

Doctoral Dissertation

**Contemplation and the Cognition of God.
Victorine Theological Anthropology and its Decline**

by
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Desiderium cognoscendae veritatis intantum naturale animae est, ut, quantumlibet sit perversa, illo omnino carere non possit. Quotidianae quaestiones indicant quod scire verum omnes cupimus. Tota vita hominis in quaestione est. Quandiu vivitur, quaeritur.

Miscellanea I, lxxii

magistrum Hugonem de sancto Victore, quem et ignotum diligis et absentem ueneraris, inter ceteros immo pre ceteris frequentarem

Laurentius

Croyez-vous donc que je me serai levé toute ma vie à quatre heures du matin, pour ne dire que ce que d'autres avaient dit avant moi?

Jean Hardouin SJ

It may be, Heaven forgive me, that I did try to be original; but I only succeeded in inventing all by myself an inferior copy of the existing traditions of civilized religion.... I did try to found a heresy of my own; and when I had put the last touches to it, I discovered that it was orthodoxy.

G.K. Chesterton

Abbreviations

AHDLMA	Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge
BGPTM	Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie [und Theologie] des Mittelalters (Munster: Aschendorff)
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina (Turnhout: Brepols, 1953-)
CCCM	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, Continuatio Mediaevalis (Turnhout: Brepols, 1966-)
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Vienna: Hölder / Pichler / Tempsky, 1866-)
DS	Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique (Paris: Beauchesne, 1937-)
DTC	Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique (Paris: Letouzey et Ané)
LMA	Lexikon des Mittelalters (Zürich: Artemis)
PL	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus series Latina</i> , ed. Jacques Paul Migne (Paris, 1841-1864)
Quar.	<i>D.S.S. Bonaventurae opera omnia, edita studio et cura pp. Collegii a S. Bonaventura</i> (Quaracchi: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1882-1902)
RMAL	Revue du moyen âge latin
RSPT	Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques
RTAM	Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale
RTPM	Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie médiévales
SC	Sources Chrétiennes (Paris: Cerf)
TRE	Theologische Realenzyklopädie (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1977-)
<i>Sent</i>	The <i>Sentences</i> of Peter Lombard
qu.	<i>quaestio</i>
dist.	<i>distinctio</i>
art.	<i>articulus</i>
co	<i>corpus</i>
sc	<i>[argumentum] sed contra</i>

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Introduction

The main motivation behind the present work was unsatisfied curiosity. It started first as a exegetical attempt to clarify certain passages in *Benjamin major* III, ix, where, in allegorical form, theories on epistemology and contemplation were discussed by Richard of Saint-Victor. Contemplation, conceived as the ultimate form of the cognition of God possible in this life, seemed to me then the crucial subject in the study of Richard. But after having witnessed the undeniable doctrinal similarities among Victorine authors, and the relentless efforts of thirteenth-century theologians to reinterpret Victorine doctrines (even against their original meaning), the investigation turned into a hermeneutical and historical inquiry, guided by two questions: What is Victorine theology? and What happened to it after the end of the twelfth century? The bulk of the literature that I consulted offered no sufficient answer to these questions; therefore I looked for an answer myself: the present volume is that answer. One of the many insights gained in the course of the research was that such questions also demand hermeneutical reflection. The historical and doctrinal position of the readers substantially defines what can be understood from earlier texts (in other words, what the meaning attributed to the texts is) – and this is true for both medieval readers and modern scholars. The present work attempts to (re)construct, on the one hand, a particular model of theological anthropology that was conceived nearly 900 years ago by Victorine authors; on the other hand, it also tries to describe the history of its reception, taking into consideration the position of medieval readers, too.

In the literature, the term “Victorines” commonly refers to a twelfth-century group of nearly a dozen theologians who were Augustinian canons and belonged to the abbey dedicated to Saint Victor. Their community, located outside the city walls of Paris, was founded in 1109 by the renowned teacher William of Champeaux, and was soon promoted to the rank of royal abbey. From the 1120s to the end of the twelfth century an unparalleled period can be observed, when theologians belonging to that same community of Saint-Victor created a remarkable corpus involving doctrinal theology and didactic works (Hugh), spiritual works (Hugh, Achard and Richard), Biblical exegesis (Hugh, Andrew and Garnier), liturgical poetry (Adam), philosophy (Godfrey), and theological polemics (Walther). Their works have long been an important subject of intellectual history.¹ The present study focuses on those few of them whose spiritual writings addressed issues of theological anthropology: Hugh (d. 1141), Richard (d. 1173), Achard (d. 1170/71) and Walther (d. after 1180). Hugh and Richard were considered as major authors on contemplation even in the Middle Ages. With the nineteenth-century emergence of the concept of “mysticism” (*Mystik*), issues that earlier belonged to Christian spirituality became subjects of mysticism: this happened to theories about contemplation as well. Medieval mysticism is a natural subject of the historiography of mysticism: the most significant, large-scale and comprehensive histories of mysticism, most notably by Bernard McGinn and Kurt Ruh, treat the Victorines as

¹ On the history of the monastery, see *L'abbaye parisienne de Saint-Victor au moyen âge. Communications présentées au XIII^e colloque d'humanisme médiéval de Paris (1986-1988) et réunies par Jean Longère* (Bibliotheca Victorina 1) (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991); for the single authors, see Jean Châtillon, “Chronique de Guillaume de Champeaux à Thomas Gallus. Chronique d'histoire littéraire et doctrinale de l'école de Saint-Victor,” *RMAL* 8 (1952): 139-162 and 247-272; Dominique Poirel, “L'école de Saint-Victor au Moyen Âge: Bilan d'un demi-siècle historiographique,” *Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes* 15 (1998): 187-207; for the recent status of scholarship, see Dominique Poirel, ed., *L'école de Saint-Victor de Paris. Influence et rayonnement du Moyen Âge à l'époque moderne. Actes du Colloque international du C.N.R.S. pour le neuvième centenaire de la fondation (1108-2008)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010). See also Dave Coulter's “Annotated Chronology of the Twelfth-Century School of St. Victor,” in his *Per visibilia ad invisibilia. Theological Method in Richard of St. Victor (d. 1173)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), 232-256, and Rainer Berndt's articles, “The School of St. Victor in Paris” In *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. The History of Its Interpretation*, ed. Magne Sebo, vol. 1 part 2 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 467-495 and “Sankt Viktor, Schule von.” *TRE* 30: 629-635.

representatives of twelfth-century mysticism.² The period is regarded as a sudden flowering of mysticism after the Patristic and early medieval times, when only a handful of Latin authors (such as Augustine, Cassian, Gregory the Great and Eriugena) could be qualified as “mystic.” In the twelfth century, dozens of “mystics” can be found: they write in Latin, and mostly belong to the “new” orders of Cistercians, Augustinian canons, Carthusians or Premonstratensians. In importance, Hugh and Richard can be compared only to the greatest authors of the Cistercians, Saint Bernard or William of Saint-Thierry. The next century brings different, sometimes overlapping manifestations of mysticism: the emergence of vernacular mysticism, female mysticism (*Frauenmystik*), Franciscan mysticism, Areopagitic mysticism and affective mysticism. But however detailed this kind of presentation can be, it does not suit a study of twelfth-century Victorine authors, for multiple reasons.

a) What modern scholars of mysticism perceive in Victorine (or other) theories is defined by their various concepts of “mysticism.” The term “mysticism” does not have a consensual meaning. For example, one of the most famous meanings recently attributed to the term is, as McGinn defines it, a way of presenting the consciousness of the (direct) presence of God.³ For the aims of our study this definition is of no avail. On one hand, it is constructed to cover various traditions and various periods of Christian mysticism from the Patristic age to the late Middle Ages: such a term is necessarily too vague if a particular school of a given period will be studied. On the other hand, it narrows down the possible subject to such an extent that it cannot give a substantial and characteristic picture of any author (even less of a school). In the view of the present study, this “mysticism” (but also the concrete “mystical statements”) is only the most visible element of a structure (or a model) of theological anthropology. “Theological anthropology,” as the present work uses the term, is a system of theoretical positions (and concluding doctrinal statements) that describe the position of the human subject in its relation to God. It includes both the privileged moment that can be called “mystical experience,” that is, ecstatic cognition or contemplation of God, but also the theoretical background that permits the possibility of such (loving or cognitive) acts. This model is what defines what can be stated about any “experience of God,” and also defines the way in which those statements can be constructed.

b) Studies of mysticism try to give a neutral presentation of what they consider as the mysticism of a given author, more or less tacitly assuming that all the various forms of mysticism are equally valid, different “ways to God.” The consequence of this (entirely theological) premise is that the authors’ doctrinal positions (and their validity) are left uninvestigated. The postulate of the present study is that “mysticism” is not independent of “doctrinal” theology: the “official” doctrines accepted by the Church may suggest, tolerate or ban models of theological anthropology; the changes of doctrines may also have similar effects. Consequently, a historical study of mysticism (at least, the present investigation of Victorine mysticism) necessarily involves doctrinal history as well.

c) The historiography of mysticism records the succession of different themes and types of spirituality, but offers no reasons for their changes. Monastic theology is believed to cease after a certain time; twelfth-century mysticism was followed by other forms of mysticism, but the extant literature on mysticism offers no causal explanation. The reception of twelfth-century theories by later authors also seems to be left mostly uninvestigated: as the present study will demonstrate, wherever central anthropological doctrines of the Victorines appear in thirteenth-century works, they undergo tendentious alterations. For these phenomena, external reasons, such as institutional

² See Kurt Ruh, *Die Grundlegung durch die Kirchenväter und die Mönchstheologie des 12. Jahrhunderts* (Geschichte der abendländischen Mystik Bd. 1) (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1990), and Bernard McGinn, *The Growth of Mysticism: From Gregory the Great through the 12th Century* (The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism, vol. 2) (London: SCM, 1995). For other representatives, see Part II, Chapter II Introduction.

³ See Bernard McGinn, *The Foundations of Mysticism: Origins to the Fifth Century* (The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism vol. 1) (London: SCM, 1992), xvi-xvii.

transformations or the emergence of newer forms of mysticism, cannot give a sufficient explanation.

d) Monographs on single authors (but also histories of mysticism) offer descriptions of mystical theories of single authors or of several (for example, Victorine or Cistercian) authors juxtaposed. The problem with this form of presentation is that it cannot say whether a particular Victorine spirituality existed or not (and consequently it cannot say what it was like), or what the distinctive character of the Victorines was. General terms, such as “monastic theology” or “canonical spirituality,” do not offer much help in understanding the character of the Victorines; neither do statements that are valid for most twelfth-century authors regardless of their affiliation.

Such difficulties prescribe different principles and different methods to follow. To obtain a description that also has heuristic and explanatory value, a complex approach is necessary: one that involves both systematic and historical aspects. From such a perspective, Victorine “mysticism” is the manifestation of the Victorine theological anthropology, and this latter is a model based on early and mid-twelfth century premises, and its reception can be understood only in a wider context of doctrinal history.

Introduction to reading: a dynamic view of the sources

While investigating theological sources from the twelfth and the thirteenth century a certain hermeneutical awareness is necessary. Scholastic theologians focused on the continuity of their doctrines with the earlier ones, and thirteenth-century doctrinal positions are very often points of reference for modern authors interpreting earlier theories. The present dissertation, by contrast, focuses on discontinuities: on those often overlooked changes that, between c. 1100 and c. 1240, delineated certain fields of Christian theology. The twelfth century (especially its first half) can be considered a period when the periphery of Christian doctrine was largely undefined. Not all the possible subjects of theology were covered by theories; the existing theories were also in development, and only some of the theories later became unanimously accepted doctrines. This creation of theories and then the solidification of doctrines led to the totality of the Christian doctrine that is often presented with such later works as the *Summa theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas. But there is another aspect of changes: unsuccessful attempts at formulating theological issues, doctrines that had only a temporary validity, or concepts that were silently redefined (although these changes are more characteristic of the period c. 1170 to c. 1240). Only a dynamic view, one that considers both aspects of changes, can offer, in my opinion, a heuristic approach: since Victorine theological anthropology is a mid-twelfth-century set of theoretical positions (as Part II will demonstrate), its afterlife can only be understood in connection with the doctrinal changes.

In order to illustrate the dynamics of development, we may take an example central for the present investigation: the issue of prelapsarian cognition of God. Creating theories about the cognition that was possible before the original sin was a very uncommon activity. Seemingly, no one was ever interested in this particular problem (not mentioned by Scripture) before Hugh of Saint-Victor. The prelapsarian state means a relatively short period in salvation history between man’s creation and man’s committing the original sin, and the Biblical narrative provided sufficient topics to investigate apart from this, and far more crucial ones (for example, the Fall itself). More traditional early twelfth-century works, such as the sentence collections of Laon and the *Elucidarium* of Honorius Augustodunensis, show the same interest.⁴ The subjects related to that state were miscellaneous: some were given by the exegesis of the text (such as the meaning of the trees, the snake and the burning sword: the explanation was usually based on Augustine’s *De Genesi ad litteram*), some reflected Augustine’s doctrines (focusing on the original sin and the loss

⁴ See the relevant pages of *Sententie divine pagine* and *Sententie Anselmi*, in *Anselms von Laon systematische Sentenzen*, ed. Franz P[lacidus] Bliemetzrieder (BGPTM 18, nos. 2-3. Munster: Aschendorff, 1919), here 20-35 and 57-66; of the *Elucidarium* of Honorius, PL 172: 1117B-1119C.

of the free will), and some grew out of curiosity (such as the physical properties of Eden and Adam's body, or questions about the children that Adam and Eve could have had before the original sin).⁵ Abelard in his *Sic et non* touched upon only the traditional theological issues, but his intended books of sentences contain nothing on this state.⁶ Unlike all his other contemporaries, Hugh had a special interest in the prelapsarian state, well beyond the traditional doctrines: he considered that the original (created), present (fallen) and future (restored) states mean different conditions for cognition, and knowing the original one is necessary to understand the present. When Hugh formulated the prelapsarian cognition of God as a form of (direct) vision, this theory was only a theory about an otherwise uninvestigated subject (although the sole accessible one), characteristic only of one particular master, and without any authority outside his school. But after the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard (1156) incorporated a variant of this theory, and that work gradually became a textbook for theological education, the issue of the prelapsarian cognition gradually became part of the official church doctrine. In other words, a very specific, somewhat marginal and not self-evident subject came to be included, in a few decades' time, in the doctrinal corpus of theology: theologians after the 1170s no longer created new theories about it, but rather new interpretations of the accepted doctrine.

The same example can also illustrate the discontinuities (discussed in detail in Parts II and III) when the validity of theories ended. In some cases explicit theological disapproval made a position invalid (expressed in censures); in other cases simply the development of theology rendered earlier doctrines incompatible with the current doctrines, that is, invalid. The terms *via* and *patria* seem to be self-evident expressions referring to this life and the blessed state, but not to Adam's status before the Fall. In the 1160s it was evident that Adam was neither *in via* nor *in patria*; by contrast, in the 1240s he was evidently *in via*. The meaning of key terms also became reinterpreted: Adam's "contemplation" of God meant for Hugh in the 1130s some kind of immediate vision of God; the same expression in the 1240s meant a mediated vision only.

The doctrinal changes and discontinuities must be also seen together with those large-scale institutional changes that defined any reception. The Victorine school (as a characteristic and independent school of theology) had ceased to exist by the first decades of the thirteenth century (as all other early Scholastic schools did); the emergence of universities defined new intellectual methods and new forms of doctrinal authority. The reception of twelfth-century theories about contemplation (and related subjects) mostly means the reception of a handful of texts (or sometimes the reception of single sentences) that, without a continuous exegetical tradition, are open to reinterpretation.

Methodologies and structure

The present study has two separate aims. The first aim is to find and describe the features characteristic of (twelfth-century) Victorine spirituality and anthropology. The second is to describe the afterlife of Victorine theological anthropology and to find a plausible causal explanation for its phenomena. These aims and the subject defined the methods applied. Following the advice *si omnia legere non potes, ea quae sunt utiliora lege*, I based the research on a close and comparative reading of sources, hoping that the result can compete with the extant literature. To obtain a comprehensive view, as many sources as possible were investigated (including unedited manuscripts too); the resulting image is, if not total, at least representative.⁷ The subjects also dictated various methods.

⁵ These traditional issues defined the theological treatment of the prelapsarian state even later, since the *Sentences* (II dist. 17-23) of Peter Lombard included them; they are also present in Hugh's *De sacramentis*.

⁶ See *Sic et non*, *Qu.* 34, 41, 51-58, 107, 108, 115; his commentary on Genesis also remains limited to the traditional issues.

⁷ The author is aware of the objective limitations due to the accessibility of the sources and literature at any given time; but he also hopes that, in spite of all the shortcomings, the materials presented will give sufficient proofs for the propositions introduced and that his arguments still have explanatory value.

In order to see what a characteristically Victorine theological anthropology can be, first theories of individual Victorine authors had to be presented. The many similar elements present at the different authors suggested a model shared by them: a Victorine theological anthropology. A comparison to another contemporary model also confirmed that the elements characteristic of the Victorines were uncharacteristic of other authors. The investigation of the afterlife demanded different methods. The direct reception of twelfth-century Victorine theories (in the spiritual literature) took place in a certain thirteenth-century doctrinal context, and the proprieties of the context also defined the reception. In order to understand this context, the doctrinal development of two themes, Paul's rapture and Adam's vision of God, was reconstructed, based on the extant sources. The reconstruction revealed that Victorine theories became incompatible with the authoritative Scholastic theories on the same subjects. In other words, the concepts by which twelfth-century Victorines formulated their own theories became unintelligible due to the conceptual changes.

These principles and aims dictated the tripartite structure of the dissertation. Part I gives a general theoretical background to twelfth-century Victorine theological anthropology, by presenting first elementary Patristic doctrines that largely defined the possible models of anthropology, then a characteristically twelfth-century problem of epistemology and theological anthropology. Part II investigates the theological anthropology of twelfth-century Victorines. Its major part (Chapters I-III) is devoted to four Victorine theologians: Hugh, Richard, Achard and Walther, and to the question of a Victorine theological anthropology (Chapter IV). For chronological reasons, Part II includes a study of the immediate, twelfth-century reception (and transformation) of Hugh's doctrine regarding prelapsarian cognition. Part III investigates the afterlife of twelfth-century Victorine anthropology in three chapters. First it gives an overview of the doctrinal developments concerning Saint Paul's rapture, focusing on the history of *visio mediastina*, a twelfth-century concept replaced by that of *raptus*, the final and complete Scholastic interpretation of 2Cor 12:2-4 (Chapter I). The second chapter investigates thirteenth-century doctrines on the prelapsarian cognition (c. 1220 to c. 1300) as they appear in the glosses and commentaries written on the *Sentences*. The last chapter investigates the direct reception of Victorine doctrines about contemplation in the spiritual literature of the thirteenth century.

Part I. Backgrounds to the Victorines

Beyond all the originality of each medieval theologians there is a background defined by the traditions of earlier periods. Before discussing the Victorine theologians, therefore, it seems to be reasonable to make a digression on a number of doctrines and common concepts that defined twelfth-century approaches to theological anthropology. Two broad issues will be covered here: Patristic doctrines that defined basic concepts (chapter I), and those points where twelfth-century thinking differ from Patristic one (chapter II). The first chapter presents those doctrines of Augustine and Gregory which became commonplaces of theological anthropology: medieval Latin theologians acquired these ideas during their formation and used them in their own works. These ideas defined the meaning of central terms (such as image and likeness, contemplation, “seeing” God in this life, and ecstasy), and formed the standard textbook knowledge of medieval theologians. Twelfth-century authors set these doctrines in a new perspective: besides theological narratives and descriptions they also created a concurrent interpretation of what man is and how he cognises God, using philosophical vocabulary.

Chapter I. The Patristic heritage

Augustine: five great themes

The present chapter outlines five basic theories of Augustine that defined key issues of medieval theological anthropology: (1) the divine image and likeness in man, (2) its corruption and its restoration; (3) the vision of God, conceived in a hierarchy of three (corporeal, imaginary and intellectual) visions; (4) the structure of ecstasy, and (5) the role of the body in the cognition of God. The choice of the ideas presented here reflects the medieval preferences, without any interest in the development of Augustine’s own theology.⁸ These ideas of Augustine functioned as traditional and authoritative doctrines; they not only always gave acceptable solutions to doctrinal questions, but also gave a pattern and interpretation for ecstatic spiritual experiences.

1. *Image and likeness*

The sentence of Genesis 1:26, *Faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram* establishes the similarity between God and man. In the usual Latin Christian reading of the sentence, the Biblical terms *imago* and *similitudo*, “image” and “likeness,” refer to something inherent in man, bearing the resemblance of the Creator. This inherence also suggests the direction of investigations: if the image is *in* us, then it can be found and identified in ourselves.

Medieval readers found a favoured explanation for the image in the *De Trinitate* of the later Augustine. Augustine speaks mostly about the divine image, without much emphasis on likeness (in contrast, medieval theologians often discern them and interpret *imago* and *similitudo* as two different things). This image resides in the highest part of man, in the soul; more precisely in the mind (*mens*), that is, in the soul’s intellectual part – especially if it is not occupied with care for corporeal-temporal things but turned towards eternal things.⁹

⁸ For Augustine in general, see Allan D. Fitzgerald and J. C. Cavadini, eds., *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia* (Grand Rapids, MI, and Cambridge, England: William B. Eerdmans, 1999). For an overview of the discussions concerning Augustine’s so-called mystical doctrines, see Bernard McGinn, *The Foundations of Mysticism* (New York 1991), 228-262, and *Augustine: Mystic and Mystagogue*, Frederick van Fleteren and Joseph C. Schnaubelt, eds. (New York 1994).

⁹ *De Trin.* XII, iv, 4: “sed in tota natura mentis ita trinitatem reperiri opus est ut si desit actio temporalium” (PL 42: 1000). Thinking oriented towards practical activities and the corporeal world is called *scientia*, while *sapientia* marks contemplative thinking: see *De Trin.* XII, xiv, 22: “Intellegendum est ad contemplationem sapientiam, ad actionem scientiam pertinere” and the distinction made in XII, xv, 25: “ad sapientiam pertineat aeternarum rerum cognitio

For Augustine, the image of God is an image of the Holy Trinity residing in the soul. It is also a trinitarian image that mirrors the “structures,” the internal relations of the triune God: Augustine so connects the mystery of the Trinity to the issue of the divine image in man. The divine image is not conceived as one single notion by him: image means rather trinitarian analogies, notions that are able to represent simultaneously unity and trinity, inseparability among separate elements. Two such analogies are traditionally used by medieval authors.¹⁰ One is the case when the (1) mind (2) knows itself by itself, and at the same time (3) loves both itself and its self-knowledge: in this case, the mind, the knowledge and the love (*mens – amor – notitia*) are three (according to their relations, *relative*) but also one (according to their essence, *essentialiter*).¹¹ The other analogy is based on three faculties of the soul, the memory, the understanding and the will (*memoria – intelligentia – voluntas*) and their operation. Each of these faculties can subject to its own working any of these faculties, thus forming a trinity and unity: willing, remembering and understanding all can be wanted; willing, understanding and remembering can be remembered and, likewise, each of them can be understood.¹² Both analogies of the divine image were widely known.

2. Restoration of the image

According to Christian theologies, the divine image in man, as we may know in this life, is deformed due to the original sin: its restoration is the programme of this life. The way in which Augustine outlined the restoration of the image defined the positions of later Western theology and influenced its spirituality. In Augustine, the restoration of the image is set in a multiple context.

a) The image of God is can be perceived only in the soul. Augustine conceives the trinitarian image as a distorted reflection of God, in the mirror of the soul. The Biblical background for this conception is 1Cor 13:12: *Videmus nunc, inquit, per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem*. In this life, *nunc*, we are confined to a limited vision of God, seeing him as far as we can in the image that we are.¹³ The final restoration of the image means that the distorted reflection turns into a perfect, clear and sufficient mirror image of God.

b) This restoration coincides with the final, fulfilling vision of God. This vision will be immediate, “face to face” (*facie ad faciem*), and it cannot be achieved in this life, only in the life to come, *tunc*. Augustine often reminds the reader that in this mortal life it is impossible to see God in “his nature,” this being the reward promised for the “other” life.¹⁴ For Augustine and the later Western theologians, the invisibility of God means invisibility *in this life* only: this concept is supported by Biblical passages such as 1Jn 4:12 *Deum nemo vidit umquam* and Ex 33:20 *Non poteris videre faciem meam: non enim videbit me homo et vivet*. The future vision of God is also a

intellectualis, ad scientiam vero temporalium rerum cognitio rationalis” (PL 42: 1010, 1012). See also Peter Lombard, *Sent.* III dist. xxxv, 1 (PL 192: 827-828).

¹⁰ See, for example, Hugh of Saint-Victor rephrasing the first analogy, substituting *notitia* with *sapientia*: *De sacramentis* I, iii, 21 (PL 176: 225). Peter the Lombard prefers (and largely transcribes) the second analogy, but also mentions the first one: *Sent.* I dist. iii, 7-15 and 18 (PL 192: 530-532).

¹¹ See *De Trin.* IX, iii-v.

¹² *De Trin.* X, xi, 18: “Memini enim me habere memoriam, et intelligentiam, et voluntatem; et intelligo me intelligere, et velle, atque meminisse; et volo me velle, et meminisse, et intelligere, totamque meam memoriam, et intelligentiam, et voluntatem simul memini.” PL 42: 983. See also *De Trin.* IX, v, 8: “At in illis tribus cum se nouit mens et amat se, manet trinitas, mens, amor, notitia; et nulla commixtione confunditur quamuis et singula sint in se ipsis et inuicem tota in totis, siue singula in binis siue bina in singulis, itaque omnia in omnibus,” and *De Trin.* X, xi, 18: “Haec igitur tria, memoria, intelligentia, uoluntas, quoniam non sunt tres uitae sed una uita, nec tres mentes sed una mens, consequenter utique nec tres substantiae sunt sed una substantia” (PL 42: 965; 983).

¹³ *De Trin.* XV, viii, 14: “Quale sit et quod sit hoc speculum si quaeramus, profecto illud occurrit, quod in speculo nisi imago non cernitur. Hoc ergo facere conati sumus, ut per imaginem hanc quod nos sumus, videremus utcumque a quo facti sumus, tanquam per speculum” (PL 42: 1067).

¹⁴ See, for example, *Ep.* 147, viii: “Ipse erat in ea specie qua apparere voluerat; non autem ipse apparebat in natura propria, quam Moyses videre cupiebat. Ea quippe promittitur sanctis in alia vita” (PL 33: 605 = CSEL 44, 315).

“vision” of truth and the divine light; a vision of the *regio intellectualium vel intelligibilium*¹⁵ as contrasted with our fallen, corporeal and temporal world, called the *regio dissimilitudinis*. This “vision” or cognition of God takes place by means of the so-called intellectual vision.

c) Restoration of the image is also expressed in terms of regaining a lost form, *reformatio*. The image is now *deformed*, because (due to the original sin) it has lost its form. It must receive a new form by adjustment to the *forma Dei*. Receiving this new form is a *reformatio*, which makes the soul similar to God. For Augustine, the perfect assimilation and reformation coincide with the final vision of God: this idea is supported by 1Jn 3:2 *Scimus quoniam cum apparuerit, similes ei erimus: quoniam videbimus eum sicuti est*.

d) Restoration is also a gradual process anchored in this life. It happens through a growing cognition of God by faith and is accompanied with a virtuous life. This slow process is the earthly life of the Christian men, beginning with baptism and ending with corporeal death.¹⁶ Through death, the soul leaves the body and the corporeal-temporal world subjected to change, and becomes capable of the vision of God.

The single programme of the return to God was told in different forms by Augustine, through different concepts and images: regaining the lost form, obtaining a perfect image in the mirror, seeing God immediately. Later theologians used these ideas, but the Patristic authority of the saint did not have answers for all the emerging questions. The insufficiency of Augustine in some cases became obvious. His doctrines about the image were elaborated primarily for the fallen and the glorified state, for *nunc* and *tunc*, where the deformed and the restored image are contrasted with each other. These elaborated theories do not extend to the prelapsarian state as such. For Augustine, the prelapsarian state was not an issue in itself: his central themes in this context are the original sin, the Fall, the problem of freedom and grace. Theorising about the image *before* the Fall, or about the difference between the prelapsarian and postlapsarian image, was left to medieval theologians.

3. Framing prophecy and extasis: the three “visions”

In the last book of the *De Genesi ad litteram* the later Augustine¹⁷ gives an explanation of 2Cor 12, where Paul mentions someone who was “elevated” or “caught up” (*raptus*) into the third heaven, into Paradise. The “Paradise” of the locus gives an opportunity for Augustine to investigate the question of Paul’s experience. The result is a comprehensive theory for prophetic visions and Paul’s rapture, formulated with the metaphor of threefold vision.

This doctrine became an almost undisputed part of the Latin theology. From the Carolingian times, commentaries on 2Cor 12 usually give Augustine’s interpretation for the passage: the three heavens mean corporeal, spiritual (imaginary) and intellectual vision. Twelfth-century commentaries add more interpretations to the Augustinian one (for example, Peter Lombard adds three more), and thirteenth-century commentators (often based on the *Collectanea*) follow this tradition. Building an interpretative framework, Augustine utilises elements of the Biblical locus. Heaven (*caelum*) will be a synonym for vision; the elevation into the third heaven will mean three sorts of vision – and “vision” is meant both literally and metaphorically. The first “heaven” means corporeal vision, as one sees the world around one.¹⁸ The second “heaven” means imaginary vision

¹⁵ *De Gen. ad litt.* XII, xvi, 54: “Una ibi et tota virtus est amare quod videas, et summa felicitas habere quod amas [...] ubi segura quies erit et ineffabilis visio veritatis [...] Ibi videtur claritas Domini, non per visionem significantem [...] sed per speciem, non per aenigmata, quantum eam capere mens humana potest.” CSEL 28/1, 419-420 (= PL 34: 476).

¹⁶ See, for example, *De Trin.* XV, xi, 21 (PL 42: 1073).

¹⁷ The *De Genesi ad litteram*, finished by 415, was written along the late works *De Trinitate* and *De civitate Dei*. Critical edition in CSEL 28/1: 1-434, ed. J. Zycha (Vienna: Hölder / Pichler / Tempsky, 1894). Non-critical edition: PL 34: 245-486; Book XII in CSEL 28/1, 379-434 (cf. PL 34: 453-486).

¹⁸ For the treatment of three visions, see *De Gen. ad litt.* XII, vi-vii.

(*visio imaginaria*), also called “spiritual” vision (*visio spiritualis*, *spiritus* being a synonym for imagination).¹⁹ By imaginary vision one can see images of corporeal but absent things, *similitudines corporum* (we may say, mental representations); here belong images guarded by the memory, images imagined, but also those images that occur in dreams, in fever caused by illness, or in ecstasy (*extasis*, *alienatio mentis*).²⁰ These mental images may or may not be *signs* of other things – that is, they can sometimes have a meaning (Augustine also calls this type of vision *visio significans*). The images produced by fever or seen in dreams are usually not signs, while those seen in ecstasy usually are.²¹ Imaginary vision is limited: it displays *similitudines* and can also discern whether they have a meaning (that is, whether they are signs or not), but it cannot decipher the meaning.²² The third kind of vision is intellectual vision (*visio intellectualis* or *intelligibilis*). Here “vision” is more metaphorical: it means rather understanding, or perceiving incorporeal-immaterial things. This vision is infallible (xiv): it sees with the *aspectus mentis* or *contuitus mentis* and it can see things that are incorporeal (cannot have corporeal representation). It grasps (“sees”) concepts (such as faith, truth, peace or goodness) that lead to God.²³ Also, this is the cognition by means of which the meaning of prophecies (behind their material images) can be understood, and this is also the way in which God himself can be seen in the *patria*. None of these things can have image or representation (*imagines sui similes*): they are present for the mind, but can be seen to different degrees: *quantum mente cerni potest, ab alio magis, ab alio minus ipsa cernitur* (vi).

On this theoretical background, for Augustine the rapture of Paul into the third heaven means that Paul in his *extasis* was able to see God with intellectual vision. Augustine’s theory encompasses not only the prophets and those few who have seen God in this life. In their case, imaginary and intellectual vision takes place with *extasis*, and for him it is not the object of the vision but the *extasis* that makes the difference. In the everyday life, if we “see images” of memory or understand concepts like “love,” we also have imaginary and intellectual vision, respectively, but without *extasis*.

4. Augustine’s model for extasis

There are two prominent places in the oeuvre of Augustine where scholars regularly sense some kind of personal mystical experience. Both *loci* are in the *Confessions*, in the work where Augustine depicts his own spiritual development, narrated in the first person.²⁴ The *Confessions* VII, x, 16 recounts the experience when God “took” Augustine to himself (*adsumpsisti*): this narrative is often called “the ecstasy of Milan.” The other narrative, commonly called “the Ostia narrative” or “Ostia

¹⁹ For this terminology (*imaginarius* = *spiritualis*) see, for example, *De Trin.* XV, xvi, 22: “dicitur spiritus in homine, qui mens non sit, ad quem pertinent imaginationes similes corporum.”

²⁰ In this case “vision” means not only the mental activity but its object too, which can be called “revelation,” “showing” or “vision” alike.

²¹ *De Gen. ad litt.* XII, 13: “Illud tamen dubium esse non debet corporales imagines, quae spiritu cernuntur, non semper signa esse aliarum rerum siue in uigilantibus siue in dormientibus siue in aegrotantibus; mirum est autem, si aliquando extasis fieri potest, ut non illae corporalium rerum similitudines aliquid significant.” CSEL 28/1, 397.

²² A telling example for the limits of imaginary vision is the story of Daniel and King Balthasar (Dan 5:5-28, analysed in *De Gen. ad litt.* XII, xi). The king saw a writing hand on the wall (corporeal vision), understood that it had some meaning and kept this vision in his memory (imaginary vision): but he could not decipher its meaning: *nec aliquid intellectu poterat nisi nosse signum esse*. The Prophet Daniel deciphered the meaning of these signs through intellectual vision (by the spirit of prophecy).

²³ *De Gen. ad litt.* XII, xxiv: “ita et caritas, gaudium, pax, longanimitas, benignitas, bonitas, fides, mansuetudo, continentia et cetera huiusmodi, quibus propinquatur deo, et ipse deus.” CSEL 28/1, 416 (= PL 34: 474).

²⁴ For an overview of the scholarly reception of the *Confessiones*, see Annamaré Kotzé, *Augustine’s Confessions: Communicative Purpose and Audience* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 7-43 (“The Confession and its Academic Readers: A Survey of Secondary Literature”).

ecstasy,” is at IX, x, 24-25: here Augustine relates an experience shared with Monica in Ostia.²⁵ For the limited goals of this study, it is sufficient to explore the theoretical background behind these seemingly so personal accounts.²⁶ I argue that these narratives are less personal than is usually assumed: they present Augustine’s pattern of ecstasy in a personal tone, while the same model appears elsewhere without such literary stylisation.

The Ecstasy of Milan (*Conf.* VII, x, 16)

Confessions VII, x, 16 describes the process of that first decisive intellectual experience when Augustine understood that God does exist. Two circumstances must be mentioned here, both regarded as significant by the scholarship: this experience takes place *before* his baptism, and the previous passages mention *libri platonici* and Platonic doctrines. For clarity’s sake I treat the text as two accounts of the same experience.

The first account²⁷ begins as Augustine “enters himself” (*intravi in intima mea*) by divine guidance. With the “eye of the soul” he sees an immaterial light high above this eye; a light which can be known by love, and which light (as he understands) created him. The internal space with the intellectual light radically differs from anything experienced before. Augustine here applies, paradoxically, a lot of corporeal images (*similitudines* as the visible light, the oil and water, and the heaven above the earth) to give a hint of this otherness, saying that what he saw there was *unlike* all these images. The second narration recounts the experience from a different angle.²⁸ God elevates the soul of Augustine to himself in order to teach him two lessons. One is that God does exist and can be seen; the other is the unworthiness of the soul that is unprepared for this vision. Then the scene suddenly changes: the soul finds itself rejected, far away from God, in a world radically unlike God: *et inveni longe me esse a te in regione dissimilitudinis*. God’s voice can be heard from far above.²⁹

²⁵ Secondary literature considers *Conf.* VII, xvii, 23 also an “ascension narrative.” The analysis of this text (where Augustine describes a momentary glance at God then its rejection) would be unnecessary and redundant to make the point of the present chapter.

²⁶ Although the present study is unconcerned with the scholarly exegesis of these passages, it is useful to indicate the orientations of the research, in Van Fleteren’s summary: “Whether the nature of this vision at Ostia (and those of Milan in *Confessiones* 7) is mystical has evoked intense controversy. Some have thought that Augustine reports his first proof for the existence of God in Milan and that only the vision at Ostia is truly mystical (Quinn). Others think Augustine reports a phenomenology of mystical experience (Marrou). The majority are of the opinion that Augustine has given us a description of his own mystical experience, the precise nature of which is further debated (Courcelle, Mandouze, Bonner, Van Fleteren). Detailed philological analyses of passages concerning vision in *Confessiones* and other works of Augustine indicate that, according to his own categories, the visions at both Milan and Ostia are genuinely mystical: Augustine had short, direct intuitions of the divine.” Frederick Van Fleteren, art. “*Confessiones*,” in *Augustine through the Ages*, 227-232, here 231.

²⁷ *Conf.* VII, x, 16: “Et inde admonitus redire ad memet ipsum intraui in intima mea duce te et potui, [...]. Intraui et uidi qualicumque oculo animae meae supra eundem oculum animae meae supra mentem meam lucem incommutabilem, non hanc uulgarem et conspicuam omni carni nec quasi ex eodem genere grandior erat, tamquam si ista multo multoque clarius claresceret totumque occuparet magnitudine. Non hoc illa erat, sed aliud, aliud ualde ab istis omnibus. Nec ita erat supra mentem meam, sicut oleum super aquam nec sicut caelum super terram, sed superior, quia ipsa fecit me, et ego inferior, quia factus ab ea. Qui novit veritatem, novit eam, et qui novit eam, novit aeternitatem; caritas novit eam. O aeterna veritas et vera caritas et cara aeternitas! Tue es deus meus [...]” CSEL 27, 103 (= PL 32: 742).

²⁸ *Conf.* VII, x, 16: “Et cum te primum cognoui, tu adsumpsisti me, ut uiderem esse, quod uiderem, et nondum me esse, qui uiderem. Et reuerberasti infirmitatem aspectus mei radians in me uehementer, et contremui amore et horrore: et inueni longe me esse a te in regione dissimilitudinis, tamquam audirem uocem tuam de excelso: ‘Cibus sum grandium: cresce et manducabis me. Nec tu me in te mutabis sicut cibum carnis tuae, sed tu mutaberis in me.’” CSEL 27, 103-104 (= PL 32: 742).

²⁹ *Conf.* VII, x, 16: “Et cognoui, quoniam pro iniquitate erudisti hominem et tabescere fecisti sicut araneam animam meam, et dixi, ‘Numquid nihil est ueritas, quoniam neque per finita neque per infinita locorum spatia diffusa est?’ Et clamasti de longinquo: immo uero ego sum qui sum. Et audiui, sicut auditur in corde, et non erat prorsus, unde

The background for the experience is made up of two radically different scenes: a corporeal one (with a distant God) and an inner, intellectual universe with the promised understanding (“vision”) of the Creator. The soul has, accordingly, two distinct experiences. In the intellectual universe it perceives the overwhelming existence of God but also learns about its own inability to understand (“see”) God; the other experience is that of being rejected into the *regio dissimilitudinis*, with the sense of insufficiency.

These passages of the *Confessions* attracted a great deal of attention after twentieth-century scholarship uncovered neoplatonic influences on Augustine’s thought. Pierre Courcelle (1950) famously saw in *Conf.* VII, x, 16 one of Augustine’s failed efforts at a Plotinian ecstasy (*vaines tentatives d’extases plotiniennes*), and this opinion gained currency. Recently (1992), James J. O’Donnell has perpetuated this view in his magisterial commentary. Seeing in the narrative “the impact the *platoniorum libri* had on him,” he summarises it in the following way: “This paragraph (7.10.16) presents A[ugustine] seeking the ecstasy that Plotinus taught comes from the ascent of mind to union with highest being; this attempt ends in failure.”³⁰

If we read Augustine’s narrative as an account of his *personal* experience, embedded in his own spiritual biography, we may see it as “unsuccessful.” Scholars often consider it as so, and assume that “the vision of Ostia” (in *Conf.* IX, x, 24-25) describes a “successful” variant of the same. But if we accept the position regarding “failed” and “successful” attempts and personal experiences, any introduction of other texts by the same author will lead to an unexpected and implausible conclusion: namely, that the author of the Psalms, Saint Paul and other saints too had the very same failed Plotinian ecstasy that Augustine had due to his Platonic readings.

Anticipating my conclusion, I suggest here seeing in *Conf.* VII, x, 16 not the rendition of a unique and personal experience, but a rhetorically embellished elaboration of a basic model of *extasis*, as adapted to the case of the young Augustine by a later (and theologically more conscious) Augustine, who was writing in a literary style for a lay audience. It is practically insignificant whether “Augustine” – that is, a half-fictitious character in a heavily edited spiritual autobiography – is said to have had individual mystical experiences or not: the decisive factor is what Augustine the theologian teaches concerning such experiences.

The author of the *Confessions* gives the reader a personalised narrative, without much doctrinal reflection: the emphasis is on the individual experience.³¹ The less “personal” theological works of Augustine, which are written largely in the same period but without literary, didactic or rhetorical aspirations present a certain pattern of *extasis*.³² The *Enarrationes in Psalmos* and the *De consensu evangelistarum* make it clear that those experiences that the literary character of the *Confessions* had were nothing other than an *extasis*, as the theologian Augustine conceived.

Extasis and rejection

dubitarem faciliusque dubitare uiuere me quam non esse ueritatem, quae per ea, quae facta sunt, intellecta conspiciuntur.” CSEL 27, 104 (= PL 32: 742).

³⁰ For James J. O’Donnell’s commentary, see his *Augustine. Confessions*, vol. II-III (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992). His comment on VII, x, 16, see II, 434-446 here II, 435. (online version: <http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/jod/conf/comm7.html#CB7C10S16>).

³¹ As Annemaré Kotzé observed, “Augustine’s ingenious and intensely passionate effort to convert his reader to Christianity resulted in a disclosure of his innermost self so touching and a segment of his life-story told so compellingly that readers through the ages (but especially modern readers) became so fascinated by the man that they lost sight of what he was aiming at.” *Augustine’s Confessions*, 252. Although Kotzé focuses on the protreptic function of the *Confessiones* and sees it a work written aiming at the conversion of its audience (and particularly, a Manichean audience), acknowledging this function of the work may also explain the different presentations of the same theory about ecstasy.

³² The *Confessiones* can be dated c. 396-398 or c. 397-401, the *Enarrationes* c. 392-418/420, and the *De consensu evangelistarum* c. 404-405. Dating based on the relevant articles of Fitzgerald and Cavadini, eds., *Augustine through the Ages*.

The passages that are most elucidating for *Conf.* VII, x, 16 are those ones from the *Enarrationes in Psalmos* that explain Ps 30 (31). Their comparison gives striking parallels. Psalm 30:23 says *ego dixi in extasi mea: projectus sum a facie oculorum tuorum*.³³ It is remarkable that the Biblical locus itself provides the two main elements for the ecstatic “experience” described in the *Confessions*: one is the *extasis* (approaching God), the other is the rejection (perceiving that God is distant). The interpretation of Augustine adds some more elements, using metaphors of vision for intellectual experiences:

‘*Ego dixi in extasi mea: projectus sum a facie oculorum tuorum.*’ Assumpta enim mente vidit nescio quid sublime, et quod vidit nondum ibi totus erat: et quadam, si dici potest, quasi coruscatione facta luminis aeterni, ubi sensit non se ibi esse, quod potuit utcumque intelligere, vidit ubi esset... et ait, ‘*Ego dixi in extasi mea: projectus sum a facie oculorum tuorum.*’ Tale est nescio quid quod vidi in extasi, ut inde sentiam quam longe sum, qui nondum ibi sum. *Enarr. in Ps 37*, 12

[“I said in my ecstasy: I am thrown away from your face.” [Ps 30:23] After his mind was caught up, he saw something sublime, but he was not yet there entirely at the thing that he saw: and when – through some sort of glittering (if one may say so) of the eternal light – he perceived that he is not there (which he could understand anyway), he saw where he was ... and said, “I said in my ecstasy: I am thrown away from your face.” Such is that something that I saw in ecstasy in order to understand by it how far away I am, who am not yet there.]

In the *extasis* the mind is “caught up” (*assumpta* – cf. *Conf.*: *adsumpsisti me*). It is God who “takes up” the soul to himself; this elevation also means that the soul “leaves” itself, “steps out” of itself and approaches God.³⁴ The elevated mind sees revelations:³⁵ “something sublime” or “something grand” (*nescio quid sublime* or *magnum*). This *nescio quid sublime* can stand for the entire experience, but (as other passages attest) also for the eternal light of truth or wisdom (*lux incommutabilis* in *Conf.*). The mind also understands, by a sudden “flash” of the eternal “light” (that is, in a sudden moment of insight) that cannot be yet “there” where this “light” is, because the mind is not yet prepared for this experience. This insight of the soul draws a sharp contrast between the two stages. The soul “makes a comparison” between the normal condition and the elevated one, and from then onwards, the “normal” condition is perceived in a dramatic manner: it is a state of rejection, as being remote from God.³⁶ The soul finds itself in this desolate condition, called *regio dissimilitudinis* in *Confessions*.

Against this theoretical background, the account of the *Conf.* VII, x, 16 seems not to be a failed attempt at *extasis*. Failure *does belong* to the Augustinian model of *extasis*, but failure is also inherent in the Biblical passage on which Augustine built his theory. Augustine’s theological interpretation, of course, adds new layers. According to him, the experience of that failure has a pedagogical function: the soul *must* learn the radical otherness of the two spheres of being. The soul *must* experience the state of rejection: Augustine writes thus: *quod vidi in extasi* ut inde sentiam *quam longe sum*. The experience of “eternal light” causes not only the knowledge that God exists

³³ I keep the Vulgate’s numbering of the verse: in the other numbering, the same verse is Ps 31:22. The Douay-Rheims translation renders it in this form: “I said in the excess of my mind: I am cast away from before thy eyes”; the King James Version gives “I said in my haste, I am cut off from before thine eyes.”

³⁴ *Enarr. in Ps 34* sermo 2, 6: “Effudit super se animam suam, et propinquavit Deo: et per quamdam nubem, pondusque carnis rursus in terram projectus, recolens ubi fuisset, et videns ubi esset, dixit: *projectus sum a facie oculorum tuorum.*” PL 36: 338.

³⁵ *Enarr. in Ps 67*, 36: “Ecstasis namque est mentis excessus: quod aliquando pavore contingit; nonnunquam vero per aliquam revelationem mentis a sensibus corporis, ut spiritui quod demonstrandum est demonstratur.” PL 36: 834.

³⁶ *Enarr. in Ps 41*, 18: “Dicit alio loco ista vox: *ego dixi in extasi mea*, ubi vidit nescio quid magnum, excessu mentis: *ego dixi in extasi mea: projectus sum a facie oculorum tuorum.* Comparavit enim haec in quibus esset illis in quae erectus erat, et vidit se longe projectum a facie oculorum Dei.” PL 36: 475.

but also raises a desire or love towards God. This love remains with the soul even in the state of rejection. The greatness of the vision seen, the longing towards that other remote region, the love towards the absent God: all of them promote a dramatic view of the otherwise “normal” condition.

The Augustinian *extasis* concludes with a purposeful frustration and reorientation of the soul towards God. The frustration is *not* the fact that the soul cannot reach some kind of neoplatonic “union” with God but the human condition itself: the soul knows about the glorious heavenly *patria*, its real home, but cannot reach it until death, and in the meantime we *must* live rejected, in the *regio dissimilitudinis*, joined to a corruptible body. In this vision of Augustine, love has a special role in the fallen world. It attracts us to God, but it must also be consciously directed towards God, and God is the only justified aim of love. Augustine formulated this idea in a sober theological language, by the *uti-frui* distinction, at the very beginning of the *De doctrina Christiana*. Loving God means the “proper” existence of man: not loving God means “existing in a wrong way”: *possumus misero aliquo modo esse et non amare te, id est esse et male esse*. This is also a reason why obtaining and maintaining conscious control over desires and love, and selecting the direction of love, are so crucial: this is a necessary struggle to turn love away from unworthy subjects and towards God. In the twelfth century, these Augustinian ideas on love receive a new currency. The *De diligendo Deo* of Bernard of Clairvaux is an eloquent retelling of Augustine’s ideas on love, transposed from the theoretical level of theology into the more personal field of spirituality: after having justified our obligation to love God, Bernard discusses in detail *how* one must control love and turn it towards God.

Another *extasis*: Ostia (*Conf.* IX, x, 24-25)

Confessions IX, x, 24-25 describes another experience, usually regarded as “Ostian ecstasy.” The narrative may be summarised thus: first Augustine and Monica are discussing the nature of heavenly joy (expected soon by Monica). Their discussion covers the entire metaphysical-ontological spectrum and proceeds towards more and more subtle subjects, until the discussion gradually “ascends” to God.³⁷ First they consider and admire the material universe as a creature of God, sharing their thought with each other (*cogitando et loquendo et mirando opera*). The next topic is the mind (*venimus in mentes nostras et transcendimus eas*); the final subject discussed is the heavenly joy (*regio ubertatis indeficientis*) when the soul experiences eternity, truth and wisdom.

The unexpected climax of this narrative is the point when, while discussing and desiring future joy, the interlocutors received a momentary experience of it: *dum loquimur et inhiamus illi, attingimus eam modice toto ictu cordis*.³⁸ This means a moment of understanding (*momentum intelligentiae*, as they formulate it later): after it, their attention came back to themselves, and they found themselves speaking to each other (*remeavimus ad strepitum oris nostri*). The account of the experience is concluded by a single-sentence paragraph (IX, x, 25).³⁹ O’Donnell thinks that this

³⁷ *Conf.* IX, x, 24: “erigentes nos ardentiore affectu in id ipsum, perambulauimus gradatim cuncta corporalia et ipsum caelum [...] Et adhuc ascendebamus interius cogitando et loquendo et mirando opera tua et uenimus in mentes nostras et transcendimus eas, ut attingeremus regionem ubertatis indeficientis, ubi pascis Israhel in aeternum ueritate pabulo, et ibi uita sapientia est [...] Et dum loquimur et inhiamus illi, attingimus eam modice toto ictu cordis; et suspirauimus et reliquimus ibi religatas primitias spiritus et remeavimus ad strepitum oris nostri, ubi uerbum et incipitur et finitur.” CSEL 27, 147-148 (= PL 32: 774).

³⁸ Literally “touching it a little with the full stroke of heart” (*cor* can stand for *mens*).

³⁹ *Conf.* IX, x, 25: “dicebamus ergo: si cui sileat tumultus carnis, sileant phantasiae terrae et aquarum et aeris, sileant et poli et ipsa sibi anima sileat et transeat se non se cogitando, sileant somnia et imaginariae reuelationes, omnis lingua et omne signum et quidquid transeundo fit si cui sileat omnino - quoniam si quis audiat, dicunt haec omnia: non ipsa nos fecimus, sed fecit nos qui manet in aeternum - his dictis si iam taceant, quoniam exerunt aurem in eum, qui fecit ea, et loquatur ipse solus non per ea, sed per se ipsum, ut audiamus uerbum eius, non per linguam carnis neque per uocem angeli nec per sonitum nubis nec per aenigma similitudinis, sed ipsum, quem in his amamus, ipsum sine his audiamus, sicut nunc extendimus nos et rapida cogitatione attingimus aeternam sapientiam super omnia manentem, si continetur hoc et subtrahantur aliae uisiones longe imparis generis et haec una rapiat et absorbeat et recondat in interiora gaudia

paragraph belongs to the description of their spiritual experience, being a “climactic description.”⁴⁰ In my prosaic opinion, it is simply the theory that Augustine (or Augustine and Monica)⁴¹ elaborated after they “returned” from the momentary ecstatic experience: a theory about the eternal life as “hearing” the message of God.

Scholars often see in this description (IX, x, 24-25) an experience something different from the account given in Book VII: O'Donnell, for example, sees here a Christian ecstasy, an opposite of the assumed “unsuccessful Platonic” one of *Conf. VII, x, 16*.⁴² Compared to the model seen previously, I cannot find striking novelties in the experience described here. Augustine and Monica are first investigating what the later Augustine calls *vestigia Dei*: the created, material-corporeal universe. If we interpret it in the context of *De Genesi ad litteram*, they use imaginary vision. The following short reference, *venimus in mentes nostras et transcendimus eas ut attingeremus regionem ubertatis indeficientis*, does not permit much speculation. In the final stage they are thinking about intellectual things that cannot have images and representation (heavenly joy is certainly so). This means “common” intellectual vision. Then suddenly this intellectual vision turns into ecstatic intellectual vision: the content of mind “realises” itself for a moment; finally the soul finds itself in the original starting position. One passage later we find the quasi-obligatory denigration of *this* world, expressed with a moving mixture of Augustine's own and Monica's words.⁴³ Ascent, a momentary experience of the entirely other world, falling back into *this* worthless world – this is another realisation of the model based on Ps 30:23.

Extasis and representations

Augustine's descriptions of the *extasis* have two levels. On one level, he describes processes of cognition and abstract mental-spiritual experiences; on the other level, he constantly uses *similitudines*: visual images (metaphors and allegories) to describe these abstract processes (glimpsing a light and ascending are the most common ones). Augustine is aware that imageless abstraction and images belong to two different levels, and this is also signalled in his accounts. The “light” of God can be seen *qualicumque oculo animae* (*Conf. VII, x, 16*), the rejected status can be understood *quadam, si dici potest, quasi coruscatione* (*Enarr. in Ps 37, 12*). In these examples, *qualicumque, quadam, quasi* reminds the reader that the “eye” and the “flash” (*coruscationes*) are *similitudines*, standing for “mind” and “understanding.”⁴⁴ Augustine uses material *similitudines* instead of an epistemological nomenclature when he describes ecstasy.

spectatorem suum, ut talis sit sempiterna uita, quale fuit hoc momentum intellegentiae, cui suspirauimus, nonne hoc est: intra in gaudium domini tui?” CSEL 27, 148 (= PL 32: 774).

⁴⁰ “What is described should properly be called not the ‘vision’ but the ‘audition’ at Ostia,” writes O'Donnell, *Augustine. Confessions*, vol. III, 133; cf. “the climactic description at 9. 10. 25 is of an ‘audition’ rather than a ‘vision’.” *ibid.*, 128.

⁴¹ The paragraph begins with “dicebamus ergo” but the transition to the next sentence is “dicebam talia.”

⁴² O'Donnell's commentary on this account: “The message of A[ugustine] of 397 is that [...] an ascent was possible that was better than what he had found through the Platonic books: not different, not uniquely better, not a denial of the excellence of Platonic mysticism, but better. This is high flattery for Platonism, combined with a final regretful suspension of allegiance and transfer of that allegiance to Christianity” (*Augustine. Confessions* III, 128). After having seen the surprising similarity between the first account and the words of Ps 30: 23 (and to the passages quoted) O'Donnell also sees an intellectual vision in this account: “On another of A[ugustine]'s schematized theories of vision, Ostia represents intellectual vision, higher than the carnal and spiritual visio[n] he knew earlier.” *Augustine. Confessions*, vol. III, 129 (= <http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/jod/conf/comm9.html#CB9C10S24>)

⁴³ The forthcoming death of a beloved mother gives personal touches to the doctrines in *Conf. IX, x, 26*: “Illo die cum talia loqueremur et mundus iste nobis inter verba vilesceret cum omnibus delectationibus suis,” says Augustine, then Monica tells us a few words about her cheerless and pointless life *here* and her late happiness in seeing her son become a Christian, *contempta felicitate terrena*.

⁴⁴ O'Donnell, in his commentary on *Conf. VII, x, 16*, thinks that “the ascents of Bk. 7 culminating in 7.17.23 are spiritual visions... and the ascent of Ostia at 9.10.23-25 is an intellectual vision.” In my opinion, this is a somehow naive interpretation, since “Seeing the immaterial light with the eye of the soul” can be directly translated into

But what happens to *similitudines* in ecstasy? The *De consensu evangelistarum* (IV, x, 20) gives a description of the ascent from a new perspective.⁴⁵ While accounts based on Ps 30:23 emphasised the dynamics and the rejection, here the same process is described as escaping images. In the ascent, roughly three phases can be discerned:

- 1) The soul leaves the corporeal representations. Representations are obstacles: in the imagery of Augustine, they form a dense cloud, produced by imagination (*nubes phantasiarum corporalium atque carnalium, nebula, carnalis caligo*). The soul must disperse this cloud; this overcoming means also alienation from “this life.”
- 2) Then follows a rapid and short moment of understanding. This is an intellectual experience, when the mind has a glimpse of the eternal truth (wisdom). In metaphorical language, it is a quick flash (*rapida coruscatio*) of the most serene light (of truth).
- 3) The soul returns into the miserable condition of this world, but feels the desire for the vision seen.

Augustine makes it clear that the “bodily darkness” (*carnalis caligo*) of the representations belongs to the human condition of “this life.” “This life” means, emphasised by Sap 9:15 and 2Cor 5:7, the earthly, body-bound condition when a mortal and corruptible body burdens the soul. In this life God is distant; our cognition is reduced to faith, believing in God, instead of seeing him. *Excessus* means a momentary escape from here: it is still a mediated vision (*per speculum et in aenigmate*) but without the corporeal *similitudines*. Augustine’s attitude here is unexpectedly permissive concerning *excessus*: it may happen to people (*quisque*), and if the faithful have not experienced it yet, they must insist on it (*instare debet*) by living a virtuous life.⁴⁶

The famous last passage of the Ostia narration also sets representations in the context of the ascent but adds metaphysical overtones too. Here Augustine describes the state of perfect happiness as is attained by silencing the representations. The passage gives a most complete list of representations: images from the created world (*phantasiae terrae et aquarum et aeris; quidquid transeundo fit*), dreams and revelations (*somnia, imaginariae revelationes*), signs and languages. All of them have a message beyond themselves: the “noise” of the representations is their undecoded message. (For Augustine, in spiritual matters vision and hearing are synonymous with understanding.⁴⁷) The “message” (or meaning) of these representations is one and the same: they are created not by themselves but by God, and after they “told” this message, silence falls. The

“understanding something about God by the mind.” Augustine has not *seen* representations: he has *understood* something about God (even if his account uses the language of representations).

⁴⁵ *De cons. ev.* IV, x, 20: “Quisquis autem arbitratur homini uitam istam mortalem adhuc agenti posse contingere, ut dimoto adque discusso omni nubilo phantasiarum corporalium adque carnalium serenissima incommutabilis ueritatis luce potiatur et mente penitus a consuetudine uitae huius alienata illi constanter et indeclinabiliter haereat, nec quid quaerat nec quis quaerat intellegit. Credat ergo potius sublimi auctoritati minime que fallaci, quamdiu sumus in corpore, peregrinari nos a domino et *ambulare per fidem, nondum per speciem* (2Cor 5:7); ac sic perseueranter retinens adque custodiens fidem, spem et caritatem intendat in speciem ex pignore, quod accepimus, sancti spiritus, qui nos docebit omnem ueritatem, cum deus, qui suscitauit Iesum Christum a mortuis, uiuificabit et mortalia corpora nostra per inhabitantem spiritum eius in nobis. Prius autem quam uiuificetur hoc quod mortuum est propter peccatum, procul dubio *corruptibile est et adgrauat animam* (Sap 9:15) et si quando adiuta excedit *hanc nebulam, qua tegitur omnis terra*, id est hanc carnalem caliginem, qua tegitur omnis uita terrena, tamquam rapida coruscatione perstringitur et in suam infirmitatem redit uiuente desiderio, quo rursus erigatur, nec sufficiente munditia, qua figatur. Et quanto quisque hoc magis potest, tanto maior est, quanto autem minus, tanto minor.” CSEL 43: 416 (= PL 34: 1228).

⁴⁶ *De cons. ev.* IV, x, 20: “Si autem nihil adhuc tale mens hominis experta est, in qua tamen habitat Christus per fidem, instare debet minuendis finiendisque cupiditatibus huius saeculi moralis uirtutis actione tamquam in comitatu trium illorum euangelistarum cum mediatore Christo ambulans.... ab eodem ipso Christo uerbo inluminetur, uerbo, quod in principio erat et uerbum aput deum erat et uerbum deus erat, etsi per speculum et in enigmate, longe tamen sublimius ab omni similitudine corporali.” CSEL 43: 416 (= PL 34: 1228).

⁴⁷ See *De Trin.* XV, x, 18: “foris enim cum per corpus haec fiunt, aliud est locutio, aliud visio; intus autem cum cogitamus, utrumque unum est. sicut auditio et visio duo quaedam sunt inter se distantia in sensibus corporis, in animo autem non est aliud atque aliud videre et audire.” PL 42: 1071.

“message” is reduced here to a metaphysical-theological statement about the Creator: after having understood it, the soul desires to understand (“hear”) God himself, without any intermediary agents.

Augustine creates a simplified but powerful opposition of representations and truth – very much like the opposition of imaginary and intellectual visions. All the various forms of representations have a common feature: they are means of an *indirect* communication between God and the soul, and they have a meaning to be deciphered. Augustine adds later other, Biblical examples of the indirect communication (*vox angeli, sonitus nubis, aenigma similitudinis*). The opposite of this indirect communication is the direct, immediate cognition of God, without any mediation. Eternal life (*sempiterna vita*) is the immediate and perpetual understanding of the eternal Divine Wisdom.

In Augustine (and his tradition), the semantic-metaphysical difference of representations and truth coincides with the theological difference of this world and the world to come. Hugh of Saint-Victor teaches that until the eschatological manifestation of the truth, only signs and likenesses of it can be grasped.⁴⁸ If we add all the elements treated, a very specific model of Augustinian spirituality emerges. There are three parties in the game: God, the individual soul, and an entire universe of things that separates them. Things hindering, things with a meaning to be deciphered, signs and representations: all of them between the soul and God. The soul, until death, is encircled by representations and strives to break through their dense cloud to see the clarity of God.

Pragmatic consequences

This model easily can be turned into pragmatic considerations towards the world, as the Augustine of the *De doctrina Christiana* I, iii-iv shows. God and his cognition are the only possible self-serving goals for us (this is the meaning of *frui*). Hence, we may not pay too much attention to creatures that can distract us from God. Creatures must be literally “utilised” (*uti*), used as instruments (*vehiculi*) in our way to God, but may not be enjoyed in themselves. The result of this approach is a mixed attitude of anxiety and utilitarianism. Creatures form a menacing, distracting world. The world is suspect, being a perpetual source of danger: it may raise *concupiscentia* and so moral decline. The only value of this world is that it can be used as an instrument to reach the distant God. The wanderer of this world is a lonely, untrusting but determined soul, dropped into this world, who is primarily seeking God (and so his own perfection), by any means possible. Innumerable medieval elaborations on this issue could be quoted, ranging from affective outcries of *o munde immunde* and the usual lamentations about *miseria* to intellectual musings about the world as a dissipated and dissipating multitude opposed to the order and unity needed to attain God.⁴⁹

The social (or communitarian) implications of this model of spirituality are also symptomatic. Augustine concentrates on the relation of the individual soul and God, and so creates a special playground for the individual. The soul can concentrate on itself, and through introspection may discover its own depths, making subtle psychological observations. At the same time, the relation of God and the soul can be dramatised and enacted in different ways too, in languages of love and longing. In this model, the individual is essentially alone, exposed to menacing or elevating spiritual experiences. What is entirely missing from this scene is the other

⁴⁸ “Nunc autem interim totum imago est, et ipsa imago longe a veritate est; et tamen facit quod potest quasi imago; et convertit animum, sed non perducit” and “ipsam adhuc veritatem capere non possumus, donec transeat figura, et veritas manifestetur, super omne hoc, et extra omne hoc, nude et aperte ut est ipsa. Nunc ergo usque adhuc manent figurae, et ex ipsis quaedam longe sunt, et apparent quod sunt similitudo tantum; quaedam vero propriae sunt, et accipiuntur quasi pro veritate, cum sint tantum signa veritatis et non veritas, in quibus quidem si nihil altius fuerit ad ipsam, concedit haec veritas nobis, et non reputat impossibilitatem.” Hugh, *In Hier.* III, PL 175: 977A and 978B.

⁴⁹ For Hugh of Saint-Victor, the innumerable creatures lead to innumerable and inordinate thoughts, and hence to disorder: “Nam quia res mundane quas inordinate appetimus infinite sunt, cogitationes quoque, quas ex ipsarum rerum memoria intrinsecus concipimus, finite esse non possunt.” *De archa Noe* IV, ii. PL 176: 665D = CCCM 176, 89. His suggestion is to turn away from the world to Scripture, where order can be found.

person: the fellow man who ought to be loved according to the commandment *dilige proximum tuum*. Fraternal love is undeniably important for Augustine: it is a commandment, and Augustine was a priest, a bishop, preaching to ordinary people and caring about their morals. But fellow humans are outside the closed world of the soul and God: they belong to the external world, and the best possible relation towards them is when they are “correctly used,” that is, loved for God’s sake.⁵⁰

The consequences of this individualistic Augustinian spirituality became more visible among twelfth-century Cistercians. Let it suffice to digress here only to note some of those sharp observations that Caroline Walker Bynum made on the character of Cistercian spirituality.⁵¹ The most important of her findings is that for Cistercians love of one’s neighbour does not mean a real activity towards the other man, but rather an internal, affective reflection like “praying for” and “weeping over.” The idea of “learning by experience” means an affective openness towards God, and love is seen primarily as an experience of the self, not something affecting the external world. Bynum derives these introspective and affective attitudes from the Benedictine Rule, whose commands “contain very few references to service, and none of these references has anything to do with edification” (77) – therefore, she thinks, the interest in human relations turns into introspection.⁵² In my opinion, however, the Rule is not a sufficient ground for these attitudes. This spirituality is basically Augustinian. The closed, internal world of the soul and God returns in the early Cistercians who read Augustine and formulated their spirituality under the influence of his doctrines. Affectivity is a Cistercian novelty – but it is not connected to the Benedictine Rule, and it is not a natural consequence of its deficiencies. Affectivity is a result of theological considerations: Cistercians saw in love a cognitive force that makes cognition of God in this life possible.

This Augustinian model of spirituality, built around a lone soul’s experiences and ecstasies, gives the basic structure of the medieval Western spirituality. The thirteenth century keeps this model but reformulates the experiences in an Areopagitic language. The short-lived Victorine spirituality forms a different tradition even in this respect. The soul returns from ecstasy, but this return is not a dramatic fall of the individual into a deplorable world: it is a conscious return, it is an imitation of Christ – for the sake of one’s neighbour.

5. Corpus quod aggravat animam: the role of the body

Humans are composed of body and soul. In Augustine and his later tradition, the body sets limitations on the cognition of God: not only for our general condition, but also, in extraordinary cases like Saint Paul’s, rapture or *extasis*. Although grace can elevate the soul, the soul will fall back into the desolate region of unlikeness, because of the body.

Augustine sees this experience of rejection in the context of original sin and the resurrection of the body. While later theologians had various opinions on eschatological perspectives, the Augustinian idea of the corruptible body as an impediment for the immediate cognition of God, lived on. The most convenient way to express this opinion was to quote the favourite *locus classicus* of Augustine,⁵³ Sap 9:15 *corpus enim quod corrumpitur adgravat animam et deprimit terrena inhabitatio sensum multa cogitantem*.

The theological source for the doctrine on the body was the later Augustine, especially the *De Genesi ad litteram* XII. For this Augustine, man is body *and* soul, and the perfect state of man

⁵⁰ See *De doctrina* I, xxxvii; on the question of *uti-frui*, see Henry Chadwick’s article *uti-frui*, in *Augustinus-Lexikon*, 3. Band, Doppelfaszikel 1/2 (2004): 70-75.

⁵¹ See her articles from the 1970s: “The Spirituality of Regular Canons in the Twelfth Century” and “The Cistercian Conception of Community,” reedited in her *Jesus as Mother. Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley – Los Angeles – London: University of California Press, 1982), 22-58 and 59-81.

⁵² “When an individual feels that an obligation to serve others cannot be an integral part of his vocation, an interest in human relationships has to become an arena for self-exploration.” *Jesus as Mother*, 77-78.

⁵³ Sap 9:15 has sixty-two occurrences in the oeuvre of Augustine, according to the CETEDOC database.

means a perfect soul governing a perfect body. Originally, in the prelapsarian state, the mind had full control over the body since the soul has an inborn intention to govern the body (*naturalis quidam adpetitus corpus administrandi*), and the body obeyed the soul. After the original sin this control and obedience are lost: the body is rebelling against the soul. Controlling the body is now laborious work for the soul: it is a distraction, while the soul ought to direct all its attention towards God. For Augustine, this concentration of attention is impossible until the resurrection of the body. In the corporeal life, the body distracts the mind. Even if the soul gets rid of the body, as happens in death and (for a moment only) in *extasis*, the inborn intention towards the body is active in the soul, meaning distraction again. Only with the resurrection will this urge be satisfied, when the soul will be accompanied by a glorified body: then the body will perfectly obey the soul.⁵⁴

This concept of man has its own theological and epistemological consequences. The difference between the cognition of those who experience ecstatic intellectual vision (such as Saint Paul) and those who are dead is insignificant. They can surpass the cloud of *similitudines*, they can escape the imaginary representations, but their cognition (even if they see the truth, or God himself as Saint Paul did) is still incomplete. Due to the intention towards the body (which remains demanding without a body), their cognition is incomplete in comparison to the angels (who never had bodies and thus never had such intentions) but also different from the final eschatological vision of the resurrected (who have their bodies). In the Middle Ages, these Augustinian ideas were not unanimously accepted. Regarding the eschatological vision or cognition of God, two competing/coexisting traditions existed until the fourteenth century.⁵⁵

According to one tradition the glorified soul can see God fully after death, even before it receives the glorified body. Augustine's position represents the other tradition, where the full vision of God is possible only in the glorified body. This Augustinian doctrine was an acceptable and accepted position during the twelfth century (represented by, for example, Bernard of Clairvaux and Hugh of Saint-Victor⁵⁶) but in the next centuries it sounded at least unusual. The Scholastic elaboration of the doctrine about beatific vision in the early thirteenth-century gradually diminished the role of the glorified body in the eschatological vision of God (see Part III, Introduction). In the next century, when Pope John XXII tried to make the Augustinian position the official doctrine of the Church in the 1330s, he had to face resistance. After his death, Pope Benedict XII declared in his *Benedictus Deus* (1336) the official Church position, which finally discredited the Augustinian idea: the glorified souls can see God before accepting the glorified body.

Whatever role the body has in the cognition of God it has severe implications for theories of contemplation. Being connected to a body is the ultimate difference between the disembodied soul and the human being living earthly life. If the possession of the body makes no difference in the

⁵⁴ *De Gen. ad litt.* XII, xxxv: "minime dubitandum est et raptam hominis a carnis sensibus mentem et post mortem ipsa carne deposita transcens etiam similitudinibus corporalium non sic uidere posse incommutabilem substantiam, ut sancti angeli uident [...] quia inest ei naturalis quidam adpetitus corpus administrandi: quo adpetitu retardatur quodammodo, ne tota intentione pergat in illud summum caelum, quamdiu non subest corpus, cuius administratione adpetitus ille conquiescat. Porro autem, si tale sit corpus, cuius sit difficilis et grauis administratio, sicut haec caro, quae corrumpitur et adgrauat animam [...] multo magis auertitur mens ab illa uisione summi caeli: unde necessario abripienda erat ab eiusdem carnis sensibus, ut ei quomodo capere posset illud ostenderetur. Proinde, cum hoc corpus iam non animale, sed per futuram commutationem spiritale receperit angelis adaequata, perfectum habebit naturae suae modum oboediens et inperans." CSEL 28/1, 433 (= PL 34: 483).

⁵⁵ On the history of the doctrines on the beatific vision, see Nikolaus Wicki, *Die Lehre von der himmlischen Seligkeit in der mittelalterlichen Scholastik von Petrus Lombardus bis Thomas Aquin* (Freiburg, Switzerland: Universitäts-Verlag, 1954) and Christian Trottmann, *La vision béatifique des disputes scholastiques à sa définition par Benoît XII* (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1995); for the fourteenth-century decision, see Trottmann, "Deux interprétations contradictoires de Saint Bernard: les sermons de Jean XXII sur la vision béatifique et les traités inédits du cardinal Jacques Fournier" in *Mélanges de l'Ecole française de Rome. Moyen-Age* 105 (1993): 327-379 and Marc Dykmans, *Les sermons de Jean XXII sur la vision béatifique* (Rome: Presses de l'Université Grégorienne, 1973).

⁵⁶ See the last pages of Bernard's *De diligendo Deo*; Hugh, *De arca Noe* I, iv/v: "anime sanctorum et nunc deposito carnis onere in contemplatione sui conditoris letantur et, cum iterum corpora sua immortalia et impassibilia receperint, tunc plenius et uicinius ei per contemplationis [632B] presentiam adherebunt." CCCM 176: 27 (= PL 176: 632B).

cognition of God (which is a possible model), then the cognition in contemplation and the eschatological vision can be nearly identical; if it does make a difference, contemplative experience and the eschatological vision may be radically different. A closely related question concerns the formulation of the upper limit of extraordinary spiritual experiences – whether the highest possible form of the cognition of God before the “literal” (that is, corporeal death) can be a face-to-face vision of God or not. The answers of the Christian tradition diverge. Augustine (and the Scholastic tradition of *raptus*) permits its possibility, but considers it a miracle and defines it as being “not in this life.” Gregory the Great denies its possibility. The position of the Victorines will be investigated in Part II.

Gregory the Great

The writings of Gregory the Great (d. 604) supplied medieval theologians with crucial arguments on the cognition of God in this life. The present chapter presents only those few ideas of his that were particularly influential for later spiritual works: the idea that contemplation cannot be a face-to-face vision of God, and the idea that love towards God is already some sort of cognition.⁵⁷ Gregory’s theology is not expounded in a systematic way: his positions reappear dispersed in exegetical works, the commentary on Job (*Moralia in Job*) and homilies on Ezekiel and the Gospels. These doctrines indeed show coherence: based on a selective reading of Augustine, they form a compact and coherent theology that at several points departs from Augustine.

The simplest approach to Gregory’s theology is to start with a main doctrine of his, repeated several times: in this life God cannot be seen as he is, and whatever can be seen of God, is not God but only an image of him. Contrary to Augustine, “life” for Gregory means the concrete human existence bound to the body until corporeal death.⁵⁸ This “factual” or non-metaphorical interpretation of “life” marks a fundamental difference between Gregory and Augustine, and defines his position about the possible cognition of God. In the case of Augustine, the word “life” had a wider, metaphorical meaning in such contexts, referring to the usual human condition; its opposite, “death” meant the cessation of life, either (literally) by physical death or (metaphorically) by ecstasy. The central doctrine of the *Letter 147* and the *De Gen. ad litt.* XII is based on this metaphorical meaning of “death”: while God cannot be seen in this life face to face, as he is, the rapture of Saint Paul was “death,” and therefore he saw God face to face.

In Gregory’s case, there is no room for such metaphorical allowances: in this life (meaning the life before death) no one has seen or can see God – not even the enraptured Paul, Augustine’s key figure for the extraordinary earthly vision of God. It is remarkable that Gregory is generally silent about Paul’s rapture, and at those two instances where he gives some explanation of the case, his position is the precise opposite of the Augustinian one. Augustine taught that Paul was *not* in this life when in the third heaven (that is, in intellectual vision) he saw God face to face; Gregory emphasises that Paul, even if he was in the third heaven, was still *in this life*, and saw God only from a distance – hence he said, “now we see through a mirror in an enigma.”⁵⁹ Gregory takes over

⁵⁷ For a general presentation of Gregory’s teachings on contemplation, see McGinn, *The Growth*, 50-79; Ruh, *Geschichte*, 163-167.

⁵⁸ For example, *Mor.* XXXI, 51, 101: “Quantumlibet enim in hac vita positus quisque profecerit, necdum Deum per speciem, sed per aenigma et speculum videt [...] sancti viri in altam se contemplationem erigunt, et tamen Deum, sicut est, videre non possunt” (PL 76: 28D-29A), but also *In Ez.* II, homilia 2: “et cum mens in contemplatione profecerit, non jam quod [Deus] ipse est, sed id quod sub ipso est contemplatur” (PL 76: 956CD); *Mor.* XXIV, 6, 12: “quaedam visionis imitatio” (PL 76: 292D); *Mor.* XXIII, 20, 39: “sub quadam imaginatione” (PL 76: 274C).

⁵⁹ *Mor.* XXXI, li, 103: “Consideremus quam sublimis aquila fuerit Paulus, qui usque ad tertium coelum volavit, sed tamen in hac vita positus e longinquo adhuc Deum prospicit, qui ait: Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem” (PL 76: 630B); *Hom. in Ez.* I, homilia 8, 30: “adhuc tamen in carne mortali posita [mens] videre gloriam Dei non valet sicut est. Sed quidquid de illa est quod in mente resplendet, similitudo, et non ipsa est. Unde et

many Augustinian ideas: but those that are connected to Paul's rapture as an assumed face-to-face vision of God are discarded. There is no face-to-face vision before corporeal death, and therefore no ecstasy or *alienatio mentis* can grant such a vision of God; for the same reason, neither is ecstasy a metaphorical "death" leading to such vision.

Contemplation: seeing the light and seeing images

Gregory's principles set strict limits for the earthly cognition of God. An Augustinian intellectual vision of God's essence or nature is excluded for Gregory, since the cognition of God without representations is impossible in this life (so the Augustinian distinction between three kinds of vision has no explanatory value in his theology).⁶⁰ Interestingly enough, Gregory still retains certain Augustinian patterns to describe what he calls "contemplation."

The fundamental ideas are clear and several times repeated: God is unlimited and incorruptible; his nature is light; humans are limited and corrupted and – because of the original sin – they cannot see that light properly. The most perfect cognition of God that humans can attain is not available in this life, but only after it; in this life neither a perfect cognition of God nor a complete ignorance of God is possible.⁶¹ Speaking about the highest possible cognition of God in this life, Gregory usually uses two different sets of concepts and imagery: one uses the metaphor of a limited vision of light (of God), the other emphasises the obstacles barring that vision.

In the imagery of vision, Gregory operates with the terms of light, blindness, vision and darkness. In this parlance, God is conceived as unlimited and radiating light; we can turn towards him, but we cannot see him properly because our vision is intercepted by the *caligo*. Literally, *caligo* means something opaque or misty (like a cloud or fog): it can be thick but light can also come through it. As an allegory, the polyvalent term *caligo* can mean simultaneously the consequences of the original sin, the corporeal nature and the corrupted human nature alike. In some cases Gregory uses the metaphor of innate blindness (*originalis caecitas*) to emphasise the general inability to see God's light in this life, sometimes lifted by the intervention of grace;⁶² in other cases, he speaks about the weakness of the mind's eyes, which does not permit an adequate vision of God.⁶³ The opposite of this dim vision of the light is the clear vision of the divine light (that is, the divine essence), the reward of the Blessed.

Narrated in this visual language, the highest possible form of earthly cognition occurs when the soul in ecstasy can still glimpse the light. Gregory emphasises in various ways that it is not the proper vision of the light: it is just glittering (*coruscatio*), and the light can be seen only "from a distance," "obscurely" (*per caliginem*) or "to some extent" (*aliquatenus*) only.⁶⁴ It is a short, momentary glimpse, followed by the Augustinian "falling back" to the present condition.⁶⁵

ille praedicator qui raptus usque ad tertium coelum fuerat dicebat: Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate" (PL 76: 868D).

⁶⁰ Compare the usage of the same examples of Balthasar and the pharaoh in *Mor.* XI, 20, 31 (PL 75: 968D) and in *De Gen. ad litt.* XII, 9 and 11.

⁶¹ See *Mor.* XXXI, li, 101: "nec omnino cernitur, nec rursum omnino non cernitur," cf. Hugh of Saint-Victor: "Quod Deus nec totus sciri, nec totus ignorari potest." *De sacr.* I, iii, 2, PL 176: 217B.

⁶² See, for example, *Mor.* VIII, xxx, 49: "superna gratia carnalem cogitationem nostram per admistionem suae contemplationis irradiat, et ab originali caecitate hominem ad intellectu reformat. Nam quia a paradisi gaudiis expulsum in hoc jam exilio natura edidit, quasi a nativitate homo sine oculis processit." PL 75: 832C.

⁶³ "Quia igitur ad contemplandum interni solis radium, nubes sese nostrae corruptionis interserit, nec ad infirmos nostrae mentis oculos illud, sicut est, incommutabile lumen erumpit; adhuc Deum quasi in nocturna visione cernimus, cum procul dubio sub incerta contemplatione caligamus." *Mor.* V, xxxi, 53. PL 75: 708A.

⁶⁴ *Mor.* XXXI, li, 101: "sancti viri in altam se contemplationem erigunt, et tamen Deum, sicut est, videre non possunt... Intentionis aciem fortiter tendunt, sed necdum propinquum aspiciunt, cujus claritatis magnitudinem penetrare nequaquam possunt. A luce enim incorruptibili caligo nos nostrae corruptionis obscurat; cumque et videri aliquatenus potest, et tamen videri lux ipsa, sicut est, non potest." PL 76: 682D.

