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History of Western Philosophy
by George F. McLean and Patrick J. Aspell

Medieval Western Philosophy: The European Emergence

By
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The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy

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in and beyond the History of Medieval Europe

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Preface

"We are like dwarfs," wrote Bernard of Chartres, "seated on the shoulders of giants; we see more things than the ancients and things more distant, but this is due neither to the sharpness of our own sight, nor to the greatness of our stature, but because we are raised and borne aloft on that giant mass."1 In the search for truth, modern Western philosophers stand on the shoulders of the "giant mass" of ancient and medieval thinkers whose ideas they have inherited.

Western civilization lives by the ideas that animate it." This book is written for students making their first acquaintance with these ideas in the history of philosophy. The author's chief purpose is to introduce students to the origin, development, and interconnection of philosophical ideas. To achieve this goal, emphasis has been placed upon making the major ideas of the medieval philosophers accessible to the reader in a direct, clear, and informative manner. This history of philosophy is intended, not as an end, but as a means of introducing the reader to a more extensive and intensive study of the philosophers' writings and of their interpretations by specialists in various fields.

When the student is first acquainted with the myriad ideas of medieval thought, they may appear to him widely elusive, hopelessly incoherent, and even self-contradictory. It is the taunting, tantalizing challenge of the history of philosophy to discover the overall pattern of interrelated meaning. With this insight one can savor the distinctive contribution of each man or movement.

In understanding the meaning of philosophical ideas, one has not only factual information but an appreciation of what philosophizing meant for Augustine, Thomas Aquinas and William of Ockham. What better way is there to learn to philosophize than to observe the great philosophers of the past? This history of philosophy is intended as an introduction to the process of philosophizing itself. With adequate knowledge of the history of philosophy, one can share in the collective enterprise of philosophizing which has occupied the mind of Western man for twenty-five centuries.

To disclose effectively the pattern of meaning in the history of medieval philosophy, the historian of philosophy must keep in mind two aims. First, he must discover the spirit of an age by fathoming.

Chapter I

Augustine: The Lover of Truth

Augustine "was, to a far greater degree than any emperor barbarian war lord, a maker of history and a builder of the bridge which was to lead from the old world to the new."¹ He was the bridge between ancient and medieval thought and the founder of philosophy in the Middle Ages. In his passionate pursuit of truth and happiness, Aurelius Augustine's life spiraled through three spiritual states: conversion, enlightenment, and unity.

Life² and Works³

- *Conversion.* Augustine was born in Tagaste (modern Souk Ahras, Tunisia), A.D. 354, of a Christian mother, Monica, and a pagan father, Patricius. An offspring of the dying ancient civilization and the emerging Christian culture, he experienced a powerful inner conflict of values. During his studies of literature and grammar at Madaura and his higher education in rhetoric at Carthage, he reveled in "the ways of Babylon" and enjoyed the Circes of sensuality. For fifteen years he lived with a mistress by whom he had a son Adeodatus. He taught rhetoric and eloquence at Tagaste, Carthage, and Milan. Outwardly, he was pleased with the ensuing fame, but inwardly, he was discontented as his mind searched for enlightenment.

He embraced the Manichean dualistic teaching that there are two ultimate principles, one responsible for good and for the human soul, the other for evil and matter, including the body.⁴ Dissatisfied with the materialism of Manichaeism and unable to find a basis for certitude in his experience, he adopted the skeptic attitude of the Platonic New Academy. On reading some "Platonic treatises" in the Latin translation of Victorinus, Augustine overcame his doubt about the possibility of a spiritual reality and found his way toward reconciling the presence of evil in the world with the Christian teaching of divine creation.⁵

- *Enlightenment.* Enlightened by the writings of St. Paul and the holy life of St. Anthony of Egypt, Augustine experienced a strong desire to improve his way of life. To that end he retreated for a year (386-387) with some friends to Cassiciacum outside Milan where he underwent a religious conversion and wrote *Against the Academics* — a justification of truth and certitude — *On the Happy Life, On Order, the Soliloquies* — a discourse on God and the soul — *On the Immortality of the Soul*, and *On Music*. After his spiritual seclusion, Augustine and Adeodatus were baptized by St. Ambrose.

- *Union.* While residing at Rome (387-388), Augustine composed two philosophical dialogues, *On Free Choice* and *On the Magnitude of the Soul* — on the operations of the soul. After returning to Tagaste (388), he sold all his inheritance and established a small monastic community. Not long after writing *On the Teacher* — a study of knowledge — he was ordained a priest (391), and later, by popular acclaim, was consecrated Bishop of Hippo (395/396). His numerous sermons against the Manichaeans, Donatists,⁶ and Pelagians,⁷ his many theological treatises and letters, testify to his unceasing concern for the faith of his fellow Christians.

Notwithstanding his pressing episcopal duties, Augustine wrote three magna opera: *the Confessions* (400) — an autobiography of his personal relationship to God — *On the Trinity* (400-416), and the *City of God* (413-426) — a defense of Christianity and an exposition of the meaning of history. His work *On the Nature of the Good* responds to Manichaeism, his treatise *On the Soul and Its Origin* replies to Donatism. Toward the end of his life, he critically scrutinized his earlier

writings in the *Retractions* which chronologically enumerates his ninety-four works, explaining their purpose and making revisions. Appropriately, his last complete opus was *On the Gift of Perseverance* (428), expressing his mind's and heart's unceasing search for truth and happiness which he found ultimately in union with God. Augustine died in 430 as Genseric and his Vandals laid siege to Hippo.

Encounter

Within the cultural crisis of the Roman Empire, Augustine encountered spiritual problems concerning God and the soul, faith and reason, Christianity and history.

Problems

I. Emergence of Problems

The cultural crisis which the Roman Empire experienced during the time of Plotinus intensified in the fourth and fifth centuries as the barbarians increased their pressure on the feeble frontiers and political discontent grew among peoples subjugated by Rome. As the political and economic order deteriorated, imperial authority became more dictatorial to stabilize the empire's vast structure, and the populace in turn lost its time honored freedoms and civic concern. Military might rather than law bound the body politic together.

The religious element in ancient culture, which had been the inspiration of civic patriotism in the fifth and sixth centuries B.C., had almost disappeared from the cosmopolitan civilization of the imperial age. The temples and gods remained, but they had lost their spiritual significance and had become little more than an ornamental appendage to public life and an occasion for civic ceremonial.⁸

As the old ideals retrogressed, the new spirit of Christianity emerged to revivify classical civilization.

II. God and the Soul

Like Plotinus, Augustine saw that the core issue of the Roman Empire was not military, or political, or economic, but spiritual, and that the ultimate question concerns God and the soul. "God and the soul, I desire to know. Nothing more? Nothing whatever."⁹ Augustine added to the ancient Greek maxim, "Know thyself," to make it, "Know God and thyself."

III. Faith and Reason

To gain a deeper insight than ancient philosophy into the spiritual problems surrounding God and the soul, Augustine shifted the philosophical perspective from the purely natural level of Plotinus to the supernatural framework of Christian thought.¹¹ Within this religious context, he was confronted with the relation of faith and reason: Can pure reason operate on its own or does it need faith to relate man to God? Can faith without the companionship of reason pursue wisdom?

IV. *Truth*

Intent on refuting the skepticism of the New Academy, Augustine investigated all the truths necessary for the soul's pursuit of God. At the outset, he attempted to determine whether certitude is possible and what truths the mind can know without doubt. Secure on the arch of certitude, he could inquire into the structure of the universe in which the soul finds itself. Central to his concern was the nature, origin, and destiny of the soul, the conclusions to which would affect his attitude toward the mystery of God and his relation to the world. Underlying all these problems is the metaphysical question of how mutable, temporal, contingent beings are related to God, the unchangeable, eternal, necessary being. How can creatures which are continually becoming "other" in time be related to God who remains unceasingly the same in eternity?

V. *History*

Viewed historically, the metaphysical problem becomes a question of whether the continually changing phenomena of history show a constant intelligible meaning. The event that occasioned this historical problem was Alaric the Goth's sacking (410 A.D.) of Rome, the "eternal city." This catastrophe shook the western world and demoralized the pagans who blamed the Christians for turning citizens from service by teaching renouncement of the world and for weakening patriotism by inculcating forgiveness of enemies. Besides, the God of Christianity, unlike the traditional gods who have been abandoned, has failed to protect Rome. In the face of this indictment, Augustine became attorney for the defense of Christianity.

Themes

In his encounter with these problems, Augustine unfolded three basic themes: God and soul, knowledge of truth, and love.

I. *God and Soul*

In developing a Christian philosophy as a plan for the renewal of western thought, he centered human existence around the soul and God. Analysis of his own experience revealed three unailing drives of existing, knowing, and willing, for being, truth, and goodness — in fine, for happiness. Within this context, philosophy is love of wisdom for the attainment of happiness.¹¹ The soul's unceasing search for knowledge and love is, in reality, the journey to beatitude in God. As Augustine put it in his response to God, "You have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it rests in you."¹²

II. *Knowledge of Truth*

The quest for happiness reveals two ways of knowledge, perception and understanding. So mutable and temporal are the outer objects of the senses in the Neoplatonic world of Augustine that the soul finds it better to turn within itself to the intelligible realm where it discovers unchangeable, eternal, necessary truths in which it enjoys certitude. Since "no creature, howsoever rational and intellectual, is lighted of itself, but is lighted by participation of eternal Truth,"¹³ the soul finds itself illumined by God in its quest for truths.

III. *Love*

By willing the truths which he discloses in knowledge, man attains true wisdom and happiness. However, weak human will wavers from seeking the good it ought to pursue. Mutable man cannot seek unchangeable moral truths, unless his will freely submits to the moral illumination of virtue streaming from the immutable and eternal light of divine virtue in God. All ethical truths, such as "live virtuously," or "live according to God's law," are reducible to one truth: love God. Happiness consists of sharing in the unchangeable, eternal love of God.

Method

Augustine developed his themes according to a religious, affective, personal, introspective, synthetic approach. His approach in general, combines the rational way of Hellenistic philosophy with the volitional way of Judaeo-Christian tradition.

I. *Religion*

As Augustine wandered from one philosophy to another (Manichaeism, skepticism, and Neo-Platonism), he became personally aware of the limitations of human reason. Reason and faith need to cooperate intimately in the soul's quest for God. Belief is natural and necessary for intellectual activity which assents to many opinions solely on another's testimony. "We believe the things which are not present to our senses, if the evidence offered for them seems sufficient,"¹⁴ and the authority "of who may be believed is being considered."¹⁵ Religious belief and understanding are complementary: "Understand my word in order to believe, but believe God's word in order to understand."¹⁶ Belief enlightened by understanding becomes a reasoned faith. On account of his close correlation of faith and reason, Augustine often made philosophical reflections in the course of theological inquiry and scriptural exegesis. Within this framework of philosophy and religion, Augustine's Christian faith was open to whatever insights Greek and Roman thinkers had to offer.

II. *Affectivity*

Like Plato's integration of love (*eros*) with wisdom (*phronesis*) in the pursuit of good, Augustine's method is highly affective as well as intellective. Love moves the soul to believe and to know: "Love it is that asks, love that seeks, love that knocks, love that reveals, love, finally, that assures the permanence of what is revealed."¹⁷ Love of God brings the soul's understanding of faith to fruition in a good life. The vision of truth is the prerogative of him who lives well, prays well, and studies well,¹⁸ for God shows himself only to one who seeks truth "piously, chastely and diligently."¹⁹ Since the wisdom of man is sanctity," it needs love inasmuch as "no good can be perfectly known unless it be perfectly loved."²⁰

III. *Person*

Augustine is more concerned about the person than problems of the cosmos. Augustine's disclosure of the soul's quest for God is highly personal in its starting point, procedure, and termination. He often begins by unfolding the evil and misery of the individual human condition

to stress the need of turning to God. The Augustinian pattern of the soul's itinerary to God advances "from the outer to the inner" forum of the soul and "from the lower to the higher"²¹ personal center of the Divine. The guiding principle in this far-reaching flight of the Augustinian mind is the causal relation of the mutable to the unchangeable. For instance, Augustine reasoned that immutable Truth or God is the sole sufficient reason for eternal truths in temporal human existence. Augustine's philosophy is an I-Thou encounter between the self and God.

IV. *Interiority*

Augustine's personal approach to truth is a profoundly interior way akin to the route of Plotinus. "Do not go abroad," he wrote, "return within yourself. Truth dwells in the inward man."²² The outer sensible world is changeable and uncertain. Clarity of thought, depth of understanding, and ardor of heart lie in the inner intelligible realm of the soul.

Thus admonished to return unto myself, I entered into my innermost parts under Thy guidance. I was able, because Thou didst become my helper. I entered in and saw with the eye of my soul the Immutable Light.²³

As the Plotinian mind ascends inwardly through three degrees of cognition — discursiveness, intuition and ecstasy, so the Augustinian mind rises through inferior reasoning, superior reasoning, and the beatific vision to God. The similarity is striking, yet there is a world of difference between the climax of these two approaches. For Plotinus, ecstasy is a natural outcome of what precedes whereas, for Augustine, the vision of God is a pure gift of God to which man has no natural claim.

V. *Synthesis*

Augustine's method, notwithstanding his genius for analyzing human experience in the *Confessions*, is generally synthetic in purpose, procedure, and perspective. With the soul's quest for God as his guiding principle. Augustine stressed the unity of reality rather than its multiple aspects by collecting his concepts into a unified structure. His eminently theocentric orientation inclined him towards organizing all beings under God rather than in specializing in a detailed analyses of creatures in themselves. Deeply concerned about the meaning of human existence rather than a detached analysis, Augustine communicated the living unity of his own personality by synthesizing his thoughts within the single Christian framework of a believer seeking understanding.

Influences

As he reflected on the relation between the human and the Divine, Augustine was influenced by both philosophical and Christian ideas.

I. *Platonism*

From the vantage point of faith, Augustine took a definite stance toward Greek and Hellenistic philosophy: he rejected skepticism and Epicureanism, accepted some Stoic teachings,²⁴ admired Aristotle as "a man of eminent abilities, yet unequal to Plato,"²⁵ whom he extolled as "the wisest and most erudite man of his day . . ." ²⁶ Most of Augustine's acquaintance with the essentials of Plato's thought was via Christian Platonists and Neo-Platonists such as Plotinus who exercised an

intensive and extensive influence on the content and technique of Augustine's philosophy.²⁷ No Father of the Church proved more courageous in Christianizing Platonism and more prudent in Platonizing Christianity than Augustine.

II. *Plotinus*

Like Plotinus, Augustine centered his thought around God and the soul. Whereas Plotinus reflected upon his own personal religious views, Augustine philosophized within a Christian framework. While the Plotinian mind had moved on the natural order with a rightful claim to reach the divine reality, Augustinian reason, to escape skepticism and to understand Judaeo-Christian revelation, adopted Plotinus' interiorism and progressed inwardly and surely within the supernatural order of divine life gratuitously established by God and manifested by faith. This drive toward God came from Augustine's indomitable desire for truth, an enthusiasm inspired by his reading of Cicero's *Hortensius*.²⁸

Response

The influences that came to play in Augustine's development of his main themes as a response to the problems of creatures and God, were conditioned by his notion of philosophy.

For Augustine, the goal of philosophy is happiness. Since man has been impressed with the natural desire for happiness,²⁹ he philosophizes like Socrates to find happiness in the possession of truth. That is why Augustine investigated truth in its different dimensions: knowledge of truth, the existence of divine truth, created truth, love of truth, and the history of the love of truth. "O Truth, Truth — how deeply even then did the marrow of my mind long for Thee, when they sounded Thy Name to me, . . ." ³⁰ Whereas Plotinus was concerned with the unity of reality, Augustine focused on its truth.

Knowledge of Truth

Augustine's theory of knowledge, which refutes Pyrrhonic Skepticism and justifies the soul's point of departure to God, progresses through four basic stages: sensation and intellection, inferior and superior understanding, knowledge of truth, and illumination.

I. *Sensation and Intellection*

In the Platonic tradition, Augustine held that sensation reaches only changing, temporal, contingent phenomena,³¹ and yields no more than opinion, whereas intellection attains unchanging, eternal necessary objects. Dreams and illusions confirm the limited value of the senses and their powerlessness in distinguishing between reality and its false images. The "judgment of truth" is the work, therefore, not of the senses, but rather of the mind.³²

II. *Inferior and Superior Understanding*

In view of its different objects, Augustine distinguished between inferior and superior intellection. Inferior reason is "rational knowledge of temporal things,"³³ whereas superior understanding is "rational knowledge of eternal things."³⁴ Lower reason relies on the senses in its

orientation towards action, while higher reason operates independently of sensation in its contemplation of truth. "There is a difference between the contemplation of eternal things and the action by which we use temporal things well; the former is called wisdom, the latter science."³⁵ Augustine preferred contemplating wisdom of divine things to the scientific use of corporeal objects, though the latter is necessary for life.

III. *Truth*

With these distinctions in mind, Augustine disclosed the certitude of truth in a direct and indirect way.

Direct Disclosure

- *Psychological Truths*. Certitude concerning truth can be directly disclosed in the psychological, ethical, cosmological, logical, and mathematical orders. First, consciousness, independent of sense experience, is immediately aware of two basic psychological realities, thought and existence. Even if one doubts, he is certain of his thinking:

If he doubts, he remembers why he doubts; if he doubts he understands that he doubts; if he doubts, he wishes to be certain; if he doubts, he thinks; if he doubts, he knows that he does not know. . . . Whoever then doubts about anything else ought never to doubt about all of these; for if they were not, he would be unable to doubt about anything at all.³⁶

- *Doubting and thinking imply existence*. "If you did not exist, you could not be deceived in anything."³⁷ Briefly, "if I err, I am."³⁸ Though a pyrrhonist were to object that "perhaps you are asleep, dreaming, even insane," nevertheless, one can still affirm, "I know that I live."³⁹ Three things escape even illusion: "We exist and we know we exist, and we love our being and our knowledge of it. . . . Without any delusive representation, I am absolutely certain that I am, and that I know and love this."⁴⁰ Since the mind, according to Augustine, grasps these truths without the intervention of the senses, its certitude cannot be invalidated by any illusions of the senses.

- *Ethical Truths*. Further analysis of moral experience immediately reveals ethical truths such as, "Happiness lies in the possession of wisdom and the good," and "Happiness requires the subordination of the inferior to the superior." With such clear, directive truths, man can guide his life and live well.

- *Cosmological Truth*. Because of the variable conditions of the senses, their objects, and the media through which both relate to each other, one must be cautious in his judgments about the world. The senses grasp what they experience and as such are never deceived. For example, if an oar is in water, it appears broken. The eyes see it exactly as they should under the circumstances, and would lie if they were to perceive it as straight. Were the mind to go beyond the sense data and affirm that reality is what appears, it would err. As long as the mind complies with the message of the senses and judges, "it appears bent to me," it expresses the truth.⁴¹

- *Logical and Mathematical Truths*. Logical and mathematical truths are valid independently of sense experience. Certainty regarding the logical principle of contradiction is disclosed in the analysis of two disjunctive proposition, one of which is true and the other false. For instance, "I am certain that either there is only one world or there are more worlds than one."⁴² One of these

alternatives is surely so in reality, even though one refuses to choose between them. Whatever the state of sensible qualities, it is "necessarily true that three times three are nine, and that this is the square of intelligible numbers."⁴³

Indirect Disclosure

Assurance of truth can be indirectly disclosed by refuting skepticism. To speak of the wisdom of the skeptics is a contradiction. The wise man pursues truth to attain it, whereas the skeptic teaches that man knows nothing. Yet, paradoxically, the skeptic lays claim to the title of wisdom. Would it not be wise for the skeptic to say that wisdom is impossible? How can a man be wise who is not sure whether and why he lives, and how he should live?⁴⁴ It is inconsistent for the skeptic to try to live a good life as long as he is uncertain of what is good. The universal doubt of the skeptics is also contradictory. If the skeptics doubt all truths, they are certain of one truth at least, namely, their doubt. Should the skeptics retreat to the position that this one truth is probable, then they would admit at least that it is either true or false, which is none other than a disjunctive proposition in itself certain.

IV. Illumination

What makes it possible for intelligible truths to be understood? This cannot be explained by some sensible light or corporeal objects which are changeable and contingent, or by man's mutable mind.⁴⁵ If truth "were equal to our mind, it would be also mutable," but, on the contrary, it is "superior and more excellent"⁴⁶ than the human mind, ruling and imposing itself on the mind's judgments. What is superior can act on what is inferior, but not vice-versa. The traits of immutability, eternity, and necessity which characterize truth point beyond the human mind to a cause which itself is unchangeable, eternal, and necessary, and illumines the mind. "No creature, howsoever rational and intellectual, is lighted of itself, but is lighted by participation of eternal Truth."⁴⁷

Not the exclusive possession of any individual human mind, truth "is present to, and offers itself in common to all men who see immutable truths, as a hidden and yet universal light."⁴⁸ Consequently, there must be a universal source which enables everyone to see it simultaneously in the same way. This cause is God. As the sensible sun makes corporeal things visible to the eye, so God's intelligible light renders the truths of science and wisdom manifest to the minds of men.⁴⁹ As intelligible light, God is the interior master and teacher of the soul, illumining the minds of all teachers and students so that they can understand the same truth. "But as for all those things which we 'understand' it is not the outward sound of the speaker's words that we consult, but the truth which presides over the mind itself from within, though we may have been led to consult it because of the words."⁵⁰

Augustine appeared to be following Plotinus in using the Platonic approach to truth, namely, immutability as a clear sign of truth, and illumination as an account of this norm. He combined the Platonic idea of illumination with the Christian belief in the light which enlightens "every man who comes into the world."⁵¹ However, whereas Plotinus viewed this light as naturally due to man, Augustine insisted that it was something to which human powers alone cannot lay claim.

Augustine undoubtedly taught a theory of illumination. What he meant by it is unclear and open to various interpretations ranging from passivity to activity on the part of the human

mind.⁵² On the spectrum of theories, emphasis on the causality of God varies inversely with stress on the causality of man.

- *Theories of Passivity*. Theories of passivity which reduce man to a mere receptive instrument and make God alone the active cause run counter to Augustine's teaching if they lead either to pantheism by denying the distinction between the divine light which illumines and the human mind which is illumined, or to ontologism by insisting that truths are immediately understood in God. Augustine clearly distinguishes the changeable created intellect from the immutable uncreated intelligence and admitted a direct knowledge of God's light and ideas only in a mystical or beatific vision of God; the other, that the divine ideas are seen in man's formation of a true judgment, he would come to two consequences irreconcilable with authentic Augustinian thought: one would logically elevate every man, even the most wicked, to a mystical vision of God and namely hold that the existence of God is evident to the atheist with no need of demonstration.

- *Theories of Semi-Passivity*. While maintaining the primacy of divine causality, other interpreters judge that more consideration should be given to human causality. Bonaventure interpreted Augustine as holding a direct illumination of the soul by giving it a capacity to attain truth without enjoying mystical intuition of the divine light itself. The first Truth, in communicating something of its being to the mind, gives it a capacity to attain truth. Still, one may ask, "What is communicated and what is this capacity?" The issues raised by these questions are specified by the theory of nativism, according to which God infused concepts into the soul, at the moment of conception or birth, and the mind needs only to recall them. This theory of innatism explains the ideogenetic function of illumination in causing the content of human concepts but does not take into account Augustine's teaching that the mind, through bodily senses, knows corporeal things, thereby ruling out Platonic reminiscence.

- *Theories of Activity*. Cognizant of Augustine's recognition of the need of sense perception, Thomas Aquinas understood his doctrine of illumination in terms of Aristotelian abstraction. According to this interpretation, the Augustinian mind is an active power which, under divine influence, illumines the intelligible element in the sensible, or in Aristotelian language, abstracts the rational content from the perceptible object. This interpretation encounters difficulties within an Augustinian framework. First, Augustine, following the Platonic and Plotinian rather than the Aristotelian view of the world, saw nothing for the mind to work on in the corporeal universe. Second, since the less perfect by itself cannot act on the more perfect, something sensible from a corporeal object cannot determine the spiritual soul. The soul itself must directly produce sensation and an image. An agent intellect in the Aristotelian sense seems superfluous for the Augustinian mind which in its reception of divine light judges about the empirical world. Within the Augustinian perspective, the theory of abstraction seems to overemphasize the causality of the human mind.

- *Theory of Activo-Passivity*. To respect Augustine's doctrine of illumination, due consideration must be given to both the passive and active character of the human mind. Augustine was impressed by the necessary, immutable, and eternal character of judgments of purely intelligible truth. He realized that truth could not be accounted for either by the objects experienced or the mind pondering them. Appeal to internal or external experience to account for the content of concepts about the corporeal world cannot explain the necessity of the concept. To make judgments of eternal things, for example, "beauty is one," the mind needs to be immediately regulated by the light of eternal and necessary rules of divine wisdom, without adverting to the light itself.⁵³ The theory of regulation, which recognizes both the human mind's activity in

judging and its passivity in being governed by divine norms, seems to be more consonant with Augustine's teaching as a whole.

*Divine Truth*⁵⁴

I. Metaphysical Principles

Certain of truth, Augustine sought to know truth itself, God, according to the following metaphysical principles. First, reality is ultimately being. Everything is real insofar as it is what it is, namely, essence, or in Platonic terminology, form. Second, everything is essentially what it is inasmuch as it is true; truth is the basis of its essence.⁵⁵ Here, Augustine has in mind truth as it is found originally in God. Third, everything which is essentially true is also one and good. Whatever is evil is without unity, truth, and essence.⁵⁶ In view of this principle, Augustine can refute the Manichaean reification of an ultimate evil cause. Finally, Augustine, in authentic neoplatonic fashion, reasoned that beauty, like goodness, flows from the order, harmony and proportion of unity.⁵⁷

On the basis of these principles, Augustine distinguished a triple hierarchy of being according to the degree of mutability and/or immutability.⁵⁸ The essence of bodies, spatially and temporally mutable, is the lowest level of being. Souls, unchangeable as regard place but mutable in time, are on a higher metaphysical plane. The essence of God, immutable both in place and time, is the highest nature.⁵⁹ In this hierarchy, truth, unity, goodness, and beauty are in proportion to a being's immutability. Within this hierarchy, the more perfect can act on the less perfect but not vice versa.

II. Knowledge of God

A finite mind cannot comprehend infinite being. God comprehended is not God. When one utters "Unspeakable," . . . there arises a curious contradiction of words, because if the unspeakable is what cannot be spoken of, it is not unspeakable if it can be called unspeakable."⁶⁰ The wisest man is he who best knows his ignorance of God in the mystery of silence. Yet "if anything worthy of praise is noticed in the nature of things, whether it be judged worthy of slight praise or of great, it must be applied to the most excellent and ineffable praise of the Creator."⁶¹

- *Negative-Positive Predication.* Augustine adopted Plotinus' double theology of negative and positive predication. Because the infinite transcends all finite categories and concepts, it is easier to know what God is not than to know what he is. Though "nothing said of God is said with complete conformity,"⁶² one speaks exactly in saying both what God is and what he is not, in affirming God "as good without quality, great without quantity, . . . being without passion."⁶³ Names, such as wisdom and love, must be profoundly transformed before they can be applied to God. What these names signify must be purged of every shadow of mutability and temporality in a negative process and then raised to an eminent degree (perfect wisdom, perfect love) in an affirmative movement. Though "everything can be said of God, yet nothing is worthy of being said of God."⁶⁴

III. Existence of God

Augustine sought to understand his belief in the existence of God by looking inwardly and outside of himself for evidence of the divine presence. His arguments are generally little more than summary statements reminding those who already believe.

- *Gnoseological Proof*. His favorite proof is nothing but the epistemological justification of knowledge of truth now understood as a philosophical verification of faith in God. How can truths which immanently regulate the mind be adequately explained? Augustine found more in intellectual knowledge than the human mind can sufficiently account for. The mutable mind which errs in knowing things other than they are, increases its knowledge, and ceases to know, cannot be the sufficient reason of truths which as necessary cannot be otherwise than they are, and as immutable cannot increase or decrease. Consequently, the truths upon which the mind depends transcend it and find their *raison d'être* only in necessary, unchangeable, and eternal Truth itself. God is "the Truth in whom and by whom and through whom those things are true which are true in every respect."⁶⁵ A judgment is true, therefore, because Truth or God is.

- *Cosmological Proof*. In reading the great book of the world, one is moved to "question the beautiful earth. . . the beautiful sea . . . the beautiful air . . . the beautiful heavens, . . ." ⁶⁶ to "question the living creatures, . . ." ⁶⁷ And they reply, "We are not God, but it is God who has made us." ⁶⁸ As works of art point to the artist, so "everything cries out to you of its author; nay, the very forms of created things are as it were the voices with which they praise their Creator." ⁶⁹ Listening with the mind and heart, one will hear "the very order, disposition, beauty, change and motion of the world and of all visible things silently proclaim that it could only have been made by God, whose greatness and beauty, are unutterable and invisible."⁷⁰ What participates in being, unity, truth, goodness and beauty, is not its own cause but an effect of unparticipating being. Creatures have truth, because "O Truth, You . . . truly are."⁷¹

IV. Divine Essence

In his revelation to Moses, God affirmed, "I am who am (Yahweh)."⁷² In line with other Christian thinkers, Augustine interpreted this name to mean that God's fundamental perfection is being. "Everything that is in God is being."⁷³ Thus, Augustine rejected Plotinus' subordination of being to the One by identifying unity with being. God who is the truth and goodness that he has, radically differs from creatures who merely have what they possess.⁷⁴ As being itself, God is essential or absolute perfection, whereas creatures which are not being itself are relative perfection. God is "primary good, the good of all goods, the good whence all goods come, the good without which nothing is good, and the good which is good for other things . . ."⁷⁵ All God's perfections are identical in his utter simplicity. "For God, to be is the same as to be strong, or to be just, or to be wise, and to be whatever else you may say of that simple multiplicity, or that multiple simplicity, whereby His substance is signified."⁷⁶

V. Divine Attributes

- *Immutable Spirit*. As supreme being, God enjoys the attributes of spirituality, immutability, eternity, and immensity. He who is must be supreme spirit,⁷⁷ without matter and composition, otherwise he would possess nonbeing and be just another essence. As truth which necessarily is and cannot be other than what it is, the divine spirit is immutable. "Thou shall change things and

they shall be changed, but Thou are always the same."⁷⁸ Only what has matter or potentiality can receive a new form of being and become what it was not. The fullness of being, God enjoys perfect self-identity and has no need of becoming what he necessarily is, being itself.⁷⁹

- *Eternity*. From God's immutability flows his eternity. The Immutable cannot come to be in the future nor cease to be in the past. Abiding truth dwells in the incorruptible present. "Analyze the changes in things and you will find it was and it *will be*; think of God and you will find He *is*; no *was* or *will be* has a place there."⁸⁰ Time is the process of the mutable, whereas eternity is the duration of the unchangeable. As eternal, God is ever ancient and ever new.

- *Immensity*. Immutable spirit is not restricted in power or presence: "God is Himself in no interval nor extension of place, but in His immutable and pre eminent might is both interior to everything because all things are in Him, and exterior to everything because He is above all things."⁸¹

- *Wisdom*. Perfect truth in his essence, God possesses all the possible forms as ideas. "Ideas are the primary forms, or the permanent and immutable reasons of real things; . . . they are contained in the divine intelligence . . . and it is by participation in these that whatever exists is produced. . . ."⁸² Nothing is real or intelligible unless it is ultimately grounded in the divine ideas. Fully conscious of his essence, God comprehends the totality of his being and eternally intuits past, present, and future things. Consequently, he is all-wise, or omniscient.

- *Will*. All God knows in "one, eternal, immutable and ineffable vision,"⁸³ he wills in a present without past or future. God sees and wills, or if one prefers the human viewpoint, foresees and forewills even the free acts of men, so that when we pray to him God knows beforehand "what, and when we should ask Him, and to whom He would listen or not listen, and on what subjects."⁸⁴ Wisdom and will in God who is the unity of truth and goodness, are one.

- *Trinity*. From faith in Christian revelation, Augustine affirmed that God is a Trinity of three divine persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Augustine's Trinity of three equal persons who are one in being radically differs from Plotinus' triad of three unequal hypostases — One, Nous or Mind, and Soul — which are successively subordinate. However, Augustine borrowed heavily from Plotinus in striving to understand the Trinity. The Father is being in his own right. The Son is the eternal, living thought or Word of the Father, his self-knowledge, his perfect image. For Augustine, the divine ideas are contained, not in an inferior Plotinian Mind, but in the Word or Son who is consubstantial with the Father.⁸⁵ The love of the Father and the Son is the Holy Spirit, goodness itself. The love of supreme wisdom in perfect being, God enjoys the highest beatitude.

- *Expressions*. As art testifies to the artist, so all creatures resemble their maker, the divine Trinity. Unity (measure), form (number), and order (weight) in all creatures reflect their creator. Object, vision, and attention of the mind are traces in sensation of their maker. Memory, understanding, and will are images in intellection of the Trinity.⁸⁶ All analogies fall short of expressing divine truth, "for what is thought of God is truer than what is said, and His being is truer than what is thought."⁸⁷

Created Truth

As the truth of the Son and the goodness of the Spirit eternally proceed from the being of the Father, so in Augustine's theological vision, all things are temporally created by God.

I. *Creator and Creation*

Among the myriad possible expressions of the divine ideas which God contemplates, he freely wills some immutable intelligible forms to be reflected outwardly, though imperfectly, in changeable forms with varying degrees of being and order.⁸⁸ The resulting hierarchy of essences, grounded in their unequal participations in the divine ideas, mirrors the creator's mind. As being itself independent of other things, "God, however, is a debtor to no one since He confers everything gratuitously."⁸⁹ Augustine favored the Christian belief in God's free creation of the temporal world over Plotinus' doctrine of necessary and eternal emanation. Motivated by pure love with nothing to gain or lose, God chose to share a measure of his goodness with creatures. Lest they slip back to nothingness from which they were liberated, the creative act conserves them in being. "If He should withdraw this activity from creatures, we would not live, nor be moved, nor be."⁹⁰

- *Creation from Nothing*. Since God's being is power itself in absolute independence of all things and forces, he created the entire being of the universe from nothing, with no need of pre-existing matter, as was the case with Plato's Demiurge. "You (God) did not create the universe in the universe, for there was no place wherein to make it before it was made to be. Nor did you hold anything in your hand wherewith to make heaven and earth."⁹¹ Nothing comes from nothing except by the unlimited power of God which can make the total being of the universe, both its matter and form.

II. *Structure*

- *Matter*. Created matter is "almost nothing," though not completely nothing,⁹² a minimum of reality between being and nonbeing, the least reflection of divine truth. Formless matter, which seems to be impervious to knowledge, does not exist except with form. Though anterior to form in the order of causality, matter is concomitant with it in time. Indefinite in itself, matter becomes determinate being by its form, as sound is made a meaningful word by articulation of the voice.⁹³ Matter and form, it seems, were created simultaneously. Matter was first endowed with a capacity for the form of the ideas and then immediately perfected with being by an inchoative form of number, order and beauty. Shifting unceasingly from one form to another, matter is the matrix of mutability, the substrate of change.⁹⁴

- *Time*. Temporality follows in the wake of mutable matter. In this sense, time began only with the creation of the universe. That is why it is more exact to say that the world was created with time rather than in time as if time preceded creation. Eternity is the duration of immutable being, whereas temporality is the duration of a changing being having a before, a fleeting now, and an after.⁹⁵ Time is basically the present interval "which cannot be divided into even the minutest moments . . . and flies so rapidly from the future into the past that it does not extend over the slightest instant."⁹⁶ In the moving series of indivisible moments, no creature is co-eternal with the creator in the permanency of its eternity. Were a creature eternal, it would undergo no change, and, consequently, have neither a past nor future, but simply exist in the present. Then it would no longer be a creature; it would be immutable being with eternal duration. Such existence belongs only to God.

Augustine opposed the theory of some Platonists that creation is eternal. These Platonists reasoned that, as the imprint of a foot is simultaneously present with the foot in the dust, so creation always is because its creator always is, the effect being concomitant with the cause in the order of time. Augustine would counter that this reasoning assumes that the cause is subject to time. On the

contrary, he insisted that the creator as eternal is beyond temporal conditions and absolutely prior to its effects. It is contradictory to equate the transitory temporal existence of creatures, whose past is no more, future yet to be, and present momentary, with the stable, eternal duration of the creator. In Augustine's vision, the temporal movement of matter by form toward God imperfectly reflects the Word's eternal adherence to the Father. Augustine's view of the temporal universe moving toward its eternal omega radically differs from the ancient Greek idea of the world's unending circular duration.

"What, then, is time?" Augustine asked. "If no one asks me, I know; but if I want to explain it to him who asks, I do not know."⁹⁷ He finds himself familiar with the use of such terms as "past," "present," and "future," but hard put to define time. He was impressed by its mental character rather than by its objective appearance as something "out there." Time is a mental phenomenon, a "stretching-out of the soul" in its measurement of motion that was and is and will be. Without this distention, the soul could not perceive and measure the duration of motion. Past is the soul's memory which retains and remembers what was; the future is its expectation of what will be; and the present is its attention to what is.⁹⁸ Past and future coexist in the continuity of the soul's present attention which alone really exists. Even after his impressive analysis of time, Augustine still feels uncertain about the nature of time.⁹⁹ Transitory phenomena find stability in the soul.

- *Spiritual Matter.* Augustine interpreted the creation of "heaven" and "earth" as described in the Scriptures to mean invisible and visible matter. To explain how spiritual creatures such as angels and probably the human soul differ from the divine spirit, he posited in their essence an invisible or spiritual matter as their mutable substrate. This special kind of matter is not quantitative like the extension of physical bodies. Unlike other creatures which are temporal, these angelic spirits enjoy the duration of a being changeable by nature but immutably stabilized and united to God in beatific contemplation.¹⁰⁰ Theirs is a closer reflection than time of eternity.

- *Form.* Whereas the book of Genesis (2:7) describes the successive production of corporeal things (for example, fishes and birds on the fifth day, and cattle and beasts on the sixth day). Ecclesiasticus (16:24-25) states that God created everything simultaneously. Augustine attempted to resolve this apparent contradiction. By a single, simple, instantaneous act, God, unbound by time, created from nothing everything simultaneously, both matter and the forms that determine it. These temporal forms, participations of the eternal ideas in God's mind, stabilize matter by conferring upon it a fixed and particular mode of being, an essence. Like Plotinus, Augustine explained the structure of created things in terms of matter and form, words reminiscent of Aristotle but really Platonic in meaning.

- *Seminal Reasons.* If everything was created simultaneously, how could Augustine account for the continual appearance of new beings? He theorized that creatures existed in two states, one perfect and the other imperfect. Whereas the four elements and man's soul were created in a state of mature form,¹⁰¹ other things were made in an imperfect condition as seminal forms. The primordial seeds of all living things, including Adam's body, account for the new beings continually appearing in the universe.¹⁰² In the beginning of creation, fully formed things were visible and actual, but those seminally preformed were produced "invisibly, potentially, causally, as future things which have not been made."¹⁰³ As conditions became favorable under God's providence, the inner, efficacious forces latent in the humid seminal reasons gradually fructified and openly appeared in the full light of creation, like the unfolding of a rosebud.

In general, then, Ecclesiasticus literally stresses the structural unity of creation in space, and Genesis figuratively emphasizes its dynamic plurality in time. The two texts complement each other.

- *Number*. Augustine interpreted the Stoic and Plotinian theory of seminal reasons within a Platonic perspective of number. Number is the source of perfection in forms and the cause of development in seminal reasons. From the number-forms flow the universal order of parts within wholes, the order of unities well disposed in space, and the order of seminal reasons developing successively in time.¹⁰⁴ As number begins from one and ends in an integer, so the hierarchy of mutable unities originates from and tends toward the supreme one, God. In his mathematical vision, Augustine viewed God's providence and rule as ordering all things according to measure, number, and weight.¹⁰⁵

III. *Evil*

In his opposition to Manichaeism, Augustine faced the problem of reconciling the reality of evil with an all-good creator. God who as sovereign good can create nothing but what is good. Hence, every substance is naturally good. However, when a creature lacks measure, form, and order, its nature is vitiated and evil.¹⁰⁶ Because evil "falls away from essence and tends to non-being . . . to non-existence,"¹⁰⁷ it is said to have in itself no essence. That is why the Manichaean conception of evil existing by itself is meaningless. As a privation of good, evil cannot be caused by God. "No one, therefore, need seek for an efficient cause of an evil will. Since the 'effect' is, in fact, a 'deficiency' the cause should be deficient."¹⁰⁸ Analogously, silence and darkness have no cause as do sound and light. Evil arises from the deficiency of creatures, their mutability and sharing in non-being.¹⁰⁹ Augustine, therefore, adapted Plotinus' conception of evil as a privation without following his tendency to equate matter with evil.

- *Physical Evil*. The question arises as to whether it would have been better to create nothing at all rather than a world of physical and moral evils. From the natural limitation of creatures comes the physical evil of suffering, anguish, and catastrophes. In Augustine's view, such privations find meaning in the beauty and goodness of the universe as a whole, as darkness looks to light for purpose. If pain humbles one in repentance and lifts the heart to God for love and courage, it serves a good purpose. Death, tragic as it appears, plays a main role in the drama of the universe for the person aspiring to be with God. As syllables and sounds pass away to allow other words to be born and yet form the well-ordered whole of beautiful speech, so creatures and the evil they work upon each other find meaning in the good of creation as a whole.¹¹⁰ The whole gives meaning to the part. For Augustine, it is better to be in this world of chiaroscuro with good standing out brightly against the darkness of evil than not to be at all.

- *Moral Evil*. No doubt recalling his own sin, Augustine was deeply concerned with the reason for God's creating peaceable wills which can voluntarily turn away from supreme goodness. He viewed moral evil as the privation of right order in a created will which, while remaining good as will, lacks the measure, form, and order it ought to have.¹¹¹ When a created will abuses its freedom and voluntarily defects from supreme goodness, it is deprived of right order. Good in itself, the will can be good for man, if he wills it so.¹¹² The abuse of free will by no means denigrates its value. In his wisdom and power, God's providence inscrutably makes moral evil serve the universal harmony by drawing good out of evil and transforming the sinner into a work worthy of God. Without justifying sin, this service of evil to good verifies in large measure God's creation of human freedom as a value personally imaging God in himself.

Human Image of Truth

Man, his soul at the foot of the intelligible world below angels and his body at the summit of the sensible cosmos, images in a unique way uncreated truth.

I. Origin of Man

In his reconciliation of scriptural texts, Augustine understood Ecclesiasticus as referring to the simultaneous creation of everything, including the first man's body and soul, and Genesis as narrating God's development of the seminal reasons to bring the bodies of Adam and Eve to their mature state.¹¹³

Augustine encountered more acute difficulties in trying to explain the origin of the first man's descendants. The difficulty is not so much with the formation of the human body which evidently developed from seminal reasons to its present finished form, but with the mode and time of the soul's creation. As regards the origin of the soul, Augustine investigated the theories of creationism and traducianism. Creationism, the view that God immediately creates each soul at the moment it comes to animate the body, faces the difficulty of explaining how original sin can be transmitted from Adam to his descendants. Traducianism answers this problem by holding that the souls of all people to come are seminally formed with the creation of the first human soul of Adam; accordingly, parents "hand down" or generate, under God's influence, the incorporeal souls of their offspring by a sort of spiritual emanation, "as light is lit by another light, so that without detriment to the latter, the former light comes from it."¹¹⁴ Augustine seemed to prefer traducianism as more probable than creationism.

II. Human Nature

For Augustine, "a soul in possession of a body does not constitute two persons but one man."¹¹⁵ So intimate is the unity of body and soul that "anyone who wishes to separate the body from human nature is foolish,"¹¹⁶ for neither alone is truly man. Within a Platonic perspective, Augustine defined man as "a rational soul with a mortal and earthly body in its service."¹¹⁷ Man is primarily a soul for whom the body is an instrument. As superior, the soul acts on the body by vivifying and moving it without being moved by it. The inferior cannot determine the superior. By its constant and pervasive "vital attention," the soul is present entirely in every part of the body as a whole and also totally in each part.¹¹⁸ Experience of what is going on in any part of the body testifies to this presence. In this mysterious union, the soul mediates between the body it unifies, informs, and orders, and the divine ideas which animate it.

III. Soul

- *Substance*. "When the mind knows itself, it knows its own substance."¹¹⁹ In reflecting upon himself, man discloses himself as a continuing center of activities: "I remember that I have memory, understanding, and will; and I understand that I understand, will, and remember; and I will that I will, and remember, and understand; . . ." ¹²⁰ These acts belong to man, but he is more than them. His true ego is the soul, subsisting in its own right, "a certain kind of substance, sharing in reason, fitted to rule the body."¹²¹ As an independent superior substance, the soul presides over a dependent inferior body.

- *Incorporeality*. Augustine reasoned to the nature of the soul from its activities and objects. The human soul could not understand immutable, eternal truths transcending space and time unless it itself has some affinity with these intelligible objects in their incorporeality.¹²² The fact that the soul can retain representations of past sensible objects in present images indicates that it is beyond bodily restrictions. If the soul were extended and consequently localized exclusively in that region of the body to which it is attending, for example, vision, it would not be able to animate the body as a whole.¹²³

- *Immortality*. As the subject of indestructible truth, the soul must be naturally imperishable.¹²⁴ Like knows like. Participating essentially in the divine idea of life, the soul cannot die. A dead soul is a contradiction. Neither can it be destroyed by error, though it diminishes in perfection as it falls from truth.¹²⁵ Life in itself, the soul is not life of itself, since it receives being from God and is kept from falling into nothingness by his sustaining power.

- *Unity of activity*. While one in substance, the soul exercises the spiritual activities of remembering, understanding, and willing, without the intrinsic intervention of the body.

- *Memory*. Memory is "the present of things past"¹²⁶ in the soul which can recall what has taken place. Self-awareness occurs in memory: "There also I do meet with myself and recall myself: what, when and where I did something, and how I felt when I did it."¹²⁷ The soul also remembers by learning immutable truths from God as the inner master who is present as light within memory and illumines the truths precontained therein. In this way memory reaches beyond the past to what is eternally present.¹²⁸ Augustine, therefore, grounded Plato's theory of knowledge as remembering in divine illumination.

- *Mind*. Coexisting with memory in the soul is the mind which as superior reason contemplates eternal, intelligible realities, and as inferior reason knows temporal, sensible things.¹²⁹ These two offices are discharged by the single mind. In the light of divine truth, the mind makes true judgments expressing necessary truths.

- *Free Will*. Willing is as inescapable a psychological fact as remembering and understanding. Man experiences the will to exist and to think. This willing reveals itself as free in its ability to choose or not to choose something. Free to acquire or to retain a thing, man finds himself responsible for what he chooses, a "fact which the shepherds proclaim on the mountains, the poets in the theaters, the unlearned in social intercourse, the wise men in libraries, the masters in the schools, the priests in the holy places and the human race throughout the whole world."¹³⁰ Man can be blamed or punished for doing what it is possible not to do.

The will enjoys power over the whole life of the soul: its feelings of fear and joy, its sensing of an object, its conjoining or disjoining of images in the imagination, and its moving the understanding to search or to know something.¹³¹ The will's ultimate power lies not in its dominion over other things, but in its mastery over itself, its ability to control its own choosing.¹³²

- *Image of God*. The closest, noblest, and clearest image of the divine Trinity is the human trinity of self-memory, self-understanding, and self-love. "Well, then, the mind remembers itself, understands itself, and loves itself; if we discern this, we perceive a trinity, not yet God indeed, but now finally an image of God."¹³³

- *Sense Powers*. Since the more perfect cannot be determined by the less perfect — the spiritual by the material — the soul cannot be acted upon by the body. The soul does not undergo sensation but rather is the subject of that activity.¹³⁴ After the soul is conscious of bodily impressions made by corporeal objects on the sensory organs, it responds by producing out of its own substance, a spiritual image in which things are perceived.¹³⁵ "When we see a body and its image begins to exist in our soul, it is not the body that impresses the image in our soul. It is the

soul itself that produces it with wonderful swiftness within itself."¹³⁶ The soul then compares and unifies the images as its own, elaborates on them in the imagination, and retains them in the treasury of sense memory. Sensation, then, is an incorporeal activity of the soul using the body and its impressions as instruments. The prominence of the soul as the proper subject of sensation is due to the Platonic influence in Augustine.

Love of Truth

As the image of divine truth, man loves to know what is true and good in order to attain happiness. For Augustine, moral wisdom lies in the love of truth, or love of good, since the true and the good are interchangeable.

I. Love

love is the dynamic center of man's moral life. As weight makes a physical body naturally tend upward or downward, so love moves man where it will: "My weight is my love; by it I am borne wherever I am carried."¹³⁷ Love motivates man toward good or the evil he thinks good. It belongs to the essence of human existence. "If you are to love nothing, you will be lifeless, dead, detestable, miserable."¹³⁸ Man thinks, remembers, senses, acts, and lives for what he loves.

- *Charity*. "Love, but be careful what you love,"¹³⁹ for as a man loves, so he is. A good love makes him good, his anger just, his desire holy, his joy blessed, his fear salutary.¹⁴⁰ To love rightly is to live rightly, whereas to love badly is to live wrongly. Love finds its highest fulfillment in loving what ought to be loved above all things, God, the greatest good, and man, the noblest participation in the sovereign good.¹⁴¹ Because "God is love," (I *John* 4:8), "Thou hast formed us for Thyself and our hearts are restless till they find rest in thee."¹⁴² Love of God above all and all in God is charity. Thus the parallel which Plato had drawn between love (*eros*) and wisdom (*phronesis*) was integrated by Augustine and subordinated to his higher comparison between charity and faith-with-understanding.

II. Happiness

Every act of love is naturally a pursuit of happiness.¹⁴³ Even evil is sought with the expectation of some sort of happiness. The outer man drinks only at the fountain of changeable, temporal creatures and finds but an impermanent and insecure happiness. "For whoever follows after what is inferior to himself, becomes himself inferior. But every man is bound to follow what is best."¹⁴⁴ Not in Stoic virtue which can be lost, but in the immutable source of all virtue lies true joy. Authentic happiness can be found in the inner man who turns his heart and mind to the divine giver of all being and all delight.¹⁴⁵

Dissatisfaction with the deficiency and emptiness of human existence leads the soul to find the fulfillment of all its desires in God, the fullness of truth and goodness. Again, "thou hast made us for thyself and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee."¹⁴⁶ Not in an image but in the reality of unparticipating good the mind finds rest in truth itself and the will quietude in Good itself, in God alone who is immutable and eternal happiness. "The striving after God is the desire of happiness; to reach God is happiness itself."¹⁴⁷ That is why man ought to love God wholeheartedly: "If God is man's supreme good . . . it clearly follows, since to seek the chief good is to

live well, that to live well is nothing else but to love God with all the heart, with all the soul, with all the mind."148

Happiness comes to perfection in eternity where truth itself now dimly glimpsed is seen clearly, face to face. The intellect sees God and love embraces him. Contemplation is the indispensable condition for attaining sovereign truth, and love constitutes the essence of this possession.¹⁴⁹ In perfect contemplative love of God, the soul is beatified with complete "joy in the truth."¹⁵⁰

III. *Grace*

In Augustine's Christian perspective, man can neither pursue nor possess perfect happiness unless he receives grace, or divine life, from God. What he found lacking in Plotinus to account for the movement of a weak and wavering will of fallen man to good, he derived from the teaching of St. Paul on the necessity of grace from God to love God. Augustine opposed the view of Pelagius who held that man's own efforts could bring him to a higher life. Decisive in Augustine's personal history was the discovery of his inability to overcome sin without God's grace and the experience of his success in doing so with divine help. "When man tries to live justly by his own strength without the help of the liberating grace of God, he is then conquered by sins; but in free will he has it in his power to believe in the Liberator and to receive grace."¹⁵¹ Man can deform God's image within himself, but only God can bridge the gulf between temporal, mutable being and eternal, unchangeable divinity to restore man to grace.

IV. *Liberty*

At this stage, Augustine encountered the formidable problem of reconciling grace with human freedom. How can the will be free if it needs grace to be moved toward what is good? Since grace strengthens man's will to do good, it perfects human liberty. Foreseeing the circumstances in which any free will would consent or dissent, God influences the will to consent infallibly to grace without removing its freedom.¹⁵² Grace draws the will to its purpose by offering delight as an incentive to which it consents just as freely as it would to the pleasure of sin if grace were lacking.¹⁵³ Human liberty is guaranteed on the part of man because "it is within each man's will to consent to the call from God or to resist it,"¹⁵⁴ and on the part of God whose eternal truth is the ground of the will's freedom.

The problem for Augustine, is not between grace and free choice, but between grace and liberty. All liberty is free choice, but every free choice is not liberty. Genuine liberty is free choice used to good purpose, whereas unauthentic liberty is its bad use. In both cases, free choice is operative.¹⁵⁵ Only God's grace can liberate free choice from the slavery of sin, and preserve and promote human liberty. "Free will is more free as it is more healthy; it is more healthy the more subject it is to the grace of the divine mercy."¹⁵⁶ The soul, completely confirmed in the grace of the beatific vision, enjoys perfect liberty: "What would be more free than free will if it were able not to serve sin?"¹⁵⁷

V. *Law*

Moved by grace, free will attains authentic liberty in fulfilling the law of God. All men are more or less conscious of moral laws. Though expressed in different ways, basic norms such as

"Seek wisdom and happiness," "Subordinate the inferior to the superior," and "Give everyone his due," are common to all people, and applied to human actions by conscience under the influence of God's moral light.¹⁵⁸ These first principles of morality, like those of the speculative order, are not of man's own making, but are grounded in eternal truths.

- *Eternal Law*. "The eternal law is the divine reason, or the will of God, ordaining the preservation of the order of nature and forbidding its disturbance."¹⁵⁹ Because "it is the law by which it is just that everything should have its due order,"¹⁶⁰ it demands universal order and necessity, binding all creatures — natural things naturally, free things freely — to observe its prescripts. Within this universal order, the divine will obliges the human will to preserve due order by subordinating the lower to the higher,¹⁶¹ external goods to the body, the body to the soul, the senses to reason, and reason to God.¹⁶² In the proper ordering of human existence, love of God is the main motivating force in the will's fulfillment of its moral obligation.

- *Natural Law*. The expression of the eternal law in creation is the natural law which is concentered with creatures. As the image of God and participating in his being, the human soul is inscribed with his eternal law, "as the impression of a ring passes into wax, yet does not leave the ring."¹⁶³ What God had inwardly written in men's consciences and they had refused to read, he outwardly promulgated as the ten commandments to the Israelites. Dictates of right conscience and acts of just legislation governing people express in particular ways the one natural law which remains the same as its applications change to meet various needs and situations.¹⁶⁴

VI. *Virtue*

Fulfillment of the divine law adorns the soul with the beauty of virtue. As the eternal law is the work of divine reason and will, so virtue is the effect of human reason reigning in ethical existence and the will wanting it to rule.¹⁶⁵ "Virtue is the love by which one loves that which should be loved,"¹⁶⁶ whereas vice is the love of moral evil. As a consequence of love's submission to the order of the eternal law, a man lives virtuously; thus virtue is "the art of living well and rightly."¹⁶⁷ Augustine, therefore, overcame the static Stoic conception of virtue as apathy by viewing virtue as love and by ordering the whole person with emotions toward God.

Because of its weakness, the human will is incapable of pursuing good without an illumination of the divine virtues. The will is rectified by participating in the immutable rules and lights of the virtues dwelling eternally within the divine truth common to all men.¹⁶⁸ As God illumines physical bodies by numbers and the mind by truth, so he illumines the will by virtue.

The virtues find their unity in love. Whereas vice is the ugly visage of disorderly love, virtue is the beauty of true love ordered toward God.¹⁶⁹ Love is the highest virtue to which all others are reducible. Temperance, for example, is a love which moves the soul wholly to prefer the lasting beauty and purer joy of God to the passing beauty and inferior pleasures of the body. From love flows liberty: "love and do what you will."¹⁷⁰ The measure of one's love of God is to love him without measure.

Love of Truth in Society

As a social being, man naturally seeks political wisdom, knowledge and love of truth and goodness in society.

I. *Origin of Society*

Society emerges from love. Love of a common good brings people together into a society. Accordingly, society is "an assemblage of rational beings associated in a common agreement as to the things it loves."¹⁷¹ Love of a common goal is the social bond of people. A society is good as long as its love is good. Besides the family, the basic natural and social unit,¹⁷² love has given rise to two great societies, State and Church.

II. *State*

A State is a group of people united in their natural love of mutable, temporal goods necessary for human life, of which peace is the most lofty and inclusive.¹⁷³ Dishonorable nations such as Assyria and Rome waged war for the sake of war,¹⁷⁴ whereas honorable men do battle with the hope for a true and just peace. "The peace of all things is the tranquillity of order," the harmonious life of body and soul, "the ordered harmony of authority and obedience" in the family and the political community, and the "perfectly ordered and harmonious enjoyment of God and of one another in God."¹⁷⁵

- *Authority*. The authority to command obedience to civil laws and unify members of the State should be in the hands of the most capable citizens whom Cicero described as "best by nature itself."¹⁷⁶ The ultimate source of legitimate authority is the author of nature who "gives kingly power on earth both to the pious and impious."¹⁷⁷ The ruler should legislate for the common good by promulgating just laws rightly reflecting the natural law. A just law ought to be obeyed as coming from God, whereas an unjust law should be disobeyed as deriving from a wicked will.¹⁷⁸ Effective legislation requires coercive power to prevent disorder. The offender of a just law should be "corrected by word or blow or some kind of just and legitimate punishment, such as society permits for his own good, to readjust him to the peace he has abandoned."¹⁷⁹ The success of authority should be measured not so much in its advancement of worldly prosperity as in its promotion of justice and obedience to God.¹⁸⁰

III. *Church*

Augustine went beyond Plato's concern for man as a citizen of the State. Christians are members of the Church, a spiritual society, as well as of a temporal State. Out of love for man, Jesus Christ made the Church in the likeness of his Father: "God is Father and the Church Mother."¹⁸¹ As the spiritual mother of souls, the Church teaches her children the truths of Christ and dispenses through the sacraments the grace they need to live what they believe. Because the Church "Holds and possesses all the power of her Spouse the Lord,"¹⁸² she can legislate, judge, and administer in matters of faith and morals.¹⁸³ The Church is a society of people loving according to the same faith, bound together by their common love of the same God and the same beatitude.

- *Church and State*. As the Church is perfect and sovereign in the spiritual order of peace and salvation, so the State is in the corporeal order of peace and harmony. With each having its own rights and laws, opposition is unnecessary as long as one does not interfere in the other's affairs. The Christian citizen owes obedience to both societies out of love of God who willed them.¹⁸⁴ The intimate intermingling of spiritual and temporal interests of Christians requires a close collaboration between religious and civil authority.¹⁸⁵ The State ought to make its natural end

serve the higher goal of the Church. In return, the State will be leavened with the yeast of Christian truth, love and holiness, and remade in the image of Christ.

History of Two Loves 186

Historical wisdom is the love of truth as it emerges in past human events, persists in the present, and culminates in the future. Philosophy of history searches for the immutable, spiritual meaning in changeable human events. Unlike Plotinus for whom history was of little significance in comparison with the return of the soul to the One, Augustine viewed the historical process as a dialectical struggle between two loves with consequences reaching into eternity.

I. Two Loves of Two Cities

In his *City of God*, Augustine found history to be a tale of two cities. Societies are what they love. Love of the uncreated good constitutes the city of God, whereas love of created goods establishes the city of creatures. "Two loves make these two cities."¹⁸⁷ On the one hand, the common love of temporal things in preference to God unites bad angels and men into the city of slavery and sin. On the other, the common love of the eternal God and his law above creatures binds all good angels and men into the city of liberty and holiness. Both cities are immanent yet transcend time and space. The head of the city of God is Christ and its citizens are all those elect angels and people -- Abel, Noah, saints — who freely submit to God's grace and are, consequently, predestined to enjoy eternal happiness in heaven. Heresiarch in the city of sin is Satan and its denizens are all the reprobate souls — perhaps, Cain — and all who freely reject God's grace and are doomed to suffer unending punishment in hell. The history of creation from its dawn to its dusk is a tale of these two cities.

These two cities are as diametrically opposed as their two loves. In the earthly city love is perverted in worship of creatures, order is false, peace unjust, and joy uncertain. In the heavenly city, however, love is rightly ordered toward the immutable good, order is true, peace just, and joy permanent. The differences between the two cities which are hidden in the inner man sometimes break into open conflict in the outer life of man.

Although the people of these two cities intermingle in the family and State, they remain spiritually different. "You have heard and know that there are two cities, for the present mingled together in body, but in heart separated."¹⁸⁸ The heavenly wheat and earthly cockle commingle in the field of life, but at the harvest time of judgment day they will be separated by the winnowing fan of God's justice which will render to each his due according to his love.¹⁸⁹

These morally distinct cities are not identified with either the Church or the State, each of which contain both future elect and reprobate souls. Were the State coincident with the city of Satan, no good Christian could be a servant of the State as well as of the Church.¹⁹⁰ However, the sacred spirit of the heavenly city permeates to a high degree the Church, and the secular attitude of the earthly city pervades the State. Since the State in itself is naturally indifferent to supernatural ends, it can be aptly defined as a "human society organizing itself apart from God,"¹⁹¹ as the history of Babylon and Rome bears out. As Christ's plenipotentiary on earth, the Church uniquely embodies the city of God, aspiring unceasingly after the eternal good of heaven and working tirelessly for the establishment of God's kingdom.¹⁹²

II. *In Defense of Christianity*

Augustine's *City of God* was also a defense of Christianity against those pagans who blamed it for the decay of the Roman Empire. The decline and fall of the Roman Empire was due not to Christianity, but to the Romans themselves who abandoned their traditional natural virtues and high ideals and deteriorated in their conquests for power, wealth and pleasure. The mission of Christianity is not to revive the old city of Rome with its material splendor, but to build up the membership of the new heavenly city of Jerusalem with spiritual glory. To this high purpose, Christian martyrs suffered and died; Christian soldiers patriotically fought in defense of their nation; Christian citizens forgave their offenders, just as the pagans Sallust and Cicero taught pardon; Christian ascetics did penance for the sins of the Romans. So runs the refutation of those "who prefer their own gods to the Founder of the Holy City,"¹⁹³ Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

Augustine's philosophy can be historically appreciated by recalling its relationship to past thought, reflecting upon its inner structure, and anticipating its future influence.

Retrospect

I. *Plotinus Redivivus*

In retrospect against the background of ancient thought, Augustine appears as a Christian Plotinus. As the African of the third century, from his personal religious viewpoint, spiritualized Platonism, so the African of the fifth century baptized Plotinus' thought in the Christian faith by cleansing it of unacceptable ideas and clothing them with the garments of biblical teachings. Augustine surpassed Plotinus in shifting the center of philosophy from man to God. Whereas the Plotinian man's rational powers can move him toward God in the natural order, the Augustinian man cannot attain God as his supernatural end unless he is elevated by the grace of God. Augustine is Plotinus redivivus in a Christian context.

II. *New Synthesis*

Augustine sounded Plotinian and Platonic themes, but the philosophical symphony is his own. Once the conceptual elements of Plotinus are assimilated by the Augustinian mind, they assume an altogether new form and become an integral part of this new synthesis. Priceless concepts of ancient philosophy rise anew, as a phoenix from the ashes, and live again the Christian thought of Augustine. Later in life, Augustine regretted his youthful avidity for Platonic ideas which he modified.¹⁹⁴ What the ancient philosophers grasped in a limited and obscure knowledge about God as the goal of life and the way to him, Augustine found with certainty and clarity in the one, true wisdom of Christianity.¹⁹⁵ Augustine Hellenized Christian ideas, or, to put it in an Augustinian perspective, he Christianized the Hellenic thought he encountered.

Conspectus

A critical conspectus of Augustine's philosophy reveals its spirit, and the strength and weakness of its method and content.

I. Integral Method

The unity of philosophy and religion in Augustine's life found expression in a method which integrated both faith and reason in one vision of a single supernatural goal. Limited to the one eye of natural reason, Plato and Plotinus could not grasp man in his concrete existence as actually fallen yet redeemed and destined by the grace of Christ for union with God. As ancient philosophy testifies to the capacity of pure human reason, so Augustine's new wisdom bears witness to the power of faith-with-reason in disclosing the meaning of human existence. In view of his integral method of a reasoning faith, it is not surprising that Augustine conceived Christian philosophy as both the true philosophy and the true religion.¹⁹⁶

II. Content

- *Essentialism.* Faithful to the tradition of Plato, Augustine conceived all beings and truth in terms of essence ranging from the immutable, eternal, uncreated essence to the many mutable, temporal, created essences. In the order of essence, he found little difficulty in reasoning from truth in the human mind to the existence of divine truth. This approach, according to Gilson, links Augustine to subsequent philosophers:

Therefore, the mere presence in man's mind of a datum which obviously transcends man implies the existence of its object. This deep-seated tendency to find in God alone sufficient reason for the idea we have of Him, is the bond which links the metaphysics of Saint Anselm, Saint Bonaventure, Duns Scotus and Descartes to Augustinian metaphysics.¹⁹⁷

- *God.* Within an essentialist context, Augustine's all-pervading purpose was to guarantee God's absolute transcendence by emphasizing the creature's complete dependence on him. The theory of illumination validates truth and virtue on the basis of an immutable being transcending time and change. With a synthetic sweep, Augustine combined epistemology, theology and ethics in a single answer to problems of knowledge, virtue and God. Though his doctrine of illumination guarantees a maximum dependence of the soul on God in the acts of knowing and willing, it is not clear and precise, as different interpretations testify. Furthermore, how can a created soul share in uncreated immutable light and truth without the latter becoming changeable in the human mind?¹⁹⁸

In view of the transcendence of God's essence, Augustine logically conceived him as absolute truth, unity, good and beauty. This conception of unity as an attribute of God's being so radically differs from Plotinus' notion of being as subordinate to the One that the teaching of these two philosophers cannot have the same metaphysical and theological meaning.

Without compromising God's transcendence, Augustine attempted to explain his creative and providential activity in the cosmos and history according to the doctrine of exemplarism. However, his revised Plotinian exemplarism is heir to the difficulties inherent in Platonic metaphysics. For

example, he left unclear whether God, in creating matter — viewed in a Platonic way as a quasi nonbeing — created being.¹⁹⁹ Whereas Plotinus envisaged divine freedom as the priority of the One over being and regarded the emanation of the many from the One as necessary, Augustine viewed the divine essence as eternally free to exemplify ideal essences in creating things. Augustine's conception of God will become the common heritage of practically all medieval philosophers.

- *Man*. Within Augustine's theocentric drama, man plays a central role in unfolding the absolute dependence of creatures on God. In contrast to the ancient Greek and Roman apotheosis of human reason and existence, Augustine emphasized its insufficiency by describing the nothingness inherent in man's origin, mutability and mortality, the development of seminal reasons, doubts and unruly passion, and involvement in evil. Augustine's psychological insights into the elements of human existence unfold in his masterful self-analysis, especially in the Confessions. This had the effect of uncovering man's need for a self-sufficient divinity who creates, conserves, provides, illumines, liberates, and beatifies. As God is the life of the soul, so the soul is the life of the body. Augustine's definition of man as a rational soul using a body, however, leaves much to be desired in explaining how the body and soul are essentially united and in giving due justice to the body as a component which is more than something to be used.

- *Causality*. Nowhere is the power of God over creatures so clearly drawn as in Augustine's doctrine of causality. Divine causality — the efficient causality of God's creative power, the exemplary causality of his truth, and the final causality of his goodness — holds hegemony over the created causality of seminal forms,²⁰⁰ and the purely passive causality of matter. No created agent can introduce new forms into nature which God created with all its actual and seminal forms. Whatever causality creatures exert in providing favorable conditions for the production of formal perfections appears at most to be an uncovering of effects implanted by God in the seminal reasons. This minimizing of the creature's causality for the maximum glory of the creator will remain a guiding principle for the followers of Augustine.

- *Evolution*. In view of Augustine's notion of causality, it is evident that his theory of seminal reasons cannot be equated with creative evolutionism in the sense of a successive production of essentially new forms. For Augustine, the forms of things were created simultaneously in their original state and successively unfold.²⁰¹ Seminal reasons seem to be principles of stability, accounting more for the fixity than for the flux of species.²⁰² While his theory of traducianism clearly implies stability of form with a human being begetting another of its kind, its conception of one soul generating another seems irreconcilable with an unequivocal affirmation of the soul's spirituality.

- *Charity*. Augustine's theology of charity surpassed Greek intellectualistic ethics to establish man's complete dependence on God in willing, loving, and liberty. Whereas ancient philosophers tended to stress the cognitive side of man's nature, Augustine envisioned the will as the central drive of politico-ethical existence with universal history as a dialectic between the human and divine will. Though he insisted on man's moral weakness, Augustine optimistically viewed history as divine love universally working for the restoration of fallen man. Charity is the essence of mysticism for Augustine, the Doctor of Charity.²⁰³

- *Free Will*. Augustine progressed beyond the ancient philosopher's rationalistic conception of freedom. Whereas Plotinus viewed freedom as an act of thinking, Augustine transposed it from an intellectualistic and naturalistic framework of rational necessity to a thoroughly Christian perspective of voluntary obligation animated by charity. With moral obligation grounded in a freedom that is essentially love of God, man ought to will what God wants him to will. In his

voluntaristic orientation beyond the one-sided intellectualism of Greek and Roman philosophers' exemplified, for example, in the Socratic identification of virtue and knowledge, Augustine strove to maintain a balance between reason and will, though he definitely gives priority to the will in the order of action. The ultimate difference between the City of God and the city of Satan and between eternal happiness in heaven or endless misery in hell depends on the will, and the essence of perfect wisdom and enjoyment of the sovereign good in heaven lies in the will's love of God who is love.

- *Universal Society*. In his conception of society, Augustine transcended the narrow view of Plato and Aristotle whose political ideas find fulfillment in the individual city-state. Judaism was a national religion for Jews only, and Stoic cosmopolitanism remained a rational philosophy mainly for an educated elite. Augustine's universal spiritual society, arising ultimately from love rather than race or reason and transcending space and time, appeals to the individual's noblest and deepest aspirations for love, freedom and joy, and offers perfect personal fulfillment in the all-embracing heavenly city.

Prospect

Reflection upon the meaning of the Augustinian Gestalt against the background of past ideas makes it possible to anticipate his role and influence in the history of philosophy.

I. Father of Philosophical History

Augustine's masterly synthesis of universal history in the *City of God* merits him the accolade of founder of philosophy of history, or, if one prefers, theology of history, since his interpretation is from a Christian perspective. His ideal of a single universal society has evoked various visions of the unity of mankind: Emperor Charlemagne, four centuries after Augustine, probably conceived and founded his empire as the embodiment of the heavenly city on earth; in the 13th century, Roger Bacon dreamt of bringing all men within the unity of the Church and Christendom; in the 16th century, Tommaso Campanella envisioned a secular ideal of men united under the wisest and holiest metaphysician; in the 17th century, Leibniz had the vision of a philosophical ideal according to which humankind is bound together by common rational truths. For Augustine, God must be the principle of unity: "The only possible source of future unity lies not in multiplicity, but above it. One World is impossible without One God and One Church. In this truth lies the ever timely message conveyed by St. Augustine."²⁰⁴

II. Influence

Perhaps no Christian philosopher has influenced the course of Western thought as much as the august Augustine. His philosophy is a living fountain from which all the great thinkers of the Middle Ages will draw ideas. As Augustinism encounters a resurgence of Aristotelianism in the 13th and 14th centuries, some philosophers like Bonaventure and Roger Bacon will remain deeply Augustinian in spirit, while others such as Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus will attempt to Aristotelianize it. In modern times, Augustine's influence will be felt especially by Descartes,²⁰⁵ Luther, Calvin, some of the German idealists,²⁰⁶ and Blondel.²⁰⁷ Medieval in spirit, Augustinian Philosophy still inspires anew the modern mind.

Notes

1. C. Dawson, "St. Augustine and His Age," *Monument to St. Augustine* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1945), p. 15.

2. The major sources of Augustine's life are the biography by Possidius, *Vita Sancti Augustini*, and the great autobiography, the *Confessions*. A scholarly biography, tracing chronologically the mental and spiritual development of Augustine, is Vernon Bourke's *Augustine's Quest of Wisdom* (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Co., 1945).

3. As of now, no complete, critical edition of the Latin works of St. Augustine has been published. Many scholars still use the *Migne Patrologia Latina* (Vols. 32-47); abbreviated as PL. Critical texts of about one third of Augustine's writings can be found in the *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*. There is also no complete English version of Augustine's works. Frequent use will be made of *The Works of Aurelius Augustinus*, 15 vols., M. Dods, ed. (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1872-1876), and the *Fathers of the Church* series, ed. Ludwig Schopp and Roy J. Deferrari, with 22 vols. on Augustine. A practical two-volume collection of shorter works plus most of the *Confessions* and *City of God* is *Basic Writings of St. Augustine*, ed. W.T. Oates (New York: Random House, 1948). Of Augustine's voluminous writings, philosophical works will be listed now. Relevant theological or scriptural treatises will be referred to as warranted by the exposition of his life and philosophy.

4. In his *Confessions* (V, 10, 18), Augustine recalled that the Manichaean doctrine enabled him to claim that the cause of sin was not himself, but something else in him.

5. The "Platonic treatises" referred to by Augustine were very likely the *Enneads* of Plotinus, at least part of them.

6. Augustine opposed the Donatists' schismatic tendency to establish a Church distinct from the Church which they spurned as contaminated by the "world."

7. In Augustine's view, the Pelagians overemphasized human self-reliance and freedom to the disregard of human weakness and corruption and the need for divine grace.

8. C. Dawson, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

9. *Soliloquy*. I, 2, 7.

10. The term "natural" refers to human capacities and objects which can be attained by them, for example, the natural capacity of the eye to see color, whereas "supernatural" signifies anything beyond those native abilities and objects, for instance, "grace" as a supernatural gift of God enabling human beings to share in something to which they have no natural right, namely, divine life.

11. *City of God*, XIX, 1, 3.

12. *Confessions*, I, 1, 1.

13. *On the Psalms*, 119.

14. *Letters*, 147, 2, 7.

15. *On the True Religion*, 24, 45.

16. *Sermon*, 43, 7, 9. Augustine viewed reason and faith in such intimate unity that he did not clearly distinguish between philosophy and Christian theology.

17. *On the Morals of the Church*, I, 17, 31.

18. *On Order*, II, 19, 51.

19. *On the Magnitude of the Soul*, 14, 24.

20. *Different Questions*, 35, 2.

21. *On the Psalms*, 145, 5.

22. *On the True Religion*, 36, 72.
23. *Ibid.*, VII, 10, 16.
24. From time to time, Stoic themes appear in Augustine's thought. See the *City of God*, XIV, 8. Also R. M. Bushman, "St. Augustine's Metaphysics and Stoic Doctrine," *New Scholasticism*, 26 (1951) 283-302.
25. *City of God*, VIII, 12. Augustine left untapped the rich resources of Aristotelian lore and quoted the Peripatetic only three times. Apart from the *Categories*, he read none of Aristotle's works.
26. *Answer to Skeptics*, III, 17, 37. See A. H. Armstrong, *St. Augustine and Christian Platonism* (Villanova, Pa.: Villanova University Press, 1967). Augustine amended whatever he adopted from Plato and Plotinus to make it "consonant with the Gospel." *City of God*, X, 2.
27. *City of God*, VIII, 12. Although it is difficult to determine the precise part played by Plotinus in the formation of Augustine's thought, it is certainly clear that the African "pagan" made a strong and lasting impression on the African Christian. See P. Henry, "Augustine and Plotinus," *Journal of Theological Studies*, 38 (1937) 1-23; M. P. Garvey, *St. Augustine: Christian or Neo-Platonist?* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1939); Robert J. O'Connell, "The Riddle of Augustine's 'Confessions': A Plotinian Key," *International Philosophical Quarterly*, IV (Sept., 1964), 327-72.
28. *On the Trinity*, X, 5, 7.
29. *On the Morals of the Catholic Church*, I, 3, 4.
30. *Conf.*, III, 6, 10.
31. *On Different Questions*, 83, 9; PL 40, 13. See R. H. Nash, *The Light of the Mind* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1969).
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Trin.*, XII, 2, 2.
34. *Ibid.*, XII, 15, 25.
35. *Ibid.*, XII, 14, 22.
36. *Ibid.*, X, 10, 14.
37. *On Free Choice*, II, 3, 7.
38. *City of God*, XI, 26.
39. *Trin.*, XV, 12, 21.
40. *City of God*, XI, 26.
41. *On the True Religion*, 36, 62.
42. *Answer to the Skeptics*, III, 10, 23.
43. *Ibid.*, III, 11, 25.
44. *Ibid.*, III, 9, 19.
45. *Solil.*, I, 8, 15. See *The Teacher*, X, 35. "When the human mind knows and loves itself, it does not know and love anything immutable." *Trin.*, IX, 6, 9.
46. *On Free Choice*, II, 12, 34; 13, 35.
47. *On the Psalms*, 119. See C.E. Schuetzinger, *The German Controversy on St. Augustine's Illumination Theory* (New York: Pageant Press, 1960). Unlike Augustine, some modern philosophers might find nothing unusual in the mutable human mind grasping the unchangeable truth of analytic propositions, for example, the whole is greater than any of its parts.
48. *On Free Choice*, II, 12, 33.
49. *Solil.*, I, 6, 12.
50. *The Teacher*, XI, 38.
51. *John*, 1, 9.

52. See R. Allers, "St. Augustine's Doctrine on Illumination," *Franciscan Studies*, 12 (1952) 27-46. R. Acworth, "Two Studies of St. Augustine's Thought: I God and Human Knowledge in St. Augustine; The Theory of Illumination; . . ." *Downside Review*, 75 (1957) 207-221. E. Gilson, *Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine*, trans. L.E.M. Lynch (New York: Random House, 1960), pp. 77-96. R. H. Nash, "St. Augustine on Man's Knowledge of the Forms," *The New Scholasticism*, XLI (1967), 223-234.
53. *On Free Choice*, II, 10, 29.
54. See S.J. Grabowski, *The All-Present God* (St. Louis: Herder, 1954).
55. *Immortality of Soul*, 12, 19. See J.F. Anderson, *St. Augustine and Being* (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1965).
56. *On the Nature of Good*, 3.
57. *Letter*, 18, 2. See *On Music*, VI, 17, 56. E. Chapman, *St. Augustine's Philosophy of Beauty* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1939).
58. B.J. Cooke, "The Mutability-Immutability Principle in St. Augustine's Metaphysics," *The Modern Schoolman*, XXIII (1946) 175-193; XXIV (1946) 37.49.
59. *On Music*, VI, 1, 1. *On the True Religion*, 10, 18. *Letter*, 18, 2. *City of God*, VIII, 5.
60. *Christian Instruction*, I, 6, 6.
61. *On Free Choice*, II, 17, 46.
62. *On Different Questions*, II, 2, 3.
63. *Trin.*, V, 1, 2.
64. *On the Gospel According to St. John*, 13, 5.
65. *Solil.*, I, 3. This line of argument is unlikely to impress minds influenced by Hume's view of propositions which express "relations of ideas" or Wittgenstein's theory of tautologies. Within these contexts, one may ask what analytic propositions in logic and mathematics have to do with the existence of God.
66. *Sermon*, 241, 2.
67. *Ibid.*
68. *Conf.*, X, 6, 8.
69. *On the Psalms*, 26. *Sermon*, 2, 12.
70. *City of God*, XI, 4, 2.
71. *On the Gospel according to St. John*, 38, 8, 10.
72. *Exodus*, 3:14. See *Trin.*, V, 2, 3.
73. *On the Psalm*, 101. *Sermon*, 2, 10.
74. *City of God*, XI, 10, 3.
75. *On the Psalm*, 134, 6.
76. *Trin.*, VI, 4, 6.
77. *Conf.*, VI, 4, 5.
78. *On the Psalm*, 101, 27.28.
79. *On the Gospel according to St. John*, 38, 8, 10.
80. *On True Religion*, 40, 9, 97.
81. *On Literal Meaning of Genesis*, 8, 26, 48.
82. *On Different Questions*, 46, 1-2.
83. *Trin.*, XV, 7, 13.
84. *Ibid.*, XV, 13, 22.

