that he is from no one. And thus the notion that belongs to him is called innascibility. As the source of another, he can be known in two ways, because as the Son is from him, the Father is known by the notion of 'paternity;' and as the Holy Ghost is from him, he is known by the notion of 'common spiration.' The Son can be known as begotten by another, and thus he is known by 'filiation;' and also by another person proceeding from him, the Holy Ghost, and thus he is known in the same way as the Father is known, by 'common spiration.' The Holy Ghost can be known by the fact that he is from another, or from others; thus he is known by 'procession;' but not by the fact that another is from him, as no divine person proceeds from him.⁵⁷⁵

As this account confirms, relation and origin do not differ significantly as principles that distinguish the persons of the Trinity for Aquinas. Though it is easy for this reason to conclude that neither takes priority as such a principle, Aquinas argues—contrary to the Eastern tradition at the time—that relation rather than origin should be regarded as the primary principle of distinction amongst the persons.⁵⁷⁶ He supports this claim on the grounds that distinctions ought to be based on intrinsic properties of persons, and relations

⁵⁷⁵ *ST* 1.32.3.

⁵⁷⁶ *ST* 1.40.2.

represent the intrinsic causes of the persons' varying origins. From the consideration of these origins, it follows that the persons move eternally in directions appropriate to themselves, such that 'the names which designate them designate the acts by which they are defined.'⁵⁷⁷ In performing their characteristic acts, the persons in their diverse ways contribute to and enable God's overarching act of being the highest good there is, knowing, expressing, and loving himself as such.

For this purpose, it seems clear that any more or any less than three persons would be inimical. In this case as in many others, Aquinas writes, the number three, which admits of a beginning, middle, and end, turns out to be the ideal number, which creates unity by allowing for a mediator—namely, the Son—between the extremes of Father and Spirit.⁵⁷⁸ Although the doctrine of the Trinity that Aquinas and many other Western thinkers endorse upholds the unity of God, it is important to stress that it does not go any further than the doctrine of divine simplicity in terms of giving access to the substance of the divine being. It only offers a more, indeed the most, elaborate 'formal' explanation of the kind of being God is.

Whereas the doctrine of divine simplicity teaches us that God is a kind of being who is infinite, eternal, immutable, and omnipresent—and thus wholly incommensurable with the objects of our knowledge, which are complex, finite, temporal, changeable, and local, the doctrine of the Trinity adds to this account of the 'known unknown' an explanation of his ability to make himself known as such in virtue of his personal and relational nature. Though the doctrine of the Trinity can therefore be said to affirm to the fullest possible extent God's ability to express himself as the simple and indeed self-communicating God monotheists

⁵⁷⁷ Thomas Weinandy, *Does God Suffer?* 119.

⁵⁷⁸ *ST* 3.53.2.

believe him to be, it is worth reiterating that the profound logic the doctrine consequently exhibits can only be perceived in retrospect of Christian revelation.⁵⁷⁹

John of Damascus on the Trinity

John of Damascus was a 7th/8th century thinker, who is recognized as one of the leading Fathers of the Eastern Orthodox church. Rightly, he has been credited with codifying the preceding Byzantine tradition in mature form.⁵⁸⁰ Perhaps his most significant and well-known work, *De fide Orthodoxa*, translated into Latin in the twelfth century, was the main channel through which Latin thinkers gained access to the Greek tradition.⁵⁸¹ In light of the tri-theistic controversy which had raged in the 6th century, he placed greater emphasis than his predecessors on the ultimate unity of the three persons of the Trinity under the monarchy or headship of the Father. In this connection, he advocated the coinherence or *perichoresis* of the three persons in one another, in what was his most original, if not entirely unprecedented, contribution to Orthodox theology.⁵⁸²

In the most basic sense, the background of Damascus' thought is the Council of Nicaea which established the three persons of the Trinity as *homoousias* or of one substance. In Greek thought *ousia* is a term used to denote a common nature or essence, or a universal

⁵⁷⁹ ST 1.32.1.

⁵⁸⁰ Andrew Louth, *St John Damascene: Tradition and Originality in Byzantine Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁵⁸¹ As Louth notes in *St John Damascene*, 84-5, the fourfold division of *De fide orthodoxa*, was imposed upon it by Latin thinkers who sought to confirm its structure to that of their own Summae. In doing so, however, they rendered John's text more systematic than he intended it do be.

⁵⁸² Andrew Louth, 'Late Patristic Developments on the Trinity in the East,' in *Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*, ed. Gilles Emery and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 148.

category. For instance, all human persons share in human nature, which entails body and soul. By reason, or conceptually, consequently, they can be seen as similar, even though in actuality they are distinguished or individuated by personal properties which render them entirely separate hypostases.⁵⁸³

In this vein, Damascus defines the *ousia* of God as a sort of ‘divine universal’, thus diverging significantly from the tradition of Augustine and Aquinas, for whom the divine essence is not a universal, but a singular. On this basis, Western thinkers deny that the Trinity can be compared to three persons all sharing in the universal nature of humanity. By contrast, the Damascene lays a much stronger emphasis on the distinction between *ousia* and *hypostasis*, on the discrete individuality of the hypostases over and against the general category represented by the *ousia*. In this way, he clearly distinguishes himself from the Western tradition, where the three persons constitute an individual—rather than a universal—essence, such that persons and essence are effectively two sides of one coin.

Although he construes the one God as a sort of ‘divine universal’, individuated by means of personal properties, he denies emphatically that the relationship between the individuals and the universal is the same as it is in the case of humans. First of all, the Father, Son and Spirit are totally identical in their essence: the fact that they share in a common nature is not just a matter of reason’s discernment. As a result, the properties that apply to the universal apply univocally to all three of them. That is to say, each of the three persons is divine in exactly the same sense, which is not the case for human beings, whose individual properties affect the way in which they instantiate human nature.

While these individuating properties must be discerned in actuality in the case of human beings, the difference between the divine persons is one that is perceived only by

⁵⁸³ *De fide* I.8.

reason, which identifies the personal properties of Father, Son and Spirit in terms of their origins: unbegotten, begotten, or proceeding, respectively.⁵⁸⁴ Whereas, ‘with human beings, our common humanity is conceptual, the difference between individuals being real,’ in other words, ‘in the case of the Trinity, it is just the opposite: their distinct individuality is conceptual. In reality there is no separate individuality, but a complete co-inherence between the persons of the Trinity.’⁵⁸⁵ Since they differ only in their manner of existing—or in their origins—the three persons can ultimately be said to enjoy one and the same identity and thus to inter-penetrate or ‘have their circumincession one in the other without any blending or mingling and without change or division in substance.’⁵⁸⁶

Whereas the Western church affirmed the unity of the three persons in a single being through the *filioque*, consequently, the Eastern church accomplishes this feat by insisting that the three individuals in the Trinity all fall under the same universal category, analogous to the way that Peter, Paul, and John all fall under the universal category ‘human’. This renders the persons identical in substance, and mutually related for that very reason, notwithstanding different modes of existence. In that sense, the same end is seemingly achieved by different but equally legitimate means in the East and the West.

Where the West construed God as a single being or essence whose three persons are united through the procession of the Spirit from the Son as well as the Father, the East for the most part rejected the *filioque*. Instead, we have seen that it posited the unity and mutual, direct inter-relation of the persons through the notion of *circumincession* (Latin) or *perichoresis* (Greek), which emphasizes that individual entities or persons sharing in one and the same universal nature cannot help but abide equally in one another precisely because of

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁵ Andrew Louth, ‘Late Patristic Developments on the Trinity in the East’, 148.

⁵⁸⁶ *De fide* I.6.

their shared nature. The advocacy of this position has led to the conclusion that the East advocates a ‘social’ more than a ‘psychological’ model of the Trinity such as is commonly found in Western thinkers like Aquinas.

However, there are hints towards a psychological understanding of the Trinity, albeit somewhat underdeveloped ones, even in Damascus. At the start of his discussion of the Trinity, which follows his proof for the one God, Damascus insists that this God cannot be without a Word. In this regard, he follows Gregory of Nyssa, whose *Catechetical Oration* prologue and chapters 1-4 form the basis for the present and subsequent section of John’s discussion.⁵⁸⁷ Much like human speech, in proceeding from the mind, is not entirely distinct from it in its subject, although identical with the mind in substance, so Damascus argues that the Word of God is distinct from the Father from whom he has his subsistence, while at the same time exhibiting the same substance that can be found in God.⁵⁸⁸ This Word must further have a Spirit, in much the same way that human speech cannot be devoid of breath, which is nevertheless not of the human substance. As Damascus writes, it is this breath ‘which on the occasion of articulation becomes the vocal expression of speech.’⁵⁸⁹

In a similar way, the Spirit of God ‘is associated with the Word and making the operation of the Word manifest.’⁵⁹⁰ As such, there is ‘a substantial power found in its own individuating personality, proceeding from the Father, coming to rest in the Word and declaring him.’⁵⁹¹ From this point, Damascus moves into a discussion of the whole Trinity, starting with the Father, who alone is unbegotten, the first principle of the Trinity and all

⁵⁸⁷ Andrew Louth, *St John Damascene*, 100; see Louth’s entire discussion of the Trinity at 95-117.

⁵⁸⁸ *De fide* I.6.

⁵⁸⁹ *De fide* I.7.

⁵⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹¹ *Ibid.*

things.⁵⁹² His ‘power of begetting is the power to beget of himself, that is, of his own substance, offspring similar [and equal] to himself in nature,’⁵⁹³ namely, the Son. That said, his way of begetting is not like the human way, for ‘he begets without time and without beginning,’⁵⁹⁴ such that the Son is always begotten by and co-eternal with him. Thus, as Damascus writes, Father and Son exist simultaneously, as does fire with its light.

Whereas the Son comes from the Father by generation, the Spirit comes by procession, ‘which is another manner of existence and is just as incomprehensible and unknowable as is the begetting of the Son.’⁵⁹⁵ On Damascus’ account, we know of these two forms of procession from the Father simply because they are revealed in Scripture. Nevertheless, the Damascene attempts to explain the difference between them with an analogy from Adam, who was unbegotten because he was formed by God, while his son Seth was begotten of Adam. Eve, however, was not begotten of Adam but proceeded from his rib. As a result, these three do not differ in nature, as they are all human, but only differ in their manner of coming into existence.

According to Damascus, the Spirit is ‘the source of wisdom and life and sanctification,’⁵⁹⁶ governing both creation and deification in human beings. If the Son is the principle of God’s being and knowledge, consequently, the Spirit would appear to be the driving force behind his action—not dissimilar to the ‘will’ or ‘gift’ of God that is ascribed to him in the Western account. While my intention here is certainly not to obscure the differences between the Eastern and Western accounts, I hope to have illustrated that there is

⁵⁹² *De fide* 1.8.

⁵⁹³ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid.

more conceptual compatibility than is sometimes perceived between them. The differences are differences in method or approach to formulation, not necessarily differences in what is ultimately affirmed about the one God who subsists in three persons.

Whereas the Greeks clearly define the individualizing properties of the persons in terms of their origins—whether unbegotten, begotten, or proceeding—representatives of the Latin tradition like Aquinas emphasize their relations, with notions of origin taking second place. While the latter prioritize a psychological model in which the human mind is the best analogy to the Trinity, moreover, the former stress a social model in which a community of persons all exhibiting human nature is the more fitting analog. Correspondingly, the *filioque* and *circumincessio* are respectively invoked for the sake of affirming the coherence and unity of the mind or society.

These differences are not inconsequential, as is confirmed by medieval controversies between Greek and Latin Trinitarian thinkers, which led to their split in 1054. In particular, the *filioque* became a point of contention. As the West became increasingly insistent about it as a litmus test for orthodoxy following the split, scholastic disputations on the matter became increasingly vociferous, as can be seen in the work of Richard of St Victor and the Franciscan Summists, whose Trinitarian allegiances are otherwise in many respects as Greek as they are Latin. Regardless of the status of the *filioque*, the foregoing analysis suggests that it would be difficult legitimately to assert that the social and psychological models are incompatible.

This has been the presumption of many modern advocates of ‘Social Trinitarianism’, who are generally quite forceful in their objections to psychological models of the Trinity,⁵⁹⁷ which now struggle under the weight of such critiques. In this context, the early Franciscan

⁵⁹⁷ Jurgen Moltmann, Miroslav Volf, Paul Fiddes, Leonardo Boff, Catherine La Cugna, Colin Gunton.

development of Richard of St Victor's doctrine of the Trinity holds considerable promise, because of the way it marries the key elements of Eastern and Western Trinitarianism in a single, streamlined approach, which is not subject to diverse methodologies that that often lead Greek and Latin thinkers to interact at cross purposes. Thus, it is to a discussion of Richard's doctrine that I now turn.

Richard of St Victor on the Trinity

Richard of St Victor (d. 1173) was a master of biblical exegesis, contemplation, and Christian doctrine who spent his entire career at the Augustinian abbey of St Victor, which was founded in 1113 in Paris.⁵⁹⁸ In scholarly circles, he has garnered scant attention by comparison to his earlier contemporary Hugh of St Victor (d. 1141), not to mention other leading 12th century monastic thinkers, such as the Cistercian, Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153). Admittedly, Hugh played a key role in forming the intellectual identity and project of the School of St Victor, which is known for placing the study of Scripture, doctrine, and indeed all sciences in the service of achieving contemplation.

For this reason, Richard has been interpreted as an inferior to Hugh, who simply followed his master in many respects, even though Hugh likely died well before Richard's arrival in Paris.⁵⁹⁹ In particular, Richard supposedly mimicked Hugh's attempt to synthesize

⁵⁹⁸ F. Bonnard, *Histoire de l'abbaye royale et de l'ordre des chanoines réguliers de Saint-Victor de Paris*, 2 vols (Paris, 1904-7). Jean Chatillon, 'Richard de St Victor,' in *Dictionnaire de spiritualité* XIII.1 (Paris: G. Beauchesne, 1987), 593-654. Lydia Schumacher, 'Richard of St Victor,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Scottish Theology*, ed. David Fergusson and Mark Elliott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

⁵⁹⁹ Clare Kirschberger, *Richard of St Victor: Selected Writings on Contemplation* (London: Faber and Faber, 1957), 15.

the longstanding tradition of Augustine, while mainstreaming the work of the sixth-century Greek thinker, Pseudo-Dionysius, whom scholars at this time believed to be a convert of St Paul and to whom they thus attributed nearly apostolic authority.⁶⁰⁰ In the following discussion of his doctrine of the Trinity, however, I will show that Richard is an innovative scholar whose influence was both lasting and momentous.

In his magisterial *De Trinitate*, Richard takes up the task of demonstrating what is taken on faith concerning the Triune nature of God.⁶⁰¹ While Richard previously pronounced such a demonstration impossible, he seems to have acquired a new confidence in the powers of reason by this likely relatively late point in his career.⁶⁰² Here, Richard argues that necessary things which we believe concerning the nature of God cannot lack not only plausible but also necessary reasons, such as Anselm's invoked in delineating the reasons for Christ's Incarnation, even though faith is needed to understand those reasons, another idea stemming from Anselm, and Augustine even before him.⁶⁰³

Although the Triune nature of God has long been affirmed on the basis of authority, Richard argues that such reasons have not yet been given. Since there are so few arguments in the writings of the Fathers from which conclusions about the rational basis for Trinitarian doctrine could be deduced, consequently, Richard states that he will have to complete his

⁶⁰⁰ Gervais Dumiege, *Richard de Saint-Victor et l'idée chrétienne de l'amour* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1952), 24-32. Marie-Dominique Chenu, *La théologie au douzième siècle* (Paris: Vrin, 1976), chapters 5, 7, 8, 13.

⁶⁰¹ Nico Den Bok, *Communicating the Most High: A Systematic Study of Person and Trinity in the Theology of Richard of St Victor (d. 1173)* (Paris: Brepols, 1996). Ruben Angelici, *Richard of St Victor: On the Trinity* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2011).

⁶⁰² Clare Kirschberger, *Richard of St Victor*, 46.

⁶⁰³ DT I.IV. Dale M Coulter, *Per Visibilia ad Invisibilia: Theological Method in Richard of St Victor (d. 1173)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006).

study not according to scriptural or historical texts but simply through his own ingenuity and passion.⁶⁰⁴ While he certainly draws on authorities—nonetheless virtually never cited—it is obvious from this statement that Richard truly sees himself as building a rationale for orthodox belief from the ground up: as a thinker working independently from though not outside of tradition.

Richard's treatise consists of six books, the key arguments of which will be outlined below. The focus of the first book is on providing evidence for faith's assertion that there is only one God, while the second considers the attributes of God, especially his infinity or immensity.⁶⁰⁵ In the chapters of this book on theistic proof and the divine nature, we have already seen how he develops his arguments on these topics, and how early Franciscans appropriated them. After treating *de deo uno* in his first two chapters, Richard moves on—seemingly after the pattern of Augustine—to cover *de deo trino* in the third book of his treatise.

On the basis of his previous argument that the fullness of goodness consists in the supreme being, Richard argues that the supreme being must be one of love, since nothing is better than to give oneself in love. Indeed, a being would not be supremely good if it withheld the good it had from another, that is, if it withheld love. Since love requires to be aimed at another, there must be multiple persons in order for there to be love.⁶⁰⁶ Now divine love must be directed at someone of equal supremacy and dignity. Thus, there must be a second divine person who is equal in greatness to the first and who returns that person's love in an equally supreme way.⁶⁰⁷

⁶⁰⁴ DT III.I.

⁶⁰⁵ DT I.V.

⁶⁰⁶ DT III.II.

⁶⁰⁷ DT III.III.

That stated, Richard argues that ‘nothing is more precious and more admirable in reciprocal burning love than one’s desire for someone else to be loved in the same fashion by him who is supremely loved and by whom one is supremely loved. Therefore the witness of perfect charity love consists in desiring to share with someone else that love of which one is the object, without expecting anything in return.’⁶⁰⁸ That is to say, the perfection of love necessitates that the first two persons desire to share with a third person the love they reciprocally enjoy, and to share it with the same intensity and devotion with which they love one another.⁶⁰⁹

This love is what Richard calls *condilectio*, or ‘co-love’, which arises ‘when a third person is loved by the two in harmony and with a communitarian spirit’⁶¹⁰, that is, when the two persons affects are fused to become only one. On Richard’s argument, such love cannot exist when two people merely exhibit a reciprocal desire for one another, represented by a third—as in the traditional Western doctrine of the Trinity advocated by Augustine—because the love is here variously directed and requires a return for its fulfilment. The sort of love he has in mind alone achieves the level of perfection befitting of God, because it affirms that in the case of any of the three persons, the other two love the third in total harmony.⁶¹¹ Whereas Augustine seemingly took the psychological model of self-love as the foundation for his understanding of the Trinity, consequently, Richard proposes a communitarian or social model that seems analogous to the relationship of parents to a child—although he rightly foreswears all attempts to compare the relations amongst the members of the Trinity with human relations.

⁶⁰⁸ DT III.XI.

⁶⁰⁹ DT III.XVIII.

⁶¹⁰ DT III.XIX.

⁶¹¹ DT III.XX.

After this discussion of the three persons, Richard proceeds in book four to inquire into the nature of divine personhood and how it can be reconciled with a single divine substance.⁶¹² To illustrate the relationship between substance and person, he asks his readers to imagine they see something from afar. In this case, he argues, we would ask, ‘what is that’? On coming closer, however, and seeing that the something is a person, we would then ask ‘who is that’? In other words, we would ask about an individual rather than a common property. Thus, Richard concludes that a substance is a property that is common to all things of a kind—a ‘something’ or a ‘what’, as it were. However, a person in his view implies ‘someone’, a ‘who’, and thus an individual who is unique from all others by an incommunicable property.⁶¹³

Although Richard assents that all persons are substances of a rational nature, and share rationality as a common property, he denies that this has any bearing when it comes to determining a person’s proper nature or reality.⁶¹⁴ On his account, this nature is defined in terms of a person’s existence, which is individual, rather than the essence or substance that is shared in common with other persons. By definition, then, multiple persons do not imply multiple substances. Thus, there is no contradiction between the single substance and three persons in God.⁶¹⁵ For just as the plurality of substances in the human being—for example, body and soul, mortality and immortality, visibility and invisibility—do not destroy the unity of the person, so the plurality of persons does not destroy the unified substance of God.⁶¹⁶

⁶¹² *DT* IV.IV.

⁶¹³ *DT* IV.VII.

⁶¹⁴ *DT* IV.VIII.

⁶¹⁵ *DT* IV.IX.

⁶¹⁶ *DT* IV.X.

To explain why this is so, Richard elaborates on what he means by personal existence. On his account, this is defined with reference to its nature and origin, which can vary either individually or at the same time.⁶¹⁷ For instance, human beings differ both in terms of their individual natures and their origins, which consist in different reproductive acts. By contrast, there is no difference of nature amongst the divine persons. ‘Since they possess an entirely single, identical and supremely simple being, it is not possible for them to differ from one another according to any qualitative distinction’.⁶¹⁸

Thus, Richard contends that the difference between the divine persons is entirely a question of their diverse origins. Whereas their common substance upholds certain common properties—such as wisdom, power, and love—their diverse origins underline what Richard calls their respective incommunicable properties, to which the Greeks referred as ‘subsistence’ (*hypostasis*). For example, the Father is unoriginated, while the Son originates or proceeds from him.⁶¹⁹ On this basis, he concludes that ‘a divine person is an incommunicable existence of the divine nature’.⁶²⁰ Furthermore, he queries the applicability of Boethius’ longstanding definition of a person as an ‘individual substance of a rational nature’ to the divine, on the grounds that the divine substance is not individual but entails three persons.⁶²¹

In book five, Richard turns to consider more carefully the properties of the individual divine persons and what distinguishes them from the others, particularly in terms of their origins. He starts by insisting that one person must exist by his own action and not someone

⁶¹⁷ DT IV.XII.

⁶¹⁸ DT IV.XV.

⁶¹⁹ DT IV.XVI.

⁶²⁰ DT IV.XXII.

⁶²¹ DT IV.XXI.

else's, otherwise there would be an infinite regress of beings in the divinity.⁶²² While it is an incommunicable property of the first person to derive from himself alone, it is a property of the beings that proceed from him to come from something other than themselves. In human beings, at least, such procession can occur in three main ways.⁶²³ That is to say, one person may proceed from another in a non-mediated, mediated, or both mediated and non-mediated way.

For instance, both Isaac and Jacob proceeded from Abraham's substance. However, Jacob's procession was mediated through Isaac, his father, who as the son of Abraham proceeded from him in a non-mediated way. Likewise, Eve and her son Seth proceeded from Adam's substance. But while the first of these processions was only non-mediated—insofar as Eve was created from Adam's side—the second was at the same time mediated and non-mediated, insofar as Seth was derived in a non-mediated way from his father Adam's seed and in a mediated way from Eve, the mother who gave birth to him.

In the case of the divine existence that precedes everything, Richard argues, it is necessary that a second proceed from this first being in a non-mediated way, otherwise that one would be destined to remain alone. That in turn would be inconsistent with the supreme love of the first, which requires that he generate a second who is worthy of his love on account of being equal to him in dignity.⁶²⁴ As noted previously, the perfection of these first two persons require that they co-love a third person in the same way they love one another.⁶²⁵ While this person proceeds immediately from the first, insofar as the first is the initial source

⁶²² *DT* V.III.

⁶²³ *DT* V.VI.

⁶²⁴ *DT* IV.VII.

⁶²⁵ *DT* V.VIII.

of divine love, he also proceeds through the mediation of the second, because the immediate love of the second for the third initially comes from the first as well.

As this suggests, Richard affirms the procession of the Spirit from both the Father and the Son (*filioque*) in keeping with the Latin tradition, but opposed by the Greeks, even while departing from a longstanding Latin tradition of defining the persons in terms of their diverse relations. In fact, Richard rejects this view in locating the difference between persons, along Greek lines, exclusively in terms of different origins. Thus, Richard contends that the first person ‘is characterized by the fact that he does not proceed from any other person but he has another one proceeding from him. The second person is characterized by the fact that he proceeds from another person and that at the same time he has another person proceeding from him,’ though not in the primary sense that belongs to procession from the Father alone.⁶²⁶ The third person proceeds from the first and the second persons, but does not himself give rise to another person but simply stands as the full expression of the co-love of the first two.

In that sense, Richard asserts, the first person is characterized by a purely gratuitous or self-giving love; the second both gives and receives love; and the third is simply the object and reflection of divine love. On this showing, the relations of all three divine persons to one another are immediate, such that there is no purely mediated existence in the Trinity. If this were the case, it would not be possible for each of the three persons directly to love the others as he himself is loved: love would not achieve its perfection. Since three are required to achieve this perfection—and a fourth or further persons would introduce purely mediated relations which would destroy it—Richard concludes that there can be three and only three members of the Trinity.⁶²⁷

⁶²⁶ *DT* V.XIII.

⁶²⁷ *DT* V.IX.

The sixth book continues the discussion of the two processions in God—distinguishing further between them—subsequently commenting on the appropriateness of the names assigned to the three persons as individuals—such as ‘Unbegotten’ for the Father, ‘Image’ and ‘Word’ in the case of the Son and ‘Gift’ and ‘Love’ in that of the Spirit. Although the entire text draws on both Latin and Greek traditions, and indeed represents a possible basis for convergence between what are often regarded as rival, Richard’s doctrine is exactly what he originally proclaims it to be: an invention that is independent of any conclusions that can be deduced from the Church Fathers or from Scripture, which is arguably one of the most creative and sophisticated in the history of Trinitarian theology. There is truly no precedent for it in the Christian tradition.

The Trinitarian Vision of the Summa Halensis

Although the doctrine of the Trinity is the last theological locus to be treated in the first volume of the *Summa Halensis*, which deals more generally with the doctrine of God, we have already discovered evidence of its Trinitarian vision throughout preceding sections, particularly the one on the transcendentals. In what follows, I will highlight retrospectively how the Summa’s unique Trinitarian vision already begins to emerge in these sections, through the discussion of certain divine attributes that can be ‘appropriated’ to specific members of the Trinity. Although properties like unity, truth, and goodness are properties of all three members of the Trinity in a general sense, insofar as they characterize the one God, a tradition sprang up in the twelfth century, and specifically, in the School of St Victor, of associating those properties in a specific sense with the person of the Trinity they seem most

to befit.⁶²⁸ This tradition was not without precedent in Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius and others, but it was instilled with new explanatory power by their medieval successors.

As we have already seen and will now discover further, the early Franciscans not only adopted the doctrine of Trinitarian appropriations but took it to new lengths in what was ultimately an effort to identify vestiges or traces of the Trinity in all things, not least the human being. Although Augustine had certainly undertaken this effort in his own way, particularly in his *De Trinitate*, the Victorine project takes a new shape in the work of early Franciscans, whose metaphysical and epistemological positions were heavily informed by Avicenna and sources other than Augustine. As we have already seen, for example, the tractate on divine immensity discusses the existence of God in things.⁶²⁹

In explaining how God is inside things, the Summist continues a longstanding, originally Augustinian tendency to affirm that God is in creatures by essence, power, and presence.⁶³⁰ He is in them by essence insofar as he causes them to be what they are, by power in terms of the abilities he gives them, and by presence, through their corresponding acts or operations.⁶³¹ Although such claims may seem uncontroversial from an Augustinian point of view, the early Franciscans lent them depth and meaning that had been unknown to the Christian world hitherto. In Augustine, for instance, the primacy attributed to the doctrine of divine simplicity rendered God wholly other in his nature to creatures. On this account, creatures are ‘like God’ in that their unity of being renders them similar to him. Nevertheless,

⁶²⁸ Dominique Poirel, ‘Scholastic Reasons, Monastic Meditations and Victorine Conciliations: The Question of the Unity and Plurality of God in the Twelfth Century,’ in *Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*, ed. Gilles Emery and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 179-80.

⁶²⁹ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr2, T3, M1, C1 (n. 45), 70-1.

⁶³⁰ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr2, T3, M1, C2, I.a, b, c (n. 46), 71.

⁶³¹ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr2, T3, M1, C2 (n. 46), pp. 72-3.

they are fundamentally unlike him in their way of being simple—through a composition of parts, subject to development in time.

The primacy the Summists attributed to the doctrine of divine immensity or infinity resulted in a rather different understanding of the relationship between God and creatures. While the Summist foreswears any quantitative concept of God, his conception of all individuals as corresponding to ideas in the mind of God nevertheless fosters a stronger sense that there is a direct correlation between divine ideas and individual instantiations. Here, creatures are unlike God only in the sense that they finitely capture some aspect of what he is infinitely. In this respect, however, the goodness and other qualities they exhibit can be related to his in a univocal way.

This theme is further explored in the tractate on the so-called ‘transcendentals’, namely, unity, truth, and goodness, which has already been explored in both its metaphysical and epistemological dimensions at some length. As we have seen, unity is that on account of which created things can be regarded as indivisible, singular entities, that is, as one. Likewise, they can be assessed in terms of their very capacity to be discerned and thus known as ‘true’. Finally, the order or fitness for a purpose of a thing can be evaluated, and in that regard, it can be known as ‘good’.⁶³² Such qualities respectively correspond to the efficient, formal, and final causality of the Father, Son, and Spirit respectively. These relations to God as efficient, formal, and final cause, whereby creatures are one, truth, and good, are said by

⁶³² Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr3, Q1, M1, C2, Respondeo (n. 73), 114-5: *Secundum quod ens aliquod consideratur absolutum, ut divisum ab aliis et in se indivisum, determinatur per ‘unum’*. *Secundum vero quod consideratur aliquod ens comparatum ad aliud secundum distinctionem, determinatur per ‘verum’*: ‘verum’ enim est quo res habet discerni. *Secundum vero quod consideratur comparatum ad aliud secundum convenientiam sive ordinem, determinatur per ‘bonum’*: ‘bonum’ enim est ex quo res habet ordinari.

the Summist to be the source of mode, species, and order as well as measure, number, and weight in creatures.

Through the innate knowledge of such transcendental properties, human beings not only enjoy the status of images of God but also thereby acquire the ability to know beings in terms of the way in which they precisely if limitedly reflect God. This knowledge is possible because of memory, intelligence, and will, which respectively allow the mind to retain a coordinated—or unified—concept of the component parts of the being, as established by its efficient cause; to understand its truth in terms of its exemplar cause; and to love or approve of the goodness a being possesses through its final cause.⁶³³ According to the *Summa*, human beings are images rather than mere vestiges of God precisely because they like him possess power, knowledge, and will.⁶³⁴ Through such triadic locutions, the *Summa* weaves of vision whereby the Trinity can be found in all things, while all things by the same token gesture towards the Trinity. With this Trinitarian vision of the *Summa Halensis* in view, we turn now to assess its doctrine of the Trinity.

⁶³³ Vol 1, P1, In1, Tr 3, Q1, M1, C2, Respondeo (n. 73), 114-5: *Item per comparisonem ad animam triplicatur eadem determinatio. Nam esse rerum tripliciter comparatur ad animam: videlicet ut res ordinentur in memoria, percipiantur intelligentia, diligantur voluntate. Est igitur in ente quolibet a causa efficiente unitas, per quam ordinetur in memoria et servetur: memoria enim ea quae retinet secundum aliquam coordinationem relationis ad 'unum' et discretionem componit. Item, a causa exemplari est veritas in quolibet ente, per quam percipitur ab intelligentia. Item, a causa finali est bonitas, per quam diligatur vel approbetur voluntate.*

⁶³⁴ Dominique Poirel, *Livre de la nature et debat trinitaire au XII siecle', Le De Tribus Diebus de Hugues de Saint-Victor* (Paris: Brepols, 2002); Poirel's article in *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*, 178-90.

8. TRINITY: DOCTRINE

In view of the background provided in the previous chapter, the present chapter will outline the Summa's account of the Trinity, which can be found at the end of the *Summa Halensis*. This is succeeded only by a final treatise of approximately 250 pages on the divine names (*de divinis nominibus*) which further elaborates the Summa's doctrine of God as three-in-one.⁶³⁵ As one of the first treatises entailing a commentary of sorts on Pseudo-Dionysius' *The Divine Names*, the presence of this treatise in the Summa signifies the attraction of the Greek Father to the early Franciscans.

In addition to Pseudo-Dionysius, John of Damascus remains a key authority throughout the Summa's discussion of the Trinity, along with Augustine and Richard of St Victor. Nevertheless, the references to Augustine primarily serve to confirm the conformity of the Summa's doctrine to Western orthodoxy, particularly as regards the *filioque* and the psychological model. In its actual contours, this doctrine departs significantly from Augustine and exhibits commonalities with the model outlined by Damascus and above all, Richard of St Victor.

That said, there are long stretches where the Summist is clearly speaking in his own voice, and it seems fairly evident that, whatever his influences, he is making the Victorine account his own and indeed transforming it into a specifically Franciscan doctrine.⁶³⁶ To see this, however, it will be necessary to follow the Summa's line of Trinitarian argumentation

⁶³⁵ See Vol. 1, P2, 492ff.

⁶³⁶ Maria Calisi, *Trinitarian Perspectives in the Franciscan Theological Tradition* (St Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute, 2008). Russell L. Friedman, *Medieval Trinitarian Theology from Aquinas to Ockham* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). J.T. Paasch, *Divine Production in Late Medieval Trinitarian Theology: Henry of Ghent, Duns Scotus and William of Ockham* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

quite closely. This is what I endeavour to do in the following analysis. In developing a version of Richard's Trinitarian account which is quite their own, the Summists divide their treatise on the Trinity into five sections or 'questions', which inquire into the plurality of persons, the truth of the persons, the number of the persons, their order, and their equality.

The basis for the entire discussion—and the bulk of the Summists' work on Trinitarian doctrine—is provided in the first question, which is itself divided into two 'titles', which respectively treat the generation of the Son from the Father and the procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son. Interestingly, John of Damascus also began his account of the Trinity with sections on the generation of the Son and the procession of the Spirit, before going on to answer further questions about the inter-relations of the persons. Whether the Summists deliberately sought to follow this pattern is difficult to say, but the resemblance in structure is striking. In any event, these two titles are the focus of the discussion below, which will be followed by a brief treatment of the key points that emerge from the sections on the truth and number and the order and equality of the persons.

The Plurality of Persons in the Trinity

The Generation of the Son

At the start of this section, the Summist presents a number of arguments in support of the claim that the Son is eternally generated from the Father.⁶³⁷ Quoting the fiftieth of Augustine's *83 Quaestiones*, he writes:

⁶³⁷ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T1, C1 (n. 295), 414-18.

‘From eternity, the Father was either able and willed to generate the son, or he did not will but was able, or he was not able but willed; or neither willed nor was able. If he willed and was not able, he was impotent. If he was able and did not will, he was evil. If he was neither able nor willed, he was both impotent and evil; but these things do not pertain to him.’⁶³⁸

On this basis, the Summist concludes that God was able and that he willed, such that the Son was generated from eternity, and his generation is eternal. A further argument turns on the idea, formulated by Pseudo-Dionysius in his *The Divine Names* 4.1, that the good is self-diffusive by nature or essence. Indeed, it is the glory of the good to diffuse itself, for if we posit two goods, which are equal in all respects, where one diffuses its goodness and the other does not, the self-diffusive good would be more praiseworthy and better than the other that did not diffuse itself. Since a good withheld is not truly good, the definition of the good includes its self-diffusion,⁶³⁹

Where there is the highest good, consequently, it is diffusive. Yet the highest diffusion is that than which a greater cannot be thought. However, no greater diffusion can be conceived than the one that is according to the whole substance of what is diffused.

Therefore, the highest good necessarily diffuses itself according to its whole substance, and

⁶³⁸ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T1, C1, a (n. 295), 414: ‘*Deus Pater ab aeterno aut potuit Filium generare et voluit; aut non voluit sed potuit; aut non potuit sed voluit; aut neque voluit neque potuit. Si voluit et non potuit: ergo impotens fuit. Si potuit et non voluit: ergo invidus fuit; sed ab eo relegata est omnis invidia. Si nec potuit nec voluit: impotens et invidus fuit; sed ista relegata sunt ab ipso.*’ *Relinguitur ergo quod potuit et voluit, et constat quod scivit; sed ad hoc quod causa rationabilis agat, non plura exiguntur nisi velle, posse et scire; ergo Filium ab aeterno genuit; ergo generatio aeterna est.*

⁶³⁹ Kevin Patrick Keane, *The Logic of Self-Diffusive Goodness in the Trinitarian Theology of the Summa Fratris Alexandri*. PhD, Fordham University (1978).

this kind of diffusion is naturally understood to occur in it. But the power of generating is nothing other than that power of diffusing one's own substance so as to produce something similar in nature. Therefore in the highest being, this highest power is understood to exist from eternity, as the highest good exists from eternity.⁶⁴⁰

On affirming this, the Summist acknowledges that some might object to his claim that the good is naturally or essentially diffusive. In response to this objection, he re-iterates that the perfection and nobility of the good involves communicating itself. Since everything perfect is attributed to the highest good, that good is self-communicating. As the highest good, moreover, it is capable of the highest level of communication. Yet the highest communication is that of a being's whole substance rather than merely its qualities or attributes. Thus, the highest good communicates its whole substance. But to communicate its substance is naturally to produce something that is similar to itself, and this is nothing other than to generate. Therefore the highest good is necessarily understood to entail generation, and generation is eternal, because whatever is understood in the highest good is eternal.⁶⁴¹

⁶⁴⁰ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T1, C1, b (n. 295), 414.