⁶⁵ "Ecce enim electorum mens... quae sint bona invisibilia [0833A] rimatur, atque haec agens plerumque in dulcedinem supernae contemplationis rapitur, jamque de intimis aliquid quasi per caliginem conspicit, et ardenti desiderio interesse

Gregory does not give a coherent and detailed description of the process of the contemplative ecstasy: the usual form in which he speaks about it comprises short and scattered doctrinal remarks on contemplation. Two such passages demand special attention: one where he gives a short outline of its process (*Mor.* XXIV, vi, 11-12), and another where he interprets Ps 30:23, the passage that Augustine used for his interpretation of ecstasy (*Mor.* XXIII, 20, 41-43). *Mor.* XXIV, vi, 11-12 gives a short account of the process. First the mind's "gaze" (*acies*) is cleaned from the *caligo*, then the glittering (*coruscatio*) of the infinite light illuminates it, and the mind becomes caught up above itself. Then follows the characteristic Augustinian moment of insufficiency (so clearly spelled out in the *Confessions*): the mind "senses" the Truth but also perceives its own inability to see or understand it; the immensity of that Truth rejects the gaze of the mind, and finally the mind falls back into itself.⁶⁶

Ps 30:23 gives to Gregory, as it did to Augustine, an opportunity to explain ecstasy, in *Mor.* XXIII, 20, 41-43.⁶⁷ The Psalm verse *ego dixi in pavore meo* in Gregory's interpretation first refers to the experience of David: he was caught up in ecstasy (*sublevatus in extasi*); by the grace of contemplation and a ray of light (*radio claritatis*) he saw a light in his soul but also saw that he could not see there anything by himself – and he fell back. In the continuation, Gregory changes the subject to the perfect soul (that is, the contemplative) who is more familiar with rejection than the interlocutor of the Psalm was. Part of this contemplative experience is the struggle for the truth, against visual representations: the mind must reject all the distracting images generated in the imagination due to the body, and the gaze of the "eye of the heart" must be fixed on the ray of the unlimited light in order to recollect the mind into a state of oneness.⁶⁸ Other passages make it clear that such ecstasy, even with a glimpse of the light, may be only momentary: the vision repels the soul (cf. the Augustinian *reverberatio*) and the weakness of the body draws it back.⁶⁹

A different set of imagery is grouped around the notion of the representation or image that separates us from the vision of God. Gregory's position is explicit: in this life God cannot be seen: what can be seen (or known) of God is a representation only (called *figura*, *imago circumscripta*, *quaedam imago*), an image that is not identical with God.⁷⁰ However high one is elevated in contemplative ecstasy, his cognition remains still a vision "through an image," through a mirror in

spiritalibus angelorum ministeriis conatur; gustu incircumscripsi luminis pascitur, et ultra se evecta ad semetipsam relabi dedignatur; sed quia adhuc corpus quod corrumpitur aggravat animam (Sap 9:15), inhaerere diu luci non valet, quam raptim videt. Ipsa quippe carnis infirmitas transcendentem se animam retrahit, atque ad cogitanda ima ac necessaria suspirantem reducit." *Mor.* VIII, xxx, 19. PL 75: 831D-832A. Note the reference to Sap 9:15, Augustine's main locus on the issue.

⁶⁶ *Mor.* XXIV, vi, 11-12: "Prius a mentis acie exurente tristitia interposita malorum caligo detergitur, et [0292C] tunc resplendente raptim coruscatione incircumscripsi luminis illustratur. Quo utcunque conspecto, in gaudio cujusdam securitatis absorbetur, et quasi post defectum vitae praesentis ultra se rapta, in quadam novitate aliquo modo recreatur. Ibi [...] non se sufficere ad id quod rapta est contemplatur, et veritatem sentiendo, videt quia quanta est ipsa veritas, non videt. Cui veritati tanto magis se longe existimat, quanto magis appropinquat, quia nisi illam utcunque conspiceret, nequaquam eam conspiceret se non posse sentiret. Adnissus ergo animi, dum in illam [0292D] intenditur, immensitatis ejus coruscante circumstantia reverberatur. [...] Unde et ad semetipsam citius labitur, et prospectis quasi quibusdam veritatis vestigiis, ad sua ima revocatur." PL 76: 292CD.

⁶⁷ See *Mor.* XXIII, 20, 41-43 (PL 76: 276C-277B) and *Mor.* XVIII, 42, 66 (contemplation as consideration of the heavenly life lost due to the original sin, PL 76: 75BD).

⁶⁸ *Mor.* XXIII, 20, 41. (PL 79: 835A).

⁶⁹ See, for example, *Mor.* VIII, 30, 19 (PL 75: 831D-832A), *Mor.* XXIV, 6, 11-12 (PL 76: 292CD).

⁷⁰ See *Mor.* XVII, liv, 88: "Quid est ergo quod [...] et Joannes ait: *Deum nemo vidit unquam* (1Jn 4:12), nisi hoc quod patenter datur intelligi, quia quandiu hic mortaliter vivitur, videri per quasdam imagines Deus potest, sed per ipsam naturae suae speciem non potest, ut anima, gratia spiritus afflata, per figuras quasdam Deum videat, sed ad ipsam vim ejus essentiae non pertingat?" PL 76: 92B; cf. *Mor.* XVII, liv, 88: "eum sitiebat per incircumscripae naturae suae claritatem cernere, quem jam coeperat per quasdam imagines videre, ut sic superna essentia mentis ejus oculis adesset, quatenus ei ad aeternitatis visionem nulla imago creata [0092D] temporaliter interesset. Et viderunt ergo patres testamenti veteris Dominum, et tamen, juxta Joannis vocem: 'Deum nemo vidit unquam' (Jn 4:12); et juxta beati Job sententiam, sapientia quae Deus est, abscondita est ab oculis omnium viventium, quia in hac mortali carne consistentibus, et videri potuit per quasdam circumscriptas imagines, et videri non potuit per incircumscriptum lumen aeternitatis." PL 76: 92C.

an enigma (cf. 1Cor 13:12).⁷¹ This position is in sharp contrast to that of Augustine, who permitted (for miraculous cases at least) a face-to-face vision of God in this life.

The limited nature of the possible cognition of God is spelled out also in the explanation of the throne vision of Isaiah 6 (*In Ez.* II, hom. 2). The prophet describes the Lord as sitting on an elevated throne, and adds that “the things below God” (*ea quae sub ipso erant*) fulfilled the Temple.⁷² Gregory’s allegorising explanation translates this image into a doctrine on contemplation. The Temple is the human mind; the “things below God” limit our cognition of God in this life – more precisely, these “things” are what can be known of God in this life. As in this life God cannot be seen, we can see only the “things below God” and however far contemplation reaches, it still cannot attain God.⁷³ The doctrine behind the words is not particularly unique in itself: Gregory several times repeats it elsewhere that in this life God cannot be seen directly, and that not even contemplation makes an exception to this rule. This is a basic principle in Gregorian theology, just as “contemplation” means a mediated cognition of God, even if in ecstasy.

The same passage gains unusual currency later, especially in the thirteenth century, partly due to its wording. Gregory explicitly denied the immediate vision of God in what he called “contemplation.” Twelfth-century theologians applied this term to a wide spectrum of the cognition of God: it could refer to the eschatological vision, to cognition through intermediaries, but also to ecstatic cognition of God (including Saint Paul’s rapture). Thirteenth-century theologians, as Part III chapter I and II will demonstrate, utilised Gregory’s sentence as argument to restructure concepts about the cognition of God. They maintained by it that “in this life” contemplation (that is, a mediated vision) cannot attain the vision of God (this is the *Quantumcumque* argument, see Part III chapter II), and they grouped under contemplation the prelapsarian vision of Adam too. Simultaneously they also stated that in *raptus* a direct, face-to-face vision of God is possible, but *raptus* was not considered as contemplation and it was taken out of the realm of “this life.”

Gregory’s doctrines on contemplation do not give an entirely coherent theory. The firm doctrine that in this life God cannot be seen face to face sets the upper limit for all possible cognition: whatever is perceived in spiritual experience, it is certainly not God as he is, only something else – an image or representation. The Augustinian pattern of *extasis* is still kept: the dynamic descriptions of ascending and falling back now are applied to this limited cognition. At the same time, these descriptions have no clear theological equivalents: it is difficult to say in precise terms what Gregory meant by seeing the Light of God.

Love as cognition?

⁷¹ *In Ezechielem* II, homilia 1: “Scriptum quippe est: ‘corpus quod corrumpitur, aggrauat animam, et deprimit terrena inhabitatio sensum multa cogitantem.’ Sic itaque per contemplationem iam mente extra carnis angustias tendimus, adhuc tamen in sacramentis quae cognouimus ipsa carnali angustia intra portam tenemur. Saepe namque animus ita in diuina contemplatione suspenditur, ut iam se percipere de aeterna illa libertate quam oculus non uidit, nec auris audiuit, aliquid per quamdam imaginem laetetur, sed tamen, mortalitatis suae pondere reuerberatus, ad ima relabitur et quibusdam poenae suae uinculis ligatus tenetur.” PL 76: 947B. Cf. *Mor.* XXXI, li, 101: “Quantumlibet enim in hac vita positus quisque profecerit, necdum Deum per speciem, sed per aenigma et speculum videt. E vicino autem cum respicimus, verius cernimus; cum vero longius aciem tendimus, sub incerto visu caligamus. [...] sancti viri in altam se contemplationem erigunt, et tamen Deum, sicut est, videre non possunt [...] A luce enim incorruptibili caligo nos nostrae corruptionis obscurat; cumque et videri aliquatenus potest, et tamen videri lux ipsa, sicut est, non potest, quam longe sit indicat.” PL 76: 28D-29A.

⁷² Isa 6:1: Vidi Dominum sedentem super solium excelsum et elevatum; et ea quae sub ipso erant replebant templum.

⁷³ *In Ezechielem* II, homilia 2, 14: “Sed inter haec sciendum est quia quandiu in hac mortali carne vivitur, nullus ita in contemplationis virtute proficit, ut in ipso jam incircumscripso [0956B] luminis radio mentis oculus infigat. [...] Nos ergo templum illius sumus, in quorum mentibus habitare dignatur. Sed ‘ea quae sub eo erant implebant templum,’ quia quidquid de illo modo conspicitur, adhuc non est ipse, sed sub ipso est. [...] ‘Ea ergo quae sub eo sunt implent templum,’ quia, sicut dictum est, et cum mens in contemplatione profecerit, non jam quod ipse est, sed id quod sub ipso est contemplatur. In qua videlicet contemplatione jam quietis internae [0957A] gustus contingitur.” PL 76: 956A-957A.

Twelfth-century Cistercian spirituality has found in Gregory an authority for one of its basic doctrines: namely, that in the relation between God and man love works as cognition – that is, loving God is cognising God. This teaching is explicit at both William of Saint-Thierry and Bernard of Clairvaux;⁷⁴ thirteenth-century theologians, such as Thomas Gallus and Bonaventure, elaborated further the notion of love through cognition (see Part III). The original of the idea can be found in Gregory: even the wording is similar (*amor ipse notitia est*), but the instrumental, cognitive function attributed to love is absent from his thinking. It is a theological commonplace that God is love, or that God does love men, or that men shall love God; it is also a commonplace that loving a subject may promote its cognition – and Gregory’s writings do not go further. The direct context of the famous sentence *amor ipse notitia est* is that Christ impresses the joy of the heavenly fatherland in our minds, through inspiring us to love him, and through hearing, we start loving and desiring that joy: “when we love the supracelestial things we heard about, then we already know the things heard, because love itself is cognition. Therefore [God] can make everything known to those who... are burning with the fires of the love towards the highest.”⁷⁵ Love is a drive in the cognition of God.

Another account with a similar wording makes the Augustinian connections of the idea clear. In *Mor.* X, viii, 13, Gregory states that we cognise through love the face of God that must be followed,⁷⁶ and he gives here another personal variant of the Augustinian ecstasy pattern. According to it, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit frees the mind from carnal thoughts (focused on transitory things) and raises the desire for the heavenly things. The mind is elevated “out from the body” by the “force” (*vi*) of contemplation; it attempts to see the “unlimited light” but is too weak to do so. The attempt fails: the mind becomes rejected and the body keeps it back too. Even the “pedagogical” function of the ecstasy and rejection is present, as Augustine outlined: God shows a little of himself, enough to raise the love towards God, but draws back from the cognition and only the loving memory of God remains with the soul. The relation of love to cognition is not particularly articulated: the love of the “spiritual homeland” shows the way to follow: this love is a sort of trace or vestige (*vestigium*) of God.

⁷⁴ See William: “cognitio vero Sponsae ad Sponsum et amor idem est; quoniam in hac re amor ipse intellectus est.” *Expositio altera super Cantica* i, PL 180: 491D; also *Epistola ad fratres de Monte Dei* I, xiv, 43, PL 184: 336A; Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermo 29 de diversis* (with reference to Gregory), PL 183: 620B.

⁷⁵ *XL homiliarum libri duo*, lib. II hom. 27, 4: “Quae sunt omnia quae audivit a Patre suo [...] nisi gaudia internae charitatis, nisi illa festa supernae patriae, quae nostris quotidie mentibus per aspirationem sui amoris imprimit? Dum enim audita supercaelestia amamus, amata iam nouimus, quia amor ipse notitia est. Omnia ergo eis nota fecerat, qui, a terrenis desideriis immutati, amoris summi facibus ardebant.” PL 76: 1207A.

⁷⁶ *Mor.* X, viii, 13. “cum ejus Spiritus afflatu tangimur, et, extra carnis angustias sublevati, per amorem agnoscimus auctoris nostri contemplandam speciem, quam sequamur. Nam cum mentem nostram spiritalis patriae amor inflammat, quasi sequentibus iter insinuat, et substrato cordi [0928A] velut quoddam vestigium Dei gradientis imprimitur [...]. Quem enim necdum cernimus, restat necesse est ut per vestigia sui amoris indagemus, quatenus usque ad contemplationis speciem quandoque mens inveniatur quem nunc, quasi a tergo subsequens, per sancta desideria explorat. [...] Nunc autem a carnali cogitatione animum infusi Spiritus gratia sublevat, et in contemptum rerum transeuntium exaltat; totumque mens quod appetebat in infimis despicit, atque ad superna desideria ignescit, et contemplationis suae vi extra carnem tollitur, quae corruptionis suae pondere adhuc in carne retinetur. Incircumscripti luminis jubar intueri conatur, et non valet; quod infirmitate pressus animum et nequaquam penetrat, et tamen repulsus amat. Jam namque de se conditor per quod ametur ostendit, sed visionis suae speciem amantibus subtrahit.” PL 75: 927D-928B.

Chapter II. Twelfth-century problems

The writings of Augustine and Gregory furnished both a theological framework to interpret, and also a language to describe, spiritual experiences. The same works, however, seem insufficient, if one compares them to what twelfth-century texts present concerning the soul. The human soul has not changed much since, and neither has its longing for the cognition of God – but the concepts and the language by means of which these issues were discussed were changed. This section outlines those general conditions and perceptions that led to a different, characteristically medieval profile.

The human soul became the subject of analysis at various levels in the twelfth century. Greco-Arabic medical literature, recently translated, provided a physiological background to it; philosophical works, mostly inherited from Latin Antiquity, provided a philosophical approach to it. The novelty of the twelfth century, the spiritual literature, considered the soul as a moral-religious self, which has to be created or (re)formed through various exercises. To the richness of sources there also contributed an increased number of authors. The Patristic heritage of spirituality meant hardly more than a handful of authors, with spiritual doctrines dispersed in the vast body of their theological writings (as the examples of Augustine and Gregory show). In the twelfth century, dozens of authors discussed such issues. Theological works and Scripture provided a certain amount of knowledge about God, but a more direct cognition, through ecstasy (*extasis*, *alienatio mentis*), was also considered as a real possibility. The ecstasy mentioned by Augustine and Gregory now became a possible, even desired, experience for many. The various institutions and intellectual techniques of the regulated monastic life they conducted – such as prayer, *lectio* and *meditatio*, and spiritual exercises – served, ultimately, as preparation for such experiences. The “spiritual ascent” or the “way to God” was discussed now not only through hints or remarks in the theological works or sermons but also in “monographic” form, in works devoted to this very subject.⁷⁷ This mystagogical or anagogical literature, explaining in detail how one should gain control over one’s thoughts and moral development to prepare oneself for the grace of contemplation, seems to be the novelty of the twelfth century.

Such spiritual experiences were beyond the usual, “common” state of the mind and whatever was considered as usual – but there were ways to talk about them. Ecstasy (called *excessus mentis*, *alienatio mentis*, *extasis*) was considered less as a type of subjective “psychic events” than an experience joined to a special form of the cognition of God. In order to describe and interpret this special cognition, twelfth-century theologians knew two, sometimes conflicting, languages: those of theological anthropology and epistemology. Unlike modern authors who are accustomed to speaking vaguely of “mystical experiences,” or of a “vision of God,” or experiencing “the presence of God,” twelfth-century theologians were remarkably aware of the two distinct languages that they used.

The language of theological anthropology is what was inherited. This is the tone that the texts of Augustine and Gregory used to talk about ecstasy. Backed by Scriptural passages, it uses images, metaphors and allegories: the proper term “cognition” is replaced by metaphors of sense perception, usually by means of vision or hearing. The remarkable feature of this language is that it is not objective or conceptual, and has no proper epistemological counterpart to explain what happens during this cognition. When Augustine speaks about “the eye of the soul,” by means of which he saw “some sort of light,” or the intellectual vision that comes about through the “gaze of the mind” (*contuitus*, *aspectus mentis*), the expressions that he uses are rather casual metaphors. They have evocative or demonstrative power, and can create narratives, but these expressions are not precisely correct terms of (philosophical) epistemology. Seemingly, there is no clear-cut,

⁷⁷ Such works are, for example, the *De diligendo Deo* of Bernard of Clairvaux, the *De contemplando Deo* and the *Epistola ad fratres de Monte Dei* of William of Saint-Thierry, the *Benjamins* of Richard of Saint-Victor and the *Itinerarium* of Bonaventure.

unambiguous epistemological model behind the examples of Augustine and Gregory: it is difficult to discern, in a “conceptual,” non-metaphorical and non-theological language, what kind of cognitive faculty the “eye of the mind” is, or how it works.

Despite these shortcomings, this language of theological anthropology worked: scholars can reconstruct a coherent use of the terms in their respective *oeuvres*. Twelfth-century authors used this language too: their descriptions of contemplative ecstasy are usually written in this language. Kenosis and alienation of the soul, metaphors of ascent or ascension, death or sleep, the deification and annihilation of the self, assimilation to Christ, union of wills and so on: all these elements belong to this language, together with a standard set of Biblical references.

This language was the traditional one of theologians. Its conceptual limits are not evident if one considers only Patristic sources alone (since they did not have much of an alternative). Twelfth-century authors thus were aware that there existed also another language to use when speaking of cognition (including the cognition of God) – the epistemological language. Usually it was monastic authors who articulated the problem of theology and philosophy (that is, theological anthropology and epistemology) being different approaches to the same subject. William of Saint-Thierry, around 1138, drew a clear distinction between the knowledge about the soul as “philosophers of this world” and as “our people, the teachers of the Church” conceive it.⁷⁸ In the 1160s, Isaac de Stella emphasised the point that doctrines on the nature and powers of the soul and its inhabitation in the body are different issues from those that can be learned from Scripture.⁷⁹ Later on, Godefroy of Saint-Victor in his *Microcosmus* (c. 1185) makes a clear distinction again: the theologian and the philosopher regard the human spirit differently: the philosopher considers its *naturalia* given by creation, the theologian considers the *gratuita* added to them.⁸⁰ These remarks point out a number of problems. One is the existence of a philosophical, epistemological language in the period; the other is the unregulated relation of theological anthropology and epistemology.

Describing cognition

Talking about cognition in a “proper,” “scientific” language had certainly become possible by the twelfth century. The *Consolatio* of Boethius provided a set of definitions of cognitive forces; Plato’s *Timaeus* (coupled with Calcidius’ commentary) described a pattern of the progress of cognition, too.⁸¹ Naming, listing, describing or defining the cognitive faculties was no longer unusual (even if the different definitions did not necessarily agree) – such enumerations can be found in many authors, including Hugh, Richard and Godefroy of Saint-Victor, William of Saint-Thierry and Isaac de Stella, Thierry of Chartres, John of Salisbury and William of Conches. There is no room here for a digression on these lists (the Victorine ones being discussed later); one may

⁷⁸ William of Saint-Thierry, *De natura corporis et animae* II, 51: “Anima, sicut philosophi hujus mundi dicunt, substantia est simplex, species naturalis, distans a materia corporis sui organum membrorum et virtutem vitae habens. Porro secundum nostros, id est ecclesiasticos doctores, anima spiritualis propriaque est substantia a Deo creata, sui corporis vivificatrix, rationabilis, immortalis, sed in bonum malumque convertibilis.” *Guillaume de Saint-Thierry. De la nature du corps et de l’âme*, ed. Michel Lemoine (Paris 1988), 122 (= PL 180: 707D). The passage is taken from the *De anima* of Cassiodorus; key terms were altered from “magistri saecularium litterarum” and “veracium doctorum auctoritas.”

⁷⁹ Isaac de Stella, *De anima*: “Vis enim a nobis edoceri de anima, sed neque id, quod in divinis litteris didicimus, id est qualis fuerit ante peccatum aut sit sub peccato aut futura post peccatum: sed de eius natura et viribus, quomodo sit in corpore vel quomodo exeat et caetera quae non scimus.” PL 194: 1875B, corrected after Gaetano Raciti, “Isaac de l’Étoile,” *DS* 7 (Paris 1969): 2011-2038, here 2019.

⁸⁰ Godefroy, *Microcosmus*, xviii: “Siquidem aliud philosophus aliud theologus in humano spiritu inspexit. Nam cum alia sunt humani spiritus naturalia a deo creatore sibi data, alia gratuita a deo recreatore sibi superaddita, philosophus naturalia, theologus gratuita inspexit dum hominem vel microcosmum vel mundum appellavit.” *Godefroy de Saint-Victor. Microcosmus*. Texte établi et présenté par Philippe Delhay (Lille: Facultés Catholiques – Gembloux: Editions J. Duculot, 1951), 45.

⁸¹ Edited as *Timaeus a Calcidio translatus commentarioque instructus*, ed. J.H. Waszink (London: Warburg Institute and Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975 [1962]).

note only a few relevant points of them. From a typological point of view, twelfth-century epistemological schemes present a combination of uniformity and diversity. The subsequent table gives an overview of these schemes imitating, ultimately, Boethius' account.⁸²

Boethius, <i>Consolatio V</i>	sensus	imaginatio	ratio	intelligentia	
Abelard (?), <i>Tractatus de intellectibus</i>	sensus	imaginatio	intellectus	intelligentia	
Thierry of Chartres, <i>Glosa II</i> , 6-10	sensus	imaginatio	ratio	intelligentia, "disciplina"	intellectibilit as
Thierry of Chartres, <i>Commentum (Librum hunc) II</i> , 5-6	sensus	imaginatio	ratio	intelligentia	
Thierry of Chartres, <i>Lectiones II</i> , 30-31	sensus	imaginatio	ratio	intellectus, "disciplina"	intellectibilit as
Clarembald of Arras, <i>Tractatus super librum Boetii De Trinitate</i> , prologus 20-23	sensus	imaginatio	ratio	intellectibilit as	
William of Conches, <i>Glosae super Platonem</i> , XXXIV (on <i>Timaeus</i> 27D)	sensus	imaginatio	ratio	intellectus	
<i>De spiritu et anima</i> xxxvii	sensualitas		ratio	intellectus sive intelligentia	
Hugh of Saint-Victor, <i>De unione corporis et animae</i>	sensualitas	imaginatio	spiritus		
Hugh of Saint-Victor, <i>In Hier. III, De sacr. I</i> , x, 2, <i>Misc. I</i> , i	oculus corporis		oculus rationis	oculus contemplatio nis	
Hugh of Saint-Victor, <i>Miscellanea I</i> , xv	sensus	imaginatio	ratio	intellectus	intelligentia
Hugh of Saint-Victor, <i>De archa Noe I</i> , iv/v	sensus		ratio	intellectus	
William of Saint-Thierry, <i>Med. or. III</i> , 13	sensus	imaginatio	ratio	intelligentia rationalis	
Isaac de Stella, <i>Sermo IV</i> and (<i>Epistula</i>) <i>de anima</i> ; Anonymous, <i>De spiritu et anima</i> iv and xiii; Alan of Lille, <i>Distinctiones</i> , art. "intellectus" and "ratio," <i>Contra Haereticos</i> I, xxviii; Raoul de Longchamp, <i>In Anticlaudianum</i> , xli.	sensus	imaginatio	ratio	intellectus	intelligentia
Richard of Saint-Victor, <i>Benjamin major I</i>		imaginatio	ratio	intelligentia	
Godefroy of Saint-Victor <i>Microcosmus</i> xix, xxxiv	sensualitas	ymaginatio	ratio	intelligentia	(discretio)

⁸² The *Timaeus* gave a different and less influential mode, emphasising the dynamism of thinking and the process knowledge is generated. It can be found in William of Conches, *Dragmaticon* VI, xxvi, 1-3 and John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon* IV, xviii. Editions of the works mentioned: William of Conches, *Glosae super Platonem* (ed. E. Jeaneau. Paris: Vrin, 1965) and *Dragmaticon* (ed. I. Ronca, CCCM 152); Alan of Lille, *Distinctiones*, "Intellectus" and "Ratio" (PL 210: 819 and 922), *Contra Haereticos* I, xxviii (PL 210: 330); anonymous author, *Traité des cinq puissances de l'âme*, edited by Marie-Thérèse D'Alverny: *Alain de Lille. Textes inédits* (Paris: Vrin, 1965), 313-317. *Radulphus de Longo Campo. In Anticlaudianum Alani commentum*, ed. Jan Sulowski (Wroclaw, Warsaw et al.: Zakład Narodowy Imienia Ossolinskich Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1972); Peter Abelard (?), *Tractatus de intelligentibus*, in *Petri Abaelardi opera*, ed. Victor Cousin (2 vols. Paris: Durand, 1859) vol. 2, 733-755.

In this pattern cognitive faculties are usually conceived as a hierarchy, stretching from corporeal sensation, through imagination and reason (*ratio*) to *intelligentia* (or *intellectus*). Reason is usually not conceived as the ultimate cognitive power: beyond it there is one (or two) higher powers called by the name *intelligentia* (or some variant of it – see the accompanying table). It seems to be a generally accepted principle in this period that reason had a limited cognitive potential, and the adequate cognition of God happens through some supra-rational cognitive faculty. This pattern is explicit in the rhetoric of monastic authors (who often condemn the self-confidence of the limited reason and *dialectica*), but it is also implicit in the epistemological models of the more “secular” authors. The situation is rather paradoxical: while virtually everyone (both monastic theologians and “philosophers”) is convinced that there is (or are) supra-rational cognitive force(s) that can grant a more adequate cognition of God than reason does, the precise formulation of that faculty may radically differ from author to author. The following examples clearly demonstrate the case.

In the case of Boethius, *intelligentia* was a cognitive faculty pertaining only to the “divine kind” – and not to human beings.⁸³ Twelfth-century remodellings of this model by Thierry of Chartres and Clarembald of Arras make the supra-rational faculties (*intelligentia* and *intellectibilitas*) a human cognitive faculty, which can reach a superior cognition of the forms and God and the pure being itself.⁸⁴ Saint Bernard claims that human reason (*humana ratio*) cannot comprehend divine things, while *intelligentia* can; William of Saint-Thierry also declares that human reason (and the human “understanding,” *intelligentia*, based on its working) is insufficient for the cognition of God, and only the *intelligentia* coming from God makes such cognition possible.⁸⁵ For Richard of Saint-Victor, *intelligentia* is an inborn cognitive faculty whose function is the cognition of God and invisible, immaterial realities.⁸⁶ Isaac de Stella distinguishes *intellectus* and *intelligentia*: the former cognises the created spirits, the latter exclusively God, the “supremely and purely incorporeal one.”⁸⁷

The common element of these models is that none of them considers reason to be competent in cognising God; however, beyond that point, all these models are different. Behind the different epistemological schemes there are different, even incommensurable models of theological anthropology: some of them consider the supra-rational faculty as a part of human nature, while others attribute it to divine operation (and the function of these faculties are also conceived differently). These differences indicate that in the twelfth century there existed no single and generally accepted anthropological scheme: instead, the examples show the existence of several, more or less independent, “local” elaborations for the same issue.

Disparity between epistemology and theological anthropology

⁸³ See Boethius, *Consolatio* V prosa 5: *Ratio vero humani tantum generis est, sicut intelligentia sola divini*. (PL 63: 854D/855A = ed. Loeb, 394). The idea of a possible *theosis* is not made explicit in Boethius’ text.

⁸⁴ See, for example, Thierry’s *Glosa* II, 6-10, where *intellectibilitas* (the ultimate human cognitive force) can remove the individual distinctions of the forms (causing their plurality) and considers the pure being and the one-ness of all. The three interpretations of the *De Trinitate* of Boethius, the *Glosa*, the *Lectiones* and the *Commentum / Librum hunc*, attributed to or at least connoted to Thierry, have been edited by N.M. Häring in *Commentaries on Boethius by Thierry of Chartres and His School* (Toronto: PIMS, 1971); for Clarembald’s *Tractatus super librum Boetii De Trinitate*, see Nikolaus M. Häring, *The Life and Works of Clarembald of Arras* (Toronto: PIMS, 1965).

⁸⁵ Bernard, *Sermo* 14 *de diversis*, 5: “*Intelligentia nempe divinis et altissimis rebus attribuenda est, quas quidem ratio humana nullatenus, difficile autem vel fides ipsa comprehendere possit*.” SBO 6/1: 138. William, *Meditativa oratio* 3, 13, PL 180: 214B.

⁸⁶ See, for example, *Benjamin minor* lxxxvii: “*Comprehensio siquidem rerum invisibilium pertinet ad intelligentiam puram*.” PL 196: 62D.

⁸⁷ See Isaac, (*Epistola*) *De anima* (PL 194: 1880AC and 1885BC) and *Sermo IV* (PL 194: 1702AB); Bernard McGinn’s “Introduction,” in McGinn (tr., ed.), *Three treatises on Man* (Kalamazoo, Mich. 1977), 1-100 and *The Growth*, 289-290. Isaac’s doctrine is taken over by the *De spiritu et anima* iv and, in a modified form, xi (PL 40: 783 and 786-787); the latter variant is taken over by Bonaventure (*Breviloquium* pars II, vi) and Rudolph of Biberach (*De septem itineribus aeternitatis*, Iter III, dist. 4 art. 3).

These radical differences between the theories also place the problem of mysticism in a different context. Epistemology can be defined as a rational discourse dealing with the cognitive faculties, the subject and object of cognition, and the cognitive process itself; in this case, the cognition of God, as the supreme object of cognition, must also be covered. Theological anthropology can cover the same subjects but from a different angle, where the cognition of God is conceived in different, theological terms (e.g. as “gazing at the glory of the Lord” or “seeing God face to face”). What is now commonly understood under the category of “mysticism” is a personified or individualised form of theological anthropology.

A remarkable point of twelfth-century authors is that in their works the two different approaches only in exceptional cases form a coherent whole. The previous examples demonstrate this as well. The construction of Boethius is a purely epistemological one; although Thierry of Chartres and Clarembald make a minimal allowance for the idea of a Christian God, their theories still remain epistemological, without theological implications. On the other side, the spiritual works of Bernard and William describe the cognition of God in terms of theological anthropology; their descriptions even cover the highest possible form of cognition, conceived as some form of the union with God (*unitas spiritus*). These texts, however, have no epistemological dimension at all: it cannot be said what cognitive faculty is working in such cases, especially because they think that in such cases love is cognition.⁸⁸ In the case of Hugh of Saint-Victor we can see both approaches: allegorical terms of theological anthropology (such as *oculus contemplationis*) with descriptions of ecstasy, and lists of epistemological terms, but these models are all separate and not coordinated. Isaac de Stella’s theory connects the two approaches, but his spiritual writings do not reflect on the working of his model. Among these authors (who represent the best of the anthropology of the century) Richard of Saint-Victor seems to be the only one who aligned epistemology and theological anthropology, since his descriptions of contemplative ecstasy are conceived in both theological and epistemological language (as will be discussed later).

This general disparity, present already in the sources, creates special difficulties for the discussion of “mysticism.” Many twelfth-century authors, “philosophers” and theologians alike, constructed their theories in a way that permits some form of immediate cognition about God. But if we try to formulate, in neutral language, what precisely happens in those crucial, “mystical” moments according to these authors, often a general failure is what we face. Even if these theories talk about the same thing, the cognition of God, they are often one-sided and cannot be translated into the other language, namely, into epistemological or theological terms as may be appropriate. Taking the examples above again: Thierry’s *Glosa* states that the *intelligibilitas* removes the boundaries of the forms and considers the pure being⁸⁹ – but this epistemological narrative has no theological implications, and is not (and indeed probably cannot be) told in theological terms. Examples of the opposite of this may be William of Saint-Thierry and Bernard of Clairvaux: they give elaborate theological explanations as to what happens in “mystical” moments – the soul becomes emptied of itself, its will becomes adjusted to the divine will, and so on – but these narratives lack the epistemological dimension.⁹⁰ One cannot go beyond the Scriptural allegories and theological narrative to grasp an epistemological narrative of what happens then. It cannot be said what cognitive forces are working then. This happens not only because these authors neglected this aspect: indeed, William constructs his theory in a way that makes an epistemological (or “rational”) discourse on it impossible. Beyond these one-sided accounts there are other combinations, too:

⁸⁸ See Part II, Chapter 4.

⁸⁹ Thierry, *Glosa* II, 6-10: “6. Ratio autem est vis animae sui agilitate sese movens atque abstrahens a pluribus ejusdem nature generalis vel specialis eam ipsam quam ipsa participant formam. [...] 7. Intelligentia vero quam proprie ‘disciplinam’ nuncupamus est vis anime que ipsam formarum qualitates singulas atque proprietates vel eas ipsas formas ut vere sunt considerat. Sic tamen ut singulos ipsarum terminos ab eis non abiciat. [...] 8. Intelligibilitas autem est vis anime removens ab his formis omnes terminos quibus inter se distincte erant atque quod de ipsis remanet solum esse atque entiam contemplans omnem pluralitatem inde absterret omniumque unionum simplicem contuetur unionem,” ed. Häring, 269.

⁹⁰ These problems, here only indicated, will be discussed in Part II.

Hugh of Saint-Victor produces several epistemological and theological variants on the same theme, without any attempt to harmonise them, while Isaac de Stella's famous model combines the theological and epistemological aspects but this model explains nothing from his spiritual writings (since it has no function therein).

These different attitudes may cause unease in the modern interpreter of these texts. Talking about these texts, we are often forced by their authors into repeating what they said, using the same phrases and terms. The other unpleasant insight is that these theories remain incommensurable to each other, since finding a common denominator is often impossible. The description of cognitive faculties of one author is often incompatible with that of another – and if one takes such a description at its nominal value, as the description of “the” man, one can see conflicting models with fundamental differences. These differences also reveal that descriptions of “man” may change both from period to period – as the thirteenth-century, more consensual model of theological anthropology replaces the twelfth-century ones – but – in this particular period, the twelfth century – even from author to author. This also calls attention to the need for caution when dealing with such sources. As the different categories given by different models of theological anthropology cannot be identified with each other, the models of a given period cannot be equated with later ones either. Judging earlier theories by external principles, concepts elaborated or developed only later, is a grave mistake from a historical point of view (as Richard's case will illustrate).

Conclusion

The doctrines of Augustine and Gregory outlined above served as inspiration, or even as direct sources, for medieval theologians. The later Augustine's trinitarian concept of the divine image, based on the analogy between the Holy Trinity and various trinities in the soul, had become a basic theological doctrine by the Middle Ages. The final restoration of the divine image in the soul (which has been deeply corrupted by the original sin) takes place in an eschatological context: that will be the time when a direct vision of God becomes possible. For the cognition of God before death Augustine elaborated different theories, which are not necessarily compatible. One theory was presented by Letter 147 and *De Gen. ad litt. XII*: here the main doctrine is that a face-to-face vision of God is theoretically or generally impossible in this life – but in exceptional cases it is still possible. These cases are miracles: Augustine's example is Paul's rapture. This theory (evolved from the exegesis of the narrative of Paul's rapture, 2Cor 12:2-4) also involves the doctrine of three (corporeal, imaginary and intellectual) visions. Other texts by Augustine give a different description, even a pattern of the ecstatic cognition of God. “Taken up” by God, the mind leaves corporeal representations, sees a light, then in a sudden moment understands its distance from God and falls back into misery. The two approaches of Augustine outline different perspectives for the cognition of God. The first theory sets a limit for the cognition of this life: experiencing the face-to-face vision of God is either impossible or a miracle. This theory is constructed in such a way as to be inapplicable to personal experiences (lest anyone dares to compare himself to the Apostle or Moses). In the thirteenth century, from these doctrines there develops the theory of Paul's *raptus*. The other theory, with its pattern of ecstasy and rejection, offered a form of expression applicable to spiritual experiences; so it served as the basic pattern in the spiritual literature of monastic theology. The most important elements – a momentary ecstatic experience of God, falling back into a world of misery where God is absent, controlling love and directing it towards God – are present already in Augustine, although with a different emphasis.⁹¹

Gregory's doctrines may be seen as providing a corrective to Augustine's multiple

⁹¹ See, for example, Bernard, *Sermo 41 de diversis*, 11 “Unde spiritus iste creatus aliquando ad Creatorem spirituum emergit, et adhaerens ei unus cum eo spiritus efficitur. Nullius autem momenti est ista contemplatio, quia spiritus corporeis claustris circumdatus, frequenti carnis cogitatione reliditur, et supra creaturam constitutus, infra quaeque vilissima protinus reperitur.” SBO 6/1, 252.

doctrines. His doctrine is unambiguous on the cognition of God: God cannot be seen before death at all; in this life all cognition is reduced and mediated (in Scriptural terms, a vision through a mirror and in an enigma). Since Gregory calls this limited cognition *contemplatio*, his words become important whenever the insufficiency of human efforts needed to be emphasised in the cognition of God. Another sentence of Gregory *amor ipse intellectus est* – also influenced medieval spirituality: it served as a reference for the later tradition of affective spirituality, represented by authors such as William of Saint-Thierry and Thomas Gallus.

The twelfth century brought new elements into the discourse about man: besides the inherited models of theological anthropology, there now appeared an alternate terminology, structures and narratives. These elements came from philosophical epistemology: they formed a different language and made possible a different description for human cognition, including the cognition of God. The duality of theological anthropology and philosophical epistemology was noted by some authors, but the contemporaries used both languages, in various combinations. The great variance of the epistemological models produced in the period makes it clear that there existed not one generally accepted scheme for cognition: the individual models are more or less similar but not identical. Another feature of the “anthropological” theories of the period is that their authors were not forced to harmonise the theological and philosophical theories concerning cognition. Some authors have only theological or only philosophical theories about the cognition of God; others may have both, but without creating coherence between them. This disparity creates a special difficulty: in most cases, the description of the cognition of God cannot be interpreted or understood outside the original (theological or philosophical) context.

Part II. Victorines and Victorine theological anthropology in the twelfth century

Introduction

The chapters of the present part investigate the Victorine theological anthropology set in the historical context. The complexity of the issue makes it necessary to join case studies on various subjects, involving various types of sources from the period between the 1120s and the early 1200s. Due to the mixed nature of these investigations, it seems appropriate here to indicate the structure and the main line of thought of these chapters.

The intention of this part is to present a particular twelfth-century model of theological anthropology. However, the concept of a characteristically Victorine theological anthropology is not a self-evident or given concept: it is also absent from the literature. In order to argue for its existence, first the works of those individual Victorine authors must be studied who discussed subjects belonging to theological anthropology. Four such authors will be considered: Hugh, Richard, Achard and Walther. The studies of their works attempt to give an accurate account of their own theories on contemplation and its doctrinal background. Hugh and Richard will be discussed in more detail, due to both their importance and the richness of their works (Chapters I and II); Achard and Walther are discussed together (Chapter III). The individual theories of these authors, at the same time, show a remarkable similarity. The common elements shared by them cover a well-defined body of theological and anthropological positions; this system of positions is what I regard as a Victorine model of theological anthropology (summarised in Chapter IV). A comparison with contemporaneous Cistercian concepts show that these elements are characteristic of Victorines only.

The final chapter (Chapter V) investigates theories on the epistemological state of the prelapsarian Adam as elaborated by twelfth-century school theology. This chapter gives an account of the non-Victorine reception of a Victorine theory; at the same time, it also gives more contrast to the Victorine model by demonstrating that it had no influence on the emerging school theology.

The chronological range of the present investigations covers the period between the 1120s and c. 1210; due to the nature of the sources, precise dating is rarely possible. Hugh taught approximately two decades, from the early 1120s to his death in 1141. Richard composed his works between the 1150s and his death in 1173; Achard's works are approximately from before 1155 to 1161; however, for Walther (d. after 1180) no precise dating is extant. The works produced by these Victorine authors mostly belong to the genres of "monastic theology": they are spiritual treatises (sometimes based on Scriptural themes) and sermons, plus Hugh's own book of sentences, written for his own school. The non-Victorine sources from the same period derive from the sphere typically called "Scholastic" theology. Such are the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard (finished by 1156) and its very first interpretations, ranging from the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* (c. 1160-1165) to the *Stephen Langton Gloss* (1200-1203), the *Sentences* of Peter of Poitiers (c. 1167-1170), a *quaestio* of Peter Comestor (d. 1178). The study of these contemporary sources can give the most precise contour lines to aid in an evaluation of the limits of Victorine influences.

Chapter I. Hugh of Saint-Victor

Introduction

Nowadays Hugh of Saint-Victor is regarded as a key figure of twelfth-century thinking. Not much is known about his life: he was born in Saxony c. 1096, he was already teaching in the school of Saint-Victor in the 1120s, and he died in 1141. His *oeuvre* is well defined: soon after his death, Abbot Hilduin gave the order to put Hugh's works together. Since then his works have become accessible in several printed editions: some of his works have critical editions too.⁹² Twentieth-century research has not substantially altered the image of Hugh as theologian: regarding this aspect, the sole remarkable (and hitherto unknown) work relevant to the present study is the *Sententie de divinitate*, a *reportatio* of his lectures by a Lawrence of Durham.⁹³ Several works of his were translated into modern languages, most notably into French and English.⁹⁴ The scholarship on Hugh abounds. Modern scholars set him and his encyclopaedic *oeuvre* into the most various contexts (since he was, among others, theologian, spiritual author, exegete, teacher and educator, historian, commentator of the Areopagite, author of a mnemonic treatise). Philological aspects of

⁹² See Ralf M.W. Stammberger, "Die Edition der Werke des Hugo von Sankt Viktor (+1141) durch Abt Gilduin von Sankt Viktor (+1155): Eine Rekonstruktion," *In Schrift, Schreiber, Schenker. Studien zur Pariser Abtei Sankt Viktor und den Viktorinern* 1 [Corpus Victorinum. Instrumenta 1], edited by Rainer Berndt (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2005), 119-231. On the manuscripts and the authentic works of Hugh, see Rudolf Goy, *Die Überlieferung der Werke Hugos von St. Viktor* (Stuttgart, 1976); for the (too often only relative) dating, Damien Van den Eynde, *Essai sur la succession et la date des écrits de Hugues de Saint-Victor* (Rome: Antonianum, 1960) and Roger Baron, *Études sur Hugues de Saint-Victor* (n.p.: Desclée de Brouwer, 1963). The critical edition of Hugh's works is an ongoing process; the generally accessible edition of Hugh's works, including several inauthentic works, is still the one by J.-P. Migne, PL 175-177, reprinting the Rouen edition of 1648. For practical reasons, the column numbers of this edition are retained, even if newer editions were also used, as in the case of the *De tribus diebus*, edited by Poirel as CCCM 177 (Turnhout, 2002) or the *De Archa Noe*, edited by Sicard as CCCM 176 (Turnhout, 2001). The critical edition of the commentary on the *Celestial Hierarchy* of the Areopagite (*In Hierarchiam* (henceforth *In Hier.*), by Poirel, is forthcoming; the *De sacramentis* (henceforth *De sacr.*) has a "historical" text edition by Rainer Berndt (meaning an edition based on two very early manuscripts): *Hugonis de Sancto Victore De sacramentis Christianae fidei* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2008). As when the relevant part of my study was written this edition was not in existence, I used the old Patrologia edition and for a few critical passages I collated its text with manuscripts (see the Appendix).

⁹³ The text-critical evaluation of Hugh's *oeuvre* started with the works of Barthélemy Hauréau: *Hugues de Saint-Victor. Nouvel examen de l'édition de ses oeuvres avec deux opuscules inédits* (Paris: Pagnerre, 1859) and *Les oeuvres de Hugues de Saint-Victor* (Paris 1886). The didactic works of Hugh (the *Epitome Dindimi*, *Mappa mundi*, *Practica geometriae* etc.) are irrelevant for this study; the *Sententie* has been edited by A.M. Piazzoni, "Ugo di San Vittore, 'autor' delle *Sententie de diuinitate*," in *Studi Medievali* 23 (1982): 861-955, text edition: 912-955.

⁹⁴ For French versions, giving also the Latin, see *Six opuscules spirituels*. Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes par Roger Baron (SC 155) (Paris: Cerf, 1969); *L'oeuvre de Hugues de Saint-Victor. I: De institutione novitiorum; De virtute orandi; De laude caritatis; De arrha animae*. Texte latin par H. B. Feiss et P. Sicard; traduction française par D. Poirel, H. Rochais et P. Sicard; introduction, notes et appendices par D. Poirel (Sous la règle de saint Augustin 3) (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997); *L'oeuvre de Hugues de Saint-Victor. II: Super Canticum Mariae; Pro Assumptione Virginis; De beatae Mariae virginitate; Egredietur virga; Maria porta*. Introduction, traductions françaises et notes par Bernadette Jollès (Sous la règle de saint Augustin, 7) (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000). For the English translations, see the following: *On the Sacraments of the Christian Faith (De sacramentis) of Hugh of Saint Victor*. Translated by Roy J. Deferrari (Cambridge, Mass.: The Medieval Academy of America, 1951); *The Didascalicon of Hugh of Saint Victor: A Guide to the Arts*. Translated and introduced by Jerome Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961); *Hugh of Saint-Victor. Selected Spiritual Writings, translated by a Religious of The Community of St. Mary the Virgin, introduced by Aelred Squire OP* (London: Faber and Faber, 1962); most recently Boyd Taylor Coolman and Dale M. Coulter, eds., *Trinity and Creation* (Victorine texts in translation: exegesis, theology and spirituality from the Abbey of St. Victor 1) (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), comprising English translation of Hugh's *De tribus diebus*, *Sententie de divinitate*, Richard's *De Trinitate* and sequences of Adam. The *Didascalicon* has been translated into French as *L'art de lire* (tr. M. Lemoine; Paris 1991) and into German as *Studienbuch* (tr. Th. Offergeld; Freiburg 1997).

his oeuvre are explored, mostly through such French scholars as Jean Châtillon, Dominique Poirel and Patrice Sicard. Recently North American scholars published a number of monographs on Hugh's theology.⁹⁵

The present chapter tries to provide an overview of Hugh's theological anthropology, including his theory about contemplation. The subject is crucial, since Hugh's doctrines served as foundation to later Victorine theologians. Unfortunately, the extant literature is not helpful on this subject: although Hugh is discussed in the standard reference works on the history of mysticism⁹⁶ and some of his doctrines are often mentioned, many important aspects of his theological anthropology seem to be still uninvestigated.⁹⁷ Hugh himself discussed many important issues in a plain way – consequently, these theories also often appear in the literature. Seemingly, it is also easy to answer what contemplation means for Hugh, since he made both explicit statements on it (such as a definition in the *In Ecclesiasten I*), and references to it (such as “foretasting of the future beatitude”). From such passages it is not difficult to derive unspecific positions such as “contemplatio has here the narrow meaning of a direct and immediate ‘loving knowledge’ of God.”⁹⁸ Such statements are more or less true (since, in the end, they are based on Hugh's passages), but do not offer much help in understanding what Hugh meant by “contemplation” in a broader context. Calling contemplation “foretasting of heavenly pleasures” is pointless if one cannot tell what “heavenly pleasures” mean in Hugh's eschatological model; calling it “loving knowledge” is similarly insufficient if one cannot tell how, and by means of what faculty, this cognition takes place. These and similar difficulties point towards another, general difficulty with Hugh's writings. Namely, Hugh left several issues implicit in his works (such as his eschatology); the extant literature covers them rarely if at all: but without understanding his positions on these subjects, the intended meaning of “contemplation” cannot be judged adequately.

Discussing Hugh's theories, therefore, the present investigation draws upon a different approach. First I outline a theoretical framework, a general theological background for his doctrines about contemplation (I-II), and only then I investigate the concept of contemplation, as it appears against that background (III); finally I digress to the problem of love and cognition (IV). The study of the theoretical background is divided in two parts, for methodological and conceptual reasons. The first section (I) investigates single issues that define the character of Hugh's theology, such as his interpretation of image and likeness, the mirror of the soul, the invisibility of God (and so on). Instead of a plain descriptive method presenting his theories as one can find them in his works, here a contrastive method was used for its much greater heuristic value. Although Hugh drew on Patristic sources (such as Augustine, Gregory and the Areopagite), he silently and critically altered many of them by adapting them to his own theological premises. Comparing his theories to the sources he used can reveal more about the individual character of his theology than a mere description of them. The second section of the investigation (II) focuses on Hugh's own characteristic doctrines on the historical dimension of theology and epistemology. He saw human nature in a broader historical context of its creation, fall and restoration: this view granted not only a historical approach but also a systematic one, demanding a description of the original condition.

⁹⁵ See Franklin T. Harkins, *Reading and the Work of Restoration. History and Scripture in the Theology of Hugh of St. Victor* (Toronto: PIMS, 2009); Paul Rorem, *Hugh of Saint Victor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), and Boyd Taylor Coolman, *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor. An Interpretation* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

⁹⁶ General introductions to Hugh's spirituality can be found in the two recent monographs on the history of mysticism, written by McGinn and Ruh; a comprehensive picture is given in Rorem's monograph, *Hugh of Saint Victor* (Oxford et al. 2009). Specific, doctrinal overview of Hugh's theology is given by Poirel, *Hugues de Saint-Victor* (Paris 1998) and more recently in his “Ugo di San Vittore,” in *La fioritura della dialettica X-XII secolo (Figure del pensiero medievale 2)*, Inos Biffi and Costante Marabelli, eds. (Milan, 2008), 387-458.

⁹⁷ Such monographs as Heinrich Ostler's *Die Psychologie des Hugo von St. Viktor* (Munster: Aschendorff, 1906) and John P. Klein's *The Theory of Knowledge of Hugh of St. Victor* (Washington DC, 1944) also offer no help in this question.

⁹⁸ Coolman, *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor*, 225.

What unique is in Hugh's writings is that *contemplatio* is not merely a concept for some "mystical" experiences in this life; instead, *contemplatio* is a special form of cognition present in the prelapsarian, in the present and in the blessed state as well. First the second part reconstructs these doctrinal contexts (that is, Hugh's doctrines on the prelapsarian state, the Fall, the present and the final eschatological states), then the third part investigates the possible meaning of the term "contemplation" among these different conditions, including Hugh's implicit theory about ecstatic contemplation.

These investigations, will provide clear contour lines to delineate Hugh's theology. With an understanding of the structure, character and limits of this anthropology, the later developments also become more explicable: the similarity of doctrines among other Victorine authors, and the rejection of the Victorine doctrines in the thirteenth century.

I. Doctrinal background: selected and edited influences

It is undeniable that Hugh of Saint-Victor was indebted to Patristic authors. The classical studies of Ott (“Hugo von St.-Victor und die Kirchenväter,” 1949) and Weisweiler (“Die Arbeitsmethode Hugos von St. Viktor,” 1949)⁹⁹ have investigated the Patristic sources Hugh used; these studies and the apparatus of the critical editions of Hugh’s works may provide a *census* of the works that he accessed. However, a mere listing of Patristic sources used by Hugh tells us nothing about the function of the doctrinal elements that he took over. The origin of many such elements is rather self-evident (whether it be Augustine, Gregory or the Areopagite); moreover, most of them belong to the common stock of Patristic ideas generally accepted and used by twelfth-century authors. What the present chapter investigates is the way in which Hugh adopts and alters Patristic doctrines to fit his own theology – those points where he deviates from the original concepts, either by omitting or reinterpreting key elements of the original. In terms of this aspect, as far as I can judge, no systematic investigations have been carried out.

Such a study of Hugh’s attitude towards the authorities that he uses is not in fact entirely unprecedented. Jerome Taylor’s investigations have demonstrated that in the first two books of the *Didascalicon*, perhaps the most philosophical work of Hugh, he had a subtle way to deal with philosophical authority. In these books, Hugh took eminently philosophical texts and notions perilous to Christian theology and, through reinterpreting the key terms and creating a new frame of reference, provided orthodox interpretations of them.¹⁰⁰ As the subsequent chapter will demonstrate, Hugh’s attitude towards theological authority is similar. He takes over, quotes or paraphrases Patristic ideas and doctrines, but sometimes he deliberately drops elements of the original doctrines, changes their function or replaces them with his own theories. Modified in this way, the inherited doctrines complement Hugh’s own ones.

Speaking about the theological anthropology of Hugh, three Patristic authors demand special attention: Augustine, Gregory the Great and the Areopagite. Doctrines of these authors substantially defined what positions medieval theologians held about the relations, both possible and real, between God and man – doctrines on the conditions of the cognition of God, on the divine image and likeness, and on the meaning of the words “contemplation” or “speculation” derived from their works. These elements belong to the core of medieval Latin theology: in the twelfth century, they appear in Hugh’s writings, although in a modified form; in the thirteenth century, the same ideas become decisive arguments in Scholastic works. Hugh’s alterations to the same doctrines make his theology less intelligible from a later perspective.

Augustine revised

Calling Hugh a “second Augustine” or “another Augustine” (*Augustinus secundus*) is an often repeated, uncritical but misleading commonplace of the literature. The mid-thirteenth-century expression of Thomas of Cantimpré referred to Hugh as the second after Augustine according to knowledge (*scientia*), in a rather hagiographical sense.¹⁰¹ Hugh’s influence on the doctrinal

⁹⁹ See Heinrich Weisweiler, “Die Arbeitsmethode Hugos von St. Viktor. Ein Beitrag zum Entstehen seines Hauptwerkes *De Sacramentis*,” *Scholastik* 30-34 (1949): 58-87, 232-267.

¹⁰⁰ See Jerome Taylor’s commentary (especially to the first two books) and his introduction: *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St. Victor* (1961; reprint: New York: Columbia University Press, 1991). Such tacit changes are the reinterpretation of *entelechia* as human soul (against its prevalent interpretation as *anima mundi*) in I, i, the redefinition of *opera Dei, naturae et artificis* in I, ix and the reinterpretation of the lambda diagram in II, iv.

¹⁰¹ Thomas of Cantimpré, *Bonum universale de apibus* II, xvi: “Apud sanctum Victorem Parisiis, in monasterio Canonicorum regularium, magister Hugo canonicus fuit; qui secundus Augustinus, id est, secundus ab Augustino, in scientia dictus est. Qui etsi vitae valde laudabilis fuerit, in hoc tamen minus perfecte fecit, quod disciplinas in secreto,

development of the Scholastic theology, the doctrines borrowed from him, altered or unaltered, also make him comparable to Augustine. The present chapter investigates those points where the “second Augustine” considerably and visibly altered the doctrines of Augustine the saint.

Such alterations must be seen in a broader historical-doctrinal context. In Hugh’s time, Augustine’s doctrines were considered as orthodox, accessible and more or less authoritative. For many, these doctrines were enough: but for Hugh they were not. Some doctrines of Augustine he accepts, other ones he modifies – but there are also characteristic and well-known Augustinian doctrines that he entirely disregards. To name two examples, such are the Augustinian *uti-frui* doctrine that regards everything either as something to be used or enjoyed (considered from the perspective of the blessed state) and the doctrine of three visions (corporeal, imaginary and intellectual). Hugh does omit them (and twelfth-century Victorines do so, too) – but these standard Augustinian doctrines are present in Peter Lombard’s works and, consequently, are inherited by later Scholastic theology. This section focuses on three issues where Hugh significantly altered Augustinian doctrines: 1) the reinterpretation of the Trinitarian image in the soul, 2) the reinterpretation of the imagery of the mirror (1Cor 13:12), and 3) the reinterpretation of God’s presence.

a) Image and likeness

The image and likeness of God in the soul is a central element of Christian theology. From the later twelfth century onwards, as the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard became the textbook for theological education, the quasi-standard doctrine on this issue became Augustine’s model, based on the psychological trinities in the soul (as expounded in the *De Trinitate*).¹⁰² Prior to that time, in the first half of the twelfth century, the Augustinian interpretation was only one of the alternatives (even if the most popular one). One example of this practice can be found among the fragmentary sentences (*sententiae*) of the school of Laon.¹⁰³ These sentences use the terms *image* and *likeness* indiscriminately. The traditional Augustinian triad of *intelligentia* – *voluntas* – *memoria* is called both *imago* (fragm. 313) and *similitudo Trinitatis* (fragm. 315); another interpretation of the theme is the parallelism between the divine omnipresence and the soul’s presence in the body (which fragm. 313 calls *imago*, fragm. 316 *similitudo*); another sentence (fragm. 313) sees *imago* in the fact that both God and humans exist, live and think (*est, vivit, sapit*). Bernard of Clairvaux defines image as freedom of choice (*liberum arbitrium, arbitrii libertas*) and likeness as freedom of consideration and pleasure (*libertas consilii and conplaciti*).¹⁰⁴

Hugh’s case is partly similar. He has his own characteristic concept of image and likeness: “image” is considered typically as the cognitive-intellectual faculty, orientation, “part” or aspect of the soul, while “likeness” is an affective one (this doctrine became a hallmark of later Victorines too¹⁰⁵). Besides his own theory, Hugh also kept the Augustinian concept of the *imago Dei*, but

vel in Capitulo cum aliis, pro quotidianis excessibus non accepit.” *Thomae Cantipratani S. theol. doctoris [...] Bonum universale de apibus. [...] Opera Georgii Colvenerii S. Theol. Doctoris [...]* (Duaci [= Douai], ex typographia Baltazaris Belleri, 1627), 215. It would demand another study how this epitheton became an unqualified adjective.

¹⁰² See, for example, Peter Lombard, *Sent.* I dist. 3, 7, for trinities *memoria* - *intelligentia* - *voluntas* and *mens* - *notitia* - *amor*, based on Augustine’s *De Trin.* XIV, 8.

¹⁰³ See Odon Lottin, *Psychologie et morale aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles*, vol. 5 (Gembloux: Duculot, 1959), esp. 245-252.

¹⁰⁴ See Bernard, *De gratia et libero arbitrio* IX, 28.

¹⁰⁵ I use here deliberately vague terms, since neither Hugh himself nor Richard defines what these “virtual parts” of the soul exactly are. In concrete texts, these two orientations or faculties are usually called, on the one hand, *ratio*, *intellectus* and *affectus*, *dilectio*, *amor* or the like on the other hand. See, for example, Hugh, *De sacr.* I, vi, 2: “Factus est homo ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei, quia in anima (quae potior pars est hominis, vel potius ipse homo erat) fuit imago et similitudo Dei. Imago secundum rationem, similitudo secundum [0264D] dilectionem; imago secundum cognitionem veritatis, similitudo secundum amorem virtutis.” PL 176: 264CD. For Richard, see, for example,

substantially reduced its significance. For Augustine, the Biblical image and likeness (*imago et similitudo*) referred to the Trinitarian image of God, as present in the various trinitarian structures of the soul – ultimately, it is the correspondence of the divine and the human trinities that made man an image and likeness of God. Augustine’s theory also assigned an active role to the human mind (as the *De Trinitate* explains): through introspection, the mind discovers trinities in itself and – using these psychological trinities as analogous structures – can also understand the trinitarian nature of the Godhead.

When Hugh incorporates this doctrine into his own theology (as *De sacramentis* I, iii, 21, in the *Sententie de divinitate* pars III, and in *De tribus diebus* attest) he transposes the idea of analogous trinities (in the *De sacramentis*, *mens – sapientia – amor*, in the *Sententie de divinitate*, *mens – intellectus (cognitio) – gaudium*) into a new, non-Augustinian context; simultaneously, he reduces Augustine’s theory to a heuristic tool, explaining the way in which the soul learns the trinitarian nature of God. In the *Sententie de divinitate*, the mind (*mens rationalis*) is called *imago et simulacrum Dei*,¹⁰⁶ and the divine trinity discovered by the mind is defined as *potentia, sapientia* and *amor*¹⁰⁷ (these being names referring to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, respectively). The twelfth-century triad of *potentia, sapientia* and *amor* has a parallel in the *De tribus diebus*: there the immensity, beauty and utility of the sensible world is the expression (Hugh’s term is *simulacrum*) of the divine *potentia, sapientia* and *benignitas*.¹⁰⁸ The mind conceived as *imago et simulacrum Dei* opens another Hugonian (and definitely not Augustinian) context. For the Augustine of the *De Trinitate*, the trinitarian image in the soul discovered by introspection meant something stable and constant: the *imago*, the divine image in man. By adding *simulacrum* to *imago*, Hugh changes the meaning of the word “image”: it is not *the* image, it is *just* an image. The term *simulacrum* is synonymous with *imago*, but has no Biblical overtones: it means representation or imitation of something, something that is not reality but stands for reality – like a sign. In a text edited as an appendix to the *Sententie*, Hugh makes this idea more explicit: wisdom, happiness and power in the human mind are only *images* of these realities as they exist in God. They *are* “in God,” in truth (that is, in reality); in the mind they only *appear*, only in an image.¹⁰⁹ In the late *De sacramentis*, Hugh reproduces the standard Augustinian doctrine of the *mens-sapientia-amor* triad (I, iii, 21) with its trinitarian implications (22-27). Then he turns to the vestiges and signs (*signa*) of the Trinity in the creation (28), and repeats the doctrine of the *Sententie* and the *De tribus diebus*: the immensity, beauty and usefulness are images (*imagines*) of the trinity of power, wisdom and love.¹¹⁰

In Hugh’s theology, the opposition of truth and image is a fundamental idea that reappears in various contexts. Images (that is, representations leading to, but standing instead of, the truth)

Benjamin minor i, *Liber exceptionum* I, i, 1; *Adnotatio in Ps 121* and *Sermo 70* in Pentecosten (in the collection *Sermones centum*); for Achard and Walther, see the relevant chapter.

¹⁰⁶ *Sententie de divinitate*, pars III: “recurramus ad idem simulacrum quod prius posuimus, id est ad mentem rationalem que est quasi imago et simulacrum Dei, ut sicut per id Deum esse et unum esse cognouimus, ita per illud idem trinum esse intelligamus.” 952.

¹⁰⁷ *Sententie de divinitate*, pars III: “Et ita apparent tria quedam in uno, id est potentia, sapientia et amor. Et est potentia, et de potentia sapientia, et de potentia et sapientia amor. Et accedit trinitas quedam et unitas non recedit.” 953.

¹⁰⁸ On the historical background of the three terms, see Poirel, *Livre de la nature et débat trinitaire au XIIIe siècle. Le “De tribus diebus” de Hugues de Saint-Victor* (Bibliotheca Victorina XIV) (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002).

¹⁰⁹ “Et hiis modis ut diximus Deum esse et unum esse rationalis anima in creaturis intellexit, trinum uero esse hoc modo per creaturas cognouit: per uniuersitatem rerum cognouit potentiam, per pulchritudinem sapientiam, per utilitatem benignitatem. [...] Tria, que in mente sunt, signa quidem sunt, quia per ea Trinitas deitatis inuestigatur. Item eadem imago sunt, quia, ut in mente potentia est, sic et in Deo potentia est, cuius potentie hec potentia que in mente est, imago est. Item ut in mente est sapientia uel gaudium, sic et sapientia et gaudium in Deo est, cuius sapientie uel gaudii ea que in mente sunt sapientia uel gaudium, imago existunt. Que enim in Deo in ueritate sunt, hic in imagine apparent. Hic etenim imago tantum est, ibi ueritas.” Appendix to *Sententie*, 954. Note the way in which Hugh calls *signa* both the three properties of the creation and the three mental instances; for Augustine the first would pertain to *vestigia Dei*, the second are *imago Dei* and the two are conceptually disjunct.

¹¹⁰ See *De Sacr.* I, iii, 28, PL 176: 230BD.

essentially belong to our human condition, in the most various forms. Everything sensible is an image of the invisible;¹¹¹ the Bible mostly uses the figurative speech of *demonstratio symbolica* in order to elevate man to the cognition of the invisible, and human cognition is bound to images. Considered from an eschatological prospective, humanity lives in the age of the image and *figura*, until truth reveals itself, *pure et nude*, without the usage of symbols;¹¹² until then all possible cognition about God acquired through reading the Bible is like an image if compared to the future cognition.¹¹³ Some similar ideas may be found in Augustine, too: but Hugh's texts reveal a grand and coherent vision where everything is an image of the truth, expecting the revelation of the truth that brings the fullness of understanding, the contemplation of the truth, the presence of contemplation.¹¹⁴

b) *Speculum* and *specula*: mirror imagery revised

The 1Cor 13:12, *videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate tunc autem facie ad faciem* is a crucial locus in Christian theologies. It speaks positively about seeing God, while numerous other Scriptural accounts state that God cannot be seen; it also promises a future immediate vision, when God will be seen face to face. For Western theology, Augustine provided the meaning of this locus: his interpretation became the standard (and unquestioned) one copied into textbooks and commentaries on the locus. In the *De Trinitate* XV, 8, 14 Augustine provides a famous and influential interpretation of 1Cor 13:12, which later became a standard interpretation of the passage.¹¹⁵ Investigating the theological meaning of "mirror" (*speculum*) and "enigma" (*aenigma*) in the clause describing the present conditions (*per speculum in aenigmate*), Augustine makes grammatical excursions on the two words and explains that the Greek original text speaks about *speculum*, mirror, and not about *specula*, watchtower. The distinction between *speculum* and *specula* surfaces again in the subsequent explanation where he employs (a somewhat arbitrary) etymology on *speculum* in order to connect 1Cor 13:12 (*videmus nunc per speculum*) and 2Cor 3:18 (*nos autem... gloriam Domini speculantes*).¹¹⁶ Augustine argues that *speculantes* in 2Cor means those who see through a mirror, not those who can

¹¹¹ See *In Hier. II*, PL 175: 950AD.

¹¹² *In Hier. III*: "Magnum est enim homini nunc ad ipsum [sc. Deum] ire, etsi non detur pervenire. Dabitur autem postea, cum venerit quod perfectum est; et coeperit videre homo sicut videtur, non per speculum imaginem, sed facie ad faciem veritatem. Nunc autem interim totum imago est, et ipsa imago longe a veritate est; et tamen facit quod potest quasi imago; et convertit animum, sed non perducit." PL 175: 977A.

¹¹³ *In Hier. II*: "Omnis enim illa cognitio, quam modo per sacrum eloquium studio lectionis vel meditationis discimus, quasi imago tantum est illius plenae [0950D] ac perfectae cognitionis, quam postmodum ex praesenti contemplatione hauriemus. Unde et Apostolus ait: 'Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate; tunc autem facie ad faciem.'" PL 175: 950CD.

¹¹⁴ *In Hier. III*: "ipsam adhuc veritatem capere non possumus, donec transeat figura, et veritas manifestetur, super omne hoc, et extra omne hoc, nude et aperte ut est ipsa. Nunc ergo usque adhuc manent figurae, et ex ipsis quaedam longe sunt, et apparent quod sunt similitudo tantum; quaedam vero propriae sunt, et accipiuntur quasi pro veritate, cum sint tantum signa veritatis et non veritas" PL 175: 978A.

¹¹⁵ *De Trin. XV*, 8, 14: "Videmus nunc inquit per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem [1Cor 13:12]. Quale sit et quod sit hoc speculum si quaeramus, profecto illud occurrit, quod in speculo nisi imago non cernitur. Hoc ergo facere conati sumus, ut per imaginem hanc quod nos sumus, videremus utcumque a quo facti sumus, tamquam per speculum. Hoc significat etiam illud quod ait idem apostolus: *Nos autem revelata facie gloriam Domini speculantes, in eandem imaginem transformamur de gloria in gloriam, tanquam a Domini Spiritu* [2Cor 3:18]. *Speculantes* dixit, per speculum videntes, non de specula prospicientes. Quod in graeca lingua non est ambiguum, unde in latinam translatae sunt apostolicae Litterae. Ibi quippe speculum ubi apparent imagines rerum, a specula de cuius altitudine longius aliquid intuemur, etiam sono verbi distat omnino: satisque apparet Apostolum a speculo, non a specula dixisse, *gloriam Domini speculantes*." PL 42: 1067-1068.

¹¹⁶ The verb *speculor* means "to spy out, see, watch closely," but here, in the early Bibles, instead of *speculantes* one more often reads *contemplantes*; Jerome and Tertullian also used the form *contemplantes*; see Jean Leclercq, *Études sur le vocabulaire monastique du moyen âge* (Rome: Herder, 1961), 83. The word *speculor*, however, means originally "to spy out," "to watch for" and "to observe," which are, in spite of Augustine's interpretation, linguistically more connected with the meaning of *specula* ("height," "lookout," "watchtower").

see far from a watchtower (*speculantes dixit, per speculum videntes, non de specula prospicientes*). The combination of these elements leads to a doctrinal-theological conclusion: seeing through a mirror (1Cor 13:12) is seeing the glory of the Lord (2Cor 3:18), which means in turn seeing the image of the Trinity in the soul; the future transformation to the image (promised by 2Cor 3:18, *in eamdem imaginem transformamur de gloria in gloriam*) refers to the transformation of the present dim image into a clear image.

These ideas imply a theological model characteristic of later Western theology: the strict duality of *via* and *patria*, the trinitarian concept of the *imago Dei* which became dim because of the original sin; the impossibility of the vision of God in this life, and the eschatological vision of God that can only restore the image. These doctrines were included in textbooks, and most medieval authors accepted them as premises. Hugh of Saint-Victor was an exception. His “deviations” from the Augustinian standards can be grasped in two instances: he provided a non-Augustinian interpretation of the *speculum* and *enigma*, and spoke positively about a *specula contemplationis* – with so much certitude that it may be well a pun on Augustine as well. These “deviations” were inherited by Richard, too, who several times refers to *specula contemplationis*, and regularly names contemplation a vision *non per speculum in aenigmate*.

Specula contemplationis

The term *contemplationis specula* is not a common term of Hugh’s (in Richard’s *Benjamin major* the term will occur more often). Hugh uses it three times in the context of contemplation (both of the prelapsarian and the present state).¹¹⁷ In the *In Threnos Jeremiae*, the exposition of Lam 2:1 provides an occasion to refer to Adam’s fall: here *specula* is a metaphor for the divine premonition banning Adam from the forbidden fruit. Independently of that metaphor, here also appear characteristically Hugonian ideas on the prelapsarian state: man was created in order to contemplate the “light of eternity,” the first man *saw* God through “the presence of internal contemplation,” and the Fall did not extinguish the “light of reason” (*lumen rationis*), but only obscured it.¹¹⁸

Two more elaborate accounts can be found in the third book of *De archa Noe*: here *specula* refers rather to the state of contemplation: being in the watchtower means also contemplating God. The first instance describes the Fall of Adam and its consequence. Hugh here (III, vi) draws a parallel between the newly built Temple of Solomon, which became full of smoke (cf. 3King 8) and the newly created Adam who fell from the watchtower (*specula*) of “internal contemplation” and cannot see his duties towards God, being surrounded by the darkness or cloud (*caligo*) of ignorance.¹¹⁹ This account

¹¹⁷ At other occurrences, *specula* means an observation point set above the turmoil of the changing world (*De vanitate mundi* II, PL 176: 720D); the *De filia Jephthe* defines *specula* as an elevated point (“Est autem specula altitudo ad aspiciendum vel despiciendum, id est desuper aspiciendum.” PL 177: 333B). According to the traditional etymology, *Sion* also means *specula*; on the meaning of *specula* in Hugh, see Sicard, *Théologies Victorines*, 25 and 43.

¹¹⁸ *In Threnos*, on Lam 2:1: “Dicit ergo: *Quomodo obtexit caligine in furore suo Dominus filiam Sion*; quia hominem, quem ad contemplandum lumen aeternitatis creaverat, peccantem deserens, in tenebris ignorantiae reliquit: Sion namque interpretatur specula, ubi hostium incursus de longe prospicitur. Primo autem homini dictum est: De ligno scientiae boni et mali ne comedas [...]. Homo ergo quasi in quadam specula erigitur, quando imminentis mali periculum per circumspectionem cavere jubetur. [...] Quo modo obtexit, inquit, quod tegitur, absconditur quidem, non aufertur; quia lumen rationis [0270C] per peccatum in homine obscuratum est, non ablatum. Quomodo obtexit, textitne superiora, hoc est coelestia videre posset. Sequitur: *projecit de coelo terram inclutam Israel*. Israel interpretatur vir videns Deum. Primus autem homo, antequam peccaret, Israel fuit, quia per contemplationis internae praesentiam Deum vidit. Per terram ergo Israel congrue corpus hominis accepimus [...]: quasi de coelo, id est de incorruptione ad corruptionem terram Israel projecit. Recte autem propheta plangendo casum hominis, primum [0270D] caliginem mentis, ac deinde corruptionem carnis commemorat.” PL 175: 270AD.

¹¹⁹ *De archa Noe* III, vi: “Sed hec domus ut edificata est nebula impletur, quia homo conditus ac deinde peccando ab illa interne contemplationis specula corruens in has miseras presentis uite tenebras labitur, ubi digne Deo ministrare non uolet, quia caligine ignorantie obuolutus, quid agendum uel uitandum sibi sit ex magna parte iam non uidet.” CCCM 176, 64 (= PL 176: 652BC). It is remarkable that the *De spiritu et anima* lii conforms this part of Hugh’s text to the Augustinian ideas, changing *specula* into *speculum*: “Sed postquam delectationem nostram in terram peccando sparsimus, peccati pulvis

of the Fall can be read as a parallel of the account of the *De sacramentis*: what is here the loss of the “internal contemplation” is there the loss of the eye of contemplation, and no longer knowing duties is there described as the effect of the loss of the “eye of reason.”

The second occurrence (III, viii) describes the opposite of Adam’s fall: the ascent of the soul (*animus*) in contemplation, in this life, into the “watchtower of contemplation.” According to this narrative, after the “rust of the original sin” has been removed from the mind, the soul becomes elevated (*sublevatur*) above itself, into that watchtower (*contemplationis specula*). From that higher position, the mind can see a bright, new and never-before-seen region from a distance. The mind enjoys the light experienced there, and also sees, with admiration, below that region which has left, and above the region it tended to. In the ascent, the soul becomes entirely spiritual (*totus spiritalis efficitur*), and in itself “glories in the hiddenness of the face of God” (*intus in abscondito faciei Domini gloriatur*).¹²⁰

This allegorical narrative interlaces three elements, those of the elevation, the middle position and the return – and this combination makes the narrative characteristically Hugonian. The elevation of the mind above itself is not extraordinary in itself. The place to which it is elevated is a middle position between the Creator and the created world, above this world but below the desired one. This elevation into an intermediary position (which takes place during this life, in contemplation and through grace) has at least two remarkable, nearly contemporaneous parallels. Abbot Suger describes his “ecstasy” in the same way, being between the earth and the heavens;¹²¹ on the other hand, the concept of *visio mediastina*, attributed from the 1160s onwards to the prelapsarian Adam and the enraptured Paul, also assumes such a third position. The epistemological value of this elevation is somewhat more than later centuries would permit for earthly contemplation: “glorying in the hiddenness” is Hugh’s term to describe that cognition of God that the disembodied souls have in the two-stage model of eschatology. The crucial, and characteristically Hugonian, element is the third one: the elevation into the middle position is a return into an earlier possessed position (as the metaphor of the watchtower suggests). Once Adam fell from the watchtower of contemplation, but the second narrative describes how the mind can, in this life, ascend into that watchtower again. Although elevation in contemplative ecstasy is not an uncommon idea, elevation *as return*, into a position once occupied, is unique. The typical Augustinian line of thought (based on the later Augustine) continually emphasises the rupture and discontinuity between the original condition and the present fallen one, and considers the departure from the fallen condition as something extraordinary – but certainly not as a reenactment of something prior.

Videre per speculum

Augustine’s interpretation of 1Cor 13:12, as given in the *De Trinitate*, defines the meaning of seeing God “through a mirror in an enigma” as seeing God’s image in the trinitarian structures of the powers

superjectus est cordi nostro [cf. Hugh *op. cit.* 652A]; et ideo ab illae internae contemplationis speculo corruentes in hac miseras praesentis vitae tenebras labimur, ubi digne Deo ministrare non valemus, quia sorde iniquitatis, caligine ignorantiae obvoluti quid agendum vel vitandum nobis sit, ex magna parte jam non videmus.” PL 40: 818.

¹²⁰ *De archa Noe* III, viii: “Postquam enim per ignem compunctionis rubigo peccati a mente fuerit consumpta et ille internus fulgor in corde micare ceperit, confestim animus in quandam contemplationis speculam sublevatur. Ibi que quodammodo se ipso altior effectus quandam, ut ita dixerim, lucidam regionem et terram nouam eminens prospicit, qualem nunquam antea uel uidisse se meminit, uel esse estimauit. Miratur et ipse qui uidet et pre gaudio presentis luminis preteritas ignorantie sue tenebras accusat, miratur subter se in imo quo prostratus iacuit, miratur super se in summo quo eleuatus tendit. Gaudet se tantum iam euasisse quod doluit, dolet se tantum adhuc abesse ab eo quod diligit. Conatur igitur, festinat, ascendit, crescit per desiderium. Et quemadmodum uirgula fumi quanto magis sursum tollitur, tanto amplius extenuatur, ita celestibus appropinquans et omnem terrene concupiscentie nebulam euaporans, totus spiritalis efficitur, tandem que se humanis subducit aspectibus, dum ad terrena ista et uisibilia concupiscenda, amplius exire recusans, intus in abscondito faciei Domini gloriatur.” CCCM 176, 68 (= PL 176: 654BC).

¹²¹ Suger, *De administratione sua* II, 13: “videor videre me, quasi sub aliqua extranea orbis terrarum plaga, quae nec tota sit in terrarum fece, nec tota in celi puritate, demorari.” PL 186: 1234A.

of the soul. It does not leave much room for other forms of cognition in this life: this mediated cognition belongs to this life. Hugh keeps certain elements of this doctrine, but his alterations subvert the Augustinian doctrine.

Hugh's most important interpretation of 1Cor 13:12 is given in the *De sacramentis* I, x, 9, the chapter explaining the sign-like character of faith. The interpretation given here is twofold: first he explains that faith, as a surrogate of the lost contemplation, has a "sacramental" character; then he presents the concrete interpretation of the Biblical *locus*, defined by his concept of faith. Here Hugh emphasises two aspects of faith, one connecting it to the prelapsarian, the other to the eschatological state: faith is a replacement of the prelapsarian contemplation of God, but also a "sacrament" of the future vision of God. The surrogate character of faith is due to the loss of the prelapsarian contemplation of God: as cognition of God, now faith replaces the lost vision. At the same time, faith also has a sign-like character. Following Augustine, Hugh uses the term "sacrament" (*sacramentum*) as an equivalent for "sign signifying a holy thing" (*sacramentum est sacrae rei signum*).¹²² Hugh applies this idea to faith, too: faith is a sacrament (that is, a sign), referring to the eschatological vision of God (called *contemplatio* by Hugh). The relation between faith and the (eschatological) vision is a relation between the sign and the reality signified (or, in Hugh's terminology, the sacrament and the thing itself). This sign-like character of faith also creates a strong opposition between faith and contemplation: faith is an image, compared to the reality in contemplation.¹²³ Such theological considerations pave the way for the meaning that Hugh gives to 1Cor 13:12:

The Apostle says: *We see now through a mirror in an enigma, but then face to face*. Now, when we see through faith, we see through a mirror in an enigma, but then, when we see through contemplation, we will see face to face. What is *seeing through a mirror*? seeing the image. What is *seeing face to face*? seeing the thing.... What is seen as an image [or: in an image], is a sacrament: what is seen as reality [or: in the thing], the thing of the sacrament. So what we see *now through a mirror, in an enigma*, is a sacrament, compared to what we will see *face to face* in manifest contemplation.... But what is an *enigma* and what is a *mirror* in which the image is seen until the thing itself can be seen? The *enigma* is the Holy Scripture. Why? Because it has obscure meaning. The *mirror* is your heart, provided that it is clear (*mundum*) and wiped (*extersum*) and enlightened (*clarificatum*). Image in the mirror, faith in your heart.¹²⁴

A key element behind all these theories of Hugh is the opposition of the direct and the indirect visions (of God), but (which is quite remarkable) the direct vision has no eschatological connotation at all. Explaining the expression *videre per speculum in aenigmate* (as a synonym for *per fidem*) and *facie ad faciem* (as a synonym for *per contemplationem*), Hugh brings forth not a theoretical but a practical explanation: if someone is behind or above us, we can see him using a mirror, although

¹²² The definition is given in *De Sacr.* I, ix, 2 (PL 176: 317C).

¹²³ *De sacr.* I, x, 9: "Quod ergo videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, sacramentum est ad illud quod videbimus facie ad faciem in manifesta contemplatione. Sed quod est aenigma, et quod est speculum in quo videtur imago donec ipsa res videri possit? Aenigma est Scriptura sacra. Quare? quia obscuram habet significationem. Speculum est cor tuum, si tamen mundum fuerit et extersum et clarificatum. Imago in speculo fides in corde tuo. Ipsa enim fides imago est, et sacramentum. Contemplatio autem futura, res et virtus sacramenti. [...] Ergo qui per fidem vident, imaginem vident; qui per contemplationem vident, rem vident. Qui fidem habent, sacramentum habent; qui contemplationem habent, rem habent." PL 176: 342BD. Similar ideas appear in the earlier *De sacramentis dialogus*: PL 176: 36B.