85. *Ibid.*, IV, 1, 3. Augustine mistakenly, though never advertent to his mistake, thought that Plotinus' teaching about the divine mind was the same as that of St. John about the divine Logos or Word. *Conf.*, VII, 9, 13. See Gilson, *op. cit.*, p. 348, n. 2.
86. See J.E. Sullivan, *The Image of God: The Doctrine of St. Augustine and Its Influence* (Dubuque: The Priory Press, 1963).
87. *Trin.*, VII, 4, 7.
88. *On Literal Meaning of Genesis*, 5, 15, 33. See C. J. O'Toole, *The Philosophy of Creation in the Writings of St. Augustine* (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1944).
89. *On Free Choice*, III, 16, 45.
90. *On Literal Meaning of Genesis*, IV, 12, 23.
91. *Conf.*, XI, 5, 7.
92. *Ibid.*, XII, 15, 22.
93. *Literal Meaning of Genesis*, I, 15, 29.
94. *Ibid.*, II, 11, 24.
95. *On Book of Genesis. Against the Manichaeans. I*, 2, and 4.
96. *Conf.* XI, 15, 20.
97. *Ibid.*, XI, 14, 17.
98. *Ibid.*, XI, 27, 36.
99. Bertrand Russell, while disagreeing, praises Augustine's analysis of time as "a great advance on anything to be found on the subject in Greek philosophy." *History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965), p. 354.
100. *City of God*, XII, 15.
101. Angels also possess finished form. See *Literal Meaning of Genesis*, I, 9, 15. G. M.J. McKeough, *The Meaning of the Rationes Seminales in St. Augustine* (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1926).
102. *Literal Meaning of Genesis*, VII, 24, 35.
103. *Ibid.*, VI, 6, 10.
104. *Ibid.*, V, 7, 20.
105. See *Literal Meaning of Genesis*, XII, 4, 3-6. Also W. J. Roche, "Measure, Number, and Weight in Saint Augustine," *The New Scholasticism*, XV (October, 1941) 350.376.
106. *On the Nature of Good*, 3, 4, 6, 23.
107. *On the Morals of the Manichaeans*, 2, 2, 3. Without claiming the theory of evil as privation of good to be a complete solution to the problem of evil, Augustine found in it evidence for rejecting the dualism of the Manichaeans.
108. *City of God*, XII, 7.
109. *On the Nature of Good*, 1.
110. *Ibid.*, 8.
111. *On Free Choice*, I, 16, 35.
112. *Ibid.*, II, 18, 48.
113. See J.A. Geiger, *The Origin of the Soul, An Augustinian Dilemma* (Rome: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1957).
114. *Letter*, 190, 15.
115. *On the Gospel according to John*, XIX, 5, 15.
116. *On the Soul and Its Origin*, IV, 2, 3.
117. *On the Morals of the Church.*, I, 27, 52.
118. *Letter*, 156, 2, 4. *Literal Meaning of Genesis*. VII, 15, 21.

119. *Trin.*, X, 10, 16. See W. O'Connor, *The Concept of the Human Soul According to St. Augustine* (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1921). A. Pegis, "Mind of St. Augustine," *Medieval Studies*, 6 (1944) 1-61.

120. *Trin.* X, 11, 18.

121. *The Magnitude of the Soul*, 13, 22. Here Augustine faced the difficulty of trying to integrate the Christian view of man's unity with the Platonic conception of the soul as man's unity. He encountered similar difficulties in attempting "to introduce a Christian meaning into Platonic formulae unsuited to its expression." Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine*, p. 271, n. 5.

122. *Ibid.*

123. Since the soul is mutable, Augustine reasoned that it probably possesses incorporeal matter. See *Literal Meaning of Genesis*. I, 19, 21-38, 41; VII, 28, 43.

124. *Solil.* II, 19, 33. See J.A. Mourant, *Augustine on Immortality* (Villanova, Pa.: Villanova University Press, 1969).

125. *Immortality of the Soul*, 9, 16; 11, 18.

126. *Conf.*, XI, 20, 26.

127. *Ibid.*, X, 8, 14; X, 24, 35. On Augustine's interpretation of Plato's theory of reminiscence, see *Retractions*, I, 4, 4.

128. *Trin.*, XV, 21, 40; XIV, 11, 14.

129. *Ibid.*, XII, 4, 4; XII, 3, 3.

130. *On Two Souls*, XI, 15; X, 13 and 14. See M.T. Clark, *Augustine, Philosopher of Freedom* (New York: Desclée, 1959).

131. *City of God*, XIV, 6.

132. *On Free Choice*, II, 19, 51.

133. *Trin.*, XIV, 8, 11.

134. *On Music*, VI, 5, 8. *Trin.*, XI, 2, 2-5. See M. A. I. Gannon, "The Active Theory of Sensation in St. Augustine," *New Scholasticism*, 30 (1956) 154-180.

135. *On the Magnitude of the Soul*, 23, 41.

136. *Literal Meaning of Genesis*, XII, 16' 33.

137. *Conf.*, XIII, 9, 10.

138. *On the Psalms*, 31, 2, 5.

139. *Sermon*, 96, 1, 1.

140. *Trin.*, XI, 6, 10.

141. *City of God*, XIV, 8-9.

142. *Conf.*, I, 1, 1.

143. *On the Morals of the Church*, 3, 4.

144. *Ibid.*, 3, 5.

145. *Ibid.*, 3, 5.

146. *Conf.*, I, 1, 1.

147. *On the Morals of the Church*, 11, 18.

148. *Ibid.*, 25, 46.

149. *City of God*, VIII, 8. "Do you love earth? You shall be earth. Do you love God? What shall I say. "You shall be God.'" *On the Epistle of John, to the Parthians*, II, 2, 14.

150. *Conf.*, X, 23, 33.

151. *On the Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, 44.

152. *City of God*, V, 9-10.

153. Augustine attempted to find in divine foreknowledge a reconciliation between human liberty and predestination, or God's election of those to be saved. Regarding this theological question, see E. Portalié, *A Guide to the Thought of Saint Augustine*, trans. R. Bastian (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1960), pp. 213-223. Gilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-157.

154. *On the Spirit and the Letter*, 34, 60.

155. See M.T. Clark, *Augustine: Philosopher of Freedom* (New York: Desclée Co., 1958).

156. *Letter*, 157, 2, 8.

157. *On Punishment and Grace*, 32.

158. See *City of God*, XI, 25.

159. *Against Faustus the Manichaeon*, XXII, 27.

160. *On Free Choice*, I, 6, 15.

161. *City of God*, XIX, 13.

162. *Letter*, 140, 2, 4.

163. *Trin.*, XIV, 15, 21.

164. *On Free Choice*, I, 6, 15.

165. *On Different Questions*, 83, 30.

166. *Letter*, 2.

167. *City of God*, XIV, 9.

168. *On Free Choice*, II, 19, 52.

169. *City of God*, XII, 8.

170. *On the Epistle of John*, VII, 8.

171. *City of God*, XIX, 24. See T. Garrett, "St. Augustine and the Nature of Society," *The New Scholasticism*, 30 (1956), 16-36.

172. *City of God*, XIX, 16.

173. *Ibid.*, XIX, 24.

174. Conscious of the periodic persecution suffered in the past by the Christians in the Roman Empire, Augustine judged the State in an unfavorable light, mainly as a coercive and punitive power needed to check the evils resulting from the fall of man.

175. *Ibid.*, XIX, 13.

176. *On the Republic*, II, 19. See *City of God*, IV, 6; XV, 16, 3.

177. *City of God*, V, 21.

178. *Ibid.*, XIX, 21.

179. *Ibid.*, XIX, 16.

180. *Ibid.*, V, 24 and 25.

181. *Sermon*, 216, 8.

182. *On Baptism, Against the Donatists*. IV, 1, 1.

183. *Letter*, 118, 5, 33. See S. J. Grabowski, *The Church, An Introduction to the Theology of St. Augustine* (St. Louis: Herder, 1957).

184. *Letter*, 185, 2, 8.

185. *Ibid.*, 93. In fact, Augustine endorsed the idea of Christian rulers subjecting heretics and schismatics to coercion. This stand is inconsistent for a man of his stature who was highly critical of the past persecutions of the Christians in the Roman Empire. Unfortunately, centuries later repressive action by the State against heretics would be justified by appealing to the authority of the man who was regarded throughout the Middle Ages as the greatest of Christian theologians.

186. See J. H. Burleigh, *The City of God: A Study of St. Augustine's Philosophy* (London: Nisbet, 1949). J. Rickaby, *St. Augustine's City of God: A View of the Contents* (London: Burns,

Oates and Washbourne, 1925). Marthinus Versfeld, *A Guide to the City of God* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1958). G. L. Keyes, *Christian Faith and the Interpretation of History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966).

187. *On the Psalms*, 64, 2. The idea of a City of God was most likely suggested by Psalm, 86, 3: "Glorious things are said of you, O City of God."

188. *Ibid.*, 136, 1.

189. *City of God*, XIX, 17; I, 35; XVIII, 48; XX, 9, 1.

190. *Ibid.*, I, 35.

191. *Ibid.*, XIX, 24. Augustine's definition, carried to its ultimate conclusion would lead to a denial of the State's right to exist. Only the City of God is truly what a city should be. See Gilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-175. Also H. Caton, "St. Augustine's Critique of politics," *The New Scholasticism*, 47 (1973), 433-457.

192. See *City of God*, XIX, 17.

193. *Ibid.*, X, 32.

194. The very praise with which I extolled Plato, the Platonists or the Academicians . . . rightly displeased me." *Retractions*, I, 1, 4.

195. *Against Julian the Pelagian*, IV, 14, 72.

196. See *On the True Religion*, V, 8. Also E. Gilson, *A Gilson Reader*, ed. A. Pegis (New York: Hanover House, 1957), p. 83.

197. Gilson, *Christian Philosophy of St. Augustine* (New York: Random House, 1960), p. 23.

198. See *Ibid.*, pp. 108-111. Augustine's view, along with Plato's, that judgments that things are more or less good or beautiful implies an absolute standard of comparison, works within a framework of reality as hierarchical; such a perspective would be questioned by some modern philosophers.

199. Gilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 203-205.

200. See J.M. Brady, "St. Augustine's Theory of Seminal Reasons," *The New Scholasticism*, 38 (April, 1964), 155-157.

201. See H. Woods, *Augustine and Evolution* (New York: Universal Knowledge, 1924). E.C. Messenger, *Evolution and Theology* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1931).

202. See Grady, "Augustine's Seminal Reasons," *op. cit.*, p. 158.

203. On the question of mysticism in Augustinism, see Bourke, *Augustine's Quest of Wisdom*, p. 88. Also E.I. Watkin, "The Mysticism of St. Augustine" in *A Monument to St. Augustine*, pp. 103-119.

204. Gilson, Foreword to *The City of God*, Vol. 8, *The Fathers of the Church*, p. xcvi.

205. Gilson, "The Future of Augustinian Metaphysics," in *A Monument to St. Augustine*, pp. 293-296.

206. See Przywara, "St. Augustine and the Modern World," in *A Monument to St. Augustine*, pp. 264-280.

207. Blondel, "The Latent Resources in St. Augustine's Thought," in *A Monument to St. Augustine*, pp. 319-353. See Bourke, *op. cit.*, pp. 299-301.

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Chapter II

Universals According to Boethius, Peter Abelard and Other Dialecticians

John of Salisbury (d. 1180) estimated that more time was taken up discussing the problem of universals than the Caesars required to conquer and govern the world. In fact, the problem runs like Ariadne's thread through eleven centuries, from Porphyry in the third century to William of Ockham in the fourteenth century, spanning a longer time than the life of the ancient Roman Empire. This chapter centers on the emergence of the problem with Boethius (c. 480-524/525) — prime minister to Theodoric, the Ostrogoth King of Italy — and its solution by Peter Abelard (1079-1142).

Encounter

Problem

I. Emergence of the Question

The medieval problem of universals arose within the logical context of the philosophies of Porphyry and Boethius. In his introduction to Aristotle's *Categories*, Porphyry formulated his classical statement of the problem in three questions concerning the ontological status of universals: "Do genera and species subsist, or are they simply something in the mind? If subsisting, are they corporeal or incorporeal? Are they separated from or located in sensible things?"¹ Though Porphyry refused to answer these "more lofty questions" in his work for beginners in logic, Boethius' commentary on the former's *Isagoge*, attempted to solve them.

II. Ontological Question

The significance of the first question is evident from the fact that the validity of scientific knowledge depends on the relationship of universal concepts to reality. For Boethius, the answer to the other questions depends on the central problem of whether genera or species are real or simply conceptions of the mind.² Both alternatives offered by Porphyry in the first question face certain difficulties.

On the one hand, a universal, such as the species "man," which at one and the same time is common to many individual men, cannot be a reality, for everything in reality is singular and one in number. To the objection that the universal is common to many by parts, as though each possessed only a part of the species, Boethius affirmed that each individual possesses the species entirely inasmuch as each man is wholly man, and each species has the genus completely insofar as each species of animal is totally animal.

To the objection that the universal is successively common to many as a horse is used by many at different times, Boethius insisted that species and genus constitute the very substance of the things to which they are common. Since a universal is substantially common to many, how can it be one in reality?

On the other hand, it seems equally impossible for universals to be simply mental concepts. If universal concepts do not correspond to a universal reality which, as we have seen, does not

actually exist, they do not represent reality as it is, and consequently they are false. In view of these ambiguities, universals seem to be neither realities nor concepts. What is their status?

III. *Psychology and Epistemology*

This ontological question confronting medieval dialecticians such as Peter Abelard was connected with the psychological question of how universal concepts are formed by the mind. If the senses experience only individual things, as Aristotle insisted, how can the mind produce universal concepts? Within this ontological and psychological context, there arises the epistemological question of how universal concepts are related to reality. How can universal concepts validly represent individual things from which they differ? Without a foundation in extramental reality, universal concepts and judgments would be of doubtful validity at the very least.

IV. *Theology*

If universals were not connected with individual reality in some way, scientific knowledge of God as well as of the world and man would lose its objective value. For example, the universal concept "wisdom" would not refer to something in God. No wonder Christian philosophers were deeply concerned about the outcome of the problem of universals. In addition, Augustine interpreted Plato's ideas as a philosophical statement of the Christian conviction that God has universal and eternal knowledge of all that can come to be. Of what value is divine knowledge if universals have no reference to reality?

Themes

In their investigation of the problem of universals, medieval dialecticians agreed in recognizing the fact of universals, such as the genus "animality" and the species "humanity," but disagreed on the meaning of the fact, which they expressed in different themes. Universals were viewed by ultra-realists as subsistent realities, by nominalists as names, and by some realists, such as Abelard, as names and concepts with a foundation in reality.

Method

In their approach to the problem of universals, the dialecticians adapted their method to their basic theme. On the one hand, ultra-realists tended to adopt a Neoplatonic method paralleling the ontological and logical orders in which universals in reality exactly correspond to general concepts in the mind. On the other hand, Roscelin, the nominalist, differentiated these orders to such an extent that he understood universals simply as words within a logical or more exactly, grammatical context. In his realistic approach embracing both the logical and ontological orders, Peter Abelard attempted to steer a middle course between ultra-realism and nominalism with the intention of grounding universal concepts and names in individual realities.

Influences: Platonism and Aristotelianism

The ancient Greek philosophers set the stage for the problem of universals and determined the direction taken by various solutions. In attempting to reconcile the teachings of Plato and Aristotle, Porphyry, as we have seen, first posed the problem in terms of genus and species. To determine the status of universals such as genera and species, the medieval philosophers relied on either the Platonic tradition of positing universal ideas beyond individual sensible things or the Aristotelian heritage of locating forms in individual realities.

Both the problem presented by Porphyry and a solution with Platonic and Aristotelian elements were transmitted through Boethius to medieval logicians. The influence of Plato predominated in Boethius and earlier medieval dialecticians who reified universal genera and species, whereas the realism of Aristotle via Boethius gradually gained ascendancy in the eleventh and twelfth century dialecticians: Abelard, Gilbert of Poitiers, and John of Salisbury.

Responses

I. Boethius

- *Logic*. In his commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, Boethius turned to Alexander of Aphrodisia (c. A.D. 200), a Greek commentator on Aristotle, to explain whether universals are real or simply conceptions of the mind. Alexander insisted that genera and species can be understood apart from sensible bodies in which they exist; for example, a true concept of a line can be formed apart from a body without the line existing separately from a body. The senses transmit, besides bodies themselves, all the incorporeal qualities present in them, such as lines and surfaces. The mind can abstract these incorporeal realities from bodies to consider them in themselves. Genera and species are realities of this kind. They "subsist in sensibles, but they are understood without bodies."³

How is it possible for incorporeal genera and species to exist in sensible bodies and yet be understood apart from them? When the observed substantial likeness of several individuals is conceived by the intellect, it becomes a species. For example, the mind conceives the species "man" from the human likeness of individual men. The concept gathered from the likeness of different species is a genus. Sensible in individual things, the likeness conceived by the intellect is intelligible. Universals, consequently, enjoy two modes: in reality they exist in sensible bodies, whereas in the mind they are thought apart from these bodies.

This solution to the problem of universals in Alexander of Aphrodisia's interpretation of Aristotle differs, according to Boethius, from Plato's teaching that genera and species are not only known separately from bodies but also exist outside them. In his commentary on Porphyry's *Isagoge*, Boethius reserved his judgment on the correctness of these views to a loftier branch of philosophy than logic.

- *Psychology and Metaphysics*. Boethius realized that the logical problem of universals has psychological and metaphysical implications. In his classic work, *The Consolation of Philosophy*,⁴ he favored the Platonic theory of knowledge and reality. Endowed with innate ideas, human reason is not only capable of recognizing universal natures in individuals, but can contemplate pure forms existing outside the universe in the divine mind. Within the structure of creatures, Boethius distinguished between their being (*esse*) by which they are, for example, humanity which makes man essentially what he is, and "that which is," the concrete singular; for

instance, John, an individual, essentially consists of animality and rationality by which he is.⁵ Strictly speaking, the natures of material substances are only reflections of pure forms which are ideas in the divine mind.⁶

Against this Platonic background, Boethius responded to the three questions of Porphyry. First, he affirmed that universals "subsist in one manner, but are understood in another."⁷ Second, "they are incorporeal, but they subsist in sensible things . . ."⁸ Third, they do not subsist outside individual things except as ideas in the mind of God and in our mind.

When the problem of universals was taken up again about four centuries later, the first solution was not along the broad lines suggested by Boethius, but was ultra-realistic.

II. *Ultra-Realists*

From the ninth to the twelfth century, ultra-realists preferred Boethius' Platonic approach. According to this view, generic and specific concepts correspond to an extramental, existing reality in which individuals share. For example, the concept "humanity" reflects a unitary substance which exists in the same way as it is thought and in which all men participate.

On the supposition that thought and reality exactly parallel each other, it is logical to posit as much universality in reality as in the mind, and to reason, for example, that because the meaning of "man" in the statements "Plato is a man" and "Aristotle is a man" is the same, there is a substantial identity in the real order between Plato and Aristotle. The advantage of this theory is that it securely grounds the scientific knowledge of philosophy and theology in the objective reality of universals.

Ultra-realism is also implied in the philosophy of John Scotus Erigena who taught that the division of concepts into genera and species is identical with the process by which the universe is formed.⁹ According to Remigius of Auxerre (c. 841-908), the species is a substantial part of the genus, and the species, for instance, man, is the substantial unity of many individuals.

If this view means that the plurality of individual men have a common substance which is numerically one, then all men differ only accidentally. This is the conclusion of Odo of Tournai (d. 1113) who held that at the birth of a child God produces, not a new substance, but simply a new property of an already existing substance which is one specific reality for all men. Consequently God is not responsible for original sin in a child, rather the human substance of Adam infected by original sin, is handed on at generation. Theological as well as logical reasons motivated philosophers to adopt an ultra-realist theory.

III. *Opponents of Ultra-Realists*

The adversaries of the ultra-realists affirmed as their guiding principle the Aristotelian axiom that only individuals exist. For Eric of Auxerre (841-876) general names, such as "white" or "black," have no general or universal realities corresponding to them; their only objects are individuals, as this white man or that black horse. Species does not exist as such, but is merely a way in which the mind groups individuals, and genera are simply the gathering together of species under one name. Eric's rejection of ultra-realism and his psycho-logical explanation of universal concepts do not involve sufficient evidence to conclude that he denied any basis in reality to universal concepts.

IV. Nominalism

- *Roscelin* (c. 1050-1123). Roscelin of Compiègne also opposed ultra-realism and maintained that only individuals exist. In his view, genera and species are not realities but verbal expressions (*voces, flatus voces*) in general form.¹⁰ This may mean that universals have only a verbal reality, or it may simply be an emphatic repudiation of the formal subsistence of universals, without excluding some form of conceptual universal. In any event, at the Council of Soissons in 1092, Roscelin was accused of heresy for applying his nominalism to the doctrine of the Trinity. If only individuals are real and universals are but words, then the three persons of the Trinity share no common divine nature, and consequently are three gods. Having firmly denied he taught tritheism, Roscelin was not formally condemned.¹¹

V. Moderate Realists

The dispute between the ultra-realists and their opponents came to a head in the controversy between William of Champeaux and Peter Abelard.

A. *William of Champeaux* (c. 1070-1121): Theory of Identity. William represented a transition from an ultra-realist theory of identity to a kind of moderate realist theory of indifference. Though a student of Roscelin, William at first returned to the realism of Boethius and taught that universals are substances common to many individuals. Because the same essential nature is wholly present at the same time in each individual member of a certain species, individuals of that species differ only accidentally from one another. For example, Plato and Socrates share the same substance of humanity and individually differ by reason of their accidental characteristics, such as personal qualities, quantities, places, and so on.

If this were so, William's pupil, Abelard, objected that humanity would be either partially or wholly in an individual. If it is only partially present, this individual is not truly and wholly man. If it is wholly present, no other individual man can exist. Furthermore if all things are identical in substance, they are the same as God who himself is substance. Lastly, if the substance animal really exists in man and beasts, the same animality would itself be in the situation of being rational and irrational — an impossible contradictory condition. Abelard's dialectical disclosure of the absurd consequences of ultra-realism sealed its downfall.

- *Theory of Indifference*. Under pressure of such criticism, William modified his position to the point of conceding that the real universal is but "indifferently common" to many individuals. This means that two individuals in the same species, for example, Plato and Socrates, are the same in being because they do not differ in the nature of humanity. However, since each individual has his own humanity, they do not have one and the same humanity, but simply resemble each other in their humanity.¹² Here William seemed to be abandoning ultra-realism. This essential likeness is the foundation of the universal concept of man, which applies "indifferently" to Peter or any other individual. This position seemed to Abelard only slightly better than the first.

Abelard criticized William's view that two individuals are the same in that they do not differ from each other. If this non-difference is taken negatively, then the statement that Socrates does not differ from Plato as a man does not solve the problem of universals. If non-difference is understood in a positive sense, then William's second position coincides with his first which has been refuted.¹³

B. *Peter Abelard* (1079-1142). Abelard's criticism was not only destructive but constructive. Like other opponents of exaggerated realism, he affirmed that nothing exists except individual things. Under the influence of Roscelin his teacher, Abelard turned to grammar and logic to answer the question of universals. He distinguished between a common or universal noun, for example, "man" which can be applied to all individual men, and a proper noun, for instance, "Socrates" which is applicable to only one.¹⁴

Abelard, however, went beyond Roscelin's view of universals as vocal utterances and conceived them as words with meaning. The sentence, "man is a stone," is grammatically correct but wrong from the viewpoint of the meaning of the words. Universals are not simply words (*voces*) in the sense of a physical entity which cannot be predicated of another thing, but are words (*sermones*) which function as signs with a logical content which is predicable of another.

The meaning of names is grounded, not in common essences which have no real existence, but in the likenesses which individuals have in common. This state of resemblance is "the common cause of imposing on individuals a universal name."¹⁵ Hence, although individuals differ not only accidentally but substantially, they are more or less like one another, and consequently can be classified into genera and species. Common names, therefore, are founded in reality.

Common names correspond to universal concepts which signify in a confused and indistinct manner the same individuals represented in a detailed way by particular concepts. Universal concepts are formed by abstraction or the attention of the mind upon one aspect of a thing to the disregard of other features of the same thing, for example, thinking of man as substance apart from the other forms that exist together in him.

Abelard summarized his doctrine of universals by replying like Boethius to the questions raised by Porphyry.

(1) Do genera and species exist? Abelard replied that they are concepts existing only in the intellect and signifying real things. Genera and species "serve to name things that actually exist and therefore are not the subjects of purely empty thoughts."¹⁶

(2) Are universals corporeal or incorporeal? Abelard answered that "universal names are described both as corporeal (because of the nature of the things they point to) and as incorporeal (because of the way these things are signified, . . .)"¹⁷

(3) Do universals exist in sensible things or outside them? Abelard replied that universals "exist in sensible things to the extent that they signify the inner substance of something which is sensible,"¹⁸ whereas they are beyond the sensible world inasmuch as they signify abstract concepts in the human and divine minds. Universal names and concepts are ultimately grounded, not in things which have nothing intrinsic to them to account for their common likeness, but in the divine ideas. In view of the ideas in his mind, God knows and creates things in the same state so that they resemble each other. Thus both Plato and Aristotle were right: Plato for holding that universals exist independently of the sensible world, and Aristotle for insisting that they exist in sensible things.

(4) In addition, Abelard raised a fourth question: If all individuals signified by a universal ceased to exist, would the latter retain its meaning? Would the concept of rose be meaningful if no roses existed? Abelard answered that although the universal would lose its universal character inasmuch as there would be no individuals to which it could be predicated, it "would still have its meaning for the mind"¹⁹ and make sense to say, "No roses exist."

Gilbert of Poitiers and John of Salisbury, two notable figures connected with the School of Chartres, broke with its old tradition of ultra-realism.

C. *Gilbert of Poitiers* (1076-1154). Gilbert went beyond Abelard in recognizing a common form in individual things. John of Salisbury summed up Gilbert's teaching on universals as follows: "An inherent form is sensible in things perceptible to the senses, but insensible as conceived by the mind. It is singular in singular things, but universal in all (of a kind)."20 The inherent form in matter is both singular and universal. But how can individuals within a species have a common form and at the same time substantially differ?

Gilbert agreed with Boethius that both universals and particulars subsist through themselves without the need of accidents. Since particular things support accidents, they are also substances. How can a subsistent universal be multiplied in singular things? Gilbert's reply is that the uniqueness of an individual results from the totality of the forms within it. While individuals in the same species or genus share all their common elements, each is as unique as the collected totality of forms within it. "Individuals are so called because each one of them is made up of such characteristics that when they are all collected together by thought, they will never be duplicated by natural conformity in any numerically different particular thing. That is why the total form of Plato, being in nature like no other creature, is truly individual."21 However, the forms combining in a unique way to constitute each individual, are universal in themselves.

The mind can attend to genus or species, which are subsistent but not substantially existing objects, by abstracting the native forms (*formae nativae*) from the matter in which they are concretized. By comparing things, the mind can collect forms of similar individuals into the idea of species, and gather together common forms of specifically different objects into the idea of genus.22

D. *John of Salisbury* (c. 1115-1180). John of Salisbury, a pupil of Abelard and Gilbert of Poitiers, criticized proponents of Aristotle for misunderstanding him when he says that genera and species do not exist but are only understood. What does not exist cannot be described. Yet this is what philosophers do when they identify universals with words, concepts, ideas, inherent forms, or collections. Universals are not substances or accidents in reality, nor are they causes of real things as the Platonists of the School of Chartres hold, but signs by which one knows and discourses about things. This does not mean universals have no foundation in reality. As shadowy likenesses of things, which the mind abstracts and unifies by comparing the resemblances of individuals, universal signs are grounded in reality.23

Conclusions

Retrospect

In retrospect, the problem of universals shows the continuity of medieval and ancient philosophy. Porphyry explicitly posited the problem and Boethius offered a solution in terms of Plato and Aristotle. By his translations and commentaries on the logical works of Porphyry and Aristotle, Boethius became the channel through which the rudiments of Aristotelian logic and many philosophical terms and definitions passed to the medieval philosophers,24 pending the discovery of Aristotle's own works in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Abelard, the outstanding dialectician, and for that matter, the eminent philosopher of the twelfth century, went beyond ancient philosophy in probing and resolving the problem of universals and contributed to ethics and the development of the scholastic method. In retrospect,

the numerous solutions combating ultra-realism can be viewed as so many steps toward Abelard's realism mediating between nominalism and exaggerated realism.

Conspectus

The naive view of the ultra-realists misunderstands Boethius' exposition of the problem by assuming that unless the thing expressed by the concept exists in reality in exactly the same way that it exists in the mind, the concept is purely subjective. The ultra-realist naively assumes that the only way of saving the objectivity of knowledge is to have a one to one correspondence between concept and reality.

Abelard mediated between ultra-realism and nominalism by grounding universal names and concepts in the common likeness of things.²⁵ In the final analysis, however, his critique dealt a death-blow to ultra-realism by showing that its rejection does not lead to the denial of all objectivity to genera and species. He also uncovered the nominalist's inadequacy of considering universals merely grammatically as words apart from their meaning.

What is significant about Abelard's response to the problem of universals is his going beyond logical and verbal analyses to coordinate the metaphysical status of universals with their psychological formation and their epistemological value to constitute a solid, coherent theory. This does not mean his theory was without difficulties. For instance, the objectivity of universal names and concepts seems to be open to question if they are grounded in the common likenesses of individuals with no intrinsic essences or natures in common.

Gilbert of Poitiers' psychological theory of abstraction and comparison identifies him as a moderate realist. His unique distinction between common and individual form or essence caused difficulties in theology. Applying that distinction to the doctrine of the Trinity, he differentiated between God (*Deus*) and Godhood (*Divinitas*), Father (*Pater*) and Fatherhood (*Paternitas*), as he would between Socrates and humanity. After being accused of impairing the unity of God, he retracted his unacceptable theological propositions.

Hugh of St. Victor (1096-1141) adopted more or less the position of Abelard and applied the theory of abstraction to mathematics and physics. The mathematician, for example, abstracts or isolates geometric elements as the line or the plane surface without their existing apart from bodies. Likewise, the dialectician considers the forms of things in abstraction as a unified concept, though in reality the forms of sensible things exist neither in isolation from matter nor as universals.

Not infrequently, the position taken by the dialecticians made itself felt in theological issues. For example, Odo of Tournai's view of one substance in all men facilitated his explanation of original sin which is handed on at generation from Adam to other individuals without making God responsible for the sinfulness of every particular human substance. Roscelin's nominalism led him to propose a form of "tritheism" which was criticized by Anselm of Canterbury and censured at the Council of Soissons. For Anselm, such conflicts between dialectics and faith need not arise.

Prospect

John of Salisbury criticized his contemporaries for trying to solve philosophical problems by logic which is barren by itself. While it is an aid to the other disciplines, dialectic needs to be impregnated by the real sciences.

John's attitude found favor with the thirteenth and fourteenth century masters who probed deeply into the metaphysical and psychological significance of the truth about universals. In the

thirteenth century, Thomas Aquinas developed Abelard's moderate realism in view of Aristotle's metaphysics and psychology to clarify the objective foundation of universal concepts and how they are formed by the mind. In the fourteenth century, William of Ockham took up afresh the problem of universals and resolved it in a nominalistic way that revolutionized philosophy.

In their concern for the epistemological value of knowledge, modern philosophers will investigate the problem of universals in ways unknown to medieval thinkers or, at least, not employed by them. Nevertheless, the nominalist, conceptualist, and realist positions of the medievalists find ardent defenders from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries.

Notes

1. *Isagoge*, ed. A. Busse, *Comment. in Aristotelem Graeca* (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1887), Vol. IV, Part I, 1:9-13.
2. Boethius, *The Second Edition of the Commentaries on the Isagoge of Porphyry*, bk. I, 10; R. McKeon, trans., *Selections from Medieval Philosophers*, I (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), p. 91. Reprinted by permission.
3. *Ibid.*, I, 11.
4. *Consolation of Philosophy* (New York: Modern Library, 1943).
5. *De Hebdomadibus*; see Boethius: *The Theological Tractates*, ed. E.K. Rand (Cambridge, Mass.: Loeb Classical Library, 1962), pp. 38.50.
6. Boethius, *De Trinitate*, 2.
7. *Commentaries on the Isagoge of Porphyry*, I, 11.
8. *Ibid.*
9. See Chapter III below.
10. Knowledge of Roscelin's thought is derived almost entirely from his adversaries, St. Anselm and Abelard. See St. Anselm, *De Fide Trinitatis*, 2, *Opera Omnia*, Patrologia Latina, t. 158, c. 256A. Abelard, *Liber divisionum*, *Oeuvres inédites d'Abelard* (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1836), p. 471.
11. See F. Picavet, *Roscelin philosophe et théologien* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1911), pp. 112-143.
12. See "Guillemi Campellensis *Sententiae* vel *Quaestiones* XLVII," in G. Lefèvre, *Les variations de Guillaume de Champeaux et la question des universaux* (Lille: l'Univers. de Lille, 1898). Also Eugene Michaud, ed., *Guillaume de Champeaux et les écoles de Paris au XIIe siècle, d'après des documents inédits* (Paris: Didier, 1867).
13. Abelard, *Glosses on Porphyry*. trans. R. McKeon, *Selections from Medieval Philosophers*, I (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), pp. 222-232.
14. *Ibid.*, *op. cit.*, p. 232.
15. Abelard, "Glosses on Porphyry," trans. A. Wolter, *Medieval Philosophy* (New York: The Free Press, 1969), p. 194. Reprinted by permission.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 200.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 201.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 202.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 250-254.
20. John of Salisbury, *The Metalogicon*, trans. D. McGarry (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1955), II, 17, p. 115.
21. Gilbert, *In Boethii Librum de Duabus Naturis*, *Patrologia Latina* 64, 1372 D.
22. *Ibid.*, 64, 1267 and 1389.

23. John of Salisbury, *The Metalogicon*, II, 20; III, 3.

24. For example, Boethius' definition of person as "an individual substance of a rational nature," "*Contra Eutychem et Nestorium*", in *Scripta veterum latina*, J. Simmler, ed. became classical among medieval philosophers.

25. That is why a nominalist or conceptualist interpretation of Abelard seems unwarranted.

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Chapter III

Christian Neo-Platonists:

John Scotus Erigena and Anselm of Canterbury

Western Europe experienced a gradual cultural awakening from the ninth to the eleventh century. Charlemagne, Alfred, and Otto provided intervals of order and stimulus to France, England, and Germany; Alcuin and others restored education and established monastic and cathedral schools; Gerbert imposed Moslem science into Christendom; Popes Leo IX and Gregory VII reformed and strengthened the Church; architecture developed the Romanesque style; and John Scotus Erigena and St. Anselm constructed Neoplatonic philosophies.

Life And Works

I. *John Scotus Erigena*

John Scotus Erigena was born in Ireland about 810. He went to France about 845 and became master of the Palace School of Emperor Charles the Bald. His translations from Greek into Latin of the works of Pseudo-Dionysius (*On the Divine Names, Mystical Theology, Celestial Hierarchy*), and some writings of Maximus the Confessor (c. 580-662) and of Gregory of Nyssa (fl. 379-304) acquainted him with Platonic thought. Erigena also drew from the Latin Platonism of St. Augustine and Origen in writing his most important original work *On the Division of Nature* (c. 862-866).¹ Legend has it that about 877 he was stabbed to death by the pens of his pupils.

II. *Anselm of Canterbury*

Anselm was born of a noble family in 1033, in Aosta, northern Italy. After his education by the Benedictines at Aosta, he entered their order in 1060 at Bec in Normandy where he wrote most of his works and succeeded his fellow countryman Lanfranc as prior in 1063 and became Abbot in 1078. In 1093 he succeeded Lanfranc as Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of England, remaining in this office until his death in 1109.

- *Writings*.² Anselm expressed his philosophy in the following works: The *Monologion*, a kind of theodicy showing the existence and nature of a supreme being; the *Proslogion*,³ which replaces the proofs of the *Monologion* with a single argument for God's existence from the notion of God; *Liber Apologeticus contra Insipientem* (*Apologetic Book against the Fool*);⁴ a response to Gaunilo's objections to the *a priori* proof; three dialogues between teacher and students, *On Truth*, and *On Free Will*;⁵ *Cur Deus Homo* (*Why God Became Man*).

Encounter

Problem

I. *God and the World*

Both Erigena and Anselm were mainly concerned about the relation between God and the world. Within a Neoplatonic context, this comes down to the question of reconciling the unity of the creator and the multiplicity of creatures. How did man originate from God and how does he return to God? If God is the one all-encompassing nature, how can he be differentiated from the universe? If God is beyond all creatures, how can he be known and named?

Erigena and Anselm intended to answer these questions with insights from both Neoplatonism and their Christian beliefs. Such a procedure necessitated their determining the relation between faith and reason. How closely can faith and reason be connected so as to have a viable Christian wisdom? If reason should assume priority over faith, then it seems logical that Neoplatonic philosophy would predominate over Christian teaching about God and the world. Such a consequence could prove disastrous for orthodox Christian wisdom.

II. *Dialectics*

Not all Christians at the time of Anselm welcomed the investigation of such issues. In their efforts to renew Christian life, some reformers, like Peter Damian (1007-1072), strongly attacked philosophy as a tool of the devil, adulterating the Word of God with specious speculation.⁶ This anti-philosophical attitude was not without provocation. When Berengar of Tours (c. 1000-1088) used dialectics to explain the Eucharist, he denied transubstantiation.⁷ He was opposed by Lanfranc (c. 1010-1089), the teacher of Anselm, for abandoning "sacred authorities" and indiscreetly using dialectics to interpret the mysteries of the faith.⁸ Though Anselm was a staunch traditionalist who respected the authority of Scripture and the Fathers of the Church, he was an eleventh century dialectician who was firmly convinced that human reason, obeying the laws of logic, could gain invaluable insights into the teachings of faith. Anselm wanted to avoid the Scylla of Damian and the Charybdis of Berengar.

Theme

I. *Unity and Good*

In their concern for the relation between God and creatures, Erigena and Anselm found their dominant theme in the divine unity and good from which the multiplicity of finite beings originate and to which they return. Because of Anselm's emphasis on the difference between created truth and divine truth and his stress on liberty as distinct from necessity in the world, he did not go as far as Erigena in his Neoplatonic unifying of the manifold beings with the One.

II. *Unity of Faith and Reason*

In pursuit of the unity of reality, Erigena and Anselm approached religious issues within a synthetic vision of faith and reason.

Method

Erigena and Anselm investigated the problem of the relation between God and creatures according to approaches that synthesized faith and reason.

I. *Erigena*

Three Stages Toward Truth. Erigena distinguished three stages in man's search for truth. In the first stage before Christ's coming, human reason, obscured by original sin, was limited to physics in the investigation of the world and in the proof of the existence of God as its cause. After Christ's appearance, reason entered a second stage in which it receives truth revealed in Scripture by God and accepted on faith. Enlightened by faith, reason now has the task of exploring and contemplating the content of revelation to make it effective in man's moral life. In the final stage, man will have no need of faith to enjoy the heavenly vision of Christ the Truth.

- *Identity of Philosophy and Religion*. Presently, reason finds itself united with faith. That is why Erigena simply repeated Augustine's words that "true philosophy is true religion, and conversely, true religion is true philosophy."⁹ In virtue of this identity, philosophy is nothing other than the understanding of Sacred Scripture: "What else is philosophy except the explaining of the true rules of true religion, by which God, the highest and principal cause of all things, is both worshipped humbly and investigated rationally."¹⁰ In view of his identification of philosophy and religion, it is not too surprising that he wrote "no one can enter heaven except by philosophy."¹¹

Reason, illumined by faith, is the source of authority in interpreting Scripture, for "true authority . . . is nothing else but the truth which was uncovered by the power of reason . . ." ¹² Emanating from the same source, divine wisdom, right reason and true authority cannot contradict each other.

Dialectics: Division and Analysis. Reason understands faith by dialectical division and analysis. Division derives less general concepts from a more universal one, for example, "corporeal" and "incorporeal" from "substance," whereas analysis begins with individuals to gather them into a higher genus, for instance, "Peter" and "Paul" into "rational substance." Erigena viewed these two complementary operations as a single dialectical movement in which the ordering of concepts is nothing but the laws of nature by which the multiplicity of the universe proceeds from the unity of God and returns to that unity.¹³

II. *Anselm*

- *Faith and Reason*. Like Erigena, Anselm followed Augustine in recognizing two sources of knowledge: faith and reason. Against the extreme dialecticians who subordinate Scripture to reason, Anselm upheld the primacy of faith as the starting point: "For I do not seek to understand in order that I may believe, but I believe in order that I may understand. For I also believe this, that unless I believe, I shall not understand."¹⁴

Unlike Peter Damian, Anselm regarded it "a neglect if, after we are established in the faith, we do not seek to understand what we believe,"¹⁵ in order to draw nearer to the very sight of God. Although the human mind in this life cannot comprehend the mysteries of faith, it can give necessary reasons to confirm belief in them; for example, it is possible to prove the necessity of the Trinity and the Incarnation. Like Erigena, he combined a sovereign faith in the authority of Scripture with an almost unbounded confidence in the capacity of human reason to demonstrate its truths.

- *Interiority*. To understand his faith in God, Anselm followed the interior path trod by Augustine and Erigena: "Enter the inner chamber of your mind, shut out all things save God and whatever may aid you in seeking God; and having locked the door, seek Him."¹⁶ By turning away

from sense experience and inward to intelligible objects, Anselm believed the mind could know real being.

Influences

Neo-Platonism. Erigena and Anselm shared a common Christian faith which they sought to understand within a general Neoplatonic framework that hierarchically graded reality according to different degrees of perfection, and derived the being of creatures from participation in a divine archetype. There is evident in Erigena and to a lesser degree in Anselm, a Neoplatonic tendency to identify philosophical speculation and religious knowledge. These general Neoplatonic similarities show no specific evidence that Anselm borrowed from pseudo-Dionysius or Erigena.

I. Erigena

The decisive event in Erigena's philosophical career was his translating of some writings of Greek Neo-Platonist thinkers: Gregory of Nyssa, Maximus the Confessor, and especially Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite.¹⁷ Erigena, fully committed to Neo-Platonism, followed Dionysius in constructing a vast system incorporating the classical Neoplatonic theses: emanation, the ineffability of the divine One, the method of negative theology, and the antithesis between the spiritual and material orders. Less profound than Augustine's use of Neoplatonic ideas, Erigena's synthesis of Christian thought organized by a Neoplatonic dialectic in his chief work, *On the Division of Nature*, appears more daring and spectacular than the Bishop of Hippo's philosophy.

II. Anselm

Unlike Erigena, Anselm did not fully exploit the Neoplatonic tradition. The distinctive cast of Anselm's thought derives not so much from Neoplatonic elements but rather from the dialectical strain he adopted from Aristotle and Boethius. Although he knew only a few writings on logic by Aristotle through Boethius, he became a master of grammar, logic, and dialectics. In his acquaintance with the writings of the Fathers of the Church, he faithfully followed Augustine's close alliance of faith and reason, his interior route to truth, the divine exemplar, and its image in the human psyche. At times, he did not hesitate to question Augustine's Neoplatonic line of reasoning, for example, in the definition of free will. Anselm let himself be governed by principles of logic as well as common sense.

Response of John Scotus Erigena

In their encounter with the problem of God and the world, Erigena and Anselm developed their basic insights within a dialectical framework of reason and faith.

- *Nature*. In his chief work *On The Division of Nature*, Erigena worked within the method of division and analysis to unfold the laws of nature governing the relation between God and creatures. In its broadest sense, nature includes the totality of things that can be understood by the intellect or perceived by the senses, things which are not, for example, God who is a non-object of human knowledge; also potential being is the nonbeing of what it will be once it is actualized.¹⁸ In its specific sense, nature is ultimately reducible to God as the origin, sustainer, and end of creatures. Between God and creatures, Erigena recognized four divisions.

I. Nature as Uncreated and Creator

- *God as Origin.* The first division of nature refers to "God alone, for only he is understood to create all and yet is himself without any beginning or source."¹⁹ In his infinity, God is completely perfect, ineffable, and incomprehensible to man and himself. Beyond the limits of finite beings and human knowledge like the One of Plotinus, God cannot be expressed in human concepts or defined in terms of the Aristotelian categories.

- *Negative Method.* Creaturely categories such as substance, essence, and good, which are affirmed of God, must be immediately denied of him who transcends all beings that are directly accessible to us. Assertions in which such perfections are raised to a superlative degree, for example, "super-essence," and "super-good," and predicated of God as more-than-essence and more-than-good, are more negative than positive statements which say not what he is but rather what he is not.²⁰ Reason learns from creatures *that* God is, but it cannot know *what* he is.

God is also "unknown to himself."²¹ Without limits, God cannot be circumscribed by self-comprehension or a definition of himself by himself. "How can the divine nature understand what it is, when it is no-thing? It transcends everything that is. God does not know what he is because he is not a "what." Both to himself and to every intellect he is incomprehensible in anything."²²

II. Nature as Created and Creative

- *Ideas.* The second division of nature includes the divine ideas which, created by God, in turn create individual things. Like the Neo-Platonists, Erigena made Plato's world of ideas the first creatures of God: "The divine nature is created by itself in the primordial causes (the divine ideas). In this way it creates itself, that is, it begins to appear in its theophanies, for it wishes to emerge from the most hidden recesses of its nature in which it is unknown even to itself."²³ Emerging from the depths of obscurity and darkness wherein he dwells into the light of self-comprehension, God passes in self-creation from being "no-thing" to being something, thereby becoming manifest to himself. Nevertheless, God's transcendence of his ideas, the medium of his self-knowledge, keeps him incomprehensible to himself in his innermost depths.

- *Hierarchy.* These primal exemplar causes of all things originate according to a definite hierarchical order in the divine Word or Wisdom generated by the Father. In a continuing process from the more universal to the less universal, the divine ideas divide into genera, genera into sub-genera, and sub-genera into species from which individuals flow. This order unfolds as the ideas are realized in the universe. According to this order, the idea of goodness appears first, and is followed by the ideas of essence or being, life, reason, intelligence, wisdom, virtue, beatitude, truth and so on.²⁴

- *Unity and Plurality.* As the number one implicitly contains all number, so the Word embraces the infinite plurality of divine ideas in its perfect simplicity. However, as multiple, limited natures, the created ideas are not identical with God who is infinite and one. The ideas, existing eternally in God are not absolutely coeternal with him inasmuch as they have a beginning in their cause; properly speaking, they participate in eternity.²⁵ The Word of Erigena is reminiscent of Plotinus' Intelligence or *Nous* whose unity contains the seeds of future multiplicity.

III. Nature as Created and Uncreative

- *Individuals*. Nature which is created and does not create embraces the individuals produced by the divine ideas. Like light radiating from a central source, creation is an emanation from the one to the many, from the most universal ideas to genera and species from which in turn come individuals pure spirits or angels, human beings composed of spirit and matter, and material things. As light diffusing far and wide dims into darkness, so creative illumination ends in matter.

Creatures participate in the primordial causes which, in turn, participate immediately in God. Participation signifies the distribution of natures in the structure of the universe, the derivation of a lower essence from a higher essence. As water from a fountain overflows into the river, so the divine goodness, essence, life, reason, and so forth, flows out from the Font of all things into the primordial causes to effect their being, and then proceeds through them into their effects. God is present in all beings as in his participations. Although this account sounds as if it was a purely Neoplatonic theory of emanation, John Scotus maintained that divine goodness created the whole universe, not from any pre-existing matter, but out of nothing (*ex nihilo*), in the sense of no essence whatsoever.²⁶ Here he tried to combine the Christian doctrine of creation and the Neoplatonic theory of emanation.

- *Man*. The idea of humanity in all its perfection is "an intellectual notion eternally produced in the divine mind."²⁷ Thus the true substance of man by which he images God exists among the ideas in the divine mind. When he ceased contemplating the divine truth and alienated himself from God, man lost the beauty of the divine image and sank to the level of an animal. As a result, the human race multiplied by the division of sexes instead of in a purely spiritual manner like the angels, and there arose the vast diversity of qualities, thoughts, customs, time, and places which now characterize human beings.²⁸

In addition, man lost the ideal innate knowledge of all things in the divine mind and now has to gradually acquire cognition. The likeness of God in man is found in his rational soul which functions through its total presence in every part of the body. Sharing with plants the powers of nutrition and growth, with animals the powers of sensation and emotional reaction, and with angels the faculty of understanding, man is the microcosm linking the spiritual and material world.

- *Universe*. The fate of the universe is bound up with man. Originally, the whole universe existed in the ideal man in the divine mind before it became externalized in the present world. Man's original sin not only separated him from God and brought individual human beings into existence, but also caused the fall of the whole universe, with the result that the other species in man divided into myriad sensible substances which are subject to generation and corruption.²⁹ A sensible substance is composed of a nature and the accidents of space and time, quantity and quality.

As a shadow, formed by light falling upon a body, disappears when they are separated and still remains in its causes, so a sensible substance is an appearance effected by the coming to ether of intelligible immaterial causes in which it still remains potentially after they no longer converge.³⁰ As the one infinite rises above the realm of intelligible, immaterial ideas, so multiple visible matter falls below them into confusion and lack of intelligibility. The material world, in the final analysis, is an appearance of reality which in itself is the immaterial, intelligible realm of ideas. Basically immaterial, the universe appears to Erigena as a vast system of symbols not to be studied for its own sake but to be contemplated for the traces of the invisible God which can lead man up the ladder of creation to God.

IV. *Nature as Uncreative and Uncreated*

- *God as Goal*. Nature, not creating and not created, is God insofar as his beauty draws all things back to himself without moving himself. Matter aspires toward form, nonbeing toward being, and multiplicity toward unity. The cosmic process of division by which creatures proceed from God comes to completion in analysis by which they return to him. Deficient and restless apart from the unity of God, all creatures aspire to reunion with God from whom they came. "For the end of the whole movement is its beginning, since it is terminated by no other end than its principle, from which its movement begins and to which it constantly desires to return, that it may halt and rest in it."³¹

- *Soul*. The soul can be described as "a movement toward God." Always remaining one, the soul moves toward God in three operations: starting from sensations of multiple sensible images, it reassembles individuals through discursive reasoning into their intelligible species and genera — theophanies of the creator -- and ultimately in contemplation brings them back to the unity of God's transcendence.³² In this ascent the soul progressively unifies itself as it deepens its unity with God.

- *Return*. Man returns to God first through death and then through the resurrection of his body which is spiritualized or glorified in its reunion with the soul. The pledge of fallen man's resurrection is the resurrection of Christ, his savior. Man's complete return to God requires grace as well as nature. The reunion of man's soul with the idea of man will be accompanied by the return of the whole material universe to the unity of the idea of man. Mutable and unspiritualized matter which John Scotus, following Gregory of Nyssa, viewed as a complex of accidents and as appearance, will perish. As all things originated in man and fell with him, so they will be saved through him. In the end everything will go back to God: "For God will be all in all when there is nothing but God."³³

When man and the universe are absorbed into God and transfigured in his light, they retain their identity without confusion with God, as air permeated by light is not destroyed or transubstantiated. Upon completion of the cosmic return, moral evil and physical suffering will disappear, all men will become pure spirits and the wicked will be punished with ignorance of Christ who is truth.³⁴

Conclusion of John Scotus Erigena

Retrospect: Original Synthesis

In retrospect, Erigena's *Division of Nature* stands out like Plotinus' *Enneads* as an original representation of Platonic philosophy. Like Plotinus, he had a passion for unity: the simplicity of the One, the unity of all creatures in the divine ideas, the identity of the laws of thought with the laws of nature (an anticipation of Hegel), the identity of philosophy and religion — in fine, the oneness of nature amid the plurality of its division.

Conspectus: Christian Wisdom

Erigena integrated Neo-Platonism and his religious beliefs into a bold and comprehensive philosophical synthesis. This distinctive Christian wisdom, however, shows an inner tension between faith and reason which has led to variant interpretations. His identification of philosophy

and religion makes him vulnerable to criticism from both of these perspectives. On the one hand, the autonomy of philosophical reason seems to be endangered by following the traditional position of Augustine. On the other, he is criticized as a rationalist who treats the truths of faith as natural objects of reason. Although his attempt to construct a Christian wisdom from Neoplatonic philosophy shows an extreme confidence in the power of reason to explain all the truths revelation presents for belief, and subordinates the authority of the Fathers to reason, he recognized the primacy of God's authority over human reason.

Erigena's attempt to understand his faith gave rise to a polarity in his system between Christian and Neoplatonic tendencies. Regarding the origin of all creatures from God and their return to him, Erigena tried to harmonize two opposing tendencies, the Christian view of God's freedom and the Neoplatonic position of the necessity of nature. The resurrection which he accepted on faith as an effect of God's free grace operating through Christ, is made a natural, necessary event in the return of man — and through man, the universe — into his eternal primordial causes. This tension is also evident, on the one hand, in his Christian affirmation of the transcendence of God who "is not the whole of his creation, nor is his creation part of God,"³⁵ and on the other, in his Neoplatonic view that God is "the essence of all things."³⁶ The first statement which agrees, with the theistic distinction between God and creatures is in line with orthodox Christian doctrine, whereas the second which suggests their pantheistic identification is incompatible with orthodoxy.

Prospect: Landmark

Although Erigena's *Division of Nature* enjoyed considerable popularity, his philosophy begot no school or movement. His work appears to have been used by Amaury and David of Dinant to interpret Aristotle in the 13th century. In 1225 Pope Honorius III condemned it for teaching that all things are God, that the divine ideas are created and create, and that at the end of the world the sexes will be abolished. Whether orthodox or not, his Christian Neo-Platonism constituted a landmark in medieval thought and a hallmark of Western philosophy.

Response of Anselm of Canterbury

Anselm responded to the problem of man's relation to God by developing a natural theology and a study of man in terms of truth and liberty.

I. God

Existence of God. Anselm proved the existence of God differently in his *Monologion* and *Proslogion*.

- *Monologion*. Argument from Goodness, Being, and Perfection. Intensely interested in rational speculation, the monks of Bec where Anselm was Prior requested him to write a model meditation on God upon which they could reflect by reason alone without having to depend on the authority of Scripture. In reply to their request, Anselm set forth in his *Monologion* three proofs for God's existence from goodness, being, and perfection.

Recurring throughout these three arguments is the following pattern: first, they start from empirical observation of varying qualities, such as goodness; second, they continue with a judgment about the different degrees which imply a reference to a standard of perfection; finally, the judgment, works within the Platonic framework wherein the objective participation of things

in the same perfection to a greater or lesser degree shows the reality of an absolute standard which the participants more or less approximate.

In the first argument, Anselm observed that experience reveals a great number of things that are good. But a number of things possess an attribute to a greater, less, or equal degree insofar as they have it through one thing that is the same in all. Accordingly, things are said to be just to any degree, can be understood to be just only through justice. "It follows, therefore, that all other goods are good through another being than that which they themselves are, and this being alone is good through itself."³⁷ This being which is supremely good and completely excels all others is God.

In the second proof, Anselm broadened the basis of the first argument by reasoning from the perfection of being which things have in common, although in varying degrees. Since it is absurd to suppose that all beings exist through nothing, then they must exist through something which is either one another, or themselves, or one cause. It is self-contradictory to admit that a thing exists in virtue of that to which it gives being. If beings exist by themselves, it is because they possess at least the common capacity of doing so, and it is this common power which causes them to be. When several beings participate in the same form, there must be a unitary being beyond them which is that form and causes them to possess it. That everything which exists, exists in virtue of a single cause which exists by itself, namely, God, is the only acceptable hypothesis.

The third proof bears on the degrees of perfection which things possess in the universe, for example, a horse is superior to a tree, and a man to a horse. Granting this gradation, there must be either an infinity of beings with none so perfect that there is not another still more perfect, or else a finite number of beings, and consequently one more perfect than all the others. However, it is absurd to suppose an infinite number of things. Therefore, there must exist a being surpassing all others in perfection and inferior to none.³⁸

- *Proslogion*: Concept of Greatest Conceivable Being. Driven by the desire for a simpler proof, Anselm meditated long on God's existence and expressed the fruit of his reflection in the *Proslogion*. Turning his thoughts inward towards God, Anselm prayed to God for "a little understanding of the truths which my heart believes and loves,"³⁹ and then developed his so-called "ontological" argument for the existence of God.⁴⁰ For purposes of clarity, this argument can be put in syllogistic form.

God is that than which no greater be thought. But that than which no greater can be thought must exist not only in the mind but in reality. Therefore God actually exists.

The major premise consists of a definition of God as "a being than which nothing greater can be conceived . . ." ⁴¹ Thus the proof starts from the idea of God as absolutely perfect. Even the atheist ("The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'" *Psalms* 13:1) understands that idea as what is meant by God, otherwise he would not really know the being to which he is denying existence.

According to the minor premise, that than which no greater can be thought must exist not only as an idea in the mind but also in reality. If such a being existed merely instrumentally, then it would not be the greatest conceivable being, for a greater could be thought, namely, a being existing extramentally as well as conceptually. As Anselm put it: "If that, than which nothing greater can be conceived, exists in the understanding alone, the very being, than which none greater can be conceived, is one, than which a greater can be conceived. But obviously this is impossible."⁴² In other words, it is contradictory to have the idea of a being as absolute perfection and at the same time deny real existence to that being.

Therefore, one cannot think of that being than which no greater be thought without conceiving of it as existing in reality. God cannot be understood as not actually existing. Without doubt, God exists in reality as well as in idea.

- *Divine Attributes*. From the notion of the most perfect being and good whose essence is to exist through himself, Anselm deduced the principal divine attributes: simplicity, immutability, eternity, creativity, and omnipresence. If God, for example, were not immutable, he could change and become other than he is, thus implying that he was originally imperfect in lacking something he subsequently came to possess. Since God is perfectly what he is, he has no need to change. Hence to be changeable is contrary to the nature of absolute perfection. Similar reasoning explicates other attributes which are implied in the idea of the all-perfect being.

Anselm predicated of God all those perfections that, absolutely speaking, it is better to be than not to be, for example, spirit, life, wisdom, power, and truth.⁴³ Before creating the world from nothing, God possessed in his infinite nature and knew eternally the exemplars of all things to be. The Anselmian doctrine of eternal ideas which are identical with God's uncreated nature radically differs from Erigena's teaching of created ideas. Since creatures subsist more truly as ideas in God — with whose nature the ideas are identified — than in themselves, they are said to be reflections or participations of the divine reality.

II. *Man*

- *Human Nature*. Man's nature images the ineffable Trinity inasmuch as his soul recollects, understands, and loves itself.⁴⁴ The knowledge of things requires the cooperation of the senses and the intellect which is aided by divine illumination. The presence of God is manifested clearly in the truths of the intellect and the freedom of the will.

- *Truth*. Anselm's inquiry into God and man rests upon his theory of true knowledge. With regard to universals, he opposed the nominalism of some of his contemporaries by insisting on the reality of genera and species.⁴⁵ The nominalists identify the content of thought with words, whereas the realists identify it with things. If one thinks simply of words, one can say, for example, that fire is water, but if one has in mind the things signified by the words, this statement is impossible. Likewise, in the order of words a nominalist can deny God's existence, but with respect to the being signified by the word one cannot say that the being than which none greater can be thought, does not exist, for the very being conceived necessarily implies existence in reality as well as in thought.

In his treatise *On Truth* Anselm analyzed the nature of truth. First, he agreed with Aristotle that a proposition is true when what it affirms is, and what it negates is not. Thus the truth of a judgment lies in "rectitude," or, in expressing what it ought to express.⁴⁶ Second, truth is also found in the rectitude of the will and action when one wills and does what he ought to will and to do. In this sense, nonrational creatures realize the truth in doing what they ought to do, for example, fire in burning. Third, truth resides in the essence of all existing things inasmuch as they are what they ought to be in conforming to their ideas in the divine mind.⁴⁷ Since rectitude is the object of the intellect and not of the senses, truth can be defined as "rectitude perceptible to the mind alone."⁴⁸

As there is only one time that measures all temporal events, so there is one highest truth, God, who owes nothing to another, and measures and causes the truth of things which in turn cause the truth of thought and of propositions.⁴⁹ As with Augustine so for Anselm, the human mind can move from the truth of propositions to the truth of thought, and from there to the truth of things,

and upward towards the divine ideas which are one with God. Thus, Anselm combined the Aristotelian notion of truth as correspondence with the Platonic theory of participation to show that God is truth.

- *Will and Liberty*. To understand the nature of moral truth or rectitude whereby a man is just in the sight of God, Anselm analyzed the notions of the will and liberty. The term of "will" has three meanings. First, it means the soul's natural self-determining power to will, or to decide, or to love. Second, it refers to the affection or disposition of the will's power towards either the useful or the just. While permanently inclined to what is useful, the will is not inseparably disposed to what is just, as is obvious in the case of injustice. Since the tendency to what is useful can get out of hand and lead to sin, it should be brought under control of the propensity to justice which always orients towards good. Third, the term "will" means the exercise of the power and inclination to will. Among the acts of the will is choice, a judgment or decision to accept or reject objects according to the evidence of reason. The ability to choose is natural to man's powers of will and reason.⁵⁰

Like Augustine, Anselm distinguished between the freedom of choosing or not choosing to act in this or that way and even of sinning, and liberty which is "the power of preserving rectitude of will for the sake of rectitude itself."⁵¹ In this definition, the phrase "rectitude of will" signifies freedom from the bondage of sin, and "for the sake of rectitude itself" means that the truly free person acts rightly not from any selfish motive but from the knowledge that his act is right. Man gives up his liberty when he enslaves himself to sin. Only the grace of God can liberate him from the slavery of sin and enable him to properly use his natural freedom of choice in the performance of just actions for true happiness.

Conclusion of Anselm of Canterbury

Retrospect

Augustine Redivivus. In retrospect, Anselm appears as a Neo-platonic Christian who strove to go beyond mere faith and arrive at a rational insight into faith. Before Anselm's time the study of Christian theology had been a collecting and systematic arranging of authorities (Sacred Scripture and Doctors of the Church). Disregarding authority in inquiry, Anselm showed the reasonableness and necessity of the truths of faith by reason alone. Though he "rationalized" revealed doctrines such as the Trinity and Incarnation, it would be an oversimplification to label him a rationalist since he favored Sacred Scripture when proofs from reason conflicted with it and opposed the rationalism of Roscelin. On the whole matter of faith and reason Anselm's thinking was fluid, uncrystallized, or even ambivalent. Because his rigorous reasoning reduced the gist of Augustine's doctrine to a well-knitted whole of demonstrated conclusions, he is aptly described as "Augustine redivivus."

Conspectus

Ontological Argument.⁵² Anselm's bold and original argument for God's existence from the notion of the greatest possible being was strongly criticized by one of his contemporaries, Gaunilon, the astute Benedictine monk from Marmoutier. In his remarkable pamphlet, "In Defense of the Fool," Gaunilon objected that he has in his mind no distinct idea of a being than which a greater cannot be thought. Replying to Gaunilon's objection that one cannot form a notion of God

from other realities unequal to him, Anselm explained that any human mind can ascend from the knowledge of a lesser good to the notion of a greater, from the awareness of less perfect things to the idea of a more perfect being, and construct a concept of a being than which a greater is inconceivable.⁵³

Gaunilon also objected that, even if one could conceive of a being than which none greater can be thought, one can conclude at most that it exists, not in reality, but only in thought. Though there are any number of unreal things existing in the mind, for example, the notion of an earthly paradise, the Isles of the Blessed, the conclusion that they really exist is unwarranted. While agreeing with Gaunilon's second objection that one cannot reason from existence in thought to existence in reality, Anselm excepted the case of the being which cannot be thought not to be. Unlike the idea of the Isles of the Blessed which contains no compelling reason to affirm their real existence, the being than which none greater can be thought necessarily implies existence in reality.⁵⁴

Prospect

Since the time of Gaunilon, Anselm's unique proof has stirred up controversy about its validity. Bonaventure, Duns Scotus, Descartes, Leibniz, and Hegel incorporated it with certain modifications into their system, whereas Thomas Aquinas, Locke, and Kant rejected it on the grounds that it implied an invalid step from the sphere of the logical to the real order. One of the reasons for these different attitudes towards the argument is that the former philosophers believed, as did Augustine, Erigena, and Anselm, that truth is given through intellectual insight into real being independently of sensation; on the supposition that reality is identified with intelligible being conceived by thought, they found no great difficulty in making the transition from the idea of God to his existence in reality. The latter group, however, agreed that all human knowledge of the existence of anything comes through the perception of sensible things; within this cognitional context, they refused to consider the problem of God's existence apart from an empirically given reality.

Father of Scholasticism. Although Anselm left behind no complete system and founded no school of thought, his outstanding initiative in applying the dialectical method to matters of faith gave such a strong impetus to the scientific systematization of theological matter as to earn him the honorary title "Father of scholasticism."

Though Erigena and Anselm shared an unbounded confidence in the capacity of human reason to understand matters of faith, Erigena assimilated his beliefs into a Neoplatonic framework, whereas Anselm incorporated Neoplatonic elements into a Christian perspective. In view of this difference of orientation, Erigena can be aptly described as a Christian Neo-Platonist and Anselm as a Neoplatonic Christian. If Erigena appears as Plotinus redivivus, Anselm shows himself as Augustine redivivus.

Notes

1. Quotations from *De divisione naturae* will generally be taken from *Medieval Philosophy*, ed. and trans. J. Wippel and A. Wolter (New York: Free Press, 1969), pp. 113-137. Reprinted by permission. Also *Selections From Medieval Philosophers*, ed. and trans. R. McKeon, I (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), pp. 100-141. His complete works are found in J. P. Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, Vol. 122 (Paris: Migne, 1865).

2. Critical edition by F.S. Schmitt, *Sancti Anselmi Opera Omnia*, 6 vols. (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1946-61).
3. Trans. A.C. Pegis, *The Wisdom of Catholicism* (New York: Random House, 1949, pp. 203-228). *Proslogion*, trans. M.J. Charlesworth (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).
4. The first three works can be found in *St. Anselm: Basic Writings*, trans. S. Deane (Chicago: Open Court Co., 1964). Citations will generally be taken from this edition. Reprinted by permission.
5. *Truth, Freedom, and Evil*. ed. J. Hopkins and H. Richardson (New York: Harper and Row, 1967). Trans. R. McKeon, *Selections From Medieval Philosophers*, I (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), pp. 150-184.
6. See *De Sancta Simplicitate Scientiae Inflanti Anteponeuda*, I, J.P. Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, Vol. 145, vols. 695 (Paris: Migne, 1844-1864).
7. Berengar of Tours, *De Sacra Coena Adversus Lanfrancum*, ed. A.F. and E.Th. Vischer, *Berengarii Turonensis Opera* (Berlin: 1834), p. 100.
8. Lanfranc, *Liber de Corpore et Sanguine Domini*, VII, PL 150, 416.
9. *Liber de praedestinatione*, ch. I, 1.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Annotationes in Marcianum*, ed. C. Lutz (Cambridge, Mass.: Medieval Academy, 1939), p. 64.
12. *De divisione naturae*, I, 69.
13. *Ibid.*, II, 1; IV, 4; V, 4.
14. *Proslogion*, 1. See Charlesworth, *St. Anselm's Proslogion*. pp. 22-46.
15. *Cur Deus Homo*, bk. I, c. 2.
16. *Proslogion*, I.
17. Dionysius was probably a Syrian monk (c. A.D. 500) who was strongly influenced by the Neo-Platonist Proclus (410-485).
18. *De divisione naturae*, I, 1, and 3-7.
19. *Ibid.*, I, 10. Nature is a broader term than "being" which signifies finite intelligible or sensible objects.
20. *Super Hierarchial Caelestem*, II, 3. *De divisione naturae*, I, 14-15.
21. *De divisione naturae*, III, 23.
22. *Ibid.*, II, 28. Erigena qualified his conclusion through the words of his disciple: "you do not prove that God does not know himself, but only that he does not know what he is. And rightly, for he is not a what."
23. *De div. nat.*, III, 23. Author's parenthesis.
24. *Ibid.*, III, 1.
25. *Ibid.*, II, 21.
26. *Ibid.*, III, 5.
27. *Ibid.*, IV, 7.
28. *Ibid.*, II, 7.
29. *Ibid.*, IV, 8.
30. *Ibid.*, I, 34, 53, 58, 60.
31. *Ibid.*, V, 3.
32. *Ibid.*, II, 24.
33. *Ibid.*, V, 8.
34. *Ibid.*, V, 37.

35. *Ibid.*, II, 1.
36. *Ibid.*, I, 72.
37. *Monologion*, I.
38. *Ibid.*, III-IV.
39. *Proslogion*, I.
40. Kant gave the name "ontological" to Descartes' version of Anselm's proof.
41. *Proslogion*, ch. II.
42. *Ibid.* See Alvin Plantinga, ed., *The Ontological Argument from St. Anselm to Contemporary Philosophers* (London: Macmillan Co., 1968). John Hick and A. Gill, ed., *Argument for the Existence of God* (New York: Macmillan, 1967). For articles on the ontological argument since 1945, see Jasper Hopkins, *A Companion to the Study of St. Anselm* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1972), pp. 261-265.
43. See *Proslogion*, V-XIII, XVIII-XXII.
44. *Monologion*, XXXI and I VI.
45. *De Fide Trinitatis*, 2.
46. *De Veritate*, 2, 3.
47. *Ibid.*, 4-7.
48. *Ibid.*, 11.
49. *Ibid.*, 13.
50. See *De voluntate, De concordia*, 6.
51. *De libertate arbitrii*, 8.
52. See N. Malcolm, "Anselm's Ontological Arguments," *Philosophical Review*, 69 (1960), 41-62; articles in reply, *Philosophical Review*, 70 (1961), 56-111. Also R. and G. Miller, "The Ontological Argument in St. Anselm and Descartes," *Modern Schoolman*, 32 (1955), 341-349; 33 (1955), 31-38. C. Hartshorne, *Anselm's Discovery: A Re-examination of the Ontological Proof for God's Existence*. (La Salle, Ill.: Open Court, 1965).
53. Gaunilon, *Liber pro Insipiente*; Anselm, *Liber Apologeticus contra Insipientem*, 8.
54. Gaunilon, *op. cit.*, 5, 6. Anselm, *Liber Apologeticus contra Insipientem*, 3, 4.

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Chapter IV

Bonaventure: Philosopher of the Exemplar

Two men climbed Mount La Verna in Italy, St. Francis of Assisi in 1224 and thirty years later St. Bonaventure. What the Seraphic Francis lived, the mind of the Seraphic Doctor Bonaventure sought to understand so "as much as possible (to) be restored, naked of knowledge, to union with the very One who is above all created essence and knowledge."¹ Both men had the same ideal: to rise from the contemplation of God's symbols in creatures to the vision of uncreated goodness itself.

Life and Works²

Giovanni Fidenza (1217-1274), popularly known as Bonaventure, was born in Bagnoregio, near Viterbo, Italy. Impressed by the holiness of both the learned and simple of the Friars Minor during his studies at the University of Paris, Bonaventure joined the Franciscans. He pursued his theological studies under Alexander of Hales and John of la Rochelle who imbued him with Augustinian thought.

Appointed in 1248 to the Franciscan chair as regent-Master at the University of Paris, Bonaventure lectured on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard and wrote his *Commentary on the Sentences*³ and its compendium, the *Breviloquium*,⁴ theological works along Augustinian lines. As Minister General of the Friars Minor, he reconciled traditional and innovative minded Franciscans and wrote his most famous work, *The Journey of the Mind to God*.⁵ In his *Collations on the Six Days*⁶ he affirmed the noblest truths of Christian thought and warned university students against current errors. Shortly after playing a major role in the reunion of the Eastern Church with Rome at the Council of Lyons, Bonaventure died. In recognition of his holiness, he was canonized in 1482.

Encounter

Problems

Bonaventure encountered problems concerning God and the soul, faith and reason, transcendence and immanence.

I. *God and the Soul*

Bonaventure agreed with Solomon "that God made man simple; man's complex problems are of his own devising" (*Ecclesiastes*, 7:29-30). Rather than entangle himself with an infinity of questions, Bonaventure, like Augustine, reflected on those core problems of knowledge and reality that centered around man's relation to God. To be sure that he was investigating these central issues within a Christian perspective rather than merely within a context of purely natural reason, Bonaventure would have to determine the relationship between faith and reason.⁷

II. *Faith and Reason*

Bonaventure followed the general medieval tradition of recognizing two sources of knowledge: faith founded on the authority of God and the Church, and reason which is based on the natural evidence of things. He was strongly concerned about thinkers who came to rational conclusions at odds with the teachings of faith. Some Masters of Arts at the University of Paris followed Averroes' view of a necessary eternal world and the same separate intellect for the whole of mankind. Such conclusions from the principles of natural reason could not be reconciled with the Christian belief in the free creation of the world in time and in man's personal responsibility and immortality. Siger of Brabant, a Latin Averroist, wanted both faith and reason, though he could not reconcile them.⁸

Opposed to philosophy developing independently of faith, Bonaventure criticized Aristotle for his triple blindness. Ignorant of exemplarism, providence, and man's future life, the peripatetic erred in affirming the eternity of the world, a single intellect for all men (as Averroes interpreted Aristotle), and the equivalent of no rewards or punishments after death. Aristotle was a great scholar with vast knowledge (*scientia*) of things in themselves, but a poor philosopher without wisdom (*sapientia*) of transcendent ideas after which things have been patterned. Even Plato and Plotinus who were cognizant of the exemplar ideas of things, were uncertain of man's destiny and the way to its fulfillment. This deformity of truth testifies to the insufficiency of weak human reason working without faith. Vis-à-vis this historical testimony, Bonaventure's problem was to show the absurdity of an autonomous philosophy, the primacy of faith, and the dependence of secular philosophy on sacred theology.

III. *Transcendence and Immanence of God*

Within the framework of a faith seeking understanding, Bonaventure investigated the central problem of God's transcendence and immanence in creation. Aristotle's world with things possessing a definite essence seems to make them unduly independent of God and cast doubt upon their intrinsic relation to the creator. The lessening of God's presence in the universe undermines human knowledge of him. In addition, the Aristotelian conception of a world moved by natural necessity runs contrary to the Christian view of a universe presided over by a free God. Bonaventure specified the question of God's transcendence and immanence in terms of his exemplar, efficient, and final relation to creatures.⁹

- *Truth*. Like Augustine, Bonaventure was concerned with understanding how God could be the exemplary cause of truth. How can God be infinitely perfect truth and also cause true beings? Either God is true being in all its fullness and creatures but mere appearances, or else creatures possess true being in themselves and God is not total being. In Bonaventure's estimation, Aristotle's ignorance of this basic problem of exemplar truth doomed his metaphysics at the outset, whereas his master Plato's success lay in confronting this issue in the light of his doctrine of ideas.

- *Unity*. From a Neoplatonic perspective, Bonaventure wondered how the plurality of mutable creatures originate from one, immutable God. If exemplar ideas are introduced to mediate between the supreme cause and the myriad phenomena to maintain God's liberty and providence, how can his unity be reconciled with the plurality of ideas?

In his concern for the individuality of creatures, Bonaventure rejected the Averroistic interpretation of Aristotle that the intellect is one and common to all men. How can Aristotle's theory of matter as the principle of individuation explain the uniqueness of the human soul and

pure angelic spirits? Yet if spiritual creatures were form alone, they would be simple like God — an unacceptable consequence.

- *Good*. In the context of the divine goodness viewed as the goal of creatures, Bonaventure investigated how the multiplicity of finite beings returns to the unity of God. How does God direct human intellectual and moral activity towards himself as the ultimate final cause? Such an inquiry will require an analysis of human nature to show the person's need for God.

Themes

In his encounter with the problems of knowledge and creation, Bonaventure unfolded three themes: exemplar, expression, and finality.

I. Exemplar

Exemplarism, the leit motif of Bonaventure's philosophy. He rejected Aristotle's reasoning that because things subsist for their own sake, they do not depend on the transcendent reality of ideas. In line with Plato, Bonaventure argued that things which are changing and composed in themselves cannot be the end of human knowledge; rather they point to the unchangeable archetypal cause of all truth through which everything is intelligible. If there were no divine ideas in view of which creatures can be known, as Aristotle thought, there could not be any creative activity or providence on God's part. Christian faith testifies that the supreme exemplar is the Holy Trinity — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — which all creation reflects.

II. Expression

Bonaventure's notion of exemplar enabled him to explain the relation between God and creatures. In virtue of its self-diffusing goodness, the divine exemplar creatively expresses itself in a multiplicity of finite beings. Since all creatures resemble the infinite being, a universal analogy of expression pervades reality. Yet the difference between the simplicity of the uncreated exemplar and the composition of created expressions is unlimited.

III. Finality

Bonaventure drew out the implications of his concepts of exemplar and expression to show man's return to God. As the image of his creator, man naturally seeks to return to God as his ultimate goal. God, the supreme good, is the final cause attracting man to fulfillment in himself. Man journeys toward God by contemplating his reflections in creatures and by loving God and others for the sake of God. The idea man has of God is nothing but the likeness of divine truth in his soul drawing him homeward. The mind cannot contemplate truth nor the will love good unless it is illumined by the divine light.

Method

Bonaventure developed his themes within the framework of illumination which embraces man's descent from God and his ascent back to him.

I. *Illumination*

The human mind can move through four levels of light to God: the "exterior light" of the mechanical arts which illumines artificial figures, the "inferior light" of the senses which illumines natural forms, the "interior light" of philosophy

which illumines intellectual truths, and the "superior light" of theology which illumines salvific truths.¹⁰ Enlightened by God through Jesus Christ the exemplar, man can read the great books of the universe, the soul, and God himself.¹¹

II. *Philosophy*

The pure philosophy of Plato and Aristotle operating by natural reason begins with the inferior light of sense perception and is consummated in the interior light of understanding which illumines intelligible truths.¹² This illumination is required for both abstraction from sense images of material things and for self-reflection. Since philosophy has its own proper object, intelligible natural truths, and proceeds according to its own inner illumination, it is methodologically distinct from other sciences.

Although philosophy is *de jure* capable of conferring certitude upon thought, *de facto* it is severely limited in the present human condition, incapable of concluding from the evidence of first principles without intermingling the grossest errors, for example, the eternity of the world in Aristotle. Pure rational philosophy stunts truth with error.¹³

III. *Faith*

The man of simple faith is wiser than the most learned philosophers who are like ostriches with wings enabling them not to fly but only to run more quickly. To attain wisdom, "the order is to begin with the firmness of faith and proceed through the clearness of reason that you may arrive at the sweetness of contemplation, . . ." ¹⁴ Philosophy, guided away from error and towards truth, becomes an organic part of Christian wisdom.¹⁵

IV. *Philosophy and Christian Theology*

Theology overcomes the limitation of philosophy to reason and sense experience by beginning with revelation accepted as true by faith. This procedure enables theology to descend from God as he shows himself to his effects, whereas philosophy needs to ascend from visible effects to God as the first cause.¹⁶ The supernatural truths which theology demonstrates to render the "credible" intelligible transcend the natural truths of philosophy.

V. *Theological Illumination*

The superior illumination of Sacred Scripture enables the mind to see salvific truths. Human vision has been so dimmed by Adam's sin that "this book, the world, became incomprehensible; the key to its understanding was lost."¹⁷ Like a dunce before some Hebrew script, he is puzzled by the book of the universe. With the revelation of Sacred Scripture, man has a kind of dictionary to help in translating that forgotten language of the world. Scripture unlocks the secrets of the cryptogrammic creation: the Trinitarian exemplar of creation; the symbolic, moral and mystical

expressions of the Trinity in all creatures; the return of the universe through man to the knowledge, love and praise of God.

Since creatures, like words, can be viewed as things or symbols,¹⁸ creation can be conceived in two ways: whereas the natural philosopher investigates the nature of things in themselves, the metaphysician contemplates them as expressions of the divine exemplar. Because the nature of creatures is grounded in their being reflections of the creator, the mind must pass from natural philosophy to metaphysics to comprehend the meaning of the world.

- *Mysticism*. Knowledge of creation and the creator is deepened by the theological application of metaphysical concepts to revelation. To light man's way to God, the mystical theologian translates theoretical conclusions into practice by giving love priority over speculation about revelation.¹⁹ The soul rises to God by reading with unctio, reflection with devotion, seeking with admiration, deep attention with joy of heart, skill with piety, knowledge with charity, understanding with humility, application with grace, and light with the inspiration of divine wisdom.²⁰

- *Resolution to Theology*. The cognitional light of science and philosophy can be resolved to the superior illumination of sacred theology, which enables the mind to see the mystical meanings expressed by divine wisdom in the world. Analogies of the eternal generation of the Word, the Christian pattern of life, and the union of the soul with God are disclosed respectively, for example, in natural philosophy as sensible forms in matter, abstract forms in the mind, and ideal forms in divine wisdom.²¹ The resolution and subordination of all the sciences to theology brings about the unity of Christian wisdom.²²

VI. Analogical Thinking

In view of creation as an exemplification of divine wisdom, Bonaventure investigated reality by analogical reasoning. Aristotelian demonstration is an inadequate tool for uncovering the metaphysical structure of a universe which is sustained, controlled and animated by divine analogy. With syllogistic reasoning subordinated to the logic of proportion, analogical thinking can demonstrate a true correspondence between the created symbol and the uncreated exemplar.²³

Influences

Bonaventure developed his themes under the influence of the Franciscan spirit and the ideas of Augustine and Aristotle.

- *St. Francis of Assisi*. Bonaventure was driven by the same threefold desire of Francis of Assisi: to adhere to God totally by the savor of contemplation, to imitate Christ completely by the practice of the virtues, and to win souls to God as did Christ himself. What the Poverello personally experienced, Bonaventure contemplated and formulated so that the corpus of his philosophical ideas was animated and organized by the spirit of Francis. Bonaventure is a Francis gone philosopher to effect a rapport between Assisi and Paris.

- *Augustine and Aristotle*. Bonaventure found Augustine more effective than Aristotle in defining and developing the Franciscan vision. He admired Augustine as the "greatest of the Latin Fathers"²⁴ and adopted him as "the master whose authority is definitive and whose words can never be contested."²⁵ Consistent with this Augustinian preference, he favored Plato's spiritual

vision of God and ideas to Aristotle's empirical concern for things in themselves. By no means did Bonaventure neglect to adopt Aristotelian ideas such as act and potency, substance and accident, abstraction, the agent and possible intellect. Whatever he inherited, however, he adapted to the mind of Augustine, the master who combined Aristotelian science of things in themselves and Platonic wisdom of transcendent realities to understand the Christian faith.