⁶⁴¹ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T1, C1, b (n. 295), 414-15: *Si dicatur, quod haec ratio non procedit, quia in bono non intelligitur diffusio nisi ex consequenti, et non naturaliter vel essentialiter, in contrarium obicitur: de perfectione boni et nobilitate est communicare se ipsum; unde haec est laus boni; quidquid autem est perfectionis et nobilitatis boni attribuitur summe bono; ergo necessario in summo bono est sui ipsius communicatio; et cum ipsum sit summum, ergo summa communicatio. Magna autem communicatio est communicare sua vel suam qualitatem vel suum accidens; maior vero communicatio est communicare suam substantiam; maxima ergo et summa est communicare totam suam substantiam; ergo haec communicatio necessario est in summo bono; sed communicare suam substantiam ut simile producat in natura, nihil aliud est quam generare; ergo necessario in summo bono intelligitur generatio; ergo generatio est aeterna, quia quidquid in eo intelligitur aeternum est.*

In a further argument, the Summist observes that whatever pertains to nobility or perfection and power is attributed to God. Moreover, a power is more noble which is characterized by a more noble effect or act. But compared to all acts of power, he further argues, none is more noble than the act of an agent that naturally produces a similar agent. But this sort of act requires the power to generate. For an artificial power produces artificial things, not something similar in nature. By the power of generation, however, a substance is produced that is similar in nature, and this entails a more powerful production. Since we understand the noblest power to be in the highest power which is God, then God must have the power of generating, and that eternally.⁶⁴²

While an imperfect generation requires a dual origin, namely, man and woman, a perfect generation has a singular principle. Therefore, since what is most perfect is attributed to the generation in God, there is in God a generation from the Father only.⁶⁴³ On the basis of these and other arguments, the Summist concludes that there is generation, and it is eternal. In support of this contention, he quotes Richard of St Victor's *De Trinitate* I.9, which states that, 'in created nature we read what we ought to think of the uncreated. Daily, we see how

⁶⁴² Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T1, C1, c (n. 295), 415: *Communis conceptio animi est quod quidquid est nobilitatis et perfectionis et virtutis est Deotribuendum; item, nobilior est virtus, quae habet nobiliorem effectum vel actum; sed comparando omnes actus virtutum, non est nobilior actus alicuius virtutis agentis quam ille quo producit simile in natura ipsi agenti; sed virtus cuius est talis actus, scilicet producere simile in natura ipsi agenti, est virtus generativa et non alia: virtus enim artificialis producit artificiatum, sed non simile in natura; a virtute autem genrativa est productio substantialis, hoc est similis in natura, et haec est virtuosior productio; ergo inter virtutes omnes producentes aliquid nobilior est virtus generativa, quae habet producere simile in natura; sed quod est nobilitatis vel nobilioris virtutis non potest non intelligi in summa virtute et summa potentia, quae Deus est; ergo in summa virtute et potentia intelligitur virtus generativa; ergo generatio; ergo generatio aeterna est.*

⁶⁴³ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T1, C1, d (n. 295), 415.

by the operation of nature itself subsistence produces existence, and existence proceeds from [another] existence. Will the most excellent nature's operation not be able to do this? Will that [higher] nature that has given the gift of fecundity to this nature, remain completely sterile in itself?'⁶⁴⁴ Thus, we attribute generation to it.

After establishing that there is generation in God, the Summist endeavours further to define generation in the divine.⁶⁴⁵ Although he admits that we do not have the power as human beings to specify the nature of eternal generation, which is a matter of faith, he insists that generation, according to the common definition, involves the production of a substance. However, this production can be understood in multiple ways, insofar as the substance produced can be similar or dissimilar in nature to the being that produces it. In the latter respect, production is equivocal, as in the case of things produced in the flesh. Whenever something is produced of one substance which is similar to it in nature, however, univocal generation is at stake.

Even univocal generation can however occur in multiple ways, given that either a part or the whole of the original substance can be produced. When man begets man, for example, the production is partial. In the case of the divine being, exclusively, the whole substance is produced, because the divine essence is simple, and there is no part in it. Yet this production can occur in either a principal or a non-principal mode. It is defined according to the principal

⁶⁴⁴ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T1, C1, Respondeo (n. 295), 416: *Confitendum verissime quod generatio aeterna est. Unde Richardus de S. Victore, in libro De Trinitate: 'In natura creata legimus quod de increata pensare debeamus. Videmus quotidie quomodo naturae ipsius operatione subsistentia existentiam producit et existentia de existentia procedit. Numquid in illa superexcellenti natura operatio naturae nulla erit? Numquid natura illa, quae huic naturae fructus foecunditatis donavit, in se omnino sterilis permanebit?'* He also quotes John of Damascus, *De Fide Orthodoxa* I.6, which states that it is impossible for God not to generate.

⁶⁴⁵ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T1, C2, Solutio (n. 296), 419-20.

mode when a product is produced which has the power and property of producing another from itself. This is the way in which the Son proceeds from the Father, insofar as he has the power of producing another from himself, namely, the Holy Spirit.

By contrast, the production of the Holy Spirit by the Son occurs according to the second, non-principal mode, because he is produced of the substance of God, but does not retain the property of producing another from himself. Therefore, the first product, namely, the Son, is generated; the other, which is the Spirit, comes forth by way of procession. Nevertheless, when we speak of the generation of the Son as principal, and the procession of the Spirit as non-principal, an inequality is not implied, but only a difference in properties. For to call something ‘first’ or ‘not first’ within the Godhead is not to designate priority or posteriority in time, but rather to designate an order of nature. From this, therefore, it is clear that generation in the divine pertains to the univocal production of something similar in nature in its entire substance according to the principle mode.⁶⁴⁶

Next, the Summist inquires whether the capacity to generate or be generated pertains to the divine essence or to the persons.⁶⁴⁷ In answer to this question, he distinguishes between nature and the order of nature. On his account, ‘nature’ refers to the having of a certain essence, while order refers to the way in which it is possessed. For instance, the Father has his nature through himself; the Son, through the Father, by generation and thus by a principal mode of procession. The Spirit has his nature through spiration from both the Father and the Son, and thus through a principal mode of procession from the Father and a non-principal mode of procession from the Son. On this basis, the Summist insists that there is a three-fold mode of being in the divine, namely, *quid*, *quis* and *quomodo*. In the divine

⁶⁴⁶ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T1, C2, Solutio (n. 296), 419-20.

⁶⁴⁷ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T1, C3, Ar1, (n. 297), 421-9.

being there is, respectively, there is the nature which is had, the having of the divine nature, and the mode of having, namely, the notion or habit or property, whereby one has the nature.

While *quid* inquires into the common nature of the divine persons, *quis* considers the one having the nature under a discreet and incommunicable property, namely, the person or hypostasis in question. *Quomodo* attends to the mode of having the nature, namely, with a certain habit or order, such as generation, which is consequently called a condition or habit of the order of nature. In summary, then, *quid* concerns the divine essence; *quis*, a divine person, and *quomodo*, the notional habits which distinguish persons in terms of their varying points of origin or in terms of the ‘order of nature’. Thus, the Summist concludes that all names signifying the divine essence as *quis est* ‘pertain to a discrete and incommunicable property and signify notional habits, such as ‘to generate’ and ‘to be generated’, which are properly referred to persons. By contrast, names signifying the divine essence in terms of *quid est* signify a communicable essence which belongs to all three persons of the Trinity.

The Procession of the Holy Spirit

After analysing the generation of the Son, the Summist goes on to consider the procession of the Holy Spirit.⁶⁴⁸ Initially, he presents a number of arguments to support the idea of this procession. First, he notes that the principle of diffusion in things is two-fold: by nature and by will. Since generation is the most perfect means of diffusion by nature, procession through love is the most perfect means of diffusion by will. However, the good is greater that diffuses itself according to both modes rather than just one or the other. Since what is most praiseworthy and perfect cannot be lacking in the highest good, which is God,

⁶⁴⁸ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T2, 438ff.

there must be diffusion of nature through the generation of the Son as well as a diffusion of the will or love through the procession of the Spirit.⁶⁴⁹

Another reason for the Spirit's procession is this: the highest good is essentially diffusive or communicative, since a good withheld is not truly good. As therefore the diffusion or communication is twofold, namely, natural and gratuitous, there is a communication through the mode of generation as well as through the mode of gift, that is, the procession of love. For love is the first and perfect gift by which all things are properly given, and the one who gives his own love to another holds all things in common with that one. Likewise, what is not given from love is not properly given, for it is given rather from fear.⁶⁵⁰

A further reason for the Spirit's procession is as follows: the highest goodness cannot be lacking in the highest love, because what is truly good gives itself, and that giving is an act of love. But the highest love entails that one loves another as one is loved oneself. Indeed, this love is highest because one wills for the other to be loved by another as one is loved oneself. Since what is most praiseworthy is attributed to the highest good, it is necessary to affirm that the highest good, in loving another as himself, wills that this one be loved by

⁶⁴⁹ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T2, C1, a (n. 304), 438: *Duo sunt principia diffusionis in rebus: natura et voluntas. Perfectissima autem diffusio naturae est illa quae est per generationem, perfectissima diffusio voluntatis est illa quae est per amorem sive per dilectionem: et haec est laus bonitatis in rebus; magis autem laudabile est bonum quod diffundit se secundum utrumque modum quam quod diffundit se secundum alterum tantum. Si ergo quod est laudabile et perfectum non potest deesse in summo bono: est igitur in summo bono, quod est Deus, diffusio generationis, quam consequitur differentia gignentis et geniti, Patris et Filii, et erit ibi diffusio per modum dilectionis, quam dicimus processionem Spiritus Sancti.*

⁶⁵⁰ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T2, C1, c (n. 304), 438.

another as he himself is loved. But this cannot be the case where there are less than three persons. Therefore there are three persons, one being the Holy Spirit.⁶⁵¹

As the subsequent discussion confirms, procession by love is proper to the Spirit, since procession can be understood in two ways: either absolutely and precisely or with the super-addition of some mode of dignity or difference. The second mode is proper to the Son, whose procession cannot be understood without the super-addition of the dignity involved in proceeding according to the principal mode, whereby he proceeds from the Father even while another, that is, the Holy Spirit, proceeds from himself. This procession by a principal mode, we have noted, is called generation. Since the Spirit proceeds from the Son by a non-principle mode, however, he proceeds in the precise or absolute sense.⁶⁵²

As the Summist later observes, this procession is through the mode of spiration or ‘breathing’. On his account, spiration can be defined in two ways.⁶⁵³ Firstly, it can be imperfect, in cases where there is only a natural power which is pulsating and moving, as in the inhaling and exhaling of air by the human body. Secondly, spiration can be perfect, where the power of reason moves towards speech, as happens when the rational intellect generates a word which is a report of understanding, simultaneously spirating the spirit which is the vehicle of this word, as Damascus says in *De fide orthodoxa* I.7: ‘the word must have a spirit, and the Word of God is not more deficient than our word.’⁶⁵⁴

This spiration can be defined according to the intention of the movement of love, because love or the desire to know is implicit in the understanding that is generated by the

⁶⁵¹ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T2, C1, e (n. 304), 439.

⁶⁵² Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T2, C2, Respondeo (n. 305), 441.

⁶⁵³ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T2, C3, Ar1, Respondeo (n. 306), 442.

⁶⁵⁴ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T2, C3, Ar1, Respondeo (n. 306), 442: *Oportet verbum habere spiritum nec est Verbum Dei deficientius nostro verbo.*

mind. Thus, just as spiration or breathing is the vital motion that sustains natural life, so spiration by love is the vital movement that sustains the power of the spiritual life, which is proper to the soul and by implication intelligence, which is the product of generation by the Son. This identification of the Spirit with love raises the question how love can be attributed to the whole Trinity, as indeed it is.⁶⁵⁵ In addressing this question, the Summist contends that love may be defined in a number of ways.

On one level, it is called a delight in what is good simpliciter (*complacentia boni simpliciter*). So construed, it befits all three persons. On another level, however, it is called a free or liberal movement of the will to the good, through that power which is the will. In this way, it is appropriated to the Father, according to the reason Richard provides, which is that purely gratuitous (*amor gratuitus*) or self-giving love is appropriated to the Father.⁶⁵⁶ Insofar as it is considered as a liberal movement made possible by another, it is however associated with the Son according to Richard, who appropriates a love that is both received and given to the Son (*amor permixtus*). When however love is defined as exclusively from another, it is appropriated to the Holy Spirit, on the account of Richard, who attributes a purely receptive love (*amor debitus*) to the third person of the Trinity.

As the above analysis suggests, love must be defined differently depending on the person of the Trinity in question. Some forms of love befit one person of the Trinity but not the others. Thus, love can be said to be both common to all three members in a general sense, as well as proper to individual persons in a more specified sense. While the whole Trinity wills the good, which is love, the Father is the moving principle (*principium movens*) of that love, the Son is the principle that is moved (*principium motum*), and the Spirit is the

⁶⁵⁵ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q4, C7, Solutio (n. 326), 479-80: On the way that the will is essentially a property of the whole divine being as well as a personal property of the Spirit.

⁶⁵⁶ Richard of St Victor, *DT* V.16, 17, 19-20.

movement coming from the wills of the Father and the Son, namely, the gift or liberal emanation of their shared love or *condilectio*. Although love is attributed to the Father and the Son in a certain way, consequently, it is properly attributed to the Spirit. As Augustine says in *De Trinitate* VI.5, ‘there are three and no more: one loving (*diligens*) him which is from himself, another loving the one from whom he comes, and one who represents their love,’⁶⁵⁷

As the shared love of Father and Son, the Summist further observes that the Spirit is the bond or nexus of their communion, and for multiple reasons.⁶⁵⁸ First because he is the love proceeding from the Father and Son commonly. Secondly because he comes from the Father and Son and is of one substance with them. Whence Augustine says in *De Trinitate* XI.19.37 that ‘the love by which the Father loves the Son and the Son the Father demonstrates the ineffable communion of both.’ Third, because he comes from the Father and Son through the habit and relation or notion which is their common spiration. Fourth because the Holy Spirit is the union or communion through which we are united to God and communicate the highest goodness of the divine good.

In a corollary inquiry, the Summist addresses the question whether there is any mode of production in the divine beyond generation and procession.⁶⁵⁹ As stated previously, there

⁶⁵⁷ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T2, C3, Ar2, Respondeo (n. 307), 445: *Tria sunt et non amplius: unus diligens eum qui de illo, et alius diligens de quo est, et ipsa dilectio.*

⁶⁵⁸ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T2, C3, Ar3, Respondeo (n. 308), 446.

⁶⁵⁹ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T2, C3, Ar4, Respondeo (n. 309), 447: *Dicendum quod ibi est productio per modum rationalis, sed non aliud a productione naturali: in divinis enim non aptatur productio cuiuscumque naturae, sed naturae dignioris, quae est rationalis natura, quae est imago Dei. Nec dicitur ibi generatio secundum quemcumque modum, sed secundum quod intelligentia a mente procedit, quae est prima productio naturae rationalis. Et hoc patet per Augustinum, qui dicit generationem Filii per productionem intelligentiae a mente intelligi, et productionem Spiritus Sancti in productione amoris ab utroque, intelligentia videlicet et mente; sed*

is a production through the mode of reason, but this is none other than a natural production: for the production in the divine is not adapted to just any nature, but a most dignified nature, which is the rational nature, or the image of God. Therefore, generation there is not said to be according to any mode whatever, but according to the way intelligence proceeds from the mind, which is the primary production of the rational nature. This is made clear by Augustine, who says in *De Trinitate* XV.7.12 that the generation of the Son is through the production of intelligence from the understanding mind, and the production of the Holy Spirit is in the production of love from both, namely, intelligence and mind. But the production through the mode of intelligence is a production through the mode of reason. This is clear because the production of the Son is the production of a mental word, which is the same as intelligence or understanding. Therefore, the production of nature and reason are the same, because in this case, the production is of the rational nature.

Following this, the Summa addresses the highly controversial question whether the Spirit proceeds from the Father only or from both the Father and the Son. This question was at the time and still remains highly controversial amongst Greek and Latin or Eastern and Western thinkers. Although the Summist relies heavily on Greek thinkers like Damascus and Dionysius—also mentioning Gregory the Theologian in this context—throughout his section on Trinitarian theology, he rejects their position on this particular issue, in favour of the one he finds presented in the classic Western account of Augustine. In this connection, he distinguishes between two forms of procession.⁶⁶⁰ In one way, he writes, to ‘proceed’ is to be moved from one place to another by way of locomotion. In the second, procession consists in

productio per modum intelligentiae est productio per modum rationis—quod patet: quia productio Filii est productio verbi mentalis, quod idem est quod intelligentia—eadem ergo est productio naturae et rationis, quia est productio naturae rationalis.

⁶⁶⁰ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T2, C4 , Solutio (n. 310), 450.

the coming of the thing caused from a cause or the thing moved from the one moving.

According to the first mode, procession requires two ends, namely, that from which and that in which; according to the second mode, it only requires one end, namely, something from which the procession occurs.

According to the Summist, the second of these two modes can be attributed to the procession of the Holy Spirit. However, the Greek understanding of his procession is by locomotion. According to this mode, he does not proceed from the Son, because from this it would follow that he proceeds from the Son in the Father, which is not fitting, as the Father is the first principle and has nothing from the Son. But they have conceded that he proceeds from the Father in the Son, in which it is shown that he is the love of the Father for the Son and is even insinuated that the Son has being from the Father. But Latin thinkers translate the word ‘proceed’ in terms of the Spirit’s coming or procession as the thing caused by a cause. Whence they say that to proceed is to come from something, although it does not proceed to something, much like knowledge and love are said to proceed from the mind, although they are not understood to proceed to a new place. And according to this mode, Latin thinkers say that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son because he comes from both as love from knowledge and the mind.

In elaborating on the Spirit’s procession, the Summist appeals again to the authority of Richard of St Victor, and specifically to his contention that the highest love, which cannot fail to be understood as the highest good, necessarily proves the generation of the Son from the Father and is the reason of his generation. For where there is highest love, it is necessary that there is a person willing the good of the other, and that good is to communicate oneself fully, according to one’s whole substance. Likewise, the reason of the procession of the Holy Spirit is preeminent love.

As Richard writes: ‘since what is best cannot be lacking in the highest love, so it is not able to be lacking in what is preeminent; in love, however, what is preeminent is nothing other than to will the other to be loved as oneself.’⁶⁶¹ ‘But as long as one is the sole person being loved by another, he alone enjoys the delights of this highest sweetness; similarly, even the other is deprived of participating in the highest joy as long as he does not have a shared lover (*condilectus*),’ or the ability to share his love with the first for a third. Thus, ‘if both are to be able to communicate delights of this sort [i.e., highest], it is necessary that they have a shared lover (*condilectus*),’⁶⁶² or a third person they can love together in the same manner. This of course is the Holy Spirit.

As the Son is called the love (*dilectio*) from the Father, consequently, so the Holy Spirit is called their shared love (*condilectio*). Thus, we are evidently able to say, according to Richard, that as the reason of the generation of the Son from the Father is the highest *dilectio*, so the reason of the procession of the Holy Spirit is *condilectio*.⁶⁶³ For by reason of the highest *dilectio* which is understood in the person of the Father, there is the reason of generation. Moreover, the highest *condilectio* which is understood in the persons of the Father and the Son is the reason for the procession of the Spirit from them. Thus, Richard says: ‘when one loves another and is alone in doing so, there is *dilectio*, but not *condilectio*. When two mutually love each other, and the affection of the first is aimed at the second, and

⁶⁶¹ DT III.11, quoted in Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T2, C5, Respondeo (n. 311), 453: *Sicut in summa caritate non potest deesse quod est optimum, ita nec potest deesse quod est praecipuum; praecipuum autem in vera caritate est alterum velle diligere ut se.*

⁶⁶² De Trinitate III.15, quoted in Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T2, C5, Respondeo (n. 311), 453: *Quamdiu enim iste ab alio solus diligitur, praecipuae dulcedinis suae delicias solus possidere videtur; similiter et alius, quamdiu condilectum non habet, praecipui gaudii communione caret; ut autem uterque possit istiusmodi delicias communicare, oportet eos condilectum habere.*

⁶⁶³ DT III.19.

the affection of the second at the first and is, at it were, turned in various directions, there is love on both sides but there is not co-love. Co-love occurs when a third is loved by the two in harmony and collectively (*concorditer et socialiter*) so that the two persons' affects are fused to become one because of the flame of love for the third.⁶⁶⁴

The Truth and Number of the Persons

Following the discussion of the generation and procession of the Son and Spirit, respectively, in question one, question two briefly treats the truth of the persons.⁶⁶⁵ Here, the Summist invokes Richard of St Victor, who writes: 'boldly, we claim that in God, we speak...about multiple persons and not about multiple substances because there, multiple persons have one and the same substance through different properties. Thus there is unity of essence according to the mode of being, because of one undivided being, and multiple persons because of multiple existences.'⁶⁶⁶

⁶⁶⁴ *De Trinitate* III.19, quoted in Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q1, T2, C5, Respondeo (n. 311), 453: *Quando unus alteri amorem impendit et solus solum diligit, dilectio quidem est, sed condilectio non est. Quando duo se mutuo diligunt et istius in illum, illius in istum affectus discurret et quasi in diversa tendit, utrobique quidem dilectio est, sed condilectio non est. Condilectio vero est cum a duobus diligentibus tertius concorditer diligitur et socialiter amatur et duorum affectus tertii amoris incendio in unum conflatur. Ex iis itaque patet quod in ipsa divinitate condilectio locum non haberet, si duobus existentibus tertia persona deesset.*

⁶⁶⁵ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q2, 455-8.

⁶⁶⁶ *DT* IV.19, quoted in Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q2, Solutio (n. 311), 455-6: *Fidenter fatemur personas in divinitate, secundum substantiam dictas, et substantiam significare et plures ibi personas et non plures substantias esse, quia sunt ibi plures habentes unum et idem esse indifferens ex differenti proprietate; itaque ibi est iuxta modum essendi unitas essentiae, quia unum indifferens esse, plures personae, quia plures existentiae.*

For example, when I speak of the person of the Father, I speak of the one having the divine essence not from another and from whom others have the same essence through generation or spiration. When I speak of the Son, I speak of the one having the divine essence from another through generation and from whom another comes through procession. When I speak of the Holy Spirit, I speak of the one having the same divine being from others, namely, the Father and the Son, through procession. Therefore, there is the same essence in Father, Son and Spirit, namely, the divine essence, nevertheless through different and incommunicable properties.

If therefore the being of a person is nothing other than to have the being of a rational nature from an incommunicable property, it is necessary to posit that the Father is a Person and the Son is a person and the Spirit is a person. Quoting Richard's *De Trinitate* IV.8, the Summist insists again that a plurality of persons does not take away from the unity of the divine substance, just as a plurality of substances—mainly, the body and soul in human beings—does not detract from the unity of a person.

As the Summist elaborates in treating the number of the persons, this is because the persons of the Trinity are not enumerated simpliciter, thus creating numerous substances, but only according to differences in their points of origin or 'order of nature', which does not foster numerous essences but only numerous persons which enact that singular essence.⁶⁶⁷

⁶⁶⁷ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q3, C3, Solutio (n. 315), 462: *Ideo solum est ibi numerus personarum sive Trinitatis et non numerus simpliciter, qui est differentium substantiarum, quia est solum secundum originis differentiam, quae non facit numerum in essentiis, sed solum in hypostasibus vel personis*; cf. Pars 1, Inq 2, Tract 1, Qu 3, Ch 4, Solutio, p. 463-4. Indeed, the Summist elaborates, there must be an order of origin in the divine, because if we think of the divine nature, we must think of one having that nature. And if we understand him as having that nature from another, we understand him with an incommunicable property, by which the one having nature? is separated from the one who is not from another. Thus, are introduced different hypostases, or things having a

After Richard's example, the Summist concludes that there can only be three such persons, because a greater number of persons would destroy the supreme similarity and connection in the Trinity and introduce confusion and disorder, which would be absurd and unfitting.⁶⁶⁸

More specifically, it would destroy the direct connection between each person with the others which the number three creates—a connection in which each member of the Trinity is loved by the other two in common, through a *condilectio* or shared love that represents the perfect form of love. This love is made possible by one person who is the terminus of the diffusion of love, one person who is the principle of this diffusion, and another who is the medium of the diffusion.⁶⁶⁹

In elaborating on the community shared by these three persons, the Summist gives an account which markedly resembles what we have seen in John of Damascus. 'When we say Peter and Paul are both men,' he writes, we accept that they share a common essence, even though there are two individuals. In a similar way, the three persons are the same according to what they are (*secundum rem*) and differ only according to reason (*secundum rationem*).⁶⁷⁰ That, incidentally, is why things said of the persons are predicated relatively, not of the substance.⁶⁷¹

The Order and Equality of the Persons

nature under a discrete and incommunicable property (*Res naturae sive habens naturam sub discreta et incommunicabili proprietate*; Richard, *DT* IV.22).

⁶⁶⁸ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q3, C7, Solutio (n. 319), 469.

⁶⁶⁹ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q3, C7, Ad quartum (n. 319), 470.

⁶⁷⁰ Vol 1, P2, In2, Tr2, S1, Q1, M2, C4, Ar2, Respondeo (n. 389), 573.

⁶⁷¹ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Qu 2, C3, Ar1, Contra b (n. 339), 504.

In treating the order amongst the persons, the Summist distinguishes between numerous definitions of the term ‘order’.⁶⁷² For instance, there is order according to place, time, cause, reason, and origin of nature. Order according to place concerns these differences: superior, inferior, and equal; time: prior posterior, simultaneous; these are not the modes of order in the divine. Order according to cause is that by which we say that a cause is prior to its effect. This mode of order is not in the divine persons because they are co-equal.

When the last order of reason is defined as an order of different genera, which are first, middle, or last, it cannot be ascribed to the divine persons, as it suggests that the latter elements in the order are inferior to the former. If the order of reason is defined in terms of an order of origins, however, there is order in the divine being. For there is one person who is not from another; a second who is from the first and from which another comes; and a third which comes from both.

For the Summist, as we have already seen, this order of origins entails an order of nature, because through the ways in which they originate, the divine persons allow for the diffusion of the essence or love of God amongst the members of the Trinity, such that each of the members bears the same nature or substance as the others.⁶⁷³ For this very reason, the order of origins within the Trinity is not one which renders one inferior to the other. To the contrary, it is an order which enacts their loving and being loved with one and the same kind of love.

The Summist then inquires whether the two Persons of the Trinity that originate in the one who does not have an origin do so such that neither proceeds from the other. The question at stake here is again the one disputed between Greeks and Latins as to whether the Spirit proceeds from the Father only or from both the Father and the Son. In reckoning with

⁶⁷² Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q4, C1, Solutio (n. 320), 471-2.

⁶⁷³ Vol 1, P1, In2, Tr1, Q4, C2, Solutio (n. 321), 472.

this question, the Summist presents a number of reasons which contest the Greek belief that the Spirit proceeds only from the Father.

The first is based on a quotation from Richard of St Victor: ‘If two persons proceeded from only one person, certainly, neither of those proceeding would be immediately bound to the other.’⁶⁷⁴ For this reason, ‘the order of nature is not according to the essence,’ because the Holy Spirit would not have order to the Son except because he is from the Father, nor would the Son have order to the Holy Spirit except because he is from the Father. Therefore, they would be more closely related to the Father than to one another. Therefore, there would be no complete or equal proportion among the divine persons: which is unfitting of God. Therefore it remains that those two proceed from the Father in such a way that one proceeds immediately from the other, namely, the Holy Spirit from the Son—which is contradictory to the Greek opinion.⁶⁷⁵

The second reason is this: the Person of the Father, from whom the others proceed, is one in essence with the persons of the Son and the Spirit. As he is entirely simple, moreover, he has one mode insofar as he is the origin of both, as the Greeks posit, because they are immediately from him, such that they do not have different habits of being ordered to him, because both are immediately ordered to himself, as they argue. Therefore, they proceed from him according to one habit and one mode. Therefore, if one comes through generation, the

⁶⁷⁴ Richard of St Victor, *DT* V.10.

⁶⁷⁵ Vol 1, Pars 1, Inq 2, Tract 1, Qu 4, C5, Ad a (n. 324), 475-6. *Richardus in libro De Trinitate*: ‘Si gemina persona de una tantum procederet, profecto procedentium neutra immediate alteri adhaereret,’ supple ‘in ordine naturae, non secundum essentiam:’ quia Spiritus Sanctus non haberet ordinem ad Filium nisi quia a Patre, nec Filius ad Spiritum Sanctum nisi quia a Patre; ergo plus convenirent cum Patre quam ad invicem; non ergo esset omnimodo nec aequalis proportio in divinis personis: quod est inconveniens. Relinquitur ergo quod ita procedunt illae duae a Patre quod et una immediate procedit ab alia, scilicet Spiritus Sanctus a Filio: quod est contra opinionem Graecorum.

other one as well, and if the other comes through spiration from the Father, the first one does also, and in that way, both could be called the Son or the Spirit, and there could be multiple sons or multiple spirits: which is unfitting and false of the Trinity. Therefore, it is necessary that the Son and Spirit proceed from the Father such that one also proceeds from the other.⁶⁷⁶

The third reason is as follows: it is not possible to understand a third as ordered to unity unless by the mediation of a second, because the second is the mediator between the first and third. Thus, the habit of the third to the second is prior to and more immediate than the third to the first. As therefore the Son is the mediating person between the Father and the Holy Spirit, it is necessary to understand the habit of the Holy Spirit to the Son as prior to the habit to the Father.⁶⁷⁷ The fourth reason is as follows: the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father as a distinct and determinate love; the Son however proceeds from the Father as intelligence from the mind; but distinct and determinate love never proceeds unless intelligence first proceeds from the mind, because we do not love unless we know.⁶⁷⁸

⁶⁷⁶ Vol 1, Pars 1, Inq 2, Tract 1, Qu 4, C5, Ad b (n. 324), 475-6. *Persona Patris, a quo procedunt aliae, est unum in essentia cum persona Filii et persona Spiritus Sancti. Item, cum ipsa sit simplex omnino, se habens uno modo quantum est ex parte originis ad utramque, sicut ponunt Graeci, quia immediate sunt de ipso nec habitudo earum differens ad illam, quia scilicet immediate se habet utraque ad illam, sicut ponunt: ergo secundum unam habitudinem et unum modum procederent ab illa; ergo si una est per generationem, et alia, et si una per spirationem a Patre, et alia; et ita utraque potest dici Filius vel Spiritus Sanctus, et ita plures filii vel plures spiritus sancti: quod est inconueniens et falsum. Necesse est ergo quod ita procedant Filius et Spiritus Sanctus a Patre quod etiam unus procedat ab alio.*

⁶⁷⁷ Vol. 1, Pars 1, Inq 2, Tract 1, Qu 4, C5, Ad c (n. 324), 475-6. *Non potest intelligi poni ordo ternarii ad unitatem nisi mediante dualitate, quia dualitas se habet quasi medium ad unitatem et ternarium, et prior est habitudo ternarii ad binarium quam ad unum et immediator. Cum ergo Filius sit persona media inter Patrem et Spiritum Sanctum, necesse est prius habitudinem intelligere Spiritus Sancti ad Filium quam ad Patrem.*

⁶⁷⁸ Quoting Augustine *De Trinitate* 8.4.

Therefore, love proceeds by the mediation of understanding. Similarly, therefore, the Holy Spirit is not able to proceed from the Father unless by the mediation of the Son. Therefore the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, as love from understanding.⁶⁷⁹

The fifth and final reason is this: there is order amongst the divine persons. However, there is not order there according to superiority and inferiority, nor according to priority and posteriority. Therefore, the order there is closest to that of reason. But an order of reason is according to first, middle, and last...because in it, there is a first, from which nothing comes but which is from others, and a last, from which others come yet itself comes from none, and there is a middle, which is from another and from which another comes.

As therefore in the divine persons there is an exemplar of this sort of order, it remains that there is one person there from which others come and that itself comes from none, and one which comes from others, while nothing comes from itself, and a middle which is from another and from which another comes. But the first of the aforementioned persons is the Father, the second, the Spirit, and the third, the Son. Therefore, he is from the person of the Father and from him comes the person of the Spirit, who is exclusively from others. Thus, it is not possible that there are two proceeding immediately from the first person, which does not have origin, so that neither proceeds from the other.⁶⁸⁰

⁶⁷⁹ Vol. 1, Pars 1, Inq 2, Tract 1, Qu 4, C5, Ad d (n. 324), 475-6. *Spiritus Sanctus procedit a Patre sicut amor distinctus et determinatus, Filius autem procedit a Patre sicut intelligentia a mente; sed nunquam procedit amor distinctus et determinatus nisi prius procedat intelligentia a mente, quia non diligimus nisi cognitum; amor ergo procedit mediante intelligentia. Ergo similiter Spiritus Sanctus non potest procedere a Patre nisi Filio mediante; procedit ergo ita Spiritus Sanctus a Patre quod et a Filio, sicut amor ab intelligentia.*

⁶⁸⁰ Vol. 1, Pars 1, Inq 2, Tract 1, Qu 4, C5, Ad e (n. 324), 476. *Ordo est in divinis personis; non autem est ibi ordo secundum superius et inferius nec secundum prius et posterius; nullo ergo modo convenientius est ibi ordo quam rationis; sed ordo rationis est secundum primum, medium, postremum, sicut patet in linea praedicamentali, quia ibi est primum, de quo nihil est, sed quod est de aliis, et ultimum, de quo alia et ipsum de*

In elaborating on the diverse origins of the different persons, the Summist follows Richard of St Victor in distinguishing between different possible ways in which one may proceed from another: mediately, mediately and immediately, or immediately only. Procession by mediation only cannot be in God, because this would sever the direct nature of his connection with and the similarity of the one proceeding from him. In God, therefore, there is only production that is immediate, as in the case of the Son's procession from the Father, and both mediate and immediate, as in the procession of the Spirit from the Son and Father, respectively. This results in an immediate relationship between the Son and the Father, the Spirit and the Father, and the Son and the Spirit, and thus in immediate relations all around.⁶⁸¹

The Notions of the Persons

The preceding discussion of order within the Trinity segues naturally into a treatment of the Summa's description—within the treatise on divine names—of the notions of origin in God. Within this section, the Summist investigates the nature of these notions and their inter-relationship with the properties and relations in God. He writes as follows: according to the common understanding of the definition, properties are those qualities that befit only one

nullo, et medium, quod de alio et aliud de ipso. Cum ergo ordo in divinis personis sit exemplar huiusmodi ordinis, relinquitur quod est ibi una persona de qua alia et ipsa de nulla, et una quae de alia et nulla de ipsa, et media quae de alia et de ipsa alia. Sed persona de qua alia et ipsa de nulla, est persona Patris; persona vero quae de alia et nulla de ipsa, est persona Spiritus Sancti; persona autem media est persona Filii; ergo ipsa est a persona Patris et ab ipsa persona Spiritus Sancti, quae solum de alia; non ergo possibile est quod sint duae procedentes immediate ab illa prima persona, quae non habet originem, ita quod neutra ab alia.

⁶⁸¹ Vol. 1, Pars 1, Inq 2, Tract 1, Qu 4, C6, Solutio (n. 325), 478.

person, and distinguish it from others. However, a relation is that which refers something to another, while a notion is that which makes a thing known. As regards the Trinity, this knowability is two-fold.