¹²⁴ *De sacr.* I, x, 9: "Apostolus dicit: Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem [1Cor 13:12]. Nunc scilicet quando per fidem videmus, videmus per speculum in aenigmate; tunc autem quando videbimus per contemplationem videbimus facie ad faciem. Quid est per speculum videre? Imaginem videre. Quid est facie ad faciem videre? Rem videre. [...] Quod videtur in imagine sacramentum est: quod videtur in re, res sacramenti [0342C] est. Quod ergo videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, sacramentum est ad illud quod videbimus facie ad faciem in manifesta contemplatione. [...] Sed quod est aenigma, et quod est speculum in quo videtur imago donec ipsa res videri possit? Aenigma est Scriptura sacra. Quare? quia obscuram habet significationem. Speculum est cor tuum, si tamen mundum fuerit et extersum et clarificatum. Imago in speculo fides in corde tuo." PL 176: 342BC. The translation above is mine.

only as an image; if we turn towards him, we can see him “face to face.”¹²⁵ This opposite of seeing an image or seeing the thing itself is a characteristic element of Hugh’s thought: it appears several times in the *In Hierarchiam* as well.¹²⁶ The distinction is set between the immediate and the mediated forms of vision – but various forms of immediate vision are not differentiated. Augustine was adamant about reserving the immediate vision of God to the life hereafter; in contrast, Hugh speaks generally about contemplation, casually called “future contemplation.” “Contemplation” in the present context may refer to both the eschatological and the ecstatic cognition, and both forms of cognition are described with the same terms: *contemplatio*, *manifesta contemplatio*; *videre facie ad faciem*, *videre ipsam rem*, *in facie*.

The remainder of Hugh’s interpretation is a more traditional, tropological reading of the locus: the mirror is the “heart” of the believer, while the enigma is Scripture (for its obscurity). The “mirror of the soul” is a traditional image present already in Augustine, but Hugh’s combination of the imagery of mirror and the sign-like character creates a different, ambiguous context: the mediated vision, through the “mirror” of the soul, is temporary – but the immediate one is not reserved for the life hereafter (even if the passage emphasises the condition of this life). The motif of the “mirror of the soul” returns in Richard’s *Benjamin minor* lxxii, with a similarly ambiguous tone. Richard admits there that for a vision of God, the “most proper mirror” is the intellectual soul (*animus rationalis*, *spiritus rationalis*), until our cognition takes place according to faith; like Hugh, he also mentions the cleansing of the mirror until the light from above appears in it. But after that point, Richard breaks with the Augustinian concept limiting God’s vision in this life to a mirrored one, more explicitly than Hugh did. The light’s gleaming in the mirror raises the desire to gaze at the light above, writes Richard; changing the imagery, he equates the direct gaze at the light with Benjamin, who in turn is another figure standing for contemplation, the immediate vision of truth.¹²⁷

c) Presence and absence of God

One of the Augustinian doctrines known to medieval authors was the idea that faith and the vision of God mutually exclude each other. In Augustine’s theology, this opposition supported the doctrine that God cannot be seen in this life (but can be in the blessed state) but, at the same time, made it possible to interpret Paul’s extraordinary experience in his rapture (2Cor 12) as a *vision* of God. Closer followers of Augustine, such as Bernard of Clairvaux and William of Saint-Thierry, adhered to this idea: they avoided the visual paradigm when talked about contemplative experience, and

¹²⁵ *De sacr.* I, x, 9: “Nunc scilicet quando per fidem videmus, videmus per speculum in aenigmate; tunc autem quando videbimus per contemplationem videbimus facie ad faciem. Quid est per speculum videre? Imaginem videre. Quid est facie ad faciem videre? Rem videre. Puta aliquem esse post te, vel supra te, aversus es ab illo, nec vides facie ad faciem, facie tua ad faciem illius. Aversa est enim facies tua ab illo: et si forte ille respicit ad te, non tamen tu similiter ad illum. Quandiu igitur sic eris, non poteris illum videre facie ad faciem. Exhibe speculum et pone ante te, [0342B] statim videbis in eo imaginem illius, qui est ad dorsum tuum, vel supra verticem tuum, et dices: Video te. Quid vides? Jam aliquid vides, sed imaginem solam. Vides illum, sed in imagine sua, nondum in facie sua. [...] Converte te ad illum, et pone faciem ad faciem; et videbis jam non imaginem, sed ipsam rem. Prius vidisti illum, sed in imagine sua: modo vides illum in facie sua.” PL 176: 342AB.

¹²⁶ The rejection of the Eriugenian theophany is based, ultimately, on this opposition; the cognition acquired from reading and meditation is also compared to an image (while ecstatic contemplation is compared to seeing the thing) (see *In Hier.* II, PL 175: 950CD), and the distinction between symbolic and anagogical demonstrations also goes back to this idea.

¹²⁷ *Benjamin minor* lxxii: “Praecipuum et principale speculum ad videndum Deum, animus rationalis, absque dubio invenit seipsum. [...] Exterso autem speculo et diu diligenter inspecto, incipit ei quaedam divini luminis claritas interlucere, et immensus quidam insolitae visionis radius, oculis ejus apparere. [...] Ex hujus igitur luminis visione quam admiratur in se, mirum in modum accenditur animus, et animatur ad videndum lumen, quod est supra se. [...] Mens itaque, quae jam visionis hujus desiderio flagrat, si jam sperat, quod desiderat, jam se Benjamin concepisse cognoscat.” PL 196: 51C-52A.

conceived it instead as a union of love. Hugh also kept the Augustinian principle, but provided a substantially different interpretation, and considered ecstatic contemplation to be indeed a vision of God.

In *Letter 147* Augustine attempted to harmonise various, seemingly contradictory, Biblical references concerning the vision of God – assertions explicitly denying the possibility of the vision of God, Old Testament accounts that speak positively of men who have seen God (such as Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Isaiah), and New Testament passages that promise a future vision of God to the Blessed. The doctrinal conclusion of *Letter 147* is that even if in this life God is invisible both to the mind and the senses (and can be cognised through faith), he becomes visible in the life hereafter. For the Old Testament accounts, the interpretative guideline is given by Jn 1:18 (*Deum nemo vidit unquam*), meaning that the righteous of the Old Testament (*patres, iusti antiqui*) saw God in only some non-identical form chosen by God (a *species*), which does not disclose God's reality;¹²⁸ in contrast, Paul in his rapture had a vision of God – that is, he saw God his reality (*in natura, in natura propria, in semetipso*). Concerning the prospects of the present life, Augustine emphasises the importance of faith (and the impossibility of a vision of God in this life), although he mentions people who have seen God's reality (*substantia*) and were taken from "this life" to the "angelic life" by divine intervention. As the entire discourse of *Letter 147* is defined by salvation history, Augustine does not give details concerning these people: the only example that he names is Paul himself.¹²⁹ Seeing God in this life is substantially impossible; Augustine does not endorse this option, as it needs a miracle (as in Paul's case).

The Augustinian opposition of faith (absence) and vision (presence) was known to Hugh. Speaking about faith Hugh asserts the opposition between seeing and believing (he even quotes the Augustinian *sententia* of *si vides non est fides*¹³⁰), and his own doctrine on the sacramental character of faith also fits into the conventional Augustinian framework. Hugh defines sacrament as sign – that is, a representation standing instead of the thing represented (*sacramentum est sacrae rei signum*); faith is also a sacrament – a sign, representing some absent reality, namely the eschatological face-to-face vision.¹³¹ Although Hugh uses these Augustinian concepts, he still adds one particular element that gives a radically different meaning to them. This element is his notion of presence. While keeping the opposition of seeing and believing, seeing also means to Hugh the presence of the thing seen.¹³² If the thing is present, it is seen; seeing the object leads to certainty and direct knowledge; in contrast, absent things can be believed only, as they are not seen. This combination of seeing and presence is rather uncommon in the period: for other authors, "experiencing" the presence of God does not necessarily mean a *vision* of God.

Such notion of presence also causes an important difference: "seeing God" does not exclusively mean the eschatological vision of God (in contrast to what the later Augustine suggested). Hugh's term for seeing God is *contemplatio* – the term means the immediate and

¹²⁸ *Ep.* 147, 7, 19. "Deus natura invisibilis est. Illi autem ideo viderunt, quicumque Deum viderunt, quia cui voluerit, sicut voluerit, apparet ea specie quam voluntas elegerit, etiam latente natura." PL 33: 604.

¹²⁹ *Ep.* 147, 13, 31: "Deinde potest movere quomodo jam ipsa Dei substantia videri potuerit a quibusdam in hac vita positus [...] nisi quia potest humana mens divinitus rapi ex hac vita ad angelicam vitam, antequam per istam communem mortem carne solvatur. Sic enim raptus est qui audivit illic ineffabilia verba quae non licet homini loqui." PL 33: 610.

¹³⁰ *De sacr.* I, iii, 1: "Scriptura dicit: Deum nemo vidit unquam (Joan. I); tamen fides quod non videt credit. Et ex hoc meritum fidei constat non vidisse et credere. Unde pulchrum illud dictum est: Nam »si vides, non est fides.« Credit ergo fides quod non vidit; et non vidit quidem quod credit." PL 176: 217A. The *dictum* is from Augustine, *In Johannis evangelium* tr. 68, 3.

¹³¹ *De sacr.* I, x, 9: "Fides ergo sacramentum est futurae contemplationis; et ipsa contemplatio res et virtus sacramenti; et accipimus nunc interim sacramentum sanctificandi, ut perfecte sanctificati rem ipsam capere possimus." PL 176: 343A.

¹³² *De sacr.* II, xviii, 17: "Inter videre et credere hoc distare dicimus; quia praesentia videntur, creduntur absentia. Plane forsitan satis est si praesentia illa hoc loco intelligamus dicta, quae praesto sunt sensibus sive animae sive corporis. Unde etiam ducto vocabulo praesentia nominantur." PL 176: 614C.

unblocked vision of the thing seen (and so it is the opposite of faith).¹³³ Hugh's epistemological-psychological definition of contemplation is also based on the concept of immediateness: it is a free insight of the mind into things that are manifest to us.¹³⁴ The presence of God and the vision (contemplation) of God belong together – and in Hugh's theology there are several instances of seeing God, even if the present state is conceived as the state of faith and often described as being “rejected from the face of God.” Besides the eschatological vision, Hugh also conceives Adam's prelapsarian cognition of God as a vision of God; at certain passages he also speaks explicitly about the vision of God in contemplative ecstasy. Compared to Augustine and his followers, in Hugh's theology the vision of God is a far less extraordinary case: it happened to Adam in a way, and it will happen in the blessed state – and it can happen in ecstasy.

Gregory the Great revised

Both the Areopagite and Gregory the Great are authorities whom Hugh used for his doctrines on the cognition of God. The Areopagite of the *Celestial Hierarchy* (the sole Areopagitic work that Hugh seemingly knew) permits only an indirect cognition of God mediated by theophanies; Gregory permits only an indirect cognition (called *contemplatio*) in this life, but after that a direct vision of God. Hugh accommodated the two substantially different positions to his own one.

A central doctrine of Gregory's theology is that an immediate vision of God is possible only after this life. Interpreting the throne vision of Isaiah, Gregory explains that whatever in this life can be seen of God is not God but something “below God”: however far contemplation reaches, it cannot attain God himself.¹³⁵ It is crucial that what Gregory calls here “contemplation” is a cognition restricted to all things except God. Hugh in his *In Hierarchiam* paraphrases this passage, but also combines the Patristic authorities. His point is that whatever one may learn from theophanies (that is, revelations) in this life, that cannot be an adequate cognition of God: these appearances (*apparitiones*) of God only reveal something about God but not God himself. In this way Hugh equates the Areopagitic theophany with the things “below God” of Gregory.¹³⁶ This interpretation of theophany, as an image of God set between the mind and God during this life, reappears in Hugh's criticism against the Eriugenian interpretation of the term.

Another, less explicit, reference to Gregory appears in the *De Archa Noe* I, iv/v. Here Hugh seemingly paraphrases Gregory's doctrinal explanation of the throne vision of Isaiah: “however far we proceed in this life, still we are averted from the face of our creator, because... we do not turn towards him through the presence of contemplation” – as long as we are limited by the body, it

¹³³ Cf. *De sacr.* I, x, 9: “qui per fidem vident, imaginem vident; qui per contemplationem vident, rem vident.” PL 176: 342D.

¹³⁴ *In Eccl. hom. 1*: “Contemplatio est perspicax, et liber animi contuitus in res perspicendas usquequaque diffusus. [...] Contemplatio vero [est] de rebus, vel secundum suam naturam, vel secundum capacitatem nostram manifestis.” PL 175: 117A.

¹³⁵ Gregory, *In Ezechielem* II, homilia 2, 14: “Sed inter haec sciendum est quia quandiu in hac mortali carne vivitur, nullus ita in contemplationis virtute proficit, ut in ipso jam incircumscripso [0956B] luminis radio mentis oculos infigat. [...] Nos ergo templum illius sumus, in quorum mentibus habitare dignatur. Sed ‘ea quae sub eo erant implebant templum,’ quia quidquid de illo modo conspicitur, adhuc non est ipse, sed sub ipso est. [...] [0956D] Ea ergo quae sub eo sunt implent templum, quia, sicut dictum est, et cum mens in contemplatione profecerit, non jam quod ipse est, sed id quod sub ipso est contemplatur.” PL 76: 956CD.

¹³⁶ Hugh, *In Hier.* III: “Et tamen sive in istis [sc. hominibus imperfectioribus], sive in illis [sc. perfectioribus] quidquid de Deo ad humanam cognitionem venire potuit, minus ipso, et quodammodo infra ipsum fuit. Hinc enim scriptum est: ‘Ea, quae sub ipso erant, replebant templum [Isai. VI]:’ quia omne quod mens humana in hac vita de cognitione illius capere potest, ineffabili maiestati ejus aequari non potest. Tamen divina Scriptura manifestationes illas, quibus Deus mentibus humanis se revelat, theophanias, id est divinas apparitiones vocare consuevit; quoniam, etsi natura Deus non est, quod cernitur, secundum demonstrationem est, quia tamen per ipsum, et in ipso Deus manifestatur.” PL 175: 1012D-1013A.

separates us from seeing the face of God.¹³⁷ Hugh's text, however, beyond the similarities in wording (*quantumlibet in hac vita proficimus*, cf. Gregory: *quandiu in hac mortali carne vivitur, nullus ita... proficit... mens profecerit*) is much more of a reinterpretation than a paraphrase. The opposition of "this life" in the body and the aversion from God to the "presence of contemplation" and the "face of God" describe only the general human condition. Contrary to Gregory, Hugh's term "contemplation" does mean indeed a direct vision of God, and such contemplation is not restricted to the life hereafter. The term *praesentia contemplationis* applies in Hugh's writings to more than one case: it describes not only the eschatological vision of God but also the prelapsarian cognition of God, and contemplative ecstasy too, as will be demonstrated. Read in this way, Hugh's sentence means the opposite of Gregory's one: while in this life usually it is impossible to see God, Hugh elsewhere explicitly states that seeing God as present may also happen in this life, through the "Spirit of the Lord."

Areopagitic elements

The more or less consensual position of the literature is that the Areopagite's work did not leave many visible traces on Hugh's own theology. The "absence of discernible Dionysian influence" seems to be an accepted common ground: from this ground Paul Rorem argues that Hugh was not particularly influenced by Dionysius; Poirel (although earlier he also admitted this absence) argues from it for a "free assimilation" of the Areopagitic doctrines, based on numerous similarities.¹³⁸ In the present section I argue for a position partly similar to Poirel's one. Rorem's argument is based on the absence of Hugonian themes in the *In Hierarchiam*.¹³⁹ This argument is insufficient and questionable in itself. On the other hand, Poirel only mentions a few examples in a sentence that he sees as representative of a certain "air de famille" but does not go into detail. My position is that Hugh's familiarity with this particular work of the Areopagite defined many features of his own theology. Several doctrines that appear in his other works are coherent with the doctrines expounded as interpretation of the Areopagitic text. Here only four subjects that contributed to the formation of the theological anthropology and spirituality of Hugh (and, consequently, the Victorine school) can be discussed: the reinterpretation of theophany, the wisdom-centred theology, the world as representation and the concepts of *symbolum* and *anagoge*.¹⁴⁰ Hugh's interpretation of theophany has a polemic edge, since it is defined against Eriugena: for the Victorines, his solution also means

¹³⁷ Hugh, *De archa Noe* I, v [iv]: "quantumlibet in hac uita proficimus adhuc tamen a facie conditoris nostri quasi auersi sumus, quia et per meritum ascendimus, sed per presentiam contemplationis ad ipsum non inclinamur. [...] quamdiu huius corruptionis tegmine circundamur quasi quodam pariete interposito ab eius facie prohibemur." CCCM 176, 27 (= PL 176: 632A).

¹³⁸ In his 2006 article ("Hugo Saxo") Poirel, on the one hand, reserves his earlier position: "Ni le vocabulaire, ni les thèmes, ni les grandes orientations théologiques du Victorine ne semblent affectés à quelque moment que ce soit par la soudaine montée d'une sève aréopagitique." On the other hand, he enumerates a number of similarities, such as the opposition of invisible and visible realities, the concepts of *simulacrum* and *sacramentum*, the imagery of light and fire to denote the transcendent unity and the multiformity of the divine action, the importance of the symbolic theology (culminating in the *Arca* treatises), the superiority of the dissimilar similitudes. Ultimately, Poirel assumes a "libre assimilation" of the Areopagitic doctrines by Hugh in his early years, before he went to Saint-Victor; see Poirel, "Hugo Saxo. Les origines germaniques de la pensée d'Hugues de Saint-Victor," *Francia* 33/1 (2006): 163-174, here 173. Rorem, knowing Poirel's recent position still keeps with the opposite argument (*Hugh of St. Victor*, 2009): "Briefly, as others have noted, Hugh's overall corpus does not show much of a Dionysian imprint at all, whether from *The Celestial Hierarchy* or in general. [...] The basic contours of his thought [...] needed no Dionysian material. [...] Hugh's *Dionysian Commentary* remains largely peripheral to his overall corpus." *Hugh of Saint Victor*, 171-172.

¹³⁹ Rorem asserts that "the Victorine's commentary is minimally 'Hugonian': very little salvation history, no eschatology, only faint traces of *conditio/restauratio*, nothing about Noah's ark, no mention of allegory or tropology, and very little on pride and humility outside the (pointed) discussion in the *Prologue*." *Hugh of St. Victor*, 170-171.

¹⁴⁰ The following are an abbreviated extract from my article "The Victorines and the Areopagite," in Dominique Poirel, ed., *L'école de Saint-Victor in Paris. Influence et rayonnement du Moyen Âge à l'époque moderne* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 333-383.

the end of the controversy: if the term occurs in their works, it no longer has the “unorthodox” meaning. The wisdom-centred theology will be common to Victorines (at least to those spiritual authors who will be investigated here), and the theory of *symbolum* returns in Richard and Walther.

a) Reinventing *theophania*

Hugh’s relation to the Areopagite is ambiguous. He commented on the *Celestial Hierarchy*, a work that he considered as a quasi-Biblical authority, by Dionysius, the direct pupil of Saint Paul. He certainly read the *Celestial Hierarchy* with the glosses of Anastasius and the commentary of Eriugena. The theological content of the *Celestial Hierarchy* certainly posed problems for Hugh. The very central subject of the work is the hierarchised “theatre” of angels situated between God and the humans. There is no immediate contact between them: the angelic hierarchies are necessary intermediaries. This unusual role of the angels can be easily explained by basic tenets of Greek theology (on which the treatise was based and which were not accepted by the Latins): the cognition of God can happen only in theophany (the text itself does not make it explicit but Eriugena’s commentary does), and not even the theophany comes directly from God¹⁴¹ – hence, the static angelic hierarchy is a necessary link between God and humanity in order to transmit the theophanies. Hugh’s position as of an exegete, therefore, was difficult: he had to create an orthodox reading of a text that had traces of heterodox doctrines; in addition, Eriugena’s commentary made these heterodox doctrines explicit. The interpretative technique that Hugh employed was “overwriting”: changing the context and the original meaning by redefining the meaning of the terms involved. The working of this strategy of replacement is clearly visible in three cases where Hugh reinterprets theophany in a Latin manner.

1. Commenting on the first chapter, Hugh launches a general attack against the Greek (or here, Eriugenian) concepts of theophany and the invisibility of God, concluding with the redefinition of the key term *theophania*.¹⁴² Explaining the text, Hugh first uses the word to denote those signs that angelic minds receive from God. Then follows an apologetic excursus (unrelated to the text commented on) whose function is to invalidate a rival meaning of the term. The word *theophania* evokes by association another concept with the same name, as “some people” (*quidam*) imagine it. The way in which Hugh describes this “other” concept of *theophania* clearly shows the fundamental disagreement between two traditions. Hugh understands this theophany as an image of an incognoscible God (*quoddam simulacrum, imago*), which is set between the mind and God, in order to be contemplated *instead of* God.¹⁴³ Then he gives a more acceptable meaning to the term as a comprehensive vision of “illuminated” and “illuminating lights.”

2. Later on (commenting on Chapter Four) Hugh carefully obfuscates the intended meaning of the text. The Areopagite rejects the possibility of an immediate theophany of God, and supports his position with a variant of Jn 1:18 (*Dei occultum nemo vidit, neque videbit*): the Biblical locus means here the radical incognoscibility of the divine essence. Hugh reinterprets the Joannine reference by

¹⁴¹ This is made explicit in *Hier. cael.* iv, tr. Eriugena: “Si autem quis dixerit et inde immediate fuisse quibusdam sanctorum theophanias, discat et hoc sapienter ex sacratissimis eloquiis, quomodo hoc quidem quid est, Dei occultum nemo videt, neque videbit. Theophaniae autem sanctis factae sunt [...]. Has autem divinas visiones gloriosi patres nostri perfecerunt per medias coelestes virtutes” (PL 175: 1004C).

¹⁴² In *Hier. II*, PL 175: 954D-955C.

¹⁴³ In *Hier. II*: “quidam... inveniuntur, Deum rationali animo omnino incomprehensibilem et inaccessibilem, praedicantes, praeterquam quod theophaniis quibusdam, id est divinis apparitionibus, vel similitudinibus divinis in contemplationem propositis, de ipso eruditur. Ipsa autem quasi quaedam simulacra absconditae Divinitatis inter rationales animos ac Deum media ponunt, altiora quidem mente, inferiora autem Divinitate. Et hoc quidem solum de Deo videri, et in hoc solo Deum videri, utpote qui in ipso a nulla mente vel animo videri possit. Haec vero simulacra sunt eorum, et phantasmata vanitatis.” PL 175: 954D

paraphrasing the ideas of Gregory the Great: in his reading, the same words simply mean that *in this life* no one can have an adequate cognition of God.¹⁴⁴

3. Finally (commenting on the end of Chapter Eight), Hugh repeats the second book's attack on the invisibility of God and the Greek-Eriugenian notion of theophany. The wording is almost the same: he mentions the fantasies of "some people" again, but avoids calling them theophany. The *quidam* here can be identified – Hugh's remark here is a direct answer to Eriugena's interpretation of the same passage. The text of the Areopagite states that the ecclesiastical hierarchy will have that beauty of the angelic hierarchies which now possesses only *in imaginibus* (so the first recension) or *in characteribus* (so the second recension). Eriugena, commenting on the text of the first recension, interprets these "images" (*imagines*) as theophanies. Hugh, while reading and commenting on the second recension, also read Eriugena's commentary and reflected on it. First he evaluates Eriugena's concept (as he understands it: "certain people" give the blessed souls fantasies and images to contemplate instead of God); then he gives a corrective of the doctrine, based on the contrast of *figura* and *veritas*: the blessed state consists in seeing not "figures" but the truth.¹⁴⁵

b) A theology of wisdom and light

Wisdom (*sapientia*) and light are central terms in Hugh's theology. He uses these terms to describe both God and humans, characterising human existence as created wisdom and illuminated light, while God is characterised as uncreated wisdom and illuminating light. Behind the two "languages" of light and wisdom there is a specifically Christocentric theology, which is also a sapiential theology: in Hugh, the terms *sapientia*, *lux*, *verbum* are convertible and denote Christ.¹⁴⁶ Hugh uses both languages in his works, sometimes even together, to expound the same central doctrine – Christ is the mediator between humanity and God the Father – but the contexts, implied by the two languages, are different.

The "language of wisdom" can describe the double dynamics of the descent of the divine Wisdom to us and the ascent of the human wisdom to God. Speaking of God, Wisdom denotes the second Person of the Trinity: Christ, who is the Wisdom and the Word of God, the mediator between the remote Father and men. Speaking of men, wisdom means our own wisdom, which can be conformed to the divine Wisdom (through Christ) and which may lead to the cognition of God – but it also means the wisdom for which the philosophers of Hugh's age were striving. These different aspects of wisdom have their discussions in different works of Hugh. The *In Hierarchiam* explains that the descent and multiplication of the Single Ray of the Light (as outlined in the first chapter of the *Hierarchy*) means the descent of the Divine Wisdom, and the multiplication of the Ray results in the sensible world and the Holy Scripture, the works of that Wisdom. The *De tribus diebus* details the opposite idea, the ascent of human wisdom. Here Hugh describes the way in which discursive thinking investigates the higher and higher levels of the hierarchy of beauty (since beauty is the expression of divine wisdom in the creatures). The most beautiful subject is the cognition itself (*motus rationalis*) and man is the "first and principal image of the uncreated

¹⁴⁴ PL 175: 1012A-1013A; cf. Gregory, *In Ezechielem II, homilia 2*. PL 76: 956CD.

¹⁴⁵ Hugh, *In Hier.* VIII: "Quidam characteres istos extranee interpretari conati sunt; in illa futura gloria beatitudinis supernae phantasias quasdam et imagines errorum pro Deo in contemplatione speculantibus opposcentes, Deum in sua substantia nulli unquam visibilem asserentes. Sed nos beatitudinem non exspectamus in contemplatione figurarum, quibus veritas ipsa promissa est." PL 175: 1084C. Cf. Eriugena, *Explanationes* viii: "Imagines vocat, ut arbitror, theophanias, in quibus et ipsi angeli, et homines in aequalem eis beatitudinem glorificati, ipsum Deum videbunt, quoniam per se ipsum invisibilis est et erit omni intellectui." PL 122: 208AB = CCCM 32, 133.

¹⁴⁶ See *De sapientia animae Christi*: "Quid est Verbum nisi sapientia? Idem enim qui Verbum Dei a Joanne dicitur, ipse sapientia Dei a Paulo nominatur.... Christus igitur ipse et Verbum, et ipse est sapientia. Verbum sapientia, et sapientia Verbum.... Verbum sonat, sapientia illuminat. Nam et ipsa sapientia lux est, et Deus lux est, quia Deus sapientia est; et cum Deus illuminat, sapientia illuminat, et luce illuminat; nec alia luce illuminat, sed ea luce quae ipsa est; quia lux est, et verbum lux est, et sapientia lux est; quia verbum sapientia est, et sapientia Deus est." PL 176: 848CD.

wisdom,”¹⁴⁷ and therefore the search for wisdom continues through the *cognitio sui* and finally ends in the cognition of the Trinity, with a very special emphasis on the divine Wisdom: the rational being has been created to the Wisdom of God (*ad Dei sapientiam*, much like *ad imaginem*) and must return to that Wisdom.¹⁴⁸ The *Didascalicon* gives a different account of wisdom: it addresses the aspect of wisdom as the subject of philosophy, of *amor sapientiae*. Here Hugh accommodates his words to the neoplatonising vernacular of the contemporary philosophy, and using various definitions for philosophy (I, ii, iv and II, i), he talks about a divine and illuminating wisdom, a self-sufficient, primordial wisdom that calls man back to itself. The Christological and theological aspects of the word are left out here – but readers of his theological writings certainly could have discovered the same concept, accommodated to a different audience and formulated with different words.

The language of light also has its characteristic narrative, based on the descent of the illuminating Light. The image has its foundation in the text of *Celestial Hierarchy*, Chapter Three: according to the Areopagite the “destination”¹⁴⁹ of the hierarchies is to reach the likeness to and unity with God, which also means a conformation to the divine beauty and becoming divine images (*divina agalmata*).¹⁵⁰ Hugh applies this idea to both hierarchies, celestial and human, and creates a strongly visual idea. The illuminating Light descends from the source of light, the Father, through the mediation of Jesus, to the intellectual creatures.¹⁵¹ Intellectual creatures (and here Hugh speaks rather about human beings, omitting the angels) are “receptacles” (*receptacula*), being able to receive the divine light: they first accept the descending Light, then become lit by the same light and reflect it.¹⁵² Becoming lit by the illuminating light makes these creatures similar to the light: they turn into beautiful “images” of the light. Hugh calls the elements of this comprehensive vision or spectacle by various names: the creatures are “illuminated lights” (*lumina illuminata*), “images of the light” (*agalmata*), “shining mirrors” (*specula clarissima*) – and the grand image comprehending all the lights, both illuminating and illuminated ones, is a “theophany of the light” (*theophania luminis*). This theological vision of the light as descending from the highest hierarchy of God, multiplying itself through the profusion to the rational creatures, and unifying them in one shining hierarchy, is a central idea of his commentary: this “shining together” is what Hugh means to be the acceptable meaning of theophany.¹⁵³

c) The created world: theophany, *materialis manu ductio* and sign

¹⁴⁷ *De tribus diebus* [xvii]: “Primum ergo ac principale increatae sapientiae simulacrum est sapientia creata, id est rationalis creatura; quae, quia secundum aliquid visibilis est, secundum aliquid invisibilis janua contemplationis facta est pariter et via.” CCCM 177: 36 = PL 176: 824D.

¹⁴⁸ See *De tribus diebus* [xxii]: “dicendum est... semper propter se amandam sapientiam.... Sapientia enim vita est, et amor sapientiae est felicitas vitae,” and [xxv]: “Rationalis creatura facta est ad Dei sapientiam... omnis motus et conversio rationalis creaturae esse debet ad Dei sapientiam.” CCCM 117: 54-55 and 61 = PL 176: 832CD and 835B.

¹⁴⁹ The word is *skopos*, translated as *interpretatio* but interpreted by Hugh as *intentio*, *directio*, *destinatio*.

¹⁵⁰ Eriugena’s translation, as used by Hugh, reads “Interpretatio igitur hierarchiae est ad Deum, quantum possibile, similitudo et unitas. Et ad suum divinissimum decorem immutabiliter quidem definiens; quantum vero possibile, reformat, et suos laudatores agalmata divina perficit.” PL 175: 994-995.

¹⁵¹ *In Hier.* II: “[Jesus] qui est paternum lumen, quo mediante omnes spirituales illuminationes et dona gratiarum illuminandis tribuuntur” PL 175: 939A.

¹⁵² *In Hier.* II: “Replemur enim in eo quod lumen accipimus; convertimur autem in eo quod ex accepto lumine et ipsi lumina sumus.” PL 175: 938B; *In Hier.* III: “reformat, dico, in eo ipso quod imitatores Dei facit, et ad similitudinem ipsius in suo ministerio convertit, et convertendo, ac reformando agalmata divina perficit, ut sint ipsi divina agalmata, id est sancta simulacra et receptacula divinitatis, et specula clarissima; ut sint ipsi agalmata quidem divina, divinum lumen perficiendo, specula autem clarissima lucenda ex suscepto lumine.” PL 175: 995AB.

¹⁵³ See *In Hier.* I, v (932D-933A); II (939BC; 994C-995C: “agalmata,” “specula clarissima”); III (955AC: “theophania luminis,” “similitudo luminis”).

Theophania means, in the most general sense, the self-revelation of God, and for Hugh the sensible world is also a form of theophany.¹⁵⁴ It is also a means of divine pedagogy: since it has been created through divine Wisdom and is decipherable by human wisdom, the function of the created, sensible world is to lead humanity back to the cognition of God and the invisible things (hence *materialis manuductio*). This doctrine is present in the first chapter of the *Celestial Hierarchy*, but Hugh gives his own, characteristic interpretation of it. The text of the *Celestial Hierarchy* mentions “visible forms” as images of the invisible beauty, and “sensible sweetness” (*sensibilis suavitas*) and “material lights” as figures of immaterial light given to humanity through symbols.¹⁵⁵ Reading the passage, Eriugena went into detail, explaining “visible forms” as forms visible in the nature and the sacraments of the Bible; he also sensed in “sensible sweetness” the original’s intended liturgical context of fumigation and incense. Hugh’s interpretation of the same text omits the specific liturgical references and creates a comprehensive image. For Hugh, the text refers to a sensible universe that is in every aspect a representation of an invisible universe: the visible forms and visible beauty are images (*imagines*) of the invisible beauty, and the various forms of sensible sweetness are representations (*figurae et similitudines*) of the invisible virtues.¹⁵⁶ This also means that everything sensual has a sign-like character, and the entire sensible universe is a representation of something else.¹⁵⁷ Hugh’s concept surpasses the original idea of an anagogical universe: his theory makes the tension between *similitudo* and *res* into a metaphysical and eschatological tension. This universe of representations is indispensable and necessary: not only because humans are corporeal creatures but also because humanity is fallen. The notion of a *fallen* humanity (missing from the *Celestial Hierarchy*) makes a crucial difference. Humanity *now* is not only encircled by representations but is also restricted to them and limited by them. All cognition of invisible things is mediated through the representations (called collectively *imago* and *figura* by Hugh) until the final and future eschatological revelation of the *res* arrives.¹⁵⁸ The sole escape from this condition is the contemplative experience conceived as a vision of God through the “Spirit of God.”¹⁵⁹

d) *Symbolum* and *anagoge*

A central doctrine of the *Celestial Hierarchy* is that symbols have an anagogical function: the revelation of the angelic hierarchies by symbols, as the first chapter of the work states explicitly, also has this function: we are expected to consider the angelic hierarchies that were revealed to us, through symbols and with an anagogical intention. Eriugena’s translation gives two adverbs, *symbolice* and *anagoge*, and Hugh (contrary to the original intention of the Areopagite), sees

¹⁵⁴ Hugh gives several translations: “divina revelatio,” “divinitatis revelatio” (PL 175, 1012C); “theophaniae id est divinae apparitiones, vel manifestationes, sive illuminationes” (PL 175, 1035B).

¹⁵⁵ See *Hier. cael. I*, in Eriugena’s translation: “Visibiles quidem formas invisibilis pulchritudinis imaginationes arbitrans, et sensibiles suavitates figuras invisibilis distributionis, et immaterialis luculentiae imaginem materialia lumina [...] et quaecunque alia coelestibus quidem essentiis super mundane, nobis vero symbolice tradita sunt.”

¹⁵⁶ *In Hier. II*: “Est enim hic species et forma, quae delectat visum; est et melodiae jucunditas, quae demulcet auditum; est suavitas odoris, quae reficit olfactum; est dulcedo saporis, quae infundit gustum; et lenitas corporum, quae fovet et blande excipit tactum. Illic autem species est virtus, et forma justitia, dulcedo amor, et odor desiderium; cantus vero gaudium et exultatio; contactus autem amati, et desiderati, et quaesiti boni inventio.” PL 175: 950AB. See also *Miscellanea I, i* (*Spiritualis dijudicat omnia*), here PL 177: 470D-471A. Cf. Eriugena, *Expositiones*: “Sensibiles suavitates dicit corporeos odores [...] Hinc est quod et sanctissimum chrismatis sacramentum, thuris etiam fumigatio, in typo intimae virtutum suavitatis et virtutum divinationis a sacerdotibus conficiuntur ecclesiae.” CCCM 31, 15 = PL 122: 139B.

¹⁵⁷ Hugh has a rich vocabulary in order to express this tension: the sensible world around us (as representation) is called *simulacrum* (*De tribus diebus*), *signum*, *figura*, *imago*, *similitudo* (*In Hier.*); the invisible things signified are called *res* and *veritas* (*In Hier.*).

¹⁵⁸ *In Hier. II*: “Omnis enim illa cognitio, quam modo per sacrum eloquium studio lectionis vel meditationis discimus, quasi imago tantum est illius plenae ac perfectae cognitionis, quam postmodum ex praesenti contemplatione hauriemus.” PL 175: 950CD; cf. 977-978A.

¹⁵⁹ See *In Hier. III*, PL 175: 976AB and V, 1029CD; see also *Miscellanea I, i*, PL 177: 469-471.

behind the two words two different, and even opposite, notions: *symbolum* and *anagoge*.¹⁶⁰ Hugh's definitions are first quite vague: *symbolum* means visual forms applied to reveal (*demonstrare*) invisible things, and *anagoge* means the elevation of the mind to contemplate the heavenly things.¹⁶¹

The brunt of the argument lies in the consequences of this division. For Hugh, both *symbolum* and *anagoge* are forms of revelation, conceived as vision and resulting in Biblical descriptions; while *symbolum* uses corporeal representations in order to veil and reveal the truth simultaneously (*demonstratio symbolica*), *anagoge* reveals the truth as it is, without allegorical veils (*demonstratio anagogica*).¹⁶² By these two notions Hugh connects the doctrine on revelation and that on the cognition of God in an unusual and new way. Both *symbolum* and *anagoge* (with the corresponding *demonstrationes*) communicate something that is to be understood; the difference lies not in the deciphering of the meaning but in the usage of representations. This theory gives a Victorine alternative to the Augustinian theory of three (corporeal, imaginary and intellectual) visions, where the understanding of the representations requires intellectual vision. The *anagoge*, the *pura et nuda revelatio*, the specific cognition without intermediary images, is primarily reserved for the angels and the writers of Scripture,¹⁶³ but – as other sections of the commentary reveal – it will also be awarded to ordinary human beings in the eschatological future. Hugh also mentions the possibility of such a cognition *in this life*, although without calling it *anagoge*. It is conceived as an adequate cognition of God when someone has “the Spirit of God,” a vision of God that cannot be expressed: *sentitur, et non exprimitur*.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ The sentence in the Eriugena translation (as used by Hugh) is “Et ab ipsis symbolice nobis, et anagogice manifestatas coelestium animorum hierarchias, quantum potentes sumus, considerabimus” (PL 175: 933B; Hugh's interpretation in *In Hier.* II, PL 175: 941). Saracenus translates the same adverbs as “significatiue nobis et sursumactiue.” Note René Roques' remark: “Isoler ainsi les signes sensibles... de l'anagogie... paraît absolument contraire à l'inspiration la plus profonde de la pensée du pseudo-Denis.” *Structures théologiques*, 330.

¹⁶¹ *In Hier.* II: “Symbolum est collatio formarum visibilium ad invisibilium demonstrationem. Anagoge autem ascensio, sive elevatio mentis est ad superna contemplanda. Notat autem hic duplicem modum revelationis divinae... Quoniam aliquando per signa sensibilibus similia invisibilia demonstrata sunt, aliquando per solam anagogen, id est mentis ascensum, in superna pure contemplata. Ex his vero duobus generibus visionum, duo quoque descriptionum genera in sacro eloquio sunt formata. Unum, quo formis, et figuris, et similitudinibus rerum occultarum veritas adumbratur. Alterum, quo nude et pure sicut est absque integumento exprimitur. Cum itaque formis, et signis, et similitudinibus manifestatur, quod occultum est, vel quod manifestum est, describitur, symbolica demonstratio est. Cum vero puro pura et nuda revelatione ostenditur, vel plana et aperta narratione docetur, anagogica.” PL 175: 941CD.

¹⁶² For an early exegetical usage of the term *anagoge*, see Cassianus, *Collatio* XIV, viii (PL 49: 962-965).

¹⁶³ See *In Hier.* VII: “[the highest orders of the angels] eandem contemplationem divinam non per aliquas formas, vel imagines mediantes, sed ab ipsa divinitate primo loco immediate, nude et pure percipiunt” (PL 175: 1055BC), “per divinae contemplationis simplicem illuminationem” (1054AB, but see also 954B for a different position).

¹⁶⁴ *In Hier.* III: “Qui autem spiritum Dei in se habent, et Deum habent: hi Deum vident, quia oculum illuminatum habent quo Deus videri potest, et sentiunt non in alio, vel secundum aliud quod ipse non est, sed ipsum et in ipso quod est, quod praesens est.” PL 175: 976AB.

II. Doctrinal background: the Hugonian framework

The theories concerning image and likeness, contemplation and vision of God are all important anthropological elements, but they receive their proper meaning only in a fuller context. Doctrines on contemplation belong to the present state of earthly life, but this state is only a transition between the prelapsarian and the eschatological states. In order to see what contemplation means, all three phases must be considered. As the following study demonstrates, Hugh also created conceptual and doctrinal connections between these states.

The historical orientation of Hugh's theology is well known: he was prominent for his interest in "theology of history" or "historical theology" (*Geschichtstheologie*). This historical orientation has particular importance for his theory about contemplation. The present state in Christian theology is (and was) unquestionably a result of deterioration. What is unique in Hugh's case is the way in which he extended this concept to the epistemological conditions as well. Considered in itself, prelapsarian cognition may seem a marginal and speculative issue, and practically no one was interested in it before Hugh. Hugh's novelty is that he approached the general subject of cognition (including the cognition of God) from a historical and systematic aspect. For all Christian theologians, the prelapsarian state ended with the original sin and the Fall, and the present state in any respect is a deteriorated one compared to the original, even with regard to the cognition of God. For theologians like Augustine or Gregory, far more important was the present and the future (with the eschatological cognition of God), and the tension between them, than the prelapsarian state (see Part I). Due to the special logic of Hugh, for him the prelapsarian state was equally important. He had a unique historical and hermeneutical attitude: the present state, as we may know, is a consequence of changes on the original, earlier state; consequently, to understand the present state one must also understand the original one. In this logic, the reconstruction of the original condition is crucial: it has both explanatory value for the present, and gives categories to the describe the present conditions.¹⁶⁵ This is also true for the cognition. In this logic, the present cognition (of God or anything else) is a deteriorated, diminished form of the original (prelapsarian) cognition, and the now extant cognitive potential of man is a deteriorated version of the original, and the eschatological cognition of God will happen also by means of the same faculties.

The cognitive aspects of the three states are not presented equally by Hugh. The prelapsarian and the present state are plainly described (and often discussed by the research), but he only hints at the eschatological cognition (this issue is left uninvestigated). Beyond the theoretical considerations, there is another, internal reason to investigate the historical states, together with Hugh's theory about contemplation. A central concept of Hugh is *praesentia contemplationis*: he applies it to the cognition of God in each state, which also gives a coherence to his theory. In order to see the doctrinal background of Hugh's concept of contemplation, the present section first investigates his narrative descriptions of the three states and his models of epistemology (which are different from his theological anthropology). The occurrences of *praesentia contemplationis* in these contexts will be discussed separately.

a) Descriptions of the original condition

Interpreting the prelapsarian condition from an epistemological perspective is a difficult task, as Hugh himself admits.¹⁶⁶ The *De sacramentis* I, vi contains his most explicit and concise theory on

¹⁶⁵ It is hardly accidental that Hugh's writings often refer to the original state, far more often than his contemporaries.

¹⁶⁶ *De sac.* I, vi, 14: "Modum vero divine cognitionis quam primus ille homo habuisse creditur explicare difficile est, excepto eo quod diximus quia per internam aspirationem visibiliter edoctus, nullatenus de ipso creatore suo dubitare potuit." PL 176: 271D.

the cognitive conditions of the original (created, prelapsarian) state. Hugh describes this condition of all rational creatures according to the same pattern (whether it be angels or the first man): they were endowed with threefold knowledge about the creator, about themselves and about the creatures that were created together with them.¹⁶⁷ This knowledge was attained not through discursive cognition but through a single act of illumination and divine aspiration. Self-knowledge consisted in understanding the dignity of the created status, in distinguishing right from wrong, and in choosing the right and rejecting the wrong. The terms that Hugh applies to Adam's cognition of God demands particular attention: he saw God (as opposed to the audition by faith), and he saw God manifestly, by the "presence of contemplation" (*De sacramentis* I, vi, 14). These sentences will be crucial for the later doctrinal developments (treated in more detail in Part II Chapter V).

In the case of man, the idea of threefold knowledge is expressed by the allegorical image of three eyes. According to the description of *De sacramentis* I, x, 2, in the created state, the soul had three eyes, each operating: an "eye of body" (*oculus carnis*), to see the world "outside," the "eye of reason" (*oculus rationis*) to see the soul itself, and the "eye of contemplation" (*oculus contemplationis*) by means of which the soul contemplated God in the soul itself.¹⁶⁸ This doctrine of "three eyes" several times reappears in Hugh's works: both in the context of the Fall and in the context of earthly contemplation (to be discussed later). It is also one of the popular ideas of Hugh, adapted and taken over by several spiritual authors. Scholarly literature often paraphrases this doctrine. Rainer Berndt sees in this doctrine a combination of various elements extant in the Patristic tradition.¹⁶⁹ Ruh (1990) paraphrases the doctrine without much effort at interpretation, remarking that it is a variant of a neoplatonic-Augustinian idea and connecting it to the triad of *sensibilia*, *intelligibilia* und *intellectibilia*.¹⁷⁰ The paraphrase of Ineke van'T Spijker (2004) emphasises that the knowledge of God both in this life and in the prelapsarian state was limited.¹⁷¹ Without discussing these

¹⁶⁷ See *De sacr.* I, v, 14: "Quoniam illuminabantur tripliciter [sc. the angels], vel ad tria simpliciter; et erat trina cognitio in eis ut agnoscerent quod facti erant, similiter et a quo facti erant, et cum quo facti erant. In eo quod facti erant, mali et boni cognitionem acceperant, ut intelligerent quid appetendum sibi foret vel quid respuendum secundum potentiam virtutis in se et libertatem voluntatis." PL 176: 252BC. Cf. *De sacr.* I, vi, 12: [the first man] "cognitionem veritatis et scientiam (eam duntaxat quae primae perfectioni congrua fuit) perfectam mox conditum accepisse putamus, et ad illam non studio aut disciplina aliqua per intervalla temporis profecisse; sed simul et semel ab ipso sui conditionis exordio una ac simplici divinae aspirationis illuminatione illam percepisse. Triplici autem cognitione primum hominem eruditum constat, cognitione scilicet creatoris sui ut cognosceret a quo factus erat, et cognitione sui ut cognosceret quid factus erat, et quid sibi faciendum erat. Deinde cognitione quoque illius quod secum factum erat, et quid sibi de illo et in illo faciendum erat." PL 176: 270CD.

¹⁶⁸ *De sacr.* I, x, 2: "Erant enim tria quaedam: corpus et spiritus et Deus: corpus quidem mundus erat, anima spiritus. Et ipsa anima, quasi in medio quodam erat habens extra se mundum, intra se Deum, et acceperat oculum quo extra se mundum videret et ea quae in mundo erant: et hic erat oculus carnis. Alium oculum acceperat quo seipsam videret et ea quae in ipsa erant, hic est oculus rationis. Alium rursum oculum acceperat quo intra se Deum videret et ea quae in Deo erant, et hic est oculus contemplationis. Hos igitur oculos quandiu anima apertos et revelatos habebat, clare videbat et recte discernebat." PL 176: 329C.

¹⁶⁹ "Schon bei verschieden Kirchenvätern finden sich die Ideen des *oculus carnis* (zum Beispiel bei Ambrosius, Augustinus, Cassiodor), aber auch des *oculus rationis* (Augustinus, Isidor, Gregor der Große), ja sogar des *oculus contemplationis* (Isidor, Gregor der Große, Beda). Hugos von Sankt Viktor genuine Leistung im 12. Jahrhundert besteht darin, die Fragmente zu einer kohärenten Lehre zusammengefügt zu haben, welche die intellektuelle und religiöse Praxis seiner Zeitgenossinnen und Zeitgenossen auf den Punkt bringt." Rainer Berndt, "Visio - speculatio - contemplatio: zur Theorie der sehenden Wahrnehmung bei Richard von Sankt Viktor," in *Hildegard von Bingen in ihrem Umfeld – Mystik und Visionformen in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Anne Bäumer-Schleinkofer, 137-160 (Würzburg: Religion & Kultur-Verlag, 2001).

¹⁷⁰ "Die genuin hugonische Lehre von drei Augen der Erkenntnis ist eine Abwandlung des alten, neoplatonisch-christlichen (augustinischen) Theologumenons von den zwei Augen oder Antlitzen der Seele, deren eines in die Zeit, das andere in die Ewigkeit blickt." Note 25 adds, "Hugos Dreiaugen-Lehre könnte durch ein Schema angeregt worden sein... die durch Marius Victorinus und Boethius vermittelte Dreieit der Erkenntnisobjecte *sensibilia*, *intelligibili* und *intellectibilia* (s. Javelet, *Intelligence et amour*, RAM 37 [1961], S. 276)." Kurt Ruh, *Die Grundlegung durch die Kirchenväter und die Mönchstheologie des 12. Jahrhunderts* (Geschichte der abendländischen Mystik Bd. 1) (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1990), 365-366.

¹⁷¹ "In Part VI, which deals with man's creation, it will become clear that, even before the Fall, man's knowledge of God, although greater than it would be after the Fall, was limited, allowing for growth and perfection." Ineke van'T Spijker, *Fictions*, 99.

interpretations in detail, it is enough to call attention to the fact that this theory of Hugh belongs to anthropology and not to epistemology; it is incompatible with his epistemological models (see below). Whatever assumed origins this doctrine may have (and the hints of the literature are far too vague in this respect), more important is the fact that the distinction between the “eyes” of reason is a result of conceptual refinement. This distinction is lacking from his early *Sententie* (see below section D) but is common in later works; in various forms, it became a characteristic element of Victorine theology.

Another characteristic and unique feature of Hugh is the elevated rank that he attributes to the original state. The original state, he asserts, was a perfection, although a special kind of perfection. Hugh distinguishes two perfection for creatures: a “perfection according to time” (*secundum tempus*), applied to the created state before the Fall, and a “perfection according to nature” (*secundum naturam*), applied to the future, glorified state.¹⁷² The original plan for the all rational creatures was the transition from the first perfection to the second one.

Scholars are rarely aware of how grand in scale the conceptual transformations that sealed the fate of twelfth-century theology (“monastic” and “Scholastic” alike) were: many ideas that were accepted as valid theological doctrines in their own time became either unintelligible to later readers or entirely forgotten. Hugh’s theories concerning the primordial state belong among such. Thirteenth-century university theology used fundamentally different concepts to describe the same state, as the reinterpretations of Hugh’s doctrines show, discussed in Part III. The most telling observation of this discontinuity was given by Heinrich Kösters, thus:

Hugo kennt nicht die innere Übernatürlichkeit der unmittelbaren Schau Gottes. Das Unvermögen ist ein faktisches, aufhebbares, kein prinzipielles, wesentliches. Nicht das Vermögen zur Gottesschau ist übernatürlich, sondern das Unvermögen unnatürlich.¹⁷³

This note, while it succinctly and adequately summarises Hugh’s attitude, also points out particular problems. After the thirteenth-century developments of Scholastic theology, the immediate vision of God (in this life) is regarded as supernatural: in other words, an immediate vision of God is impossible unless a miracle occurs (the concept of *raptus* is what describes this theoretical possibility). This also involves a conceptual problem: “supernatural” (as opposed to “natural”) is a typically thirteenth-century term (long surviving in Western theology), which also presumes a certain concept of what “natural” is – and the meaning of “natural” was different for twelfth-century Victorines and thirteenth-century university theologians. Hugh’s attitude may seem uncommon, as it is incompatible with what Scholastic theology developed. But Richard of Saint-Victor also had a similar attitude: in his *Adnotatio in Ps 113* he remarks that it is unnatural for the soul to be bound around corporeal things.¹⁷⁴

b) Narratives of the Fall

In the *De sacramentis* I, vii (*De lapsu primi hominis*), Hugh presents a theological treatment of the Fall. Since the *De sacramentis* was a textbook based on school practice, it contains the common theological material on this issue: a discussion of the Biblical narrative of the Fall, the role that Eve played in the Fall, the meaning of original sin, and its transfusion to humanity and so on. Besides this traditional presentation of the problem, Hugh has other, additional, interpretations of the Fall, using different terms and concepts. Such a narrative is the Fall conceived as loss of unity (and falling into the multitude) and the Fall as separation.

¹⁷² See *De sacr.* I, v, 16-17 (angels), cf. I, vi, 12: “primum hominum perfectum credimus factum.”

¹⁷³ Heinrich Köster’s *Die Heilslehre des Hugo von Sankt-Viktor. Grundlagen und Grundzüge* (Emsdetten: Heinrich & Lechte, 1940), 42 as quoted by Heinz Robert Schlette, *Die Nichtigkeit der Welt. Der philosophische Horizont des Hugos von St. Viktor* (München: Kösel-Verlag, 1962), 34.

¹⁷⁴ “bene consideranti pene videtur contra naturam esse, spiritum videlicet circa corporea [...] ligari” (PL 196: 339A), discussed in the next chapter.

The loss of unity

The *De sacr.* I, ix, 3 provides an ontological narrative of the Fall, with Platonic overtones, based on notions of “good(ness)” (*bonum*) and “one(ness)” (*unum*). Good(ness) and one(ness) are, ultimately, God; he is also perfectly simple. In the undisturbed, original condition, the only and one goodness (*bonum*) of man was God, and man depended on this unique good by means of love and contemplation.¹⁷⁵ The opposite of this unity of God is the divided multitude of creatures, the world, the “horrible confusion of all things.”¹⁷⁶ Man’s position is in-between: in the original state he turned towards the creator and his ultimate unity. After the Fall, man is turned towards the multitude of visible, transient and changing things: now man in the state called *conditio mutabilitatis*. In this condition the mind knows only the visible and multiple things, as it became multiply divided, according to the subjects of its desires.¹⁷⁷

The escape from this condition comes about through the reunification of the mind and turning again towards God – and this reversal is prepared and helped by divine pedagogy. The given chapter of the *De sacramentis* details how the works of restoration are also accommodated within this condition: the complexity and manifold nature of the sacraments (including liturgical and religious operations too), the many works of virtue (*opera virtutis*) are proposed to us, for inner edification and bringing forth virtues.¹⁷⁸ The *De archa Noe* IV, iv, sets the idea of this reunifying reversal into different contexts. One context is given by salvation history: God has chosen one single nation and one single place to institute his sacraments, in order to remind humans of the importance of unity (*unitas*) and to summon them to it, but also in order to make it the single source for the beginning of the salvation.¹⁷⁹ The historical deeds of God are a means for reunification of the individual soul, if they are investigated in meditation (this can be called the spiritual context). Hugh briefly outlines a potential spiritual agenda (in other words, a programme for meditation) starting with the consideration of the numerous deeds that God effected by human agency, continuing with his less numerous deeds realised by angels, and ending with those few cases when God acted alone.¹⁸⁰ Ascending in those hierarchised order of the subjects also means a reunification and resimplification of the self.

¹⁷⁵ *De sacr.* I, ix, 3: “Bonum quidem hominis unum erat; et quandiu homo illi per dilectionem adhaesit non eguit hac multiplicitate. Postquam autem mentem suam per concupiscentiam ad multiplicia haec et transitoria dividi permisit; stabilis esse non potuit, quia sicut multa diligens in his per affectum dividitur, sic mutabilia sequens variatur.” PL 176: 320C.

¹⁷⁶ *De archa Noe* IV, ii: “Et ut quod loquimur per exemplum manifestius fiat, constituamus tres res: unam in imo, alteram in summo, tertiam in medio. In imo ponamus mundum, in summo Deum et in medio collocemus humanum animum. Deinde consideremus deorsum in mundo isto magnam quandam et horribilem omnium rerum confusionem et infinitam humanarum mentium distractionem, sursum autem apud Deum perpetuam et inconcussam stabilitatem. Post hec imaginemur quasi humanum animum de hoc mundo sursum ad Deum ascendentem, et in ascendendo magis semper ac magis in unum sese colligentem.” CCCM 176, 90 (= PL 176: 666AB).

¹⁷⁷ *De sacr.* I, ix, 3: “Postquam autem mentem suam per concupiscentiam ad multiplicia haec et transitoria dividi permisit; stabilis esse non potuit, quia sicut multa diligens in his per affectum dividitur, sic mutabilia [320D] sequens variatur. Quidquid enim in his omnibus ad requiem et consolationem appetit, ipsa ei mutabilitatis conditio ad laborem et dolorem convertit.” PL 176: 320CD.

¹⁷⁸ *De sacr.* I, ix, 3: “Proposita sunt ergo homini foris opera virtutum ad aedificationem interiorem exercendam [...]. In his [321C] autem virtutum studiis mirabili dispensatione Deus et multiplicitem praevideat, et varietatem, et intermissionem, ut humana mens et in multiplicitate exercitationem, et in varietate delectationem, et in intermissione recreationem inveniatur.” PL 176: 321BC.

¹⁷⁹ *De archa Noe* IV, iv: “Propterea elegit unam gentem et unum locum, ubi sacramenta non ad unius gentis tantum, sed ad salutem totius mundi pertinentia initiaret, ut unitas ubique commendaretur et humanus animus intus et foris ad unitatem reuocaretur, ut sicut ab uno salvatore est salus omnium, ita etiam ab uno loco et ab uno populo manaret salutis initium.” CCCM 176, 100 (= PL 176: 671C).

¹⁸⁰ *De archa Noe* IV, iv: [operatus est Deus] “plurima per homines, per angelos multa, per semetipsum pauca. Propterea ut, dum in meditatione eorum humanus animus de factis hominum ad facta angelorum et de factis angelorum ad facta Dei ascendendo proficit, paulatim sese in unum colligere assuescat, et quanto magis multiplicitem euadit tanto amplius ad ueram simplicitatem appropinquare incipiat.” CCCM 176, 100 (= PL 176: 671D).

Separation from God

The Fall also meant a separation from God – that is, losing the prelapsarian immediacy to God. Since Hugh applies the imagery of seeing to cognition (where knowledge is vision), separation from God means a separation from the thing seen. This is the dominant imagery of Hugh: in this language, the separation is the loss of the “internal vision” of God – the blindness of mind or reason (as an early formulation of the *Sententie de divinitate* gives it), or the blindness of the “eye of contemplation” and the myopia of the “eye of reason” (as the later *De sacramentis* presents the issue). The same change can be described also through the imagery of hearing (although Hugh uses this only rarely): the first man had an “ear of the heart,” by means of which he “heard” the voice of God spiritually; this internal hearing was lost after the original sin.¹⁸¹ Another variant of the separation theme is ignorance. If (prelapsarian) knowledge is conceived as vision, separation from the thing seen means ignorance, or more precisely, oblivion (that is, forgetting something earlier already known). In another perspective, ignorance also describes the cognitive consequence of the original sin.¹⁸²

To this general theme of separation belongs an unusual term too: *medium divisionis*, a term appearing only in *De sacramentis* I, ix, 3. In Hugh’s narrative, Adam subjected himself to things inferior to himself, and found a *medium divisionis* separating God and himself:¹⁸³

Iusta igitur recompensatione qui suo superiori per obedientiam subiectus esse noluit: per concupiscentiam suo se inferiori subiecit, ut jam ipsum inter se <et> deum medium inveniatur divisionis, non mediatorem reconciliationis. Hoc enim medio dividente humana mens et obnubilatur ne creatorem suum agnoscere valeat: et refrigescit ne ipsum per dilectionem requirat.

[According to a right compensation he, who did not want to be subjected to his superior, by obedience, became subject to what is inferior to himself, by concupiscence; so that he shall find between himself and God the dividing *medium* and not the reconciling mediator. The human mind, being divided by this *medium*, both becomes obscure (so that it cannot recognise its creator), and becomes cold (so that it cannot search him by love).]

In Hugh’s thinking, the expression *medium divisionis*, with its sole occurrence, has a rather marginal role. Its meaning is rather undefined: it may refer to something dividing or separating a primordial unity: *medium divisionis* may mean the thing (or the event) itself that separates God and man. This separating *medium* is clearly opposed to a *mediator reconciliationis* (that is, to the Saviour),¹⁸⁴ and its appearance causes a loss of the cognition and the love of God. From a rhetorical

¹⁸¹ *De archa Noe* IV, iv: “Primus homo antequam peccaret non opus habuit, ut ei extrinsecus loqueretur Deus, quia aurem cordis intrinsecus habuit qua uocem Dei spiritaliter audire posset. Sed postquam foris aurem ad suasionem serpentis aperuit, aurem intus ad uocem Dei clausit. Quia ergo homo auditum intus perdidit quo Deum loquentem audiat, reuocans nos Deus ad se foris clamat.” CCCM 176, 95 (= PL 176: 669AB).

¹⁸² See, for example, *De sacr.* I, vii, 27: “Haec duo vitia ad puniendam superbiam hominis iuste in ipso confirmantur. Ignorantia quidem, dum ab animo subtrahitur lumen veritatis; concupiscentia vero, dum caro percutitur poena mortalitatis.” PL 176: 298D, and *De sacr.* I, vii, 28: “Si ergo quaeritur quid sit originale peccatum in nobis intelligitur corruptio sive vitium quod nascendo trahimus per ignorantiam in mente, per concupiscentiam in carne.” PL 176: 299A.

¹⁸³ *De sacr.* I, ix, 3; the printed text (PL 176: 319C) is corrected here according to the manuscripts (see the Appendix).

¹⁸⁴ Note the careful construction and the wordplay: the separating *medium* is opposed to the connecting *mediator*, the division to reconciliation (which sets the account in the dimension of salvation history).

point of view, this *medium* may be just a rhetorical device that enables the author to speak about the separation in an assertive form (not only through negations).¹⁸⁵

The unexplained term *medium divisionis* does not return in Hugh's works. It had a , but had a remarkable afterlife. In Richard's *Benjamin major* a similar idea appears in the metaphor of the "veil of oblivion" (*velum oblivionis*) that forbids the cognition of the angels and God in this life.¹⁸⁶ The concept had a different afterlife outside the Victorine school. Odo of Lucca contracted the Hugonian ideas and stated that that Adam saw God *sine medio*; Peter Lombard's *Sentences* took this term over (see the following chapters). In the early thirteenth century, the exegesis of this term in *Sentences* commentaries will define the problem of prelapsarian cognition (see Part III).

c) Descriptions of the present state

Unlike that of his contemporaries, the theology of Hugh is conceived from a reflected, hermeneutical position. Like other theologians of his period, he is aware that the consequences of the original sin define the perspectives of the cognition of God – but unlike other theologians, he also explains the present state in connection with the prelapsarian state. In the rhetoric of the later Augustine and his followers, the present state is seen as the "normal," given and miserable condition, and the consequence of the original sin is a radical change and loss, the state of being rejected (see Part I). In contrast, Hugh's theology does not suggest such a sharp discontinuity. What it suggests is that although the original condition was different, it was not substantially and radically different, and there is a continuity, which is not merely historical, between the two states. It is certainly difficult to formulate discontinuity and continuity at the same time. In Hugh's works, there are doctrines that focus on discontinuity, such as the doctrines generally describing the present state with reference to the Fall and its debilitating consequences. These doctrines are thus balanced with theories, or just elements,¹⁸⁷ focusing on the continuity, such as the theory on contemplation.

Hugh's descriptions of the epistemological conditions of the present state emphasise rather the discontinuity. He elaborated two theories on this subject, involving different purposes and different sets of doctrines. One theory is based on the allegorical doctrine of three eyes of body, reason and contemplation and is expounded most prominently in the *De sacramentis*. Hugh describes the prelapsarian state by the working of these faculties, then the fallen (or present) condition by the dysfunction of the eyes of contemplation and reason (I, x, 2). This theory has several different functions. First it provides an epistemological-anthropological framework to describe both the prelapsarian and the present states.¹⁸⁸ Describing the present condition (characterised by the lack of contemplation) it also explains the necessity of faith as a replacement

¹⁸⁵ One may even speculate that *medium divisionis* is a tautology: the separation itself (which enters between God and man) could well be a *medium divisionis*, a "dividing separator."

¹⁸⁶ The *velum oblivionis* appears in *Bmaj* III, ix and V, xxiii (PL 196: 119A and 167B). McGinn (*The Growth*, 597, note 239), is mistaken speaking about "*velum oblivionis*, which *alienatio mentis* sets up between the mystic and created reality (see 167B-68C)." Note also something that is perhaps a later and probably not directly Victorine elaboration of the idea in the *Summa Halensis*, connected to a (rejected) interpretation of Hugh's theory about prelapsarian cognition: "per hoc quod dicit 'sed ea qua tunc per praesentiam contemplationis scienti manifestus cernebatur,' insinuat nullum fuisse velamen ex parte contemplantis, quia tunc est praesentia contemplati [*var.* contemplanti] quodam modo in contemplatione, quando nullum velamen ex parte contemplantis impedit quin templum templo coniungatur" (*Summa Halensis* lib. II inq. IV tract. III qu. 4 memb. 2 cap. 1 art 1; for its discussion, see Part III).

¹⁸⁷ Such element is that the imagery Hugh applies to explain original sin (such as the *medium divisionis* or the "darkness of ignorance") speaks about a change but not about an irrecoverable loss, or that "restoration" is also conceived as a gradual process starting in this life.

¹⁸⁸ As Kleinz rightly observes, "An unimpaired faculty of sense-perception, a weakened power of reason, an intelligence which sees the invisible but can no longer know God directly – these are the consequences of Adam's sin, and it is about these three that a treatment of Hugh's theory of knowledge must revolve." *The Theory of Knowledge of Hugh of St. Victor* (Washington DC 1944), 20.

for the lost contemplation (I, x, 2), and sacraments as means of the divine pedagogy (I, ix, 3). This emphasis on faith and sacraments is not surprising here: the *De sacramentis* is a *summa* of theological knowledge and not a spiritual work. However, in other works the same doctrine serves as foundation for Hugh's theory about ecstatic contemplation of this life (which a later section will discuss).

A different theory describes the postlapsarian condition and its perspectives for a cognition of God. It can be found in the *Sententie de divinitate* (a preliminary version of the *De sacramentis* preserved by the *reportatio* of Lawrence) and, in its final form, in the *De Sacr.* I, iii, 3.¹⁸⁹ The theory is based on two main doctrines. 1) God wanted to be both known and unknown to humans, in order to keep the merit of believing.¹⁹⁰ This position is supported by the Scriptural authority of Rm 1:19 (*Quod notum est Dei manifestum est in illis*) and the statement that concerning God certain things are cognisable while others are unknowable.¹⁹¹ 2) There are four ways of cognising the creator, defined by two pairs of opposites: nature/grace and inside/outside. The cognition may derive from the reason (inside, by nature), from the creatures (outside, by nature), from aspiration (inside, by grace) and the Holy Scripture (outside, by grace). The theory is almost identical in both sources: the most substantial difference is a reference omitted from the later *De sacramentis*. In the *Sententie*, Hugh describes reason as "some eye of the mind" or "eye of nature" which contemplated the truth in the prelapsarian state; after the original sin, aspiration is what illuminates reason.¹⁹² This terminology does not appear elsewhere: the later doctrine of three eyes permits a more differentiated approach, separating reason and contemplation (and opposing faith to contemplation).¹⁹³

d) Descriptions of the future. The eschatology of Hugh

The final status of the soul and the eschatological vision of God are issues that Hugh left unelaborated. His systematic work the *De sacramentis* gives on these questions just a lengthy extract from Augustine's *Letter 147*, confirming only that God will be seen.¹⁹⁴ In the *De sacramentis* the most explicit position on this issue is shown by an accidental reference: the greatest

¹⁸⁹ See *Sententie de divinitate*, pars III (ed. Piazzoni, 949) and *De sacr.* I, iii, 3 and 31 (PL 176: 217C-218A and 234C).

¹⁹⁰ *De sacr.* I, iii, 21: "Item sic ab initio suam notitiam Deus temperavit ab homine, ut nec totus manifestus esset nec totus absconditus. Si enim totus manifestus esset, fides non exerceretur et infidelitas convinceretur. Si vero totus esset absconditus, fides non juvaretur et infidelitas excusaretur." PL 176: 234C.

¹⁹¹ The idea that *quoddam de Deo noscibile est, quoddam non* also returns in the *In Hierarchiam*, in the context of the angelic cognition of the Seraphim, see below.

¹⁹² *Sent. de div.* pars III: "Interius enim ratio quasi quidam mentis oculus ueritatem contemplabatur que foris per creaturam demonstrabatur. Sed quia ipsa ratio per peccatum colligauerat [read caligaverat], adiuncta est ei intus aspiratio ad illuminationem sicut foris creature scriptura ad demonstrationem. Ignorantia enim superueniens auferebat cognitionem ueritatis, concupiscentia superincumbens auferebat amorem bonitatis. [...] Data sunt itaque homini aspiratio et doctrina et adiuncta est aspiratio rationi interius, doctrina creature exterius, per que duo aduenientia oculus nature et illuminaretur ad cognitionem et accenderetur ad dilectionem. [...]" ed. Piazzoni, 949. The *Sermo* 61 (de operibus sex dierum) of the collection *Sermones centum* (PL 177: 1087A-1089D) attributed to Richard combines the doctrines of the lost eye of contemplation ("homo, peccati caligine tenebratus, oculum contemplationis amisit") and the four modes of the cognition of God. The four ways also appear in the Victorine *Miscellanea*, lib. I titulus 63 (PL 177: 504Csq).

¹⁹³ See also *Sent. de div.* pars III: "Et a ratione incipiamus, que est quasi primus oculus quo mens hominis Deum contemplatur. Dicimus quia ratio per lumen naturaliter insitum sibi potuit cognoscere Deum esse, deinde unum esse, postea trinum esse," ed. Piazzoni, 950.

¹⁹⁴ *De sacr.* II, xviii, 16 *De visione Dei*, PL 176: 613-614. As Ott has demonstrated, the final parts of the *De sacramentis* (II, xvi-xviii) consist mostly of extracts from Augustine's *De civitate Dei* and *Ep. 147*. A plausible explanation was given by Ludwig Ott, who spoke of the impression, "daß ihm nicht mehr die Zeit blieb, das angehäuften Material selbständig zu verarbeiten." See Ott, "Hugo von St. Viktor und die Kirchenväter," *Divus Thomas* 27 (1949): 180-200 and 293-332, here 306. Trottman's monograph (*La vision*, 94) is unaware of the fact that it is compiled from Augustine.

good (*maximum bonum*) of man consists in simultaneously contemplating the majesty of God by means of the “eye of the heart” and contemplating the humanity of God by means of the “eye of the body.”¹⁹⁵

The lack of elaborate or conspicuous doctrines, indeed, does not mean that Hugh had no theory about the eschatological vision. He had one indeed, but it must be reconstructed from hints dispersed in his works. As the following investigation will demonstrate, Hugh had a two-stage model for eschatology, with unusual connections to the state of contemplation.

Hugh in the *De archa Noe* I, iv/v discerns two types of *status* for the souls.¹⁹⁶ The first one is the status between death and resurrection; in the second status, after resurrection, the souls receive their glorified body. In the first, interim, status the souls joyfully contemplate God (*contemplatione sui conditoris laetantur*). In this status (as a reference of the *De sacramentis* adds) the souls enjoy the illumination of the True Light and they are in the “hiddenness of the divine contemplation,” in the “hiddenness of the face of God” (*in secreto divinae contemplationis*, in *abscondito faciei ejus*).¹⁹⁷ In other words,¹⁹⁸ this is the Heaven where Jesus Christ according to his human nature (*secundum humanitatem suam*) is enthroned on the right of the Father. In the second and final status the soul receives its immortal, impassible and incorruptible body, and a transformation of cognitive faculties takes place in the soul itself. Sense perception (*sensus corporeus*) turns into reason (*ratio*), reason into *intelligentia*, and *intelligentia* becomes deified (*transibit in Deum*).¹⁹⁹ In the very last phase of this transformation, mind will be connected to God by the Mediator, Jesus Christ, and the souls adhere to God “by the presence of contemplation” (*per contemplationis praesentiam adhaerebunt*). This vision of God is fuller and “closer” (*vicinius*) than it was without the body.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁵ *De sacr.* I, x, 4: “Et maximum bonum hominis est ut in Deo suo et maiestatem inueniat quam oculo cordis contempletur; et humanitatem quam oculo carnis speculetur, ut totus homo in Deo beatificetur.” PL 176: 333C.

¹⁹⁶ Hugh discerns here altogether five status: the first three are for living men who are, using Pauline terms, *carnales*, *animales* and *spirituales*. William of Saint-Thierry uses for the same purpose the *animalis* – *rationalis* – *spiritualis* triad: *Epistola aurea* II, i-iii.

¹⁹⁷ *De sacr.* II, xvi, 11: “Quaerunt nonnulli de animabus carne solutis, utrum cognitionem habeant [...] illorum qui jam in gaudio Domini sui et in abscondito faciei ejus, veri luminis illustratione laetantur. [...] Hoc unum certum est sanctorum animas in secreto divinae contemplationis constitutas eorum quae foris aguntur tantum scire quantum illis vel ad gaudium vel nobis ad auxilium prodesse constat.” PL 176: 596AB. The term is Biblical, cf. Ps 30 (31): 21 (20): *Abscondes eos in abscondito faciei tuae, a conturbatione hominum*.

¹⁹⁸ See *De sacr.* II, xvi, 4: “qui ab hac vita purgati exeunt sine mora ad coelum (ubi secundum humanitatem suam Jesus Christus in dextera Patris sedet in gloria) deduci continuo creduntur, sicut scriptum est: ‘Ubiunque fuerit corpus illuc congregabuntur aquilae’.” PL 176: 586C.

¹⁹⁹ Hugh’s scheme of transforming faculties may be an intended rewriting of Eriugena’s model of deification. The most significant differences are that in Eriugena it is the *body* that changes into spirit, and at the end, the individuality of the soul entirely disappears: the *theosis* of man finally means the reduction of the concrete man to the *idea* of man (see *Periphyseon* IV, 7. PL 122: 768B). Patrice Sicard sets this reinterpretation in a wider, Patristic context, pointing out a similar move in the *De unione*, where Hugh also wants to preserve the separation of spirit and body: “Hugues reprend ici une passage du *Periphyseon* de Jean Scot [...] Il est très probable que Hugues a voulu éviter, dans ce passage du *De archa*, et combattre, dans le *De unione*, une des thèses origénienues qu’il a pu connaître à travers le long réquisitoire de saint Jérôme (*Epistula CXXIV Ad Avitium*, [...]).” Sicard, *Diagrammes*, 178 n. 87.

²⁰⁰ *De archa Noe* I, v [iv]: “quantumlibet in hac uita proficimus adhuc tamen a facie conditoris nostri quasi auersi sumus, quia et per meritum ascendimus, sed per presentiam contemplationis ad ipsum non inclinamur. [...] quamdiu huius corruptionis tegmine circundamur quasi quodam pariete interposito ab eius facie prohibemur. Quarta autem et quinta mansio in ascensu suo ad unum colliguntur, quia anime sanctorum et nunc deposito carnis onere in contemplatione sui conditoris letantur et, cum iterum corpora sua immortalia et impassibilia receperint, tunc plenius et uicinius ei per contemplationis presentiam adhaerebunt. [...] Quando ergo mortale hoc induerit immortalitatem et corruptibile hoc uestierit incorruptionem, tunc mente pariter et corpore spiritales effecti secundum modulum nostrum et per mentis illuminationem omnia sciemus, et per corporis incorruptibilis leuitatem ubique esse poterimus. Volabimus mente per contemplationem, uolabimus corpore per incorruptionem. Discernemus mente et, ut ita dicam, discernemus et corpore, quando ipsi sensus nostri corporei uertentur in rationem, ratio in intellectum, intellectus transibit in Deum, cui nos coniungimur per unum mediatorem Dei et hominum, Dominum Iesum Christum.” CCCM 176, 27-29 (= PL 176: 632A; 632A-633A).

This model of a two-stage eschatology was not uncommon in the twelfth century, although it was seldom expounded in detail. Even Augustine separated the two phases. What is peculiar in Hugh's case is that the terms that he uses for the first stage of eschatology are largely identical with the terms used for the contemplative experience. The *De tribus diebus* describes contemplation as a burial of the soul into the "hiddenness of contemplation."²⁰¹ In this context contemplation is seen as a work of the illuminating Wisdom, as a vision of the truth (*contemplatio veritatis*) and as the tropological equivalent of the burial of Christ. In the *De Archa Noe* Hugh uses another term: the soul in the contemplation "glories in hiddenness of the face of the Lord." The context here is a description of an ascent towards the heavenly things: first the soul gets elevated above itself, into an "observatory of contemplation" (*contemplationis specula*), and then from this elevated point it discovers a hitherto unknown region of celestial things (described as *lucida regio et terra nova*). Driven by desire, the soul approaches those celestial things more and more closely, transforms into an entirely spiritual being (*totus efficitur spiritualis*) and "glories in hiddenness of the face of the Lord" in itself (*intus*).²⁰²

In the framework of the two-stage eschatological model, the presence or absence of the body (whether it be glorified or not) does make a substantial difference in the cognition of God: ecstatic cognition of this life, the cognition without body (as disembodied soul) and within the glorified body mean three different stages. Hugh does not have any elaborated doctrine on this issue: only the *De unione* has a reference to the uncleansed and disembodied souls which are still hold by passions.²⁰³

e) Epistemology: disparate models for the cognition of God

Understanding Hugh's epistemology and theological anthropology would be necessary in order to properly understand what he means precisely by contemplation. Hugh had various models to interpret the cognition of God: besides the well-known pattern of three eyes he also created other, less elaborate models (or rather sketches) that approached the same issue from an epistemological perspective. These various models, pertaining to theological anthropology and epistemology, are remarkably disparate and not harmonised in Hugh's thinking.

The doctrine of three eyes is a model of theological anthropology expressed in allegorical form. This theory does not use epistemological terminology to name cognitive faculties: the terminology applied suggests indeed a model consisting of sense perception (*oculus corporis*), reason (*oculus rationis*) and an unnamed third faculty that is able to perceive God (*oculus contemplationis*); however, the term *oculus contemplationis* is never transcribed into clear epistemological terms. In its elaborated forms (in the *De sacramentis* and *In Hierarchiam*) the theory implies that reason and the faculty of contemplation are two separate faculties. A passage of the *In Hierarchiam* confirms this impression, but also the tripartite division mentioned before. Here,

²⁰¹ *De tribus diebus* [xxvi]: "Potentia terret, sapientia illuminat, benignitas letificat. In die potentiae per timorem morimur; in die sapientiae per contemplationem ueritatis a strepitu huius mundi sepelimur; in die benignitatis per amorem et desiderium aeternorum bonorum resurgimus. Ideo enim Christus sexta die mortuus est, septimo die in sepulcro iacuit, octauo die resurrexit, ut simili modo primum potentia in die suo per timorem nos a carnalibus desideriis foris occidat, deinde sapientia in die suo intus in abscondito contemplationis sepeliat, postremo benignitas in die suo per desiderium diuini amoris uiuificatos exurgere faciat." CCCM 177, 69-70 = PL 176: 838CD.

²⁰² *De archa Noe* III, viii [vii]: "Postquam enim per ignem compunctionis rubigo peccati a mente fuerit consumpta et ille internus fulgor in corde micare ceperit, confestim animus in quendam contemplationis speculam subleuatur. Ibique quodammodo se ipso altior effectus quandam, ut ita dixerim, lucidam regionem et terram nouam eminus prospicit, qualem nunquam antea uel uidisse se meminit, uel esse estimauit. [...] celestibus appropinquans et omnem terrene concupiscentie nebulam euaporans, totus spiritalis efficitur, tandemque se humanis subducit aspectibus, dum ad terrena ista et uisibilia concupiscenda, amplius exire recusans, intus in abscondito faciei Domini gloriatur." CCCM 176, 68 (= PL 176: 654BC).

²⁰³ *De unione corporis et animae*: "animae corporibus exutae, corporalibus adhuc passionibus teneri possunt, quia uidelicet a corruptione corporalium affectionum nondum mundatae sunt." PL 177: 288B.

speaking of ecstasy (*extasis, id est mentis excessus*), Hugh remarks that some holy men (recorded by Scripture) have in ecstasy surpassed sense perception and reason, and begun to be enlivened and illuminated by what is above reason.²⁰⁴ The earlier form of the theory, as the *Sententie* (written before the *De sacramentis*, and perhaps before the *In Hierarchiam*, too) demonstrated, did not separate reason and the contemplative faculty so clearly: the loss of the original contemplation is attributed to the obfuscation of the reason.

Other works of Hugh present various sketches of epistemology – and these accounts are unelaborated and so incoherent that they cannot indicate one single coherent theory. The *De unione corporis et animae* connects medical-physiological theories of the day with a model of epistemology based on the terms *sensus* (*sensualitas*), *imaginatio* and *spiritus*. The fivefold distinction of the *Miscellanea* I, xv²⁰⁵ notes *sensus*, *imaginatio*, *ratio*, *intellectus* and *intelligentia*; in contrast, the *De archa Noe* I, v provides a model consisting of three elements, *sensus*, *ratio* and *intellectus*. The two models are incompatible: the *Miscellanea* text speaks about *intellectus* and *intelligentia* as separate faculties, while the *De archa* says that, from the eschatological perspective, the corporeal senses will be converted into reason, and then reason into intellect (*intellectus*), and ultimately the *intellectus* will be deified.²⁰⁶

Hugh of St. Victor, <i>De archa Noe</i> I, v [iv] CCCM 176, 29 (= PL 176: 633A)	<i>Liber de spiritu et anima</i> xi PL 40: 787
Discernemus mente et, ut ita dicam, discernemus et corpore, <i>quando ipsi sensus nostri corporei uertentur in rationem, ratio in intellectum, intellectus transibit in Deum</i> , cui nos coniungimur per unum mediatorem Dei et hominum, Dominum Iesum Christum.	Discernemus mente, discernemus et corpore, cum sensus nostri corporei vertentur in rationem, ratio in intellectum, intellectus in intelligentiam, intelligentia in Deum mutabitur.

In Hugh's writings, theological anthropology and epistemology do not meet: the *oculus contemplationis* does not have a sole epistemological equivalent, and the various epistemological sketches are incoherent among themselves, too. Later, in Richard's theory, epistemology and anthropology will form a harmonised unity, as the function of *intelligentia* (also conceived as an epistemological term) and the "eye of contemplation" will coincide.

While the epistemological doctrines in Hugh's own theology did not result in one conclusive theory, they inspired other, later authors: the *Liber de spiritu et anima*, a work notorious for its uncritical and compilatory character, combines the fivefold model of the *Miscellanea* and the simpler one of the *De archa* (see above). The fivefold division of the *Miscellanea* I, xv influenced an entire group of authors. Isaac de Stella built up his epistemology on these ideas; the *Liber de spiritu et anima* copies and modifies Isaac's ideas – in turn, later Bonaventure will use the ideas of the *De spiritu et anima*. The distinction of the *Miscellanea* was also commented: the anonymous and untitled commentary has been attributed to Alan of Lille (d. 1202) by Madame d'Alverny.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴ *In Hier.* II: "Unde et in sacra Scriptura sanctos viros Spiritu Dei afflatos exstasim, id est mentis excessum [0983D] aliquoties passos invenimus; quoniam supra rationem et sensum humanum ducti in hoc a ratione et sensu excesserunt, quo ad id, quod altius ratione erat, pertingentes in ipso vivificari et ab ipso illuminari coeperunt." PL 175: 983CD.