Response

In his encounter with the issues of knowledge and reality within a philosophico-religious framework, Bonaventure responded under the influence of Augustinian and Aristotelian ideas by developing his main themes in relation to God, the world, and man. Like Pseudo-Dionysius, he cyclically unfolded his leit motifs: from God as the exemplar expressing himself in creation to God as the final goal towards which man moves by divine illumination. The ontological basis of this cycle is the axis of divine goodness which is self-diffusing and finalizes all other beings. "Our whole metaphysics is concerned with exemplarism, emanation and the consummation of beings, namely, to be enlightened by spiritual rays and to return on high. Thus you will be a true metaphysician."²⁶

Metaphysics of the Exemplar

Metaphysics, like creation, must begin with God as the exemplar cause of all things²⁷ to acquire a true understanding of reality. The key to Bonaventure's whole philosophy is the concept of exemplarism, a doctrine originating from Plato's archetypal forms or ideas. To overcome the limitations of the Platonic theory of ideas, Bonaventure adopted Augustine's vision of the divine Word as the exemplary cause of all reality and knowledge.²⁸

I. Threefold Ascent in the Knowledge of the Divine Exemplar

When the intellect correctly views reality in the light of exemplarism, it can know God who is eminently knowable in himself. On the limits of man's knowledge of God, Bonaventure reaffirmed Hugh of St. Victor's classic formula: "God has so tempered man's knowledge of himself that he can never be wholly ignorant that God is even as he can never fully comprehend what God is."²⁰ The universe is a book inscribed with brilliant characters of the Divine on every page. The man who reads the symbols of this sacred book in the spirit of St. Francis will find God manifesting Himself, like a thought revealing itself in a spoken word.³⁰

Mystical reflection upon reality in the light of exemplarism reveals three steps of ascent to God: abstraction, self-reflection, and faith, successively deepening one's awareness of God's self-manifestation. "Through these successive levels, comparable to the rungs of a ladder, the human mind is designed to ascend gradually to the supreme principle who is God."³¹

A. *Abstraction.* Abstracting from sense data, the intellectual soul finds God in His vestiges presented by the senses in their experience of natural forms of the corporeal world, and reasons from sensible effects to their intelligible efficient and exemplary cause. "As the cause shines forth in the effect, and as the wisdom of the artist is manifested in his world, so God, the artist and the cause of the creature, is known through the creature."³²

- *Evidence.* The myriad properties of the things caused offer evidence of manifold relations to the cause. First, whatever is produced and posterior presupposes a prior or first being, since every

effect implies a cause. Second, whatever depends upon another for its origin, operations and purpose, presupposes an independent being which exists by itself, of itself and for itself. Third, possible being presupposes a necessary being which has no possibility of nonexistence, otherwise the former would never be brought into existence. Fourth, a being composed of potentiality and actuality presupposes a being of pure actuality, for no potency is reducible to act save through the agency of what is itself in act. Fifth, whatever moves must be moved by what is unmoved, as the motion of the hand is based upon the relative immobility of the elbow. Sixth, relative being, which is in one genus or the other and unable to account for its own being, presupposes an absolute being whence all others derive such being as they have.³³

B. *Self-Reflection*. Through self-reflection independent of sensation — a typical Augustinian approach — man turns inward and discloses his soul, not as an indistinct trace of God as a shadowy efficient cause of being, but as an image of God as a vivid object of its knowledge and love. "By the light externally given; we are disposed to re-enter the mirror of our mind' wherein shine forth divine things."³⁴ As individual beings are grasped and defined in view of the idea of pure being, so imperfect being is conceived in relation to perfect being. "How could the intellect know that this being is defective and incomplete, if it had no knowledge of being without any defect?"³⁵ This knowledge of the perfect in the mind implies the presence of God in the soul.

- *Evidence of Divine Truth and Goodness*. With God present in human knowledge as an image naturally infused into the intellect,³⁶ Bonaventure reaffirmed the position of Augustine that the human mind can be certain of truths in the light of divine truth. True knowledge in the soul is an image of eternal truth. As an image of God, man's intellect naturally aspires to eternal wisdom, his will desires happiness in the possession of the supreme good, and his heart thirsts for peace in immutable being.

Unable to seek that of which he is ignorant, man's soul must have some innate idea of supreme wisdom, sovereign good, and immutable being.³⁷ This idea is none other than the image of the Divine in the soul. "Knowledge of this truth (God) is innate to the rational soul, inasmuch as it involves the notion of image, in virtue of which a natural appetite, knowledge, and remembrance of Him has been implanted in it, . . ." ³⁸ So evident is God's existence within man that if concupiscence and sensible images do not veil his mind, it is unnecessary to prove that God exists.

Man's dim, implicit awareness of the Divine becomes explicit as he grows more conscious, independently of sense experience of the external world, of his dependence on God. At most, this innate knowledge implies the real possibility of affirming God's existence without a clear concept of his essence. Bonaventure agreed with Hugh of St. Victor that God has measured out man's knowledge of himself in such a way that he can never be either totally ignorant of his existence or wholly comprehend his essence.³⁹

- *Anselm's Argument*. The innate idea of God validates the Anselmian argument. "God, or the highest Truth, is Being itself, than which nothing better can be thought of; hence, he cannot not exist, nor be thought of as not existing."⁴⁰ Without a correct conception of God as that than which nothing more perfect can be conceived, one cannot discover the necessity of his existence. It is a contradiction to think of the most perfect being, which must exist of itself, as not existing.⁴¹ The necessity of the conclusion that God exists is grounded in the necessity of God himself present in the human mind. As necessary being, God's existence can be simply proved by reasoning that "if God is God, God exists."⁴²

C. *Faith and Love*. In its faith encounter with Jesus, the mediator between God and man, the noblest visible image of the invisible God, the soul is likened as a similitude to God by the grace

of the Holy Spirit in a "love (that) goes further than vision."⁴³ In the silence of knowledge, love transforms the soul into the similitude of God it formerly was in that earthly paradise of old.

II. *Trinity*

In his understanding of the Trinitarian nature of the divine exemplar, Bonaventure reasoned that, as pure self-diffusive activity, God's nature is fruitful: the Father begets the Son, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from both through a spiration of love. God "supremely communicates Himself by eternally possessing One who is beloved (Son) and One who is mutual love (Spirit), so that He is both one and triune."⁴⁴ As supreme exemplar cause, the divine Trinity is the center of reality and the key to metaphysics.

III. *Attributes*

- *Simplicity*. Bonaventure reasoned that as pure activity God enjoys unique attributes to a supreme degree.⁴⁵ Because God is first in existence, most perfect in nature, and the ultimate end of all things, he is absolute simplicity without any composition whatsoever.⁴⁶ Simplicity unifies all the divine perfections and is the ground of God's other attributes.⁴⁷ "Being absolutely simple, He remains completely undivided,"⁴⁸ and one in being while his power exercises many operations. Because God's simple essence is not limited by potency, it is infinite, and because it transcends space, it is immense so that God can be present everywhere.⁴⁹ Finite creatures, impermanent because of their element of nonbeing and finitude, would like running water cease to be unless they are supported by the divine presence.⁵⁰

God's eternity flows from his simplicity and infinity. The infinite is without beginning or end, and the Simple without succession of priority or posteriority. This interminable and totally simultaneous duration of presence or possession of life is eternity.⁵¹ God's immutability also follows from other attributes: "He does not change in place, because He is everywhere; not in time, because eternity is simultaneous; not in form, because He is pure actuality."⁵²

IV. *Perfection*

Supremely perfect being, God possesses knowledge, power, and will to the highest degree.

- *Knowledge*. As sovereign truth, God is a unity of perfect intelligibility and perfect intelligence in his simple essence. The divine Father, knowing himself perfectly, eternally expresses his being in the perfect image of the Word, a generation dimly mirrored in the human intellect's production of a concept.⁵³ Knowing himself eternally and unchangeably in the production of the divine Word with its ideas, God also eternally and immutably comprehends all the possible reflections of his essence without any dependence on things, like the spectator's eye motionlessly observing a passerby.⁵⁴

- *Ideas*. The ideas of the Word, "expressions of the divine truth as far as it concerns things"⁵⁵ which God's power can produce, are the exemplar causes of all possible effects.⁵⁶ Since God's infinite power can cause an infinite number of possibles, there must be an infinity of ideas in God.⁵⁷ Since the divine exemplar infinitely transcends every kind of genus, it "can be the expressive likeness of a great number of things."⁵⁸

But how can there be an infinite number of ideas in God without violating his simplicity? For Bonaventure, the ideas, as regards their reality, are ontologically one in God's absolutely simple

essence which transcends every distinction of existing things. How, then, can there be an unlimited plurality of these ideas? In Bonaventure's words, "ideas are many, not by reason of what they are, but by reason of that to which they are."⁵⁹ As regards what they connote, the ideas are understood as distinct — a distinction of reason — and expressed by different names. The basis of the distinction lies not in God but in the multiplicity of things connoted and in their real relation to their creator on whom they depend as copies on a model. From the human viewpoint, the divine ideas can be understood as connotatively distinct like the many rays emanating from a single source of light.

Bonaventure's doctrine of divine ideas enabled him to overcome the limitations of Aristotle's concept of the Divine. Aristotle's God, possessing no ideas of creatures, knows nothing other than himself, exercises no providence, and moves only as a final cause, namely, as object of desire and love for other beings. Bonaventure's God, however, comprehends all creatures in knowing himself with his ideas of all things, thus enabling him to be their efficient cause and exercise providence over them.

- *Power.* Of the infinity of possible ideas known by God, he has the power and the will to realize those which his wisdom selects. His immeasurable presence enables him to exercise his power directly over the totality of creatures.⁶⁰ Since a contradiction is repugnant to God's perfection and truth and reducible to nothing, it cannot be the term of any power; to be able to do nothing whatsoever is equivalent to not being able to do anything.⁶¹ Identical with his infinite essence and able to produce unlimited finite effects, God's power must be infinite.

- *Will.* God's power can be exercised only through his will. As will, God loves and possesses himself as the object of supreme beatitude.⁶² The causality of the will flows from the divine goodness which embraces both self-diffusive productivity and the end to which everything else is ordered.⁶³ Efficient causality springs from the essence of good communicating itself as an end. Conscious of itself as cause and end, divine goodness communicates beyond itself. The conjunction of all the good's productivity with all its desirability is the act of the divine will.⁶⁴ Through the medium of the will, knowledge and power participate in converting possibles into the reality of creation.

Metaphysical Expression in Creation

Bonaventure unfolded the implications of exemplarism for creatures in his metaphysics of expression. The origin and structure of the physical world can be seen as it really is only when viewed as an expression of the divine exemplar.⁶⁵

I. Origin

Assured of the world's beginning from faith, Bonaventure investigated how and why it originated.

A. *Diffusion.* As the divine goodness necessarily and eternally diffuses itself inwardly in three equal, infinite persons, so it freely and temporally expresses itself in a multiplicity of unequal, finite beings without increasing or decreasing its perfection, as a point adds nothing to a line.⁶⁶

B. *Purpose.* God's self-diffusion terminates in his own goodness as the reason for his existence. This complete self-fulfillment in his own goodness constitutes God's all-perfect glory.

Outward expansion is "for the sake of his glory, not to increase but to manifest and communicate his glory, in whose manifestation and participation is found the highest glory of the creature, namely its glorification or beatitude."⁶⁷ So intimately has the divine artist impressed his goodness upon creatures that his end becomes their goal.

C. *Universal Analogy*. Since God's outer expression imitates his perfect inner emanation, all creatures resemble him in some degree. This real likeness, which excludes both an equivocal separation between the finite and the Infinite and a univocal identity of beings and Being in the same substance, gives rise to analogical relations which may be either expressive or proportionative. Analogy of expression between a model and its copy arises from the productive act engendering the likeness.⁵⁸ Thus creatures are analogous expressions of the divine exemplar who made them.

Of less importance is analogy of proportion between two sets of beings of different classes. In the relation of presiding, for instance, God is to creatures as a teacher to his students and a pilot to his ship. Analogy of expression arises from the creature as an effect of God and conformed to his divine idea. It is the foundation of analogy of proportionality which presupposes the creature's production of an effect similar to God's causality.⁶⁹

The divine artist expresses his likeness in being in three ways: vestige, image, and similitude.⁷⁰

Some things are conformed to God as a vestige of Him, some as an image, some as a similitude. The vestige bespeaks a relation to God as to a causal principle; the image not only as to a principle, but also as to a motive object . . . namely through knowledge and love. The similitude looks to God not only through the modality of principle and object but indeed even through the modality of an infused gift.⁷¹

- *Vestige*. Vestige in the wide sense is a remote and indistinct likeness which creation as a whole has to God as its first cause. This shadowy resemblance arises from the properties which creation possesses in virtue of God's universal causality by which he is present in the totality of reality. This distant and faint reflection indicates attributes such as being, life and intelligence, univocally common to the three divine persons.

Vestige in the strict sense is a distant but distinct intelligible representation of God in all creatures. This divine trace in a created being flows from God's presence as either efficient, exemplary, or final cause. Measure, order, and weight (extension, order of parts, and inclination) express attributes appropriate to each person of the Trinity: the power of the Father, wisdom of the Son, goodness of the Holy Spirit.⁷²

- *Image*. The image, a proximate and distinct representation of God in every spiritual creature, arises from God's presence not only as a cause illumining the human mind and inspiring the will, but also as an object, the truth to be known and the good to be loved.⁷³ The image of God in rational souls and angelic spirits is "memory, intelligence and will, in which the Trinity shines forth."⁷⁴ These three faculties in the soul are attributes respectively proper to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

- *Similitude*. The similitude, the closest and clearest likeness of God in souls gifted with divine grace,⁷⁵ the most immediate and eminent mode of participation in the divine essence, the indwelling of God in every sanctified soul, arises from the presence of God who assimilates the

soul to himself by a created but divine quality which prepares it for its final glorification in eternity. Graced with divinity, the soul is united to God by the virtues of faith, hope, and charity.⁷⁶

The whole of reality, therefore, is caused, sustained, controlled, and moved according to the transcendent law of divine analogy.

D. *Creation*. Bonaventure criticized the inadequacy of ancient Greek theories of the world which explained only an aspect of its origin and generally assumed the eternity of matter.⁷⁷ He believed that everything in the totality of its being was created by God as its total cause. "The entire fabric of the universe was brought into existence in time and out of nothingness, by one first Principle, single and supreme, whose power, though immeasurable, has disposed all things 'by measure and number and weight' (*Wisdom* 11:20)."⁷⁸ This belief can be confirmed with decisive arguments from efficient and final causality.

- *Efficient Causality*. God's creative efficient causality can be shown from his transcendence, self-sufficiency, and simplicity. What God is in being, that he is in action. Transcendent in action as in essence, God's absolutely primary and perfect causality extends beyond the partial influence of secondary causes to produce the total substance of matter and form. God's transcendence arises from his self-sufficiency. As God exists absolutely independent of every creature, so, as the most perfect agent, he exercises causality independently of any external instrument or pre-existing matter. God's self-sufficiency is rooted in his absolute simplicity. An effect is proportional to its cause. Accordingly, as a composed being can produce a form in pre-existing matter, so the absolutely simple being, acting as a whole, can produce the total substance of a thing.⁷⁹

- *Exemplar Causality*. Bonaventure agreed with Plato that the divine efficient cause works in view of the exemplar ideas to form the world. However, he strongly objected to Plato's assumption that God, matter, and the ideas are three eternal separate causes. Bonaventure reaffirmed Aristotle's criticism of the difficulties raised by such a supposition. To admit that matter has subsisted from all eternity in an imperfect state is tantamount to maintaining that the same form (or idea) can exist simultaneously in a state of separation and in combination with matter.⁸⁰ If, as Plato held, God formed the world in view of ideas separate from himself, he would depend on them, and consequently would not be absolutely self-sufficient. To avoid this consequence, Bonaventure followed Augustine's position that the exemplar ideas, according to which things are caused, are really identical with God. Since God alone possesses the totality of exemplar causes after which all things are patterned, he alone can create their whole substance.

- *Final Causality*. The necessity of God's unique creative causality for the origin of the world can also be shown from finality. Efficient and final causes are correlative. If "all things in the world are in their whole being for the sake of another," namely, the supreme good which all beings seek, "then they are from another,"⁸¹ who is the total efficient cause of their existence. Every creature, therefore, bears a threefold causal relation to the first cause: "For everyone exists by virtue of the efficient cause, is patterned after the exemplary cause, and ordained toward the final cause. For this reason, every creature is one, true, and good,"⁸² thereby reflecting the Father as single source of all things, the Son as wisdom, and the Spirit as love.

- *Immediacy of Creation*. The very notion of creation as the production of something from nothing (*ex nihilo*) implies that God acted without any intermediary. Only infinite power can immediately span the unlimited distance between not-being and being to produce the total substance of a creature.⁸⁸ In creating, God has no direct need of a creature's partial instrumental causality.

- *Temporality of Creation.* Bonaventure opposed Aristotle's view of the eternity of the world as a denial of the creation of the world from nothing. If the world is created from nothing, Bonaventure reasoned, it receives existence after non-existence; this means it could not have always existed.⁸⁴ He also adapted arguments from Aristotle to show the impossibility of a world created eternally out of nothing. If the world were of eternal duration, then infinite time would have already passed by; yet new days added to old ones would increase the infinite number of days; but it is impossible for an actually infinite multitude to be augmented.

Thomas Aquinas objected that one can conceive of time being unlimited as regards the past and finite as regards its present to which an addition may be made.⁸⁵ To this, Bonaventure retorted that if the past were infinite, there would be an infinite number of solar revolutions. Since there are twelve lunar revolutions to one solar revolution, an infinite past would involve two infinite numbers, one being twelve times greater than the other. This is an impossibility.⁸⁶

- *Continuation.* Nothing continues to exist except by God's power. Were creatures left to themselves they would lapse into the nothingness from which they were created. The element of nonbeing in every creature's nature makes it naturally "vertible" or possible of falling into nothingness, unless it is held in existence by God's will upon which it is radically contingent.⁸⁷

II. *Composition of Creatures*

Bonaventure understood the structure as well as the origin of contingent beings against the horizon of universal analogy. The composition of creatures, the root of all their imperfection, differentiates them from the absolutely simple uncreated exemplar.⁸⁸ Hence being belongs primarily and per se to God, and secondarily and analogously to creatures.

In view of his theory of exemplarism, Bonaventure raised the Aristotelian distinction of substance and accident from the physical to the metaphysical order to explain the composition of creatures. Their being and actions not identical, creatures must develop through powers and functions which are accidents inhering in their substance.⁸⁹ The fact that a created essence is common to all the individuals of a class shows that it is not identical with the individual limited subject in which it is realized. In other words, every creature is composed of the essence and the individual being. These various compositions presuppose "the difference of being and existence,"⁹⁰ as Avicenna insisted. Having received their existence from God, creatures must be composed of essence and existence.

A. *Hylomorphic Structure.* Bonaventure inherited from Avicenna via his Franciscan teacher Alexander of Hales the doctrine of universal hylomorphism. Following Aristotle, Bonaventure conceived created essences as composed of potential matter and actual form which complement each other in the unity of a being.⁹¹ All change implies that which is moved by reason of form and that which is moved insofar as it is matter. Even angelic spirits who communicate and receive knowledge, must act by reason of a form and be acted upon by reason of matter. The universal hylomorphic composition of creatures radically distinguishes them from God who is pure act.

- *Matter.* Bonaventure viewed matter metaphysically and physically.⁹² The metaphysician recognizes abstract, common matter as lacking all form, an absolutely indeterminate potential principle of becoming. Without any shadow of formal act, "matter considered in itself is neither spiritual nor corporeal."⁹³ Matter in itself is indifferent to receiving either the form of a body and being corporeal, or the form of a spirit and being spiritual.⁹⁴ Form confers a determined existence on the corporeal or spiritual substance, and matter gives it permanence. The physical philosopher,

however, restricted to considering matter as already determined in the concrete by a corporeal form, cannot bring himself to attribute any matter to angelic spirits or human souls.

- *Plurality of Forms*. Bonaventure also developed Aristotle's notion of form within the Augustinian tradition of a plurality of forms hierarchically ordered in a substantial composite. Unlike Thomas Aquinas' concept of substantial form as limitative and definitive, Bonaventure viewed it as a preparation of the body's reception of further perfections. The form, having determined the matter, is in potentiality to a more perfect form within the unity of the individual essence. The diverse physical, vital, and intellectual properties of man indicate his possession of a multiplicity of forms. Matter has a natural appetite for a higher form, until the creature attains its perfect actuality.⁹⁵ The form most perfectly fulfilling its appetite is the human soul, the crowning act of a body already determined by all the prerequisite inferior forms.⁹⁶

The ordering of forms as principle of action and development is hierarchically organized in a substance. Every physical body consists of the ultimate common form of light and the elemental or mixed forms which vary with different beings.⁹⁷ The elements, endowed with their own forms and ordered under the forms of mixed bodies, constitute various substances which in turn combine to make more complex substances. The substantial ordering of all the formal parts in the totality of a being constitutes a single composite.

B. *Light*. Like Robert Grosseteste and Roger Bacon, Bonaventure viewed light as the substantial form of corporeal beings. Created before the sun, the empyrean heaven is pure, substantial light which confers on matter the aptitude to receive all the corporeal forms and extension.⁹⁸ Highly active in nature, light is a pure luminous form inseparably actuating corporeal matter as its primary act, the most eminent created expression of God's luminosity.⁹⁹ From the greater or lesser participation of corporeal beings in the fundamental form of light arises the universal hierarchy of mystical bodies ranging from the most luminous empyrean through intermediary substances to the darkest and lowest body, the earth.

Active of its very essence, light is "multiplicative and diffusive of itself,"¹⁰⁰ emitting itself successively as a luminous ray in bodies which it conserves, supports, and controls. Its presence is manifest in sunlight, the formation of minerals over which it presides, the disposition of matter for vegetative and sensitive souls, and the actualization of the sense powers.¹⁰¹ Intellectual knowledge requires the higher light of divine illumination. As a participation in God's pure inaccessible light, light in the universe mirrors the beauty of its creator. Bonaventure's metaphysics of light combined the Neo-Platonism of Augustine and the theories of Alfarabi, Avicenna and the pseudo-Aristotelian *Liber de causis*.

C. *Seminal Reasons*. As light explains the formal similarities of corporeal substances, so Augustine's theory of seminal reasons accounts for their formal differences and development into new beings. This theory also enabled Bonaventure to emphasize the work of the creator by diminishing the independence of the natural agent. Aristotle taught that new forms are brought from potency to act through the efficacy of secondary causes.¹⁰² This statement may be interpreted in two ways. It may mean that the forms, passively present in matter, are effectively and originally in a particular agent who educes the form by multiplying the form in itself, as one burning candle lights a multitude of candles. This hypothesis, though it is not suggesting creation out of nothing, implies the production of some new essence. Bonaventure rejected this hypothesis for attributing the semblance of creative power to a created agent.

The Aristotelian statement may also mean that matter contains the form to be educed not only as that in which and, to a certain extent, by which the form is produced, but also as that from which it is virtually caused, as a "soil-bed" whose matrix is pregnant with the active powers of all living things to be drawn out and developed by the agent. Concreated with and in matter, the seminal reason is nothing but the form in a state of incomplete being yet to be educed.¹⁰³ This hypothesis was more acceptable than the other to Bonaventure. It attributes less causality to the created agent which simply makes what formerly existed in one way to exist now in another way. Since the form, which existed virtually, is reduced to act, no new essence is produced.

Incapable of actualizing itself, the virtual form needs to be perfected by an external efficient cause to attain complete being.¹⁰⁴ As due conditions arise, the seed-forms implanted by God in the bed of matter become completely actualized under the efficacious influence of secondary agents. The superior forms develop in matter as soon as the inferior have brought it to the degree of organization that permits them to evolve.¹⁰⁵ All living beings return to the slumbering potentiality of nature's store and await the animating forms to actualize them anew. Never complete nor definitely annihilated, the seminal principle is always the imperfect essence of a form which may perfect itself at any moment or the receiver of a complete form in disintegration.¹⁰⁶

D. *Individuation.* Bonaventure agreed with Aristotle that only individuals actually exist. Nothing can exist unless it is substantially "undivided in itself and distinct from another."¹⁰⁷ Matter, as pure indetermination and univocally common to all creatures, cannot be the principal cause of individuation. Form, abstracted from matter, is universal and consequently can be shared by others. Comprising the whole being, the individual must be constituted from the intrinsic principles composing its total substantial reality. "Individuation arises from the actual union of matter and form, from which conjunction one principle appropriates the other."¹⁰⁸ While matter makes something singular, the form constitutes it a definite kind of being. As a distinct impression is made by the conjunction of wax and a seal, so individual beings are constituted and multiplied by the actual union of matter and form.

- *Person.* The union of matter and an intellectual form constitute a person, the noblest individual among all created beings. Because of its unique dignity, a person cannot be in potency to a higher substantial form; it is immediately ordered to God alone as its end. The ultimate value of a "personality arises from the existence of a noble and supereminent nature in the substance,"¹⁰⁹ namely, in the intellectual form, and resides incommunicably and differently in each subject. Angelic persons are formed from the actual union of spiritual matter and a preeminent intellectual form.¹¹⁰ Less noble are human persons who are composed of corporeal matter and a rational soul.

III. *Man*

The glory of God finds its highest fulfillment in the corporeal universe with man who "brings in himself from his origin the light of the divine countenance."¹¹¹ Man's sovereignty over nature lies in his intellectual capacity to possess the essences of all beings and in his volitional power to master all things for his good pleasure. All sensible things exist for man through whom they are ordered to God, and man himself exists for God alone.¹¹²

A. *Origin.* Destined by God to preside over corporeal creation, man was created when the universe was sufficiently prepared to receive him as its crown. The bodies of all men were

contained seminally in the body of Adam, the first man, and transmitted by means of the human seed. So noble is the human soul, "signed with the image of God,"¹¹³ that it is directly created out of nothing by God and immediately infused into an organized body to constitute man a living, sensible, intellectual being.¹¹⁴

B. *Soul and Body*. The substantial union of an intellective soul and a corporeal body constitutes a human person, a distinct, incommunicable, individual rational substance of eminent dignity. This union is natural inasmuch as "the rational soul is the act of the human body."¹¹⁵ Composed of spiritual matter and form, the soul is individuated in itself and formally perfects matter which limits and multiplies. "Since human bodies are distinct, the rational souls which perfect those bodies will also be distinct."¹¹⁶

Bonaventure strongly opposed Averroes' interpretation of Aristotle that the active and passive intellects are unitary cosmic substances which are one in all men. For Bonaventure, such a position is contrary to the uniqueness of each person's intellectual form. If the intellectual soul were numerically one in all men, they would differ merely as animals. The fact that men differ from each other as men indicates that each person possesses an intellectual form by which each is a human being. If all men had the same intellect, they would think the same thoughts. However, it is a matter of experience that persons have different thoughts, showing that the soul is the individual form of the body in each man.

- *Plurality of Forms*. The soul, although individuated by its own principles and a spiritual substance in its own right, has a natural inclination to inform the body. Likewise, the body with its composition of matter and form also has a natural appetite for being actualized by the soul. In their union and mutual fulfillment, all forms, for example, the vegetative and sensitive, are essentially and hierarchically ordered under the ultimate completing form, the rational soul, to constitute a substantial unity of the human person.¹¹⁷

- *Presence*. The individual rational soul completes and subsumes lesser forms by its animating presence in the whole body. Because the soul "is the form of the whole body, it is present," not in a determinate part of the body, the heart for instance, but "in the whole body; because it is simple, it is not present partly here and partly there."¹¹⁸ Since the soul as the moving principle of the body is not extended in space, it can be present in its entirety in each of the body's parts to integrate them into the organized body, without communicating the perfection of the whole to any part.

C. *Soul*. The limitation and changeableness of the soul imply its possession of passivity and matter, the principle of receptivity for perfections of being, life, and intelligence.¹¹⁹ Spiritual matter enables the soul to undergo successive determinations while enjoying a simplicity transcending quantitative parts.¹²⁰ Individuated by its own forms and matter, the soul subsists in its own right.¹²¹ Form guarantees the soul's essential being, and matter its fixed existence. If this is so, why is it united with the body? Both body and soul are constituted in such a way by their proper matter and form that they are naturally inclined to find perfection in union with each other. The soul, for example, exercises its powers fully only in informing the body.

The human soul can be briefly defined as "a form endowed with being, life, intelligence and liberty."¹²² Bonaventure, therefore, modified the Aristotelian theory of hylomorphism with the doctrine of spiritual matter which was suggested by Augustine, taught by Avicenna, and continued by Alexander of Hales.

- *Immortality*. This modified version of Aristotelian hylomorphism enabled Bonaventure to uphold the unity and independence of the soul in itself, thereby facilitating the proof of its

immortality. A complete individual substance in itself, independently of the body which it perfects, the rational soul can subsist separately, surviving the destruction of the body at death. The human soul's "aptitude not to die"¹²³ can be shown from its threefold resemblance to its creator in the order of final, exemplar, and efficient causality.

According to the principal argument from finality, the soul's desire for perfect happiness implies a definitive possession of the most perfect good without fear of losing it. Such permanence requires the immortality of the soul as the necessary means rigorously imposed on it by the end.¹²⁴

To enjoy perfect happiness, the soul must be capable of possessing God. Its form must have a perpetual duration which images the eternity of the divine exemplar. The eminent form of the rational soul so actualizes its spiritual matter that the entire soul is ennobled with an incorruptible reflection of God's eternity. With the appetite of spiritual matter so completely satisfied in union with this form, an incorruptible image of God is constituted.¹²⁵

Since the soul as an intellectual agent resembles God by its knowing without the help of the body, especially by its self-reflection and loving itself, not aging and decaying like the body but remaining young and growing in wisdom, it must be independent in being, and consequently incorruptible.¹²⁶

Finally, divine justice implies a survival of the soul as a precondition to restoring the balance of the moral order by punishing the wicked and rewarding the just, especially those who sacrifice their life rather than seriously transgress the laws of God.¹²⁷

D. *Powers*. Bonaventure accommodated Aristotle's division of the faculties to the Augustinian tradition of the soul as the image of God. Alcher of Clairvaux viewed the different vegetative, sensitive, and rational activities of intellect and will as simply functions of the soul, as though they were wholly identical with the substance of the soul, whereas Hugh of St. Victor considered these powers simply as accidents of the substantial soul.¹²⁸ With Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure regarded the faculties as distinct powers of the soul which uses them as instruments to attain their various objects.¹²⁹ Consubstantial with the soul from which they immediately flow, the three powers of remembering, knowing, and willing expressly resemble the three divine persons in the unity of the divine substance.¹³⁰

E. *Knowledge*. Bonaventure integrated Aristotelian and Augustinian ideas to explain the soul's acquisition of knowledge through sensory and intellectual activities. He upheld the unity of human knowledge by maintaining that the distinct operations, without becoming identified, pass into one another by moving from the inferior to the superior until their reunion in the soul, their common source.¹³¹

- *Senses*. Following Aristotle closely, Bonaventure viewed human knowledge as beginning with sensation, the operation of a corporeal organ receiving, independently of the matter of objects, the sensible species or form existing in matter.¹³² As the animator of the body, the soul senses through the five organs of sight, touch, taste, hearing, and smell. Sight and touch directly attain their objects,¹³³ while the others indirectly reach theirs by species which emanate from the thing through the medium. Whereas the first kind of sensations grasps absolute properties of bodies, resistance and color, the second perceives properties which are producible, but not necessarily possessed, by objects.¹³⁴ The distance between a sensible object and an organ is spanned by each body's self-diffusing form of light radiating a resemblance of itself through the surrounding medium and determining the sensory organ.¹³⁵

- *Act of Sensation.* With the object activating the organ, the act of sensation takes place as the likeness contacts the soul.¹³⁶ Bonaventure departed from Augustine's view of the soul forming the content of sensation from its own substance, and agreed with Aristotle that the soul is determined in its perception of the sensible species from the exterior physical world.¹³⁷ But Bonaventure was quick to add in true Augustinian fashion that the moment the soul's sensitive faculty is stimulated, the soul spontaneously discerns and judges the content of the sensible object. Bonaventure, evidently, attempted to reconcile the Aristotelian conception of sensation as a passive modification of the human composite and the Neoplatonic notion of sensation as an action of the soul.

- *Internal Senses.* The activities of the lower external senses are united to those of the higher internal senses in their common source, the soul. The soul's powers ramify in the different external senses through the common sense which penetrates them, perceiving the bodily organ, and comparing, ordering the unifying the various sensations.¹³⁸ The sensible species gathered up by common sense are preserved in the imagination and revived by memory.¹³⁹ Memory in its recall of the likeness of things shows itself as the soul always present to itself.

- *Intellect.* Rationality passes through common sense to enrich and complete the senses. "The act of reason redounds upon the senses, and the act of the senses is ordered and subserves the act of reason; and hence one is stimulated by the other."¹⁴⁰ The cycle of psychological activities with the influence of the superior penetrating the inferior and the experiences of the inferior returning to the superior, begins and ends in the soul.

The soul's intellectual power can discover the nature of material things by transposing the sensible content of images into the intelligible order. The intellect illumines the sensible content by abstracting the intelligible likeness informing it. The single intellect performs both passive and active functions. As the possible intellect abstracts the intelligible content from sensible matter and judges it only insofar as it is influenced by the active intellect, so the active intellect illumines the intelligible likeness insofar as the possible intellect is informed by the abstracted likeness.¹⁴¹ These two interdependent functions belong to the single activo-passive intellect.

- *Abstractive Knowledge.* Bonaventure reaffirmed Aristotle's teaching that the intellect can abstractively acquire scientific knowledge of sensible things. Created a clean slate (*tabula rasa*), as Aristotle described it, with nothing written on it, the intellectual soul needs to turn its "lower face," as Augustine would say, towards the material world to abstract the intelligible content of sensibles. Recourse to sense experience enables the soul to know corporeal beings foreign to its own spiritual nature.¹⁴²

- *First Principles.* In abstracting the intelligible content of sensible things, the intellect spontaneously apprehends first principles in their universality. They are rightly described as virtually preformed in thought as "the habit of first principles," or "the created light of principles."¹⁴³ Directly responding to sense experience, the intellect can readily judge with certainty that the whole is greater than the part, or that man should respect and obey his parents.¹⁴⁴ The intellect is innate, the principles acquired.

- *Reflection.* In addition to Aristotelian abstraction via sensation to know the material world, Bonaventure recognized along with Augustine the possibility of grasping incorporeal objects in the purely intelligible domain without sense images needed only when corporeality is interposed between the object and the soul. Without the intervention of sense perception, the "higher face" of the soul, "superior reason," can turn directly inward upon itself and upward towards noble realities such as the virtues of the soul and God. Always present to itself in memory as habitual knowledge, the soul immediately experiences itself in self-reflection.¹⁴⁵ The soul also directly encounters God

who is even more present to it. With knower and known as one and the same in self-reflection, the soul enjoys habitual self-consciousness.¹⁴⁶

- *Innate Idea of God.* Reflecting upon itself as an image of the divine exemplar, the soul becomes aware of God's existence. The knowledge of this truth (God's existence) is innate in the rational mind, inasmuch as the mind is an image of God, by reason of which it has a natural appetite and knowledge and memory of Him in whose image it has been made and towards whom it naturally tends, that it may find its beatitude in Him.¹⁴⁷ As this dim, implicit idea of God becomes clear and explicit through self-reflection, the soul discloses God as the exemplar of truth and tends towards him as the end of desire.

- *Innate Knowledge of Virtues.* Contemplation of the experience of virtue discloses its meaning resident in the soul. In the presence of its affection of love and its natural light for recognizing truth and rectitude, the soul reflexively acquires an explicit consciousness of love rightly directed towards God.¹⁴⁸ The innate knowledge of the virtues is impressed on the soul by God in the form of a natural light and direction of the will towards good.

F. *Truth.* Bonaventure viewed truth in terms of being or essence. The truth of being is the essence insofar as it is that which it is. The essence grasped and fully conceived by thought is the truth of knowledge. Truth includes both the essence of the thing and the representation of the essence in thought. This twofold character is expressed in the classic definition of truth: "The adequation of the thing and the intellect."¹⁴⁹

- *Illumination.* Like Plato and Augustine, Bonaventure found two conditions necessary for truth and certitude: immutability of the object and infallibility of the knowing subject. These two prerequisites cannot be adequately accounted for by changing sensible objects or by a fallible, mutable mind.¹⁵⁰ Man's intellectual soul is infallibly converted to immutable intelligible objects such as God, the soul itself, and necessary principles, only insofar as it is influenced by God's infallible, unchangeable light, or eternal ideas.

To reach what is infallible in God's light and what is unchangeable in his truth, superior reason must experience an immediate contact with God's eternal principles.¹⁵¹ Whatever the variable content obtained by abstraction or reflection, divine illumination assures the mind of certitude in infallibly grasping the invariable formality of truth without implying a direct vision of God's ideas.¹⁵² The Augustinian doctrine of illumination, therefore, completes the Aristotelian theory of abstraction.

- *Regulation.* Eternal principles directly regulate human knowledge of truth by communicating stability and necessity to it. In obedience to these absolute rules governing its thought, the intellect can infallibly judge with certitude concerning the content derived by abstraction and reflection. In the intellect, the eternal ideas organize the multiplicity of sensible experiences by ordering it towards simple universal first principles of being and complex first principles of knowledge and ethics.¹⁵³

- *Idea of Being.* The resolution of judgments to the necessary first principles assures the mind of God's immediate collaboration and guarantees the truth-value of propositions. Thought conceives every object in terms of the idea of being which cannot be viewed by means of any other concept inasmuch as it is the first principle expressed by the intellect.¹⁵⁴ Infallibly known and necessary, the notion of being, immediately presenting itself to the intellect as first and absolute, can represent none other than God, total being itself. The reduction of any act of understanding to the idea of being shows that nothing can be apprehended without knowing God, the measure of all true knowledge.¹⁵⁵

- *Contuition*. The divine light, without which nothing can be understood, is not directly known, remaining inaccessible to intuition.¹⁵⁶ The divine ideas are only indirectly affirmed by thought in view of the results flowing from them, as the existence of an unseen source is known in the flowing waters that are seen. The mind "contuits," or mediately apprehends, God's presence in his effects — the soul, things, and transcendent principles — immediately experienced.¹⁵⁷ Truth is seen, not through, but in the eternal ideas.

Metaphysical Consummation of Creation

In his metaphysics of consummation, Bonaventure showed the return of creatures via man to the divine exemplar as the goal of his love and contemplation. He analyzed morality as a prolegomenon to his vision of man's journey to God.

I. Morality

Moral self-reflection intuitively discloses that man desires knowledge in his investigation of the sources of things, happiness in his seeking to procure good or to avoid evil, and peace in the repose following from the attainment of truth and goodness.¹⁵⁸ Out of love, the will freely pursues peace.

A. *Will*. The "will is nothing other than a rational affection or appetite"¹⁵⁹ of the soul for an object. As a natural power, the will is immutably inclined to happiness, while as a deliberative faculty, it can adhere to good or to evil as though it were good. At one and the same time natural and deliberative, it remains unchangeably directed towards happiness in its indeterminate relation to different objects.¹⁶⁰

- *Liberty*. The human will exercises liberty as regards act and object. Master of its own willing and in absolute possession of itself, the will is capable of acting or not acting as it so desires. It can choose its objects without being externally determined to seek this or that good proposed to it.¹⁶¹ In this dominion of a rational will lies man's exalted dignity.

Self-dominion is rooted in the depths of a rational being. Man wills goods such as virtue which are values desirable in themselves and intelligible only to the mind. Freedom with respect to values such as justice and charity presupposes reason.¹⁶² The will's mastery over its proper act requires rationality. Appetition arises from the rational command of the will which, at its pleasure, can move and restrain its own operations as well as the bodily members, detest what it formerly loved and love what it formerly disliked. Whereas servitude is the lot of irrational animals, liberty is the privilege of rational animals.

- *Choice*. "Choice is the same as judgment, at whose will the other powers are moved and obey."¹⁶³ Free choice involves the collaboration of the intellect's self-reflection with the will's decision to set it in motion. "Choice implies the act of reason regulated according to the command of the will."¹⁶⁴ Though a habit of two powers, free choice enjoys a permanent unity emanating from the essence of the soul.

- *Primacy of Will*. In the spirit of Augustine, Bonaventure held for the priority of the will over the intellect. The process of free choice begins in reason and is consummated in the will. While disposing the will to act rationally, knowledge comes to perfection with the command of the will in the act of choosing.¹⁶⁵ The rational dictation of the good to be followed or the evil to be avoided

finds fulfillment in the will's approving or rejecting, eliciting or refraining.¹⁶⁶ The godlike gift of free choice, inchoate in reason, is completed in the will, its master.

Adequately conceived, "free choice bespeaks a faculty free from coercion and ordered to the conservation of rectitude."¹⁶⁷ In this orientation of liberty towards goodness, Bonaventure viewed free will as analogically the same in man and God. So essentially inviolable and absolute is freedom of action in relation to good that it cannot be less plenary in man than in God.¹⁶⁸ Compared to the infinity of divine freedom, however, human liberty is limited by physical and moral conditions that come into play in the total act of man's free will. In God, free choice is his essence which is rectitude and justice itself, whereas man's free choice as a habit to observe rectitude is defectible and able to commit moral evil.¹⁶⁹

- *Evil*. The capacity to sin, however, is not essential to liberty.¹⁷⁰ This capacity for deficiency is neither good because it is not something nor evil because it does not denote a privation of some good, but rather an impotency arising from the imperfection of the human condition.¹⁷¹ The malice of an act is from free choice not as an efficient but as a deficient cause.

- *Necessity*. While external acts commanded by free choice can be coerced, internal elicited acts of willing, choosing, and consenting, cannot be compelled, but only be induced or impeded.¹⁷² The necessity of immutability is not repugnant to liberty. "In the act of willing itself," a being "moves itself and has dominion over itself, so it is said to be freed, although it is immutably ordered to the object,"¹⁷³ thereby excluding the possibility of preferring its opposite.

Perfect Liberty. The capacity for choosing opposites arises, not from liberty, but from the imperfection of man's earthly condition as a voyager distant from his ultimate end. In the perfect condition of the blessed in heaven, liberty is purified of the impotency of sinning. The attraction of the supreme good does not in the least remove man's self-dominion over his affection: "Clarity of knowledge is not in our power, but the ardor of affection is in our power."¹⁷⁴ In the state of glory, man freely moves himself to love God in an immutable order of love, and enjoys perfect liberty.

B. *Charity*. Charity is the original, universal, moral perfection of free will. Man freely wills another as other insofar as it is good and worthy of love. The universal object of the will is good as such, and the adequate object for all its tending to good is God, the supreme good. In terms of its object, then, "charity is the love by which God is loved on account of Himself and one's neighbor on account of God."¹⁷⁵

The meaning of charity can also be shown from an analysis of the twofold affection of the will for one's own good in concupiscent love and for the good of another in the love of friendship.¹⁷⁶ Charity, love of the supreme good, is the highest kind of friendship. The depth of charity depends on the intensity of affection: "The order of charity looks less to the magnitude of the desirable good than to the preponderance of the lover's affection."¹⁷⁷ Charity is "love inestimably esteeming what is loved."¹⁷⁸

In the intensity of charity, man loves God with his whole heart. Affection can be total either as a love of God fully dominating one's heart in its every movement towards God to the exclusion of every extraneous inclination, or as a love preferring God above everything else. Complete charity in the first sense belongs to the blessed in heaven, and in the latter case it can be experienced on earth through the infusion of God's grace.¹⁷⁹ Charity can be aptly described as "a weight inclining to the supreme good and perfect beatitude."¹⁸⁰

The supreme good is the unifying object of charity, for in loving God man wills every good for himself and his neighbor through grace and glory.¹⁸¹ Since love of self and others is ordered

to love of the supreme good as one's principal end, charity is man's basic spiritual perfection, grounding his whole moral life.

Charity can be resolved into a twofold movement of affection. In the first inclination, love for God is prior. "Since God is the more principal object, the inclination with respect to God Himself is the cause of the inclination towards one's neighbor."¹⁸² In the second movement, love of neighbor is antecedent. Loving others in the active life is a sure way towards loving God in the contemplative order, as an image to its exemplar. Love of self is involved in both inclinations. "Through charity I love the supreme good in God and the supreme good for myself,"¹⁸³ desiring through participation much more for oneself than oneself.

Charity is the unifying cause of the other virtues. Its object the supreme good, charity is the "head and principle" of the other virtues which it commands. As the mover of other virtues to make their works meritorious, charity is said to be their form. Because meritorious works are destined for the enjoyment of God through charity, it is ". . . the end of the other virtues and the precepts."¹⁸⁴ As the root of all good affections, charity is the synthesizing source of man's spiritual life.

Charity informs the other virtues so they can dispose the soul to tend to its ultimate end. In ordering the other virtues to the supreme end, it makes them meritorious by presenting man with the great challenge of loving and adhering to God above all beings.¹⁸⁵ Without charity, the affections and moral habits of the soul are disordered, and its spiritual life is formless and chaotic.

Charity deforms the soul. Since love transforms the lover into the person loved, charity conforms the soul to the divine exemplar, God, the source and goal of its affection.¹⁸⁶

C. Moral Illumination. Man cannot do good without a moral illumination from God. Drawn hither and thither by the impressions of the senses and the disorderly desires of the flesh, the will alone is incapable of acquiring moral virtues, and the practical intellect is unstable in judging moral principles. Mutable and contingent powers cannot explain the necessary and universal element in the law dictated by moral conscience and set in action by the virtues.¹⁸⁷ To overcome his moral impotency, man needs a divine illumination in the moral order. As the exemplar of virtue, God can communicate the cardinal virtues to man's powers of knowing, loving and acting by causing the ultimate determinations necessary for his doing good and ordering his moral operations towards God.¹⁸⁸

D. Cardinal Moral Virtues. Plato's four cardinal moral virtues of prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice, fully equip man with the determinations necessary for the right regulation and strengthening of his relation to himself and his neighbor.¹⁸⁹ With its natural aptitude for good gradually perfected by repetition of good actions, the soul acquires moral virtue. Incomplete and incapable in themselves of acquiring merit, the natural moral virtues can be fully developed only if they are transfigured by God's gifts of faith, hope, and charity.¹⁹⁰ The grace of divine life renders them meritorious, and charity orders them to God.

E. Moral Goodness. The intention, object, and subject determine the moral goodness of a virtuous action. A human act is directed by the will which, on the occasion of rational knowledge, freely intends an object to find fulfillment in it.¹⁹¹ The right ordering of human acts, then, depends upon the intentional agreement of intellectual assent and volitional consent. The will is good not only because the goodness of the end is communicated to it but also because the affection for the end makes it good.¹⁹² The right intention of a good end makes a work good.

Through its habits of conscience and syneresis, the soul intends the end. Conscience, a habit of the practical intellect, judges upon the primary moral principles to which conduct should be conformed. This subjective norm dictates the direction of moral actions and prescribes the object to which the will ought to be inclined, for example, to love and adore God.¹⁹³ When conscience commands what is good, it should always be followed, whereas a bad conscience prescribing some act against the law of God ought always to be reformed.

Syneresis, an inborn natural "weight" of the will, spontaneously inclines it towards good for its own sake. A spark of conscience, syneresis moves the soul to desire good for itself, and orients it towards God by attracting its faculties away from evil and directing it to love of God. This irrepressible force strives to lift the soul to a good life, or if this is not possible at the moment, to stir up remorse of conscience.¹⁹⁴

F. *Fonts of Morality*. The difference between a good and evil action arises from the moral fonts of object and circumstance. The act of loving God, for example, possesses a due object, whereas hating God has undue matter. The generic morality of the object is specified by the concrete circumstances, among which the principal condition is the end. In charity, the conversion of man to God through an appreciative love of friendship, the proper end and due object are one, whereas an "aversion from God and a conversion to creature"¹⁹⁵ constitute a bad action.

G. *Eternal and Natural Law*. The eternal law of God is the archetype of rectitude in the wisdom and will of God, according to which all things are ordered and free action can be good.¹⁹⁶ Virtue is conformity to the eternal rule of rectitude. Because "the natural law is an impression made on the soul by the eternal law,"¹⁹⁷ it is an image deriving all its obligatory force from the divine exemplar. An expression of man's rational nature, natural law can be defined as "that which right reason dictates"¹⁹⁸ to the will. In practical life, conscience dictates the natural law and syneresis inclines man to its precepts. Charity perfects the natural law so as to move man to render not only good for good but good for evil inflicted by enemies.¹⁹⁹

II. *Mystical Journey into God*

Bonaventure's ethical analysis laid the groundwork for his exposition of the soul's mystical journey into God. Man is a viator whose desire for knowledge, happiness, and peace can be fulfilled by journeying into God who is wisdom, goodness, and beatitude. The itinerary of the soul passes from the world outside to oneself, and beyond self to God. In this threefold elevation, the soul undergoes purgation, illumination, and unification through divine grace: "purgation leads to peace, illumination to truth, and perfective union to love."²⁰⁰ Engaging in meditation, prayer, and contemplation, the soul advances in fear, hope, and charity towards God.

A. *Purgation*. The journey begins in the sensible order with the transition of the soul from the contemplative love of God through traces in the universe to the contemplative love of God in the divine vestiges of the act of perception. Conscious of its misery, sin, and fear, the soul deplors sin and asks for mercy in prayer, pitting "alacrity against negligence, austerity against concupiscence, and benignity against malice,"²⁰¹ to rise from the flesh towards God in a process of purgation. In the first step of ascent to God, the purged soul turns its sensory powers to the outer sensible mirror of the universe through which the "eye of the flesh" discovers traces of God. From the observation of weight, number, and measure, as well as of substance, power, and activity, the

soul "can rise, as from a vestige, to the knowledge of the immense power, wisdom, and goodness of the Creator."202

As the soul turns its imaginative power of representing things to sense data, it recognizes in its psychological experiences traces of God. In producing a likeness of themselves, all knowable things "manifestly proclaim that in them, as in mirrors, can be seen the eternal generation of the Word, the Image, and the Son, eternally emanating from God the Father."203

B. Illumination. The soul departs from the outer material world for the inner spiritual realm as it goes beyond sensoriness to spirit which searches for God through his image in man's natural psychological powers and in his similitude in the soul reformed by the divine gift of grace. The splendor of truth dawns upon the soul insofar as it is illumined by meditation on its sins, prayer for God's mercy, and contemplation of Christ crucified.

Passing from the exterior to the interior realm, the illumined soul withdraws into itself to contemplate and love God as he is naturally imaged in itself. The spiritual eye of reason sees God through "the soul as memory, intelligence, and will, which are consubstantial, co-equal and contemporary, and interpenetrating."204 These three powers of the soul disclose "the Blessed Trinity, the Father, the Word, and Love, three Persons co-eternal, co-equal and consubstantial,"205 in one divine nature.

As the soul recalls, contemplates, and loves God through its image, it retreats more deeply into itself by going beyond itself, as Jacob ascending the ladder to God. In faith, the soul finds God dwelling within its own being sanctified by grace with a divine likeness. In the mystery of the sanctified soul, the similitude of God Himself is beheld with contemplative love. Reformed by the divine life of faith, hope, and charity, the soul "believes and hopes in Jesus Christ and loves Him, Who is the incarnate, uncreated, and inspired Word, Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life."206

C. Unification. As the soul journeys beyond itself, it is united with the Divine. In this final stage, the mind contemplates God through and in the ideas of being and goodness. The soul enters the Holy of Holies as it intensifies its love. Meditation enkindles the soul to go beyond the senses, imagination, and understanding, to the divine bridegroom; prayer unites the soul with God; and contemplation perfects the soul in the love of God.207

Departing from images, the soul transcends itself to enter the Ark of the idea of being. Through the mirror of the idea of being in its purity and absolute actuality, the essential divine attributes, especially unity, are grasped. "Behold, if you can, Being in its purity and you will find that . . . it appears to you as having no diversity and through this, is supremely one."208

Being shows itself to be good, a self-communicating love. In the mirror of the idea of good, the soul pursues God in his personal attributes. As the mind at the apex of its powers contemplates the self-diffusiveness of being, it realizes that "through the supreme communicability of the Good, there must be the Trinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."209

The soul ardently desires to exceed its apprehension of God and reach God Himself. But the distance between one's finite self and the infinite can be bridged only by the crucified Christ, the mediator between the human and the Divine, to whom the soul can be united by plunging into the darkness of "learned ignorance."210 While understanding sleeps, love is awake and active, for "love extends further than vision"211 to touch God in the deepest wisdom, the highest happiness, and the finest peace possible during this earthly pilgrimage to heaven.

Conclusion

The significance of Bonaventure's mystical philosophy can be appreciated within three perspectives: retrospect, conspectus, and prospect.

Retrospect

I. Augustine Redivivus

Viewed against the background of Greek and Christian thought, Bonaventure's philosophy appears as an attempt to assimilate Aristotelian ideas into an Augustinian framework. Bonaventure capturing the authentic spirit of Augustine more fervently, continued and developed his teaching personalized in Christ. This enabled Bonaventure to integrate philosophy and theology.

- *Theocentric View.* In view of the divine exemplar, Bonaventure systematically developed Augustine's theocentric view and organized all his conceptions on the relation between God and creatures. God is the exemplar cause of truth, the efficient cause of unity and plurality, and the final cause of all created actions. Considering Bonaventure's doctrine of universal analogy ontologically rooted in the divine exemplar, it is not surprising that he was more concerned with things as symbols leading the soul to God than as objects in themselves to be disinterestedly observed by the natural philosopher. Like a St. Francis of Assisi gone philosopher, Bonaventure found no greater joy than that of contemplating the visage of God in things.

- *Knowledge of God.* Within Bonaventure's conceptual framework, the whole of nature symbolically proclaims God's existence as a truth, if one humbly looks and reflects. It is not so much Bonaventure's logical reasoning as his fervent Franciscan feeling for God's presence in nature that constitutes his proofs as so many acts of drawing attention to God's self-manifestation in creation. The force of these proofs is more compelling in the Augustinian context of the soul as an image of God than in the Aristotelian realm of physical bodies as a vague vestige of the Divine.

- *Anselmian Argument.* Anselm and Augustine, having constructed an ontology based on the objective content of concepts, proved the existence of God as the sole conceivable cause of the idea of God in man. Bonaventure viewed the necessity of God's being in itself as more exactly, and adapted it more successfully to the Age of the Schoolman, than any other disciple of the thirteenth century. Like Augustine, Bonaventure was ultimately concerned about unconditionally guaranteeing God's rights in the order of being, knowledge, and willing. Accordingly, he tends to attribute more to God at the expense of nature or free will, though without intending to contradict the latter. Anxious about dangerous innovations to Christian thought, he reaffirmed the common Augustinian tradition. Bonaventure is truly Augustine redivivus.

Conspectus

Critical reflection upon Bonaventure's attempt to integrate Augustine and Aristotle brings to light the value and limitation of his conceptual framework. He strove to integrate all the insights he had acquired in faith, philosophy, theology, and Franciscan spirituality, into a mystico-metaphysical synthesis.

I. *Mystical Wisdom*

The mystical purpose of Bonaventure was to bring the soul to God, showing in every way possible how it comes to unity with its divine spouse. Within a Christian perspective, he viewed the concrete man of history as elevated to a supernatural vocation and destined for eternal beatitude with God. To show the presence of the Divine in nature and man, he methodically subordinated nature to grace, reason to faith, love to charity, and philosophy to Christian theology in one mystical wisdom whose center is Jesus Christ, the mediating unity between God and man.

Bonaventure's wisdom made him the master of mysticism in the thirteenth century, and probably in the whole middle ages. St. Bernard, perhaps the greatest medieval mystic before Bonaventure, was loathe to recognize the value of philosophy in man's approach to God. Bonaventure, on the contrary, oriented philosophy to mysticism in his vision of a universe whose nature he translated into symbols leading the soul to God. From the Augustinian standpoint, "I believe that I may understand," Bonaventure synthesized the mystic principle of Bernard and the Victorines, "I love that I may understand," with the rational principle of Alexander of Hales, "I understand that I may believe."

No medieval mystic expressed the noble aspirations of Christian life so comprehensively and systematically, so rationally and religiously, as did Bonaventure.

II. *Metaphysical Synthesis*

Bonaventure's mystical edifice is grounded in the metaphysical foundation of exemplarism, expression and finality.

A. *Exemplarism*. Bonaventure's philosophy, in one word, is exemplarism. Whereas other medieval masters preferred to study the rapport between things and God as the efficient and final cause of creation, Bonaventure meditated on God as the exemplary cause of beings. The glory of Bonaventure lies in his developing a religious metaphysics which systematically interrelated nature and supernature, reason and faith, in the light of his doctrine of exemplarism.

- *Christocentric Vision*. The personal center of Bonaventure's synthesis is the divine Son or Word who, as the mean between the Father as principle and the Spirit as end, is the measure of God himself, and consequently the measure of things and of knowledge. The eternal Word is the exemplar truth of all intelligible beings and the immutable rule of all judgments. Since the Word became flesh in Jesus Christ, the center of the universe, he is the means by which the soul is united to God.

- *The doctrine of Exemplarism*. God is the sole conceivable sufficient reason of the necessity of man's idea of God's existence. The objection to Anselm's reasoning from the ideal to the real order seems irrelevant in Bonaventure's framework of the idea of God as simply the mode whereby he is present in thought. There is no real gap to be bridged between the idea of God whose existence is necessary and this same God necessarily existing. The illumination of the divine being in the interior of the soul is the metaphysical foundation of the knowledge one has of it.

B. *Expression*. Bonaventure developed his prime insight of exemplarism not in a static but in a dynamic sense as a universal expression. Self-communicating good at the core of the Divine gives reason to God's Trinitarian nature and to his universal representation in the world. Aristotelian necessitarianism is avoided by Bonaventure's affirmation of God's freedom to express his goodness in creation from nothingness. The Aristotelian world of nature in itself is simply a created analogy of the Augustinian realm of the divine exemplar.

- *Creature*. Bonaventure never missed an opportunity to describe the radical insufficiency of creatures which drives them to find the reason for their existence in God. Their plurality and composition analogically point to the unity and simplicity of the divine exemplar who caused them. The soul's composition of spiritual form and spiritual matter in the human person guarantees its independence of the body and its immortality, and also demands as the sufficient reason of its being the simplicity of God. Bonaventure opposed the Aristotelian tendency to make secondary causes a sufficient explanation of the emergence of new living things by positing the Augustinian theory of seminal reasons as the best guarantee of God's universal creative power. Bonaventure avoided "occasionalism" by attributing some efficacy to secondary causes in developing seminal reasons. The Seraphic Doctor preferred to enhance the power and glory of God than to risk attributing too much to creatures.

- *Illumination*. In his Augustinian theory of illumination, Bonaventure showed man's radical dependence upon God, the exemplar cause of intelligibility, to grasp truth. In virtue of divine illumination, the human soul intellectually images God in efficiently and exemplarily unifying the multiplicity of beings in knowledge. There is no question of an innate intelligible content in the Bonaventurian mind which is a blank tablet (*tabula rasa*) before abstraction and reflection. Bonaventure is not an "ontologist," since his affirmation of the doctrine of illumination from the observation of its effects implies the absence of a vision of God.

However, there is an unresolved difficulty in the doctrine of illumination. If the human mind of itself is naturally incapable of attaining truth and the will of itself naturally unable to realize good, then, it would seem that no divine illumination could ever compensate for this innate impotency, without impairing the soul's essential nature. Such a conception of the soul's radical insufficiency seems to contain the seeds of intellectual and moral skepticism.

In the later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, followers of Bonaventure, such as John Peckham and Matthew of Aquasparta, will attempt to resolve this difficulty to preserve the theory of illumination as indispensable for defining the soul's dependence on God. Matthew of Aquasparta reasoned that the human intellect is so naturally deficient that it cannot succeed in seeking truth unless it is helped by divine light. Convinced of the inadequacy of the human intellect and of philosophy, he turned to Christian theology for truth.²¹²

- *Finality*. Through the rational will of man, Bonaventure showed how the whole of creation is dynamically finalized by God's goodness which orientates all things to itself through the intellectual illumination of human knowledge and moral illumination in freedom and charity. All Bonaventure's ethical ideas find their foundation and end in the grand idea of charity which unifies the soul with God, conforming the created image to the divine exemplar. Charity inspires man to the noble task of organizing his earthly city into a suburb of the heavenly kingdom by transforming the universe and forestalling eternal beatitude.

- *Voluntarism*. Free will plays a dominant role in Bonaventure's conception of the relations between God and man. He rooted efficient and final causality in God's will through which will, power, and knowledge are exercised, and without which nothing exists. Bonaventure does not seem to be a voluntarist in his view of God as an infinite being knowing and willing himself.

As regards man, however, Bonaventure tends to a primacy of will. Whereas man's image of God resides in his cognitive faculties, his similitude of the Divine is found in the soul's affectivity which is radically the will. The most powerful agent in man's rebellion against God is free will, just as it is the prime drive in the soul's loving and enjoying the perfect beatitude of heaven. Love extends beyond knowledge, synderesis beyond conscience, charity beyond faith. Bonaventure preferred Augustinian voluntarism to Aristotelian intellectualism.

III. *Mystical Metaphysics*

Bonaventure fully expressed the medieval Augustinian tendency to set all the elements of thought within a mystical metaphysical framework. Theories of knowledge, nature, and action are systematically synthesized within his mystical matrix so as to make it possible for human experience to rise from the humblest operations upon material objects to the highest inpourings of grace in a grand continuous movement, like a Gothic cathedral ascending from earth to heaven. The Paris of learning and the Assisi of sanctity met in a holy alliance as the Seraphic Doctor rose from the slopes of St. Genevieve to the summit of Mount La Verna on the wings of reason and love, faith and charity.

Prospect

Reflection upon the pattern of Bonaventure's mystico-metaphysical thought makes it possible to project his place in the history of philosophy. Whether Bonaventure's synthesis is viable depends on its capacity to assimilate new insights.

I. *Bonaventurian Movement*

The force of Bonaventure's writings, his eminence as a scholar, his ecclesiastical statesmanship, and above all, his sanctity, coalesced as a cachet to make him the unofficial founder of a movement.²¹³ Noteworthy among his immediate followers were John Peckham and Matthew of Aquasparta who faithfully elaborated his ideas.

Peckham (c. 1225-1292), an English Franciscan theologian who occupied the Franciscan chair at Oxford and then became Archbishop of Canterbury, adopted all the dominant themes of his master's teaching with emphasis on the plurality of forms. He vigorously defended the Bonaventurian teachings for their close conformity to the tradition of the Fathers and sound philosophers, and strongly attacked dangerous novelties, such as Thomas Aquinas' theory of the unicity of form.

Bonaventure's most original disciple, Matthew of Aquasparta (c. 1240-1302), was also regent master at Paris and later became General of the Franciscan Order and a cardinal. Matthew derived two notable conclusions from his master. Persuaded, first of all, that the instability of sensible things provides no basis for certain knowledge, he looked to a divine illumination for the constancy and necessity which science needs. Since the incapacity of the intellect's natural power to secure certitude make it impossible for pure philosophy to establish the foundations of science, it is necessary to have recourse to the theological doctrine of illumination, lest one end in skepticism.

Second, the Aristotelian doctrine of abstraction presupposes an Augustinian intuition. The abstracted universal idea lacks an epistemological foundation, unless the mind, by means of singular intelligible species, directly knows individual things. In other Augustinian-Bonaventurian doctrines, as the theories of seminal reasons and universal hylomorphic composition, Matthew proved himself a faithful disciple.

The spread of Aristotelianism led some traditional minded philosophers to modify their positions. The growing influence of Aristotelianism in the Bonaventurian movement is manifested in the transition from Roger Marston to Richard of Middleton, two English Franciscans. Though a strong traditionalist, Roger Marston (d. 1303) modified the Augustinian theory of divine

illumination by identifying the illuminating active intellect with, God an adaptation of Avicenna's interpretation of Aristotle.

Richard of Middleton (d. 1307/8), while following the general Franciscan tradition, incorporated innovations from Thomas Aquinas' Aristotelianism into the thought of Bonaventure. Rejecting as unnecessary the postulate of a special divine illumination and the identification of the active intellect with God, Richard held that intellectual knowledge of spiritual as well as of corporeal beings is abstracted from sense experience. This new movement among Franciscan thinkers towards a modified Augustinianism found its greatest exponent in Duns Scotus.

II. *Decline*

Beset by internal difficulties, the Bonaventurian movement lost ground to Aristotelianism and declined as the middle ages passed from the thirteenth to the fourteenth century. Like Richard of Middleton, critics such as the English Franciscan William of Ware questioned and even abandoned basic Bonaventurian positions, as the doctrine of illumination and universal hylomorphism.

To be sure, the spirit of Bonaventure experienced some minor revivals. His doctrine of exemplarism with its themes of symbol and illumination continued to capture the minds of such men as the apostolic Raymond Lull (c. 1235-1315) in his writings on the *Great Art* of propagating the Christian faith, and John Gerson (d. 1492), chancellor of the University of Paris, who insisted on the primacy of mystical theology as a remedy for the conflict and confusion of philosophical systems.

III. *Problematic Future*

The future of Bonaventure's philosophy is problematic. The Seraphic Doctor is the most medieval thinker of all the masters of the thirteenth century in the sense of seeing reality and life in the mirror of a thorough going mysticism acceptable to the religious mind of the middle ages. His vision is a far cry from the modern mentality which restricted its vision to reason as science. As we move beyond this, Bonaventure's inspired vision takes on new interest. Religious thinkers who share Bonaventure's vision of God will find possibilities in his mystico-metaphysical system that can be actualized in a contemporary context.

Notes

1. J. de Vinck, *The Journey of the Mind to God, Mystical Opuscula*, I (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1960), c. VIII. Citations from this work and others found in *The Works of St. Bonaventure* are used with permission.

2. For general studies of the life and works of Bonaventure, see Etienne Gilson, *The Philosophy of St. Bonaventure*, trans. Dom Iltyd Trethowan and F.J. Sheed (Paterson, N.J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1965). E. Bettoni, *St. Bonaventure*, trans. Angelus Gambatese (Notre Dame, In.; University of Notre Dame Press, 1964). J. Guy Bougerol, *Introduction to the Works of Bonaventure*, trans. José de Vinck (Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1964).

The standard critical edition of the complete writings may be found in the following set: Doctoris Seraphici S. Bonaventurae, *Opera omnia*, 10 volumes in-folio (Quaracchi, Italy: ex Typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1882-1902). Of the fifty-five works assembled in the Quaracchi edition, forty-six are certainly authentic and nine doubtful.

3. *Commentary on the Sentences*, I, 3, 1, trans. R. McKeon, *Selections from Medieval Philosophers* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), II, pp. 118-148.

4. *The Works of St. Bonaventure: II. The Breviloquium*, trans. J. de Vinck (Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1963).

5. *The Works of St. Bonaventure*, ed. P. Boehner and M. Laughlin: I. *The Resolution of the Arts to Theology*, Latin text and trans. E. Healy (St. Bonaventure, N. Y.: Franciscan Institute, 1955); II. *Journey of the Mind to God*, Prologue and ch. 5-7 of *Journey . . .*, trans. A.C. Pegis, *The Wisdom of Catholicism* (New York: Random House, 1949), pp. 272-288. For other mystical writings see "Disputed Questions Concerning Christ's Knowledge" (Excerpt), in *The Library of Christian Classics* Vol. X, *A Scholastic Miscellany: Anselm to Ockham*, ed. and trans. E.R. Fairweather, pp. 379-401. *The Works of St. Bonaventure: I. Mystical Opuscula*, trans. by J. de Vinck (Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1960 and 1963).

6. Trans. J. de Vinck, *The Works of Bonaventure, V* (Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1970).

7. See *Sentences*, II, prooem.

8. See E. Gilson, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938), pp. 54-66.

9. See *Collationes in Hexaemeron (Collations on the Six Days)*, I, 8.

10. *On Retracing the Arts to Theology*, trans. J. de Vinck, *The Works of Bonaventure: III. Opuscula* (Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1966), 1-5.

11. *Breviloquium*, II, 11, 2.

12. *On Retracing the Arts to Theology*, 4. Bonaventure is prompt to find representations of the Trinity in the threefold classification of philosophy: rational philosophy — grammar, logic, rhetoric — which concerns the truth of knowledge; natural philosophy — physics, mathematics, metaphysics — which focuses on the truth of things; and moral philosophy — ethics, economics, politics — which treats of the truth of life. See *In Hexaem.*, IV, 2.

13. *In Hexaem.*, IV, 1.

14. *Sermon on Theological Matters (Sermo De Rebus Theologicis)*, IV.

15. *Sent.*, III, 24, 2, 3, Concl.

16. *Brevil.*, I, 1, 3.

17. *In Hexaem.*, XIII, 12.

18. *Sent.*, I, 3, 3, 2.

19. *In Hexaem.*, XII, 15.

20. *Journey of the Mind to God*, Prol., 4.

21. *On Retracing the Arts to Theology*, 19-20.

22. *Sent.*, I, prooem., I, 3-4.

23. *In Hexaem.*, II, 27; I, 30.

24. *Sent.*, III, 3, 2, 2, 1.

25. Cited by J. Guy Bougerol, *Introduction to the Works of Bonaventure*, p. 31, n. 55.

26. *In Hexaem.*, I, 17.

27. *Ibid.*, I, 13.

28. See *In Hexaem.*, III, 3-4.

29. Hugh of St. Victor, *De Sacramentis*, I, 3, 1. Approved by Bonaventure, *Sent.*, I, 8, 1, 1, 2, Concl.

30. See J. Jørgensen, *St. Francis of Assisi*, trans. T. O'Connor Sloane (Garden City, N.Y.: Image Books, 1954), pp. 253-260. Francis' vision of symbols helps explain his love of nature.

31. *Brevil.*, II, 12, 1.
32. *Sent.*, I, 3, 1, un., 2, Contra and Concl.
33. *Ibid.*, I, 3, 1, 2, Concl.
34. *Journey of the Mind to God*, II, 13.
35. *Ibid.*, III, 3.
36. *Ibid.*, III, 2.
37. *De Mysterio Trinitatis*, I, 1, 6-9.
38. *Ibid.*, I, 1, Concl. Author's parenthesis.
39. *Sent.*, I, 8, 1, 1, 2, Concl.
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Trin.*, I, 1, c.
42. *Ibid.*, I, 1, 29.
43. *Journey of the Mind to God*, VII, 4. Author's parenthesis.
44. *Brevil.*, I, 2, 3.
45. *Ibid.*, I, 2, 2.
46. *Trin.*, III, 1, c.
47. *Trin.*, III, 1, c. *Sent.*, I, 8, 2, 4, ad 2.
48. *Brevil.*, I, 3, 2.
49. *On the Knowledge of Christ*, VI, ad 13. *Sent.*, I, 8, 2, 4; I, 37, 1, 1, 1, Concl.
50. *Sent.*, I, 37, 1, 1, 2, C; I, 37, 1, 3, 1 and 2, C; II, 19, 1, 1, ad 2; I, 1, 3, 1, ad 2. See J. P. Doyle, "Saint Bonaventure and the Ontological Argument," *The Modern Schoolman*, III (1974), 27-48.
51. *Trin.*, V, 1, c.
52. *Sent.*, I, 8, 1, 2, 1, C.
53. *Brevil.*, I, 3.
54. *Sent.*, I, 39, 2, 2, C.
55. *Ibid.*, I, 35, un., 1.
56. *Ibid.*, 35, un. 5, ad 2; 11, 18, 1, 3, c.
57. *Ibid.*, I, 35, un., 5.
58. *Brevil.*, I, 8. The terms "expressive likeness" specifically signify the Word of God in the sense of the divine Son who, proceeding from the Father, is his likeness, and who, representing the Father, expresses all that the Father can effect.
59. *Sent.*, I, 35, un., 3, ad 5, and C.
60. *Ibid.*, I, 42, un., 1, C.
61. *Ibid.*, I, 42, un., 3, C.
62. *Ibid.*, I, 45, 1, 1, C.
63. Bonaventure combined the Neoplatonic view of good as self-diffusive and the Aristotelian notion of good as end.
64. *Sent.*, I, 45, 2, 1, C.
65. *Ibid.*, II, 1, 2, 1, 1, fund. 1-3, and ad 4.
66. *In Hexaem.*, XI, 11.
67. *Sent.*, II, 1, 2, 1, C.
68. *Ibid.*, I, 3, 1, un. 2, ad 3.
69. *Ibid.*, II, 16, 1, 1, Concl., and ad 2.
70. *Sermon*, IV, 16. *Brevil.*, II, 12, 1.
71. *Sermon*, IV, 16.

72. *Trin.*, III, 1, ad 5 and 6.
73. *Sent.*, I, 3, 1, un. 2, ad 4.
74. *In Hexaem.*, II, 27.
75. *Sent.*, II, 16, 2, 3, Concl.
76. *Ibid.*, II, 16, 2, 3, C.
77. *Ibid.*, II, 1, 1, 1, 1, Concl.
78. *Brevil.*, II, 1, 1.
79. *Sent.*, II, 1, 1, 1, 1, fund. a-c.
80. Aristotle's criticism presupposes his theory that matter depends for its reality on its union with form.
81. *Ibid.*, c.
82. *Brevil.*, II, 1, 4.
83. *Sent.*, II, 1, 1, 2, 2.
84. *Ibid.*, II, 1, 1, 1, 2, 6, Concl. See *Brevil.*, II, 1, 3. 85. *Contra Gentiles*, II, 38.
86. *Ibid.*, I, 43, un., 3, Concl. For further arguments of Bonaventure against eternal creation, see *Ibid.*; also *Sent.*, II, 1, 1, 1, 2, 3 and 5.
87. *Ibid.*, I, 8, 1, 2, 2.
88. See *Journey of the Mind to God*, V, 3-6. *Sent.*, I, 43, un. 3, Concl. *Ibid.*, 8, dub. 6.
89. *Sent.*, I, 8, 1, dub. 8.
90. *Ibid.*, I, 8, 2, un., 2, Concl. See G. P. Klubertanz, "Esse and *existere* in St. Bonaventure," *Modern Schoolman*, 8 (1946), 169-188.
91. *Sent.*, I, 8, dub. 6.
92. *Ibid.*, II, 3, 1, 1, 2, ad 3.
93. *Ibid.*
94. *Ibid.*, II, 3, 1, 1, 2, ad 3m.
95. *Ibid.*, II, 12, 1, 2, C.
96. *Ibid.*, 1, 2, 2, 1, ad 2; 12, 1, 3, ad 6.
97. *Ibid.*, 12, 2, 1, arg. 4.
98. *Ibid.*, 13, 1, 1, ad 3.
99. *Ibid.*, II, 13, 2, 1, Concl; 13, 1, 1, ad 3.
100. *Ibid.*, 13, 3, 1, ad 3.
101. *Ibid.*, 13, 2, 2, ad 2 and 3, and Concl; 2, 2, 1, 2, ad 1.
102. *Ibid.*, II, 7, 2, 2, 1, Resp.
103. *Ibid.*, II, 7, 2, 2, 1, C.
104. *Ibid.*, 7, 2, 2, 2, C.
105. *Ibid.*, II, 18, 1, 3, Concl.
106. *Ibid.*, II, 17, 2, 2, ad 6.
107. *Ibid.*, III, 5, 2, 2, ad 1.
108. *Ibid.*, II, 3, 1, 2, 3, C.
109. *Ibid.*, II, 3, 1, 2, 2, Concl.
110. *Ibid.*, II, 8, 1, 2, 2, 2, C.
111. *Ibid.*, II, 16, 1, 1, C.
112. *Ibid.*, II, 16, 2, 1, C. "The motion of the starry heavens is for no other reason than the service of the traveller." *Ibid.*, 2, 2, 1, 1, ad 3-4.

114. Bonaventure rejected traducianism. Created agents, their causality confined to working on transmutable matter, cannot generate a human soul whose matter is also spiritual. *Ibid.*, II, 18, 2, 3, Resp.

115. *Ibid.*, II, 18, 2, 1, Contra 1. See C.J. O’Leary, *The Substantial Composition of Man according to St. Bonaventure* (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University Press, 1931). C.M. O’Donnell, *The Psychology of St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1937).

116. *Sent.*, II, 18, 2, 1.

117. *Ibid.*, II, 17, 1, 2, ad 6; 1, 2, 1, 2, ad 2-3.

118. *Ibid.*, I, 8, 2, un., 3, Resp.

119. *Ibid.*, II, 17, 1, 2, fund. 6.

120. *Ibid.*, II, 17, 1, 2, ad 5.

121. *Ibid.*, II, 17, 1, 2, fund. 5 and Concl. *Brevil.*, II, 9, 5.

122. *Brevil.*, II, 9, 1.

123. *Sent.*, II, 19, 3, 2, C.

124. *Ibid.*, II, 19, 1, 1, C.

125. *Ibid.*, II, 19, 1, 1, Concl.

126. *Ibid.*, II, 19, 1, 1, Contra 7.

127. *Ibid.*, II, 19, 1, 1, Contra 3, 4, and Concl.

128. See *Sent.*, II, 24, 1, 2, 1, Concl. and ad 1.

129. *Ibid.*, II, 24, 1, 2, 1, Concl. and ad 8.

130. *Sent.*, I, 3, 2, 1, 1, C.

131. *Ibid.*, I, 3, 2, 1, 3, ad 6.

132. *Brevil.*, II, 9, 5.

133. Bonaventure treated sight as immediate because the luminous species acts instantaneously without passing through the medium.

134. *Sent.*, IV, 49, 2, 1, 3, 1.

135. *Journey of the Mind to God*, II, 4.

136. *Sent.*, I, 8, 2, un., 3, C.

137. *Retracing of the Arts to Theology*, 8.

138. *Sent.*, IV, 12, 1, dub. 1.

139. *Ibid.*, II, 8, 2, un. 3, C; 7, 2, 1, 2, C.

140. *Ibid.*, IV, 49, 2, 1, 3, 1, ad 1.

141. See *Ibid.*, II, 24, 1, 2, 3, Concl. Bonaventure understood Aristotelian abstraction in the sense of Augustine’s notion of judgment. See *Journey of the Mind to God*, II, 9. *In Hexaem*, XII, 5. *Knowledge of Christ*, IV, fund. 23.

142. *Sent.*, I, 16, un. 2, fund. 1.

143. *In Hexaem*, VIII, 13.

144. *Sent.*, II, 39, 1, 2, Concl.

145. *Sent.*, II, 3, 2, 2, 1, fund. 6.

146. *Ibid.*, I, 3, 2, 1, 1, ad 3.

147. *Trin.*, I, 1, Resp.

148. *Sent.*, I, 17, 1, un. 4, Concl.

150. *Knowledge of Christ*, IV, Concl.

151. See *ibid.* This does not imply that God is the total cause of man's knowing truth. If the human intellect were incapable of making any contribution, then it would never escape skepticism, no matter what the influence of God. See *Knowledge of Christ*, IV, Concl.

152. Bonaventure followed Augustine in objecting that the demand of the Platonic doctrine for direct knowledge of eternal archetypes to attain certitude, opens the door to skepticism, because in this life man has no direct vision of God or his ideas. See *Knowledge of Christ*, IV, Concl.

153. *Sent.*, I, 17, 1, un. 4, Concl.

154. *Journey of the Mind to God*, III, 4.

155. *Ibid.*, V, 4. This does not mean man has a natural vision of God. See *Sent.*, II, 4, 2, 2, ad 2 and 4.

156. *In Hexaem.*, V, 33.

157. *Journey of the Mind to God*, II, 11.

158. *Trin.*, I, 1, 6-8.

159. *Sent.*, III, 33, un., 3, Concl.

160. *Ibid.*, II, 24, 1, 2, 3, Concl.

161. *Ibid.*, I, 1, 1, 1, ad 2.

162. *Ibid.*, II, 25, 1, un., ad 1 and 3.

163. *Ibid.*, II, 25, 1, un., 1, Concl.

164. *Ibid.*, 25, 1, un., dub. 1.

165. *Ibid.*, II, 25, 1, un., 6, Concl.

166. *Ibid.*, I, 3, 2, 1, 1, ad 6.

167. *Ibid.*, 25, 1, dub. 3.

168. *Ibid.*, 25, 2, dub. 3.

169. *Ibid.*, II, 25, 1, dub. 3.

170. *Ibid.*, 7, 1, 2, 2, ad 2.

171. *Ibid.*, II, 34, 1, 2, Concl.

172. *Ibid.*, 25, 2, un. 4, Concl.

173. *Ibid.*, 25, 2, un. 2, Concl.

174. *Ibid.*, I, 1, 1, 3, ad 2.

175. *Ibid.*, III, 27, dub. 1.

176. *Ibid.*, III, 28, un. 5, Concl.

177. *Ibid.*, III, 29, un., 3, ad 6.

178. *Ibid.*, I, 10, dub. 4.

179. *Ibid.*, III, 27, 2, 6, Concl.

180. *Ibid.*, III, 28, un. 4, Concl.

181. *Ibid.*, III, 28, un. 2 and 3.

182. *Ibid.*, III, 27, 2, 4, Concl.

183. *Ibid.*, I, 3, 2, 2, 2, ad 4.

184. *Ibid.*, III, 36, dub. 3.

185. *Ibid.*, III, 27, 2, 1, ad 5.