By one mode, God is known in unity and indistinction, and in this way, the notion of God is the same as his essence, inasmuch as it is knowable. By another mode, God is known in the persons of the Trinity or in distinction, and this is the understanding of ‘notion’ that is under consideration in the present context. According to this therefore, the Summist affirms, a property in God is that which distinguishes one person from another person; a relation in the Trinity is the habit of the persons to one another. And a notion is through itself both firstly and properly the reason of the distinctions amongst the persons, as through it, one person is distinguished from another, and one person is referred to another. As therefore the properties make the persons differ and the relations refer them to one another, so a notion makes known the distinct being of the persons in relation.⁶⁸²

From this point, the Summist inquires more specifically into the number of the notions.⁶⁸³ Claiming John of Damascus as his authority, he argues that in the three persons,

⁶⁸² Vol 1, P2, In2, Tr3, S1, Q1, M2, Respondeo (n. 464), 665. *Secundum rationem intelligentiae communem sciendum est quod proprietas dicitur quod uni soli convenit, hunc ab illo distinguens...relatio vero est hunc ad illum referens...notio vero dicitur rem notam faciens...Deus est et vera Trinitas, qua cognoscibilis est, et haec est notio increata, et dicitur duobus modis: uno modo dicitur dispositio formae, qua cognoscitur in unitate et indistinctione, et hoc modo notio est ipsa essentia in quantum noscibilis est; alio modo dicitur dispositio, qua cognoscitur in personarum Trinitate sive in distinctione, et hoc modo accipitur in praesenti inquisitione notio. Secundum hoc ergo dicendum, secundum rationem intelligentiae propriam in divinis, quia proprietas est quo est distinctio personae a persona, relatio vero in Trinitate est habitudo personarum in invicem...notio vero est per se et prima et propria ratio distinctionis et relationis, ut per quod distinguitur persona a persona vel per quod refertur persona ad personam.*

⁶⁸³ Vol 1, P2, In2, Tr3, S1, Q1, M3, C1, Respondeo (n. 465), 667.

five notions can be identified, because the ingenerateness of the Father implies innascibility, active generation implies paternity, and passive generation, filiation. Similarly, in procession is implied a relation to a first principle, and thus spiration: for everything that proceeds, proceeds from something. Thus, he concludes that there are five notions: innascibility or unbegotten/ungenerateness; paternity, filiation, procession, and spiration. There are however four relations: two by which the Father and Son are referred to the Spirit and the converse; and two by which the Father and the Son are referred to one another. In other words, there is one relation of the Father to the Son; one of the Son to the Father; one common relation of the Father and Son to the Spirit and one of the Spirit to the Father and Son. Thus, the Father and the Son are referred to the Spirit by one relation, not two, which designates the highest concord of those two persons.⁶⁸⁴

Finally, the Summist inquires into the number of personal properties in God. He reiterates that there are five notions, four relations, and three properties, for personal properties are those which only befit one person and which distinguish it from the others. From this it is clear that the personal properties are three and are equal in number to the persons themselves. As noted already, there are four relations. For there is a relation of the Father to the Son and of the Son to the Father; likewise, there is a common relation of the Father and Son to the Spirit, and conversely of the Spirit to the Father and Son. Therefore there are only four relations in total. Yet beyond these four, five notions can be found; for the habit of the Father to the Son further implies that he himself does not derive from another principle—that he is innascible. Otherwise there would be an infinite regress of persons. Indeed, the number of the notions in the divine persons can be proved by invoking the order of origins amongst the persons.

⁶⁸⁴ Vol 1, P2, In2, Tr3, S1, Q1, M3, C2, Respondeo (n. 466), 667.

In this regard, the Summist states that everything that is, is either from another or not from another: this the first way of distinguishing one being from another, and it is the way in which the persons are distinguished in God. Likewise ‘to be from another’ (*esse ab alio*) either is through generation or through spiration. Thus we have three properties, namely, not to be from another (*esse non ab alio*), or to be innascible or ingenerate, as in the case of paternity, and through this, to be from another (*esse ab alio*), through generation and thus through filiation, and finally, to be from another through spiration (*esse ab alio per spirationem*), which like generation is a form of procession.⁶⁸⁵

Conclusion

If the analysis above is any indication, the early Franciscan Summists offer a straightforward if rather more systematic account of Richard of St Victor’s doctrine of the Trinity. Bonaventure would of course develop this further, particularly with regard to the notion found in the Summa according to which the Son is the ‘center’ of the Trinity and indeed all things.⁶⁸⁶ Nevertheless, the Summa’s account is of fundamental significance for the way that it initially commandeers Richard’s account for Franciscan purposes. As a result of this initial appropriation, the Victorine theory would continue and still continues to feature in the Franciscan intellectual tradition to this day.

This begs the question why early Franciscans decided to adopt Richard’s model of the Trinity in the first place. As I have already noted, one part of the Summists’ project was evidently to provide an up-to-date systematic theology. Since Richard had developed the

⁶⁸⁵ Vol 1, P2, In2, Tr3, S1, Q1, M3, C3, Respondeo (n. 467), 668.

⁶⁸⁶ Zachary Hayes, *The Hidden Centre: Spirituality and Speculative Christology in St Bonaventure* (St Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute Press, 1981).

most innovative and extensive account of the Trinity of recent years, the Franciscan fathers might have decided to foreground his work, even more so than Augustine's, in an attempt to locate themselves at the cutting edge of contemporary research.

Yet their motivation for appropriating Richard must have involved more than that, otherwise his doctrine of the Trinity would not have become such a defining feature of the Franciscan intellectual tradition. As in the case of other doctrines, there were surely reasons to do with the vision and example of Francis that inspired them to incorporate the Victorine's thought. As Maria Calisi has shown, the Victorine account of the Father's totally self-diffusive love served very effectively to convey Francis' vision of what God is like and how human beings made in his image should seek to live, namely, in a completely self-sacrificial and self-impoverishing manner.⁶⁸⁷

As the *Summa* construes it, moreover, the role of the Spirit in the Godhead bespeaks the totally passive or receptive position of creation and indeed the human race must assume with reference to God: it stresses as Francis did that all beings are entirely dependent upon God's sustaining, gratuitous love. Furthermore, the mediating role of the Son, who stands in the middle between the Father and the Son, plays well into a wider vision in which he stands at the centre of creation, as we will see in the chapter on the Incarnation. Although the early Franciscans never state explicitly—and we can on some level only speculate—as to why they showed preference for the Victorine account, the reasons mentioned above at least serve to suggest that there was a rationale for this choice which pertained specifically to ethos of the Franciscan order.

⁶⁸⁷ Maria Calisi, *Trinitarian Perspectives in the Franciscan Theological Tradition*.

9. CHRISTOLOGY

In the late thirteenth century, John Duns Scotus championed an account of the hypostatic union, or the union of Christ's human and divine natures, which has been closely associated with his legacy ever since. This account has often been regarded as the first major instance of an attempt to relate the human to the divine nature of Christ as a substance to an accident. Many years before Scotus, however, the Halensian Summists had already developed a version of this account, which can also be found albeit in a more elementary form in earlier contemporary sources. The purpose of this chapter is to outline the contours of the Summa's substance-accident model and the unique context in which it was written.

As we have seen, this was a context in which the work of Avicenna was highly influential, not least when it came to providing the metaphysical underpinnings for the Franciscan account of the hypostatic union. The subsequent generation was dominated principally by Aristotle, whose works were enthusiastically although not uncritically appropriated by Bonaventure's Dominican counterpart, Thomas Aquinas. In keeping with his Aristotelian metaphysical assumptions, Aquinas articulated a theory of the hypostatic union which conceived the relation of the divine and human natures like that of a part to a whole. Thus commenced what quickly became a vociferous debate in the time of Scotus over which theory could be more considered doctrinally sound.⁶⁸⁸

⁶⁸⁸ For instance, Aaron Riches makes a polemical case for Aquinas and against Scotus on the hypostatic union in his, *Ecce Homo: On the Divine Unity of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016); cf. 'Christology and the Scotist Rupture,' *Theological Research* 1 (2013), 31-63. Similarly, Richard Cross calls the legitimacy of Aquinas' account into question while supporting that of Scotus in his *Metaphysics of the Incarnation: Thomas Aquinas to Duns Scotus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

These debates continue today, with many scholars regarding the Franciscan and Dominican accounts as mutually exclusive alternatives in terms of their claims to orthodoxy. Within this polemical context, the *Summa Halensis* has an important role to play, insofar as it highlights the metaphysical sources of the Franciscan theory, which were quickly eclipsed and to some extent forgotten in the next generation. By calling attention to those sources, I seek to provide grounds for the contention that each theory is sound when taken on its own terms. The reason for studying the *Summa Halensis* on this issue is not simply to draw attention to the first attempt fully to elaborate the theory for which Scotus became famous, consequently. The goal is to recover in the process what seems like the best available resource for tempering longstanding debates between Scotists and Thomists over the metaphysics of the Incarnation.

The Context of Early Franciscan Christology: Antecedents

At the outset of this inquiry, it is important to offer an analysis, however brief, of twelfth and early thirteenth-century developments in Christology that form the background for the *Summa*'s discussion. Prior to this time period, the study of Christ and his two natures had very little opportunity to advance in the West.⁶⁸⁹ Although the Western Middle Ages did witness the occasional production of—occasionally quite inspired—treatises on the Incarnation, such as Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo*, the doctrinal reflections that can be found in such writings are relatively broad and even inchoate. They provide little in the way of detail about the mode of union between Christ's human and divine natures. In contrast, the East had

⁶⁸⁹ See the important work by Lauge Olaf Nielsen, *Theology and Philosophy in the Twelfth Century: A Study of Gilbert Porreta's Thinking and the Theological Expositions of the Doctrine of the Incarnation During the Period 1130-1180* (Leiden: Brill, 1982).

formulated a sophisticated conceptual framework and vocabulary for dealing with Christological questions—and identifying Christological heresies—during the patristic period. By the time and indeed in the work of John of Damascus (674/5-749), therefore, it had more or less settled on a model for relating the two natures of Christ.

With the exception of insights gleaned from Boethius (476-c. 524), the West was unable to benefit from Eastern formulations because of the cultural, linguistic and religious divide between East and West that had grown since the fifth century. When the discipline of theology—which was not so named at least until the time of Peter Abelard (1079-1145)—began to move away in the twelfth century from a methodology which prioritized the interpretation of Scripture and the composition of devotional texts, in favour of one which focused on the systematic treatment of theological topics, consequently, the West was caught quite unprepared to reckon with Christological questions.

As Marcia Colish demonstrates in her magisterial volumes on *Peter Lombard*, scholars working in the first half or so of the twelfth century, including Gilbert of Poitiers (d. 1155), Peter Abelard, Hugh of St Victor (d. 1160), and Robert of Melun (1100-67), lacked a common understanding of the meaning of pertinent terms like ‘substance’, ‘nature’, and ‘person’.⁶⁹⁰ While their theories of the hypostatic union consequently suffered from lack of clarity, some of their contemporaries perhaps unwittingly pandered to heresies, in particular, the tendency to divinize Christ, that had been long since condemned in the East.⁶⁹¹

In an effort to bring order to the situation, Peter Lombard laid out the three main opinions on the hypostatic union that were evidently circulating at the time he wrote his celebrated book of Sentences, which date to around 1150. His efforts in this regard were advanced significantly by a thorough study of John of Damascus, whose recently translated

⁶⁹⁰ Marcia Colish, *Peter Lombard*, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 399.

⁶⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 398.

De Fide Orthodoxa raised his awareness of the Christological heresies of which the West had hitherto been largely ignorant.⁶⁹² According to the standard reading of the Sentences, the Lombard presents all three opinions as potentially orthodox ways of construing the hypostatic union.

Additionally, ‘it has been general practice to assume that the Lombard’s own opinion is only of peripheral importance to an understanding of his text and his presentation of the three theories.’⁶⁹³ As L.O. Nielsen shows in his important study of the doctrine of the Incarnation in the twelfth century, however, Lombard and his school came down clearly on the side of the third theory, which will be elaborated below.⁶⁹⁴ Whatever Lombard’s own opinion, however, his outline of the three opinions and the drawbacks potentially associated with each one became the main point of reference for all further Christological discussions of the period. This is certainly the case in the *Summa Halensis*, which is not exceptional amongst its contemporaries in reprising the opinions and casting one in a more favourable light than others.⁶⁹⁵

Because of their centrality to the ‘Christological controversies’ of the late medieval West, I will state the opinions as Lombard presents them below. For ease of comparison, I will also provide the corresponding formulation of the *Summa Halensis*.⁶⁹⁶ The first opinion has become known as the *assumptus homo* theory:

⁶⁹² Ibid., 399-400; cf. 418 on Lombard’s use of John of Damascus.

⁶⁹³ L.O. Nielsen, *Theology and Philosophy in the Twelfth Century*, 244.

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid., 359.

⁶⁹⁵ Walter Principe, *William of Auxerre’s Theology of the Hypostatic Union* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1963), 64: ‘by the time Auxerre wrote his *Summa Aurea* the presentation of the teachings of the three opinions had become schematized in ways that often failed to reproduce the opinions as they were originally stated about the middle of the twelfth century.’

⁶⁹⁶ *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica* (Florence: Quaracchi 1924)

<i>Lombard's Sentences</i>	<i>Summa Halensis</i>
<p>Some people say that in the very Incarnation of the Word, a certain man was constituted from a rational soul and human flesh, from which two every true man is constituted. And that man began to be God—not, however, the nature of God, but rather the person of the Word—and God began to be that man. Indeed, they concede that that man was assumed by the Word and united to the Word, and nevertheless was the Word...Not however by the movement of one nature into another, but with the quality of both natures being preserved, it happened that God was that substance and that substance was God. Hence, truly it is said that God became man and man became God, and the Son of God became son of man and vice versa. And although they say that that man subsists from a rational soul and human flesh, they do not, however, confess that he is composed of two natures, divine and human; nor that the parts</p>	<p>The first opinion says, first, that in the Incarnation of the Word of God there is a certain man, subsisting in the rational soul and a human body, who is prior to the union in nature, not in time. Second, it says that that man became God and God became that man, so that God was made as man and conversely that man was made God. Third, it says that in Christ there are two complete substances, each possessing its own nature (<i>quid</i>), unified in the person. Fourth, it says that the one assuming is [identical to] the one assumed, i.e. the Son of God is man or the son of man. Nevertheless, the supposit of the Son of Man is not assumed by the Son of God nor the converse. Fifth, and lastly, that man is not divine and human in nature but only human.⁶⁹⁸</p>

Vol. 3, Tr1, Q4, T1, D3, M4, C1 (n. 46), 68-70. See also Walter Principe's *Alexander of Hales' Theology of the Hypostatic Union* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1967), 97.

⁶⁹⁸ Vol 4, Tr1, Q4, T1, M4, C1, I (n. 46), 69: *Primo dicit quod in incarnatione Verbi divini constitutus est quidam homo ex anima rationali et humana carne subsistens, prius unione natura non tempore. Secundo dicit quod ille homo coepit esse Deus et Deus coepit esse ille homo, ita ut Deus factus sit homo et e converso ille homo factus sit Deus. Tertio, quia in Christo sunt duae substantiae completae, quarum utraque facit quid in unitate personae. Quarto dicit quod assumens est assumptum, id est Filius Dei est homo sive filius hominis; tamen supposito filio hominis non supponitur Filius Dei nec e converso. Quinto et ultimo dicit quod ille homo non est divinae et humanae naturae, sed tantum humanae.*

of that one are two natures, but only soul and flesh. ⁶⁹⁷	
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While the *homo assumptus* theory's most famous twelfth-century proponent was Hugh of St Victor, it had been upheld previously by various Eastern and Western Fathers.⁶⁹⁹ According to this opinion, the Word assumed a human nature and became a particular man who was not already in existence, per adoptionism, or the idea that Christ was a normal man who was somehow co-opted as the messenger of God, but who became fully united to the Word at the moment of his conception. As Walter Principe has observed in his four-volume

⁶⁹⁷ Translation of Peter Lombard, *Sent.*, Book 3, dist. 6, chap 2, no. 1 (2:50) taken from Franklin T. Harkins, 'Filiae Magistri: Peter Lombard's Sentences and Medieval Theological Education On the Ground,' in *Medieval Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard*, vol. 3, ed. Philip W. Rosemann (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 65: *Alii enim dicunt in ipsa Verbi incarnatione hominem quondam ex anima rationali et humana carne constitutum: ex quibus duobus omnis verus homo constituitur. Et ille homo coepit esse Deus, non quidem natura Dei, sed persona Verbi; et Deus coepit esse homo ille. Concedunt etiam hominem illum assumptum a Verbo et unitum Verbo, et tamen esse Verbum...Non tamen de migratione naturae in naturam, sed utriusque naturae servata proprietate, factum est ut Deus esset illa substantia, et illa substantia esset Deus. Unde vere dicitur Deus factus homo et homo factus Deus, et Deus esse homo et homo Deus, et Filius Dei filius hominis et e converso. Cumque dicant illum hominem ex anima rationali et humana carne subsistere, non tamen fatentur ex duabus naturis esse compositum, divina scilicet et humana; nec illius partes esse duas naturas, sed animam tantum et carnem.*

⁶⁹⁹ Marcia Colish, *Peter Lombard*, 400: this opinion 'supported the idea that the Word had assumed a human nature, that he had become man a man fully united with the Word from the first moment of his conception, and not a man already in existence (i.e. adoptionism). Later, in order to counter the threat of Nestorianism, proponents of this doctrine emphasized the intimacy of the union between the two natures in the incarnate Christ and their inseparability once united in a single person.'

study of the hypostatic union in the early thirteenth-century, this *assumptus homo* theory carried within itself the seeds of a twofold and in some ways opposed development.⁷⁰⁰

On the one hand, its earliest advocates emphasized the identity of the man assumed with the Word who assumed him to such an extent as to invest Christ with qualities like omniscience and omnipotence, not insofar as he was God but precisely inasmuch as he was man. Although they tried to stress the distinctness of the two natures, therefore, they nevertheless gave the impression of having divinized Christ's human nature. On the other hand, the *homo assumptus* theory contended that the Word assumed a certain individual man, as opposed to human nature in general.

As such, it suggested that there are two subjects or supposits in Christ, one which is man and one which is God. 'Such stress on the duality of Christ coupled with clear statements that there are not two persons in Christ led opponents of the first opinion to describe its supporters as semi-Nestorians.'⁷⁰¹ Even though their account differed from that of true Nestorians who went so far as to assign distinct personhood to the distinct subjects, Thomas Aquinas by the 1250s did not hesitate to pronounce it heretical owing to the way it combined two distinct and seemingly tenuously united hypostases in a new *tertium quid*.

The second, so-called 'subsistence theory', reads as follows:

<i>Lombard's Sentences</i>	<i>Summa Halensis</i>
There are others, however, who partially agree with these [proponents of the first opinion] but say that that man [Jesus Christ] consists not only of a rational soul and flesh, but of a human and divine nature, that is, of three substances: divinity, flesh,	The second opinion says first that that man is not only constituted out of these two, namely, the rational soul and human body, but from three substances united in the person, namely, the deity, along with the soul and body, although the deity is

⁷⁰⁰ Walter Principe, *William of Auxerre*, 65.

⁷⁰¹ Ibid., 66; cf. Marcia Colish, *Peter Lombard*, 425.

<p>and soul. They confess that this Christ is only one person, indeed merely simple before the Incarnation, but in the Incarnation made composite from divinity and humanity. He is not, therefore, another person than he was previously, but whereas previously he was the person of God only, in the Incarnation, he also became the person of man: not so that there were two persons, but so that one and the same was the person of God and man. Therefore, the person who was previously simple and existed in only one nature [now] subsists in two natures.⁷⁰²</p>	<p>not said to be there as a part. The person of the Word was simple before the incarnation, but in the incarnation he was made composite by reason of the nature assumed. The divine person assumed not this or that man but human nature or humanity, which is against the first opinion which says that Christ was only one and not two. That man did not become God but the converse, because that supposit of man did not exist before he became God, neither temporally or naturally, which is opposite to the first opinion.⁷⁰³</p>
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⁷⁰² Translation of Lombard's *Sent.* Book III, dist 6, chap 3, no. 1 (2:52-3) taken from Franklin T. Harkins, 'Filiae Magistri,' 66: *Sunt autem et alii, qui istis in parte consentiunt, sed dicunt hominem illum non ex anima rationali et carne tantum, sed ex humana et divina natura, id est ex tribus substantiis divinitate, carne et anima, constare; hunc Christum fatentur, et unam personam tantum esse, ante incarnationem vero solummodo simplicem, sed in incarnatione factam compositam ex divinitate et humanitate. Nec est ideo alia persona quam prius, sed cum prius esset Dei tantum persona, in incarnatione facta est etiam hominis persona: non ut duae essent personae, sed ut una et eadem esset persona Dei et hominis. Persona ergo quae prius erat simplex et in una tantum natura existens, in duabus et ex duabus subsistit naturis.*

⁷⁰³ Vol 3, Tr1, Q4, T1, M4, C1, I (n. 46), 69: *Secunda opinio dicit primo quod ille homo non solum constitutus est ex iis duobus, scilicet ex anima rationali et humana carne, sed ex tribus substantiis in unitate personae, scilicet ex deitate et anima et carne, nec tamen dicitur ibi deitas sicut pars. Secundo dicit personam Verbi fuisse simplicem ante incarnationem, sed in incarnatione dicit eam esse factam compositam ratione assumptae naturae. Tertio dicit quod divina persona assumpsit quid, non hominem hunc vel illum, sed naturam hominis vel humanam, quod est contra primam opinionem, et ex hoc dicit Christum esse tantum unum et non duo. Quarto dicit quod non coepit ille homo esse Deus, sed e converso, quia non fuit illud suppositum hominis antequam ipsum esset Deus, nec tempore nec natura: quod est oppositum primae opinionis.*

By contrast to the first opinion, the second stresses that the divine and human natures do not merge in Christ to form a new semi-divine, semi-human *tertium quid*. Rather, the Word, who was eternally a simple person, became a composite person at the Incarnation, possessing his divine as well as a human nature, entailing a body and a soul.⁷⁰⁴ The Word's assumption of human nature—rather than a particular man—is quite important, insofar as it safeguards the subsistence theory from the suggestion that there are two persons in Christ. On this account, consequently, God became man, or the composite person.⁷⁰⁵ However, that person did not become God, because the person in question was always God. Thus, the Incarnation did not bring about a change in the Word—who eternally is the person that he is—but rather in the human nature that now became joined to the Word.

The third, *habitus*, theory can be stated as follows:

<i>Lombard's Sentences</i>	<i>Summa Halensis</i>
There are also others who deny not only [the existence of] a person composed of natures in the Incarnation of the Word, but even that some man or some substance was there composed or made from soul and flesh. Rather, they say that these two things, namely, soul and flesh, were united to the person or the nature of the Word not so that some	The third opinion states that the soul and flesh are united to the person of the Word or with the divine nature in the Word, such that those two or three do not result in some one substance or person, but rather the Word of God clothed in those two as in a garment...Thus, the union was not substantial but [like that of] an accident with the subject. ⁷⁰⁷

⁷⁰⁴ Marcia Colish, *Peter Lombard*, 401.

⁷⁰⁵ For more on this concept, see Corey L. Barnes, 'Christological Composition in Thirteenth-Century Debates,' *The Thomist* 75 (2011), 173-206.

⁷⁰⁷ Vol 4, Tr1, Q4, T1, M4, C1, I (n. 46), 69: *Tertia opinio dicit quod illa duo, videlicet anima et caro, ita sunt unita personae Verbi vel naturae divinae in Verbo, ut ex illis duobus vel tribus non sit aliqua una substantia vel persona, sed magis Verbum Dei vestitum est illis duobus velut quodam indumento. Unde dicit quod Christus secundum quod homo non est quid nec Verbum incepit esse quid in incarnatione, sed qualiter ens vel quodam*

substance or person was made or composed from these two or from these three things, but so that the Word of God might be clothed with these two as with a garment in order that he might suitably appear in the eyes of mortals. ⁷⁰⁶	
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The source to which medieval thinkers generally trace this theory is Question 73 of Augustine's Eighty-Three Different Questions which speaks of 'the humanity of the incarnate Christ as a habit or garment which he puts on.'⁷⁰⁸ By thus affirming that the *habitus*, or human nature, is accidental to the person of the Word, proponents of the *habitus* view made themselves susceptible to two main charges, namely, that the union of the divine and human natures is tenuous at best, and that Christ as man is not 'something' (*aliquid*) in his own right. Because it downplayed or even obliterated the humanity of Christ in this way, opponents contended, the *habitus* theory gave way to what came to be known as 'Christological nihilism'.

modo se habens. Et ex consequenti videtur dicere quod illa unio non fuerit substantialis, sed quasi accidentis cum subiecto.

⁷⁰⁶ Translation of Lombard *Sent.* Book III, dist. 6, chap 4, no 1 (2:55) (Lombard, *Sent.* 3.6.4, nn. 1, 3 (ii. 55) taken from Franklin T. Harkins, 'Filiae Magistri,' 67: *Sunt etiam et alii, qui in incarnatione Verbi non solum personam ex naturis compositam negant, verum etiam hominem aliquem, sive etiam aliquam substantiam, ibi ex anima et carne compositam vel factam diffitentur; sed sic illa duo, scilicet animam et carnem, Verbi personae vel naturae unita esse aiunt, ut non ex illis duobus vel ex his tribus aliqua substantia vel persona fieret sive componeretur, sed illis duobus velut indumento Verbum Dei vestiretur ut mortalium oculis congruenter appareret.*

⁷⁰⁸ Marcia Colish, *Peter Lombard*, 402; cf. 417-38 on Lombard's own Christology.

In an attempt to suppress such nihilism, Pope Alexander III officially condemned the *habitus* theory in 1177.⁷⁰⁹ After this time, the third opinion was universally regarded as heretical, and the first opinion became subject to the growing suspicion that it, too, implied either nihilism or Nestorianism. While those who held the second opinion, at least around the middle of the twelfth century, also held that Christ as man is not *aliquid*, in order to avoid suggesting that he was a separate person, they evaded implication in the condemnation, because their teaching only applied to questions about the mode of union, rather than the constitution of the two natures.⁷¹⁰ Their argument, in other words, was not that the humanity of Christ was insubstantial in its own right but only that it was accidental to the Word insofar as he is God.⁷¹¹

In practice, consequently, the second opinion won the day. After 1177, it was the favoured opinion of scholars as wide-ranging as Simon of Tournai (1130-1201), Peter Cantor (d. 1197), Stephen Langton (1150-1228), and Godfrey of Poitiers.⁷¹² While the first opinion was still debated in the university context until at least the 1230s—and even in the *Summa Halensis*—it seems to have garnered very little active support from the late twelfth century.⁷¹³ Be that as it may, there was still considerable work to do on the part of the post-1177 generation to show more clearly how Christ is *aliquid*, while at the same time demonstrating his unity-in-duality. Remarkably, this was a task scholars accomplished not by foreswearing

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid., 329.

⁷¹⁰ Walter Principe, *William of Auxerre*, 67.

⁷¹¹ Ibid., 74.

⁷¹² Ibid., 68.

⁷¹³ Walter Principe, *Hugh of St Cher's Theology of the Hypostatic Union* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1970), 59. By the 1230s, virtually all scholars accepted the second opinion, rejected the third, and discussed the first only as a purely academic exercise; cf. *William of Auxerre*, 202.

all talk of accidentals but rather by giving a much more robust account of the sense in which the human nature of Christ can be understood as an accident in relation to the subject or substance of the Word.

Although the likes of Langton and Poitiers had espoused the burgeoning substance-accident account of the union between Christ's divine and human natures in rather 'loosely structured, meandering questions',⁷¹⁴ Principe acknowledges that it was the *Summa Aurea* of William of Auxerre, composed between 1215-25, which formulated this account in a more precise manner. For this very reason, that text was among the most influential, along with the writings of Alexander of Hales, for contemporaries and immediate successors, who largely simply reiterated the arguments of William and Alexander.

Nevertheless, Principe notes, the work of both these two scholars was of limited use in that William's account treated only a restricted and in some ways idiosyncratic set of questions about the hypostatic union, while Alexander of Hales' more profound thoughts on the subject were 'either fragmentary and lacking in clarity because of brevity (especially the *Glossa*; 1222-9) or deal with only certain aspects of the mystery (especially the *quaestiones*; 1220-36).'⁷¹⁵ Despite the significant advances made by William and Alexander, consequently,

⁷¹⁴ Walter Principe, *William of Auxerre*, 140; cf. 98: William was not the originator of the substance-accident model; Langton and Godfrey of Poitiers also espouse it. However, William takes it to a new level and influences later thinkers with his idea that Christ's human nature 'degenerates into an accident' of the Word.

⁷¹⁵ Walter Principe, *Hugh of St Cher*, 21: William's '*Summa Aurea* treats only a limited number of topics concerning the hypostatic union. Alexander of Hales' *Glossa* and *Quaestiones* though more profound are either fragmentary and lacking in clarity because of brevity (especially the *Glossa*) or deal with only certain aspects of the mystery (especially the *Quaestiones*). The only other works [written between 1200-40] prior to the so-called *Summa fratris Alexandri* that treat the Hypostatic Union are either summaries of the preceeding works (Auxerre, Alexander) or individual questions such as those of Philip the Chancellor, or are so engaged in dialectics (Roland of Cremona and Godfrey of Poitiers) as to be unhelpful.'

a complete and systematic study of the hypostatic union had yet to be written. Although Principe acknowledges that the first such study can be found in the *Summa Halensis*, he declines to take this text into consideration, as does Richard Cross in his study of the metaphysics of the Incarnation between Aquinas and Scotus. Yet it is precisely this text that interests me here and that will be discussed in detail below.

Metaphysics in the Summa Halensis

At the outset of this discussion, it is relevant to re-construct as fully as possible the theory of substance and accident that underlies the *Summa*'s section on the hypostatic union. As this effort will illustrate, there is considerable evidence that the *Summa*'s theory draws significantly on the work of Avicenna. For one thing, as we have seen in chapter six, the early Franciscan doctrine of the hypostatic union presupposes a plurality of substantial forms. The first substantial form that every being possesses is that of a soul—whether vegetative, as in plants, sensitive, as in animals, or rational, as in human beings.⁷¹⁶ This form predisposes the being in question to assume a second, bodily or material form, which correlates to that of its soul. Thus, every being is a composite of two separate substances, namely, body and soul.

As such a composite, a being is not only set apart from other beings of a similar nature but also predisposed to assume forms of another sort, namely, accidental forms or properties, to do with quality, quantity, location, relation, and so on. By contrast to the body-soul composite or 'subsistent nature' in which they inhere, these accidental forms are unable to exist independently in the world. Although they increase the number of forms in any given subject, consequently, they do not proliferate or distinguish entities, as is the case with

⁷¹⁶ For more on this, see my account of Avicenna, early Franciscans, and Bonaventure, in chapters 3-4 of *Divine Illumination: The History and Future of Augustine's Theory of Knowledge* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

substantial forms.⁷¹⁷ As forms of a sort, however, they are understood nonetheless to possess ‘non-subsistent natures’ which enjoy existence or *esse* in their own right.⁷¹⁸ Ultimately, therefore, an individual is defined as a unique ‘bundle’ of forms.⁷¹⁹

When a being undergoes a change, on this account, this is a result of the coming or going of an accidental form. Since change involves a shift from non-being to being on the part of such a form, all changes are substantial changes, that is, the type of change that Aquinas following Aristotle associated only with birth and death. That said, change does not precipitate constant shifts—even crises—in identity.⁷²⁰ For the soul preserves the unity of the being throughout the many fundamental reconfigurations in the constitution of its ‘bundle’ of accidental properties that may occur across time.

A brief excursus on Aquinas’ theory of substance and accident, which has already been mentioned in chapter three, will throw the unique character of the Franciscan account into sharper relief.⁷²¹ Following Aristotle to a large extent, Aquinas upholds a ‘unicity’ theory of form. In particular, he holds that every being is defined by only one form rather than a plurality of natures or forms. While human beings for instance have a human body in addition to the rational component, or the soul, the body is not a separate substance in its own right, for the form of the ‘rational animal’ entails embodiment. Conversely, for Aquinas, rationality can only be applied or exercised in the context of embodied life.

⁷¹⁷ Vol 3, In1, Tr1, Q4, T1, C4, Ad objecta 3 (n. 56), 82: *Formae istae substantiales faciunt essentialiter differre naturas, sed non ipsum suppositum, quia ‘una illarum quasi degenerat in accidens.’*

⁷¹⁸ Richard Cross, *Metaphysics of the Incarnation*, 19, cf. 45.

⁷¹⁹ Ibid., 10.

⁷²⁰ Walter Principe, *William of Auxerre*, 39: Forms are either substantial or accidental; substantial and accidental changes occur by the corruption or *transitus* of forms.

⁷²¹ Lydia Schumacher, ‘Ontology,’ in *Rationality as Virtue* (London: Routledge, 2015), chapter 2. Richard Cross, *Metaphysics of the Incarnation*, 42: An accident actualizes a passive potency in a substance.

When a being of any kind undergoes change in this showing, the alternation represents a natural development of its single substantial form. Thus, any ‘accidents’ or properties that come to be associated with the being through the process of development merely realize an inherent potential that pre-existed in its singular nature or form. When a child grows taller or wiser, for instance, it does not gain an additional form, even if accidental, as it would by Franciscan standards. Instead, it becomes what it previously had the potential to be, and is thereby transformed into a fuller instantiation of its original form, namely, that of a rational animal.

While accidents contribute *esse* to beings, consequently, as that by which they are in a certain state, they are not here construed as independently existing forms or ‘things’ with an *esse* over and above that of the form in which they are inhere. Whereas the Franciscan account treated every accident as a form over and above that of its subject, which nevertheless did not proliferate subjects, Aquinas’ account presupposes an alternative framework in which accidents are numerically identical with their subject while contributing nonetheless to its mode of being.⁷²²

As I will demonstrate below, the more robust understanding of accidental properties as independently existing although not self-subsisting forms was not simply a by-product of the metaphysical resources that were actually available at the time in the work of Avicenna; it was perhaps still more so the means whereby late twelfth and early thirteenth-century thinkers, above all, the Summists, counteracted the tendency of the *habitus* and even the *homo assumptus* theories to reduce the humanity of Christ to something relatively insubstantial in the hypostatic union.

⁷²² Richard Cross, *Metaphysics of the Incarnation*, 41.

That is not to say that the Summists dismissed these other opinions altogether, although they admittedly affirmed Pope Alexander III's condemnation of the third opinion. In keeping with the academic custom of the day—and perhaps in an attempt to provide an 'updated' version of Lombard's comprehensive book of Sentences—they not only rehearse all three opinions as they understood them but also elucidate them on their own terms, entertaining questions commonly posed about each one.⁷²³ Nevertheless, they ultimately opt

⁷²³ Walter Principe *Alexander of Hales*, 109: Alexander shows a preference for the second opinion in Glossa III, 6, 8, and 10-13. The Summists articulated two main ways of understanding the distinction between the three opinions in Vol 3, Tr1, Q4, T1, M4, C1 (n. 46), 68-70. The second method of distinction is developed on the basis of a three-fold way of understanding being in Christ, in terms of *esse morale*, *esse naturale*, or *esse rationale*, which is a unique contribution of Alexander of Hales who finds inspiration for it in the work of Augustine *De Trinitate* XI, 25; Principe 61): 'The first opinion concerns *esse naturale*, and [holds that] because there are two natures in Christ, Christ is two; and because both are complete substances...it can be said that God became that man and that man became God. The second opinion concerns *esse morale*, for "person" is a name of dignity, but dignity pertains to moral being. Therefore, moral properties pertain to the person. So it is said [according to this opinion] that because the person is one, Christ is one; and because the natures are united in the person, God is man and the converse, because Christ is one. And because a complete substance is not united with another complete substance, that is to say, a person is not united with a person, but a nature to a nature—that is to say, human nature, comprised of a conjoined body and soul, or "this man," consisting of both the divine and human natures—it is not possible to concede that man began to be God, but the converse, nor that man is deified, but that God is "humanified." The third opinion considers *esse rationale* according to which it is said that Christ was something insofar as he was God and in a certain way he had the habit of a man, and this is because he is of human nature, which is added to the complete hypostasis or arrives after the hypostasis is complete. For, if the two natures are united in this person, one of them is added after this person already existed, but that which is added or arrives after something is already a hypostasis does not contribute to what the hypostasis is but to how it exists or is habituated, or its way of being. And therefore this opinion says that Christ is not something insofar as he is man. But this opinion was condemned by the Decree of Pope Alexander in 1177.'

very clearly for the rendition of the second opinion that had been evolving in the decades preceding.

The Metaphysics of the Incarnation in the Summa Halensis

The treatise on ‘The Act of Incarnation’ in the Summa is divided into two main parts on ‘The Assumption’ and ‘The Union’, respectively.⁷²⁴ While the former covers the act whereby the Word took on human nature, the latter reflects upon the union between the natures as accomplished. In both sections, the main concern of the Summa is apparently to use the sort of substance-accident theory described above to affirm that Christ is *aliquid*, while at the same time insisting on his unity-in-duality.