²⁰⁵ See *Miscellanea* I, xv (*De progressionibus cognitionis*). PL 177: 485BC.

²⁰⁶ Kleinz's position must be noted as an attempt to understand Hugh's epistemology. He writes, "It should be noted that for Hugh reason and intelligence, although directed to different objects, are not two separate faculties but are rather two aspects of that rational power of the soul which elevates man above the level of brute animals.... Reason (whether it be *ratio in imaginationem agens*, or *ratio pura supra imaginationem*) and intelligence are two different modes in which the eye of reason operates." Kleinz, *The Theory of Knowledge*, 73-74. The interpretation of Kleinz is based on *Didascalicon* I, 3 and II, 3 and the *De unione*. However innovative this interpretation is, it makes a multiple fallacy by creating a theory which integrates anthropology and epistemology, on a far too narrow textual basis, disregarding the passages of the *De archa* and *Miscellanea*.

²⁰⁷ See Alan of Lille, *Traité des cinq puissances de l'âme*, edited by Marie-Thérèse D'Alverny: *Alain de Lille. Textes inédits* (Paris: Vrin, 1965), 313-317.

III. Contemplation in contexts. From eschatology to ecstasy

Hugh uses the term *contemplatio* in various contexts with various meanings; for a first approach, it is enough now to discern a historical and a spiritual usage of the term. Hugh calls “contemplation” both the prelapsarian and the eschatological cognition of God; in other cases, with the same word he refers to a spiritual experience possible in this life. It is significant that Hugh makes no clear distinction between the historical and the spiritual usage of the term. In addition, there is another related term appearing in all these various contexts, *praesentia contemplationis* (“presence of contemplation” or “contemplative presence”). Whether it be the prelapsarian state, the eschatological future or the contemplative experience of this life, contemplation and *praesentia contemplationis* characterise them: this suggests a general theory of contemplation.

A. Contemplation in the prelapsarian and the final states

The term *praesentia contemplationis* describes both the original created and the future final states of man. The *De sacramentis* (I, x, 2) outlines the prelapsarian cognition of God as contemplation through the “eye of contemplation,” by “the presence of contemplation” (*praesentia contemplationis*, see I, vi, 14). The latter term reappears in the *De archa Noe*. The first man, says Hugh, was created to be present (*assisteret*) to “the face of God” through *praesentia contemplationis*; this also meant a “full and perfect” cognition of God (according to the perfection of the initial state). Later, due to the original sin and the ignorance following it, he was rejected from “the internal light” of contemplation (*De archa Noe* I, i).²⁰⁸ This account suggests that the term *praesentia contemplationis* means a continuous vision of the “face of the Creator.” Another passage of the same work (IV, iii) states that Adam was seeing the present God through contemplation.²⁰⁹ A third account (IV, v) describes the “natural order” (*ordo naturae*) of the prelapsarian state: in this state, the first man remained stable “inside” (*intus*)²¹⁰ because his cognitive and affective faculties both were turned towards God. Hugh emphasises that Adam saw God: he continuously gazed at God with the “indefatigable peak” of the mind (*indefessa mentis*

²⁰⁸ *De archa Noe* I, i: “Primus itaque homo ad hoc conditus fuit, ut si non peccasset, *per contemplationis praesentiam vultui Creatoris* sui semper assisteret, ut eum semper videndo, semper amaret [...]. Hoc ergo erat unum et verum bonum hominis, plena videlicet et perfecta cognitio sui conditoris, plena scilicet secundum illam plenitudinem, quam creatus acceperat, non secundum illam quam post peractam obedientiam accepturus erat. Sed projectus est a facie Domini quando, propter peccatum cecitate ignorantie percussus, ab intima contemplationis illius luce foras venit [...].” CCCM 176, 4 (= PL 176: 617, as *prologus*). In the English translation of an anonymous, “The first man, then, was made in such a way that, if he had not sinned, the power of contemplation would have kept him always in his Maker’s presence. By always seeing Him he would thus always have loved Him, by always loving Him he would always have cleaved to Him, and, by always cleaving to Him who is immortal, he too would have possessed in Him life without end. This was, therefore, the one, true good of man, to wit, the full and perfect knowledge of his Maker – full, you must understand, after that fullness which he received at his creation, not after that which he was to receive hereafter, when his obedience was fulfilled. But he was banished from the face of the Lord when, smitten with the blindness of ignorance through his sin, he came forth from the inward light of contemplation.” See *Hugh of Saint-Victor. Selected Spiritual Writings, translated by a Religious of The Community of St. Mary the Virgin, introduced by Aelred Squire OP* (London: Faber and Faber, 1962), 46.

²⁰⁹ *De archa Noe* IV, iii: “Primus autem homo deseruit Creatorem suum, cum eum per contemplationem presentem aspiceret. Nunc autem homo Creatorem, quem non videt per speciem, querit per fidem.” CCCM 176, 93 (= PL 176: 667D).

²¹⁰ The term *intus* is often applied by Hugh to the “place” of contemplation. Curiously, it seems to have no opposite: contemplation cannot happen “outside,” as “outside” contemplation is not possible. The latter motif, “being outside,” is connected to blindness and rejectedness after the original sin, most explicitly in the *De archa Noe*.

acies), and therefore he had no doubts about him. This also means that Adam was present to God “inside,” through this “presence,” the *praesentia contemplationis*.²¹¹

The term *praesentia contemplationis* appears also in the context of eschatology; moreover, it describes the second stage of Hugh’s two-stage eschatology. It is contrasted with this life’s general condition (when it is excluded); it is also contrasted with the contemplation of the disembodied souls (*contemplatio conditoris*), as *praesentia contemplationis* means a fuller and “closer” connection to God (*Archa Noe*).²¹² The cognition through that *praesentia contemplationis* will be the final, full and perfect cognition of God, also called by the Apostle a “face-to-face” vision of God as in 1Cor 13:12).²¹³ This presence is also the remuneration reserved for the future life.²¹⁴

B. Contemplation in this life

Hugh gives different descriptions of what contemplation in this life means. The most conventional one situates contemplation among the exercises of monastic life (see *Didascalicon* IV, ix). Contemplation obtains the highest position among them (the ascending order of the exercises being *lectio – meditatio – oratio – operatio – contemplatio*). In this context contemplation is described in a traditional way, as a foretasting of the future rewards and tasting the sweetness of the Lord (Ps 33:9).²¹⁵ The term has another, unspecific usage in *De archa Noe* III, iv, meaning four possible considerations concerning creatures.²¹⁶ Three more specific contexts of the term can also be discerned: a) when *contemplatio* means a psychological reality, a particular form of cognition; b) when it refers to the human restoration and c) when it refers to ecstatic contemplative experiences.

a) Contemplation as mental activity

In a psychological-epistemological sense, *contemplatio* means to Hugh a particular mental activity, a form of comprehension, clearly distinguished from other cognitive activities. In his *In Ecclesiasten*, Hugh distinguishes three “visions” of the mind (*anima rationalis*): thinking, meditation and contemplation. The “visions” are differentiated primarily according to inherent, psychological features: thinking (*cogitatio*) occurs when the representation of something appears in the mind; meditation is the investigative activity of the mind, resulting in knowledge of something

²¹¹ *De archa Noe* IV, v: “Quandiu ergo hunc ordinem nature sue tenuit, quanuis foris per actionem uariaretur, intus tamen per intentionem et amorem stabilis permansit, quia unum intendebat et propter unum omnia faciebat, unum diligebat et omnium uoluntatum atque actionum suarum finem ad unum referebat et indefessa mentis acie ad unum iugiter respiciebat creatorem suum. Vnde nec dubitare de creatore suo poterat, cui semper intus per contemplationem presens erat. Cuius uisio et per cognitionem cor eius illuminauit et per amorem stare et requiescere fecit. Sed postquam merito preuaricationis sue eiectus est a facie Domini, factus est cecus et instabilis: cecus per ignorantiam mentis, instabilis per concupiscentiam carnis.” CCCM 176, 98-99 (= PL 176: 670D-671A).

²¹² *De archa Noe* I, v: “quantumlibet in hac uita proficimus adhuc tamen a facie conditoris nostri quasi auersi sumus [...] per presentiam contemplationis ad ipsum non inclinamur. [...] quamdiu huius corruptionis tegmine circundamur quasi quodam pariete interposito ab eius facie prohibemur. [...] anime sanctorum et nunc deposito carnis onere in contemplatione sui conditoris letantur et, cum iterum corpora sua immortalia et impassibilia receperint, tunc plenius et uicinius ei per contemplationis presentiam adherebunt.” CCCM 176, 27 (= PL 176: 632AB).

²¹³ *In Hier.* II: “Omnis enim illa cognitio, quam modo per sacrum eloquium studio lectionis vel meditationis discimus, quasi imago tantum est illius plenae [950D] ac perfectae cognitionis, quam postmodum ex praesenti contemplatione hauriemus. Unde et Apostolus ait: Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate; tunc autem facie ad faciem.” PL 175: 950CD.

²¹⁴ *De sacr.* I, vi, 17: “quibus amor Dei causa est in opere, praesentia Dei praemium sit in retributione.” PL 176: 274B.

²¹⁵ *Didascalicon* IV, ix: “Quinta deinde sequitur contemplatio, in qua quasi quodam praecedentium fructu in hac vita etiam quae sit boni operis merces futura praegustatur.” “Habet haec via praemium suum, quoties ejus laboribus fatigati superne respectus gratia illustramur, gustantes et videntes quoniam suavis est Dominus. Sicque fit quod supradictum eum, quod oratio quaerit, contemplatio invenit.” PL 176: 797A.

²¹⁶ PL 176: 637C-638D.

previously unknown; contemplation is the comprehension of things already known.²¹⁷ This application of the word “vision” to cognition stands in a remarkable contrast to the widely accepted Augustinian doctrine of three visions (corporeal, spiritual-imaginative and intellectual). This technical definition says nothing about the “content” of contemplation.

b) Contemplation and restoration of the image

At some points, restoration of the divine image and contemplation are connected in Hugh’s theology. Hugh often repeats that the image and likeness in us – that is, the cognitive and the affective aspects of the soul – can be restored by cognising the truth and loving virtue – this double restoration is also the ultimate goal and result of the study of Scripture.²¹⁸ These accounts suggest the possibility of a gradual process, but do not make it clear how far restoration can go in this life. The *In Hierarchiam*, indeed, warns that the cognition acquired through reading and meditation is far below than the future one, being “merely like an image” (*quasi imago tantum*) of the perfect cognition acquired from the “present contemplation.”²¹⁹

Another discourse on restoration is the restoration of the original created order. In the original state, as the *De archa Noe* depicts, the soul was turned towards God by reason (*per rationem*) – that is, both by its “intention” and by its desire (the former referring to the cognitive aspect, the latter to the affective one of the soul).²²⁰ The depiction is largely traditional and Augustinian (except for the Victorine concept of the image and likeness). While this original order has been subverted by sin, the *De sacramentis* I, i, 12 still describes its restoration in this life, as a conscious reversal of the Fall and a return to the order given in creation. The theory is presented in a tropological interpretation of the Hexaemeron account. The first three days of the creation (which had no Sun) mean to Hugh various phases of moral development; the third day before the light appears is the ultimate phase that one may attain by oneself. In this phase (followed by divine

²¹⁷ *In Ecclesiasten hom.* 1: “Tres sunt animae rationalis visiones, cogitatio, meditatio, contemplatio. Cogitatio est, cum mens notione rerum transitorie tangitur cum ipsa res, sua imagine animo subito praesentatur, vel per sensum ingrediens, vel a memoria exsurgens. Meditatio est assidua et sagax retractatio cogitationis, aliquid, vel [0117A] involutum explicare nitens, vel scrutans penetrare occultum. Contemplatio est perspicax, et liber animi contuitus in res perspicendas usquequaque diffusus. Inter meditationem et contemplationem hoc interesse videtur. Quod meditatio semper est de rebus ab intelligentia nostra occultis. Contemplatio vero de rebus, vel secundum suam naturam, vel secundum capacitatem nostram manifestis. Et quod meditatio semper circa unum aliquid rimandum occupatur; contemplatio ad multa, vel etiam ad universa comprehendenda diffunditur. Meditatio itaque est quaedam vis mentis curiosa; et sagax nitens obscura investigare, et perplexa evolvere. Contemplatio est vivacitas illa intelligentiae quae cuncta in palam habens, manifesta visione comprehendit. Et ita [0117B] quodammodo id quod meditatio quaerit, contemplatio possidet. Contemplationis autem duo sunt genera: unum quod et prius est, et incipientium: in creaturarum consideratione; alterum quod posterius, et perfectorum est: in contemplatione Creatoris.” PL 175: 116D-117B. Cf. *De meditatione*.

²¹⁸ Boyd Taylor Coolman’s recent work, *The Theology of Hugh of St. Victor. An Interpretation*, focusing on the concept of formation, conceives restoration as “re-formation.”

²¹⁹ *In Hier.* II: “Omnis enim illa cognitio, quam modo per sacrum eloquium studio lectionis vel meditationis discimus, quasi imago tantum est illius plenae [0950D] ac perfectae cognitionis, quam postmodum ex praesenti contemplatione hauriemus.” PL 175: 950CD.

²²⁰ *De archa Noe* IV, v: “Primi hominis natura ita a Deo ordinata et instituta fuerat, ut anima que corpori preerat per sensus quidem ministeria corporis foris impleret, sed intus per rationem semper ad creatorem suum intenderet; hoc est ut membra corporis sensificando foris ad agendum moueret, sed intentionem et desiderium intus ad solum creatorem dirigeret et nichil foris ageret, quod ex eius dilectione non procederet et ad eius dilectionem non pertineret, ita ut omnem actum et caritas imperaret et ratio disponderet et sensus impleret atque perficeret.” CCCM 176, 98 (= PL 176: 670D). In Squire’s rendition, “The first man’s nature was so ordained and constituted by God that the soul, which governed the body, should fulfil its outward service to the body, certainly, but that, by means of reason, it should always be directed inwardly towards its Maker. It should – in other words – move the bodily members to external activity by giving them sense-life, but direct its attention and desire within to its Maker alone, and do nothing outwardly that did not originate in love for Him, or bear some relation to that love. Charity was thus to command, reason to direct, and the sensitive faculties to fulfil and complete his every act.” Squire, *Selected Spiritual Writings*, 134.

illumination) the soul becomes “called back to the natural stance (*status naturae*) and disposed according to reason.” The desires of the soul are concentrated and fixed above (on God), and the order of the creation is restored: the body is subordinated to the (human) spirit and the spirit to God. What may happen after is described in characteristically Hugonian terms: this “ordination” makes it possible for the light of the highest Truth to shine upon the contemplating one (*irradiet contemplanti*) so that he can cognise the Truth in itself as it is – not through a mirror and in an enigma.²²¹ These elements: contemplation, cognition of the truth without the mediation of a mirror and enigma (cf. 1Cor 13:12) will return in Richard.

c) *Spiritus Dei* and *oculus contemplationis*: Hugh’s doctrine on contemplative ecstasy

The *De sacramentis* presents the theory of the three eyes from the perspective of salvation history: the original sin led to the blindness of the eye of contemplation – that is, to the cognitive faculty dedicated to the cognition of God – and now it is faith (along with the sacraments) that replaces that lost cognition. Elsewhere Hugh expounds a different doctrine: at *In Hierarchiam* III and *Miscellanea* I, i he speaks about an immediate contemplation of God in this life, by means of the eye of contemplation enlightened by “the Spirit of God” (*Spiritus Dei*). The proposed reading that I give below has escaped scholarly attention.²²² The scholarship often connects the theory about the “eye of contemplation” (usually by paraphrasing the text) and contemplation in this life; thus a short digression on them seems to be appropriate here.

Kleinz (1944) points out that after the Fall no direct vision of God is possible, as the eye of contemplation became blind²²³ – at the same time, however, he also sees clearly that the eye of contemplation may reopen from a privilege of grace.²²⁴ This impartial position of Kleinz clearly outlines the problem of the sources. According to Patrice Sicard’s interpretation (1993), faith can restore the eye of contemplation to a certain extent, but only as far as the fallen condition permits.²²⁵ Bernard McGinn’s paraphrase (1994) gives references to *De sacr.* I, x, 2 and *In Hierarchiam* III; he sees in the doctrine the inspiration of 1Cor 2:9-12, and, rather strangely, concludes that the usage of

²²¹ *De sacr.* I, i, 12: “Novissime sequitur in dispositionis ordine opus tertiae diei, ut congregentur aquae quae sub coelo sunt in locum [0196D] unum, ne carnis desideria fluxa sint, et ultra metam se necessitatis expandant, ut totus homo ad statum naturae revocatus, et secundum ordinem rationis dispositus, in locum unum omne desiderium colligat, quatenus et caro spiritui, et spiritus subjectus sit Creatori. Quisquis sic ordinatus est dignus est lumine solis, ut mente sursum erecta et desiderio in superna defixo, lumen summae veritatis contemplanti irradiet, et jam non per speculum in aenigmate, sed in seipsa ut est veritatem agnoscat et sapiat.” PL 176: 196D.

²²² The literature presents more traditional readings of *In Hier.* III and *De sacr.* (the *locus* of *Misc.* is generally unobserved).

²²³ “Whatever this intuition of Adam may have been, Hugh will admit no habitual direct vision of God in men after the Fall, for the Fall extinguished the eye of contemplation. From this fact he deduces the necessity of faith.” Kleinz, *The Theory of Knowledge*, 110-111; see also 109-112.

²²⁴ Kleinz, *The Theory of Knowledge*, 124: “This highest form of contemplation [the vision of God] is also, of course, the highest degree of knowledge to which man can rise. For the first man in the Paradise it had been a natural function of the eye of contemplation. After the Fall it is the privilege of those few who attain the summit of the mystical ascent and in whom the eye of contemplation is reopened by illuminating grace.” Elsewhere Kleinz. makes an anachronistic mistake, stating that “The Victorines drew upon this Neoplatonic tradition [of the eye of the intelligence] when they spoke of the contemplation of God which man experiences in *acie mentis*. They christianise the tradition when they deny that this contemplation is a function of natural reason. For Hugh the light of divine illuminating grace is required before the eye of contemplation may be reopened in the vision of God” (Kleinz, 114). This remark shows that Kleinz, contrary to his otherwise good intuition, equated “natural” and “fallen” reason, a move typical for thirteenth-century theologians.

²²⁵ “L’oeil de la contemplation peut être guéri par la foi. Par elle en effet, ces réalités qui ne sont plus vues, sont crues, et elles subsistent en nous: ainsi est restitué à la contemplation son objet (Dieu en tant qu’il réside en l’âme), et par l’illumination du Verbe sauveur, est rendue la possibilité de le rejoindre. Mais tout cela – objet et puissance renouvelés – se proportionne à l’état du malade qu’il s’agit de guérir.... Même conclusion si l’on voit que la foi, qui restaure l’oeil de la contemplation, est elle aussi constituée d’une double élément: le principal est l’*affectus*, qui est la substance même de la foi, et la *cognitio* qui donne à l’*affectus* sa matière.” Sicard, *Exégèse visuelle*, 187-190, here 188.

visual aids (meaning probably the diagram of the *De archa Noe*) was introduced to reactivate the eye of contemplation.²²⁶ The interpretations of Sicard and McGinn have a common point: both assume that human agency can restore the eye of contemplation. I argue that such an interpretation of Hugh is wrong – but it has a tradition going back to the twelfth century. For Hugh, contemplation (in the strict sense) and faith were opposites, even excluding each other (faith being a replacement for the lost vision of the eye of contemplation), and the passages below will show that the operation of the eye of contemplation in this life has nothing to do with human agency (even if its preparation, by means of spiritual-moral education, is part of the monastic life).

After Hugh, however, it became a convenient doctrine that human agency can “heal” that eye of contemplation. Walther of Saint-Victor, a late twelfth-century Victorine canon, already makes this conjecture (speaking about “internal eyes,” “eyes of the mind” and “eyes of the heart”²²⁷). A similar reinterpretation appears in Bonaventure’s *Collatio V in Hexaemeron* and *Breviloquium*: he speaks about a partial restoration through grace, faith and Scriptural understanding.²²⁸ Contrary to all these modern and medieval (re)interpretations, Hugh’s texts suggest a substantially different concept. The eye of contemplation can operate again, since it can become reactivated through grace: while Hugh makes it clear that this comes about through that *spiritus Dei*, he nowhere indicates that this grace could be obtained by human activities or any human agency.

In Hierarchiam III

Commenting on the second chapter of the *Celestial Hierarchy* of the Areopagite, Hugh makes a famous digression on the incomprehensibility of God and the inexpressibility of what God is.²²⁹ The broader context here is given by a theme of the Areopagite (namely that the dissimilar similitudes are superior to similar ones); this gives an opportunity to Hugh to discuss the radical otherness of God. God cannot be grasped through anything existing in this world, he argues; not even through human apprehension (*sensus hominis*). *Sensus hominis* means here the corporeal eye (*oculus corporis*) and the “eye of mind” (*oculus mentis*).²³⁰ This discussion of the limits of human cognition

²²⁶ “One of the predominant themes that the Victorine employed in presenting it [the ascent to God, NCs] was his teaching concerning the ‘three eyes’ of the soul.’ Inspired by Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 2:9-12, Hugh distinguished the ‘eye of flesh’ (*oculus carnis*), which even fallen humans continue to possess, the ‘eye of reason’ (*oculus rationis* or *oculus cordis*) that has been injured by sin, and the ‘eye of contemplation’ (*oculus contemplationis*), extinguished by Adam’s fall. This triple formula was especially helpful in the Victorine programme of integrating the visual images observed by the *oculus carnis* with the corrective lenses brought to the myopic *oculus rationalis* by faith in order to restore the limited vision of God possible here below through the reactivation of the *oculus contemplationis*.” McGinn, *The Growth of Mysticism*, 385.

²²⁷ Walther, *Sermo XII*, 6: “Omnis enim homo caecus a natiuitate est quantum ad oculum mentis. Triplex est <oculus>: oculus contemplationis, oculus rationis, oculus carnis. Oculo contemplationis uidetur Deus et ea quae sunt in Deo, oculo rationis uidetur animus et ea quae sunt in animo, oculo carnis uidetur mundus et ea quae sunt in mundo. Oculus contemplationis penitus est per culpam extinctus, oculus rationis lippus est effectus, oculus carnis ad concupiscentiam est apertus. Oculi igitur interiores, oculi cordis, sanantur per fidem Verbi incarnati” (CCCM 30, 108/109). The wording shows that Walther’s source is Hugh’s *In Hier.* III, PL 175: 976A.

²²⁸ Bonaventure, *Breviloquium* pars II cap. 12: “Propter quam triplicem visionem triplicem homo accepit oculum, sicut dicit Hugo de Sancto Victore, scilicet carnis, rationis et contemplationis [...] oculum contemplationis quo videret Deum et ea quae sunt in Deo, et sic [...] videret [...] oculo contemplationis ea quae sunt supra se. Qui quidem oculus contemplationis actum suum non habet perfectum nisi per gloriam, quam amittit per culpam, recuperat autem per gratiam et fidem et Scripturarum intelligentiam, quibus mens humana purgatur, illuminatur et perficitur ad caelestia contemplanda.” Quar. V, 230.

²²⁹ Discussed, for example, in Lenka Karfíková, *De esse ad pulchrum esse*, esp. 251, and her “Symbol und Unmittelbarkeit. Zur Interpretation des dritten Buches In Hierarchiam coelestem Hugos von St. Viktor,” in *Ex latere. Ausfaltungen kommunaler Theologie* (ed. Erich Naab. Eichstatt: Franz-Sales-Verlag, 1993), 32-55.

²³⁰ *In Hier.* III: “Omne enim hoc aliud est a Deo; quia non est Deus omne quod factum est a Deo, et non videt oculus, neque mens capit, nisi hoc, vel secundum hoc quod non est Deus, sed a Deo. Homo enim sensum hominis habet, et

turns – through the interpretation of 1Cor 2:11 – into a discussion about surpassing these limits. The Scriptural passage gives a parallel between the “spirit of man” and the “Spirit of God.” Hugh contrasts the “Spirit of God” (*Spiritus Dei*) with the “spirit of man” (*spiritus hominis*, later equated with *humana ratio*): just as the human things (*quae sunt hominis*) can be known only through the “spirit of man,” so the divine things (*quae sunt Dei*) can be known only through the “spirit of God.” And those who have that Spirit do know the divine things, indeed.²³¹ After this introduction, Hugh gives a description of the fallen condition through the allegory of the three eyes, not omitting the “closed and blind eye of contemplation.” Curiously enough, after this recapitulation he immediately gives a description of the three eyes working and he uses the present tense: “By means of the eyes of contemplation, God is seen, and those things that are in God... by means of the eyes of contemplation man sees those things that are in and above man.”²³² The continuation leaves no doubt about the meaning of these words: those people who have the Spirit of God are indeed able to see God, because they have that illuminated eye (by means of which God can be seen); they can perceive God but cannot express the experience (*et sentitur, et non exprimitur*).²³³

Miscellanea I, i

The Victorine *Miscellanea*, as far as it is accessible in its printed form, is an obscure collection of theological texts of various lengths: sermons or parts of sermons, extracts, *distinctiones*, mostly of allegorical and tropological content, divided into seven books.²³⁴ The Hugonian authorship of the first book can be taken for granted.

The first text of the first book (*titulus i* in the edition), is basically a tropological meditation on *bonum*, developed from the interpretation of 1Cor 2:15, *Spiritualis dijudicat omnia*.²³⁵ The first part of the text presents an eulogium of that “spirit” that makes people spiritual (*Spiritus spiritalem facit*). This “spirit” is wisdom (containing all the truths), and it is spiritual light, but it is also an unction (poured into the heart by grace), which gives teaching about everything.²³⁶ In the course of the explanation of the Scriptural lemma the issue of the three eyes appears: the spiritual man is the one who is able to see “God and the things that are in God,” by means of the eye of contemplation.

sentit secundum sensum hominis, vel quod extra est secundum carnem, vel quod intus est secundum mentem, et non habet amplius homo. Oculus carnis quae ad carnem, oculus mentis quae ad mentem. Amplius quid?” PL 175: 975D.

²³¹ In *Hier.* III: “Nemo hominum scit quae sunt hominis, nisi spiritus hominis, qui est in homine. [cf. 1Cor 2:11]. Sic quae Dei sunt, nemo scit, nisi spiritus Dei; et qui habet spiritum Dei, scit per spiritum Dei quae sunt Dei.” PL 175: 976A.

²³² In *Hier.* III: “Est autem oculus triplex: oculus carnis, oculus rationis, oculus contemplationis. Oculus carnis apertus est, oculus rationis lippus, oculus contemplationis clausus et caecus. Oculo carnis videtur mundus, et ea quae sunt in mundo. Oculo rationis animus, et ea quae sunt in animo. Oculo contemplationis Deus, et ea quae sunt in Deo. Oculo carnis videt homo quae sunt extra se; oculo rationis quae sunt in se; oculo contemplationis quae sunt intra se et supra se.” PL 175: 976A.

²³³ “Ergo Deus, quod est, incogitabilis est, sed hominum, et humanae rationi: quae non percipit, nisi quod novit, vel secundum id quod novit, quod est in se vel extra se. Qui autem [0976B] spiritum Dei in se habent, et Deum habent: hi Deum vident, quia oculum illuminatum habent quo Deus videri potest, et sentiunt non in alio, vel secundum aliud quod ipse non est, sed ipsum et in ipso quod est, quod praesens est. Nec tamen id dici potest, quia ineffabile est, quia incogitabile est; et sentitur, et non exprimitur.” PL 175: 976AB.

²³⁴ The seven books of *Miscellanea* are printed by Migne in PL 177: 469-899. What Migne edited as the second thirteen books of it (PL 175) is now considered as Richard’s book of excerpts (edited by Châtillon as *Liber exceptionum*). The inherent philological problems of the *Miscellanea* are only recently addressed.

²³⁵ PL 177: 469C-477B. Coulter, *Per visibilia* 50-51, sees here a “process of learning to judge,” “a process by which the individual slowly comes to see God.” This reading seems to me to be too voluntaristic and to miss the role of divine initiative and grace.

²³⁶ *Misc.* I, *tit.* i: “Spiritus spiritalem facit. Ipse spiritus, ipsa est unctio quae, cum mentem tetigerit, de omnibus docet. Ipsa una est, et docet de omnibus. Nec mirum si omnia docet, quae omnia continet. Una est sapientia et in ipsa omnia sunt; et omnia in ipsa non aliud sunt quam ipsa. [...] Unum bonum est, et in illo bono omne bonum est. Si videre cupis, lumen est et species.” PL 177: 469C.

What Hugh introduces here is the same analysis of the prelapsarian cognition as in the *De sacramentis*, but with crucial differences. Hugh here does not hint at a lost, prelapsarian condition. He uses the present tense, speaking about people who can see by means of the eye of contemplation, by means of the eye of reason, or by means of the eye of the body.²³⁷ This usage of the words leaves no doubt: the same epistemological model that elsewhere describes the prelapsarian state does describe a model for the present life as well. The continuation explains that the higher cognitive faculty subsumes the lower ones: someone seeing by means of the eye of contemplation can see whatever the eye of reason and body see.²³⁸ Hugh uses this principle to explain the *dijudicat omnia* part of the lemma – that is, the way in which spiritual men can judge *everything*: the things in the soul and in the world.²³⁹

If we read the testimonies of the *In Hierarchiam* and the *Miscellanea* together, a specifically Hugonian doctrine emerges. According to this, the immediate vision of God is possible in this life. This means a cognition of God “as he is.” The organ of this cognition (vision) is the “eye of contemplation,” a specific cognitive faculty for seeing God. This is an inborn cognitive faculty, present in anyone, although its working is precluded or proscribed (as a consequence of the original sin). The *De sacramentis* describes this general condition; the accounts of *In Hierarchiam* and *Miscellanea* refer to that case when this proscription is lifted. The vision of the eye of contemplation is restored through the “Spirit of God.” This Spirit is not identified with the Holy Spirit: its descriptions fit the Victorine concept of the illuminating Wisdom, a gift of grace.

These accounts of Hugh emphasise the directness and the adequacy of this ecstatic cognition, but also leave crucial questions unanswered. It is difficult to define how this cognition can be related to the two-stage eschatology that he had, and whether these accounts (speaking about a vision of God *sicuti est*) describe a cognition identical to that of the disembodied soul before the glorification.

Hugh’s teaching on the eye of contemplation is a key to the spirituality that twelfth-century Victorine authors had. To express his theory about the cognition of God, Hugh used the particular imagery of vision, based on the images of the eye (of contemplation) and its direct, unblocked regard. The chosen imagery has most serious implications for contemplation. Man once had an “eye of contemplation” working; after the Fall, it is the vision that is lost, but not the eye. This logic grants a certain anthropological optimism: the faculty of contemplation is present (even if its operation is halted). Contemplation (even ecstatic contemplation) is not something extraordinary, unheard-of or radically new: it has a historical precedent in Adam, and it is a real spiritual possibility, too (if one is helped by grace). What was first the individual doctrine of Hugh became a pattern repeated among Victorines: in the works of Achard and Richard, contemplation means some form of immediate cognition of God, expressed by a similar visual imagery (Achard speaks about a direct *vision* of God in contemplation, but Richard prefers to talk about a vision of the truth). Hugh’s attitude towards ecstatic contemplation is also mirrored by them, although in a different context: they consider (as the following chapters will demonstrate), Saint Paul’s rapture as a *paradigmatic* case of ecstatic contemplation, while in the tradition following Augustine, the same Scriptural passages refer to a unique and *extraordinary* experience.

²³⁷ *Misc.* I, *tit.* i: “Qui enim videt oculo contemplationis, videt Deum et ea quae in Deo sunt. [471C] Qui videt oculo rationis, videt animum et ea quae in animo sunt. Qui videt oculo carnis, videt mundum et ea quae in mundo sunt.” PL 177: 471BC.

²³⁸ “Qui autem videt ea quae videntur oculo contemplationis, videt et ea quae videntur oculo rationis et ea quae videntur oculo carnis, quia in superioribus inferiora cognoscuntur. Qui autem videt oculo rationis, ea quidem quae videntur oculo carnis videt; sed non similiter ea quae videntur oculo contemplationis videt. Qui vero oculo carnis videt, ex eo nec ea videt quae videntur oculo contemplationis, nec ea quae videntur oculo rationis.” PL 177: 471C. The same principle, applied to the traditional cognitive faculties (*sensus, imaginatio, ratio, intelligentia*) can be found in Boethius’ *Consolatio* V.

²³⁹ *Misc.* I, *tit.* i: “Propterea igitur *spiritualis dijudicat omnia*, quia sicut per oculum contemplationis ea videt quae in Deo sunt, ita per oculum rationis contemplatione illuminatum ea videt quae in animo sunt, et per ea et in [471D] eis ea quoque quae in mundo sunt.” PL 177: 471CD.

IV. Hidden things in God, the limits of cognition and Seraphic love

The relation of the affective and cognitive moments in the cognition of God (in its all variants) is considered as a crucial question of theological anthropology. For internal reasons, it has even more importance in Hugh's case: he defined image and likeness as the cognitive and affective aspects of the soul; he also declared that faith is a replacement for the contemplation lost with the Fall; thus, at the same time, he elaborated a theory about ecstatic cognition of God, where the "eye" of contemplation – an intellectual (and not affective) organ – grants the cognition of God.

Three major issues will be investigated here, each related to Hugh's "mysticism." First, the relation of faith, reason, love and contemplation. The second issue is Hugh's theory about the cognoscibility of God, which defines what contemplation may (or may not) cognise of God. The third issue is the relation of love and cognition again, as it appears in the *In Hierarchiam* and is regularly discussed by the literature. Hugh's theory about the cognoscibility of God and his theory about (angelic) love form one theoretical whole (even if the literature does not recognise the former), where the one is the counterpart of the other. Finally, an excursus investigates the medieval affective interpretations of the theme of Seraphic love.

1. Cognition and love

"Like all Christian mystics," writes Bernard McGinn, "Hugh insisted that it was love rather than knowledge or understanding that leads to God, however much the latter contributes."²⁴⁰ This sentence certainly demands some specification, or even correction. Two chapters of the *De sacramentis* demand attention in this respect. One is I, iii, 31 which explains the relation of reason and faith regarding the objects of cognition, declaring that only things belonging to the realm of reason can be grasped by faith; the other is I, x, 4 which describes the interplay of cognition and love in cognising God. These passages suggest a position different from the one that McGinn assumed. What these passages seem to declare is that both cognition (reason) and love (devotion and affection) lead to God; the two are cooperating but love does not lead more to God than knowledge, since the ultimate act of cognition (in this life) is beyond their realms.

The relation of reason and faith in the cognition is spelled out in the *De sacramentis* I, iii, 31, where Hugh gives a division of the objects of knowledge, described according to categories of reason and faith.²⁴¹ There are things *ex ratione* (necessary truths, which can be only known, without faith), *secundum rationem* (probable things, in which reason cooperates with faith), *supra rationem* (things known by divine revelation: these are objects of faith alone, because reason cannot grasp them) and *contra rationem* (incredible things, which cannot be either believed or accepted by reason). The objects of faith can be only things that are *secundum* and *supra rationem*; things that are against reason (*contra rationem*) cannot be grasped by faith either.²⁴² Later Richard of Saint-Victor redefines these

²⁴⁰ McGinn, *The Growth*, 390.

²⁴¹ *De Sacr.* I, iii, 31: "Item quatuor modis invisibilis Deus ad notitiam hominis egreditur: duobus intus, duobus foris. Intus per rationem et aspirationem; foris per creaturam et doctrinam. Ex his duo ad naturam pertinent, duo ad gratiam: ratio et creatura ad naturam pertinent; aspiratio et doctrina ad gratiam." PL 176: 234A; almost identical formulations in *Sententie*, pars tertia, 949.

²⁴² "Alia enim sunt ex ratione, alia secundum rationem, alia supra rationem: et praeter haec quae sunt contra rationem. Ex ratione sunt necessaria, secundum rationem sunt probabilia, supra rationem mirabilia, contra rationem incredibilia. Et duo quidem extrema omnino fidem non capiunt. Quae enim sunt ex ratione omnino nota sunt et credi non possunt, quoniam sciuntur. Quae vero contra rationem sunt nulla similiter [0232A] ratione credi possunt, quoniam non suscipiunt ullam rationem, nec acquiescit his ratio aliquando. Ergo, quae secundum rationem sunt et quae sunt supra rationem, tantummodo suscipiunt fidem. Et in primo quidem genere, fides ratione adjuvatur et ratio fide perficitur, quoniam secundum rationem sunt quae creduntur. Quorum veritatem si ratio non comprehendit, fidei tamen illorum non contradicit. In iis quae supra

terms: he asserts that the things above reason (*supra rationem*) belong to revealed knowledge and are subjects of *intelligentia*.²⁴³

Another passage of Hugh, from *De sacramentis* I, x, 4 (*De incremento fidei*), gives more detail on the relation of reason and faith in the cognition of God in this life. The interplay between faith and reason also means an interplay between cognition and love: faith can grow both by means of cognition and by means of affection, and affection is more praiseworthy than knowledge.²⁴⁴ The remarkable point here is that Hugh's account, contrary to contemporaneous and later theories, does not give priority either to the affective love or the intellectual cognition. Instead, in the cognition of God in this life both discursive thinking (reason and argumentation) and love (desire and attraction) have complementary and necessary roles subordinated to contemplation. Hugh's example on the cooperation and structure of reason and faith shows clearly that. First he shows that a rational choice can be made in favour of Christian principles: he gives reasons (*rationes*) why believing in one principle is better than in more, and believing in a creator and a saviour is better than believing in a creator only. Convinced by these arguments (*his rationibus confortatus*) the soul becomes more devout – that is, cognition promotes love – and devotion cleanses the soul, until “in some way” (*jam quodammodo*) it has God present through contemplation.²⁴⁵ This account of Hugh shows that in the cognition of God in this life both the cognitive and affective aspects and activities of the soul (identified elsewhere as image and likeness) have their necessary functions: the cognitive side (cognition, faith, reason and arguments) and the affective one (love, affection, devotion) cooperates. Thus, the ultimate degree of the possible cognition of God, the “perfection of faith” is simultaneously more and less than faith. The third and highest degree of faith is when the things believed are grasped “by truth” (*per veritatem apprehendere*), and God is present through “the presence of contemplation.” Reading the accounts of *De sacramentis* I, x, 4 and I, x, 2 together, it becomes clear that the ultimate degree of faith is, paradoxically, not faith at all. Reason (faith and cognition) and devotion (love and affection) mutually help the soul to this experience – but then, as the logic of Hugh suggests, their function ends. One can conjecture that the “perfection of faith” is not faith at all but contemplation: it is not believing in something absent, but is a direct contemplation, a knowledge with certainty, deriving from the “presence of contemplation.”²⁴⁶ It is not only beyond faith but also beyond reason: contemplation means a cognitive (intellectual) activity for Hugh, and the faculty dedicated to this cognition is the “eye” of contemplation, and not the eye of reason.

2. The unknowable in God

Hugh elaborated a rather unusual theory about the cognoscibility of God. This theory appears as the interpretation of 1Cor 1:19, a passage referring to “the things known of God” (*quod notum est Dei, manifestum est in illis. Deus enim illis manifestavit*); it is present both in the early *Sententie de*

rationem sunt, non adjuvatur fides ratione ulla; quoniam non capit ea ratio quae fides credit, et tamen est aliquid quo ratio admonetur venerari fidem quam non comprehendit. Quae dicta sunt ergo, et secundum rationem, fuerunt probabilia rationi, et sponte acquievit eis. Quae vero supra rationem fuerunt ex divina revelatione prodita sunt; [0232B] et non operata est in eis ratio, sed castigata tamen ne ad illa contenderet.” *De sacr.* I, iii, 30, PL 176: 232A-232A.

²⁴³ See *Bmaj* I, vi (PL 196: 72AB): Richard's distinction is between the things inside the realm of reason (*non praeter rationem*) and things against reason (*praeter seu contra rationem*).

²⁴⁴ *De sacr.* I, x, 4: “Verumtamen affectum magnum in fide magis laudabilem esse quam cognitionem magnam Dominus manifeste ostendit [...]” PL 176: 322CD.

²⁴⁵ *De sacr.* I, x, 4: “His rationibus animus confortatus, ad ampliorem religionis divinae devotionem excitatur; devotione autem mundatur et purificatur ut mundo corde jam quodammodo praegustare incipiat, id ad quod fide et devotione cognoscendum festinat. Ita munda conscientia invisibilibus documentis, et secreta et familiari visitatione de Deo suo quotidie eruditur et certificatur; in tantum ut jam quodammodo eum per contemplationem [0333D] praesentem habere incipiat [...]. Isti ergo sunt tres gradus promotionis fidei, quibus fides crescens ad perfectum conscendit. Primus per pietatem eligere; secundus per rationem approbare; tertius per veritatem apprehendere.” PL 176: 333CD.

²⁴⁶ Cf. *De sacr.* I, x, 2: “Fides est certitudo rerum absentium supra opinionem et infra scientiam constituta.” PL 176: 331B.

divinitate and, in a more elaborate form, in the sixth book of his *In Hierarchiam*. The account of the *In Hierarchiam* combines this theory with another one: explaining the circular motion of the angels around God (an idea of the Areopagite), Hugh makes a digression there to the relation of love and cognition as well.

Hugh's doctrine on God is remarkable as it introduces a distinction between the cognoscible and incognoscible "parts" of God. According to these passages, there is a clear distinction between those things which can be known or cognised in God and those that cannot. There are manifest things in God, he says, which can be known through knowledge (*scientia*), and there are hidden ones ("profound, hidden, very internal and entirely impenetrable"), which cannot be known at all, remaining incomprehensible and utterly impenetrable to reason and intellect.²⁴⁷ The cognitive faculty by means of which humans can perceive the divine things (called here "sense of the rational mind") can perceive only the external things from God but cannot perceive the hidden ones.²⁴⁸

Hugh clearly separates the cognoscible from the incognoscible; by doing so, he seems to find a balance between the mutually exclusive Latin and Greek traditions. The typical Latin position has two crucial tenets: that the possible cognition of God is limited (since the creature's knowledge about God always remains below the self-cognition of the creator) – but at the same time, in the ultimate eschatological vision of God, it will be God (in other words, the divine nature in its purity) that will be seen.²⁴⁹ In the thirteenth century, this position will develop into a "transparent" concept of God: God is in himself (*in se*) entirely knowable (even if not for the other intellects than himself).²⁵⁰ The typical Greek position – which Hugh certainly knew, through the *Celestial Hierarchy* of the Areopagite, or its commentary by Eriugena²⁵¹ – was radically different. In that theology, God is incognoscible: no creature can know the divine nature, and all our knowledge of God, now and in the final state, comes about through theophanies. That form of immediacy of the cognition that Latin authors attribute to the eschatological state is unthinkable in the Greek model. The final confrontation of the two models took place in the early 1240s, when the Greek position was declared to be heretical in the Latin world (see the Introduction to Part III).²⁵²

Hugh's own teaching preserves elements of both models: he simultaneously asserts that God is both knowable and not knowable. The remarkable point here is the clear distinction by means of which Hugh formulates the divine incomprehensibility: the unknowable things are *by their very*

²⁴⁷ See *Sententie de divinitate*, pars tertia: "Cum enim diceret: Quod notum est Dei id est quod noscibile est de Deo, satis innuit quod quoddam de Deo noscibile est, quoddam non. Deinde subiunxit: manifestum est in illis; nec ait manifestum est 'illis' sed 'in illis', quia in eis naturalis est ratio cui naturaliter reuelatur quod de Deo noscibile est," ed. Piazzoni, 949. Cf. *In Hier. III*: "Nam quaedam divina prorsus intus esse, et abscondita, et latentia, quaedam vero foras exisse, et manifestata esse Apostolus insinuat, dicens: 'Quod notum Dei est, manifestum est in illis.' Cum enim dicit 'Quod notum Dei est,' id est noscibile de Deo, ostendit, plane ex iis quae Dei sunt, et in Deo sunt aliquid esse manifestum, aliquid occultum. Et id quidem quod manifestum est, per scientiam posse contingi; id vero, quod prorsus absconditum est, nulla ratione posse penetrari. Sunt ergo divina quaedam, et Dei quaedam ad manifestationem proposita, quae secundum aliquid penetrari possunt, et comprehendi; quaedam vero tam profunda, et occulta, [1040C] et intima valde, et impenetrabilia omnino, ut scrutari non possit illa omnis intellectus, neque ulla sapientia investigare: de quibus magnum hoc est, cum datur ad illa contingere, etiamsi non detur illa penetrare; et cum ad illa penetrando pervenitur, illa tamen non penetrantur, sed manent impenetrabilia et incomprehensibilia, in quibus hoc solum, quod foris est, pervenienti intelligentiae ad cognitionem ostenditur, et id, quod semper intus est, ad comprehensionem non aperitur." PL 175: 1040BC.

²⁴⁸ "Ita cogita quod sensus mentis rationalis, ille, quo divina percipimus, si quando ad Deum contingendum admittatur, ea solum, quae quasi sunt foris illi, percipit; et illa quae intus occulta et abscondita latent non comprehendit." PL 175: 1041A.

²⁴⁹ Latin traditions differ in how the ultimate state is conceived, having received the glorified body (as Augustine and most twelfth-century authors think) or even before it (as the common position since the thirteenth century holds).

²⁵⁰ See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* pars I qu. 12 art. 1 co: "Deus [...] quantum in se est, maxime cognoscibilis est. Sed quod est maxime cognoscibile in se, alicui intellectui cognoscibile non est."

²⁵¹ As is attested by his repeated rejections of the Greek concept of *theophania*, presented by Eriugena's commentary.

²⁵² The problem is discussed in the introduction of the third part of the dissertation.

own nature incomprehensible, and not because of the weakness of the created intellect.²⁵³ This position also means that the thirteenth-century concept of a beatific vision of God, consisting in a *per essentiam* vision of God, is a doctrine incompatible with Hugonian theology. The idea of a divine *essence* is generally alien to Hugh (and also anachronistic in a twelfth-century context); in addition, a God who is not entirely cognoscible probably cannot be known *per essentiam* either. Hugh's concept of a highly autonomous God is also expressed by visual imagery: whatever can be known about God is quasi-"outside" of him, while the incomprehensible aspects are "inside," and cognition can only "touch" but not penetrate them.

These doctrines on the nature of God appear in a broader context in the commentary. The seventh chapter of the Areopagite's text mentions the circling motion of the angels around God. Here Hugh's theory has an exegetical function and solves the problem of why the angels (who, in his interpretation have a penetrating and unceasing love towards God) cannot "enter" or penetrate God, but only circle around God (as the original states).²⁵⁴ Hugh's doctrine on God's double nature explains this: however penetrating their love is, it cannot reach the unknowable parts.

The reception of the doctrines in the sixth book of the *In Hierarchiam* is curiously one-sided: the sentences discussing the relation of love and cognition became remarkably important (first among thirteenth-century theologians, then recently among twentieth-century scholars), but the doctrine on the partly incognoscible nature of God is silently omitted (both by the selectively quoting medieval authors and modern scholars) – even if the two doctrines only considered together express Hugh's idea. More interestingly, modern scholars (seemingly without any theological aspiration) paraphrase Hugh's words in a similar way to the way in which, six centuries ago, those theologians did who heralded the "affective" theology. First I briefly present the text, then its recent interpretation (it being more accessible and better known to contemporary readers) with indications as to why it is problematic. Lastly I present three medieval "affective" readings that seem to influence the modern (and, I believe, wrong) interpretation.

3. Angels circling. The development of a "mystical" theme

The seventh chapter of the *Celestial Hierarchy* of the Areopagite deals with the first, and highest, hierarchy of angels collocated around God. Three orders form this hierarchy: Seraphim are the highest order, Cherubim are second and Thrones third in rank. Explaining the name of the Seraphim, the Areopagite provides etymologies ("Seraphim" means "incendiaries or warm-makers"²⁵⁵) and mentions their whirling motion around God. This sentence is close to unintelligible in the Eriugena translation (as Hugh also points out);²⁵⁶ but from its Hugonian interpretation unfolds an eulogy of love. Explaining the various adjectives of the word "motion" (*mobile, incessabile, calidum, acutum, superfervidum*) as referring to love (*dilectio*), Hugh makes first general observations on the nature of love (1036D-1039D), then specifies them regarding the angels (1040A-). For a better understanding of the text, Hugh's exegetical process must be observed

²⁵³ So to say, the difference of the Hugonian and the later Scholastic concept is the difference between qualitative and quantitative.

²⁵⁴ Note the question introducing the doctrine: "Si ergo acutum habent, quomodo in circuitu sunt?" PL 175: 1040A.

²⁵⁵ *incendentes aut calefacientes*: *Hier. Cael.* vii; Hugh, *In Hier.* VI, PL 175: 1034D-1035A.

²⁵⁶ The text commented (*Hier. Cael.* vii) reads: "Mobile enim semper eorum circa divina, et incessabile, et calidum, et acutum, et superfervidum intentae, et forsan intimae, et inflexibilis semper, motionis et suppositorum reductivae, et activae exemplativum tanquam recalificans illa, et resuscitans in similem caliditatem, et igneum coelitus, et holocauste purgativum, et incircumvelatum, et inextinguibile habentemque sic semper luciformem et illuminativam proprietatem omnis tenebrosae obscurificationis persecutricem, et manifestatricem, seraphim nominatio aut manifestatio docet." PL 175: 1035D, Eriugena's translation. Hugh's reaction is, "Si ego quod sentio dicam, primum hoc fateor, quod verba audiavi aut non homini dicta, aut non dicta ab homine." PL 175: 1036A. Grosseteste also remarks the obscurity of the passage and, like Hugh, assumes that here Dionysius recounts something from the *arcana verba* Paul heard in his rapture (for his explanation, quoted by Rudolph of Biberach, see *De septem itineribus*, *Iter* 4 dist. 5 art. 3). On Hugh's interpretation, see van 't Spijker, *Fictions*, 86-90.

carefully. While the Areopagitic text speaks unambiguously and only about angels and angelic cognition, Hugh first draws conclusions about love in general, and only afterwards narrows it down to angelic love. First he uses the exegesis of the Areopagitic text as a pretext to talk about *human* love: all the Scriptural passages that he adduces speak about human love. These observations on human love give the context for the often quoted sentence, *dilectio supereminat scientiae, et major est intelligentia. Plus enim diligitur, quam intelligitur, et intrat dilectio, et appropinquat, ubi scientia foris est.*²⁵⁷ This general and basically anthropocentric discussion of love (which can even be a drive to ecstasy as well²⁵⁸) is terminated by questions on how these adjectives can be applied to angels and why are they located around God. These questions lead to a discussion of the nature of God, since the nature of God is the reason why this powerful and penetrating love is so restricted – that is, why it cannot penetrate God. The doctrine on the “impenetrable” divine nature is the counterpart of the doctrine of the penetrating love (figured in the Seraphim), but the former seems to remain invisible to the literature.

The most influential interpretation of Hugh’s passages about love was given by Paul Rorem. His main point is that Hugh expresses the doctrine that love is superior to knowledge and love can go beyond the limits set to cognition.²⁵⁹ In a most recent form, Rorem’s position sounds as follows:²⁶⁰

Although Hugh was not overtly concerned with the apophatic, he perceives from the *Song* [of Songs] that love reaches deeper than knowledge, and that the end of knowledge marks the beginning of *unknowing*. These angels “surround by desire what they do not penetrate by intellect.” The bridal chamber of love is beyond the realm of knowing, and thus, later authors can associate it with the darkness of unknowing [...].

This interpretation, emphasising the superiority of love to knowledge emerged first in his 1993 monograph on the Areopagite. It soon became a commonplace among scholars writing in English, and the author recently repeated it without much change.²⁶¹ Nevertheless, Rorem’s interpretation demands certain reservation.

²⁵⁷ Hugh, *In Hier.* VI, PL 175: 1038D.

²⁵⁸ See *In Hier.* VI: “Fit ergo miro quodammodo, ut dum per dilectionis ignem in illum sustollitur, qui est supra se, per vim amoris expelli incipiat, et exire etiam a se. Quomodo ergo fervet, et quomodo bullit corde, qui per conceptum superni amoris ignem [...] cogitatione et desiderio extra semetipsum projicitur, et supra se elevatur, nec se cogitat, dum illum solum amat?” PL 175: 1039D.

²⁵⁹ See Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius. A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to their influence* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); recently the article “The early Latin Dionysius. Eriugena and Hugh of St. Victor,” *Modern Theology* 24 (2008): 601-614; with the same title also in Sarah Coakley and Charles M. Stang, eds., *Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 71-84, and ultimately in his monograph *Hugh of Saint Victor* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). Rorem writes, “To Hugh (but never to Dionysius) this fire is the ‘fire of love,’ meaning that love is superior to knowledge just as the seraphim are superior to the cherubim. Hugh’s adaptation of the Areopagite’s explanation of the Hebrew names is the start of juxtaposition of the ancient Dionysian unknowing and the traditional Latin emphasis on love represented so famously by Hugh’s contemporary, Bernard. Loving is higher than knowing. Where knowledge stops on the threshold in ignorance (unknowing), love can still advance and approach.” *Pseudo-Dionysius*, 217; “Hugh came to a specific Dionysian text, wrote his long excursus, and left behind the influential conclusion that love is superior to knowledge, as the Seraphim are higher than the Cherubim.” *Hugh of Saint-Victor*, 174

²⁶⁰ Rorem, *Re-thinking*, 80

²⁶¹ Another interpretation, but a similar one, was given by Kurt Ruh, *Die Grundlegung*, 363-365, here 365: “Aber das Entscheidende ist nicht die Terminologie, sondern ein Wechsel im System: Was bei Dionysius im hierarchischen Aufstieg ein Erkenntnisvorgang ist, wird von Hugo der Liebe zugeordnet. Der Fortgang von *amor mobilis* zum *amor superfervidus* wird zu einer *via mystica* auf emotionaler Ebene.” Rorem’s position is paraphrased by McGinn, even if without much clarity: “This artful invocation of the erotic language of the Song of Songs into the Dionysian tradition of seraphic love [...] is the foundation for one of the major contributions of subsequent Victorine tradition to later medieval mysticism: the ‘affective Dionysianism’ which fused negative theology of the negative theology of the Areopagite with erotic motifs drawn from the Song of Songs.” *The Growth of Mysticism* (1994), 393. In a recent study Boyd Taylor Coolman repeated Rorem’s argument (“the medieval ‘affective’ interpretation of the CD, an innovation

“Superiority” is very much an evaluating notion read into Hugh’s text by the modern historian; it is an inappropriate (if not misleading) term in this particular context. The very term “superiority” may be adequate in the context of the hierarchy of angels only; it is inadequate if Hugh’s theory about the two faculties of the soul is discussed. In all catalogues of the angelic orders known to medieval Latin authors (including the Areopagite’s one), Seraphim are “superior” to Cherubim.²⁶² But, in contrast, Hugh does not set a hierarchy between cognition and love. Love and cognition are operations of two separate and juxtaposed faculties (whose operation can facilitate the other one’s); Hugh always keeps the duality of cognition and love and does not merge them.²⁶³ Curiously enough, only the French scholars Châtillon and Poirel seem to be attentive to this crucial element and its implications for spirituality.²⁶⁴

Hugh’s poetic words about a love that can “enter” while cognition “remains outside” mean nothing more than what is expounded elsewhere in the same work. Namely, love is a persistent attraction: it is (or can be) a drive, or even a prerequisite, of cognition; it can even drive one to ecstasy;²⁶⁵ it may even be more intense than cognition itself – but love in itself does not give any cognition. The two faculties and their operations are not confused in Hugh: love does not transform itself into knowledge nor knowledge into love. Consequently, the entire question of love’s “superiority” is irrelevant as long as the duality of love and cognition is kept: love and cognition are based on two separate instances and love is *not* cognition. And this is true for the entirety of twelfth-century Victorine theology. The “priority” or “supremacy” of love is an overtly marginal if not non-existent issue in Hugh and other twelfth-century Victorines. Their omnipresent theme – almost a Victorine commonplace – is the *duality* of cognition and love (usually as *imago et similitudo*) and never the “superiority” of love.

What love has, and cognition does not have, is penetration. In later passages of the commentary, Hugh makes it clear that the Seraphim, burning in their love towards God, can circle around the “divine things,” but, having no cognition, cannot enter them: *qui in circuitu est, nondum intrat*. To a certain extent, they can “penetrate” the divine things by means of the “sharpness of love” (*acutum amoris*) – but the “incomprehensible majesty” of God (and the things that constantly remain inscrutable to them) will make the angels remain “outside” around God and forbid them to

first introduced by Hugh of St. Victor but developed and disseminated by [...] theologians from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Simply put, this tradition, following Hugh but departing from Dionysius, champions love (*amor, dilectio, affectio*) over knowledge in the pursuit of union with God.”), even adding that “This claim for the superiority of love over knowledge is not innovative”: see “The Medieval Affective Dionysian Tradition,” *Modern Theology* 24 (2008): 615-632, here 615 and 619. As the first formulation in 1993 was greatly unelaborated, inattentive reading of Rorem’s words led to such misconceptions as “Beginning with Hugh and Richard of Saint-Victor in the twelfth century, love began to be equated with the ‘unknowing’ ascent of Pseudo-Denis’s *On mystical theology*” (Dennis D. Martin, “Introduction,” in his *Carthusian Spirituality*, 38-38).

²⁶² See Gregory, *Moralia* XXXII, xxiii, and *Homiliae in Ev.* II, hom. 34, 7; Areopagite, *Hier. Cael.* vi; for the liturgical order, see Achard’s *Sermo XIV* (and Châtillon, *Théologie*, 260 n.23); see also Dominique Poirel, “L’ange gothique,” in Agnès Bos et Xavier Dectot, eds., *L’architecture gothique au service de la liturgie. Actes du colloque organisé à la Fondation Singer-Polignac (Paris) le jeudi 24 octobre 2002 (Turnhout, 2003)*, 115-142.

²⁶³ See, for example, *In Hier.* VII: “Duo sunt enim, cognitio et amor. Alterum ad illuminationem pertinet, alterum ad refectionem.” PL 175: 1065B.

²⁶⁴ Explaining the same passage of the *In Hier.* (1038D), Dominique Poirel rightly remarks that “In realtà Ugo non pensa assolutamente a fare dell’amore un modo alternativo di conoscenza; egli osserva semplicemente che le nostre facoltà di conoscere e di amare non hanno la stessa estensione e là dove l’intelligenza raggiunge i suoi limiti, è possibile avvicinarsi ulteriormente a Dio, non più sul piano della conoscenza, ma su quello dell’amore.” *Ugo di San Vittore. Storia, scienza, contemplazione* (tr. Antonio Tombolini) (Milano: Jaca Book, 1997), 110. See also Jean Châtillon’s words, quoted by Sicard: “Ce n’est pas l’amour qui fait contempler, et l’acte de l’amour n’est pas une révélation,” and Sicard: “La contemplation est affaire d’intelligence, et l’intelligence ne ‘passe’ dans la volonté, ni la connaissance dans l’amour.” Patrice Sicard, *Théologies victorines* ([Paris]: Parole et Silence, 2008), 92 and 94.

²⁶⁵ See *In Hier.* VI: “Fit ergo miro quodammodo, ut [...] per vim amoris expelli incipiat, et exire etiam a se. [...] per conceptum superni amoris ignem [...] cogitatione et desiderio extra semetipsum projicitur, et supra se elevatur.” PL 175: 1039D.

enter.²⁶⁶ Their penetrating love can reach God: but their cognition cannot.²⁶⁷ One may say with Rorem that love “reaches deeper” than knowledge – but this means only that creatures can more or better love God than know. The difference, if one may say, is quantitative. What one may not accept from Rorem is that the “end of knowledge” marks the “beginning of *unknowing*.” It is true that according to Hugh, there is a limit set to cognition: but it has nothing to do with any kind of “unknowing.” The limit is both ontological and epistemological. There are things in God that are not permitted to be known – therefore these things cannot be known. This doctrine of the commentary can also be found in Hugh’s *Sententie de divinitate*, a draft to his *De sacramentis summa*.²⁶⁸

At the same time the very term “unknowing” implies a particular form of cognition, introduced by Dionysius. According to his *Mystical Theology*, God can be cognised by means of the so-called “unknowing” (that is, a cognition beyond intellectual cognition). Such a notion is essentially foreign to Hugh: for him, cognition is and can be only intellectual and there is no “unknowing” beyond it.²⁶⁹ Even if the Seraphim may love God better than they know him, and their love is more is more “penetrating” than their cognition, that love produces no knowledge. The possible knowledge of God has its limits, which cannot be transgressed. The Seraphim moving around God investigate this “external,” cognoscible “part” of God by contemplation and love; human cognition is also restricted to this “external” knowledge.²⁷⁰

Excursus: a note on the medieval affective reading of Hugh’s explanation

The priority of love over cognition was certainly an extremely marginal (if not a non-existent) issue in Hugh’s theology. The passage of the Areopagite gave him occasion to explain that love is stronger and more penetrating than cognition, even if love is not cognition – but the doctrine on the incognoscibility of God created a restriction. In the thirteenth century, a new idea emerged: the explicit superiority of love to cognition. This idea was projected into the relation of Cherubim and Seraphim, and finally this new doctrine was even justified with the very passages of Hugh’s text discussed above.

These new doctrines belonged to a new model of theological anthropology which accepted that *affectus* functions as a cognitive force, and love does result in a form of cognition. To some extent, these doctrines have their precedents in the works of Gregory the Great²⁷¹ and William of Saint-Thierry, but it was the thirteenth-century Thomas Gallus (d. 1246) who created a coherent theory around the *affectus* (which gives an immediate and non-intellectual cognition of God) and

²⁶⁶ Hugh, *In Hier.* VI: “qui in circuitu est, nondum intrat,” “Per acutum igitur amoris penetrant ad ipsum: et tamen per incomprehensibilem majestatem, ipsius permanent circa ipsum, ut non ad totum ingrediantur, etiamsi penetrant usque ad aliquid. [...] Ambiant enim desiderio, quod intellectu non penetrant.” PL 175: 1040B; 1041A.

²⁶⁷ *In Hier.* VI: “Per acutum igitur amoris penetrant ad ipsum: et tamen per incomprehensibilem majestatem, ipsius permanent circa ipsum, ut non ad totum ingrediantur, etiamsi penetrant usque ad aliquid.” PL 175: 1041A.

²⁶⁸ Cf. Hugh, *Sententie de divinitate*, pars tertia: “Cum enim diceret: Quod notum est Dei id est quod noscibile est de Deo, satis innuit quod quoddam de Deo noscibile est, quoddam non. Deinde subiunxit: manifestum est in illis; nec ait manifestum est ‘illis’ sed ‘in illis’, quia in eis naturalis est ratio cui naturaliter reuelatur quod de Deo noscibile est,” ed. Piazzoni, 949.

²⁶⁹ There is no positive evidence that Hugh had ever read the *Mystical Theology*.

²⁷⁰ Hugh, *In Hier.* VI: “Ita cogita quod sensus mentis rationalis, ille, quo divina percipimus, si quando ad Deum contingendum admittatur, ea solum, quae quasi sunt foris illi, percipit; et illa quae intus occulta et abscondita latent non comprehendit.” PL 175: 1040D.

²⁷¹ Gregory’s *locus classicus* is *XL homiliarum libri duo*, lib. II *hom.* XXVII, 4: “Dum enim audita supercaelestia amamus, amata iam nouimus, quia amor ipse notitia est” (cf. also *Mor.* X, viii, 13). For William, see his *Speculum fidei* 64: “In eis uero que sunt ad deum sensus mentis amor est.”; *Expositio altera super Cantica* i: “cognitio vero Sponsae ad Sponsum et amor idem est; quoniam in hac re amor ipse intellectus est.” PL 180: 491D; *Epistola aurea* I, xiv, 43: “quantum enim videt, vel intelligit eum cui offert, tantum ei in affectu est, et ei amor ipse est intellectus.” The sole comparable Hugonian passage, although only in wording, I found in *Hom. VIII in Ecclesiasten*: “quia ignis ipse dilectio est, et dilectio ipsa cognitio.” PL 175: 175D.

supported it by the *Mystical Theology* of Dionysius.²⁷² Compared to the twelfth-century Victorines (for whom angels had no particular role or function in human contemplation), in Thomas the angels and their hierarchy acquire unusual importance: in the introductions of his *Canticum* commentaries, he defines the angelic hierarchy as a general pattern in the (angelic and human) minds – more precisely, *the* pattern of contemplative progress. In this hierarchical pattern, the superiority of Seraphim to Cherubim means the superiority of a purely affective cognition to the intellectual-affective one.²⁷³ By the late thirteenth century, as Thomas became an authority in spirituality, his doctrines also became accepted. The following three examples show how this new interpretation of the angelic hierarchy acquired popularity. The third author, Rudolph of Biberach, even quotes Hugh's doctrine on Seraphic love to support these doctrines. In these cases (contrary to modern literature) it is not surprising that the authors do not quote Hugh's theory about the partly unknowable God at all: since the principle of all three interpretations is that love does give a special, affective, immediate, non-intellectual cognition of God – the precise opposite of what Hugh taught.

Thomas' commentary on the *Celestial Hierarchy* is inaccessible, as it exists only in manuscript.²⁷⁴ Thus a passage in his third commentary on the *Canticum* contains a reference to the sentence Hugh interpreted before. The Seraphim move around the divine substance, because they cannot penetrate and enter it by their own power, except if (*nisi*) they are admitted to “the more secret experiences of theories,” through the attraction of love and the *unitio superintellectualis*.²⁷⁵

Another step in the tradition was the *Quaestio unica* of Hugh of Balma, attached to his *Viae Sion lugent* (written between 1289 and 1297). Here the hierarchical relation of the two orders is already an argument for the primacy, but also for the superiority, of love to intellect. The central question of the *Quaestio unica* is whether the *affectus* can move into the cognition of God without the prior move of the intellect; the ultimate answer is positive. One of the *sed contra* arguments (sc 8) uses the hierarchical order of Cherubim and Seraphim to reach the conclusion. The argument runs thus: the Seraphim receive the outpouring of grace first, the Cherubim second; the Seraphim correspond to *affectus*, the Cherubim to intellect; *therefore* it is the *affectus* that moves first into god – consequently, God is first desired by the *affectus* and is only afterwards understood by the intellect.²⁷⁶ Although this argument emphasises the (temporal) priority of *affectus* (which is the main point of the *Quaestio unica*), other passages of the two works also make it clear that *affectus* is also superior, giving a more immediate experience and cognition of God than intellect can.

The ultimate phase of reinterpretation of Hugh's doctrine can be found in the *De septem itineribus aeternitatis* of Rudolph of Biberach (fl. c. 1270-c. 1326).²⁷⁷ Rudolph's treatise is based on the same principles as the works of Thomas and Hugh of Balma, but it draws on an entire library of spiritual works. On the subjects of Seraphic love (Iter IV dist. 5 art. 3) and superintellectual revelations (Iter V dist. 5) his sources are Hugh's passages mentioned above. By superintellectual

²⁷² On Thomas, see Part III, Chapter 3.

²⁷³ See the prefaces of his Second and Third Commentary, discussed in Part III.

²⁷⁴ I learned only after the closing of the manuscript of the dissertation that the commentary and the gloss were recently edited by Declan Anthony Lawell as *Thomae Galli Explanatio in libros Dionysii* and *Thomae Galli Glose super Angelica Ierarchia* (both Turnhout: Brepols, 2011).

²⁷⁵ Thomas, *Comm. III*, 3A: “circuire Deum vel ‘in circuitu Dei’ esse dicuntur, Ang. hier. 7 l: ‘indeseinenter ambientes ipsius eternam cognitionem.’ Sicut enim intuitus aquile penetrare non potest solis substantiam, quamvis sol a multis videatur in propria specie, ita substantia divina a multis, in mente humana vel angelica non penetratur, nisi in quantum divina miseratio mentium desideria attrahendo admittit per unionem superintellectualem ad secretiores thesaurorum experientias,” ed. Barbet, 166-167.

²⁷⁶ Hugh of Balma, *Quaestio unica*, sc8: “constat, secundum Dionysium, quod ordo Seraphim, qui interpretatur ardens, primo, uberius et perfectius recipit influentiam a Deo, quam ordo Cherubim, qui interpretatur plenitudo scientiae: ergo affectus per ardorem amoris, qui respondet Seraphim, primo et principaliter afficitur et movetur in Deum, quam intellectus illud, quod affectus desiderat, cogitando intelligat, quod intelligere respondet Cherubim. Ergo primo affectus movetur in Deum sine cogitatione praevia intellectus, sed potius ipsum sequitur.” Bonaventure, *Opera omnia* vol. 8, ed. Peltier (Paris, 1866), 49.

²⁷⁷ Rudolph, *De septem itineribus aeternitatis*, ed. A.C. Peltier in Bonaventure, *Opera omnia* vol. 8: 393-482 (1866).

revelations Rudolph understands revelations that unify the mind with the eternity in an act of love (*actus dilectionis*) that precedes and surpasses the act of intellect. This act of love “touches” God in a way that the intellect cannot (that act being superintellectual); the result of this touch is “a certain non-intellectual notion that is affective or experimental.”²⁷⁸ In this context, Hugh’s passage will be one of the arguments for the existence of a non-intellectual cognition (*notitia*). It is preceded by Gregory’s famous sentence, *amor notitia quaedam est*, and followed by a passage from the preface of Thomas Gallus’ Canticum commentary, on the *principalis affectus* that can be unified with God (unlike *intelligentia*).²⁷⁹ Hugh’s sentences are selected to fit this context (Rudolph quotes the passage on love’s preeminence compared to cognition and knowledge), but the interpretation also defines its meaning: love unifies us to God more immediately than intellectual cognition (*intellectio*) does, and therefore affective cognition is superior to the intellectual one.

²⁷⁸ Iter V dist. 5: “notitia aliqua non intellectualis, sed affectualis seu experimentalis,” ed. Peltier, 461.

²⁷⁹ Rudolph, *De septem itineribus*, Iter V dist. 5: “Unde Gregorius, exponens illud Joannis: Vos dixi amicos meos, etc., dicit: ‘quia cum affectus discipulorum imprimuntur divino amori, fit in eis praelibatio quaedam, et per consequens quaedam notitia experimentalis: quia amor notitia quaedam est.’ Ergo patet, quod non est oppositum in adjecto, cum illa notitia sit alia ab intellectuali, ut dictum est. Cum praedictis concordat Hugo commentator Dionysii, dicens sic: ‘Intelligas quanta est vis veri amoris et dilectionis, si tamen intelligi potest: quoniam dilectio supereminet scientiae, et major est intelligentia; plus enim diligitur, quam intelligitur. Intrat dilectio et appropinquat, ubi scientia foris stat.’ Et reddit rationem: ‘Quia amor, inquit, praesumens et confidens amato, suo acumine penetrat omnia, impetum sequens ardentis desiderii sui, nec dissimulari valens, donec ad amatum perveniat, et eo ipso amplius adhuc sitiens intrare ipsum, et esse cum ipso, et esse tam prope, ut, si fieri possit, hoc idem ipsum sit quod ipse.’ Ecce expresse dicit, quod verus amor Dei unit Deo immediatius quam intellectio, et quod intellectus non capit. Sic ergo talis notitia affectualis est superior intellectuali. Cum his concordat per omnia Vercellensis super Cantica, dicens, quod affectus et intellectus simul coambulant, usque ad novissimum defectum intellectus, ubi habet suae cognitionis et sui luminis consummationem,” ed. Peltier, 461.

Conclusion

The theological anthropology of Hugh was investigated under four headings: his doctrinal basis as contrasted to his Patristic sources (I); his descriptions of the various conditions of the subject of cognition and his cognitive faculties (II); his doctrines on contemplation (III) and the interrelation of cognition and love in his writings (IV).

I. Hugh used the Patristic traditions critically: when he took over certain doctrinal elements, also often modified them to fit his own theology. The ideas of Augustine and the Areopagite were particularly influential on his thought.

a) Hugh used the theories of Augustine critically. He took over the Augustinian theory about image and likeness, but it had only a limited role besides Hugh's own concept of image and likeness conceived as the cognitive and the affective aspects of the soul. Hugh's concept of *specula contemplationis* reads like an answer to Augustine's etymology on 2Cor 3:18 (*De Trinitate* XV, 8, 14). More significant are those deviations of Hugh where he goes against the Augustinian theories about presence and the vision of God. One instance revealing the significant difference between Augustine and Hugh is the interpretation of 1Cor 13:12. For Augustine, the passage referred to the opposition of the (present) mediated and the (future, eschatological) immediate vision of God. Hugh's interpretation keeps the notion of a direct and an indirect vision of God, but without the eschatological perspective. Seeing through a mirror means only a mediated cognition through a representation (faith *is* for Hugh a representation, a *sacramentum*, of the future vision of God). Its opposite means an immediate cognition, *contemplation*, the presence of the thing seen – but unconnected to eschatology. The other instance is an overwriting of an Augustinian concept, the opposition of seeing and believing. According to Augustine, God cannot be seen in this life (only afterwards), and now he can only be believed in. Hugh keeps the idea, but adding the notion of presence he turns it over: absent things cannot be seen (only believed in), but present things are seen (which leads to certain knowledge, beyond faith). The term that Hugh uses for the immediate and unblocked vision of the present thing is *contemplatio*.

b) The exegetical work on the Areopagite's *Celestial Hierarchy* left its character on Hugh's own theology: many theories that appear in his other works are coherent with the doctrines expounded as interpretation of the Areopagitic text. Three points can summarise these elements: 1. Hugh's theology has a strong Christocentric character, emphasising the mediator role of Christ between humanity and God the Father. This explains the special emphasis on wisdom and light in Hugh's writings. While light and wisdom denote Christ, humans are also conceived as "illuminated lights," "images of the light" and "created wisdom": theophany is reinterpreted by him as a comprehensive vision of illuminated and illuminating lights. 2. Inspired by the Areopagite, Hugh had a grand vision about the created world. The entire sensible world is a representation of the invisible one; due to the fallen state of humanity, the invisible realities cannot be cognised directly. This state of mediated cognition remains until the eschatological revelation of the Truth. Here Hugh, however, makes an exception for the ecstatic cognition: through the "Spirit of God," God can be seen directly even before that event. 3. The opposition of immediate and mediated cognition returns in Hugh's two terms, *symbolum* and *anagoge*. *Symbolum* means a cognition through intermediary representations, while *anagoge* happens without representations. The two concepts here refer to the revelations given to the writers of Scripture, but later Richard uses them as epistemological categories.

II. Hugh's particular doctrines on contemplation must be considered against a more general background. This background consists, on the one hand, of his description of the conditions when the cognition of God can come about – that is, the prelapsarian, present and eschatological states – and on the other hand, of his epistemological theories, which can describe that cognition. The investigation of these issues gave the following results.

- a) Hugh's description of the created condition includes an epistemological edge: he discusses the knowledge that the first man obtained about the Creator, himself and the creatures, and creates the allegory of three "eyes," of contemplation, reason and body. This anthropological doctrine will be the basis of the Victorine theological anthropology, where contemplation is conceived as a vision of God. Adam's cognition of God was acquired by a single act of illumination and aspiration, but this cognition is also described as a contemplation of God.
- b) The Fall has a crucial role, since it explains the present state in connection with the original, created condition. Besides the usual theological themes belonging to the Fall, Hugh elaborated two narratives about it characteristic of him. One narrative describes the Fall as turning away from the unity or one(ness) that God is, and falling into the multiplicity of the divided multitude of the creatures. In this narrative, the restoration of man comes about through a process of unification, set in both a historical and an individual, spiritual context. The other narrative describes the Fall in terms of separation and losing the original immediateness to God. The imagery Hugh uses is the impairment or blindness of the "eyes" (of contemplation or reason), and loss of the "internal" hearing. Another concept to formulate the same idea of separation is the "separating medium" (*medium divisionis*) that due to the original sin entered between God and man. This unelaborated rhetorical concept is marginal in Hugh, but later it will cause considerable hermeneutical and doctrinal problems, when it becomes transformed into the statement "Adam saw God *sine medio*."
- c) The present state is the opposite of the prelapsarian one: contemplation, the immediate vision of God, is lost. Hugh connects the loss of the vision of the "eye" of contemplation with two doctrinal or institutional issues: now faith is the replacement of the original contemplation, and sacraments (that is, visible signs with invisible signification) are necessary.
- d) The eschatological model that Hugh represents is the two-stage model. In the first state the disembodied souls contemplate the Creator God, enjoy the illumination of the True Light and are in the "hiddenness of the divine contemplation": this is the Heaven where Jesus Christ according to his human nature is enthroned on the right of the Father. In the second and final status the soul receives its immortal and incorruptible body, and a gradual transformation of cognitive faculties takes place in the soul itself and the *intelligentia* becomes deified. In the very last phase of this transformation the souls adhere to God "by the presence of contemplation," in a vision of God fuller and "closer" than it was in the first stage.
- e) Hugh does not present one elaborated epistemological model. What he seems to have is an elaborate model of anthropology, based on the allegory of "eyes" (of contemplation, reason and the body) – but this model is not an epistemological one. Besides it, he has various and incompatible sketches of epistemological models: *sensus - imaginatio - ratio - intellectus - intelligentia* (*Misc. I, i*); *sensus - ratio - intellectus* (*De archa Noe I, v*). In Hugh's writings, (theological) anthropology and epistemology do not meet: the "eye of contemplation" does not have a sole epistemological equivalent, and the various epistemological sketches are incoherent among themselves.

III. This overview of Hugh's descriptions of the various states of salvation history is necessary to see the context of the word "contemplation" and the way in which Hugh used the term. Most interestingly, Hugh uses the same expression, *presentia contemplationis*, to describe the cognition of God throughout the various periods of salvation history: it describes the way in which Adam saw God, and the way in which the glorified souls will see God. The concept summarises Hugh's ideas about the immediacy, vision and presence, but it is not restricted to the prelapsarian and the eschatological states. In the context of the present life Hugh uses the term "contemplation" in various senses: it refers to a monastic exercise, a specific mental activity. It also refers to a restored state of man, a reversal of the Fall, when the well-disposed soul becomes irradiated by the Truth (which is an immediate cognition of the Truth). An even more specific use of "contemplation" outlines Hugh's doctrine on contemplative ecstasy. According to this theory, the immediate vision of God (a cognition of God "as he is") is possible in this life. The organ of this cognition (vision) is the "eye of contemplation," a specific cognitive faculty for seeing God, present in everyone, even if its working is precluded or proscribed as a consequence of the original sin. The vision of this "eye"

is restored through the “Spirit of God” (whose descriptions fit the Victorine concept of the illuminating Wisdom).

IV. For any theological anthropology, both the affective and cognitive moments and faith are crucial elements in cognising (or experiencing) God. The relation of cognition, love and faith to contemplation was investigated in three contexts of Hugh’s theories.

a) First the ultimate phase of believing was investigated. According to Hugh, reason and faith cooperate in the cognition of God, which also means the interplay of cognition and love towards God. The ultimate degree of faith (as Hugh calls it) is, however, not faith: the realities earlier believed are then grasped “by truth” (*per veritatem apprehendere*), and God is present through “the presence of contemplation.”

b) The second and third subjects are Hugh’s theories on the cognoscibility of God and on the relation between love and cognition turned towards God. After a famous passage of the *In Hierarchiam* modern scholars like to think that Hugh attested the superiority of love to knowledge (or cognition). The basis of this assumption is Hugh’s explanation of a passage of the *Celestial Hierarchy* that describes the motion of the Seraphim around God; here Hugh indeed states that love is stronger than understanding. What is generally overlooked is, on the one hand, Hugh’s theory on the partial cognoscibility of God, and on the other hand, the idea that love has no cognitive function for Hugh.

Chapter II. Richard of Saint-Victor

Introduction

Among twelfth-century spiritual authors of the Victorine school it was only Hugh and Richard who did not fade into oblivion as early as the Middle Ages.²⁸⁰ Since the thirteenth century Richard has been regarded as both a theologian and a spiritual author. Among Scholastic theologians, his *De Trinitate* became a reference work on the Trinity. His fame as spiritual (or even a “mystical”) author was due to the treatises *Benjamin minor* (or *De XII patriarchis*), *Benjamin major* (or *De arca mystica* or *De contemplatione*) and *De IV gradibus violentae charitatis*.²⁸¹ These works, regarded as dedicated literature on contemplation, were copied throughout the Middle Ages, and their doctrines (as Part III of the dissertation will demonstrate) influenced Scholastic and mystical theology from the early thirteenth century onwards. The oeuvre of Richard was already then well defined and accessible to readers, and modern philological research has changed its picture only in a few minor points.²⁸²

Richard as “mystic”: trends of the literature

Richard is by no means unknown to the scholarly public. Scholarly attention was drawn to his writings in the nineteenth century, when the first modern works on intellectual history appeared.

²⁸⁰ For a list of Richard’s authentic writings see, for example, Cacciapuoti, *Deus existentia*, or Châtillon, “Introduction,” SC 419, 14-17; on the manuscripts of Richard’s works, see Rudolf Goy’s work, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung der Werke Richards von St. Viktor im Mittelalter*. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005). The majority of Richard’s works were published by Migne in the single volume PL 196 (1855, first reprinted 1880). The non-critical text of the edition is taken from the 1650 Rouen edition (see Cacciapuoti, *Deus existentia amoris*). All references to Richard’s works with mere colon numbers refer to PL 196. From the 1950s onwards, the more important works of Richard were edited critically. These are the *De IV gradibus violentae charitatis*, in *Ives. Épître a Séverin sur la charité. Richard de Saint-Victor. Les quatre degrés de la violente charité*, ed. Gervais Dumeige (Paris: Vrin, 1955), 126-177 (abbreviated as *De IV gradibus*; in the references I give in brackets the section number introduced by Dumeige); *De Trinitate*, ed. J. Ribaillier (Paris: Vrin, 1958); *La Trinité*, ed. and tr. Gaston Salet (SC 63; Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1959); *De statu interioris hominis post lapsum*, ed. J. Ribaillier, AHDLM 34 (1967): 7-128; *Les douzes patriarches ou Benjamin minor*, ed. Châtillon and Jean Longère (SC 419) (Paris: CERF, 1997). A semi-critical, emended text of the *Benjamin major* also exist (edited from three twelfth-century manuscripts), prepared by Marc-Aeilko Aris, in his *Contemplatio: philosophische Studien zum Traktat Benjamin Maior des Richard von St. Viktor. Mit einer verbesserten Edition des Textes*, pages [1-148] (Frankfurt: Knecht, 1996). The edited text differs mostly just in minor variants from the Patrologia edition, and these differences do not influence the arguments in the present study.