186. *Ibid.*, II, 16, 1, 1, fund. 3; III, 27, 2, 1, Concl.

187. *In Hexaem.*, VI, 10.

188. *Sent.*, III, 23, 2, 1, Concl.

189. *Ibid.*, III, 33, un. 4, ad 4.

190. *Ibid.*, II, 25, 1, dub. 1.

191. *Ibid.*, II, 38, 2, 2, Concl.

192. *Ibid.*, II, 38, 1, 1, Concl.
 193. *Ibid.*, II, 39, 1, 1, Concl.
 194. *Ibid.*, II, 39, 2, 1-3, Concl.
 195. *Ibid.*, II, 41, 1, 1, ad 3.
 196. *Evangelical Perfection*, IV, 1. *Brevil.*, I, 9.
 197. *Ibid.*, IV, 1. *Book of Wisdom*, VI, 13. *Sermon*, IX.
 198. *Sent.*, IV, 33, 1, 2, Concl.
 199. *Ibid.*, III, 33, 5, fund. 3.
 200. *The Triple Way*. Prol.
 201. *Ibid.*, I, 8.
 202. *Journey of the Mind to God*, I, 11.
 203. *Ibid.*, II, 7.
 204. *Ibid.*, III, 1 and 5.
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 206. *Ibid.*, IV, 3.
 207. *The Triple Way*, I, 15-17.
 208. *Journey of the Mind to God*, V, 5.
 209. *Ibid.*, VI, 2.
 210. *Brevil.*, V, 6.
 211. *Sent.*, II, 23, 2, 3, ad 4.
 212. See Gilson, *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*, pp, 230-235.
 213. See C.J. Majchrzak, O.F.M., *A Brief History of Bonaventurianism* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1957).

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Chapter V

Thomas Aquinas: Philosopher of the Existential Act

"Among all human pursuits", Thomas Aquinas wrote, "the pursuit of wisdom is more perfect, more noble, more useful, and more full of joy."¹ With wisdom as his goal, Aquinas's life can be viewed as passing through three periods: first, the development of wisdom; second, the construction of wisdom; third, the final touches of wisdom.

Life² and Works³

Development (c. 1225-1259). Aquinas was born of a noble family in 1225 at the castle of Roccasecca near Naples. After his education by the Benedictines at Monte Cassino, he went to the University of Naples for his arts studies. At Naples, he joined the Dominicans and studied at the University of Paris and later at Cologne under Albert the Great, who acquainted him with Aristotelianism and Neo-Platonism. Returning to Paris after his ordination to the priesthood, he did graduate studies and lectured on Peter the Lombard's *Sentences* at the University of Paris. His originality was manifested at this early time in his *Writings upon the Four Books of the Sentences*, and in two significant works: *On Being and Essence*⁴ which distinguishes between created essence and existence, and *On the Principles of Nature*⁵ which stresses the pure potentiality of prime matter.

During his first Paris professorship (1256-1259), the Master of Theology lectured on the Bible and resolved disputed questions which are articulated in his treatise *On Truth*⁶ and the *Quodlibetales*.⁷ He also developed his most extensive and penetrating study of the hierarchy of the sciences and their method in *Exposition of Boethius' On the Trinity*⁸ and his notion of participation in *Exposition of Boethius' On the Weeks*.⁹ As Augustinian, Neoplatonic, and Aristotelian ideas meshed in the early writings of Aquinas, they gradually assumed a new form.

- *Construction* (1259-1271). As Aquinas approached the high noon of his reflective powers, he systematically constructed his basic insights into a new synthesis. Returning to Italy, he taught at Anagni, Orvieto and Viterbo, continuing work begun in Paris on the *Summa against the Gentiles* (*Summa contra Gentiles*)¹⁰ and making his first attempt at a commentary on a Neoplatonic work in the *Exposition of Dionysius on the Divine Names*.¹¹ He fused Christian and non-Christian traditions on God, the world and man, into a vast and profound synthesis in the *Summa of Theology* (*Summa Theologiae*).¹² In *Disputed Questions on the Power of God*,¹³ he defined the relationship between God and creatures in terms of existential act.

During his second term (1269-1272) of teaching at the University of Paris, Aquinas defended the mendicant orders in his opusculum *On the Perfection of the Spiritual Life*,¹⁴ opposed Siger of Brabant, the Parisian Averroist, in his treatise *On the Unity of the Intellect*,¹⁵ and replied to Augustinian traditionalists in his work *On the Eternity of the World, against the Complainers*.¹⁶ Equipped with more authentic translations of Aristotle's writings by William of Moerbeke, Aquinas composed detailed commentaries on the Aristotelian corpus.¹⁷ He also wrote scriptural expositions, theological elaborations in the *Disputed Questions* and *Quodlibetal Questions*,¹⁸ and more philosophical investigations in his work *On the Books Concerning Causes* and his incomplete *Treatise on Separate Substances*.¹⁹

Final Period (1271-1274). In the last period, Aquinas put some final touches to his architectonic vision. Appointed master of theology at the Dominican house of studies associated

with the University of Naples, he lectured on the Psalms, commented on Aristotle's works, and unexpectedly halted work on the *Summa of Theology* with the words: "I am unable to do it . . . Everything that I have written seems like chaff to me, in comparison with the things that I have been and that have been revealed to me."²⁰ On the way to the second Council of Lyons, he fell ill and died on March 7, 1274 at the Cistercian Abbey of Fossanuova.

Encounter

Problems

Aquinas encountered problems of God, the world and man within the philosophico-religious context of faith and reason.

I. Faith and Reason

In probing the relation of faith and reason, Aquinas opposed the pietistic tendency to suppress philosophy in favor of religion and also the Latin Averroist rationalism which divorced philosophy from faith. Under the influence of Moses Maimonides' *Guide for the Perplexed*, he endeavored to distinguish and correlate the dimensions of reason and faith within a unified vision. First, he would have to determine the meaning of faith and knowledge.²¹

- *Philosophy and Theology*. With a clear idea of the relationship between belief and knowledge, Aquinas could come to grips with the germane question of the connection between Christian theology and philosophy. Since "the philosophical sciences deal with all parts of reality even with God," and "Aristotle refers to one department of philosophy as theology or the divine science,"²² Aquinas asked whether there was need "for another kind of education to be admitted or entertained."²³ Additional teaching from divine revelation and Christian theology seems superfluous, since God, men and the world "lying within range of reason yield well enough to scientific and philosophical treatment."²⁴

If the necessity of revelation is granted, there arises the problem of associating philosophy and Christianity without impairing the integrity of either science. On the one hand, Anselm's theologism tended to rationalize the object of faith so as to render it scientifically demonstrable, thereby making theology as faith seeking an understanding, appear unnecessary.²⁵ On the other hand, to accept metaphysical truths on faith without a rational demonstration would make a distinct philosophical science superfluous. Aquinas was intent on preserving the purity of each science in their correlation.

Latin Averroists set philosophy and revealed theology at loggerheads by opposing rational conclusions which they accepted as Christians. Following Averroes, they reasoned to the eternity of the world and at the same time believed in the temporality of creation. If "what is rationally necessary is thereby necessarily true," these Averroists were following "a doctrine of twofold truth, . . . maintaining as simultaneously true two sets of contradictory propositions."²⁶ Aquinas wanted to avoid the Scylla of Anselm's theologism and the Charybdis of Siger of Brabant's Averroistic philosophism.

II. *Reality*

Within the framework of faith and reason, Aquinas reflected on the most basic metaphysical problem of the meaning of reality. Reality had been viewed in different ways by philosophers: as being by Aristotle, as good by Plato, as unity by Plotinus, as truth by Augustine, and as essence by Avicenna.²⁷ Aquinas' decision about the core of reality and its relation to the totality of things would have to respect the insights of his illustrious predecessors so as to guarantee progress in the growth of metaphysics. The validity of his concept of reality would be tested by its success in explaining the traditional problems of unity and multiplicity, truth and falsity, good and evil.

- *One and Many*. Thomas investigated the problem of reconciling unity and multiplicity under various aspects. How can an individual existent possess many functions, and a plurality of individuals have specific unity? Plato's explanation of many individuals participating in the unity of a common archetypal idea gives rise to the difficulty of how, for example, the idea of man is shared by an individual man without his being the whole of humanity. The Neoplatonic derivation of multiplicity from the transcendent One conflicts with the Aristotelian view that being is prior to unity.

Only by determining the relation between being and unity would Aquinas be able to deal effectively with the problem of whether and how many things derive from a single cause. According to Avicenna, one simple divine cause can produce necessarily but one effect; and hierarchical causes, necessarily originating from the first cause, successively produce one effect each.²⁸ For Aquinas, Avicenna's explanation did not make adequate provision for the pre-existence of plurality in the simplicity of the divine intelligence, and its procession from God by way of knowledge and freedom.

- *Truth*. Aquinas investigated the problem of truth within the context of unity and being.²⁹ How can truth be related to being, if, as Aristotle says, "true and false are not in things but in the mind"?³⁰ If truth is only in the mind, then whatever appears to each person — even contradictory views — is true.³¹ To overcome the relativity of truth, Aquinas found it necessary to show how a spiritual intellectual soul can understand a material thing. How can forms which, according to Aristotle, are understood by abstraction from matter, provide objective knowledge of reality where they exist with matter?³² Furthermore, if the intelligible likeness abstracted from things is that which is understood by the intellect, then things themselves, it seems, are not what is actually known.³³

III. *God*

On the basis of his metaphysical inquiries, Aquinas investigated questions concerning God's existence and essence.

At the outset, Aquinas confronted objections to proving God's existence from those who were impressed by its self-evidence. If "as Damascene says when beginning his book, `the awareness that God exists is implanted by nature in everybody,'"³⁴ and if the word "God" which signifies "that than which nothing greater can be meant" implies his existence in fact as well as in thought,³⁵ then all proof of his existence is superfluous. If God's existence is not self-evident, then it must be demonstrated from effects in the world. But "it seems that everything we observe in this world can be fully accounted for by other causes, without assuming a God. Thus natural effects are explained by natural causes, and contrived effects by human reasoning and will."³⁶ In a self-explanatory world, there is no need to suppose that a God exists.

Aquinas was faced with the task of resolving whether God is so manifest as to be self-evident, or so hidden as to be impossible of demonstration.

Although Aquinas agreed with Dionysius the pseudo-Areopagite that "we cannot know what God is, but only what he is not,"³⁷ he rejected the Neo-Platonist's explanation of this negative knowledge which placed the divine One above being to which human reason is limited. To avoid agnosticism while holding the unknowability of God's essence, Aquinas had to explain how the mind can rise from the experience of sensible things to a positive knowledge of God and can affirm that he is being, unity, and truth.³⁸

IV. *World*

If the divine cause of the world and its causal action is eternal, Aquinas wondered whether the world as its effect also always existed.³⁹ Latin Averroists, on the one hand, reasoning against the Aristotelian background of the eternal principles of imperishable forms and ingenerable matter, concluded that the world is created from eternity. Bonaventure, on the other than, working within the Augustinian framework which identified eternity with God, affirmed that the universe is created in time. As a Christian theologian, Aquinas was concerned with how the eternity of the universe could be reconciled with the biblical teaching that "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."⁴⁰

Aquinas intended to go beyond Plato's and Aristotle's explanation of the origin and notion of things in their class characteristics to account for the cause of their whole being, their complete substance.⁴¹ However, if God created the whole universe, how can he be exonerated from willing the evil of defective and corruptible beings,⁴² unless there is a Manichaean principle of evil, as the Albigensians held?

V. *Man*

Investigation of the world throws some light on man's nature, but there still remains the peculiarly human question of his unity and the duality of soul and body. On the one hand, the Platonic conception of man as a soul using a body ensures the uniqueness and immortality of the soul to the detriment of the body's significance. On the other, Aristotle's hylomorphic theory guarantees the substantial unity of soul and body but makes it difficult to explain the subsistence and immortality of the soul apart from the body which is in potency to another form.⁴³

Aquinas encountered the problem of human freedom in his attempt to reconcile the Augustinian view of freedom in man's relation to God and the Greco-Arabian conception of necessity and order in the universe.⁴⁴ On the part of God, how is it possible for divine goodness which Neo-Platonists insist naturally and necessarily diffuses itself, to freely communicate its likeness to other beings?⁴⁵ If, as analysis reveals, man's will is moved by objects outside himself, how can he act voluntarily, since that is voluntary which has its principle within itself, as Gregory of Nyssa, Damascene and Aristotle declare?⁴⁶ Briefly, can choice be determined and free?

Working within the context of freedom and necessity, Aquinas investigated the moral problem of good and evil. If the will is somehow determined and, as Aristotle believed, desires only good, how is moral evil possible?⁴⁷ As master of its actions, how can the will be governed by laws which prescribe its end? Men more or less agree on the most general abstract principle of conduct, for example, "do good and avoid evil," but how can they be sure of what is good and reasonable in concrete situations?

Themes

Aquinas' encounter with the intellectual and moral needs of thirteenth century man led him to center his philosophy on the general theme of existence as expressed in the fields of reality, knowledge and action.

I. Existential Act

Aquinas encountered issues about God, the world, and man in view of his basic theme of being as existence,⁴⁸ thereby radically differentiating himself from Aristotle's conception of being as form. Existential act is the fundamental principle both of being and becoming. It constitutes the reality of the world as a dynamic principle that expresses itself in the essence it grounds. "The most perfect thing of all is to exist, for everything else is potential compared to existence. Nothing achieves actuality except it exist, and the act of existing is therefore the ultimate actuality of everything and even of every form."⁴⁹ Becoming is the realization of form which as potency intrinsically depends on existential act which it receives. Existence is the key to understanding being as act. The highest reality towards which all else is oriented is no longer a passive essence — as Aristotle's form, Plotinus' unity, Augustine's truth — but a dynamic pure existential act.⁵⁰

II. Knowledge of Existence

The act of being in physical phenomena, which is in a process of realizing and expressing itself, is also the source of knowledge. To retain the Platonic and Aristotelian ideal of unified and stable knowledge, Aquinas considered man's proper mode of understanding to be the attainment of existence, not as individual, but as universal. In this way knowledge, as abstractive, is not only realistic in its orientation towards the existence of concrete things, but is characterized by certainty, unity and universality. Metaphysical knowledge through judgement is a consideration of existential act in concrete things.

III. Existential Action

Similarly, the source of action in the world is the act of to be of concrete things: "From the very fact that something actually is, it is active."⁵¹ Beings operate only insofar as they are, or possess their own act of being, the primary principle of their energy. The activity of a being is the unfolding in time of its basic existential act by which it is. In virtue of this actuality at the core of their being, things exist in view of their acts.⁵² Operation is the ultimate perfection of existents.⁵³

Method

Aquinas developed his theme of existence within a framework of faith and reason.

I. Faith and Reason

Aquinas viewed reason and faith as two complementary approaches of a single Christian vision of reality in its totality. Faith, an assent of the mind under the influence of the will to truths revealed by God, formally differs from pure reason which of its own power grasps truth as it

presents itself. Their distinction is evident from the fact that "it is impossible that one and the same thing (or aspect of a thing) should be believed and seen by the same person. . . ."54 Faith and reason reach different aspects even of the same object. For example, God can be known as the prime mover by rational demonstration, and at the same time be believed as the Trinity of persons by faith.55 When an object of rational knowledge is resolved into first principles, it is removed by this very fact from the domain of faith.56 Faith intimately completes reason in its concern for truths exceeding its natural capacity. Although, for example, God's existence and oneness are rationally demonstrable, his infinite essence which transcends finite understanding is accessible to faith.57

- *Complementarity*. Since "man is directed to God as to an end that surpasses the grasp of his reason,"58 he needs faith to recognize that truth and strive towards that supernatural goal. "Hence, it was necessary for our welfare that divine truths surpassing reason should be signified to us through divine revelation,"59 and accepted on faith. Considering the limitations of the human condition, rationally knowable truths concerning God and the soul can and even need to be revealed. Without revelation, "the rational truth about God would have appeared only to a few, and even so after a long time and mixed with many mistakes; whereas on knowing this depends our whole welfare, which is God."60 God's revelation enables even wise men to overcome doubt and error and to acquire certitude concerning natural truths or "preambles to faith."61 Faith complements reason.

As faith aids reason, so reason contributes in four ways to faith seeking an understanding of itself in sacred theology.62 First, as a propaedeutic, reason philosophically demonstrates the preambles to faith, for example, the existence of God.63 Second, as a guardian, it "refutes statements against the faith, either by showing that they are false, or by showing that they are not necessarily true."64 Third, with the help of philosophical concepts, reason deduces theological conclusions from revealed principles accepted on faith. Fourth, it explains theological conclusions in terms of sensible analogies and arguments of fittingness to show the reasonableness of revealed truths.65

II. *Sciences of Philosophy and Theology*

Aquinas coordinated philosophy, the science of principles acquired by reason, and sacred theology, the science of principles revealed to faith, in terms of their goal and principles.

The task of philosophy is to study the nature of "creatures in themselves" to come to "the knowledge of God," whereas that of theology is to consider their "relation to God" as their origin and goal.66 Purely philosophical conclusions about the nature of things, without losing their rational character, can be ordered towards an essentially theological end.67 While collaborating on common questions, philosophy and theology remain radically distinct in their principles of demonstration. Whereas philosophic reasoning begins with the self-evident principles of natural intelligence, investigates the essence of things, and argues to God as their first cause, theological reasoning starts with the articles of faith, and reflects on God's revelation of himself and his relation to creatures.68

- *Science*. Aquinas defined his philosophico-theological method in terms of science conceived in its strict Aristotelian sense as certain and evident knowledge which reason demonstrates about things.69 As a result of these demonstrative acts, the mind develops an intellectual habit of thinking effectively in a definite way, and moving steadfastly towards truth. Theoretic reason aims to know truth by the three intellectual virtues of understanding, science and wisdom.

Understanding grasps first principles; science demonstratively draws conclusions from principles; and wisdom demonstrates from the highest and widest principles. Practical reason activates truth by the virtues of prudence directing man's doings to secure the ends of life, and of art ensuring that the things man produces are well made.

Aquinas divided the speculative sciences according to the aspect of reality that each attains by abstraction from things. For example, being as the proper subject of metaphysics differentiates it from other sciences.⁷⁰ Following Aristotle, Aquinas distinguished the abstraction of the human mind's first operation simply apprehending "what a thing is" from its second operation of judgment which "joins and divides" the intelligible essence by affirming and denying that and how something is or is not.⁷¹ Whereas natural philosophy and mathematics attain their proper subjects through apprehensive abstraction of objects which cannot exist in reality without other things, metaphysics reaches its object by the separation through a negative judgment affirming that being is not necessarily linked to matter nor to any of its conditions. In such a judgment based on knowledge of non material reality, the intellect considers being apart from all matter and declares that to be is not, as such, material.⁷²

Aquinas differentiated metaphysics and the other sciences further by specifying their proper abstractive procedure in terms of their subjects and the intellectual operations by which they are grasped.

- *Natural philosophy*. The natural philosopher abstracts a whole from its parts or from its individuating notes which are really together in things; it considers, not this form and that matter, but form and matter as a whole — what is universal and necessary in corporeal things, what is essential in a nature to the disregard of what is incidental to it.⁷³ With his rational method, the physical philosopher analyzes the constantly changing manifold of sense data to demonstrate from their effects the efficient and final causes, and to discover the nature and interrelationships of things.⁷⁴ The rational approach of natural philosophy terminates "in senses with the result that we judge of natural beings as the senses manifest them. . . ." ⁷⁵ Sense experience is the final court of appeal for the veracity of its scientific judgments. Natural science sometimes reasons to true demonstrations, whereas in other cases it is restricted to "suppositions," which explain sensible appearances without being necessarily true, as with the Ptolemaic theory of astronomy.⁷⁶

- *Mathematics*. Mathematics abstracts the form of quantity from the sensible thing,⁷⁷ and deduces, by way of formal causality, conclusions from definitions and principles. For instance, a certain property of a triangle is shown to follow from its very definition.⁷⁸ Because mathematics abstracts from changing sensible qualities, it is more exact and certain than natural philosophy.⁷⁹ Since the mathematician's judgments concerning geometrical entities "terminate in the imagination and not in the senses,"⁸⁰ his scientific conclusions are directly verified by an appeal to the imagination.

- *Metaphysics*. Metaphysics goes beyond physical and mathematical abstraction to consider being as being,⁸¹ such of its properties as goodness and truth, and God, the first cause.⁸² Now being and its properties can exist in spiritual beings separate from matter.⁸³ The metaphysician recognizes that spiritual beings actually exist or can exist without matter in view of a negative judgment which denies that being is necessarily bound up with material conditions. The judgment that being as such is not the same as form, as well as matter, implies that the mind has gone beyond being as essence and affirmed being in its existential character simply insofar as it *is*.⁸⁴

The metaphysical method is uniquely intellectual, because it begins with insight into first principles, contemplates purely intelligible objects of metaphysics which are separated from material conditions, and terminates in the intelligible aspect of things by judging in the light of

evidence revealed by the intellect.⁸⁵ The human mind can attain a supreme synthesis in the metaphysical intuition of the multitude of truths in the unity of simple principles. "It is distinctive of reason to disperse itself in the consideration of many things and, then to gather one simple truth from them."⁸⁶ The analytic movement of reason in other sciences finds its ultimate term in the metaphysical synthesis of objects in view of the universal notion of being and of God as the first cause of all beings. Because of the profundity of its insight and the unity of its ideas, Aquinas held metaphysics as the highest science.

Influences

Within a philosophico-religious framework Aquinas developed his thematic ideas under the influence of Aristotelian and Augustinian thought. He evaluated the positions of other thinkers, not according to the argument from human authority, which he regarded as generally the weakest of all proofs in philosophy, but in view "of the reasoning of what is stated."⁸⁷

I. Approach

In the tradition of Augustine, Aquinas philosophized under the influence of faith as freely and rationally as Plato or Aristotle. Impressed by Aristotle's insights and Albert the Great's scientific reflections, he recognized the power of natural reason to follow its own method and principles to reach truth. He adopted Aristotle's method and division of the speculative sciences and added to Boethius' distinction of the sciences in terms of objects by defining the cognitional acts which grasp the different objects. As a consequence, the intellect, though passive insofar as it is determined by forms in the world, is shown to play an essential role in the abstractive determination of the subjects of the sciences.⁸⁸ What is significant in the maturing of Aquinas' mind is his recognition that being is constituted the proper subject of metaphysics, not through the abstractive apprehension of essence which is required for Aristotle's philosophy of form, but through the affirmation of existence and separation in judgment.⁸⁹

II. Aristotle and the Moslem Philosophers

In his explanation of the relation between God and creatures, Aquinas used Aristotle's concept of form as the point of departure for deepening his notion of being in terms of existential act. In his notion of being as existence he was decisively influenced by Boethius who distinguished between the individual and the form whereby the substance is,⁹⁰ and by the Moslem philosophers who disclosed that existence is not included in essence but must somehow be added thereto. Alfarabi conceived existence as an accessory accident of essence, Avicenna regarded it as a property of essence, and Averroes viewed it as substance.

Aquinas went further and located existence at the very core of being as the act of all acts, "The existential act of being (*esse*) is the most intimate element in anything, and the most profound element in all things, because it is like a form in regard to all that is in the thing."⁹¹

III. Platonism

Aquinas synthesized his insight into the existential actuality of Aristotelian being with the Platonic theory of participation to explain the plurality and unity of reality.⁹² He radically

transformed Plato's participation of things in ideas as their principle of intelligibility, into a participation of creatures in one supreme being, their source of reality. He incorporated the basic insights of previous philosophers in terms of existential participation: a being is one (Plotinus), true (Augustine), good (Plato), and beautiful (Pseudo-Dionysius), insofar as it shares in existence. In defining the participatory relationship between creatures and God, Aquinas followed Avicenna's line of reasoning from participating beings whose essence is other than existence to the unparticipating simple being which is its own existence.⁹³ In view of his notion of existential participation, Aquinas adopted Dionysius' vision of creation as a hierarchy of beings whose summit is God, the pure act of divine existence.

Response

Under the influence of Augustinian and Aristotelian ideas, Aquinas responded to the issues of knowledge and reality within a philosophico-religious framework by developing his themes of existence and participation in relation to God, the world, and man.

Metaphysics

Aquinas laid the groundwork of his response in his metaphysical investigation of the ultimate principles of reality.

I. Principles

- *Substance and Accident.* Within an Aristotelian context, Aquinas analyzed changing things into the nine accidents — as quality, quantity, and place — and substance which he defined as "that which is possessed of a nature such that it will exist of itself."⁹⁴ Whereas the whole reality of the accidental determinations is "to-be-in"⁹⁵ the supporting subject, the substance with its own act of to be exists by itself. Accidents participate in the existence of the substance.

- *Matter and Form.* Deeper reflection upon the concrete data of substantial change discloses that the element persisting through the transition is prime matter, the indeterminate substrata of change, and that the element which determines the character of a thing to be plant or animal and places it in its specific class, is the substantial form. "Evidently, then, essence embraces matter and form."⁹⁶ Every corporeal substance is composed of matter and form. Following Aristotle, Aquinas defined prime matter as pure potentiality to every form, and form as the first act of a physical body, placing a body in its class and determining its essence. United in corporeal substances, matter shares in the form, as potency in act.

Aquinas saw no need of the Augustinian theory of seminal reasons in his concept of prime matter as pure potentiality, without act or form even in a germinal way.⁹⁷ The agent so changes the dispositions of a corporeal substance that it develops an exigency for a new form which is educed out of the potentiality of matter. Aquinas also rejected the traditional theory of the plurality of forms with the argument that what is already constituted as substance by the first form, can be subsequently determined only by accidental forms.⁹⁸

- *Individuation.* Aquinas agreed with Aristotle that individual substances, which alone actually exist, are classified in a determined species in virtue of their form. But to exist in a particular substance, form, which of itself is a universal element, needs to be individuated and numerically multiplied by matter. But matter of itself is pure potentiality without any

determination. Aquinas, therefore, was compelled to include quantity along with matter in the principle of individuation. Form is individuated by "designated matter", or matter determined by quantitative dimensions.⁹⁹ The principle of individuation, therefore, is matter as signed by quantitative determination which it receives from union with the form.

- *Spirit*. Within the framework of a hierarchic scale of being, Aquinas found it natural to posit the existence of angels. There would be a glaring gap between God, the uncreated pure spirit, and man, the created embodied spirit, if created pure spirits did not exist.¹⁰⁰ Unlike Bonaventure's application of the hylomorphic theory to angels, Aquinas argued that purely spiritual intelligences in the hierarchy of being must be completely immaterial with no exigency for quantity. Without matter, angels are not multiplied in the same specific class; rather each angel is an individual pure form which alone fulfills the capacity of its species. "While there is no composition of form and matter in angels, there is a composition of actuality and potency," of form and existence by which it subsists¹⁰¹ as contingent beings radically distinct from God.

- *Existence*. Going beyond Aristotle, Aquinas reasoned that substance is a being, not insofar as it is matter or form, but inasmuch as it has existence. Because matter has no existence of its own apart from some form,¹⁰² it cannot be the cause of the existence of substance. Although form substantially determines and specifies its matter, it is limited to making a being belong to a class.¹⁰³ It is necessary to posit beyond the form by which a thing is such and such a being, the act of being by which the substance exists. "For if we say that in composites of matter and form the form is the principle of existence (*principium essendi*), it is because it achieves the substance whose act is the act-of-being (*ipsum esse*)."¹⁰⁴ The substance exists only by reason of the act of being in which form participates as potency in act.

Since the form exists only in virtue of the existential act which makes it a real being, existence holds a radical primacy over essence. Existential act is the core of reality: "Existence is more intimately and profoundly interior to everything than anything else, since it informs all that is real."¹⁰⁵ The act of being is the primordial principle in things, because it is "the ultimate actuality of everything else, even including forms. Its relation to other things therefore is not that of receiver to received, but of received to receiver."¹⁰⁶ By integrating the Platonic doctrine of participation and the Aristotelian notion of being, Aquinas explained Dionysius' vision of creation as a hierarchy of beings in terms of a graded sharing in existence. For Aquinas, metaphysics is the science of being as existential act.

Aquinas undoubtedly distinguished between essence and existence. But is the distinction conceptual or real? If real distinction means two separable physical things, as Giles of Rome held, then it cannot be attributed to Aquinas who understood essence and existence as two constitutive metaphysical principles of every finite being. Likewise, the way Aquinas used this distinction shows clearly that he regarded the distinction between essence and existence as objective and independent of the mind. For example, he argued that beings whose existence is other than their essence must have received existence from another, namely God, whose essence is existence. Aquinas's metaphysical reasoning is based on this distinction between essence and existence as real, merely conceptual.

II. *Properties of Being*

- *Unity*. In view of his existential notion of reality, Aquinas conceived being as transcendently one, true, good, and beautiful insofar as it exists. A being is one inasmuch as it is or shares in its single act of to be. In virtue of the undivided act of to be, being and unity are

convertible: every being is one and whatever is undivided is being. Hence, "everything existing is one."¹⁰⁷ Identity is a negation of divisibility.¹⁰⁸ Plurality arises from the unity of a being in itself and its division from other beings. "Clearly then everything's existence is grounded in indivision. And this is why things guard their unity as they do their existence."¹⁰⁹ In this way, Aquinas incorporated unity, which Plotinus posited at the summit of reality, into his notion of being.

- *Truth*. Whereas Aristotle did not consider truth to be a property of being as such, since it is found in the mind and not in things,¹¹⁰ Aquinas referred it to being insofar as it is related to the mind. In this context, he concluded "truth is primarily in the intellect, and secondarily in things, by virtue of a relation to the intellect as to their origin."¹¹¹ Truth resides formally in the intellect which, in knowing "its own conformity to the thing known, . . . judges that the thing corresponds to the form of the thing which it apprehends."¹¹² Truth and being are interchangeable: every being is knowable by the intellect, and everything knowable by the intellect is a being.¹¹³ As with being and unity, being and truth are identical in reality, they differ only conceptually with truth adding the notion of knowability to being.¹¹⁴ In this analysis, therefore, Aquinas integrated truth, which Augustine sought as supreme reality, into his notion of being.

- *Good*. Aquinas also incorporated Plato's central notion of good into his metaphysics of existential being. In view of Aristotle's dictum that "good is what all things desire,"¹¹⁵ Aquinas reasoned that desirability follows from an object's perfection and actuality which is achieved by existing.¹¹⁶ That is why "the *Book of Causes* says that 'existence is the first thing created',"¹¹⁷ and "Augustine says that inasmuch as we exist, we are good."¹¹⁸ Conversely, everything that exists is good. The same in reality, they differ in concept, with good adding the notion of desirability to being. Thus goodness is being conceived under the aspect of its perfection and desirableness.¹¹⁹ "Since good is what all things desire, and this involves the idea of a goal, clearly being good involves being a goal."¹²⁰ With St. Anselm, Aquinas divided good into the worthy which is desirable in itself, the useful which is sought for some other thing, and the delightful which is appetible for its satisfaction.¹²¹

- *Beauty*. Beauty does not play a role comparable to the other properties in Thomistic metaphysics. In line with pseudo-Dionysius' statement, "the good is esteemed beautiful," Aquinas grounded the identity of beauty with goodness in the form of a thing.¹²² Whereas goodness relates to form as fulfilling the appetite, beauty pertains to form as restful to apprehension. Hence, "we call a thing beautiful when it pleases the eye of the beholder."¹²³ Beauty is that which pleases when seen. The three elements of beauty — integrity, due proportion, and clarity¹²⁴ — are given by the form through which a beautiful thing has existence.

III. *Causality*

Aquinas explained the structure and relations of existing being in view of Aristotle's fourfold division of causes: moving, formal, material and final. He integrated Augustine's seminal reasons into the Aristotelian causes rather than as being in the material causes from the beginning of the world.¹²⁵ Whereas Aristotle conceived efficient causality in terms of motion (hence, the Aristotelian designation 'moving cause'), Aquinas, influenced by Avicenna's notion of a creative cause giving actual existence, viewed God as the efficacious cause of existence as such and creatures as cause of a particular aspect of existence.¹²⁶ Aquinas' integration in terms of existence of the Platonic doctrine of participation and the Aristotelian notion of causality provided him with a metaphysical framework for reasoning from creatures to God and from God to creatures.¹²⁷

Theodicy

Aquinas constructed his natural theology upon the foundation of his metaphysics by inquiry into the existence, nature, and attributes of God.

I. Existence of God

Aquinas investigated the problem of God's existence in three questions: First, is it self-evident that there is a God? Second, can it be made evident? Third, is there a God?

A. *Lack of Self-Evidence.* Aquinas faced the problem of resolving the apparent conflict between the opinion that God cannot exist and the historical phenomenon of atheism. In response to John Damascene's view that man enjoys an innate awareness of God and naturally desires happiness which can found truly only in God, Aquinas replied that such knowledge is so unclear that man is not explicitly conscious of God as the ultimate good.

He criticized Anselm's so-called 'ontological' argument for illicitly proceeding from the idea of a being than which no greater can be thought to its existence in fact. It does not necessarily follow from the concept of the greatest conceivable being that such a being exists outside the mind. Anselm, no doubt, would respond to Aquinas, as he did to his comparative critic, Gaunilo, that the objection holds for all concepts except that of God. As the being than which no greater can be thought, God is not simply possible but a necessary being. He must exist in reality, otherwise he is not that being than which no greater can be thought. But Aquinas added that the human intellect has no direct intuition of God's nature in the sense of discerning *a priori* the positive possibility of the supremely perfect being whose essence is to exist.¹²⁸

- *Self-Evident Proposition.* Aquinas realized that the historical fact of atheism would not be possible were God's existence immediately manifest to man. The fact that the atheist can affirm that "God does not exist," indicates that the proposition "God exists" is not self-evident to man. While the proposition, "God exists", is self-evident in itself inasmuch as God is his own existence, it is not self-evident to man who does not directly know what it is to be God and consequently cannot immediately predicate existence of God.¹²⁹

B. *Possibility of Proof.* Here Thomas faces a number of difficulties. First to the challenge that if God's existence is not immediately evident to human knowledge, how can it ever be uncovered he responds that "faith presupposes natural knowledge"¹³⁰ of God's existence. Second, to the question how can natural reason discern what is not evident except to faith, or overcome its restriction to knowing only what God is not, he responds by insisting that knowing what God does not presuppose knowing that he exists. And third to the difficulty of proceeding disproportionately from finite things to an infinite source he counters that limited effects "can serve to demonstrate that God exists, even though they cannot help us to know him comprehensively for what he is."¹³¹ It is possible to demonstrate the fact of God's existence without knowing why it is true by reasoning "from effects evident to us" in immediate experience to the existence of their cause.¹³²

C. *Demonstration.* Aquinas presented five ways of demonstrating God's existence. Their metaphysical core is the central principle of his notion of participation, namely, that where the essence of a being is potency to *esse* as act (composit being) its actual existence cannot be explained by itself, but only by another being whose essence is identically its existence (simple

being). There are five indices of the state of being a composite being, namely, motion, causality, contingency, perfection and order.¹³³

- *Proof from Motion*. Like Maimonides and Albert the Great, Aquinas adopted Aristotle's proof from motion or change,¹³⁴ which essentially entails potency. Anything in process of change is being moved by something else, because nothing can be reduced from potency to act or from passivity or mere possibility to activity or actualization except by another in act. If that other is itself moved, it must be actuated by yet another agent. An infinite series of movers and moved things, taken as a whole, must also be moved, and hence requires a cause which is not so moved or subject to potency in order to reduce it from potentiality to actuality. Therefore, there must be "some first cause of change not itself being changed by anything, and this is what everybody understands by God."¹³⁵

- *Proof from Causality*. The second proof, used by Avicenna and Albert, and traceable to Aristotle, starts from the series of efficient causes, each caused by, or dependent upon another in order to cause. This argument turns on things as producing rather than on their undergoing change as in the first proof. In an ordered series of efficient causes, there could be no last cause nor intermediate one without some first cause which is not itself caused or subject to potency. To this "everyone gives the name 'God'."¹³⁶

- *Proof from Contingency*. Like Maimonides,¹³⁷ Aquinas adopted Avicenna's proof from the contingency of things in the world. In this demonstration, he went beyond the changing, causal character of things, to focus on the contingency of their being. Observation shows that things spring up and perish in time, indicating that while they can exist they are not bound to be. Even if one were to proceed beyond changing things to an order of unchanging but limited beings the question remains whether such beings are necessary of themselves or of another. If the latter "one is forced therefore to suppose something which must be, and owes this to no other than itself; indeed it itself is the cause that other things must be."¹³⁸

- *Proof from Degrees of Perfection*. The fourth argument from the perfection of things penetrates deeper into the metaphysical structure of the world. Here Aquinas synthesized some observations in Aristotle with the ideas of Plato, Augustine and Anselm.¹³⁹ Observable things show a gradation in the sense that they are more or less good, more or less true, more or less being, and so on. "But such comparative terms describe varying degrees of approximation to a superlative."¹⁴⁰ The truest and best and most noble of things, the most fully in being, causes in other things the perfections they have, for participated being which has more or less of perfection as limited must be constituted of a distinct essence which stands as a limiting potency for existence. Hence, its limited perfection must be received from a simple and unlimited being which is perfection in its purest state. The most perfect existent is called "God".

- *Proof from Order*. The fifth argument from the orderedness of inorganic bodies turns on the principle that operations cannot be directed to ends except by an intelligent cause. Observation reveals an orderedness in the cooperation of different things with contrary qualities and in the operation of individual objects for an end. The fact that their behavior hardly ever varies and practically always turns out well for the harmony of the world shows that they do not function haphazardly but rather tend to a goal. "Nothing however that lacks awareness tends to a goal, except under the direction of someone with awareness and with understanding,"¹⁴¹ as the arrow is guided by the archer. In the pattern of the prior four ways, however, such ordering, like moving, even if in an infinite series of final causes, is not caused is not except by something self-sufficient in ordering. This director is called "God".

II. *Essence of God*

After showing that God exists, Aquinas investigated how the human mind can know God and what it can affirm of him.

A. *Knowledge of the Divine Essence.* How can concepts of finite effects and the words articulated to signify those ideas express an infinite cause whose being is beyond that of the world experienced by man? To explain the human mind's approach to God, Aquinas worked towards harmonizing Dionysius' negative way of unknowing which respects the transcendence of God and the Hellenic positive path of affirming which recognizes his eminence.

In this the positive or affirmative way (*via affirmation*) is first and fundamental: God is good and by his love causes all. But because of the limitations of the human mind and speech it is necessary to remove in a negative way (*via negativa*) from these direct statements the limitations implied even in our need to use at least two words (God is) in making judgements regarding the one simple and uncomposit God. From this there follows the way of transcendence (*via eminentiae*) that God is in a more perfect way than the human mind can state.

- *Positive Way (via affirmativa).* Whereas negative names, such as "immutable", remove from the notion of God a characteristic incompatible with him as first cause, positive names such as existing, unity, truth, goodness, and life, are affirmatively predicated of God and signify something in God.¹⁵⁵ For Aquinas, the opinion of Moses Maimonides that all names of God are negative predicates implies the affirmation of something existing in God. "The meaning of a negation always is founded in an affirmation," for "unless the human understanding knew something of God affirmatively, it could deny nothing of God. . . ." ¹⁵⁶ The statement that God is not a body implies the proposition that God is.

Aquinas also rejected the opinion of Alan of Lille (d. 1202) that the assertion "God is good" means nothing more than "God is the cause of all goodness." If such were the case, then consistency would dictate that God is body inasmuch as he is the cause of all bodies. To affirm that God is good means that goodness positively exists somehow in God. Hence, Aquinas concluded that "God is not good because he caused goodness, but rather goodness flows from him because he is good. As Augustine says, 'Because he is good, we exist.'" ¹⁴²

For Aquinas, the positive predicates attributed to God imperfectly signify how God exists. The statement "God is good" implies *what* is predicated, but not how it is predicated. The word "goodness" which is affirmatively predicated of God, signifies a reality which involves no defect. Likewise, the formal notion of "to be" (*esse*), unity, truth, and wisdom, which do not necessarily imply any note of imperfection, "can be used literally of God." ¹⁴³

- *Negative Way (via negativa).* Because every limited effect experienced by man is unequal to its unlimited first cause, Aquinas emphasized under the influence of the neo-Platonist Pseudo-Dionysius that "we are unable to apprehend it (divine essence) by knowing *what it is*. Yet we are able to have some knowledge of it by knowing *what it is not*." ¹⁴⁴ He conceived this negative way as a process of successively removing (*via remotionis*) from the notion of God all the modes of finite existence that cannot belong to the divine being. Because "by its immensity, the divine substance surpasses every form that our intellect reaches," ¹⁴⁵ it cannot be positively defined by genus and species, but must be negatively affirmed and negatively differentiated from the phenomena of our immediate experience.

- *Negative Attributes.* After reflecting on the data of empirical experience, the mind can progressively affirm that God who exists beyond sensible things as their ultimate cause is not

material, because matter (or body) which is potentiality and participates in form cannot belong to God who must be "sheer actuality" and "essentially form."¹⁴⁶ Nor is God composed of matter and form, substance and accident, essence and existence, for these components, involving the correlation of potency and act and the causation of the composite, cannot be found in God who is pure actuality "without qualification" and the uncaused "first cause".¹⁴⁷ In positive terms, God is absolute simplicity.

God is not composed insofar as he is not limited as form is by matter, substance by accidents, and existence by essence, because his actuality is unrestricted and self-existing.¹⁴⁸ Not circumscribed (in positive terms, "omnipresent"), his unlimited existence is not by power inasmuch as everything is subject to his power, by presence inasmuch as everything is naked and open to his gaze, and by substance inasmuch as he exists in everything causing their existence. . . ."149 As pure self-actuality, he is the fullness of perfection with no imperfection.¹⁵⁰ Since God is pure self-actuality without any potentialities to be actualized, he does not need to move; he is not changeable.¹⁵¹ In virtue of his unchangeableness, God's duration is not temporal, because in his immutable duration he exists eternally or all at once now without beginning or end.¹⁵²

Words are predicated of God in an imperfect manner. They express realities in the limited way they are conceived by the human intellect and articulated in speech. It is not that man knows and talks about God from his experience of empirical things which only finitely resemble their first cause. It is the nature of metaphysics to develop the notion of being from which such limitations are removed as to what it is that is said. The problem which remains, however, is related to the limited character of the human mind itself and from which the mode even of its metaphysical expression cannot escape. "The reason why Dionysius says that such words are better denied of God is that what they signify does not belong to God in the same way that they signify it, but in a higher way."¹⁵³

As a consequence, positive predicates, as the Pseudo-Dionysius observed, can be affirmed of God in regard to the perfection signified and denied of God inasmuch as the perfection understood by the mind in reference to things is not equivalent to the perfection as found in God.

- *Transcendence*. In predicating these negative attributes of God, the mind affirms that God surpasses all sensible and intelligible things. That is why Aquinas affirmed that "neither the Catholic nor the pagan understands the nature of God as he is in himself. . . ."154

Words as wisdom and truth mean more of God than they signify of creatures. "The sentence ('God is living') is used say that life does pre-exist in the source of all things, although in a higher way than we can understand or signify."¹⁵⁷ Life and wisdom belong to God in supreme manner.

- *Transcendental Predicates*. Aquinas positively predicated of God being or existence and its transcendental properties of unity, truth, and goodness. He found Avicenna theologically ahead of Plato and Aristotle in affirming that God's being is not other than his existence.¹⁵⁸ God is being in the sense that his "existence is his essence"¹⁵⁹ in contradistinction to creatures whose essence is really other than their existence which is received and limited. Hence, God is most appropriately named "Existence itself" (*ipsum esse*), or in the words spoken to Moses, "He who is" (Yahweh).¹⁶⁰

Because God's essence is to exist, he is supremely one in himself and distinguished from the multiplicity of creatures.¹⁶¹ Truth as conformity of mind and being "is verified most of all in God. For his being is not only conformity with his intellect, but is his very act of knowing. . . ."162 Because "God's understanding is his being",¹⁶³ he is supreme, original truth which measures all other being and truth. "Since it is as first source of everything not himself in a genus that God is good, he must be good in the most perfect manner possible."¹⁶⁴ Goodness belongs

essentially to God who alone is perfect existence and consequently supremely lovable in himself and the ultimate source and goal of creatures.

B. *Analogy*. In his concern for using words to mean more of God than they signify of creatures, Aquinas applied names to both, "neither univocally nor equivocally but analogically."¹⁶⁵ On the one hand, if in the statement "God is good," the word "good" means univocally the same for God as it does for creatures, then God is reduced to the level of creatures — an unacceptable consequence. On the other hand, if empty of all significance God would have left the universe bereft of ability to relate to its source and goal.¹⁶⁶

Words are used analogously of God and creatures according to a meaning that is more than verbal and less than specific or generic sameness. A meaning is common to different objects according to their relation to some third thing or to each other. As regards a third term, "we say that an animal is healthy as the subject of health, medicine is healthy as its cause, food as its preserver."¹⁶⁷ This kind of analogy, however, is inadequate to explain the application of predicates such as being and goodness to God and creatures who in themselves and not by reason of a third thing are really related to God.

Since creatures are related to God as effects to their cause, meanings can be analogously predicated of them as between two sets of paired terms. In this analogical context, positive perfections, such as being, whose formal meaning does not necessarily imply imperfection, are affirmed first of God who is essentially existence, and secondarily of creatures who participate in existence. "When we say he (God) is good or wise we do not mean simply that he causes wisdom or goodness, but that he possesses these perfections transcendently or eminently."¹⁶⁸ What is meant by the names "existence" and "goodness" is affirmed originally of God and derivatively of creatures.¹⁶⁹ The likeness of effects to their cause makes possible the predication of pure perfection to God and creatures in a similar sense, whereas the deficiency of this resemblance necessitates predicating it in a dissimilar meaning.

- *Analogy of Proportion and Proportionality*. To clarify his theory of analogical knowledge and language, Aquinas distinguished between "proportion" and "proportionality". According to the first kind of analogy, "there is a certain agreement that they have determinate distance between each other or some other relation to each other. . . ."¹⁷⁰ Analogy of proportion is the similarity of a simple relation, for example, between 8 and 4. Being is analogically predicated of created substance and accident which resemble each other according to a simple proportion. However, being cannot be attributed to God and creatures in the same way, because unlike the real relation of created substance to accident, God is not dependent on creatures and not included in the definition of creature. Nevertheless, the fact that creatures are really related to God, makes it possible for the same term to be attributed analogously to both.

Analogy of proportionality involves "the agreement . . . between two related proportions. . . ."¹⁷¹ This is not the identity of a mathematical proportionality, as for example, 6 is to 3 as 4 is to 2, but the infinite distance from creature to God, from composit to simple being developed in the five ways above. Literally, as being is to creatures, so being is to God: the existence of a creature is to its creaturely essence, the existence of God is to the divine essence. No matter how much human knowledge progresses, it does not know how God exists in himself. "Indeed, this is the situation, for, while we know of God what he is not, what he is remains quite unknown."¹⁷² Man cannot know what it means for perfections to exist in God.

C. *Intelligence*. Intelligence and will, the noblest perfections of man, can be attributed to God by analogy with his creatures. Intelligence is a perfection of an immaterial spirit which can and should be predicated of God in a superlative way since he is a spirit who is infinite, eternal, and "immaterial in the highest degree. . . ."173 Since in God "intellect and what is known must be identical in every way,"174 he is completely present to himself and affirms himself perfectly. Unlike Aristotle's self-enclosed divinity, Aquinas affirmed that in perfectly comprehending his power which is one with his being, God grasps all the effects to which his power extends. "Things other than himself he sees not in themselves but in himself, because his essence contains the likeness of things other than himself,"175 not only in their general characteristics but also in their individual reality.176 Eternally embracing the whole of time in an immovable present, God knows all possible177 and future contingents as actually present and realized.178

- *Ideas*. Following the Neo-Platonism of Augustine, Aquinas asserted that there must be ideas in the divine mind, since God created things not by chance, but intelligently, according to the exemplar conceived in his mind. However, he encountered a difficulty from Neo-Platonists, such as Plotinus who refused to posit a multiplicity of ideas in the One or supreme Godhead, lest the divine unity be impaired. To answer this difficulty Aquinas distinguished two aspects of the idea: its mental character and content.

As a subjective mental modification, the idea cannot be plurality in God whose intellect is identical with his undivided essence without any possibility of receiving determinations or any sort of composition. The divine ideas are not really distinct modifications but together with God's act of knowing they are identical with his simple essence and hence absolutely one. "God in his essence is the likeness of all things. Hence an idea in God is simply the divine essence."179

As regards its content, the idea signifies the divine essence, not as it is in itself, but as the exemplar of this or that object. In this sense, the ideas are nothing but the divine essence known in itself as imitable outside itself in multiple ways by creatures. From the human viewpoint, one can speak of a plurality of ideas in the divine intellect insofar as they signify the manifold objects which can participate in the divine essence. To deny a plurality of ideas in God, then, would be tantamount to denying that God knows a plurality of objects.

D. *Will*. Will is also a perfection which, removed from the limitations of creatures, can be predicated in the highest degree of God as identical with his simple being. Since "anything with a mind has a will, just as a thing with sensation has emotional appetite, . . . there must be a will in God because he has a mind."180 God primarily and necessarily wills his own being as the principal good apprehended by his intelligence, and in so doing, wills all other things insofar as they can participate in the divine goodness.181 With no need of perfection from creatures, God does not necessarily will other things. He wills unchangeably whatever changes he wills.182 Because a self-destructive contradiction, for example, a square circle, cannot share in resembling the divine being, it cannot fall within the scope of God's will.

- *Life and Beatitude*. As "that Being, then, whose own nature is its act of knowledge" and willing, "which also does not have what belongs to it by nature determined for it by another," God is "the Being which has life in the highest degree."183 Fully conscious of the "plenitude in the good" he possesses, and complete "master of his actions," God is supremely happy.184 God *is* happiness, creatures *have* happiness.

The different attributes predicated of God give rise to the question of whether they are really distinct from one another. Since God is absolutely simple, his attributes, such as intelligence and will, are really identical with his divine essence. If this be so, what justification is there for speaking

of them as though they were distinct? The distinction arises from the approach of human knowledge which, from the consideration of God's effects as manifesting their cause, forms different concepts expressed in different names to describe the divine essence. What a finite and discursive intellect knows in composite and distinct concepts is, nonetheless, one simple divine reality. Inadequate and imperfect knowledge of God, to be sure, but true knowledge nonetheless.¹⁸⁵

Cosmology

In view of his notion of God, Aquinas investigated the origin and nature of the universe.

I. Creative Act

In searching for the origin of all things from the first cause, Aquinas asked not only about their motion, matter, and form, but about their very existence as such, not simply why they are this or that being but why they exist at all. Everything besides God exists not by its own essence, but by receiving existence from Him who exists of himself. Now to cause existence as such implies as the condition of its possibility no preexisting matter whatsoever from which the universe is made. This production of the whole of all *ex nihilo*, "the non-being which is nothing at all," is none other than "creation."¹⁸⁶

Creator and creatures are closely related. The creature is really related to God upon whom it depends as the cause of its being. However, God has no real relation to the creature. If such a relation were in God as identical with his substance, he and creatures would form a totality within which he would necessarily depend on them for his existence. Such a consequence was unacceptable to Aquinas. Neither would he admit an accidental relation, as if God, pure act, could be potential in regard to any of Aristotle's categories of accidents. Nothing can enter into composition with God who is absolute simplicity. The relation of God to creatures, according to Aquinas, is one of reason, a mental relation, attributed to God by the human intellect on the basis of the real relation of creatures to their creator.¹⁸⁷

Because "properly speaking to create is to cause or produce the existence of things" and not simply to effect their form, it is "God's action by reason of his existence, which is his very nature. . . ." ¹⁸⁸ Existence, the most universal and original of all effects, is the proper effect, not of a creature whose essence is receptive of existential act, but of "the first and most universal cause" ¹⁸⁹ who *is* the unlimited act of to be. All effects produced by finite power presuppose existence *tout court* which can be caused exclusively by the infinite power of God who alone can bridge the unlimited gap between nonexistence and existence.

- *All-perfect*. God neither needs nor acquires anything by giving actual existence to the archetypal ideas of things. Motivated by the Neoplatonic principle that good is self-diffusing, Aquinas viewed the supremely active divine nature as communicating its goodness inwardly through the processions of the persons of the Trinity (as revelation shows), and outwardly through the free creation of finite beings.

Since God's free will is not necessitated by any good beyond himself, no reason other than his own goodness and his own glory -- that is, the manifestation of this goodness -- can be assigned for his decision to share existence with creatures. "He alone is supremely generous, because he does not act for his own benefit but simply to give of his goodness."¹⁹⁰ It was eminently fitting for pure existential act creatively to share its perfection.

II. *Temporality or Eternity of Creation?*

While holding that philosophy can show the creation of the world from nothing, Aquinas believed that it cannot adduce reasons "demonstratively" proving the necessity of creation either in time or from eternity.¹⁹¹ Either way is possible in view of divine freedom and the contingency of creatures. As eternal, God might have created the world from eternity, thus making possible "an unlimited number of things" extending into the past.¹⁹² "There is no necessity for God to will an everlasting (or temporal) world. Rather the world exists just so long as God wills it, since its existence depends on his will as on its cause."¹⁹³ As contingent, creatures can either exist or not exist, either from eternity or in time, depending on God's will.

God is free to will from eternity that the world come to be in time, or that it have eternal duration. What philosophic reason can show to be possible, can be definitively known to be actual only from God's self-revelation made to the believer of his eternal decision to create the world in time. "This therefore is held through revelation alone, and cannot be demonstrated."¹⁹⁴

III. *Conservation*

The world's continuance no less than its origination depends on the creative efficacy of God. Although artifacts continue to exist after the artist's work has ceased inasmuch as he simply alters matter by conferring on it a new form, it is a different case with finite nature. Every creature is essentially related to God as the sole source of its existence so that without his continuing present causality the universe would cease to exist. "The preservation of each and every thing depends on its cause. . . ."195

IV. *Goodness*

Because God is good, the world he created is itself good. Indeed, "the universe cannot be better, as things actually exist, because the order God has established among them, and in which the good of the universe consists, most befits them."¹⁹⁶ However, since divine power is infinite and since every creature participating in perfection is limited, it is always possible for God freely to create another universe that shares more in perfection--a better world. Why God chose the present universe out of the infinite number of possible ones he could have created is his secret. An absolutely best possible universe, like an absolutely greatest number, is inconceivable.

- *Evil*. If God willed only good in creating the world, how can there be evils? If evil is something positive and created, then it would have to be ascribed either to God as creator, or to an ultimate principle of evil, as the Manichaeans believed. Neither conclusion was acceptable to Aquinas who, like Augustine and Plotinus, rejected the antecedent premise and viewed evil as something negative.

Within the metric of good, evil appears not as a positive entity, but as a privation of reality and good. Participating in goodness, creatures can have this in a greater or lesser degree that admits of physical deficiency, for example, blindness which is an absence of sight. Since God foresaw the presence of evil in the world he created, can it be said that he willed evil in some sense? Physical evil -- sickness, loss of limb, death -- which is involved in the total universal order willed per se by the divine artist, is allowed incidentally (*per accidents*) by him.

Moral evil, however, the disorder of a creature's free will, opposes the universal order within which free agents are orientated towards the divine good, and hence cannot be willed even

incidentally by God without denying himself. God wills man's freedom and tolerates his misuse of freedom for a greater good, namely the life of freedom itself. In this sense, "that whole composed of the universe of creatures is the better and more complete for including some things which can and do on occasion fall from goodness without God preventing it."197

Psychology

Aquinas developed his notion of the human person within the general framework of creation.

I. Human Structure

Following Aristotle's theory of hylomorphism, Aquinas viewed human beings as composites of matter and a rational form, standing between the angelic world of pure intellectual forms and corporeal creation which is composed of matter and mineral, plant or animal forms. The substantial form as the inner source of a living being's self-motion and self-development, is called soul. Each human soul possesses "a complete act of existing in virtue of its own nature."198

- *Unity*. To explain how the human composite of body and soul with its multiple operations is a single subject, Aquinas, at first, seemed to lean towards the prevalent Augustinian theory of a plurality of forms. Though this theory accounts for the variety of human operations and the difference between matter endowed with a form of corporeity and the human soul with its own independent existence,199 it was rejected by Aquinas as inadequate to explain man's substantial unity.

Adapting Aristotle's hylomorphic theory in term of existence, Aquinas reasoned that one being can have but one existence, one existence can have but one essence, and one essence can have but one form. Man exists and operates as one subject insofar as he has one substantial form which also informs the matter and simultaneously confers on man being, corporeity, life, sense, and understanding. "The same act of existing that belongs to the soul is conferred on the body by the soul so that there is one act of existing for the whole composite."200 There is but one undivided human nature and one human subject.

Within the whole human composite matter needs the rational form to be a human body with living, sensory functions which belong to the one human subject. Likewise, the rational soul needs the body so that its intellectual power can grasp the meaning of things sensibly experienced and thus, find fulfillment of its vital, sensory, intellective capacities in the body. "It is for the good of the soul to be joined to the body and to understand by turning to sense images."201 While body and soul are co-constituents by which man is and operates, it is the individual human subject that properly exists and functions.202

II. Human Powers

In his concern for the manifold functions of the one human being. Aquinas held a real distinction between the essence of the soul and its powers, and between the powers themselves. Because the rational form is not identical with its existential act, it does not essentially exist or function but rather is in potentiality to operation by powers which "are distinguished in terms of their acts and objects."203 Since these powers originate in an orderly way (vegetative, sensitive, intellective) from the one soul and participate in its single existential act, they are "an ordered relationship" in the one human existent.204 In this hierarchy, the higher the power the wider and

more comprehensive its object; for example, the intellect has as its object, not only sensible bodies perceived by the sensitive power, but being in general. By reflecting upon man's functions and their proper objects, Aquinas distinguished in Aristotelian fashion the soul's vegetative, sensitive, appetitive, locomotive, and intellective powers of acting.²⁰⁵

- *Vegetative Powers*. In common with other living things, man has the vegetative powers of nutrition, growth, and generation which transcend inorganic physical forces. These powers "do not exist without the body, for they are performed through bodily organs."²⁰⁶ Whereas the object of the vegetative power is simply the body of the sentient subject, that of the sensitive faculty is every sensible body.

- *Sensation*. Man shares with animals the five external senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, distinguished according to their respective formal objects of color, sound, odor, taste, pressure. Sense activity involves a "spiritual change when the form of color is in the eye, which does not become the color it sees."²⁰⁷ Unlike Augustine who thought sensation belonged simply to the soul using a body, Aquinas held that the sensory faculties of the soul belong to the whole human subject in such a way that they cannot operate without a bodily organ.

Sensible objects perceived by the external senses evoke a response in the internal senses: common sense, imagination, instinct, and memory. Common sense distinguishes, compares, and combines different sense data, as it perceives the various functions of the senses. The data collated by common sense is represented and reconstructed by the imagination which conserves the forms grasped by the senses. "What we call natural instinct in other animals in man we call cogitation, which . . . compares individual intentions" in view of their beneficiality or harmfulness, "the way the reasoning intellect compares universal intentions."²⁰⁸ As regards sense memory, man not only shares with other animals the "sudden recollection of things past," but also reminisces or searches in a "quasi-syllogistic" way among memories for the one desired.²⁰⁹

The objects perceived by sensation are desired as an end by the sense appetite and attained by movement in place. "By this (appetitive) power an animal seeks after what it knows, not merely going where inclination leads."²¹⁰

- *Intellect*. Deepening his analysis of human subjectivity, Aquinas sees it able to reflect upon being in general, the universal object, and reasoned to the intellect as a faculty whose operation intrinsically transcends the sense experience of particular objects. Unlike sensory powers, the rational faculty belongs to the soul as such, functions without intrinsic dependence on a bodily organ, and remains operative in the soul even when it is separated from the body. In its function of remembering, the intellect transcends sensory memory of particular objects as past by conserving and recalling concepts. The speculative and practical intellects are but one intellectual power, for both concern truth with the latter directing "that known truth towards action."²¹¹

- *Individual Intellect*. In his concern for the uniqueness of each person, Aquinas rejected Averroes' theory of the intellect (both the active and passive intellect) as a substance distinct from the human soul and common to all men. If there were one intellect for all men, it would be the subject of knowledge, functioning independently of the individual and understanding without the help of the individual's senses and imagination. However, the fact is that the individual is conscious that *he* knows, pursues intellectual activity at will, needs sense experience for intellectual operations, and enjoys intellectual capacities and ideas that differ from another's. These facts can be explained adequately only by the presence of an individual intellectual substance informing the body of each person. The uniqueness of each human being "following upon the unity of its form" which is the "intellective soul".²¹² Indeed without such there could be no personal responsibility or destiny.

- *Appetition*. Within the ceaselessly changing universe, man finds himself restless and active. Reflecting on man's natural inclinations, Aquinas disclosed three kinds of appetites. First, man has certain natural inclinations in common with physical substances, for example, the tendency of heavy bodies to fall downward. Second, he shares sense appetites with animals: "desire" (*concupiscibilis*) drives towards "what pleases the senses and avoids what hurts them", and "aggressiveness" (*irascibilis*) resists whatever threatens its pleasure and brings danger" by striving to overcome and rise above the difficulties.²¹³ Love and hostility, desire and aversion, pleasure and pain, are emotions of the inclination of desire; hope and desire, courage and fear, and anger, are passions of the aggressive drive.

- *Will*. Third, in conjunction with his power of reason, man possesses a rational appetite or will.²¹⁴ The will "though it bears on objects . . . as concrete particulars, nevertheless attains in them a universal object of reason, desiring a thing precisely because it is good." Motivated by good as such, the will necessarily desires happiness. Such necessity is not imposed from without by violence (necessity of coercion), but is a necessity of nature (natural necessity proceeding from the nature of the will).

"Since the will's potential is to total and perfect good, that potential cannot be exhausted by any particular good, and so it cannot be moved necessarily by it."²¹⁶ Although the will's drive towards good as such implicitly orientates man towards God as the supreme good, this does not mean that man must explicitly desire God as his ultimate goal. Since man encounters only particular goods to which his will is contingently related, he does not see clearly and steadfastly the connection between happiness and God, and consequently does not necessarily will God.

"Free will" signifies, not a power different from the will, but the same faculty as principle of free choice of means to the end. Whereas the will necessarily desires universal good as its final end, it freely chooses particular goods as means to the end: it is able to choose or not to choose, to choose one good rather than another. Unlike the animal whose natural instinct determines its "judgment," for example, a sheep's "judging" that the wolf is to be avoided, man judges that some good is to be attained or some evil to be avoided by a free act of his intelligence, a decisive judgment. Since "particular actions are contingent . . . reason's judgment is open to various possibilities, not fixed to one. It is because man is rational that such decisions must needs be free."²¹⁷

Thus, the gap between finite goods and the infinite good gives rise to freedom of choice.

III. *Immortality*

Preferring Aristotle's hylomorphic theory of man to the Platonic-Augustinian view of the soul using the body, Aquinas faced the difficulty of explaining how the soul could be the single substantial form of the body and depend upon sense experience for the performance of intellectual functions without sacrificing its subsistence and immortality. In response, he reasoned that something is corruptible either by itself (*per se*) or accidentally through the corruption of something else on which it depends for existence. Neither of these alternatives is true of the rational soul as analysis of its unique activities shows it to be a spiritual and subsistent form. Whereas the soul of the brute whose sensory powers are determined to a specific bodily object indicates that it is subject to material conditions, the rational soul, which can abstract and universalize the nature of all bodies, shows it to be a spiritual form. The fact that the intellectual soul can reflect upon itself is further evidence that it is not a body.

The sensitive soul of the brute intrinsically depends on bodily organs for all its operations and corrupts with the corruption of the body. In contrast, the intellectual soul functions intrinsically independent of the body and subsists in a spiritual and consequently incorruptible state. The mind's need of the body arises, not from its own intrinsic immaterial activity which is exercised without an organ, but from its natural object in this life with the soul conjoined to a body. Since the intellectual soul "has its own activity in which the body takes no intrinsic part,"²¹⁸ apprehending "objects universal and incorruptible as such,"²¹⁹ it must be subsistent and incorruptible.

Furthermore, because "man has an intellectual apprehension of existence as such, and not only of existence here and now as the brutes have,"²²⁰ he naturally desires to persist in being not with a temporal limit, but perpetually. Implanted by the author of nature, this desire cannot be in vain. This argument that the natural desire for immortality ought to be fulfilled is based on the previous proof that it is possible of achievement in a spiritual soul.

Though the human soul alone is incomplete in essence, comprised as it is with the body in man's nature, it is complete as far as its existence is concerned. Possessing its own existential act with no matter from which its form could be separated, the human soul subsists as a spiritual substance in its own right and naturally persists perpetually in being.²²¹

Theory of Knowledge

In his affirmations about God, the world, and man, Aquinas critically reflected on the nature and truth of knowledge to lay an epistemological basis for his theology, psychology, and metaphysics.²²² He realized that affirmations are, on the one hand, scientific insofar as they possess universality and necessity, and on the other, objective inasmuch as they are applicable to individual, contingent beings of immediate experience.²²³

I. Sensation

Man encounters contingent particular things insofar as he is a sensory being. Truth is in the senses insofar as it "judges of things as they are,"²²⁴ that is, perceives its proper object, for example, the visual intuition of color. "Truth is not in senses, however, as something known by sense," for "it knows neither the nature of its act nor the proportion of this act to things."²²⁵ Falsity is said to be in the senses insofar as they occasion a misjudgment by the intellect, for example, in presenting the appearance of gold for what in reality is not genuine gold.²²⁶

II. Agent Intellect

Aquinas agreed with Aristotle that the human intellect is originally a clean slate (*tabula Rasa*) without any innate ideas. The mind must draw its materials from what is provided by the senses. How can a transition be effected from singular, contingent, sensible things to universal, necessary conclusions? Because no sensory object nor image can directly affect the spiritual soul, Thomas agreed with Aristotle that the rational soul must possess an "agent intellect" which "by a process of abstraction makes images received from the senses actually intelligible."²²⁷ He interpreted Augustine's theory of illumination as "a proper intellectual light in man,"²²⁸ which abstracts "the universal from the particular, or the intelligible species from the phantasm."²²⁹ After reducing the universal from potential to actual intelligibility, the intellect presents to itself a possible likeness (*species*) of the thing. "The intellect actualized and informed by the species, as by a proper form,

understands the thing itself" in an immanent act which "remains in the intelligence and bears a relation to the thing which it understands. . . ."230

III. *Concept*

On understanding the thing, the intellect "forms within itself a certain *intention* (concept) of the thing understood which is the meaning (*ratio*) of the thing, which the definition signifies."231 Because the intellect "understands the thing as separated from the material (individuating) conditions"232 and as universal, it needs to form a concept. Although the concept and the thing are different entities, they are intelligibly identical through the intentional "mode by which the similitude existing in the intellect is representative of the thing."233

Thus the conceptual likeness is not what is known but that *by* and *in* which the intellect understands the thing itself much as we do not perceive the mirror image but the object in itself which is reflected in the mirror. After grasping the thing via the concept, the intellect can then reflect on the concept as a construct of its own, as in logic.234 Were concepts that which is originally understood, scientific knowledge would be confined to concepts and what each mind judges of them -- however contradictory -- would be true.235 Truth, however, is the conformity of mind and reality.

The concept expresses the intellect's apprehension of the essence of sensible things, not as individualized in them, but as "abstracted or set apart from matter and from material likenesses such as sense images"236 and hence from the individuality of the object. In its first intention, the intellect "directly" knows the nature. It then either relates this to all the instances of a nature, i.e., universalizes the nature, or through a "quasi-reflection" turns to the image presented by the imagination, thereby "indirectly" knowing the singular thing and discerning that the universal concept is applicable to this individual existent.237 Here Aquinas followed Aristotle in holding that the human intellect understands nothing without a phantasm or image, as is evident from introspection. Thus Aquinas' theory of abstraction and conversion explains the synthesis of understanding universals and the perception of the concrete.

Favoring the Aristotelian position over the Augustinian view of the rational soul's direct knowledge of itself, Aquinas reasoned that "the human intellect, which is actualized by a species of the thing understood, is itself understood through this same species. . . ."238 But how is this possible? In view of the Aristotelian principle that nothing is in the intellect which was not first in the senses, the problem arises whether the mind can go beyond sensible things to attain knowledge of the human soul and God, immaterial realities which can neither be objects of the senses nor representations of the imagination.

The human intellect as human, has as its proper object the essence of a material thing, whereas as intellect it is oriented towards the whole range of being: ". . . being is the primary and distinctive object of the intellect, just as sound is the primary object of hearing."239 Within the horizon of being in general, the human intellect indirectly knows immaterial realities insofar as they are manifested in and through concrete experience. For example, one "perceives himself to have an intellectual soul from the fact that he perceives himself to be intellectually acting" and understands "the nature of the human mind from the nature of the intellect's activity."240 Likewise, the human intellect can know God insofar as sensible objects manifest his existence and can attain an analogical, indirect and imperfect knowledge of his nature.

IV. *Judgment*

Truth takes place originally in the judgment wherein the intellect, aware of itself as conforming to reality, "judges about the thing it has apprehended at the moment when it says that something is or is not," by composing and dividing in affirmative and negative propositions.²⁴¹ Whereas the truth of speculative judgment lies in the intellect's consciousness of its adequation to intelligible existence, the truth of practical judgment about acts to be done or things to be made resides in the intellect's awareness of its correspondence with right desire, that is, the will inclining man to suitable goals by appropriate means.²⁴²

- *First Principles*. "All knowledge is in a certain sense implanted in us from the beginning . . . through the medium of universal conceptions . . . immediately known by the light of the agent intellect."²⁴³ With being as its horizon, the intellect immediately forms its judgment of things grasped in simple apprehension. When at the third level of knowledge, by judgement it clarifies explicitly the notion of being it affirms the first principles of intelligible being, for example, that being cannot be and not be under the same formal relationship. "These serve as universal principles through which we judge about other things, and in which we foreknow these others."²⁴⁴

Morality and Politics

Aquinas developed his moral theory on the basis of his theological, psychological, and epistemological conclusions. Within a teleological framework, he viewed every creature striving for its own development as sharing and growing in a resemblance to God: "Anything which tends towards its own perfection, tends towards the divine model."²⁴⁵ To show how man matures in the image of God, Aquinas analyzed man's ethical life in its general structure and particular modalities.

I. *Human Act*

Morality concerns human acts. Whereas actions of man such as eating and walking are simply physical or biological in themselves, they are said to be human insofar as they "proceed from the will of man according to the order of reason."²⁴⁶ Aquinas adopted Aristotle's ethical teleology by viewing every human act as oriented towards an end which is the good apprehended by reason and intended by the will.²⁴⁷

II. *Happiness*

Aquinas agreed with Aristotle that the ultimate end of human action is happiness. Because the will is orientated towards the universal good, man does not and cannot find complete fulfillment in any created good, such as riches, power, and bodily pleasure. Even Aristotle's metaphysical contemplation of the ultimate cause is not fully satisfying since God as he is in himself remains hidden. The most that man can experience in this life is an imperfect happiness, because every created good offers only incomplete fulfillment and God — the uncreated sovereign good — is known imperfectly and analogically.²⁴⁸ The ultimate end which alone can fully realize man's potentialities is God, "the universal good".²⁴⁹

The Thomistic man seems to be torn between two goals, one an imperfect happiness, and the other complete happiness which is unattainable in this life. Within the Christian perspective,

Aquinas distinguished between the natural final end, contemplation of God, as the good proportionate to human powers and the supernatural ultimate end, vision of God, as the good transcending the power of human nature, namely eternal life with God.²⁵⁰ These ends, however, are not mutually exclusive. They refer to different dimensions of existence in the same concrete human being. In the attainment of imperfect felicity as his natural end, man does not put himself outside the way to his supernatural end. As we shall see later, the limitations of man's natural end point beyond itself to a higher goal.

III. *Good and Evil*

Aquinas analyzed the moral goodness of human acts within the horizon of man's ultimate end. Since "the human will's ultimate end is the supreme good, . . . God, "an act of the human will is good insofar as it is "ordered to the supreme good."²⁵¹ Human acts are morally good insofar as they orientate man towards the ultimate good, and bad inasmuch as they defeat that purpose. Since man's whole person is destined for happiness with God, the moral goodness of act refers to him in his total being, or man as man, and not simply under some aspect, for example, a good athlete. With knowledge of the purpose of an act, man can freely choose what leads to his ultimate end and perform good actions. Virtue enables man to be habitually disposed to good acts.

IV. *Moral Structure*

To determine how human actions can be inwardly directed towards God and consequently good, Aquinas analyzed their moral structure into object, circumstances, and end. First, "as the basic goodness of a natural thing is provided by its (specific) form, which makes it the kind of thing it is, so also the basic goodness of a moral act is provided by the befitting *objective* on which it is set, . . . for instance using what belongs to you."²⁵² The appropriate objective agrees with "the reasonable order of life."²⁵³

Second, *circumstances* determine the morality of actions. As qualities like figure and complexion supervene on the specific nature given by the substantial form to man, so with moral activity "its full goodness as a whole . . . is filled out by the additions which are like its qualities: such are its due circumstances."²⁵⁴

Third, the motive or end shapes the structure of human action. As form actualizes matter, so the end (*finis operantis*: intention of the doer) intended by the will formally specifies the act which is orientated towards its objective (*finis operis*: purpose of deed).²⁵⁵ The end is good when it agrees with reason which directs the will to what can be referred to man's intellectual form and hence, to what is reasonable and good.²⁵⁶ The will can desire either a seeming good, for evil attracts insofar as it appears as a value, or a genuine good, God or some created good which is referable to man's final and all-embracing value. "Unless it gathers in all these values" — reasonable objective, due circumstances, and proper motive — "an action is not good simply speaking (without reservation), for as Dionysius says, each single defect causes evil, whereas complete integrity is required for good."²⁵⁷

V. *Virtue*

Moral actions are regulated inwardly by virtue and outwardly by law. With Augustine, Aquinas defined virtue as "a good quality of mind by which one lives righteously. . . ." ²⁵⁸ As a

good habit, virtue disposes a rational being in a steady way to perform good actions, whereas vice is a settled disposition for bad activity. The subject of intellectual virtues, such as science, wisdom, and understanding, is reason, whereas the seat of moral virtues, such as justice, is the will which can impress the sensitive appetites with rational control and habituate the passions to the spiritual for man's full development.²⁵⁹The intellectual and moral virtues do not necessarily coexist in the same person, although, it is not possible to have the intellectual virtues without prudence. Gradually formed by repeated good acts, the virtuous disposition facilitates the performance of subsequent acts for the same end.

Aquinas agreed with Aristotle that moral virtue consists in a mean as regards the matter about which it is concerned, namely, the passion or appetites. An action can be opposed to virtue as conformity to right reason either by excess or defect, for example, profligacy or insensibility in relation to the mean of temperance, which controls passion. At first glance, the adoption of this Aristotelian theory might seem to make it difficult to explain the reasonableness of such Christian styles of life as virginity or voluntary poverty.

In reply, Aquinas pointed out that complete chastity, for example, can be virtuous when it conforms with reason enlightened by God who invites a person to that form of living. If such a way of life were done out of superstition or vainglory, it would be an excess. What determines whether a virtue, which appears as an extreme in one situation, is a mean in another circumstance, is its conformity to the rule of reason directing man's acts to his final end.²⁶⁰

VI. Religion

- *Moral Virtues.* Aquinas adapted Aristotle's division of the cardinal moral virtues into prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude, in view of his notion of God. For example, whereas Aristotle's concept of the Divine involves no personal relationship between man and the divine, Aquinas' notion of God as creator and governor of all things led to his regarding religion as a unique natural moral virtue, "annexed" to justice inasmuch as it renders to God due worship and reverence. However, it is superior to the other virtues because it "approaches more closely to God, and to justice because man is unequal to the duty of fully acquitting himself of his debt to God."²⁶¹ Aquinas grounded Aristotelian virtue in man's total dependence upon God as his beginning and end.

- *Theological Virtues.* Within the framework of religion, Aquinas surpassed Aristotle in the reality of "the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity [which] have God as the proper object of their acts," transcending the objects of the moral virtues as "means to the last end."²⁶² In contrast to the natural acquisition of moral virtues, theological virtues are infused by God to lift human activity beyond its pursuits within the earthly city to fellowship with God. "Sympathy or connaturality for Divine things is the result of charity, which unites us to God."²⁶³ Natural moral virtues come to completion insofar as they are perfected by the supernatural virtue of charity which "is said to be the end of other virtues, because it directs all other virtues to its own end."²⁶⁴

- *Hope.* Likewise, Aristotle's definition of hope as an emotional tendency for "a good that lies in the future and that is difficult, but possible to attain,"²⁶⁵ finds a deeper meaning in Thomas' concept of hope as "a cleaving to God as source of absolute goodness, since hope is reliance on God's help to bring us to blessedness."²⁶⁶ In hope, God shows himself not only as "the ultimate good sought after," but also as the source of confidence, "an unfailing source of help in attaining thereto, . . ."²⁶⁷

VII. Law

The outer principle of human activity is law which Thomas succinctly defined: "law is nought else than an ordinance of reason for the common good made by the authority who has care of the community, and promulgated."²⁶⁸ Law then is a function of practical reason which, as director of man's activity towards his end, is the measure of human acts. Where reason is wanting, there is neither law nor equity, but sheer inequity. Virtue is conformity to the rule of reason. Reason, therefore, is the root of moral obligation. Since law aims essentially at the realization of good without reservation of any kind, it cannot restrict itself to the welfare of particular persons, but rather prescribes the good of the community. For that reason, the authority required for the legitimate establishing of law can belong only to someone duly invested with powers to lead his community, or to the community itself.

- *Natural Law*. Reason obliges according to the basic inclinations of human nature to constitute the natural law. Since the will naturally tends toward the good, practical reason dictates as "the first command of law, 'that good is to be sought and done, evil to be avoided.'"²⁶⁹ This most general prescription expresses itself in three particular precepts for the good of human nature. The natural law commands every rational being to respect his three natural tendencies: first, to conserve his life and protect his health; second, to procreate and care for his wife and family; third, to develop his rational life by seeking truth and grow in social virtue.²⁷⁰

- *Knowledge of Natural Law*. Although the natural law is inherent in human nature, all people are not aware of its dictates. "As for its common principles," for example, to act intelligently, "here natural law is the same for all in requiring a right attitude towards it as well as recognition,"²⁷¹ though reason can be confused about how they apply in particular cases. "As for particular specific points" — for instance, restoration of goods to an owner — "which are like conclusions drawn from common principles," Aquinas reasoned that "most people" are aware of them, though in "fewer cases"²⁷² desire and "knowledge of what is right may be distorted by passion or bad custom."²⁷³ To overcome these unreasonable situations, he concluded to the value of divine positive law, for example, the ten commandments. In addition, considering the fact that not all men have the time or ability to discover the whole natural law, it was morally necessary that it should be positively expressed by God in the revelation of the Decalog to Moses.

- *Eternal Law*. The ultimate source of obligation must be found in the infinite Being who determines the nature of things and governs them²⁷⁴ in view of his eternal exemplar ideas. Influenced by Augustine, Thomas concluded that "the Eternal Law is nothing other than the exemplar of divine wisdom as directing the motions and acts of everything."²⁷⁵ Since man's rational ordering of his natural tendencies is a created impression of the eternal law indelibly written on the tablets of the heart, so to speak, natural law is aptly called, "the sharing in the Eternal Law by intelligent creatures."²⁷⁶ The eternal law is applied by divine providence and executed by divine government. Because natural law is grounded in the eternal law of divine reason ordering man's acts according to the unchangeable exemplar idea of human nature, it remains fundamentally the same.

- *Human Law*. "Human positive laws are either just or unjust. If they are just, they have binding force in the court of conscience from the Eternal Law from which they derive, . . ."²⁷⁷ The human legislator applies the natural law to particular cases in clearly defined enactments and supports it with effective sanctions.²⁷⁸ For example, murder, forbidden by natural law but in an unclear dictate without immediate sanctions, is clearly defined in positive enactments with sanctions added. When man-made law "is at variance with natural law, it will not be a law, but

spoilt law,"²⁷⁹ and consequently does "not oblige in the court of conscience," unless perhaps a greater evil would follow from its nonobservance.²⁸⁰ But sooner or later it must be modified. Since the ruler receives his legislative power ultimately from God, he has no right to promulgate laws counter to the natural law.

- *Law and Change*. Law needs to adapt to a living situation in which reason develops insight into a better regulation, or changing conditions vary what is for the common benefit. However, stability and security dictate that law "should never be altered, unless the gain to the common well-being on one hand makes up for what has been lost on another."²⁸¹ The natural law may change by addition or subtraction. First, "many things over and above natural law have been added, by divine law as well as human laws, which are beneficial to social life."²⁸² Second, "the first principles of natural law (e.g., do good and avoid evil) are altogether unalterable"²⁸³ by subtraction since they are founded on human nature which remains basically the same, whereas secondary precepts, "though not alterable in the majority of cases . . . , can nevertheless be changed on some particular and rare occasions,"²⁸⁴ for example, not returning goods to the owner who needs them to attack one's country.

VIII. *State*

While largely adopting the social ethics of Aristotle, Aquinas found it necessary to modify and supplement it within a political framework that opened to man's destiny beyond his earthly life and related Church and State.