The Assumption

In the treatise on the assumption, one of the key preliminary tasks the Summists undertake involves distinguishing more precisely than previous authors between an individual human nature and a person.⁷²⁵ Obviously, the Summists could not argue that Christ as man was a person without suggesting, together with proponents of the first opinion, that there were two persons in Christ—one divine and one human—and thus a ‘split personality’, as in Nestorianism. With a view to circumnavigating this heresy, they follow William of

⁷²⁴ Walter Principe, *Alexander of Hales*, 127: Alexander discusses the mode of union in Book III, Distinctions 6-7 of his *Glossa*.

⁷²⁵ On this topic, see Norbertus de Amato OFM, *Doctrina Summa fratris Alexandri de Hales de ipsa natura a verbo assumpta: Disquisitio Historico-Systematica* (Rome: Herder, 1956).

Auxerre in carefully delineating a three-fold definition of personhood as entailing singularity, incommunicability, and dignity.⁷²⁶

On their account, a person is singular by virtue of being a unique instance of a universal, in this case, the rational soul. The instantiation of a soul occurs through its unification with a body, which establishes it as an individual substance or self-subsisting thing.⁷²⁷ Although singularity thereby confirms the distinctness of one person from another, the forms of soul and body that enact singularity are nonetheless common or communicable to all persons. While singularity makes a person *quod est* or what it is, consequently, it does not clarify *quo est*, or the unique ways in which that person manifests human nature.

Following Porphyry and perhaps Boethius, the Summa contends that this level of individuation is achieved by a collection or ‘bundle’ of properties or accidental forms which is specific to the person in question and not the same in others.⁷²⁸ These properties are incommunicable, and as noted already above, they are subject to constant flux through the

⁷²⁶ This three-fold distinction itself had a pre-history which Magdalena Bieniak describes in *The Body-Soul Problem at Paris 1200-50* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2010), chapter 1.2 on ‘The human soul and the concept of person.’ Walter Principe, *William of Auxerre*, 85: The distinction of dignity has its origins in Faustus of Riez, and possibly Boethius before him; it was invoked by Stephen Langton, Godfrey of Poitiers and others. However, William’s schematization of singularity, incommunicability, and dignity was followed almost universally by next generation of theologians.

⁷²⁷ Vol 3, Tr1, Q4, T1, D2, C4, Solutio (n. 35), 55: *Distinctio singularitatis est in anima aliqua, dum est in corpore...distinctio vero incommunicabilitatis est, quam habet singulare aliquod, ut iste asinus animal; sed hoc non habet anima existens in corpore, cum ipsa et corpus communicant in constituendo unum esse. Distinctio vero dignitatis est, qua purus aliquis homo distinguitur ab alio rationalitate individuali, quae est dignissima proprietas.*

⁷²⁸ Walter Principe, *Alexander of Hales*, 63: The doctrine of individuation by accidents or properties is basically that of Porphyry and Boethius in his *Commentarium in Porphyrium* III, PL, 110-C-116B.

coming and going of accidental forms. For this very reason, the Summists follow William in revising Porphyry's view that individuality is established primarily through an incommunicable conglomerate of accidents. In this regard, singularity takes priority as that which anchors the subject through alterations in the bundle which merely gives expression to a person's fundamental identity.⁷²⁹

Although the first two distinctions of singularity and incommunicability fully establish a person's individuality, the final distinction is the ultimate arbiter of personhood according to the Summa. For it is derived from what is most dignified or excellent in all persons, namely, their unique rational capacities. On the ground that the very Mind and Word of God is found in Christ, the Summa insists that his personhood was that of the Son of God rather than that of the man Jesus.⁷³⁰ While Jesus' personhood would have derived from his humanity if he were somehow to have lost his divinity, his human personhood could not help but be supplanted by the far superior divine personhood at the Incarnation.

That stated, the Summa is far from denying that Christ was *aliquis* or human in the fullest sense of the term. In fact, the first two aspects of its definition of personhood make it possible to affirm that he is an authentic human individual with a human soul and body and a

⁷²⁹ Walter Principe, *William of Auxerre*, 48.

⁷³⁰ Vol 3, Tr1, Q4, T1, D2, C5, Solutio (n. 35), 55: *Ad esse ergo personae requiritur haec triplex distinctio, singularitatis, incommunicabilitatis et dignitatis, quae attenditur secundum proprietatem digniorem...Prima vero, secunda et tertia est in Christo Deo homine. Et, quamvis primam et secundam possit habere ex parte humanae naturae, tamen tertiam non potest habere nisi ratione divinae personae, et ita esse personam in Christo non est ratione humanae naturae. Cum enim ratio personae sumatur ab excellentiori proprietate et digniori, dignior autem proprietas in Christo non est ex parte humanae naturae, sed ex parte divinae personae, propterea relinquitur quod non est assumptio personae. Distinctio enim personarum debet esse secundum id quod in ipsis personis invenitur nobilius. Quia ergo in homine assumpto nobilissimum est esse Filium Dei, ideo secundum hoc inest ei distinctio personalis, ut sit una persona cum Filio Dei.*

unique set of human properties that made him ‘this man’, even though his personal dignity was ultimately derived from his divinity.⁷³¹ To bolster this contention, the Summa invokes Richard of St Victor’s definition of an individual—or hypostasis—as an ‘incommunicable substance which has certain distinguishing features’.⁷³²

After citing Richard’s definition of the person as an ‘incommunicable substance of a rational nature which is distinguished through the property of dignity’, the Summa concludes that where a hypostasis is characterized by rationality and thus by dignity, it can be called a person. Thus, every person is a hypostasis, even though every hypostasis is not a person. Although a non-personal hypostasis would normally be a non-rational being, Richard’s definitions allow for the possibility of a hypostasis that so happens to be distinguished by all the properties that make someone human, while still deriving actual personhood from the Son of God.

According to the Summa, this possibility was realized in the case of Christ. As man, he was a hypostasis that could rightly be described as an individual or even as ‘someone’ (*aliquis; quis*), since such names can refer either to the distinction of singularity alone, and thus to the individual humanity of Christ, or in other human beings, to all three distinctions together and so to the person. Thus, Christ was fully human. As the Son of God, moreover, he was a hypostasis that could be called a person. Since the term ‘hypostasis’ can mean both

⁷³¹ Vol 3, Tr1, Q4, T1, D3, M4, C1, Ar4, Solutio (n. 53), 78: *Christus, secundum quod homo, non est persona, est tamen individuum. Unde, cum quaerit utrum Christus, secundum quod homo, sit quis, si hoc nomen ‘quis’ supponit generaliter substantiam singularem, hoc est dicere, si supponit individuum, dico quod est quis. Si vero supponit substantiam singularem, non alteri digniori coniunctam, sed distinctam, quod est persona, dico quod secundum quod homo, hoc modo non est quis.* Walter Principe *William of Auxerre*, 125: names like individual, *quis* and *aliquis* can refer to the distinction of singularity alone and so to the individual humanity of Christ, but they may also refer in ordinary human beings to all three distinctions together and so to the person.

⁷³² Richard of St Victor, *DT* IV.3.

‘individual’ and ‘person’, however, it encompasses both his human and divine natures in their full integrity without duplicating the persons in Christ. While Christ was the Person of the Word from eternity, consequently, he was an individual in a purely temporal sense.

In further reflections on the way Christ subsists in two natures, as one person, the language of substance and accident becomes particularly important in the Summa. That is not to say that the Summa accepts the contention of the third opinion that he failed to ‘be something’ as man—that his manhood was merely an accident or *habitus* that he assumed at the Incarnation. As we have already seen, the Summa defends the notion that the human nature of Christ is something substantial in its own right—a substantial form, as it were—just as is the case with his divinity.

At the same time, however, it accepts that the Son of God *as* Son of God is not by nature united to the human nature. On the ground that anything that comes to be associated with something else after it is already complete has the mode or nature of an accident, the Summa concludes that the human nature of Christ ‘degenerates into an accident’ when it comes to the question of what belongs to the Son of God *as God*. To quote:

The human nature is united to [the Word] as adjacent to it [as an accidental form], because man, which had not existed previously, is united to the Son of God existing from eternity, and so even though it is not an accident, it is attached to him in the mode of an accident.⁷³³

⁷³³ Vol 3, Tr1, Q4, T1, D3, M4, C1, Ar4, Ad4 (n. 53), 79: *Filius Dei, quamvis uniatur homini, personam a se habet, quia in comparatione ad humanam naturam est substantia fixa et per se, hoc est non in alio ut adiacens; humana vero natura est ei unita ut adiacens, qua homo, prius non existens, unitur Filio Dei ab aeterno existenti, et ita quoad hoc tenet modum accidentis, quamvis non sit accidens.*

Because the enumeration of forms does not number subjects, the Summa legitimately concludes that Christ is ultimately one supposit, even though he subsists in two natures.⁷³⁴ Since accidental forms have *esse* of their own on this understanding, moreover, the Summa is able to envisage the human nature as a substance or *quod* in itself, even though it is a *quo* with respect to the *quod* that is the Son of God. Further to treating this *quod-quo* distinction in Christ, the Summa discusses what it means to say ‘this is that nature’ versus ‘this is of that nature’.⁷³⁵

⁷³⁴ Vol 3, In1, Tr1, Q4, T1, C4, Ad objecta 2, 3 (n. 56), 81-2: *Quamvis in Christo sit binarius essentialis, una tamen unitatum illius binarii degenerat quasi in accidentalem, liceat modo ita loqui sicut Doctores (William of Auxerre) locuti sunt, videlicet unitas, quae est ex parte humanae naturae. Et ideo ille binarius non numerat subiecta, sed naturas, quemadmodum numerus accidentium non numerat subiecta, sed suas formas. Formae istae substantiales faciunt essentialiter differre naturas, sed non ipsum suppositum, quia una illarum quasi ‘degenerat in accidens’ (quoting Guil. Altissiod, Summa, III, tr. 1, q.3), eo quod est post adveniens.*

⁷³⁵ Vol 3, Tr1, Q4, T1, D3, M4, C1, Ar1, Solutio (n. 50), 74: *Dicendum quod refert dicere ‘hoc esse hoc’ et ‘hoc esse huius’; item, refert dicere naturam et rem naturae in omnibus citra Primum, scilicet Deum. Dicendum ergo quod quamvis plures naturae sint in Christo, non tamen praedicantur de Christo in rectitudine, hoc est dicere, ut Christus sit ipse naturae...quia ex parte divinae non differt natura et res naturae, quia persona est essentia; nec differt etiam dicere ‘hoc est hoc’ et ‘hoc est huius’, quia persona est divina essentia et persona est divinae essentiae. Sed ex parte humanae naturae differt; falsum enim est ‘Christus est humana natura’, et tamen verum est ‘Christus est humanae naturae’ vel ‘habens humanam naturam’. Quia ergo non praedicatur per essentiam natura humana de persona, scilicet de Christo, sed per causam, non dicitur Christus plura propter pluralitatem naturarum, quia ea quae dicitur in obliquitate, non numerant. Ex praedictis ergo rationibus non sequitur quod Christus sit plura, sed quod sit plurium; sicut non sequitur, ex parte hominis, quod, quamvis sit corpus et anima coniuncta, et anima est unum et corpus est unum, ergo homo est plura. According to Walter Principe, William of Auxerre, 38: what is invoked in this instance is a distinction from Hilary of Poitiers between a nature and a thing of a nature.*

In God, there is no difference between being a nature and being *of* a nature, because the three divine persons *are* the divine essence in addition to being *of* the divine essence. When it comes to treating the human nature of Christ, however, this is not the case. For it is not true to say that ‘Christ is human nature’, even though it is true to say that he is ‘of human nature’ or ‘had a human nature’. Because the human nature is not predicated essentially or substantially of the person of Christ but in terms of the fact that he is ‘of’ that nature, and things predicated in such an oblique or accidental manner are not numbered, consequently, Christ is not said to be multiple persons, even though he is made up multiple natures.

In offering this description of Christ’s human nature as an accident of the Word, the Summists admittedly became susceptible to two possible objections that were later raised by Thomas Aquinas. One objection states that by construing human nature as an accident, the Summa suggests that there is a passive potency in God to become human. In this way, allegedly, it implies that God is open to increased perfection and thereby undermines the claim that he is complete in himself. The other main objection points out that since accidents are detachable from their subjects, the account under review fails to establish the inseparability of the human and divine natures in the hypostatic union.

The Summa’s response to such objections comes in the form of an exceptionally robust doctrine of the so-called ‘grace of union’, which had become a topic for discussion amongst medieval thinkers, under the influence of Augustine and Lombard.⁷³⁶ Following Alexander of Hales, the Summa takes this doctrine much further than any prior thinker had done by clearly distinguishing this grace from the created grace found in both ordinary

⁷³⁶ Walter Principe, *William of Auxerre*, 105: Discussion concerning the grace of union discussion entered into the tradition with the question of Christ’s predestination, under influence of Augustine and Lombard; cf. Vol 3, In1, Tr3, Q3, T2, M1 (n. 99), 143-8.

humans and in the humanity of Christ. For the Summa, the grace of union is that by which the Word actually assumed human nature.

In elaborating on the nature of this grace, the Summa distinguishes between an active and a passive potential for union. Here, the Summa emphatically denies that the Word receives the accident of human nature through the sort of passive disposition through which created subjects receive accidents. Nevertheless, it affirms the active power of God—and God alone—to unite created nature to himself accidentally.

As the Summa emphasizes, this union is not brought about in any way that changes the Word's eternal existence as the second person of the Trinity, but rather in a manner that enacts a passive power in human nature to be joined to the Son of God.⁷³⁷ Thus, the Summa refutes the first objection by observing that in the exceptional case of the hypostatic union, the accident in question is assumed by God's pro-active will, that is, the grace of union.⁷³⁸ Since God's good or gracious will is immutable, the Summa further contends, he maintains the union inseparably, such that the second objection is simultaneously overturned.⁷³⁹

⁷³⁷ Vol 3, In1, Tr1, Q2, T1, D2, M1, C1, Respondeo 2 (n. 11), 27: *Omne unibile est possibile respectu unionis. Dicendum quod duplex est potentia, scilicet, activa et passiva. Si loquamur de potentia passiva, sic verum est quod natura divina nullo modo est unibilis, quia quod est unibile hoc modo, est possibile respectu maioris perfectionis; quia ergo non est possibile quod potentia Dei perficiatur ex actu incarnationis, propter hoc non est ponere secundum viam istam divinam naturam unibilem. Si autem loquamur de potentia activa, sic natura divina est unibilis humanae, quia in Deo est potentia activa, ut sibi uniat naturam humanam. Unibile ergo dicitur de natura divina secundum potentiam activam, scilicet quod possit sibi unire naturam creatam; de natura vero humana dicitur secundum potentiam passivam, eo quod possit uniri. Et in hoc etiam fuit summa ostensio et manifestatio suae potentiae. Ponatur enim quod non posset uniri active naturae humanae, hoc non diceretur esse perfectionis in Deo. Et sic concedendum est quod natura divina et humana sunt unibiles.*

⁷³⁸ On the grace of union, see Walter Principe, *Alexander of Hales*, 159, 218.

⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*, 152.

The Union

The upshot of the Summa's arguments regarding the union become clearer in the second major section in the treatise on 'The Act of Incarnation' which follows the section on the assumption or coming-to-be of the union which we have been considering so far. This second section covers the union itself, insofar as it is accomplished. At the start of this section, the Summa presents a number of different ways of understanding a union between two substances, derived from Alan of Lille, eventually narrowing in on the one that its authors regard as the most apt analogy for the hypostatic union.⁷⁴⁰

Most importantly, the text distinguishes between a union *simpliciter* and a union *secundum quid*. What is one *secundum quid* is one through apposition, as in the case of a stone set next to another stone, an apple that transfers its scent to the hand that holds it, or an article of clothing assumed by the one wearing it. On the Summa's account, no such mode of union accurately conveys the nature of the hypostatic union. This feat can only be accomplished by a mode of union *simpliciter*. Such modes can be defined in two ways, namely, insofar as something is one from multiple things, namely, through *unionem*, or in itself, that is, through *unitatem*, like the one God. What is one *simpliciter* through *unionem* can however be construed in an additional number of ways.⁷⁴¹ In the case of a union that preserves both of the natures united—which is the main type of union that concerns the Summa here—either a third is produced from these two, or not.

⁷⁴⁰ Vol 3, Tr1, Q4, T2, C1, Solutio (n. 57), 83.

⁷⁴¹ This list of ways is derived from Alan of Lille, *Theologicae Regulae* 100, PL 210, 617B-684C (PL 210, 674B). It is also quoted in Alexander's *Gloss* III, 7, 6 (A), p. 91; cf. III, 7, 19 (L), 96, though Alexander does not name Alan as his source and attributes the text to other sources. See Walter Principe, *Alexander of Hales*, 78.

In the first mode, there is the union of the soul and the body in one man composed of them: for there is no change in the nature of the soul or the body. In the second mode there is a union as we say that the sprig of a pear is united to a tree in which it is inserted, whether it is an apple or other tree. For the nature of both is preserved, namely, the pear and the apple, since neither the pear becomes an apple nor the converse, nor from those two is affected a third, that is, a tree which is neither an apple nor a pear tree. Rather, one is made of the other or is of the other, as pear from apple, because in the process of insertion the dominant [sprig] pulls the other into a unity with itself, so that it is from the other but is nevertheless not the other.

Therefore, in a union, in which one is changed, there is a union in which one pulls another toward its own nature. In a union in which both are changed, there is a union in a third thing, namely, a third nature, which is made from the two. But in the union in which there is one from another, as in a union through insertion, there is a union in one hypostasis, so that one hypostasis has two natures. Whence the pear and the apple share the same tree trunk, after they are united through insertion, and thus the same hypostasis, namely, the same tree, which has two entirely different natures, such that there is one hypostasis but not one nature. This is the mode in which [the hypostatic union] must be explained...For the union of humanity to the deity is one in which one [is grafted into the other] or is from another, and not where one becomes the other or in which a third is derived from those two...And so as the divine person is predominant in this union, it draws human nature into unity with its hypostasis.

Whence humanity is not part of the divine person, but is of it, because there is one hypostasis for both [natures], such that the integrity of both natures is preserved...Thus, it is clear that the union is in the single divine hypostasis or person.

In this lengthy passage, we find the Summa proposing two basic models for the hypostatic union: the body-soul or ‘anthropological’ model and the ‘grafting’ model.⁷⁴² The latter, which the Summa endorses as an analogy for the hypostatic union, is drawn from the way a branch from a pear tree is joined to the hypostasis of an apple tree, such that they form one hypostasis in which each is ‘of the other’, while maintaining the integrity of its own nature. In this analogy, we hear echoes of the ‘this is this’ versus ‘this is of this’ distinction mentioned above. By virtue of drawing the pear-tree branch into its own hypostasis, the Summa elaborates, the pear tree begins to draw its being from the apple tree’s hypostasis.⁷⁴³ This is the sense in which it is said to be ‘of the being’ (*de esse*) of the apple tree. By the same token, the union in one hypostasis is said to render the apple tree ‘of the pear’, precisely because the pear has its being from this tree.

⁷⁴² According to Richard Cross, *Metaphysics of the Incarnation*, 60-1, the grafting model is an analogy for the part-whole model such as was endorsed by Thomas Aquinas. But here it emerges clearly as attached to the substance-accident model; cf. Anselm *Cur Deus Homo* II.7 in support of the anthropological model.

⁷⁴³ Vol 3, In1, Tr1, Q4, T2, C7, Ar2, Solutio (n. 65), 94: *In Christo est unio divinae et humanae naturae, quae est quasi unio per insertionem. Sed in unione per insertionem unum non est alterum nec in altero, sed unum fit de hypostasi alterius, sicut quando pirum inseritur pomo, fit una hypostasis ex duabus naturis, scilicet una arbor, quia unum trahit alterum ad suam hypostasim, et ita unum fit de altero quantum ad esse suae hypostasis; unde pirum est de esse hypostasis vel arboris, cui unitur, et similiter pomum, et propter hoc, cum dicitur ‘ista arbor est pirum’, hic praedicatur ‘esse de’, quia pirum est de esse illius arboris. Similiter cum dicitur ‘Christus est homo’, quia non solum est sensus ‘Christus est ens in humana natura’, immo etiam humana natura est de Christo. Ita ergo est Verbum insitum, quod trahit humanam naturam ad esse suae hypostasis et quod est de sua hypostasi, sicut pirum de hypostasi pomi et tamen natura piri non est natura pomi. Similiter nec divina natura est humana; nec una natura fit de alia, sed facit haec unio unam naturam esse de hypostasi alterius et non unam esse aliam. Et ita non praedicatur ibi habitus solum, nec ‘esse in’ solum, sed ‘esse de’. Et sic facit quod homo est de esse personae Verbi sive ‘quid’ suae hypostasis, et non quod sit ipsum recte, immo praedicatur ibi ‘esse de’ et in rectitudine ‘Filius Dei est homo’ sicut et hic cum dicitur ‘haec arbor est pirum’.*

In a similar way, the Summa argues, the Word draws human nature into its hypostasis so that neither the human nor the divine nature becomes the other by nature, but the man Jesus nevertheless draws his being from the hypostasis of the Word, to which he is joined. As an apple tree is said to be ‘of the pear’ consequently, the Word is rightly said to be ‘of human nature’ and to have this nature not merely as a *habitus* but as ‘something’ that is joined to it as one. Although the union so construed might seem at face value to bring about a change in God, who now has a mode of being, namely human being, which he did not have previously, the Summa denies any change in God at the Incarnation. In support of this contention, it distinguishes between:

a type of union in which the ones united are both changed, as when water is united with wine, or in which only one is changed, as when the light of the sun is united with air. [In the latter case], the light is not changed nor does it receive any disposition that it did not have previously, even though now it is illuminating, which it did not do previously. For its illumination does not posit a new disposition in the light but in the recipient, because now there is illumination where there was none previously. In this way, [the Summa concludes], the union of the Word to flesh in no way is said to cause a change in the Word but only in that humanity, which received a ray of the divine where previously it received none, and in this way, there is no change in the eternal light.⁷⁴⁴

⁷⁴⁴ Vol 4, Tr1, Q4, T2, C7, Ar1, Solutio (n. 63), 93: *Notandum quod quaedam uniuntur ita quod fit mutatio in utroque unitorum, ut aqua unitur cum vino; vel in altero tantum, sicut cum unitur lux solis ipsi aeri, lux non mutatur in illa unione nec recipit aliquam dispositionem quam non habuit prius, licet modo sit illuminans et prius non: hoc enim non ponit novam dispositionem in luce, ponit tamen in recipiente, quia modo est illuminatum et non prius. Secundum hoc dicendum quod unio Verbi ad carnem nullam facit mutationem in*

To summarize, the Son of God does not move from not-being human to being human through the union, but the one that he joins to himself, namely, human nature, moves from not-being divine to being divine, through union with the Second Person of the Trinity.⁷⁴⁵ Thus, the hypostatic union does not entail a symmetrical relationship between the human and divine but merely a one-sided relation of the one assumed to the one assuming.⁷⁴⁶ For the Summa, we have seen, the grafting analogy is emblematic and explicative of this asymmetrical relationship, which is itself like that of an accident to a subject.

According to the Summa's presentation, the main alternative to this model is the anthropological model, which was commonly invoked by many Greek patristic thinkers, including Cyril of Alexandria and Chalcedonians like Maximus the Confessor and John of Damascus, who defended it against its abuses by Monophysites like Severus of Antioch and John of Philoponus.⁷⁴⁷ While it is not clear, and not likely, that the Summists were aware of

Verbo, sed solum est mutatio in ipsa humanitate, quae modo recipit radium divinitatis et prius non, et propter hoc non est facta mutatio in luce aeterna. Cf. Vol 3, Tr1, Q4, T1, D1, C2, Responsio 3 (n. 31), 50: Assumptio enim non ponit aliquid in assumente, quo scilicet assumens aliquam innovationem accipiat, sed ponit aliquid in assumptio, quo fit innovatio in creatura assumpta.

⁷⁴⁵ Vol 3, Tr1, Q4, T2, C7, Ar1, Ad tertium 3 (n. 63), 93: *Filius Dei non transit de non-esse aliquo ad aliquod esse per istam unionem, sed aliquid quod se habet ad ipsum, sicut humana natura, transit de non-esse divino ad esse divinum per unionem cum Verbo in una persona et in unum esse personae.*

⁷⁴⁶ Cf. *SH*, Vol. 1, P1, I1, T1, Qu2, C1, Respondeo (n. 28), 47: *Quando ergo aliqua dicuntur relative de Deo, non dicuntur relatione quae ponat mutationem in ipso, sed solum in creatura* (When therefore certain things are said relative to God, they are not said by way of a relation which posits change in him but only in creatures).

⁷⁴⁷ On the use of the body-soul analogy in historical theology, see Uwe Lang, *John Philoponus and the Controversies over Chalcedon in the Sixth Century* (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 50. See also 'Chalcedonian Christology,' in Thomas Weinandy, *Does God Change: The Word's Becoming at the Incarnation* (Still River: St Bede's, 1985), 32-66.

the whole history of this model, outside the work of John of Damascus, they reject it nonetheless, on the grounds, among others, that it seemingly implies that the divine and human natures, when united, comprise a ‘third thing’.⁷⁴⁸

Here, the Summa suggests a number of reasons why it finds the body-soul analogy untenable as an explanation of the hypostatic union. One reason is that, in the case of the hypostatic union, what assumes is prior to what is assumed, and what assumes, assumes inseparably. Neither is the case in the body-soul relationship, because there is no pre-existence of the soul as there is with the Second Person of the Trinity, and because the body and the soul, as distinct substances, are intrinsically separable, as becomes obvious at the point of death. Furthermore, the Summa contends, the Word who assumes, once united to the assumed human nature, affects a certain unity between the two; however, the soul does not bring about its union with the body, because they are created at the same time. Finally the one assuming and the assumed do not comprise a certain whole and are not parts of a whole, but soul with body compose a third thing. In other words, the whole human being is a third thing composited of body and soul as parts, but the Incarnate Son is not a third thing comprised of parts: human and divine nature.

The problem with positing such a third thing, by all accounts, is that it implies a confusion or change in the two natures, once they are united in a being that is neither strictly divine nor strictly human. The fact that this seemed to be the case in the minds of the Summists may have been a function of their metaphysical assumptions, in particular, their body-soul dualism. Whereas Aquinas following Aristotle held that the soul is the form of the body, such that they comprise one substance, we have seen that the Summa treats body and

⁷⁴⁸ Vol 3, In1, Tr1, Q4, T1, C5, Responsio II (n. 36), 57.

soul as separate substances from which a third thing, the human person, is made.⁷⁴⁹ That said, Aquinas also rejects the body-soul analogy for the hypostatic union insofar as he is unable to conceive of the body and soul apart from each other, as is necessary in the case of the divine and human natures.

Interestingly, many of the Summists' contemporaries, including William of Auxerre and Hugh of St Cher, described the body and soul as 'parts' of the human nature, and the human and divine natures as 'parts' of the whole or 'composed hypostasis' that is Christ.⁷⁵⁰ In this regard, they may have followed a trend set by Peter Abelard, who employed such part-whole language in his own defence of the third opinion, which laid the groundwork for Lombard.⁷⁵¹ This tendency may have been due to an understanding of both substantial and accidental forms as 'parts' in some sense of the term.

According to the Summa, by sharp contrast, the human nature cannot be related to Christ as a part to a whole, because it would then be necessary to affirm that, prior to assuming human nature, a part of the Son of God was missing, and his perfection

⁷⁴⁹ Vol 3, In1, Tr1, Q4, T1, C3, Ar5, Problema II, Solutio (n. 55), 80: *'Totum' dicitur duobus modis. Uno modo 'totum' dicitur ex compositione partium, et hoc modo totum et pars dicuntur ad aliquid, et a quo removetur intentio partis et totius; alio modo dicitur 'totum' ex eo quod nihil est accipere extra quod debet esse intra, et hoc modo Christus dicitur totum* ('Totum' or 'a whole', can be defined in two ways. In one way 'totum' is defined in terms of a composition of parts, and in this way, the whole and parts are predicated in relation to something, from which the meaning of the parts and the whole is removed; in another mode 'totum' is that from which nothing is absent which should be present (i.e. nothing is missing). And in this way, Christ is 'totus', or a whole person, and 'totum': 'totus' as far as his person is concerned, and totum insofar as his nature goes).

⁷⁵⁰ Walter Principe, *William of Auxerre*, 136; cf. *Hugh of St Victor*, 77-8.

⁷⁵¹ L.O. Nielsen, *Philosophy and Theology in the Twelfth Century*, 363.

diminished.⁷⁵² Although Christ can be called a whole (*totum*) in the sense that nothing is missing from him, or insofar as he is ‘complete, the Summa insists that he cannot be referred to as a whole (*totus*) in the sense of being composed of parts of any quantitative sort. The only concession the Summa makes in this regard involves accepting that a part-whole model might be employed in a purely logical sense to say that human nature is part of the definition of the whole. But that concession amounted to rejecting the model as previous authors had apparently used it to capture the nature of the hypostatic union.

The Context of Early Franciscan Christology: Later Developments

While the Summa does not state why it takes a new stance against the part-whole model, we might speculate that doing so was regarded as essential to a larger effort to solidify the substance-accident model and to extrapolate the logical corollaries of its underlying assumptions. In undertaking this effort, the Summists offered a synthesis of the less developed insights of William of Auxerre and Alexander of Hales which, while indebted to such sources, entails far more than the sum of them. Contrary to the contention of Principe, consequently, it is the Summa, more than the authors Principe himself considers, that seems to form the decisive link between the chaotic Christological circumstances of the twelfth

⁷⁵² Vol 3, In1, Tr1, Q4, T1, C3, Ar5, Problema I, Solutio (n. 54), 80: *Dicendum ergo quod, proprie loquendo, non est dicendum humanam naturam esse partem Christi...quia videretur ex hoc ipso ante humanitatem esse Filius Dei diminutus vel imperfectus. Tamen, si debet reduci ad aliquam rationem partis, debet reduci ad partem definitionis, quia, si vellemus definire Christum, nos diceremus ipsum esse personam in divina et humana natura.*

century and the grand syntheses, particularly of the substance-accident model, produced from the middle of the thirteenth.⁷⁵³

With the notable exception of Principe's study, these later syntheses have been the primary focus of scholars working in the field of late medieval Christology. These scholars include Richard Cross, whose important study of the metaphysics of the Incarnation between Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus has already been mentioned. Like Principe, Cross overlooks the significance of the *Summa Halensis* as a precursor to the work of thinkers in his period, acknowledging William of Auxerre, if anyone, as the most likely forerunner of the full-fledged versions of the substance-accident model that can be found in the likes of Bonaventure and Scotus.

A significant advantage of the present study is that it offers a revised genealogy of the substance-accident model that starts from the *Summa Halensis*. As we have seen, this text codifies the substance-accident model as it had developed to that point. In highlighting this, the present chapter serves as a sort of corrective footnote to the otherwise extremely astute and valuable intellectual histories of Cross, Principe, and others. At the same time, it enables the achievement of another objective of this chapter, which is to demonstrate that the substance-accident model does not preclude the tenability of the alternative that was later formulated by Aquinas, and vice versa.

This contention may come as a surprise to some, given the highly polemical nature of the late thirteenth-century debate between proponents of the two different models, which Cross very effectively, and, I think, accurately, relates. What is particularly useful about the study of the *Summa Halensis* is that it highlights the contrast between the intellectual and historical contexts in which the two different models arose and confirms that each was the

⁷⁵³ Walter Principe, *William of Auxerre*, 10.

natural product of a particular time.⁷⁵⁴ That is not to say that either model was or is dated. Rather, it is to strengthen the case for the claim that both models were and remain tenable within their respective frames of reference.

As I have already mentioned, the substance-accident model emerged at a time when Avicenna's metaphysics was the most readily accessible for Latin thinkers. At the time, I have suggested, this metaphysics proved especially germane, insofar as its 'hypostasized' conception of accidents allowed Latin scholars to rebuff the heretical third opinion by re-defining the very terms that had led to its condemnation. With the help of this metaphysics, consequently, the West managed to construct an orthodox Christology, despite the fact that it lacked the fully developed philosophical and theological resources for this purpose that were available in the Greek East.

By the time of Aquinas, things had moved on considerably. The era of Avicenna had given way to a period of preoccupation with the works of Aristotle, which had been instigated by the integration of Averroes' commentaries on Aristotle in the 1250s and 60s. Aquinas' own commentaries on Aristotle bespeak an especial eagerness to follow the lead of Averroes in seeking to interpret Aristotle on his own terms. By his time, or at least through Aquinas' own work, moreover, the West began to exploit key texts for understanding the patristic developments in Christology, such as the writings of Cyril of Alexandria and the documents associated with the Council of Chalcedon.⁷⁵⁵

⁷⁵⁴ Michael Gorman, 'On a Thomistic Worry about Scotus' Doctrine of the *Esse* of Christ,' *Antonianum* 84 (2009), 719-33. See also idem., *Thomas Aquinas on the Metaphysics of the Hypostatic Union* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

⁷⁵⁵ In texts like *ST* 3.2.1, cf. 3.2.6, Aquinas quotes the councils of Chalcedon, Constantinople, and Ephesus as well as Cyril Alexandria among other Greek fathers.

That is not to suggest that the substance-accident model, which was seemingly developed without recourse these documents, was un-Chalcedonian. After all, its formulators had access to Boethius and John of Damascus and were clearly sensitive to the need to avoid ‘confusion, change, separation, or division’ in the natures, even if they did not observe that this was the mandate of the Chalcedonian Definition itself. Because of his superior knowledge of the Greek Fathers and conciliar documents, Aquinas evidently deemed himself justified in concluding that he had orthodoxy and church history on his side in objecting to the substance-accident model of the hypostatic union. This was something he could hardly help but do, given his adoption of the Aristotelian metaphysical assumptions we have already discussed.

Thomas Aquinas Against the Substance-Accident Model

In his account of the union in the *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas explicitly inquires whether the human nature of Christ was united to the Word accidentally. He denies emphatically that this was the case, on the grounds that accidents, at least on his understanding of them, are not ‘forms’ in their own right but merely realize a passive potency in a being to exhibit some quantity, quality, or other mode of existence. For this reason, to affirm that the human nature of Christ was united to the Word by way of an accident would be to suggest that there is an inherent potential in God to become human, thus undermining the truth that he always completely is what he is: pure act.⁷⁵⁶

By the same token, to say that it represented a form in its own right, accidental or otherwise, would be to imply the existence of two supposits in Christ and thus Nestorianism.

⁷⁵⁶ Richard Cross, *Metaphysics of the Incarnation*, 52.

Aquinas explicitly addresses the threat of Nestorianism in his reply to the initial question. For Aquinas, this heresy also entails an accidental union, because there are distinct divine and human persons on this account, which are only ‘united’ insofar as the Word ‘indwelled’ the man so that his will and works conformed to those of the Word.

According to Aquinas, some recent masters—undoubtedly the proponents of the substance-accident model—in seeking to avoid the Nestorian heresy, ironically fell into it by affirming that the human nature of Christ was united to the Word after the manner of an accident. While they avoided numbering the persons in doing so, they ended up advocating the condemned third opinion. By maintaining an accidental union, therefore, Aquinas insists that their opinion falls into the error of Nestorius. For in Aquinas’ view, there is no difference between saying that the Word of God is united to the man Christ by indwelling or by putting on man as a garment, as per the third opinion.

In light of the explanation of the substance-accident model that I have provided, this criticism of the model cannot help but seem rather over-simplified and short-sighted. In offering this critique, Aquinas clearly makes the same mistake as those proponents of the substance-accident model who eventually objected to his alternative. He interprets their account according to his own understanding of the substance-accident relation and consequently fails to recognize it as simply a different way of arguing for Lombard’s second opinion.

When we look at Aquinas’ own rendering of this opinion momentarily, it will become evident that his account is simply another means to that same end. According to Cross, this account can be described in terms of a ‘part-whole’ model of the hypostatic union. While some readers of Aquinas explain his views on this topic in other terms—preferring for

instance to speak of his doctrine of ‘mixed relations,’⁷⁵⁷ I think Cross makes a helpful contribution by bringing to the fore this particular analogy for the Incarnation—and for Aquinas, as Cross stresses, it is only an analogy, with all the limits that entails.

For the present purposes, the emphasis on this analogy is especially useful, because it highlights how Aquinas picked up on a once prominent feature of the prior tradition which had been roundly rejected by more recent proponents of the substance-accident model and revived it in an effort to offer an alternative to their view. In doing this, seemingly, Aquinas not only delivered an account of the union that was consistent with his own metaphysical perspectives but also located himself within the larger tradition of thinking on this topic that had developed to that point in the late medieval West.