²⁸¹ The works of Richard have several title variants given by the tradition and manuscripts. For the sake of convenience, the present study uses the titles used in the Patrologia edition: *Benjamin minor* (abbreviated as *Bmin*) and *Benjamin major* (*Bmaj*). The former work is also called *De XII patriarchis* (for the subject matter of the book, the generation of the patriarchs); *Benjamin major* (named after its size and *incipit* taken from Ps 67:28, “Benjamin adolescentulus in extasi”) is also called *De contemplatione* (as in Aris’ edition) or *De arca mystica*.

²⁸² Three such points can be mentioned: a) the authorship of *Liber exceptionum*, a textbook extracted from mostly Hugh’s works (edited in PL 175 and 177 among Hugh’s writings) and a number of attached sermons (*Sermones centum*) is now attributed to Richard (critical edition: *Liber exceptionum*, ed. Jean Châtillon. Paris: Vrin, 1958); b) the commentary on the Canticle printed under Richard’s name in PL 196 is no longer considered his work, and c) a number of minor and hitherto unedited works by him were discovered and edited: see *Sermons et opusculs spirituels inédits*, ed. J. Châtillon and William-Joseph Tulloch (Bruges: 1951), *Opusculs théologiques*, ed. Jean Ribaillier (Paris: Vrin, 1967), and *Trois opusculs spirituels de Richard de Saint-Victor. Textes inédits accompagnés d’ études critiques*, ed. Châtillon (Paris: Études Augustiniennes, 1986). Dating based on Pierluigi Cacciapuoti, “*Deus existentia amoris*.” *Teologia della carità e teologia della Trinità negli scritti di Riccardo di San Vittore (+1173)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), 79-96.

Richard figured in two fields, in the history of “mysticism” and in the history of philosophy alike. From the 1820s onwards, several German works on “Mystik” discussed his works and made accessible his doctrines and texts in vernacular. These presentations usually were based on the two *Benjamins* and the *De IV gradibus*. The attention onto Richard were not seconded by other nations at that time.²⁸³ Twentieth-century histories of spirituality (or mysticism) also contain short presentations of his doctrines.²⁸⁴ The historiography of philosophy found in Richard a follower of Anselm’s methodology who (in his *De Trinitate*) used arguments rather than *auctoritates* to show God’s existence.²⁸⁵ Such works sometimes also acknowledge that Richard created a new concept of person, opposed to the Boethian one,²⁸⁶ and (after Bäumker) that Richard was the medieval thinker who used an *a posteriori* argument for the existence of God. A particularly popular subject is his theory about the Trinity.²⁸⁷

Richard’s doctrines on theological anthropology – the proper subject of the present study – were also discussed in the twentieth century, usually under title “epistemology” or “mysticism.” Joseph Ebner in 1917 wrote a monograph on Richard’s epistemology; Eugène Kulesza in 1924 on the “mystical doctrines” of his.²⁸⁸ General histories of mysticism, such as that by Pierre Pourrat, also included his doctrines.²⁸⁹ Introductions to English translations of his works by Clare Kirchberger (1957) and Grover A. Zinn (1979) also presented his doctrines in detail;²⁹⁰ more recently, the two monographic series on the history of mysticism, Kurt Ruh’s *Geschichte* (1990) and Bernard McGinn’s

²⁸³ Although a survey on Richard’s reception in the modern period would demand a separate study, his unusual popularity among German scholars investigating the history of “Mystik” cannot be overlooked. Richard is discussed in Johann Heinrich Schmid’s *Der Mystizismus des Mittelalters in seiner Entstehungsperiode* (Jena: August Schmied, 1824). Adolph Helfferich’s two-volume work, the *Die christliche Mystik in ihrer Entwicklung und ihren Denkmälern* (Gotha, 1842) gives a monographic treatment to the issue: the first volume is practically a monograph on Christian *Mystik* while the second one is a textbook containing translations from the Areopagite, Eriugena’s *Periphyseon*, from the works of Bernard of Clairvaux, Hugh and Richard – from Richard a substantial selection from the *De Trinitate* I and *Benjamin major* was translated.²⁸³ In this period also appeared two monographs on Richard’s contemplative doctrines, one by N.Th.A. Liebner: *Richardi a S. Victore de contemplatione doctrina* (Göttingen, 1837 and 1839), another one by J.G.V. Engelhardt’s *Richard von St. Victor und Johannes Ruysbroek* (Erlangen, 1838), containing paraphrases made from the *De eruditione interioris hominis* and the two *Benjamins*. These works are generally left out from the recent discourses on the Victorines.

²⁸⁴ See, for example, Pierre Pourrat, *Christian Spirituality in the Middle Ages* (originally *La spiritualité chrétienne*, 4 vols, Paris, 1918-1928; English tr. W.H. Mitchell and S.P. Jacques) (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1924; repr. Westminster, Mar.: The Newmann Press, 1953), vol. 2, 120-129 (“Mystical Contemplation and Ecstasy according to the School of St. Victor”); Joseph Bernhart, *Die philosophische Mystik des Mittelalters* (Munich: Ernst Reinhardt Verlag, 1922), esp. 110-117 (“Die Schule von St. Viktor”).

²⁸⁵ This methodological novelty is very often the only known thing from Richard’s thought, as the works of Grabmann, Bréhier, Copleston and Marenbon show.

²⁸⁶ See Clement Bäumker, *Witelo* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1907). Richard’s concept of person derived from his Trinitarian speculations. See Peter Hofmann, “Analogie und Person. Zur Trinitätsspekulation Richards von St. Viktor,” in *Theologie und Philosophie* 59 (1984): 191-234 and Heinz Robert Schlette, “Das unterschiedliche Personenverständnis im theologischen Denken Hugos und Richards von St. Viktor,” in *Miscellanea Martin Grabmann. Gedenkblatt zum 10. Todestag. Mitteilungen aus der Grabmann-Institut München* Nr. 3 (1959), 55-72.

²⁸⁷ Most recently, see Niko Den Bok, *Communicating the Most High. A Systematic Study of Person and Trinity in the Theology of Richard of St. Victor (+1173)*. (Bibliotheca Victorina VII) (Paris and Turnhout: Brepols, 1996).

²⁸⁸ See Joseph Ebner, *Die Erkenntnislehre Richards von Sankt Viktor*. BGPTM 19/4 (Münster: Aschendorff, 1917); Eugène Kulesza, *La doctrine mystique de Richard de Saint-Victor* (Saint-Maximin: Ed. de la Vie Spirituelle, [1924]).

²⁸⁹ See Pierre Pourrat, *Christian Spirituality in the Middle Ages*, Vol. 2 (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1924; reprinted Westminster, Mar.: The Newmann Press, 1953).

²⁹⁰ See *Richard of Saint-Victor. Selected Writings on Contemplation. Translation with Introduction and Notes by Clare Kirchberger* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957); *Richard of St. Victor. The Twelve Patriarchs, the Mystical Ark, Book Three of the Trinity. Translation and Introduction by Grover A. Zinn, Preface by Jean Châtillon* (New York / Ramsey / Toronto: Paulist Press, 1979), 1-49. Further summaries are given by, for example, Grover A. Zinn, “Personification Allegory and Visions in Richard of St Victor’s Teaching on Contemplation,” *University of Toronto Quarterly* 46/3 (1977): 190-214, and Richard Kämmerlings, “Mystica arca. Zur Erkenntnislehre Richards von St. Viktor in *De gratia contemplationis*,” in *Mittelalterliches Künstlerleben nach Quellen des 11. bis 13. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Günther Binding and Andreas Speer (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: frommann-holzboog, 1993), 76-100.

The Presence of God (1994) covered the issue.²⁹¹ In addition, two works were dedicated only to the *Benjamin major* of Richard: a commentary by Marc-Aeilko Aris (1996), and a theological essay by Steven Chase (1995) focusing on the symbol of the cherub (as it appears in *Benjamin major* IV).²⁹² Most recently, Dale Coulter wrote a monograph on Richard's theological methods involving Richard's theories about hermeneutics and contemplation (2006) and in an article by Dominique Poirel and Patrice Sicard discussed Richard's spirituality (2008).²⁹³

The present study addresses different goals than these works. As I seek a different and broader context for Richard's doctrines (which is both theoretical and historical), the majority of the extant literature has little explanatory value, and in addition, many of them bear methodological or hermeneutical faults: usually such works are based on a few writings, project foreign notions into Richard's text and miss the comparative aspect, which could show what is particular in Richard's theories.

Richard's writings on contemplation are regarded and read as masterpieces – as a few, selected and timeless “classics of mysticism,” isolated from Richard's other works. Reviewing the modern literature, Pierluigi Cacciapuoti observed (1998) that twentieth-century rereading of Richard's *oeuvre* is mostly limited to four works of his – to the *De Trinitate*, the two *Benjamins* and the *De IV gradibus violentae charitatis*.²⁹⁴ The three spiritual works is too narrow a textual basis to understand Richard's doctrines, since some of his other works also discuss similar themes (such as the *Adnotationes in Psalmos* or the *De eruditione*). The doctrinal context of Richard's theological anthropology is also generally missed: the usual vernacular paraphrases of his doctrines cannot relate contemplation to the eschatological or the prelapsarian visions (cognitions) of God. The modern attitude towards “mystical” writings as such also favours obscurity instead of clarity, even on the behalf of the interpreters. From the late thirteenth century at least, “mystical theology” also became a term opposed to “Scholastic theology.” In this context, “mystical theology” means something personal, individual, direct experience of God, contrasted with “Scholastic theology,” which is doctrinal, authoritative and taught in school. This distinction was extant already in the thirteenth century (for example, it can be found in Thomas Gallus and Hugh of Balma, see Part III). Due to the fact that “mystical” theology was often connected to the Areopagitic apophatism in the Catholic tradition, “mysticism” also means an obscure subject, nearly inaccessible for discursive understanding. Approaching a twelfth-century text with attitudes and expectations mentioned above do define what the interpretations may contain – but also define what remains hidden to modern readers.

Some modern authors read Richard's works as theologically valid mystical texts. While this attitude was usual among medieval theologians, transposed into our times it leads to dubious results. J. G. V. Engelhardt (1838), standing on the firm ground of Lutheran orthodoxy, saw in Richard a mystical author (*Mystiker*) whose doctrines on the contemplative's union with God are in harmony with the doctrines of the Lutheran theologians about the “union of the substances.” On the Catholic side, Kulesza's monograph (1924) justified Richard's contemplative doctrines with those of Teresa of Avila (who was a far better known spiritual author of the Catholic tradition at that time). More

²⁹¹ Kurt Ruh, “Richard von Sankt Viktor,” in Ruh, *Die Grundlegung*, 383-395; Bernard McGinn, “Richard and the Other Victorines,” in McGinn, *The Growth*, 396-418.

²⁹² Steven Chase, *Angelic Wisdom: The Cherubim and the Grace of Contemplation in Richard of St. Victor* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995); Marc-Aeilko Aris, *Contemplatio: philosophische Studien zur Traktat Benjamin major des Richard von St. Viktor, mit einer verbesserten Edition des Textes* (Frankfurt: Knecht, 1996).

²⁹³ Dale M. Coulter, *Per visibilia ad invisibilia. Theological Method in Richard of St. Victor (d. 1173)*. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006); Dominique Poirel and Patrice Sicard, “Figure vittorine: Riccardo, Acardo e Tommaso,” in Inos Biffi and Costante Marabelli, ed., *Figure del pensiero medievale*, vol. 2: *La fioritura della dialettica X-XII secolo* (Milano, 2008), 596-618.

²⁹⁴ See Cacciapuoti, *Deus existentia amoris*, 39: “anche se la rilettura della sua produzione si è confinata quasi esclusivamente al trattato *De Trinitate*, ai due scritti sulla contemplazione – *Beniamin minor* e *Beniamin maior* – e allo scritto *De quattuor gradibus violentae caritatis*. Il dibattito su Riccardo di San Vittore si è così incentrato soprattutto su tre aspetti del suo pensiero: dal punto di vista del metodo, il rapporto tra ragione e fede nella riflessione trinitaria; dal punto di vista teologico, la valutazione del modello trinitario centrato sull'analisi dell'amore o carità; dal punto di vista filosofico, la teoria della contemplazione come forma di conoscenza, per determinarne la natura, l'oggetto e il rapporto con la carità.”

recently, Terence German (1986) interpreted Richard's doctrines in the usual terms of (Catholic) Scholastic mystical theology.²⁹⁵ The following example may give an impression of this theological language, so common after the fifteenth century:

Richard, following most of the mystical theologians from Origen to Augustine and later, clearly wishes us to understand that the soul in this state possesses a direct vision of God which is not the Beatific Vision nor the vision which the soul has attained by acquired contemplation. [...] It [= the state of ecstasy] is the dark night of the soul, the cloud of unknowing, when the soul knows the Blessed Trinity.

The vocabulary used in this analysis (involving terms like “acquired” and “infused” contemplation, “intuitive vision” of God, “ordinary” grace opposed to “divine action”) was elaborated long after Richard's time.²⁹⁶ Such an interpretation may be valid and correct according to theological standards but ultimately does little, I contend, to aid our historical understanding of Richard. The problem lies not only in the anachronistic nature of these terms – their meaning was basically defined by thirteenth-century theological anthropology and a particular Western interpretation of the Areopagitic texts – but also in the obstacles that these very terms create. To stay with the above example, the contemplative ecstasy in Richard is certainly not an entering into the “cloud of unknowing.” Not only because Richard is not under the influence of the *Mystical Theology* of the Areopagite (which could justify the term), but also because Richard's interpretation of the same Scriptural image (Moses enters the cloud on Mount Sinai) contradicts the Areopagitic one. It is even less a “dark night of the soul”: the latter expression was coined first by John of the Cross (d. 1591) and presupposes an affective Areopagitic spirituality (which was created first only in the thirteenth century).²⁹⁷

The most recent example of this theologising vein is Steven Chase's monograph *Angelic Wisdom* (1995), portraying Richard mostly as a “master of divine incomprehensibility.” Based on an boldly narrow textual basis (mostly Books One to Four of the *Benjamin major*), Chase attempts to explain the symbol of the Cherubim in the *Benjamin major*. He sees it as remarkable that in this work (which, he admits, is a tropological work) “Christ is virtually absent,” but he does not remain content to see that absence as mere absence.²⁹⁸ As he tries to interpret Richard's doctrines through Areopagitic

²⁹⁵ See Terence German, “Interpreting Mystical Contemplation in the Writings of Richard of St. Victor,” *Louvain Studies* 11/2 (Fall 1986): 119-130.

²⁹⁶ See also German's analysis of the highest degree of contemplation: “Final contemplation is the direct or intuitive knowledge of God in which the intelligence is the instrument of such contemplation, though it is not actively functioning in this intuitive vision of God. [...] Intelligence as an instrument of direct knowledge may be used in a twofold manner. If its use is active, it is an admiring and joyful regard by which many things are seen to have similarity or a unifying principle among themselves. In this use the intelligence has a non-discursive knowledge of objects [...]. This is the highest knowledge possible for man using his natural powers with the help of ordinary grace. It is like the knowledge the angels naturally possess. However, if the use of the intelligence is passive, completely subject to or under the influence of divine action, the soul is in ecstasy. [...] He [that is, God] plunges the soul into the darkness of unknowing, yet he fills it with a divine light by which it sees Him in an intuitive manner short of the Beatific Vision, and unites it to himself with an indescribable love which excites the soul and makes it more like God in knowledge and in love. This act or state of contemplation is due to God's infusing into the soul a knowledge of himself, a greater likeness of himself.” “Interpreting,” 129.

²⁹⁷ In the period between the sixteenth century and the second Vatican council, Catholic mystical theology uses largely the same Scholastic language. Although it is John of the Cross and Theresa of Avila who have real authority on actual spiritual-mystical doctrines, ideas from “mystical” authors of the past (including Saint Bernard, Bonaventure and Richard) also serve as illustration in the theological monographs devoted to contemplation and mystical theology; see, for example, Thomas de Jesu, *De contemplatione diuina libri sex* (Antverpiae: Ex officina Plantiniana, 1620).

²⁹⁸ Making a point about the absence of Christ in a tropological interpretation is rather strange and betrays a misunderstanding of both the function of tropology and the Victorine concept of Christ as (uncreated) Wisdom. Tropology focuses on the individual's personal sphere, on spiritual practice and experience – and that experience here is the very cognition of the immaterial realities. Claiming an “absence” of Christ is also unfounded. The *De IV gradibus* explicitly (that is, not “apophatically”) speaks about the assimilation to the Christ in the third degree of contemplation. This idea of assimilation is not hidden in Richard's spiritual works at all: for example, Blastic formulates it in this way (speaking of contemplative ecstasy): “This is perfecting knowledge, the knowledge of Jesus Christ – it is a loving knowledge of relationship through identity. In this sense, one can say that for Richard, the authentic contemplative, the person who is

notions, he considers that absence to be “apophatic Christology.” Another novelty of his work is the introduction of a new term, “angelization,” for the state of contemplation.²⁹⁹ From a historical and practical point of view, the efforts of Chase add nothing to a better understanding of Richard: references to obvious historical and doctrinal contexts, or other relevant works of Richard are missing.³⁰⁰ From a methodological aspect, the obscurity of the explanation could not be justified by the assumed “incomprehensibility” of the subject, and explaining metaphors through metaphors (instead of clear concepts) still lacks in explanatory value.³⁰¹

Historical and doctrinal investigations into Richard’s spirituality rarely provide sufficient context for his understanding, either. Such shortcomings may be rooted in Richard’s prose style. His spiritual writings are compact works, using tropological interpretation of Scriptural themes to convey spiritual doctrines, and Richard very rarely hints at his sources. Presentation of his doctrines often means vernacular renditions of his main ideas, based on three major spiritual works: the two *Benjamins* and the *De IV gradibus*.³⁰² Comparative studies are generally rare in any issue related to his spiritual works. The sources of his doctrines are largely unresearched: the sole remarkable result in this field is Robilliard’s discovery (1939) of the Boethian inspiration behind Richard’s concepts of *sensibilia*, *intellectibilia* and *intelligibilia*.³⁰³ The connection between Hugh’s and Richard’s theology is also generally assumed, but only rarely proved by demonstrative means. Richard is sometimes also believed to be a student of the Areopagite. It is indisputable that he knew at least portions of the *Celestial Hierarchy* and Hugh’s *In Hierarchiam* (as he quotes both).³⁰⁴ Clare Kirchberger once claimed that Richard knew not only the *Celestial Hierarchy* but also the *Divine Names* and the *Mystical Theology*: her claim has not been (and probably cannot be) substantiated by any textual evidence.³⁰⁵ The literature sometimes indeed applies Areopagitic terms to Richard, usually without any supporting argument or justification.³⁰⁶ More recently, Kent Emery drew parallels between Richard’s six contemplations and the various kinds of theology that the Areopagite defines.³⁰⁷ Such

reintegrated and perfected via the contemplative ascent, becomes a son in the Son, the true image and likeness in which Adam and Eve were created.” Blastic, *Condilectio*, 125.

²⁹⁹ The central term “angelization” means “the contemplative imitation of the cherubim... ongoing process of purification, reformation and restoration, illumination, ascension... It thus includes both work and rest, both the active and the contemplative life. Angelization is that hovering ground between humanization and divinization.” Chase, *Angelic Wisdom*, 126; Bernard McGinn accepts the concept of “angelization,” speaking about *transformation into an angelic being* in his *The Growth of Mysticism* (London: SCM Press, 1995), 411.

³⁰⁰ It is difficult to see what this term can add, apart from obscurity, to the old ascetic concept of *vita angelica*; moreover, Richard makes it clear in the text (*Bmaj IV*, xxi) that the cherubim also “mean” the cognition of the highest mysteries through revelation.

³⁰¹ See, for example, his *Angelic Wisdom*, 128: “For the contemplative, flight into the secret places of incomprehensibility means ‘imitation’ of the cherubim, or ‘angelization,’ for ‘flight’ into the mystery of Trinity [...]; it means spreading the wings, looking at the propitiatory” and so on.

³⁰² Such presentations are Grover A. Zinn’s “Introduction” to his translation, *Richard of St. Victor, The Twelve Patriarchs: The mystical Ark: Book Three of the Trinity* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979) and his “Personification Allegory and Visions in Richard of St Victor’s Teaching on Contemplation,” *University of Toronto Quarterly* 46, no. 3 (1977): 190-214; Michael William Blastic, *Condilectio: personal mysticism and speculative theology in the works of Richard of Saint Victor. PhD dissertation, Saint Louis University 1991 (microform edition: Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms International, 1991)*; the entries about Richard in McGinn’s *The Growth* and Ruh’s *Die Grundlegung*.

³⁰³ The categories go back to Boethius’ commentary on Porphyry’s *Isagoge*; see J.-A. Robilliard, “Les six genres de contemplation chez Richard de Saint Victor et leur origine platonicienne,” *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques* 28 (1939): 229-233.

³⁰⁴ On this subject, see my article “The Victorines and the Areopagite,” in Poirel, ed., *L’école de Saint-Victor in Paris*.

³⁰⁵ See Clare Kirchberger, *Richard of Saint-Victor. Selected Writings on Contemplation* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), 48.

³⁰⁶ Grover A. Zinn writes, for example: “Richard recognizes the ambiguity of the ‘unknowing’ of ecstatic contemplation. He fully incorporates the Dionysian theme of the state of ‘unknowing’ that characterizes ecstasy: Ecstasy takes one beyond rational consciousness, behind a veil, into darkness” (“Introduction,” in *Richard of St. Victor*, 33).

³⁰⁷ “His six genera of contemplation, moreover, evince some correspondence with the three modes of theology – symbolic, intelligible, and mystical – taught by Pseudo-Dionysius in *The Divine Names* and elsewhere. The first three kinds [...] correspond with the Areopagite’s ‘symbolic theology.’ The fifth kind, in terms of its purely spiritual,

assumed correspondences or connections (which otherwise left no visible textual traces), due to their nature, are beyond the realm of the present investigation. As a rare example of an appropriate historical and comparative approach to Richard's work Jean Châtillon's introduction to the *Benjamin minor* must be mentioned. Châtillon presents not only the spiritual teachings of Richard but also the earlier and contemporary exegetical traditions related to the imagery used in the treatise.³⁰⁸ Otherwise, the exegetical background of Richard's spiritual works is unevenly studied: while his theories of exegesis have been investigated, a topical study of his exegesis is still needed.³⁰⁹

The plan of investigation

With different goals and different interests from those of most of the works mentioned, the present study tries to follow a different methodology. The present chapter falls into three parts. The first one gives a background for Richard's theory about contemplation; the second part investigates issues pertaining to contemplation, and the third part gives a case study of the hermeneutical problems emerging from reading Richard's spiritual texts.

First the doctrinal background of his contemplative theory must be outlined, since any theory about contemplation is greatly defined by the author's theological, anthropological and epistemological positions. To this background belong also Richard's theories about *similitudo* and the language of theology. These theories define what can be said about spiritual experiences, and how, but ignoring them (as a case study will demonstrate) easily leads to misconceptions – and therefore their treatment also has a place in the introductory part.

Richard's doctrines on contemplation can be investigated in various contexts; the main part covers five possible approaches. First I give a short overview of the six contemplations and the three ways of contemplation, following the *Benjamin major*: these are the most commonly known contemplative doctrines of Richard. Then I present two fundamental and generally overlooked categories of his thinking, *contemplatio* and *speculatio*. The next subject is the reconstructed description of contemplation as a dynamic process (which completes the static presentations explicit in Richard's writings). In another section I argue that for Richard, among the many allegorical narratives on contemplative ecstasy, Paul's rapture worked as the paradigm of ecstatic contemplation. Finally Richard's attitudes towards contemplation will be investigated.

The third part of the chapter is a case study that illustrates the difficulties in understanding Richard's text. He several times mentions a "face-to-face" vision in contemplation, which has prompted modern authors to identify (or not identify) the vision of contemplation with the immediate vision of God. I will demonstrate that without considering Richard's theory about language interpreters are easily misled by their own presuppositions. In Richard's works the doctrinal content is often inseparable from the form it is presented. In order to avoid such mistakes, therefore, it is necessary to digress to a few features of writings before discussing any of Richard's doctrines.

illuminated cognitions and its object [...] corresponds closely with Dionysius' 'intelligible theology.' [...] Richard's sixth kind corresponds with the highest mode of 'affirmative' theology [...] the 'discrete theology' that concerns the distinctions of the trinitarian persons." Kent Emery, "Richard of St. Victor," in Jorge J.E. Garcia and Timothy B. Noone, eds., *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 588-594, here 591.

³⁰⁸ See *Richard de Saint-Victor. Les douzes patriarches ou Benjamin minor* (SC 419), pages 19-39 ("Antécédents bibliques, patristiques, médiévaux") and 40-61 ("L'enseignement spirituel").

³⁰⁹ Recently Dave Coulter gave a remarkably comprehensive view on Richard's theory, involving such rarely consulted authors as Robert of Melun ("Literal Interpretation and the Meaning of the Visible World," *Per visibilia*, 61-124). In Aris' commentary, the chapter "Victorine symbolism" is based mostly on Hugh's exegetical writings, assuming a general Victorine milieu.

Preliminary remarks on Richard's spiritual prose

There are many factors that make Richard's spiritual writing a difficult read for the modern audience. Richard belonged to and wrote for a canonical community. The monastery in which he lived still continued what is called symbolic theology or Biblical theology; like many of his contemporaries, Richard was familiar with the concept of *integumentum* and the practice of allegorical exegesis.³¹⁰ Many of these features, belonging to the milieu and period of Richard, were analysed and described by scholars.

Some other aspects of his works (that still make them difficult to understand) are far less often investigated: such is the way in which his writings were intended to function and the style of the prose of his spiritual works.³¹¹ The practical aim of Richard's spiritual works is preparing the reader to accept the grace of contemplation; part of this preparation is self-construction. As Ineke van T'Spijker emphasises, "[b]y his exegesis, Richard offers his readers a script which they can rewrite for themselves by reading it. Following and imitating the explications of the text, the reader will construct his inner life."³¹² In this sense Richard's writings are mystagogical works preparing contemplation, where the act of understanding is indispensable to the construction of the new self.

The spiritual writings of Richard also present a complex hermeneutical problem. These works contain his doctrines on contemplation, and must be understood basically by themselves (since other authors' works cannot help us to understand them). These doctrines are mostly communicated in a particular "language," through allegories and their explanations (the dry Scholastic presentation of *Bmaj* I is an exception and not the rule). Richard was a most reflective author, highly aware of the nature and working of the language. The literature is generally unaware of the fact that Richard's spiritual writings are written by an author who indeed had strong opinions on the relation of the cognition, the representations and the language – and his own writings were written according to the same principles. The "language" and the "message" of his spiritual works are inseparable and equally important. While his theory about the language will be discussed later, here a lower and practical aspect of his works must be first discussed: those particular compositional techniques that separate them from other works of spiritual literature – and which make his spiritual writings so difficult to understand first.

a) *The two styles.* Richard's doctrines on contemplation have a double presentation in his spiritual writings, expounded in two different styles. One is a technical and theoretical style which appears only in the first book of the *Benjamin major*. Here Richard gives a summary of his epistemology and his system of contemplations in a manner apt for teaching. The presentation of the issue evolves through definitions, clear-cut distinctions and comparisons; both the similar and

³¹⁰ On symbolic and Biblical theology, see Chenu, Smalley, de Lubac; for the theories on *integumentum* (in a mostly philosophical context), I indicate here only Peter Dronke's *Fabula: Explorations Into the Uses of Myth in Medieval Platonism* (Leiden, 1985) and Frank Bezner's *Vela veritatis. Wissen und Sprache in der Intellectual History des 12. Jahrhunderts* (Leiden and Boston, 2005).

³¹¹ The intended interaction of the text and the reader, the role of Richard as author and the compositional techniques that he used, are problems that have not attracted much attention. The most promising contextual interpretation of Richard's texts has been shown by Ineke van T'Spijker. Her studies investigate the way in which Richard's texts function as means of moral education – or rather texts helping to compose the self of the reader; see her "Exegesis and Emotions. Richard of St. Victor's *De Quatuor Gradibus Violentae Caritatis*," *Sacris Erudiri* 36 (1996): 147-160, and "Learning by Experience: Twelfth-Century Monastic Ideas," in Jan Willem Drijvers and Alasdair A. MacDonalds, eds., *Centres of Learning. Learning and Location in Pre-Modern Europe and the Near East* (Leiden, New York and Cologne: Brill, 1995), 197-206; see also her *Fictions of the Inner Life. Religious Literature and Formation of the Self in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004). On Richard's spiritual exegesis, see Patrice Sicard, "Du *De archa Noe* de Hugues au *De archa Moysi* de Richard de Saint-Victor: Action, contemplation et sens scripturaux chez deux théoriciens maquettistes" in his *Théologies victorines* (Paris, 2008), 57-106.

³¹² Van t'Spijker, *Fictions*, 183; equally important is her observation on the *modus operandi* of these texts: "At the same time, the biblical and exegetical text functions as a screen between reader and his inner life, which prevents him from being absorbed by the immediacy of his experientia." *ibid.* The preserved self-reflection must be seen as a consequences of the Victorine concept of image and likeness.

dissimilar elements of the concepts compared are observed. This style, Richard makes it clear to the reader, is intended for the “more learned” audience (*doctioribus*). The remainder of the treatise (meaning Books II to V) is intended as a repetition of the same material, in a different style, for a different audience – “in the manner of contemplatives,” for those who have free time (*otiosi*).³¹³ This “manner of contemplatives” is the other style: Richard presents his theories illustrated with exegesis of Scriptural narratives or images.

b) *Interlocked allegories*. A most conspicuous feature of Richard’s spiritual writings is the great number of *similitudines* he introduces to explain his doctrines. His spiritual works usually have a central organising or frame allegory which give the structure of the text: such are, for example, the Ark of the Covenant or the family tree of Jacob’s descendants. These frame allegories are accompanied by other, auxiliary allegories as well: these (connected or not to the organising ones) explain minor subjects. The richness of carefully expounded Scriptural allegories (or *similitudines*) seems to be a distinctive feature of the “contemplative style”: the first book of the *Benjamin major* uses rather similes.

c) *Two “Scriptural” principles: one word with several meanings and one concept through several figures*. Richard explicitly talks about two principles or compositional techniques he thought he observed in the Bible. Curiously, he also uses these assumed techniques in his spiritual works but without self-reflection. One principle is that the meaning of one and the same word or thing in the Bible may change its reference by widening or narrowing its own meaning.³¹⁴ The principle is used by Richard too. He makes it clear to the reader that “imagination,” “will,” “reason” and “intellect” may mean both faculties and their actions.³¹⁵ The same principle works in his spiritual works as well. The same element may have not only one but several correlate meanings, unfolding gradually in the process of explanation. For example, in the *Benjamin minor* Naphtali (an older brother of Benjamin) means first imagination, then rational imagination perfused with *intelligentia* (that is, a specified cognitive faculty) and finally *speculatio* (the very working of that faculty). Similarly, Benjamin (the hero of *Benjamin minor*) means first the grace of contemplation (lxxi), then that sort of contemplation which is above reason (lxxiv) and finally, contemplation of invisible things and *intelligentia pura*, the faculty which makes such cognition possible (lxxxvii). The same rule applies to the motif of the rapture and three heavens: their explanations in different writings unfold various aspects of the same underlying theme.

The other principle is that the same “divine instruction” may be expressed by various allegories and *similitudines* in the text of the Bible in order to make a deeper imprint on the mind.³¹⁶ This principle works in Richard’s own writings as a compositional technique – namely, Richard as author employs the most various images (and their tropological interpretations) to express the same doctrine. In this sense, the various Scriptural *similitudines* applied to one subject are practically equivalents of each other.³¹⁷ The central theme of the process of ecstatic and supra-rational contemplation appears as the tropological explanation of several Scriptural images. One such image

³¹³ *Bmaj* I, xii: “Et fortassis ista doctioribus animis sufficere possunt ad ea quae de Moysis arca vel contemplationis gratia dici debuerunt. Sed quia otiosi sumus et otiosis loquimur, propter pigriores quidem pigrum nobis esse non debet, adhuc eadem cum utile et forte quibusdam necessario supplemento repetere, et eidem materiae liberius vacando in ipsam adhuc aliquid latius agere. Contemplantis itaque more, contemplationisque tenore de contemplatione agamus, nec tantae jucunditatis studium et tantae admirationis spectaculum in transitu videamus.” 78D.

³¹⁴ *Bmaj* IV, xiv: “Et saepe fit ut una eademque Scriptura, dum multipliciter exponitur, multa nobis in unum loquatur, moraliter nos docens quid dilectus noster facere nos velit, allegoriter admonens quid pro nobis per semetipsum fecerit, anagogice proponens quid adhuc de nobis facere disponit. [...] Saepe unum idemque mandatum sub variis aenigmatibus et figuris proponitur, ut mentibus altius imprimatur.” 151CD = ed. Aris 104.

³¹⁵ *Bmin* xvii: “Et saepe instrumentum et ejus actionem uno nomine appellamus [...]. Sic cum ratio, vel voluntas, vel intellectus nominatur, aliquando instrumentum, aliquando ejus actio intelligitur.” 12A.

³¹⁶ *Bmin* lxxxvi: “Hoc autem non solum in Benjamin, sed et in omnibus fratribus oportet attendere, imo et in innumeris Scripturarum locis, diligenter observare, quomodo soleat Scriptura divina, circa eandem rem, nunc significationem extendere, modo restringere, vel etiam mutare.” 62AB (= SC 419, 342).

³¹⁷ A topical reading of his spiritual works could reveal how few central themes are discussed by the many Scriptural allegories that he employs.

or *similitudo* is Paul's rapture into the third heaven, but this allegory has several other equivalents. In the *Benjamin minor* such equivalents are the birth of Benjamin, which kills Rachel (that is, ecstatic contemplation surpasses the limits of reason), and that moment of the Transfiguration scene when the disciples fall on their faces (Matt. 17), and the Psalm's reference to Benjamin's *excessus mentis* (Ps. 67 [68]: 28). In *Benjamin major* such equivalents are the moment when the high priest Aaron enters the Holy of the Holies to the Ark of the Covenant, the moment when Moses enters into the cloud on the summit of Mount Sinai (Exod 25), the moment when Abraham leaves his tent at Mambre to see God (Gen 18), and the moment when a bright cloud covered the disciples in the Transfiguration. In the *De exterminazione* the same is figured at the moment when the Ark of the Covenant arrives in the Promised Land.³¹⁸ The dichotomy of contemplation and speculation also has its own equivalent *similitudines*.

d) *Tropological typology, typological tropology*. Tropological explanation connects elements of the text to psychological realities: persons or figures of the Bible represent virtues, sins and other contents of the individual soul. In the given period tropological (moral) exegesis was the usual way to explain various aspects of the relation between God and the individual human soul, whether it be moral-spiritual development, moral advice or analysis of "mystical" experiences. The unusual element in Richard's exegesis is that Scriptural events and narratives come to express the dynamism and the changes of psychological conditions. Scriptural figures are not considered by him as signs with a given and static meaning. Instead, they function as types and prefigurations, representing spiritual ("psychological") conditions that must be, or can be, reached (realised) by the reader. In some sense, the reader is (or can become) identical with the various figures. Saint Paul, Benjamin and other figures (and Biblical events too) represent not historical persons or events but psychological statuses or changes. A most telling example, clearly illustrating this way of typological thinking, is Paul's rapture. Paul's spiritual rapture into the third heaven is generally the model (the prefiguration) of the contemplative ecstasy (as later will be demonstrated); but, at the same time, the spiritual ascent (or ecstasy, figured by Paul's rapture) also has a prefiguration, the corporeal ascent of Christ. This example also shows how the tropological reading governs even history: Richard states that Christ ascended *in order* to be followed (see *De Trin.* prologus).

e) *Dislocated allegories*. An unusual editorial-compositional technique of Richard is what can be called dislocated allegories and composite allegories. Richard unfolds many doctrines in the framework of allegorical explanation of a given Scriptural theme. In some cases, the explanation of the same theme (and the same doctrine) is split, and its parts are set apart in his writings, either at different places of the same work or at different works. Reading the separate parts together gives a fuller meaning; although Richard makes no reference to this technique, recognising and joining the separate parts may well pertain to the active role that he assigns to his reader.³¹⁹ Such dislocated allegories are in the *Benjamin major* Abraham's vision of three men (IV, xi and V, viii), the dawn light (*aurora*, III, x and V, ix), the iron door of the prison (II, xiii and V, xiii), and the allegory of three heavens (although its parts are dispersed into several works, as discussed later).

³¹⁸ See *Bmin* lxxiii; 82; 84-85 (PL 196: 52D, 58B, 60A-61C = SC 419, 300-301, 326, 334-340); *Bmaj* IV, xi; IV, xxii and V, ii; IV, xxiii; V, ii (PL 196: 146C-147B; 165A-166C and 171BC; 167; 171BC = Aris 99; 118-120 and 125-126; 121; 126); *Exterm* II, v-vi (1091BD). Richard several times emphasises the identity behind the various figures, for example, *Bmin* lxxxv: "Quod enim propheta per Rachelis interitum, quod Evangelista designat per casum discipulorum, Psalmista exprimit in Benjamin per mentis excessum." 61C = SC 419, 340.

³¹⁹ Richard makes it explicit that he does not explain all the details (*Bmaj* IV, xi, 196B), and the reader is expected to conjecture the intended meaning; see *Bmaj* IV, xiii, 184B: "cogita hoc, inquam, et forte hoc cogitando invenies"; *Bmaj* V, xiv, 186D: "Cogitet ergo qui potest." Sometimes he simply closes the discussion of the subject, either for compositional reasons (*Exterm* III, xviii, 1116B) or because of modesty, leaving certain contemplative issues to *eruditiores* (*Bmaj* V, xii, 181C; V, xix, 192A).

I. Background to contemplation

However vaguely defined “contemplation,” “mystical experience” or “mysticism” are, the terms presume a theoretical background. Without the study of this (often-overlooked) background a study of a given author’s “mysticism” is rarely more than an extract from his (or her) more interesting sentences. Before the investigation of the doctrines on contemplation, three major subjects will be treated here, in order to answer three elementary questions. The first subject is the doctrinal context of contemplation. The question to be answered is what the status of contemplative experience in the author’s theological system is. The second subject is the epistemological background: the question here is what kind of cognitive faculties are working in contemplative experience – in other words, what makes that experience possible? The third subject is the language of *similitudo* and its rules; here the question is as follows: what can be said about contemplative experience at all, and by what means?

1. The doctrinal context of contemplation

In order to set Richard’s doctrines in context, an investigation of his doctrines on the primordial (prelapsarian) and the final (eschatological) conditions is indispensable. Since on these issues Richard did not present his positions in a systematic way, those must be reconstructed from his various references. So far, it seems, such investigations have not been carried out.

The writings of Richard do not indicate his eschatological position clearly; moreover, his hints at this subject are so scarce that it is difficult to say what eschatological model he had at all. His commentary on the Apocalypse explains the seven visions of John without giving clear eschatological prospective. Richard there distinguishes between justification and glorification³²⁰ (and his references suggest that the first belongs to earthly life, the second to the life hereafter); the glorified souls contemplate God face to face and enjoy the continuous contemplation of the humanity and divinity of Christ.³²¹ The two *stolae* of the Apocalypse refer to the glorification of the soul that also means clear contemplation and the face-to-face vision of God (first *stola*) and to the resurrected body (second *stola*).³²² None of these passages makes reference to the role of the body in the (eschatological) contemplation of God; hints at the incomplete cognition of God due to the lack of the glorified body, or at a fuller cognition in the glorified body (being these the clearest indicators of a two-stage eschatology) are equally missing. The description of the glorified state in *De exterminazione* II, vi also lacks such references.

Even more confusingly, in many cases it is indistinguishable whether he speaks about experiences belonging to the (ecstatic) contemplation of this life or to the blessed state. From an

³²⁰ For the *creatio – justificatio – glorificatio* triad, see also *Adn in Ps 118/b*, 350AB.

³²¹ *In Apoc VII*, vii: “Quandiu vero in hac vita sumus, citra fluvium sumus, quia gratia desuper datur per quam genus humanum justificatur. Qui autem jam per primam stolam glorificati sunt, ultra fluvium sunt, quia jam perfecte justificati non indigent justificari; quibus etiam ipsum Conditorem facie ad faciem jam datum est contemplari. [...] Christus omnibus electis [...] et in mundo, et in coelo semetipsum refectionem tribuit, quam videlicet refectionem apostolica auctoritas in mundo ad justitiam, in coelo exhiberi ad gloriam praedicavit. Reficit enim Christus suos in mundo, corporis et sanguinis sui participatione, reficit eos in coelo perpetua divinitatis et humanitatis suae contemplatione. Ex utraque ergo parte fluminis lignum vitae profert fructum citra justitiae, ultra gloriae. Citra quippe [0876B] pascendo facit justos, ultra pascendo facit beatos.” 875D-876B.

³²² *In Apoc VI*, vii: “Haec est resurrectio prima, justificatio sive glorificatio videlicet animarum, quae est in acceptione stolae primae, sicut secunda est corporum in acceptione secundae.” 855A; *In Apoc I*, viii: “Et dabo illi stellam matutinam, stella matutina stola prima, stella propter claritatem contemplationis, matutina propter inchoationem beatitudinis. [...] Ista stella matutina mutabitur in solem meridianum in resurrectione, quando anima glorificabitur in resurgenti corpore.” 728AB; *In Apoc IV*, ii: “laetamini coeli, et qui habitatis in eis [...], id est angeli sancti, sive sancti per primam stolam glorificati.” 802A.

epistemological perspective, there seems to be no difference between contemplation and eschatological vision. Both mean a vision of the truth: the difference is that contemplation is transient and the eschatological vision is perpetual.³²³ There is no sensible difference either on behalf of the cognisant: the six forms of contemplation proposed to the contemplatives in the *Benjamin major* are identical with those forms of contemplation that the angels and the blessed souls already obtained.³²⁴

Richard's thoughts on prelapsarian condition are also presented in a similar, scattered and unsystematic way. His remarks define three major contexts: the image and likeness, the prelapsarian state in terms of grace, and Adam among the angels.

a) *Image and likeness*. For Richard, as for Hugh, the divine image (*imago*) and the likeness (*similitudo*) in the spiritual creature are two separate instances, the former being its intellectual, and the latter its affective ability. This issue reemerges in his works several times: first in the *Liber exceptionum* (seemingly extracted from Hugh), then in the two *Benjamins* and in *Adnotationes in Psalmos*.³²⁵ The *Liber exceptionum*, as an early (and not particularly original) work of his, accentuates those elements that he takes over from Hugh. Through a metaphor, Richard makes it explicit that the two abilities are (and remain) separate: image and likeness are like the heat and the light of the same fire: "the two are different, and distant (*remota*) from each other – the light is not heat, and nor is heat light."³²⁶ This duality has a crucial consequence for the practice of spiritual life as well: the cognitive activities (such as meditation, contemplation and understanding) all belong to the cognitive ability (*ratio*), and the affective activities (such as crying, feeling pain or sighing) to the affective ability.³²⁷

The original state was possession of the integer divine image and likeness and a special immortality of the body. Through sin, the image (that is, the cognitive ability) was invaded by ignorance; the likeness (that is, the affective ability) by concupiscence – and corporeal immortality by mortality and weakness. The remedies against them are wisdom, virtue and *necessitas* (the things sustaining human life).³²⁸ The remarkable point here is that for Richard the divine image is the equivalent of the human cognitive faculties. He does not speak about a radical and irreversible loss

³²³ See *Bmaj* I, ii: [Maria] "summae veritatis contemplationi vacabat. Haec est pars, quae electis et perfectis numquam aufertur; hoc sane negotium, quod nullo fine terminatur. Nam veritatis contemplatio in hac vita inchoatur, sed in futura jugi perpetuitate celebratur." Aris 6 = 65A. Cf. *Bmaj* I, ii: "quid aliud quam arrhas quasdam futurae illius plenitudinis accipimus, ubi sempiternae contemplationi perpetuo inhaerebimus?" Aris 7 = 65C.

³²⁴ *Bmaj* I, x: "Has utique sex contemplationum alas soli perfecti in hac vita vix habere possunt. Has omnes in futura vita electi omnes tam in hominibus quam in angelis habituri sunt, ita ut de utraque natura veraciter possit dici quia sex alae uni, et sex alae alteri." 76D.

³²⁵ Cf. "Fecit autem eam ad imaginem et similitudinem suam: ad imaginem suam secundum rationem, ad similitudinem suam secundum dilectionem. Ad imaginem suam secundum cognitionem veritatis, ad similitudinem suam secundum amorem veritatis. Ad imaginem suam secundum intellectum: ad similitudinem suam secundum affectum." *Liber exceptionum* I, i, ed. Châtillon 104 (= PL 177: 193A); see also, for example, *Adn in Ps 121*, 363AB (equating Adam and Eve with image-intellectus and likeness-affectus). It must be noted, though, that Richard's *De statu interioris hominis* (tract. I, iii) gives a substantially different definition for image and likeness, equating both with the free will (*liberum arbitrium*) and its different aspects. The free will is image, being the image of eternity, and likeness, being likeness of the divine majesty: "Quid, quaeso, in homine sublimius, quid dignius inveniri potest, quam illud in quo ad imaginem Dei creatus est? Habet sane libertas arbitrii imaginem non solum aeternitatis, sed et divinae majestatis." etc. 1118D. The *liberum arbitrium* has a remarkably marginal role in Richard's theories on contemplation.

³²⁶ "Sicut enim in uno elemento igne duo sunt inter se diversa et a se prorsus remota, scilicet splendor et calor, nec splendor est calor, nec calor est splendor, quia splendor lucet et videtur, et calor ardet et sentitur, nec splendor ardet aut aliter quam visu sentitur, nec calor lucet aut videtur, ita in spirituali creatura imago Dei et similitudo Dei inter se diversa sunt et a se quodammodo remota. Nam secundum illud originale bonum quo facta est ad imaginem Dei, ipsa spiritualis creatura elucet ad cognitionem, et secundum illud bonum quo facta est ad similitudinem Dei, calet ad dilectionem." *Lib. exc.* I, i, ed. Châtillon, 104 (PL 177: 193A-194B). The issue reappears in a varied form in *Adn in Ps 118/b* (348CD).

³²⁷ *Bmin* iv: "Nam sicut Rachelis est meditari, contemplari, discernere, intelligere; sic profecto pertinet ad Liam flere, gemere, dolere, suspirare. Nam Lia, ut dictum est, affectio est divina inspiratione inflammata; Rachel est ratio divina revelatione illuminata." 4B.

³²⁸ *Lib. exc.* I, ii-iv, ed. Châtillon, 104-105 (PL 177: 194A-195D).

(as Augustine does): the image was “given divinely and inserted naturally and originally” (*divinitus data, et naturaliter et originaliter insita*); ignorance (connected to darkness, *tenebrae*) has corrupted it, but wisdom is a remedy against ignorance. In a later work Richard speaks about the active restoration of image and likeness.³²⁹

b) *Theoretical articulation (in terms of grace)*. Discussing the different meanings of a “sufficient” grace in various periods, Richard states that before the original sin, Adam had grace sufficient for him to perform his duties and avoid sin; this fullness of grace cannot be had in our life.³³⁰ Whatever he could do in that state “by nature” or “natural goodness” (*naturale bonum*), states Richard elsewhere, was ultimately from the “first grace,” the *gratia praeveniens*.³³¹

c) *Adam among the angels*. *Benjamin major* V, xiii gives a detail on prelapsarian epistemology. Before the original sin, writes Richard, Adam easily moved between visible and invisible realities; he could be among the angels every day through contemplation and could “enter the divine secrets.”³³² Richard presents this doctrine with references to the present state: the once free way or passage of Adam is now blocked with the “iron door” (a reference to Act 12) and closed after the original sin. The Fall does not mean, however, a final separation: Richard refers to people who are familiar with this “iron door” as they often go through it, and who can be consulted on this issue.³³³ What Richard says means, in other words, that there exist people who do have the same contemplative experience as Adam once had.

The temporary and not definitive inability of contemplation and the possible restoration of the original contemplation are close parallels to Hugh’s doctrine on the ecstatic contemplation of God by means of the reactivated eye of contemplation. Richard’s account of Adam contains an element foreign to Hugh: it is Adam’s companionship with the angels. A similar doctrine exists in Augustine (*De Gen. ad litt.* IX, 19): Adam was in ecstasy (while Eve was being created from his body); he sojourned in the heavenly court (*angelica curia*), entered the “sanctuary of God,” and then returned and prophesied.³³⁴ The Augustinian idea of an ecstatic and prophesying Adam appears in the school theology of the 1160s with theologians like Peter of Poitiers and Peter Comestor (see Part II chap. 5). The Augustinian and the Victorine theories are substantially different: Augustine (as well as his tradition) speaks about a single, extraordinary case, while Richard regarded it as something characteristic of the entire prelapsarian state.

³²⁹ *Adn in Ps 118/b*: “Vis et tu diligi a Deo tuo, Salvatore tuo? Reforma in te imaginem suam et amabit te; repara similitudinem suam et desiderabit te. Si enim reparaveris nativam pulchritudinem tuam, quam fecit ipse ad imaginem et similitudinem suam, profecto concupiscet rex decorem tuum.” 345D.

³³⁰ *De missione spiritu sancti*: “Nam alia sane erat illa plenitudo gratiae quam homo habere poterat, seu potius habebat ante peccatum; et alia quam modo habet vel habere valet secundum praesentis miseriae statum. Ante peccatum siquidem homo sufficientem gratiam habuit, et ad omne malum cavendum, et omne debitum solvendum, alioquin non potuit vitare peccatum. Hanc autem gratiae plenitudinem in hac vita sicut nemo habet, sic absque dubio nec habere valet.” 1026B.

³³¹ *De statu* tract. I, xx. 1130CD.

³³² *Bmaj* V, xiii: “Cogita illum exitum quem primus homo habuit antequam peccavit, vel quem homo adhuc haberet si omnino non peccasset, per quem sane exitum quoties oporteret facilem transitum habere potuisset de mundanis ad supermundana, de visibilibus ad invisibilia, de transitoriis ad aeterna, cum haberet promptum quotidie coeli civibus per contemplationem interesse, divinis illis secretis licenter ingerere, et istud internum Domini sui gaudium dignanter intrare. Cogita consequenter quomodo et istum pervium prius commeandi transitum divina post peccatum severitas dirae necessitatis valvis impossibilitatisque repagulis obstruxit et observavit.” 184BC.

³³³ *Bmaj* V, xiii: “Quaere tamen si minus sufficis ad ista, non quidem a nobis quin potius ab illis quibus forte haec porta ferrea per frequentem transitum familiariter est nota, et quibus forte juxta similitudinem Petri angelo praeunte ducatumque praebente saepe ultro est aperta.” 184C. Note that Richard here emphasises only the first-hand experience of others; in *Bmaj* II, xiii he does explain the allegory.

³³⁴ For more detail, see Part II, Chapter 5.

2. Epistemological and anthropological background

The theological background of the contemplation defines what can be cognised but does not define the means and the ways of that cognition. Richard makes transparent his epistemology in the first book of the *Benjamin major*. Unlike other “mystics,” he gives a comprehensive picture of his anthropological, psychological and ontological principles – and (which is equally rare) he expounds them in a discursive and rational way,³³⁵ by definitions and contradistinctions. The clear-cut formulations and the clear relations between the elements make Richard’s theories seemingly self-evident, and often summarised and repeated in the literature, without much criticism.

The first book of the *Benjamin major* gives a succinct presentation on Richard’s epistemology in conjunction with his ontology. Richard establishes three ontological categories of sensible things (*sensibilia*), the *intelligibilia* (invisible things that can be grasped by reason), and *intellectibilia* (invisible things that cannot be comprehended by reason – including the uncreated and divine things).³³⁶ These different realities are subjects of various human cognitive faculties. Richard discerns three such faculties: imagination, reason (*reason*) and *intelligentia*. The cognitive faculties are co-ordinated with the three objects of cognition: imagination (and sense perception) perceives *sensibilia*, reason *intelligibilia* and *intelligentia* – a faculty beyond reason – *intellectibilia*. The cognitive faculties also have their characteristic operations (which adds a psychological profile to the theory). From imagination springs thinking (*cogitatio*): it is occupied with several objects but has no result. The reason’s proper activity is meditation (*meditatio*): it investigates single things carefully – an activity usually described as *ratiocinatio* (discursive thinking), looking for reasons and causes. The proper activity of *intelligentia* is contemplation. Contemplation is, as Richard defines, “a free insight of the mind into the spectacles (*spectacula*) of the wisdom, with admiration,” or (as he takes over Hugh’s definition) a comprehensive vision.³³⁷ Elsewhere Richard gives more details: “contemplation” is the cognition of the highest things (*sublimia*) when the soul uses “pure” *intelligentia* (*Bmaj* I, iii) and the “joyful admiration of the manifest truth” (*Exterm* II, xv);³³⁸ he also emphasises that contemplation brings not new knowledge but is oriented towards truths already known either by nature, meditation or divine revelation.³³⁹ The three cognitive activities can transform into each other (thinking into meditation, and meditation into contemplation), and the same object can be subjected to all of them.³⁴⁰

³³⁵ Pondering whether Richard was a “Scholastic” or a “mystic,” as some scholars did in the past – and even recently Coulter had to reflect on this question (*Per visibilia*, 11-15) – is, I believe, rather pointless. Coulter is certainly right, saying that “in the final analysis it may prove most useful to jettison terms like mystic and Scholastic altogether as introducing greater confusion than clarity” (*Per visibilia*, 16). Historically, these two categories do not make much sense at all before the thirteenth century, and their application to Richard disregards basic facts. Richard (like Hugh) was appointed with teaching, and organising the material into a communicable and memorable form does belong to the teacher’s duties.

³³⁶ These categories, as Robilliard demonstrated, go back to Boethius’ commentary on Porphyry’s *Isagoge*.

³³⁷ *Bmaj* I, iv: “Contemplatio est libera mentis perspicacia in sapientiae spectacula cum admiratione suspensa, vel certe sicut praecipuo illi nostri temporis theologo placuit, qui eam in haec verba definivit. Contemplatio est perspicax et liber animi contuitus in res perspicendas usquequaque diffusus.” 67D. The “excellent theologian of our age” is Hugh (the definition comes from *In Eccl.* I, PL 175: 117A).

³³⁸ *Bmaj* I, iii: “Specialiter tamen et proprie contemplatio dicitur, quae de sublimibus habetur, ubi animus pura intelligentia utitur.” 67C. The *Exterm* II, xv defines it as “perspicuae veritatis jucunda admiratio,” 1102C, cf. also *Bmin* I, iv: “Proprium itaque est contemplationi jucunditatis suae spectaculo cum admiratione inhaerere.” 68C.

³³⁹ *Bmaj* I, iii: “Semper autem contemplatio est in rebus vel per sui naturam manifestis, vel per studium familiariter notis, vel ex divina revelatione perspicuis.” 67C.

³⁴⁰ *Bmaj* I, iii: “Sciendum itaque quod unam eandemque materiam aliter per cogitationem intuemur, aliter per meditationem rimamur, aliter per contemplationem miramur.... De una siquidem eademque materia, aliter cogitatio, aliter meditatio, longeque aliter agit contemplatio.” PL 66D; also *Bmaj* I, iv: “Fit tamen saepe ut in cogitationum nostrarum evagatione tale aliquid animus incurrat quod scire vehementer ambiat, fortiterque insistat. Sed dum mens desiderio suo satisfaciens ejusmodi inquisitioni studium impendit, jam cogitationis modum cogitando excedit, et cogitatio in meditationem transit. Solet sane simile aliquid circa meditationem accidere.” PL 68B. Contemplation can also undergo this transformation: it can turn into admiration, and the admiration into the *excessus mentis*. See *Bmaj* V, xii [Aris 137, 18-21].

The definitive element of Richard's epistemology is his notion of *intelligentia*. It is a cognitive faculty whose function is the invisible realities (God, the self and the angels); it is a constant element of human nature, present in everyone but disabled until it can cooperate with grace. The cooperation of this cognitive faculty and divine grace leads to higher and higher levels of cognition. The fact that Richard introduces this cognitive faculty into his epistemology defines both the form and content of his spirituality, leading to two crucial consequences. One is that Richard's writings on contemplation have a remarkably cognitive character. What may be called "mystical experience" in his case, it is primarily a cognitive act, not influenced by love; love has seemingly no particular role beyond that of a drive.³⁴¹ The other consequence is that the inclusion of *intelligentia* makes the epistemological description of contemplation (including ecstatic contemplation) possible: the cognition that comes about through an "intellectual" faculty can also be described. Those models of spirituality that are based on love and *affectus* usually (and perhaps necessarily, too) lack an epistemological dimension.

Two models?

Beyond the systematic presentation (of *Bmaj* I) Richard gives elsewhere further theoretical details on *intelligentia* and its demarcation from reason, in the framework of two different models.

a) One model implies two different faculties for the two different subjects, God and the self. This model is outlined in the *Nonnullae allegoriae* and *Bmaj* IV, xxiii, in both cases through the allegory of the Tabernacle of the Covenant.³⁴² The *Nonnullae* gives more details: the Tabernacle (divided into two rooms) represents the "internal man" who has two faculties: a rational faculty (*sensus rationalis*) whose function is self-cognition and self-reflection, and an intellectual faculty (*sensus intellectualis*) whose function is the contemplation of God.³⁴³ In the *Benjamin* he mentions *sensus intellectualis/rationalis*, although the emphasis is rather on the two states of mind, the common and the ecstatic one.³⁴⁴

³⁴¹ On this point I disagree with the position of Poirel and Sicard insofar as they attribute a certain cognition to love. They write, "Il fatto che Riccardo parli dell' «occhio» dell'amore e di quello della conoscenza inclina a comprendere queste espressioni in funzione della dottrina dei sensi spirituali, qui quello della vista. Questo uso suggerisce anche che è anche l'amore stesso che vede, e dunque che ci sono come due vie di conoscenza: quella dell'amore e quella della ratio o dell'intelligenza. La prima ama e fa conoscere secondo il modo che le è proprio, che è la conoscenza amorosa. L'*amor ipse notitia* di Guglielmo dei Saint-Thierry si ritrova sostanzialmente in Riccardo, e in entrambi si tradurrebbe più esattamente con «l'amore è la conoscenza». «Dove c'è un amore, c'è anche uno sguardo» (Bmi, 13). La seconda via fa conoscere secondo il suo modo proprio, ma non ama direttamente: può fornire all'amore il suo alimento, e questo amore rimbalza in una conoscenza nuova (ex dilectione cognitio), che rimbalza a sua volta in un amore più intenso (ex cognitione dilectio). L'amore conosce; la conoscenza non ama ma fa amare" (Poirel and Sicard, "Figure Vittorine," in Biffi, ed., *Fioritura*, 491). The interrelation and mutually promoting role of love and cognition is undeniable in Richard's theology (being explicitly stated as well, for example in *Bmaj*), but attributing cognition to love is, in my opinion, an unjustified exaggeration (especially if compared to William). The direct context of the sentence in *Bmin* xiii also suggests rather the usual Victorine dichotomy of cognition (here also vision) and love: "Ubi amor, ibi oculus. Libenter *aspicimus* quem multum *diligimus*. Nulli dubium quia qui potuit *invisibilia diligere*, quin velit statim cognoscere, et per *intelligentiam* videre, et quanto plus crescit Judas (affectus videlicet diligendi), tanto amplius in Rachel fervet desiderium [010B] pariendi, hoc est studium cognoscendi" (10AB, emphases added).

³⁴² *Nonnullae allegoriae*: "Habitūs interioris hominis dividitur in rationalem et intellectualem. Rationalis habitus intelligitur per tabernaculum exterius, intellectualis vero habitus per tabernaculum interius. Sensus rationalem dicimus, quo nostra discernimus; intellectualem hoc loco dicimus, quo ad divinorum [192C] speculationem sublevamur. Exit homo de tabernaculo in atrium per operis exercitium. Intrat homo tabernaculum primum, cum redit ad seipsum. Intrat in secundum, cum transcendit seipsum. Transcendendo [192D] sane seipsum elevatur in Deum. In primo moratur homo per considerationem sui, in secundo vero per contemplationem Dei." 192C.

³⁴³ Cf. also *Bmin* v where *ratio* is synonymous with "sensus cordis" and "oculus cordis" that see the invisible: 5A. For the similar terms *sensus carnis/sensus mentis* in Hugh, see *In Hier.* VI, PL 175: 1040D.

³⁴⁴ *Bmaj* IV, xxiii: "Per primum namque tabernaculum illum quem omnes [167B] novimus intelligimus communem animi statum; per secundum vero intelligimus illum quem pauci admodum noverunt qui fit per mentis excessum. Ad

b) A different model (presented in *Bmaj* III, ix) suggests that all invisible realities (including both the self and God) are cognised by one and the same faculty called *intelligentia*. The third book of the *Benjamin major* is devoted to the fourth contemplation, where the soul takes cognisance of human and angelic spirits.³⁴⁵ Richard here presents, in an allegorical framework, his variant of the Hugonian eye of contemplation with his own epistemological scheme. In Richard's theology self-cognition has a preparatory function. Whoever desires to scrutinise the "depths of God" must first scrutinise his own "depths," but only spiritual men can accomplish this task and only they can see the "wondrous things of God in the depth" (*mirabilia Dei in profundo*).³⁴⁶ These "wondrous things" (also conceived as "other world") in the human "heart" is the structure of human cognitive faculties presented as three heavens (based on the pattern given by 2Cor 12: 2-4). The earth is the corporeal sensation; the first heaven is "imaginary heaven" (meaning imagination); the second is "rational" heaven (reason), the third one "intellectual" heaven (*intelligentia*). To the first heaven belong all the *similitudines* and images of the visible things; to the second, their reasons and definitions, together with the investigation of the invisible things; to the third one belongs the comprehension and contemplation of spiritual and divine things.³⁴⁷

Explaining the cognition of invisible realities Richard introduces the concept of the "eye" of *intelligentia*: unlike the "eye of reason" which proceeds in a discursive way, it perceives the invisible as present.³⁴⁸ After digressing to the limits of this faculty, Richard addresses the problem whether there are different senses to grasp the different (divine and human) kinds of the invisible things.³⁴⁹ Richard's answer is a series of analogies confirming the duality and unity of the two "gazes" (*intuitus*): they can be called a "double sense collocated in one head," or a "double instrument of a single sense," or a "double effect of a single instrument."³⁵⁰ Thus instead of two faculties, Richard speak about different orientations of the same faculty.

illum maxime pertinet sensus rationalis, ad istum vero sensus intellectualis. In illo sane speculamur invisibilia nostra, in isto contemplamur invisibilia divina." 167AB.

³⁴⁵ Richard divides this contemplation into five ascending stages or grades. In the first grade the object of consideration are the properties and quality of the soul: its immortality, simplicity, habitation in the body, its being as divine image and likeness. The second grade considers the five cognitive abilities by means of which we can get knowledge, study the truth, or augment the science: the sensual perception (*sensus*), thinking (*cogitatio*), imagination, *ingenium* and memory. To the third grade belongs the admiration of the emotions (*affectus*) and will. In the fourth grade the subject is the virtue of deliberation (*deliberatio*), which, exerting its regulating activity, and helped by the *discretio*, converts emotions into virtues. The fifth, highest grade of this contemplation deals with the cooperating grace and the blessings of the Holy Spirit.

³⁴⁶ Richard's line of thought in *Bmaj* III, viii starts by equating the ascent into the third heaven with the investigation of the "depths of God" (118AB). The passage must be read against a wider background: both "scrutinising the depth of God" and ascending into the "third heaven" belong to ecstatic contemplation (*De IV gradibus*). His references to "spiritual men" and the "spirit of man" evokes Hugh's passages from the *In Hier.* III introducing the doctrine of three eyes (discussed in the previous chapter), PL 175: 975D-976A.

³⁴⁷ *Bmaj* III, ix: "Et, ut hoc triplex coelum congrua possimus distinctione discernere, primum dicatur imaginale, secundum est rationale, tertium intellectuale. [0118C] Tenet itaque imaginatio vicem primi coeli, ratio secundi, intelligentia vero vicem tertii. [...] In primo itaque coelo continentur omnium visibilium imagines et similitudines. Ad secundum vero pertinent visibilium omnium rationes, diffinitiones et invisibilium investigationes. Ad tertium autem spectant spiritalium ipsorum, etiam divinorum comprehensiones et contemplationes." 118 CD.

³⁴⁸ *Bmaj* III, ix: "intellectualis ille sensus invisibilia capit, invisibiliter quidem, sed praesentialiter, sed essentialiter." 119A. *Oculus intelligentiae* is synonymous with *sensus intellectualis* and *oculus intellectualis*. The working of the "eye of reason" is investigation (119A) – that is, meditation. Cf. Hugh, *De meditando*: "Meditatio est frequens cogitatio modum et causam et rationem uniuscujusque rei investigans. Modum: quid sit. Causam: quare sit. Rationem: quomodo sit." PL 176: 993. *Bmaj* I, iv: "Meditatio est providus animi obtutus in veritatis inquisitione vehementer occupatus." 67D. *Exterm* II, xv: "Meditationis est perscrutari occulta [...] meditatio est occultae veritatis studiosa investigatio." 1102C.

³⁴⁹ *Bmaj* III, ix: "Sed dubitari potest utrumnam eodem hoc intelligentiae oculo visuri sumus ea quae ultra velum esse significavimus, an alius sensus sit quo utemur ad videnda invisibilia divina, et alius [PL: alii] quomodo utimur ad videnda invisibilia nostra." Aris 66 = 119B.

³⁵⁰ *Bmaj* III, ix: "Verumtamen hunc geminum superiorum et inferiorum intuitum, sive dicamus geminum quasi in uno capite sensum, sive duplex eiusdem tamen sensus instrumentum, sive ejusdem instrumenti geminum effectum, quidquid horum velimus eligere, nihil tamen impedit dicere, utrumque horum ad intellectuale caelum pertinere." Aris 67 = 119C.

At the first sight the two models cannot be harmonised: the first reserves a separate cognitive faculty for God while the second only a function of it. This discrepancy between *Bmaj* III, ix and IV, xxiii, has also been observed recently by Coulter, who considers it as a major inconsistency on Richard's part.³⁵¹ Instead of inconsistency I see here rather a problem of creating coherence between epistemological categories and mental states, since to the proper and purest operation of *intelligentia* ecstasy is the usual condition. In both cases (of *Bmaj* IV, xxiii and *Nonnullae*) the focus is on the difference of the normal and ecstatic states (called *habitus* and *status*), and Richard emphasises the difference of rational self-cognition and the ecstatic cognition of God.³⁵² This dualistic approach is close to Hugh's doctrines who reserved the "eye of contemplation" exclusively for the cognition of God and the "eye of reason" for self-cognition.³⁵³

Hindrances to contemplation

The working of the *intelligentia* unfolds gradually, as the working of grace removes the obstacles caused by the original sin. The obstacles of cognition take various forms in Richard's writings. Besides the traditional images of darkness (of ignorance) and clouds of the original sin, there are two particular images that demand attention: the veil and the iron door. These images imply a temporary disability of the *intelligentia* that can be removed during contemplation.

Richard is somewhat ambiguous on the potential of *intelligentia*. Most of his references describe how it starts its operation, aided by grace, or how it cognises (directly or indirectly) the invisible realities. The *Bmin* III, ix describes it in a manner which would fit reason better. Here after an eulogy of the *intellectualis sensus* Richard describes it as a faculty limited in itself. The "eye of *intelligentia*" has in front of itself a "veil" woven from concupiscence that blocks the vision of the invisible "divine secrets" and some invisible things belonging to the soul.³⁵⁴ Having a veiled eye means partial self-knowledge and ignorance of the divine; this state is surpassed by revelation.³⁵⁵

Another allegory of the temporary and not organic hindrance is the closed "iron gate" (*porta ferrea*) of the prison. It appears in a dislocated allegory: first (*Bmaj* II, xiii) Richard talks about the soul (*victor animus*) who escaped from his exile, through contemplation broke the iron gates and returned from to his own palace, to the throne of the celestial home.³⁵⁶ Later he repeats

³⁵¹ Coulter, *Per visibilia*, 229-231, here 231: "Under the weight of attempting to explain the difference between Moses, Aaron and Bezeleel as three different ways to see the ark, he confines the intellectual eye to the higher sense." 231. Coulter gives two reasons for this move: "he needs to postulate higher degrees of mental sight to set up the reader for the difference between *dilatatio mentis*, *sublevatio mentis* and *alienatio mentis*." and "he wants to uphold his earlier claim that only divine grace can restore the eye of the understanding so that it can peer into divine matters." 231.

³⁵² Without fully resolving the question it is enough to point out here that (according to Richard's explicit statements in *Bmaj* I) reason and *intelligentia* cooperates on many levels, including self-cognition, and the latter is dominant only in the last two contemplations of the six (self-cognition belongs to the fourth); in *Bmaj* III, ix Richard speaks about the limitation of the unaided *intelligentia* to a partial self-knowledge.

³⁵³ See *De sacr* I, x, 2: "Alium oculum acceperat quo seipsam videret et ea quae in ipsa erant, hic est oculus rationis. Alium rursum oculum acceperat quo intra se Deum videret et ea quae in Deo erant, et hic est oculus contemplationis." PL 176: 329C; also *Misc* I, i, PL 177: 471C; *In Hier.* III, PL 1785: 976A.

³⁵⁴ *Bmaj* III, ix: "Sed habet sane oculus hic intellectualis, ante se velum magnum expansum ex peccati delectatione fuscum, et tot desideriorum carnalium varia multiplicitate contextum, quod contemplantis intuitum a divinatorum secretorum arcanis arceat, nisi quantum divina dignatio quemlibet pro sua, aliorumve utilitate [119B] admiserit." Cf. II, iv (a "cloud of the sin" that covers the "eye of reason"), 82B. In a different context the veil (as *velum oblivionis*) means the oblivion separating ecstasy and the common state of mind: see *Bmaj* IV, xxiii, 167BC.

³⁵⁵ "Profecto velatos oculos habere se probat, qui eos a Domino revelari postulat; videt tamen anima isto oculo, quae citra velum sunt, hoc est invisibilia sua, ea videlicet quae in ipsa sunt, non tamen omnia, quia non omnia citra velum sunt. Et oculo quidem quo sua quaedam videt, seipsam id est animae ipsius essentiam videre non valet." Aris 66 = 119B.

³⁵⁶ *Bmaj* II, xiii: "quisquis ab huius exsillii aerumnis in invisibilium gaudiorum libertatem, mentis contemplatione transire potuit [...] conterens portas aereas [...] et vix tandem se in sui juris palatium recipit, dum se in coelestis habitaculi solum totum colligit." 91BC.

the scene but already as the tropological explanation of Act 12: Saint Peter's liberation from the prison by the angel means the mind's escape from the body through inspiration and revelation (*Bmaj* V, xiii). This is also the place where Richard digress to Adam's free access to the angelic court and the now closed iron gate. The exile and prison are characterised by consequences of the Fall (such as concupiscence and ignorance) from which the soul must break out

The two images refer not only to a removable obstacle in contemplation. By their internal logic, they also point to a state before the cognitive faculty became blocked: the soul returns to its earlier state and the eye could have seen the objects of the vision before the veil has intervened. The imagery used is analogous with the Hugonian concept of the eye of contemplation.

3. *Perception and expression: the creative aspects of similitudo*

It is an anthropological commonplace of the twelfth century that the cognition of invisible realities necessarily begins with the cognition of the visible ones; among the Victorines, this basic doctrine was further supported by the authority of the Areopagite. This cognition comes about through *similitudines*: visual or sensual "things" (or rather words referring to them) that have a "spiritual" meaning and work as representations of invisible "things."

In Richard's system of contemplations it is the third contemplation where the deciphering of *similitudines* takes place: here the soul begins to be spiritual (see *Bmaj* II, xiii), since through the visible it begins to understand the invisible. The understanding of *similitudines* extends to the entire sensible sphere: it comprises not only the visible world but also Scripture, using images. The deciphering aspect of Richard's doctrines (expounded in both *Benjamins*) has already been sufficiently studied.³⁵⁷ Here I address a related but generally overlooked subject: not the deciphering but the creating of *similitudines*. What scholars observe in Richard's texts is an exegetical-interpretative technique (rooted in Hugh's exegetical theory). This is a right observation, but Richard's texts also contain the inverse of this technique: besides theories about understanding and deciphering *similitudines*, Richard also developed theories about their creation. Creating *similitudines* is a "poetic" activity of the imagination, a process when invisible things become expressed through visible things.

Richard's theories about how meaning is created (or expressed) through *similitudines* appears in three contexts in his works: in the symbol-creating and -interpreting activity of the imagination (analysed in *Benjamin minor*), in a special contemplation which uses *similitudines* (the third contemplation in *Benjamin major*) and in the theory of translating ecstatic experiences into language.

1. Naphtali

The structuring image of Richard's *Benjamin minor* (or *De XII patriarchis*) is the family tree of Jacob's descendants.³⁵⁸ The tropological interpretation permits Richard to present his theological, anthropological and psychological doctrines as the explanation of the Scriptural subject. Thus, the birth of Jacob's children by his two wives and their handmaids represents the emergence of various virtues and powers of the soul from *ratio* and *affect* – that is, from the cognitive-intellectual and the

³⁵⁷ The most thorough study is Coulter's *Per visibilia*.

³⁵⁸ The chapters discussed here cover PL 196: 15-17 = SC 419, 146-156.

affective-moral “parts” of the soul, figured in Rachel and Leah respectively.³⁵⁹ Imagination, represented by Naphtali, a son of Rachel, also finds its place in the work.

The figure “Naphtali” holds, as usual in Richard’s tropological works, several interconnected meanings unfolding gradually. Its core meaning is “imagination,” and the process of Richard’s exposition (chapters xxii-xxiv) adds more and more qualifications to it. First “Naphtali” is a faculty of the soul, the “rational imagination perfused with *intelligentia*,” in the next turn, the name refers to a mental-cognitive process, the very working of the same faculty. One operation of this special form of imagination is “translation.”³⁶⁰ The term means the very act when through the sensible qualities of visible things one learns something about invisible realities: “he [Naphtali] uses translation... when he transfers any description whatever of visible things to the signification of invisible things.” and “he is accustomed to converting any known nature of visible things to spiritual understanding.”³⁶¹

The primary context for the working of this kind of imagination is, seemingly, exegetical. In order to demonstrate the operation of “translation” Richard uses the example of a Scriptural passage (1Tim 6:16): “translation” is working when Naphtali (that is, the reader) understands that the “inaccessible light” where God lives means the Wisdom of God. Richard also states that this form of imagination “converts to spiritual understanding almost everything *he* (that is, Naphtali) *finds written*.”³⁶² Besides this obvious reference to Scripture the next chapter (xxii) connects this form of *speculatio* to meditation, an activity usually bound to Scriptural reading.³⁶³ This picture of imagination as a rather passive-receptive faculty changes by chapter xxiii, which emphasises its productive capabilities. The Genesis narrative of the Blessing of the Patriarchs (Gen 49: 21) gives a line on Naphtali: “Naphtali is a hind sent forth, giving words of beauty.” “Giving words of beauty” means for Richard nothing other than describing incorporeal things through corporeal things – that is, the very act of creating *similitudines*.

[Naphtali] knows to mix carnal things with spiritual things, and to describe incorporeal things by corporeal things, in order that both natures of man (who consists of corporeal and incorporeal nature) can find in his words something by which they do refresh themselves.³⁶⁴

What is puzzling in Richard’s account is not the idea that humans can both understand and create *similitudines*. Using *similitudines* is general among twelfth-century authors, and having some theory

³⁵⁹ It is characteristic of Richard’s mystagogic tropological style that the presentation of the subject of spiritual-moral development in the work also imitates the progress of cognition. The work begins with the presentation of the two wives of Jacob, which is also the presentation of the Victorine concept of image and likeness, and culminates with the death of Rachel caused by the birth of Benjamin – that is, through the ecstasy of contemplation (figured in Benjamin’s birth), which surpasses the limits of reason (figured in the death of Rachel).

³⁶⁰ The other operation, comparison (*comparatio*) happens when the soul compares the present beauty of the world with the invisible beauty, cf. Hugh, *In Hier.* I, PL 175: 950AB.

³⁶¹ “utitur nihilominus, ut dictum est, translatione, quando rerum visibilium descriptionem transfert ad rerum invisibilium significationem.” “Solet namque cognitam quamlibet rerum visibilium naturam convertere ad spiritalem intelligentiam.” 15D, 16A; Zinn’s translation, 74-75.

³⁶² *Bmin* xxii: “Quia ergo pene quidquid scriptum reperit, ad spiritualem intelligentiam convertit.” 16A = SC 419, 150.

³⁶³ *Bmin* xxiii: “Est plane et promptior in meditatione.” 16B = SC 419, 152. Also note the clear contrast between contemplation (happening in *pura intelligentia*) and this speculation (which is only *permista intelligentia*), in the first sentence of Chapter 23: “Sciendum autem quia illud contemplationis genus, quod in pura intelligentia versatur, hujusmodi speculatione, quae per Nephtalim designatur, quanto subtilius, tanto nimirum excellentius esse cognoscitur.” 16AB.

³⁶⁴ “Sic novit Nephtalim carnalia cum spiritualibus permiscere, et per corporalia incorporea describere, ut utraque hominis natura in ejus dictis inveniat unde se mirabiliter reficiat qui ex corporea et incorporea natura constat.” 17A = SC 419, 154), in my own translation. I used above my own translation; Zinn’s one gives here “Thus Naphtali knew to mix carnal things with spiritual things and to describe incorporeal things by means of corporeal things so that the twofold nature of man finds in his words that from which he who consists of both corporeal and incorporeal nature might marvelously refresh himself” (*Richard of Saint Victor*, 76). Note the connaturality of the *similitudo* to human nature.

about that issue is not entirely uncommon either. The figurative language of the Bible – which also permeates Patristic and early Scholastic theology – is based on what they considered as *similitudines*; viewing the created world (with its single elements) as *similitudo* was also usual – but newly created *similitudines* were also in use.³⁶⁵ In the so-called symbolic theology of the twelfth century, *similitudo* was a legitimate means to give an insight by analogy into complex doctrines (such as that of the Trinity), in a non-discursive way. What is puzzling in Richard's case is the disparity between the general context and his chosen examples. On the one hand, Naphtali represents imagination, a human cognitive faculty common to anyone: in other words, it is an anthropological constant of human nature, able both to create and to decipher *similitudines* (or symbols). But at the same time, Richard's examples for the “words of beauty” spoken by Naphtali (that is, the results of the faculty's operation) are, without exception, Biblical quotes: six verses from the Canticle, speaking of love and the beauty of the Bride, being partly similes, partly lines readable as allegories.³⁶⁶ Illustrating the *usual* activity of a human cognitive faculty by Biblical verses – that is, illustrating the operation of imagination creating *similitudines* by the text inspired by God – is rather unusual.

2. The grades of the third contemplation

Another discussion of *similitudines* and their role in cognition is presented in the analysis of the third contemplation (*Benjamin major* II, xv). In this contemplation (*contemplatio in ratione secundum imaginationem*) both imagination and reason are operating; the cognitive activity belonging to this contemplation is the understanding of *similitudines*. The extant interpretations of the text (by McGinn, Aris, Zinn and Coulter) read *Bm* II, xv mostly as a doctrine on interpretation of symbols – which is a rather one-sided reading.³⁶⁷

In this chapter Richard first declares that the third contemplation (which he also calls *speculatio*) is divided into five “grades,” according to that five modes of consideration by means of which a relation of *similitudo* can be established in order to investigate the invisible.³⁶⁸ The five modes are defined according to the subject from which the material or visible element of the *similitudo* is taken: 1) the proprieties of material of the object (*materia*); 2) from the form and 3) nature of the object (that is, the qualities perceptible through vision and other senses); 4) the natural operation (such as rain) and 5) artificial motion (such as building). After listing these modes, Richard gives one Scriptural example of each of them, without any further explanation. Although the terms defining the second and third modes (*forma*, *natura*) are standard terms of Victorine exegetical theory³⁶⁹ and the examples are taken from the Bible, Richard's intention here is to do more than presenting possible ways of exegesis. The same ambiguity appears here as in the

³⁶⁵ Hugh of Saint-Victor speaks explicitly about the *similitudines* of the Bible (*In Hier.* II, PL 175: 941); Abelard justifies the usage and creation of *similitudines* by the authority of Macrobius (*Theologia 'scholarium'* I, 20: PL 178: 1022-1023); Bernard of Clairvaux chastises some of Abelard's *similitudines* as distorted ones, calling them *dissimilitudines* (*Ep.* 190, 2-3, PL 182: 1057-1058 = SBO VIII, 21); Alan of Lille's words on the creatures as images (“quasi liber et pictura,” *De miseria mundi*, rhytmus alter, PL 210: 579A) and Bernard's words on trees and stones teaching (*Ep.* 16, SBO VII, 266) are often cited examples.

³⁶⁶ Osculetur me osculo oris sui (Cant 1:1); fulcite me floribus (2:5); favus distillans labia tua (4:11); Capilli tui sicut grex caprarum (6:4); dentes tui sicut grex ovium (6:5); nasus tuus sicut turris Libani (7:4).