- *Natural Institution*. The State is founded on man's nature as animal and social. First, "it is natural for man, more than any other animal to be a social and political animal, to live in a group."²⁸⁵ Whereas nature provides animals with clothing and means of defence, she leaves man to fare for himself by the use of reason in cooperation with other men, dividing their labor and specializing, for example, in medicine and agriculture. Second, man's linguistic capacity to communicate concepts shows his natural inclination to live in community: "Man communicates with his kind more completely than any other animal known to be gregarious."²⁸⁶ While other animals are confined to expressing their feelings through very general signs, man can articulate his concepts completely in words.

- *Government*. As reason directs the manifold faculties of the person, so a ruling power is needed to unify and order a multitude of human beings "toward the common good of the many, over and above that which impels toward the particular good of each individual,"²⁸⁷ lest society be broken up from each one looking after his own interest. Human society and government have a justification and authority from God who, in creating human nature upon which they are grounded, willed their existence.²⁸⁸ The wisdom of human rulers is traceable to divine reason: "Since the Eternal Law is the governing idea in the sovereign of the universe, from that all the governing ideas in lower rulers derive."²⁸⁹

- *Perfect Society*. Aquinas acknowledged with Aristotle that the State is an institution in its own right with an end and sphere of its own. The State is a "perfect community" in the sense that it is entirely self-sufficient, possessing all the means necessary to attain the common good of the citizens.²⁹⁰ The government works for the common good by procuring "the unity of peace"²⁹¹ within the State, unifying the direction of the citizens' activities for a good life, adequately providing for the needs of life, and overcoming dangers to the State from within by criminals and from without by enemies.

- *State and Church.* No State, however, has absolute power. Aristotle supposed that the State (or City-State) satisfied or ideally could satisfy all the needs of man. For Thomas, the one ultimate goal of man is to attain God. This supernatural end cannot be achieved through the State, but through the ministry exercised by the Church. "In order that spiritual things might be distinguished from earthly things, the ministry of this kingdom has been entrusted not to earthly kings but to" the Church, so that "those to whom pertains the care of intermediate ends should be subject to him to whom pertains the care of the ultimate end, and be directed by his rule."²⁹² As reason is related positively to faith, so is the State to the Church. Aquinas' position is based more on his faith in man's supernatural end than on the political structure of his day. Church and State should collaborate in their respective spiritual and temporal offices for the attainment of man's one ultimate end.

- *Individual and State.* Law concerns primarily the common good because "an individual is part of a group" and not absolutely autonomous. "Each in all that he is and has belongs to the community, as also is any part what it is because of the whole."²⁹³ Accordingly, in view of Plato's concept of love as the desire and pursuit of the whole, Thomas justified a man's courageously dying in defense of his country.²⁹⁴ However, the Aristotelian subordination of the individual as a part to the State as a whole should not be pressed in Thomas' politics. Going beyond the Aristotelian concept of man as an individual within a class, Thomas respected him as a person with his own unique existence, freedom, and rights, destined for an end beyond the sphere of the State.

- *Political Power.* Neither legislative nor executive power is absolute. Political sovereignty comes from God, for "with any governed system . . . power issues from an original principle to secondary principles, . . ."²⁹⁵ In what appears to be a reference to elected government, Thomas affirmed that "the ruler . . . has the power of making law only in so far as he represents the people."²⁹⁶ Here, however, Thomas is motivated rather by respect for tradition and the force of custom than by a feeling for democracy.²⁹⁷ As long as the ruler exercises his power in the light of reason, he looks to the good of the people as a whole.²⁹⁸ But, if the sovereign abuses his power for his private interests, he becomes a tyrant who may be legitimately deposed, especially by people who possess the right to elect a king.²⁹⁹ In view of this right, and the obligation of the ruler to represent the people, it seems probable that Aquinas held a theory of popular sovereignty, namely, that power is given by God to the people as a whole, who, in turn, delegate it to the ruler.

- *Forms of Government.* Following Aristotle, Thomas distinguished government into three forms: monarchy, aristocracy, and law-abiding democracy, and their corresponding forms of deviation: tyranny, oligarchy, and irresponsible democracy.³⁰⁰ While theoretically favoring the monarchical rule of one person as the best to assure social unity and peace,³⁰¹ Thomas practically tempered his rule to keep it from easily turning into tyranny. He preferred for the public good, a monarchy blended with other forms: "This is the best form of constitution, a mixture of monarchy, in that one man is at the head, of aristocracy, in that many rule as specially qualified, and of democracy, in that the rulers can be chosen from the people and by them."³⁰² Thomas' flexibility allowed him to avoid the Scylla of absolutism and the Charybdis of individualism in order to direct political structures of a mixed constitution to the common good and the value of the person.

IX. *Vision of God*

Obedience to law and growth in virtue within the State and Church enable man to share more in the divine likeness and move toward his final end, God. Since man's proper operation is intelligence, he seeks as his last end "to understand God in some fashion."³⁰³ Aristotle's man

finds the natural fulfillment of his desire to know all possible objects in the contemplation of God.³⁰⁴ For Thomas, however, no contemplation in man's present state of existence completely fulfills his inner intellectual drive. This natural tendency can be totally satisfied only upon the perfect attainment of its ultimate end in the next life, for "nothing finite can fully satisfy intellectual desire."³⁰⁵ Up to this point, Aquinas as a moral philosopher completed the Aristotelian ethic by introducing consideration of the next life.

Within the framework of religious faith, Thomas saw that man cannot find the perfection of his drive to know all possible things except in the vision of God, the most knowable object.³⁰⁶ "And this will clearly be fulfilled in that wisdom, when, through the vision of the First Truth, all that the intellect naturally desires to know becomes known to it."³⁰⁷ Since the sight of God in the next life "transcends the limitations of every created nature . . .," the attainment by a created intellect to the vision of divine substance is not possible except through the action of God, Who transcends all creatures.³⁰⁸ In this vision, the intellect's desire finds complete fulfillment.

Thomas' statement that the perfect happiness of man consists in the vision of God raises a difficult problem. On the one hand, he said that man has a "natural desire" for the vision of God, which cannot be in vain, and on the other, he explicitly stated that man by his own efforts cannot attain to the vision of God. But a natural desire for the vision of God seems to endanger the gratuitous character of supernatural beatitude. It is difficult to see how the grace of God, by which the beatific vision is attainable, is not in some sense due to man with his natural desire to see God.

What Thomas meant by "natural desire" (*desiderium naturale*) is not clear. Commentators interpret this concept in different ways with the intention of preserving Thomas' belief in the supernatural and gratuitous character of the vision of God. Cajetan understood the notion of natural desire as only an obediencial potency (*potentia obediencialis*), a passive capacity for the beatific vision; but it seems that Thomas has something more positive and active in mind. Suarez, for example, interpreted Thomas' natural desire as conditional on God's elevating man to the supernatural order and giving him the means to attain the supernatural end. This interpretation is reasonable, but it seems to restrict Thomas' meaning of natural desire to nothing more than a desire to know the nature of the first cause.

It seems more probable that Thomas, like Augustine, viewing man in the actual, concrete order as called to a supernatural goal, meant that man's natural desire to know as much as possible of the ultimate cause is a desire to see God. In other words, in its natural tendency towards truth, the human intellect moves *de facto* towards the vision of God as absolute truth, its only concrete end. This explanation is not intended to be a definitive conclusion as to what Thomas precisely meant by natural desire.³⁰⁹

Conclusion

Thomas Aquinas stands beyond all the other scholastics and alongside Dante as a representative of medieval genius at its height. The sound of "the dumb ox," as the silent slow-moving Thomas was dubbed by his fellow students, has sounded far and wide in the history of philosophy. His significance can be appreciated by viewing him in three perspectives: retrospect, conspectus, and prospect.

Retrospect

- *Reformation.* Seen in retrospect, Thomas' philosophy appears as a fruitful revolution profoundly changing past ideas by a positive development. Of all the philosophical influence that came to bear on Thomas' thought, Aristotelianism seems the greatest, indeed to such an extent that *prima facie* it may appear simply as a repetition of Aristotle's philosophy baptized and harmonized with this Christian faith. A comparison, however, of their respective notions of being shows the inadequacy of that first impression. While recognizing and utilizing Aristotle's conception of being as form to provide clarity and definiteness for reality, Thomas grounded it in his notion of being as the act of existing, the ultimate insight of his metaphysics. By dissociating the two notions of form and act and conceiving form as act in the essence but essence, in turn, as potency to the act of existing, he achieved nothing less than a reformation in metaphysics.³¹⁰

Since being is the first of man's concepts and that on which all others depend. Thomas' radical transformation of the Aristotelian notion of being was bound to differentiate his philosophy from the Stagirite's and to have far-reaching consequences. Thomas used Aristotelian terms to express his views of God, man, and the world, but their meaning is distinctly his own. Whatever value Thomas discovered in Aristotle's ideas, he was chiefly concerned with existence by which all was ultimately explained. With metaphysical principles different from Aristotle's, Thomas logically came to conclusions different from the Stagirite.

- *Existentialism.* In his admiration for Aristotle as "The Philosopher," and Augustine as "The Theologian," Thomas rarely directly rejected their positions. Rather in his discriminating evaluations, he endeavored to achieve a fruitful revolution by retaining and developing what was valid. He faithfully continued Aristotle's enrichment of Plato's passive ideas with active content from experience. But Thomas' drive for truth moved him beyond Aristotle (*Amicus Aristotelis sed magis amicus veritatis*) for he was more interested in how the truth of things stands³¹¹ than in what Aristotle thought. The growth of Thomas' thought shows a consistent intention to infuse the structure and function of forms with the actuality of existence sensed in changing physical nature and human strivings. His insight into the existential character of reality was not a rejection, but an enrichment of the notion of form and of its knowledge by man. The outcome was a new kind of wisdom which went beyond the horizons of Greek thought.

Conspectus

A critical conspectus of Thomas' approach and teachings shows the unity, value and limitations of his philosophical revolution.

- *Method.* Within the framework of faith, Thomas philosophized as authentically as Plato or Aristotle. It is inexact to sum up Thomas' philosophy as nothing more than an effort to make the peripatetic system agree with Christian beliefs. The mind of Thomas demonstrated philosophical conclusions on the basis of rational principles according to a rigorous rational method. In questions 5 and 6 of his *Commentary on the De Trinitate of Boethius*, he elucidated his philosophical approach by analyzing the methods of natural philosophy, mathematics, and metaphysics. The value-judgments of later thinkers against the possibility of philosophizing within a religious framework does not negate the historical fact of Thomas' distinctive philosophical reflection.

- *Metaphysics.* Thomas' metaphysics like Aristotle's is a philosophy of the real, for it focuses on existing things in the world in which it grasps being with its structure, function and laws. His revolution of the notion of being as existence enabled him not only to surpass the formalist

viewpoint common to so many Greek and medieval philosophers, but also to unify Platonic and Aristotelian metaphysics by taking the original step of transposing the Platonic doctrine of participation. The participated existence of all creatures enabled Thomas to reason in various ways, for example, from motion and effect to the unparticipated existence of God and to explain how God alone is the creative source of their whole being

- *Knowledge*. Corresponding to Thomas' notion of being as existence is his Position on judgment. He went beyond Aristotle's idea of judgment as a combining and separating of formal concepts to the view of judgment as originally an affirmation of existence, which is grounded in the unity of the object affirmed and the subject affirming. However, he neglected to follow through his insight to analyze the existential and historical structure of human consciousness. Nevertheless, his view of knowledge as primordially a grasp of existence is a revolution in the history of the theory of knowledge.

- *God*. The full force of Thomas' metaphysical notion of being as existence emerges in his approach to the Divine. What appears to be simply a restatement of Aristotle's arguments from motion and causality, and the Platonic procedure from participation to the Divine turns out to be a radical reformulation of these proofs in view of Thomas' conception of the act of existence. Thus, since creatures are moving, caused, contingent, more-or-less perfect, and ordered, insofar as their existence is other than their essence, they find their full explanation in the being who is first unmoved mover, first cause, necessary, supremely perfect, and ultimate end, none of which he could be unless his essence is to exist. On the basis of his notion of God as pure existential act, the different proofs can be viewed as completing each other to form a structural whole in the creature's relation to God.

The Thomistic proofs of God's existence have by definition seemed less cogent within the modern context restricted by its reductionist humanism to concerns for language, science, and evolution. First the notion of a first cause when it came to be read in terms of a mechanistic view of the universe could not have conveyed its dynamic sense of the living God. But this Newtonian view of the universe is itself a relic of the past. Thomas, context of a comparatively static universe has been replaced successively by Darwinian mechanisms, internal microbiology and theories of relativity in which the working of mind and spirit emerge as increasingly decisive. Moreover, the new emergence of subjectivity, through the phenomenological investigations of this century, reopens the mind to the concerns for person and teleology, values and cultural traditions long off limits to modern rationalism. This reengages the issues of the fourth and fifth of Thomas's five ways and does so in ways that are not reductivist to this world, but open precisely to Being which grounds the *dasein* or human being in time and ties it back to the sense of the divine which is the ground and inspiration of all the great cultures and civilization.

For all his confidence in human reason approaching the divine in a positive analogical way, Thomas introduces the via negative as an essential step. He notes that the essence or quiddity of God is known to us, but not exhaustively or quidditively as it is to the divine mind (which indeed is the divine life itself). While the proper object of the intellect as a human power in a body is the nature of sensible things, he insisted that by philosophy it seeks its ultimate causes and arrives at affirmative conclusions regarding God as transcending. Hence the three ways of predication regarding God must always be employed simultaneously: the existence and attributes we know (*via affirmativa*), that they are not had by God in the way in which we speak (*via negativa*), and that they are had in a way that transcends our manner of judging and speaking (*via eminentiae*): "This is the extreme of human knowledge of God: to know that we do not know God."312

- *Universe*. Thomas went even further to affirm the incomprehensibility of existence itself: "Just as we cannot say that *running* itself *runs*, so we also cannot say that *being* itself *is*."³¹³ He Thomas insisted on the human incapacity to get to the bottom of created things — "The essence of things is unknown to us"³¹⁴ — it would be contrary to his mind to view his philosophy as a closed system with the last word on every issue. The attitude of Thomas is one of endless exploration into the inexhaustible meaning of existence.

Aquinas was not experimentally inclined like Albert the Great and Robert Grosseteste. For the most part, he inherited his picture and workings of the physical universe from Aristotle. He wrote what is generally considered one of the best commentaries on Aristotle's *Physics*. Bracketing out outmoded physical theories, as Ptolemaic geocentrism and the four-element hypothesis (earth, air, fire, and water), does not in the least invalidate his metaphysical insight into the existential structure of the universe. In view of the constitution of creatures by an existential act and potency he went beyond Aristotle's explanation of the cause of their motion to the creative source of their existence. Likewise, in his account of becoming, Thomas transformed the Aristotelian world into a universal dynamism of the act of existing belonging to forms. The Platonic doctrine of participation enabled him to see the world structurally as a hierarchy of beings pointing towards the Divine and dynamically as a drive of form to share more in existential act so as to resemble the Divine existence more closely. The theology of analogy developed by Augustine and Bonaventure finds its deepest significance in Thomas' view of existential act as the ultimate perfection in which creatures image divine existence. As a participated likeness of pure existential act, the universe is religious, sacred to the core of its peculiar being. His linking of the *Physics* to the *Metaphysics* provides a context for engaging the temporal structure of the world in this structures of existential act and potency?

- *Man*. In his explanation of the nature of man, Thomas surpassed all preceding accounts in the history of philosophy. He did more than substitute Aristotle's hylomorphic theory for the Augustinian doctrine of plurality of forms and spiritual matter. Thomas transfigured the Aristotelian doctrine by grounding the substantiality and immortality of the human soul in its proper existential act which through the soul in turn actuates the body to constitute one human composite. Because of his unique spiritual existential act, man shares more perfectly in the divine Being than other corporeal creatures. At this point one can ask a question that was not available to Thomas: Is it possible to explain the historical structure of man's nature in terms of existential act and potency?

- *Intellectualist*. Thomas leaned more towards Aristotelian intellectualism than towards Augustinian voluntarism on the basis of his notion of being. As the object of the intellect, truth or being as intelligible, is ontologically prior to the object of the will, good or being as appetible, the intellect has precedence over the will. For that reason, Thomas located the supreme happiness of man in his intellectual vision of God which is accompanied by joy of the will. In seeking to balance the roles of intellect and will in his account of free choice, he viewed the judgment of practical reason as formally prior to the choice of the will. Thomas' notion of liberty in the context of intellectualism and of means more than of end, leaves something to be desired in doing justice to the value of freedom. But as he situates this in a teleology and elaborates it intensively in his ethics on an existential basis he provides important grounds for the new projects of creative freedom for the future.

- *Morality*. In ethics, Thomas was as naturalistic as Aristotle in his concern for the natural tendencies of man and the means of liberating them to fully develop his rational nature. The Stagirite, however, was silent on the correspondence between moral perfection and morality;

chance events prevent Aristotle from guaranteeing what Kant calls the reign of end, that is, the consistent fulfillment of virtuous actions. Well aware of the inadequacy of natural means to attain complete happiness, Thomas viewed man's nature as open to perfect fulfillment in God whom he can see face to face in a future life to rejoice in him as the universal good.

- *Politics*. Thomas' attempt to synthesize the Aristotelian concept of the State and the Christian idea of the Church, seems somewhat precarious. In view of man's supernatural end, the ordering of State to Church, like reason to faith, appears consistent. However, if one adheres strictly to the historic Aristotelian concept of the State as a perfect society in its own right, it seems logical that it should be autonomous in its own sphere of activity. This tension between the concepts of State and Church in Thomas' political theory reflects to some extent the actual situation of emerging nation-States becoming conscious of their own uniqueness and power apart from the authority of the Church without expressly repudiating the latter's hegemony. What kept Thomas from viewing the State as a completely autonomous society was his Christian belief in man's one ultimate end. However, as G. Stanley elaborates in note 309 above this is not to suppress the natural end of contemplation, but to recognize the imperfection in its realization recognized by Aristotle and to bring to this the impetus of love and sacrifice required for its achievement.

Prospect

- *Reaction*. Thomas' own century reacted ambivalently to his philosophy. On the one hand, he was highly esteemed for his profound treatment of issues and his masterly organization of Christian teachings. On the other, he was more often misunderstood and attacked for his daring innovations by Latin Averroists and Augustinians. Whereas, the Latin Averroists criticized his novel development of Aristotelianism, conservative Augustinians opposed his giving too much ground to Aristotle's naturalism to the detriment of Christian belief.

In returning to Paris for the second time Thomas had to fight a battle on two fronts in order to bind the new to the old and the old to the new — anything else would have been a tragedy for Western civilization. Had the classical Christian Platonists suppressed the emerging Aristotelian competencies for scientific reasoning the development of the West would have been frustrated; on the other hand had the new Aristotelian undermined the transcendent sense of the human person the new developments would have been in principle dehumanizing a victory of either side would have been a human tragedy. It was precisely the contribution of Thomas, appreciated not immediately, to enable the two streams of thought to reinforce and enrich each other for the common good.

Thomas' theory of the unicity of substantial form, for example, was vigorously attacked as a dangerous innovation contrary to the teaching of Augustine and Anselm. The Franciscan John Peckham and the Dominican Robert Kilwardby criticized the Thomistic doctrine as inadequate to explain how the dead body of Christ was the same as the living body, since, according to Thomas, the one substantial form in the human substance is withdrawn at death and other forms are educed from the potentiality of matter. While maintaining that the dead body of a man is not precisely the same as the living body, Thomas held that Christ's dead body was the same numerical body he had when alive and remained united to the Word of God.³¹⁵ Thomas' theory of the unicity of substantial form, along with other teachings, was condemned as dangerous in 1277 by Robert Kilwardby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and as heretical in 1284 by John Peckham, Kilwardby's successor in the Archbishopric.

- *Corrective*. To cope with the spread of Thomas' ideas, opponents drew up "Correctives" of his teaching. The most popular was written by the English Franciscan William de La Mare (d.c. 1285) who gave Thomas' position on a particular point and then corrected it by generally following Alexander of Hales and Bonaventure. The English Dominican Richard of Clapwell (or Thomas of Sutton) responded by correcting William's presentation. Unfortunately, since supporters of Thomas did not understand his doctrine much more correctly than his opponents, controversy degenerated into confusion. Attacks against Thomas diminished after his canonization in 1323.

- *Exponents*. In the fourteenth and fifteenth century, the multiplication of Thomistic manuscripts contributed to the diffusion of Thomas' thought in newly established European universities. Early in the fourteenth century, Thomas of Sutton noted that all spoke of Aquinas as the Common Doctor (*Doctor Communis*). Renaissance scholastics such as John Capreolus (b.c. 1380) of France, Cardinal Thomas de Vio (1469-1534) of Italy — popularly known as Cajetan — Dominic Banéz (1528-1604) of Spain, and John of St. Thomas (1589-1644) of Portugal, wrote commentaries and treatises to explain and defend Thomas against opponents such as the Scotists. Although the commentators professed loyalty to the mind of Thomas, they not infrequently fell short of grasping the basic principles of their master. For this reason, Banéz, who seems to have grasped better than his contemporaries Thomas' notion of being, criticized both Capreolus and Cajetan for failing to understand that existence (*esse*) is the actuality of every form. Following the example of Cajetan, teachers used Thomas' *Summa Theologiae* as a theological textbook instead of the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard.

- *Decline and Rise*. Due to different factors — competition with Scotism, growth of nominalism, the Protestant Reformation, advance of science — the Thomistic school declined in the modern period. With the revival of neoscholasticism at the end of the 19th century, Neo-Thomism integrated contemporary insights and concerns and gained new vigor through the work of Jacques Maritain, Etienne Gilson, Bernard Lonergan, and Karl Rahner. In different ways, these philosophers attempt to creatively rediscover the possibilities of the authentic Thomistic heritage in the encounter with contemporary issues.³¹⁶ This renewal shows that, despite his outmoded scientific ideas and scholastic style, Thomas' philosophy timelessly surmounts the historical conditions of the thirteenth century and articulates truth of lasting value for all ages.

Notes

1. Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, or *On the Truth of the Catholic Faith*, trans. Anton C. Pegis, Vol. 1 (New York: Image Books of Doubleday, 1955), Bk. I, c. 2, n. 1.

2. See Vernon J. Bourke, *Aquinas' Search for Wisdom* (Milwaukee; The Bruce Publishing Co., 1965). Also J. Weisheipl, *Friar Thomas D'Aquino* (New York: Doubleday, 1974).

3. The best critical edition is the Leonine, *S. Thomae Aquinatis Opera Omnia jussu Leonis XIII edita, 22 vols. to date* (Rome: ex typographia polygotta S.C. de propanganda fide 1882-). Also *S. Thomae Opera Omnia*, 25 vols. (Parma: Fiacadori, 1852-73); photographic reproduction (New York: Musurgia Publishers, 1948-49). Also *D. Thomae Aquinatis Opera Omnia*, ed. S.E. Fretté and P. Maré, 32 vols. (Paris: L. Vives, 1871-80). For a critical discussion of Aquinas' works, see I.T. Eschmann, O.P., "A Catalogue of St. Thomas' Works," in E. Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* (New York: Random House, 1956), pp. 381-430. Also J. A. Weisheipl, "A Brief Catalogue of Authentic Works," in *Friar Thomas D'Aquino*, pp. 351-405.

4. Trans. A. Maurer (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1949).

5. A treatise on matter, form, and the four causes. See *The Pocket Aquinas*, trans. V.J. Bourke (New York: Washington Square Press, 1960), pp. 61-77.
6. Trans. R.W. Mulligan et al., 3 Vols. (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1952-54).
7. *Quaestiones Quodlibetales* (Rome: Marietti, 1949).
8. See *On Searching into God*, trans. V. White (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947); qq. 5-6, *Division and Method of the Sciences*, trans. A. Maurer (Toronto: Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1953).
9. *Expositio in librum Boethii De hebdomadibus* (Rome: Marietti, 1954).
10. The full title in the manuscripts is *Summa on the Truth of the Catholic Faith against the Gentiles*. See *On the Truth of the Catholic Faith*. 5 vols., trans. A.C. Pegis et al. (New York: Doubleday, 1955-57).
11. Chapter 4, lect. 5-6, trans. V.J. Bourke, *The Pocket Aquinas*, pp. 269-278.
12. This magnum opus, written for students of theology, was begun at Rome in 1265 and left incomplete in 1273. (The supplement that purposes to bring the work to its completion is extracted mainly from Bk. 4 of Aquinas' writings on the *Sentences*). Trans. English Dominicans, 3 vols. (2nd ed. New York: Benziger Brothers, 1947-48). New translation with commentary in process, ed. T. Gilby et al. 60 vols. planned (New York: Blackfriars and McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1964-). Quotations from this new edition used by permission.
13. Trans. L. Shapcote (Westminster: Newman Press, 1952).
14. Trans. in three unpublished M.A. dissertations, by G. J. Guenther, C.G. Kloster, and J.X. Schmitt (St. Louis: St. Louis University Press, 1942-44).
15. *The Trinity and the Unicity of the Intellect*, trans. R.E. Brennan (St. Louis: Herder, 1946).
16. Trans. C. Vollert, L. Kenziarski, and P.M. Byrne (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1964).
17. *On Generation and Corruption (In libros de generatione et Corruptione Expositio)*, trans. P. Conway and W.H. Kane (Columbus, Ohio: Alum Creek Press).
- On the Heavens (In Libros de Caelo et Mundo Expositio)*, trans. P. Conway and R.F. Larcher (Columbus, Ohio: Alum Creek Press).
- On Interpretation (In Libros Perihermeneias)*, trans. J. T. Oesterle (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1962).
- On the Metaphysics (In Duodecim Libros Metaphysicorum Expositio)*, trans. J.P. Rowan (Chicago: Regnery, 1961).
- On the Nicomachean Ethics (In decem libros Ethicorum Expositio)*, trans. C.I. Litzinger, 2 vols. (Chicago: Regnery, 1964).
- On the Physics (In Octo Libros Physicorum Expositio)*, trans. R.J. Blackwell, R.J. Spath and W.E. Thirkel (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963).
- On the Posterior Analytics (In Libros Posteriorum Analyticorum Expositio)*, trans. P.H. Conway, and W.H. Kane (Albany, New York: Magi Books, 1969).
- Prologues and First Lectures of Commentaries*, trans. P. H. Conway, O.P. and R.F. Larcher, O.P. (Columbus, Ohio: Alum Creek Press, St. Mary of the Springs).
- On the Soul (with Aristotle's De Anima) (In libros de anima expositio)*, trans. K. Foster and S. Humphries (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1951).
18. Quoted from Bourke, *Aquinas' Search for Wisdom*, p. 193, nn. 53, 54.
19. *Treatise on Separate Substances*, trans. F.J. Lescoe (West Hartford, Conn.: St. Joseph College, 1960).

20. Quoted from Bourke, *Aquinas' Search for Wisdom*, p. 193, n. 54.
21. See E. Gilson, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages* (New York: Charles Scribner, 1938), pp. 69-85.
22. *Metaphysics*, VI, 1, 1026a 19.
23. *Summa of Theology*, I, q. 1, a. 1, obj. 2. Subsequently abbreviated as *ST*.
24. *Ibid.*, obj. 1.
25. *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 1, a. 5.
26. See Gilson, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages*, p. 81; also pp. 53-56.
27. See Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1949), pp. 1-81.
28. E. Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* (New York: Random House, 1956), p. 123. *ST*, I, q. 47, a. 1, obj. 1; q. 45, a. 5, obj. 1-3.
29. *ST*, I, q. 16, a. 3, obj. 3.
30. *Metaph.*, VI, 4, 1027 b 25.
31. See *ST*, I, q. 16, a. 1, obj. 2. *On Truth*, q. 1, a. 2.
32. *ST*, I, q. 85, a. 1, obj. 1.
33. *Ibid.*, obj. 1 and 2.
34. *Ibid.*, I, q. 2, a. 1, obj. 1.
35. *Ibid.*, obj. 2.
36. *Ibid.*, I, q. 2, a. 3, obj. 2.
37. *Ibid.*, I, introduction to q. 3.
38. For the agreement of Christian thinkers on the identification of God and being, see Gilson, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophers*, trans. A. Downes (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), pp. 51-52.
39. *ST*, I, q. 46, a. 1, obj. 9 and 10; also obj. 5.
40. Genesis, I, 1, *The Jerusalem Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1966), p. 15.
41. See *ST*, I, a. 44, q. 2 and 3. Also Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, pp. 461-62, n. 6.
42. See *ST.*, I, q. 49, a. 1-3.
43. *Disputed Questions: On Spiritual Creatures*, a. 2.
44. See A.C. Pegis, *St. Thomas and the Greeks* (Milwaukee: Marquette University, 1939).
45. See *On Power*, q. 3, a. 15, obj. 1-20.
46. *ST*, I-II, q. 6, a. 1, obj. 1. See A.C. Pegis "Necessity and Liberty: An Historical Note on St. Thomas Aquinas," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, XVI (December, 1940), 1-27.
47. *ST*, I-II, q. 8, a. 1; q. 18, a. 1.
48. See D. Banéz, *The Primacy of Existence in Thomas Aquinas*, trans. B.S. Lamzon (Chicago: Regnery, 1966).
49. *ST*, I, q. 4, a. 1, ad 3. See J. Bobik, "Some Remarks on Father Owens' 'St. Thomas and the Future of Metaphysics,'" *The New Scholasticism*, XXXIII (1959), 68-85.
50. *In V Metaph.*, I, 21 ad Ex his autem.
51. *Summa Contra Gentiles*, bk. I, ch. 43, 1. Subsequently abbreviated *SCG*.
52. *Ibid.*, bk. I, ch. 45, 6.
53. *Ibid.*, bk. III, ch. 113, 2.
54. *ST*, II-II, q. 1, a. 5.
55. *Ibid.*, q. 2, a. 4, ad 1.

56. *Ibid.*, I-I, q. 2, a. 2, ad 1.
57. *SCG*, bk. I, oh. 3.
58. *ST*, I, q. 1, a. 1, Answer.
59. *Ibid.*
60. *Ibid.*, I, q. 1, a. 1, Answer.
61. *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 1, a. 5, reply 3; II-II, q. 2, a. 4. See TW Quzie, "The Act of Faith according to St. Thomas," *The Thomist*, XXIX (1965), 239-280.
62. The term "theology" refers to the science of revelation which Thomas called "sacred teaching" (*sacra doctrina*) as distinguished from rational or philosophical theology. See *On Boethius' De Trinitate*, q. V, ch. 4.
63. See *ST*, II-II, q. 2, a. 10, reply 2.
64. *On Boethius' De Trinitate*, q. II, a. 3, c.
65. See *ST*, I, q. 1, a. 5.
66. *On the Sentences*, Prologue, bk. II. *SCG*, bk. 2, ch. 4.
67. In books I to III of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* purely philosophical reasoning (*SCG*, 4, 1) follows a theological order (*SCG*, 2, 4, 5). However, in the *Commentaries* on Aristotle's works, the philosophical method is used without the explicitly ordering of views in a theological context.
68. *On the Sent.*, bk. I, Prolog. 2, ad 2 and 3. *ST*, I, q. 85, a. 5.
69. *On Boethius' De Trinitate*, q. 5, a. 1, ad. See T.W. Quzie, "Evolution of Philosophical Method in the Writings of St. Thomas," *The Modern Schoolman*, XXXVII (1960), 95-120.
70. *Ibid.*, q. a. 3, reply. See W.H. Kane, "Abstraction and the Distinction of the Sciences," *The Thomist*, XVII (1954), 43-63. On the subject of metaphysics, see J. Owens, "A Note on the Approach to Thomistic Metaphysics," *The New Scholasticism*, XXVIII (1954), 454-476.
71. *Ibid.* See H. Renard, "The Metaphysics of the Existential Judgment," *The New Scholasticism*, XXIII (1949), 387-394. R.B. Gehring, "The Knowledge of Material Essences According to St. Thomas Aquinas," *The Modern Schoolman*, XXXIII (1956), 153-181.
72. Aquinas emphasized the distinction between separation which is proper to metaphysics and the abstraction which belongs to the other sciences to show against the Platonists that such transcendentals as being and goodness can exist apart from matter, but that universals and mathematical cannot. See *On Boethius' De Trinitate*, q. V, a. 3. See J.N. Deely, "The Problematic of Metaphysical Knowledge," *Philosophy Today*, XI (1967), 184-206.
73. See E.D. Simmons, "The Thomistic Doctrine of the Three Degrees of Formal Abstraction," *The Thomist*, XXII (1959), 37-67.
74. *Ibid.*, q. VI, a. 1, reply to the first question. See also *ST*, I, q. 79, a. 9.
75. *Ibid.*, q. VI, a. 2.
76. See Aquinas, *In De Caelo et Mundo*, bk. I, lect. 3, n. 7.
77. *On Boethius' De Trinitate*, q. V, a. 3. Aquinas had in mind Euclidean mathematics. See T.C. Anderson, "Objects of Mathematics in Aquinas," *The New Scholasticism*, XLIII (1969), 1-28; 555-576.
78. *Ibid.*, q. VI, a. 1, reply to the first question; reply to obj. 4 of second question.
79. *Ibid.*, q. VI, a. 1, reply to the second question.
80. *Ibid.*, q. VI, a. 2.
81. *On the Power of God*, VII, 2, ad 9. See G.B. Phelan, "A Note on the Foreign Object of Metaphysics," *Essays in Modern Scholasticism* (Westminster, MD: Newman, 1944), pp. 47-51. R. J. Henle, *Method in Metaphysics* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1951), pp. 51-58. H.

Renard, "What is St. Thomas' Approach to Metaphysics?" *The New Scholasticism*, XXX (1956), 64-83.

82. Strictly speaking, God is the cause of the subject of metaphysics. See *In Metaph.*, Prooemium; *In IV Metaph.*, lect. 1, nn. 529-533. However, since the whole of metaphysics is ordered to a knowledge of God as its principal object, Aristotle called it a theology and a first philosophy. See *On Boethius' De Trinitate*, q. V, a. 1. SCG. bk. III, ch. 25. Natural theology and metaphysics are one and the same science. See J. Owens, "Theodicy, Natural Theology, and Metaphysics," *The Modern Schoolman* (1951), pp. 126-137.

83. *ST*, I, q. 88, a. 2, ad 2.

84. For the role of separation in metaphysics, see Thomas, *In Metaph.*, bk. IV, lect. 1, nn. 529-533; lect. 5, n. 593. *On Boethius' De Trinitate*, q. V, a. 3. Also J. Maritain, *Existence and the Existent* (New York: Pantheon, 1948), p. 30, note.

85. See *ST*, I, q. 79, a. 9. *On Boethius' De Trinitate*, q. VI, a. 1, reply to the third question; q. VI, a. 2.

86. *On Boethius' De Trinitate*. q. VI, a. 1, reply to the first question; reply to the third question. See *On Metaph.*, bk. I, lect. 2, n. 47.

87. *On Boethius' De Trinitate*, bk. 2, 3, reply to 8. See J.A. Weisheipl, "Thomas' Evaluation of Plato and Aristotle," *The New Scholasticism*, XLVIII (1974), 100-124.

88. See A. Maurer, Introduction to *The Divisions and Methods of the Sciences* of St. Thomas Aquinas, pp. xiv-xv.

89. *On Boethius' De Trinitate*, q. 5, a. 3. For a comparative discussion of abstraction in Aristotle and Aquinas, see Maurer, *op. cit.*, pp. xxv-xxvii.

90. See *On Being and Essence*, ch. IV, p. 48.

91. *ST*, I, q. 8, a. 1. See *On Being and Essence*, ch. IV, pp. 45-46. Also, E. Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, pp. 41-82.

92. See W. Norris Clarke, "The Meaning of Participation in St. Thomas," XXVI, *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*(1952), 147-157; also, "The Limitation of Act by Potency: Aristotelianism or Neo-Platonism," *The New Scholasticism*, XXVI (1952), 167-194; "St. Thomas' Essence-Existence Doctrine," *The New Scholasticism*, XLVIII (1974), 19-39. C. Fabro, "The Intensive Hermeneutics of Thomistic Philosophy: The Notion of Participation," *The Review of Metaphysics*, XXVII (1974), 449-491. A. Little, *The Platonic Heritage of Thomism*(Dublin: Golden Eagle Books, 1949). R.J. Henle, *Saint Thomas and Platonism* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1956).

93. See Avicenna, *Metaphysica* (Venice: 1495; Louvain: Edition de la bibliotheque S.J., 1961), VIII, c. 7, and IX, c. 6. Also, Aquinas, *ST*, I, q. 44, a. 1.

94. *ST*, I, q. 3, a. 5, ad 1. See T.R. Heath, "St. Thomas and the Aristotelian Metaphysics," *The New Scholasticism*, XXXIV (1960), 438-460; also, *Aristotelian Influence in Thomistic Wisdom: A Comparative Study* (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America, 1956). W.H. Turner, "St. Thomas' Exposition of Aristotle: A Rejoinder," *The New Scholasticism*, XXXV (1961), 210-224.

95. *On Metaph.*, bk. V, lect. 9, n. 894. See J. Albertson, "The Esse of Accidents according to St. Thomas," *The Modern Schoolman*, XXX (1953), 265-278.

96. *On Being and Essence*, ch. II. *On Metaph.*, bk. II, lect. 4, n. 320.

97. *On the Sentences*, bk. II, d. 18, q. 1, a. 2. See *ST*, I, q. 115, a. 2.

98. Though he seemed to accept the form of corporeity as the first substantial form in his *Commentary on the Sentences* (bk. I, d. 8, q. 5, a. 2), he definitely rejected it later in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, bk. 4, ch. 81.

99. *On Being and Essence*, ch. II. Aristotle's principle of individuation is simply matter. See R.A. O'Donnell, "Individuation: An Example of the Development of the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas," *The New Scholasticism*, XXXIII (1959), 49-67.
100. *On Spiritual Creatures*, a. 1, 5. In addition to Poseidonius the Greek Philosopher who had employed this line of reasoning, Aquinas was also influenced by Aristotle's astronomical view of separate intelligences, which reappeared in Avicenna's philosophy.
101. *ST.*, I, q. 50, a. 2. *On Spiritual Creatures*, a. 1, 1.
102. *SCG*, bk. II, ch. 54. See D. O'Grady, "Esse and Metaphysics," *The New Scholasticism*, XXXIX (1965), 283-294.
103. Thomas distinguished between substance and form according to Boethius' traditional distinction of that which is (*quod est*) and that by which (*quo est*) something is, and deepened its meaning in relation to existence. *SCG*, bk. II, ch. 5.
104. *Ibid.* See C.A. Hart, *Thomistic Metaphysics* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1959).
105. *On the Sentences*, bk. II, d. 1, q. 1, a. 4.
106. *ST*, I, q. 4, a. 1, ad 3.
107. *ST*, I, q. 11, a. 1; I, q. 9, a. 1. *On Power*, q. 9, a. 7.
108. *On Metaph.*, bk. IV, lect. 2, n. 560. *Quodlibetal Questions*, X, q. 1, a. 1.
109. *On Power*, q. 9, a. 7, ad 5.
110. See Aristotle, *Metaph.*, bk. VI, c. 4, 1027 b, 25-34. 111. *ST*, I, q. 16, a. 1. See *On Truth*, q. 1, a. 3.
112. *ST*, I, q. 16, a. 2, c.
113. *Ibid.*, a. 3. See G. B. Phelan, "Verum Sequitur Esse Rerum," *Philosophy of Knowledge* (New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1960), pp. 200-216.
111. *ST*, I, q. 16, a. 3, ad 1 and 3.
115. *Ethics*, I, 1, 1094, a. 3.
116. *ST*, I, q. 5, a. 1, reply. See R. Ducka, "Aquinas' Definition of Good: Ethical-Theoretical Notes on *De Veritate*, Q. 21," *The Monist* 58 (1974), 151-162.
117. *ST*, I, q. 5, a. 2.
118. *Ibid.*, a. 1.
119. *Ibid.*, a. 3.
120. *Ibid.*, a. 4.
121. *Ibid.*, a. 6.
122. *Ibid.*, a. 4.
123. *Ibid.*, The word "eye" refers not only to sight itself but also to every kind of cognitional experience by either sense or intellect.
124. *Ibid.*, q. 39, a. 8, reply. See G.F. Greif, "The Relation between Transcendental and Aesthetical Beauty according to St. Thomas," *The Modern Schoolman*, XL (1962), 163-182. F.D. Wilhelmsen, "The Aesthetic Act and the Act of Being," *The Modern Schoolman*, XXIX (1952), 277-291.
125. *ST*, I, q. 115, a. 2.
126. *On Power*, q. 7, a. 2. *On Metaph.*, bk. V, lect. 1, n. 751; also lect. 2, nn. 765 and 770.
127. See *On Being and Essence*, ch. IV, pp. 46-47.
128. *ST*, I, q. 2, a. 1. *SCG*. bk. I, oh. 10-11. See M. Cosgrove, "Thomas Aquinas on Anselm's Argument," *The Review of Metaphysics*, XXVII (1974), 513-530.
129. *ST*, I, q. 2, a. 1.

130. *Ibid.*, q. 2, a. 2, ad 2.

131. *Ibid.*, ad 3.

132. *Ibid.*, I, q. 2, a. 2.

133. *Ibid.*, I, q. 2, a. 3. *SCG*, bk. I, c. 13. See *ST*, I, Vol. 2 of Blackfriars edition, Appendix 1, p. 173. Also T.C. O'Brien, "Reflexion on the Question of God's Existence in Contemporary Thomistic Metaphysics," *The Thomist*, XXIII (1960), 1-891 211-285. J. Owens, "Aquinas and the Five Ways," *The Thomist*, 58 (1974). 16-35. L. Velecky, "'The Five Ways' — Proofs of God's Existence?" *The Thomist*, 58 (1974), 36-51.

134. Though Thomas' most open proof begins within a physical context and seems to be committed to the particular astronomical theory of Eudoxus, it is charged with the metaphysics of actuality and potentiality at the heart of created things. "As such it moves on a plane where it is neither confirmed nor impugned by theories about projectiles or by laws of thermodynamics." *ST*, I, Vol. 2, Appendix 6, p. 192.

135. *ST*, I, q. 2, a. 3, reply. See Appendix 6, po. 191-195.

136. *ST*, I, q. 2, a. 3, reply. With regard to an infinite series, Thomas had in mind the order of being rather than the order of duration. Implicit in his admission of the possibility of an infinite series without a beginning of duration. However, he denied the possibility of an infinite series of actually depending causes without a beginning of existence. The very being of their causality implies dependence on, and origination from, a first cause. See *ST*, I, Vol. 1, Appendix 7, pp. 198-199.

137. *The Guide for the Perplexed*. Ed. M. Friedländer. (London: G. Routledge, 1925), Part II, p. 152.

138. *ST*, I, q. 2, a. 3, reply. The full force of Aquinas' reasoning cannot be felt unless one sees him conceiving the notions of contingency and necessity beyond the order of essence in the deeper dimension of existence. Contingent and necessary duration are basically different ways of existing. See *Ibid.*, Appendix 8, pp. 201-203. See T.K. Connolly, "Third Proof for the Existence of God," *The Thomist*, XVII (1954), 281-349.

139. See Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, IV, 5, 1008 b 31-1009 a 5. Plato, *Phaedo* 75, 77, 93, 100; *Republic*, V, 476, and VI, 506-507. Augustine, *On the Trinity*, VIII, 3; *City of God*, XI, Anselm, *Monologium*, 1-4.

140. *ST*, I, q. 2, a. 3. The full force of this argument appears in view of Aquinas' notion of being as existence (*esse*), that actuality into which all perfections are ultimately resolvable. Briefly, beings which participate and hence are limited in existence, require for their full intelligibility pure unlimited existence. See *ST*, I, q. 44, a. 1.

141. *ST*, I, q. 2, a. 3, reply. *SCG*, bk. I, ch. 96, n. 35. In a metaphysical context of final causality, this argument can be applied to all creatures whose desire is potential with regard to ends which they do not of themselves possess. Hence, they must be causally actualized by an actual ultimate object of desire, which is its own reason of acting. See *ST*, I, Appendix 10, pp. 206-208.

142. *ST*, I, q. 13, a. 2, reply.

143. *Ibid.*, I, q. 13, a. 3, ad 1.

144. *SCG*, bk. I, ch. 14, n. 2.

145. *Ibid.*

146. *ST*, I, q. 3, a. 2.

147. *Ibid.*, a. 8.

148. *Ibid.*, q. 7, a. 1.

149. *Ibid.*, I, q. 8, a. 3.

150. *Ibid.*, q. 4. See Appendix 13, pp. 218-219.
151. *ST.*, I, q. 9.
152. *Ibid.*, I, q. 10, a. 2.
153. *Ibid.*, q. 13, a. 10, ad 5.
154. *Ibid.*, a. 2, reply.
155. *On Power*, q. 7, a. 5.
156. *Ibid.*, ad 2.
157. *Ibid.*, I, q. 13, a. 2, ad 2.
158. Aquinas, however, did not agree with Avicenna's view that God has no essence. See Aquinas, *On Being and Essence*, IV, pp. 45-46; V, p. 51.
159. *ST.*, I, q. 13, a. 11, reply. For Aquinas, the name being, because of its universality and unrestricted meaning, is more properly applied to God, an infinite ocean of being, than all other names. See J.B. Reichmann, "Immanently Transcendent and Subsistent Esse: A Comparison," *The Thomist*, XXXVIII (1974), 332-369.
160. *Exodus*, 3:13-14.
161. *SCG*, bk. I, ch. 42, n. 17-18. *ST.*, I, q. 11, a. 3-4.
162. *ST.*, I, q. 16, a. 5, reply.
163. *SCG*, bk. I, ch. 45, n. 7.
164. *ST.*, I, q. 6, a. 1-4. Although Aquinas neglected to prove that God is beauty, he attributed beauty to God. See *ST.*, I, q. 39, a. 8, reply.
165. *SCG*, bk. I, ch. 34. See G. Klubertanz, *St. Thomas Aquinas on Analogy* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1960).
166. *SCG*, bk. 1* ch. 32-33.
167. *Ibid.*, ch. 34.
168. *ST.*, I, q. 13, a. 5-6. While recognizing the value of metaphorical language about God, e.g., calling him "light," Aquinas found it inadequate as a general theory of theological language. A metaphorical word implies some imperfection and consequently would always apply primarily to creatures; to use it of God would be to move outside its ordinary meaning. See *ST.*, I, q. 13, a. 3; also Appendix 4, pp. 106-107.
169. "But from the point of view of our use of the word we apply it first to creatures because we know them first." *ST.*, I, q. 13, a. 6, reply. See *SCG*, bk. I, ch. 34, n. 5-6.
170. *On Truth*, q. 2, a. 11. *In Sent.*, IV, 49, 2, 1, ad 6. Commentators on Aquinas sometimes call analogy of proportion "analogy of attribution," and analogy of proportionality "analogy of proportion." Though Aquinas emphasized analogy of proportion in later works — *On Power*, *Summa against the Gentiles*, *Summa of Theology* — it does not seem he ever abandoned analogy of proportionality. See R.J. Masiello, "The Analogy of Proportion according to the Metaphysics of St. Thomas," *The Modern Schoolman*, XXXV (1958), 91-105.
171. *On Truth*, q. 2, a. 11, c.
172. *SCG*, bk. III, ch. 49, n. 9. See *On Power*. q. VII, a. 2, ad 11.
173. *ST.*, I, q. 14, a. 1.
174. *Ibid.*, I, q. 14, a. 2.
175. *Ibid.*, I, q. 14, a. 5.
176. *SCG*, bk. I, ch. 50 and 65.
177. *ST.*, I, q. 14, a. 9.
178. *Ibid.*, I, q. 14, a. 13, ad 1.
179. *Ibid.*, I, q. 15, a. 1, ad 3. See *SCG*, bk. I, ch. 53-54.

180. *ST*, I, q. 19, a. 1, reply.
181. *SCG*, bk. I, ch. 74, 75, 80. *ST*, I, q. 19, a. 2.
182. *ST*, I, q. 19, a. 3. *SCG*, bk. I, ch. 81-83. Within this philosophic context, Aquinas developed his theory of predestination.
183. *ST*, I, q. 18, a. 1-4.
184. *Ibid.*, I, q. 26, a. 1-4.
185. See *SCG*, bk. I, ch. 31; also *ST*, I, q. 13, a. 12, c and ad 3.
186. *ST*, I, q. 44, a. 1-2; q. 45, a. 1-2. *SCG*, bk. II, ch. 15-16. See W.A. Wallace, "Aquinas on Creation: Science, Theology, and Matters of Fact," *The Thomist*, 38 (1974), 485-523.
187. See *SCG*, bk. II, ch. 11-13; *ST*, I, q. 45, a. 3; *On Power*, q. 3, a. 3. Also J.F. Anderson, "Creation as a Relation," *The New Scholasticism*, 24, (1950), 263-283.
188. *ST*, I, q. 45, a. 6, reply.
189. *Ibid.*, I, q. 45, a. 5, reply.
190. *Ibid.*, I, q. 44, a. 4, ad 1. See *ST*, I, q. 25, a. 6. *On Power*, q. II, a. 1.
191. See Aquinas' objection to Bonaventure's argumentation, p. 166.
192. Whereas in the *Summa of Theology* (I, q. 7, a. 4) Aquinas affirmed the impossibility of an actual infinite created multitude, he pointed out in *On the Eternity of the World against the Complainers* that no one has ever proved that God cannot create an infinite number of simultaneously existing beings. Aquinas seemed to be hesitating on a mooted question.
193. *ST*, I, q. 46, a. 1-2. Author's parenthesis.
194. *Ibid.*, a. 2, c. See *SCG*, bk. II, ch. 31-38.
195. *SCG*, bk. II, ch. 25. *ST*, I, q. 104, a. 1 and 3.
196. *ST*, I, q. 25, a. 6, ad 3.
197. *Ibid.*, I, q. 48, a. 1 and 3; q. 49, a. 2. See J. Maritain, *Saint Thomas and the Problem of Evil* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1942).
198. See *Disputed Questions on the Soul*, a. I. See J. Owens, "Soul as Agent in Aquinas," *The New Scholasticism*, XLVIII (1974), 40-72. See M. Stock, "Thomistic Psychology and Freud's Psychoanalysis," *The Thomist*, XXI (1958), 125-145.
199. *On the Sentences*, bk. I, d. 8, q. 5, a. 2; bk II, d. 3, q. 1, a. 1.
200. *Disputed Questions on the Soul*, a. I, ad 1. *ST*, I. See G.P. Klubertanz, "The Unity of Human Activity," *The Modern Schoolman*, XXVII (1950), 75-103.
201. *ST*, I, q. 89, a. 1.
202. See *Ibid.*, I, q. 76, a. 5; q. 89, a. 1. Also A.C. Pegis, "St. Thomas and the Unity of Man," *Progress in Philosophy* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1955), pp. 153-173.
203. *ST*, I, q. 77, a. 3. c.
204. *Ibid.*, I, q. 77' a. 1-4. *Disputed Questions on the Soul*, a. XII-XIII.
205. *ST*, I, q. 78, a. 1. See J.E. Royce, "St. Thomas and the Definition of Active Potency," *The New Scholasticism*, XXXIV (1960), 431-437.
206. See *Disputed Questions on the Soul*, a. XIX. *ST*, I, q. 78. a. 2.
207. *ST*, I, q. 78, a. 3. This spiritual change should not be confused with the physical reaction, for example, the retinal image in the eye. See M. Aloysius, "Towards a Thomistic Theory of Sensation," *The Thomist*, XX (1957), 143-157.
208. *ST*, I, q. 78, a. 4. See G. Klubertanz, *The Discursive Power - Sources and Doctrine of the Vis Cogitativa According to St. Thomas Aquinas* (St. Louis: Modern Schoolman, 1952). See T. V. Flynn, "The Cogitative Power," *The Thomist*, VI (1953), 542-563. J. Peghaire, "A Forgotten Sense,

The Cogitative according to St. Thomas Aquinas," *The Modern Schoolman*, XX (1943), 123-140, 210-229.

209. *ST*, I, q. 78, a. 4. Man's instinct and sense memory differ from the animal's insofar as they are influenced by intellective powers within the single human subject. *Ibid.*, ad 5. See M. Stock, "Sense Consciousness according to St. Thomas," *The Thomist*, XXI (1958), 415-486.

210. *Ibid.*, I, q. 80, a. 1, c.

211. *Ibid.*, I, q. 79, a. 11; see a. 1-10, 13.

212. *SCG*, bk. II, ch. 73 and 76. *ST*, I, q. 76, a. 1-2; q. 79, a. 4-5. *On the Unity of the Intellect against the Averroists*. Whereas Averroes interpreted Aristotle's statement that the agent intellect is "separable, not acted upon and unmixed" (*On the Soul*, III, 5, 430 a 17) to mean that the intellect is a separately existing substance, Aquinas understood it to express the uniqueness of each intellect in individual men. The adequacy of Aquinas' explanation of human knowledge in terms of his theory of an individual agent intellect does not depend on the correctness or incorrectness of his interpretation of Aristotle. *On Aristotle*, See *SCG*, bk. II, ch. 78, and *Commentary on the Soul*, bk. 3, lectio 10.

213. *ST*, I, q. 81, a. 2.

214. *Ibid.*, I, q. 80, a. 1-2; q. 81, a. 1-3. See W.R. O'Connor, "Natural Appetite," *The Thomist*, XVI (1953), 361-409.

215. *ST*, I, q. 80, a. 2, ad 2.

216. *Ibid.*, I, q. 82, a. 3, ad 2.

217. *Ibid.*, I, q. 82, a. 1-2; q. 83, a. 1-4. See C. Fabro, "Freedom and Existence in Contemporary Philosophy and in St. Thomas," *The Thomist*, XXXVIII (1974), 524-556. R.Z. Lauer, "St. Thomas' Theory of Intellectual Causality in Election," *The New Scholasticism*, XXVIII (1954), 299-319.

218. *ST*, I, q. 75* a. 2 and 6. *SCG*, bk. 2, ch. 49.

219. *SCG*, bk. 2, ch. 79. See G.St. Hilaire, "Dose St. Thomas Really Prove the Soul's Immortality?" *The New Scholasticism*, XXXIV (1960), 340-356. A.C. Pegis, "Between Immortality and Death: Some further Reflections on the Summa Contra Gentiles," *The Monist*, 58 (1974), 1-15.

220. *Disputed Questions on the Soul*, a. I, ad 1.

221. *SCG*, bk. II, oh. 55.

222. Thomistic texts on a theory of knowledge are found in different places, especially the *Summa of Theology*, I, qq. 75-102; *Summa Contra Gentiles*, bk. II, and *Quaestiones Disputatae*. See G. Van Riet, *Thomistic Epistemology*, 2 vols. trans. G. Franks (St. Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1963). L.M. Régis, *Epistemology*, trans. I.C. Byrne (New York: Macmillan Co., 1964). G. C. Reilly, "St. Thomas and the Problem of Knowledge," *The Thomist*, XVII (1954), 510-524. W.H. Kane, "Outline of a Thomistic Critique of Knowledge," *The New Scholasticism*, XXX (1956), 181-197; XXXV (1961), 445-477.

223. In his work, *Concerning Being and Essence*, Aquinas investigated the problem of reconciling the universality and individuality, necessity and contingency, of concepts and judgments, and reflected on that problem within the question of truth in his work *On Truth*.

224. *On Truth*, q. 1, a. 9.

225. *Ibid.*

226. *Ibid.*, a. 11.

227. *ST*, I, q. 84, a. 6.

228. *On Aristotle's de anima*, q. 1, a. 4, ad 7. Aquinas' understanding of illumination as a natural power is probably not the true interpretation of Augustine's meaning of it as a special light from God.

229. *ST*, I, q. 85, a. 1, ad 1. See P. Dunne, "The Production of the Intelligible Species," *The New Scholasticism*, 27 (1953), 176-197.

230. *SCG*, bk. I, ch. 53. See F. Nugent, "Immanent Action in St. Thomas and Aristotle," *The New Scholasticism*, 37 (1963), 164-187.

231. *SCG*, bk. 1, ch. 53. Language signifies the concept: "This conception . . . is properly called a word: for this is what is signified by an exterior word." *On Power*, q. 8, a. 1. See J. Peiffer, *The Mystery of Knowledge* (Albany: Magi Books, Inc., 1952). R.T. Murphy, "Concept and Object," *The New Scholasticism*, XLII (1968), 254-269.

232. *SCG*, bk. I, ch. 53, n. 3. Author's parenthesis. When the mind abstracts for example, the idea of man from this flesh and these bonds, it prescind from individualizing matter but not from matter in general, "intelligible matter" (substance as subject to quantity) which enters into the universal idea of man.

234. *SCG*, bk. IV, ch. 11, n. 61.

235. *ST*, I, q. 85, a. 2; I-II, q. 93, a. 1, ad 2.

361. *Ibid.*, I, q. 85, a. 1, c. R.W. Clark, "Saint Thomas Aquinas' Theory of Universals," *The Monist*, 58 (1974), 163-172.

237. *Ibid.*, I, q. 86, a. 1; q. 84, a. 7. What prevents an individual corporeal thing from being the direct object of intellectual cognition is not its particularity but its matter from which the mind must abstract. See G. Klubertanz, "St. Thomas and the Knowledge of the Singular," *The New Scholasticism*, 26 (1952), 135-166. K. Rahner, *Spirit in the World*, trans. W. Dych (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968).

238. *ST*, I, q. 87, a. 1. See P. Hoenen, *Reality and Judgment According to St. Thomas*, H.F. Tiblier, trans. (Chicago: Regnery, 1952).

239. *ST*, I, q. 5, a. 2.

240. *ST*, I, q. 87, a. 1.

241. *On Truth*, q. I, a. 3 and 9. *On Boethius' De Trinitate*, q. V, a. 3. *On the Sent.*, bk. I, d. 19, q. 5, a. 1. See G.B. Phelan, "Verum Sequitur Esse Rerum," *Medieval Studies*, I (1939), 11-22. F. Wilhelmson, *Man's Knowledge of Reality: An Introduction to Thomistic Epistemology* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1956).

242. *ST*, I-II, q. 57, a. 5, ad 3.

243. *On Truth*, q. X, a. 6.

244. *Ibid.*, q. XI, a. 1; q. X, a. 4 and 6.

245. *SCG*, bk. III, ch. 21.

246. *Commentary on Nichomachean Ethics*, I, 1, 2.

247. Aquinas elaborated on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* III by analyzing the continuous process of the complete single human act into twelve successive moments (*ST*, I-II, q. 8-17. See Blackfriar's edition, Appendix 1, pp. 211-217).

Human Act

Mind Will

immanent activity in order of intention

about end

1. grasp of good
2. wish
3. judgment
4. intention

about means

5. deliberation
6. consent
7. decision
8. choice

practical activity in order of intention

9. command
10. application of power
11. performance
12. completion and enjoyment

248. *SCG*. bk. III, ch. 48.

249. *ST*. I-II, q. 1-3.

250. *On Truth*. q. 14, a. 3.

251. *ST*. I-II, q. 19, a. 9, c.

252. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 18, a. 2. Author's parenthesis.

253. *ST*. I-II, q. 18, a. 8.

254. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 18, a. 3.

255. *Ibid.*, I-II, 18, 4 and 6. See O. Lottin, "Le problème de la moralité intrinsèque d'Abélard à Saint Thomas d'Aquin," *Revue Thomiste*, 39 (1934), 477-515.

256. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 19, a. 3.

257. *Ibid.*, I, q. 18, a. 6. Author's parenthesis.

258. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 55, a. 4.

259. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 56, a. 3, 5, 6, c. Along a similar line, Freud later viewed the work of psychoanalysis as a "reclamation" of the id (untamed passions) by the ego (reason).

260. *ST*. I-II, q. 64, a. 1.

261. *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 80, a. 1; q. 81, a. 1-8.

262. *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 5, reply and ad 1. Author's parenthesis.

263. *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 45, a. 2. Human love finds fulfillment in charity: "nature loves God above all things inasmuch as He is the beginning and the end of natural good; whereas charity loves Him, as He is the object of beatitude, and inasmuch as man has spiritual fellowship with God." *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 109, a. 3, ad 1.

264. *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 24, a. 8, ad 3. On the limitation of natural moral virtues, see J. Maritain, *An Essay on Christian Philosophy*, trans. E. H. Flannery (New York: Philosophical Library, 1955), pp. 61-100.

265. *ST*. II-II, q. 17, a. 1. See I-II, q. 40, a. 1.

266. *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 17, a. 6.

267. *Ibid.* ad 3. See L. Weeks, III, "Can Saint Thomas' Summa Theologiae Speak to Moltmann's Theology of Hope?" *The Thomist*, XXXIII (1969), 215-228. P. De Letter, "Hope and Charity in St. Thomas," *The Thomist*, XIII (1950), 204-248.

268. *Ibid.*, a. 4. Though Aquinas used the terms "right" (*jus*) and "law" (*lex*) interchangeably, he grounded right which implies freedom in law which, while obligating, protects right. See *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 57. Also J. Tonneau, "The Teaching of the Thomist Tract on Law," *The Thomist*. XXXIV (1970), 13-83.

269. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 94, a. 2. See E. T. Gelinas, "Right and Law in Thomas Aquinas," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, XLV (1971), 130-130. V. J. Bourke, "Is Thomas Aquinas a Natural law Ethicist?" *The Monist*, 50 (1974), 52-66.

270. *ST.* a. 2. See R. A. Armstrong, *Primary and Secondary Precepts in Thomistic Natural Law Teaching* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1966).

271. *ST.* I-II, q. 94, a. 4, see q. 99, a. 2, ad 2.

272. No statistical ratio is fixed, and the reflection is prompted by *a priori* reasons, supported by observation. An anthropologist will require a wider induction.

273. *ST.* I-II, q. 94, a. 5; see q. 99, a. 2, ad 2.

274. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 93, a. 4. Aquinas grounded his notion of natural law in his concept of God as first efficient and supreme exemplary cause, a step Aristotle could not take because of his restricted view of God as only final cause.

275. *Ibid.*, a. 1.

276. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 91, a. 2.

277. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 96, a. 4. The proximate guide of conduct, "every judgment of conscience, be it right or wrong, . . . is obligatory, in such wise that he who acts against his conscience always sins." *Quodlibet*, III, q. 27. Aquinas also recognized the necessity of divine positive law as given in the Old and New Testaments. *ST.* I-II, q. 91, a. 4. See M. R. MacGuigan, "St. Thomas and Legal Obligation," *The New Scholasticism*, 35 (1961), 281-310. G. Stevens, "Moral Obligation in St. Thomas," *The Modern Schoolman*, 40 (1962), 1-21. J. F. Ross, "Justice is Reasonableness: Aquinas on Human Law," *The Monist*, 58 (1974), 86-103.

278. In contrast with Augustinian thought which stressed the minatory role of law, Aquinas subordinated its coercive function to its directive power. See *ST.* I-II, q. 92, a. 2; q. 95, a. 1.

279. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 95, a. 2.

280. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 96, a. 4. Aquinas viewed the eternal, natural and human laws not as "three independent rules of action" but as "one rule progressively specified" (*ST.* I-II, q. 95, a. 2) in analogically different ways according to diverse participation of values. See S. Parry, "Introduction" to *Thomas Aquinas: Treatise on Law* (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1949), p. vi.

281. *ST.* I-II, q. 97, a. 2.

282. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 94, a. 5.

283. *Ibid.* Author's parenthesis.

284. *Ibid.* See I-II, q. 94, a. 4. In the case of the Israelites who made off with the goods of the Egyptians, Aquinas reasoned that God, as supreme lord and owner of all things, transferred ownership to the Israelites, with the result that they did not steal. What Aquinas viewed as the changeability of secondary precepts, therefore, is more a change of matter (*mutatio materiae*) than a change of the precept itself which no longer applies to the act in its altered circumstances.

285. *On Kingship*, trans. G. B. Phelan (Toronto: The Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1949), ch. I, n. 4. See I. T. Eschmann, "Studies in the Notion of Society in St. Thomas Aquinas,"

Mediaeval Studies, 18 (1946), 1-42; IX (1947), 19-55. J. Smith, "St. Thomas and Human Social Life," *The New Scholasticism*, 19 (1945), 285-321.

286. *On Kingship*, ch. 1, n. 7. See R. Crofts, "The Common Good in the Political Theory of Thomas Aquinas," *The Thomist*, 37 (1973), 155-173.

287. *On Kingship*, ch. 1, n. 8.

288. Thomas rejected an Augustinian tendency to view the State as simply the result of sin. He reasoned that even if there were no sin, as in a state of innocence, authority would be needed to care for the common good by the direction of common activities.

289. *ST. I-II*, q. 93, a. 3.

290. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 90, a. 2. *On Kingship*, ch. 1, n. 14.

291. *On Kingship*, ch. 1, n. 14. See *In Ethic.*, bk. III, ch. 8, n. 474.

292. *On Kingship*, ch. III, n. 110. See ch. IV, n. 114. In terms of later political thinkers, one can classify Aquinas as a supporter of the indirect power of the Church over the State: The power of the Church over the State is not direct in the sense of pre-empting the State's authority in its own sphere of activity, but is indirect to the extent that matters of State bear upon the supernatural life, the Church's sphere of concern.

293. *ST. I-II*, q. 96, a. 4.

294. A part "naturally" loves the common good more than its proper good. *ST. II-II*, q. 26, a. 3. See *In Ethic.*, bk. III, lect. 4.

295. *ST. I-II*, q. 93, a. 3. "In any series of subordinate agents the energy of those that are secondary flows from the energy of the prime mover." *Ibid.*

296. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 97, a. 3, ad 3.

297. *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 90, a. 3.

298. Even omnipotence cannot break the order of truth. See *Ibid.*, I, q. 25, a. 3, 4 and 5.

299. *On Kingship*, ch. VI, n. 49-52. Thomas condemned the assassination of a tyrant because of the evils following in the wake of rebellion. See *Ibid.*, 45-48.

300. See *In Ethic.*, bk. VII, lect. 9 and 10. *In Polit.*, bk. II, lect. 5, 6, 14, 15 and 16.

301. *On Kingship*, ch. II. n. 16-20 ch. V. n. 36-40.

302. *ST. I-II*, q. 105, a. 1.

303. *SCG*. bk. III, ch. 25, n. 1. See W. O'Connor, *The Eternal Quest* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1947); also *The Natural Desire for God* (Milwaukee: Marquette University, 1948).

304. Thomas also recognized contemplation as man's end: "For there is in man, in so far as he is intellectual, one type of desire, concerned with the knowledge of truth, indeed men seek to fulfill this desire by the effort of the contemplative life." *SCG*. bk. III, ch. 63, n. 2.

305. *Ibid.*, bk. III, ch. 50, n. 5.

306. *Ibid.*, bk. III, ch. 25, n. 3.

307. *Ibid.*, bk. III, ch. 63, n. 2.

308. *Ibid.*, bk. III, ch. 52, n. 6. See *On Boethius' De Trinitate*, q. VI, a. 4, ad 5.

309. On the question of the natural desire for the vision of God, see the summary and discussion of opinions by A. Motte, *Bulletin Thomiste*, 1931 (nos. 651-676) and 1934 (nos. 573-590) and especially Gerald Stanley, "Contemplation as Fulfillment of the Human Person," *Personalist Ethics and Human Subjectivity*, ed. by George F. McLean (Washington: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 1996).

310. See E. Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, p. 174.

311. *In De Caelo et Mundo*. bk. I, lect. 22.

312. *Disputed Questions: On Power*, q. 7, a. 5, ad 14.

313. *De Hebdomadibus (On the Weeks)*, 2, n. 23.
 314. (*On Aristotle's De Anima*), q. I, a. 1. n. 15.
 315. *ST.* III, q. 50, a. 5.
 316. See V. J. Bourke, "Esse, Transcendence, and Law: Three Phases of Recent Thomism," *The Modern Schoolman*, LII (1974), 49-64. J. Donceel, "Transcendental Thomism", *The Monist*, 58 (1974), 67-35.

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Conclusion of Part II

- *Comparison of Bonaventure and Aquinas.* Though both Bonaventure and Aquinas worked within the cultural community of the thirteenth century, they created philosophical systems which are radically different yet analogous. Bonaventure assimilated Aristotelian ideas into an Augustinian framework, whereas Aquinas incorporated Augustinian and Platonic elements into an Aristotelian perspective. Both Bonaventure and Aquinas philosophized within the framework of Christian faith as freely and rationally as Plato and Aristotle, but the former was less confident than the latter in the natural capacity of human reason to arrive at truth, especially in view of its need of divine illumination. They radically differed as regards their metaphysical starting points with Bonaventure conceiving all beings in terms of the good and Aquinas viewing reality as existence.

In their explanation of the relation between creatures and God, Bonaventure emphasized analogy of expression or attribution, whereas Aquinas stressed analogy of proportion. Within his framework of universal analogy, Bonaventure's proofs of God's existence appear as simply ways of drawing attention to God's self-manifestation in the universe. Since Aquinas did not recognize God's existence to be as evident as Bonaventure's thought, he found it necessary to investigate thoroughly the nature of creatures in order scientifically to demonstrate the existence of God. Whereas Bonaventure followed the Augustinian tendency of stressing the primacy of divine causality by downplaying their efficacy and by pluralizing their formal structure, Aquinas pursued the Aristotelian penchant for emphasizing secondary causality and simplifying the structure of creatures in terms of their act of existing.

Both adopted the Aristotelian doctrine of abstraction, but only Bonaventure retained the Augustinian teaching on the mind's ability to reflect upon itself independently of sensation and acquire truth. Bonaventure favored the primacy of the will, whereas Aquinas accepted the hegemony of the intellect.

As Bonaventure was concerned more with things as symbols pointing to the divine exemplar so Aquinas tended to contemplate and analyze things in themselves. In fine, Bonaventure showed himself a mystic impatient in his intent to leap from creatures to their creator, while Aquinas appeared as the reasoner calmly and coolly investigating the nature of things for conclusive evidence about God.

Bonaventure and Aquinas found themselves more than once on crucial issues at loggerheads with the Latin Averroists who tended to follow human reason alone as the criterion of truth. Bonaventure strongly criticized the Averroists' teaching on the eternity of the world, the oneness of the intellect in all men, and the denial of personal immortality. In no uncertain terms, Thomas inveighed against the contradictory attitude of those philosophers who claim that reason necessarily arrives, for example, at the oneness of the intellect for all men, and yet who hold the opposite truth by faith. As controversy intensified, there was a growing distrust of Greek, Arabian, and Jewish philosophies. In his treatise *On the Errors of the Philosophers*, Giles of Rome listed the errors of Aristotle, Averroes, Avicenna, and Maimonides, to caution his contemporaries against putting too much trust in the great thinkers of the past.¹

- *Condemnations.* The dispute between philosophers and theologians became so bitter and the winds of heterodoxy so strong that in 1277, Stephen Tempier, Bishop of Paris, condemned two hundred and nineteen propositions, threatening with excommunication anyone upholding them. That same year Robert Kilwardby, Archbishop of Canterbury, condemned a shorter list of thirty

propositions. Both ecclesiastical authorities formally condemned teachers who professed errors opposed to the Catholic faith and then tried to evade the charge of heresy by distinguishing the truth of philosophy and that of faith, "as though there were two contrary truths."

So sweeping was the thrust against Aristotelian naturalism, as a philosophy separated from and opposed to faith, that not only propositions of Latin Averroism — for example, the unicity of the intellect for all men. and the eternity of the world — but also some Thomistic theses — for instance, one substantial form for each man' and matter as the principle of individuation — were numbered among the syllabuses of errors. Although these condemnations did not stop the teaching of Aristotle or Averroes they did signal the beginning of the end of a happy marriage of philosophy and religion so harmoniously expressed in Thomistic thought.

The spirit of friendly and confident collaboration of faith and reason that developed during the thirteenth century gradually gave way from 1277 on to an attitude of strong criticism and even distrust of philosophy in the fourteenth century. On the one hand, theologians tended to disengage their philosophical findings from the tenets of faith and, on the other, philosophers preferred rational inquiry without regard for their Catholic beliefs. In the course of time faith and reason gradually separated culminating in their divorce among modern philosophers.

Note

1. J. Koch, ed. J.O. Riedl, trans., *Errores Philosophorum* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1944).

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Chapter VI

John Duns Scotus: Metaphysician of Essence

John Duns Scotus was the bridge between the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries. Like his predecessors, he built an impressive philosophical system. Yet the critical and penetrating mind of the Subtle Doctor, as he was called, attempted to restructure the traditional foundations of philosophy in the spirit of the fourteenth century.

Life and Works²

Dubbed Scotus from his birthplace (1265/66) Scotland, John Duns' life is a tale of two cities, Oxford and Paris, and his writings an expression of two traditions, Augustinianism and Aristotelianism.

The Oxford and Parisian Periods. After entering the Franciscan Order, Scotus was ordained a priest in 1291. He studied and lectured on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard at the University of Oxford. He compiled his monumental commentary on the *Sentences* into his most important work, *Opus Oxoniense*, sometimes called, the *Ordinatio*. In 1302, he continued his studies and then taught as regent master in the Franciscan chair at the University of Paris where he received his Master of Theology. His commentaries and lectures on the *Sentences* at Paris were drawn together in the *Reportata Parisiensia*, also entitled *Opus Parisiense*. A long-festering feud between King Philip the Fair of France and Pope Boniface VIII came to a head when Boniface excommunicated Philip for taxing Church property to support his wars with England. For siding with the Pope, Scotus was forced to go to Cologne where he wrote and taught until his death in 1308.

Scotus also wrote other valuable treatises: short disputations entitled *Logic of Scotus (Logica Scoti)*; *Questions on the Books of Aristotle's De Anima (Quaestiones in libros Aristotle's De anima)* which is probably authentic; *On the First Principle (De primo principio)*, a compendium of his natural theology; *Collations (Collationes)*, forty-six short disputations held at Oxford and Paris; *Very Subtle Questions on the Metaphysics (Quaestiones subtilissimae in Metaphysicam Aristotelis)*, the first nine books being certainly authentic; *Quodlibetal Questions (Quaestiones Quodlibetales)*, representing almost always the definitive expression of the teaching touched upon in these disputations.³

Encounter

Problems

Within the critical context of the relation between State and Church, philosophy and religion, Scotus encountered problems in the areas of knowledge, being, and action.

I. Knowledge

Scotus investigated the value of natural knowledge within the larger issue of faith and reason. - *Faith and Reason*. At the end of the thirteenth century, Scotus found himself vis-à-vis the two extremes of theologism and philosophism.⁴ On the one hand, the theologians tried to understand every part of revelation without the slightest reliance upon natural reason. On the other,

Philosophists, like the Latin Averroists, generally investigated only natural phenomena without allowing any influence of faith on pure reason. Aquinas had refuted these extremes by harmonizing reason and revelation. The fact that some of his teachings were proscribed along with Averroistic theses in 1277 suggests that he perhaps overestimated the accord between faith and reason.

Scotus was concerned about the advance of philosophical naturalism. The philosophies of Aristotle, Avicenna, and Averroes, were being introduced as the new ideal of a purely rational philosophy, sufficient in itself and adequate to satisfy man's desire for knowledge. This philosophism seemed to undermine the Christian doctrine of man's need of grace and revelation for salvation. As everything colored falls within the scope of sight, so it seems reasonable to conclude that everything intelligible falls within the purview of man's natural intellectual powers, independently of any supernatural help. Aristotle summed up the state of nature in a nutshell: "Nature is not lacking in what is necessary."⁵ For Scotus, then, it was a question of determining the limitations of pure reason in philosophy in order to show the possibility and necessity of faith and theology.

- *Natural Knowledge*. Scotus investigated the scope of natural reason to ascertain the objective value of human knowledge. A conclusion of Augustine that "no pure truth can be expected from sensation"⁶ was often quoted after 1255. Henry of Ghent and Matthew of Aquasparta avoided skepticism in their distrust of sensation by appealing to the certitude of a special divine illumination. Aquinas found Aristotelian abstraction of the intelligible content from sense data a sufficient guarantee of the truth of natural knowledge. In view of these different theories, Scotus posed the problem in this form: "Can a certain truth be known without admixture of error by the human intellect in this life, naturally and without a special illumination of uncreated light?"⁷

This question is analyzable into various specific issues. Is the process of understanding an act of the intellect passive and receptive, or is it actively produced by the intellect? What object is the intellect naturally capable of grasping? Whereas Henry of Ghent taught that the proper object of the human intellect is God, Aquinas held that it is the quiddity of a material thing. For Scotus, the latter view presents the difficulty of explaining how intellectual knowledge can be objective if it abstractly knows the universal directly and individual realities only indirectly. Since individual things actually exist, intellectual knowledge is said to be objective insofar as it attains singular realities. But it does not seem that indirect knowledge can adequately guarantee the objective value of universal concepts. Yet, the validity of philosophy and science rests upon the objectivity of human knowledge.

II. *Being*

Viewing knowledge within an ontological context, Scotus investigated the objective value of metaphysics, whether it is a science of real or logical being. Do ontological ideas such as being and goodness, abstractly expressing the essence of things in generic and specific concepts, represent reality as it is, or are they merely logical entities in the mind? As Scotus asked, "What corresponds to metaphysical concepts in the thing itself?"⁸ Notions such as unity, freedom, and wisdom, are neither the whole being nor some physical part of it. How then can they truly express what reality is? Is this partial knowledge of beings objective?

Whereas Averroes claimed that the object of metaphysics is God, Avicenna considered it to be being as being.⁹ Granting Avicenna's position, what is the meaning of being and how can it be applied to both God and creatures? While the Augustinian descent conceptually from God to creatures differs from the Thomistic ascent cognitively from creatures to God, both agree in their

common use of analogy. Analogical knowledge, however, requires previous acquaintance with the terms to be compared. Scotus was convinced that the being and attributes of creatures and God cannot be compared unless there are concepts common and applicable to both. He believed something more than analogy would be needed to avoid agnosticism.

Inquiry into the value of concepts led Scotus to determine the structure of finite beings so as to provide an objective basis in reality to which universal judgments can refer. Is this objective foundation of knowledge universal or individual reality? In dealing with the composition of individual beings, Scotus will have to take a stand on the medieval problem of the oneness or plurality of forms in things. Aquinas' theory of one substantial form in a single being was controverted and even censured in the condemnation of 1277. Many Augustinian schoolmen recoiled at the soul's giving not only rationality and life but also substance and being to the body. This seems to bind the human soul so closely to the body as to endanger its independence from matter and consequently its immortality. Traditional thinkers preferred the safer supposition of at least one other substantial form in man.¹⁰

Scotus pursued the problem of objectivity into the field of natural theology to determine the validity and extent of man's knowledge of God. Within the finite framework of human reason, he inquired into the possibility of metaphysics developing into a natural theology with God as the object of knowledge. Can the metaphysician, his reason drawing upon the data of sensible objects, demonstrate the existence of an infinite being transcending immaterial as well as material beings? Is the human mind justified in rising from the knowledge of contingent things to the concept of a necessary being? In Scotus' estimation, the probative value of the Aristotelian proof from contingent motion may demand the existence of a primary mover, but it does not establish the reality of an infinite being supremely transcending all finite beings.

As regards God's nature, Scotus asked, "What kind of predicates are they which are predicated formally of God?"¹¹ His intent was to evaluate the objectivity of metaphysical statements about God. Implied in this investigation is the need of determining the methodological relationship between rational theology in which human reason alone inquires into the existence and nature of God, and revealed theology in which the mind reflects on what God has revealed to man in faith.

III. *Action*

In his concern for beings in action, Scotus faced the problem of reconciling intellect and will, necessity and freedom, knowledge and love. His efforts were bent towards insuring the freedom of God in relation to the world and opposing Greco-Arabian naturalism in which things necessarily flow from the Divine. An understanding of the whole economy of Christian morality — grace, merit, salvation, beatitude — hinges on the solution to the problem of liberty. Scotus had to maintain a delicate balance lest in emphasizing rational necessity he seriously limit the freedom of God and man, or in stressing contingency and indetermination he undermine the intelligibility and order of the universe.

Themes

Scotus' encounter with these issues centered around three themes: knowledge of being, being as essence, and free will.

I. Knowledge of Being

Scotus found in the human mind's grasp of being, the basis of universal concepts and objective knowledge of individual things. Following Aristotle, he held that the intellect can know everything that is. With being in its totality including both sensible and intelligible things, as its primary adequate object, the human intellect is capable of abstractive and intuitive knowledge. To maintain the Platonic ideal of unified and stable knowledge, Scotus agreed with Aristotle that the proper role of intellection is the abstraction of the quiddity of a sensible thing in a universal concept.

However, in Scotus' view, abstractive knowledge alone is not adequate for an objective grasp of individual things which, according to Aristotle, are what actually exist in reality. Hence, Scotus complemented Aristotelian abstraction with Augustinian intuition of singular realities in their actual existence. In this way, knowledge as intuitive is realistic in its orientation towards concrete things, and as abstractive is characterized by unity and universality. Scientific knowledge, therefore, is an abstractive consideration of the quiddity in intuited concrete things.