Thomas Aquinas on the Part-Whole Model

There are a number of key texts in which Aquinas argues that the human nature of Christ is something analogous to a part of the body, such as a hand or a foot, including a question on whether there is only one being or *esse* in Christ, in his Sentences Commentary (1252-6);⁷⁵⁸ Quodlibetal Question 9;⁷⁵⁹ and a question on ‘the being of Christ’ in the *Summa Theologiae*.⁷⁶⁰ The reason this model is attractive to Aquinas is that concrete parts of a whole, by contrast to accidents, do not realize any latent potential in a substance or contribute to its

⁷⁵⁷ Thomas Weinandy, *Does God Change*. Michael Gorman, ‘Christ as Composite According to Aquinas,’ *Traditio* 55 (2000), 143-57. Corey Barnes, *Christ’s Two Wills in Scholastic Thought: The Christology of Aquinas in Its Historical Contexts* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2012).

⁷⁵⁸ Thomas Aquinas, *In 3 Sent.* D.6, q. 2, a.2: ‘Whether there is not only one being (*esse*) in Christ?’

⁷⁵⁹ Thomas Aquinas, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2, a. 1[2]; IX, q. 2, a. 2[3].

⁷⁶⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *ST* 3.17.2; cf. Richard Cross, *Metaphysics of the Incarnation*, 52.

esse. Instead, they share in the *esse* of the subject or substance, such that their existence depends upon that of the entity of which they are parts. Although concrete parts cannot exist apart from a substance in the way accidents theoretically can, and are not therefore ‘things’ in their own right, they nevertheless maintain an individual identity as parts of the whole.⁷⁶¹

Thus, one can imagine a foot without imagining a whole body, in a way it would be difficult to imagine ‘white’ unless it was associated with something white. Conversely, one could imagine a person remaining complete as such even if that person were to lose a hand.⁷⁶² While the on-going existence of the part depends upon that of the whole, consequently, this is not the case the other way around. For this reason, the part-whole model provides a useful—if imperfect—analogy for the way the human nature derives its existence from the Word. Since the Word on this account does not cease to be itself independently of the human nature of Christ, which cannot in turn exist or have *esse* except by derivation from the Word, the divine and human natures comprise a single entity, not a *tertium quid*.

In thus denying that the human nature of Christ has *esse* or existence in its own right, later Franciscans like Scotus perceived Aquinas to be denying that the human nature was ‘something’ for the Word to assume. By failing in this way to assert the fullness of that nature in Christ, Aquinas supposedly merited accusations of Monophysitism, or the heretical

⁷⁶¹ Richard Cross, *Metaphysics of the Incarnation*, 54: According to Cross, Aquinas ‘is quite clear that concrete parts do not, for example, have a substantial form other than the substantial form of the whole. Equally, the separation of a concrete part from its whole entails the destruction of the part. [Thus], parts don’t realize potential in the way accidents do; they are not things and can’t exist in their own right apart from a substance but still have their own identity; accidents contribute *esse* to the suppositum (they have *esse* of their own) but parts do not; they share in the *esse* of the substance.’

⁷⁶² As Cross notes on page 57 of *Metaphysics of the Incarnation*, ‘Aquinas makes it clear that the correct analogue for the hypostatic union is the addition of a part after the constitution of a person, because a person remains complete and does not cease to exist upon losing a hand.’

teaching that Jesus Christ possessed only a single nature which was either completely divine or some synthesis of the divine and the human.⁷⁶³ While this charge may obtain when Aquinas' account is interpreted through the lens of Franciscan metaphysical assumptions, I have tried to demonstrate that he presupposes quite different metaphysical assumptions, which allow him fully to affirm the human nature of Christ in his own way. By the same token, the Franciscan account evades Nestorianism when interpreted on its own terms.

As we have seen, in summary, both the Dominican and the Franciscan approaches fully affirm that the Person of the Word assumes human nature at the Incarnation, not in any way that alters the Word but rather in a way that affects the assumed human nature. In both accounts, this becomes joined to and derives its existence from the Word so as to form one hypostasis, whether in the way a part depends upon a whole or in the way an accident cannot exist without a substance. In that sense, proponents of the two different models who detect heretical tendencies in the work of their opponents only do so as a result of misinterpreting them. When each of the two accounts is assessed within its own frame of reference, both emerge as equally valid, albeit distinct, ways of defending the subsistence theory, or Lombard's second opinion.⁷⁶⁴

Conclusion

According to the argument of this chapter, the study of the *Summa Halensis* is exceptionally effective for illustrating this point, because it was written in an era in which the reasons are particularly clear as to why this account was developed in the first place. This

⁷⁶³ Ibid., 78.

⁷⁶⁴ Richard Cross, 'Homo Assumptus in the Christology of Hugh of St Victor: Some Historical and Theological Revisions,' *The Journal of Theological Studies* 65:1 (April 2014), 62-77, esp. 75-7.

indeed was an era during which the primary concern of scholars with regard to Christology was to find a way to re-define accidents that would avoid the error of the third and even the first opinion and establish the orthodoxy of the second. As we have discovered, moreover, Avicenna was the main resource available to them for this purpose.

By the time Bonaventure was writing, circumstances had changed considerably. Although the substance-accident model remained popular amongst Franciscans, the rise of Aristotelian philosophy called for an alternative construal of the hypostatic union, which was ultimately provided by Aquinas. In drawing attention to the way each model developed in a particular context, and on the basis of distinct metaphysical assumptions, I have aimed to strengthen a case for the claim that the models represent two equally legitimate means to the same end. That is not to say that there may not be other reasons why one might prefer a particular model over another.

Although the substance-accident model was not originally developed by Franciscans and was endorsed during its early history by scholars outside the Franciscan order, there are some obvious reasons why Franciscans quickly adopted it as their own and became its most avid and prominent supporters. For example, the model's emphasis on the active and voluntary way in which God brought about and sustains the union is consistent with a wider Franciscan emphasis on the completely gratuitous or self-sacrificial and wholly unmerited love of God which sustains all creatures, which are entirely dependent upon him for their ongoing existence and states of being.

Furthermore, the metaphysic underlying this account of the hypostatic union is compatible with the wider metaphysic Franciscans adopted, for reasons I have already explored in chapter six. While being a Franciscan was clearly not a necessary condition for adhering to this model, at least in the generation of the Halensian Summists, therefore, it does seem to be a sufficient condition for doing so. Likewise, the account that was unique to

Aquinas became a hallmark of his school.⁷⁶⁵ While the disagreements between these two schools are real and not to be underplayed, this contribution seeks to mitigate them by highlighting the respects pertaining to the doctrine of the hypostatic union in which both are plausible on their own terms. As I have demonstrated, the key to accomplishing this feat is the study of the long-neglected *Summa Halensis*.

⁷⁶⁵ Richard Cross, *Metaphysics of the Incarnation*, 60.

10. INCARNATION

In the previous chapter, we came to understand both that and how the Son of God assumed a human nature. But we have yet to grasp exactly why the Summa thinks he did this. According to numerous authors, the Summa follows Anselm of Canterbury's *Cur Deus Homo* very closely in enumerating the reasons for the Incarnation.⁷⁶⁶ This conclusion is reached mainly by counting the number of quotations to Anselm in comparison to other sources cited in the text. As we already saw in the chapter on theistic proof, the early Franciscans, led by Alexander of Hales, were the first to appropriate Anselm's thought, which had largely been neglected during the more than century-long gap that separated him from the early thirteenth-century scholastics.⁷⁶⁷

When deploying Anselm as a source, however, we have discovered that the first Franciscan intellectuals tend to put his themes to use in a wider context which is entirely of their own making. This is certainly true regarding their account of the Incarnation. Although the Halensian Summists appropriate Anselm's habit of enumerating necessary and fitting reasons for this event, I will show in this chapter that they go far beyond him in the way they define what those reasons entail. To this end, the first section of this paper will provide a brief synopsis of the key points of Anselm's famous *Cur Deus Homo*, as a point of

⁷⁶⁶ Michael Robson, 'Anselm's Influence on the Soteriology of Alexander of Hales: The *Cur Deus Homo* in the Commentary on the Sentences,' in *Cur Deus Homo: Atti del Congresso Anselmiano Internazionale*, ed. Paul Gilbert, Helmut Kohl, Elmar Salmann (Rome: Pontificio Ateneo S Anselmo, 1999), 191-219. Jacques Bougerol, *Introduction à l'étude de s. Bonaventure* (Paris, 1961), 73. J. Patout Burns, 'The Concept of Satisfaction in Medieval Redemption Theory,' *Theological Studies* 36 (1975), 285-304.

⁷⁶⁷ V. Doucet, *Prolegomena in Librum III necnon necnon in Libros I et II 'Summae fratris Alexandri* (Quarrachi, 1948), VII.

comparison with the Summa's own discussion.

Subsequent sections will treat the Summa's take on the necessary and fitting reasons for the Incarnation, respectively. As regards its general arguments for the necessity of the Incarnation, *Summa Halensis* follows Anselm fairly closely.⁷⁶⁸ In further sections which describe how the Summa understands Christ's human nature and the necessity of his suffering, both physical and psychological, however, it will become clear that the early Franciscans go well beyond Anselm in introducing an early—indeed the first historical instance—of a penal substitutionary theory of atonement.

Such theories hold that Jesus Christ 'was personally burdened with the sins of humanity, judged, condemned, and deservedly punished in our place.'⁷⁶⁹ Although the full development and popularization of penal theories is rightly credited to the Reformation period, their origins have sometimes been traced to Anselm, albeit with certain qualifications.⁷⁷⁰ As my analysis will illustrate, however, the origins of penal lines of thought, however inchoate, can actually be identified in the founders of the Franciscan intellectual tradition and indeed to their particular way of interpreting Anselm, whose legacy has clearly been impacted by the Franciscan reading of his thought ever since.⁷⁷¹

Following this discussion of the necessity of the Incarnation, I will go on to explore a way in which the Halensian Summists do not even pretend to look to Anselm as their source

⁷⁶⁸ *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minorum Summa theologica* (Florence: Quaracchi, 1924).

⁷⁶⁹ Gerard O'Collins, *Jesus Our Redeemer: A Christian Approach to Salvation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 177.

⁷⁷⁰ Ibid., 137: On the transformation of Anselm's satisfaction theory into penal substitution theory. Jean Riviere, *The Doctrine of Atonement: A Historical Essay*, vol. 2, trans. Luigi Cappadelta (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, and Trubner Co., 1909).

⁷⁷¹ Andrew Rosato, 'The Interpretation of Anselm's Teaching on Christ's Satisfaction for Sin in the Franciscan Tradition from Alexander of Hales to Duns Scotus,' *Franciscan Studies* 71 (2013), 411-44.

of inspiration. This concerns their belief that the Incarnation of Christ would have fittingly occurred even if human beings had never sinned. The reason for this is simple, namely, to bring to completion the work of creation that was brought about through him as the second person of the Trinity. To show how Christ did this, an initial section under this heading will entertain the question debated within the Summa as to what kind of creature Christ should become in order to perfect creation. This will be followed by an enumeration of the reasons why Christ became a human being.

In elaborating these reasons, the Summa offered the first instance in the West of a position that has come to be known as ‘supra-lapsarianism’, or the view that Christ would become Incarnate regardless of the fall.⁷⁷² It presented an innovation that even Anselm could not have anticipated. To discern the ways in which the Summa goes beyond Anselm, however, we must start from an understanding of Anselm’s own account of the Incarnation, delineated below, against which the Franciscan one can be contrasted.

Anselm on the Incarnation

In his *Cur Deus Homo*, Anselm develops an argument for the Incarnation of Christ, which follows this logic: God made human beings to flourish, which requires that they

⁷⁷² Justus Hunter notes on page 19 in his unpublished dissertation on ‘The Motive for the Incarnation from Anselm of Canterbury to John Duns Scotus’ (PhD Dissertation, Southern Methodist University, August 2015) that Rupert of Deutz (1075-1129) raises the hypothetical question whether Christ would have become incarnate without sin in his commentary on Matthew’s Gospel, *De Gloria et honore Filii hominis* (PL 1628, 13.684-86). However, Rupert’s account is rather undeveloped. By contrast the Summa’s, is not located within a larger systematic framework for thinking on this topic. Robert Grosseteste also entertained the question but probably slightly later than Alexander of Hales in his Sentences Commentary and also independently.

‘distinguish between right and wrong and between the greater and lesser good.’⁷⁷³ An overriding love and preference for the highest good, namely, God, makes it possible to do this, because it prevents persons from attributing excessive significance to things other than God which cannot serve as permanent and all-encompassing sources of human flourishing. The failure to do this, which occurred at the fall into sin, therefore undermined not only the human relationship to God but also the human ability to thrive.

On the ground that sin is committed against the supremely good God, Anselm affirms that even a single and seemingly ‘lightweight’ sin is of infinite magnitude and has all-pervasive consequences and manifestations.⁷⁷⁴ Naturally, God cannot forgive sin without an appropriate consequence or punishment for it, because this would contradict his will that human beings ‘give him their due’ as their creator by choosing to be what he made and enabled them to be of their own accord.⁷⁷⁵ However, human beings forfeited the ability to make recompense for the loss of the ability to fulfill his will—and thereby regain it—through original sin itself, which subsequently became an inherited disposition, albeit one that would be actualized in individual ways.⁷⁷⁶

Although the obligation lies with human beings alone to make this repayment, consequently, no one can make it but the God who gave the ability to honor him in the first place.⁷⁷⁷ On account of his unchanging will that human beings always be able to do what they were made to do, namely, to honor God, consequently, it became necessary that the

⁷⁷³ Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo*, trans. Brian Davies and G.R. Evans in *Anselm of Canterbury: The Major Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), II.1; cf. I.11.

⁷⁷⁴ *CDH* II.14.

⁷⁷⁵ *CDH* I.12.

⁷⁷⁶ *CDH* I.23.

⁷⁷⁷ *CDH* II.6.

relationship be restored by a God-man.⁷⁷⁸ As God, this man was without sin and therefore had no debt to make restitution for sin. For the same reason, he alone had the power to efface the infinite sins against him. Christ did this by doing exactly what we were made to do, namely, by ‘upholding righteousness so bravely and pertinaciously that as a result he incurred death,’⁷⁷⁹ which is the punishment for sin.

That is not to say that Christ’s death was actually required to make satisfaction for our sin on Anselm’s understanding. What was needed, rather, was not only to pay God his ordinary due but also to give back to him something more, to make up for what was taken from him in sin. By simply living a perfect human life, Christ could not have offered this supererogatory gift, precisely because this is what would have been required of him as a man. As Andrew Rosato writes in an important article on the subject, ‘There is only one possible thing that Christ could do that is not already owed to God, according to Anselm. As sinless, Christ is not obligated to die. If he were to do so for the honor of God, this would both be an act of sufficient goodness to pay the debt of sin and something not already owed to God.’⁷⁸⁰

Although much is often made of the feudal context of Anselm’s discussion, which turned on certain social parameters regarding debt repayment, the discussion above lends support to the idea that Anselm is engaged in a project of demonstrating that conclusions taken on faith about the reason for Christ’s Incarnation can also be reached and proven profoundly plausible through rational reflection upon their entailments.⁷⁸¹ As we have seen, a central feature of this project involves showing that there is a proportionality or fittingness to

⁷⁷⁸ *CDH* I.20; cf. II.4.

⁷⁷⁹ *CDH* I.9.

⁷⁸⁰ Andrew Rosato, ‘The Interpretation of Anselm’s Teaching on Christ’s Satisfaction for Sin,’ 415-16.

⁷⁸¹ David L. Whidden III, ‘The Alleged Feudalism of Anselm’s *Cur Deus Homo* and the Benedictine Concepts of Obedience, Honor, and Order,’ *Nova et Vetera* 9:4 (2011), 1055–87.

the way that God works in the world, which in many cases goes so far as to imply a certain necessity.

The reason why the Incarnation for one was necessary, in summary, was simply that human beings severed their relationship with God, which had been established by God, which meant that human beings were both responsible to repair it, yet only God had the power to do so. Since God's will to make that relationship possible is infallible, it was necessary for there to be a God-man who restored the relationship. While this restoration did entail death, which is the consequence of sin, Anselm does not actually regard Christ's death itself as essential to making satisfaction: he is not an advocate of penal substitution, in which Christ's death is what redeems us from ours.

His focus is more on the fact that Christ had 'no other opportunity to perform a supererogatory act'⁷⁸² that was needed to make up for what God had lost through humanity's failure to give him his due. While Christ's life paid back what any human being owed to God, consequently, his death offered the 'something more' that was needed for this purpose. As we will see below, the Summa's account of the necessity of the Incarnation follows Anselm's relatively closely.

The Necessity of the Incarnation

As noted above, Anselm's authority far outstrips that of any other source in the Summa's discussion of the necessity of the Incarnation.⁷⁸³ The first chapter of this section

⁷⁸² Andrew Rosato, 'The Interpretation of Anselm's Teaching on Christ's Satisfaction for Sin,' 416.

⁷⁸³ Michael Robson, 'The Impact of *Cur Deus Homo* on the Early Franciscan School,' in *Anselm: Aosta, Bec and Canterbury: Papers in Commemoration of the 900th Anniversary of Anselm's Enthronement as Archbishop*, ed. D.E. Luscombe and G.R. Evans (Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 334-47.

inquires whether human nature is lapsed from the state in which it was made. In answer to this question, various affirmative statements are put forward. Most significantly, the *Summa* observes, it is unfitting that creatures whom God made to experience beatitude or union with him should know misery without sin.⁷⁸⁴ For this reason, humans must exist in their current state of misery because of their own culpable lapse from the state in which they were made.⁷⁸⁵ This state of misery—and ultimately death—is the rightful punishment for original sin and the resultant tendency of all humans to actualize the potential to sin of their own accord at their origins.

In chapter two, the *Summa* further inquires whether human nature lapsed reparably or irreparably. Following Anselm, it notes that all mortal sin is accompanied by an infinite quantity of guilt, since it offends against an infinite God. For this guilt, God would have to provide an infinite satisfaction.⁷⁸⁶ But the remission of mortal sin cannot be without infinite satisfaction, lest God's will go unfulfilled. However, humans cannot offer this satisfaction. Thus, one might conclude that we must not be redeemable but are subject to an infinite punishment for sin, which lasts for an infinite time, that is, for eternity. Against this claim, however, the *Summa* states that while the guilt of angels is irreparable because they are immutable in nature, that of humans is reparable, precisely because they are changeable through free will.⁷⁸⁷ Thus, our sin is remediable.

This raises the question of chapter three whether it was necessary for God to repair lapsed human nature. Following Anselm again, the *Summa* insists that God cannot make anything in vain, as this would suggest a deficiency in him as the artificer; and since he made

⁷⁸⁴ Vol 3, T1 Q1, C1, Primo sic a (n. 1), 5: quoting Anselm's *CDH* I.9.

⁷⁸⁵ Vol 3, T1 Q1, C1, Ad objecta (n. 1), 6.

⁷⁸⁶ Vol 3, T1 Q1, C2, Ad I.1 (n. 2), 11: quoting Anselm in *CDH* I.19.

⁷⁸⁷ Vol 3, T1 Q1, C2, Solutio (n. 2), 10-11: quoting Anselm *CDH* II.8.

human nature for beatitude, human nature must be repaired.⁷⁸⁸ That is not to say that God is subject to necessity by compulsion or prohibition, as is the case with human beings. Because God is not the cause of sin, he is under no obligation to remedy it.⁷⁸⁹ Nevertheless, as Anselm says, he is subject to the sort of necessity that derives from the immutability and perfection of his will.⁷⁹⁰

For the reparation of human nature, chapter four reiterates, a certain satisfaction for sin was needed. In order to explain how it was offered, the *Summa* distinguishes here as in other cases between the absolute and ordained power of God.⁷⁹¹ When considered as absolute, God's power is understood in terms of its infinite and unlimited or undetermined nature. In this sense, we must concede that he is able to repair human nature without satisfaction for sin.⁷⁹² In his ordained power, however, he does not and even cannot forgive sin without satisfaction, because he has determined to do everything in accordance with what is just, and justice demands satisfaction or recompense for human sin.⁷⁹³

Obviously, human beings cannot offer satisfaction for their own sin, since they lost the capacity to act aright through sin itself.⁷⁹⁴ Thus, the satisfaction of sin requires an act of God. Although God alone could repair the human race, human beings owed the debt to do so. Thus, the *Summa* concludes after Anselm that the one to make this satisfaction must be both

⁷⁸⁸ Vol 3, T1 Q1, C3, Pro 1, 7 (n. 3), 13.

⁷⁸⁹ Vol 3, T1 Q1, C3, Contra a, b, c (n. 3), 13.

⁷⁹⁰ Vol 3, T1 Q1, C3, Respondeo, (n. 3), 13; cf. Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, C3, Respondeo (n. 150), 211. According to Anselm, there is a necessity of immutability and a necessity of compulsion or prohibition. Quoting Anselm *CDH* I.10, I.20, II.4, II.5-6, II.18 in these passages.

⁷⁹¹ Vol 3, T1 Q1, C4, Respondeo (n. 4), 15-16.

⁷⁹² Vol 3, T1 Q1, C4, Respondeo (n. 4), 15-16; quoting Anselm *CDH* I.12.

⁷⁹³ Vol 3, T1 Q1, C4, Respondeo (n. 4), 15-16.

⁷⁹⁴ Vol 3, T1 Q1, C5, Ar1, Contra a, b (n. 5), 17: quoting Anselm *CDH* I.21.

God and human.⁷⁹⁵ Since it was through the Son or the Second person of the Trinity that all things were made, the Summa states that it is through him that human nature must be re-made.⁷⁹⁶ Although the Summa more or less follows Anselm thus far, the study of its account of the human nature of Christ below will set the stage for demonstrating that it ultimately adopts a new and more penal approach.

The Human Nature of Christ

In the Middle Ages, discussions of Christ's human nature in general were strongly shaped by arguments, first and most famously advanced by Hilary of Poitiers, who 'essentially denies the psychological or affective reality of Christ's suffering and pain.'⁷⁹⁷ As Paul Gondreau observes, Hilary believed that 'Christ's soul did not feel the pain inflicted upon his body, as if his body were, as it were, entirely anesthetized at the time of his crucifixion.'⁷⁹⁸ According to Gondreau, 'Hilary adopted this view in his attempt to defend the orthodox Christian faith against the Arian heresy which took Jesus' display of passion as a sufficient disclaimer of the divinity of Christ.'⁷⁹⁹ While most medieval authors did not

⁷⁹⁵ Vol 3, T1 Q1, C7, Contra b (n. 9), 23-4, quoting Anselm *CDH* II.6.

⁷⁹⁶ Vol 3, Tr1, Q2, T1, D2, M1, C4, Ar2, Respondeo (n. 15), 32; cf. Vol 3, Tr1, Q4, T1, D1, C1, Responsio (n. 30), 49.

⁷⁹⁷ Paul Gondreau, *The Passions of Christ's Soul in the Theology of Thomas Aquinas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 25.

⁷⁹⁸ Ibid., 25. Jarred Mercer, 'Suffering for Our Sake: Christ and Human Destiny in Hilary of Poitiers's *De Trinitate*,' *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 22:4 (Winter 2014), 541-68.

⁷⁹⁹ Paul Gondreau, *The Passions of Christ's Soul*, 25.

advocate Hilary's position, many sought to offer a generous interpretation of his account and at very least developed ideas in conversation with it.⁸⁰⁰

The Summa is no exception in this regard. At the outset of its discussion of Christ's human nature, the Summa acknowledges with a nod to Hilary that the suffering of Christ might seem on some level to be inconsistent with his divine nature, which is impassible and omnipotent.⁸⁰¹ After all, he enjoyed comprehensive knowledge of God, which would seemingly preclude pain and entails a greater pleasure than human beings can imagine.⁸⁰² Still, it recognizes Scripture's affirmation that he was a 'man of sorrows, acquainted with grief.'⁸⁰³ On this basis, the Summa concludes that Christ must have experienced sufferings in some way. Following John of Damascus and even Hilary himself, the Summa describes these sufferings in terms of Christ's passions, or the negative side of his experience in both body and soul.⁸⁰⁴

This way of understanding the passions was widely adhered to at the time, not least by Peter Lombard.⁸⁰⁵ Amongst the passions, he includes sentiments like fear, agony, and sorrow that follow the perception of evil.⁸⁰⁶ Such passions are a consequence of the fall into sin, before which there was no such thing as evil.⁸⁰⁷ Moreover, they are themselves evil, in

⁸⁰⁰ Ibid., 50.

⁸⁰¹ Vol 3, Tr5, Q1, M1, Ad 1-8 (n. 141), 194-5; cf. II.1, 195, quoting Hilary, *De Trinitate* X.23.

⁸⁰² Vol 3, Tr5, Q1, M1, Ad II.5 (n. 141), 195.

⁸⁰³ Vol 3, Tr5, Q1, M1, Contra II.b (n. 141), 195, quoting Isaiah 53:2-3.

⁸⁰⁴ Ibid., 50; cf. 78: '*De fide orthodoxa* became accessible to the Master of the Sentences through Burgundio of Pisa's Latin translation that was executed between 1153-4.'

⁸⁰⁵ Paul Gondreau, *The Passions of Christ's Soul*, 80; cf. Lombard III *Sent.* 15.1.81. It is found for instance in Peter Lombard.

⁸⁰⁶ Ibid., 66.

⁸⁰⁷ Ibid.

that they generally entail an inappropriate response to evil, which itself inflicts further suffering. As Gondreau points out, the *Summa Halensis* was the first text to present a systematic account of the Lord's passions within a systematic theology.⁸⁰⁸ This account was partly based on that of Alexander of Hales, who was the first medieval author to move beyond Lombard's Sentences in presenting a systematic treatment of the Lord's passions⁸⁰⁹ in his own Gloss on Lombard's Sentences.

In a later departure from these Franciscan precedents, Thomas Aquinas followed Aristotle in affirming that passions entail feelings of joy, hope, and desire as well as fear and pain. In developing his account, Aquinas became the only medieval author to surpass the Summists in terms of the amount of attention he devotes to the passions of Christ, a topic on which he nonetheless looks to the *Summa Halensis* as a prototype. On his understanding, passions are not the products let alone the essence of sin but are neutral features of human nature. Their sinfulness or innocence ultimately depends on whether we reckon with them in a manner that is compatible with our own thriving and thereby God's will or fail to do so.

As component parts of human nature, the existence of passions in Christ can be established by reason according to Aquinas. By contrast, the Summists do not seem to think this and hold instead that the presence of passions in Christ must be taken as a matter of faith. In this regard, they accept, as Damascus affirmed, that God intended us to be impassible, or unable to suffer, as human beings were before the fall.⁸¹⁰ That is not to suggest that pre-fall persons were unreceptive to the external, empirical stimuli on the basis of which thoughts and desires are formed. But it does mean that they were unable to be disturbed by them.⁸¹¹ Since

⁸⁰⁸ Ibid., 91.

⁸⁰⁹ Ibid., 90.

⁸¹⁰ *De fide* II.11.

⁸¹¹ Vol 2.1, Tr 3, Q1, T1, C1 (n. 469), 631ff.

sin is the reason why persons become passible or capable of suffering, it is not immediately obvious that the sinless Christ should suffer. To explain the sense in which he did so, the Summa adopts an important distinction from Peter Lombard between the so-called ‘defects of punishment’ and the ‘defects of guilt’.⁸¹²

The defects of guilt are those we possess on account of our sin nature, which lead us to have inappropriate or irrational responses to external stimuli, that is, to exhibit the passions. The defects of punishment, however, merely constitute the consequences of sin. They include defects of the body, such as hunger, thirst and mortality, and the defects of the human soul, such as sadness, sorrow, and fear.⁸¹³ Similar to Lombard, the Summa accepts that Christ assumed the defects of punishment. He did this to prove that he fully shared in our broken human nature, and as we will see, to rescue us from it. Because he was the perfect God, however, he did not share in our guilt.

For this reason, Christ experienced the passions in a fundamentally different way from human beings.⁸¹⁴ First of all, we cannot help but experience the passions or suffering because doing so is written into the code of our sin nature. For while Adam had an ability to suffer and was indisposed or not necessitated to do so, we have an ability to suffer (*potentia patiendi*) and cannot avoid doing so because of sin.⁸¹⁵ Furthermore, we cannot help but be disturbed or dissuaded from what is good by sufferings, as that is precisely what the sin nature leads us to do. By contrast to us, Christ did not experience the defects of punishment

⁸¹² Ibid., 82; cf. Lombard III *Sent.* 15.1.

⁸¹³ Vol 3, Inq 1, Tr 1, Qu 4, Tit 1, Dist 3, Memb 3, Ch 1, Respondeo (n. 43), 67.

⁸¹⁴ Vol 3, Tr5, Q1, M1, Respondeo (n. 141), 197.

⁸¹⁵ Ibid.

because he was guilty of them.⁸¹⁶ There was no guilt in him because his human nature was not a natural facet of his divine being but one he freely chose to assume for our sakes. While we are constrained by human nature to undergo the passions, consequently, Christ exceptionally was Lord of his passions.⁸¹⁷

For this reason, he could be disturbed by feelings like hunger, fear, or sadness, and yet not be deterred from the good to which he is always orientated as God.⁸¹⁸ Indeed, his sinless nature prevented him from responding to such passions in the way of normal persons, who turn from what is good on account of them. This is why Jerome—and medieval thinkers following him—called the passions in Christ ‘pro-passions’, namely, because they move the will towards what is right, even in the midst of various afflictions and evils, to which fallen humans would generally respond with further, moral evil.⁸¹⁹

According to the *Summa*, this is what Hilary meant when he insisted that Christ was not able to feel pain: not that he possessed a body or soul incapable of suffering hunger, thirst, fear or sadness, but that his suffering was not the product of being dominated by his passions or the infirmity of sin. In short, as Gondreau confirms, the words of Hilary did not preclude the truth of the passions but their cause. For the *Summa*, however, Christ was not only able to suffer along these lines but also had to do so for the sake of making satisfaction for sin. In what follows, therefore, we will consider the *Summa*’s arguments for the necessity

⁸¹⁶ Ibid., 87; cf. Lombard III *Sent.* 15.1. Vol 3, Tr1, Q2, T1, C3 (n. 18), 37-8; cf. Vol 3, In1, Tr1, Q4, T1, D3, M1 (n. 37), 58-61, cf. (n. 38-45), 62-8.

⁸¹⁷ Vol. 3, Inq 1, Tr 5, Qu 1, M3, C1, Ad objecta 1-2 (n. 148), 207.

⁸¹⁸ Ibid., 86; cf. Lombard III *Sent.* 17.2.

⁸¹⁹ Ibid., 85 (and 29); cf. Lombard III *Sent.* 15.2. Vol 3, Tr1, Q4, T1, D3, M2, C1, Ar2, Respondeo (n. 39), 63.

Marilyn McCord Adams, *What Sort of Human Nature? Medieval Philosophy and the Systematics of Christology* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1999).

of Christ's suffering and death. Although Anselm is cited regularly in this context, we will discover that his Franciscan interpreters already begin to move beyond him in elaborating on the penal substitutionary nature of Christ's atonement.

The Necessity of Christ's Suffering

At the outset of this discussion, the Summa re-iterates its earlier point that suffering and death are necessary for human beings because these experiences constitute our punishment for sin. By contrast, Christ's death was not necessary in any sense. As the Summa writes: 'Christ did not have to die efficiently, because no cause could make him die; nor materially, because that necessity contracted by sin in us was not in him. Nor according to a formal cause, because such a cause is able to be prohibited nor is it voluntary.'⁸²⁰ The only reason why he had to die, the Summa concludes, was in terms of the final cause or purpose of bringing about satisfaction for our sin.⁸²¹

In elaborating on the question why suffering and death specifically was necessary for our redemption, the Summa invokes Anselm to explain that redemption entails recuperating a thing by a just price. Since the penalty for sin was suffering and death, it posits, there could be no recuperation of the human race without suffering and death.⁸²²

Further reasons that confirm the necessity of Christ's satisfaction by death are as follows.

Since the human race fell in pride, pleasure, and honor, it was right that God in his mercy

⁸²⁰ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M3, C1, Respondeo (n. 148), 206.

⁸²¹ Ibid.

⁸²² Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M3, C2, Respondeo (n. 149), 209, quoting the *Glossa* (PL 192, 419). Andrew Rosato, 'The Interpretation of Anselm's Teaching on Christ's Satisfaction for Sin,' 425, citing Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M4, C1, A1.

made satisfaction through a Son who desired poverty, worthlessness and subjection. If he had chosen the way of prosperity, rather than adversity, it would not have befitted the divine effort to reverse the effects of sin.⁸²³

So great, indeed, was our sin, the Summa insists, ‘that we were not able to be saved unless the only begotten Son of God died for us debtors of death.’⁸²⁴ Only Christ could recuperate us in this way, because he alone of all men shared the nature of the infinite God.⁸²⁵ Because he also shared in our broken human nature, the suffering and death he inevitably experienced was both able and necessary to satisfy for infinite human sins and relieve us of the ultimate consequences for them.⁸²⁶ As a fire generates heat but remains separate from it, so the Summa concludes that Christ’s passion consumes the whole guilt and punishment for sin without being touched by it.⁸²⁷

Whereas Anselm had argued that redemption is impossible without satisfaction, the Summa clearly goes further here to claim that there is no satisfaction without Christ’s passion.⁸²⁸ It makes the shift, however subtle, from Anselm’s notion of supererogatory debt-repayment to penal substitution. As such a penal substitute, the Summa avers, Christ needed to suffer every conceivable type of consequence of sin. In fact, there was no other way to

⁸²³ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M4, C1, Ar2, Respondeo (n. 151), 212-13.

⁸²⁴ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M3, C1, Respondeo (n. 148), 206.

⁸²⁵ Andrew Rosato, ‘The Interpretation of Anselm’s Teaching on Christ’s Satisfaction for Sin,’ 432, quoting Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M5, C1-2 (n. 154-5), 214-15; cf. Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M2, C2, Ar1 (n. 147), 203-4. Vol 3, Tr1, Q4, T1, D3, M3, C2, Respondeo (n. 45), 68.

⁸²⁶ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M5, C1-2 (n. 154-5), 214-15; cf. Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M2, C2, Ar1 (n. 147), 203-4. Vol 3, Tr1, Q4, T1, D3, M3, C2, Respondeo (n. 45), 68.

⁸²⁷ Vol 3, Inq 1, Tr 1, Qu 4, Tit 1, Dist 3, Memb 3, Ch 2, 2 (n. 45), 67; cf. 68, Respondeo.

⁸²⁸ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M3, C1, Respondeo (n. 148), 206-7, quoting Lombard III *Sent.* 18.5.

atone for every kind of sin.⁸²⁹ This means that it was essential for him not only to undergo physical suffering and death but also the sort of psychological trauma or suffering that accompanies our alienation from God, from which all further sin sprang in the first place.⁸³⁰ The nature of this suffering and its redemptive power is what we will explore below.

The Psychological Suffering of Christ

The key to the Summa's account of Christ's psychological suffering is a distinction between 'higher' and 'lower' reason that is drawn from Augustine.⁸³¹ Another way the Summa speaks of this distinction is in terms of 'reason as nature' or 'reason as reason.'⁸³² The difference at stake is between reason or intellect insofar as it is concerned with natural life, or reason insofar as it is concerned with the purposes of God.⁸³³ In that sense, the higher/lower reason distinction in the Summa resembles much more closely Avicenna's doctrine of the 'two faces of the soul', or his distinction between theoretical and practical intellect, which respectively consider matters related to the soul insofar as it is separate from the body versus the soul insofar as it is related to the body. Either way, Avicenna's

⁸²⁹ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, C2, Ar 1, Ad objecta 3 (n. 148), 204.

⁸³⁰ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M2, C1, Ar1, Respondeo (n. 142), 199. See Boyd Taylor Coolman, 'The Salvific Affectivity of Christ in Alexander of Hales,' *The Thomist* 71 (2007), 24. See the broader article, pages 1-38, for an excellent and more in-depth study of this aspect of the Summa's account. I am grateful to Boyd Taylor Coolman for extremely helpful comments on an earlier version of this chapter.

⁸³¹ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M2, C1, Ar2, Respondeo 1 (n. 143), 200.

⁸³² As Boyd Taylor Coolman points out in his article on, 'The Salvific Affectivity of Christ in Alexander of Hales,' 20, the distinction between 'reason as nature' and 'reason as reason' comes from Maximus the Confessor and is transmitted by John of Damascus; this is a distinction in the superior part of reason.