³⁶⁷ *Bmaj* II, xv, 93-94. McGinn dismisses the issue with the following remark: “Here Richard spends some time discussing the laws of Scriptural symbolism (2.14-16)” (*The Growth*, 408). Aris, with more right, speaks about *Symbolauslegung* (*Contemplatio*, 73-73). Zinn reads the text in the same vein: “Richard then shows how a deeper meaning can be found in various Scriptural verses using the five categories above as the way for determining a spiritual meaning” (*The Twelve Patriarchs*, Introduction, 27-28). Coulter (*Per visibilia*, 106-123 passim) also focuses on the interpretation of *res* and, like all the others, misses the creative aspect.

³⁶⁸ *Bmaj* II, xv: “hoc contemplationis genus in quinque grados distinguitur secundum quinque dictos illos considerationum modos ex quibus in invisibilium investigationem similitudinum ratio quaeritur vel assignatur.” 93A.

³⁶⁹ See, for example, Hugh, *De scripturis* xiv, PL 175: 21BC.

Benjamin minor xxii-xxiii: Richard uses Biblical examples again to illustrate the way in which *similitudo* is created by us (and not to explain the interpretation of *similitudo*, as the common opinion of literature holds). All the expressions that he applies emphasise that *active*, productive aspect: *similitudo trahitur*, *similitudo (as)sumitur*, *similitudo assignatur*, *similitudinis accommodatio*, or (for the fourth mode) *operatio in consideratione adducitur*. Thus, the five “modes” describe not so much rules of interpretation but rather such universal rules of production as are used both by the holy writers of the Bible to convey spiritual meanings (as the examples show) and by those who attempt to understand invisible things by means of *similitudo*.

3. Abraham at Mambre: *Benjamin major* IV, xi-xii

Benjamin major IV, xi-xii gives a remarkably dense complex of ideas. Richard here describes ecstatic contemplation, through a tropological interpretation of Abraham’s vision of God at Mambre (Gen 18), and discusses the expressibility (and inexpressibility) of the contemplative experience. This latter point makes Richard’s text unique even among twelfth-century works. Spiritual authors were, usually, far less theoretical in this respect: although they commonly utilised Scriptural texts and images (usually from the Canticle) to talk about such experiences, but rarely (if at all) pondered the theoretical question of what can be said of such experiences, and how. In sharp contrast, Richard explicitly addresses the problem, and does so in an unusually reflective, “technical” way, expounding the methods by which the things learned in ecstasy may be shared with others.

The fourth book of the *Benjamin major* discusses the two highest contemplations (expressed by the two forged Cherubim covering the box-like Ark of the Covenant). Chapters x-xii introduce an auxiliary allegory, a double one, to express the contemplative’s attitudes to contemplative ecstasy. The Prophet Elijah becomes the figure for the state when the contemplative can have only a momentary experience of contemplation and receives inspiration only (cf. 3King 19).³⁷⁰ The counter-example is Abraham’s vision of three men at Mambre (cf. Gen 18); this account describes the entire process of contemplative ecstasy, but Richard presents it in form of a displaced allegory, first the final phases (IV, x-xi), then its precedents (V, viii). Abraham’s vision of God (Richard tacitly identifies the “three men” of the text with God alone) outside the tent is the equivalent of the summit of the contemplative experience: the mind sees the “light of the highest Wisdom” without any representation (*involucrum, figurarum adumbratio*).³⁷¹ After this vision Abraham returns to his tent, which is the equivalent of the contemplative’s return to the usual state of mind. Richard writes (in my own translation):

[Abraham] draws the thing seen outside inward when he [the contemplative] makes what he saw by ecstasy graspable and even comprehensible to himself, by means of great reconsideration and vigorous investigation (*discussione*), and now by the testimonies of reason, and now again by adapting *similitudines*, he draws it to the usual level of understanding (*ad communem intelligentiam deducit*).³⁷²

The contemplative has some memory of his experiences and has a chance to communicate them to others. The means to do so, reasons and *similitudines*, belong to the usual, common, non-ecstatic

³⁷⁰ *Bmaj* IV, xi: “Deum autem praesentem sed quasi transeuntem habemus, dum luminis illius contemplationi diutius inhaerere necdum sufficimus.” 147A.

³⁷¹ *Bmaj* IV, xi: “summae sapientiae lumen sine aliquo involucrio, figurarumve adumbratione, denique non per speculum et in aenigmate, sed in simplici, ut sic dicam, veritate contemplatur.” 147B.

³⁷² *Bmaj* IV, xi: “Exterius visum introrsum trahit quando id [PL: in] quod per excessum vidit multa retractatione, vehementique discussione, capabile, seu etiam comprehensibile sibi efficit, et tum rationum attestatione, tum similitudinum adaptatione, ad communem intelligentiam deducit.” Aris 99 = 147B. In Zinn’s translation: “he makes what he saw by ecstasy comprehensible and expressible to himself and now by proof of reason and now again by the application of similitudes he draws it forth for the understanding of all.”

sphere of cognition. Reasons (bond to reason) and *similitudines* (bond to imagination) constitute the language of those who are not in ecstasy. The only way to share the knowledge acquired in ecstasy is, therefore, a necessary translation into this language of others: by finding cogent testimonies of reason, and producing *similitudines* with demonstrative potential. The next chapter (IV, xii) classifies further Richard's position on expressibility: those "things" can be expressed which can be assimilated to our rationality, that is, which are not contrary to reason. The things which seem to be contrary to rationality (such as the Trinity) cannot be expressed and remain incomprehensible.

This passage, like the previously investigated ones, focuses on the active role of the subject who does communicate what he learned in ecstasy, either by rational arguments or demonstrative (that is, revealing) *similitudines*. It is the contemplative who creates them in order to make the supra-rational things understandable to others – and the first audience of these arguments and *similitudines* is his own rational mind. Communicating the most high through or without representations seem two different alternatives, and it seems not to be restricted to the revelation; a passage of *Adn in Ps 118/b* suggests that the activity of teaching can happen in a way without representations.³⁷³

* * *

The analysis of the three passages permits us to conclude that Richard had an elaborate theory about *similitudo* that reemerges in various contexts.³⁷⁴ This theory is, on the one hand, rooted in the common conviction of twelfth-century authors that invisible realities can be cognised through visible things, but, on the other hand, it presents a more complex view than usual. Richard connects theories belonging to various fields: the anthropological and psychological doctrines (on the acting of imagination and *intelligentia*, the role of *similitudo* in cognitive process) are joined to exegetical ones (the interpretation of Scripture). The same theory works in two ways. It is a hermeneutical theory, a theory of "decoding" that describes the cognitive process of understanding *similitudines*. The theory is so self-reflective that there exists a dedicated *similitudo* even to the cognition through *similitudo*, the ladder of Jacob (e.g. *Exterm* III, xvi). Considered in the other way, it is also a poetic theory, a theory of "encoding," explaining how the knowledge about those immaterial realities can be translated into words and communicated to others (who again can "decode" them).

Such a theory, universal by its intention (since it describes human nature), leads to most unusual consequences. The barrier disappears between the holy authors of Scripture and the contemplatives who create *similitudines* to express their experiences. Another consequence affects Richard's own writings and the language he uses in them. Creating and deciphering *similitudines*, interpreting Biblical texts, the liturgy or the creatures in a symbolic way (tropologically or allegorically) were fairly common activities in the monastic culture of the twelfth century. Richard was not an exception either, but he had an theory appropriate to this practice as well, and this defined his approach to the texts. When the theology of the twelfth century is called "symbolic" or "Biblical" theology, it also refers to its strongly figurative language, using metaphors, similes, terms and expressions taken from Biblical passages, whose meaning usually comes from Patristic sources. The novelty of Richard's approach is that he takes Scriptural *similitudines* as representations of something – and he does so even with those ones that had already obtained an accepted meaning in the usage of theology. He takes these *similitudines*, such as "being caught up into the third heaven," and seeing "face to face" or "through a mirror," divests them of their acquired theological meaning, and redefines them.

³⁷³ *Adn in Ps 118/b*: "Sicut qui mel purum convivus distribuit, sic qui avidis auditoribus absque involucro veritatem exponit." 352A.

³⁷⁴ Note that *similitudo* in this sense is a universal, quasi-ontological category, which includes both the visible, material creatures (as far as they can represent something) and their verbal representations as well.

II. Richard on contemplation: four investigations

Introduction: systematic presentations

Richard presents his theories about contemplation in several different, although often overlapping, contexts whose mutual relation is not clarified by Richard himself. Contemplation appears as one of the three modes of cognition besides thinking and meditation (*Bmaj* I). The system of six contemplations (*Bmaj* I-IV) presents various cognitive operations on various subjects. There are also three modes of contemplation (*Bmaj* V) based on different reasons. The *De IV gradibus* describes as “four degrees of love” three stages of contemplation. Since both medieval authors and modern historians regularly turn to these two works for Richard’s doctrines on contemplation (and these doctrines are presented in a clear form by the author), these are the most often discussed and presented contexts. Less often observed are the strong distinction between the non-ecstatic and ecstatic states (the former connected to reason and the latter to *intelligentia*) and the distinction between *speculatio* and *contemplatio* (marking two forms of cognition). These various distinctions and classifications are not harmonised by Richard himself, and creating a more coherent system by connecting them is beyond the aim of the present work.³⁷⁵

The investigations of the present chapter will cover five themes. First the doctrines of the *Benjamin major*’s first and fifth book will be briefly presented as an introduction: these systematically expounded doctrines were and are often considered as Richard’s teaching on contemplation. These well-known and often discussed doctrines give a rather static and formal picture of Richard’s theory, and leave such crucial subjects as the process of contemplative ecstasy unexplained. Then (2) I demonstrate that *contemplatio* and *speculatio* are two fundamental categories of Richard’s thought, present through his entire oeuvre (including his very first *In Apocalipsin* to the late *De Trinitate*). Then through a reconstruction based on Richard’s text I try to present the structure of the process of the contemplative ecstasy (3) with its epistemological and theological aspects. The next investigation (4) concerns the images of the triple heaven and rapture therein, regularly appearing in the context of contemplation; I argue that for Richard Paul’s rapture was the paradigm for ecstatic contemplation. The identification of contemplative ecstasy with Paul’s rapture is not a self-evident or generally accepted doctrine: it seems to be characteristic only of Richard and Achard of Saint-Victor. From a historical perspective (see Part III), this identification proves to be a Victorine experiment only: the development of the Western theology conceptually separated contemplation and *raptus*. The last subject investigated here is not a strictly doctrinal issue: Richard’s attitude towards contemplation (5). Attitude is a subtle subject to study, and it remains usually uninvestigated in such contexts. It is still an important subject for us, since it tells us something about the perception of the spiritual experiences. Among the Victorines it was Richard who treated contemplation in the most extensive manner (and thus made his attitude explicit), and at the same time his theological anthropology was (as Part II, Chapter 4 will argue) based on typical Victorine premises. For this reason, Richard’s explicit statements on his attitude may explain (and to certain amount, represent) the less explicit attitudes of other Victorines as well. The attitude receives its proper role in a broader context: combined with characteristically Victorine doctrines on theological anthropology and on contemplation, it may help to mark the contour lines that demarcate Victorine spirituality.

Six contemplations

³⁷⁵ For example the first grade of love corresponds to the four first contemplations, the second to the fifth and the third to the sixth contemplation according to Sicard (“Action et contemplation,” in *Théologies victorines*, 93); see also Châtillon’s “Introduction.”

The best way to give a general introduction to these subjects seems to be to briefly summarise some of the best-known doctrines of the *Benjamin major*, Richard's most systematic work on contemplation. The first four books of it discuss contemplation according to its objects and the cognitive faculties involved in their cognition. By connecting the three cognitive faculties (imagination, reason and *intelligentia*) with the three objects of cognition, Richard creates a system of six contemplations. In the fifth book he approaches contemplation from another, more psychological perspective, analysing the "ways" in which contemplation used to happen (*fieri solet*). The system of contemplations is certainly the best known part of Richard's contemplative doctrines: works on medieval "mysticism" regularly present or analyse the first one; for the most detailed study, see Aris' *Contemplatio*. Here I give only the shortest overview possible to give a context for the references of the present study alone.

The first contemplation (the wooden structure of the Ark) is purely the work of imagination, without the cooperation of reason. In this contemplation, proceeding "in imagination and according to imagination," imagination admires the various creatures. The second contemplation (the gilding of the wooden structure), takes place "in imagination according to reason," as reason explains the phenomena perceived by imagination. The reason's explanation extends to a variety of subjects; reasons, causes and utility of singular phenomena, activities and institutions, both divine and human;³⁷⁶ even moral education belongs to this contemplation.³⁷⁷ The third contemplation (the rim of the Ark) proceeds "in reason according to imagination": the soul gathers *similitudines*, analogies from the visible world, in order to understand the invisible things.³⁷⁸ The entire created world can be the object of this activity, because creatures have likeness to the invisible world.³⁷⁹ The fourth contemplation is figured in the golden "mercy seat" or propitiatory (*propitiatorium*) that covers the Ark. This contemplation takes place "in reason according to reason," without the operation of imagination, by the operation of *intelligentia*; its objects are created spirits. The last two contemplations (the two cherubim on the Ark) are beyond reason: here the cognitive faculty operating is the *intelligentia* and its objects are beyond the realm of reason – that is, things known through revelation. To the fifth contemplation belong things "above but not contrary to reason" like the unicity and simplicity of the divine unity and certain teachings about the body of Christ;³⁸⁰ to the sixth contemplation belong objects that are "above reason and beyond reason" – theological truths like the intratrinitarian relations, the union of the humanity and divinity in the person of Christ, the Eucharist and the ubiquity of God.

The internal relations among the six contemplations is somewhat ambiguous. A popular and traditional interpretation (shared also by thirteenth-century theologians) sees in them subsequent grades of an ascent towards God. Such reading of Richard is compatible with later schemes of "spiritual ascent," but does not reflect Richard's original intention.³⁸¹ Another possible interpretation is given by Robilliard, who saw in the six contemplations not stages of an ascent but different approaches to six different objects.³⁸² Both positions seem to have some truth: the hierarchical series of contemplations

³⁷⁶ *Bmaj* I, vii: "Constat ergo arcae nostrae deauratio in contemplanda ratione divinorum operum, iudiciorum, sacramentorum et nihilominus actionum vel institutionum." 85D.

³⁷⁷ See the Biblical image of fishermen who can see *mirabilia in profundo*, *Bmaj* II, viii, 88C. Aris (*Contemplatio*, 70) reads the passage as referring to the process of cognition (*Erkenntnisvorgang*), where the *Erkenntnissubjekt* organises emotions and through using argumentation and exhortation. I believe instead that here Richard speaks about the duties of the preachers, as he does with similar concepts in the *Nonnullae allegoriae*, 201-202.

³⁷⁸ "Ad hoc itaque genus pertinet quoties per rerum visibilium similitudinem rerum invisibilium qualitatem deprehendimus, quoties per visibilia mundi invisibilia Dei cognoscimus, ut constet quod scriptum reperitur, quia invisibilia Dei a creatura mundi per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiciuntur [Rom 1:20]." *Bmaj* II, xii, PL 89D.

³⁷⁹ Richard's doctrines at this point are rather close to Hugh's *De tribus diebus* and *In Hier.* II.

³⁸⁰ For the fifth contemplation, see esp. *Bmaj* IV, xvii and *Bmin* lxxxvi; for the sixth, see *Bmaj* IV, xviii. The duality of two contemplations "above reason" is already present in the *Bmin* lxxii-lxxxvii.

³⁸¹ See, for example, Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II-II qu. 180 art. 4 ad 3 and *In III Sent.* dist. 35 qu. 1 art. 2 qc 3. Aquinas uses only *Bmaj* I, v-vi and in his interpretation reduces Richard's three categories into two, *sensibilia* and *intelligibilia*.

³⁸² "Assurément la raison la plus évidente en est un meilleur discernement des objets de la pensée... c'est bien des objets divers de l'esprit, des *genres* de contemplation qu'il s'agit ici, non des *degrés* et du progrès de la vie spirituelle comme

does describe a progress of cognition that moves from the lowest (created and corporeal) to the highest (uncreated and immaterial) subjects, and this “ascent” of cognition (in terms of ontology) involves the use of more and more subtle cognitive faculties (from imagination to *intelligentia*). This epistemological progress, however, is not identical with the progress or development of the contemplative. Richard’s intention is to teach the reader to “acquire” the six contemplations – that is in the best case, but he sees obtaining only the first two or four of them as a more realistic goal (see *Bmaj* I, x).

Three ways of contemplation

Richard distinguishes three ways of contemplation (*dilatatio*, *sublevatio* and *excessus*) that also form a hierarchy according to the grade of grace obtained and according to how far the limitations of the mind are surpassed.³⁸³ The first way of contemplation, *dilatatio mentis* (“enlargement of the mind”), comes about predominantly through human effort and does not exceed the possibilities of the human mind. The mind can learn by *dilatatio* the theory (*disciplina*, *ars*) and the practice of contemplation;³⁸⁴ it is a preparatory phase for the higher grades of contemplation, and its *similitudo* is the building of a watchtower.

The second way of contemplation, *sublevatio mentis* (“elevation of the mind”), comes about through the cooperation of grace and human efforts.³⁸⁵ Here the mind (more precisely, the *intelligentia*) is illuminated by grace, and elevated over its possibilities.³⁸⁶ *Sublevatio* is divided into three grades: in its first grade (*supra scientiam*) the mind exceeds its own, personal knowledge.³⁸⁷ In the second grade the mind exceeds human operation (*supra industriam*, which is left unelaborated). The third grade (*supra naturam*) exceeds the natural limits of the human mind: the

voudraient nous le faire croire tant d’exposés superficiels de la pensée du grand mystique.” J.-A. Robilliard, “Les six genres de contemplation chez Richard de Saint Victor et leur origine platonicienne,” *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques* 28 (1939): 229-233, here 232.

³⁸³ *Bmaj* V, i: “Mentis dilatatio est quando animi acies latius expanditur et vehementius acuitur, modum tamen humanae industriae nullatenus supergreditur. Mentis sublevatio est quando intelligentiae vivacitas divinitus irradiata humanae industriae metas transcendit, nec tamen in mentis alienationem transit [...]. Mentis alienatio est quando praesentium memoria menti excidit, et in peregrinum quemdam et humanae industriae invium animi statum divinae operationis transfiguratione transit.” 170A. The first part of *Bmaj* V, i which introduces this trinity, is rather inconsistent as Beumer (“Richard of St. Viktor,” 234) already remarked. Richard uses first the figures of Moses, Beseleel and Aaron to mark different personal relations to contemplation: Moses saw the Ark by grace only, Beseleel from grace and his own efforts, and the priest Aaron from *aliena traditio* (which seems to be the teaching as accepted from someone else). In the continuation, the *aliena traditio* (connected to *pro officio* in IV, xxiii?) is substituted with one’s own efforts.

³⁸⁴ Cf. “contemplandi artem nostro studio et industria comparamus.” *Bmaj* I, ii, PL 170B, cf. V, iii.

³⁸⁵ Richard’s words in V, ii refer to this way of contemplation: “Sed quod Moyses jubetur montem ascendere, quod Dominus dicitur illi terram promissionis ostendisse, attende quam expresse videatur secundum contemplandi gradum designare. Quid est illa Moysi montana ascensio, nisi humanae mentis supra humanae possibilitatis planum quaedam in superna elevatio? Quid autem est Dominica illa ostensio, nisi intimae aspirationis infusa illuminatio?” (171A, mainly identical with Aris 125, 26-31) The expression *intimae aspirationis infusa illuminatio* seems to repeat Hugh’s terms on Adam’s knowledge, for example *De sacr.* I, vi, 12: “cognitionem veritatis et scientiam [...] una ac simplici divinae aspirationis illuminatione illam perceperisse” PL 176: 270CD.

³⁸⁶ *Bmaj* V, iv: “Supra scientiam mentis sublevatio ascendit, quando quilibet nostrum tale aliquid ex divina revelatione [173A] cognoscit, quod modum propriae scientiae vel intelligentiae excedit. Supra industriam mentis sublevatio erigitur, quando ad illud humana intelligentia divinitus illuminatur, ad quod nulla sua scientia sufficit, nec illa, quam interim habet, nec ulla sua industria comparare valet. Supra naturam mentis sinus dilatatur, quando humana intelligentia, divina inspiratione afflata, non cuiusque bonis, sed generaliter totius humanae naturae modum industriaeque metas transgreditur.” 173A.

³⁸⁷ The Psalm verse illustrating this grade of contemplation is *Ascende ad cor altum* [Ps 63:7]: the same verse in *Bmin* lxxv signifies the achievement of full self-knowledge.

mind receives prophecies, and can see the future and past things, and the secrets of the present. Reaching this level is figured allegorically by the transformation of the soul into a winged being.³⁸⁸

The third and highest way of contemplation is the *excessus mentis*, the ecstasy proper.³⁸⁹ *Excessus mentis* means the stage when the mind exceeds its limits and is alienated from itself (*alienatio mentis*): by the working of grace it is elevated over itself, and forgets both external things and itself, and the human *intelligentia* is transformed into superhuman *intelligentia*. In Richard's *oeuvre* the *Benjamin major* gives the fullest analysis of *excessus mentis*: it describes its three "modes" caused by three different causes (V, v-xvi), but on the grades of ecstasy it contains only an abrupt note (V, xix).³⁹⁰ This systematic presentation, however, may be misleading: in other works of Richard, the categories of *dilatatio* and *sublevatio* do not appear; practically speaking, the *excessus mentis* is what stands for the ecstatic state of mind. A topical study of Richard's writings could reveal that *excessus* is one of the central doctrines of Richard's tropological works, expounded through several different *similitudines*.

³⁸⁸ *Bmaj* V, iv: "Pennata itaque animalia veraciter tunc esse incipimus, quando gratiae munere in idipsum divinitus accepto, humanae conditionis metas contemplationis nostrae volatu transcendimus. Omne autem genus prophetiae, si tamen fuerit sine mentis alienatione, videtur ad hunc tertium sublevationis gradum pertinere. Nonne enim supra humanam naturam est, videre de praeteritis [...]; videre de futuris [...]; videre de praesentibus [...]; videre de alieni cordis secretis [...]; videre de divinis, quod supra sensum est." 173D. The imagery of winged animals here is inconsistent with the bird-tetramorph-cherubim triad applied to the six contemplations.

³⁸⁹ Richard calls *excessus mentis* also "anagogicos excessionis modos." *Bmaj* V, v, 174D.

³⁹⁰ The first form of *excessus* is caused by the greatness of devotion, the second by the greatness of admiration and the third one by the greatness of exultation. For other passages on *excessus*, see, for example, *Ext* III. 18, *Bmaj* IV and V, *Adn in Ps 4* (*In pace in idipsum*), *Adn in Ps 113* (*Montes exultaverunt*), *De IV gradibus*.

II-1. Contemplatio and speculatio

The term *contemplatio* (together its synonym *speculatio*) is basically an abstract noun meaning “gazing at something.” Being visual metaphors traditionally applied to cognition, both can refer to the cognition of immaterial realities as well. Richard is aware of this fact and gives them terminological meaning (partly based on etymological considerations): “speculation” means seeing something through a mirror (*speculum*) and *contemplatio* means the immediate vision of the truth.³⁹¹ The opposition of these two categories defines Richard’s theories about cognition: *speculatio* becomes the term for cognition mediated by intermediary representations (*similitudines*) and *contemplatio* stands for an immediate cognition (in spite of the minor inconsistency in the usage of the terms³⁹²).

Richard’s theory of contemplation is based on Hugh’s interpretation of *symbolum* and *anagoge*. In the case of his *In Apocalipsin* this filiation is obvious and well known. Here I demonstrate two overlooked points: that Richard in this work significantly alters the context of Hugh’s original concepts to fit his own theory – and that these changes serve as a basis for his mature theory about speculation and contemplation.

The *In Apocalipsin*, Richard’s commentary on the Revelations of John, belongs among his earliest works: it was written after the *Liber exceptionum* and before his grand treatises on contemplation. At the very beginning of the commentary Richard establishes a typology of the various forms of “vision.”³⁹³ This is somewhat traditional: since the main part of the Apocalypse consists of visions, commentators used to explain what “vision” means before explaining them, placing here their typologies of visions (usually based on Augustine’s *De Gen. ad litt. XII*). Where Richard deviates from this practice is that he gives here his own theory of spiritual visions, based on

³⁹¹ *Bmaj* V, xiv: “Quamvis enim contemplatio et speculatio per invicem poni [0187B] soleant, et in hoc ipso saepe Scripturae sententiae proprietatem obnubilent et involvant, aptius tamen et expressius speculationem dicimus, quando per speculum cernimus; contemplationem vero, quando veritatem sine aliquo involucro umbrarumque velamine in sui puritate videmus.” 187B.

³⁹² Zinn rightly remarks on Richard that “In his analysis in books 2-4 it is significant to note that he refers most frequently to various kinds of speculation rather than kinds of contemplation” (“Introduction,” 25). In the *Nonnullae allegoriae* Richard speaks about *arca speculationis* and calls the two highest contemplations *speculatio* (195B, 198B); describing the diverse patterns of contemplation in *Bmaj* I, v, he uses the words *contemplatio*, *consideratio*, *speculatio* as synonyms (69). This indiscriminate usage is peculiar to the *Benjamin major* and the *Nonnullae allegoriae*, but, curiously, the former work also includes the criticism of this practice. The most recent interpretation of the two terms was given by Coulter’s *Per visibilia*; he rightly observes that “Richard’s use of *speculatio* in books 1-4 [of the *Benjamin major*] implies that he sees it as synonymous with *contemplatio*.” However I cannot agree with Coulter’s general interpretation of the two terms (as outlined in *Per visibilia*, 144-145). If I understand well, he maintains two different positions: a) that Richard regarded the two terms as synonyms (e.g. “Thus *speculatio* [...] refers to the mental act of *contemplatio* that employs created things as mirrors through which knowledge of divinity may be acquired.” *ibid.*); b) but Richard (esp. in *Bmaj* V) changed his mind and used *speculatio* for human agency and *contemplatio* for the ecstatic and divinely inspired cognition while *speculatio* is the six forms of contemplation outlined in the *Benjamin major* (as he writes, “It is only when Richard begins to conceive of *contemplatio* as the kind of vision resulting exclusively from some divine initiative rather than human activity, i.e., as *alienatio mentis*, that he then feels the need to differentiate it from speculation.” and “If the six kinds of contemplation are in fact forms of *speculatio* that open the possibility of entering the contemplative vision identified by *alienatio mentis*, then the link between *De arca Moysi* and *De Trinitate* becomes stronger.” 144, 155). This interpretation can be refuted by Richard’s texts; see, for example, *Bmaj* IV, xxii: “Omnia contemplationum genera possunt modo utroque fieri, et modo per mentis excessum, modo sine aliquo mentis excessu solent exerceri.” 166C; *Adn in Ps 113* makes it clear that both contemplation and speculation have their ecstasies when both see the truth. A technical weakness of Coulter is, I believe, that he unnecessarily makes the two terms synonymous in cases when they are not, and undervaluates the numerous instances where their opposition is obvious. The opposition of human agency and divine initiative is, I believe, insufficient for describing Richard’s (or other Victorines) thought where their cooperation is emphasised.

³⁹³ This move is also an exegetical necessity, for John several times introduces his visions with “I saw.” Other commentaries on the Revelations traditionally give Augustine’s theory about three visions.

the *Celestial Hierarchy* of the Areopagite (the *Liber hierarchiae*, as he calls it) and Hugh's commentary on that work.

Richard distinguishes four forms of vision, two corporeal and two spiritual. Spiritual visions mean "seeing" invisible and celestial things without using corporeal eyes; one form of it uses mediating, visual representations as signs of these realities (such as the Apocalypse), while the other "vision" leads to their contemplation without using the sign-like visual representations.³⁹⁴ Richard's theory is based on Hugonian premises: the two "spiritual visions" is transformed form the Hugonian concepts of *demonstratio symbolica* and *demonstratio anagogica*. In order to support his own distinction of spiritual visions, Richard first quotes the sentence of Dionysius where the key terms *symbolice* and *anagogice* appear, then extensively transcribes, with a little modification, Hugh's commentary on that sentence, wherein Hugh gives his key definitions of *symbolum*, *anagoge*, *symbolica demonstratio*, *anagogica demonstratio*.³⁹⁵ Hugh describes the *symbolica demonstratio* using the terms *formis*, *figuris*, *similitudinibus* and *integumento*; Richard's terms for the third vision are *similitudinibus*, *imaginibus*, (*quasi*) *figuris et signis* and *qualitatibus*.³⁹⁶

Richard, <i>In Apocalipsin</i> I, i, 1 (PL 196: 686D-687A)	Hugh, <i>In Hierarchiam</i> II (PL 175: 941CD)
"Tertius visionis modus non fit oculis carnis, sed oculis cordis: quando videlicet animus per Spiritum sanctum illuminatus formalibus rerum visibilium similitudinibus, et <u>imaginibus</u> praesentatis <u>quasi quibusdam figuris et signis</u> ad invisibilium ducitur cognitionem. Quartus visionis modus est, cum spiritus humanus per internam aspirationem subtiliter ac suaviter tactus nullis mediantibus rerum visibilium figuris <u>sive qualitatibus</u> spiritualiter erigitur ad coelestium contemplationem."	"Ex his vero duobus generibus visionum, duo quoque descriptionum genera in sacro eloquio sunt formata. Unum, quo <u>formis, et figuris, et similitudinibus</u> rerum occultarum veritas adumbratur. Alterum, quo nude et pure sicut est absque integumento exprimitur. Cum itaque <u>formis, et signis, et similitudinibus</u> manifestatur, quod occultum est, vel quod manifestum est, describitur, symbolica demonstratio est. Cum vero puro pura et nuda revelatione ostenditur, vel plana et aperta narratione docetur, anagogica."

In the continuation, Richard gives a theory of symbols, based mostly on the first two chapters of the *Celestial Hierarchy*.³⁹⁷ Quoting and paraphrasing Dionysius and Hugh's commentary is not something unexpected among Victorines: what is peculiar (but also overlooked by the research) is the way in which Richard changes their context.³⁹⁸ The primary intention of both Dionysius and Hugh was exegetical: the *Celestial Hierarchy* gives a key to understand the figurative speech of the Bible, and Hugh's explanations (on *symbolum*, *anagoge* and *demonstrationes*) explain the formation of the Holy Scripture. According to Hugh, principally the holy authors and the prophets are those who receive the revelations of *symbolum* and *anagoge*, and the *demonstrationes* of Scripture are also created by them.³⁹⁹ Richard tacitly redefines the context:

³⁹⁴ Peter Dronke, without giving any reference to Hugh, sees in the division Eriugena's influence: "Richard, relying on Scotus Eriugena, contrasts two modes of spiritual vision: the symbolic, where the knowledge of invisible things is attained 'through images presented as it were as figures and signs', and the anagogic, which aspires to heavenly contemplation without the mediation of visible figures." *Fabula*, 45.

³⁹⁵ PL 196: 687AB, cf. PL 175: 941BD. The single difference is that Richard defines *symbolum* as *collectio (formarum visibilium)* while Hugh wrote *collatio*.

³⁹⁶ The terms *figura* and *qualitas* may refer to the visible and the other perceptible qualities of the objects described in the Bible.

³⁹⁷ Richard first introduces the notion of *materialis manuductio* and its necessity (quoting *Celestial Hierarchy* i: 688A), then gives examples of it (paraphrasing CH xv: 688AB) and mentions the wide range of things, vile to sublime, which may serve as a *similitudo* in order to express invisible things (quoting CH ii: 689C).

³⁹⁸ Cf. Aris, *Contemplatio*, 34-35.

³⁹⁹ "Notat autem hic duplicem modum revelationis divinae, quae theologorum et prophetarum mentibus infusa est." PL 175: 941C.

although he cites Hugh's words on the *symbolum* and *anagoge* as support, his own position is quite different. For him, the two visions are *not* revelations reserved only to the holy authors: the third and fourth visions are two ways of the cognition of the invisible. The subjects are also changed: Richard's *animus illuminatus* and *spiritus humanus* are not historical categories – unlike Hugh's *theologi* and *prophetae*. This alteration of the context from exegetical to spiritual is the first step in the elaboration of Richard's theory of contemplation, both in chronological and theoretical sense.

The same basic ideas will be repeated in his later works: there is a cognition through visual representations (based on the Hugonian notion of *symbolum*), and its opponent, a cognition without representations (based on *anagoge*) – and both are conceived as real, anthropologically possible forms of cognition. In the later works of Richard the opposition of the third and fourth visions receives a standard formulation as the opposition of *speculatio* and *contemplatio*. These terms mark two different forms of cognition, but also define two groups of people who have these kinds of cognition: “speculative men” (*speculativi*) and “contemplative men” (*contemplativi*). This dichotomy of speculation and contemplation becomes a quasi-omnipresent theme in the later works, expressed by various allegories: in *Benjamin major* V, xiv and *Adnotatio in Ps 113* it appears as the human imitation of the different angelic orders; in the *De exterminatione* as the difference between the sleeping Jacob and the dead Christ; in the *De differentia* as the double tomb of Abraham; in the *Benjamin minor* as Naphtali and Benjamin; in the *Exiit edictum* as Galilean men and Christ ascending to heaven. Despite the variance of the allegories applied, these accounts show great consistence both in terminology and concepts. In all these works *speculatio* and *contemplatio* are opposed: *speculatio* means the cognition of the truth through sign-like intermediary representations, while *contemplatio* means the immediate cognition of the truth without any intermediary representation. Richard uses various synonyms for representation (*involucrum*, *velamen umbrarum*, *figurarum adumbratio*) but all these revolve around the same idea: something blocking the direct glance at the truth (*veritas*) and the light of wisdom (*sapientiae lumen*).⁴⁰⁰

The *Adnotatio in Ps 113* gives further details on *speculatio* and *contemplatio*. Here Richard introduces the triad of active, speculative and contemplative men (*activi*, *speculativi*, and *contemplativi*); the contemplatives and speculatives are men who in their ecstasy have such special cognition of God. Here *speculatio* is covered with a number of terms: *involucrum*, *corporaliū similitudinū nūbila*, *allegoriarū et aenigmatū nūbilosa*, while *contemplatio* is defined as a glance at the truth in its purity and simplicity.⁴⁰¹ The way in which Richard formulates contemplation and contemplatives is unusual and exceptionally daring. He writes,

Per contemplativos debemus illos intelligere, quibus datum est facie ad faciem videre, qui gloriam Domini revelata facie contemplando [cf. 2Cor 3: 18], veritatem sine involucro vident in sua simplicitate sine speculo et absque aenigmate [cf. 1Cor 13:12].

[Under “contemplatives” we must understand those people who are given to see face to face, who – while contemplating the glory of the Lord with unveiled face – see the truth in its simplicity, without *involucrum*, without a mirror and an enigma.]

⁴⁰⁰ Cf. also *Bmaj* III, viii-x; IV, vii, xi; *Exterm* III, xvi, xviii.

⁴⁰¹ *Adn in Ps 113*: “Montes exsultaverunt ut arietes, et colles sicut agni ovium. Sed ut et montes et colles, et campos congruis sibi differentiis distinguamus, per montes contemplativos, per colles speculativos, [0337C] per campos activos intelligimus. [...] Speculativi sunt qui caelestibus intendunt, qui invisibilia Dei per speculum in aenigmate vident [cf. 1Cor 13: 12]. Qui eopse speculativi dicti sunt, quia nonnisi per speculum et in aenigmate videre possunt. Per contemplativos debemus illos intelligere, quibus datum est facie ad faciem videre, qui gloriam Domini revelata facie contemplando [cf. 2Cor 3: 18], veritatem sine involucro vident in sua simplicitate sine speculo et absque aenigmate. [...] Sed speculativi corporaliū similitudinū nūbila nullo modo transcendunt, quia summam veritatem in sua puritate videre non possunt. Contemplativi autem in montium morem, allegoriarū et aenigmatū nūbilosa alta intelligentia transcendendo, tranquillū illud supernae regionis serenum montis verticem tangunt.” 337CD.

The context of the sentence is clear: Richard speaks about earthly contemplation. What exceptional is that he applies two such Scriptural passages to contemplation which have traditionally a different meaning. *Facie ad faciem videre* of 1Cor 13:12 has a clearly eschatological meaning in the tradition before and after Richard: it refers to the vision of the Blessed. The modification of 2Cor 3:18 is also telling: the Vulgate gives *gloriam speculari* (referring to men “mirroring” or “gazing at” the glory of the Lord), Richard make the *locus* fit his theory and reads here *gloriam contemplando*. Describing contemplation with the words usually applied to the *visio beata* is certainly a radical move and raises the question about the relation of contemplation and beatific vision.

In the late treatise *Exiit edictum* (c. 1172)⁴⁰² Richard introduces a partly similar distinction, distinguishing three kinds of people: speculative, contemplative and prophetic men (*speculativi, contemplativi, prophetici*). The terms describing the speculatives and contemplatives are closely similar to the categories of the *Benjamin major* and *Adn in Ps 113*. “Speculative men” are those who can see “the truth of the celestial secrets” only through a mirror and in an enigma (cf. 1Cor 13:12) – that is, who need representations of corporeal things (*similitudo corporalium rerum*) to understand spiritual things; “contemplative men” are those who “see the Truth” barely and openly (*nude et aperte*) and without covering (*absque integumento*).⁴⁰³ The “speculatives” (the “Galilean men”) use imagination and visual representations (*similitudo rerum visibilium*) in order to investigate the celestial things (this is described as the third contemplation in the *Benjamin major*). The contemplatives enjoy “the simple and pure manifestation of the Truth,” without representations. Richard describes their experience through references to Christ’s ascension and Paul’s rapture: the soul of the contemplative is “caught up into ecstasies,” his mind becomes alienated and learns the eternal things through revelation.⁴⁰⁴

The dichotomy of *speculatio* and *contemplatio* also transforms into dichotomy of different forms of life. In the generally neglected treatise *De differentia sacrificii Abrahae* Richard distinguishes three forms of life: active, speculative and contemplative life. The speculative and contemplative forms of life (figured in the double burial chamber of Abraham) are described with the same terms as elsewhere *speculatio* and *contemplatio*: “speculative” life sees the “invisible

⁴⁰² Edition: *Richard de Saint-Victor. Sermons et opusculs spirituels inédits*, tome I: *L’édit d’Alexandre ou les trois processions*, ed. Jean Châtillon and W.J. Tulloch (Bruges, 1951). Châtillon dates it to the period 1162-1173, and suggests 1172 as a closer date (*Introduction*, xlv). As Châtillon observed (“Richard de Saint-Victor,” DS 13: 622), the text has a shorter version, probably a first redaction, in the *Miscellanea Victorina* VI, xiv (PL 177: 817D-819A). There, “angelic men” mean good teachers; “Galilean men,” good audience, and Christ signifies those people who will be admitted to the heaven from these groups; the *speculativi-contemplativi* element is missing (PL 177: 818CD). For the tropological interpretation of Christ’s ascent, see also *De Trin. prologus*.

⁴⁰³ In the *Exiit edictum*, the ascending Christ means the contemplatives and the men of Galilee mean speculatives: “Ibi video in terra stantes sed celestibus intendentes; ibi conspicio a terra sublevatum, a nube susceptum, in celis assumptum; ibi alios attendo descendentes a summis et divina nuntiantes in ymis. Prima horum graduum differentia exprimit speculativos, secunda contemplativos, tertia viros propheticos. Speculativos hoc loco volumus intelligere qui celestium secretorum veritatem vident non nisi per speculum et in enigmate, qui sine rerum corporalium similitudine nesciunt in rerum spiritualium intelligentiam assurgere. Contemplativos vero dicimus, qui faciem revelatam habent et veritatem nude et aperte et absque involucro vident. Viri prophetici sunt qui divini consilii archana que celitus ex divina revelatione cognoscunt, prout expedire divinitus didicerunt, hominibus innotescere faciunt.” *Exiit*, 76-78.

⁴⁰⁴ *Exiit edictum*: “Viri itaque Galilei qui in terra stabant, celestibus tamen intendebant, congrue satis speculativos designant; dum enim per rerum visibilium similitudinem nituntur ad rerum invisibilium cognitionem, terrenis quidem inherent per imaginationem, sed celestibus intendunt per investigationem. Contemplativorum autem animus, in morem ascendentis Domini, a terra quidem et quasi per inane suspenditur, quando invisibilium rerum spectaculo contra speculativorum morem nullo visibilis pulchritudinis sustentaculo utitur, quando nulli corporalis similitudinis sublevationi innititur, sed solummodo simplici et pura veritatis manifestatione delectatur. Quandoque autem in eiusmodi excessus rapitur, ut terrenorum omnino omnino obliviscatur et in mentis alienationem abducatur. Et tunc quasi a nube suscipitur, quando ab inferiorum aspectu oblivionis abalienationisque obnubilatione seiungitur, ita ut cum Apostolo dicere possit: ‘Sive corpore, sive extra corpus, nescio, Deus scit’ [cf. 2Cor 12: 2-4]. Tunc demum vero quasi in celum assumitur, quando celestibus secretis admittitur. Per suspensionem itaque a terra intellige mentis elevationem in superna, per susceptionem nubis alienationem mentis; per assumptionem in celum intellige revelationem eternorum.” *Exiit*, 78-80.

things of God” (cf. Rm 1:20) through creatures, *velut per speculum et in aenigmate*; in contrast, contemplative life sees the truth without covering (*absque involucro*), *quasi facie ad faciem*.⁴⁰⁵

The duality of *contemplatio/speculatio* is a universal principle of cognition valid among the angels as well, as the parallel between humans and angels shows in the *Adnotatio in Ps 113*. The basic idea here is that angelic orders (conceived according to the Areopagitic hierarchy) can contemplate God: they may have their “simple contemplation” (which is left unexplained) but also their ecstasy. The highest hierarchy of the three ascends above itself in its ecstasy and (being the highest one) can see God immediately, “without any mirror” (*absque omni speculo*). The two lower hierarchies also elevate in their ecstasy, but then can see only “through a mirror,” in their case, “mirror” is the higher hierarchies disposed above them.⁴⁰⁶ In the *Benjamin major* (IV, vii) a different concept of angelic contemplation appears: the Cherubim, as the highest order of the angelic beings, are attached immediately to the Supreme Light, and serve as model for contemplatives. Richard uses the same terms to describe the angelic cognition that he used to describe human contemplation: the Cherubim see God face to face, without a mirror, without an enigma.⁴⁰⁷

The examples given show that the opposition of *speculatio* and *contemplatio* is a fundamental category of Richard’s thought, valid to all spiritual creatures. It is based on Hugh’s distinction between “symbolic” and “anagogical” demonstrations, and it is present in his earliest work (the *In Apocalipsin*) and his later, mature works as well, with very little variance. *Speculatio* uses intermediary representations to understand (or cognise) immaterial issues while *contemplatio* does not need such representations and it grasps directly the Truth. This latter point makes such a crucial difference to Augustine’s doctrine on spiritual vision that the two theories cannot be harmonised.⁴⁰⁸

While the opposition of contemplation and speculation is clearly and often expressed in Richard, it is remarkable how little can be said of what contemplation is. The negative formulae are easy to understand: contemplation does not use representations that involve something sensible or perceptible (as *similitudines*, *figurae*, *imago*, *involucrum*). But what contemplation is, positively defined, is more difficult to establish: it means most often a vision of the truth or the “heavenly things” (*coelestium contemplatio*). But what does the ontological statement “seeing the highest truth in its simplicity” mean? To answer this question, I believe, one must investigate Richard’s dynamic accounts of contemplative ecstasy.

⁴⁰⁵ *De differentia sacrificii Abrahae a sacrificio beatae Mariae virginis*: “Per vitam activam mortificamur, per speculativam et contemplativam cum Abraham quasi duplici spelunca sepelimur. Proprium est speculativae [PL: speculative] invisibilia Dei per ea quae facta sunt intellecta conspiceret, et velut per speculum et in aenigmate videre. Proprium est contemplativae, veritatem absque involucro, et quasi facie ad faciem videre. Per speculativam itaque et contemplativam a rebus [1055B] humanis absentamur, et, ut dictum est, velut duplici spelunca sepelimur.” 1055AB.

⁴⁰⁶ *Adn in Ps 113*, 341AC.

⁴⁰⁷ For Richard’s reference to the nine orders and “magnus theologus beatus Dionysius Areopagita,” see *Adn in Ps 113*, 340D. Richard set the Cherubim the highest order probably due to the Exodus text: “[ordo] qui summae claritati immediate adhaeret, qui facie ad faciem, et sine speculo, et sine aenigmate videt.” *Bmaj* IV, vii, 140D.

⁴⁰⁸ Richard’s *speculatio* and *contemplatio* (or the third and fourth visions) are different forms of cognition: both acquire knowledge, and their difference lies in the usage of representations. In contrast, Augustine’s theory of three visions (*De Gen. ad litt. XII*) separates the element of understanding from the way of cognition: spiritual-imaginary vision cannot understand anything, since understanding is reserved for intellectual vision only.

II-2. Contemplation as dynamic process

The first book of *Benjamin major* gives a systematic overview of contemplation, ordered mostly according to its subjects and the cognitive faculties involved. The subsequent three books elaborate the same issue in a different language, in the style of the contemplatives, and the last book gives again a different take on the issue, investigating the modes of contemplation. These issues are often discussed by the literature, along with the clear-cut grades of progress outlined in the *De IV gradibus*. There is still another aspect of contemplation that demands investigation: the anthropological and epistemological description of the progress of contemplation. This issue seems to be ignored by scholars: not only the general works on mysticism overlook it but also the monographs devoted to Richard's doctrines on contemplation.⁴⁰⁹ The sole exception known to me, Clare Kirchberger's *Introduction* to Richard's selected writings, gives only hints of this progress.⁴¹⁰

In the following I try to demonstrate that contemplation as a personal experience does have its description in Richard (even if not in such a structured form as the six contemplations). If contemplation is the ultimate cognitive act of this life (which Richard makes clear), it is certainly crucial to understand what precisely the object of the cognition is and what "virtual part" of the soul cognises it. Richard does not limit himself to vague references to a "vision of God" or "ascent to God" in contemplation. He gives a complete description of its phases, from the departure from to the return to the "normal" consciousness, using clear theological and epistemological concepts to describe what happens to the cognitive subject before and during ecstatic contemplation.

Although Richard's theory about the process of contemplation does not have one sole and unique coherent presentation, it still can be reconstructed from his (more or less extensive) remarks dispersed in several works. The same contemplative experience can be described according to its various aspects. From the psychological perspective, it is a temporary departure from the consciousness, when admiration, joy and happiness fill the soul; this aspect is not the subject of our investigation. From the epistemological perspective, it means the more and more intensive working of *intelligentia* which leads to ecstasy and then the transformation of this faculty. The theological narrative is the most elaborate one describing the event: it explains how the cognitive subject affected by grace approaches the source of grace more and more closely, until it becomes conformed to it, through a transformative vision of the "eternal light" or "the glory of the Lord." The following outline (based on the most relevant passages⁴¹¹) covers four subjects: the general scheme of the process (a), Richard's analysis of the moment of ecstasy (b), the epistemological narrative of ecstasy, based on the operation of *intelligentia* (c), and the theological narrative of the same event (d).

⁴⁰⁹ McGinn's *The Growth* and Ruh's *Geschichte* give partial paraphrases and summaries of the *Benjamin major* and the *De IV gradibus*; Aris' *Contemplatio*, Chase's *Angelic wisdom* and even Coulter's *Per visibilia* (and from the older literature, Ebner's *Erkenntnislehre*, Kulesza's *La doctrine mystique*) also miss this, otherwise self-evident, aspect.

⁴¹⁰ See *Richard of Saint-Victor. Selected Writings on Contemplation. Translation with Introduction and Notes by Clare Kirchberger* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), 42: "The consequences of the divine rapture, the *excessus*, going forth and the *alienatio*, abstraction or becoming estranged, are first a suspension of the bodily senses: all the external world and personal concerns are forgotten, the senses of sight, sound and touch do not react to the normal stimuli. Then the powers of imagination, reason and intelligence cease to function, and the understanding is in abeyance. Whatever takes place between God and the soul remains unknown to or hidden from consciousness, until the ecstasy is over and the powers recover their use."

⁴¹¹ *Adn in Ps 4*, 276BC makes it clear that the various Scriptural references like "silence in the heavens" (Apoc 8), "peace of God" (Phil 4) and "dream" (Ps 4) all refer to the same state of mind. The *Adn in Ps 113*, 338C gives a short description of the steps from the "sleep of the senses" to the "ecstasy of mind." The *Exterm III*, xviii (*De quiete contemplationis*), 1113C-1116A focuses mostly on the *divisio animae et spiritus* but also refers to the meaning of "sleep" and "death" (latter referring to the peak of the experience) and indicates the return. *Bmaj V*, xii among other references describes the states *esse in spiritu* and *esse sine spiritu* (182BC) what are a variant of the "sleep" and "death" themes. The *De IV gradibus* offers then a general framework with more explicit theological descriptions of the highest level of contemplation.

a) The general scheme

The contemplative experience is engulfed in the “normal consciousness,” the “common state of the soul” (*communis status animae*): the experience is a departure from and then a return to this state. Richard gives a general scheme of the process of ecstatic contemplation in three steps.⁴¹² The process or order (*ordo*) begins with meditation (1): the discursive investigation of a problem (this problem may be given by the reading of Scripture⁴¹³). Contemplation (2) follows meditation, by means of which the result of the investigation is considered and understood. The understanding changes the attitude of the contemplative, as it brings about admiration. The third phase (3) is ecstasy (*excessus, alienatio*): it is not the direct consequence of the previous phase of contemplation but much more the result of the “grace of contemplation.”⁴¹⁴ Whatever can be considered as “mystical experience” (such as the deification, the union with God, the transformation to the divine image etc.) happens in this state: it is the joy (*jucunditas*) that characterises this state.

To this threefold basic scheme describing the ascent Richard sometimes adds a fourth phase of descent too, the return to the normal state of mind. The returned person, due to the transformative vision of God, becomes a “new creature,” resurrected, impassible (that is, not subjected to passions) and immortal “in some way.”⁴¹⁵ The way and meaning of return form a point where Richard characteristically differs from many others. For him return is a part of the general plan, and a meaningful part indeed. The Scriptural imagery he chooses has no dramatic potential since it describes the return as a descent and never as a fall. The most eloquent example is given by the *De IV gradibus*: the contemplative’s return imitates the incarnation of Christ and of the taking of the form of a servant for others. It must be noted here that this meaningful, even Christomimetic, return for the sake of the community stands in sharp contrast to what other authors thought on the issue (see Part II, Chapter 4). Based ultimately on the accounts of the later Augustine (see Part I, Chapter 1), other authors (such as Saint Bernard) conceived the end of contemplative experience in a far more dramatic way. Considered from the individual’s personal perspective, it means to such authors a tragic loss, a “falling away” from the delights experienced: the moment of rejection, followed by a painful return into misery.

b) Entering ecstasy: analyses of the moment

Richard gives a detailed description of the process leading to ecstasy. Ecstasy is a state when the soul “surpasses” itself and leaves its limits; the metaphors Richard uses are “pouring over,” going “outside” and “above” itself. Although the soul (*anima*) is a unity, it has different “virtual parts” and the vocabulary for these parts is greatly limited (the same word even may have different meanings). A terminological clarification thus seems appropriate here. The self-transcendence of

⁴¹² *Bmaj* V, xii: “Ecce quo ordine processit, vel ad quem tandem exitum venit. Prius quaerit et audit; postea videt et intelligit; tandem autem obstupescit et deficit. Interrogat quod discat, contemplatur quod miretur, stupet ut mente excidat mentemque excedat. Primum est meditationis, secundum contemplationis, tertium extasis. Ecce quibus promotionis gradibus sublevatur animus humanus. Meditatione [0181D] profecto assurgitur in contemplationem, contemplatione in admirationem, admiratione in mentis alienationem.” 181CD. Cf. *De IV gradibus*: “In primo intrat meditatione, in secundo ascendit contemplatione, in tertio retroducitur in jubilatione, in quarto egreditur ex compassione.” 1217D = Dumeige (29), 157.

⁴¹³ See *De IV gradibus* illustrates the process with the reading (and understanding) of the Canticle verse “Anima mea liquefacta est ut dilectus locutus est” (Cant 5: 6) that may lead to the self-revelation of the divine wisdom, 1121CD = Dumeige (40), 169.

⁴¹⁴ *Exterm* III, xviii: “Potest ergo animus hanc pacem per prudentiam solerter quaerere, et per meditationem subtiliter investigare, nunquam eam tamen nisi per sapientiam et contemplationis gratiam poterit invenire.” 1113C.

⁴¹⁵ *De IV gradibus* 1223AB = Dumeige (45), 173; also *Exterm* III, xviii, 1116A.

the soul (expressed through various terms) means basically that a part of the human soul (*anima*) participates in an event while another part of it remains inactive. The active part has a cognitive-intellectual character (but also a less exposed affective character, too): hence it can be called *animus*, *mens* and *spiritus* as well.

Richard distinguishes basically two central and subsequent phases in what can be called contemplative experience (*Bmaj*, *Exterm*, *De IV gradibus*). The two phases are conceptually separated by the moment of the separation of “the soul and the spirit” (expounded in *Exterm*). These passages outline the following process.

1) In the first phase the spirit gathers itself entirely in itself (spirit here refers to the cognitive part of the soul opposed to the body). This phase is called “dream” (*Exterm*), the spirit “being in spirit” (*Bmaj*); in the *De IV gradibus* the second “grade of love” seems to be its equivalent. The self-concentration means a detachment from the sensible world: the mind (*spiritus*) turns away from the external reality and disregards everything happening in and outside the body.⁴¹⁶ The spirit is still self-conscious and (through the operation of memory or intellect) turns towards its own content.⁴¹⁷ The paradigmatic figure of this state in the *Benjamin major* (V, xii) is Saint John, the author of the Apocalypse (the expression derives from Apoc 1:10 *fui in spiritu*). John ascended to the “summit of mind” (*summum mentis ascendit*) but did not surpass it.⁴¹⁸ The early *In Apocalipsin* gives a slightly different interpretation of John’s visions: he left both the visible things (*visibilia*) and the representations of visible things (*visibilibus similia*), and turned towards the invisible realm (*superna ac invisibilia*) through pure *intelligentia*, without the working of imagination, in “simple contemplation.”⁴¹⁹ It was then that the Holy Spirit reminded him of his duty towards his audience (since John was a bishop), and taught him to write about those realities according to the sensual representations (*secundum sensibilibus similitudines*). The *De IV gradibus* is perhaps conceptually closer to the later works: it describes this state as the second grade of love and also celestial life: the mind receives revelations, and sees the inaccessible light from a distance, but cannot access it.⁴²⁰

2) The transition between the first and second states is the “separation of the soul and the spirit” (*divisio animae et spiritus*).⁴²¹ The concept is modelled on the separation of the body and the soul in death (which Richard considers as the *typus* of this contemplative event). The higher power of the

⁴¹⁶ Cf. *Bmaj* V, ii: “In tertio gradu arca in Sancta sanctorum infertur, et quasi intra velum collocatur, quando contemplantis acumen ad intimum mentis sinum colligitur, et ab exteriorum memoria oblivionis et alienationis velo secluditur.” 170C.

⁴¹⁷ *Exterm* III, xviii: “Aliud dormire, aliud est obire. Aliud spiritum suum totum in seipsum colligere, [1114B] et aliud est supra se levare et seipsum deserere. Aliud est appetitum coercuisse, exteriorumque curam cordi excidisse atque aliud est ipsum sibi in oblivionem venire.” 1114AB. Cf. *Bmaj* V, xii: “An forte hoc est spiritum in spiritu esse, semetipsum intra semetipsum totum colligere, et ea quae circa carnem, seu etiam in carne geruntur, interim penitus ignorare? [...] Nonne in spiritu spiritus esse tunc recte asseritur, quando exteriorum omnium obliviscetur, pariter et ignarus eorum omnium quae in corpore corporaliter aguntur, et illis solis interest per memoriam vel intellectum, quae in spiritu vel circa spiritum actitantur?”

⁴¹⁸ *Bmaj* V, xii: “An forte hoc est spiritum in spiritu esse, semetipsum intra semetipsum totum colligere, et ea quae circa carnem, seu etiam in carne geruntur, interim penitus ignorare? [...] Nonne in spiritu spiritus esse tunc recte asseritur, quando exteriorum omnium obliviscetur, pariter et ignarus eorum omnium quae in corpore corporaliter aguntur, et illis solis interest per memoriam vel intellectum, quae in spiritu vel circa spiritum actitantur? [...] In spiritu itaque est, qui summum mentis ascendit.” 182BC.

⁴¹⁹ *In Apoc* I, iv: “[John] cunctaque visibilia, et visibilibus similia post se longe reliquerat, et jam in anteriora semetipsum extendens per puram intelligentiam omni imaginatione remota solis supernis ac invisibilibus intendebat, et dum ad subditorum eruditionem reducit, ac de his [0705A] quae scribenda erant secundum sensibilibus similitudines edocetur, quasi de anterioribus ad posteriora revocatur, et dum eum Spiritus sanctus ad illos quos coelestibus per simplicem contemplationem intentus non respiciebat, secundum formales rerum qualitates respicere monuit, quasi post tergum vocem audivit.” 704D/705A.

⁴²⁰ *De IV gradibus*: “In hoc gradu ejusmodi alis evolvant usque ad celum, non solum usque ad primum, sed etiam ad secundum, ita ut de reliquo dicere possint: Nostra conversatio in celis est.” Dumeige (35), 163 = 1219D.

⁴²¹ *Exterm* III, xviii, 1114BD.

soul (*suprema vis*) becomes separated from the lower one (*vis inferior*); with the terminology of Heb 4:12, Richard calls the first “spirit” and the second “soul.”

This separation leads to the state of “peace” when the two “parts” of the soul act separately.⁴²² Peace is only one Scriptural name for this state, as Richard points out: the “peace that surpasses all the senses” (Phil 4:7) has equivalents “silence in the heaven” (Apoc 8:1) and “dream” (Ps 4:9).⁴²³ For the “lower” part of the soul, the “peace” means rest: imagination and sense perception do not operate.⁴²⁴ The “higher” (or “purer”) part transcends itself and enters into God in ecstasy; the descriptions of its activities permit us to identify it with the *intelligentia*.⁴²⁵

3) The second phase – “death,” the spirit being “without spirit, the “third grade of love – is important only for the still active cognitive part of the soul. The separation from the lower functions creates the condition in which the highest possible form of cognition can happen.

In this phase the mind (*animus*) or spirit surpasses itself and *intelligentia* cognises God. The *intelligentia* also has an instrumental role in this change: the revelation from the “eternal light” irradiates the *intelligentia*, which elevates above itself,⁴²⁶ and it is the *pura intelligentia* that elevates the mind above itself.⁴²⁷ A characteristic feature of this state is the loss of self-reflectiveness, the *alienatio*. The cognitive subject does not reflect on itself anymore: it becomes “emptied” of itself, “ignores” and “forgets” itself. This also means the destruction and loss of its identity – more properly, the destruction of the *human* identity of the subject: the human spirit enters into a “supraworldly and more-than-human state” (*status supermundanus et plus quam humanus*). Instead of being human, the spirit adheres to God and becomes deified.⁴²⁸ Other passages of Richard make more precise references: it is the *intelligentia* that becomes transformed.⁴²⁹ The detailed descriptions of this phase are mostly theological by nature – assimilation to the divine light, adherence to God, seeing the glory – which makes possible only a conjecture concerning the final status of *intelligentia* in this condition. The last status seems to be its deification: the *intelligentia*

⁴²² Cf. *Adn in Ps 4*: “per hunc de quo loquimur interioris hominis somnum exsuperantur omnes sensus mentis. Simul enim absorbet cogitationem, imaginationem, rationem, memoriam, intelligentiam, ut constet quod Apostolus scribit, quia exsuperat omnem sensum.” 276D.

⁴²³ *Adn in Ps 4*: “Haec est illa pax in qua anima obdormit; pax, quae mentem ad interiora rapit; pax, quae exteriorum omnium memoriam intercipit, quae ingenii acumen exsuperat, quae rationis lumen reverberat, [0276C] quae desiderium cordis replet, quae omnem intellectum absorbet. Hanc quietem Joannes dicit silentium [Apoc 8:1], Psalmista vocat somnum [Ps 4:9]. Ab Apostolo dicitur pax Dei quae exsuperat omnem sensum [Phil 4:7].” 276BC.

⁴²⁴ *Exterm III*, xviii: “pax illa, quae omnem sensum exsuperat, omnem sensum humanum funditus absorbeat, et in divinum quemdam habitum puriorem animae partem felici transfiguratione convertat. Jacet hic corpus sine sensu et motu in hoc Dominico monumento; nihil sensualitas, nihil agit imaginatio, et omnis inferior vis animae proprio interim induitur officio.” 1114A. Cf. *Adn in Ps 113*: “corporalis sensus sopitur, exteriorum memoria intercipitur, affectio inebriatur, ratio transformatur, intelligentia innovatur, mens tota a seipsa alienatur.” 338C.

⁴²⁵ Cf. *Exterm III*, xviii: “Pars igitur inferior componitur ad summam pacem et tranquillitatem, pars autem superior sublimatur ad gloriam et jucunditatem.” 1115B.

⁴²⁶ *Bmaj V*, xi: “cum inaccessibilis illius, et aeterni [0180C] luminis revelatio cor humanum irradiat, humanam intelligentiam supra semetipsam, imo supra omnem humanum modum levat.” 189BC.

⁴²⁷ *Exterm III*, xviii: “Sed, cum coeperit animus per puram intelligentiam semetipsum excedere, et in illam incorporeae lucis claritatem totus intrare [...] nihil omnino invenies, vel quod per desiderium petat, vel per fastidium arguat, vel per odium accuset.” 1113CD.

⁴²⁸ *Bmaj V*, xii: “Cur non et recte dicatur spiritus semetipsum non habere, quando incipit a [0182C] semetipso deficere, et a suo esse in supermundanum quemdam, et vere plus quam humanum statum transire, et mirabili transfiguratione spiritus ille ab humano videatur in divinum deficere, ita ut ipse jam non sit ipse, eo duntaxat tempore quo Domino incipit altius inhaerere. Qui enim adhaeret Domino unus spiritus est.” 182BC. See also *Exiit*: “Ibi [in carnis mortificatione] homo exterior infra semetipsum relabatur, hic [in mentis alienatione] homo interior supra semetipsum levatur. Ibi ille desinit esse quod fuit, hic iste incipit esse quod non fuit: qui enim adheret Deo, unus spiritus est [1Cor 6:7].” 70.

⁴²⁹ *Bmaj V*, ix: “humana intelligentia ex dilatationis suae magnitudine quandoque accipit, ut ipsa jam non sit ipsa, non quidem ut non sit intelligentia, sed ut jam non sit humana, dum modo mirabili mutationeque incomprehensibili efficitur plus quam humana, dum gloriam Domini speculando, in eamdem imaginem transformatur a claritate in claritatem, tanquam a Domini Spiritu.” 178D.

becomes transformed to the divine Wisdom. Richard's writings do not give much explicit help to interpret this element. Hugh's theology offers a better interpretative framework: there it can be understood as a conformation of created human wisdom to uncreated divine wisdom.

c) The epistemological narrative of the contemplative progress

The epistemological narrative describes the act of the cognition of God through the highest cognitive faculty, the *intelligentia*. This narrative can be part separated from the theological narrative, but its ultimate phase cannot be described in clear terms of epistemology.

1) The first book of the *Benjamin major* gives a general picture on the unfolding operation of *intelligentia*. The function of this faculty is the cognition of the invisible realm and it does not work the same way in the six contemplations: it operates partly together with imagination and reason, and partly independently of them. In the lowest form of cognition it cooperates with imagination when representations help people to understand invisible realities. In the *Benjamin minor* (xviii) this use Richard calls "rational imagination mixed with *intelligentia*" and is figured in Naphtali; in the *Benjamin major* its equivalent is the third contemplation. A subtler working of *intelligentia* is when it is free from imagination: Richard calls this status "pure" *intelligentia*. In the *Benjamin minor* its function is the cognition of the invisible, and it is figured in Benjamin himself.⁴³⁰ The *Benjamin major* keeps this concept and refines it, introducing the category "simple" *intelligentia* (which means the *intelligentia* independent of reason).⁴³¹ This double distinction helps to describe the progress of *intelligentia* through the different contemplations: it appears in the lower forms of cognition as cooperating with the lower cognitive forces, then gradually becomes free of them, so that in the last two contemplations (which happen "against reason") it operates alone. In the third contemplation it cooperates with imagination (and reason); in the last three contemplations it is free already from imagination (*intelligentia pura*), and in the last two ones, it becomes free from reason too (*intelligentia simplex*). The ultimate grade of its freedom is the sixth contemplation whose subjects are utterly unintelligible to reason.⁴³²

2) The operation of *intelligentia* is described through metaphors based on the paradigm of vision. *Intelligentia* can "see" (that is, cognise) its objects, by "setting" or "fastening" its "gaze" or "ray" on the objects of cognition.⁴³³ These objects are described by various names: invisible or eternal things, eternal or inaccessible light, truth, eternity, wisdom and so on. This visual language applied to cognition connects the epistemological and theological descriptions of the process. The operation of *intelligentia* towards the objects is preceded by an opposite operation from the objects' side: a

⁴³⁰ *Bmin* lxxxvii: "Proprie tamen et expressius per Benjamin designatur intelligentia pura [...]. Comprehensio siquidem rerum invisibilium pertinet ad intelligentiam puram [...]. Intelligentiam puram dicimus, quae est sine admistione imaginationis [...]." 62CD. See also *Bmaj* I, ix: "Simplicem intelligentiam dico quae est sine officio rationis, puram vero quae est sine occursione imaginationis." 74C.

⁴³¹ *Bmaj* I, vi: "In hac [that is, the fourth] primum contemplatione humanus animus pura intelligentia utitur, et semoto omni imaginationis officio, ipsa intelligentia nostra in hoc primum negotio seipsam per semetipsum intelligere videtur. Nam licet illis prioribus contemplationum generibus videatur non deesse, nusquam tamen inest pene nisi meditante ratione, seu etiam imaginatione. Illic quasi instrumento utitur, et velut per speculum intuetur. Hic per semetipsam operatur, [072A] et quasi per speciem contemplatur." 71D/72A

⁴³² See *Bmaj* I, viii-ix for further details and comparisons.

⁴³³ See *Bmin* lxxxvii: "Quid est Benjamin in Aegyptum descendere, nisi ab aeternorum contemplatione, ad temporalia contemplanda, [062C] intuitum mentis revocare, et ab aeternitatis luce, quasi de vertice coeli, usque ad mutabilitatis tenebras, intelligentiae radios deponere." 62BC; cf. *Bmaj* IV, x: "Sic sane debemus [...] divinae revelationis horam [...] expectare, ut quacunque hora divinae inspirationis [145B] aura mentis nostrae nubila deteraserit, verique solis radios, remota omni caliginis nube detexerit, excussis statim contemplationis suae alis, mens se ad alta elevet, et avolet, et fixis obtutibus in illud aeternitatis lumen, quod desuper radiat [...] omnia mundanae volubilitatis nubila transvolet atque transcendat." 145AB.

“ray of the divine light” descends upon the *intelligentia*, illuminates it, enables its operation and makes the ecstasy possible.⁴³⁴ Another, perhaps more precise, passage implies that the working of the *intelligentia* entirely depends on the visiting grace since the *intelligentia* is born in the soul because of the inspiration.⁴³⁵ Without the cooperation of grace, the *intelligentia*, on the other hand, is limited to a partial self-knowledge; it is a revelation through grace that enables its proper working.⁴³⁶ The ultimate state of ecstasy cannot be expressed in clear terms of epistemology either. On this point Richard gives mostly theological descriptions (see below). A conjectural reading of these passages suggests that the ultimate phase, the deification, means a temporary transformation and destruction of the cognitive faculty – and the destruction of the *human* faculty does set a limit to the epistemological description of the event. In the transformative vision of the “divine light,” “the glory of the Lord,” in the “adherence to God” the *intelligentia* becomes assimilated to the object of cognition (to the truth, the glory, and the light; perhaps to the wisdom or to Christ) – which takes it out of the jurisdiction of epistemology.

d) The theological narrative of contemplative ecstasy

The theological description of the progress leading to ecstatic contemplation is the most elaborated one in Richard’s writings. In this case, I believe, two dominant (and partly overlapping) narratives can be discerned: both describe different aspects of the same progress but both are based on the concept of transformative vision – that is, on the idea that the thing seen accommodates the seer to itself. One narrative describes the event as seeing a light while the other as seeing the “glory of the Lord.” It is plausible to assume that the thing seen, the object of the vision, is identical in both cases, but Richard’s descriptions do not go into detail of this subject. There are no clear theological definitions of what is seen in contemplation. Richard does not state explicitly or with unambiguous terms that God (in its entirety) or any defined person, or one of the natures of Christ is seen in contemplation. In his less precise accounts he uses various different words: “invisible things,” “goods” (*bona*), both without further specification, “secrets,” or various synonyms for light. Besides these accounts, however, he also has a formulaic description of contemplation, which is repeated several times with remarkable uniformity. Contemplation means seeing the truth immediately in its simplicity or its purity, or seeing the light of the “supreme wisdom” in “simple truth.”⁴³⁷ The truth in its simplicity – this seems to be the most precise and definitive definition of the object, and Richard gives no more help on it. In one instance he explicitly identifies truth and wisdom with the Son of God through the agency of whom we have access to the “supreme light” (*principale lumen*) – that is, to the Father – but that sole passage does not permit us to draw further conclusions.⁴³⁸

⁴³⁴ See, for example, *Bmaj* V, xi: “Perpende [...] quid ille in nobis divinae revelationis aeternique luminis radius efficiat? Quomodo humanam intelligentiam ex infusionis suae illustratione, supra semetipsam levat, attende qualiter haec propositi tibi exempli formula [...] humanae mentis excessum, ex qualitatis suae similitudine proponat.” 180A.

⁴³⁵ *Bmaj* III, vi: “Sol oritur quando veritatis intelligentia cordi inspiratur, idemque sol occidit cum intelligentiae radius subtrahitur. [...] Solis hujusmodi locus ipse est animus. Ex ipso enim animo intelligentia nascitur, quando a divina gratia visitatur.” 117B.

⁴³⁶ See *Bmaj* III, ix, 119AB: without revelation neither the essence of the soul nor the divine things can be known.

⁴³⁷ *Bmaj* IV, xi: “Sed ille [...] per mentis excessum extra semetipsum ductus, summae sapientiae lumen [...] in simplici, ut sic dicam, veritate contemplatur.” 147B; *Bmaj* V, xiv: “contemplationem vero [dicimus], quando veritatem [...] in sui puritate videmus.” 187B; *Adn in Ps 113*: “Per contemplativos debemus illos intelligere [...] qui gloriam Domini revelata facie contemplando, veritatem sine involucro vident in sua simplicitate.” 337C; *Adn in Ps 113*: “Nihil itaque aliud est montes in modum arietum exsultare, nisi viros contemplativos per mentis excessum summam veritatem nuda, et aperta visione attingere et quasi facie ad faciem videre.” 341D/342A; *De differentia sacrificii* “Proprium est contemplativae [vitae] veritatem [...] et quasi facie ad faciem videre.” 1055A.

⁴³⁸ *De verbo incarnato* v: “Cum summam veritatem, summam sapientiam [1000A] interpellamus, Filium invocamus. [...] Sapientia est quae expellit tenebras erroris [...]. Sapientia est quae nos custodit inter nocturnos horrores [...]. Custos itaque est Dei Filius, custos est Spiritus sanctus. [...] in istis duobus ad principale lumen accessum habemus.” 1000A.

1) Entering inaccessible light

In the first narrative the object seen is a certain light. It is called the “inaccessible” light (cf. 1Tim 6:16); equivalents of this image are “immaterial light,” “eternal light” (or “light of eternity,” *lumen aeternitatis*), “light of divinity,” “clear light” (*claritas*), the “glory of the Lord,” and the “Sun of Righteousness.” The inaccessible light, as Richard defines, means the wisdom of God; it is inaccessible because reason and discursive thinking cannot access it,⁴³⁹ but the *intelligentia* in ecstasy can do so. This narrative begins with the activity of the light: first it irradiates the mind (or the *intelligentia*) in its cognitive operations. Turning towards the light is already leaving the “darkness” of ignorance resulted from the original sin.⁴⁴⁰ In the next phase the mind obtains the “grace of contemplation”: this is the phase when the mind is concentrated in itself, the spirit being “in spirit,” or on the “second grade of love.” In this phase the inaccessible light is clearly seen but remains still is inaccessible; the mind is in the position of the highest angelic orders.⁴⁴¹ In the ultimate step, the cognitive subject (that is, the *intelligentia*) enters the light. This happens without human agency (that light being inaccessible to that which is human – that is, to reason): the *intelligentia* is “taken” (*rapitur*) to this phase in ecstasy, the paradigmatic image of it being Paul’s rapture into the third heaven.⁴⁴² The subject becomes transformed into the light seen – that is, (human) *intelligentia* is transformed into (divine) wisdom.⁴⁴³

This moment is both a transformation and a conformation. The subject becomes radically altered (transformation), but this change also means an accommodation to the form, to the image seen (conformation). Richard uses the allegory of the melting iron to express this change: the iron takes the quality of the fire and receives a new form.⁴⁴⁴

2) Transformative vision of the glory and union

The other narrative describes the event as a vision of the glory of the Lord. This narrative describes the last phase of the progress. This description connects the interpretations of 2Cor 3:18 and 1Cor 6:17, declaring that the vision is not only transforming but also unifying.

⁴³⁹ *Bmin* xxii: “Audit in Scripturis nominari lucem, sicut de Deo scriptum est: Quia habitat lucem inaccessibilem. Quaerit ergo quae sit lux ista incorporea quam inhabitat invisibilis et incorporea Dei natura, et invenit quia lux ista est ipsa Dei sapientia, quia ipsa est lux vera. Sicut enim lux ista exterior illuminat oculos corporum, ita illa absque dubio illuminare consuevit oculos cordium.” 15D.

⁴⁴⁰ *Adn in Ps* 80: “quid aliud est Aegyptum deserere quam discussis ignorantiae tenebris in lumine veritatis oculos intelligentiae figere? Toties Aegyptum deserimus, quoties [0325D] rerum temporalium obliti, contemplationis radios in aeternitate figimus. [...] Quia cum divinae contemplationi spretis exterioribus omnibus vacamus, nunc ex angelica revelatione, nunc ex divina inspiratione coelestis sapientiae secreta percipimus.” 325CD.

⁴⁴¹ *De IV gradibus*: “Si igitur in hoc coelo, sive in hac terra es, illum solem videre habes sub quo aestuant et ardent illi angelici spiritus qui seraphin hoc est ardentis dicti sunt. [...] Solem itaque justitiae videre potes si in hac terra es, et ad secundum amoris gradum profecisti [...]. In secundo itaque [1220D] gradu, ut dictum est, coelum coelorum, lumenque illud inaccessibile videri potest, sed adiri non potest.” 1220AD = Dumeige (36, 37), 165.

⁴⁴² *De IV gradibus*: “Tertius itaque amoris gradus est quando mens hominis in illam rapitur divini luminis abyssum, ita ut humanus animus in hoc statu exteriori omnium oblitos penitus nesciat seipsum totusque transeat in Deum suum [...]. In hoc statu dum mens a seipsa alienatur, dum in illud divini arcani secretarium rapitur, dum ab illo divini amoris incendio undique circumdatur, intime penetratur, usquequaque inflammatur, seipsam penitus exuit, divinum quemdam affectum induit, et inspectae pulchritudini configurata tota in aliam gloriam transit.” Dumeige (38), 167 = 1220D-1221B.

⁴⁴³ See *Exterm* III, xviii: “Sed cum coeperit animus per puram intelligentiam semetipsum excedere, et in illam incorporeae lucis claritatem totus intrare, et in his qui in intimis videt quemdam intimae suavitatis saporem trahere, et ex eo intelligentiam suam condire, et in sapientiam vertere.” 1113CD.

⁴⁴⁴ *De IV gradibus*, Dumeige (39), 167. The allegory is one of the allegories that Eriugena and Saint Bernard used to express similar changes.

The 2Cor 3:18 explicitly speaks about a transformative vision of the glory of the Lord: the seers have unveiled face (as opposed to the veiled face of Moses, 3:11); the glory is some sort of light (*claritas*) and seeing the glory leads to an assimilation to the image seen – which also means becoming lit (*transformamur in claritatem*).⁴⁴⁵ Richard often applies this passage to describe contemplation, at least in three different ways. It denotes the act of contemplation as opposed to *speculatio*; it is also the characteristic activity of the “contemplative men” (as opposed to the “speculative men”), but the passage also describes the ultimate phase of the contemplative process.

Seeing the glory involves other elements as well. The transformative vision is (a) also a transformation to the image; it is (b) becoming “one spirit with God” (*unitas spiritus*), and this latter moment also demands an immediate vision (c) of the subject. The transformation to the image (that is, to the glory) happens sthrough taking the form of the glory of the Lord. The detailed description of the *De IV gradibus* describes the object of this vision as fire (*divinitatis flamma, ignis*): it has both light (*lux*) and heat.⁴⁴⁶ This duality mirrors his concept of the soul already present in the *Liber exceptionum*: the *imago Dei* and *similitudo Dei* are separate, compared to the light and to the warmth of fire, and equated with the cognitive and affective “parts” of the soul respectively.⁴⁴⁷ The transformation involves both aspects of the soul. The form into which the soul is transformed is left unexplained: it is marked only as “the form of God.”⁴⁴⁸

Becoming unified with God in spirit (*unitas spiritus*) also belongs to this phase. The *unitas spiritus*, based on 1Cor 6:17 (*Qui autem adhaeret Domino unus spiritus est*) is a relatively rarely used *auctoritas* among Victorines.⁴⁴⁹ A direct adherence to God appears in different contexts, and is usually connected to the immediate vision of the light. Richard generally avoids speaking about an immediate (face-to-face) vision of God: he speaks mostly about such a vision of the truth or the light (regularly using the phrases of 1Cor 13:12). The immediate vision of truth seems to be a synonym of the adherence to God. The highest angelic order is said to immediately adhere to the “highest Light” and see it face to face.⁴⁵⁰ In the Trinity the divine persons see each other mutually and immediately and *therefore* adhere to each other as well.⁴⁵¹ In the case of human cognition of contemplation, the three elements of the union of the spirits, the contemplation of the glory of the Lord and the immediate (face-to-face) vision of the truth are intimately connected. The *Adnotatio in Ps 113* defines contemplatives as men who are given to see face to face (the object of vision is not

⁴⁴⁵ 2Cor 3:18 (Vulg.): *Nos vero omnes revelata facie gloriam Domini speculantes in eandem imaginem transformamur a claritate in claritatem tamquam a Domini Spiritu*. In Douay-Rheims translation: “But we all beholding the glory of the Lord with open face, are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

⁴⁴⁶ *De IV gradibus*: “Nonne et illi ex circumfusa divinitatis flamma, et velut ex inspecta gloria incandescunt, et divinae luci configurati jam quasi in aliam gloriam transeunt, qui revelata facie gloriam Domini speculantes, in eandem imaginem transformantur a claritate in claritatem tanquam a Domini Spiritu?” 1121C = Dumeige (40), 169.

⁴⁴⁷ *Lib. exc.* I, i, ed. Châtillon, 104: “Sicut enim in uno elemento igne duo sunt inter se diversa et a se prorsus remota, scilicet splendor et calor [...] ita in spirituali creatura imago Dei et similitudo Dei inter se diversa sunt et a se quodammodo remota.”

⁴⁴⁸ *De IV gradibus*: “in tertio gradu quodammodo quasi in forma Dei esset” Dumeige (44), 173.

⁴⁴⁹ See esp. *Bmaj* V, xiii (Aris 182) and *Bmaj* IV, xv. McGinn rightly observes that Richard rarely refers to the 1Cor 6:17, the classical locus of *unitas spiritus* (*The Growth*, 597, note 234; he also lists *De eruditione* II, ix, *De IV gradibus*, *Adn in Ps 30* and the *De tribus processionibus*, to which the *Exiit edictum* must be added). The paucity of references to this locus is also characteristic of Hugh. There seems to be a remarkable relation between two expressions applied to the ecstatic state, *unitas spiritus* and seeing God. Hugh and Richard rarely talk about *unitas spiritus* but often use metaphors of seeing; in contrast, the *unitas spiritus* is a key concept for Bernard of Clairvaux and William of Saint-Thierry who carefully avoided visual language on this subject, reserving the vision of God to the Blessed.

⁴⁵⁰ *Bmaj* IV, vii: “Cogita, obsecro, cujus sit excellentiae illius ordinis in se similitudinem per imitationem trahere, qui summae claritati immediate adhaeret, qui facie ad faciem, et sine speculo, et sine aenigmate videt.” 140D.

⁴⁵¹ *De Trin* V, ix: “Quoniam igitur omnes divinae personae invicem se et immediate conspiciunt, radium summae lucis in alterutrum effundunt aut excipiunt. Et quia immediate vident, immediate adhaerent. [...] Quis enim eam neget caeteras personas et videndo cognoscere et cognoscendo videre?” 956C.

given thus), to contemplate the glory of the Lord, to see the truth in its simplicity and without covering.⁴⁵²

The *De exterminatione* III, xviii connects the immediate vision (whose object is unmentioned again) with the vision of the glory.⁴⁵³ The immediate vision in contemplation is described here as a “face-to-face” vision, while its opposite is, again, the vision through representations (*speculatio*).

Non ergo opus hic habet Spiritus [1115A] ille [...] officio scalae, nec eget [...] sustentari alicujus corporeae similitudinis adumbratione, ubi videt facie ad faciem, non per speculum, et in aenigmate. Mentior si ipsi de seipsis non idem asserunt qui ejusmodi sunt: Nos autem omnes, inquiunt, revelata facie, gloriam Domini speculantes, in eandem imaginem transformamur a claritate in claritatem, tanquam a Domini Spiritu.

[Therefore that Spirit does not need the usage of a ladder, and it does not need the support of the shadow (*adumbratio*) of any corporeal likeness here where it sees face to face, not through a mirror in an enigma. I would lie, if those men who are such, had not stated about themselves: “but we all,” they say so, “gaze (*speculantes*) at the glory of the Lord with unveiled faces; we transform into the same image, from clarity to clarity, as if through the Spirit of the Lord.”]