II. Being as Essence

Knowledge of being makes it possible for the metaphysician to grasp real things precisely as essence. The object of metaphysics is not existential being, as Thomas Aquinas affirmed, but quidditative being. In view of the simple Aristotelian axiom that science is of necessary things, Scotus conceived metaphysical being in a quidditative sense, for the essence of a thing contains the element of intelligible necessity and is expressible in an essential definition. Quidditative being is the basic principle of entities and their becoming. As form, it constitutes the reality of the physical world as a dynamic principle that expresses itself in the matter it perfects and orders. In so doing, it achieves its purpose by manifesting God's exemplary ideas in the material world of concrete things. Becoming is the actualization of form in matter. The highest form that all finite things strive to imitate is the infinite essence. What is "absolutely first in divinity," according to Scotus, "is essence, as essence."¹²

III. Free Will

A basic mode of the divine and human essence is freedom. Absolutely free, God is the sole source of choosing whether beings come into existence or not. The active center of man's ethical striving is the will which constitutes his concrete moral experience. The thrust of Scotus' ethics is free will which directs man toward his fulfillment by choosing patterns or habits for his own actions. By reflection upon his activities in the concrete social situation, man discovers the moral constituents of his acts, the natural law governing this, and the appropriate goals of human conduct. As the divine will communicates the obligatory force and content to natural laws, so the human will through freedom and love follows the moral laws to attain the infinite good.

Method

The problems confronting Scotus in view of his thematic ideas were investigated within a philosophical and theological framework.

I. Science

Scotus analyzed the relationship between philosophy and revealed theology in terms of Aristotle's distinction between science in the strict and wide senses. Strict scientific knowledge "must be certain, that is, without error and doubt, of a necessary object, based on evidence, and attained by syllogistic reasoning."¹³ The disclosure that the predicate inheres in the subject leads to a true conclusion by knowledge that is *a priori* and causal, a demonstration of the reasoned fact (*propter quid*).

Truth belongs only indirectly to science in the wide sense, or demonstration of the simple fact (*quia*), which reasons from effects to conclusions about contingent objects.¹⁴ Based on objective evidence and certain, such knowledge is scientific without giving a necessary reason why the object is what it is.

Scotus grounded the Aristotelian notion of science in the introspective approach of Augustine. In the intellectual intuition of psychological acts he found a guarantee of the validity of scientific knowledge and certitude. Scotus intertwined the Augustinian warp of inner experience and the Aristotelian woof of outer encounter into a single method.

II. Metaphysics

Since human knowledge is restricted to the notion of being directly grasped in material things, the primary "subject of metaphysics" cannot be God, the supreme spiritual being.¹⁵ Hence, the metaphysician cannot deduce what is proper to the divine essence any more than the geometer can demonstrate the properties of a triangle from the concept of a figure. "In everything which it says about God, metaphysics is purely a science of simple fact (*quia*)."¹⁶ We cannot know God by a science of reasoned fact, "because the middle term of a demonstration of reasoned fact, which is the deity in itself, as this deity, is not self-evident to us, nor is it apt in itself to be known by us, and therefore, this proposition, 'God is', is not self-evident (to us)."¹⁷

Metaphysics is only indirectly a science of reasoned fact (*propter quid*) in its secondary concern for truth about God. Nevertheless, metaphysics culminates in natural theology as "the most lofty way" possible for pure reason to study God.¹⁸

As knowledge of first principles and "highest causes,"¹⁹ metaphysics is the most perfect science of natural reason, focusing on the most knowable, most common, and most certain truths.²⁰ By analyzing essence into its elements, this highest human wisdom attains the absolutely first and most knowable being, God, the supreme cause. However, since man does not directly intuit intelligible essences in the present life, the metaphysician acquires no more than a science of simple fact, concluding to the existence of causes without explaining why their effects exist.

III. Revealed Theology

The limitation of natural reason and the radical insufficiency of metaphysics to achieve a strictly scientific knowledge of God show the necessity of a divine revelation for man to fulfill his supernatural destiny. Greek and Arabian philosophers were ignorant of God as a free cause. "Proper attributes" of God "cannot be known merely from what is purely natural."²¹ Natural reason is unable to know truths about God in himself; for example, "it is a property of this (divine) substance that it can be shared with three (Divine Persons)."²² In addition, "man can have no

definite knowledge of his end," not to mention how it may be attained, "from what is natural; therefore, he needs some supernatural knowledge,"²³ some special revelation from God.

Christian theology, treating of God in himself, is a science in itself with necessary truths evident to God, but not to man's finite mind in its present condition.²⁴ Theological premises, known by faith in divine revelation, cannot be strictly demonstrated. Truths contingent on God's free decree, for example, his relation to the world in creation and to man in redemption, also resist strict demonstration. Christian theology is a science in the sense that it reasons from principles accepted on faith and authority to true and certain knowledge.

While Christian theology shares its object, God, to some extent with metaphysics, neither is properly subordinate to the other, for they derive independently from their respective principles, the former from principles accepted on faith and the latter from those known by the natural light of reason.²⁵ However, Scotus contended against Averroes that revealed theology is superior to metaphysics.²⁶ The Primary object of theology is God in himself whereas the concern of metaphysics is being in general. All those truths the metaphysician demonstrates *a posteriori* of God, the theologian proves *a priori* why they are true of God. Metaphysics is a propaedeutic to Christian theologies.

Influences

I. Coordinates

The three coordinates of time, society, and place, converged in the formation of Scotus' thought. Living at the apogee of the great intellectual expansion of the thirteenth century, he had at his command immense resources of thought from Greek, Arabian,²⁷ Jewish, and preceding scholastic philosophy. Whereas the Dominicans were inclined to adopt the Aristotelianism of Aquinas, the Franciscans, for example, Bonaventure, tended to adhere to the Augustinian tradition. Scotus' studies at the universities of Oxford and Paris brought him into contact with the mathematical and empirical orientation of the former and the Aristotelian metaphysics of the latter.

II. Augustinian and Aristotelian Heritage

At the intersection of those coordinates, Scotus experienced the tension between Augustinian and Aristotelian ideas. Bonaventure's Augustinian assimilation of Aristotelian elements was steadily losing ground to Aquinas' Aristotelian synthesis of Augustinian concepts. Henry of Ghent (d. 1293) reorganized the Augustinian tradition with Avicennian and Aristotelian concepts into an eclectic philosophy. In Scotus' view, the essentials of the Augustinian heritage needed to be reconstructed by a more rigorous, scientific approach so as to stand up to the pressing polemics with the Aristotelians. For Scotus, this reconstruction required not so much a search for new information as a critical reflection upon the responses already made to the issues of knowledge, being, and action.

Faithful in his pursuit of truth more than of tradition, Scotus at times abandoned some Augustinian teachings. For instance, he rejected Augustine and Bonaventure's theory of illumination, and adopted the Aristotelian and Thomistic theory of abstraction as a more satisfactory explanation of man's natural power to know reality as it is and also to avoid skepticism. Convinced that Thomas was not empirical enough in preserving the objectivity of knowledge, Scotus posited an intellectual intuition of the individual existent as a supplement to

abstraction in knowing reality as it is. This realism of Scotus represents an attempt to fuse the Augustinian concern for the individual and intuition with the Aristotelian regard for the universal and abstraction.

III. *Avicenna and Averroes*

Scotus also experienced the influence of Moslem philosophy in the construction of his metaphysics. In determining the orientation of metaphysics, he leaned more towards Avicenna's interpretation of Aristotle, that being as being is the direct object of ontology than towards Averroes' interpretation that God and separate intelligences (those separate from matter and man) are its object. For Scotus, God is the indirect object of metaphysics and natural theology its climax. With the help of Avicenna and Averroes, Scotus built Aristotle's unfinished metaphysics into a scientific edifice of transcendentals, relying also on Aquinas' analysis of such notions as unity and truth and on Bonaventure's treatment of such concepts as act and potency, prior and posterior. Scotus' view, that being is both communal and individual represents a convergence of the Aristotelian affirmation that individuals exist and the Avicennian teaching of a common nature in things.

IV. *Thomas Aquinas*

Scotus refined Thomistic ideas in a crucible of critique before adopting them. For example, while more or less continuing the Thomistic distinction and complementarity of faith and reason, Scotus, however, in view of his strict notion of demonstration, transferred some Thomistic truths (for example, the immortality of the soul) from the certainty of reason to the certainty of faith. Sometimes Scotus reacted dialectically to Aquinas by adopting a counter-position. For instance, Scotus viewed Christian theology as primarily a practical science, whereas Aquinas considered it chiefly speculative. This difference is rooted in their preference for diverse traditions. Aquinas, favoring the Aristotelian tradition with its primacy of intellect over will and the emphasis on contemplation of intelligible truths, regarded theology as principally a speculative science. Scotus, however, preferring the Augustinian tendency to the priority of the will and the world's contingent relation to the divine free will (factors not amenable to theoretical treatment) described theology as mainly a practical science.²⁸

The Response

Scotus responded to his problematics by developing a theory of knowledge, a metaphysics of being, a natural theology of infinite being, and an ethics of action under Augustinian and Aristotelian influences.

Theory of Knowledge

I. Object

To determine the value of human knowledge, Scotus analyzed the intellect in terms of its primary, natural and adequate objects.²⁹ "Being is the first object of the intellect."³⁰ The first object in the order of nature, fully corresponding to the intellect's capacity, is also the adequate

object. "The proper object, according to its total indifference, is the adequate object."³¹ In its total indifference, being is not exclusively material or immaterial; it can be either a sensible or an intelligible object.

The adequate object which includes everything a faculty can know is first inasmuch as the mind does not know without it and common insofar as everything is understood in its light. The problem narrows down to this: What is the natural object first grasped by the human intellect and adequately fulfilling its whole capacity?

Scotus criticized Henry of Ghent's position that God is the prime object of the human intellect, because it "accords too much to the intellect on the knowledge of God" whose infinite essence is adequate only to the infinite intellect. Likewise, he objected to Aquinas' view that the proper object of the human intellect is the abstracted quiddity of a sensible thing, because it "accords too little;"³² if this were so, the ultimate immaterial cause of things would be beyond man's intellectual capacity which would be frustrated in its natural desire to know that cause; furthermore, metaphysics as a science of all beings would be impossible, restricting the human intellect to a science of physics.

A. *Being*. With Avicenna, Scotus affirmed that, as the natural object of sight is color, so "the primary object of our intellect is being, and this according to the total indifference of being to sensible and insensible (imperceptible) things."³³ Not determined solely to sensible or intelligible existence, being can be an object in either state. If being were not the primary object of the intellect, it could be described in terms of something more ultimate, which is impossible. As the most common notion, being alone is that formality in view of which everything is known, and which alone is predicable of everything.³⁴ With being in all its fullness, unrestricted to this or that thing, as the adequate object of the intellect, man is naturally capable of knowing anything that is intelligible.

B. *Sensible Quiddity*. Although the human intellect is *de jure* capable of grasping being in its entire indetermination, *de facto* it is restricted to the abstraction of a sensible quiddity given in the phantasm according to conditions willed by God.³⁵ This restriction, according to Scotus, may be either a penalty for original sin or a result of God's design to harmonize the operation of man's various powers with sense and imagination apprehending the individual thing and the intellect grasping the universal. While his explanation is not very satisfactory or clear, he, nonetheless, maintained that as a viator on earth, man's intellect is naturally and immediately moved only by the "quiddity of a sensible thing."³⁶

II. *Intellectual Power*

Agreeing with Aristotle that the human intellect is a clean slate (*tabula nuda*) with no innate ideas, Scotus analyzed its intuitive and abstractive power.

A. *Intuition*. In line with the Augustinian emphasis on intuition, Scotus defined it as knowledge of an object as present in its actual singular existence.³⁷ The singular which the senses immediately perceive can be directly understood *a fortiori* by the intellect, "for a superior and more perfect power knows all that an inferior power knows."³⁸ Intellective intuition is evident in induction, true contingent propositions, and love, all of which concern individual things. Abstraction presupposes intuition. "It is impossible to abstract universals from the singular without

knowing from what it was abstracting."³⁹ Intellectual intuition of individual realities directly affecting the senses validates the objectivity of scientific knowledge of universals.

The limitation of intellectual intuition "is not due to unintelligibility on the part of the singular thing itself,"⁴⁰ being more real as an existent and more intelligible in itself than the specific form, but rather to "an imperfection in its (intellect's) present state."⁴¹ Presently, an object acts on the intellect only to the degree of its nature and not insofar as it is singular. The fact that one does not know why individual characteristics inhere in this thing rather than in that shows one's nescience of the singular as singular. Reasoning that intelligence is a common characteristic of persons does not explain why, for example, this particular intelligence belongs to Aristotle rather than to Alexander the Great.

If one were to intuit the singular as singular, he could possess full knowledge of its being, a consequence not verified from experience. On account of this limitation of intellectual intuition, science concerns universals rather than singulars, and its definitions express the quiddity of a class rather than the singular as such. Since the intellect intuits an individual, not in its innermost being, but simply as existing, it's knowledge is confused and imperfect.⁴²

B. *Abstraction.* Scotus found it necessary to compensate for the limitations of Augustinian intuition by introducing the Aristotelian theory of abstraction. There can be abstractive knowledge of a nonexistent object as well as of an existent object, but there can be intuitive knowledge only of an existent object as existent.⁴³ Naturally capable of intuiting intelligible quiddities, the human intellect, however, in the present condition, knows things in their intelligible quiddity only by an abstractive process which starts with the individual sensible thing represented in the phantasm of the imagination and produces an intelligible likeness (*species*) by the mediation of the agent intellect. Abstraction enables the mind to arrive at universal knowledge of individual things in their essence and causes.

Aristotle held that scientific knowledge concerns universals. But a nature in itself, Scotus insisted, is indeterminate to universality and individuality. How does an object pass from negative to positive indetermination by which the objects as soon as it is known, becomes completely universal"?⁴⁴ The cause can be neither the object alone which simply reveals itself as it is nor the intellect as a passive receptive power. the total cause is the intellect as active together with the object's nature: "the agent intellect, together with common nature makes the object universal."⁴⁵ Scotus reaffirmed Aristotle's agent intellect as producing in the possible intellect the universal likeness of the nature presenting itself.

But how can abstraction discover a universal which is not at least potentially in the individual thing? The objectivity of intellectual knowledge depends, in addition to the individual, on the reality of its common nature receiving its ultimate actuality as a universal from the intellect. Scotus found in Avicenna's theory of common nature the basis for knowing reality as it is in itself. The intellect can discover directly in the common nature, not individual in itself, the capacity for being universalized, without any need of stripping the quiddity of individuating notes as in Thomistic thought. Intellectual abstraction, therefore, is an apprehension of the common nature plainly presented in the phantasm and a universalization of it as a positive indifference to this or that thing.⁴⁶

Relying on Averroes' teaching that universality is the work of the intellect, Scotus reasoned that the process of universalization consists in the agent intellect's endowing common nature with a new modality as the intelligible likeness produced in the possible intellect. To know the universal, the intellect must be determined by an object that is real and present, otherwise it remains

indifferent to knowing and unmoved. The common nature, really present as a universal in the intelligible likeness, is "formally caused in the possible intellect" which is moved to understand.⁴⁷ The intelligible likeness represents as universal what the sensible presents as similar. To understand, Scotus agreed with Aquinas that the human intellect must turn to the phantasm in the imagination which represents the individual thing, not because of the nature of the human intellect as Aquinas held, but because of its present condition in the world.⁴⁸

III. *Understanding*

On the one hand, Scotus criticized Henry of Ghent's "opinion that attributes the whole activity of understanding to the soul alone"⁴⁹ without respecting the causality of the object. If the intellect were the total cause of knowing, it would always be actually knowing, at least itself — a conclusion not verified by experience. On the other, he was dissatisfied with the theories of Godfrey of Fontaines, Giles of Rome, and Thomas Aquinas, who emphasized the intelligible content of the phantasm from which the intellect removes individuating conditions without giving due justice to the subject's power to initiate knowledge and to elaborate on the object by reasoning, reflecting, and establishing relations of reason or logical intentions.⁵⁰

While favoring the Augustinian tradition of emphasizing the intellect's causal power in effecting the activity of understanding, Scotus held that both intellect and object "taken together are the integral cause of knowledge,"⁵¹ each exercising a causal efficacy proportioned to its own nature. They collaborate as two partial efficient causes essentially related to each other in producing the single effect of understanding. In the unity of understanding both are perfect and independent of one another insofar as their own causality is concerned.⁵²

Intellection manifests the three characteristics of inequality, specialization, and complementarity. First, the intellect exercises a superior causality as an active power that can perform an unlimited number of acts, whereas the object is limited to the production of that act referring to it.⁵³ Second, the human intellect, lacking within itself the whole of being, is finite and consequently needs a special determination of an object to actualize its power for a particular act of understanding.⁵⁴ Third, the causal complementarity between the formal content of the object and the intellect's efficient activity is natural inasmuch as thought by its nature is ordained to being which is knowable in itself.⁵⁵

IV. *Certitude*

A. Rejection of Illumination Theory. In view of the intellect's intuitive and abstractive grasp of objective reality, Scotus affirmed that "a truth, certain and without mixture of error, can be known by the human intellect in this life, naturally and without a special illumination of the uncreated Light."⁵⁶ Henry of Ghent argued that, since the intellect's certainty concerning unchangeable truths cannot be derived from mutable sensible objects, an immutable light is required. Scotus rejected Henry's Augustinian theory of a special divine illumination with the criticism that if changing sensibles of themselves are not open to certainty, no divine light can assure one of them without representing them other than as they are and leaving one in error.⁵⁷

Likewise, Henry contended that the human intellect is so changeable that it cannot be the cause of immutable truth. In reply, Scotus insisted that whatever divine light is received into the soul to remedy such a defect will itself be subject to the variable conditions of the intellect and consequently itself undergo change.

B. *Truth.* Without a special divine light, the human intellect can naturally acquire certitude of truth in both the abstract and concrete orders. The intellect, on understanding the nexus of simple terms that compose first principles, for example, being is being and not nonbeing, and the whole is greater than any of its individual parts, can be sure of their truth.⁵⁸ By syllogistic reasoning, the intellect can deduce certain conclusions from first principles. Scientific knowledge rests on these principles. Even if the senses furnishing the terms of comparison were constantly deceiving one, the truth of such propositions would not change, because the evidence of the nexus between subject and predicate is caused, not by sensation, but by the intelligible terms abstractly "present to the intellect."⁵⁹

The intellect can also be certain of cosmological and psychological truths of the concrete order. The intellect infallibly intuits sensation and the existence of singular objects.⁶⁰ Certitude regarding the nature of things is based on a self-evident principle: "Whatever happens regularly and does not depend on a free cause, is a natural effect of that cause."⁶¹ It would be contradictory for a cause which is not free to produce generally effects contrary to those which follow normally from its nature. A natural cause regularly produces the effect to which it is ordained by its being and not by chance.

Since the terms of this undeniable principle and their nexus are abstracted from intuited sensible objects, the principle can be used to guarantee the validity of sensation. The sense power is regularly modified by a sensible species which is always the same in the presence of the same object. Therefore, a sensation regularly produced by a sensible thing must be the natural effect of that cause, "and thus the external thing will be white or hot as such as it naturally appears to be according to the image so frequently produced."⁶² When the senses regularly perceive the same object, the intellect can be sure that it is as one perceives it. On the basis of first principles, the human intellect can critically judge with certitude what sense data report the physical world as it really is.

- *Induction.* Certainty about sensible natures can be advanced scientifically by induction. From a limited number of experienced cases, inductive science formulates general laws which are accepted as universally valid for all cases of the same kind. The ground of their universality is the first principle already invoked, namely, "Whatever happens in most cases (the observed cases) does not proceed from a free cause, but is the natural effect of the cause."⁶³ On the basis of this principle, it suffices that one experientially knows that some beings generally behave in a definite manner to be sure that such is generally so in all beings of the same kind. The principle of uniformity and constancy of effects leads to the conclusion that they are natural, not fortuitous.

Certitude of psychological truths arises from the intuition of interior acts whose evidence equals that of first principles. Upon the intuitive certainty of human operations rest all other certainties and the whole edifice of scientific knowledge. "And just as our certitude of being awake is like that of self-evident propositions, the same is true of many other acts in our power such as 'understand' or 'hear'"⁶⁴ when understanding "is functioning properly. And when it is not it is something self-evident, otherwise nothing could be known for certain."⁶⁵ Though one experiences an illusion and is unsure of seeing something as it really is, one is certain, at least, that he is seeing.

In the present state, "our soul is not known by us, nor our nature, except under some general notion, able to be abstracted from sensible things,"⁶⁶ and understood in terms of being. With no intellectual intuition of his soul in the present state, man knows his soul indirectly by reasoning from its acts to its powers to the soul itself. The need for indirect reflection arises, not from the soul which is eminently intelligible and immediately present to itself, but from the present

condition of the intellectual soul which is restricted to being moved immediately by a sensible quiddity.⁶⁷ The intellective soul intuits the existence of its own acts and by abstracting the quiddity of these functions arrives at a knowledge of its own nature.

*Metaphysics*⁶⁸

I. *Being*

Because the intellect "comes to know something through the characteristic of being in general,"⁶⁹ it can engage in the science of metaphysics whose "primary object is being inasmuch as it is being."⁷⁰ But how is this object to be understood? Is it logical or real? If it is real in the physical sense, what need is there of metaphysics? Scotus replied, on the one hand, that because the metaphysician completely abstracts from matter and motion and disregards the individuating conditions of sensible beings, he transcends physical things to contemplate being as such with everything pertaining to it.⁷¹

On the other hand, he goes beyond the purely logical being (second intentions) constructed by the mind to real being (first intention) abstracted immediately from singular things and essentially predicable of them. The consideration of real things simply as being is identified with neither physics nor logical metaphysics. As the primary concept to which all truth of metaphysics are reduced and the virtual notion containing all things knowable by this science⁷² inasmuch as they are known in virtue of being, being is the unifying object of metaphysics.

As Avicenna noted, being first falls in the intellect, because it is the most simple, common notion. Everything that is not nonbeing is being. Being admits of no reality beyond itself. Opposed to nothing except nonbeing, the notion of being is "an absolutely simple concept . . . which is not resolvable into several concepts,"⁷³ and cannot be conceived except distinctly. One either knows being or is totally ignorant of it in the sense of knowing nothing; there is no halfway stage. Irreducible to simple concepts and allowing of nothing more readily known to elucidate it, being can be neither properly defined nor explained in the strict sense, but simply described.⁷⁴

Being, signifying that which includes no contradiction, can be distinctly conceived apart from any other concept. Every kind of being, because it includes the notion of being in its conception, cannot be conceived distinctly apart from being. Utterly simple, indeterminate, and "most common,"⁷⁵ being embraces all reality within its scope, common to the categories yet transcending them. With its object surpassing that of all other natural sciences, metaphysics is the highest science.⁷⁶

In line with the Aristotelian conception of science as concerned with necessary things, Scotus viewed being in a quidditative sense, for the essence of a thing contains an intelligible necessity which is expressible in a definition.⁷⁷ A definition expresses what a being is, namely, its essence or quiddity. Being is "that to which to be is not repugnant,"⁷⁸ or intrinsically impossible. Now the only real being that can exist or already exists is quidditative being, the object of metaphysics. Since metaphysics abstracts from actual existence, it is understandable that it treats mainly of essence.

Not merely a nonrepugnance to existence, being of itself is profoundly positive. To be the primordial element of distinct knowledge, being must primarily include the quidditative subject of existence rather than actual existence, since existence cannot be conceived except in reference to a subject. In its reference to actual existence, being can be described as a quidditative capacity for a determined grade of existence in things. "It is form, or has form."⁷⁹ Since metaphysics abstracts

being from actual existence, it is open to all beings as quidditative. "Because the quiddity of a thing is the *per se* entity of a thing, therefore first philosophy considers the thing according to its entity."⁸⁰ Quidditative entity is the formality under which metaphysics embraces the principles of being.

II. *Transcendentals*

Any real notion which "cannot be contained under any genus"⁸¹ and rises above the categories of substance and accident is said to be transcendental. As the most simple and common notion *par excellence*, being is the "first of the transcendentals."⁸² With the help of Avicenna and Averroes, Scotus built Aristotle's metaphysics into a scientific edifice of coextensive and disjunctive transcendentals.⁸³ For Scotus, metaphysics is "the science of the transcendentals."⁸⁴

A. *Coextensive Transcendentals*. "'Being' possesses . . . attributes which are coextensive with it, such as 'one', 'true' and 'good',"⁸⁵ which are convertible with being in such a way as to be inseparable from it; by the fact that everything is being, it is one, true, and good. For that reason they are predicable of everything of which being is affirmed. While unitively contained in a real indivisible whole of a physical entity, these transcendentals, from the objective standpoint, are formally distinct in virtue of their different quidditative entity. From the viewpoint of concepts, these properties presuppose the quidditative notion of being as the primary subject which they formally modify without being explicitly or implicitly contained in that subject.⁸⁶ "So to be one or many, act or potency, is exterior to the essence of anything insofar as it is being, or essence in itself."⁸⁷ Without entering into the formal definition of each other, each coextensive attribute adds its own proper entity to being.

- *Unity*. Every quidditative entity enjoys its own proper transcendental unity whereby it is "undivided in itself and is divided from all else."⁸⁸ The most perfect form of transcendental unity is individuality, designated by the pronoun "this," and possessing an irreducible simplicity forbidding its multiplication. "Less than numerical unity"⁸⁹ is the unity of kind arising from common nature which is indifferent to pertaining to one or many individuals.

- *Truth and Goodness*. What is one is also true and good. Truth is the intelligibility of being, or the being manifestive of itself according to its proper grade of being.⁹⁰ The first object the mind grasps is the quidditative entity of which intelligibility is an attribute. Ontological goodness bespeaks "perfection in itself and in reference to itself"⁹¹ by means of a being's form. In addition to its primary transcendental goodness, a being can be desired by another. "The perfection of a thing is twofold, namely, intrinsic as a form, extrinsic as an end"⁹² which is desirable. The appetibility of good as an extrinsic goal is grounded in the primary, intrinsic goodness. As the mind grasps being under the aspect of truth, so the will seeks it as goodness.

B. *Disjunctive Transcendentals*. Being also has "attributes which are opposed to one another such as 'possible-or-necessary,' 'act-or-potency,' and suchlike."⁹³ The primary differences of real being are the disjunctive transcendentals. Together as a disjunctive pair, they are coextensive with being as such. Every being is either contingent or necessary, substance or accident, absolute or relative.⁹⁴ To show that these disjunctives have real content, for example, that contingent and necessary beings exist, recourse must be made to experience. Disjunctives are either contradictorily opposed, as actual and potential, infinite and finite, or are correlatives, as prior-posterior, cause-caused, leaving open the alternative of a being that is neither cause nor caused.⁹⁵

The disjunctive attributes follow a metaphysical law: "In the disjunctive attributes . . . as a universal rule, by positing the less noble extreme of some being we can conclude that the more noble extreme is realized in some other being."⁹⁶ The validity of the law of disjunction is based on the essential order between the members which can be related in terms of eminence — for example, nobility — or dependence. Among disjunctions, contradictorily opposed, the existence of the imperfect member implies the reality of the more perfect member, but not vice versa. With correlatives, the existence of either member implies the other. For Scotus, the metaphysician's principal task is to study the disjunctive transcendentals.

C. Being's Primacy of Virtuality and Commonness. Being holds virtual primacy over its attributes and ultimate differences. They are contained virtually in being inasmuch as they are predicable necessarily of those things of which being is predicable essentially. The subject enjoys a natural priority over that which modifies it. As the ultimate subject of which the attributes and ultimate differences are predicable as modifications, being holds a virtual priority over these notions. Because they are simple qualifications of being, being can be predicated only denominatively of them. "For whatever is of itself intelligible either includes essentially the notion of 'being' or is contained virtually or essentially in something else which does include 'being' essentially."⁹⁷

As the determinable element to which every concept not irreducibly simple can be reduced, "'being' has a primacy of commonness in regard to the primary intelligibles, that is, to the quidditative concepts of the genera, species, individuals, and all their essential parts, and to the Uncreated Being."⁹⁸ This means that quidditative being is essentially predicable of anything that can be grasped by a complex concept, for example, finite being and infinite being.

III. *Formal Distinction*

In view of his notion of being, Scotus assimilated the common Franciscan doctrine of formal distinction. Being and its transcendentals are formally and objectively distinct. The formal objective distinction is more than a purely logical distinction made by the mind, for example, between "man" and "rational animal," and less than a real physical distinction between one thing and another thing, for instance, between a man's two arms. A distinction is objective insofar as it exists in real entities prior to any act of the intellect, and formal inasmuch as it obtains between formalities of things.⁹⁹

Although these formalities have their own proper entity and are not contained in each other, they are not totally diverse like different physical things which have a really distinct existence. In fact, different formalities are so unitively contained within a single subject that they constitute one indivisible thing, inseparable even by the power of God.¹⁰⁰

In view of the formal distinction, Scotus concluded that the concepts of being with its attributes and the concepts of the perfections in God and creatures are grounded in objective reality, because they represent formalities of things as they really are and can be predicated of them.¹⁰¹ In this way Scotus maintained the objectivity of knowledge without impairing the unity of the object. He applied this distinction in his metaphysics by formally distinguishing between being and its attributes, the grades of quidditative being (substantiality, materiality, animality, sensitivity, rationality), the metaphysical essence and its properties, the common nature and the individuating difference, the attributes of God, and the soul and its powers.

IV. *Univocation*

Having explained the objectivity of metaphysical notions in view of his theory of formal distinction, Scotus accounted for their conceptual character in terms of univocation.¹⁰² On the one hand, he rejected Henry of Ghent's opinion on the equivocity of being as undermining knowledge of God; if the concept of being comprises two different meanings, then every argument from creatures to God would be nullified by the fallacy of equivocation. On the other, Scotus believed that the theory of analogy in Augustinian and Thomistic philosophy is unsatisfactory, since the meaning of the same concept cannot be partly the same and partly different, partly itself and partly not itself. In Scotus' view, analogy needs to be grounded in the univocity of being, because creatures can be compared with God as the imperfect with the perfect, not insofar as they differ, but inasmuch as they have something in common expressed in univocal concepts.

For Scotus, univocation is required to explain the conception and predication of being. "I call univocal a concept that is so one that its unity suffices to make it contradictory to affirm it and to deny it, at one and the same time, of one and the same thing."¹⁰³ An analogical concept lacks that basic unity allowing for a contradiction. Because the notion of being has a unity whereby it is contradictorily opposed to nonbeing, it is a univocal concept which can be predicated of God and creatures in the same sense.¹⁰⁴ In virtue of its singleness of meaning constituting it the opposite of nonwisdom, the concept of wisdom, for example, can be validly applied "as a syllogistical middle term" in a univocal sense to God and creatures, free of the fallacy of equivocation.¹⁰⁵ The syllogism would run as follows:

If there is wisdom in creatures, there must be wisdom in being. But there is wisdom in some creatures.

Therefore, there is wisdom in God.

Without a common middle with a univocal meaning, no reasoning from creatures to God is possible or valid.

Scotus endorsed the arguments of Avicenna for the univocal concept of being. First, since the human intellect can know every reality only in view of being, the notion of being must be the same and common to everything, with a real unity of meaning and predication.¹⁰⁶ If being were not univocal to creatures and God, and substance and accident, it would mean that, not being, but nonbeing, is the primary object of the intellect — an unacceptable consequence. Second, one may be unsure whether something is substance or accident, but one cannot doubt that the thing is being. One would not have this assurance unless the concept of quidditative being, which abstracts from all modes of being and is indifferent to all of them, could not be affirmed of reality as a whole in one and the same sense.¹⁰⁷ Finally, reasoning from finite to infinite being would not be valid unless the sheer formal notion of being is common to creatures and God.¹⁰⁸ In Scotus' judgment, no metaphysical knowledge of God is possible, unless the concept of being is univocal in relation to God and creatures.

Some remarks of Scotus have given rise to the question of whether or not he restricted the univocal concept of being to the logical order. On the one hand, he said that the "one common concept which is expressed by this word 'being,' . . . is one logically speaking, although it is not (one) naturally and metaphysically speaking."¹⁰⁹ Likewise, in asserting that God and creatures are completely different in the real order,¹¹⁰ Scotus seemed to be confirming the univocal concept

of being to the logical order as a being of reason (*ens rationis*). But how can objective knowledge of God be guaranteed if univocal concepts are purely constructions of the mind?

In another place, Scotus stated that "existence (*esse*) belongs primarily and principally to God in such a way that it yet belongs really and univocally to the creature; and similarly, with goodness and wisdom and the like."¹¹¹ What is mainly in God is found univocally in a real way in creatures. How can this statement affirming something in reality corresponding to the univocal concept, be reconciled with the other statement restricting it to the logical order?

This reconciliation can be approached in view of Scotus' distinction between the being of existence and the being of quiddity. In actual existence, every being is either infinite or finite. Prior in the order of reason to the division of being into infinite and finite, the univocal concept of being possesses a unity of the logical order which is not the province of the metaphysician who focuses on quidditative being. In the quidditative order, every being is really opposed to nothingness in different ways. This diverse opposition to nothing, which God and creatures manifest in reality, is a real foundation for the univocal concept of being. The concept of being, as what is first intended (*intentio prima*) by the mind, is founded on reality from which it is abstracted and to which it objectively refers, whereas, as what is secondarily intended (*intentio secunda*), it is a being of reason. The univocal concept of being, briefly, is a subjective construct of the mind with a foundation in reality.

IV. Modal Distinction

While the formal distinction explains the objectivity of common univocal concepts, such as being, the modal distinction accounts for the objectivity of proper concepts, such as infinite being. A modal perfection exists between a formal perfection and the intrinsic modes by which it inheres in its subject.¹¹² The quidditative perfection of being, though not formally identical with its primary modes of finiteness and infinity, is really inseparable from them. A formal notion such as truth conceived without its mode is said to be imperfect and common, whereas with its mode, for example, infinite truth, it is perfect and proper.

An intrinsic mode, for instance, finitude, qualifies a nature by contracting it to its inferiors without formally changing the quidditative perfection of being, unity, and truth, just as an increase in the intensity of a luminous ray makes light brighter without adding to its nature. Because the intrinsic mode is virtually included in the concept of being and its transcendentals such that an individual entity with the formal perfection necessarily has the mode also, it does not perfect being,¹¹³ but simply determines the way it exists.

"Whatever concept we conceive, whether of good, or of truth, if it is not contracted through something that is not an absolutely simple concept, it is not a concept proper to God."¹¹⁴ In the contraction of being to the various entities which it embraces, the inner modes of infinity, necessity, and eternity proper to God, and those of finiteness, contingency, and temporality proper to creatures, do not formally alter their respective essences. Both the essence of God and that of creatures virtually contain the intrinsic modes proper to their individual entity.¹¹⁵ Thus God and creatures are formally similar in the conceptual order but morally different in their individual entity.

- *Essence and Existence*. Scotus rejected both Henry of Ghent's intentional distinction and Giles of Rome's physical distinction between essence and existence in creatures. "The being of essence (*esse essentiae*) is never really separable from the being of existence (*esse existentiae*)."¹¹⁶ If they were physically separable or distinct, essence would exist without

existence and existence would have an essence without essence — a self-evident contradiction. A purely logical or intentional distinction is inadequate, because existence is a determination of essence and formally outside the definition of the individual essence.¹¹⁷

Though Scotus was not explicit, a modal distinction of essence and existence seems to represent his mind. Whereas existence appears as a modal qualification of essence, and includes, both in thought and definition, the notion of the subject of which it is a mode, essence can be conceived and defined without introducing actual existence.¹¹⁸ Finite essence can be conceived apart from actual existence. Evidently, actual existence is an intrinsic modality of essence. However, since existence belongs to the concept of God's being, infinite essence cannot be thought of as not existing.

V. *Universals*

Scotus employed the formal and modal distinctions in his investigation of the universality and objectivity of concepts. Formalities, contracted to inferiors by intrinsic modes of being, exist in individuals but can be predicated of many. The universality of concepts which objectively refer to the formalities of things and are predicable of many individual entities, can be shown on the physical, metaphysical, and logical level.

- *Physical Level.* Scotus synthesized the Aristotelian teaching that individuals exist and the Avicennian theory of common nature by viewing nature as both common and individual.¹¹⁹ A nature is singular insofar as it is found in individuals and, consequently, not apt by itself to be predicated of many. However, if human nature, for example, were of itself individual, there would be no foundation in reality for universal statements. The abstraction of universal concepts presupposes as an objective basis, a formal distinction without physical separability between nature and the individual.

To establish a secure objective ground for universal judgments, Scotus characterized a nature as common insofar as it enjoys a unity of genus or species which, while less than numerical unity, makes things similar. As a real unity of generic or specific being, common nature is formally indifferent to the universal and individual, both of which it virtually contains.¹²⁰ Because of its unity of being in countless individuals, the common nature objectively grounds universal concepts of physical things and is appropriately called the physical universal.

- *Metaphysical Universal.* The aptitude of a thing's common nature to be predicated of many is conferred by the agent intellect in its abstracting and universalizing. Averroes provided Scotus with an explanation of universality as a work of the intellect. In virtue of its formal indetermination, common nature can receive a singular mode in concrete things or a universal mode in the intellect. The intellect abstracts the common nature by making its potential indifference in things, or predictability of many individuals, an actual indifference in concepts.¹²¹ The concept is "indeterminate in act, so that something which is intelligible and one is predicable of every subject and is truly universal."¹²² Since the metaphysician defines things insofar as they are actually indeterminate, the common nature as first intended by the mind is fittingly called a metaphysical universal.

- *Logical Universal.* The *de facto* predication of a universal concept requires a second intentional operation of the mind. Reflecting on the metaphysical universal and analyzing it into its constitutive notes, the intellect discovers that it can actually be predicated of many individuals, and constitutes its concept as formally universal or actually predicable of many. This logical relation of predictability is the work of the intellect. "Effectively, the universal is from the mind,

materially or genetically it proceeds from a property in the thing."¹²³ As the common nature grounds the objectivity of concepts, so the mind guarantees their universality.

VI. Individuation

Scotus strengthened the foundation of objective knowledge in his investigation of the cause which singularizes a common nature.¹²⁴ What makes the common nature, which in itself is no more singular than universal, to be individual? He rejected the following: Henry of Ghent's negative principle as inadequate to account for the positive perfection of individual unity; Giles of Rome's theory of quantity, because an accident can make substances differ only accidentally;¹²⁵ prime matter, because an indeterminate principle cannot be the primary reason of distinction; Aquinas' theory of matter and quantity together, because two insufficient principles cannot make an adequate one;¹²⁶ and form, because it is common to the individuals of a class.

What then makes "an individual," or something "one in number" so that "it is not divisible into many things, and is distinguished from every other according to number"?¹²⁷ How does being pass from specific to individual unity? Evidently, finite common nature with no intrinsic repugnance in itself to being multiplied, requires a determinant formally extrinsic to the nature to individuate it. An axiom of Scotus is that a more perfect unity demands a more perfect entity. For Scotus, that entity which is extrinsic to common nature and intrinsic to being itself, is haecceity (*haecceitas*) or "thisness,"¹²⁸ the individual entity, which is the final, positive perfection in the order of quidditative being.

- *Haecceity*. Although the logical unity of the species, for example, rational animal, excludes a division into essential parts without destroying the species itself, it does not exclude division into "subjective parts,"¹²⁹ whereby the representatives of the species can be numerically multiplied indefinitely.

Haecceity, a new entitative act, contracts the indeterminate specific nature to singularity and intrinsically determines a being to be just this being and none other.¹³⁰ It is not a specific difference added to a genus, but an entity which actualizes the potential reality of the species. Nor is it a perfection within form, but rather a new mode of being affecting the whole composite of matter and form, transforming the nature from specific to individual unity. Because every individual entity is radically different from any other entity, no haecceity has anything in common with another haecceity.

As the last perfection of form and the final preparation of a being for actual existence, haecceity is the ultimate reason for the individual's impossibility of being multiplied and for the impredicability of the individual which can receive all predicates but cannot itself become a predicate. Thus Scotus raised numerical or individual unity to a transcendental status as the ultimate quidditative perfection and embraced the whole of reality in the personal infinite being and individual finite beings.

VII. Matter and Form

Scotus developed Aristotle's hypomorphic theory within the transcendental structure of individuality. Analysis of quiddities abstracted from individuals reveals that they are composed of act and potency. According to these disjunctive transcendentals, every being is either act or potency, or a composite of both. Thus all material beings are composed of matter, the potential principle of indetermination, and form, the actual principle of determination. Following the

Augustinian conception of the reality of matter in itself, Scotus viewed it as an entity whose potency, prior (at least logically) to formal determination, is actualized to constitute it a being in its own right.¹³¹ When potential being receives act, it stands as an individual existent outside its cause.¹³² Without act, matter would not exist as a reality distinct from form. As a reality with its own proper existence, matter has a real capacity to receive form.¹³³

- *Substantial Union*. Although matter and form each has its own distinct reality, each is naturally ordered to the other as complementary potential and actual entities in a substantial union to constitute one physical composite.¹³⁴

This substantial union of a potential entity and an actual entity — a unity of order — radically differs from an accidental union of two things not naturally determined to one another, such as the stones in a wall. With his adaptation of Aristotle's hypomorphic theory, Scotus saw no need of retaining the traditional Augustinian doctrine of seminal reasons to account for the change and variety of things. He saw no necessity for inserting seminal reasons into matter which he conceived as a positive potency with its own act. Change can be explained by the capacity of matter for form, and variety by the succession of forms to which matter can be ordered. The operation of created efficient agents in forming a composite by uniting the form with matter does not infringe on God's creative causality.

- *Causality and Eminence*. Metaphysical reflection on quiddities abstracted from experience discloses an essential order of prior-posterior, cause-caused, and exceeding-exceeded — three correlative disjunctive transcendentals.¹³⁵ First, every being is ordered by its essence so that it is either prior or posterior. A being can be prior or posterior in terms of dependence and eminence.

Second, in the order of dependence, it is of the essence of two beings to be unequal, the posterior owing its being to the prior. This essential dependence is a relationship of cause and caused.¹³⁶ Though formal and material causality exist in an essential order, both types involve imperfection preventing them from applying to all being. Relevant in this order are efficient and final causation which imply no imperfection on the part of the cause. The final cause moves the efficient cause to exercise its productivity in such a way that the agent gives being to its effect. Thus Scotus adapted Aristotle's four kinds of causes to meet the demands of his own metaphysics.

Third, in the essential order of eminence, two beings, by their essence, are unequal inasmuch as one has more perfection than the other, without, however, necessarily involving dependence. The prior is that which exceeds in perfection and the posterior that which is exceeded.

To properly interpret observable facts in the light of these three essential orders, two norms must be respected. First, nothing can be essentially ordered to itself but only to something distinct from itself, otherwise the same thing would be contradictorily prior and posterior, exceeding and exceeded, cause and caused. Second, a circle or infinite regress in the order of essential causes is impossible. If the totality of these causes were essentially order to itself, a reversion would be made to the aforementioned contradiction. Consequently, there must be a first being in every essential order.

*Natural Theology*¹³⁷

Scotus developed Avicenna's position that God is the object of philosophy by culminating his metaphysics in a natural theology of infinite being.

I. *Cognitional Framework*

Although the human intellect *de jure* has a natural capacity to know everything intelligible insofar as it is being, *de facto* it is moved directly only by the quiddity of sensible things. With no intuitive, or "self-evident" knowledge of the divine essence, man's intellect has no proper concept of God's essence from which he could a priori deduce his existence. Man must rise by abstraction to an indirect knowledge of immaterial beings and God.¹³⁸

- *Demonstration.* Within the framework of human knowledge, Scotus analyzed Anselm's argument for God's existence. From an understanding of the word "God" as the "self-existent" or the "infinite," one can form the self-evident proposition, "God exists."¹³⁹ However, the terms of this proposition are merely logical. To proceed from the simple possibility of a thing expressed in a merely logical concept to its actual existence affirmed in a real concept, is invalid. The proposition, "God exists," is logically self-evident but not metaphysically proven. Since God's existence needs to be demonstrated, Anselm's proof offers only persuasive value. It is necessary to show that the term "God" signifies an essence to which the predicate "existence" really, not merely logically belongs.

A *posteriori* demonstration of God's existence must not originate from physical things, the proper study of the natural philosopher who, like Aristotle, reasons from moving bodies to the prime mover not transcending the physical order. "The most perfect concept of God possible in physics is prime mover; however the one possible in metaphysics is first being."¹⁴⁰ One needs to go beyond the horizon of sensible things to establish that a cause is first in the order of being. "How should a physicist prove that a mover is first without being more of a metaphysician to prove it first than of a physicist to prove it a mover?"¹⁴¹ A first mover is more metaphysical as first than physical as mover.

To overcome the limitations of physics, the metaphysician, focusing on the essences abstracted from existing things, investigates their intrinsic properties to discover what constitutes the real possibility of quidditative being. Here Scotus has in mind, not merely the logical possibility of a compatibility of conceptual notes, but rather the real possibility of being's agreement with actual existence. Should the metaphysician establish the real possibility of an essence demanding existence, that essence would necessarily exist as first.

A *posteriori* demonstration from contingent sensible effects which may or may not exist, is confined to establishing the hypothetical necessity of the prime cause. The probative force of proof from contingency falls short of rigorous demonstration from the absolute necessity inherent in the real possibility of caused beings. For a being to be produced, it is absolutely necessary that it have a cause. In metaphysical demonstration, the major must express necessity in the order of quidditative being, the minor a necessary relation between essence and existence, and the conclusion the necessity of actual existence.¹⁴²

The disjunctive transcendentals supply the necessary principles of a metaphysical proof. On the basis of the universal law of disjunction, "by positing the less noble extreme of some being, we can conclude that the more noble extreme is realized in some other being."¹⁴³ For example, "if some being is finite, therefore some being is infinite, and if some being is contingent, therefore some being is necessary."¹⁴⁴

II. *Proof of God's Existence*

For Scotus, the metaphysical demonstration of God's existence must prove that an infinite, primary being exists.

A. *Primary Being*. The existence of a primary being can be demonstrated from efficiency, finality, and eminence.

- *Proof from Efficiency*. "Some being is producible."¹⁴⁵ But the producible must be caused by another, and ultimately, by a primary cause. Therefore, there exists a primary cause. Observation shows that some natures can be effected from the fact that some beings are contingent; they are possible to be after not being. It is possible for some being to be produced insofar as there is some being which effects.¹⁴⁶ Causality and effectibility are a disjunctive transcendental of quidditative being as such.

The producible must be effected ultimately by a primary cause. "Now it cannot be produced by nothing, for what is nothing causes nothing. Neither can it be produced by itself, for . . . nothing ever makes itself or begets itself."¹⁴⁷ Nor can the distinct cause of a producible being be an infinite series of causes which are essentially ordered.

"In essentially ordered causes, the second depends upon the first precisely in its act of causation."¹⁴⁸ The essence of the former is less perfect than that of the latter. All the members in the essential series are simultaneously present, otherwise there would be no direct dependence of posterior upon prior, and consequently, no actual causality required to produce the effect. For example, a pen in the hand of a writer who is by nature more perfect can actually cause its effect only because it is here and now moved by the hand.¹⁴⁹

It is impossible for some being to be ultimately produced by a distinct, infinite series of essentially ordered causes.¹⁵⁰ Because the sum total of essentially ordered causes is composed of effects, the entire ensemble of effects must have been produced by a primary cause which is extrinsic and prior to the series. "Even if the group of beings caused were infinite, they would still depend upon something outside the group."¹⁵¹ Since the totality of effects is not the cause of itself, an infinity of essentially ordered causes cannot exist simultaneously.¹⁵² Hence, the effectibility of being is really possible only if an absolutely first cause is really possible.

The first efficient cause is really possible only because it actually exists. If it were not actually existing, it would only be because the first cause is really impossible, that is, capable of being caused. "Anything to whose nature it is repugnant to receive existence from something else, exists of itself if it is able to exist at all."¹⁵³ The first cause, as absolutely first, cannot be effected, and no being is producible unless it is really possible.¹⁵⁴

- *Proof from Finality*. Some beings are finalizable. But the finalizable must be caused by another, and ultimately, by an absolutely final cause. Therefore, an ultimate final cause exists.¹⁵⁵

In this proof, the metaphysician abstracts the real possibility of finality from the empirical fact of existing things acting for an end, and considers being as finalizable. Some being is effectible only if it is ordered to an end. Inasmuch as any being acts, it acts for an end. Hence, every effect of an efficient cause must have a final cause.¹⁵⁶

An infinite series of essentially ordered final causes is an impossibility. The sum total of final causes, like the individual causes, cannot be essentially ordered to itself and, consequently, cannot be simultaneously both prior and posterior, both end and that which has an end — a clear contradiction. The end of every producible being must be extrinsic to the universe and "simply

ultimate, that is, it can neither be ordained to something else nor exercise its finality in virtue of something else."157 Not able to be finalized, "the ultimate end cannot be caused in any way."158

"The being which can be an ultimate end actually exists and . . . this primacy pertains to some actually existing nature."159 If the primary end were not existing, it would be on account of its real impossibility. The primary end would be a real impossibility (1) if it were ordered to an end — inconceivable, because it is essentially ultimate in the order of finality; (2) if it were ordered to itself — unthinkable, inasmuch as it is strictly uncausable; (3) if it were from nothing — impossible, for nothing comes from nothing. Hence, the ultimate final cause is really possible only insofar as it actually exists.160

- *Proof from Eminence.* Beings are more or less perfect. But in an order of more or less perfection there must be an absolutely perfect being. Therefore, an absolutely perfect being exists.

Quidditative beings, excelling one another in perfection, are essentially ordered to one another. The root of eminence is the perfection of a form or end which exceeds that of another form, without necessarily involving dependence either in the order of efficient or final causality.161

The hierarchy of perfection is really possible only insofar as there is a real possibility of an absolutely first eminent being. Since nondependent beings can be more perfect than one another, it is really possible for a being to be totally independent, and perfect in being. The totality of an infinite series of hierarchical perfections, like each member of the series, enjoys only relative independence. In the order of perfection, posterior is really possible only inasmuch as the prior is really possible. Hence the exceeded totality of hierarchical perfections is really possible only because "some eminent nature . . . simply first in perfection,"162 is really possible. Since "the supreme nature cannot be caused,"163 nor ordered to an end, the supremely perfect being holds absolute primacy of eminence.164

If the supremely perfect being were not actually existing, it would be for one of these reasons: (1) its possibility is from nothingness — impossible, for nothingness is prior in perfection to nothing; (2) its possibility is from something else — inconceivable, because it is prior in perfection to all things; (3) its possibility is from itself — impossible, inasmuch as the prior in perfection cannot be posterior to itself in total perfection. "The supreme nature," then, "actually exists,"165 totally perfect and independent.166

The prime cause, ultimate end, and first being are one and the same primacy. Proportionate only to itself in being, the ultimate end of the first efficient cause is itself.167 "For if the end were anything apart from the agent intending the end, it would be more noble than the agent."168 Cause of all effects, the first efficient and final cause is supreme eminence, more perfect than all producible and finalizable things.

"Since this triple primacy is found together, . . . there is but one first efficient cause according to essence and nature."169 This single first being cannot be destroyed either intrinsically by a contradiction inasmuch as it is really possible, or extrinsically annihilated by a cause, for its nature is supreme. Its quidditative being necessarily demanding existence, the first must be. One in essential being, the first necessary being is one existent.170

B. Infinite Being. For Scotus, the proof of a primary being is incomplete unless its infinity is demonstrated from efficiency, eminence, and the rational faculties. Aristotle stated that the first cause moves by an infinite motion inasmuch as it has infinite power. Scotus interpreted this statement as meaning that God's supreme causal power can produce by motion an infinite number of beings. Not limited by any cause, the first efficient cause can produce all possible effects. "But

whatever has an infinite effect in its power at one and the same moment is infinite."171 Since the most perfect being cannot become more perfect, be equalled, or be exceeded by another being, it must be infinite in eminence,172 and one alone.

Scotus reasoned from the fact that "something is caused contingently"173 to contingency in the first cause in the sense that does not operate necessarily so as to exclude the possibility of the opposite effect. From internal experience, man is aware that the only Principle of contingent operation is free will which always implies intelligence. The freedom of some secondary causes can be due only to the first cause freely and intelligently causing.174

Since the object of the human intellect is being in its unlimited intelligibility, the intellect can experience an unlimited series of intellectual acts to grow in the knowledge of reality. Being's unlimited intelligibility, which a limited intelligence understands in a potentially infinite series of successive intellectual acts, requires an actually infinite intelligence to be understood simultaneously in one act. "That intellect is infinite which, at one and the same moment, has actual knowledge of all these things."175 The first intelligence, embracing in itself an infinity of intelligible being with perfect simultaneity, must be actually infinite in being.176

The human will naturally tends beyond all finite objects incapable of completely satisfying its drive for perfect repose, "to love an infinite good to the greatest degree possible."177 The will would not incline naturally towards, nor find fulfillment in, an infinite good if its nature were contradictory and could not exist. An infinite good is a real possible object of the will because it exists.178

"This notion of God as an infinite being is the most perfect absolute concept we can have of him,"179 compatible with infinity. It is the most perfect concept, because infinite being virtually includes infinite truth, infinite goodness and every perfection. It is the simplest concept, since it signifies, not an attribute such as the concept of goodness which is predicated of the being, but rather the very intrinsic mode of that being.

III. *Infinite Essence*

Knowledge of God's existence implies some awareness of what he is. From the proofs of God's existence, it is clear that the ultimate modality and actuality of the divine essence is infinity, the most basic source of all his perfection, radically differentiating him from all other beings whose innermost mode is finitude. The quidditative being of the infinite absolutely demands existence and all perfection. The essence of the infinite is to exist. That is why God called himself, "He who is" in the Book of Exodus. "Divinity is formally infinity."180

A. *Perfections*. The infinite being enjoys all pure perfections which, having no limitation in their formal notion, are better to have than not to have. "Every pure perfection is predicated of the highest nature as necessarily existing there in the highest degree,"181 namely, in an intensively infinite manner. Accordingly, pure perfections predicable of infinite being are being, its coextensive attributes, the nobler member of its disjunctive properties — prior, cause, exceeding, actuality, substantial, simple — and simple perfections such as life, free will, intelligence, and power. These divine "attributes . . . are perfections simply spoken of God formally."182

Natural reason, however, cannot demonstrate with certainty God's omnipotence, omnipresence, justice, mercy, and providence.183 While recognizing with Avicenna the demonstrability of God's infinitely extensive power to produce every possible effect, immediately or mediately, Scotus was not so sure about God's omnipotence. The imperfection of the effect may

require a finite cause for its explanation. Consequently, although the first cause eminently possesses the causality of the secondary cause, it does not necessarily follow that the first cause is omnipotent in the sense that it can immediately produce the effect of the latter without its cooperation.¹⁸⁴

Likewise, though it can be shown that God is present to all effects, it is not certain that he is immediately present to them. The greater the efficacy of the agent, the greater its power to act at a distance. "Therefore, since God is the most perfect agent, it cannot be concluded concerning Him through the nature of action that He is together with any effect caused by Him, but rather He is distant."¹⁸⁵ Scotus' reasoning regarding the divine presence and omnipotence seemed to have been influenced by Avicenna who followed Plotinus' theory of emanation in explaining God's peculiar transcendence; it is such that he can create only one being immediately, the highest intelligence, which in turn produces subordinate intelligences and material things.

Since the soul's immortality cannot be proven strictly, the justice of God cannot be rationally demonstrated as rewarding and punishing in the next life.¹⁸⁶ Similarly, with human reason unable to justify all the ways of God to man, the mercy of God, in the sense of forgiving sins and foregoing the exaction of punishment, cannot be philosophically demonstrated. Divine providence, especially in relation to intelligent creatures, cannot be metaphysically established by unaided reason which can fathom neither God's election of the just nor a special providence without the mediation of secondary causes.¹⁸⁷ Indemonstrable to natural reason alone which can at most give probable arguments, these divine attributes are properly objects of revelation and faith.

- *Formal Objective Distinction.* The divine attributes are formally distinct from each other in the individual essence of God, yet physically inseparable even by God's absolute power. Were these formalities only logically distinct, God would be unintelligible to himself and there would be no objective ground for the human intellect's distinct concepts of God.¹⁸⁸ Formally and objectively distinct, one perfection of God does not enter into the essential definition of the other. The univocal concept of wisdom formally differs from the univocal concept of goodness in their predication of God.

The mode of infinity constitutes God's essence and attributes as really, physically one without suppressing their formal distinction. "Goodness and greatness and other (attributes) of this sort are the same as it were by mutual identity, because each is formally infinite, and owing to this infinity each is the same as the other."¹⁸⁹ The divine attributes are morally and substantially the same in the infinite being. "So I allow that truth is identical with goodness in reality, but not, however, that truth is formally goodness."¹⁹⁰ Infinity makes God absolutely simple and one in himself.

- *Intelligence and Ideas.* Infinitely perfect in essence, God is infinitely intelligent with an infinity of ideas. In their quidditative being they are formally distinct from the divine essence. However, since they have no distinct proper existence, they are morally identical with the divine essence in the simple existence of the infinite. The objects of God's intelligence are distinguishable according to a formal order of priority and posteriority. "God first knows His essence," which as infinite is proportionate to his intelligence, "and in the second instant He understands creatures by means of His essence,"¹⁹¹ expressing them as an unlimited number of ideas. In the third moment, the divine intellect relates its essence with other intelligibles by comparing them. In the fourth moment, God's mind knows this relationship by reflecting upon it.¹⁹² All intelligible natures or possible beings, therefore, originate from the divine intellect.

Infinitely fertile, the divine intellect, "logically prior to the act of the divine will," naturally and eternally" produces those objects in their intelligible being,"¹⁹³ the ideas which are as necessary as his essence. Existing only as known in relation to the divine intellect, the whole being

of ideas is cognitional or objective. The ideas are related to the divine mind, not in the order of causality as existents, but in the order of priority and posteriority as objective beings. The ideas are perfectly true representations of the essences of possible creatures, because they conform to the productive and knowing mind of God. In fine, possible beings are intelligible imitations of the divine essence because God knows and produces them in their intelligible being.¹⁹⁴

- *Will*. The divine intellect and ideas sufficiently explain the necessity of possible beings and God's perfect knowledge of essence, such as humanity. However, they are inadequate to account for the existence of an essence and God's definite knowledge of contingents, for example, a particular man. A contingent being is one whose opposite could have been when it came to be,¹⁹⁵ whereas "necessity deprives completely all possibility that the opposite of what is should be."¹⁹⁶ A contingent being can have actual existence after nonexistence. To make an essence actually exist and to enable God to have definite knowledge of contingent beings, his intellect requires the concurrence of the divine will.

"Will in God is His essence really, perfectly and identically."¹⁹⁷ Whereas God necessarily wills his own being which alone is the infinite good, he has no need of willing any finite essence not necessarily related to his infinite being. Willing all change, God himself never changes his will which is immutably one with his infinite essence. However, it does not follow that what God unchangeably wills eternally must necessarily exist eternally: "The operation (of the will) is in eternity, and the production of the being of existence is in time."¹⁹⁸

The divine will causes creatures contingently inasmuch as their nonexistence could have been when they came to be.¹⁹⁹ Creatables, finite goods freely chosen from among possibles, are individualized quidditative entities. Only through recourse to the free decisions of the divine will and the creatable does God's intellect know contingent beings.

The infinite will possesses the pure formal perfection of liberty by which every object is freely chosen, every act of divine love is free. The liberty of the divine will lies in its being the absolutely first source of choosing. "The will is the total (efficient) cause of volition in the will."²⁰⁰ Because God freely loves himself in the sense of being the sole source of his self-love, he wills his own infinite essence necessarily. The less perfect is grounded in the more perfect. In the order of divine willing, the formality of liberty in choosing is logically prior to and more perfect than the formality of necessity in appetition. The liberty and necessity of divine self-love are identical in the infinity of God's being.

The divine willing of every finite essence is an absolutely gratuitous act of freedom and love. Its existence is contingently willed.²⁰¹ The sole reason for transforming a possible into a creatable is God's will. With the exception of the principle of contradiction and of the intrinsic necessity of the intelligible forms in themselves, the divine will is absolute master of the decision to create or not to create, as well as of the choice and combination of essences to be created. Once laws have been decreed, God's will preserves them unchangingly. Willed by God, an entity is good. "Because He willed it to be, therefore, it is good that it should be."²⁰²

IV. *Creation*

The divine will chooses what the intellect knows as possible and efficiently causes as necessary, and gives it contingent existence outside of God. "Anything that receives its total being from another, so that by its nature it has existence after nonexistence, is created"²⁰³ by God's power, a pure perfection formally distinct from the will. Whereas "uncreated reality, of itself (*se*),

infinite and necessary is God, created reality, from another, possible, and finite, is spoken of by the common name, 'creature.'"204

A. *Power*. Creating is the causality of the divine essence as power. Infinite in being, God enjoys infinite power, or better, omnipotence, an active causal power of immediately bringing from nonexistence to existence every creatable without the concurrence of any intervening secondary cause.²⁰⁵ Having received its whole being, the creature is really related to the creator. whereas the creator who suffers no entitative determination is only logically related to the creature.

B. *Temporal or Eternal Creation?* Creation in time is philosophically indemonstrable, because nothing depending on God's absolutely free decision is rationally deducible. The logical priority of nonbeing to being implied in creation does not seem to involve necessarily a temporal priority. "It does not seem to be necessary that nothingness should precede the world logically."²⁰⁶ Creation in time is possible, perhaps probable, yet creation in eternity is not impossible, as far as natural reason can see. Scotus, therefore, rejected Bonaventure's opinion and inclined more towards Aquinas' view, though with some hesitation, and for somewhat different reasons.

Psychology

1. Unity of Finite Beings

Scotus extended his metaphysics into a science of finite beings. He conceived the created universe as a hierarchy of angels with subsistent intellectual forms, inanimate things, and man as the mediating incarnate soul. In bringing a creatable into existence, the creative act constitutes all its formalities in the existing whole. The unity of every existent is quidditative inasmuch as all its forms are composed without losing their proper distinction. and existential insofar as all the distinct quidditative entities numerically co-exist in the one individual.²⁰⁷

II. Plurality of Forms

In the Augustinian tradition, Scotus viewed living beings as having a plurality of forms, namely, the form of corporeity and the soul.

A. *Form of Corporeity*. The form of corporeity constitutes the body with its own proper actuality, enabling it to have a real potentiality to receive a soul. Transcending the purely material composition of an inanimate body, a living being requires the form of life, in addition to the form of corporeity, to account for the being's organization and its vital activities.²⁰⁸ The form of corporeity, disposing a body to be informed by the soul as the form of life, retains its own proper quidditative entity apart from the formal being of the soul. At death, the physical integrity of the corpse, the binding of its manifold elements and the preservation of its appearance, can only be due, not to the soul which is separated from the body, but to the form of corporeity actualizing the body.²⁰⁹

B. *Intellective Soul*. Reflection on man's acts make it possible to arrive, by way of causality, at their adequate principles. "The intellective soul is the specific form: of man," as is evident from the "function proper to man."²¹⁰ Now, "man formally and properly understands,"²¹¹ and chooses. Human understanding with universal being as its object and its ability for self-reflection transcends

sensation which is confined to particular beings and unable to turn perfectly back upon itself. The will's freedom to choose or not to choose different things surpasses an organic appetite determined by this or that sensible good. The source of these rational and volitional activities must be an intellectual form. Each person can say that he knows or he wills because he possesses the formal principle of these activities as his own. and not as an Averroistic separate intelligence. As the proper form of man, the spiritual soul differentiates him from the brute and confers existence on him.

III. *Substantial Union*

Unity follows quidditative being. The unity of the human composite comes from the one intellective form which unifies the lower forms. The plenary substantial form, involving its highest actuality, haecceity, contains all the forms entering into the composite. As potentiality is naturally subordinate to and complemented by actuality, so the body with its form of corporeity is naturally ordered to the intellective soul as its ultimate and most perfect form to constitute one complete substance.²¹² "Only the composite is a being per se . . .; the intellective soul, however, is not said to be subsistent," except insofar as it participates in the "existence of the whole."²¹³ The partial forms — form of corporeity, vegetative and sensitive souls — are formally distinct from each other in the intellective form of the whole which virtually includes them and communicates them to the human composite.²¹⁴ Man, then, is a substantial union of an intellective soul and a living organized body. Consequently, the individual human composite subsists with soul and body as partial entities within the whole being and for the good of the person. In view of his emphasis on the individual, Scotus was critical of Aquinas' giving the soul — a partial being — its own proper subsistence and conferring existence, absolutely speaking (*esse simpliciter*), on man.

IV. *Faculties*

The human soul is physically identical but formally distinct from its faculties. As principles of understanding and willing, the powers are not physical entities apart from the soul, but rather "are contained unitively in the essence"²¹⁵ of the soul as properties of a superior "container." Since the soul is the source of the powers and contains their partial perfections in a unitive identity with its total perfection, it is the immediate eminent principle of operation. The plurality of formalities are quidditatively distinct from the individual soul with which they are existentially or physically one.²¹⁶ Likewise, the active intellect and possible intellect are formally distinct yet physically identical.

- *Pre-eminence of the Will*. In the spirit of Bonaventure, Scotus found the will formally distinct from and nobler than the intellect. First, the will which alone is free,²¹⁷ a free power (*potentia libera*) — is formally more perfect than the intellect, a natural power determined by its object to assent to clearly evident truth, for example, the whole is greater than the part.²¹⁸ Though the will in its natural appetite for good is like the intellect in its necessary determination to truth, yet the formal notion of the former lies more in its essential freedom than in its natural inclination. Second, the will's freely elicited act of love is more excellent than the intellect's necessary natural love. That is why "no ignoring of God, not even that of unbelief," can be worse than "hatred of God, if the will could entertain such hatred."²¹⁹ Finally, happiness comes more from loving than from knowing finite goods and especially the infinite good.²²⁰ "Beatitude," lies "formally in an act of the will by which the supreme good alone is absolutely attained and enjoyed."²²¹

- *Freedom of the Will*. Whereas the action of natural agents is specified by what they are in themselves and is exercised uniformly given the same set of extrinsic conditions, the will of itself is undetermined and the total efficient cause of volition. It can determine itself to act or not to act, or to act now this way, now that. The free agent acts *with*, but is not determined by intellectual knowledge which is only a necessary condition of volition or, at most, an occasion of presenting objects which the will is always able to refuse or to accept.

In contrast to the intellect which is "irrational" in the sense of automatically assenting in the presence of evident truth, the will is "rational" insofar as it freely chooses an object known through the intellect. "If rational means to act *with* reason, then it is the will that is properly rational and it is concerned with alternatives both as regards its own actions and the actions of the powers it controls, but the alternative it selects is not determined by its nature (as is the case with the intellect which could not determine itself to act otherwise), but it acts freely."²²² Thus the will is not capricious or arbitrary in the exercise of its freedom, but radically rational in nature.

- *Love*. Scotus interpreted Anselm's distinction between affection for the advantageous (*affectio commodi*) and the affection for justice (*affectio iustitiae*) as a twofold inclination of the will towards the good. Whereas the former tendency is a love for what is to one's advantage, the latter is a love of a thing for its own sake. "This affection for what is just . . . is that liberty which is native or innate in the will, since it provides the first tempering influence on the affection for what is advantageous"²²³ so that the will need not seek that towards which the latter affection inclines. The essential freedom of the will lies in choosing good for its own sake. Whatever decision is for one's own benefit should be rooted in the choice of something good in itself. The drive for self-perfection, then, should be channeled towards the love of God and others in themselves.

V. *Immortality*

Neither the soul nor the body, but the human composite properly exists through itself (*esse per se*). Though the soul is entitatively distinct from the body, its partial being is not definitive and ultimate, for, as the specific form of the body, it is quidditatively ordered to the "composite as a whole" which "is perishable."²²⁴ In view of the evident fact that the individual man, the proper subject of existence and activities, corrupts, it is not logical to reason that his soul, once separate from the body, enjoys a natural capacity to exist in itself.

The Augustinian argument from the natural desire for perpetual existence presupposes that human nature, the basis of the desire, is capable of immortality — the question at issue. A highly probable argument for this capacity can be found in the soul's spiritual activity. The fact that the soul exercises its proper operations of intellectual and free volitional activity independently of the body, persuasively, though not demonstratively, argues to its independence in being apart from the body. The immortality of the soul, therefore, is "a more probable conclusion than its opposite."²²⁵

Ethics and Politics

I. *Moral Constituents*

Scotus developed his ethics by an analysis of good. First, transcendental goodness is a property of all beings to the extent that they have any positive entity in themselves. "The secondary (or natural) goodness of being, which is accidental and accruing to being, is its integral harmony

with other things to which it is necessarily related."²²⁶ The moral goodness of a human action depends on man's acting in harmony with the exigencies of his nature in given circumstances and his respecting the necessary relations he has to other beings.

- *Primary Morality*. Morality is grounded in reason and freedom. "Primarily, then, the moral goodness of the act consists in its conformity to right reason, dictating in full concerning all the circumstances (power, object, end, time, place and manner) that are appropriate to this act."²²⁷ No human action can be morally good unless it originates from the power of free will which enjoys autonomy, dominion, and responsibility for the action. "An act is neither praiseworthy nor blameworthy unless it proceeds from the free will"²²⁸ which enables the action to be completely conformed to right reason.

A human act derives its basic ethical meaning from the object to which it refers. "The primary (moral goodness) belongs to the volitive act insofar as it directs itself towards an object which is proper to it, not only according to the natural order of things, but also according to the dictates of right reason."²²⁹ Murder (the killing of an innocent person), for example, is contrary to right reason. The object conformable to right reason confers the actuality of moral goodness on a free act, as beauty adds to the substance of a body. As to love, God is the only act good in virtue of its object alone, so to hate the infinite good is the sole action evil by reason of its object alone with no possibility of being rendered good by any circumstance.²³⁰

- *Secondary Goodness*. "Secondary moral goodness belongs to the volitive act inasmuch as it is performed by the will having due consideration of all the circumstances"²³¹ of place, time, way of accomplishing, and especially the intention of the will. "Goodness, as far as circumstances are concerned, depends primarily on the end"²³² qualifying the whole act. However, a good end cannot justify evil means: "evil things must not be done that good may eventuate,"²³³ for example, to hate God to save one's life from persecutors. To love God for his own sake, the ultimate end, is the supreme human action. In fine, a human act is completely good only when all its elements — object, end, and other circumstances — conform with right reason, just as a body is beautiful when it possesses all those characteristics of size, color, shape, and so on, which befit the body itself and harmonize with each other.

- *Indifferent Actions*. A human action lacking some circumstance necessary for complete moral goodness can be morally indifferent.²³⁴ An action not ordered, at least indirectly, to the ultimate end, can be good generically but fall short of the specific goodness of the end. He who loves God, the infinite good in whom object and end are identical, tends towards his due end and performs a morally perfect act. However, "man is not bound always to refer his acts to God by an actual or virtual intention, for God did not oblige us to do so."²³⁵ For example, almsgiving not referred either actually or virtually to the infinite good is neither completely compatible nor completely incompatible with the love of God, but simply an indifferent action.

II. *Natural Law*

Right reason is founded on the natural law grounded in God's will. "The divine will is the cause of good, and so by the fact that He wills something it is good."²³⁶ This does not mean that God ever wills in a purely arbitrary or capricious manner. With his infinite essence as the primary and necessary object of his will and its supreme norm, God cannot will evil, a contradiction of his being. What God wills is good because God of his very nature cannot will anything but what is good. "God wills in a most reasonable and orderly manner"²³⁷ as his will completely conforms to the dictates of his perfect intellect.

- *Obligation.* God wills both the obligatory force and content of the moral law. Moral obligation arises from the divine will inasmuch as "to command pertains only to the appetite or will."²³⁸ In the human sphere, the intellect judges the truth or untruth of practical as well as speculative things, while the will dictates what ought to be done or ought not to be done to conform to the divine command of the moral law. A finite will is morally obliged to do good and avoid evil insofar as it is bound by the command of the infinite will.

- *Necessary Content.* God wills the content of the moral law in two formally different ways. First, in willing his own infinite essence as the only necessary object, God wills that laws directly referring to the Godhead be as necessary as his being, and necessary for man to attain his ultimate end. To conform to God's will, man should follow the primary moral principle, "God is to be loved"²³⁹ in himself as the supreme good, and its implicit, necessary consequences which include the worship of God alone and the reverence of his holy name, regardless of circumstances.²⁴⁰ The first table of the Mosaic Decalogue expresses this necessary content of the moral law concerning God. Man's moral conscience dictates with certainty these strictly natural laws for the attainment of his ultimate end.²⁴¹

- *Contingent Content.* Laws referring directly to finite beings and expressed in the seven precepts of the second table of the Decalogue, belong to the natural law in a less strict sense. With every finite good contingently related to the infinite good, God's infinite will and power are not restricted to a limited set of physical or moral laws. Just as God can create an indefinite variety of universes different from the present one, "so the divine will can establish another order,"²⁴² and lead man to himself by moral laws other than those he has ordained.

"Everything other than God is good because it is willed by God and not vice versa."²⁴³ All objects other than God are either good if commanded by God, or bad if forbidden by him, or indifferent if neither. This means that "no act is generically good solely from its object, except to love God."²⁴⁴ It can be sometimes good, sometimes bad, sometimes indifferent morally, depending on circumstances.

Because no commandment pertaining to our neighbor is related by an absolute necessity to our final end, then none can be deduced necessarily from the first practical principles of the moral order, as good ought to be done.²⁴⁵ Such laws, contingent upon the absolutely free will of God, are natural in the sense of being in harmony with man's nature and well adapted to secure his happiness. Hence, all natural laws, as expressions of God's will, are binding in the present state of human existence.²⁴⁶

- *Dispensation.* "To dispense is to revoke a precept, or to declare how it is to be understood."²⁴⁷ A divine dispensation from natural laws in the strict sense is impossible, whereas a suspension from natural laws in the less strict sense is possible. God could never revoke the first principles of the natural law and permit man to will evil by hating God, without ceasing to will his own infinite good — an absolute impossibility.

"His will is determined by his rectitude to will that which is becoming his goodness, and this is, as it were, rendering what is due to himself, that is to say, to his goodness as something other," are absolute and not as something relative or advantageous for him. Since the first ethical norm, "God is to be loved, is a practical truth prior to any determination on the part of the divine will,²⁴⁹ it is irrevocable under any circumstance.

However, God can dispense from secondary precepts which involve only a contingent relation of finite goods to the absolute infinite good. Because God's free will cannot be bound by nature as such but only by an absolute good, he can dispense from secondary precepts. This explains why

God could allow the Israelites to carry off the property of the Egyptians, and command Abraham to kill his son Isaac.²⁵⁰

- *Positive Law*. God can confirm the natural law by positive law (the Ten Commandments) which is fitting and even necessary. Analysis of practical principles and deductions not evident from them can leave one with an unclear and uncertain knowledge of the natural law.²⁵¹ Because of its universality, the natural law often appears indeterminate in changing and complex situations of human existence. The positive law promulgated by God on Mount Sinai helped to overcome the cognitive and ontological limitations of the natural law.

Positive law confirms man's conscience in the natural law and dissipates from his mind the obscurities and uncertainties likely to arise from remote deductions from first principles.²⁵² Positive law clarifies and authentically interprets the natural law by determining and specifying it. With God's express command and approval added to the dictate of man's conscience, he is more deeply impressed and his sense of duty strengthened. A clear knowledge of the natural law enables man to journey more surely towards his ultimate end.

III. *Political Authority*

Scotus placed the proximate basis of political authority in "the common consent and election of the community."²⁵³ Historically, diverse peoples with no obligation to obey the other gathered together, and then, "from mutual consent of all" to promote peaceful living "they could elect one of themselves for a ruler."²⁵⁴ That authority could be placed in one person elected for himself, or for his posterity in the case of a hereditary monarchy, or exercised by many as in a democracy. Exercising prudence, legitimate authority can make just, positive laws directing "What is to be done for the community according to right and practical reason."²⁵⁵

Conclusion

Scotus' philosophy can be historically appreciated by recapitulating it in retrospect, conspectus, and prospect.

Retrospect

I. *Critical Reconstruction*

In retrospect, Scotus' philosophy appears as an attempt to reconstruct past ideas by a critical reflection which would guarantee the relation of reason to faith, philosophy to theology, and man to God. Since he philosophized after the condemnation of 1277, his attitude towards past philosophies, in comparison with that of Thomas Aquinas, seems more demanding both in the subtle scrutiny of ideas and in the rigorous methodical framework within which they are evaluated.

He critically annulled, preserved, and transformed philosophical insights in his quest for truth. Aristotle's conception of the first mover, strongly criticized as inadequate to express the transcendence of God beyond the physical world, was metamorphosed into the metaphysical notion of infinite being. The Stagirite's ethics is diagnosed as necessitarianism unless it is corrected by being grounded in the freedom of the divine will.

Aristotle's and Aquinas' realism is found to be insufficient to guarantee the objective value of concepts and natural theology unless it is reinforced by such theories as common nature, formal

distinction, and univocation. While continuing such Augustinian themes as the superiority of the will over the intellect and the plurality of forms, Scotus felt it necessary to reject the unessential theories of seminal reasons and a special divine illumination for natural knowledge.

- *Synthesis*. Scotus synthesized Augustinian and Aristotelian thought in an original manner which appears more Augustinian than Aquinas' philosophy and more Aristotelian than Bonaventure's system. The Augustinian spirit, frequently expressed in Aristotelian concepts, terms and method, is clearly evident in such doctrines as the knowledge of the individual, plurality of forms, and primacy of the will.²⁵⁶ As Thomism was an original development of Aristotelian thought, so Scotism appears as a unique expression of the Augustinian tradition.

The metaphysical nuclei around which all the elements of Scotus' thought revolve are the univocal notion of quidditative being, formal and modal distinctions, freedom, love, and the infinite being. With these central insights as his touchstone, Scotus' creative genius purged different philosophical ideas of their unacceptable content, preserved their kernel of truth, and transformed them into a new synthesis. Though a constructionist like Aquinas and Bonaventure in the thirteenth century, Scotus is more a critical thinker of the fourteenth century.

Conspetus

Reflection upon the inner structure of Scotus' synthesis enables one to evaluate his philosophical framework within the flow of history.

I. Delimitation of Knowledge

In his concern for the rights of faith and the autonomy of Christian theology, Scotus delimited the object, method, and conclusions of reason. While accepting Avicenna's view that being in all its fullness is the proportionate object of man's intellect, he adapted it to the Aristotelian theory of the essence of sensible things as the intellect's object in the present state, thereby limiting the scope of rational demonstration.

He criticized Aristotle for ascribing to being itself characteristics proper to sensible things only, for instance, the universal necessity of being. Scotus, however, saw being itself as open to the perfection of freedom and developed a metaphysics which grounded contingent beings in the radical freedom of God. In a universe of radical contingency and freedom, metaphysical demonstration can show the existence of the infinite being but it is considerably limited in discovering its essence and confined to probability in the knowledge of such attributes as omnipotence and omnipresence.

Since the immortality of the human soul and the present condition of man in respect to the object of his intellect and to the rules of human conduct depend on the decisions of the absolutely free God, they do not belong necessarily to the essence of finite beings and cannot be strictly deducible as a necessary conclusion. These truths are more objects of faith than of pure reason.

Scotus exhibited a tendency to withdraw from metaphysical reasoning conclusions commonly held to be rationally demonstrable and to posit them as knowable only in the light of revelation. On account of his criticism of Aristotelian naturalism and his unique notion of demonstration, he increased the list of revealed truths a Christian should believe but cannot prove.²⁵⁷ For instance, the immortality of the soul, a demonstrable truth from William of Auvergne to Aquinas, was philosophically indemonstrable for Scotus. As the "credibles" increased and the demonstrables

decreased, the marriage of faith and reason, like that of Church and State, in the thirteenth century, was breaking up in the fourteenth century.

In his concern for the objectivity of human knowledge, Scotus rejected the Augustinian doctrine of illumination and attempted to overcome the inadequacy of the Thomistic and Aristotelian theories of knowledge by the intellectual intuition of singulars, abstraction of the common nature, and the univocity and formal distinction of being. In his desire to establish an unshakable basis for the possibility of metaphysical knowledge and demonstration, one may question whether his Augustinian limitation of the role of sensation to an occasion of understanding weakens the objective foundation of knowledge. However, within the scope of Scotus' whole noetic, this limitation heightens the independence of the intellect in understanding the objective data of the senses. The objectivity of the experimental sciences is grounded in the regularity of phenomenal effects from a natural cause, guaranteeing them intelligible necessity from contingent sense experience.

Scotus appears to be more realistic than Aquinas in his theory of knowledge which grounds abstract concepts and the Aristotelian science of universals in an intellectual intuition of singular things. He also went beyond Aquinas by reorganizing a greater existential reality in common nature as the object of abstraction.²⁵⁸ The Scotistic theory of knowledge is a critical realism.²⁵⁹

II. *Essentialism*

The radical difference between the metaphysics of Aquinas and Scotus arises from their diverse notions of being. Whereas the Angelic Doctor viewed reality in terms of existence, the Subtle Doctor conceived it as essence of which existence is a real mode.²⁶⁰ Upon these different foundational notions of being, both thinkers constructed diverse philosophical edifices such that any evaluation of one from the viewpoint of the other is unsatisfactory unless it respects the metaphysical perspective of each. The Scotistic notion of quidditative being in abstraction from existence and nonexistence has led to the comparison of this aspect of his thought with Edmund Husserl's phenomenological approach to essence.

Scotus' metaphysical notions of transcendental, formality, haecceity, and univocity, are the main links in his great chain of quidditative being. He brilliantly developed the disjunctive transcendentals in defining the basic metaphysical relations between finite beings and the infinite being. Scotistic metaphysics is a science of transcendentals of which the disjunctive properties are the great pillars rising from finite beings to the infinite being.