⁸³³ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M2, C1, Ar2, Respondeo 1 (n. 143), 200.

distinction operates purely at the level of the rational soul or intellect and thus differs significantly from Augustine's, which is instead a distinction between the intellectual power on the one hand and the sense faculties on the other.

As a corollary to its account of the intellect, the Summa offers a two-fold account of the will which entails both natural and rational or intellectual components.⁸³⁴ While the natural will fears the soul's separation from the body and desires to maintain the body-soul union, the rational or deliberative will is entirely abstracted from bodily preoccupations and is therefore capable of preferring what is good and right, no matter the difficulties involved in doing so. As a human being with a natural appetite for survival, the Summa argues, Christ inevitably felt the pain of physical suffering and the fear of death; he underwent passion with regard to his natural will. By contrast, his deliberative or rational will experienced no suffering whatsoever because he as God remained constantly connected with God and his purposes.

For this reason, he eternally experienced the highest joy (*summum gaudium*) and the pleasure of always participating in the fulfilment of God's good will.⁸³⁵ Throughout his life, the Summa allows, Christ's connection with God via higher reason informed his experiences registered by lower reason. The joy he found in God and in accomplishing his purposes provided him with an enduring source of consolation, despite the difficulties he faced in his human life. However, this situation changed dramatically at his ultimate passion and death. In this instance, the influence of higher reason over lower reason was temporarily suspended: lower reason lost access to the resources of higher reason, which remained as functional as

⁸³⁴ Vol 3, Tr5, Q1, M2, C1, Ar2 (n. 143), 201.

⁸³⁵ Vol 3, Tr5, Q1, M2, C1, Ar2, Ad objecta 1-4 (n. 143), 201

ever as ever.⁸³⁶ As a result, Christ effectively underwent his final sufferings without access to the consolation he drew from God.⁸³⁷

This is why he cried out ‘my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’⁸³⁸ at the moment of his death, namely, because the Father in this sole instance did not seem to come to his aid. That is not to say that the Son of God ceased in this or any instance to be or be connected to God and thus to possess the highest joy.⁸³⁹ For the change in the Son’s relationship to God that is reflected in his outcry on the cross did not occur on the side of his divine but only his human nature: it had to do with lower reason’s sudden lack of access to the comfort that came from higher reason, not with a change in higher reason’s ability to commune with God or indeed in Christ’s status as a divine person.⁸⁴⁰ To affirm that it did affect change in these respects would undermine his divinity, on account of he was able to accomplish our redemption in the first place. By no means, consequently, does the Summa go as far as contemporary authors like Jürgen Moltmann to affirm that, for the sake of fully engaging in the human experience of suffering, the Son was alienated from the Father, even for a moment.

The analogy the Summa invokes to explain the simultaneous connection and disconnection from God that the Son experienced as God and man, respectively, is that of light, which always subsists in the sun, but sometimes does not shine in certain places.⁸⁴¹ While Christ as the Light of God always maintains contact with the Father, the temporary

⁸³⁶ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M2, C1, Ar5, II (n. 146), 203.

⁸³⁷ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M2, C1, Ar2, Respondeo 3 (n. 143), 200-1.

⁸³⁸ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M2, C1, Ar2, Respondeo 3 (n. 143), 200-1.

⁸³⁹ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q2, C1ff, 226ff.

⁸⁴⁰ Vol 3, Tr5, Q1, M1, III, Respondeo (n. 141), 195-7.

⁸⁴¹ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M2, C1, Ar5, Ad objecta 2 (n. 146), 203.

bracketing of the light over his human nature meant that he was able to suffer pain without reference to his source of joy in God. Although God himself clearly does not suffer on this showing, the early Franciscan authors nevertheless allow that statements about Christ's suffering can be ascribed to the Son of God insofar as they are referred to the Person who subsisted in two natures. In remarks that anticipate the future development of the doctrine of the 'communication of attributes', however, they point out that it is necessary to make clear that the person in question suffered pain by reason of his human rather than his divine nature.⁸⁴²

In this regard, the Summa claims that Christ's pain was the most severe pain imaginable, for several reasons. First of all, it was most contrary to the nature of the person it afflicted, who encapsulates the supreme good.⁸⁴³ Since Christ's divine nature fostered the most intimate possible connection or fittingness between his body and soul, moreover, Christ could not help but experience the greatest suffering at the separation of the soul from the body that occurs at death. Above all, the Summa concludes, his pain was most extreme because it was voluntary.⁸⁴⁴ As the Summa asserts, Christ actually wanted to take on broken human nature, that is, to endure the defects of punishment (*voluit puniri*), because this was the only way to restore the human race to God.⁸⁴⁵

Unless we think Christ came to earth with an explicit death wish, however, the Summa is quick to qualify this claim by distinguishing between an 'absolute' and 'conditional' kind of will. On this account, Christ could not have suffered out of a merely conditional will to do so, as that would entail that his suffering was part voluntary and part involuntary, which

⁸⁴² Vol 3, Tr5, Q1, M1, III, Respondeo (n. 141), 195-7.

⁸⁴³ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M5, C1, Respondeo 1 (n. 154), 214.

⁸⁴⁴ Vol 3, In1, Tr4, Q3, Ar3, II Respondeo 1-3 (n. 140), 193; cf. Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M5, C1, a (n. 154), 214.

⁸⁴⁵ Vol 3, In1, Tr1, Q4, T1, D3, M1, 6 (n. 37), 60.

would undermine the integrity of his intent to save us. Thus, the Summa distinguishes between three kinds of ‘absolute’ will, that is, a will that is not subject to force, a will for something in itself, and a will for something through another.⁸⁴⁶ Clearly, Christ’s will to suffer was absolute insofar as it was not subject to force.

However, it was not absolute in the sense that he willed to die for its own sake.⁸⁴⁷ What he willed, rather, was always, and only ever could be a good end consistent with his nature, to wit, the flourishing of the human race.⁸⁴⁸ On account of sin, the fulfilment of this will necessitated his suffering and death. But his will per se was not to suffer and die. Nor was it the will of the Father, who permitted and did not prevent Christ’s death, but did not himself cause it in the way of Judas, or the Romans and Jews at the time. What the Father willed, in fact, was exactly the will of the Son, namely, the good of the human race, which will be discussed further below in a section on the fittingness of the Incarnation. For neither member of the Trinity was the passion of Christ a good in itself. It was a means to an end, and that end was the only proper object of the divine will.⁸⁴⁹

When he fulfilled this will through his suffering and death, we have seen that Christ simultaneously experienced the joy of knowing in higher reason that he had accomplished God’s plan, along with the repugnance of lower reason at the harsh realities of suffering and death themselves. While this might seem like a psychological and even logical contradiction, the Summa counsels its readers to consider the analogous case of martyrs, who gloried in the chance to participate in God’s purposes, even in the moment of a treacherous death.⁸⁵⁰ The

⁸⁴⁶ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, Ar4, Contra 1 (n. 145), 202.

⁸⁴⁷ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, Ad objecta 1 (n. 152), 212.

⁸⁴⁸ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M3, C1, Respondeo, Ad objecta 3-4 (n. 148), 207; cf. 209-11.

⁸⁴⁹ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, C2, Respondeo, Ad objecta 1-3, II Respondeo (n. 162), 225.

⁸⁵⁰ Vol 3, In1, Tr5, Q1, M2, C1, Ar3, Contra 1-2 (n. 144), 201.

major difference between martyrs and Christ, the Summa highlights, is that their suffering is due to violent extrinsic causes, but Christ's was the product of his voluntary will to suffer, not only physical trials, above all death, but also the psychological trauma of enduring this suffering without recourse to hope in God.⁸⁵¹

By undergoing this tragic experience in the context of lower reason, while maintaining knowledge of, and delighting in, the divine purposes known to higher reason, Christ accomplished those very purposes. He took upon himself the punishment for our sin, both in his body, through suffering and death, and in the very depths of his soul, through momentary alienation from God. As we draw this part of our discussion to a close, it is worth going back to Anselm and seeing how the Summa's account of the atonement compares to its source of inspiration.

An Anselmian Theory of Atonement?

In his *Cur Deus Homo*, Anselm presents a theory of atonement that turns on the notion of supererogatory debt repayment. Since God has made us to flourish by pursuing him as our ultimate good, and we have failed to do this, it is incumbent upon us not only to restore ourselves to the place where we can do what he made us to do but also to compensate somehow for the fact that we have previously failed to do this. By coming to earth and living a sinless life, Christ restored our capacity to honor God with our lives in a way that we could not do for ourselves. But since this kind of life was already owed to God, it did not suffice to compensate for the prior human failure to give God his due. Thus, Christ succumbed to death, not because death itself was necessary for this purpose but simply because it was all

⁸⁵¹ Vol 3, In1, Tr4, Q3, C3, Ad objecta 5 (n. 134), 187.

Christ had left, beyond his life, to give back to God something more than the life of honouring him that was already owed.

Throughout its elucidation of the reasons for the Incarnation, we have seen that the *Summa Halensis* employs Anselm as its point of departure. While it follows him to a large extent in affirming the general necessity of the Incarnation, however, it moves beyond him very decisively in affirming that suffering and death on the part of Christ were crucial to achieving satisfaction for sin. The logic in this regard runs as follows: if the punishment for sin is suffering and death, then the only way to remove the punishment is for one without sin, namely, God, to undergo suffering and death. By uniting himself to broken human nature, this is exactly what the Son of God did.

While he did not remove the temporal punishment for sin, namely, suffering and death themselves, which sin has established as a permanent feature of the present order, he did absolve us of eternal suffering and death that comes in the form of separation from God.⁸⁵² This is something he accomplished not merely by experiencing the same kinds of physical sufferings, and above all, death, that we experience, but also by undergoing the very experience of psychological separation or alienation from God that gave rise to the penalties of suffering and death in the first place, and on account of which we presently undergo sufferings without any sense of hope in God.

By entering the depths of our spiritual hopelessness, Christ has ultimately given us hope, not only for the good of a future life but also for the one in the present. As we continue to face trials of various kinds in this context, we can now do so in the way Christ modelled, namely, controlling rather than being controlled by the passions, enduring them in a way that does not compromise our integrity but rather enables us to fulfil God's will for our existence.

⁸⁵² Vol 3, T1 Q1, C5, Ar2, Respondeo (n. 6), 20.

Because Christ has taken all the consequences of sin upon himself, in summary, we are able to pursue a life here and in the hereafter that is not encumbered by guilt. In affirming this, the Summa clearly introduces an early version of the penal substitutionary atonement theory that became popular at the Reformation.

Certainly, there are differences between the early and later theories, which are more full-blown. The Summa for one does not focus on the way that Christ's death appeased God's wrath. While it gives a central place to Christ's death and final outcry, moreover, it does not stress specifically the significance of the cross of Christ. Still, the early version of penal substitution it presents helps explain how later, more developed accounts became conceivable. Moreover, its extensive use of Anselm in this regard goes a long way towards revealing why such accounts have been mistakenly associated with his legacy ever since. By examining more closely how the Summists turn Anselmian themes to their own ends and define them in their ways, their atonement theory emerges as an excellent example of their tendency and capacity to hold in tension both an allegiance to authority and a commitment to innovation.

The Fittingness of the Incarnation

While we have been so far considering the Incarnation of Christ in terms of the way it remedied the effects of human sin, this is not the only or even the main reason why the Summa states that the Incarnation occurred. The primary reason for the Incarnation was quite simply the completion or perfection of creation. As we have seen in the chapter on the divine nature, the divine mind contains an infinite number of ideas for all things that have existed,

do presently or could exist.⁸⁵³ The one who determines which ideas to instantiate and who is responsible within the Godhead for instantiating them is the second person of the Trinity, the Son.

The Son is the obvious candidate to bring about creation because his role in the Trinity is to receive ideas or commands from the Father and carry them out in the Holy Spirit, who is the one in whom the goodness of God comes to be expressed in the goodness of creatures.⁸⁵⁴ As the locus of the divine ideas and the one through whom they are instantiated, the Son is not only the image of God himself but also the ‘Archetype’ or Exemplar of all creation.⁸⁵⁵ He is at the center of everything because the basis for every being comes from him. For this very reason, however, no creature is complete until it is reconciled with its exemplar in him and thus with God. But this cannot happen until the exemplar himself becomes, in a sense, every creature: the universal every particular. To explain how this happened, the Summa entertains a number of preliminary questions whether it was even fitting for God to be united to a created being, and if so, which one.⁸⁵⁶

What Kind of Creature?

⁸⁵³ SH 2.1, I1, Tr1, S1, Qu 2, Ti 1, C3, Ad objecta 1 (n. 11), p. 20: *Unde omnium sive actualium sive possibilium est divina scientia*. See also Lydia Schumacher, ‘The Early Franciscan Doctrine of Divine Immensity: Towards a Middle Way Between Classical Theism and Panentheism,’ *Scottish Journal of Theology* 70:3 (2017), 278-94.

⁸⁵⁴ Vol 2.1, I1, Tr1, S1, Qu 2, Ti 1, C2, Ad contrarium a (n. 10), 19: *Unus est mundus sensibilis et mundus sensibilis est exemplatum; multo ergo forius est unum exemplar scilicet mundus archetypus: nam maior est unitas exemplaris quam exemplati*.

⁸⁵⁵ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S1, Q1, C3, Ar2, In contrarium a (n. 3), 8: *Mundus sensibilis respondet archetypo, sicut exemplatum exemplari; sed idem est mundus archetypus quod ipse Deus*.

⁸⁵⁶ Vol 3, Inq 1, Tract 1, Qu 1, Tit 1, Dist. 1, Respondeo 2, 26.

At the outset of this discussion the Summa notes that a union between the Son and a creaturely nature would require some kind of similarity between them. This similarity cannot derive from sharing in a common nature, for there is no commensurability between the finite and the infinite, the one through whom all things exist, and the ones that depend on him for their existence. However, there can be a likeness between them insofar as created things are caused by God and for this reason acquire qualities like goodness from him that are ‘proportional’ as the Summa says to his goodness or reflect it in a particular way, without capturing it in full.

Another ground-clearing query the Summa strives to address at this point concerns the very question of positing potential in God for union with another entity. The problem with doing so, it observes, is that the notion of potential implies the possibility for change or improvement in God, which is unbefitting of a being that is already complete and perfect. To alleviate the problem, the Summa distinguishes between a passive potential and an active one.⁸⁵⁷ God cannot be united to a creature through a passive potency, through which a quality or state is assumed that improves the assuming being. However, he can be united to a creature through an active power, where by his own initiative and volition he assumes a created nature not for his own benefit but for that of the created nature itself.

Here, the assumption of a creaturely nature by God only brings about change or improvement on the side of the creature that is assumed. For it activates a passive power in

⁸⁵⁷ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, Q2, T1, D2, M1, C1, Respondeo 2 (n. 11), 27. This distinction was introduced in the anonymous, *De potentiis animae et obiectis*, ed. Daniel A. Callus, ‘The Powers of the Soul: An Early Unpublished Text,’ *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 19 (1952), 131-170. See Magdalena Bieniak, *The Soul-Body Problem at Paris, ca. 1200-1250: Hugh of St-Cher and His Contemporaries* (Leuven: Leuven University Press: 2010), 113.

created nature to be joined to the Son of God.⁸⁵⁸ The question therefore remains regarding the kind of creature to which the Son is most fittingly united. An initial option the Summa entertains in this regard is an angel, which is a purely spiritual being, albeit comprised of what the Summa calls ‘spiritual matter’.⁸⁵⁹ This option is quickly eliminated however on the ground that the ideas for creatures or exemplars in God are not only for spiritual but also for corporeal beings, and even for beings, in specific, human beings, that are both corporeal or bodily and spiritual.⁸⁶⁰

Since human beings have a likeness to all creatures, both corporeal and spiritual, they enjoy a greater likeness to the full range of divine exemplars and are therefore more unitable to God than angels.⁸⁶¹ Further support for this conclusion is derived from the similarities the Summa mentions between human beings and the divine in terms of nature, personhood, and power. With respect to nature, the Summa elaborates, the human soul governs its own body

⁸⁵⁸ Vol 3, In1, Tr1, Q2, T1, D2, M1, C1, Respondeo 2 (n. 11), 27: *Omne unibile est possibile respectu unionis. Dicendum quod duplex est potentia, scilicet, activa et passiva. Si loquamur de potentia passiva, sic verum est quod natura divina nullo modo est unibilis, quia quod est unibile hoc modo, est possibile respectu maioris perfectionis; quia ergo non est possibile quod potentia Dei perficiatur ex actu incarnationis, propter hoc non est ponere secundum viam istam divinam naturam unibilem. Si autem loquamur de potentia activa, sic natura divina est unibilis humanae, quia in Deo est potentia activa, ut sibi uniat naturam humanam. Unibile ergo dicitur de natura divina secundum potentiam activam, scilicet quod possit sibi unire naturam creatam; de natura vero humana dicitur secundum potentiam passivam, eo quod possit uniri. Et in hoc etiam fuit summa ostensio et manifestatio suae potentiae. Ponatur enim quod non posset uniri active naturae humanae, hoc non diceretur esse perfectionis in Deo. Et sic concedendum est quod natura divina et humana sunt unibiles.*

⁸⁵⁹ David Keck, *Angels and Angeology in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 32, 94-5.

⁸⁶⁰ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, Q2, T1, M2, C1 (n. 16), 33.

⁸⁶¹ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, Q2, T1, M2, C1, Respondeo 3 (n. 16), 35: *Homo habet similitudinem cum omni creatura, scilicet corporali et spirituali, quarum rationes sunt in exemplari divino, quod non habet angelus; et ita homo est unibilior, cum secundum viam essendi magis exprimat similitudinem exemplaris divini.*

and the bodies that fall under its purview, much as God governs the world. Furthermore, human beings are similar to God in terms of their personhood. Here, the Summa notes a particular affinity between human persons and the second person of the Trinity, who originates from the Father and is the origin of the Spirit, together with the Father himself.

In a similar fashion, human beings originate from other human beings and have the potential to give rise to further human life. Although human beings are known as images of God in general, they are images of the Son more specifically who himself is the image of God, and as such, contains all the ideas God has for things he could make.⁸⁶² This brings us to the likeness that human beings, as spiritual beings, enjoy to God and specifically the Son in terms of their cognitive power. This power enables them to think of any item they like or may encounter in the world. Through reason, consequently, human beings can in principle encompass all created things and the whole of the created order.⁸⁶³ As the Summa puts it, ‘all natures are united in the human.’⁸⁶⁴

According to the Summa, ‘the soul is a likeness to all things’ not only in the sense that it is capable of knowing all things but also because it has something in common with all beings.⁸⁶⁵ Thus, human beings are similar to the earth through the sense, to water through

⁸⁶² Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, Q2, T1, C4, Ar2, Ad objecta 1 (n. 15), 32: Human beings are an express likeness of the image of God, the Son.

⁸⁶³ Vol. 3, Tr 1, Qu 2, Tit 1, Qu 2, Memb 2, Ch 1, Respondeo, 34.

⁸⁶⁴ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, Q2, T1, C2, 3 (n. 17), 36: *Omnes enim naturae uniuntur in homine.*

⁸⁶⁵ Vol. 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q1, VI (n. 321), 387: *Anima est omnium similitudo.* Vol. 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q1, Solutio 1 (n. 321), 388: *[Anima] convenit enim cum substantiis corporeis inanimatis in esse, licet non in corporeitate, cum animatis in vita, cum sensibilibus in sensu, et ex parte incorporearum cum angelis in intellect cum Deo, sive...in intelligentia* (The soul has something in common with inanimate corporeal substances in being, albeit not in being corporeal itself; with animated beings in life, with sensible beings in sense, with angels insofar as it is incorporeal and in the intellect or intelligence, with God).

imagination, to air through reason, to the skies through the intellect, to the heaven of heavens through intelligence; to stones through essence, to trees through life, to animals through sense and imagination, to other humans through reason, to angels through intellect, to God through intelligence.⁸⁶⁶

This is why the Summa insists not only that all natures can be united in the human mind but also that all bodies are ordered to the human body, namely, because the human being has something in common with all bodies.⁸⁶⁷ Lest we jump too quickly to the conclusion that the human being is the only viable candidate for union with God, however, the Summa considers another option, namely, that the whole universe is most fittingly united with God. To set up this discussion, it distinguishes between three kinds of world:⁸⁶⁸ there is the archetypal or intelligible world that exists in the mind of God, that is, the Son. And here is the actual sensible world we know and experience every day. But this itself is two-fold.

⁸⁶⁶ Vol. 2.1, In4, Tr1, S1, Q1, Respondeo VI (n. 321), 385: *Similis est terrae per sensum, aquae per imaginationem, aeri per rationem, firmament per intellectum, caelorum caelo per intelligentiam; similis est lapidibus per essentiam, arboribus per vitam, animalibus per sensum et imaginationem, hominibus per rationem, angelis per intellectum, Deo per intelligentiam.*

⁸⁶⁷ Vol. 3, Tr 1, Qu 4, Tit 1, Dist 2, Ch 2, Responsio 2 (n. 33), 52: *Ad corpus humanum ordinatur omnia corpora, nec est aliquod corpus in universe cum quo non conveniat; propterea cum sit ultimum corporum in genere corporum, immediate se habet ad Deum et ideo unibile est* (All bodies are ordained to the human body, with which all things in the universe have something in common. Therefore as the human body is the ultimate in the genus of bodies, it is immediately related to God and unitable to him).

⁸⁶⁸ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, Q2, T1, C2, 2 (n. 17), 36: *Triplex est mundus, scilicet archetypus...et iste est mundus intelligibilis; item est mundus sensibilis vel sensibilis, et iste est duplex, scilicet maior et minor: maior est universum, minor est ipse homo...homo omnis creatura dicitur, quia homo habet convenientiam cum omni creatura. Sed minor mundus magis elongatur a archetypo et minus accedit ad ipsum quam maior mundus, cum dicatur diminutive respectu maioris mundi.*

First, there is the macrocosm (*maior mundus*) which is the whole of the universe, and then there is the microcosm (*minor mundus*), or the human being that has a likeness to all creatures in virtue of being bodily and spiritual. This distinction between macrocosm-microcosm was as old as some of the oldest Greek philosophy and patristic theology and continued to be popular in the Middle Ages, largely thanks to the transmission of Greek ideas to the west through Calcidius and Macrobius, among others like Martianus Capella and Boethius.⁸⁶⁹ Despite the strong case that can be made that God is most unitable to the human being, this distinction is invoked by the Summa to show that there are some compelling reasons, listed below, why the universe is most appropriately united to God:

1. A universal effect is better assimilated to a universal cause than a particular effect. But God is a universal cause, and the universe a universal effect, while the human being is a particular effect; therefore, the universe is more assimilated to God than a human being and thus is more unitable to him.
2. Although human beings as microcosms can in principle contain the universe through reason, the macrocosm is more directly related to God's understanding of the world, as he created it, than a human being's understanding of it, as a mere microcosm. Thus, the universe is more unitable to God than the human being.
3. What is good is perfected by goodness; therefore a particular good is perfected by a particular goodness, and a universal good by a universal goodness. As a human being is a particular good, it is perfected by a particular good, and the universe by a universal one. But the highest good is a universal good. Therefore it is more unitable with the highest goodness.

⁸⁶⁹ Rudolf Allers, 'Microcosmus: From Anaximandrosto Paracelsus', *Traditio* 2 (1944), 319-408.

In typical scholastic fashion, the Summa then presents a number of further points on the other side of the argument:

1. Human beings are universal and one, given that all natures can be in principle united cognitively in the human mind. However, the universe consists of a vast multiplicity of beings. Since God as the universal cause of all things is one, human beings are closer and more unitable to him than the universe.
2. The universe is composed of multiple natures, while human beings have just one nature. As God is one, he is more unitable to humans than to the universe.
3. Although the universe is more like God in a quantitative sense because it is universal as he is, the human being, though an individual, is more like God in a qualitative sense because all natures can be united in it.⁸⁷⁰

After considering these various arguments, the early Franciscans ultimately conclude that the human being rather than the universe is most fit for union with God. This is because a manifold effect like the universe is not properly united to a unified cause unless it is assimilated to a unified nature like the human being, possessing the unifying power of rationality.⁸⁷¹ While the universe may be considered a greater likeness to the archetypal world if we think only in terms of where it is most widely diffused, the human being is a better likeness because it is a better expression of the way in which all beings are united in

⁸⁷⁰ Vol 3. Inq 1, Tract 1, Qu 2, Tit 1, Memb 2, Ch 2, Ad objecta 1 (n. 17), 37.

⁸⁷¹ Vol 3. Inq 1, Tract 1, Qu 2, Tit 1, Memb 2, Ch 2, Respondeo (n. 17), 37: *Concedendum est quod universum non est unibile Deo, sed homo, quia effectui multiplicato non debet uniri unitas causae simplicissimae, nisi reducatur in unitatem naturae.*

the mind of the Son.⁸⁷² On account the mind's power to unify all things cognitively, the Summa goes even further to say that all creatures are ultimately ordered to the human being, who can contemplate a mental likeness to any one of them.⁸⁷³

Amongst creatures, moreover, human beings are ultimate, because they alone are capable of knowing things as God knows them in himself as their source, that is, in relation to their divine models or exemplars.⁸⁷⁴ Because human beings are oriented to God, in summary,

⁸⁷² Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, Q2, T1, C2, Ad objecta 2 (n. 17), 37: *Dicendum quod similitudo mundi archetypi potest dupliciter repraesentari in mundo sensibili: vel magis diffuse, vel magis expresse. Si magis diffuse sic magis repraesentatur in universo: magis vero expresse repraesentatur in homine in quo repraesentatur unitas in natura, et secundum modum personae Filii Dei, qui dicitur mundus archetypus.*

⁸⁷³ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, Q2, T1, M2, C1, 4 (n. 16), 35: *Magis accredit anima ad Deum quam angelus quoad hoc: quoniam homo est ultima creatura et ultima in ordine universi et finis aliarum creaturarum, quod non angelus, et ita unibilior, quia magis accedens.* SH, Vol. 3, Tr 1, Qu 4, Tit 1, Dist 2, Ch 2, Responsio 1 (n. 33), 52; cf. Vol. 3, Tr 1, Qu 4, Tit 1, Dist 2, Ch 2, Responsio 2 (n. 33), 52: *Ad corpus humanum ordinantur omnia corpora, nec est aliquod corpus in universo cum quo non conveniat; propterea cum sit ultimum corporum in genere corporum, immediate se habet ad Deum et ideo unibile est.* Vol 2.1, In1, Tr2, Q4, C3 (n. 88), 111: *utrum omnia sint ordinata ad hominem.* Vol 2.1, 416-17: *all things ordered to the human soul.*

⁸⁷⁴ Vol 3. Inq 1, Tract 1, Qu 1, Tit 1, Dist. 1, Respondeo 2 (n. 10), 26: *Dicendum quod quaedam est distantia essentialis rei ad rem, et hoc modo infinita est distantia naturae divinae ad naturam creatam. Alia est distantia rerum secundum esse ordinis, et haec non est infinita creaturae ad Creatorem. Et secundum istam minus distat homo a Deo quam aliqua alia creatura, quia ultimum corpus in natura est corpus humanum, communicans cum omni corpore in natura; similiter ultima forma in natura est anima raionalis, et inde est quod omnia alia ordinantur ad hominem, et ideo est propinquior Deo, et ita est ei unibilis* (Furthermore, there is an essential difference between two things, and in this way, the distance between the divine and created natures is infinite. Yet there is also a distance according to order, and here there is not an infinite distance between creature and Creator. Indeed, according to this type of distance, the distance between humanity and God is less than that of any other creature, because the ultimate body in nature is the human body, which has something in common

and all beings are oriented to human beings, all beings are ordered through humans to God.⁸⁷⁵ As a result, the human being is the obvious creature with which the Son would become united for the sake of uniting himself to every particular being. For this is the only particular form of being that can virtually encompass all others. This marriage of the universal and the particular is the feat Christ accomplished at his Incarnation, which the Summa regards as fitting regardless of sin for the reasons outlined below.⁸⁷⁶

Fitting Reasons for the Incarnation

1. Dionysius says in *Divine Names* 4 that, ‘the good is diffusive of its being’. Thus, we say that in the divine, the Father diffuses his goodness in the Son through generation. From both, moreover, there is a diffusion of the Holy Spirit through procession. This diffusion in the Trinity is the highest diffusion, where creatures do not exist.

Where creatures do exist, however, if the highest good did not diffuse itself in creatures, one could think of a greater diffusion than that of God [i.e. within the Trinity]. If therefore God should be understood as the highest diffusion because he is the highest good, it is most fitting that he should diffuse himself in creatures; but this diffusion cannot be understood as highest, unless he is united to creatures.⁸⁷⁷ Therefore, it is fitting that God is united to creatures and

with all bodies in nature. Likewise, the ultimate form in nature is the rational soul, whereby all other things are ordained to to human kind and therefore [the human kind] is closer to God, such that it is unitable to him).

⁸⁷⁵ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, Q2, T1, C2, c (n. 17), 37: *Mundus factus est propter hominem, et homo propter Deum; si ergo rerum universitas ad hominem ordinatur et per hominem ad Deum, immediatius et propinquius se habet homo ad Deum quam universum.*

⁸⁷⁶ Vol 3, Tr1, Q2, T2 (n. 23), 41ff.

⁸⁷⁷ Walter Principe, *Alexander of Hales’ Theology of the Hypostatic Union* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1967), 84: on the ‘supralapsarianism’ of Alexander of Hales in his *Quaestiones* 15, 46.

above all to human beings. As a result, man would have been united to the highest good even if there had not been a lapse.⁸⁷⁸

2. There is no perfection except in God, and the rational creature is entirely able to be perfected; but the rational creature, which is the human being, has two powers of cognition, sensitive and intellectual and has love in both; if therefore the whole person can be perfected, therefore this is also possible according to sense and according to intellect. Therefore it is necessary that in God both [sense and intellect] are beatified. But in God, considered according to his proper nature, the senses cannot be perfected, but only the intellect, because the senses are not beatified except in the senses or what is corporeal. Therefore, if the whole human must be perfected in God, such that it is necessary for God to become corporeal and sensible; but it is not fitting that he assume any corporeal nature whatever but only the human nature [which is comprised of body and soul].⁸⁷⁹

⁸⁷⁸ Vol 3, Tr1, Q2, T2, a (n. 23), 41: *Dicit Dionysius: 'Bonum est diffusivum sui esse'; sicut nos dicimus quod in divinis Pater diffundit suam bonitatem in Filium per generationem et ab utroque est diffusio in Spiritum Sanctum per processionem, et haec diffusio est in Trinitate et haec est summa diffusio, creatura non existente. Ergo si summum bonum, existente creatura, non se diffundit in creaturam, adhuc erit cogitare maiorem diffusionem quam diffusionem eius. Si ergo eius debet esse summa diffusio quia est summum bonum, convenientius est quod se diffundat in creatura; sed haec diffusio non potest intelligi summa, nisi ipse uniatur creaturae; ergo convenit quod Deus uniatur creaturae et maxime humanae; ergo posito quod ipsa non esset lapsa, adhuc ei uniretur summum bonum.*

⁸⁷⁹ Vol 3, Tr1, Q2, T2, b (n. 23), 41: *Non est beatitudo nisi in Deo, item creatura rationalis tota est beatificabilis; sed creatura rationalis, quae est homo, habet duplicem cognitionem, scilicet, sensitivam et intellectivam, et habet delectationem in utraque; si igitur tota est beatificabilis, ergo et secundum sensum et secundum intellectum; ergo oportet quod in Deo beatificetur quantum ad utrumque. Sed in Deo, secundum se considerando et in propria natura, non potest beatificari sensus, sed solus intellectus, quia non beatificatur vel delectatur sensus nisi in sensibili solum sive in eo quod corporale est; si ergo totus homo debet beatificari in*

3. Likewise, if one comes to understand three persons in one substance, and conversely, three substances in one person, then between those two [options] there are three persons and three substances. If therefore one extreme is in the nature of things, namely, three persons in one substance, as in the Trinity, and there is the medium, as in the case of three persons in three substances, as demonstrated by three men or three angels, therefore one must posit a third, namely, one person in three substances.⁸⁸⁰ But this cannot happen except through the union of the divine nature to the human, because in no other creature can one posit two substances as in the human being, namely, the spiritual and the corporeal, or body and soul; likewise, no creature is able to perfect man or to be united with him, because an angel is not able, as man according to his superior part is equal to an angel. Therefore it is fitting that there should be a union of the divine nature and the human nature in a unity of person in order that there might be perfection in the totality of things: as there are three persons in one nature and three persons in three natures, so there should be three natures in one person, namely, divine, body, and soul.⁸⁸¹

Deo, oportet Deum esse corporalem et sensibilem; sed non est conveniens ut assumat quamlibet corporalem naturam, sed solum humanam.

⁸⁸⁰ Walter Principe, *Alexander of Hales*, 83: as God is the unity of nature in several persons, so Christ is the unity of person in diverse natures. Alexander discusses this topic in his Gloss I, 31, 32b, p. 315; and states that the union most fittingly occurs in the human being in his *Quaestiones* 15, 48, 208-9.

⁸⁸¹ Vol 3, Tr1, Q2, T2, c (n. 23), 41: *Contingit intelligere tres personas in unitate substantiae, et ex opposito tres substantias in unitate personae, et inter haec duo tres personas in tribus substantiis. Si ergo unum extremorum est in rerum natura, videlicet tres personae in una substantia, ut in Trinitate, et medium, ut tres personae in tribus substantiis, demonstratis tribus hominibus vel angelis, vel una persona in Trinitate, uno angelo in homine, ergo contingit ponere tertium, videlicet unam personam in tribus substantiis. Sed hoc non potest fieri nisi per unionem divinae naturae ad humanam, quia in nulla alia creatura est ponere duas substantias quam in*

4. We find a unity of nature in three persons, and this is due to the perfection of nature, as in God. Furthermore, we find a unity of person in multiple natures, as in the human being. If therefore it pertains to the perfection of nature to exist in multiple persons, therefore it will also pertain to the perfection of person to be able to exist in multiple natures. If therefore what is most perfect is always attributed to God, as regards both nature and person, then the divine person will be able to be in multiple natures. But this cannot be posited from eternity, because multiple natures cannot be from eternity; therefore, there is a certain divine person who exists in multiple natures in time. But this is not possible unless he is united to a creature nature. Therefore it befits the demonstration of the perfection in the divine personality that the divine nature be united to the created nature in the divine person. But this does not befit just any created nature, but only the human nature; nor does it befit any person of the Trinity but only the Son. Therefore it remains that regardless of the lapse of human nature, this union fittingly occurs in the person of the Son.⁸⁸²

homine, scilicet spirituales et corporales, ut animam et corpus; similiter nulla creatura potest hominem perficere ita quod uniatur cum illa, quia angelus hoc non potest cum homo secundum partem superiorem sit angelo aequalis. Convenit ergo quod sit unio divinae naturae ad humanam in unitate personae ut sit in rerum universitate perfectio, ut sicut tres personae in una natura et tres personae in tribus naturis, ita tres naturae in una persona, scilicet divinitas, corpus, et anima.

⁸⁸² Vol 3, Tr1, Q2, T2, d (n. 23), 41: *Nos invenimus unitatem naturae in tribus personis, et hoc est de perfectione naturae, ut in Deo; item, nos invenimus unitatem personae in pluribus naturis, ut in homine. Si ergo de perfectione naturae est quod est in pluribus personis, ergo et de perfectione personae erit quod potest esse in pluribus naturis. Si ergo semper quod est perfectius est Deo tribuendum quantum ad naturam et quantum ad personam, sicut divina natura est ens in pluribus personis, ita divina persona erit potens esse in pluribus naturis. Sed hoc non potest poni ab aeterno, quia plures naturae non possunt esse ab aeterno; est ergo aliqua divina persona in pluribus naturis ex tempore; sed hoc non est possibile nisi uniatur naturae creatae; convenit*

The arguments presented above are quite dense and sophisticated; but they can be summarized succinctly as follows. The first states that God as the supreme good diffuses himself, because it is proper to what is good to give or share goodness, which cannot be withheld by any good being worthy of the name. He does this within himself, amongst the members of the Trinity. But where creatures exist, he must also do it outside himself, in creatures, lest there be a greater diffusion of goodness than his own. According to the second argument, this diffusion must happen by way of union to a human being. This is because human beings have all the faculties of other creatures along with the rational faculty that makes it possible in principle to think of all other creatures. For God to be united to a human therefore is for him to be virtually united to all things.

The third reason holds that if there are three persons in one substance, as in the Trinity, and three persons in three substances, as in the case of three humans, then there must be a middle way, which involves one person in three substances. This cannot happen unless through the union of the divine nature to the human nature, which involves spiritual and corporeal substances or body and soul. Similarly, the fourth reason argues that if there is unity of nature in three persons, as in the Triune God, and unity of person in multiple natures, as in the human being, then there should also be a person that is able to exist in multiple natures, namely, divine and human.