Finally, the *De IV gradibus* (40) connects the vision of the glory with the union of the spirits. In the state of ecstasy the mind alienated from itself is encircled by divine love, which leads to its “melting” (*liquefactio*). The transformation is described first by 2Cor 3:18;⁴⁵⁴ then Richard takes an example of Bible interpretation that leads to the same result. The Bible verse in his example is Cant 5:6, *anima mea liquefacta est ut dilectus locutus est*, a line evoking the literal “melting” of the soul. The understanding of this line leads to the state of the union with God.⁴⁵⁵

Seeing the glory of the Lord is then, basically, identical with seeing the truth immediately, which again is the same as being “one spirit” with God and “taking the form of God.” The strongly visual language applied to cognition (seeing a light, the truth) is complemented with descriptions of the affective aspect: the soul becomes more and more ardent and shining (like iron melting) until it loses its earlier features and takes a new form. The present study has focused on the cognitive aspect of the process and concluded that the ultimate state means to the *intelligentia* an assimilation to the divine wisdom. Richard’s text also describes what must be the ultimate phase to the affective side: after the ardent love and desire take over the soul, the human will and all desires become attuned to the divine will.⁴⁵⁶

It seems to be appropriate here to set Richard’s doctrines in a broader context. Many elements of them are not unique or particularly original but a comparison to counter-examples shows the individual profile of these doctrines. One such example may be Augustine, another one Bernard of Clairvaux. Seeing the “Glory of the Lord” means for Augustine, too, a transformative

⁴⁵² *Adn in Ps 113*, 337C: “Per contemplativos debemus illos intelligere, quibus datum est facie ad faciem videre, qui gloriam Domini revelata facie contemplando, veritatem sine involucro vident in sua simplicitate sine speculo et absque aenigmate.”

⁴⁵³ See *Exterm* III, xviii, 1115A.

⁴⁵⁴ *De IV gradibus*, Dumeige (40), 169: “Nonne et illi ex circumfusa divinitatis flamma, et velut ex inspecta gloria incandescunt, et divinae luci configurati jam quasi in aliam gloriam transeunt, qui revelata facie gloriam Domini speculantes, in eandem imaginem transformantur a claritate in claritatem tanquam a Domini Spiritu?”

⁴⁵⁵ *De IV gradibus*: “Vultis adhuc audire animam divinae lectionis igne liquefactam? Anima mea liquefacta est ut dilectus locutus est. Statim siquidem ut ad illud internum divini arcani secretum admittitur [...] in seipsa, immo in ipsum qui loquitur, tota resolvitur, dum incipit audire arcana illa verba que non licet homini loqui, et intelligit incerta et occulta sapientiae divinae manifestari sibi. In hoc itaque statu Spiritus omnia scrutatur, etiam profunda Dei. In hoc statu qui adheret Domino unus a spiritus est.” Dumeige (40), 169 = 1121C.

⁴⁵⁶ See *De IV gradibus*, Dumeige (41-42), 169-171.

vision of God – but this belongs to the “future perfection,” that is, to the final eschatological state (and not to the possible ecstatic experiences of this life). This transformative vision means for Augustine the renovation of the image in the full sense. It is an assimilation to the Son of God, even bodily, as it involves the reception of the immortal body as well.⁴⁵⁷ Another telling difference can be observed in the usage of the visual imagery of light. For Richard, contemplation includes not only seeing the “light” but also entering the light in ecstasy and becoming transformed to it. The typical Augustinian narrative of ecstasy-and-rejection (based on Ps 30:23) describes, instead, a momentary vision of light, from a distance or dimly; the emphasis is always laid on the shortness of this experience, on the impossibility of “being at that light” and on being cast away from it. There is still an exception: unlike the soul who is not yet (*nondum*) at that “sublime something,” Saint Paul in his rapture was there (*iam ibi erat*) but was “called back to us.”⁴⁵⁸

The *De diligendo Deo* X, 27 of Bernard of Clairvaux may be a contemporary counter-example to Richard, with similarities and crucial dissimilarities. In contemplative ecstasy the soul forgets itself, becomes emptied of itself; the spirit will be united with God, the inordinate human will be destroyed and attuned to the divine will – all these elements are common in Bernard and Richard, even their example of fiery iron is identical. Beyond the similarities, however, two elements appear which are characteristic only to Richard. The body is entirely indifferent for him, and does not limit cognition in contemplation (at least he nowhere mentions it), while in the Augustinian tradition all cognition of God before receiving the glorified body is limited, even the immediate vision of God.⁴⁵⁹ The other, less obvious element is Richard’s epistemological description itself. Separating the cognitive and affective aspects of the soul *and* reserving cognition to the former only is a Victorine principle: but this principle makes an epistemological discourse about ecstatic contemplation possible (see Part I, Chapter 2). If the cognition of God (even the ecstatic one) happens through cognitive faculties, then the progress of contemplation can be described not only in theological but also in epistemological terms, as Richard’s case demonstrated. By contrast, those authors who attribute cognitive function to the affective aspect of the soul (like Bernard of Clairvaux, William of Saint-Thierry, Thomas Gallus and others) remain silent about the epistemology of ecstasy.

⁴⁵⁷ See Augustine, *De Trin* XIV, xvii-xviii, and XV, xi.

⁴⁵⁸ *Enarr in Ps* 37, 12: “alius psalmus dixit: *ego dixi in ecstasi mea: proiectus sum a facie oculorum tuorum*. Assumpta enim mente uidit nescio quid sublime, et quod uidit nondum ibi totus erat [...]. tale est nescio quid quod uidi in ecstasi, ut inde sentiam quam longe sum, qui nondum ibi sum. Iam ibi erat qui dixit assumptum se in tertium caelum, et ibi audiebat ineffabilia uerba, quae non licet homini loqui. sed reuocatus est ad nos, ut gerneret prius perficiendus in infirmitate” (PL 36: 403; note the expression *ut inde sentiam*).

⁴⁵⁹ This doctrine is emphasised in Bernard’s text, but it is also held by virtually anyone accepting the two-stage eschatology (including Hugh as well); see Part I, Chapter 1 (Augustine), and Part III, Chapter 2 (*raptus*).

II-3. Paul's rapture: the paradigm of ecstatic contemplation

Tropological exegesis was Richard's means to impart his doctrines of contemplation. Among the many Scriptural narratives that he uses to develop a doctrinal content, the narrative on Paul's rapture into the third heaven obtains a central place. The references to this event abound in his spiritual writings; the meanings given to the elements of the Scriptural narrative show coherence, and whenever he quotes 2Cor 12:2-4, Saint Paul's words constantly serve as testimonies of contemplation in *excessus mentis*. Such references are not restricted to a particular work or period of Richard: the *Benjamin minor*, the *Benjamin major*, the *De exterminatione mali et promotione boni* and the *Adnotatio in Ps 121* (all written in his middle period, 1159 to 1162) contain such references, like the late works *De IV gradibus violentae charitatis* and the prologue of the *De Trinitate* (1162-1173). These references make it clear that Richard fully identifies Paul's rapture and ecstatic contemplation: for him, Paul's rapture was contemplation – but, conversely, (ecstatic) contemplation is a rapture into the third heaven, too. The tropological interpretation of the rapture narrative makes the recorded historical event a possible spiritual event for the present: therefore both Paul and “those who are similar to him” (meaning the contemplatives) *are* caught up to the third heaven and receives revelations about those secrets that are not granted to man to utter.⁴⁶⁰ Richard's uncommon position on Paul's rapture (rare among his contemporaries and unthinkable a century later) is a consequence of his anthropological and exegetical premises.

Variations on three heavens

Like other Biblical *similitudines* in the works of Richard, the three heavens (and the rapture into the third heaven) have a versatile use with interconnected meanings, in almost all cases expounding doctrines of theological anthropology and epistemology.⁴⁶¹ Paul's rapture into the third heaven means in the *Benjamin minor* a rapture to the inaccessible light where God is (1Tim 6:16): this light is inaccessible through reason and human efforts.⁴⁶² Here Richard gives two variants of the theme of three heavens, one describing the subjects of cognition, another the ways of cognition of God.⁴⁶³ First the heavens mean “the dignity” of human, angelic and divine spirits (all possible subjects of cognition), where to the first heaven pertain the self-knowledge, to the third the contemplation of God. In the other allegory the three heavens refer to three degrees of the possible cognition of God in this life: seeing God through faith (which is below reason), through reason (*ratio*) and through contemplation (which is above reason). The motif of rapture connects both allegories, as no one can ascend to the third heaven – to the cognition of God and to contemplation – by his own power.

The *Benjamin major* set the motifs into a proper anthropological-epistemological context.⁴⁶⁴ The point of departure is the same as in the *Benjamin minor*: obtaining self-cognition is a necessary step before the cognition of God, and in order to be able to investigate the “depths of God” (1Cor 2:10) humans must first know the depths of the human spirit. Spiritual men enter the depths of the human soul and discover there “another world”: above the earth of corporeal sensation there are an imaginary heaven, a rational heaven and an intellectual heaven. Three heavens here mean cognitive faculties of Richard's anthropology (together with their subjects): the first heaven is imagination with images and *similitudines*; the second is reason with reasons, definitions and investigations; the

⁴⁶⁰ See Richard, *Bmaj* III, iv: “Nam, cum Paulus, vel Paulo similis, elevatur supra seipsum, rapitur usque ad tertium coelum, profecto arcana illa, quae non, licet homini loqui, non investigat per spiritum proprium sed revelat ei Deus per spiritum suum.” 114C = Aris 61.

⁴⁶¹ For an independent use of these elements, see *Adn in Ps 121* (365BD) and *Adn in Ps 2*.

⁴⁶² *Bmin* 74 (53A); cf. *De IV gradibus* 37 (1220D = ed. Dumeige, 165-167).

⁴⁶³ *Bmin* 74 (53AC = SC 419, 302-304).

⁴⁶⁴ See *Bmaj* III, 8-10 (118B-121B = ed. Aris 65-69).

third heaven is *intelligentia* with the “understandings and contemplations of divine things.”⁴⁶⁵ The analysis of the depths of the human spirit culminates in the exposition of the “eye of *intelligentia*” – the faculty which makes contemplation possible.⁴⁶⁶ After an elaborated allegory of heaven and sun, Richard concludes that the human soul, the image of the divine wisdom, is that watchtower or observation point (*specula*), from which the “sublimity of angelic spirits” and the “greatness of the divine spirit” can be cognised and contemplated (III, x). The same triad of human, angelic and divine spirit occurred already in *Benjamin minor* as three heavens, and it reappears in the same way in the prologue of *De Trinitate*.

These accounts read together give a more detailed composite allegory.⁴⁶⁷ The desired goal is to reach the third heaven, to which one must pass the first heaven of self-cognition. This is accomplished in *Benjamin major* III, ix where Richard describes (by the same allegory of three heavens), the elements of the self – including *intelligentia*, the faculty which makes such self-cognition possible. The already known self serves as observation point to investigate and contemplate the two other heavens: the angels and God. The allegories are interconnected in their ultimate level, as the various meanings attributed to the third heaven and rapture give one complex meaning: the “divine spirit,” God can be seen through contemplation by the working of the *intelligentia*.

In the structure of the *De IV gradibus* the rapture theme has a somewhat subordinated role besides the general pattern of four degrees of love, and is only partly elaborated.⁴⁶⁸ The first grade of love means a state when the soul perceives God’s presence in an affective state, tastes the sweetness, but does not see God, only through a mirror. The second grade means obtaining the grace of contemplation: in the evolving allegory of heavens, it means that the clarity of the Sun of Righteousness (Mal 4:2) can be seen but cannot be approached. The third grade of love is already explicitly identified with the third heaven (also by quoting 2Cor 12:2): in this grade both the deifying transformation in rapture and the union in spirit with God come about.

The prologue of the late *De Trinitate* gives, besides another variant of the ascension theme, a clue to Richard’s usage of rapture imagery.⁴⁶⁹ The rapture into the third heaven is here an allegory of an ascent through three phases (heavens) of moral-intellectual development, beginning with the consideration of the immortality of the soul, through acquisition of the angelic incorruptibility, through merits to the contemplation of God (which happens through the “Spirit of Christ,” in rapture). The introduction of this allegory reveals why Paul’s rapture is the central pattern for contemplation: Christ’s ascent to the heaven is the ultimate model, which was followed by Paul’s rapture. Richard even states that Christ ascended in order to be followed and sent his spirit to elevate us to him: the spiritual ascent in contemplation is the parallel to the corporeal ascent of Christ.⁴⁷⁰

Consequences of the tropological reading

⁴⁶⁵ *Bmaj* III, viii, 118D = Aris 66.

⁴⁶⁶ *Bmaj* III, 9: “Intelligentiae siquidem oculus est sensus ille, quo invisibilia videmus [...] intellectualis ille sensus invisibilia capit, invisibiliter quidem, sed praesentialiter, sed essentialiter” (119A = Aris 66).

⁴⁶⁷ Coulter sees in chapters III, ix-x certain ambiguity and confusion on behalf of Richard (*Per visibilia*, 48 note 96): “These chapters are somewhat difficult to interpret because Richard interchanges his terms quite frequently. It is clear from 3.8 [...] that he sees three dimensions (which he calls three heavens) within the person: imagination... reason... and understanding... It is also clear that Richard thinks the intellectual heaven is the highest point of person... The confusion comes when Richard identifies this place to find the kingdom of heaven also with the soul (*anima*).” In my opinion, there is not much of a confusion if one reads these passages along with the other occurrences of the same allegory (which Coulter obviously did not): the various occurrences explain different aspects of the same *similitudo*.

⁴⁶⁸ See *De IV gradibus* 35-38 (ed. Dumeige, 163-167 = 1219D-1221A).

⁴⁶⁹ See *De Trinitate*, prologus (889C-890C = ed. Ribaillier, 82-83).

⁴⁷⁰ *De Trinitate*, prologus: “Ascendamus post caput nostrum. Nam ad hoc ascendit in coelum ut provocaret, et post se traheret desiderium nostrum. Christus ascendit, et spiritus Christi descendit. Ad hoc Christus misit nobis Spiritum suum, ut spiritum nostrum levaret post ipsum, Christus ascendit corpore, nos ascendamus mente. Ascensio illius fuit corporalis, nostra autem sit spiritualis” (889D = ed. Ribaillier, 82).

The tropological-typological reading of the rapture narrative causes several uncommon consequences, and these consequences affect both Richard's doctrines and their afterlife. Tropological interpretation is basically atemporal and ahistorical, since it expresses anthropological and moral doctrines. The rapture narrative for Richard refers not to a unique historical case but to a potential experience: to the immediate contemplation of God in *excessus mentis* (or *alienatio mentis*), by a proper cognitive faculty called *intelligentia*. Augustine's theory was elaborated primarily for Paul's singular case – and the vague hints at “some saints” who had perhaps had that intellectual vision (besides Paul and Moses), with the constant emphasis on the invisibility of God in this life, all suggest that ecstatic intellectual vision, if not impossible, is a miracle (see Part I Chapter I). In contrast, for Richard the ecstatic contemplation, even if from a divine gift, is a possible and not unusual experience: those who are prepared for it may experience it in its time.⁴⁷¹

Another consequence of the tropological reading is that for Richard 2Cor 12:2-4 does not become the ultimate reference point for the ecstatic cognition of God. The rapture narrative merely describes an event through certain *similitudines* (the triple heaven and the ascent), but the same event is expressed in several other places of Scripture through other *similitudines* as well. The rapture narrative seems to be only the most prominent one of the several equivalent narratives describing the same.

Considered in itself, Richard's tropological interpretation of Paul's rapture gives a remarkably coherent interpretation that connects theological anthropology with the doctrine of contemplation. In this tropological reading Paul's rapture is not unique, not extraordinary: it is the pattern of the spiritual experience that used to happen to contemplatives. It is not a historical case, either: Paul's concrete rapture only set the example that happens to be repeated in contemplation. This usage of Paul's rapture narrative fitted well into the tropological exegesis of Richard. Surprisingly enough, Achard of Saint-Victor used the narrative in a similar (although less elaborate) way in his *Sermo XIV*. Such usage of the narrative seems to be unprecedented and unheard outside Saint-Victor. Thus, the very originality of this interpretation set it apart from the entire tradition both earlier and later.

The tropological interpretation of the rapture narrative must also be seen in a historical context.

In the twelfth century there existed neither an authoritative doctrine nor a universally accepted interpretation of Paul's rapture; the elaboration of the well-defined concept of *raptus* is an early thirteenth-century development (see Part III Chapter I). Richard's theory – which connects contemplation and ecstasy with the 2Cor 12 – is an individual theory: it has no direct parallel in the contemporary school theology (that is, the then flowering urban schools in Paris), or among monastic theologians except Victorine ones. In a world where the monastic/Scholastic division of theology still had meaning (before monastic theology entirely disappeared), Richard's interpretation was one of the many possible monastic interpretations, and it had neither authority nor influence outside the given monastery. The Scholastic interpretation was based on different principles (see Part III). Here I mention only those few points where the Scholastic and the Victorine interpretations were contrary to each other.

a) The meaning Richard gave to the rapture narrative was incompatible with the standard Augustinian position (which was adopted by Scholastic theology). The Scholastic interpretation of Paul's rapture was defined by a selective reading of the *De Gen. ad litt. XII* and *Letter 147*; these works regarded the rapture narrative as a reference to a historical, individual and exceptional event. Richard's tropological reading rendered Paul's rapture a non-historical, not unique and less than extraordinary case.

b) The tropological reading of 2Cor 12 itself was alien to Scholastic theology. The exegesis of the passage was based on mid-twelfth-century works, the *Glossa ordinaria* and the *Collectanea* of

⁴⁷¹ See, for example, *De differentia sacrificii*: “Miraris fortassis qui haec audis, quia nil in te tale adhuc experiris. Nescis quia omnia tempus habent” (1050C).

Peter Lombard: although these sources both provided multiple interpretations (including the Augustinian one), each of them explained the text as a historical and extraordinary event.

c) Richard's interpretation was comparatively unsystematic and exerted no influence, due to practical and institutional reasons. The Scholastic position emerged from a school tradition where the Biblical text was taught and discussed, and the discussions were based on commentaries on the Second Corinthians. Richard's interpretation had no coherent presentation, as it was dispersed in his spiritual writings – and these works never became part of the theological curriculum.

d) The Scholastic interpretation became authoritative. From the 1160s onwards, school-educated theologians *learned* the interpretations given by the two main commentaries, the *Glossa* (later called the *Glossa ordinaria*) and the *Collectanea*: instead of creating new interpretations of the Scriptural text, they produced mostly interpretations of the interpretations given by the commentaries. The validity of the Augustinian interpretation was not questioned rather it became the standard interpretation.

These differences clearly define the possible reception of Richard's theory. It was an original and individual theory – perhaps the most elaborate form of Victorine doctrines of theological anthropology – which connected the exegesis of Paul's rapture narrative with his own doctrines on contemplation. Thus, for the future Scholastic theology this theory remained invisible and unknown – which also means that the irreconcilable differences between the Scholastic theories and Richard's one remained hidden. Early thirteenth-century doctrinal developments resulted in the concept of Paul's *raptus*, the authorised church doctrine on Paul's rapture, which gave modern formulations to Augustine's concepts. Richard's theory did not develop further: it remained isolated – and, being based on different premises, was incompatible with the official doctrine. In other words, Richard's theory was unintelligible outside the intellectual milieu of Saint-Victor, since it was based on premises peculiar to that school; in the long run, as the authoritative theory emerged, it became unintelligible, since it was based on utterly different premises from the commonly accepted ones.

II-4. Attitudes towards contemplation

The richness of Richard's writings permits the investigation of his attitude towards contemplation. Attitude in itself is a subject that is certainly volatile: it is not so substantial as the doctrinal positions and it is usually expressed in asides and hints, if it is expressed at all. Attitude may be still a worthy subject to study, since it tells us something about the perception of the spiritual experiences (both the possible and the real ones). Based on anthropological premises, the attitude also shows the way in which theological anthropology defines and influences the spiritual life. In Richard's case, there are enough explicit statements to make a study into this (seemingly still uninvestigated) issue possible. Beyond giving another dimension to Richard's theories, such an investigation can bear two more results. To some extent it helps in understanding the spirituality of those other Victorines who had a similar doctrinal background but a less prominent attitude. Richard's case, at the same time, also reveals that his attitude – as an attitude deriving from a set of doctrines peculiar to one school of one period – substantially differ from what later became the accepted one. This difference can even influence the understanding of Richard's texts in the reception.

It is Richard's concept of *intelligentia* that basically defines his attitude towards contemplation. Richard's *intelligentia* (much as the *oculus contemplationis* was for Hugh) has no close parallel in other schools or authors of the period. It is an inborn cognitive faculty whose function is the cognition of the invisible realities, including God; its operation is precluded or proscribed, but can become operative again by grace – which also means that everyone is virtually predisposed to contemplation. Contemplation is a real possibility for Richard – and his positions on this issue paradigmatically differ from what is usual and traditional in Latin spirituality.

The best expression of Richard's attitude can be found in the *Adnotatio in Ps 113* where Richard remarks: the rational spirit is created to contemplate the divine things, and it is equally wondrous (*mirabile*) if it cannot or if it can do so. Then he elaborates on the act of wondering, outlining two attitudes belonging to two types of men: spiritual men wonder why the spirit could *not* fulfil its function; in contrast, carnal men wonder how it could do so.⁴⁷² It is obvious that Richard's position is that of the “spiritual men” – what is unusual is that Richard characterises the two attitudes by two Scriptural references. For the “carnal” attitude (that is, wondering over the spirit's capability of contemplation), the authority is Sap 9:15 (*corpus quod corrumpitur aggravat animam*); for the “spiritual” attitude (that is, wondering over the incapability), it is Rm 8:26 (*spiritus adjuvat infirmitatem nostram*). Both this opposition and the Scriptural authorities are remarkable. The Romans passage clearly illustrates the optimistic Victorine attitude, regarding a Spirit that helps weak humans. The other *locus*, used to epitomise the “carnal” attitude, is also telling. Sap 9:15 is a favourite authority of Augustine and the Augustinian tradition (including Bernard of Clairvaux) to express the consequences of the original sin. Augustine quotes the passage 51 times, Bernard of Clairvaux 20 times.⁴⁷³ In contrast, the same verse has no particular function either in Hugh or in Richard. In their authentic works (as included in the Patrologia edition), Hugh never quotes it, and Richard quotes it only once – in the present passage of *Adnotatio in Ps 113*.⁴⁷⁴

Other passages of the *Adnotatio in Ps 113* give more context to Richard's idea. He argues here with an analogy: as the “outer man” and the body can “go above itself” (when someone is jumping), so the “internal man” can also “go above itself” – and even if the possibility of a

⁴⁷² *Adn in Ps 113*: “Certe ad divina contemplananda spiritus rationalis creatus est, quid ergo miramur si hoc facere potest ad quod factus est, cum hoc solum mirandum videatur, si hoc facere non potest? Est tamen utrumque mirabile, et hoc posse, et ipsum non posse. Sed unum carnalibus, aliud spiritualibus. Posse mirabile, quia corpus quod corrumpitur aggravat animam, et terrena inhabitatio deprimit sensum multa cogitantem. Non posse mirabile, quia spiritus est qui adjuvat infirmitatem nostram” (339BC).

⁴⁷³ The statistics of Augustine and Bernard are based on the CETEDOC database. Most notable occurrences in Bernard are *De diligendo Deo* 13, *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 37 and 41.

⁴⁷⁴ The *Victorine Miscellanea* contains two instances of the *auctoritas*: III, liv and lxxviii.

contemplative ecstasy may be curious, its impossibility would be a far greater indignity. Richard also gives example of the right attitude regarding ecstasy. To the properly thinking person (*bene consideranti*), he writes, it is evident that being bound to corporeal realities is against the nature of the incorporeal spirit – as the spirit is “sentenced” to return from the material to itself and into the invisible realities. Richard’s concepts are remarkably unique, even among twelfth-century works (and quite unimaginable in any thirteenth-century one): he speaks about ecstatic contemplation of this life as the *natural* destination of the human spirit. Richard has a generally optimistic attitude: the possibility of that contemplative experience (the “spiritual jump”) cannot be understood by someone who has not experienced it *yet* and whose spirit cannot *yet* return to itself.⁴⁷⁵

Contemplation is not only a theoretical possibility for Richard: he also considers it as an event that “used to happen.” Since it has the anthropological background, this attitude in itself is not surprising; but compared to the way in which contemporary authors talked about such experiences, it is again unusual. Speculating about whether Richard himself had some “mystical experience” is rather irrelevant for the present investigations (since it adds nothing to the understanding of his texts); far more important is his general attitude towards such experiences. I digress here only to address two points so characteristic of Richard (and, I will argue later, of Victorine theological anthropology too): contemplation means a possible experience (and one that is not an exceptional case) – and it occurs not infrequently.

The opening lines of the *Benjamin minor* (I, i), addressing perhaps the novices of Saint-Victor (*adolescentuli*), speak of the contemplative experience as a reality. Here Richard addresses both those who know “Benjamin” (that is, ecstatic contemplation) from doctrines and those who do so by experience.⁴⁷⁶ The *Exiit edictum* speaks about witnessing the deification of the spiritual men (referring to the state of *unitas spiritus* in ecstasy).⁴⁷⁷ Another example is given by the same chapter of the *Benjamin major* (I, i) where he interprets the theme Mary and Martha (Lc 10), the classical locus to contrast contemplative and active forms of life. Richard here juxtaposes (or rather identifies) Mary’s experience and the contemplative’s one: Mary *saw* the Wisdom of God by understanding (*intelligendo videbat*); this “contemplation of the truth” begins in this life; this grace make one holy in this life (*sanctificamur*) and blessed after (*beatificamur*).⁴⁷⁸ “Seeing the truth” is

⁴⁷⁵ *Adn in Ps 113*: “Perpende ergo, si potes, qualis sit illa cordis gratulatio, quam vehemens exsultatio, quae cogit [...] in cordis tripudia quosdam quasi [0338D] saltus in superna et aeterna miris modis et multis inexpertis dare, et frequenter iterare. Respondes fortassis ad hoc voce Nicodemi: Quomodo possunt haec fieri? Esto, magnum, mirum et omnino stupendum hoc fieri posse, sed multo magis indignum hoc omnino facere non posse. Vide quam sit indignum quod exterior homo suos quosdam secundum modum suum saltus dare potest, et homo interior sui generis saltus, secundum modum sibi congruum penitus formare non potest. [...] [0339A] Miraris quod spiritualis creatura in spiritualibus se suspendere potest, et non potius miraris quod spiritus a non spiritualibus separari non potest? Siccine in oculis tuis desinit esse mirabile, quod bene consideranti pene videtur contra naturam esse, spiritum videlicet circa corporea tam fortiter, et pene inseparabiliter ligari, adeo ut ab eis vel ad modicum non possit avelli, et illud tibi minus, vel minime mirabile videtur, quod incorporea natura illud non potest, quod secundum naturam iudicatur a corporeis videlicet ad seipsam redire, et in suis, hoc est in incorporeis fixa stare. Sed illud, ut arbitror, idcirco non miraris, quia in teipso minime experiris. Sed si necdum potest spiritus tuus ad semetipsum redire, quando poterit supra [0339B] seipsum ire, et quales spirituale naturam decet saltus formando in divina transire? Quid est spiritus qui incorporeus est, ad se, vel in sua redire, nisi solam incorpoream creaturam, et quae circa ipsam sunt prae oculis habere? Quid est autem spiritum quasi dato saltu supra semetipsum ire, et in illam omnium creatricem naturam, et quae circa ipsam sunt oculum contemplationis figere?” 338C-339B. Emphases added.

⁴⁷⁶ *Bmin* i: “Audiant adolescentuli sermonem de adolescente [...] Quis sit Benjamin iste, multi noverunt, alii per scientiam, alii per experientiam. Qui per doctrinam noverunt audiant patienter; qui per experientiam didicerunt, audiant libenter.” 1A.

⁴⁷⁷ *Exiit edictum*: “Mirabile genus magnificentie, hominem humana transire. Cum autem videritis spiritalem quemcumque virum, non modo ab humano in supermundanum, sed, quod est mirabilius, a supermundano in statum quendam transire divinum, scitote quoniam mirificavit Dominus sanctum suum. Nonne vere mirificatur qui, ut sic dicam, deificatur? Quid de hac mirificentia dicitur, ubi adherens Deo, unus spiritus efficitur?” [cf. 1Cor 6] *Exiit*, 70. See also *B maj*. V, xii for similar terms: *status supermundanus* and another occurrence of 1Cor 6 in a similar sense, 182C.

⁴⁷⁸ *Bmaj* I, i: “Summam itaque Dei sapientiam in carne latitantem, quam oculis carnis videre non poterat, audiendo intelligebat, et intelligendo videbat, et in hunc modum sedendo et audiendo summae veritatis contemplationi vacabat. [...] veritatis contemplatio in hac vita inchoatur, sed in futura iugi perpetuitate celebratur. Per veritatis sane

the usual expression Richard applies to contemplation. Elsewhere, in the *Adn in Ps 113* and in the *De sacrificio Abrahae*,⁴⁷⁹ Richard emphasises that ecstatic contemplation is a real possibility that can be experienced – which may sound strange to the inexperienced who have not *yet* experienced it (*nondum* and *necdum* are his words).

Contemplative experiences (including even the highest form of ecstasy) are not only possible experiences but also “usual” events. When Richard talks about contemplation and related issues, he continuously refers to the experience (and the general possibility of such experiences), even without talking about his *own* personal experiences – and this is far more important from an anthropological point of view.⁴⁸⁰ This attitude becomes manifest if we observe how and how often he uses the words *solet* (“used to,” usually with a passive verb) and *saepe* (often) in the context of contemplation.⁴⁸¹ The various divisions of contemplation are justified with observations: visual representations *often* cannot be excluded from the mind;⁴⁸² the most different forms of contemplation *used to happen* (*fieri solet*) according to different patterns;⁴⁸³ some people *often* can see the “secrets of divine mysteries” through the eye of *intelligentia* in ecstasy;⁴⁸⁴ the *intelligentia* (under special circumstances) *often* learns about future events;⁴⁸⁵ some people *often* can rise to ecstasy through the doctrine learned from others.⁴⁸⁶

Richard’s attitude towards ecstatic contemplation (or “mystical experiences”) is optimistic and casual. It must be noted that this attitude is not self-evident in the Latin theology in the given period, either. A most notable counter-example is Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153). Although in his

contemplationem homo et eruditur ad iustitiam et consummatur ad gloriam. [...] O quam singularis gratia! O singulariter praeferenda per quam in praesenti sanctificamur et in futuro beatificamur!” Aris 6 = 65AB.

⁴⁷⁹ *De sacrificio Abrahae*: “Sopor itaque irruit, quando spiritualis quispiam repentino impetu in mentis alienationem transit. [...] Miraris fortassis qui haec audis, quia [1050C] nil in te tale adhuc experiris. Nescis quia omnia tempus habent. [...] Forte tibi nondum sol occubuit, necdum vanitatis amor defecit.” 1050BC.

⁴⁸⁰ Richard in the *Bmaj* V, i casts on himself the role of Beseleel, meaning that he can teach about ecstasy even without himself had had it.

⁴⁸¹ The more traditional attitude is also present in Richard, although seemingly rarely. In *Adn in Ps 113* he talks in the traditional terms: becoming similar to angels in ecstasy (the “jump”) is rare and short experience, a foretasting of heavenly joy among the calamities of this life: “Pensemus ergo, si possumus, cujus sit praerogativae, vel gratiae, quantae sit excellentiae, vel gloriae humanae infirmitatis industriam in illam angelicae jucunditatis celsitudinem similitudinis [0342D] cujusdam affinitate assurgere, et miris quibusdam et momentaneis contemplationis, vel speculationis suae saltibus illam quidem, quamvis raro et raptim et velut per mentis excessum attingere. O anima benedicta, o vere beata et multum glorificanda, cui datum est desuper mirificis illis cherubin et seraphin gaudiis sub hoc peregrinationis suae tempore, vel ad modicum interesse, beatificas illas internae et aeternae dulcedinis delicias degustare, et sub hujus miserae carnis fatigatione, de illa immensitatis plenitudine primitias quasdam accipere.” 342CD. This traditional rhetorics is somewhat contrary of the text which earlier established not only the categories of contemplatives and speculatives but also emphasised the natural character of ecstasy.

⁴⁸² *Bmin* vi: “Hinc est quod saepe dum psallimus vel oramus, phantasias cogitationum vel quaslibet imagines rerum ab oculis cordis amovere volumus, nec valemus.” 5D.

⁴⁸³ “Audi de illo contemplationis modo qui quodammodo fieri solet ante et retro” *Bmaj* I, v; “alia solet per imaginationem repraesentare, et alia ratiocinando colligere. Itemque, sicut illud inferius duorum mediorum solet infra simplicem intelligentiam descendere atque subsistere, sic illud inferius infimorum duorum solet se ad rationem habere. Nam et illud inferius infimorum duorum solet se ad rationem habere. [...] Solent tamen haec quae distinximus contemplationum genera quandoque invicem permisceri.” I, ix, 74D/75A; “Ex hac sane specula quasi e vicino valet et solet videri qualis sit illa sublimitas spiritus angelici.” III, x, 121A; “Et fit saepe (quod omnes novimus) ut in nostra gratia nosmetipsos aestimatione, vel dilectione modum tenere nesciamus.” IV, ix, 144C; “His itaque tribus modis omnis contemplatio solet contingere, mentis dilatatione, mentis sublevatione, mentis alienatione. [...] Ille autem contemplationis modus qui fit mentis dilatatione tribus solet gradibus excrescere, arte, exercitatione, attentione.” V, ii, iii, 171CD.

⁴⁸⁴ “Puto siquidem quia divinarum revelationum consolatio non omnino peregrina erit eis eis qui divinarum sacramentorum arcana [...] intelligentiae oculo assidue contemplando et per mentis excessum saepe videndo, desiderio suo satisfacere [0164B] non possunt?” IV, xxi, 164A.

⁴⁸⁵ “In hac mentis sublevatione humana intelligentia, saepe illam divinarum iudiciorum abyssum ingreditur, et ad futurorum etiam, uti jam dictum est, praescientiam eruditur.” *Bmaj* IV, xii, 148A.

⁴⁸⁶ “Quidam autem ad eandem gratiam ex aliena traditione magis quam proprio mentis acumine proficiunt qui tamen in suis contemplationibus [0169B] saepe usque ad mentis excessum assurgunt.” V, i, 169A.

psychological and theological descriptions of contemplative ecstasy Bernard uses largely the same concepts as Richard does, his attitude towards such events stands in striking contrast to what Richard displays. Bernard's accounts emphasise the extraordinary and exclusive nature of this experience. It can occur only to the contemplatives, and only to some of them; it occurs rarely, and the experience lasts only a short time.⁴⁸⁷ The miraculous nature of the event is explicit: "I would call saint and blessed that one to whom this experience was imparted in this life even once," he writes. Descriptions of ecstasy are similar in many respects in Bernard and Richard, but their attitudes towards it and the prestige that they attribute to that event do differ.⁴⁸⁸ The differences can be explained with their different theological anthropologies. For Bernard the human condition is substantially a fallen state without ties to the original state, where (due to the Fall) man has lost his proper cognitive faculty to cognise God. Consequently, ecstasy works against the conditions of the present state; it is extraordinary and is also described as an extraordinary and accidental event. In contrast, Richard assumes a certain continuity with the original state: the Fall has not destroyed but only hindered the faculty that cognises God. In this setting, the same ecstatic contemplation is not extraordinary: it is "ordinary" since ecstasy is the functional operation of the regained faculty. It must be emphasised again: Richard and Bernard use largely the same theological and psychological terms to describe the ecstasy (both conceive even its ultimate phase as a transformation to Christ) – but their positions concerning the event are contradictory: for Bernard it is a rare, extraordinary and unusual event, while for Richard it is an ordinary and usual event that used to happen. This difference points well beyond itself. Richard can represent the other Victorines (as will be demonstrated) who shared similar anthropological premises. Bernard's attitude is characteristic for those who followed late Augustinian principles – which means the vast majority of later Latin theologians.⁴⁸⁹ The distance between the two attitudes can be measured with reference to the remark of Pierre Pourrat, the early twentieth-century historian of mysticism (the first sentences paraphrase Richard):⁴⁹⁰

The gift of ecstasy is bestowed very unequally among fervent souls. With some the ecstatic phenomena are most rare [...]. Others experience them almost at will. I am inclined to think that on this last point Richard somewhat exaggerates. Is not ecstasy a state to which we are unable to attain by our own effort?

⁴⁸⁷ The most explicit and coherent texts on contemplative ecstasy are *De diligendo Deo* X, 27 and *De gratia et libero arbitrio* V, 15. The first one also emphasises (besides the rarity and shortness of the experience) the spiritual "prestige" given by it (*felix, beatus, sanctus*): "27 Felix qui meruit ad quantum usque pertingere, quatenus nec seipsum diligit homo nisi propter Deum. [...] Quando huiusmodi experitur affectum, ut divino debriatus amore animus, oblitus sui [...] totus pergit in Deum et, adhaerens Deo, unus cum eo spiritus fiat [...]. Beatum dixerim et sanctum, cui tale aliquid in hac mortali vita raro interdum, aut vel semel, et hoc ipsum raptum atque unius vix momenti spatio, experiri donatum est. Te enim quodammodo perdere [...] et paene annullari, caelestis est conversationis, non humanae affectionis Et si quidem e mortalibus quispiam ad illud raptum interdum, ut dictum est, et ad momentum admittitur, subito [...] fraterna revocat caritas." SBO III, 142 = PL 182: 990BD. See also *De gratia et libero arbitrio* V, 15: "An tamen fatendum est eos, qui per excessum contemplationis rapti quandoque in Spiritu, quantulumcumque de supernae felicitatis dulcedine degustare sufficiunt, toties esse liberos a miseria, quoties sic excedunt? Hi plane, quod negandum non est, etiam in hac carne, raro licet raptimque complaciti libertate fruuntur [...] experiuntur utique quod futurum est. Sed quod futurum est felicitas est [...] Itaque in hac vita soli contemplativi possunt utcumque frui libertate complaciti, et hoc ex parte, et parte satis modica, viceque rarissima." SBO III, 177 = PL 182: 1018AB.

⁴⁸⁸ In the two cases the psychological and theological description are largely the same, using the same terms and concepts (*alienatio mentis, excessus contemplationis, oblivio sui, unitas spiritus*), although Bernard (unlike Richard) has no epistemological description for ecstasy, and both assume that ecstasy is restricted only to the "contemplatives."

⁴⁸⁹ Similar passages could be quoted, for example, from William of Saint-Thierry. The standard model of Scholastic theological anthropology (which became institutional in the early thirteenth century) was also based on Augustinian principles (see the Introduction of Part III). The most manifest example to this attitude will be then the separation of "extraordinary" cases: into *raptus* (an extraordinary and supernatural miracle), affective union with God (a less-extraordinary, rare but positively possible experience) and contemplation (common and intellectual understanding).

⁴⁹⁰ Pierre Pourrat, *Christian spirituality*, vol. 2 (London: Burns Oates and Washbourne, 1924), 128. Pourrat gives here a reference to *Bmaj* IV, xxiii.

III. Contemplation as face-to-face vision? A case study

Richard's texts on contemplation have an inherent problem that escaped the attention of most of his readers. The problem can be outlined briefly thus. In a handful of passages (detailed below), Richard connects the contemplative ecstasy with the face-to-face vision of God (cf. 1Cor 13:12). Sometimes he calls the ecstatic contemplation of this life a *face-to-face* vision of God; in other cases, he calls it a *quasi-face-to-face* vision. The context of these accounts is unambiguous, because Richard speaks about contemplation of this life; at the same time, the *face-to-face* vision has clear eschatological connotations. Relatively few authors recognised the problem these passages bear – namely, that the relation of the contemplative cognition of God and the face-to-face vision is at least ambiguous in Richard. Does Richard state that contemplative ecstasy can result in a face-to-face vision of God – an experience attributed traditionally to the Blessed, and in some cases to Saint Paul? Or, more generally: What is the ultimate degree of the cognition of God in this life, according to Richard? What does he mean by the unusual Scriptural terms applied to contemplative ecstasy?

Interestingly, the most recent studies that deal extensively and exclusively with Richard's theory about contemplation are unaware of this problem. Aris' commentary on the *Benjamin major*, although it often paraphrases the text, entirely overlooks the question. Chase's work does not grasp the problem either: his position, if I understand his obscure and rhetorical words properly, is that the ultimate level of contemplative experience is seeing and experiencing God in itself and "participating the presence of God." Chase is obviously unaware of the theological associations of seeing God *face to face*, or to the fact that he practically attributes to contemplation a *per essentiam* vision of God.⁴⁹¹ Coulter's chapter dedicated to Richard's contemplative doctrines does not address the issue; at other passages, he seemingly takes some of Richard's words on their assumed nominal value, and attributes a face-to-face vision to contemplation, meaning the vision of the divine nature.⁴⁹² Both interpretations are problematic: none of them is aware that there is a traditional conceptual distinction between the eschatological and the contemplative vision of God, or that there exists a traditional doctrine stating that no one can see God in this life. None studied Richard's position on the eschatological vision of God, or investigated closely those statements where Richard uses these charged terms. Practically both interpretations is based on the tacit assumption that if Richard mentions a face-to-face vision in contemplation, it must be the face-to-face vision of God as in the blessed state – although Richard speaks more often of a vision of the Truth, rather than a vision of God.

Other, mostly earlier authors (perhaps more familiar with the Catholic tradition before the Second Vatican Council) were far more sensitive to the problem, even if their interpretations of Richard's position diverge. Johannes Beumer seems to be the most neutral (1956): he simply and soberly admits that the relation between the contemplative vision and the eschatological vision of God are not defined in Richard.⁴⁹³ Other authors also sensed this problem but tried to solve it.

⁴⁹¹ See Chase, *Angelic Wisdom*: "To see, to comprehend, to experience God in God's true self, the contemplative must be clothed in angelic clothing," 89; "The journey progresses [...] into the midst of the cherubim [...]. There the journey has the potential to begin again, 'ending' in an ever-deepening consciousness of the presence of God." 96. "Through knowledge [...] and virtue we attend to the presence of God. [...] Angelized, without meditation, we participate in God's presence born in the soul." 125.

⁴⁹² Coulter, *Per visibilia*, "Chapter III. Navigating the Invisible World," *Per visibilia*, 125-171. See also Coulter on the face-to-face vision: "It may well be that *De Trinitate* represents the culminating vision of Richard's journey to know God and see God face to face.... His analysis of the Trinity represents the fruit of a mind moving from *speculatio* to *contemplatio* and, finally, in the suspended awe of contemplative vision, gazing into the beauty of the divine nature." 35; "One must keep in mind that he uses the term *contemplatio* in several different ways to refer to the contemplative life, contemplation as it differs from meditation, and contemplative vision, which involves seeing God face to face." 36; "the soul... dedicates itself to the pursuit of seeing God face to face, which occurs primarily through *alienatio mentis* and forms the ultimate goal of contemplative ascent." 160.

⁴⁹³ As Beumer writes, "Der Einfluß der Theologie auf die Mystik sollte sich bei Richard, so möchte man wenigstens von vorneherein annehmen, zumal darin zeigen, daß er das *Verhältnis der höchsten contemplatio zu der unmittelbaren*

Joseph Ebner (1917) understood contemplation as quasi-face-to-face vision, beyond the mirrored vision of reason. The contemplation as quasi-face-to-face vision still uses images (*bildhafte Schauung*), but the *real* (that is, eschatological) face-to-face vision is direct and takes place without images. This cognition knows God in his own form, *per speciem*.⁴⁹⁴

According to Kulesza (1924), contemplation means the cognition of the cause without the influence of the effects, in the light of Wisdom – which is usually impossible. This is the reason why Richard adds *per mentis excessum* to the account of *Benjamin major* IV. 11, *ille quasi... facie ad faciem intetur, qui per mentis excessum extra semstipsum ductus... non per speculum in aenigmate* (PL 196: 147B). At the same time, Kulesza thinks that Richard does not admit the possibility of a *per essentiam* vision in contemplation: he argues that Richard does not speak directly about a perception of God in his essence; the cognition of God in the contemplation does not mean the perception of the divine essence (neither in the fifth nor in the sixth contemplation).⁴⁹⁵

In contrast, according to Javelet (1961), contemplation for Richard is a direct vision of God, and it does correspond to face-to-face vision.⁴⁹⁶

According to Reyers, Richard expressed the summit of contemplation as a *per speciem* vision of God, which the perfect souls can reach. This is the vision, using the words of *Adn in Ps* 2, “quando in propria substantia sicuti est facie ad faciem cernitur.”⁴⁹⁷

Trottmann thinks that contemplation attains God himself – but there is an insurmountable opposition between *via* and *patria*, because there is an obstacle for the vision, which is the original sin rather than the incapacity of the intellect.⁴⁹⁸

Gottesschau des Jenseits klar bestimmte. Leider enttäuscht er uns in dieser Hinsicht.” He even admits that “[Richard’s] Vorstellungen über die Vollkommenheit der mystischen Beschauung sind theologisch nicht sehr exakt.” See Johannes Beumer, “Richard von Sankt Viktor, Theologe und Mystiker.” *Scholastik* 31 (1956): 213-238, here 230 and 231.

⁴⁹⁴ “Diese [= die Erkenntnis der Kontemplation] ist vorhanden, wenn sie das durch göttliche Erleuchtung begnadigte Auge der Intelligenz auf die Objekte des Glaubens richtet. Sie steht auch über der bloß verstandesmäßigen Erkenntnis, die Gott nur wie im Spiegel erfaßt; sie eine Erkenntnis “non per speculum, sed in simplici veritate” [147B], aber weil sie doch immerhin noch eine bildhafte Schauung bleibt, so ist sie nur eine Erkenntnis “quasi facie ad faciem” [*ibid.*]. Die kontemplative Gotteserkenntnis ist aber noch nicht die höchste überhaupt, sondern sie wird noch übertroffen von der unmittelbaren Schauung von Gottes (*a facie ad faciem*). Diese ist bildlose Erkenntnis durch seine eigene Form (*per speciem*) [271A], unmittelbare Erfahrungserkenntnis, die nur den Seligen zuteil wird. [890D]” Joseph Ebner, *Die Erkenntnislehre Richards von Sankt Viktor* (BGPTM 19/4) (Münster: Aschendorff, 1917), 72. Here and in the following notes I give in brackets the references to Richard given by the authors in footnotes.

⁴⁹⁵ Kulesza, *La doctrine*, 27. His criticism against Ebner: “Bref, si l’on voit la cause dans son effet, on a la vision ‘per speculum.’ Au contraire, dans la contemplation on voit la lumière de la Souveraine Sagesse sans aucun voile, sans l’obscurissement des figures, dans la simple vérité, en un mot: sans aucune inférence des effets à la cause. Mais à l’ordinaire ce mode de connaissance n’existe pas, et c’est pour cela que Richard précise sa pensée, en ajoutant les mots: ‘per mentis excessum.’ [147B]” *La doctrine*, 23.

⁴⁹⁶ Robert Javelet, “L’extase au XIIe siècle”: “La contemplation est au delà du raisonnement; en soi, elle est vision directe de Dieu et correspond au «face à face». Les étapes intermédiaires (où la raison peut encore oeuvrer), même englobées par le vocable extensif de contemplation, ne sont que *speculatio*. Cette *speculatio* suit la hiérarchie des êtres. Elle va à la contemplation «per *speculum* in aenigmate», elle correspond à la *sublevatio* et même à la première phase de l’extase (revelata facie, speculantes).” DS 4/2: 2113-2120, here 2118-2119.

⁴⁹⁷ Léonce Reyers, “Connaissance mystique de Dieu, jalons jusqu’au douzième siècle”: “Pourtant Richard met expressément au sommet de la contemplation une vision de Dieu *per speciem*, à laquelle les parfaits seuls arrivent, quelquefois et avec peine (PL 196, 148D). En regard de la première connaissance mystique, où le contemplatif *de spelunca velata facie prospexit* (146C), il est sorti ici de la caverne à la rencontre de Dieu: ‘quasi facie ad faciem intetur qui per mentis excessum extra seipsum ductus, summae sapientiae lumen *sine aliquo involucre*, figurarumque adumbratione, denique *non in speculo in aenigmate*, sed simplici ut ita dicam veritate contemplatur’ (147AB; cf. 146D, et *Adnotationes mysticae in Ps* 113, 341D-342A). C’est la contemplation *per speciem*, ‘quando in propria substantia sicuti est facie ad faciem cernitur’ (*ibidem*, 271A).” DS 5: 888-892.

⁴⁹⁸ Trottmann: “selon Richard de Saint Victor (†1173) la contemplation atteint Dieu même. Pourtant elle reste toujours voilée et ne parvient à sa perfection que dans la vision béatifique réservée à l’autre vie [cf. PL 196, 147AB, 899D, 119D-120B]. Elle comporte également une dimension affective qui prolonge la capacité de l’intellect. L’opposition entre *via* et *patria* reste toutefois insurmontable, peut-être parce que l’obstacle à la vision de Dieu dans cette perspective qui reste augustinienne et moins l’incapacité naturelle de l’intellect que le péché originel.” See Christian Trottmann, *La vision béatifique des disputes scholastiques à sa définition par Benoît XII*, 98-99 (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1995).

These interpretations disagree greatly, and some even exclude others; interestingly, they are based largely on the same few passages of Richard (four places of *Benjamin major* and one of the *Adnotatio in Ps 2*). The confusion of the scholars is understandable: on the one hand, Richard applies the terms of vision to contemplation, and he generally emphasises the immediacy of the ecstatic contemplation – in this sense, Javelet and Reyers state what Coulter and Chase stated in a naive and unreflected way: contemplation is a face-to-face vision of God. On the other hand, Kulesza and Ebner are consistent with the traditional doctrine stating that an immediate vision of God (or, since the thirteenth century, *per essentiam* vision) is impossible in contemplation. All these interpretations perceive the problematic nature of Richard's texts (and are therefore more reflective than Chase and Coulter), but even doing so, they fall into the same methodological errors. They all elaborate one or other side of a false (and also basically anachronistic) dilemma, discussing whether contemplation may be a face-to-face vision or not – but they fail to investigate the meaning of the term “face-to-face vision” for Richard.

A consideration of the various positions of the literature makes it obvious that Richard's theological doctrines on contemplation are not self-evident – hence, his assumed doctrines depend greatly on the interpreter's own preconceptions. If a precise doctrinal-historical understanding is our aim, following the unreflected way of interpretation (as the literature does) is fruitless: it is anachronistic (since the thirteenth-century concepts define it) and leads ultimately to theological statements and speculation. Richard's position evidently cannot be understood through concepts created later than his period. Unfortunately, no contemporary parallels help in its understanding either. The last resort is, to put simply, to reread Richard's own text, with more care than usual.

An observation made by Poirel and Sicard may serve as a good hint where to start: they state that for Hugh and Richard, the Scriptural passage 1Cor 13:12 *videmus nunc per speculum... tunc autem facie ad faciem* has a substantially different meaning than for their contemporaries. To most medieval authors, the *locus* underlines the opposition between the eschatological (beatific) vision and the present cognition of God (through the “mirror” of the creatures), but the two Victorines interpret the two forms of vision (*per speculum* and *facie ad faciem*) as referring to two forms of contemplation *in this life*, one being the contemplation of the creatures (or speculation), the other the contemplation of God (even if the latter is confused, they think, with the beatific vision).⁴⁹⁹ Their observation points out a special problem missed by others – the problem of theological language itself.

Above I argued that so far no detailed and consistent explanation was given on what Richard meant by contemplation as a (quasi-) face-to-face vision. In order to understand the meaning of the expression, a different methodology must be followed. The most plausible beginning is to start with a hermeneutical observation: the expression “seeing face to face” is a *similitudo* itself. Consequently, it can be understood only if it is read as a *similitudo*. First I review those passages which drew the attention of scholars and give them a different reading; then using parallel texts I argue for an interpretation of the term “seeing face to face.”

Contemplation and face-to-face vision: the discussed passages

Only a few scholars (mostly Ebner, Reyers and Kulesza) sensed the theological problem in Richard's doctrine on contemplation. Unfortunately, when they tried to determine whether Richard identified contemplation with a face-to-face vision of God, they based their argumentation on an unusually narrow textual basis. This basis consists mostly of a passage from the *Adnotatio in Ps 2*

⁴⁹⁹ Sicard and Poirel (“Figure vittorine,” 475): “I contemporanei intendevano questo passo [...] come riferito alla distinzione tra la conoscenza di Dio su questa terra attraverso lo specchio delle creature, e la sua visione nell'aldilà beatifico. In Ugo e Riccardo, il versetto paolino serve a distinguere due generi di contemplazione, quella delle creature come riflesso del Creatore, e quella del creatore, o contemplazione propriamente detta, il cui il carattere diretto e immediato, tuttavia mai confuso con la visione beatifica, espresso dal *facie ad faciem*. *Nunc* e *tunc* si applicano allora rispettivamente alla contemplazione dei principianti (o speculazione) e a quella dei perfetti.”

and three others from the *Benjamin major*: namely, the epistemological allegory of the triple heaven (III, viii-x); an angelological text using the term *facie ad faciem* (IV, vii) and a narrative of Abraham's vision at Mambre, when he saw God in form of three men (IV, xi). Since the term *facie ad faciem* appears in all these passages, scholars tried to give meaning to Richard's words in conjunction with their interpretation of 1Cor 13:12; the result is various and contradictory interpretations. I try here to give an evaluation and a more coherent interpretation than theirs.

a) *Adnotatio in Ps 2*

The *Adnotatio in Ps 2* originates from a collection called *Tractatus super quosdam psalmos*; it was written supposedly between 1159 and 1162.⁵⁰⁰ The author uses the allegory of the triple heaven, a motif based on the rapture narrative of Saint Paul (2Cor 12). The first heaven is the believers (collocated above the earth of faithless people); the second heaven is the "dignity of spiritual men," and the third heaven is the "sublimity of the angels." God can be seen in the first heaven only by faith, in the second by faith and contemplation, and in the third heaven face to face. Seeing God by contemplation means seeing the already believed tenets with the eyes of *intelligentia*, through divine inspiration. Seeing God *per speciem* is described with the usual eschatological *loci*: *sicuti est* (1Jn 3:2), *facie ad faciem* (1Cor 13:12), and *in propria substantia*.⁵⁰¹ For Ebner the third heaven refers to the direct vision of God, which is assigned only to the blessed; he interprets it as a cognition of God without images, in his own form (*per speciem*). In contrast, Reypers sets the passage into the context of other passages of Richard, and interprets this face-to-face vision as the summit of the contemplation.

The two interpretations are not only contradictory but also insufficient. Although in the language of the twelfth-century theology *per speciem* and *facie ad faciem* vision are usually terms describing the vision of the blessed souls (opposed to *videre per speculum in aenigmate*), here the eschatological context is missing: there is no mention of blessed souls (just angels and spiritual men of earthly life). The text also clearly distinguishes contemplation (as work of inspiration and *intelligentia*) and face-to-face vision – this distinction is uncharacteristic of Richard, who often connects these two notions. A closer inspection of the *Adn in Ps 2* reveals such conceptual, terminological and philological problems that question the Ricardian authorship of the text.

Even a cursory reading of the text reveals a number of ambiguities. In his authentic works, Richard (a) never makes a clear distinction between contemplation and eschatological vision, and (b) regularly applies the term (*quasi*) *facie ad faciem* to contemplative vision and not only to the eschatological one (even if contemplation is an immediate vision of truth through *intelligentia*). The three heavens is an often used allegory of Richard, but most of its other occurrences give (c) a coherent composite allegory where the third heaven refers to (ecstatic) contemplation in this life, while the allegory of *Adn in Ps 2* is incompatible with that meaning.⁵⁰² The idea of "seeing God by faith" is alien to Richard (d): the basic categories of his theology, *speculatio* and *contemplatio*

⁵⁰⁰ Dating of Cacciapuoti; the *Adn in Ps 113* was not part of this collection: see Cacciapuoti, *Deus existentia*, 74-75.

⁵⁰¹ *Adn in Ps 2*: "Quod est inter coelum et terram, hoc interest inter fidelem et infidelem, et possumus quemlibet perfectum dicere coelum propter fidem. Huic tamen coelo supereminet aliud coelum, [0271A] dignitas scilicet spiritualium virorum, cui tamen superfertur tertium sublimitas, videlicet angelorum. In primo itaque videtur per solam utique fidem; in secundo autem videtur etiam per contemplationem; in tertio vero cernitur facie ad faciem. Per fidem eum videmus, quando illa quae de eo scripta sunt firmiter credimus. Per contemplationem autem eum cernit, qui in eo quod de illo prius credidit, ex inspiratione divina intelligentiae oculos figit. Per speciem vero videtur, quando in propria substantia sicuti est facie ad faciem cernitur. Verumtamen quocunque modo videatur, non tamen videtur nisi in coelo. Nam in primo, ut diximus, per fidem; in secundo coelo per contemplationem; in tertio vero videtur per speciem." 271A.

⁵⁰² Richard used the allegory of three heavens several times in tropological-anagogical meaning: *Adn in Ps 121* (365B-366C), *Bmin 74* (53AC), *Bmaj III*, viii (118), *De IV gradibus* (1219D), and *De Trinitate* (890AD). For Hugh's interpretation of heaven, see *In Ecclesiasten XI* and *XII* (PL 175: 184 and 191CD).

(repeated throughout his writings), are based on a different principle. The expression *per speciem* (used twice by the *Adnotatio* and derived from 2Cor 5:7) is not a characteristic term of Richard, either (e): his authentic works printed in the PL 196 use it only four times, and in a different sense.⁵⁰³ Finally, (f) the very distinction of seeing *per fidem*, *per contemplationem*, *per speciem* is generally alien to Richard's thinking (as the reasons above may indicate), but curiously, the same distinction can be found in the *Sermo XIX* of Walther of Saint-Victor (see the subsequent chapter).⁵⁰⁴ These problems, although they cannot be investigated here in further detail, make it clear that the doctrines of the *Adnotatio in Ps 2* are inconsistent with Richard's authentic works – thus it can be disregarded until philological research solves the question of its authorship.

b) Angels face to face: *Benjamin major IV*, vii

The beginning of *Benjamin major IV*, vii is one of those few places where Richard's unwritten angelology appears.⁵⁰⁵ The allegorical context is the formation of the Ark's Cherubim in the soul (meaning attaining the fifth and sixth contemplations). Here Richard says that the contemplative shall imitate the highest order of the angels, the order that sees God immediately, face to face, without a mirror or enigma. The English translation by Zinn gives that as "contemplation... sees face to face," and Chase argues on its basis for a face-to-face vision in contemplation.⁵⁰⁶ The Latin text does not support this position. Grammatically it is not the contemplation (or the contemplative) who sees face to face but the highest angelic order, that is, those angels are who immediately adhere to the highest light, and whom the contemplative must imitate. The mistake is still understandable: the same terms that describe the angels' vision elsewhere are applied to the contemplative's experience (III, xi).

c) Abraham at Mambre: *Benjamin major IV*, xi

In *Benjamin major IV*, xi the term "seeing face to face" appears twice. This chapter, as discussed above, deals with the attitudes towards contemplation through the figures of Elijah and Abraham, the former meaning the state of inspiration and the latter the contemplative ecstasy.

The first occurrence of the term bears a traditional meaning. The soul dedicated to contemplation must ardently wait for the end of life, because then it may see face to face what in

⁵⁰³ See *Bmin* xv, 11A (*per speciem* opposed to *per similitudinem*); lxxii, 51D (a direct quotation from 2Cor 5:7 opposing *per fidem* and *per speciem*); in *Benjamin major I*, vi it describes the direct cognition of the *intelligentia* ([*intelligentia*] *quasi per speciem contemplatur*, 72A), and in the *De Trinitate V*, vi it refers indirectly to contemplation: "Rerum ergo visibilium similitudine pro scala utamur, ut quae in semetipsis per speciem videre non valemus, ex ejusmodi specula, et velut per speculum videre mereamur [...] Oportet itaque ex hac natura se ad illam contemplationis speculam erigere, et juxta dictam considerationem quid ibi sit, vel quid ibi non sit, proportionem similitudinis, vel dissimilitudinis cum summa diligentia investigare." 952D/953B.

⁵⁰⁴ To add another problem, Thomas Gallus attributes the *Quare fremuerunt gentes* (that is, the *Adn in Ps 2*) to Richard: see Part III, Chapter 3.

⁵⁰⁵ *Bmaj IV*, vii: "Hinc [...] facile perpenditur quanta superexcellenciae praerogativa hujus novissimi operis dignitas praedicta caetera supergreditur, quae supremae illius hierarchiae in angelis *archangelicam sublimitatem* [...] imitatur. Cogita, obsecro, cujus sit excellentiae illius ordinis in se similitudinem per imitationem trahere, qui summae claritati immediate adhaeret, qui facie ad faciem, et sine speculo, et sine aenigmate videt. Quale, quaeso, est quod intelligentia humana quotidie ad illos supercoelestium animorum theoricos excessus nititur [...]?" (140D, identical with *Aris 92*; emphases added) The grammatical structure *illius ordinis... qui* is unambiguous.

⁵⁰⁶ In Zinn's translation (*The twelve*, 267): "Think, I beg you, of how excellent it is when, through the imitation of those orders of celestial beings which adhere without mediation to the highest light, contemplation draws a similitude into itself and sees face to face and without a mirror and without enigma." Quoted by Chase, *Angelic Wisdom*, 125.

this life it has seen only through a mirror and in an enigma.⁵⁰⁷ The meaning of seeing *per speculum/facie ad faciem* here is the traditional one: the terms by means of which Richard characterises this life – *interim* (“in the meantime”), *ergastulum* (prison or workhouse) and *peregrinatio* (wandering) – each are common enough terms for this life. The next passage is more ambiguous, as its three different interpretations attest. The text is as follows:⁵⁰⁸

Sed ille quasi de tabernaculo in advenientis Domini occursum egreditur, egressus autem quasi facie ad faciem [0147B] intuetur, qui per mentis excessum extra semetipsum ductus, summae sapientiae lumen sine aliquo involucro, figurarumve adumbratione, denique non per speculum et in aenigmate, sed in simplici, ut sic dicam, veritate contemplatur.

[But that one who goes out from the tent, as it were, running to meet the Lord who approaches, sees face to face after having gone out. So he who has been led outside of himself by ecstasy of mind contemplates the light of highest wisdom without any covering or shadow of figures and finally not by a mirror and in an enigma but in simple truth, so to speak.]

The interpretations of the passage diverge considerably and even contradict each other.

- 1) In Ebner’s interpretation “contemplation” here means an intermediate cognition between the vision of blessed souls (*facie ad faciem* vision) and the common cognition (*per speculum* vision). It is a *quasi facie ad faciem* vision (that is, not a real face-to-face vision), because it uses images.
- 2) In Kulesza’s interpretation the *per speculum* vision means the cognition of God through the created world (in his Scholastic terms, cognition of the “cause” through the “effect”); contemplation means cognition of God *not* from the created world (that is, not from the “effect”), and the expressions *sine aliquo involucro, figurarumve adumbratione* describes the difference of this cognition and the cognition from the effects. Kulesza allows that contemplation can see the light of Wisdom, but this is generally impossible (which Richard marks by adding *per mentis excessum*).
- 3) In Reyers’ interpretation contemplation is a face-to-face vision of God when, quoting *Adn in Ps 2*, in *propria substantia sicuti est facie ad faciem cernitur*.

Contemplation for Richard obviously cannot be a vision of the divine essence and a non-vision of it. This contradiction in the assumed meaning(s) of the passage reveals a common weakness of the interpretations. While all focus on the emerging term of Cor 13:12, the face-to-face vision of God, and assume that it has the fairly standard theological meaning (namely the eschatological vision of God, formulated as a vision of the divine essence from the thirteenth century onward), all miss a key element that ought to be obvious. The next sentence of the text (discussed in a previous section) addresses the problem of creating *similitudines* in order to express invisible realities cognised in ecstasy. The entire narrative (involving Abraham and the contemplative) must be read as a *similitudo*: Abraham’s narrative is the “veil,” the *integumentum* that expresses, in a tropological reading, the reality of contemplative ecstasy. An appropriate interpretation of the passage must first understand the way in which it is constructed and only afterwards interpret its content. The following example gives an insight into Richard’s particular way of thinking regarding *similitudines* and exegesis.

⁵⁰⁷ *Bmaj IV*, x: “Debet ergo anima perfecta et assidue summorum contemplationi dedita omni hora peregrinationis suae terminum ergastulique hujus egressum cum summo desiderio exspectare, quo [PL: quod] id, quod interim videt per speculum et in aenigmate, mereatur facie ad faciem videre. Hinc est quod Abraham in ostio tabernaculi sui sedebat. Hinc est quod Elias in speluncae suae ostio stabat, uterque ad egressum paratus, uterque in Domini adventum suspensus.” 145D = Aris 97, 30-98, 2.

⁵⁰⁸ *Bmaj IV*, xi, 147B, identical with Aris 99, 19-23, and Zinn’s translation, *Richard of Saint Victor*, 276.

d) *Adnotatio in Ps 113*: an example of self-reflective interpretation

The *Adnotatio in Ps 113* offers an example of Richard's awareness of the role of *similitudo* in language and thinking. The interpretation of Joel 3:18 reveals that for Richard the verbal expression is unusually closely connected to the content expounded. It has already been demonstrated that representations (*similitudines*) play a definitive role in Richard's thinking: their presence or absence in cognition defines the two fundamental categories, *speculatio* and *contemplatio*, and thus also the groups of "speculative" and "contemplative" men. The example of the *Adn in Ps 113* shows another, communicative aspect of that distinction: namely that the divine communication, Scripture also uses both techniques.

Psalm 113 contains references to mountains and hills, and in Richard's tropological interpretation "mountains" means contemplative men and "hills" speculative men. Later he introduces Joel 3:18, another passage which mentions mountains and hills, saying that once "mountains shall drop down sweetness, and the hills shall flow with milk and honey" (*In illa die stillabunt montes dulcedinem, et colles fluent lac et mel*). Richard reads the new elements of the line (the "sweetness" of the mountains and "milk and honey" of the hills) into the context of Ps 113, and observes that the text mentions the "sweetness" (belonging to mountains) without giving any further details on it, but the "sweetness" of the hills is explained by the *similitudines* of "milk and honey." He explains the passage by giving its "internal" reasons: the Bible does not apply *similitudo* to the "sweetness" of the mountains (that is, of the contemplatives) *because* that sweetness cannot be expressed through *similitudines*; in contrast, the "sweetness" of the hills (that is, of speculatives) is expressed through *similitudines* (of milk and honey) – and, as he earlier expounded, speculatives can cognise the invisible only through *similitudines*.⁵⁰⁹ What the interpretation of Joel 3:18 adds is that the verbal utterances on the two forms of cognition can also be formed according to the same principles. The tropological reading permits Richard to create an example where verbal expression fits the doctrinal content. Contemplation and contemplatives do not use *similitudines*, and therefore neither does the account of them ("sweetness"); speculation and speculatives use representations, and therefore the account of them also does ("milk and honey," meaning "sweetness"). In this extreme case, the relation to the representations defines not only the subject but also the way in which the subject is discussed.⁵¹⁰

It is a plausible conclusion now that the insights offered by the interpretation of Joel 3:18 also apply to the language of Richard used in his works as well – and help to understand what he probably meant by using "face-to-face vision" in the context of contemplation. Returning to the narrative of *Benjamin major* IV, xi the first and most obvious insight (missed by scholars) is that Abraham's narrative is nothing other than an *involutrum* that communicates through visible or sensible elements something invisible. The text is constructed from two separate layers of separate statements. One layer describes an Old Testament narrative, and the other the highest possible contemplation. To the first layer belong the statements about Abraham: it is he who sits at the entrance of his tent, who sees the Lord *quasi* face to face. The second layer is formed from

⁵⁰⁹ Richard, *Adn in Ps 113*: "De talibus collibus, vel montibus illud prophetae intelligimus: 'In illa die stillabunt montes dulcedinem, et colles fluent lac, et mel' (Joel 3:18). De montibus dicit, quia stillabunt dulcedinem, nec tamen dicit qualem, nec eam per aliquam exprimit similitudinem. Cur hoc, quaeso, nisi quia tanta est quae nulla similitudine digne exprimi potest? Cur hoc, quaeso, nisi quia dulcedinem puram hauriunt et effundunt? Collium autem dulcedo per similitudinem [0338A] exprimitur, cum lac vel mel figurative nominatur. Cogita ergo qualis vel quanta sit illa dulcedo quam superiores experiuntur, quando et illa quam inferiores sentiunt lac et mel nominatur." 337D-338A.

⁵¹⁰ These passages seem to be the only place in Richard's works, where the possible congruence of the content and form is expounded in a concrete example. It also evokes Hugh's definitions of "anagogical" and "symbolic" demonstrations of the Bible: "milk and honey" can be read as an example of symbolic demonstration and "sweetness" as anagogical demonstration. (Hugh's definitions were "formis, et signis, et similitudinibus... vel quod manifestum est, describitur" and "cum... plana et aperta narratione docetur.")

statements about the contemplative: it is him who surpasses the limits of reason and sees the “light of the highest wisdom.” This also means that the scholars above resolved the complex sentence badly: *quasi* belongs not to the term *facie ad faciem* but to the context itself.

The word *quasi* is a remarkably frequently used word of Richard: in the corpus of his authentic works in the PL 196, it has altogether 866 occurrences (including Scriptural verses using the term). The term *quasi* is often used also in conjunction with other terms such as *quasi... quando*, *quasi... qui*, *quasi... quoties*.⁵¹¹ The word *quasi* has (together with *velut*) a particular function: it joins the two elements of *similitudo*, the visible or sensible one and the invisible one. Thus, *quasi* signals to the reader that what he reads is a *similitudo* and that the visible element is only similar (in some respects) to the invisible one but is not identical with that, and there is a lot of regularity in Richard’s use of the term *quasi*. It is obvious that thinking (an immaterial reality) is not a judge of any tribe, although Richard states that it is *quasi* “judging in its tribe” (namely when an act is corrected by a similar one); it is also obvious that Richard (as an author writing about contemplation and instructing the reader) is not Beseleel nor a carpenter, even if he say that he *quasi* takes the task (*officium*) of Beseleel and *quasi* toils with the composition of the Ark of the Covenant. It is also obvious that contemplatives do not die during contemplation (taking the word literally) therefore do not resurrect from death after ecstasy ends, although the return from that state may be compared to that (*quasi resurgens ex mortuis*).⁵¹²

These examples make it clear that the *quasi* connects two narrative layers, and make fuller sense of the passage above. It is only Abraham who is said to see face to face (which involves a different theological problem⁵¹³); the contemplative *quasi* leaves the tabernacle and *quasi* sees face to face. Abraham’s narrative is here an *integumentum*; the contemplative in ecstasy sees the “light of the highest Wisdom in simple truth.” Thus a problem remained: what does “seeing face to face,” the vision attributed to Abraham (and others), mean?

Seeing face to face

The passage above (*Bmaj* IV, vii) is not the only place where contemplation is compared in some way to a “face-to-face” vision. Such a comparison rightly puzzled people, since in the theological tradition the expression seeing “face to face” is a clear reference to the eschatological vision of God. In some cases Richard uses the expression in this sense as well, but it more often appears in connection to contemplation of this life. In order to conjecture the most probable meaning of the term in such cases, the following examples must be reconsidered first.

- 1 Per contemplativos debemus illos intelligere, quibus datum est facie ad faciem videre, qui gloriam Domini revelata facie contemplando, veritatem sine involucrio vident in sua simplicitate sine speculo et absque aenigmate. *Adn in Ps 113*, 337C

⁵¹¹ A few examples: “bonae opinionis laudem, quasi quasdam late fragrantis mandragoras invenire,” *Bmin* xx, PL 14B, cf. *Bmin* xxx, PL 21D; *quasi/qui*: *Bmin* lxxxv, PL 61C; *quasi/quoties*: *Bmin* xxxvii, PL 26C; *velut*: “Mens itaque velut aurora consurgit, quae ex visionis admiratione paulatim ad incrementa cognitionis proficit,” *Bmaj* V, ix, PL 178C.

⁵¹² *Bmin* xx: “Quaelibet ergo cogitatio quasi in sua tribu iudicatur, quando omne erratum per suum simile corrigitur.” 14B; *Bmaj* V, i: “Ecce nos in hoc opere quasi Beseleel officium suscepimus qui te ad contemplationis studium instructionem reddere et quasi in arcae operatione desudare curavimus.” 169B; *De IV gradibus*, 1123A.

⁵¹³ Richard talks about a vision of the Lord by Abraham while the text mentions three men. The *Glossa ordinaria* gives a Christological interpretation for the three men (as Christ with either two angels or Moses and Elijah), PL 113: 125D. The same *Glossa* also takes from Gregory the notion that it was the Trinity and thus it gives a remarkably similar reading to Richard: “Abraham tribus angelis occurrit, quia vir et dominus domus, scilicet spiritualis intellectus, debet in cognitione Trinitatis claustra carnis excedere, et quasi habitationis infimae januam exire.” PL 113: 125D-126A.

2 Nihil itaque aliud est montes in modum arietum exsultare, nisi viros contemplativos per mentis excessum summam veritatem nuda, et aperta visione attingere, et quasi facie ad faciem videre. *Adn in Ps 113*, 341D/342A

3 Non ergo opus hic habet Spiritus ille de medio sublatus officio scalae, nec eget in illa subtilitatis suae ascensione sustentari alicujus corporeae similitudinis adumbratione, ubi videt facie ad faciem, non per speculum, et in aenigmate. *Exterm III*, xviii, 1115A

4 Proprium est contemplativae [sc. vitae], veritatem absque involucro, et quasi facie ad faciem videre. *De differentia sacrificii*, 1055A

5 In hoc itaque statu anima dilectum suum sentire potest, sed, sicut dictum est, videre non potest. Et si videt, quidem videt quasi in nocte, videt velut sub nube, videt denique per speculum in aenigmate, nondum autem facie ad faciem. *De IV gradibus*, 1218D

These accounts show a certain consistence and they have a formulaic form. The term “seeing face to face” appears in two forms as seeing *quasi facie ad faciem* (2, 4) and *facie ad faciem* (1, 3, 5), without any obvious difference in meaning (1 and 2 derive even from the same text). The object of vision, if it is given at all, is not God: Richard talks about seeing the truth. The term is sometimes coupled with a synonym, also derived from the 1Cor 13: 12, seeing *sine speculo et aenigmate* (1, 3, 5). Seeing *facie ad faciem* describes ecstatic contemplation, but it is also accompanied with a string of terms already discussed: seeing the “light of the highest Wisdom,” “in simple truth” (*in simplici veritate*), the truth in its simplicity (1, 2, 4 and above). The structure and the meaning of these accounts become clear if one considers the term “seeing face to face” not as a theological term with a standard meaning but simply as a *similitudo* (as, I believe, Richard himself did).

Considered this way, “seeing (quasi-) face to face” is a *similitudo*, a symbolic expression, anchored to the visible world by the word “face.” Seeing “not in a mirror and in an enigma” is a synonym of it, but this synonym is also on the same symbolic level (as “mirror” also refers to the “visible” reality). The term “seeing the truth” (with its various forms) means the same, in a non-symbolic, non-metaphorical language; this is also the meaning of the *similitudo* “seeing face to face,” the non-symbolic equivalent of “mirror and enigma” is (as in the passages investigated in the other sections) *involucrum* and its terminological synonyms. In the examples above, Richard presents together the symbolic (“seeing face to face”) and the proper, non-symbolic descriptions (seeing the truth) of the same.

“Face to face” is an adverb refining the meaning of “seeing” (which stands for “cognising”); thus the narrowest meaning of “(seeing) face to face” (without the context of contemplation and cognition) can also be defined by the following two examples.

In the *De Trinitate* Richard introduces an absurd position: in the Holy Trinity there may be a person who is not permitted to see the innascible one (that is, the Father) directly:⁵¹⁴

Unum est quod neminem sanae mentis credo posse sentire, quod videlicet [0956A] sit aliqua persona in divinitate, cui non liceat, vel quae nolit innascibilem immediate, ut sic dicam, facie ad faciem videre.

[There is one position, I believe, that no one with a sound mind can think: namely that there can be any person in the Deity who is not permitted (or who does not want) to see the Innascible immediately, so to say, face to face.]

The phrase *immediate, ut sic dicam, facie ad faciem videre* makes it clear that “face to face” means simply “immediately.” The other example confirms this result indirectly. In the *Benjamin major I*, vi Richard explains that the *intelligentia* operates alone in the fourth contemplation while in the

⁵¹⁴ *De Trin.* V, ix, 956A, translation mine.

lower contemplations its cognitive operation comes about through the mediation of imagination and reason. To explain further, Richard adds *similitudines* to the explanation by applying to cognition the common metaphor of vision: when *intelligentia* uses the lower faculties, *quasi instrumento utitur, et velut per speculum intuetur*; when it operates by itself, it *quasi per speciem contemplatur*.⁵¹⁵ *Per speciem*, like *facie ad faciem*, may have Scriptural overtones (cf. 2Cor 5:7), but here its primary meaning is “by itself,” “without mediation” – that is, “immediately.”

What does “seeing face to face” mean for Richard? The term “face to face” in itself means “immediately,” “seeing face to face” then means “cognising immediately,” excluding representations. At this point Richard radically differs from other theologians of the Christian tradition. He uses the term *facie ad faciem* as a *similitudo* referring to the direct cognition and he positively and explicitly asserts the possibility of such cognition in this life – therefore the term can refer to eschatological and ecstatic cognition alike. For other theologians this expression referred primarily and almost exclusively to the eschatological cognition of God. The doctrinal, theological or anthropological meaning of the term is given by Richard: it is a vision of the truth (with all its additions, such as seeing it in its simplicity). The statement may sound in itself very much a metaphysical statement, but the dynamic accounts of contemplative ecstasy give the more precise meaning of it: “seeing the truth” “face to face” (as the first example of the five above also shows) is seeing “the glory of the Lord,” it is the transformative assimilation to the Wisdom.

One final remark must be made here to warn the reader. Richard’s theory about contemplation as “seeing the truth” in ecstasy is a twelfth-century theory with twelfth-century premises. These premises became invalid by the mid-thirteenth century, therefore equating it with an immediate vision of God without any qualification (as Chase, Coulter and others do) is basically a theological statement that creates a historical and theological anachronism and distorts Richard’s position. In the first half of the thirteenth century the conceptual background of theological anthropology was redrawn: the face-to-face vision of God became the Scriptural equivalent of the *per essentiam* vision of God (a category alien to Richard). According to Scholastic theological standards, such a vision was granted to Paul (in his *raptus*) and to the Blessed, but is generally denied to people living this life. Thirteenth-century authors sometimes talk positively about a vision of the truth in this life and call it contemplation, but this vision is not conceptually identical with the vision of the divine essence (which can happen only in *raptus*). Richard’s concepts cannot be translated into such terms: as it seems, for him the vision of the truth is not a lower degree compared to the eschatological vision; he does not know the idea of a *per essentiam* vision or anything about a *medium* that enables the mind to see God (both doctrines introduced in the early thirteenth century); he does not conceptually separate contemplation and Paul’s rapture (since the two are identical to him).

⁵¹⁵ *Bmaj* I, vi: “Nam licet illis prioribus contemplationum generibus videatur non deesse, nusquam tamen inest pene nisi meditante ratione, seu etiam imaginatione. Illic quasi instrumento utitur, et velut per speculum intuetur. Hic per semetipsam operatur, [072A] et quasi per speciem contemplatur.” 71D/72A.

Conclusion

The investigations regarding Richard's theories on contemplation were divided into three larger parts. The first one contained investigations of the background of these theories; the middle one investigated various aspects of his doctrines on contemplation; the last one presented a case study of his central term, the face-to-face vision (of Truth) in contemplation.

The first, preliminary studies covered the doctrinal background of Richard's theology and epistemology, and his theory on imagination and *similitudo*. Investigating the last subject is particularly important in understanding Richard's spiritual writings, since his theories also extend to the question of expressing spiritual realities by words. The preliminary studies show the following.

a) Richard conceived the divine image and likeness in man following Hugh. He gives very few references to the prelapsarian state; those suggest that Adam knew the invisible realities through contemplation, and as a companion of angels he "could enter the divine secrets." The consequence of the Fall is the inability of this cognition, but this limitation can be overcome in this life. Richard's eschatological model cannot be reconstructed from his texts with exactness. All possible indicators of the two-stage model of eschatology are missing (such as references to incomplete cognition of God due to the lack of the glorified body, or to a fuller cognition in the glorified body). Moreover, in many cases it is indistinguishable whether Richard speaks about experiences belonging to the (ecstatic) contemplation or to the blessed state. There is no sign indicating that Richard made any epistemological difference between contemplation and eschatological vision: even the six forms of contemplation (proposed to contemplatives in the *Benjamin major*) are identical with those forms of contemplation that the angels and the blessed souls have already obtained.

b) The definitive element of Richard's epistemology is his concept of *intelligentia*, a cognitive faculty whose function is the cognition of invisible realities (God, the self and the angels); it is an inborn constant element of human nature but it can operate only by cooperating with grace. The presence of this element defines the way in which contemplative experience is conceived. Contemplation and ecstasy mean primarily a cognitive act, without the influence (or instrumental role) of love.

c) The third study investigated the role of imagination in Richard's theories on contemplation, and it found that Richard had an elaborate theory about *similitudo* that connects various fields. It involves anthropological and psychological doctrines, as Richard describes the acting of imagination and *intelligentia*, and the role of *similitudo* in cognitive process: when using sensual representations one learns something about the invisible realities. It also involves exegetical theory, since understanding the figurative language of Scripture belongs among the same powers. A remarkable feature of Richard's theory is that it works two ways (according to Richard's intention as well): it is partly a hermeneutical theory, a theory of "decoding," which explains how *similitudines* work and can be understood, but it is also a poetic theory, a theory of "encoding," explaining how knowledge about immaterial realities can be translated into corporeal *similitudines*. Moreover, it also addresses the limits of communicability: the question of what can be said about spiritual experiences, and how. This theory also leads to unusual features in Richard's exegesis. He takes Scriptural *similitudines* as representations of something, even those that had already obtained an accepted theological meaning, such as "being caught up into the third heaven," and seeing "face to face" or "through a mirror," divests them of their acquired traditional meaning, and redefines them. This practice of Richard must be observed when his theories on contemplation (usually expounded through exegesis of Scriptural images or passages) are investigated.