Scotus developed his notion of the transcendental unity of essence according to his doctrine of formality. The realm of being is a hierarchy of formal entities within which the superior, especially infinite being, unifies by including inferiors. In this way, Scotus incorporated the Plotinian notions of coherent containment and the One's metaphysical activity. The Scotistic doctrine of formality, however, is saved from the monistic tendency of Plotinus by the theory of haecceity which guarantees the individuation of a being without impairing its distinct formal entities.

Scotus clearly and radically vindicated the value of the individual against the depreciating tendencies of Greek and Arabian philosophers: Plato's esteem of the ideas to the devaluation of individual beings; Aristotle's reverence for intelligible form and lowly regard for the individual as a sort of binding of form and matter; Averroes and Avicenna's interpretation of the Aristotelian agent intellect as impersonal to the individual man. Haecceity is Scotus' *tour de force* in transforming the impersonalism of the Greek man into the personalism of the Christian man.

Scotus' theory of univocity enabled him to view the plurality of individual beings in a vision which, while recognizing individual and modal differences, focuses quidditatively on the formal entity and unity common to God and creatures. Whether Scotus' univocity of being carries the human intellect nearer to God than Aquinas' analogy of being is a question which can be satisfactorily answered only in view of a comparative analysis of their notions of being. Scotistic univocity is "a radical negation of pantheism, since the common attribution of the concept of being to God and creatures requires precisely that it should not be extended to that which makes the being of God to be God."²⁶¹ At the same time, the univocal concept of being unifies the whole order of human knowledge by affirming the essential unity of its object in diverse states.

- *God*. Scotus climaxed his metaphysics in an investigation of the infinite being. The coextensive transcendentals — the Plotinian way of unity, and the Augustinian way of truth and goodness — play a lesser role than the disjunctive transcendentals in establishing the existence and nature of the first infinite being. Scotus integrated the Anselmian argument into his metaphysics of essence by reasoning from the real possibility and properties of beings to the real possibility of an infinite being. Viewing motion as an object of physics and not a transcendental concern of metaphysics, he criticized the Aristotelian proof of a primary mover as imperfect and inadequate.

In Scotus' rigorous demonstration, the *point d'appui* must be, not merely contingent existents, as seems to be the case with Aquinas, but the quidditative being of existents, the possible and necessary element inherent in the contingent. Though Aquinas' proofs utilize notions such as contingency and necessity, finitude and infinity, Scotus formulated them as transcendentals which together cover being in its total extension, and systematically applied them according to the law of disjunction with strong probative force in his demonstrations of God's existence. Whereas each of Aquinas' five ways appears sufficiently independent of one another to be considered an argument in its own right, Scotus' three proofs represent three movements in the demonstration of one conclusion, the existence of the first, infinite being. "It has been rightly said that no other scholastic philosopher worked with such concentration and perseverance as Scotus in constructing a truly valid and complete proof of the existence of God."²⁶²

The notion of infinity plays a more basic role in Scotus' conception of God than in Aquinas' theology. Whereas Aquinas viewed the infinite as being without limit, Scotus conceived infinity in a positive sense as an intensive modality of God's essence by which it surpasses finite beings. Infinity, which for Aquinas is a consequence of God's pure act of existence, is for Scotus the ultimate determination of God's essence. The univocal notion of being assures Scotus of God's immanence, and the proper concept of infinity guarantee his transcendence.

- *Creatures*. As regards finite beings, Aquinas viewed potency in itself as having no actuality of its own, whereas Scotus considered potency as unreal unless it possesses actuality of its own. Accordingly, Scotistic matter as potency with actuality radically differs from Thomistic matter as simply potency without actuality. Scotus guaranteed a positive reality to all elements of composite beings by dissociating the notion of actuality from that of form and conceiving matter quidditatively as actual in its own right. So radically did Aquinas and Scotus transform and elevate the Aristotelian concepts of act and potency to a metaphysical level that potentiality need not be equated with materiality nor actuality with formality.²⁶³ The Scotistic universe with matter an actual entity in itself appears more dynamic than the Thomistic world wherein only form is the active principle.

- *Man*. In Scotus' estimation, the individual unity of man is tenuously defended by Thomists who, faced with the hard fact of death as a separation of soul and body, point to the soul's aptitude

for the particular body which it was created to inform. Individual immortality and Christian personalism are jeopardized by such a weak defense. The transcendental doctrine of haecceity, on the contrary, not only upholds the individual dignity and perfection of the soul, but offers latitude for the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body.

The form of corporeity naturally safeguards the identity of the corpse with the living body. Compared to the Thomistic teaching of a real distinction between the soul and its faculties, Scotus' theory of formal distinction seems to strengthen the unity of the soul and its powers by excluding from psychological experience any unnecessary multiplicity which might impair the nobility of the soul. Scotus' theory mediates between the Thomistic doctrine of real distinction and the Bonaventurian notion of reductive identification.

III. *Voluntarism*

- *Ethics.* Scotus' ethical philosophy is deeply rooted in his metaphysics of contingency which radically characterizes the relation of finite beings to the infinite being. Within this Augustinian metaphysical framework of contingency, one can appreciate the Subtle Doctor's preference for the will, freedom, and love over intellect and contemplation prevailing in the Thomistic world of necessity. As these three forces in the infinite being overcame the radical contingency of finite beings on the day of creation, so also, only these three in man can triumph over his contingency to attain the infinite.

The absolute dependence of laws regarding creatures upon the free will of God is understandable within the context of the contingency of beings. In a contingent order, love and freedom and not simply contemplation of necessary truths, are needed to reach God. In view of the priority of free will and love, Scotus conceived theology as a practical science in contradistinction to Aquinas' characterization of it as speculative in conformity with his assigning primacy to the intellect.

Scotus' theory of moral law can be viewed as a mediator between Aquinas and William of Ockham. Scotus agreed with Aquinas' recognition of the existence of immutable, necessary moral principles concerning God, and at the same time held to mutable contingent moral laws regarding creatures, thereby foreshadowing Ockham's making the whole moral law a creation of the divine will. However, there is no divine authoritarianism or irrationalism in the Scotistic world of morality which is grounded in common natures of finite beings and ultimately in the necessary divine ideas.

In Scotus' system, the law of nature which depends on God's will assumes a personal character in comparison with other scholastic thought which, like Stoicism, linked it with the eternal law.²⁶⁴ Scotus' masterly analysis throws new light upon the contingent and necessary character of the moral law, though without completely solving the problem of their reconciliation.

- *Love.* Scotus remained true to the Augustinian tradition of grounding ethics on the most evident and necessary moral principle, love of God. "Love is . . . the law of our being as well as the law of our salvation. Duns Scotus' ethics can rightly be called a scientific demonstration of the primacy of love."²⁶⁵ For Scotus, "all that is real is love: will-power, action, science, grace, beatific vision and even thought itself, in as much as it is dependent upon the will."²⁶⁶

- *Will.* Scotus' ethics of love expresses his voluntaristic spirit. This man of Augustinian will, Franciscan love, and Christian freedom expanded his personality into the creation of a philosophy in which free will plays a primary role. In its recognition of the superiority of the will over the intellect, Scotism may be rightly called a philosophy of voluntarism.²⁶⁷

Voluntarism is not in God himself whose intellect and will are physically one and whose intellect knows ideas without the determination of the will. As regards creatables, however, there is a divine voluntarism in the sense that the free decision to create and the selection of essences and laws to be created belongs ultimately to God's will. Yet the unalterable essences of creatable things and the necessary truths deducible from them are independent of the divine will. Whereas Aquinas focused on God's creative efficacy as the basis of the existence of contingents, Scotus rooted contingency in God's freedom to counteract Greek and Arabian necessitarianism.

There is also a strain of voluntarism in Scotus' teaching on man whose dignity lies more in his will than in his intellect. Scotus went beyond Aquinas' intellectualist conception of freedom as essentially choice between acting or nonacting to the metaphysical being of the will as essentially free in the total spontaneous cause of its act.²⁶⁸ Freedom lies in the will's radical indetermination which is by no means arbitrary and irrational but naturally dependent on intellectual judgments. In the well-balanced voluntarism of Scotus, intellect and will are assigned their proper role.

- *Authority*. The Scotistic theory of the social contract between people and ruler grounds popular sovereignty and departs from Augustine's view that the power of princes is derived directly from God. Grounded in his concept of the native freedom of every person, Scotus' view of the derivation of political authority from the body politic anticipates modern political theory.

Prospect

In view of Scotus' original reconstruction of Augustinian and Aristotelian thought, one can appreciate the prospects of his philosophy.

I. Rise of Scotism

Scotus' philosophy resembles an unfinished cathedral with its foundation laid and its superstructure emerging. Although the master builder's death at the early age of forty two prevented him from finishing most of his works and fully formulating his ideas, the wealth-laden writings he left posterity rank him among the greatest architects of philosophy. His teachings stimulated a strong following among the new generation at Oxford and Paris.

At Paris, Francis of Meyronnes developed the doctrines of Scotus' philosophy and accelerated it as a movement. At first, Scotus' teaching met with resistance in the Franciscan Order, many of whom still preferred the traditional simplicity of Bonaventure's thought, and some of whom, like William of Ockham, strongly opposed its basic tenets. In 1593, the Franciscans declared Scotus their official doctor. By the end of the century, Scotism was a vital force at the universities of Salamanca, Alcalá, Coimbra, Rome, Padua, Paris, Louvain, Budapest, and Cracow.

In the seventeenth century, a resurgence of Scotism led to the official formation of the Scotist school by legislation of the Franciscan Order, Franciscan lecturers in philosophy were obliged to teach from an official manual of Scotistic thought. William von Sichel (d. 1691), a Belgian Franciscan, wrote a *Cursus philosophicus* to harmonize Scotus, Aquinas, and Bonaventure, whereas Claude Frassen composed his *Philosophia academica* to emphasize the difference between Scotism and Thomism.

II. Decline

Although the influence of Scotus in the early eighteenth century was felt outside the Franciscan Order, especially by Christian Wolff in his concept of being, it declined and was gradually replaced by the philosophy of John Locke and the science of Isaac Newton. The Kantian critique of Leibniz and Wolff was taken as a refutation of scholasticism in general. Duns' men ("dunces") were the prime target of obloquy to Erasmus and the reformers.

III. Revival

The revival of scholasticism at the end of the nineteenth century brought about renewed interest in Duns Scotus. Themes of being, person, freedom, love, will, intuition, and introspection, critically analyzed and systematized by Scotus, offer valuable insights into contemporary issues.²⁶⁹ On Scotus' relation to science, Charles Sanders Peirce, the American philosopher, wrote this commendation: "The logic and metaphysics of Duns Scotus adapted to modern culture would go far toward supplying the philosophy which is best to harmonize with physical science."²⁷⁰

Notes

1. See A. Wolter, ed. and trans., *Duns Scotus: Philosophical Writings* (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1962), pp. ix-xvii. Selections from this edition reprinted with permission. Also, Charles Balic, "The Life and Works of John Duns Scotus," *John Duns Scotus*, John K. Ryan and Bernardine M. Bonansea, eds., *Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 3 (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1965), pp. 1-27.

2. The major works are published in *Opera Omnia*, 26 vols. (Paris: Vives, 1891-1895). This collection also contains spurious works, as *De rerum Principio*, *Expositiones in Metaphysicam*, commentaries on the *Physica*. *The Theoremata*, a collection of common axioms formulated according to the mathematico-deductive method is of doubtful value; internal evidence seems to militate against their authenticity, but external reasons favor them. The new critical edition of the *Opera Omnia*, prepared by the Scotistic Commission and published by the Vatican City Press, consisting so far (1950-) of seven volumes, is still incomplete.

3. An enumeration of other genuine logical writings can be found in Wolter, *op. cit.*, p. xx.

4. E. Gilson, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938), pp. 3-66.

5. *On the Soul (De Anima)* III, 9, 432b 20.

6. *On Different Questions*, 83, 9.

7. *Opus Oxoniense*, bk. I, distinction 3, question 4.

8. *Very Subtle Questions on the Metaphysics of Aristotle*, VII, q. 19, n. 4.

9. *Reportata Parisiensia*, Prol., q. 3. a. 1.

10. See B. Campbell, *The Problem of One or Plural Substantial Forms in Man as found in the Works of St. Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus* (Paterson, N. J.: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1940), pp. 6-20.

11. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 8, q. 3, n. 18.

12. *Quodlibetal Questions*, V, n. 25.

13. *Op. Ox.*, I, Prol., qq. 3-4, n. 26. See P.C. Vier, *Evidence and its Function according to John Duns Scotus* (St. Bonaventure, N. Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1951), p. 111.
14. See *Op. Ox.*, I, Prol., q. 3, n. 28.
15. *Rep. Par.*, Prol., q. 3, a. 1. See J. Owens, "Up to What Point is God Included in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus?" *Mediaeval Studies*, 10 (1948), 163-177.
16. *Rep. Par.*, Prol., III, q. 1.
17. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 2. Author's parenthesis.
18. *Op. Ox.*, Prol., I, q. 3, a. 7, n. 20.
19. *Rep. Par.*, Prol., q. 3, a. 1.
20. *In Metaph.*, Prol., 5.
21. *Op. Ox.*, Prol., q. 1, n. 40.
22. *Ibid.*, n. 41. Author's parenthesis.
23. *Ibid.*, n. 13.
24. *Ibid.*, n. 27-28. If an intellect were unable to understand the arguments of geometrical reasoning, but accepted the conclusions of the word of the geometer, geometry would be for him an object of belief, not a science. Yet geometry in itself would still be a science to an intellect adequate to understand it. *Ibid.*, Prol., q. 3, n. 4.
25. *Ibid.*, Prol., q. 3, n. 29.
26. *Op. Ox.*, Prol., q. 3, a. 1.
27. E. Gilson, "Avicenne et le point de départ de Duns Scot," *Archives*, 2 (1927), 89-149.
28. This classification of theology as practical is also found in Roger Bacon and Richard of Middleton, both Franciscans and members of the Oxford School. See C. Harris, *Duns Scotus*, Vol. I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), pp. 90-100.
29. See *In Metaph.*, I, VII, q. 19, n. 5-6.
30. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 3, q. 3.
31. *Quodl.*, XIV, n. 13. See *Op. Ox.*, Prol., q. 1, 1.
32. *Rep. Par.*, I, d. 3, q. 1, a. 4. See *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 3, q. 3, n. 1. Scotus' interpretation of Aquinas is not quite accurate inasmuch as the Common Doctor held that the proper object of the intellect as such is being, whereas the proper object of the human intellect is the quiddity of sensible being. See *ST*, I, q. 5, a. 2.
33. *Op. Ox.*, Prol., q. 1, a. 2, n. 12. Author's parenthesis.
34. *In Metaph.*, I, IV, q. 1, n. 5; I, II, q. 3, n. 22.
35. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 3, q. 8, n. 13. For a translation regarding the primary object of the intellect, see *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 1, q. 3, trans. J. Wellmuth; ed., J. Katz and R.H. Weingartner, *Philosophy in the West* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Inc., 1965), pp. 560-563.
36. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 3, q. 3, a. 4, n. 24.
37. *Rep. Par.*, I, III, d. 14, q. 3, n. 12. Scotus rejected the skeptical trend of allowing intuitive knowledge without the existence of its object, thereby making it impossible to be certain of the real existence of objects. See S.J. Day, *Intuitive Cognition: A Key to the Significance of the Later Scholastics* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute. 1947).
38. *Op. Ox.*, IV, d. 45, q. 3, n. 17. See *Ibid.*, II, d. 3, q. 9, n. 6.
39. *In De Anima*, XXII, 3. In this work, which is probably authentic, Scotus rejected the Thomistic limitation of the intellect to direct knowledge of the universal with only indirect knowledge of singulars.
40. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 3, q. 6, n. 16.
41. *Ibid.*, II, d. 3, q. 9, n. 9. Author's parenthesis.

42. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 8, q. 4, n. 15.
43. *Ibid.*, I, d. 1, q. 2, n. 1, 2 and 32.
44. *In Metaph.*, VII, q. 18, n. 8.
45. *Ibid.*
46. *Ibid.*, VII, q. 18, n. 6 and 18. The intellect's simple apprehension of a quiddity — a direct view of an object — can be called intuitive knowledge in the wide sense. See *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 3, q. 9, n. 6.
47. *Ibid.*, VII, q. 18, n. 9. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 3, q. 6, n. 2, 8, 10 and 16.
48. See *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 3, q. 6, n. 19.
49. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 9, n. 2. One would be hard put to find in the Middle Ages a theory of knowledge denying all collaboration of the object in the act of intellection. What Scotus probably means is that Henry of Ghent's teaching is such that it tends to reduce the function of the object to practically nothing.
50. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 9, n. 11 and 16. In explaining the process of idiogenesis, Aquinas and followers of Aristotle stressed the active note of the object and the agent intellect, whereas Scotus most likely under Augustinian influence, preferred a more active role for the possible intellect.
51. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 9, n. 20.
52. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 3, q. 7, n. 21.
53. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 8, n. 2.
54. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 7, n. 26.
55. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 6, n. 1.
56. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 4.
57. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 4, n. 2 and 4.
58. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 4, n. 2.
59. *Ibid.*
60. Both Aquinas and Scotus agreed in making the individual existent an object of intellectual evidence known in the intuited sensible object. However, in their explanation of how this knowledge occurs they differ. For Aquinas, existence is affirmed in the judgment, whereas for Scotus, the object itself can be directly intuited as existing by the mind, prior to abstraction.
61. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 3, q. 4, n. 9.
62. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 4, n. 11.
63. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 4, n. 9.
64. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 4, a. 2.
65. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 4, n. 15.
66. *Ibid.*, Prol., q. 1, a. 2, n. 11.
67. *Ibid.*, II, d. 3, q. 8, n. 13-14. While Aquinas and Scotus concurred on the fact that the human soul does not directly know itself, they explained this fact in different ways: The Common Doctor reasoned from the nature of the soul, whereas Scotus suggested this hindrance may be due to sin.
68. See P. Basil Heiser, "The Metaphysics of Duns Scotus," *Franciscan Studies* (Sep., 1952), pp. 379-396.
69. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 1, q. 3, trans. J. Wellmuth, ed. J. Katz and R.H. Weingartner, *Philosophy in the West* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1965), p. 560.
70. *In Metaph.*, II, q. 3, n. 21.

71. *Ibid.*, VI, q. 1, n. 13. See Cyril L. Shircel, *The Univocity of the Concept of Being in the Philosophy of John Duns Scotus* (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America, 1942), pp. 87-94.

72. *Rep. Par.*, Prol., q. 1, n. 5.

73. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 3, q. 2, a. 6, n. 21. See P. Basil Heiser, "The Primum Cognitum according to D. Scotus," *Franciscan Studies* (Sep., 1952), pp. 193-216.

74. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 39, q. 1, n. 13.

75. *In Metaph.*, IV, q. 1, n. 5.

76. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 1, q. 4, n. 26.

77. *Ibid.*, Prol., q. 4, n. 41. *Rep. Par.*, Prol., q. 1, n. 4. 78. *Op. Ox.*, IV, d. 8, q. 1, n. 2.

79. *Ibid.*, I, d. 19, q. 1, n. 2.

80. *Quaestiones in libros Elenchorum*, q. 1, n. 1. Quidditative entity is the property of an essence on real being which of itself has not a being of existence.

81. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 8, q. 3, n. 19.

82. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 8, q. 3, n. 18. A. Wolter, *The Transcendentals and Their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus* (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1946).

83. Scotus also singled out a broader level of transcendentality, the realm of pure perfections — as wisdom and free will — which, implying in their formal notion no imperfection or limitation, transcend finite categories and can be

predicated of God. *Rep. Par.*, I, d. 8, q. 5, n. 13.

84. *In Metaph.*, Prol., n. 10.

85. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 8, q. 3.

86. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 3, n. 12. Since these transcendentals have no strict essence, but are modifications of essence, they cannot be predicated essentially, but only denominatively of being. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 3, q. 3, n. 6-7. See A. Wolter, *Duns Scotus*, pp. 165-166, n. 2.

87. *In Metaph.*, I, q. 1, n. 23.

88. *Op. Ox.*, IV, d. 6, q. 1, n. 4.

89. *Ibid.*, II, d. 3, q. 4, n. 3.

90. *In Metaph.*, VII, q. 3, n. 5.

91. *Rep. Par.*, II, d. 34, q. 1, n. 3.

92. *Op. Ox.*, IV, d. 31, q. 1, n. 4.

93. *Ibid.*, I, d. 8, q. 3.

94. *Ibid.*, I, d. 39, q. 1, n. 13.

95. *Ibid.*

96. *Ibid.*

97. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 3. Here Scotus used the term "virtual" in a special sense, namely, when two distinct formalities are found in one and the same really identical thing, one of the two formalities can be said to virtually contain the other.

98. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 3, n. 8.

99. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 7, n. 41, 45. See M.J. Grajewski, *The Formal Distinction of Duns Scotus* (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University Press, 1944). A. Wolter, "The Formal Distinction," *John Duns Scotus, Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 3, pp. 45-60.

100. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 3, q. 4, n. 6. *Rep. Par.*, IV, d. 46, q. 3, n. 4.

101. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 3, q. 3.

102. See C. L. Shircel, *The Univocity of Being in Scotus*. T. Barth, "Being, Univocity, and Analogy According to Duns Scotus;" W. Hoeres, "Francis Suarez and the Teaching of John Duns Scotus on Univocatio Entis," *John Duns Scotus, Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 3; pp. 210-262, 263-290.

103. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 3, q. 2, n. 5.

104. Scotus was well aware that God and creatures are opposed to nothingness in different ways. However, he prescind from the concrete ways in which they are opposed to nonbeing to show that for the validity of a univocal concept, it suffices that a contradiction be caused.

105. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 2, n. 5.

106. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 3, n. 6. *In Metaph.*, IV, q. 1, n. 5.

107. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 3, q. 2, n. 5-12.

108. *Ibid.*, I, d. 8, q. 3, n. 2.

109. *In De Anima*, XXI, 3.

110. God and creatures "are primarily different in reality, because they convene in no reality." *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 8, q. 3, n. 11.

111. *Ibid.*, II, d. 12, q. 2, n. 8.

112. *Ibid.*, I, d. 8, q. 3, n. 27.

113. *Ibid.*, n. 16-17, 26-27.

114. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 5.

115. *Ibid.*, n. 26.

116. *Ibid.*, II, d. 1, q. 2, n. 7. See A.J. O'Brien, "Scotus on Essence and Existence," *The New Scholasticism*, 38 (1964), 61-77.

117. *Rep. Par.*, III, d. 22, q. 1, n. 13. That is why Scotus sometimes says that actual existence is related to a potential essence as a logical accident. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 3, q. 3, n. 3.

118. *Rep. Par.*, III, d. 6, q. 1, n. 7.

119. See E. Gilson, "Avicenne et le point de départ de Duns Scot," *op. cit.*, pp. 89-149. Also Gilson, *Jean Duns Scot*, pp. 80-94, 114.

120. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 3, q. 1, n. 7-8. See J.R. Cresswell, "Duns Scotus on the Common Nature," *John Duns Scotus, Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 3, pp. 122-132.

121. *Rep. Par.*, II, d. 2, q. 5, n. 12.

122. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 3, q. 1, n. 7.

123. *Quaestiones super Universalia Pophyrii*, q. 4, n. 4.

124. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 3, q. 4, n. 3. See J.R. Rosenberg, *The Principle of Individuation: A Comparative Study of St. Thomas, Scotus and Suarez* (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1950). K.C. Clatterbaugh, "Individuation In the Ontology of Duns Scotus," *Franciscan Studies*, 32 (1972), pp. 65-73.

125. *In Metaph.*, VII, q. 13, n. 3-4.

126. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 3, q. 5, n. 1.

127. *In Metaph.*, VII, q. 13, n. 17.

128. *Rep. Par.*, II, d. 12, q. 5, n. 1, 14.

129. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 3, q. 7, n. 6; II, d. 3, q. 4, n. 3.

130. *Ibid.*, II, d. 3, q. 6, n. 12-13. As the ultimate actuality of form, "haecceity (or thisness) is numerically this entity essentially." *Rep. Par.*, II, d. 12, q. 6, n. 13.

131. "Nevertheless, a being is said to be in potency, because insofar as it has less of act, so much the more is it in potency, and . . . a cause of the composite . . ." *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 12, q. 1, n. 11.

132. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 12, q. 2, n. 7.
133. *Ibid.*, II, d. 12, q. 1, n. 10; IV, d. 11, q. 3, n. 11.
134. *Ibid.*, IV, d. 11, q. 3, n. 11. It is not clear whether or not Scotus accepted the Bonaventurian attribution of hylomorphic compositions to angels and rational souls.
135. *De Primo Principio*, c. I, n. 2.
136. While the natural philosopher determines causes in existing things, the metaphysician considers the essential conditions of all causality in the quidditative order.
137. See A. Wolter, "Duns Scotus on the Nature of Man's Knowledge of God," *Review of Metaphysics*, 1, n. 2 (Dec., 1947), 3-36. "The Theologism of Duns Scotus," *Franciscan Studies*, VII (1947), 257-273; 367-398. "Duns Scotus on the Natural Desire for the Supernatural," *The New Scholasticism*, 22 (1949), 281-317. "Duns Scotus and the Existence and Nature of God," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, 28 (1954), 94-121. F. Alluntis, "Demonstrability and Demonstration of the Existence of God," *John Duns Scotus, Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 3, pp. 133-170. See C. Maus, "The Possibility of Knowing God Naturally: Paul Tillich and Duns Scotus — A Contrast," *Scotus Speaks Today* (Southfield, Michigan: Duns Scotus College, 1968), pp. 271-289.
138. *Quodl.*, q. 7, n. 8. See *Op. Ox.*, III, d. 2, q. 16.
139. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 21. *De Prim. Princ.*, c. III, n. 1.
140. *In Metaph.*, VI, q. 4, n. 1. "The intellect of the viator can be certain of God that he is being while doubting concerning finite or infinite being . . ." *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 3, q. 2, a. 4, n. 6.
141. *In Metaph.*, VI, q. 4. See Roy Effler, "Duns Scotus and the Physical Approach to God," *John Duns Scotus, Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 3, 171-189.
142. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 1.
143. *Ibid.*, I, d. 39, q. 1, n. 13. *Rep. Par.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 2.
144. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 39, a. 3, n. 13.
145. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 11. See G. Marcil, *Efficient Causality in the Philosophy of John Duns Scotus* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1965).
146. *De Prim. Princ.*, c. III, pp. 39-41.
147. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 11, 43.
148. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 1, a. 1.
149. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 48-51.
150. *De Prim. Princ.*, c. III, p. 45.
151. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 1, a. 1.
152. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 43-44.
153. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 1.
154. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 1, n. 1.
155. *De Prim. Princ.*, c. III, p. 57.
156. *On. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 17. *De Prim. Princ.*, c. II, pp. 17-21.
157. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 1, a. 1.
158. *De Prim. Princ.*, c. II, conclusion 4.
159. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 1, a. 1.
160. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 17.
161. *De Prim. Princ.*, pp. 35, 39.
162. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 1, a. 1.
163. *Ibid.*
164. *De Prim. Princ.*, pp. 13-14, 35, 59.

165. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 1, a. 1.
166. *Ibid.* Also see *De Prim. Princ.*, pp. 61, 49-50, all of conclusion 4.
167. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, a. 18.
168. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 1, a. 1.
169. *Ibid.*
170. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 19.
171. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 25.
172. *Ibid.*, n. 31.
173. *De Prim. Princ.*, p. 83.
174. *Ibid.*, pp. 81-89.
175. *Op. Ox.* I, d. 2, q. 1, a. 2.
176. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 1, a. 2. See *De Prim Princ.*, c. IV, pp. 103-106. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 30.
177. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 1, a. 2.
178. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 31. *De Prim. Princ.*, pp. 145-146.
179. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 2, q. 1, a. 2.
180. *Quodl.*, V, 17.
181. *De Prim. Princ.*, c. IV, conclusion 3, p. 77.
182. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 8, q. 3, a. 1, n. 10.
183. *De Prim. Princ.*, c. IV, pp. 146-148.
184. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 42, q. 1, n. 2. See *Quodl.*, VII, trans. F. Alluntis and A. Wolter, "Duns Scotus on the Omnipotence of God," *Ancients and Moderns*, ed. J.K. Ryan, Vol. 5, *Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1970), 178-222.
185. *Rep. Par.*, I, d. 37, q. 2, n. 6. Scotus did not go along with Aquinas' rejection of action at a distance.
186. *Op. Ox.*, Prol., d. 4, q. 17, n. 7.
187. *De Prim. Princ.*, c. IV, p. 146.
188. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 8, q. 4, n. 1.
189. *Ibid.*, d. 8, q. 4, n. 23.
190. *Ibid.*, n. 18.
191. *Ibid.*, I, d. 36, n. 4, 6.
192. *Ibid.*, I, d. 35, q. 1, n. 10.
193. *Ibid.*, I, d. 3, q. 4, n. 20.
194. Scotus' view radically differs from Aquinas' position that God knows possible creatures because they are intelligible as imitations of the divine essence.
195. *De Prim. Princ.*, c. IV, concl. 4, p. 85.
196. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 39, q. , n. 31.
197. *Rep. Par.*, I, d. 45, q. 2, n. 7.
198. *Op. Ox.* II, d. 25, q. 1, n. 22.
199. See *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 36, q. 1, n. 12.
200. *Ibid.*, II, d. 25, q. 1, n. 22.
201. Whereas Greco-Arabian philosophers viewed contingency as merely due to the indisposition of matter preventing the effect of natural causes from occurring, Scotus grounded the contingency of creatures in God's infinite freedom to create or not to create.
202. See *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 1, q. 2, n. 65.

203. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 1.
204. *Quodl.*, Praefatio, n. 1.
205. *Ibid.*, VII, 4. As seen above, omnipotence in this proper sense is mainly an object of faith. Natural reason can demonstrate that God as first efficient cause must be able to create or produce some effects immediately, otherwise he would not be able to produce effects even mediately. See *Rep. Par.*, II, d. 1, q. 3, nos. 9-11.
206. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 1, q. 3, n. 19.
207. *Ibid.*, IV, d. 11, q. 3, n. 46. See B. Campbell, "The Problem of One or Plural Substantial Forms in Man as Found in the Works of St. Thomas and John Duns Scotus". See C. Devlin, *The Psychology of Duns Scotus* (Oxford: Blackfriars, 1950).
208. *Op. Ox.*, IV, d. 11, q. 3, n. 45. B. Vogt, "The forma corporeitatis of Duns Scotus and Modern Science," *Franciscan Studies*, 24, III (1943), 47-62.
209. *Op. Ox.*, IV, d. 11, q. 3, n. 54.
210. *Ibid.*, IV, d. 43, q. 2, n. 6.
211. *Ibid.*, n. 12.
212. *Ibid.*, n. 46-47.
213. *Quodl.*, q. IX, n. 17.
214. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 1, q. 5, n. 25. In the quidditative order, substantial form gives absolute formal being (*esse simpliciter*), followed by accidental form which confers particular modified being (*esse secundum quid*), that is, determinations which may or may not be in the thing, without it ceasing to be what it is essentially.
215. *Ibid.*, II, d. 16, q. 1, n. 18. Scotus attempted to give a mediating solution between Aquinas' real distinction and Henry of Ghent's real identity of the soul and its powers.
216. *Ibid.*, IV, d. 43, q. 2.
217. *Ibid.*, IV, d. 49, quaestio ex latere.
218. *Ibid.*, II, d. 25, q. 1, n. 22.
219. *Ibid.*, IV, d. 49, quaestio ex latere. From translation by John Wellmuth. *Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, J. Katz and R. H. Weingartner, ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1965), p. 559. See R. Prentice, "The Voluntarism of Duns Scotus as Seen in His Comparison of the Intellect and the Will," *Franciscan Studies*, 28 (1968), 63-103.
220. *Op. Ox.*, IV, d. 49, q. 3, n. 5.
221. *Ibid.*, q. 2, n. 20.
222. *In Metaph.*, IX, q. 15, n. 7. Here Scotus used Aristotle's division of rational and irrational powers to show the intellect is "irrational" and the will "rational." See A. Wolter, "Native Freedom of the Will as a Key to the Ethics of Scotus," *Deus et Homo ad mentem I. Duns Scoti*, Acta Tertii Congressus Scotistici Internationalis (Romae: Societas Internationalis Scotistica, 1972), pp. 359-370.
223. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 6, q. 2, n. 8.
224. *Ibid.*, IV, d. 43, q. 2.
225. *Rep. Par.*, IV, d. 43, q. 2, n. 17.
226. *Quodl.* q. 18, n. 3.
227. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 17, n. 62; I, d. 2, q. 2, n. 19; II, d. 40, q. 1, n. 2. *Rep. Par.*, II, d. 39, q. 1, n. 1.
228. *Op. Ox.*, II, d. 40, q. 1, n. 2-3.
229. *Ibid.*, II, d. 7, q. 1, n. 11.
230. *Rep. Par.*, IV, d. 28, q. 1, n. 6.

231. *Op. Ox.*, 11. d. 7. q. 1, n. 11.
232. *Ibid.*, II, d. 40, q. 1, n. 3.
233. *Ibid.*, IV, d. 5, q. 2, n. 7.
234. *Ibid.*, II, d. 7, q. 1, n. 13.
235. *Ibid.*, II, d. 41, q. 1, n. 4.
236. *Rep. Par.*, I, d. 48, q. 1.
237. *Op. Ox.*, III, d. 32, q. 1, n. 5.
238. *Ibid.*, IV, d. 14, q. 2, n. 5.
239. *Ibid.*, IV, d. 46, q. 1, n. 10.
240. *Ibid.*, III, d. 37, q. 1, n. 1.
241. *Rep. Par.*, II, d. 39, q. 2, n. 4-7.
242. *Op. Ox.*, I, d. 44, q. 1, n. 2. See R. Prentice, "The Contingent Element Governing the Natural Law on the last Seven Precepts of the Decalogue according to Duns Scotus," in *Antonianum*, 42 (1967), pp. 259-292.
243. *Op. Ox.*, III, d. 19, n. 7.
244. *Rep. Par.*, IV, d. 28, n. 6.
245. *Op. Ox.*, III, d. 37, q. 1, n. 14.
246. See *Rep. Par.*, IV, d. 46, q. 4, n. 8.
247. *Op. Ox.*, III, d. 37, q. 1, n. 3.
248. *Ibid.*, IV, d. 46, q. 1, n. 3.
249. *Ibid.*
250. *Ibid.*, n. 8 and 11.
251. *Rep. Par.*, IV, d. 28, q. 1, n. 15.
252. *Ibid.*, n. 13, 15.
253. *Op. Ox.*, IV, d. 15, q. 2, n. 6.
254. *Rep. Par.*, IV, d. 15. q. 2, n. 9. See A.R. Soto, "The Structure of Society according to Duns Scotus," *Franciscan Studies*, XI (1951), 194-212; XII (1952), 71-90.
255. *Op. Ox.*, IV, d. 15, q. 2, n. 6.
256. See E. Bettoni, "The Originality of the Scotistic Synthesis," *Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 3, p. 44.
257. See E. Gilson, *Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages*, p. 86.
258. See B. de Saint-Maurice, "Existential Import in the Philosophy of Duns Scotus," *Franciscan Studies*, IX (Sep., 1949), pp. 297, 299.
259. See A. Wolter, "The Realism of Scotus," *The Journal of Philosophy*, LIX (1962), 725-736. S.Y. Watson, "A Problem for Realism: Our Multiple Concepts of Individual Thing and the Solution of Duns Scotus," *John Duns Scotus. Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, III, pp. 61-81. J.F. Boler, *Charles Peirce and Scholastic Realism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1963), pp. 37-66.
260. Concerning essential metaphysics in Scotism and existential metaphysics in Thomism, see A. Wolter, *Transcendentals and Their Function in the Metaphysics of Duns Scotus*, pp. 66-69. E. Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*, pp. 84-94.
261. E. Gilson, *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy.*, p. 266.
262. F. Alluntis, "Demonstrability and Demonstration of the Existence of God," *John Duns Scotus, Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*, Vol. 3, p. 133.
263. E. Gilson, *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, p. 410.
264. A. Wolter, "Native Freedom of the Will as a Key to the Ethics of Scotus," *op. cit.*, p. 370.

265. E. Bettoni, *Duns Scotus*, pp. 181-182.

266. A. Gemelli, *Le message de saint Francois au monde moderne*, traduit de l'italien par Ph. Mazoyer (Paris: Lethielleux, 1948), p. 58.

267. For a critical description of Scotistic voluntarism and Thomistic intellectualism as two different approaches to one and the same problem than as two conflicting doctrines, see B.M. Bonansea, "Duns Scotus' Voluntarism," *John Duns Scotus, Studies in Philosophy and the History of Philosophy*. Vol. 3, pp. 83-121.

268. B.M. Bonansea, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

269. See B. de Saint-Maurice, "The Contemporary Significance of Duns Scotus' Philosophy," *op. cit.*, pp. 345-367.

270. C.K. McKeon, "Peirce's Scotistic Realism," *op. cit.*, p. 238.

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Chapter VII

William of Ockham: Philosopher of Nominalism

Of those who readily acknowledged their great indebtedness to Scotus yet felt free to go their own way, the most significant philosopher was William of Ockham. An independent thinker who constantly criticized and sifted the teachings of Scotus, William went beyond the work of the great Master to inaugurate a new movement known as nominalism. In the second half of the fourteenth century, Thomism and Scotism were already called the "old way" (*via antiqua*) of philosophizing in contrast to the "modern way" (*via moderna*) of Ockham and his followers.

Life and Works

Life

William was probably born at Ockham in the county of Surrey near London, around 1285. After joining the Friars Minor and his ordination as subdeacon in 1306, he pursued higher studies in theology at Oxford (1309-1315), when the ideas of Duns Scotus were very influential, and lectured on the *Bible* (c. 1315-1317) and on the *Sentences* (c. 1317-1319). Although he fulfilled all the requirements for the Master of Theology during the following two years, he never became a regent master occupying an official chair of theology but remained a "beginner" (hence the name Venerable Inceptor) due to the opposition of John Lutterell, Chancellor of Oxford University (1317-1322), who denounced Ockham as a heretic.

Pope John XXII summoned Ockham to Avignon where a papal commission (including Lutterell) found 51 propositions extracted from his writings, open to censure. Although Ockham was not formally condemned by the Pope, he was compelled to remain in Avignon along with Michael of Cesena, the minister general of the Friars Minor, who was opposed to the Pope on the interpretation of Franciscan poverty and the temporal power of the Church. Prompted by his general, William studied the papal constitution concerning the Franciscan rule and became firmly convinced that the Pope had fallen into heresy, thereby forfeiting his right to the Chair of Peter. For signing an appellation against the Pope and fleeing to Italy in 1328, both Ockham and Michael were excommunicated.

They joined Louis of Bavaria in Pisa on his return from Rome where he opposed John XXII by installing an antipope and receiving from him the crown of the Holy Roman Empire. In 1330 they journeyed with Louis to Munich, and remaining under his protection, aided him by their counsel and writings in his struggle against John XXII. Though there is no historical evidence of Ockham's saying "O Emperor, defend me with your sword, and I will defend you with my pen," this famous dictum nevertheless expresses the fact of Ockham's intellectual leadership in the struggle of the Emperor against the popes. During all this time, however, Ockham professed himself a faithful Catholic, willing to submit to the legitimate authorities of both the Church and the Franciscan Order though there is no evidence of a formal reconciliation. He died at Munich in 1347, probably a victim of the Black Death, and was buried in an old Franciscan Church.¹

Works2

Ockham wrote his philosophical and theological works in Oxford (c. 1317-1323) and in Avignon (1324-1328) before his open conflict with the Papacy, and his polemical and political treatises in Munich (1330-1347). His works may be divided into logic, physics, theology, and politics.

- *Logic*.³ His works on logic include the following: *Exposition on the Book of Porphyry (Expositio super librum Porphyrii)*: *On Porphyry's Introduction to Aristotle's Categories*, dealing with the five predicables — genus, species, difference, property, and accident; *Exposition on the Book of the Predicaments (Expositio super librum Praedicamentorum)*: an explanation of Aristotle's *Categories*, namely, substance and the nine accidents; *Exposition on Two Books of the Perihermenias (Expositio super duos Libros Perihermenias)*: Aristotle's *On Interpretation*,⁴ treating of propositions, and truth and falsity; *Exposition on Two Books of the Elenchus (Expositio super duos libros Elenchorum)*: Aristotle's *On Sophistical Refutations*, analyzing fallacies; *Summa of All Logic (Summa totius logicae)*: Ockham's main logical work dealing with terms, propositions, and arguments,⁵ definitely written before 1328 and probably after 1320; *Compendium of Logic (Compendium logicae)*: a condensed presentation of logic, following the outline of the *Summa of All Logic*; *Elementary (Elementarium)*:⁶ another systematic work on logic in a more personal style.

- *Physics*. Ockham's writings on physics, which focus on the works of Aristotle, consists of three treatises: *Exposition of the Books of the Physics (Expositio in libros physicorum)*; *Summary on the Books of the Physics (Summulae in libros physicorum)*; and *Questions on the Books of the Physics (Quaestiones in libros physicorum)*.

- *Theology*. Ockham's theological works include the following: *Ordination (Ordinatio)*: the first book of his commentary on the first book of the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, dealing with God, was finished before 1323;⁷ *Reportation (Reportatio)*: questions on the second, third, and fourth books of the *Sentences*, treating respectively of creation, redemption, and the end of man;⁸ *Seven Quodlibetals (Quodlibeta septem)*: on far-ranging subjects; *First Tractate on Quantity (Primus tractatus de quantitate)*, and *Second Tractate on Quantity (Secundus tractatus de quantitate)*: these two tractates are on quantity in relation to the Holy Eucharist; *Tractate on Predestination and on the Foreknowledge of God and of Future Contingents (Tractatus de praedestinatione et de praescientia Dei et de futuris contingentibus)*: on predestination and God's knowledge of events depending on an act of free will;⁹ *Various Questions (Quaestiones variae)*.

- *Political and Polemical Writings*.¹⁰ To Ockham's Munich period belong the following principal political and polemical writings: *The Work of Ninety Days (Opus nonaginta dierum)*: Allegedly written within ninety days (1333-1334) against Pope John XXII on the problem of Franciscan poverty; *On the Dogmas of Pope John XXII (De dogmatibus papae Joannis XXII)*: polemical work against the Pope; *Against John XXII (Contra Joannem XXII)*; *Compendium of Errors of Pope John XXII (Compendium errorum papae Joannis XXII)*; *Tractate showing that Pope Benedict XII and John XXII embraced heresies (Tractatus ostendens quod Benedictus papa XII nonnullas Joannis XXII haereses amplexus est et defendit)*; *Allegations on Imperial Power (Allegationes de potestate imperiali)*; *Eight Questions on Papal Power and Dignity (Octo quaestiones super potestate et dignitate papali)*; *Whether the King of England can receive goods of the Church for the support of a war (An rex Angliae pro succursu guerraee possit recipere bona ecclesiarum)*; *Dialogue (Dialogus)*: main work (1334-1338) on the relation between Church and State in the form of a dialogue, showing the pros and cons without revealing his own position

(hence it must be used with caution); *Tractate on the election of Charles IV (Tractatus de Electione Caroli IV)*; *Breviloquium on the Power of the Pope (Breviloquium de potestate papae)*:11 on the spiritual and temporal power of the pope; *Tractate on the Power of the Emperors and the Popes (Tractatus de imperatorum et pontificum potestate)*: on the Church at Avignon and the errors of John XXII.

Encounter

Problems

Like other medieval philosophers and theologians, Ockham sought to understand his Christian faith in terms of philosophy. To this end, he needed to determine how much human reason, unilluminated by divine revelation, can know. With the limits of cognition clarified, the problems of God, the world, and man can be investigated.

I. Cognition

At the outset, Ockham found it necessary to grapple with the issue of knowledge by laying a firm foundation to his philosophy. Like Aristotle, he investigated the conditions of scientific knowledge so as to distinguish strictly scientific from unscientific conclusions in philosophy and (revealed) theology. Such an inquiry could not be rigorously pursued without determining the very possibility and limits of human cognition as such. What is the mind able to know? What is it unable to know?

Scientific knowledge, according to Aristotle, concerns universals which are expressed in general statements predicable of many cases. What does the universal concept represent? Almost all of Ockham's predecessors held that corresponding to the universality of a concept are natures or essences which in themselves have some kind of generality or commonness. Their problem was to show how universals become numerical units or singulars.

For Ockham, it was by no means self-evident that in its own right the nature or essence of a thing is not individual. Aristotle clearly stated what appears evident from immediate experience, namely, that only individuals exist. Consequently, Ockham regarded as a pseudo-problem the Scotistic questions of how common natures are individuated and the consequent issue of how the intellect can abstract a common nature from the individuals experienced. What is needed is not an explanation for the fact that something is an individual but an account of why it exists and that it has such or such a nature.

In one of those epoch-making changes of outlook, like Copernicus' revolution in astronomy, Ockham strategically shifted the approach to the problem of universal concepts from the side of the universal to the side of the individual. For Ockham, the problem of individuation is a logical question of showing how general terms are used in propositions to refer to individuals. As an epistemological issue, the problem of universals is one of explaining how experience of individual existents can give rise to universal concepts holding for all objects signified by a term. To explain how universal concepts truly represent individuals in scientific knowledge, it is necessary to explain what makes a concept universal and what certainty there is of individual realities.

For Ockham, the Aristotelian and Thomistic theory of abstraction is inadequate by itself to guarantee intellectual knowledge of individual things. To achieve a rigorous scientific reexamination of the foundations of philosophy, Ockham found it necessary, as Aristotle had, to

develop the practical science of logic so as to systematize universal concepts into an organized body of truths. What the mind scientifically affirms of reality, God, and creatures depends in large measure upon how it arranges its concepts and orders them in propositions.

II. *Reality*

Equipped with the scientific tool of logic, Ockham felt confident to investigate the problems of reality in general: the meaning of the term "being" and its relationship to both the conceptual and real order. In determining the sense of the term "being," Ockham believed that Scotus and Aquinas had confused the terminological and real order by affirming the reality of universality — a property of concepts — of the essences of things. One of Ockham's main preoccupations was to distinguish what belongs to concepts and words from what constitutes the structure of reality.

III. *God*

Ockham objected to Scotus' lack of strict scientific procedure in attempting to demonstrate the existence of God. Ockham's task was to apply his logical tools in a rigorous critique of the Scotistic arguments, evaluating what could be demonstrated with certitude and what could be argued with probability.

As a Christian theologian, Ockham was passionately concerned with upholding the doctrines of divine omnipotence and liberty. He could not accept Scotus' satisfaction that he had safeguarded the absolute freedom and power of God from ancient Greek necessitarianism by letting God be governed, as it were, and limited in his creative act by the eternal ideas or essences, and by endowing creatures with immutable natures and necessary relations. However, there was a long revered tradition behind the theory of ideas.

Bonaventure, Aquinas, and Scotus inherited the theory from Augustine who adapted it from the Neo-Platonists to explain God's free and intelligent creation of the world. For Ockham to oppose the theory of ideas was like swimming against the current of history. Yet he was convinced that only by eliminating the metaphysics of essences implied in the theory of ideas and derived from Greek sources could he adequately preserve God's omnipotence and liberty.

Ockham's opposition to the metaphysics of essence is quite consistent with his attack against reification of universals. The postulation of ideas of universals in God, for example, the idea of human nature, arises from the need to account for some sort of universal in reality, for instance, human nature which all individual men have in common. Correlative to the theory of universal ideas in God is the acceptance of some form of "realism" in the explanation of one's own universal ideas. By refuting the latter, Ockham found no need to assert the former. If a class-word like "man" objectively refers to no such thing as human nature, what is the sense of ascribing to God a universal idea of man, that is, an idea of human nature?

For a thorough criticism of Scotus' approach to God, Ockham had to reexamine the Subtle Doctor's doctrines of univocity and causality to see whether they justify man's knowledge of God's existence and essence. If only individuals exist, how can one univocally reason from creatures to God on the basis of a common characteristic in reality? Since arguments for the existence of God depend on the relation of effects to their cause, it is necessary to investigate the value of the principle of causality. What is the basis of the principle of causality?

IV. *Creatures*

Dissatisfied with Scotus' study of man, Ockham was convinced that a strict scientific approach was needed to show what is certain and what is probable regarding the nature of the soul and its relation to the body. This same critical approach is needed to simplify Scotus' complex conception of the world in terms of Aristotle's categories. Ockham believed that Scotus had watered-down the contingency of creatures by adopting a Greek metaphysics of essence to establish an immutable natural law. Ockham was convinced that the moral order could be grounded in God without sacrificing his unconditional freedom or underestimating the radical contingency of creatures.

V. *Politics*

In the midst of controversy between the Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire, Ockham focused his attention on the special problem of the relation between State and Church, and sovereign and subjects. His immediate aim was to defend the lawful rights of the Franciscan Order and the "Holy" Roman Emperor, Ludwig of Bavaria, against the interference of Pope John XXII by determining the limits of papal power. This meant opposing the view of so-called curialist who claimed absolute universal power for the pope over temporal as well as spiritual matters. Ockham's respect for law and custom led him to oppose arbitrary and capricious absolutism.

Themes

In his investigation of the problems of science, God, and creatures, Ockham centered his ideas around three themes: terms, freedom and power, and the individual.

I. *Terms*

Ockham advanced his inquiry by developing an epistemological position that radically distinguished him from Aquinas and Scotus. In contrast to the Thomistic and Scotistic conception of universal terms — as genera and species — with a real foundation in things, Ockham viewed concepts and names as signs that can refer to one thing or to many. Purely functional, their universality in no sense refers to a common nature possessed by many things outside the mind.

With universality as a construction of the mind, what assumes importance over metaphysics and physics is logic, the study of universal terms. Here Ockham shifted the focus of medieval philosophy from reality in itself — form, essence, and existence — to the terms signifying things in order to clarify metaphysical issues. This new notion of universality makes necessary a whole new logic of supposition in which terms stand, not for common natures, but for individual things. Having rejected the epistemological realism of Aquinas and Scotus, Ockham could criticize their metaphysical teachings and reconstruct the whole fabric of philosophy in view of his new logic.

II. *Freedom and Power*

Ockham's epistemological stance grew out of his theological position. His restriction of universality to concepts arose from his view of the relation between God and creatures. The sufficient reason for affirming the truth of a statement cannot be found ultimately in merely

contingent creatures, but only in God, the sole necessary being. Absolutely dependent on the omnipotent and unconditional free will of God, the world has no inherent reason to be what it is. Here Ockham diametrically opposed the necessitarianism of Greek and Arabic philosophers. In his search for truth, Ockham investigated beyond the contingent order of the present universe to discover what God can do by his absolute power, what is absolutely possible, and for that reason always true, free from contradiction, and therefore necessary. Ockham searched, not for what is relative, but for absolute truth.

III. *Individual*

Ockham's viewpoint on universality as a construct of the mind also developed from the oft-repeated Aristotelian axiom that only individuals exist. Like Scotus, Ockham grounded scientific knowledge in the intuition of the individual thing which alone exists. "Knowledge of the singular sensible is absolutely first in this life, so that the same singular thing which is first perceived by the sense is the same object under the same aspect primarily understood intuitively by the intellect."¹² With nothing in reality corresponding to universal concepts except individual things and qualities which are contingently related, universality can not be abstracted from reality but must be formally constructed by the mind. Ockham reaffirmed the uniqueness of the individual in the moral and political sphere. Each person possesses unique rights and freedom which are inviolable by any earthly power. In Ockham's philosophy, the individual supercedes Aristotelian form, Thomistic existence, and Scotistic essence, as the ultimate reality.

Method

Rigorous investigation of the problems of God, the world, and man demanded that Ockham develop a strict scientific method.

I. *Scientific Knowledge*

Ockham's insistence on individuals as the sole existents did not prevent him from recognizing science as a knowledge of universal propositions. On the contrary, he accepted the Aristotelian dictum that science is of universal terms, quantified universally for all the individuals signified by the term. With a high ideal of strictly scientific knowledge modeled after that developed by Aristotle in his *Posterior Analytics*, Ockham defined science in the strict sense as "an evident cognition of some necessary truth caused by the evident cognition of necessary premises and a process of syllogistic reasoning."¹³ A proposition is scientifically known in this strict sense only when it remains true regardless of the existing world. All the truths of logic and mathematics, some statements about God (for example, God is good), and many metaphysical propositions, conform to the definition of scientific knowledge, for they are necessary conclusions obtained from evident premises which are necessary, that is, always true and never false.

In view of these requirements, no statement of actual fact about this world is truly a scientific statement. However, propositions about the world construed as conditionals or as of the mode of possibility may have the necessity required by the definition of scientific knowledge if they are based on evidence. For example, the proposition "Peter is moving" is necessary if considered as equivalent to the following hypothetical proposition, "If Peter is running, he is moving." Similar

affirmative and assertoric propositions which include terms standing for contingent things can be necessary.

Ockham also accepted the Aristotelian notion of indemonstrable principles to which the mind assents once it grasps the meaning of the terms. Mathematical propositions are analytically evident from the meaning of the terms; for example, a triangle is a figure bounded by three sides. A principle may be indemonstrable inasmuch as it is known through experience. "Certain first principles are not known through themselves (*per se nota* or analytic) but are known only through experience as in the case of the proposition 'all heat is calefactive.'"¹⁴ The premises of the natural sciences are also verified by intuitive cognition.

II. *Real and Rational Science*

To avoid the confusion of terms with things, Ockham distinguished between real and rational science. Whereas the former concerns things in reality, the latter focuses on terms which do not stand immediately for real things, as in the case of logic which deals with second intentions, for example, genus and species.

Without a clear distinction between these two types of sciences, concepts or terms will be confused with things. It is important, for example, to keep in mind that Aristotle's intention in the *Categories* was to treat of words and concepts and not of things, otherwise one will misinterpret his thought. Logic deals with terms of second intention, "fabrications" or constructions of the mind's activity without which they cannot exist. Since terms of second intention presuppose terms of first intention, logic as a rational science presupposes real science. However, real science, such as physics and metaphysics, deals with first intention. "The first intention is an act of the understanding signifying things which are not signs. The second intention is the act of signifying first intentions."¹⁵ Ockham's inclusion of both sign and thing in the definition of first intention enabled him to account for two Aristotelian doctrines: first, science is of the universal; and second, only individuals exist. By means of universal terms, real science concerns individual things. In the universal proposition "man is capable of laughter," the universal terms stand for individual things, and not for any extramental universal reality. The difference between real and rational science is this: "the real sciences are about mental contents — which stand for things. Logic, on the other hand, is about mental contents that stand for mental contents."¹⁶

- *Unity of Science*. The unity of a science is based on neither its subject or object. First, the unity of a subject does not make a unity of science. Each branch of philosophy, for example, metaphysics or logic, is not one habit of the mind but an ordered group of habits. Since these habits are expressed by written propositions, a science can also be called a related collection of propositions. In this sense, Ockham spoke of Aristotle's book of *Metaphysics* as the science of metaphysics: The unity of a science, therefore, is that of an ordered whole, like the unity of an army or city.

Since a science is a collection of many truths or propositions, it is not limited to one subject. Scientific propositions may have different subjects. Some metaphysical propositions, for example, have being for their subject, whereas others have God as their subject. Both views can be justified. Among all the subjects of metaphysics God is the primary subject as far as primacy of perfection is concerned, but being is the primary subject as regards primacy of predication. Consequently, metaphysics does not have numerically one subject. As there is no king of the whole world, so

nothing is the subject of the whole of metaphysics. Each part of metaphysics has its own subject, just as each kingdom has its own ruler.¹⁷

Neither is the unity of a science based on the unity of its object, for each science has many objects. The objects of both rational and real sciences are the propositions it contains. "Every science, whether it be real or rational, is concerned only with propositions, as with objects known, for only propositions are known."¹⁸ Ockham did not imply that science has no reference to reality. The terms of propositions of real science stand for individual things existing outside the mind, whereas terms of logical propositions stand for concepts in the mind. Terms and propositions substituting for realities are the proper objects of real sciences which treat of the real world only indirectly and improperly.

III. *Philosophy and Theology*

Working within the framework of faith and reason, Ockham correlatively developed his ideas in the real sciences of philosophy and (revealed) theology. Although its propositions can be true and certain, theology cannot be a strict science, since it rests upon faith and authority rather than upon evidence.¹⁹ In another sense, both philosophy and theology are sciences as ordered mental habits expressed by a systematic collection of propositions. While theology is methodologically distinct from philosophy and concerns some subjects unknown to the metaphysician and conducive to salvation, for example, the Trinity and Incarnation, they are ordered to each other as a whole, similar to men in the unity of an army or city, and can treat of the same truths.²⁰

IV. *Simplicity of Explanation*

In his demand for rigorous scientific thinking, Ockham passionately practiced a simplicity of explanation. This principle of economy, sometimes called "Ockham's Razor," is often stated by him in the form: "Plurality is not to be posited without necessity,"²¹ and sometimes: "What can be explained by the assumption of fewer things is vainly explained by the assumption of more things."²² The formulation, "Entities must not be multiplied without necessity," does not seem to have been used by Ockham. He used the principle of parsimony to eliminate pseudo-explanatory entities according to the criterion that "we must not affirm something is necessarily required for the explanation of an effect, if we are not led to this by a reason proceeding either from a truth known by itself or from an experience that is certain."²³ For Ockham, the sufficient reason for the truth of a statement is either the observation of a fact, or immediate self-evidence, or divine revelation, or a deduction from these. In view of these criteria, he wielded his methodological razor in sharp critical analysis.

Influences

- *Scotus*. Like Scotus, whose lectures he perhaps heard, Ockham believed that the reconstruction of the Augustinian tradition by the incorporation of Aristotelian ideas required a strict scientific approach. Heir to myriad sources of information in the writings of Anselm, Averroes, Avicenna, Bonaventure, and Aquinas, he was thoroughly convinced that a scientific procedure more rigorous than that employed by Scotus was necessary for a complete critical investigation of the problems of knowledge and reality.

- *Logicians: Aristotle and the Scholastics.* To achieve a radical reconstruction of Augustinian thought, Ockham adapted Aristotelian logic as the tool of his critique. In this adaptation he relied on Peter of Spain's (later Pope John XXI) *Summulae logicales* which opened Aristotelian logic to new considerations of terms, signs, and suppositions,²⁴ and on William of Sherwood's treatise on syncategorematic terms. The distinctive feature of Peter and William's logic was its use of the supposition of terms in formulating the syntactical and semantical properties of cognitive language. Ockham, undoubtedly influenced by this logic of terms, considerably refined the technical equipment of his predecessors. "In his *Summa Logicae* Ockham systematized the contributions of his predecessors in a reformulation of the whole content of Aristotelian logic on semantical foundations of a purely extensional character."²⁵

Peter of Spain extolled dialectic as the art of arts and the science of sciences. By "dialectic," Peter meant probable reasoning. Some other thirteenth-century logicians shared this tendency to focus on probable reasoning as distinct from demonstrative science, on the one hand, and sophistical reasoning, on the other. Undoubtedly, Ockham was influenced by the preceding logicians' emphasis on dialectical or syllogistic reasoning leading to probable conclusions. However, he went further than his predecessors in his penchant for regarding arguments in philosophy — as distinct from logic — as probable rather than demonstrative arguments.

- *Nominalists.* For an effective use of logic, Ockham believed it was necessary to reconstruct the foundation of universal concepts employed in logical and scientific thinking. Already in motion was an anti-realist movement by Durandus, Peter Aureoli, and Henry of Harclay to emphasize the foundation of universals in the mind rather than in individual things. Ockham climaxed that movement with a complete break from the realisms of Aquinas and Scotus, and concluded from the Aristotelian truth that only individuals exist that universality belongs solely to concepts and names, thereby instituting a new terminist or nominalist logic. Ockham adopted a nominalism along the lines of Roscelin of Compigne and Abelard to purify Aristotelian logic of the Neoplatonic corruptions which, for example, in Peter of Spain assumed that a universal term stood for a universal thing.

- *Augustinian and Aristotelian Heritage.* With the foundation of philosophy restructured in terms of nominalism, Ockham reexamined the superstructure of cognition and metaphysics. To guarantee a solid foundation and a simple superstructure, Ockham applied the principle of economy — "a plurality is not to be posited without necessity" (a common dictum of the scholastics and traceable back to Aristotle) — in a new way to strengthen the Augustinian lines of his system, namely intuition, the individual, and the will. He revised Scotus' analysis of cognition into intuition and abstraction: in view of his Augustinian conviction of the primacy of divine causality, he believed intuition of a nonexistent is possible, and in view of his nominalism he limited abstraction to forming universal concepts.

By reinterpreting the Aristotelian metaphysics of being, the categories, matter and form, causality, and univocity in a radically nominalistic and empirical framework, Ockham was able to reconstruct anew the Augustinian tradition of the primacy of divine power and freedom, and the absolute dependence of creatures on God. In this way he endeavored to rectify the Aristotelian theories which failed to recognize the liberty and omnipotence of God.

The emotional repercussions of Ockham's personal history and circumstances are evident in his polemical and political writings. In the academic atmosphere of Oxford, Ockham appears as the cold logician and calm philosopher, whereas in his exile at Munich, his teaching career cut short and the ban of excommunication on his head, he is the impassioned political and ecclesiastical controversialist. In both situations, Ockham showed himself an independent,

original, and critical thinker, clear in his convictions and principles, and ready to apply them courageously, systematically, and logically in both the theoretical and practical arena.

Response

Ockham responded to the problems of knowledge and reality by methodically developing his themes in the different areas of philosophy.

Theory of Knowledge

Ockham developed his theory of knowledge to meet the epistemological demands of science. He agreed with Aristotle that science is concerned with universal propositions. For example, the mind assents to the universal proposition that the whole is greater than the part, when it grasps the meaning of the terms. But for Ockham such scientific knowledge is not simply *a priori* in the sense of being a development of innate principles. For scientific propositions to be objective, they must be grounded in reality which, according to Aristotle, consists only of individuals. To validate scientific knowledge, Ockham has to account for both the universal and individual poles of knowledge.

Furthermore, Ockham recognized, outside the limited field of scientific knowledge, there are many statements that are true, evident, and even necessary, and therefore known with certainty. How does the mind arrive at them?

Ockham's explanation followed the lead of Scotus in constructing a theory of knowledge on two basic modes of cognition: "The one may be called intuitive, the other abstractive cognition."²⁶ The former mode belongs to the Augustinian tradition and the latter to the Aristotelian deposit of reason.

I. Intuition

Human cognition starts with the immediate experience of singular facts, either sensible or intelligible objects, whether outside or within the mind. "And therefore, just as the knowledge of sensible facts that is obtained from experience . . . begins with the senses, . . . so in general the scientific knowledge of these purely intelligible facts of experience begins with an intellectual intuition of these intelligible facts."²⁷ Intuitive knowledge is the immediate apprehension of existing things without any concept as a medium between things and the act of apprehending.

Following the Augustinian tradition, Ockham recognized that man directly experiences his mental states of understanding and willing without any previous sense perception.²⁸ Natural knowledge, therefore originates from two sources: intuition of external sensible objects and intuition of psychological activity. This intuition is the basis for a self-evident existential statement that the contingent thing which is experienced exists, is present, and has such and such a condition of inhering or not inhering (accident or substance), of nearness or distance, and other concrete features. Caused by an individual thing and by no other thing, an intuition contains its own guarantee.

Even if the existential judgment concerns an object of sense, it is based on an intellectual intuitive cognition of an object. Although the intellect cannot intuit a sensible object without the help of sensation — at least in the natural order — the primary intellectual awareness relates to the sense-object as immediately as sensory cognition. Thus Ockham continued the Augustinian

doctrine of the certitude of judgments regarding immediately given facts by grounding them in the intuition of singular things. "Intuitive cognition of a thing is cognition that enables us to know whether the thing exists or does not exist, in such a way that, if the thing exists, then the intellect immediately judges that it exists and evidently knows that it exists."²⁹ The guarantee of such concrete judgments is the evidence presented by intuition.

- *Intuition of Nonexistents*. While it is evident that there cannot be intuition without a knowing subject, it is not at all clear whether intuitive cognition can take place without the existing object itself or its causality. With only the intellect present, it seems impossible to have intuition. However, as a Christian, Ockham believed in God's omnipotence which as first cause can produce everything that a secondary cause can effect. "Intuitive cognition of a non-existent object is possible by divine power."³⁰

Since God can supply the causality of a secondary cause and cooperate with the intellect to produce intuition, no existing object is necessary. God can collaborate in this effect, even if the object known is far away or inaccessible to direct contact with the intellect. For example, God could produce immediately in the organs of vision all those psycho-physical conditions which are naturally produced by the light of the stars. Since the act of seeing stars is distinct from the stars themselves, divine omnipotence could annihilate the stars and conserve the visual act with the object.

In stating that intuition can know an object which does not exist, Ockham has in mind an object which, though not existing in fact, can exist. But is it not a contradiction to speak of an intuition of something which does not exist? As a Christian theologian, Ockham believed that God has immediate cognition of everything, not only all that exists, but also all that could exist, but does not. If such knowledge is possible to God, it cannot involve a contradiction. An object which "does not contain a manifest contradiction"³¹ and hence is not pure nothingness, is a possible existent which can be intuited by the human intellect with the help of God.

Ockham excludes a contradiction not only from the object in itself but also from the very act of intuiting. "God cannot cause in us such knowledge through which there evidently appears to be a thing present to us when it is absent, because this includes a contradiction."³² God cannot cause a contradictory situation of evident knowledge that a thing is present when it is absent. Something cannot be both present and absent in the evident knowledge of intuition.

II. *Abstraction*

How can an intuited individual thing give rise to universal knowledge? To answer this question, Ockham analyzed the Aristotelian theory of abstraction. The mind also "abstracts from existence and nonexistence"³³ to focus solely on the object itself. Since this knowledge does not imply the actual existence of the object here and now, it cannot be grounds for asserting the existential judgment, "This thing exists." Without a preceding intuition, abstractive cognition by itself does not suffice to make evident an existential judgment concerning contingent things. Although abstractive cognition prescind from the object's actuality or nonactuality, it is not universal knowledge. Since intuitive and abstractive cognition result from the causal cooperation of intellect and object, both represent real objects outside or inside the mind. Ockham, therefore, is a realist in his theory of knowledge.

- *Universal concept*. Intuition combines with abstraction to effect a concept. The crucial question for Ockham is how the concept becomes universal. The abstractive cognition is stored in the memory as habitual knowledge and generalized as a universal concept by way of comparison

with other similar abstractive cognitions to represent, not just one, but many similar individuals. Thus, the universal "is a sign naturally predicable of many things, . . ."34 Nothing in the real world corresponds to the universality of a concept; "A universal is nothing other than a content of the mind; and therefore no substance outside the mind and no accident outside the mind is such a universal."35

Ockham argued against the existence of universals in various ways. If universals exist, they must be individual, for only singular things really exist; but it is a contradiction for something actually existing to be both individual and universal. Furthermore, if there were a common reality existing at the same time in two members of a species, the annihilation of one individual thing would involve the destruction of another individual thing. However, for example, one man can be annihilated by God without any other man being annihilated or destroyed. Therefore, there is not anything in common to both, because (if there were) it would be annihilated, and consequently no other man would retain his essential nature. The essence of an individual man is not affected by God's creation or annihilation of another man.

With no universals in reality, what guarantee does the intellect have that its universal concepts provide objective knowledge of reality as it is with individual natures? Because of its origin in abstraction from intuited individual things, and because of the similarity between the individuals, the concept is common to all individuals of the same kind and hence predicable of them.³⁶ Individuals, for example, Plato and Socrates, are similar not in the sense of sharing in a common reality, but in the sense that they agree with each other in the likeness of their individual natures. On this basis, universal concepts are said to represent individual realities. Whereas universality exists wholly within the mind as a sufficiently generalized abstractive cognition, only individuality and the similarity of singular natures exist outside the mind as the objective basis of universal concepts.

Ockham was not as sure about the nature of a universal concept in the mind. At first he considered the universal concept (for example, "man" or "animal" in the proposition "man is an animal") as something differing from the act of thinking of which it is an object with no psychical or physical reality other than that of thought-object in the mind.³⁷ because the concept is merely mentally imaged, Ockham called it a "fictum" in the sense, not of a pure fiction, but of a logical "picture" constructed from the interaction of the object and cognition and hence truly representing the object. Peter Aureoli, Ockham's contemporary, also held the "fictum" theory.

However, it appears that Ockham eventually gave up the "fictum" theory for what may be called the "intellection" theory, "according to which a concept is the same as the act of knowing."³⁸ According to this view, the universal concept is a psychical entity which is identical with the very act of intellection. Since there are no universals to be drawn from individual sensible things, Ockham applied his principle of economy to get rid of the apparatus of abstracting intelligible likenesses (*species intelligibiles*). Immediately caused by the object and the intellect working together as two part-causes, the concept represents the object, and consequently can function as a predicate in a mental proposition.

Logic

Having investigated the mind's universal concepts as the material needed for the various sciences. Ockham inquired into the logical arrangement of these notions to obtain truth and to organize them into a body. Since logic teaches one how to order concepts in the right way, it is a practical science, it is a tool of scientific work. Following Aristotle's *Organon*, he divided the field

of formal logic into the three classical parts: terms, propositions and reasoning.³⁹ Ockham's logic, like all medieval logic, treats mainly of spoken sentences which he distinguished from mental and written sentences.

I. *Terms*

The elements of propositions are terms. "A term is simply one of the parts into which a proposition is directly divided."⁴⁰ It signifies an object to the mind. Nouns, for instance, are instituted by man to represent objects and to substitute as names for things in discourse. Language, for Ockham, is a system of conventional signs which depend on concepts. Since concepts are produced, not by the activity of artificiality instituting languages, but by the natural interaction of object and intellect, they are said to be natural signs to which the forms correspond. Words for an individual thing vary in different languages, for example, "man" in English and "homme" in French, but the concept or logical significance of the term is the same. However, both word and concept, properly speaking, directly signify the same object.⁴¹

- *Division of Terms. Categorematic and Syncategorematic.* In his analysis of propositions, Ockham distinguished formal and material elements. In the proposition "every man is not white," the material elements, "man" and "white," are categorematic terms, and the formal characteristics, "every," "is," and "not," are syncategorematic terms (called "constants" by modern logicians). Whereas, the former terms naturally or conventionally signify definite objects, the latter have meaning only within the context of categorematic terms.⁴² The main subject of logic is syncategorematic terms which make inferences possible.

- *Absolute and Connotative Terms.* Categorematic terms are basically distinguished into absolute and connotative terms. Absolute terms, such as "man," "horse," and "intellection" directly signify an object. "A connotative name, however, . . . signifies something primarily and something else secondarily."⁴³ A connotative term not only directly signifies an object, but indirectly stands for something else. For example, in the proposition "This table is quantitative," the term "quantitative" which immediately signifies "table" connotes or indicates that such a body has parts distinct from each other. Whereas absolute terms result from abstraction based on intuition and are susceptible of a real definition in answer to the question "What is this thing?", connotative terms are the outcome of a combination of concepts and are nominally definable in response to the question, "What is meant by this term?"

- *First and Second Impositions.* Ockham further analyzed terms into first and second imposition. The act of imposing a name on an object can take place on the first level of using terms, or on the second level of speaking about terms and signifying "only a conventional sign."⁴⁴ As regards the spoken or written language, words of first imposition, as "man," "intention," and "universal," are assigned the task of signifying; and words of second imposition, as "substantive," "adjective," and "conjugation," refer to qualifications of language. The latter words, which always signify the former, are the main interest of the grammarian.

- *First and Second Intentions.* The distinction between first and second intentions concerns concepts. Concepts of first intentions such as "man" and "white" signify objects that are not signs;⁴⁵ corresponding to this first level are words of first imposition. Concepts of second intentions such as "universal" and "species" are signs predicated of first intentions, as when it is said "man" and "horse" are species; correlative to this level are words of second imposition. In Ockham's view, the projection of universals into reality arose from the logical mistake of

construing terms of second intention as term of first intention and supposing, for example, that what is signified by the term "man" is some reality in individuals.

II. *Supposition*

Ockham refined and simplified the theory of supposition introduced by earlier logicians. Supposition "is a property belonging to a term, but only when used in a proposition."⁴⁶

- *Personal, Simple, Material*. In the statement "the man is running," the term "man" stands for a definite individual. This is an instance of personal supposition "when a term stands for what it signifies and is used in its significative function."⁴⁷ However, in the case of simple supposition the term itself becomes a subject of discourse and does not exercise a significative function. For instance, in the statement "man is a species," the concept "man" represents, not a man in reality, but simply the concept itself. Rejecting the earlier terminist logicians who had construed a simple supposition as the use of a term for the universal supposed to exist in individuals, Ockham regarded simple supposition as the use of a term for the concept expressed by it. If the term as the subject of discourse is a word in "material" supposition, for example, in the sentence "'man' has three letters," the sense is that the term "man," not as species or rational animal, but as word has three letters.

The importance of this distinction can be shown in dealing with the problem of whether a real science, such as physics, deals with physical objects in the extramental world or with propositions. In Ockham's view, the term "science" is a second intention, since it is predicated of propositions or of a system of propositions. However, most of the propositions themselves are composed of first intentions.

- *Determinate and Common Supposition*. Ockham developed a logic of predication by distinguishing a personal supposition into determinate and common. The inference from an affirmative proposition such as "some man is white" to its singularized form "This man is white," (and so on for other individuals signified by the subjects) is valid. "There is determinate *supposition* when it is possible to make the logical descent to singulars by a disjunctive proposition."⁴⁸ In a common, distributive, confused supposition, the logical descent from a universal proposition to singularized propositions is joined by the conjunction "and," as in this instance, "Every man is mortal; therefore this man is mortal and that man is mortal" (and so on for every individual man). The inference from a singular proposition to a more general statement is a process of ascent.⁴⁹

- *Ontological Foundation*. Ockham's analysis of the absolute and connotative terms of first intention unfolds the ontological foundation of his logic. For Ockham, the terms Aristotle grouped under the category of primary substance as signifying what they essentially are, are absolute terms that signify individuals when used in propositions with personal supposition. The concrete terms of the categories of accident which signify "this quality," or "so big," or "in such a place," are connotative terms that directly refer to the substance and obliquely to some contingent factual condition. For instance, the term "round" directly pertains to the sun and indirectly to its shape.

- *Logical Truth*. Ockham utilized his theory of supposition to clarify Aristotle's view that a proposition is true when that which is said to be is. The term "truth" and "falsity" are second intentions predicable of propositions which they signify and for which they can stand. Ockham restates Aristotle with greater precision when he says that for a proposition to be true "it is sufficient and necessary that subject and predicate should stand for (have supposition for) the same thing."⁵⁰ For example, the statement "Socrates is white" is true if there really is one individual

signified by the terms "Socrates" and "white" even though the terms themselves and the notions associated with them are not identical. The terms "true" and "false" are connotative terms that directly signify propositions and connote that subject and predicate stand for the same state of affairs.⁵¹

III. *Consequences*

With other medieval logicians, Ockham viewed the syllogism as a special type of inference within the general theory of consequences (*consequentiae*) which can be understood as conditional propositions expressed in the general form: If A is, then B is. Its antecedent and the consequent may be either simple or compound propositions. In his analysis of conditional propositions, Ockham formulated many rules of inference which are well-known theorems of propositional calculus in modern logic. For example, "From truth falsity never follows";⁵² when the antecedent is true and the consequent is false, the inference is not valid.

*Metaphysics*⁵³

Within the framework of his logic and theory of knowledge, Ockham developed his metaphysics by a critique of traditional metaphysical doctrines.

I. *Being*

Ockham followed Aristotle in describing metaphysics as a real science whose "subject is being . . . , not nevertheless in word but in concept."⁵⁴ It deals with the concept of being in general, which is formed after the intuition of existing things. In the first sense, "the noun 'being' is associated with a concept which is common to all things and can be predicated of all things."⁵⁵ Being as such, the most common concept predicatable about things, "stands only for a concept in the mind, not for substance nor accident,"⁵⁶ nor a common nature in things. There is no "being as such" in the extramental world; there are only beings.

In the second sense, the term "being" stands for all individual things, both substance and accidents, ranging from inanimate bodies, plants, animals, human beings and angels, to God — in fine, all actually existing individuals, or everything to which it is not repugnant to be in the actual order of things. Since every one of these individuals is conceived of as a "being," then "being" can be predicated of every one of them. The concept of being can be predicated about everything that exists or can exist.

As "the adequate object of our intellect," being is most common, and univocal to everything *per se* intelligible."⁵⁷ For that reason, being is a natural object of the human intellect inasmuch as this "power is naturally inclined towards it"⁵⁸ without attaining every element of the object's content. Through intuition of singular existents, the intellect first abstracts "the concept of being"⁵⁹ and in a progressive process of generalizing abstraction forms the universal concept of being as such.

- *Substance*. Ockham conceived Aristotle's primary substance as the individual subject. However, "no external corporeal substance can be naturally apprehended in itself, by us, however it may be with respect to the intellect itself or any substance which is of the essence of the knower."⁶⁰ For example, from the observation of fire, we know that it is fire; yet, in reality, we do not know fire in itself but only the accidents of fire. Known only as the substratum of sensible

qualities, corporeal "substance is therefore understood in connotative and negative concepts, such as 'being which subsists by itself,' 'being, which is not in something else,' 'being which is a subject of all accidents.'"61

- *Essence and Existence*. Since the term 'being' denotes everything that exists or can exist in the universe, it necessarily refers by its very meaning to actual existence. In view of this notion of being, Ockham found it as meaningless as Scotus to distinguish between essence and existence in a real thing: "Existence is not a thing different from the essence of a thing."62 While differing grammatically, both terms signify exactly the same individual reality. As means "essence" and "existence" signify the same individual grammatically and logically. "The words 'thing' and 'to be' (*esse*) signify one and the same thing, but the one in the manner of a noun and the other in the manner of a verb."63

While admitting that the noun "essence" cannot simply be substituted for the verb "to be" for obvious grammatical reasons, Ockham was sensitive to any encroachment of grammatical distinctions on metaphysics. The grammatical distinction between essence and existence cannot properly be taken as a basis for distinguishing them as distinct things; they are the same thing. Thus, he could maintain that a creature is truly its own essence and existence, and nevertheless allow for an ultimate distinction between God who of himself is necessary, infinite, and uncaused, and a creature which is not from itself, contingent, finite and caused.

Ockham understood Boethius' famous distinction between what a thing is (*quod est*) and that by which a thing is (*quo est*) as a real distinction in a creature: "that which a creature is and that in virtue of which a creature is are simply distinct, just as God and a creature are distinct."64 A creature, as that which is, really differs from God by which he is, whereas there is nothing different from God in virtue of which God is.

- *Act and Potency*. Such is the case also with the supposed distinction in things between potential and actual being. To say that something exists potentially does not mean that "something which is not in the universe, but can exist in the universe, is truly a being."65 This involves a distinction between two kinds of statements, assertoric and *de possibili*, and not between things denoted by the terms of statements. In Ockham's view, most of the traditional metaphysical doctrines represent confusions of logical and physical concepts, or of ways of signifying things and the things signified.

Since only concrete singular things exist outside the mind, there are no principles really (essence and existence in Aquinas) or formally (common nature and individual in Scotus) distinct, save those entities which are separate or separable.

II. *Univocity*

Ockham agreed with Scotus that the general concept of being is univocal. Since every individual is conceived as a being, the concept of being can be univocally predicated of everything that exists or can exist. Unable to intuit God or to have a simple proper concept of him, the human mind needs to abstract from immediately known creatures to acquire a common concept predicable of him and other beings. For instance, the notions "being" and "first" abstracted from intuited things can be combined to form the composite proper concept "first being."66 The elements of such a concept are predicable in exactly the same sense of God and creatures, linking experience to the un-intuited Divinity. If the term "being" were not univocal, such that one and the same meaning did not correspond to that term, there would be no link joining the experience of creatures to the unexperienced God; the outcome could be agnosticism in regard to God.

Ockham distinguished three kinds of univocity. First, a univocal concept may be common to a number of things which are perfectly alike, for example, the concept of man common to individual men. Second, a univocal concept may be common to a number of things which are alike in one way and unlike in another. For instance, man and donkey are alike in being animals and having similar matter, though their specific forms differ. Third, the term "univocal" denotes a concept common to many things which have no likeness, either substantial or accidental."⁶⁷ It is in this sense that a concept common to God and creatures is univocal, since they are completely dissimilar in reality. What is common to God and creatures in the conceptual order radically differs in the real order. The univocity of the term "being" and of others used in metaphysics, imply no real similarity between God and creatures: ". . . in God and in creatures there is nothing at all intrinsic or extrinsic, which is of the same kind."⁶⁸ As a melody can be the same though each note is different when played in a different key, the one concept of being can be univocally applied to completely dissimilar beings, as infinite being and finite being. The term "being" (also the term "substance") is predicated of every individual, not simply as qualifying some other thing, for example, as the term "white" is applied in the manner of a quality (*in quale*) to a subject, but in its own right as a "quiddity" (*in quid*). This theory of univocity enabled Ockham to lay the foundation of a natural theology without falling into pantheism or agnosticism.