As these arguments suggest, the Summa does not here go so far as to affirm that the Son would have become incarnate regardless of sin *necessarily*. Presumably, it avoids

igitur ad ostensionem perfectionis in personalitate divina, quod uniatur divina natura naturae creatae in persona divina; sed non convenit cuilibet, sed solum humanae, nec etiam cuilibet personae in Trinitate nisi soli Filio; relinquitur ergo quod, circumscripto lapsu humanae naturae, adhuc est convenientia unionis in persona Filii.

drawing this conclusion explicitly on the grounds that it is impossible to speculate as to God's will regarding a pristine world that is unknown to us. Indeed, it is only possible to think in terms of necessities with regard to the world order that actually exists. Nevertheless, the Summa's arguments from fittingness in this section quite strongly support the conclusion that God's primary intention in becoming Incarnate was to establish his place as the centre of everything by joining himself to the one being, to air, the human being, to whom all beings are ordered and through whom he can be joined to all beings, thereby achieving their completion and perfection. Any effect of the Incarnation aside from or in addition to this was merely incidental.

A New Reason for the Incarnation

Although there is some sense in which the Summa's account of the necessary reasons for the Incarnation, to do with human atonement, can be traced loosely back to Anselm, the introduction of this 'supra-lapsarian' position, whereby Christ would have become Incarnate regardless of sin, finds no medieval precedent to speak of. It is one of the most noteworthy Franciscan innovations, which would come to play an increasingly significant and central role in Franciscan incarnation theories, as already mentioned above with reference to Duns Scotus, not to mention in early modern theology.

While supra-lapsarianism can be joined in principle with a variety of atonement theories, its combination with penal substitution in the early Franciscan context is worth noting in concluding this discussion, in light of certain objections that have been raised against the theory by contemporary theologians. On these accounts, it has been argued, the Father seemingly takes pleasure in turning an innocent man over to death in order to appease

his wrath against sinners.⁸⁸³ Moreover, the Son appears excessively willing to oblige in this regard. He evidently comes to earth out of a sadistic death wish.⁸⁸⁴

Although this may be the case in some penal theories, I would argue that the Franciscan affirmation of an ‘Incarnation anyways’ provides a sort of ‘escape hatch’ through which the Summists pre-emptively evade these potential objections to their understanding of Christ’s penal work. As we have seen, Christ’s primary reason for coming to earth in their view was simply to consummate his relationship with all creation. The reason he took on a human rather than another form is that human beings have the ability in principle to think about the infinite variety of all the things God has made, an ability the Son of God possesses in actuality in virtue of his own infinity.

For Christ to be united to human nature was therefore for him to be united virtually with all of creation. Of course, uniting himself to human nature under the circumstances of sin, which were not part of his original design, did require an adjustment on the human side of Christ’s experience, insofar as it necessitated that Christ take on the fallen human condition. As a result of this, Christ inevitably experienced suffering and death, which had become part of the natural course of human life in the wake of sin. Nevertheless, we cannot say that Christ was sent or came specifically to die on the early Franciscan account. This level of external determination regarding the events surrounding his death simply did not exist, precisely because the only reason for the Incarnation was ever to perfect and complete

⁸⁸³ Kathryn Tanner, ‘Incarnation, Cross, and Sacrifice: A Feminist-Inspired Reappraisal,’ *Anglican Theological Review* 86:1 (2004), 37.

⁸⁸⁴ Gerard O’Collins, *Jesus Our Redeemer*, 167, citing E. Käsemann, *Jesus Means Freedom* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970), 114.

creation.⁸⁸⁵ The redemption of humanity from sin was merely an additional benefit of fulfilling this overarching purpose.

When the sections of the *Summa* that delineate its penal elements are read in this light, penal substitution and supra-lapsarianism emerge as non-separable moments in its account of the Incarnation, as a result of which the objectionable aspects of penal theory seemingly lose their weight.⁸⁸⁶ Notwithstanding contemporary theological arguments to the contrary, early Franciscan thinkers illustrate, through their combined account of the necessary and fitting reasons for the Incarnation, that penal substitution theory is not beyond redemption.

Conclusion

The question that remains at the end of this analysis concerns why the Franciscans might have found the aforementioned theories especially attractive. One possible reason for the newfound interest in penal substitution may have been the growing penitential culture at the time.⁸⁸⁷ After Lateran IV, individuals were required to attend confession at least once a year, where they received instruction on how to do penance for their wrongdoings. The growth of the genre of confessors' manuals, which enumerated a wide range of sins and their

⁸⁸⁵ Kathryn Tanner, 'Incarnation, Cross, and Sacrifice,' 43. Gerard O'Collins, *Jesus Our Redeemer*, 159.

⁸⁸⁶ I am grateful to Corey Barnes for suggesting this phraseology to me.

⁸⁸⁷ Thomas Jude Jarosz, 'Sacramental Penance in Alexander of Hales' Glossa,' *Franciscan Studies* 29 (1969): 302-346. Alexander Murray, *Conscience and Authority in the Medieval Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 49-86.

remedies, is one of the likely reasons why the Halensian Summists themselves devote an entire volume to listing countless kinds of sin.⁸⁸⁸

The early Franciscans, who were preachers and confessors before they were theologians, were concerned to facilitate the penitence of parishoners and further the life of a church that was struggling to keep them. Thus, we will see in the next chapter that they outlined a very detailed account of the divine commands, the observance of which can curb and compensate for sin. The transgression of these commands called for acts of penance which it was one of the friars' primary functions to assign, along with administering the Eucharist. While other sacraments like baptism and marriage were undertaken within the parish context, the Holy See had come increasingly to rely upon the friars as confessors who enabled the fulfilment of the Lateran IV mandates.⁸⁸⁹

This primary focus of the friars is reflected in volume four of the Summa, on the sacraments; in the Cologne edition, this text runs 845 pages, 399 of which are devoted to penance, 262 to the Eucharist, and the remainder to other topics.⁸⁹⁰ Naturally, the increasing emphasis on the recompense human beings had to make for personal sins anticipated the development of an account of the way that Christ had already done so. While Anselm had seen satisfaction as a way of honouring God which makes recompense for the dishonor that has been shown him through sin, satisfaction was coming to be understood as a means of

⁸⁸⁸ J. Longère, 'Quelques *Summae de paenitentia* à la fin du XII^e et au début du XIII^e siècle,' *La piété populaire au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale. 1977), 45-58. P. Michaud-Quantin, 'Les Méthodes de la pastorale du XIII^e au XV^e siècle,' *Miscellanea Mediaevalia* (Berlin, 1970), 76-91. P. Michaud-Quantin, *Sommes de casuistique et manuels de confession au Moyen Âge (XII^e-XVI^e siècles)* (Louvain-Lille-Montreal, 1962).

⁸⁸⁹ Norman Tanner, 'Pastoral Care: The Fourth Lateran Council of 1215,' 112-25 and Michael Robson, 'A Ministry of Preachers and Confessors: The Pastoral Impact of the Friars,' 126-47, in *A History of Pastoral Care*, ed. Gillian Evans (London: Continuum, 2000),

⁸⁹⁰ I am grateful to Timothy J. Johnson for drawing this to my attention.

cleansing oneself from the guilt of sin, which is something that had to be accomplished through Christ's undergoing the punishment for sin.

On another level, there is no denying that one of if not the most significant aspects of the Franciscan ethos concerns its emphasis on the suffering and self-sacrifice of Christ as a model for the Christian way of life. For Francis, in fact, Christ's passion was the key to conveying the fundamentally self-giving nature of God to humanity: by suffering in his human life, Christ witnessed to the extent of God's love which had been poured into creation. In this light, it is not surprising that the Halensian Summists laid such a major emphasis not only the suffering of Christ and his ability to empathize with our suffering, but also on Christological questions in general, which absorb a relatively large amount of space by comparison to Dominican sources.⁸⁹¹ That is not even to mention the more general interest at the time in the veneration of the passion and death of Christ, which may have enhanced the attractiveness of penal theory in the minds of the Summists.⁸⁹²

Further to this, there is the matter of the Summa's 'supra-lapsarianism', or inclination towards the view that Christ would have become Incarnate regardless of human sin. Here, the correlation is clearly detectable between early Franciscan doctrine and Francis' own vision of the world, in which all creatures are regarded as brothers and sisters to us, like Christ, who reveal some aspect of God's nature in the world. For this vision, Francis has garnered the title of patron saint of animals and ecology, and as such, the Franciscan notion that Christ came primarily to complete and perfect creation is hardly surprising. Since all things have been made by him, and he is in a sense, every creature, the way in which we treat creatures reflects

⁸⁹¹ Kent Emery, Jr. and Joseph Wawrykow (eds), *Christ Among the Medieval Dominicans* (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998).

⁸⁹² Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

the way we would treat Christ. Thus, the supra-lapsarian doctrine perfectly encapsulates Francis' belief that all creatures deserve our care and respect, regardless of their size or apparent significance. This belief, rather than a tendency routinely to follow authorities like Anselm, is ultimately what inspired the novelty that is the Franciscan doctrine of the reasons for the Incarnation.

11. MORAL THEOLOGY

The late medieval Franciscan thinker William of Ockham is often heralded as the first to formulate a full-blown moral theory that turns on obedience to divine commands.⁸⁹³ Well before his time, however, the Halensian Summists had offered the first Franciscan statement of this theory, in what represented a significant departure at the time from the more common focus on moral virtues and vices, such as can be found in earlier contemporaries like Peter of Poitiers, Prepositinus, Philip the Chancellor, William of Auxerre, and Roland of Cremona.⁸⁹⁴ According to recent critics, the divine command theories that eventually usurped such theories exhibit a decided tendency to undermine personal moral autonomy and thus responsibility.

⁸⁹³ A version of this chapter has been published in Lydia Schumacher, 'Divine Command Theory in Early Franciscan Thought: A Response to the Autonomy Objection,' *Studies in Christian Ethics* (2016), 1-16. Bonnie Kent, *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995). See also Servais Pinckaers, *The Sources of Christian Ethics* (London: Continuum, 1995), 240-79, which explains how laws, rules, and commands came to feature more than virtue and happiness under nominalism. In the early modern period, a secular counterpart to divine command theory eventually emerged in the form of deontology, or an ethic which prescribes adherence to duties and laws.

⁸⁹⁴ *Petri Pictaviensis Sententiarum libri quinque*, ed. Dom Hugh Mathoud, Paris 1655, reprinted in PL 211, 789-1280. Ph. Moore, *The Works of Peter of Poitiers: Master in Theology and Chancellor of Paris (1193-1205)* (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1936). G. Lacombe, *Prepositini Cancelarii Parisiensis (1206-1210)* (Caen: Le Soulchoir, 1927). William of Auxerre was the first to incorporate a discussion of natural law, usually treated in exclusively legal treatises, into a theological account of the virtues, which nonetheless took priority, as O. Lottin observes in *Psychologie et morale aux XII et XIIIe siècles*, Tome II, Première Part (Louvain: Abbaye du Mont César, 1948), 75. For an example of the focus on virtue and vices, see Roland of Cremona, *Summae Magistri Rolandi Cremonensis, O.P. Liber Tercius* (Bergamo: Umberto Midali, 2017).

After all, they render morality a matter of merely following arbitrary regulations, which must be accepted unquestioningly from an authoritative source. On this assumption, recent philosophers and theologians—Alasdair MacIntyre most famously—have sought to recover the traditional ethic of virtue which prevailed in some form not only in the aforementioned thinkers but also for much of the earlier medieval period.⁸⁹⁵ In most cases, this kind of ethic assists adherents in cultivating a personal moral disposition that makes it possible to act virtuously in a wide range of unpredictable circumstances.

As such, it affirms the role of the moral agent in moral adjudication in a way that duty and divine command theories supposedly fail to do. Though the rehabilitation of virtue theory may be a worthwhile undertaking, this chapter will demonstrate that there is a way to elucidate divine command theory which is not susceptible to the so-called ‘autonomy objection’ described above. This way can be found in the *Summa Halensis*, and perhaps indeed in later Franciscan thinkers like Ockham, though demonstrating that is more controversial and less straightforward.⁸⁹⁶

As we will shortly discover, the authors of the *Summa* regarded God’s commands—administered initially through the Mosaic Law and subsequently through the Law of the Gospel—as the arbiters of the Christian moral life. For them, however, these divine laws or commands are no arbitrary rulings but remain fully intelligible in terms of the natural law that is innately known to all human beings—an aspect that some have regarded as missing in

⁸⁹⁵ G.E.M. Anscombe initiated the discussion in her landmark article, ‘Modern Moral Philosophy,’ *Philosophy* 33:124 (1958), 1-19. Alasdair MacIntyre became more famous for raising this concern in his, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (London: Duckworth, 2007).

⁸⁹⁶ Edward Wierenga, ‘A Defensible Divine Command Theory,’ *Nous* 17:3 (Sept. 1983), 387-407. Thomas M. Osborne, Jr., ‘Ockham as a Divine-Command Theorist,’ *Religious Studies* 41:1 (March 2005), 1-22.

Ockham's account.⁸⁹⁷ This law simultaneously engrains in human minds the eternal law of God that is expressed in the Law of Moses and in the Gospel.

Thus, the natural law offers access to the rationale behind divine commands, which human beings on this account can weigh and consider for themselves. According to the *Summa Halensis*, this capacity for comprehending the commands is complemented by a complete freedom of the will to obey or disobey them. So construed, no moral act can be conceived as the mere fulfillment of an arbitrary duty. Rather, it is the product of a completely free choice to perform or decline to perform an act about which one is capable of adjudicating for oneself, that is, autonomously, and for which one therefore remains fully responsible.

In order to make this case, I will assess the tractate on law that can be found in the so-called *Summa Halensis*. Whereas the precise author of different sections of the *Summa* is sometimes difficult to determine, scholarship has succeeded in establishing that John of La Rochelle was the author of the treatise on law, large swaths of which simply reproduce his personal writings on this topic, which have recently been edited.⁸⁹⁸ In order to throw the

⁸⁹⁷ Marilyn McCord Adams' riposte to this position in 'The Structure of Ockham's Moral Theory,' *Franciscan Studies* 46 (1986), 1-35. See also Riccardo Saccenti's survey of the doctrine of natural law in the middle ages and the Franciscan tradition in *Debating Medieval Natural Law: A Survey* (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 2016).

⁸⁹⁸ The tractate on law in the *Summa Halensis* is heavily based on John's *Summa de praeceptis et consiliis*. See Victorin Doucet, 'Prolegomena in librum III necnon in libros I et II Summa Fratris Alexandri,' *Doctoris Irrefragibilis Alexandri de Hales Summa Theologica* (Florence: Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1948), 211-13, 300. The most recent and most substantial study of this material is by Michael Basse (ed.), *Summa theologica Halensis: De legibus et praeceptis: Lateinischer Text mit Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018). See also the important studies of this text by the following: Aloysius Obiwulu, *Tractatus de Legibus in Thirteenth-Century Scholasticism: A Critical Study and Interpretation of Law in Summa Fratris Alexandri*,

distinctiveness of his Franciscan approach to Christian ethics into relief, I will begin with a brief comparison of the Summa's structure and content to the more familiar text of Aquinas' Summa, which offers the most mature and well-known statement of Christian virtue ethics. Although Aquinas' Summa post-dates the Summa Halensis, the fact that it offers the most developed version of the alternative way of thinking that dominated previously makes it the most useful text for throwing the uniqueness and innovative ness into relief.

The Summa Halensis vs. the Summa Theologiae

Similar to Aquinas' Summa, the Franciscan Summa is divided into three main parts, where the second part is itself divided into first and second parts. However, the similarities between the two texts largely end there. For while Part I of Aquinas' Summa treats God, creation, angels, and humanity, the Franciscan Summa deals only with the doctrine of God. Part 2.1 of Aquinas' Summa discusses the human end, acts, passions, habits, vice and sin, law and grace—or matters preliminary to virtue ethics--before dealing with the three theological and four cardinal virtues in Part 2.2. By contrast, the Franciscan Summa covers creation, angels, and humanity in Part 2.1 and provides an extensive catalogue of types of evil and sin in Part 2.2. The table of contents alone for this section alone runs over 25 pages.

Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas (Munster, 2003). Beryl Smalley, 'William of Auvergne, John of La Rochelle and Saint Thomas on the Old Law,' in Beryl Smalley, *Studies in Medieval Thought and Learning from Abelard to Wyclif* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1981), 121-211. M.V. Dougherty, 'Twenty Moral Dilemmas from Two Early Thirteenth-Century Summaries of Theology: William of Auxerre's *Summa aurea* and the Franciscan *Summa Halensiana*,' in *Moral Dilemmas in Medieval Thought From Gratian to Aquinas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

In order to capture the level of detail to which the Summists resort in discussing sin, it is worth rehearsing some of the principal topics addressed in Part 2.2, which contains three main sections, namely, on evil, on sin, and on particular species of sin. The latter section contains headings on ‘venial and mortal sins’, ‘sins of omission and commission’, sins of the heart, speech, and action’, ‘the seven capital vices’, ‘sins of infirmity, ignorance, and purpose’, ‘sins of fear and love’, ‘the sin of concupiscence’, and ‘sins against God, neighbours, and the self’. In these sections, the Summists provide a lengthy catalogue of sins, which is to my knowledge unmatched in literature from this period and probably reflects the key role Franciscans played as confessors. Aquinas’ brief segment on ‘vice and sin’ in his own *Summa* is certainly no comparison, although it is well known that his volume 2.2 circulated widely at the time, separate from other sections of the *Summa*, as an aid for confessors and moral teachers as well.

In Part 3 of the *Summa Theologiae*, finally, Aquinas covers the Incarnation and sacraments, whereas the Franciscan *Summa* describes the Incarnation, the divine laws that are designed to counteract sin—and their fulfilment in the gospel—as well as grace and faith. Though there are many more differences between the two texts than the basic ones mentioned above, even these are striking and clearly testify to very different theological and moral perspectives and priorities. As scholars have observed, for instance, Aquinas devoted an extraordinary level of attention to his discussion of moral virtue, giving it a central place in his theological scheme, with two whole parts of his four-part work covering matters preliminary to virtue ethics and the virtues themselves, respectively.⁸⁹⁹

By contrast, the early Franciscans commit a seemingly disproportionate amount of space to the extremely detailed enumeration of both human sins and the divine laws that have

⁸⁹⁹ Mark D. Jordan, ‘Aquinas Reading of Aristotle’s Ethics,’ in *Ad Litteram: Authoritative Texts and Their Medieval Readers*, ed. Mark D. Jordan and Kent Emery (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992).

been administered to curb them. In this regard, they certainly were not alone. Many scholars of the period devoted considerable attention to the Ten Commandments, particularly after the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 declared knowledge of the Decalogue, along with the creed and the Pater Noster, essential for all Christian persons, as part of a larger effort to reform both morals and orthodox beliefs which were being compromised at the time. In the wake of this development, a wave of literature on the Decalogue was produced, not least as a basis for preparing sermons.¹

Nevertheless, John's treatment, and that of his Franciscan contemporaries, is too extensive to be considered unexceptionable.⁹⁰⁰ Thus, one might suppose that the Franciscans had particular reasons, to do with their unique ethos as a religious order, for emphasizing divine commands. These reasons likely referred back, as in so many other cases, to the personality and prescriptions of Francis of Assisi. As has been detailed in chapter two, Francis proffered quite a literal interpretation of Scripture and what it means to imitate the life of Christ which is depicted there. For him, the literal imitation of Christ, made possible by the literal observance of the Franciscan rule, entailed obedience to strict and extremely specific rules and regulations concerning all aspects of ordinary as well as spiritual life.

Since what it means to live like and by the grace of Christ was construed in this way from the earliest days of the order's existence, it is hardly surprising that the first Franciscan

⁹⁰⁰ Bonaventure, *Collationes de decem praeceptis*, in *Opera Omnia* 5 (Florence: Quaracchi, 1891), trans. Paul J. Spaeth, *St Bonaventure's Collations on the Ten Commandments* (St Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute Press, 1995). Robert Grosseteste, *De Decem mandatis*, ed. Richard C. Dales and Edward B. King (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987). Lesley Smith, 'The *De decem mandatis* of Robert Grosseteste,' in *Robert Grosseteste and the Beginnings of a British Theological Tradition*, ed. M O'Carroll (Rome: Istituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 2003), 265-88. James McEvoy, 'Robert Grosseteste on the Ten Commandments,' *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale* 58 (1991), 167-205.

scholars would opt to advocate an already mainstream emphasis on divine commands. On account of this emphasis, the reader is hard pressed to find many references to the cardinal moral virtues, and discussion of the theological virtues is sparse and far from central. The only exception in this regard is the virtue of faith, which receives detailed coverage in a Part 3 treatise on ‘grace and faith’, which follows the treatise on divine laws—and in specific, the Ten Commandments and their relationship to the Gospel—and which closes the whole of the *Summa Halensis*.

For his part, in contrast, I have mentioned that Aquinas addressed the questions of grace and faith at the end and at the beginning of his Parts 2.1 and 2.2, respectively, covering the Old and New Laws only cursorily prior to his discussion of grace. Although Aquinas treats some of the same key theological topics as the Summists, such as grace, faith, and the law, consequently, the context in and extent to which he does so speaks volumes regarding the theological differences between them. As I have noted, Aquinas treats law and grace at the end of a section on preliminary matters pertaining to moral virtue. In his account, therefore, the law—whether divine or natural—is not incompatible with virtue. On the contrary, the law requires that human beings strive for the highest good, or what is best, and thus bear their lives and resources to the best of their abilities. Yet that is precisely what the virtues he subsequently discusses apparently make it possible to do.⁹⁰¹

When he discusses the Old (Mosaic) Law explicitly, Aquinas goes so far as to state that the whole purpose of that Law was to prescribe and make it possible to exhibit moral virtue.⁹⁰² As the grace dispensed through Christ now performs this function, at least in those who receive grace through faith, working through the other theological virtues of hope and

⁹⁰¹ Jean Porter, *The Recovery of Virtue: The Relevance of Aquinas for Christian Ethics* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1990), 79.

⁹⁰² Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 2.1.100.2.

love, that law is no longer needed. That is not to say that it has been abolished. As Aquinas notes, the Law of the Gospel contains the Old Law, precisely because it nurtures automatically the virtues that inhibit the transgression of the Law.⁹⁰³ For that very reason, however, he concludes that the Old Law has been rendered obsolete in practice, even though it remains theoretically valid.

For the Franciscan Summists, by contrast, law, grace, and faith are not preliminaries or conditions for the possibility of moral virtue, as they are for Aquinas. Rather, the law represents the whole substance of early Franciscan moral theology, where grace and faith respectively represent the divine and human contributions that render the fulfilment of the law possible. Thus, grace performs a very different function in Franciscan thought than it does in that of Aquinas. In his work, I have hinted, grace sets us up to the fulfil the law—which is simply to do whatever is morally appropriate in the circumstances.

Because the circumstances vary radically depending on who is acting, towards whom, when, why, where, and how, and what the relevant action entails, however, determining how to act rightly in various circumstances requires spontaneous judgement and thus a remarkable level of adaptability, which is made possible by moral virtue.⁹⁰⁴ Whatever the value of human laws and duties—which Aquinas by no means foreswears—they are no substitute for the necessary involvement of the moral agent who must decide what laws or rules even apply in any given case, and that agent's will to act according to duty. In that sense, the grace that supports the faith that enacts the theological virtues, which motivate moral virtue in ideal circumstances, is bound to have quite diverse and even highly individual ramifications.

Indeed, grace is operative anywhere anyone operates in the best interests of themselves and others. Thus, it is active variously depending on who is acting and what

⁹⁰³ *ST* 2.1.107.

⁹⁰⁴ *ST* 2.1.7.

action is involved. For the early Franciscans, by contrast, the function of grace is univocal: grace makes it possible for those with faith to fulfil the Mosaic Law. Where Aquinas spent hundreds of pages discussing the virtues, consequently, the early Franciscan Summists designate a 500-page section of their Summa to commenting on the nature and implications of the Mosaic Law. Thus it remains to examine more closely the Franciscan account of this Law, its fulfilment by the Gospel, its relationship to eternal and natural law, and ultimately, to the faith that is enlivened by grace.

Mosaic Law and the Law of the Gospel

In keeping with biblical and historical tradition, John of La Rochelle recognized three components of the Mosaic Law, as outlined in the Torah: the judicial and ceremonial precepts and the moral precepts provided in the Ten Commandments. Over half of John's section on the Mosaic Law is devoted to considering these Commandments, which are themselves spread across two tablets. In accordance with a longstanding tradition of dividing the commands which can be traced back to Augustine, the first three commandments belong on the first tablet and order the human soul to God, while the latter seven are listed on the second and order inter-personal relations.⁹⁰⁵

On John's argument, the 'ceremonial precepts depend on the mandates of the first tablet, which were all given to enable the worship of God and to keep human beings from

⁹⁰⁵ SH Vol 3, P2, In3, Tr1, Q3, C2, Ad objecta 1-3 (n. 270), 400: *Moralia primae tabulae ordinant animam ad Deum; moralia autem secundae tabulae ad proximum* (The moral laws of the first tablet ordain the soul to God' the moral laws of the second tablet ordain the soul to the neighbour). On the complex relationship between early Franciscans and Augustine, see Lydia Schumacher, *Divine Illumination: The History and Future of Augustine's Theory of Knowledge* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), especially chapters 3-4.

idolatry'⁹⁰⁶, whereas the judicial precepts were given 'for the purpose of preserving peace with others, and thus depend on the moral principles of the second tablet'.⁹⁰⁷ As John observes, however, these precepts are no longer necessary after Christ, who has provided conclusive justification for sin, that is, the failure to observe God's law, for which the ceremonial and judicial laws formerly provided merely provisional compensation.⁹⁰⁸

While it would be interesting to evaluate John's account of each divine command in detail, that inquiry would take us far beyond the scope of the present project. In this regard, it suffices to note that where preceding thinkers—following Origen—had tended to interpret the Decalogue exclusively in terms of what medieval thinkers described as the 'spiritual sense' of the text, that is, with regard to its allegorical, moral, or eschatological implications, John worked under the influence of his earlier contemporary, William of Auxerre (d. 1231), who had insisted on a completely literal reading of the commands.

Although 'William's analysis was too unusual to be wholly accepted, it was influential for both John of La Rochelle and Thomas Aquinas. John could not agree that every precept had a literal meaning, but he was prepared to admit that most of them did, and

⁹⁰⁶ Vol 3, P2, In3, Tr1, Q3, C2, Ad objecta 1-3 (n. 270), 400: *Omnia ceremonialia dependebant a mandatis primae tabulae, quia omnia erant data ad divinum cultum et ut homo revocaretur ab idololatria* (All ceremonial laws depend on the law of the first tablet, because they were all given to support the workshop of God and to deter human beings from idolatry).

⁹⁰⁷ Vol 3, P2, In3, Tr1, Q3, C2, Ad objecta 1-3 (n. 270), 400: *Iudicialia vero, quia erant ad conservandam pacem ad proximum, dependebant a moralibus secundae tabulae* (The judicial precepts, which are ordained to preserve peace with a neighbour, will depend on the moral laws of the second tablet).

⁹⁰⁸ Vol 3, P2, In3, Tr1, Q3, C2, Ad objecta 1-3 (n. 270), 400; cf. P2, In3, Tr1, Q5: *De iustificatione per legem* (On justification through the law), 406-12.

all were certainly comprehensible and thus observable in a spiritual sense.⁹⁰⁹ The combination of a literal and spiritual reading of the Commands presumably made it possible theoretically to counteract all the specific sins enumerated in Part 2.1 of the Summa. Thus, it remains to consider how early Franciscans like John perceived the role of those laws in combatting sin in the current dispensation, that is, in an order which is privy to the revelation of the Incarnate Son.

Needless to say, both Scripture and the Christian tradition teach that the Law of Moses was not abolished but fulfilled by the Gospel of Christ.⁹¹⁰ Yet there are different ways of understanding what this teaching means. In Reformation theology particularly, the debate about the relationship between the Law and the Gospel became a matter of some significance. Following John Calvin, the Reformed tradition has tended to acknowledge three uses of the Law.⁹¹¹ The first is the political or civil use, in which the Law is regarded as the means by which God has generally revealed principles by which believing as well as unbelieving individuals should live. The second is the pedagogical use, in which the Law makes us aware of our transgressions and points us to Christ. The third is the didactic use, exclusively reserved for believers, whereby the Law continues to instruct us in the way we should live, even though it cannot condemn us any longer.

Whereas the Lutheran tradition generally affirms the first two uses of the Law, many strands of this tradition have perceived the danger of a ‘works-based’ salvation lurking in the so-called ‘third use of the law’. The Catholic tradition, as represented by Aquinas, certainly

⁹⁰⁹ Lesley Smith, *The Ten Commandments: Interpreting the Bible in the Medieval World* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 38: see the chapters on God and neighbour for details about John’s exposition of each command.

⁹¹⁰ Mt. 5:17.

⁹¹¹ Christina Aus der Au, ‘Being Christian in the World: The *Tertius Usus Legis* as the Starting Point of a Reformed Ethic,’ *Studies in Christian Ethics* 28:2 (2015), 132-41.

acknowledges the significance of the Decalogue and assumes a literal reading of it as the basis for moral theology.⁹¹² Yet it moves relatively quickly from this foundation to a spiritual reading of the commandments as means of cultivating the theological and moral virtues.⁹¹³ Thus, there is disagreement when it comes to determining what it means to affirm that the Law is fulfilled, though not completely abolished, by the Gospel, and it is vital in any instance to investigate how exactly a particular school of thought construes the relationship between the two.

The early Franciscan focus on divine commands gives us reason to believe that the Gospel in this context is interpreted as that which literally enables believers to fulfil those commands in all their specificity, and thus to avoid committing any of a long list of sins. In Franciscan thought, in other words, there is already something like a ‘third use of the Law’. This claim is actually made explicitly in the very first chapter of the treatise on Mosaic Law, which considers ‘the uses of the law’.⁹¹⁴ There, John writes that ‘the law of Moses functions according to three reasons, by divine dispensation’.⁹¹⁵

First, the law was given in support of the natural law. Because there are seeds of justice in human nature, he elaborates, the Law was added by divine mercy, such that by its authority and teaching, the natural human proficiency for justice might bear fruit in just acts. In that sense, he argues, the natural law is included in the law of Moses, which renders that

⁹¹² Beryl Smalley, ‘William of Auvergne, John of La Rochelle and Saint Thomas on the Old Law.’

⁹¹³ See the discussion of the Decalogue in the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM.

⁹¹⁴ Vol 3, P2, In3, Tr1, Q1, C1 (n. 259), 366-9.

⁹¹⁵ Vol 3, P2, In3, Tr1, Q1, C1 (n. 259), 366: *Et secundum hoc lex Moysi decurrit secundum tres rationes divinae dispensationis*. Pars II, Inq IV, Tract 1, Qu 7, Respondeo (n. 559), 864: *Nota ergo quod lex naturalis est sicut semen, lex Moysi sicut herba supercrescens, Evangelium sicut fructus* (The natural law is like the seed, the law of Moses like the sprout, and the Gospel like the fruit).

law explicit. Secondly, the law was given to restrain sin. In other words, it was given to teach humanity what sin is and to deter us from it. Thirdly, the law was given in anticipation (*ad figurandam*) of the law of grace and to direct us towards it: it served as a sign of what it signified.⁹¹⁶

In that sense, John contends, the moral content of the law does not differ from that of the gospel. That is to say, the Law of the Gospel does not add new precepts to the Decalogue.⁹¹⁷ It only secures the justification that comes from obeying the Ten Commandments in a different way, namely, through Christ rather than through the observance of ceremonial and judicial precepts. Thus, the law of Moses is included in the Gospel just as fully as—we will see—the natural law is included in the Law of Moses itself.

This point is further substantiated in the Summa's treatise on 'The Law of the Gospel' (*de lege evangelica*), which follows the treatise on Mosaic Law. In this context, John makes his view of the relationship between the two laws manifestly clear in bolstering the contention that the 'law of the gospel and the law of Moses are one law in terms of their universal reason and diverse only in terms of their proper reasons'.⁹¹⁸ As he goes on to explain, a universal or common reason can either pertain to the source/cause or goal/end or to the sense of the law. The source is the same in the case of both laws because 'one God is the universal legislator of both the law and the gospel'.

⁹¹⁶ Vol 3, P2, In4, Tr1, Q7, Respondeo (n. 559), 864: *Comparatio est Legis et Evangelii sicut figurae et figurati sive signi et signati* (The Law and the gospel are compared as a figure and what is figured or a sign and what is signified).

⁹¹⁷ Vol 3, P2, In4, Tr1, Q8, Respondeo (n. 560), 866: *Quantum ad innovationem praeceptorum non addit Evangelium Legi*.

⁹¹⁸ Vol 3, P2, In4, Tr1, Q5, Respondeo (n. 547), 845: *Dicendum quod lex Evangelii et lex Moysi una lex est in ratione universali, diversae vero sunt in ratione propria*.

Moreover, the end of both laws is the same, namely, Christ, who perfects rather than destroys the law (*finis perficiens, non interficiens*) in the sense that he makes it possible actually to do those things the law imposes a duty to do.⁹¹⁹ Finally, the laws share a single sense because there is one universal truth, which, while expressed differently at different times, carries the same connotations.⁹²⁰ Nevertheless, the Summist acknowledges that the two laws differ in these three respects in terms of their proper reasons. As regards its source, for instance, the Mosaic law was given purely through humankind, while the gospel came through Christ.⁹²¹ With respect to ends, the Law serves to deter us from evil through fear, while the gospel motivates us to do good through love.⁹²² As regards senses, the laws differ in that the first is true in form, and the gospel is true in substance, and this insofar as it is ordered to the form.⁹²³

On these grounds, the Summist sums up that the law of Moses and of the Gospel are one law in universal terms, and only differ in specific terms because the former was given to carnal people, the latter to spiritual ones, the former to children, and the latter to the mature.⁹²⁴ Since these ‘formal’ differences do not make for a substantial difference between the two laws, however, those laws do not differ as contraries but only as entities which

⁹¹⁹ Vol 3, P2, In4, Tr1, Q5, Respondeo (n. 547), 846.

⁹²⁰ Vol 3, P2, In4, Tr1, Q5, Respondeo (n. 547), 846: *Unus sensus quia una universalis veritas* (One sense because one universal truth).

⁹²¹ Vol 3, P2, In4, Tr1, Q5, Respondeo (n. 547), 846: *Per comparisonem ad efficientem differt Lex et Evangelium quia Lex data est per hominem purum, Evangelium vero per Christum* (As regards its efficient cause, the Law differs from the Gospel because the Law is given through a pure man and the gospel through Christ).

⁹²² Vol 3, P2, In4, Tr1, Q5, Respondeo (n. 547), 846.

⁹²³ Ibid.

⁹²⁴ Ibid.

cannot be compared in terms of their proper reasons.⁹²⁵ In order to understand why this is so, we must turn to John's writings on the eternal and divine law, which precede the treatises on Mosaic law and the gospel.

Eternal and Natural Law

As recent scholarship has established, John of La Rochelle was the first theologian systematically to develop an account of the eternal law that exists above our minds, in the mind of God, for which he nonetheless drew inspiration from Augustine.⁹²⁶ According to John, this law is impressed upon our souls;⁹²⁷ and 'is that by which all things are ultimately ordained towards what is just.'⁹²⁸ Thus, both the Mosaic Law and the natural law are derived from the eternal law.⁹²⁹ In order to define the content, as it were, of the eternal law, consequently, John turns first to consider the natural law, to which the Mosaic Law gives a privileged and complete expression.

⁹²⁵ Vol 3, P2, In4, Tr1, Q4, Respondeo (n. 546), 844.

⁹²⁶ O. Lottin, *Psychologie et morale aux XII et XIII siècles*, II.1 (Louvain: Abbaye du Mont César, 1948), 52-3.

See also 138-9 on the eternal law in Brady, 'Law in the *Summa Fratris Alexandri*,' where the author credits John with systematizing Augustine's thought on the eternal law and providing the first concerted discussion on this score. Smith discusses John's innovations regarding the eternal law in her book, *The Ten Commandments*, 18-25. Aquinas follows John in *ST* 2.1.93.

⁹²⁷ Vol 3, P2, In1, Q1, C1 (n. 224), 314: The eternal law is above our minds. Vol 3, P2, In1, Q1, C2 (n. 225), 316: However, the eternal law is impressed on our soul.

⁹²⁸ Vol 3, P2, In1, Q1, C1 (n. 224), 314: *Lex aeterna est qua iustum est ut omnia sint ordinatissima*.

⁹²⁹ Vol 3, P2, In1, Q1, C7, Ar4 (n. 233), 328-9: In specific terms, Law of Moses, and the natural law it contains are derived from this law.

In treating this topic, he initially inquires whether the natural law pertains primarily to reason or to the will. In answering this question, he states that the natural law is ‘that by which anyone understands and is conscious in themselves as to what is good and what is bad.’⁹³⁰ Thus, it seems at first glance to pertain primarily to reason. Since consciousness implies a habit, which is generally called a habit of the will’, however, John concludes that the application of the natural law is not simply an act of reason but also a habit of the will. In elaborating on this contention, he writes that an act of reason proceeds from and thus presupposes the substance of an innate operation.

For example, ‘to shine’ is innate to the substance of the sun, even though shining or illuminating the world is itself a further operation, to which the substance of the sun cannot be altogether reduced. Similarly, he writes, the natural law is that which shines in reason. As such, it is in the will as an aptitude or habit to operate for the good.⁹³¹ However, the aptitude must still be employed in operation. On this basis, John concludes that three components make up *liberum arbitrium* or the capacity for free choice, namely, reason (*ratio*), will (*voluntas*), and activity (*facultas*) in keeping with reason, which decides what to do, and the will, which provides the motivation to do it.⁹³²

From this point, he turns to consider whether the natural law is the same as the conscience or what scholastics called ‘*synderesis*’.⁹³³ As noted above, the natural law is that

⁹³⁰ Vol 3, P2, In2, Q2, C1, Solutio, 343: *Lex naturalis est qua quisque intelligit et sibi conscius est quid bonum et quid malum...conscium importat habitum, dicunt quod est habitus voluntati...lex naturalis actus sit rationis et habitus voluntatis.*

⁹³¹ Vol 3, P2, In2, Q2, C1, Solutio (n. 243), 343.

⁹³² Vol 3, P2, In2, Q2, C2, Solutio (n. 243), 344: *Cum liberum arbitrium sit facultas voluntatis et rationis, patet quod in intentione liberi arbitrii concurrunt tria, scilicet facultas, ratio et voluntas.*

⁹³³ Vol 3, P2, In2, Q2, C3, Solutio (n. 245), 344-5: *An lex naturalis sit idem quod conscientia et synderesis* (Whether the natural law is the same as conscience or reason).

which prescribes good and forbids evil. Though the conscience is formed by that law and regulates reason thereby, it can choose nonetheless to ignore or refuse to accept the judgments of the law. As such, it may vacillate between good and evil in a way that the natural law itself cannot do. In this regard, the purpose of *synderesis*, the so-called ‘spark (*scintilla*) of the conscience’⁹³⁴, is to regulate the will, instigating it to do good. Although *synderesis* itself can never be extinguished, the will may lose its connection with *synderesis* on account of inordinate, sinful desires.⁹³⁵ As a result, the conscience may become unreceptive to the natural law. For these reasons, neither conscience nor *synderesis* can be equated with that law itself.

Although the mind may lose touch with the natural law on account of a failure of the will, John further insists that the natural law itself can never be obliterated. It is permanently engraved on human reason, because it constitutes the image of God in human beings.⁹³⁶ That image cannot be lost under any circumstances, since that would imply a defect in God’s ability to make himself known to humanity, and thus a defect in God himself. For this reason, the intellectual power to apply the natural law always remains in principle. Likewise, the law itself does not change, although the circumstances in which it is applied may differ.⁹³⁷ To suggest otherwise would again imply some defect in God and the law he prescribes.

As already noted, however, the ability to adhere to the natural law may be destroyed in practice when the will becomes preoccupied with earthly objects of affection and pursues those instead of seeking to fulfil the natural law.⁹³⁸ When sin takes hold of the will in this

⁹³⁴ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q3, T4, C1, c (n. 417), 491.

⁹³⁵ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q3, T4, C4, Solutio (n. 420), 495.

⁹³⁶ Vol 2.1, In1, Tr1, S2, Q3, T4, C5, Solutio (n. 425), 499.

⁹³⁷ Vol 3, Pars II, Inq II, Qu 3, Cap 2 (n. 247), 347-8.

⁹³⁸ Vol 3, Pars II, Inq II, Qu 3, Cap 1, solution (n. 246), 346.

way, we have seen, access to the law of reason is temporarily suspended. It becomes accessible only when the human will commits once more to conforming to the will of God,⁹³⁹ that is, to doing what God commands, as he commands.⁹⁴⁰ In this connection, John further argues that the natural law does not merely order our actions in natural circumstances, as Aquinas believed.⁹⁴¹ It also, and indeed, firstly, ordains us to God. For John, in fact, it is because human beings are made in the image and likeness of God that they have this:

law by which they understand and are conscious in themselves of what is good and what is evil. For insofar as human beings are in the image of God, they have a cognition of the first truth, namely, God, because the image pertains to a power of knowing. But from the fact that human beings are in the likeness of God, they have the potential and also the duty to love the supreme good, because the likeness refers to the potential to love, and therefore, the law entails that human beings are ordained through love to God and also to neighbours.⁹⁴²

On this showing, consequently, it is nature rather than grace, which teaches us that we are subjected to our Creator and should perform good works in his honor.⁹⁴³ In that sense, the

⁹³⁹ Vol 2.1, Pars II, Inq I, Qu unica, Caput 8, Art 1, Solutio (n. 234), 330.

⁹⁴⁰ Vol 2.1, Pars III, Inq I, Tract 2, Qu 2, Tit. 1, Memb 5, Cap 2, Art 1, Respondeo (n. 653), 1037.

⁹⁴¹ ST 2.1.94: Natural law.

⁹⁴² Vol 3, P2, In2, Q4, M2 C1 (n. 250), 353: *Quod homo est ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei, habet legem qua intelligit et sibi conscius est quid bonum et quid malum...In eo enim quod homo est ad imaginem, habet cognitionem primae veritatis, quae Deus est, quia, imago attenditur in potentia cognoscendi. Ex hoc vero quod est ad similitudinem, est in potentia et debito diligendi summam bonitatem, quia similitudo attenditur in potentia diligendi, et propter hoc in lege est quod per ipsam ordinetur homo ad Deum et etiam ad proximum.*

⁹⁴³ Vol 3, P2, In2, Q1, C1, Solutio (n. 241), 339.

natural law strictly speaking impresses the eternal law upon our hearts.⁹⁴⁴ ‘It insinuates that we should love God above all things and above the self and through the self, and instigates us to do so, though not by causing or inducing us.’⁹⁴⁵ Since the natural law became unable to instigate the conscience to love God on account of sin, however, the Law of Moses was introduced to do so, and grace was ultimately supplied to induce us actually to follow that law. This grace is received through faith, in the manner discussed below.

Faith

The concept of faith that is often associated with later Franciscan thinkers at least is a strongly voluntarist one, according to which faith in God entails a ‘leap’ on the part of the will, which is not based on grounds or reasons. In the early Franciscan tradition, however, faith is attributed to the *liberum arbitrium*, which entails both reason, will, and their co-operation.⁹⁴⁶ Thus, faith in this tradition is both a matter of what we believe in our minds—but do not actually see—and desire or assent to in our hearts. As such, it entails both ‘material’ and ‘formal’ components, that is, components which respectively supply the substance and enact the possibility of faith.

⁹⁴⁴ Vol 3, P2, In2, Q1, C1, Ad secundum (n. 241), 340.

⁹⁴⁵ Vol 3, P2, In2, Q4, M2, C3, Solutio (n. 252), 357: *Dicendum quod diligere Deum super omnia et supra se et propter se est in lege naturali tamquam insinuante et instigante, sed non tamquam efficiente vel perducente. Lex enim naturalis, eo quod lex, ostendit animae et insinuat quod debet Deum sic diligere; eo autem quod naturalis, se habet ad animam ut instigans ad hoc.*

⁹⁴⁶ Vol 3, P3, In2, Tr1, M8, C1 (n. 691), 1098.

While the material act of faith is to know God, on the Summa's account, the formal act of faith is to assent to love him.⁹⁴⁷ It is this love that gives us access to the first Truth that is impressed upon our minds and that guides the conscience.⁹⁴⁸ Because the First Truth is innately impressed upon our minds, it is the first object of our knowledge and is therefore known with utmost certainty. That certainty is only lost when the formal element of faith is forfeited by a will that becomes excessively preoccupied with loves other than God.⁹⁴⁹ In these circumstances, a super-added grace is needed to restore the formal element and thus to reinstate access to the first truth.⁹⁵⁰

In the first instance, consequently, faith on this definition entails a movement on the part of the will to obey God's will as expressed in his commands.⁹⁵¹ While a certain primacy is therefore attributed to the will, which can make its movement seem blind or unfounded, at least initially, this account does not promote voluntarism in the fullest sense of the term, because the initial act of the will is ordered towards the restoration of an intrinsic human knowledge of the First Truth, or God, which provides the rationale behind all of his commands.

Without a doubt, therefore, there is a cognitive component to the faith that motivates obedience to God's commands. Yet the knowledge at stake here is love's knowledge, which is accessible only to those who have learned properly, and completely voluntarily, to order their desires in relation to God. In this light, it comes as no surprise that at the very start of the Summa, theology is defined as a more 'practical' than 'theoretical' science, the primary

⁹⁴⁷ Vol 3, P3, In2, Tr1, M8, C3-4 (n. 681-2), 1082-3.

⁹⁴⁸ Vol 3, P3, In2, Tr1, M7, C1 (n. 685), 1087.

⁹⁴⁹ Vol 3, P3, In2, Tr1, M1, C1 (n. 673), 1064.

⁹⁵⁰ Vol 3, P3, In1, Tr1, Q3, M2, C1 (n. 615), 973.

⁹⁵¹ Vol 3, P2, In3, Tr2, Q1, T1, C4, Ar1, Solutio. (n. 279), 419.

purpose of which is not to instruct the mind about God but to move the affections of the will towards what is good, on account of love for God. By loving God, first and foremost, we acquire access to the transcendentals, not least, truth, which help us not only to know the world as he knows it but also to live in it as he intended, and in the way that is most conducive to our well-being.

Although the principles that have been given thus to make us good are hidden to us because they can only reside in the mind of the transcendent God, the Summist insists in this context that they are the most certain of all principles, precisely because they derive from an infallible being. When we conform ourselves to the God who is love by an act of faith which leads us to love him above all else, however, we become disposed to grasp the principles that might otherwise appear inscrutable, unfounded, or even arbitrary. That is why the Summist frequently repeats the words of Matthew 5:8: *blessed are the pure of heart, because they will see God* (Mt. 5:8).

Conclusion

In light of the discussion above, we may return to the question whether divine command theory undermines the autonomy of individuals to choose their own course of moral action and to understand and deliberate about the reasons why they should act. As mentioned previously, many critics suppose that personal moral agency is undermined by this theory, because an external factor, namely, the will of God, governs our lives, rather than individual decisions and choices. Because his will is inscrutable to us, the laws that proceed from it cannot help but appear arbitrary at best and contradictory at worst, in the sense that God could in theory command us to do wrong or even to hate him.

Although such objections may well apply to other theories regarding the divine commands, the early Franciscan account evades them by positing a natural law with which God's commands—and our own actions—must always remain consistent. That is not to suggest that God is constrained by the natural law, which orientates all things towards what is good or in their best interests. After all, God himself ordained the natural law in accordance with his eternal law, which ultimately orders all things towards him as the highest good. In this account, consequently, God could never command us to do wrong or to hate him, let alone to perform seemingly arbitrary acts, the personal value of which is unclear.

On the contrary, he commands us only to act for our own benefit, and he gives us recourse to an understanding of the relationship between his commands and our interests through the innate knowledge of the natural law itself. In the section of the *Summa* on the divine will, the Summist states as much when he inquires whether God can command what he does not will or prohibit what he wills. In addressing this question, he distinguishes between a will by which one prepares to accomplish an act and a will by which one actually accomplishes that act. Though God may test a person's faith by issuing a command to act against his will in the first sense—as, for instance, when he asked Abraham to sacrifice his son, Isaac—he never ultimately commands what he does not will.⁹⁵²

The same goes for the natural law, which regulates all things according to the highest good. Since this good is simply God, God would not command anything contrary to it, namely, himself.⁹⁵³ While he can obviously perform miracles, which are on some level contrary to nature, he cannot act against nature in the sense of causing creatures he has made to be obedient to him to do otherwise; nor in the sense that he would contradict his own

⁹⁵² Vol 1, P1, Tr6, Q3, T2, M2, C1, Ar1, Respondeo (n. 274), 376.

⁹⁵³ Vol 1, P1, Tr6, Q3, T2, M2, C1, Ar2, Solutio (n. 275), 380.

will.⁹⁵⁴ When it comes to miracles, moreover, he cannot cause things simultaneously to be and not to be something at the same time, because this would contradict his own will for their stability in being.⁹⁵⁵ Although God can change the course of the future, since it has not yet occurred, at least from the human perspective, moreover, he does not change the past, as in making someone corrupt who was not corrupt previously, because commanding and rewarding meritorious behaviour is part and parcel to the irrevocable, good order that he himself established.⁹⁵⁶

By the same token, the Summist contends that God would not command anything contrary to the Decalogue, given that this law flows from the natural law, which ultimately orders creatures not only to themselves and others but principally to God. Since all things are orientated towards God as their end, nothing can be mandated by God which is contrary to the law that emanates from him.⁹⁵⁷ That again is not to limit his power, the Summa insists, for it is not consistent with divine omnipotence to do anything that would detract from or limit God's goodness, or ours.⁹⁵⁸

In summoning us to adhere to the divine commands, consequently, God offers us not only understanding of the respects in which obedience is consistent with our well-being, but also total freedom to obey or disobey his law. Granted, the knowledge of the natural law was lost through sin. For this reason, the Law of Moses and ultimately the Law of the Gospel had to be introduced, in the first case, to clarify the contours of the natural law, and in the second, to reinstate a consistent means of fulfilling it, namely, grace. This grace, administered by the

⁹⁵⁴ Vol 1, P1, Tr4, Q3, C2, Ar1, Respondeo (n. 152), 234.

⁹⁵⁵ Vol 1, P1, Tr4, Q3, C3, Respondeo (n. 155), 236.

⁹⁵⁶ Vol 1, P1, Tr4, Q3, C4 (n. 156), 237-8.

⁹⁵⁷ Vol 1, P1, Tr6, Q3, T2, M2, C1, A3, Solutio (n. 276), 383.

⁹⁵⁸ Vol 1, P1, Tr4, Q2, M1, C1, Respondeo (n. 136), 209.

Holy Spirit, re-awakens love for God, which is expressed in an initial act of faith that is evidenced through obedience to God's commands.

Though this initial step of faith might seem at first glance to entail acceptance of arbitrary divine laws, and thus the deferral of our own powers of deliberation, it soon restores our awareness of the natural law as fully expressed in the Law of Moses, thus providing access to the principles underlying the divine commands. While faith may be blind at first, therefore, it ultimately transforms us into initiated moral agents with the inner moral disposition to discriminate when and how to follow the divine law, and to do so of our own accord. In that sense, the early Franciscan divine command theory clearly establishes moral agency, or the human capacity for spontaneous moral judgment, albeit in a way that differs from the tradition of Aquinas. As such, it represents a viable foundation for Christian ethics, and one that is especially compatible with Francis' emphasis on the literal observance of Christ's example. This, one might surmise, is the inspiration behind the Summa's invention of divine command theory in the first place.

12. CONCLUSION: THE PROMISE OF EARLY FRANCISCAN THEOLOGY

This book set out to show that early Franciscan theology is innovative, and thus no mere rehearsal of prior Augustinian tradition. The case for the innovativeness of early Franciscan theology has now been made with reference to a variety of key theological themes, including the status and purpose of theology as a science, theistic proof, the divine nature, the Trinity, Christology, the reasons for the Incarnation, and moral theology. As the discussion draws to a close, it is worth revisiting these topics to summarize concisely the ways in which the Summists approached them in an original fashion. At the start, we learned that the theological vision of the *Summa* was strongly shaped by the circumstances surrounding the condemnation of 1241.

The recent influx of Greek and Arabic sources which in one way or another contested the possibility of direct knowledge of God in the life to come was suddenly realized as incompatible in the generation of the Summists with the West's own cherished affirmation of the beatific vision. In order to affirm the possibility of knowing God, whether here or in the hereafter, consequently, the *Summa* incorporated the Avicennian doctrine of the transcendentals, on the one hand, and the affective stream of the Christian tradition, on the other. The result was a theory in which the human mind enjoys an intuitive link with God, as his image, which makes it possible to know him directly, if finitely, through creatures in this life, and which lays the foundation for an encounter with his reality in the life to come.

The benefits of this link are however reaped only by those whose affections are properly ordered toward God first and foremost. As we have seen, the love of God is the key which opens the door to knowledge. In this regard, the whole orientation of early Franciscan theology is practical: its purpose is to inspire and cultivate right affections through theoretical work that reveals just how profound God's nature and work on our behalf can be understood

to be. The Summa builds on its theological vision in a related discussion of theistic proof, which shows how our innate connection with God through his image makes it impossible not only to know what he is like through creatures, as seen in chapter four, but also to know that he necessarily exists. There are three ways that his existence can be discerned on the basis of the transcendentals, namely, through the self, through reflection on who God is in himself, and ultimately, through creatures.

All these ways are however based on and spring from the knowledge of God that is gained through the self, that is, through reflection on the self as his image. By these means, we become aware of the fact that we do not exist through ourselves but through one who does exist through himself, namely, God. This awareness lays the foundation for the further effort to prove that God exists simply through rational reflection on the fact that existence is part of his definition as the one through whom all beings, including himself, exist. The innate knowledge of God as the one on whom all things depend for their being lays a foundation which makes it possible for encounters with creatures to ‘trigger’ the knowledge of their source and thereby also provide proof of his existence. As in the case of ordinary knowledge described in chapter four, however, knowledge of God in any of these ways—through what is inside, above, or below the self—only comes to those who approach him in the right attitude of devotion and love.

The key to construing theistic proof along these lines, we have learned, is the Summa’s re-reading of Anselm’s argument in *Proslogion* 2-4. Richard of St Victor was the first to de-contextualize this famous argument from the larger twenty-six-chapter text of which it was a part. In doing so, he laid the groundwork for early Franciscans to assess it without reference to the rest of that text and in light of the highly popular work of Avicenna. The result was the attribution to Anselm of the kind of ontological argument which Avicenna championed, but which arguably cannot be found in the *Proslogion* itself.

The innovativeness of early Franciscan theology proper culminates in its treatment of the divine nature, which abandons Augustine's longstanding tradition of attributing primacy to divine simplicity in favor of the newer Greco-Arabic tendency, championed in the West by Richard of St Victor and other twelfth-century thinkers, to describe God primarily in terms of his infinity. Although infinity was typically linked with incomprehensibility in preceding tradition, the 1241 generation, and the Summists above all, realized the urgent need to re-define it in a way that allowed for knowing God in this life and in the life to come.

To this end, they replaced a 'negative' concept of infinity such as is found in the Greek Fathers, for whom God simply lacks limits, with the more positive concept that is found in Avicenna. For Avicenna, what is infinite is that which contains innumerable positive possibilities. By attributing this idea to God, the Summists concluded that God is the sum total of all possibly and really existing things, who as such exceeds all natural things. In him, exist the patterns after which all creatures are directly fashioned, such that they provide an equally direct albeit limited window into who he is. The univocity that is inherent in the relationship between God and creatures so construed is precisely what makes him knowable in this way. Moreover, univocity is another sign of the influence of Avicenna.

Through the appropriation of Avicenna, in summary, the Halensian Summists recasted the notion of infinity to render it the linchpin of the human ability to know the infinite God who had always previously been deemed unknowable. They initiated a total shift away from simplicity as the primary feature of God to infinity, establishing a tradition that would be carried to its fullest conclusions by John Duns Scotus and continues to feature in the Franciscan intellectual tradition to this day.

The novelty of early Franciscan theology continues in its treatment of the Trinity. Here again, the Summists depart from the longstanding Western tradition of Augustinian Trinitarian theology, formulated most fully by Thomas Aquinas, in order to affirm their own

rendition of Richard of St Victor's doctrine of the Trinity. This doctrine falls squarely in the Western tradition insofar as it affirms the *filioque* or the procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son rather than the Father only. At the same time, however, the Victorine doctrine involves a rather more 'Greek' line of thinking, which gives primacy to the origins rather than relations of the divine persons, and which assigns a 'monarchical' role to the Father. Indeed, the early Franciscan doctrine of the Trinity, following Richard, manages to marry some of the key elements of both Greek and Latin trinitarian traditions in what is ultimately a new synthesis altogether.

In the field of Christology, the *Summa* offers what was in many respects the most mature account available to date of the substance-accident theory of the hypostatic union that was growing in popularity and precision at the time. As has been shown, the Summists took up this theory and made it their own to such an extent that it would be associated almost exclusively with Franciscan thinkers from that point forward. Although Scotus has often been regarded as the most significant champion of this theory, which supposedly had little other precedent, my efforts to show that this theory already existed in the *Summa* highlight simultaneously the reasons why and the context in which this theory was developed in the first place. This context can easily be contrasted with the one that came to dominate in the generation of Aquinas, who advocated a very different part-whole model of the union under the inspiration of Aristotle. While Scotists and Thomists have long regarded their respective accounts of the hypostatic union as mutually exclusive, the study undertaken in this chapter and particularly of the *Summa Halensis* highlights that each account is intelligible and valid when interpreted within its own proper frame of reference.

The *Summa*'s discussion of the reasons for the Incarnation represents an area of especial innovation. When it comes to delineating the necessary reasons for this event, the *Summa* starts from Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* and takes him as the basis for the discussion.

However, it departs significantly from Anselm's own way of construing these reasons and radically redefines them. For Anselm, we have seen, the Incarnation of Christ was necessary in order to pay back what was owed to God as a result of sin and to compensate for what he had lost in the process. While the life of Christ succeeded in exemplifying the obedience and honor that is due to God, 'something more' was still needed to make recompense for humanity's failure to do this in the first place. The only remaining option for offering this superogatory gift was therefore the suffering and death of Christ.

Although these events in the life of Christ were necessary for restoring order between humans and God, they were not as such the locus of salvation for Anselm. In the Franciscan account, by contrast, the suffering and death of Christ become essential to making satisfaction for our sins. Since suffering and death, both physical and psychological, were the product of sin, the Summists contend, Christ had to undergo both forms of suffering unto the point of death in order to redeem us from them. In affirming this, the Summa articulates for the first time in Christian history an early version of the sort penal substitution theory of the atonement that would become popular at the Reformation.

In the Franciscan account, however, this theory was combined with an equally innovative 'supra-lapsarianism', according to which the Incarnation of Christ would have fittingly occurred even if humanity had never fallen into sin. The reason for the Incarnation, on this showing, was first and foremost the completion of creation. This feat was accomplished when Christ became a human being, which is the only being that has something in common with all other beings and can virtually encompass them all by cognitive means. For this very reason, his Incarnation effectively enabled him to 'become' all creatures, the models for which exist in him. In doing so, he consummated the relationship between God and creatures that he initiated at creation and confirmed the role of natural beings as signs of who God is in the world and of his existence. Although there is a passing

reference to this kind of doctrine in at least one twelfth-century text, the *Summa* is the first to develop such a theory substantially.

The moral theology of the *Summa* represents another area of innovative departure from prior tradition. While previous thinkers focused overwhelmingly in the cultivation of virtues, the *Summa* introduced a robust and extensive theory in which the moral life is based primarily on adherence to divine commands. A common objection to divine command theories has been that they tend to undermine the autonomy of the moral agent, who must observe God's law no matter what it involves, without necessarily understanding its basis. The *Summa* clearly circumnavigates this objection by positing an innate knowledge of the natural law with which all of God's commands are in accord. This knowledge discloses the rationale behind the commands. Furthermore, the Franciscan theory of the will's absolute freedom to alternate between good or evil establishes the moral agent's complete autonomy in respect to the question of obeying or disobeying them. There is no question of the moral agent acting as a sort of automaton.

In concluding this brief summary of the *Summa*'s innovations, as outlined in this book, I will briefly reiterate them. When defining the nature of theology—and as one of the first systematic attempts to do so—the *Summa* advocates a form of voluntarism in which love is the key to knowledge, and a theory of knowledge in which innate concepts of the transcendentals allow for knowing things as they directly correspond to ideas in the mind of God. For the *Summa*, the motivation for systematically and comprehensively outlining our understanding of God is ultimately a practical one, namely, to inspire awe and love for God that is needed to know him. The exercise of the *Summa* itself, however seemingly speculative and theoretical, is no such thing.

On the basis of its theological vision, the *Summa* transforms Anselm's argument into the sort of ontological argument that it has since been understood to be. By the same token, it

establishes an approach to natural theology that would gain further momentum with Scotus and beyond. As regards the divine nature, it replaced the longstanding emphasis on divine simplicity with an emphasis on divine infinity. Likewise, it substituted the Western account of the Trinity first and foremost articulated by Augustine with a new model advocated by Richard of St Victor. In Christology, it offered the first major statement of the substance-accident model that has been most associated with Scotus and that came to rival the part-whole model of Aquinas.

As regards the reasons for the Incarnation, the Summa offers the first historical instance of a penal substitutionary theory of the atonement and of the view that Christ would have become incarnate regardless of sin. The moral theology it develops replaces the longstanding stress on virtue theory with a theory revolving around divine commands. In this case, as in that of the other theological doctrines mentioned, the Summists' innovations resulted not only from the sophisticated and creative recasting of their sources. They also seemingly give expression to aspects of the ethos and example of Francis of Assisi, whose memory remained vivid in the memories of the friars at this time.

Although it was not consistent with the Summa genre to state any connections between Franciscan spirituality and Franciscan thought explicitly, they can be relatively easily discerned by the attentive reader. For example, the theological vision of the Summa, and its proof for God's existence, give a reasoned account of the intimate cognitive connection with God and insight into all worldly affairs that Francis enjoyed owing to his love for the creator. The practical vision of the Summa further supports Francis' tendency to prioritize cultivating love for God over acquiring knowledge, to the point of identifying love as the key to obtaining knowledge. The Franciscan account of God's nature successfully articulates Francis' belief that every single creature, no matter how lowly, is a direct object of God's love, which deserves to be treated with care and respect.

The nature of the divine love, as Francis conceived it, is nowhere better described than through the Summa's Trinitarian doctrine, which envisages the love of the Father as overflowing in a completely self-giving and self-abandoning manner through the Son to its beneficiary in the Spirit. The latter simply stands as the fullest possible expression and recipient of divine love. In affirming this, the Summa emphasizes the radical dependence of all creatures on God which Francis was always eager to reiterate. This dependence comes into fuller relief in the Summa's Christology, which emphasizes the pro-active way in which God unites human nature to himself and maintains that union by his grace. A remarkable feature of the Summa is indeed the centrality it devotes to Christological questions. This however is not surprising when we consider that it was Francis' encounter with the crucifix at St Damiano church that motivated him to found an order devoted to living as Christ did, in complete poverty and self-sacrifice, in the first place.

The sacrificial attitude that is so crucial to the Franciscan principle of poverty is most poignantly revealed in the new emphasis the Summa places on Christ's suffering as the locus of redemption. By undergoing the full extent of human sufferings, the Summa disclosed Francis' understanding of the extent of God's love for us and the kind of love we should be prepared to demonstrate to others. After all, others remain signs of the divine which are patterned after models maintained in the mind of the Son. The Summa's cosmic vision of the way that Christ takes his place at the center of creation and consummates his relationship with it at the Incarnation conveys with supreme effectiveness the emphasis Francis placed on creation as a representation of the divine.

The material on moral theology further portrays a distinctly Franciscan vision as to how we carry on the work of Christ pragmatically, namely, by observing the laws he laid down for this purpose. These laws counteract the virtually countless possible vices enumerated in the Summa, through which those laws can be broken. As in the other

examples, this ethical vision closely correlates to Francis' emphasis on the literal interpretation of the gospel and what it means to lead a Christ-like life. From start to finish, early Franciscan theology promotes that kind of life, particularly as Franciscans understood it. It outlines a vision of God, his relationship to the world, and the role of human beings in the world, which reflects the religious charism of its authors.

In the process of casting their scholarly vision, we have seen that the Summists also accomplished a number of other impressive feats. They incorporated the then immensely popular Avicennian sources more extensively and systematically than of their earlier contemporaries. They circumnavigated heresies, and they mastered many of the new Greek sources as well, without compromising certain key principles of their own Latin tradition. As we have seen, their work in these respects distinguished them amongst their contemporaries as the leading intellectual lights of the time. By any standards, the *Summa* must have seemed impressive at a time when scholarly survival depended upon addressing the intellectual challenges of the day in the most sophisticated and encompassing manner possible.

At the same time, however, we have observed a happy coincidence between the historical sources and pressures of the day and the scholarly objectives that the Franciscans at Paris sought to fulfill. The Greco-Arabic sources were not merely the ones that were available and indeed urgent to incorporate at the time. They also happened to suit Franciscan efforts to do what scholars generally did in this period, turning sources to their own ends, incorporating them into a framework of their own devising. In doing this, the *Summa* set the stage more than any other work for the further development of the Franciscan intellectual tradition, to say nothing of scholasticism more generally.

Although there is considerable variation amongst individual Franciscan thinkers, the doctrinal core of the *Summa* obviously made a lasting impression on later Franciscans, as much as some of the topics of discussion they codified continued to feature even in the works

of figures like Aquinas who took very different perspectives from them. Many of the doctrines and theories that were the objects of their innovation, for instance, are simply reiterated by Bonaventure. This is important to note not simply to give credit where credit is due but also to debunk the untenable theory that Franciscans before and including Bonaventure were merely Augustinian.

As our study of the *Summa* has shown, the early Franciscan reading of Augustine was mediated by sources, spurious, Arabic, Greeks or otherwise, to such an extent that it simply cannot be conflated with anything that can be found in Augustine. By the time Bonaventure was working, most of these sources had been eclipsed or surpassed, but the reading of Augustine that was based upon them stuck. Thus, the study of Bonaventure obscures what that of the *Summa* reveals, namely, that the early Franciscan tradition is quite distinct from and at most points wholly unrelated to the one founded by Augustine.

While the relationship between the *Summa* and Bonaventure will not come as a total shock to many who are aware that he acknowledges Alexander's inspiration and tutelage in his *Sentences* commentary, readers will be more surprised perhaps to find many areas of continuity between the *Summa* and the work of John Duns Scotus. As I have noted already, Scotus adopts and adapts the doctrine of the transcendentals that was incorporated into his tradition by the Summists.⁹⁵⁹ He further develops the theory of knowledge that accompanied it.⁹⁶⁰ He did the same for Franciscan voluntarism.⁹⁶¹

⁹⁵⁹ Ludger Honnefelder, *Scientia transcendens: Die formale Bestimmung der Seiendheit und Realität in der Metaphysik des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit (Duns Scotus, Suárez, Wolff, Kant, Peirce)* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag, 1990). Allan B. Wolter, *The Transcendentals and their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus* (St Bonaventure: Franciscan Institute Press, 1946).

⁹⁶⁰ Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus' Theory of Cognition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

⁹⁶¹ Olivier Boulnois, *Duns Scot: la rigueur de la charité* (Paris: Le Cerf, 1998). Allan B. Wolter, *Duns Scotus on*

There are other areas in which he extrapolated the logical, even sometimes extreme, conclusions of his predecessors. These pertain to his doctrine of God as infinite being,⁹⁶² natural theology;⁹⁶³ his theory of the univocity of being;⁹⁶⁴ and his treatment of the practical character of theology as a science.⁹⁶⁵ The early Franciscan Trinitarian theology also carries through to the work of the Subtle Doctor, who likewise elaborates fully the substance-accident model of Christology that was bequeathed to him by his forebears.⁹⁶⁶ Additionally, he advocated penal substitution theory and famously declared that the Incarnation would

the Will and Morality (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1997.)

⁹⁶² Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus on God* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

⁹⁶³ Alex Hall, *Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus: Natural Theology in the High Middle Ages* (London: Bloomsbury, 2009).

⁹⁶⁴ Daniel P. Horan, *Postmodernity and Univocity: A Critical Account of Radical Orthodoxy and John Duns Scotus* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014).

⁹⁶⁵ Oleg Bychkov, 'The Nature of Theology in Duns Scotus and His Franciscan Predecessors,' *Franciscan Studies* 66 (2008), 5-62. Stephen D. Dumont, 'Theology as a Science and Duns Scotus's Distinction between Intuitive and Abstractive Cognition,' *Speculum* 64:3 (Jul. 1989), 579-99.

⁹⁶⁶ Russell L. Friedman, *Medieval Trinitarian Theology from Aquinas to Ockham* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). J.T. Paasch, *Divine Production in Late Medieval Trinitarian Theology: Henry of Ghent, Duns Scotus and William of Ockham* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). Richard Cross, *The Metaphysics of the Incarnation: Thomas Aquinas to Duns Scotus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

have occurred regardless of sin.⁹⁶⁷ Above all, he is known for the rejection of virtue ethics in favor of divine command theory.⁹⁶⁸

Many studies have already been written about Scotus' thought on these and other topics, which allow a more elaborate comparison to be drawn between his positions and those of the Summists. My object in this book was not to undertake that comparison but only to begin to make it possible on the side of the study of early Franciscan thought. As such a comparison would reveal, there is a great deal of continuity between early and later Franciscan schools of thought, between which there has normally been supposed to be a break. Although Scotus is universally and indeed rightly recognized as a turning point in Franciscan intellectual history, he was nonetheless part of a larger tradition from which he inherited some of the key ideas for which he became famous.

That stated, the object of this book has not simply been to shift the credit for Franciscan innovations back one generation, although this study does achieve that to some extent. The overarching goal has been to draw attention back to the ethos that inspired the development of Franciscan ideas in the first place. This ethos is not as easy to discern in the generation of Scotus, for a variety of reasons. By this time, for instance, the university had eclipsed the religious order as the primary site for theological reflection. The theories that

⁹⁶⁷ Thomas M. Ward, 'Voluntarism, Atonement, and Duns Scotus,' *The Heythrop Journal* 58 (2017), 37-44. Andrew Rosato, 'The Interpretation of Anselm's Teaching on Christ's Satisfaction for Sin in the Franciscan Tradition from Alexander of Hales to Duns Scotus,' *Franciscan Studies* 71 (2013), 411-44. Justus Hunter, *The Motive for the Incarnation from Anselm of Canterbury to John Duns Scotus* (PhD Dissertation, Southern Methodist University, August 2015).

⁹⁶⁸ Bonnie Kent, *Virtues of the Will: The Transformation of Ethics in the Late Thirteenth Century* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995). Thomas Williams, *John Duns Scotus: Selected Writings on Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

were initially formulated to further Francis' vision of the world became subject increasingly to the rules of logical consistency and scholastic debate.

As a result, the Franciscans of later generations might seem to be simply playing games with logic rather than striving to do justice to what are at base distinctly Franciscan intellectual intuitions. The advantage of highlighting early Franciscan innovations—and thus their continuity with the later Franciscan tradition—is that it allows for situating later manifestations of the tradition in relation to the ethos that clearly informs early Franciscan thought. By reading Franciscan thought in this light, it becomes possible to demarcate the Franciscan tradition, whether early or late, from any modern developments in intellectual history. Although there may be surface similarities between some Franciscan and modern concepts, the different ends to which they were deployed in their different contexts renders them virtually incommensurable.

This discovery bears considerably on the charges that have recently been levelled against Franciscans for supposedly precipitating all the alleged ills of modern thought. In point of fact, it nullifies the question whether and how Franciscan innovations engendered the problems of modernity, which has garnered far too much attention in recent years. As a result of the present study, in summary, that question and the underlying assumption regarding the Franciscan 'responsibility' for modernity proves unworthy of further pursuit and unsound as a basis for any kind of argument or hypothesis. By the same token, attentions are shifted onto more pressing and interesting lines of inquiry regarding the contents and contribution of early Franciscan texts that have long been neglected in scholarship.

In this connection, the study of Franciscan thought in its proper context helps us to see how Franciscan ideas were meant to be used and can indeed be employed today in line with their proper theological and philosophical purposes. For many years, scholars have made much of recovering or retrieving the work of Thomas Aquinas. However, Franciscan

tradition has never really managed to overcome its guilt by association to modernity in order to be mined in the same way. By highlighting the tensions between authority and innovation in early Franciscan thought, one ultimate objective of this project has been to make such a recovery possible in future. What this book seeks to awaken, in the last analysis, is our awareness of the untapped promise of early Franciscan theology.

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