Ockham saw no need of analogy to avoid pantheism and agnosticism. If analogy is understood in the third sense mentioned above, then the univocal concept of being may be called "analogous." However, recourse to the theory of analogy to avoid pantheism is unnecessary, since being as such which is common to God and creatures is not a real thing in which both participate but rather a concept. From the viewpoint of reality, God and creatures are radically different beings, and the concepts corresponding to these individuals also have different significations. In this case, since the concept of God is not the same as the concept of creature, the term "being" should be predicated, not univocally, but equivocally, of them. This would lead to agnosticism. For Ockham, predication is either univocal or equivocal. There is no room for analogy.⁶⁹

III. Causality

Ockham retained the fourfold Aristotelian division into formal, material, final and efficient causes, and reduced the exemplar to cause in a metaphorical sense.⁷⁰ In general cause is a positive entity distinct from what is caused by it. Efficient cause is that which, having been posited, the effect follows and, having been removed (all other circumstances remaining the same), the effect does not follow. "An efficient cause," Ockham wrote, "is defined as that whose existence or presence is followed by something."⁷¹ This definition shows an empirical tendency on the part of Ockham to interpret causal relation as regular sequence.

Knowledge of a causal relation depends on experience. Ockham was quite emphatic on this point. He insisted that knowledge of a given thing having a cause does not mean one knows what particular thing is the cause. No amount of a priori deduction can establish that one individual thing is the cause of another individual. Only intuitive cognition of each of the two things and experience of their sequence can disclose whether one is the cause of the other.

In the experiential verification of a causal relation it must be shown that when one definite thing is present another thing follows, or when the former is absent the latter does not follow. For example, "it is proved that fire is the cause of heat, since when fire is there and all other things (all other possible causal factors) have been removed, heat follows in a heatable object which has been brought near the fire."⁷²

Ockham confined knowledge of causal relations to experience because, in view of God's absolute power and freedom, he found no inherent reason in contingent things necessarily relating them; their causal relations, therefore, appear as regular sequences which experience encounters as matter of fact. Ockham's empirical view of causality goes hand in hand with his theological outlook. His preference for scientific induction over a priori deduction in the determination of causal relations derives from the demands of his theology rather than from the exigencies of purely physical science in which he showed comparatively little interest.

In the case of two really distinct things, for example, fire and burning, Ockham held that God could cause one without the other. "Although burning always follows the contact of fire with an inflammable object, this does not exclude the possibility that its cause is not the fire. It may be that God has so ordained things that whenever fire is compresent with the object, he himself is the cause of the burning."⁷³ Since God can supply for the causality of any secondary cause, one cannot strictly prove that a given effect is caused by a secondary cause and not by God alone.⁷⁴ However, Ockham did not deny the validity of causal argumentation. On the contrary, he used causal arguments to reason from the characteristics of a given effect to a cause. Since God created things in such a way that a certain order results, one can empirically study that invariable succession and predict that the causal relations experienced in the past will be experienced in the future, even though God's absolute power could intervene in the world.

Natural Theology

With a theory of univocity linking creatures and God, Ockham would develop a natural theology on the basis of his metaphysics. At the outset, Ockham encountered the question of whether God is the term of human cognition.

I. Knowledge of God

In the tradition of medieval thought, Ockham affirmed that the human intellect cannot naturally intuit, and consequently cannot abstractively know God as he is in himself.⁷⁵ The primary object of the human mind is the nature of material things. Since human understanding does not have the divine essence as its immediate object, it "cannot know God in this life in a concept that is simple and proper to Him,"⁷⁵ just as a man born blind cannot have a proper concept of color. Hence, the proposition, "God exists" is not self-evident to man in this life. This being so, is it possible to have certain natural knowledge of God from creatures?

However, God "can be conceived by us in some common concept predicable of him and others."⁷⁷ For example, from the experience of other things, the intellect is able "to abstract the concept of wisdom from created wisdom" and "imperfection from the wisdom of the creature,"⁷⁸ to form a complex concept of wisdom which is common to God and creatures. These connotative terms principally and quidditatively signify God and secondarily refer to the different created perfections.

The distinct composite concepts which man has of God, a single being, indicate that he immediately knows, not the divine essence, but rather concepts of God, mental representations of the Divine. None of these mental constructs is a simple proper concept adequately mirroring the divine essence. The human mind can attain a nominal representation (*quid nominis*) but not the reality (*quid rei*) of God. Although the human mind "cannot know in themselves either the unity of God . . . or his infinite power or the divine goodness or perfection," its propositions signifying

these attributes, nonetheless, have meaning. Thus theology is a real science of "concepts which . . . we use in propositions to stand for God,"⁷⁹ and theological propositions are objective in the sense of referring to the divine reality.

Unaided natural reason can strictly demonstrate with utmost certainty from evident promises only a few conclusions about God. Other inferences can be made by way of persuasive (probable) or dialectical argument from premises not evident but accepted by all, or at least by all acute and trained minds. The conclusion may be certain, but not evident. One can be certain who one's parents are without the fact itself being evident to that person.

II. *Proof of God's Existence*

- *Argument from production.* For Ockham, the proposition that God exists can be strictly demonstrated. He criticized Duns Scotus' form of the proof from efficient causality as not sufficiently conclusive.⁸⁰ In the case of accidentally ordered causes, for example, a series of men, each of whom successively begets a son, it is difficult, if not impossible, to prove that there cannot be an infinite regress in causes of the same kind with one able to exist without the other. Furthermore, one is not logically bound to postulate coexistence in time of all causes essentially belonging to the same series: "not everything which mediately or immediately produces a thing coexists with the thing produced. Therefore, in the order of productive beings we could go on *ad infinitum*,"⁸¹ without conclusively affirming a first efficient cause.

- *Proof from Conservation.* By shifting his perspective from origination to conservation, Ockham found that the difficulty of infinite regress could be overcome and Scotus' argument from essentially ordered causes be made more cogent. In a series of conserving causes, wherein one thing keeps another in existence, and the former itself is being maintained by something else, and so on, it follows *ex hypothesi* that the whole series must be simultaneously existing. Since it is "reasonable enough" to suppose that an infinite number of contemporaneous conserving causes is impossible, there must be a primary conserver of the world here and now.⁸² Ockham's criticism of Scotus, therefore, is directed more against the actual form than against the main principle of his proof.

- *Reasoning from Finality.* Ockham rejected as insufficient Scotus' proof of God's existence from final causality. The fact that natural agents act uniformly does not warrant any valid conclusion other than that they move by natural necessity. It is meaningless to say they move for an end, unless one presupposes the existence of God who created their natures and thereby determined inanimate things to act as they do. But this reasoning assumes precisely what needs to be proved.⁸³ As to intelligent agents, it is evident that their own wills move them, but it cannot be shown that all wills are moved by the perfect good, God.⁸⁴ With no adequate evidence of an immanent teleological order in the universe, Ockham believed he could not convincingly infer the existence of God as its final cause.

III. *Attributes*

Ockham recognized the possibility of demonstrating certain divine attributes. For instance, as highest being, God must have both intellect and will. Since every being is good, and God is a being, it can be concluded that God is good. "Good," the middle term of this syllogism, is a concept common to God and creatures, and hence univocally predicable of both. Since the connotative term, "good" is not simply synonymous with the term "being" and tautological, it calls to mind a

relation to the will, thereby increasing one's knowledge of God. In the proposition "God is good, the term "good" has personal supposition because it stands for God himself and by the same token signifies him. All the divine attributes are, properly speaking, terms which substitute for, and signify, God.

- *One.* Like Moses Maimonides, Ockham denied that one can strictly demonstrate that there is one God. Although the proof of God's existence discloses that he is "that than which nothing is more noble and more perfect,"⁸⁵ it does not strictly imply that God excels anything equal to him. Since other worlds besides our own are possible, it is consequently conceivable that there are other primary conserving causes. Then it is a question of proving that one conserver is the cause of all others. With no demonstrative argument for God's unicity, Ockham turned to persuasive reasoning that seems to be adopted from Duns Scotus. If two gods of equal perfection were possible, then why cannot three, or even an infinity of such gods exist. But since what is possible is also necessary to God, an infinity of gods must exist. An infinity of separate beings, however, is a contradiction and hence inadmissible. By implication, it follows therefore that not more than one God can and does exist.

- *Infinity and Omnipotence.* Having rejected the strict demonstration of an absolutely primary cause, Ockham logically denied strict proof of an infinite and omnipotent being as creator of all things. Since "every effect producible by God is finite," and "effects together are finite also," then "by their efficiency the infinity of God cannot be proved."⁸⁶ Since there is a proportion between cause and effect, finite effects would seem to require merely finite causes.

If human reason cannot demonstrate the impossibility of a being equal to God, then by implication it cannot prove that the primary conserver is all-powerful and not limited. Any attempt to demonstrate such attributes in a syllogism assumes that the notions "infinite" and "omnipotent" can be used as middle terms predicable of the concept of God as the absolutely supreme being. Such a fallacy begs the question by assuming there is such a being to which infinity must be attributed.⁸⁷ Human reason, at most, can give only probable or persuasive arguments for the infinity and omnipotence of God.

Nonetheless, Ockham developed his whole philosophy in view of the divine omnipotence which he professed within the framework of faith. "That God is the mediate or immediate cause of all things . . . cannot be demonstrated, yet I argue persuasively for it on the basis of authority and reason."⁸⁸ On the premise that God who is infinite will and infinite power, can do anything that does not involve a contradiction (which is none other than absolute nonentity),⁸⁹ anything that is possible, Ockham inferred that whatever God produces by means of secondary created causes, he can produce and conserve immediately without their aid. For example, God can produce and conserve an accident without its substance, matter without form, and *vice versa*.⁹⁰

- *Omniscience.* Human reason cannot strictly prove that God knows other things beside himself. Demonstration would have to rest mainly on God's universal causality. But it can neither be proven by means of the principle of causality that a cause knows its immediate effect, nor demonstrated that God is the immediate cause of all things. Probable arguments for God's knowing some things other than himself are inconclusive. However, it cannot be demonstrated that God knows nothing other than himself, because it cannot be proved that every act of cognition depends on its object.⁹¹ Ockham, nevertheless, affirmed the omniscience of God as an article of faith.

- *Ideas.* If God knows all things, does this mean that he needs ideas to know creatures? On the one hand, according to Ockham, Scotus' view that the divine ideas have their own being distinct from that of the divine essence, implies many beings in God to the detriment of his absolute simplicity. On the other, Aquinas' position that the divine ideas are identical with the being of

God, is equivalent to saying there can be only one divine idea. Applying his principle of economy, Ockham himself found it unnecessary to postulate such ideas in the being of God to explain either his production or knowledge of creatures.

Infinite in knowledge and power, God has no need of intermediary ideas in knowing and creating other beings.⁹² Just because man uses ideas or concepts to signify something about God does not justify his projecting ideas into the Godhead. This is a confusion of the linguistic or conceptual and real orders, with words and concepts being taken for realities. In Ockham's opinion, the theory of ideas in God is simply an anthropomorphic invention. However, perhaps out of respect for the traditional Augustinian acceptance of the theory of ideas, Ockham was not prepared to abandon the theory altogether.

The connotative term "idea" "can be predicated of the creature itself, but not directly of the divine "knowing agent nor of the knowledge, since neither the knowledge nor the knower is an idea or pattern."⁹³ It connotes indirectly the divine knowledge or knower. The ideas are not subjective realities in God. "The ideas are in Him only objectively, that is, as certain things which are known by him, for the ideas are things themselves which are producible by God."⁹⁴ Creatures as known by God are really the ideas. The patterns or exemplars in view of which God knows and creates actual existents are nothing more than the creature as known from eternity by God.

Since individual things alone are producible outside (the mind) and no others,⁹⁵ it follows that there are divine ideas of individuals but not of universal genera and species nor of negations, privations, evil, and guilt, which cannot be actually distinct existents. What is the sense of postulating ideas of universals in God when there is no reality corresponding to them? According to Ockham's principle of parsimony, there is no reason for postulating ideas in God which are distinct from creatures themselves, whether the ideas are understood as real or mental relations. Absolutely independent, God bears no real relation to creatures. If the idea were a mental relation, it could not be the exemplar of the creature, just as a purely mental construct or being of reason (*eus rationis*) such as genus or species cannot be the exemplar of a real being.

Inasmuch as God can produce an infinity of creatures, the number of ideas must be unlimited. Aquinas and Scotus spoke as though the distinction of ideas in God were prior to the production of creatures. Before creation, the ideas have no positive reality but are simply "nonbeings" in the divine mind.⁹⁶ This negative status of the divine ideas respects God's absolute simplicity and at the same time guarantees his knowledge of things other than himself.

Ockham's talk of ideas may give one the impression he contradicted his previous rejection of the theory of ideas. However, although he retained the language of the theory of ideas, his interpretation of it differs so radically from its traditional meaning that he seemed to reject the older understanding of the theory for a completely new explanation. His interpretation of ideas as identified with creatures is consistent with his philosophical principle that only individuals exist while universals are unreal and with his theological safeguarding of divine omnipotence from the restrictions of Greek essentialism. His identification of ideas with creatures enabled him to observe that Plato acted rightly in neither identifying the ideas with God nor placing them in the divine mind.

- *Divine Liberty*. God's liberty, though not strictly demonstrable, can be affirmed with persuasive reason. The fact of contingency in the world presupposes that God is a free cause which cannot be hindered and equally regards an infinite number of things in the same way.⁹⁷ "But because of the limitlessness of volition (the divine will) is free as regards opposite objects."⁹⁸ Since the divine will "intends the object contingently in such a way that at the same instant it could intend the opposite object,"⁹⁹ it can produce one effect and not the other.

- *Knowledge of Future Contingents.* Human reason cannot strictly demonstrate that God knows events depending on free wills for their actuality. Since "a future contingent fact simply depends on a free power and hence is not true in itself,"¹⁰⁰ what will happen or what will not happen cannot be known as true. Neither statement taken by itself, namely, "This will happen," or "this will not happen" can be known to be true. One can simply state as true the disjunctive proposition, "Either this will happen or this will not happen."

Motivated by faith, however, Ockham held "without any doubt that God knows all future contingent facts evidently and with certainty. The manner in which he knows them, I, however, do not know."¹⁰¹ Ockham reasoned that as the human intellect can know contingent propositions from an intuition of their terms given in experience (for example, "the sun is shining."), "so the divine essence itself is an intuitive cognition by which are known not only necessary truth and contingent truth about a present fact, but also which side of a contradiction will be true and which will be false."¹⁰² For example, God knows not only whether I shall choose to walk or not to walk tomorrow, he also knows which alternative is true and which false. Implied in Ockham's position, in opposition to Aristotle, is his rejection of any propositions that are neither true nor false. This shows that Ockham did not admit an exception to the principle of excluded middle. Appealing to faith, Ockham noted that God could reveal affirmative propositions about future contingent events to the prophets, because he knew the truth of such propositions.

- *Distinction of Attributes.* The divine attributes, as terms, differ from each other as distinct concepts or words, but as regards the reality signified by these terms they are in every sense identical with each other and with God's absolutely simple essence.¹⁰³ "In God there is no distinction between essence and will, nor between intellect and will."¹⁰⁴ While agreeing with Aquinas that the divine attributes differ by a distinction of reason,¹⁰⁵ Ockham rejected Aquinas and Scotus' views of a foundation in the divine being for the distinction of man's concepts of God, and affirmed that concepts such as wisdom and goodness, which stand for the one, simple, divine reality, have exactly the same meaning in God. They differ in meaning only insofar as they connote created wisdom and goodness which are really distinct qualities in creatures.¹⁰⁶

Cosmology

I. Induction

The real science of nature treats of concepts which signify changeable things. It "is about mental contents which are common" to movable and corruptible things and "which stand precisely for such things in many propositions."¹⁰⁷ It inductively starts from the more known, and through observation, experience and reasoning ascends from effects to causes. The passage from singular to universal propositions affirmed for all possible cases is justified by the analytically evident principle that all individuals of specifically similar nature (*eiusdem rationis*) act or react in a similar manner to similar conditions. Since God can produce an effect without its natural cause, the application of this rule is valid only within the general hypothesis of the common course of nature.

II. Contingency

Ockham viewed the world against the background of divine omnipotence and freedom. The world is ordered in the sense that certain evils are readied by particular means. To explain this

order, Scotus distinguished between God's choice of the end and then his choice of the means. Ockham, however, objected to any anthropomorphic projection of human ways of acting into the Divine. "It does not seem to be well said that God wills the end before that which is (ordered) to the end, because there is not (in God) such a priority of acts."¹⁰⁸

In addition, such language of priority and posteriority seems to impair the utter contingency of the world-order. The choice of both end and means is completely contingent. In view of the divine omnipotence and infinite freedom, Ockham conceived all changeable things as radically contingent in their created structure; to be a creature means to depend entirely on God's free will. Whatever stability the world-order possesses is completely dependent on God's free decision.¹⁰⁹ Infinitely wise and good, God's freedom is not arbitrary; his freedom is wise and good, and his wisdom and goodness are unconditionally free. Bound only by what is a contradiction, which in reality means nonbeing, his power and freedom are encompassed by nothing real; they are really boundless.

III. Categories

- *Substance and Quality.* In accord with the principle of economy, Ockham reduced the Aristotelian categories to substance and quality, as "white," and "hot." Whereas these two categories are absolute terms signifying distinct entities, the other categories are connotative terms denoting either a substance or a quality and stand for something else. Thus the latter categories are in no way different from the individual contingent bodies they modify. Since "quantity signifies substance, connoting that it has part distant from part,"¹¹⁰ it is "the very substance of a thing."¹¹¹ Likewise, motion, place, and time are in no way different from the bodies concerned.¹¹²

- *Relations.* Ockham's general tendency to analyze the world into contingent individuals without any necessary connections is sharply reflected in his treatment of relations. For Ockham, the only real distinction independent of the mind is the one between separate or separable entities. Thus a relation is really distinct from the terms of the relation if it is separate or separable from them. But it is absurd to hold that a relation is really distinct from its foundation. If it were, the relation of paternity, for example, could be produced by God and conferred on someone who had never generated a child. To compare Plato and Aristotle as philosophers, it is unnecessary to postulate a third entity, a relation of similarity, in addition to the individual or "absolute" substances and qualities.

Ockham did not identify a relation with its foundation. "But I say that a relation is not the foundation but only an 'intention' or concept in the soul, signifying several absolute things."¹¹³ A relation is a name or concept denoting the comparison of substances or qualities with each other. This means that outside the mind, the order of the universe, for example, has no reality distinct from the existing parts of the universe.

Ockham's view of relation had the effect of rendering null and void the common teaching in the Middle Ages that the creature has a real relation of dependence to God, although God's relation to the creature is only a mental relation. This common way of speaking, for Ockham, simply means that God and creatures are different kinds of beings. There is no need of postulating a mysterious entity called an essential relation of dependence between creatures and God.

In this case, the relation of dependence, is analyzable in reality, into two existents, creatures and God, and simply means that the latter individuals cannot exist without the former who produces and conserves them. Ockham is willing to speak of a real relation of creatures to God but

only in the sense that what is produced and conserved, and what produces and conserves, actually exists, without any third entity being added to the creature.¹¹⁴

- *Motion*. The various kinds of movement — qualitative alteration, quantitative change, and local motion — are not positive entities distinct from permanent things in reality. It is a false supposition to think that for distinct abstract terms or words such as "motion," "succession," and "simultaneity," there corresponds a distinct thing. When a body gradually acquires a qualitative form, it is superfluous to postulate something other than the thing and the quality gained. It is obvious that quantitative change involves nothing more than "permanent things" increasing or decreasing in parts.

To be moved locally "is first to have one place, and afterwards, without any other thing being postulated, to have another place . . . And consequently the whole nature of motion can be saved by this without anything else but the fact that a body is successively in distinct places and is not at rest in any of them."¹¹⁵ It suffices to postulate a body and its place to explain local motion.

- *Place and Time*. Ockham's razor also shaved down the Aristotelian categories of place and time. The statement that a body is in a place can mislead one into thinking that, because the words "body" and "place" are distinct terms, the realities signified by the names are really distinct. On the contrary, place is identical with the surface or surfaces of a body or bodies. Time is not a thing distinct from a moving body. "Primarily and principally 'time' signifies the same as 'motion,' although it connotes . . . an act of the soul, by which it (the soul or mind) knows the before and after of that motion."¹¹⁶ Time denotes no distinct thing outside the soul beyond what motion signifies. For Ockham, time and motion are simply distinguished as terms by the mind.

Ockham allowed no other absolute entity to creep into his simplified world unless it was necessary for a full explanation of the facts. For example, he rejected both the theory of impetus according to which the stone receives the quality of impetus, and the old theory according to which the projected object is kept in motion by the surrounding air. It is sufficient to assume that the movement imparted by the hand to the stone is identical with the moving body and remains until it is impeded. "Such motion as occurs through the separation of movable object from its first projecting body, the moving agent is the very thing that is moved . . . , so that this mover and the thing it moves are absolutely indistinguishable."¹¹⁷

IV. *World-view*

Ockham accepted the world-system commonly held by thinkers in the Middle Ages. With Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus, he believed that the beginning of the finite world in time cannot be demonstrated: "God could have made the world from eternity, since no contradiction seems to follow from this."¹¹⁸ As God is absolutely powerful and free to create the world from eternity, so "God could make a better world" than the present one.¹¹⁹ Everything was made for man who was created for God. At the center of the universe is the earth, surrounded by the spheres of the planets and stars. All creatures are divided into two groups, the spiritual and the material.

V. *Matter and Form*

Ockham adopted Aristotle's hylomorphic theory with the exception of the notion of privation which he eliminated as superfluous. Matter and forms are "the only two principles of any generation."¹²⁰ Primary matter is not pure potentiality but a positive entity which is the same in all composite physical bodies, heavenly as well as terrestrial.¹²¹ "Matter is really actual by itself

and it can by no means be reduced to a mere potentiality," although it is "always in potentiality with reference to the form which it lacks."¹²² Since the individual is nothing other than the form of the whole (*forma totius*), the union of matter and form, no principle of individuation is required apart from its efficient cause.

Psychology

I. Soul

In view of his demands for strict demonstration, Ockham criticized the inadequacy of a number of psychological proofs advanced by his predecessors. Natural reason would undoubtedly suppose that one's acts of understanding and willing, which are intuitively cognized, are acts of his substantial form. However, since they are experienced as acts of the form of the body, there is no compelling reason for assuming that form to be incorruptible and separable from the body rather than an extended and corruptible form. If, however, intellective soul is understood as an immaterial and incorruptible form, "it cannot be evidently known by reason or experience that such a (immaterial and incorruptible) form exists in us."¹²³ Nor can it be strictly proved that the acts of understanding one experiences are "proper to such a substance . . . in us."¹²⁴ Even if one could demonstrate that these experienced acts of understanding belong to an immaterial substance, it would not follow "that such a soul is a form of the body . . . These three things are only matters of belief."¹²⁵

- *Plurality of Forms.* While accepting on faith the existence of an incorruptible form in a human being, Ockham hesitated to say that this form directly determines matter. The corruptibility of the human body presupposes "another form in addition to the intellectual soul, namely a sensitive form, in which a natural agent can act by way of corruption and production."¹²⁶ The matter of the human body supports the sensitive form which determines it (the matter). The sensitive form is extended in such a way that its various parts perfect the different sensory organs, such as sight and hearing.

The ambivalent experience of desiring a thing with the sensitive appetite and turning away from it with the rational will indicates a real difference between the sensitive and intellective souls, though this distinction is difficult to prove. Ockham's problem in holding a real distinction between the sensitive and rational souls in man is that it makes it harder to safeguard the unity of man than does Scotus' theory of formal distinction. For Ockham, a real distinction can exist only between things which are separate or separable, at least by divine power. If, however, the sensitive form is really separable from man's rational form and from his body, it is difficult to preserve the unity of man.

In brutes and men, the sensitive soul is distinct from the form of corporeity which explains the numerical identity of a dead body with the individual's formerly living body. Within a theological context, the form of corporeity accounts for the numerical identity of Christ's dead body with his living body. The intellectual, sensitive, and corporeal forms are united in the individual: "There is only one total being of man, but several partial beings."¹²⁷ Thus Ockham rejected Aquinas' theory of one form in favor of the Augustinian tradition of a plurality of forms.

II. *Faculties*

The plurality of forms does not imply that the rational soul is really (Thomas Aquinas) or formally (Duns Scotus) distinct from its faculties. Unextended and spiritual, the rational soul cannot have parts or distinct faculties. Intellect and will appear as really distinct when they are taken as connotative terms which signify the different acts of understanding and willing. However, from the viewpoint of the one rational soul producing the acts of understanding and willing, intellect and will are really identical as partial causes in their one eliciting principle; they are nothing but the "one substance of the soul."¹²⁸

Similarly, the sensitive powers, though distinct accidental dispositions in the various sense-organs, are identical in the sensitive form as the one source effecting the various acts of sensation.¹²⁹ The activities of this one simple soul can be stabilized by habits which as additional forms are accidental and really distinct from the soul.¹³⁰

- *Intellect*. In accord with his principle of parsimony, Ockham saw no need of sensible and intelligible likeness to explain knowledge which involves simply an act of knowing and individual realities.¹³¹ Chimera and nonbeing are nothing but the mind's act of knowing to which nothing corresponds in reality.¹³² If intelligible likenesses were first known, knowledge would stop at them and one would never know whether they resemble reality.¹³³

There is no compelling reason for distinguishing the active intellect from the passive intellect. "The agent and possible intellects are completely the same in reality and in principle. Nevertheless, these names or concepts connote different aspects,"¹³⁴ the former connoting the soul as actively producing knowledge and the latter designating the same soul as passively receiving knowledge. With no essence to be abstracted from individual things, abstraction is simply an activity in which the intellect on experiencing one or more things elicits an indistinct act of knowing and produces a universal concept.¹³⁵

- *Will*. Ockham followed the Franciscan tradition of Bonaventure and Scotus in upholding the priority of the will over the intellect. "With reference to what their names signify, the will may be called superior to the intellect, because the act of loving, designated by the word 'will,' is superior to the act of understanding, designated by the word 'intellect.'"¹³⁶ What necessarily moves the intellect in the act of understanding is freely chosen or rejected by the will. In the ultimate analysis, "a true rather than a false proposition is formed, an affirmative rather than a negative, . . . because the will wants to form the one and not the other."¹³⁷ The intensity of conatus and the attention in cognition depend on the act of the will.

- *Freedom*. Freedom is one of the chief characteristics of a rational being. Intuition, not a priori reasoning, reveals that man is the cause of free acts: "It can, however, be known evidently through experience, that is, through the fact that every man experiences that however much his reason dictates something, his will can will or not will it."¹³⁸ Freedom is "the power whereby I am able indifferently and contingently to posit an effect, so that I am able to cause and not to cause the same effect without any change being made in this power."¹³⁹ Furthermore, blame and praise attributed to responsible persons indicates the reality of their freedom. In complete possession of itself, the will enjoys self-determination, the power to act or not to act even if all the necessary requirements to an act are given. "The will is properly a rational power,"¹⁴⁰ which has a capacity for "contrary effects, because it can cause the love of something or hate."¹⁴¹

Ockham found it difficult to explain how repeated acts of the sensitive appetite can result in the formation of habits in a free power like the will. Experience shows that the will is more inclined not to choose an object causing pain in the sensitive appetite, even though the intellect present it

with the option of not choosing the object. On the other hand, pleasure in the sensitive appetite is not the cause of the inclination of the will which is free to choose the opposite. No matter how much the will is inclined towards a habit formed by the sensitive appetite's indulgence in a certain direction, the will, even though with difficulty, remains free to act against that habit.¹⁴²

Liberty of the will is the basis of moral goodness, and responsibility. The seat of morality is in the will, "because every act other than the act of will, which is in the power of the will, is only good in such manner that it can be a bad act, because it can be done for an evil end and from an evil intention."¹⁴³ Since every action, other than the act of willing itself, can be performed by reason of natural causes and not freely, it could be caused in man by God alone instead of by his will, and consequently, in itself be neither virtuous nor vicious, except by denomination from the act of the will.¹⁴⁴

The will, according to Ockham, does not necessarily seek happiness, the last end. "The will contingently and freely . . . enjoys the ultimate end shown in a universal," or particular way, "because it is able to love and not love happiness."¹⁴⁵ However, since natural reason does not know that the enjoyment of God as the last end is possible and since there "is not in our will an inclination intensively to the infinite good,"¹⁴⁶ man does not necessarily will the enjoyment of God.¹⁴⁷ Even if faith testifies to its possibility, man can still will or not will to enjoy God, as experience reveals. Vis-à-vis the intellect's judgment, the will remains free. It does not necessarily desire even perfect happiness in general. Though "the will does not necessarily conform to the judgment of reason, it can conform with the judgment of reason, whether that judgment be right or erroneous";¹⁴⁸ for example, if the intellect judges that perfect happiness is impossible and incompatible with human existence, the will can consent to that judgment.

III. *Person*

The plurality of forms and faculties is unified in the human person which as "an intellectual and complete nature is neither supported by anything else nor is able, as part, to form with another thing one being."¹⁴⁹ The individual subject or *suppositum* is "a complete being, incommunicable by identity, incapable of inhering in anything, and not supported by anything."¹⁵⁰ As complete, the human person can neither be a generic, specific, or numerical part of an individual being, not identical with another individual, nor an accident inhering in another, nor assumed by another individual. Though the rational form constitutes a human being as an intellectual supposit (*suppositum intellectuale*) distinct from other kinds of subjectivity, it alone is not the total being of man. Only the person embraces the whole man.¹⁵¹

Ethics

Ockham developed his ethical notions against the background of his views of God's absolute freedom and omnipotence and man's contingent relation to his creator.

I. *Moral Goodness*

The term "moral" refers to "human acts which are subject . . . to the power of the will according to the natural dictate of reason and according to other circumstances."¹⁵² The term "goodness" signifies that something is as it ought to be. The will determines what a thing or action should be. A pen is good, for instance, if it is made as it should be in view of the function for which it has

been willed. Because all creatures have been caused by God in conformity with his will, they are good.¹⁵³

Likewise, a human act is morally good, not by conformity to an eternal law, but insofar as it is commanded by the omnipotent and absolutely free will of God. "With him (God) a thing becomes right solely for the reason that he wants it to be so."¹⁵⁴ Because what God wills is good and what he forbids is evil, it is by definition impossible for him to order something bad. As the supreme ethical norm, God's will should be obeyed. To put it more exactly, the one free God of wisdom, love, power, and mercy is the supreme rule of ethics. Man is morally obliged to follow the laws freely laid down for him by God's will.¹⁵⁵

II. *Obligation*

For Ockham, the ontological foundation of the moral order is man's dependence on God, as creature on creator. Whereas God who is unconditionally free falls under no obligation, man whose freedom is contingent and created is subject to moral obligation. Man is morally obliged to will what God commands and not to will what God forbids him. Thus the content of the moral law derives from divine precept. "Evil is nothing else than doing something when one is under an obligation to do the opposite."¹⁵⁶

III. *Basis of Morality*

Ockham viewed the moral law in its existence and content as completely contingent on God's omnipotence and unbounded freedom. This is a radical departure from the positions of Thomas Aquinas and Scotus, who, in spite of their differences, agreed that the natural law in its immutable essence is founded on the universal idea of man in the divine mind; consequently, both recognized that there are human acts which are forbidden because they are intrinsically evil. For Ockham, however, the ultimate norm of morality is, not the divine ideas (which are reducible to the creatures they signify), but God's omnipotent, free will.

It is possible for God's absolute power, viewed logically apart from all his other attributes, to do everything that involves no contradiction. "Everything which does not include a contradiction nor a moral evil can come from God."¹⁵⁷ Not ruled by an eternal law and nobody's debtor, God is bound (if this can be called an obligation) only by the impossibility of a contradiction which, in reality is nonbeing. To be bound by nonbeing is equivalent to not being bound at all. This, in effect, means that God is absolutely free to command or to forbid whatever he wills. Ockham did not hesitate to draw the logical consequences of his position.

The first consequence is diametrically opposed to Aquinas and Scotus' view that intrinsically good actions are commanded because they are good and intrinsically evil acts are forbidden because they are evil. For Ockham, however, no acts are good unless willed by God, nor evil unless forbidden by him.

Second, as omnipotent, God can produce as total cause what he can effect as a partial cause. The command of a man that others hate God is concurred in by God as universal and primary cause. "Thus he can be the total cause of an act of hatred of God, and that without any moral malice."¹⁵⁸ God's absolute power can command that a person should hate him or at least not love him.¹⁵⁹ By the very fact that God wills something, it is right for it to be done. There would be no sin either in God since he is under no obligation or in man who is not obliged to avoid something beyond his power. Such a situation seems to give rise to an antinomy in Ockham's ethics. If God

commanded a man to hate him, his obedience to that order would be an act of love God. Hence, the fulfillment of God's command to hate him seems to be an ethical impossibility.

What is at work here is the principle of noncontradiction. God cannot order a man to love and hate him at the same time, which is equivalent to saying that his power can command everything except not to obey him. On recognizing that a certain command is God's will, man is bound to obey. To do God's will or, equivalently, to love God, is the highest moral law. "The act by which God is loved above all and for His own sake" is a necessarily virtuous act and "the first of all good acts."¹⁶⁰

According to the third consequence of God's absolute power over the moral order, what is now forbidden regarding creatures can be commanded and what is now commanded can be forbidden. For example, stealing and committing adultery, forbidden by God in the present order, can be commanded as good by God. "They may even be meritoriously performed by man if they fall under divine precept, just as now their opposites, as a matter of fact, fall under the divine precept." Underlying Ockham's reasoning is his denial of any absolutely necessary connection between loving a creature and loving God. The present way of loving a creature is only contingently ordered to loving God by God's will. Between love of God and the illicit love of a creature, there is only an extrinsic repugnance arising from God's actual prohibition. What God prohibits now, he can command if he so desires.¹⁶¹

IV. *Right Reason*

Right reason is also a norm of morality. "It can be said that every right is in conformity with right reason."¹⁶² For an act to be perfectly virtuous, it must not only agree with, but be commanded by right reason which Aristotle includes in the definition of virtue. "For to elicit an act in conformity with right reason is to will what is prescribed by right reason on account of its being so prescribed."¹⁶³ An act motivated merely for the sake of pleasure would not be virtuous. In emphasizing right reason as the proper motivation, Ockham was following Aristotle who had insisted that for an act to be perfectly virtuous, it must be done not simply because the righteous person would do it, but because it is the right thing to do.

Anchored in reason are certain universal principles which regulate every human act; for example, "everything honest should be done, every good should be loved, everything dictated by right reason should be done."¹⁶⁴ Particular practical judgments of conscience are grounded in these general ethical principles. Even if mistaken a man is obliged to will what is prescribed by reason. "A created will which follows an invincibly erroneous conscience is a right will; for the divine will wills that it should follow its reason when this reason is not blameworthy." To act against an invincibly erroneous conscience is to sin.¹⁶⁵ The dictates of conscience are expressions of God's free decision that it should act according to given norms.

In freely legislating, God has laid down a particular moral code obliging all men. While retaining his absolute power (*potentia absoluta*) to command whatever he desires, God's ordained power (*potentia ordinata*) has actually established a definite moral code. All people can discover this natural law which they are obliged to follow. Although God is not constantly changing his laws, he not only could have established another moral order, but could at any time command what he has actually forbidden.¹⁶⁶ Ockham's intention, therefore, is not to undermine the moral order or to promote immorality, but to make unmistakably clear the primacy of God's absolute power and liberty.

Politics

In his political and polemical writings, Ockham inveighed against tyrannical power and the deprivation of natural rights on the basis of right reason.¹⁶⁷

I. Natural Rights

Ockham's political writings were occasioned by disputes involving the Papacy. In criticizing Pope John XXII's pronouncements on evangelical poverty as heretical and erroneous and in defending his Franciscan confreres, Ockham analyzed natural rights as a legitimate power in conformity with right reason. Man, for example, enjoys a natural God-given right to property, the legitimate power "of disposing of the goods of the earth which right reason would dictate . . . not only to live, but also to live well."¹⁶⁸ The right of private property restricts the right of common possession for the due management and procurement of things which are necessary for a good life.¹⁶⁹ Willed by God, the natural right of private property comes from the natural law anterior to human convention, and consequently is violable by no earthly power against a man's will. Although the State can regulate the way property is to be transferred, it cannot legitimately deprive a man of the exercise of the right of private property, still less of the right itself unless there is fault on his part or some reasonable cause,¹⁷⁰ for example, his criminal use of property against the common good.

Ockham distinguished different kinds of natural rights. First, there are natural rights which are valid under certain conditions until a contrary convention is established; for example, the right of the Roman people to elect their bishop may be ceded to the cardinals.¹⁷¹ Second, there are natural rights operative in the state of humanity before the Fall and conditional on a state of perfection no longer existing. Third, there are natural rights sharing in the immutability of moral precepts, such as the right of private property and the right to life.

However, these rights are not quite the same. Whereas the right to life cannot be renounced, for example, by starving oneself to death, without sinning, the right of private property can be relinquished without going contrary to the moral law. It is not necessary for every individual to exercise the right of private property in order to fulfill the moral precept of right reason to appropriate temporal goods. For a just and reasonable cause, the Franciscans voluntarily renounce all rights to property.¹⁷²

Pope John XXII, however, emphatically insisted that it was unjust to use temporal things without having a right to them, and hence that the Franciscans were entitled to use temporal things like food and clothing only because they have a right over them. The common view among the Franciscans, on the contrary was that they could legitimately use those things whose ownership was voluntarily renounced. Ockham defended this common view by maintaining that the Franciscans gave up the right of using (*usus juris*) as distinguished from that right over their substance, and possessed simply a factual use (*usua facti*) deriving from mere revocable permission to use the things of another.¹⁷³ Their use of temporal things was permitted by the Holy See who has the right of ownership and right to use things. Ockham's concept of evangelical poverty after the example of Christ and the Apostles was declared heretical by John XXII.

II. *Church and State*

In 1323 Pope John XXII denounced the election of Ludwig of Bavaria, as Holy Roman Emperor by claiming that papal confirmation was required. On the occasion of this dispute, Ockham strongly supported the independence of the State against encroachments by the Church. "In appointing Saint Peter to the head and sovereign of all the faithful, Christ assigned to his power certain limits which he was not to overstep."¹⁷⁴ The absolute power of a pope contradicts the liberty of the holy gospel according to which men are free in Christ and also right reason which opposes placing unrestricted power in the hands of one human being.¹⁷⁵

Like most medieval thinkers, Ockham insisted that the spiritual and temporal spheres must be clearly distinguished. "By God not only is papal power instituted, but also many others, that is, the secular powers are instituted by Him."¹⁷⁶ As the spiritual power of the pope is directly from God absolutely independent in its own realm, so the secular dominion of the emperor and the jurisdiction of all legitimate sovereigns, originating immediately from God through the people or their electors choosing the ruler, is also autonomous in its own domain and governed by natural law for the common benefit. The task of the State, besides preventing crimes, is "to give to each one his rights and to save them, to make the necessary and just laws, to institute the subordinate judges and officials, (to decide) which handicrafts (*artes*) are to be exercised and by whom, to prescribe acts of all the virtues, and many other things."¹⁷⁷

Ockham protested against the tendency of certain popes to arrogate to themselves the position and rights of universal temporal monarchs. "Whenever, therefore, the pope, in case of necessity, meddles in temporal affairs, he is thrusting his sickle in alien crops, unless he be entrusted with power to do so by the emperor or by some other person."¹⁷⁸ Neither pope nor sovereign should interfere in the other's affairs over which he has no jurisdiction. "Although the emperor is supreme ruler of the multitude of the faithful, nevertheless he is not supreme ruler of the person of the pope in temporal affairs on account of reverence for the office which the pope exercises, and because in spiritual matters he is superior to the emperor."¹⁷⁹ Ockham expressed a common medieval outlook when he insisted that there should be a proper balance between the sword of secular power and the staff of religious authority for peace between State and Church.¹⁸⁰ With a common source in God, the distinct spiritual and temporal powers should collaborate for the common good.¹⁸¹

III. *People and Ruler*

All people enjoy an inviolable natural right to set up a government endowed with jurisdiction.¹⁸² The ruler may be elected either directly or indirectly through human law according to which legitimate authority is transmitted to a successor, as in the case of a hereditary monarchy. Thus while the right of instituting government and the right of private property come immediately from God by natural law, the actual setting up of a government and the appropriation of temporal things is usually the act of man and of human law.¹⁸³ His power derived from God, the ruler cannot be arbitrarily deposed by the people except in cases specified by positive or natural law, for instance, unfitness or danger to the common good.¹⁸⁴

IV. *Universal Monarchy*

Ockham envisaged a commonwealth of all nations as a political ideal: "Therefore, he is not truly zealous for the common good, who does not desire and work, as far as he can in his station,

for the whole world to be subject to one monarch."185 As there is one pope presiding in the spiritual sphere, so there should be one monarch in the temporal order.

Conclusion

Ockham's philosophy comes into historical focus by viewing it in retrospect, conspectus and prospect.

Retrospect: Modern Way

Nominalism. In the second half of the fourteenth century, Ockham's philosophy was called the "modern way" in contrast to the "old way" of Thomism and Scotism. An independent, daring and vigorous thinker, Ockham initiated a new way of thinking that is characterized by nominalism, empiricism, and voluntarism. In opposition to the realists of the old school, Ockham attributed universality only to names and inaugurated a way of thought that conquered the greater part of Europe.186

In conceiving the universality of being as only a term, Ockham's nominalism or terminism limited the scope of metaphysical knowledge so as to shift the focus of philosophy from metaphysics to logic. Ockham's nominalism represents "an extreme economy of ontological commitment in which abstract or intentional extralinguistic entities are systematically eliminated by a logical analysis of language."187 In view of this transition, it is not surprising that Ockham valued highly the certitude he found in the truth of logic above the probability he frequently arrived at in his conclusions about God and man. Ockham's fame lies in his founding the nominalist movement.

- *Empiricism*. Ockham's nominalism implies an empirical view of knowledge and reality. With no universal to be abstracted from reality (as Aquinas and Scotus believed) and only individuals existing and relating in a contingent manner, human reason cannot abstract necessary connections from the nature of things, but must observe things in experience to discover the structures and function of the actually existing world. No *a priori* deduction can discover the completely contingent order of the world; it must be empirically examined for what it is in actual fact. Experience verifies that an individual thing is the cause of another. On the basis of this new radical empiricism, Ockham reweave the whole fabric of philosophy.

- *Voluntarism*. Ockham's empiricism is grounded in his voluntarism. The need to observe individual contingent things arises from the fact that they completely depend on God's absolutely powerful and free will. Ockham carried the primacy of the divine will over intelligence found in Bonaventure and Scotus to its utmost limits in order to overcome Greek necessitarianism. To all intents and purposes, he broke with the old Augustinian tradition of orienting God's will towards the divine ideas and originated a new way of viewing God as unconditionally free.188

Conspectus

I. Original Synthesis

Ockham's bold new way of thinking in a nominalistic, empirical, voluntaristic framework enabled the "Venerable Inceptor" systematically to construct an original philosophical synthesis by renewing the logic of Aristotle.

II. Logic

"Ockham's principal gift to his generation was his new system of logic . . . , a technique of great subtlety resembling in some respects the symbolic logic of our own day."¹⁸⁹ He surpassed other scholastics in his careful analysis of signification and supposition to elucidate a semantic notion of truth. He applied the theory of supposition with a rigor, consistency, and thoroughness hitherto unknown to the medieval discussion of philosophical and theological problems. Ockham excelled in the analysis of modal syllogisms and consequences which he expressed in theorems that anticipated the so-called De Morgan laws.¹⁹⁰

In line with Ockham's logic, Walter Burleigh in his main work, *On the Purity of the Art of Logic* (*De puritate artis logicae*), and Albert of Saxony in his treatise, *A Very Useful Logic* (*Perutilis Logica*) developed the theory of consequences. These studies in the structure of inferences and their elements constitute a notable development in the history of formal logic.

III. Knowledge

Ockham executed a *tour de force* in shifting the center of philosophical gravity from metaphysics to logic by transferring the foundation of universality from reality to the mind. By no means is Ockham a pure subjectivist, for the universal concepts are grounded in things and their similarities as individuals, and the propositions of a real science signify singular things. In view of this relationship of concepts to reality, Boehner calls him "a realistic conceptualist."¹⁹¹ However, his razor-sharp exclusion of the abstraction of the nature of sensible things from his theory of knowledge had the effect of restricting the capacity of human reason, and limiting many propositions about God, the soul and the world to at best a high probability. Nevertheless, in a certain sense, Ockham went beyond Thomas Aquinas in guaranteeing the objectivity and certainty of scientific knowledge by holding with Scotus an intellectual intuition of individual realities.¹⁹²

Besides, Ockham, the theologian, worked within the traditional framework of faith seeking understanding. If understanding could at most reach probability, Ockham's faith remained unshaken in its certitude concerning God and the soul. The Augustinian tendency (reaffirmed by Bonaventure) to stress the limitation and weakness of human reason found authentic expression and fulfillment in Ockham's critical reduction of not a few scientific demonstrations to the level of probability. As a result, the close collaboration of faith and reason which worked so harmoniously in Bonaventure and Aquinas to acquire certitude appeared to break down into a new and looser association wherein (revealed) theological certitude was backed only by philosophical probabilities. In his conception of theology and philosophy as collections of mental habits or of propositions, Ockham contributed to the modern notion of science as an ordered body of knowledge. In addition, his preference for singulars rather than universals, intuition rather than abstraction, and induction rather than deduction, prepared the ground for a more scientific approach to reality, an empirical study of facts rather than an a priori deduction of conclusions.

IV. Metaphysics

With his penchant for logic, Ockham defined metaphysics as a real science of propositions signifying individual beings. This definition agrees with his nominalistic view of being — the object of metaphysics — as a universal term standing for individuals. To simplify explanations, he banished from metaphysics all Platonic ideas, and likewise the mitigated Platonism of Aristotle

in which the essence precedes at least logically and naturally, though not in time, the individual. For Ockham essence as well as existence is equated with the individual. In his estimation, this simplification of metaphysics overcomes verbal difficulties and endless discussions about problems originating from grammar.

By understanding substance in connotative terms rather than general names, in descriptive phrases rather than proper names, the category of substance in Ockham tends to be "reduced to the referential function expressed in language by the phrase `thing such that . . .`' or by what is equivalent to the bound variable of quantification."¹⁹³ Ockham's conception of substance as the posited referent of the connotative predicates points towards John Locke's "something I know not what" characterization of substance.

By restricting the application of being to its univocal predictability as a term, and limiting the consideration of (efficient) causality to a fact requiring experienced verification, it is not surprising that Ockham found it difficult to obtain certitude of any reality beyond intuited sense objects. If it cannot be established with certainty by any other way than by actual experience that X is the cause of Y, what certainty can there be that the world is caused by God who is not naturally experienced? Though Ockham anticipated the modern empirical philosopher, David Hume, in rejecting the *a priori* deduction of an effect from its cause and in basing knowledge of causal relations on experience alone, he is not skeptical of the objectivity of causation which he grounded in the uniformity of nature.¹⁹⁴ Some historians interpret Ockham as a subverter of traditional metaphysics, but the fact is that his nominalistic metaphysics reconstructed past thought in an original synthesis that climaxed in conclusions about God.

V. God

In view of his strict notion of science, Ockham, for the most part, arrived at probable conclusions about God's existence and attributes. He qualified his demonstration of the existence of a first efficient cause from conservation with the possibility that this first cause could be a heavenly body. However, the concept of a primary conserving cause is not all that is usually understood by the term "God." If the term "God" means the absolutely supreme, perfect, unique and infinite being — as Scotus understood the term — then Ockham did not think the existence of such a being could be strictly demonstrated by the philosopher. Faith is needed to be certain of the existence of a supreme and unique being in the fullest sense.

Ockham's epistemological principles and strict concept of science made it extremely difficult for him to demonstrate with certitude in natural theology. His logic is ever at hand in his metaphysics and theological reasoning to remind him that the requirements of a demonstration are exacting and difficult to fulfill. In a strictly scientific metaphysical, Ockham wanted only demonstrative conclusions, and not convictions. This tendency in Ockhamism to reduce many philosophical conclusions to probability so lessened the enthusiasm of later Christian theologians for philosophy, that they turned to patristic theology which emphasized the reading and linguistic study of Scripture.

Ockham, however, was not a religious skeptic. On the contrary, intensely loyal to the Christian faith, he objected to demonstrating what cannot be proved and to packing (revealed) theology with pseudo explanations that blunted and obscured the articles of Christian belief. Motivated by belief in God's absolute power and freedom, Ockham completely rejected the ancient metaphysics of essence which as divine ideas restricted God's freedom and omnipotence, and as a common nature in things constituted them necessary in themselves and in their connections when all they are in

reality is contingent. The core concept of God's unconditional power and freedom gives inner cohesion to Ockham's whole philosophical system.

Ockham's concept of divine omnipotence and absolute freedom effects every aspect of his thought. Theologically, it meant that God can produce Y without any need of X as secondary cause. In Ockham's world-view, this meant that all natural processes are contingent not only in the traditional Christian sense that God can miraculously intervene in the regularity of nature, but in the more radical sense that all uniform connections in nature have no inherent necessity and consequently are reducible to a successive existence of individual things. When it comes to verifying the causal relations of individual things, the regular sequences of nature, recourse must be made not to *a priori* deduction but to empirical experience. Even the present moral law — its obligatory force and content — completely depend on God's all-inclusive power and liberty.

VI. *Creatures*

Ockham's radically contingent world is composed of individual beings whose existence and order is a sheer fact without any metaphysical ground of common nature or necessary causal relations. With no matters of fact derivable from any *a priori* necessity, the world from strictly empirical observation appears simply as two categories, individual substances and qualities. Ockham wielded his razor or principle of economy to shave away entities whose independent existence is not demanded by experiential data or divine revelation. By rejecting essences which confer on nature a comparative stability and necessity, Ockham contributed to Western man's quest for a substitute to traditional metaphysics in a scientific approach to the world.

Ockham's view of the universe gave a definite impetus toward the growth of the empirical approach. For Ockham, the universe consists of "absolutes," namely, substances and qualities. They are "absolute" in the sense that they exist and can be understood without reference to other entities. If this is so, then an approach, such as that of Bonaventure, which focused on the way creatures mirror God, is unnecessary. Such an approach implies that creatures cannot be understood except as having a real relation to God. But if creatures are "absolutes," they can be investigated in and for themselves alone without any advertence to God. From such an approach, it follows that empirical science is an autonomous discipline.

Ockham's inability to strictly prove the existence of God in the full sense of the term gave added impetus to the study of the world in itself without reference to God. While recognizing that Ockham, as a Christian theologian, never questioned the radical dependence of things on God, it seems legitimate in view of the aforementioned to regard his thought as a catalyst in the emerging "lay spirit," as Logarde does.

To simplify his explanation of the world, Ockham eliminated all distinctions (Scotus' formal and Aquinas' real distinctions) except those between separate or separable entities. His treatment of sensible qualities as distinct from substances, and of quantitative predicates as signifying nothing other than substances having parts outside of parts, is a step toward the modern view of corporeal substance as essentially extension with qualities as secondary.

Ockham's application of his strict criteria of evidence to the physical doctrines of Aristotle showed that many principles accepted by the Stagirite as necessary and self-evident, are not evident. For Ockham, the arguments for the immateriality, ingenerability and incorruptibility of celestial bodies, and for the impossibility of a plurality of worlds and of action at a distance are inconclusive. His openness to the possibility of different theories equally capable of accounting for the facts helped create the intellectual atmosphere for later fourteenth-century philosophers to

explore new physical theories, thereby laying the foundation for the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century.

- *Man*. Ockham remained faithful to the Franciscan tradition of a plurality of forms and a real identity of intellect and will. The unity of man, which appears *prima facie* to be weakened by the real distinction between the sensitive and rational souls, is upheld in the reaffirmation that only the whole individual man as a person actually exists. Since the terms "intellect" and "will," "active" and "passive," refer to the operations of the same person, the psychology of really distinct faculties is not evident or necessary.

VII. *Ethics*

Ockham's ethical theory is positivistic in the sense that it derives moral goodness from God's will. Ockham's unconditional voluntarism in regard to God enabled him to break completely with the Thomistic and Scotistic notion of an immutable natural law grounded in the ideas of divine reason. If the present moral order depends solely on the divine choice and if there is no common, stable, necessary nature in individual things to be abstracted, how can man's natural reason know what is actually commanded as good and forbidden as evil, unless it turns to faith in a revealed ethic? Unless God makes his will evident in revelation, it is difficult to see how human reason alone could be certain of a definite code of morality contingent solely on divine choice. It would seem that the most human reason could do is either dictate a set of hypothetical imperatives contingent on the present moral order or prescribe a provisional code of morality to suit present circumstances. If reason can discern some intelligible content in the present moral order apart from revelation, how can that content be dependent simply on the divine choice?

There seems to be an unresolved tension, on the one hand, in Ockham's theological insistence on the absolute authority of the divine will in determining moral goodness and, on the other, in his Aristotelian emphasis on reason as the norm of morality for discerning what is right and what is wrong. How Ockham can be so emphatic in his authoritarian conception of morality and at the same time be so insistent on the necessity of right reason for virtuous action and natural rights grounded in an immutable moral law, is difficult to understand. Does it make real sense to speak of an immutable moral law in which the right of private property is rooted and to make that same law changeable by divine will? Ockham no doubt, would resolve this difficulty by grounding right reason and natural rights in the divine will. In other words, the ultimate and sufficient reason for following right reason and for recognizing natural rights is God's will. This resolution, to all intents and purposes, makes no moral law absolutely immutable.

VIII. *Politics*

Although Ockham personally opposed the tyrannical exercise of papal power and sided with the Emperor, he developed his political thought within the traditional framework which clearly distinguished between the religious authority of the Church and the secular power of the State, and recognized basic rights of subjects in society. His rejection of the absolutism of papal and secular power conforms with his view that only God has absolute power and freedom, and that each individual exists with unique rights. Though Ockham's dislike of arbitrary power and his insistence on law were by no means novel ideas, the manner in which he controverted the papacy was part of a revolutionary movement toward the consolidation of centralized national States completely independent of the Church.

Prospect

I. Growth of Ockhamism

Despite the censures of Ockhamism at the Papal Court in Avignon and subsequent prohibitions against teaching it at Paris, it spread rapidly and flourished in the universities of Europe during the 14th and 15th centuries, rivaling in popularity Thomism and Scotism. An anonymous treatise *De Principis Theologiae*,¹⁹⁵ about 1350, deduces the main tenets of Ockhamism from two principles: the omnipotence of God and Ockham's razor. Of the many philosophers in the fourteenth century who developed Ockham's basic principles in a more or less original way, the most important were John of Mirecourt and Nicholas of Autrecourt, both of whom taught at the University of Paris.

John of Mirecourt (fl. c. 1345) agreed with Ockham that, outside of faith, certainty can be attained by way either of the principle of noncontradiction or of experience. Strict demonstration from evident premises can be achieved on the basis of the principle of noncontradiction. For example, if God exists, he exists; if man exists, animal exists (for man is an animal). Absolute certainty about one's own existence can also be achieved, for, as Augustine inferred, doubting one's existence implies affirming it. However, experience of the external world is fallible inasmuch as God can miraculously cause the appearance of something not really existing. Like Ockham, Mirecourt conceived God's absolute power and will as the cause of the moral law even to the point of being able to command man to hate him or his neighbor.

Nicholas of Autrecourt (fl. c. 1347) agreed with Ockham and Mirecourt that the principle of noncontradiction and experience are bases of certainty. In view of the primary law that contradictory propositions cannot be true at the same time, he proved the truth of what are today called analytic judgments with the predicate being contained in the notion of the subject (for example, the whole is greater than the part), and the truth of empirical judgments (for example, that I see red). Since it is impossible to detect any necessary causal connections in nature, it is impossible to infer the existence of one thing from the existence of another. The certainty deriving from a direct experience that one thing is the cause of another (for example, that fire heats an object close to it) lasts only as long as the sensible encounter after which it is only probable that the same effect will follow upon the cause. This empirical view of causality later earned for the author the title of the medieval David Hume.

In view of his notion of causality, Autrecourt denied that natural reason could demonstrate God's existence from that of the world and relied upon faith for certainty concerning God. Likewise, to infer from the experience either of the qualities such as heat and color, or of acts of understanding and willing, the reality of substance is, at best, probable. Having undermined Aristotle's physics by casting doubt on the reality of substance, Nicholas returned to ancient Greek atomism not only for its easy solutions to the problems of change, continuum, and the void, but also for its easy reconciliation with God's causality. A universe composed of an infinite number of constantly moving atoms without necessary ties between them is readily subject to God's power and free will.

Despite the condemnation of Nicholas of Autrecourt and John of Mirecourt by Pope Clement VI, Ockham's terminist logic became prevalent not only at Paris and Oxford, but also at the universities of Heidelberg, Vienna, Erfurt, and Leipzig. The *Collectorium* of Gabriel Biel (d. 1495), which summarizes Ockham's doctrines and fills in gaps left by the master, exercised considerable

influence, especially in the German universities where he was read by Luther who claimed to belong to the Ockhamist sect.¹⁹⁶

Nominalism, however, suffered the fate of most philosophical movements and declined, perhaps due to its "logic-chopping" and reserved attitude towards metaphysics. Drained of their energies by exaggerated logical refinements and subtlety, later nominalists contributed little to the fresh impetus received by philosophy at the time of the Renaissance.

II. Anticipations

Although not particularly interested in empirical science, Ockham did anticipate a key idea of the modern empirical method, namely that the only adequate ground for asserting a causal relation between two phenomena is the empirical observation of regular sequence. At Oxford the Ockhamist tradition of grammatical and logical analysis survived until far into the 17th century. Thomas Hobbes' logic goes back to the nominalist version of the logic of terms. There are striking resemblances between the empiricism of Ockhamism and that of such philosophers as John Locke and David Hume. From Ockham up to the "ordinary language" school of philosophy of the 20th century, one finds a steady series of warnings not to be misled by the use of abstract terms. Ockham's logic of supposition, with its emphasis on functionality anticipated the approach of contemporary linguistic analysis.

Notes

1. See P. Boehner, "Introduction," *Ockham: Philosophical Writings* (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1962). pp. xi-xvi. Quotations will generally be from this edition by permission.

2. With few exceptions, Ockham's works are available in 15th and 16th century editions and in facsimile reproductions, along with some recent publications. For a detailed description of these works and a list of spurious writings, see Boehner, *op. cit.*, pp. iii-ix.

3. A critical edition of the philosophical and theological works under the title *Guilleimi Ockham Opera omnia philosophica et theologica* is being prepared under the direction of the Franciscan Institute at St. Bonaventure University, St. Bonaventure, N. Y.

4. *Perihermeneias* I was edited by P. Boehner, *Traditio*, 4 (1946), 320-335.

5. The new edition is by P. Boehner (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute, 1951).

6. On the authenticity, nature, and relation of the last three works (5-7), see Boehner, "Three Sums of Logic attributed to William Ockham," *Franciscan Studies*, XI (1951), 173-193.

7. This is the main source for his theological and philosophical doctrines. It is called *Ordinatio* because Ockham "ordered" or prepared it for publication on the basis of his lecture notes. Boehner edited Question 1 of the Prologue, Paderborn, 1939; "B. I, d. 2, q. 8," *The New Scholasticism*, 16 (1942), 224-240.

8. The work is called *Reportatio* because it is a "report" of Ockham's lectures. Boehner, "Reportatio, B. II, q. 14-15," *Traditio*, I (1943), 245-275.

9. *Predestination, God's Foreknowledge, and Future Contingents*, trans. M.M. Adams and N. Kretzmann (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969).

10. Three volumes of these treatises have appeared in a critical edition at Manchester University: Vol. 1, ed. J. G. Sikes, 1940; Vol. 2, ed. R.F. Bennett and H.S. Offler, 1963; Vol. 3, ed. H.S. Offler, 1956.

11. Guillelmi de Occam, *Breviloquium de potestate papae*, ed. L. Baudry (Paris: J. Vrin, 1937).
12. *Ordinatio*, d. III, q. 6.
13. Prologue to the *Expositio super viii libros Physicorum*. See D. Wehering, *Theory of Demonstration according to William Ockham* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1953).
14. *Summa totius logicae*, III, c. 2.
15. *Quodlibeta*, IV, q. 19.
16. Prologue to the *Expositio super viii libros Physicorum*.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ord.*, d. I, q. 2, 4, M.
19. *Ibid.*, Prologue, 7, E.
20. ". . . A conclusion that is not only specifically the same but also numerically the same can be proved in theology and in natural knowledge, provided that both [sciences] exist in the same intellect. For instance, the conclusions 'God is wise,' 'God is good.'" *Quodl.*, V, q. 1. See *Ord.*, Prologue, q. 8, C; 1, F. See A. Maurer, "Ockham's Conception of the Unity of Science," *Medieval Studies*, 20 (1958), 98-112.
21. *Reportatio*, II, q. 17, Q. See G. O'Hara, "Ockham's Razor Today," *Philosophical Studies*, 12 (1963), 125-139.
22. See *Tractatus De sacramento altaris*, cap. 28 (Burlington, Iowa: T.B. Birch, 1930), p. 318. Also, *Ord.*, d. 30, q. 1, E.
23. *Rep.*, II, q. 150.
24. At the beginning of his work, Peter wrote that "dialectic is the art of arts and the science of sciences" which opens the way to the knowledge of the principles of all methods. Ed. I. Bockenski (Rome: Marietti, 1947), p. 1. Tracts VI-XII have been edited with an English translation by J.P. Mullally, Notre Dame, Ind., 1945. See P. Boehner, *Medieval Logic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).
25. E. Moody, "William of Ockham," *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 8 (New York: Macmillan Co. and Free Press, 1967), p. 310.
26. Prologue to the *Ord.*, q. 1, N. See P. Boehner, "Notitia intuitiva of non-existents," *Collected Articles on Ockham*, ed. E. Buytaert (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: The Franciscan Institute, 1958), pp. 268-300.
27. *Ibid.*
28. *Ord.*, Prologue, I, HH; *Quodl.*, I, q. 14.
29. Prologue to the *Ord.*, q. 1, N.
30. *Quodl.*, VI, q. 6.
31. *Ibid.*
32. *Ibid.*, V, q. 5.
33. Prologue to the *Ord.*, q. 1, N.
34. *Summa totius logicae*, I, c. 14.
35. *Ibid.*
36. Inasmuch as the similarity of concepts is founded in the agreement of every individual with the totality of individuals, Boehner prefers to call Ockham's theory "realistic conceptualism." See "The Realistic Conceptualism of William Ockham," P. Boehner, *Collected Articles on Ockham*, pp. 156-174.

37. *Ord.*, d. II, q. 8, prima redactio. In medieval terminology, the universal concept has no "subjective being" (*esse subjectivum*) but an "objective being" (*esse objectivum*).
38. *Expositio super librum Perihermenias*, 8.
39. See P. Boehner, *Medieval Logic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), pp. 80-83.
40. *Summa of All Logic*, I, c. 1, n. 1.
41. See P. Boehner, "Theory of Signification," *Collected Articles of Ockham*, pp. 201-232.
42. *Summa of All Logic*, I, c. 4, n. 3.
43. *Ibid.*, I, c. 10, n. 4.
44. *Ibid.*, I, c. 11, n. 5.
45. *Ibid.*
46. *Ibid.*, I, c. 62. See G.B. Matthews, "Ockham's *Supposition* Theory and Modern Logic," *Philosophical Review*, 73 (1964), 91-99. R. Price, "William of Ockham and *Supposition Personalis*," *Franciscan Studies*, 30 (1970), 131-140. J. Swiniarski, "A New Presentation of Ockham's Theory of Supposition with an Evaluation of Some Contemporary Criticisms," *Franciscan Studies*, 30 (1970), 181-217.
47. *Ibid.*, I, c. 63.
48. *Ibid.*, I, c. 68.
49. See Boehner, "Theory of Supposition," *Collected Articles on Ockham*, pp. 232-253.
50. *Summa of All Logic*, II, c. 2" Author's parenthesis.
51. See Boehner, "Ockham's Theory of Truth," *Collected Articles on Ockham*, pp. 174-200; also pp. 253-267.
52. *Ibid.*, III, c. 36. This rule can be symbolized in the following theorem: $(p \supset q) \supset (p \supset q)$.
53. See P. Boehner, "The Metaphysics of William Ockham," *The Review of Metaphysics*, I (1947-1948), 59-86. Reprinted in *Collected Articles on Ockham*, pp. 373-399. P. Lucey, *Metaphysics and the Philosophy of William of Ockham* (Rome: Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana, 1954).
54. *Rep.*, III, q. 9, T.
55. *Summa of All Logic*, I, c. 38.
56. *Rep.*, III, q. 9, T.
57. *Ord.*, d. III, q. 8.
58. *Ibid.*
59. *Quodl.*, I, q. 13.
60. *Ord.*, I, d. 3, q. 2, Y.
61. *Ibid.* "These remarks suggest that the general terms of the category of substance are not as absolute as Ockham elsewhere supposed, and that the only nonconnotative concept is the transcendental concept 'being.'" E. Moody, "William of Ockham," *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 8, p. 313.
62. *Ibid.*, III, 2, c. 27.
63. *Ibid.*
64. *Ibid.*
65. *Summa of all Logic*, I, 11, c. 55.
66. *Ord.*, d. II, q. 9, P.
67. *Rep.*, III, q. 8.
68. *Ibid.*
69. *Ibid.*
70. *Ord.*, d. I, q. 35, 5, N. *Rep.*, II, q. 3, 8.

71. *Quodl.*, IV, q. 1. See H.A. Klocker, "Ockham and Efficient Causality," *The Thomist*, 23 (1960), 106-123. Also "Ockham and Finality," *The Modern Schoolman*, 43 (1965-1966). 233-247.
72. *Ord.*, I, d. 1, q. 3, N.
73. *Rep.*, II, q. 5, R, S.
74. *Rep.*, II, q. 4-5.
75. *Ord.*, d. II, q. 9, P. See H. A. Klocker, "Ockham and the Cognoscibility of God," *The Modern Schoolman*, 33 (1957-1958), 77-90.
76. *Ord.*, d. II, q. 9, P.
77. *Ibid.*, d. II, q. 9.
78. *Rep.*, d. III, q. 8.
79. *Ord.*, d. 1. q. 3, 2. M.
80. On Ockham's view of efficient causality, see H.A. Klocker, *William of Ockham and the Proofs for the Existence of God* (Roma: Università Gregoriana, 1955).
81. Quaestiones in lib. I Physicorum, q. 135.
82. *Ibid.*, q. 136. See *Ord.*, d. I, q. 2, 10. But Ockham immediately pointed out that the first cause could be a celestial sphere: "I say that we do stop at a first efficient cause and there is no regress to infinity. It is sufficient that a heavenly body be posited because we do experience concerning such that they are the causes of others." *Quodl.*, II, q. 1. See E. Woods, "Ockham on Nature and God," *The Thomist*, 37 (Jan., 1973), 69-87.
83. *Summa of All Logic*, III, c. 2.
84. *Ord.*, d. I, q. 2, 6, D.
85. *Quodl.*, I, q. 1, n. 6.
86. *Ibid.*, III, q. 1. See M. Tweedale, "Scotus and Ockham on the Infinity of the Most Eminent Being," *Franciscan Studies*, 23 (1963), 257-267.
87. *Ord.*, Prol., q. 2, DD.
88. *Quodl.*, III, q. 3, n. 1.
89. See *Ibid.*, VI, q. 6.
90. *Rep.*, II, q. 19 F.
91. *Ord.*, d. I, q. 35, 2, D.
92. *Ibid.*, d. I, q. 35, 5, C.
93. *Ibid.*, I, q. 35, 5, E.
95. *Ibid.*
96. *Ibid.*, d. I, q. 36. 1. P.
97. *Ibid.*, II, q. 5, E.
98. *Ibid.*, d. 38, C.
99. *Ibid.*
100. *Ibid.* See *Predestination, God's Foreknowledge, and Future Contingents*. Trans. with an introduction by M.M. Adams and N. Kretzmann (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969). Also Boehner, *Collected Articles on Ockham*, pp. 420-441.
101. *Ord.*, d. 38, q. unica.
102. *Ibid.*
103. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 1, F.
104. *Ibid.*, I, d. 45, q. 1, C.
105. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 1, D and F; 2, 2, G.
106. *Ibid.*, I, d. 2, q. 1, BB.
107. Prologue to the *Expositio super viii libros Physicorum*.

108. *Ord.*, I, d. 41, q. 1, E.
 109. *Ibid.*, I, d. 41, q. 1.
 110. *Quodl.*, IV, q. 30.
 111. *Summulae*, III, 12.
 112. *Rep.*, II, q. 9, C, D, E; 12, D. *Tractatus de successivis*, ed. Boehner, p. 111. See H. Shapiro, *Motion, Time and Place According to William Ockham* (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: Franciscan Institute, 1957).
 113. See *Ord.*, d. I, q. 30, I, R. It must be added, however, that Ockham restricted the application of this concept of relation to creatures and, as a theologian, recognized real relations in the Trinity.
 114. *Ord.*, I, d. 30, q. 5.
 115. *Tractatus de successivis*, ed. Boehner, p. 47.
 116. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
 117. *Rep.*, II, q. 26, N.
 118. *Quodl.*, II, q. 5.
 119. *Ord.*, I, d. 44, M.
 120. *Summulae Physicorum*, I, 14.
 121. *Ibid.*, I, 8.
 122. *Ibid.*, I, 15.
 123. *Quodl.*, I, q. 10. Author's parenthesis.
 124. *Ibid.*
 125. *Ibid.*
 126. *Rep.*, II, q. 22, H.
 127. *Quodl.*, I, q. 10.
 128. *Rep.*, II, q. 24.
 129. *Ibid.*, II, q. 26, D and E.
 130. *Ibid.*, II, q. 15, Q.
 131. *Ord.*, I, q. 27, 3.
 132. *Comm. on Perihermenias*, I, Q-R.
 133. *Rep.*, II, q. 15, T.
 134. *Ibid.*, II, q. 24, Q.
 135. *Comm. on Perihermenias*, II, 25, A, O; II, 15, XX. 136. *Rep.*, II, q. 24, P.
 137. *Ibid.*, II, q. 25, K.
 138. *Quodl.*, I, q. 16.
 139. *Ibid.*, "Liberty is a certain indifference and contingency, and is distinguished from a natural active principle." *Ord.*, I, d. 1, q. 6.
 140. *Rep.*, IV, q. 14, G.
 141. *Expositio super Physicam Aristotelis*, fol. 117a. 142. See *Rep.*, III, q. 13, U.
 143. *Quodl.*, III, q. 13.
 144. Like Peter Abelard before him and Kant after him, Ockham was concerned with distinguishing morality from legality.
 145. *Ord.*, d. 1, q. 6.
 146. *Quodl.*, VII, q. 20.
 147. *Ord.*, d. I, q. 1, 4, E.
 148. *Ibid.*, d. I, 6, P.
 149. *Rep.*, III, q. 1, 8.

150. *Quodl.*, IV, q. 11.
151. *Ord.*, I, d. 23, q. 1, C.
152. *Quodl.*, II, q. 14.
153. *Rep.*, II, ProI., q. 1, BB.
154. *Ibid.*, II, d. 9, F.
155. *Ibid.*, II, q. 4-5, H; 19, P; IV, 8-9, E.
156. *Ibid.*, II, q. 5, H.
157. *Ibid.*, II, d. 19, q. 1, F.
158. *Ibid.*, II, q. 19, P. See IV, 9, E-F.
159. *Ibid.*, IV, d. 14, D.
160. *Quodl.*, III, q. 13.
161. *Rep.*, II, q. 19, N, O.
162. *Ord.*, I, d. 41, K.
163. *Rep.*, III, q. 12, C-D.
164. *Ibid.*, III, q. 12, T.
165. *Ibid.*, III, q. 13, O.
166. See *Opus nonaginta dierum*, c. 95. See F. Oakley, "Medieval Theories of Natural Law: William of Ockham and the Significance of the Voluntarist Tradition," *Natural Law Forum*, 6 (1961), 65-83.
167. See Boehner, "Ockham's Political Ideas," *Collected Articles on Ockham*, pp. 442-468.
168. *Breviloquium*, lib. III, c. 7. Private ownership is "the power of appropriating some temporal thing for one person or some special group . . ." *Ibid.*
169. *Brevil.*, lib. III, c. 7.
170. *Ibid.*, c. 6.
171. *Dialogus*, 22, 6.
172. *Brevil.*, lib. III, c. 2.
173. *Dialogus*, 1, 3, 24.
174. *On the Power of the Emperor and the Pope*, 1, 3.
175. *Brevil.*, lib. II, c. 3.
176. *An princeps*, c. 4.
177. *Octo Quaestiones*, q. 3, c. 8.
178. *On the Power of the Emperor and the Pope*, II, 3.
179. *Octo Quaestiones*, q. 2, c. 8.
180. Ockham distinguished between regular power which excludes interference and casual power by which the Pope may help in the deposition of a king guilty of a crime, and the Emperor can punish a pope who has committed grave crimes against public security. See Boehner, *Collected Articles on Ockham*, pp. 465-468.
181. *An princeps*, c. 4. *Brevil.*, lib. II, c. 5.
182. *Brevil.*, lib. III, c. 7.
183. *Ibid.*, c. 15.
184. *Dialogus*, 2, 3, 1, 27; 2, 3, 2, 6. *Opus nonaginta dierum*, 2, 4.
185. *Brevil.*, lib. IV, c. 14.
186. For that reason, Boehner prefers to call Ockham a "conceptualist." See "The Realistic Conceptualism of William Ockham," *op. cit.*, pp. 156-174.

187. E. Moody, "William of Ockham," *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 8, p. 307. See R.G. Turnbull, "Ockham's Nominalistic Logic: Some Twentieth Century Reflections," *New Scholasticism*, 36 (1962), 313-329.

188. See D.W. Clark, "Voluntarism and Rationalism in the Ethics of Ockham," *Franciscan Studies*, 31 (1971), 72-87. Different interpretations of Ockham seem to arise from an emphasis on one of these three characteristics: Nominalism gives rise to E. Gilson's judging him a skeptic, empiricism to E. Moody's insistence on his Aristotelianism, and voluntarism to P. Boehner's recognition of his carrying on Franciscan tradition. See Gilson, *Unity of Philosophical Experience* (New York: Scribner's, 1937), pp. 61-91. Moody, *The Logic of William of Ockham* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1965), Ch. I. Boehner, "The Spirit of Franciscan Philosophy," *Franciscan Studies*, N.S. II (1942), p. 220.

189. D. Knowles, *The Evolution of Medieval Thought* (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1962), p. 321.

190. "According to them (De Morgan laws), the contradictory opposite of a conjunctive proposition is equivalent to a disjunctive proposition in which each proposition is denied." For example, the contradictory opposite of the propositions "Socrates is white and Plato is black" is "Socrates not white or Plato is not black." In terms of symbolic logic, Ockham knew the law: $\neg(p \cdot q) \equiv (\neg p \vee \neg q)$. Boehner, "Introduction," *Ockham*, p. xxxvii; also pp. 80-81.

191. See Boehner, *Collected Articles on Ockham*, pp. 156-174.

192. See A.M. McCords, "Intuitive Cognition, Certainty, and Skepticism in William Ockham," *Traditio*, 26 (1970), 388-398. Also R.C. Richards, "Ockham and Skepticism," *New Scholasticism*, 42 (1968), 345-363.

193. E. Moody, "William of Ockham," *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, p. 313.

194. See H.A. Klocker, "Empiricism and Reality: Ockham and Hume," *The Heythrop Journal*, 4 (1963), 42-53.

195. *Le Tractatus de Principis Theologiae attribué a Guillaume d'Occam*, ed. L. Baudry (Paris: J. Vrin, 1936).

196. For Luther's relation to Ockham, see P. Vignaux, *Luther, Commentateur des Sentences* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1935).

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Epilogue

At the end of this journey of the early European mind, it is worthwhile to make a final reflection on medieval Western philosophy as a whole in retrospect, conspectus, and prospect.

In retrospect, medieval philosophy shows the decisive influence of two main systems of ancient thought: Neo-Platonism — especially its Augustinian and Pseudo-Dionysian form — and Aristotelianism. Neo-Platonism manifested an irrepressible vigor and persistence in shaping the medieval mind from the Fathers of the Church to Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499). Though Aristotelianism triumphed in the scholastic age of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries to begin a new era in philosophy, both systems mingled freely in the minds of many schoolmen.

In fact, Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas synthesized these two philosophies in different ways, the former Neo-Platonizing Aristotelianism and the latter Aristotelianizing Neo-Platonism, to create original systems of thought. In responding to the challenge of Neo-Platonism, Augustine christianized it, whereas John Scotus Erigena Neo-Platonized Christian ideas. Medieval philosophy was not an echo of ancient thought, but rather a voice speaking its own mind.

In conspectus, medieval Western philosophy manifests a variety of expressions within an horizon of common concern. As Christians, medieval philosophers shared a common faith whose relation to natural reason they sought to understand in order to deal with the issues of God, the world and man. In their common desire to discover truth, medieval philosophers were generally influenced by either Neo-Platonism or Aristotelianism, or both.

However, medieval philosophy is not a monolithic structure. In the common lines of interest and even philosophical schools that present themselves against the background of medieval philosophy, no common philosophy or theological understanding of faith is discernible. Each great medieval thinker started from his own fundamental principles and articulated his own philosophical synthesis which must be studied for its own sake as an original creation of its author.

Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and William of Ockham agreed with Aristotle that being is the concern of metaphysics. But so radically diverse are the metaphysical starting points: Aquinas' notion of being as the act of existing, Scotus' concept of being as essence, and Ockham's view of being as a name, that the respective philosophies which are constructed on the foundations of each meaning of being are totally different. As early European civilization emerged into different nations, so the medieval mind expressed itself in a rich variety of philosophies.

In prospect, medieval philosophical ideas continued and development in Renaissance and modern times. Although Renaissance humanists reacted against Aristotelianism, they were open to Platonism and the Patristic culture of the early Middle Ages, especially as represented by St. Augustine. Following the example of Master Eckhart, Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464) abandoned Aristotelianism in favor of the Neo-Platonism exposed by medieval thinkers from St. Augustine to the school of Chartres. Nicholas' central idea of God as the absolute maximum combines St. Anselm's concept of God as the being than which none greater can be conceived with Duns Scotus' notion of God as infinity.¹

Immense impetus was given to the revival of Platonism and Neo-Platonism by Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499) who founded the Platonic Academy in Florence, translated from Greek into Latin

the *Dialogues* and *Letters* of Plato, and the *Enneads* of Plotinus, and taught Platonic philosophy. Prior to Marsilio, medieval philosophers had practically no firsthand acquaintance with the main sources of either Platonism or Neo-Platonism. In his most important work, the *Platonic Theology*, Ficino incorporated ideas of Thomas Aquinas into a Platonic and Augustinian framework.²

- *Renaissance Scholasticism*. Scholasticism outlived the Middle Ages and remained a significant intellectual force throughout the Renaissance and early modern times.³ Unfortunately, latter-day scholasticism generally failed to keep pace with the advances of contemporary science and to be open to the new winds of ideas that were transforming Europe, with the result that it fed on its own substance, lacked fecundity and originality, and offered little leadership in the intellectual life of the day. Although it preserved many scholastic notions and passed them on to modern philosophers, it contributed little to the advancement of learning except in the field of legal and political theory.

The two chief centers of Renaissance scholasticism were Italy and Spain. The most influential Jesuite, Suarez, wrote the *Disputationes Metaphysicae*,⁴ the first complete and systematic treatise in scholastic metaphysics. In his monumental work Dante followed Virgilian reason and Beatricean faith out of the inferno of ignorance and unintelligibility towards the goal of truth. The great minds of Bonaventure, Aquinas, Scotus, and Ockham continued the pilgrimage of philosophy through the purgatory of darkness and light, cleansing their thought of error and uncertainty, catching a glimpse into the meaning of God, the world, and human existence.⁵

As King Arthur and Sir Lancelot searched for the Holy Grail but never possessed it, so the medieval philosophers never attained the perfect vision of truth in all its fullness. The torch of philosophic reason which the medieval mind received from its Greek and Roman predecessors will be handed on to its modern successors in the quest for wisdom and truth until like Sir Galahad in possession of the Holy Grail the human mind reaches the heaven of pure light and love.

Notes

1. Nicholas of Cusa, *On Learned Ignorance*, trans. G. Heron (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954).

2. See P. O. Kristeller, *The Philosophy of Marsilio Ficino*, trans. V. Conant (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943); same author, "The Scholastic Background of Marsilio Ficino," *Traditio*, II (1944), 257-318.

3. Cajetan, *Commentarium in Summam Theologiae*, printed in the Leonine edition of Aquinas' *Opera Omnia*; Cajetan, *Commentaria in De Ente et Essentia D. Thomae Aquinatis*, ed. M. H. Laurent (Turin: Marietti, 1934); Cajetan, *The Analogy of Names and the Concept of Being*, trans. E. A. Bushinski and H. Koren (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1953).

4. Suarez, *Disputationes Metaphysicae*, Vols. 25 and 26 of the *Omnia Opera* (Paris: Vives, 1856-1878).

5. See E. Gilson, *Etudes sur le role de la pensee medievale dans la formation du systeme cartesien* (Paris: Vrin, 1930); *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*, first two vols.; *History of Medieval Philosophy*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), pp. 13-18. 3rd edition, trans. E. C. Messenger, London: Longmans Green and Co., 1935, 1937.

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