After these preliminary investigations Richard's doctrines on contemplation were studied. First, as an introduction, a standard overview of the most commonly known contemplative doctrines of Richard was given, covering the six contemplations and the three ways of contemplation. This presentation was based mostly on those parts of the *Benjamin major* where Richard intentionally

discussed the subject in a systematic way, for the sake of his advanced readers. This presentation gives the necessary background for the following four investigations, which reconstruct Richard's theories on subjects treated unsystematically.

1) The first subject is two fundamental (and generally overlooked) categories of Richard's thinking, *contemplatio* and *speculatio* (II-1). The categories are based on Hugh's concepts of *anagoge* and *symbolum*; *speculatio* means the cognition of the truth through sign-like, intermediary representations, while *contemplatio* means the immediate cognition of the truth, without any intermediary representation. For Richard, the two forms of cognition are a universal principle describing both the human and the angelic cognition of God.

2) The second subject is the dynamic description of contemplation with its various aspects (II-2). Richard's writings give, on the surface, static and hierarchical presentations of contemplation (most notably, the system of six contemplations), which give no epistemological or theological details on its process. The dynamic description of the process (which completes the static one) must be reconstructed from Richard's hints. The study found that there is a general scheme to locate contemplation: in this sense, contemplation is a part of the sequence of meditation, understanding, admiration (caused by understanding), ecstasy and return from ecstasy. Richard also gave a subtle psychological-anthropological description of the two main phases of ecstasy. This narrative describes the soul's self-concentration, then its self-transcending move, and finally, the alienation when the *intelligentia* becomes assimilated to the divine Wisdom and thus deified. The contemplative ecstasy has two more descriptions, from other aspects: an epistemological and a theological one, describing the same event with different concepts. The theological narrative culminates in the transformative and deifying vision of Wisdom; the epistemological narrative describes the operation of *intelligentia*, first cooperating with imagination then with reason, and ultimately operating alone in the cognitive act: its cognitive operation starts from a partial self-knowledge and ends with the cognition of immaterial realities. The two narratives do not overlap perfectly, since the epistemological one is limited. It can follow the progress only to that point where, in the last phase of ecstasy, the human cognitive faculty becomes transformed and assimilated to the subject of cognition. When the human cognitive faculty undergoes deification it leaves the realm of epistemology.

3) Another section (II-3) investigated the way in which Richard used the theme of Saint Paul's rapture (2Cor 12:2-4). Allegorical references to three heavens and rapture abound in Richard's writings. These elements, I argue, are disconnected parts of a greater "composite allegory," and as such, results of an unusual editorial-compositional technique of the author. The meaning of these elements must be joined to grasp their fuller meaning. In the case of Paul's rapture, the allegory is a special one. Richard reads the Scriptural locus tropologically: therefore, the description of Paul's rapture becomes an allegory (or *similitudo*) of the process of contemplative ecstasy; more properly, Paul's rapture serves as the pattern of contemplative ecstasy (remarkably, Richard quotes Saint Paul's words on his *raptus* constantly, as testimony for contemplation in *excessus mentis* and not as an account of a miracle). In this tropological reading, the ascent into the various heavens stands for the entire progress of contemplation. The desired goal is to reach the third heaven, to reach which one must pass the first heaven of self-cognition; the already known self serves as an observation point to investigate and contemplate the two other heavens, namely the angels and God. The allegories are interconnected in their ultimate level, as the various meanings attributed to the third heaven and rapture give one complex meaning: the "divine spirit," God can be seen through contemplation by the working of the *intelligentia*. This tropological interpretation of the rapture narrative is unique in the Latin tradition; the only similar one was conceived by Achard of Saint-Victor.

4) Finally, Richard's attitudes towards contemplation were investigated (II-4). The overview of his scattered remarks suggests that Richard, in accord with his anthropological premises, had a rather optimistic attitude towards the contemplative experiences, including even the highest form of ecstasy. When Richard talks about contemplation and related issues, he continuously refers to the experience (and the general possibility of such experiences). Ecstasy is not only a possible

experience for Richard. It is not even an extraordinary event: it “used to happen” under specific conditions. The most explicit words, joining his attitude towards contemplative ecstasy and his optimistic (and unparalleled) anthropological premise, can be found in the *Adnotatio in Ps 113*. Richard writes here that it is evident to the properly thinking person that being bound to corporeal realities is against the nature of the incorporeal spirit, because the spirit is “sentenced” to return from the material to itself, and into the invisible realities.

The third part is a case study that illustrates the difficulties in understanding Richard’s works and investigates the meaning of a curious expression of his. Richard several times mentions a “face-to-face” (but also a “quasi face-to-face”) vision of the truth in contemplation, which leads modern authors to contradictory opinions. One half of the modern interpreters assume that Richard states that in contemplation a face-to-face vision of God is possible; the other half states that Richard has not stated so. Curiously all these modern readers shared the same methodological mistake: none of them investigated the possible meaning of that expression in Richard’s writings; instead, both parties projected thirteenth-century concepts into Richard’s texts (more properly, into a handful of selected passages). To avoid this mistake the first step is to understand that “seeing (the truth) face to face” is a *similitudo* and it must be read as such; then, for its meaning, the other similar occurrences must also be considered. The final conclusion of these investigations is that “seeing the truth (quasi) face-to-face” in ecstasy does not for Richard mean any “vision of the divine essence” (as some modern interpreters assumed). The meaning of the expression can be found in the dynamic accounts of contemplative ecstasy: “seeing the truth” “face to face” means seeing “the glory of the Lord,” that is, the transformative assimilation to the Wisdom.

Chapter III. Achard and Walther of Saint-Victor

Achard and Walther belong among those minor figures of Saint-Victor who were practically unknown between the thirteenth and the twentieth century. Before the twentieth century, their works were never printed; their works were rediscovered and edited by Châtillon and Glorieux. Since then, Achard has been acknowledged as a spiritual author and acquired some notoriety, but Walther's spirituality has been neglected by scholars.

Achard (d. 1170/1171) was for a short period the second abbot of the monastery, then bishop of Avranches.⁵¹⁶ Compared to Hugh or Richard, his writings exerted only a modest influence, although his sermons were copied in the thirteenth century as well, Scholastic works of theology from that or later periods do not refer to him.⁵¹⁷ Beyond Châtillon's monograph, his spirituality has not been much investigated; the doctrinal connections between Achard and other Victorines belong to an uninvestigated field.⁵¹⁸ Walther (Gualterus / Gauthier) was the prior of Saint-Victor. He received this office in 1173 as the immediate successor of Richard in the position, and died at some point after 1180. Since the nineteenth century, histories of medieval philosophy made him an embarrassing example of anti-Scholasticism for his passionate theological invective against "modernist" theologians, the *Contra IV labyrinthos Franciae*,⁵¹⁹ but his sermons (like his oeuvre and person) are substantially neglected by the research.⁵²⁰

The present investigation focuses on those doctrines of Achard and Walther which belong to theological anthropology. I will argue that their doctrines are far too similar to the doctrines of Hugh and Richard. It is not self-evident that members of the same monastery may or can have the same theories: this chapter demonstrates that the doctrines of Achard and Walther, like those of Richard, show a remarkable similarity among themselves, but also to the doctrines of Hugh.

⁵¹⁶ On Achard's life and works, see Jean Châtillon's monograph, *Théologie, spiritualité et métaphysique dans l'oeuvre oratoire d'Achard de Saint-Victor* (Paris, 1969); for the overview of the rather scarce literature on Achard, see Poiriel, "L'école de Saint-Victor au Moyen Âge: Bilan d'un demi-siècle historiographique," *Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes* 15 (1998): 187-207; for an overview on Achard's theology, see Sicard and Poiriel, "Figure vittorine," in Biffi, ed., *La fioritura*, 500-517. Short presentations of it can be found in Feiss' introduction to the *Works* and in McGinn, *The Growth of Mysticism*, 395-398.

⁵¹⁷ There exists no twelfth-century inventory for Achard's writings; scholarship now attributes him three letters, fifteen sermons, a *De unitate Dei et pluralitate creaturarum*, a *De tentatione Christi* (preserved in Ms BNF lat. 15033) and the treatise *De discretione animae, spiritus et mentis*. The sermons have been edited by Jean Châtillon: *Achard de Saint-Victor. Sermons inédits* (Paris: Vrin, 1970), referred here by page number after the quotations. A English translation of his writings was given by Hugh Feiss: *Achard of St. Victor. Works* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2001). Achard's sermons were copied for exegetical-homiletical purposes, mostly in the twelfth-thirteenth and fifteenth (!) centuries: see Châtillon, *Sermons inédits*, 8-12.

⁵¹⁸ Modern scholars are more attracted by the metaphysical ideas of Achard: see *Achard de Saint-Victor. L'unité de Dieu et la pluralité des créatures*, tr. Emmanuel Martineau (Saint-Lambert des Bois: Franc-Dire, 1988), and Mohammad Ilkhani, *La philosophie de la création chez Achard de Saint-Victor* (Paris 1999).

⁵¹⁹ Editions: *Galteri a Sancto Victore et quorundam aliorum Sermones ineditos triginta sex*, ed. Jean Châtillon (CCCM 30. Turnhout: Brepols, 1975); *Contra quatuor labyrinthos Franciae*, ed. Palémon Glorieux, AHDLM 19 (1952): 187-335; see also Jean Châtillon, "Un sermon théologique de Gauthier de Saint-Victor égaré parmi les oeuvres de Richard," *Revue du Moyen Âge latin* 8 (1952), 43-50 and Glorieux, "Mauvaise action et mauvais travail. Le 'Contra quatuor labyrinthos Franciae' de Gauthier de Saint-Victor," RTAM 21 (1954): 179-193.

⁵²⁰ The research literature concerning Walther consists of entries in Châtillon's articles: "De Guillaume de Champeaux à Thomas Gallus" part 1, *Revue du Moyen âge latin* 8 (1952): 139-162, "Sermons et prédicateurs victorines de la seconde moitié du XIIIe siècle." AHDLM 32 (1966): 7-60, and Glorieux' article, "Mauvaise action et mauvais travail. Le *Contra quatuor labyrinthos Franciae* de Gauthier de Saint-Victor," RTAM 21 (1954): 179-193. As it seems, no one bothered to investigate the content of his sermons.

Achard of St. Victor

Achard's reign as the abbot of the Victorines was a short period (1155-1161), after which he left the monastery and became the elected bishop of Avranches. His sermons, dated before 1155 (sermons 1-12), and of his office years (sermons 13-15),⁵²¹ show particular features which are present also in other Victorines. Although he was a renowned master of theology even before he became a Victorine canon, his doctrine on prelapsarian condition is a variant of Hugh's position. Remarkably enough, the sermons of Achard show the same particular technique of typological tropology as the writings of Richard. Richard was younger than Achard; he composed the *Benjamin minor* and *Benjamin major* as subprior (1159-1162), almost in the same period when Achard was the abbot. Achard's position on the community aspect of contemplation (to be discussed later) also has distinctively Victorine overtones.

a) Achard on the prelapsarian state

Achard's position concerning the prelapsarian state is not expounded in a systematic form, so it may be reconstructed from short references. Very much like Hugh, Achard describes the prelapsarian state by the presence and the contemplation of God by the *intelligentia*: before the original sin, man had God present, through *intelligentia* and contemplated him. The consequence of the original sin is a gradual deterioration of the cognition of God from *intelligentia* to reason (*ratio*), then from reason to faith (*fides*), from faith to opinion, from opinion to doubt, from doubt to ignorance, and ultimately into error. Even though the scheme of a gradual loss of cognition cannot be found in Hugh or Richard (but curiously, it has an almost literal parallel in Walther⁵²²), the combination of presence, contemplation and *intelligentia* (which is higher than *ratio*) in the prelapsarian state is a distinctively Victorine idea. Elsewhere Achard describes the prelapsarian state as being in Paradise, in *visio pacis*, in the light of cognition and in the mount of contemplation; in contrast, the Fall is described as a loss of light and falling into darkness, confusion and ignorance.⁵²³

b) Achard on contemplation: three sermons

The sermons of Achard contain several lineal narratives of the spiritual progress and ascent to contemplation, expounded by various allegories. These narratives must be interpreted with care, since Achard (unlike Richard) did not explain his own exegetical principles, and nor did he have an elaborate epistemology comparable to Richard's one.⁵²⁴ Like Richard, Achard also clearly separates speculation (called also meditation) and contemplation, and uses a similar exegetical technique of tropological typology. Achard's *Sermo XII* describes a development through "transformations," from the personal penance to the renovation of the universe; his *Sermo XIV* uses the sequence of real liturgical feasts to describe the individual's gradual ascent to the contemplation of God, and *Sermo XV* deploys a pattern of wandering through deserts to describe a similar programme.

⁵²¹ Dating from Châtillon, *Théologie*, 142.

⁵²² Achard, *Sermo V* [in ramis palmarum], 4: "Antequam enim homo peccasset, habuit deum presentem per intelligentiam, cuius contemplatione fruebatur; deinde vero per culpam cecidit de illo culmine divine intelligentie ad rationem, de ratione in fidem, de fide in opinionem, de opinione in dubitationem, de dubitatione in ignorantiam, de ignorantia in errorem." 71. Cf. Walther, *Sermo XXI*.

⁵²³ Achard, *Sermo VII*, 2: "Primus enim homo ante peccatum fuit in Jerusalem, in visione pacis, in paradiso, in loco deliciarum [...] Itaque eiectus est homo de luce cognitionis ad tenebras ignorantie [...] de pace ad confusionem, de monte contemplationis in valle plorationis." 85.

⁵²⁴ For Achard, the basic structure of the soul is duality of *voluntas* and *ratio* (a variant of the Hugonian concept of likeness and image) and the ultimate contemplative experience, the *unitas spiritus* is described as an exchange of human *voluntas* and *ratio* to divine ones: see *Sermo XV*, 34.

Sermo XII [de transfiguratione Domini]

Achard's *Sermo XII* presents a multi-dimensional pattern of progress that comprises both the moral-spiritual transformation of the individual and the eschatological future of the Blessed and the created world. The progress is divided into 15 phases.⁵²⁵ The phases are called transformations (*transfigurationes*), modelled after the "transfigurations" of Christ: the idea behind is that each phase brings a radical change, a transformation, to the preceding phase. The first transformation is that of penance (1), followed by good deed (2), inspired by love of justice, and the temporary concealment of that renovation (3: *innovationis occultatio*). After these external practices follow meditation and contemplation (4-5). Contemplation is followed by return: descent (6) and accommodation (*contemperatio*) to others, to one's fellows (7). The next "transfigurations" are the reiteration of contemplation (8) and setting a good example to the less perfect ones (9). The next "transfigurations" belong to death: that is, those external signs of mortal agony when the faces of the dying become almost unrecognisable (10) and the separation of body and soul in death (11). The last four "transformations" connect the individual and the general salvation: after the general resurrection (12), the bodies of the saints become similar to the body of the glorified Christ (13) and their spirits enjoy *plenum gaudium perfectum et consummatum* (14). The last transfiguration is the eschatological renovation of the entire universe (15).

In this process, meditation and contemplation are clearly separated. Meditation means the consideration of the works of creation and restoration, including the future eschatological events: Achard applies the parallel of Christ's ascension to this phase.⁵²⁶ The following phase, contemplation, means the cognition of God; its typological equivalents are Christ's sojourn in the lap of the Father and the Holy Spirit's Pentecostal working. Achard here emphasises that contemplation cognises not the creatures or God in the creatures (his word for that is here "meditation," in *Sermo XV* "speculation") but God in himself, as far as such cognition is possible.⁵²⁷

Concerning contemplation, two elements of Achard's doctrine demand special attention. First is the way in which he describes contemplation as vision. In *Sermo XII* he speaks about a *vision* of God in contemplation – moreover, a vision of God in himself (*sed ipsum in seipso [contemplatur], quantum possibile est, oculo mentis intuetur*). The clause "as far as it is possible" mitigates the meaning, but does not change it substantially: Achard speaks a vision of God without the intermediary of creatures. Other sermons of his give more details on this issue. The other particular element is Achard's emphasis on the repetition of contemplation. It can be, and has to be, repeated: *ascendendum est*. The paradigmatic model of the repetition is Christ's ascent on the mount to his transfiguration, followed by Peter, Jacob and John.⁵²⁸

Sermo XIV

Sermo XIV of Achard gives another pattern of spiritual ascent, accommodated within the chronological order of various feast-days. The sermon is written on the occasion of the feast-day of

⁵²⁵ See *Sermo XII*, 5-8.

⁵²⁶ *Sermo XII*, 5: "Quarta hominis transfiguratio fit per meditationem, cum quis, mente innovatus, incipit in operibus Dei meditari, nec solum prime creationis sed maxime nostre restaurationis, in sacramentis utriusque testamenti, preceptis, promissis, de gloria sanctorum, de pena malorum. [...] Hec autem transfiguratio, pro modulo suo, transfigurationem dominice ascensionis emulatur." 127.

⁵²⁷ *Sermo XII*, 6: "Quinta fit per contemplationem, cum quis per meditationem tantum profecerit, ut jam non opera Dei vel Deum in operibus suis contemplatur, sed ipsum in seipso, quantum possibile est, oculo mentis intuetur, et quomodo cum Christo in sinu Patris commoratur. Hec similis est illi que in die Pentecostes in cordibus et spiritibus apostolorum facta est." 127.

⁵²⁸ *Sermo XII*, 6: "Octava fit per contemplationis iterationem. Non enim semper morandum est in valle per actionem sed ascendendum est cum Domino in monte, sed assumpto Petro, Jacobo et Johanne. [...] Hec transfiguratio est similis illi que facta est in monte." 128. The same Biblical theme was used also by Richard's *Benjamin minor*.

All Saints; by taking “All Saints” literally, Achard obtained a rich subject list of the saints, including John the Baptist, the saint angels, the Virgin Mary, but also God the source of all sanctification. The sermon describes a progress of spiritual development through different phases that culminates in the ecstatic contemplation of God. The phases are called “human,” “angelic” and “divine feasts,” modelled on the real feasts given by the liturgical calendar.

The starting point of this ascent, “human feast(s),” refers to real, liturgical feasts. Their function is to cleanse the will and the “feast of Saint John” closes their sequence. This feast makes the soul “spiritual” and enables the soul to participate in the “feast of the angels.” “Angelic feast(s)” denote a speculative ascent purifying reason; finally the “feast of the Trinity” seems to refer to the inner life of the Trinity. The two latter “feasts,” separated by the “feast of the Holy Virgin,” become allegories of speculative and contemplative cognition.

The angelic feast is *speculatio*: because the soul is not yet able to see the truth “in itself,” first the nine angelic orders reveal different truths related to the created world. The soul “enters” the hierarchy of the angels and ascends through the nine subsequent orders. During the ascent, the soul “impersonates” the angels, becomes assimilated to them and takes over their knowledge. By the end of this “angelic feast,” the soul cognises the eternal reasons of creation, and the way in which God creates, governs and consummates the created world. By the end of the angelic feast, the soul becomes as purified as possible, having both will and reason cleansed.

Speculatio is followed by contemplation, which for Achard means the contemplation of God in himself (*contemplatio Dei in seipso*). After the “angelic feast,” the soul celebrates the “feast day of the Virgin Mary,” when it departs from the angelic hierarchy and meets the Holy Virgin. Achard at this point uses tropological typology in a much more daring manner than Richard ever did. Achard first identifies the Holy Virgin, the Mother of God, with the “consummate and perfect purity of the heart” of the contemplative (based on Mt 5:8: only the pure in heart will see God). This tropological identification of the Virgin and the purified heart leads to unusual consequences: the predicates stated about the Mother of God now are stated about the soul of the contemplative. As the Mother of God “gives childbirth to the Son of God, to the Wisdom of God, to the contemplation of God,” the purified mind does the same.⁵²⁹

Achard discerns three steps of this process: first the mind conceives the Son of God by the Spirit of God, then it has the labours, and finally “gives childbirth to contemplation.” Conception is a purely affective phase: the soul begins to desire to see the face of God, and burning in love becomes enraptured, leaving behind the body. In the second phase, labouring, the soul is set “in the light of contemplation” and strives to break through to “contemplation” that is, to the vision of the face of God and deification (*quasi in Deum transire*). The third step is the fulfilment of these efforts, as the soul is taken into the third heaven, “following Paul.”⁵³⁰

Hard to overlook at this point the close similarity between the doctrines of Achard and Richard, even though it cannot be discussed here in length. Achard’s sermon was written during his abbacy (1155-1161); Richard as subprior (1159-1162) composed almost at the same period the *Benjamin minor* and *Benjamin major*⁵³¹ and later his *De IV gradibus* (1162-1173). In these works

⁵²⁹ Achard, *Sermo XIV*, 7, 22: “Hic itaque ei occurrit virginum Virgo, munditia munditiarum, puritas puritatum, id est munditia et puritas cordis secundum hujus vite possibilitatem consummata atque perfecta. Hec est et mater Dei; hec parit Filium Dei, sapientiam Dei, contemplationem Dei; hec enim facit videre regem in decore suo, Deum contemplari in seipso. Beati namque mundo corde, quoniam ipsi Deum videbunt. Non tamen ad hanc visionem sufficit quantalibet cordis munditia, absque Dei gratia. Oportet siquidem ut ex Spiritu Dei concipiat Filium Dei.” 194.

⁵³⁰ Achard, *Sermo XIV*, 7, 22: “Tunc autem ex Spiritu sancto mens munda fecundatur ut ab ea vere et fructuose Filius Dei concipiat, cum ad eum in seipso contemplandum [...] instinctu divini Spiritus instigatur atque provocatur, cum ad faciem Dei videndam estu ineffabilis amoris divini tota inflammatur et quasi mole deposita carnis, vi caritatis et attractu interne dulcedinis tota raptatur, dilatatur atque sublevatur. Parturit vero quotiens, sic concepto spirituali desiderio quasi in lumine contemplationis posita, tota nititur in contemplationem ipsam erumpere et quasi in Deum tota transire. Parit autem cum id consequitur ad quod nititur, cum pulsanti aperitur, cum in abscondito faciei divine absconditur, cum, Paulum consequens, in tertium celum rapitur. In primo namque celo est cum concipit, in secundo cum parturit, in tertio cum parit.” *ibid.*

⁵³¹ Dating from Châtillon, *Théologie*, 142.

Richard, like Achard, creates from Paul's rapture narrative a paradigm for contemplative experience. The scheme conveyed by the Biblical text – an ascent of three grades, set in parallel with Paul's elevation into the three heavens – is nearly identical: Richard's first three grades of love are strikingly similar to Achard's three phases.⁵³² In Achard's sermon, the proper meaning of contemplation (*contemplatio ipsa*) is seeing "the face of God," but it also means a contemplation of Christ's divinity; *Sermo XX* of Walther of Saint-Victor identifies "the face of God" with Christ. Richard's usual expression for contemplation is "seeing the truth," "*quasi* face to face." Another common feature is their optimistic attitudes towards contemplation. For Achard, contemplation means not only a vision of God in rapture; it is also an experience that is possible in this life. Although it is a gratuitous spiritual experience, it is not a miracle, as it is granted to those who are pure in heart. A similar optimistic attitude can be grasped in Richard.

Sermo XV

Achard's *Sermo XV* (also considered as a treatise on seven deserts) presents another pattern of spiritual progress. Here the phases are called "deserts" (a double pun referring to the desert into which Christ was taken, and the Latin verb *desero*, "deserting, leaving"), and Achard distinguishes seven deserts according to the seven spirits (or gifts) of the Holy Spirit.⁵³³ In the progressive pattern, the sixth desert means contemplative experience, the seventh and last one is the return from contemplation.

Contemplation here is presented from various aspects. It takes place in ecstasy; the soul contemplates the divinity of Christ and the eternal things (*jam supra se intellectu contemplatur eterna*). Contemplation is also a sojourn in the heaven, "entering the joy of the Lord," enjoying the delights of Paradise although the body imposes some limitation on the soul (an effect left unexplained).⁵³⁴ At the same time, the soul takes the form of God, exchanging human reason and will to divine ones.⁵³⁵ Contemplation also has a Christocentric aspect: in it, the soul contemplates the divinity of Christ, "contemplates the King of Glory"⁵³⁶ and the contemplative's life "becomes hidden with Christ in God." The most plausible meaning of these words seems to be plainly contrary to the most developed (and, as it seems, the sole) theological interpretation of Achard's theory about contemplation. Hugh Feiss, the English translator of Achard, writes:

In the first step of contemplation, Christians saw God mirrored in physical and spiritual creatures; now they see created things in a much more sublime way in their archetypes in

⁵³² Achard concludes two allegorical variants on the rapture theme: first he equates first heaven with conceiving, the second with labouring and the third with childbirth (of contemplation); then in a more traditional vein, he describes the rapture of the soul as moving through the first heaven of men and the second one of the angels into the third heaven of the Trinity, *Sermo XIV*, 7, 22: "Vel post primum celum hominum et secundum angelorum, hic ad tertium, videlicet Trinitatis, pervenit et ingreditur celum. Hic post humanum atque angelicum, prorsus divinum celebrat festum. Primum egit quodammodo corporaliter, secundum spiritualiter, hoc tertium nonnisi intellectualiter." *ibid*.

⁵³³ See *Sermo XV*, 3, 203.

⁵³⁴ *Sermo XV*, 35: "Qui ergo per sex predicta transivit deserta, jam velut per gradus sex ad thronum conscendit Salomonis nostri, id est usque ad ipsam divinitatis Christi sublimitatem contemplandam. [...] Excedens Deo mente, conversatur in celestibus, et absconditur vita eius cum Christo in Deo. Ibi fruitur deliciis et primiciis quibusdam paradisi, ingrediens in requiem et intrans in gaudium Domini sui, quantum possibile in carne adhuc fragili. Ex parte maxima ibi deponit formam servi et liber assumit formam Dei." 239.

⁵³⁵ Achard, *Sermo XV*, 34: "Exit quidem non extrorsum sed introrsum, non deorsum sed sursum, non a seipso in mundum sed a se in Deum, ut Deus veniat in ipsum et ipse in Deum. [...] non enim ipse jam vivit in se, sed vivit in eo Christus, qui, Dei sequens et in se recipiens voluntatem et rationem, suam deseruit non modo carnem, sed tam voluntatem quam rationem [...] cum se totum deserit, voluntas Dei et ratio in eo habitat tota, *adhaeret Deo* et sic cum eo *unus est spiritus* [cf. 1Cor 6:17]." 237.

⁵³⁶ *Sermo XV*, 34-35: "In desertum hoc sextum [...] a sexto, id est a spiritu ducitur intelligentie, ut ei scilicet vacet vacare et videre quam suavis est Dominus, et contemplari regem glorie in decore suo. Non autem deserit proximum affectu, nec effectum quodam interiore, sed solo exteriori; non occulto, sed manifesto. Coram Deo sine intermissione orat pro eo, sed coram hominibus intermittit laborare pro eo." 239.

God. This mystical union Achard describes as *excessus mentis*, as divinization, and as reformation in the form of God. It is both affective and intellectual, but in the end, love reaches the very heart of the mystery of God, whereas the intellect stops short at the eternal reasons; there is no contemplative vision of the divine essence.⁵³⁷

This interpretation demands correction at many points. Seeing the archetypes belongs to speculation in *Sermo XIV*, but to contemplation in *Sermo XV*.⁵³⁸ That in the cognition of God the intellect stops at a certain point while love still progresses certainly was (and is) a popular notion among both medieval authors and modern scholars – but I could not find it in Achard’s sermons cited here. After the early thirteenth century, the entire tradition of the affective spirituality would agree with that idea (including Thomas Gallus and Hugh of Balma); modern scholars (whose example Feiss seems to follow here) used to take the same notion from Paul Rorem’s monograph on the Areopagite, where Rorem laid a particular emphasis on such an interpretation of Hugh of Saint-Victor’s commentary on the *Celestial Hierarchy*.

Reading this doctrine into Achard is even contrary to the internal logic of his texts. Achard does not speak of such limitation and “stopping short”: in the contrary, his sermons constantly describe the peak of contemplation by metaphors of vision. *Sermo XIV* speaks of “breaking through to contemplation” and seeing the “face of God,” *Sermo XII* of a gazing at God “with the eye of mind” – and contemplation, cognition and seeing belong to *intellectus*, not to love. In the context of contemplation, the affective aspect (or love) is mentioned explicitly only in *Sermo XIV*, but its function is that of a drive promoting the vision of God. Moreover, if the intellect “stops short” at the eternal reasons (as Feiss assumes), how could the contemplative contemplate the divinity of Christ (as Achard’s explicitly teaches)? The last line of Feiss’ interpretation, denying the “vision of the divine essence” to contemplation, also contains some misconception. Speaking of a vision (or non-vision) of the divine *essence* is pure anachronism in twelfth-century context. Both the concept of an *essence* of God, and the duality between seeing God in his essence or in any other way are ideas characterising Scholastic tradition after the early thirteenth century. Such concepts are insufficient for interpreting Achard’s doctrines on contemplation.

The proper context for understanding these doctrines was, however, clearly indicated by Achard’s references to Christ. Achard, like most twelfth-century theologians, had an eschatological model for the vision of God that distinguished between the vision of God before the resurrection and the one after it. When contemplatives in contemplation see the King of Glory, contemplate the divinity of Christ and are hidden with Christ, they do and experience what the souls of the saints do.⁵³⁹ Adopting Feiss’ anachronistic terminology, one can say that, for most twelfth-century authors, before resurrection there is no vision of the divine essence at all (and it is also very doubtful if the vision after resurrection may be called a vision of any essence at all). This eschatological model of different degrees of vision was discarded in the thirteenth century when the glorified souls were declared to see the divine essence even before the resurrection (1241 and 1244; see Part III *Introduction*).

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⁵³⁷ Feiss, *Achard of St. Victor. Works* (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 2001), “Introduction,” 54.

⁵³⁸ See *Sermo XIV*, 20: “Hic [that is, in the order of cherubim] creaturas, quas ante viderat in mundo, jam videt in Deo; quas ante in seipsis, nunc videt in rationibus eternis et veritatibus suis.” 192; cf. *Sermo XV*, 35: “Que ante viderat in mundo, nunc eo sublimius quo et verius videt in Deo; que prius sub se sensu perceperat temporalia, jam supra se intellectu contemplatur eterna.” 240.

⁵³⁹ Achard, *Sermo XII*, 8: “Licet enim jam anime sanctorum cum Christo in celis gaudeant, tamen, resumtis corporibus tam gloriosis et corpori claritatis Christi configuratis, multo incomparabilius gaudebunt.” 129.

Walther seems to be by no means an original theologian, or one working on a grand scale, comparable to Hugh, Richard or Achard, but for this very reason he may be a representative of the Hugonian theological tradition. As the subsequent investigation will demonstrate, his sermons also present philological problems (hitherto unnoticed) that connect his texts to Richard's and Achard's too.

a) *The prelapsarian condition, the image and the Fall*

In defining the meaning of "image and likeness" in man, Walther follows Hugh: these are a twin ability of knowing and loving God. Walther, however, modifies the original idea at two points: 1) echoing Augustine's wording, he conceives these as "capacities," and 2) he freely applies other, non-Victorine terminology to the Victorine concepts of image and likeness: image may be called *ratio*, *intellectus*, and *mens*, while the likeness may be called *voluntas*, *affectus*, *cor*.⁵⁴⁰

Describing the original condition and the Fall, Walther uses a few allegories based on Victorine concepts and imagery. The prelapsarian man enjoyed the light and warmth of the Sun (that is, the *sol iustitiae*, the Wisdom and the Word of God); the light and the warmth of the Sun correspond to the image and likeness in the soul. The consequence of the original sin was a fall into darkness and cold (*Sermo XII*).⁵⁴¹ The corruption induced by the original sin is twofold: following Hugonian doctrines, in the image it is ignorance, while in the likeness it is concupiscence and malice. A new element is the idea that the corruption of the image also means a progressive loss of the knowledge about God, falling from the original contemplation of God into ignorance of God, through phases of less and less certain cognition (*Sermo XXI*). The idea is not Hugonian; it can be found in Achard, whose text Walther seems to paraphrase here (note Walther's expression for the original state *in contemplatione erat*):

Achard, *Sermo V*, 4
(ed. Châtillon, *Sermons inédits*, 71).

Walther, *Sermo XXI*, 3
(ed. Châtillon, CCCM 30, 179, l. 65-72).

Antequam enim homo peccasset, habuit deum presentem per intelligentiam, cuius contemplatione fruebatur; deinde vero per culpam cecidit de illo culmine divine intelligentie ad rationem, de ratione in fidem, de fide in opinionem, de opinione in dubitationem, de dubitatione in ignorantiam, de ignorantia in errorem.

Illa autem mutatio quae in mente consideratur, hoc modo processit: homo ante peccatum in contemplatione erat, de qua descendit in rationem, de ratione in fidem, de fide in opinionem, de opinione in dubitationem, de dubitatione in ignorantiam, de ignorantia in errorem, et sic de luce ad tenebras peruenit, in quibus tamdiu ambulauit donec palpabiles fierent et diceret homo lapidi uel trunco: *Deus meus es tu, adiuua me*.

Describing the Fall, Walther takes over and modifies Hugh's allegory of three eyes. He accepts that there were three eyes – of body, of reason and of contemplation – and that the original sin inflicted blindness on the eye of contemplation and unclear vision on the eye of the reason. After this point, however, Walther's theory differs from the Hugonian one. For Hugh, contemplation and faith were

⁵⁴⁰ Walther, *Sermo XX*, 2: "Imago Dei in nobis est illud quod est capax diuinae cognitionis, similitudo quod est capax diuini amoris" (CCCM 30, 172 l.39-42; see also *Sermo III*, 3, *ibid.* 28 l. 79); cf. Augustine, *De Trinitate* XIV, viii, 11: "Eo quippe ipso imago ejus est quo ejus capax est." For the synonymous use of the various terms, see *Sermo VIII*, 6: "Mens etenim uocatur quod in nobis capax est ueritatis, cor uero quod capax est amoris; quae duo uocantur ratio et uoluntas, uel intellectus et affectus." and *Sermo XI*, 9: "Illud quidem quod in nobis capax est diuinae cognitionis, nunc ratio, nunc intellectus, nunc imago, nunc mens nuncupatur; illud uero quod in nobis capax est dilectionis, aliquando uoluntas, aliquando affectus, aliquando similitudo, aliquando cor dicitur." CCCM 30, 67, l. 160-163 and 100, l. 285).

⁵⁴¹ Walther, *Sermo XII*, 2: "Homo cum esset in paradiso quasi in aestate erat [...] in luce meridiana, solem habens sibi propinquum, cuius splendore et calore fruebatur. Ex quo uero peccauit, a luce recessit, et statim in tenebris ambulauit [...], et facta est uia eius obscura, et lubrica, et frigida: obscura per ignorantiam, lubrica per concupiscentiam, frigida per malitiam." CCCM 30, 104/105, l. 26-35.

opposites even excluding each other: faith served as replacement for the lost vision of the eye of contemplation, and contemplation meant the experience of the *praesentia contemplationis*, when God is present. Walther turns Hugh's original idea into a pious commonplace: faith and contemplation are not opposites: faith does heal the "internal eyes," the "eyes of the heart."⁵⁴² The same misinterpretation of the Hugonian theory reappears later in Bonaventure's *Collatio V in Hexaemeron* and *Breviloquium*.

b) Restoration

Since image and likeness are for Walther two distinct "capacities" with different functions, they need two different kinds of restoration, through cognition of the truth and love towards God⁵⁴³ (which is another Hugonian doctrine). The restoration has a dominant Christic character, without casting a role on the Holy Spirit (this feature is also shared by Hugh, Richard and Achard). Walther makes it explicit that it is the Word of God that restores the image and likeness – in the Areopagitic language (learned from Hugh's commentary), Christ is the "light from the Father" (*paternum lumen*), which leads to the cognition of the Father; he is the "face of God" which must be sought and the "joy of the internal eyes."⁵⁴⁴ In restoration of the image Walther discerns four forms, three being possible in this life and one being the eschatological vision (described as *plena contemplatio Dei*). All these three cognitions are related to faith (Walther sees in faith a kind of cognition). The third and the highest form of this cognition, given only to the more perfect ones in this life, is the understanding of "sacraments."⁵⁴⁵

Restoration is a process starting in this life, consisting in cognition by faith and infusion of love.⁵⁴⁶ This is overall emphasis on faith as cognition so characteristic of Walther appears also in his interpretation of 2Cor 3:18 (*revelata facie gloriam Domini speculantes*). The meaning of the *locus* for Walther is that we can see Christ, the Wisdom of God in our reason (the "mirror of the

⁵⁴² Walther, *Sermo XII*, 6: "Omnis enim homo caecus a natiuitate est quantum ad oculum mentis. Triplex est <oculus>: oculus contemplationis, oculus rationis, oculus carnis. Oculo contemplationis uidetur Deus et ea quae sunt in Deo, oculo rationis uidetur animus et ea quae sunt in animo, oculo carnis uidetur mundus et ea quae sunt in mundo. Oculo contemplationis penitus est per culpam extinctus, oculus rationis lippus est effectus, oculus carnis ad concupiscentiam est apertus. Oculi igitur interiores, oculi cordis, sanantur per fidem Verbi incarnati." CCCM 30, 108/109, l. 151-159. The wording shows that Walther's source is Hugh's *In Hier.* III, PL 175: 976A.

⁵⁴³ *Sermo III*, 3: "Sapientia est pietas, quae graece dicitur theosebia, id est cultus Dei; Deum autem colere est ei per fidem cognitionis et affectum dilectionis adhaerere. [...] Non enim quaelibet cognitio dicitur sapientia, sed cognitio Dei; nec quaelibet cognitio Dei, sed illa tantum quae habetur cum dilectione." "Cognitio ueritatis reformat in nobis Dei imaginem, dilectio reparat in nobis Dei similitudinem. Factus est enim homo ad Dei similitudinem et imaginem in hoc quod factus est diuinae dilectionis et cognitionis particeps." CCCM 30, 29, l. 96-112 and 116-120. Cf. *Sermo VIII*, 6: "innouatio uel consummatio [...] in mentibus per intelligentiam ueritatis, in cordibus per affectum dilectionis; intelligentia contra ignorantiam, dilectio contra concupiscentiam." *ibid.* 67, l. 141-146.

⁵⁴⁴ Walther, *Sermo XX*, 2: "Sermo ergo Dei lucet et ardet, quia lucentes et ardentes facit. Lucendo reformat in nobis Dei imaginem, ardendo reparat in nobis Dei similitudinem" (CCCM 30, 172, l. 36-39); also *Sermo XV*, 6: "Pater dicitur principale lumen [...] ab ipso principali lumine procedit Filius, paternum lumen [...] qui ideo factus est uisibilis ut nos ad inuisibilem Patrem perduceret" (CCCM 30, 134, l. 171-176); cf. *Sermo XX*, 6: "Quid est facies Dei? Christus Dei uirtus et Dei sapientia, imago Dei inuisibilis, uerus sol iustitiae, splendor gloriae, figura substantiae, candor lucis aeternae, superprincipalis claritatis simplex radius, paternum lumen [...]. Haec est facies Dei quam iubemur semper quaerere" (CCCM 30, 175, l. 126-133).

⁵⁴⁵ *Sermo XX*, 5: "Veritas imaginem reformans est agnitio Dei et eorum quae pertinent ad diuinum cultum. Cuius sunt quatuor species. Prima est scientia praecedens fidem [...] haec est intelligentia uerborum. Secunda est ipsa fides. Tertia est scientia sequens fidem; haec est scientia quae constat in reseratione sacramentorum, de qua scriptum est: 'Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis.' Quarta est plena contemplatio Dei, quae in futuro speratur. Per primam et secundam et tertiam reformatur mens hominis in praesenti: in minoribus per primam et secundam tantum, in perfectioribus etiam per tertiam" (CCCM 30, 174, l. 105-115). The word "sacramentum" may well refer here to spiritual meanings of symbols.

⁵⁴⁶ *Sermo IX*, 6: "Gloria non datur in praesenti, sed futura expectatur; iustitia uero in praesenti hominem interiorem innouat per fidei cognitionem et dilectionis infusionem. De qua nouitate dicit Apostolus: *Nos, reuelata facie, gloriam Domini contemplant, transformamur in eandem imaginem.*" CCCM 30, 79, l. 141-145.

heart”), by the inspired faith (the “image in the mirror”).⁵⁴⁷ The result of this mirrored vision is the assimilation of our cognition to the Wisdom of God, then that of our love. The distinction of speculation and contemplation, crucial to Achard and Richard, is missing.

Walther’s sermons do not give an elaborated theory about contemplation or contemplative experience. He distinguishes the cognition from faith from contemplation; he considers the ascension of Christ as a prefiguration of contemplation, and Paul’s rapture as contemplation. These doctrines derive mostly from his predecessor’s works.

1. The ascent of Christ as prefiguration

In the ascension of Christ Walther sees a prefiguration of the ascent of contemplation. This tropological and typological interpretation of the ascension can be found in Richard. Walther, using the terms *figura* and *veritas*, makes more explicit the doctrine: Christ’s ascent was the prefiguration and model of both our future resurrection and present ascent by cognition and love.⁵⁴⁸

Walther, <i>Sermo XV</i> , 2 (ed. Châtillon, CCCM 30, 130, l. 37-48).	Richard, <i>De Trinitate</i> , prologus (PL 196: 889D-890B = ed. Ribailier, 82-84).
Cuius ascensio nostram praefiguravit, et illam quae fit in praesenti in mente per contemplationem, et illam quae fiet in futuro in corporibus. [...] Facta etenim Domini ueritas sunt et figura, ueluti mors et resurrectio ueritas et figura fuerunt: ueritas quia uere mortuus et uere resurrexit, figura quia mortuus est et resurrexit ut, peccatis mortui, iustitiae uiuamus.	Ascendamus post caput nostrum. Nam ad hoc ascendit in coelum ut provocaret, et post se traheret desiderium nostrum. Christus ascendit, et spiritus Christi descendit. Ad hoc Christus misit nobis Spiritum suum, ut spiritum nostrum leuaret post ipsum.
Sic et ascendit ut nos interim mente, amore et desiderio post ipsum ascendamus, ut ibi fixa sint corda nostra, ubi uera sunt gaudia, et dicere cum Apostolo ualeamus: <i>Nostra conuersatio in coelis est</i> .	Christus ascendit corpore, nos ascendamus mente. Ascensio illius fuit corporalis, nostra autem sit spiritualis. [...] Ascendamus ergo spiritualiter, ascendamus intellectualiter, quo interim non licet corporaliter, parum autem nobis debet esse ad primi coeli secreta, mentis contemplatione ascendere.

2. Paul’s rapture

Paul’s rapture was for Achard and Richard the paradigm of contemplation. Walther did not elaborate a detailed theory about it; instead, his *Sermo XIV* transcribes the final part of Achard’s sermon on the feast of All Saints. Walther takes over the “birth” of contemplation (which is also the birth of the Wisdom of God) and keeps the reference equating Paul’s rapture into the third heaven with the summit of contemplation, but remodels these ideas into an explanation of Sap 4:1.

Achard, <i>Sermo XIV</i> , 22 (ed. Châtillon, <i>Sermons inédits</i> , 193-194).	Walther, <i>Sermo XIV</i> , 5 (ed. Châtillon, CCCM 30, 126, l. 133-147).
Unde et voluntatem habet mundissimam propter virtutes activas, et rationem purgatissimam propter	Sponsus enim uirgo est, sponsam habens uirginem de qua non generat nisi uirgines; nescit quidem habere

⁵⁴⁷ *Sermo IX*, 6: “In speculo non uidetur nisi imago. Speculum est cor nostrum, imago quae in hoc speculo cernitur est fides et omnis cognitio Dei quae in praesenti habetur. Gloriam Dei uocat Christum, Dei sapientiam [...]. Dum ergo ratio per fidem speculatur Dei sapientiam, transformamur in eandem imaginem. Transformamur in rationem et in fidem, tendentes in imaginem Dei inuisibilem ut ei consimiles et conformes efficiamur.” CCCM 30, 80, l.152-163.

⁵⁴⁸ See also *Sermo XVI*, 5: “Iubilemus et nos interim mente, et dilectione, et coelestium secretorum contemplatione; cum ipso et ad ipsum ascendamus, certi quia etiam secundum corpora in futuro ipsum sequemur.” CCCM 30, 141, l.156-159.

virtutes speculativas.	filios degeneres et dissimiles. <i>O quam pulchra est casta generatio cum caritate.</i> [Sap 4:1]
Hic [194] itaque ei occurrit virginum Virgo, munditia munditiarum, puritas puritatum, id est munditia et puritas cordis secundum hujus vite possibilitatem consummata atque perfecta.	Castitas mentis munditia est cordis. Haec est munditia munditiarum, puritas puritatum et quasi uirgo uirginum;
Hec est et mater Dei; hec parit Filium Dei, sapientiam Dei, contemplationem Dei; hec enim facit videre regem in decore suo, Deum contemplari in seipso. Beati namque mundo corde, quoniam ipsi Deum videbunt. Non tamen ad hanc visionem sufficit quantalibet cordis munditia, absque Dei gratia.	haec est mater Dei; haec parit Filium Dei, sapientiam Dei, contemplationem Dei; haec enim facit uidere Filium Dei, regem gloriae in decore suo, Deum facie ad faciem. Beati enim mundo corde, quoniam ipsi Deum uidebunt.
Oportet siquidem ut ex Spiritu Dei concipiat Filium Dei. Tunc autem ex Spiritu sancto mens munda fecundatur ut ab ea vere et fructuose Filius Dei concipiatur, cum ad eum in seipso contemplandum [...] instinctu divini Spiritus instigatur atque provocatur, cum ad faciem Dei videndam estu ineffabilis amoris divini tota inflammatur et quasi mole deposita carnis, vi caritatis et attractu interne dulcedinis tota raptatur, dilatatur atque sublevatur.	Haec concipit, parturit et parit Filium Dei, non tamen ex se, sed ex Spiritu sancto. De quo concipit cum ex ipso ad uidendum Deum in semetipso inflammatur;
Parturit vero quotiens, sic concepto spirituali desiderio quasi in lumine contemplationis posita, tota nititur in contemplationem ipsam erumpere et quasi in Deum tota transire.	parturit cum in lumine contemplationis posita tota in contemplationem erumpere nititur;
Parit autem cum id consequitur ad quod nititur, cum pulsanti aperitur, cum in abscondito faciei divine absconditur, cum, Paulum consequens, in tertium celum rapitur. In primo namque celo est cum concipit, in secundo cum parturit, in tertio cum parit.	parit cum id consequitur ad quod nititur, cum pulsanti aperitur et cum Apostolo ad tertium coelum rapitur.

Elsewhere he distinguishes between Paradise and the third heaven in Paul's rapture, interpreting the latter as the fullness of the light of the face of God.⁵⁴⁹

3. Vision through faith, contemplation and face to face

Walther distinguishes three ways of seeing God in *Sermo XIX*: seeing God by faith, by contemplation and face to face. Although the sermon contains only a short reference to this doctrine, the same doctrine appears in a full form in the text entitled *Adnotatio in Ps 2* and attributed traditionally to Richard. In the *adnotatio* the distinction unfolds into an allegory of three heavens.

Walther, <i>Sermo XIX</i> , 2 (ed. Châtillon, CCCM 30, 162, l. 47-51).	Richard, <i>Adnotatio in Ps 2</i> (PL 196: 270D-271A).
Non uno modo uidetur Deus, ideoque non uno modo dicitur Israel. Videtur enim per fidem, per contemplationem, per speciem. Cum igitur dicitur Israel potestas eius, ille modus qui fit per contemplationem intelligitur. Contemplatio enim ueritatis confirmat et consolidat sanctificatos.	Sciendum tamen est quod aliter videtur per fidem, aliter autem per contemplationem, aliter vero cernitur per speciem. Quod est inter coelum et terram, hoc interest inter fidelem et infidelem, et possumus quemlibet perfectum dicere coelum propter fidem. Huic tamen coelo supereminet aliud coelum, [271A] dignitas scilicet spiritualium virorum, cui tamen superfertur tertium sublimitas,

⁵⁴⁹ *Sermo XX*, 6: "Per coelum tertium plenitudinem lucis, claritatem faciei intellige, in qua uidendus est Deus in aeternitate et modo uidetur ab angelis, facie ad faciem. Per paradisum multitudo pacis, affluentia deliciarum, plenitudo gaudiorum intelligi datur." CCCM 30, 175, l.152-156.

videlicet angelorum. In primo itaque videtur per solam utique fidem; in secundo autem videtur etiam per contemplationem; in tertio vero cernitur facie ad faciem. Per fidem eum videmus, quando illa quae de eo scripta sunt firmiter credimus. Per contemplationem autem eum cernit, qui in eo quod de illo prius credidit, ex inspiratione divina intelligentiae oculos figit. Per speciem vero videtur, quando in propria substantia sicuti est facie ad faciem cernitur. Verumtamen quocunque modo videatur, non tamen videtur nisi in coelo. Nam in primo, ut diximus, per fidem; in secundo coelo per contemplationem; in tertio vero videtur per speciem.

The similarity of the two texts presents a doctrinal and philological problem. As the *adnotatio* is attributed to Richard, and the two texts present the same doctrine, a plausible consequence can be that Walther used here Richard's text. However, an opposite conclusion – that the *adnotatio* was written by Walther and it is wrongly attributed to Richard – can also be supported by valid arguments. One argument is that Richard's authorship of the text may be called in question: the *Adnotationes in Psalmos* is a group of shorter and longer texts, constructed artificially by modern editors.⁵⁵⁰ Unlike the major works of Richard, the collection and its single *adnotationes* were not subjected to philological study, and their texts are known only through modern printed editions.

Another, more firm argument is that the doctrine developed in the *Adnotatio in Ps 2* is coherent with Walther's doctrines emphasising the role of faith in contemplation; at the same time, it is substantially inconsistent with Richard's doctrines expounded in his authentic works. In this *adnotatio*, "seeing by contemplation" means seeing the tenets already believed with the eyes of *intelligentia*, from divine inspiration, belonging to the "dignity of spiritual man." In Richard's authentic works, in contrast, contemplation is always described as immediate vision of truth (accompanied by the term [*quasi*] *facie ad faciem*, contrasted with the mediated vision through representations). Richard does not know the distinction between believers and "spiritual men," as his fundamental categories are "speculatives" and "contemplatives," and nor does he make any explicit distinction between contemplative vision and eschatological contemplation. Richard very rarely uses the expression *per speciem*: while it has three occurrences in the present *adnotatio*, in the authentic works it appears only three times.⁵⁵¹

Conclusion: Achard and Walther, representatives of a Victorine model

The overview of the theological anthropologies of Achard and Walther revealed remarkable similarities to doctrines and attitudes present in Hugh and Richard. Achard conceives the prelapsarian cognition of God as contemplation of God (like Hugh), a contemplation by *intelligentia* (like Richard). Earthly contemplation in ecstasy is conceived as a vision of God: Achard, like Hugh and Richard, uses the visual language for this cognition. He also distinguishes speculation and contemplation and considers Paul's rapture as a paradigm for contemplation, like Richard. Another remarkable point is that composing his works, Achard uses the same technique of tropological typology as Richard.

Walther's theology poses some problems to interpreters. Perhaps he is the least original author among the Victorines, using the ideas of the other Victorines, but (if the romantic notion of originality

⁵⁵⁰ See the relevant part in Cacciapuoti's *Deus existentia amoris*.

⁵⁵¹ See *Ben. min.* xv (PL 196: 11A, opposing *per similitudinem*) and lxxii (quoting 2Cor 5); *Ben. maj.* I, vi (72A: *intelligentia quasi per speciem contemplatur*) and *De Trin.* V, vi (953A, opposing *per speculum* vision).

is discarded) he may also be considered a most valuable witness of what Victorine theology meant in the later twelfth century. His works show a fusion of various Victorine theologies: the fundamental doctrines come from Hugh and additional ideas come from Richard and Achard. He accommodates Hugh's doctrines to the contemporary, non-Victorine standards by introducing more common synonyms for image and likeness, and rewriting the doctrine of three eyes – turning the original doctrine of ecstatic contemplation into a pious commonplace. Walther, however, still keeps the concept of the prelapsarian state as contemplation; he also knows the theme of the gradual fall. The influence (?) of Richard and Achard demands further textual investigations. Walther takes over elements of tropological typology, seeing prefigurations of contemplative ascent in the Ascension of Christ (borrowed from Richard) and in the birth of Christ (taken from Achard).

The doctrinal similarities between these less well-known Victorines and the famous ones cannot be overlooked. These similarities affect those fundamental tenets that define a system of theological anthropology. The historical fact that they belonged to the same monastery cannot give a direct explanation of these similarities. The similar principles are far too numerous to be a coincidence: in my opinion, these similarities do outline a particular model of theological anthropology – a Victorine theological anthropology – which is characteristic of Hugh's twelfth-century followers, and which substantially differs from other theological anthropologies outside the Victorine school.

Chapter IV. The question of a twelfth-century Victorine spirituality

One of the aims of the present study is to demonstrate that there existed a theological anthropology peculiar to the twelfth-century Victorines – a pattern that was both characteristic of Victorine authors and significantly different from doctrines of authors outside that school. There exist already a number of other concepts that can, to a certain extent, describe the theology of the Victorines. Their theology is regarded as neither monastic nor Scholastic theology proper; there existed a Victorine school (as an institution with continuity) that embraced twelfth-century Victorines and later ones, too (Châtillon, Poirel); the Victorine spirituality was a canonical spirituality, and as such, it is different from the Cistercian or Benedictine spiritualities (Bynum).

These concepts, however appropriate they are, can give only a background of attitudes, social and institutional contexts, offering no insight into the content of doctrines. Caroline Bynum has already demonstrated that there existed an attitude peculiar to regular canons (epitomised by the expression *docere verbo et exemplo*) while Cistercians had a very different attitude.⁵⁵² The existence of a Victorine “school” is a debated conceptual question – at least if the word is not taken in the strictest literal sense (since the continuous existence of a monastery school, well after the end of the twelfth century, has been demonstrated by Crossnoe⁵⁵³). It is a valid question whether the various authors belonging to Saint-Victor – among others Hugh, Richard, Andreas and Thomas Gallus – may be subsumed under one and the same “school,” with their very diverse characters and their works covering different subjects. Instead of a “Victorine school,” Schniertshauser rather speaks about “Victorines”; against this position, Poirel and Sicard elaborated a term for the Victorine school that is broad enough to include the Victorines up to the early fifteenth century.⁵⁵⁴ The present study avoids entering these discussions for two reasons. One reason is a thematic one: our interest is limited to questions of theological anthropology and contemplation. From the twelfth-century Victorines (which means more than a dozen authors), only a handful dealt explicitly with such questions. The other reason is chronological, and it limits the issue to the twelfth century, given that the sole thirteenth-century Victorine whose works are relevant is Thomas Gallus. His theological anthropology (as will be demonstrated later in Part III) is a particular variant of a standard thirteenth-century model – which model in itself is incompatible with the twelfth-century Victorine doctrines.

⁵⁵² See Caroline Walker Bynum, “The Spirituality of Regular Canons in the Twelfth Century: A New Approach,” originally published in *Medievalia et Humanistica* NS 4 (1973): 3-24, and “The Cistercian Conception of Community: An Aspect of Twelfth-Century Spirituality,” originally published in *The Harvard Theological Review* 68 (1975): 273-286. Both articles were republished in Bynum, *Jesus as Mother. Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley – Los Angeles – London: University of California Press, 1982), 22-58 and 59-81.

⁵⁵³ See Marshall E[ugene] Crossnoe, “*Animarum Lucra Quaerentes*”: the School of St. Victor and the University of Paris in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1996) and “Education and the care of souls: Pope Gregory IX, the Order of St. Victor, and the University of Paris in 1237,” *Medieval Studies* 61 (1999): 137-172.

⁵⁵⁴ For Schniertshauser’s position, see Sicard, *Théologies victorines*, 101 (Paris: Parole et silence, 2008), and Poirel and Sicard, “Figure Vittorine,” 462. The position of Poirel and Sicard is, however, too wide for the present investigation: “È esistita una scuola di San Vittore? Sì, e la diversità stessa degli autori e delle opere è spiegata da uno sforzo sempre rinnovato per immagazzinare l’insieme dei saperi e unificarli in sapienza, in un clima di umanesimo generalmente ottimista e sereno, aperto tanto all’eredità letteraria degli Antichi quanto agli apporti originali dell’esegesi rabbinica, ma anche in una tensione costante tra la contemplazione e la trasmissione di ciò che è stato contemplato, tra il sacro e profano, l’amore e conoscenza, lo spirito e lettera, l’esteriore e l’interiore, l’invisibile e il visibile, l’uno e il molteplice, conformemente a una vocazione originale di canonici regolari.” Poirel and Sicard, “Figure Vittorine,” in *Fioritura*, ed. Biffi, 537.

Victorines as a doctrinal community?

Assuming that Victorines shared common doctrines is rather plausible, even if the literature does not investigate this sense of the term “school.” The situation of Victorine canons was unique in the century, since Hugh, the “founder” of their intellectual tradition, was an appointed teacher at the school of the monastery. He taught a variegated audience whose needs in education ranged from his introduction into Latin grammar to the explanation of the *Celestial Hierarchy* of the Areopagite. Unfortunately, however, there is far too little information to talk about a direct master-disciple relation between Hugh and those later Victorines who figure in our study. Achard was already a famous theologian when he joined the community; when Richard arrived at the monastery, Hugh was probably already dead, and on the early life of Walther nearly nothing is known.

At the same time, many spiritual and anthropological doctrines of later Victorines are rooted in Hugh’s ideas (being repetitions or elaborated variants). The question of a direct, personal discipleship is, ultimately, irrelevant – especially when there are far too numerous similar doctrines shared (and for the present investigation, it is the doctrinal affiliation that constitutes a school). The matching basic ideas define a pattern which can be considered a characteristically Victorine model of theological anthropology.⁵⁵⁵ Its features can be summarised in the following points.

1. *Image and likeness.* Image and likeness, conceived as the duality of a cognitive and affective aspect of the human soul is a hallmark of Victorine theology. In Hugh’s theology, the image and likeness of God (cf. Gen 1:26) refers to two different orientations of the human soul, originally turned towards God. Image (*imago*) is a cognitive aspect: an intention towards truth, knowledge and wisdom, called *cognitio* (and sometimes also *ratio*). Likeness (*similitudo*) has an affective and moral character, being an intention towards virtue and justice, called *amor* and *dilectio*.⁵⁵⁶ This double idea resurfaces in Hugh’s works wherever he speaks about the restoration of man through cognition of truth and love of virtue. Richard keeps this notion, using the terms *ratio* / *affectio* and *intellectus* / *affectus*.⁵⁵⁷ Achard also keeps the concept.⁵⁵⁸ Walther also does so; however, like Achard, he also uses further synonyms such as *ratio* and *voluntas* besides the original terms.⁵⁵⁹ Robert of Melun rejected this

⁵⁵⁵ Speaking of a “Victorine” anthropology means a certain generalisation, and one must acknowledge the limitations set by generalisation – the spirituality of one particular author (however influential or impressive) evidently cannot stand for the spirituality of an entire monastery. (Similar problems emerge when speaking of a “Cistercian” spirituality, although the Victorine canons are a far smaller and more coherent group of authors than Cistercians).

⁵⁵⁶ Perhaps most explicitly in *De sacramentis* I, vi, 2: “Factus est homo ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei, quia in anima... fuit imago et similitudo Dei. Imago secundum rationem, similitudo secundum dilectionem; imago secundum cognitionem veritatis, similitudo secundum amorem virtutis.” PL 176: 264CD.

⁵⁵⁷ For Richard see, for example, *Bmin* i and iv: “Rachel doctrina veritatis, Lia disciplina virtutis. Rachel studium sapientiae, Lia desiderium iustitiae.” and “Lia, ut dictum est, affectio est divina inspiratione inflammata; Rachel est ratio divina revelatione illuminatione. Lia, affectio ad normam iustitiae seipsam componens; Rachel, ratio se in coelestis sapientiae contemplationem attollens” (PL 196: 1 and 4BC). In the *Liber exceptionum* I, i, 1 he uses *affectus* and *intellectus*: “Ad imaginem suam secundum intellectum, ad similitudinem secundum affectum” (PL 177: 193A = ed. Châtillon, 105); see further *Adnotatio in Ps 121* (PL 196: 363BD), *Sermo 70 in Pentecosten* (PL 177: 1119).

⁵⁵⁸ Achard, *Sermo XIII*, 32: “[creatura spiritualis] facta est ad Dei ipsius imaginem et similitudinem, in eo quod diligere et intelligere potest ipsam bonitatem.” *Sermo XV*, 11: “Is [sc. spiritus hominis] Dei mons est quia in eo Dei consistit imago atque similitudo; imago in ratione, similitudo in voluntate. Voluntas autem inferior est ratione ut similitudo imagine.” *Sermons*, 165, 211.

⁵⁵⁹ Walther, *Sermo XI*, 9: “Illud quidem quod in nobis capax est diuinae cognitionis, nunc ratio, nunc intellectus, nunc imago, nunc mens nuncupatur; illud uero quod in nobis capax est dilectionis, aliquando uoluntas, aliquando affectus, aliquando similitudo, aliquando cor dicitur.” CCCM 30, 100.

Victorine doctrine⁵⁶⁰ but Peter of Poitiers took it over, and attributed to it the authority of Augustine.⁵⁶¹

2. *Cognition and love separated.* The fact that cognition and love are conceived as image and likeness also means that they are, and remain, two separate aspects or orientations since the image cannot convert into likeness (nor the reverse). This point, common to the Victorines investigated here, clearly set them apart from the other contemporary forms of spirituality. In Victorine logic (due to their concept of image and likeness), *cognitio* cognises and *dilectio* loves: the two can promote each other but the functions are and remain separate. In ecstatic contemplation, it is a cognitive faculty which cognises God (whether it be called metaphorically an “eye of contemplation” or called *intelligentia*). The affective faculty works as a drive for cognition but has no cognitive function – unlike the account in Cistercian authors of the period.

3. *The prelapsarian state and the Fall.* In Hugh, Achard and Walther, the prelapsarian cognition of God is conceived as a contemplation of God through *intelligentia*, the highest cognitive faculty of man (though Richard has less elaborated doctrines on that state). The Fall is conceived as a loss of this contemplative vision, a fall into darkness – that is, into ignorance and concupiscence. The more conventional Augustinian attitude and imagery characteristic of their non-Victorine contemporaries (and taken from the later Augustine) conceive the Fall as ultimate corruption that can be restored only after this life, in an eschatological perspective. In contrast, Victorine descriptions of the present state often suggest a condition that can be gradually emended. Ignorance can be diminished by acquiring knowledge; Hugh’s doctrine that cognising the truth and loving the virtue can restore image and likeness is something of a commonplace among them.

4. *Overcoming the consequences of the Fall in contemplation.* Hugh’s writings outline two different ways that overcome the consequences of the Fall. One may be called institutional: it consists in the moral and doctrinal education and development (fostering *cognitio veritatis* besides *amor virtutis*), monastic exercises and the acceptance of the sacraments. The other, direct way is the direct, individual contemplative experience which is beyond institutional frames, described with visual imagery as a vision of God. In Hugh, it is the working of *oculus contemplationis* (otherwise taught to be blind after the Fall), in Richard and in Achard, of the *intelligentia*. This experience, as far as I could observe, is never described by them as a return to the prelapsarian state (Richard explicitly states that it is impossible to obtain the same degree of grace that Adam had). It is identified, instead, with Paul’s rapture (by Achard and Richard) or an immediate vision of God (by Hugh).

5. *Predisposition to contemplation.* The contemplation of God – meaning a direct and supra-rational perception (however ambiguously it is put) – is one of the cornerstones of Hugh’s theological anthropology: prelapsarian contemplation, eschatological contemplation(s) and ecstatic contemplation in this life are conceived in a similar way. In the construction of Victorine theological anthropology, there is a cognitive (and intellectual) faculty dedicated to the vision of God: Hugh (and Walther) calls it metaphorically “eye of contemplation,” Achard and Richard “*intelligentia*.” This structure of anthropology was basically incompatible with the contemporary and later accepted models. The traditional, Augustinian set of mind liked to emphasise the radical changes effected by the original sin: seeing God in this life is generally impossible, but if it happens

⁵⁶⁰ Unfortunately, only the chapter headings remained from that part of Robert’s book of sentences, written 1152-60, that discussed this issue. The chapter heading (preserved by a content table) to *Sententie* lib. I pars II cap. III is “Quod non convenienter per rationem et dilectionem, inter imaginem et similitudinem que sunt in anima differentia demonstrari potest.” See R.M. Martin, ed., *Oeuvres de Robert de Melun, tome III: Sententie*, vol. 1 (Leuven, 1932).

⁵⁶¹ See his *Sent.* II, xx (PL 211: 1026), written c. 1170, discussed in the next chapter.

it is a miracle – especially because after the Fall there are no faculties left for such cognition.⁵⁶² The Cistercian model of knowing God through love can be interpreted as a solution in the traditional framework to the problem of an immediate contact with God. The traditional nature/grace opposition (or its Scholastic variant natural/supranatural) cannot describe the Victorine concept of the “eye of contemplation” (or its equivalents), since the divine image is defined as a cognitive character of the mind whose function is cognising God. In this way, the mind is predisposed to contemplation since it has the proper cognitive faculty for that aim. Contemplation is cooperation of grace and the cognitive faculty – it is not a miracle (even if it takes place in ecstasy) but rather a connatural disposition.

6. *Visual imagery of contemplation.* Victorines applied to the cognition of God an unusual, strongly visual imagery. Admitting again the danger of generalisation, one may say that Victorine spiritual works favoured the “visibility” of God, both in “historical” and in “spiritual” contexts. The principal imagery Hugh applied to the cognition of God was the visual one: at the beginning God was “contemplated” (that is, “gazed at”) with an “eye” of contemplation, and (as he explicitly states), in ecstasy God can be contemplated directly. Contemplative ecstasy is in Achard described as a direct vision of God, in Richard a direct vision of the truth. The idea of an “eye of contemplation” is explicit in Walther who takes over directly Hugh’s doctrine on three eyes and in Richard. Generally speaking, all these accounts speak for the possibility of a vision of God. The characteristic opposition is not between seeing and not-seeing, but between a direct vision of God (in contemplation) and the vision mediated by *similitudines*, *figurae*, *symbolum*. Both the mediated and immediate cognition of God is conceived in visual terms. Another characteristic Victorine element is that the immediate *cognition* of God (also possible in this life) is identified with a direct *vision* of God. This is not self-evident: although vision is a “natural” metaphor for cognition, in the theological context its use is strictly regulated, usually reserving vision for the eschatological cognition. It must be emphasised that the immediate cognition is *not* necessarily linked with visual imagery. Perfect and contemporaneous counter-examples to the Victorines are the works of William of Saint-Thierry and Saint Bernard: while emphasising the invisibility of God, they conceive the direct cognition of God not as a vision but as intimate, affective experiences.⁵⁶³ Another characteristic difference is that among the Victorines, the “eye of contemplation” is not a vaguely used term: it is a definite element of their theological anthropology, an “organ” for the cognition of God. In Hugh (in spite of the terminological-conceptual variance) it may be identical with the supra-rational *intelligentia*; in Achard, *intelligentia* has the same role, and Richard explicitly identifies it with the *intelligentia*. Consequently, contemplating God means a direct and ecstatic cognition of God through that faculty.

The community aspect

Speaking of monastic theologies of the twelfth century, the formative influence of theological and anthropological doctrines on the life of the community may not be disregarded. *Docere verbo et*

⁵⁶² It must be also noted that twelfth-century authors, “Scholastic” and “monastic” alike, prefer to emphasise the corruption of the cognitive part (leading to a fall from cognition into ignorance); it was later, with the thirteenth-century introduction of a *medium disponens* that the prelapsarian (and postlapsarian) state became essentially different from the blessed one.

⁵⁶³ Although Bernard uses the visual imagery in various ways in his works (for examples, see McGinn, *The Growth*, 207 sqq.), his *Sermo 31 in Ct* makes its meaning remarkably clear: he declares there that the vision of God “as he is” (*sicuti est*) is exclusively reserved for the eschatological vision: now only various forms of God’s self-revelations can be seen. *Sermo 31 in Ct*, 2: “Et nunc quidem apparet quibus vult, sed sicuti vult, non sicuti est. Non sapiens, non sanctus, non propheta videre illum sicuti est potest aut potuit in corpore hoc mortali; poterit autem in immortalis, qui dignus habebitur. Itaque videtur et hic, sed sicut videtur ipsi, et non sicuti est.” SBO I, 220. The highest form of this “revelations” is when God “presents” itself in various roles depending on the desires and needs of the soul.

exemplo, leading an exemplary life, is one well-known aspect that separates the canonical spirituality from other ones. A less commonly investigated but, for the present investigation, more telling issue is the authors' positions and attitudes concerning the "descent" from contemplation.

The experience of contemplation is an individual experience, which separates the mind from the external world. In the monastic environment (and we may include canons too), the external world means not only the physical reality but also a community living regulated life, with all the duties imposed on the individual. Thus, the return from the delightful contemplation to the everyday conditions also means a return from the individual freedom to one's fellows. The attitude towards this double change – from the individual "there" to the social "here" – shows a certain uniformity in Achard and Richard (those Victorines who treated it explicitly); this Victorine attitude is substantially different from the Cistercian one. As the Cistercian attitude has been already investigated, it seems to be appropriate to start with it.

In her article on the Cistercian concept of community, Caroline Bynum made several observations that delineate a position characteristic of Cistercian authors. The relevant points of her analysis run thus:

Despite the fact that Cistercian authors are personally drawn towards an ideal of service, they consciously reject the incorporation of this ideal into their conception of monastic vocation. Aelred of Rievaulx [...] states explicitly that turning to the needs of one's neighbor is a painful (although sometimes necessary) departure from Christ. [...] Similarly, Bernard sees the preaching to which he is so attracted as a falling away from contemplation. [...] Bernard states explicitly that the vocation of the monk is to cultivate his own virtue, not to serve others. [...] Moreover, Aelred's casual references to serving one's neighbor usually mean "praying for," "weeping over," and so forth, and not more active service, and both Aelred and Bernard seldom have in mind an activity when they refer to "love of neighbor." [...] when Bernard, Aelred, Stephen [of Salley] and Adam [of Perseigne] discuss love, they tend to be interested in the implications of that emotion for the one who experiences it, not for the neighbor to whom it is directed.⁵⁶⁴

These observations may be confirmed with a most telling example from Saint Bernard's *De diligendo Deo*. Here the ultimate, fourth degree of love occurs, when one loves himself only for God's sake, a state thought to be exceptional or rather impossible in this life. In this state, the soul becomes empty of itself, and also becomes one spirit with God. This moment is short: several factors ruin it and force the mind to return (including the world, the body and its needs) – but "the most violent of all" is the love towards the brethren (*quodque his violentius est, fraterna revocat caritas*). The mind is forced to return, and complains about this intrusion.⁵⁶⁵ In this setting, love towards one's fellows separates the individual from God's contemplation (which is considered a rare event altogether).

The writings of Achard and Richard present a substantially different Victorine attitude – different in every respect. The departure from contemplation is not conceived as a "painful departure" or "falling away" from contemplation but as a part of an original plan, dignified by the example of Christ. It does not have any sense of a loss: the return to the usual condition comes

⁵⁶⁴ C.W. Bynum, "The Cistercian Conception of Community: An Aspect of Twelfth-Century Spirituality," in *eadem*, *Jesus as Mother. Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley – Los Angeles – London: University of California Press, 1982), here 70-71.

⁵⁶⁵ See Bernard, *De diligendo Deo*, XIV, 39. X, 27 is more telling: "Te enim quodammodo perdere [...] et a temetipso exinaniri, et paene annullari, caelestis est conversationis, non humanae affectionis. Et si quidem e mortalibus quispiam ad illud raptum interdum, ut dictum est, et ad momentum admittitur, subito invidet saeculum nequam, perturbat dei malitia, corpus mortis aggravat, sollicitat carnis necessitas, defectus corruptionis non sustinet, quodque his violentius est, fraterna revocat caritas. Heu! Redire in se, recidere in sua compellitur, et miserabiliter exclamare: DOMINE VIM PATIOR; RESPONDE PRO ME, et illud: INFELIX EGO HOMO, QUIS ME LIBERABIT DE CORPORE MORTIS HUIUS?" SBO 3, 142.

about through following a divine institution, and (unlike the Cistercians), the return has a goal. Both Achard and Richard conceive the return as an ultimate Christomimetic act, done for one's fellows. The contemplative leaves the contemplation of God precisely as Christ made himself empty (Phil 2:7), and takes the form of a servant – and he does so for the sake of his fellows, as Christ did for men.

This position is explicit in both authors. Achard, in his *Sermo XII*, uses Biblical typology to describe the return to the active life (conceived as the sixth transformation). Return is merely a change of role, and Achard does not regard it as a loss. The contemplative becomes transformed from Israel into Jacob, from Mary into Martha, from Rachel to Leah (the last two are traditional figures for the *vita activa / contemplativa* opposition). Its ultimate and most perfect analogy is, however, the incarnation.⁵⁶⁶ The return from contemplation is connected to the responsibility felt towards one's fellows. Although participation in contemplation is a sign of perfection (*quis tante perfectionis est*), the contemplative accommodates himself, in the seventh transformation, to those who are “less perfect,” and serves them, giving an example (ninth transfiguration). The metaphors for this service are those of food, the Eucharist and recreation.⁵⁶⁷ In *Sermo XV*, Achard uses Moses' ascent to Mount Sinai as a *similitudo* for contemplation. Climbing a mountain is a traditional metaphor for spiritual ascent to contemplation, even that of Moses, but Achard's sermon adds an unusual element. The contemplative does see his brothers while he is in contemplation, as Moses saw his brothers who were suffering in Egypt. The return from contemplation is, again, a Christomimetic act: the contemplative follows the example of Christ by taking the form of the servant; from the love towards his fellows, he leaves the contemplation of God, in order to liberate his fellows, as Moses did.⁵⁶⁸

Richard's case is similar. In his *De IV gradibus* he outlines four grades of love whereas the first three grades pertain to contemplation. In the first grade the soul perceives God's presence in an affective state and sees God through a mirror; in the second grade the grace of contemplation is obtained: the clarity of the Sun of Righteousness (cf. Mal 4:2) can be seen but cannot be approached; finally, in the third grade of love the deifying transformation in rapture and the union in spirit with God take place. The three grades is followed by the ultimate, fourth grade of love, which has nothing to do with contemplation: the contemplative conforms himself to the humility of Christ and returns.⁵⁶⁹ Instead of the indignant cries of Bernard (claiming a forced return), Richard describes this state with the Pauline hymn of love, 1Cor 13: 4-7: in the fourth degree charity

⁵⁶⁶ Achard, *Sermo XII*, 4: “Sexta [transfiguratio] fit per descensionem, cum quis de altitudine contemplationis descendit ad humilitatis actionem, quodammodo et ipse de sinu Patris cum Christo veniens in mundum. Qui prius erat Israel efficitur Jacob, transiens de Rachel in Liam, de Maria ad Martham. Hec transfiguratio dominice descensionis per omnia est consimilis.” *Sermons*, 126.

⁵⁶⁷ Achard, *Sermo XII*, 6: “Septima [transfiguratio] fit per contemperationem, cum quis, exemplo Domini infirmis compatiens, se illis contemperat, cum Paulo dicens: *Quis infirmatur et ego non infirmor? Omnia omnibus factus sum, ut, quantum in se est, omnes salvos faciat*. Hec illi congruit qua Dominus, aliis contemperans, *habitu inventus est ut homo*. [...] “Nona [transfiguratio] fit per conversationis exemplum, cum quis tante perfectionis est quod tota ejus conversatio infirmorum est recreatio, et se panem et cibum suaviassimum ad refectionem minus perfectorum prebet, *ne deficiant in via* vel succumbant in lucta. Hec transfiguratio illi que dicitur sacramentalis congruit.” *Sermons*, 127-128.

⁵⁶⁸ Achard, *Sermo XV*, 35-36: “Videt libere, quasi ab eminenti monte, fratres sui, qui sunt in Egypto, quanta depressi et oppressi sunt afflictione [...] Non potest non affici compasione [...] Venit et illi in mentem spirituale illud ipsius Unigeniti exemplum divinum, *qui cum in forma Dei esset* [...] et tamen *exinanivit seipsum, formam servi accipiens, et habitu inventus est homo*, inter homines et propter homines. [...] Qui intus erat quodammodo cum Deo Deus, in forma Dei, foris fit cum hominibus et pro hominibus homo, reassumpta pro eis forma servi; qui prius proximum deseruerat propter Deum, nunc et Deum secundum aliquid deserit propter proximum. [...] Jam et cum Moyse deserens visionem illam magnam quam viderat in deserto interiore, a monte Dei descendit in Egyptum liberare fratres suos [...]. Sic igitur, non modo propter proximum, ded quasi propter Deum, ipsum deserit Deum.” *Sermons*, 240-241.

⁵⁶⁹ Richard, *De IV gradibus*: “Hec est forma humilitatis Christi ad quam conformare se debet quisquis supremum consummatae caritatis gradum attingere volet. *Majorem siquidem caritatem nemo habet quam ut animam suam ponat quis pro amicis suis* [Jn 15:39]. [...] in quarto gradu semetipsum exinanire incipit, formam servi accipiens et habitu iterum invenitur ut homo [...] in quarto quasi resuscitatur in Christum,” ed. Dumeige, sect. 44, 171-173 = PL 196: 1222CD.

endures everything.⁵⁷⁰ Speaking of Saint John's ecstasy in his Apocalypse commentary, Richard uses similar terms again: John turns back from ecstasy and contemplation of God to the needs of one's fellows (*ad necessitatem proximi*) and in order to teach them (*ad subditorum eruditionem*).⁵⁷¹

The way in which Achard and Richard conceived the return from contemplation is, if one may say based on these two authors, a characteristically Victorine way. For them, contemplation is not a miraculous, rare moment: it used to happen, or can be repeated.⁵⁷² Accordingly, nor is the departure from contemplation a dramatic event. It takes place according to a pattern: it is a Christomimetic act, done for one's neighbours, and it is also the ultimate degree of love. The Cistercian attitude is dramatically different, as Bynum's analysis and Bernard's example show. For them, departing contemplation is a painful and dramatic event, as it terminates a miraculous and rare moment. Return is not part of the itinerary, and fellows are rather hindrances: the contemplative is forced to be with them again, instead of enjoying God.⁵⁷³

Victorine spirituality versus Cistercian spirituality? Attempt at a comparison

In the previous chapters I argued for the existence of a coherent Victorine theological anthropology in the twelfth century. So far, its characteristic doctrines have been outlined. But contrasting one model with another one can provide even more insights. The comparison reveals the features peculiar to one or another model, and the regularly appearing differences can mark the contour lines between them more clearly. Admitting the dangers involved in generalisation, I will speak here about a Victorine model, contrasted with a Cistercian one. The latter is based on the doctrines of two of the first Cistercians, Bernard and William of Saint-Thierry. They were precise contemporaries of Hugh; the doctrines that they formed were similar (they influenced each other too), and William's works often were copied under the name of Bernard (a fact partly justifies my method here).

Much has been written about these two authors: it is not the purpose of this chapter to repeat it, nor to enter subtle issues discussed at length by renowned scholars. The sole aim of the following pages is to demonstrate that twelfth-century Victorine and Cistercian theologies were coherent, diametrically opposed and mutually exclusive forms of thought. The two theologies were based on different premises of theological anthropology, and, I argue, the differences in premises led to considerable differences in spirituality, attitudes, genres and even literary style. Before addressing these differences, it must be noted that in this period there were certain theological standards, commonly accepted doctrines, which can be found in both traditions – as with many of their contemporaries. The central role of Christ, the mediator between God and men, between the invisible and the visible realities, is a common doctrine. The position of man was also conceived in a similar way: human cognition is burdened with representations (or images of fantasy); the reason (*ratio*) is limited, being incapable of a direct or immediate cognition of God. That love towards God

⁵⁷⁰ Richard, *De IV gradibus*: "In hoc gradu caritas omnia suffert, omnia credit, omnia sperat, omnia sustinet. In hoc gradu caritas patiens est, benigna est, non est ambitiosa, non quaerit quae sua sunt, nescit reddere malum pro malo, nec maledictum pro maledicto, sed e contrario benedicit," ed. Dumeige, sect. 46, 175 = PL 196: 1223CD.

⁵⁷¹ Richard, *In Apoc.* I, iv: "Et conversus sum ut viderem vocem quae loquebatur mecum. Conversus sum ab anterioribus quibus per contemplationem inhaerebam ad subditorum eruditionem, quod propter exsilium postposueram. Conversus a contemplatione Dei ad necessitatem proximi, ut viderem vocem quae loquebatur mecum." PL 196: 705B.

⁵⁷² Achard explicitly talks about its reiteration in his *Sermo XII*; see also Richard's casual remarks discussed in the section II-4. *Attitudes towards contemplation*.

⁵⁷³ For this aspect, Bernard McGinn's words (written on the occasion of the seventh desert in Achard's *Sermo XV*) sound inappropriate, as far as Bernard is concerned: "Here Achard takes his place with Bernard of Clairvaux, Richard of St. Victor, and many others, in insisting that the final goal of what we call mystical experience is not the enjoyment of God in itself, but consists in taking on Christ, and therefore like Christ and his saints (Paul and Moses are invoked), returning from ecstasy to loving service of the neighbor" (McGinn, *The Growth*, 398). Bynum's observation, speaking about Benedictines and Cistercians, seems to be closer to the truth: "all monastic authors write as if their monastic reader's fundamental concern is his own virtue." *Jesus as Mother*, 72.

is a prerequisite for cognising God, together with the ascetic practices (which reshape the self to achieve moral development), was beyond doubt for all these authors, too. The differences to be investigated are beyond these common doctrinal elements.

a) Love and cognition

The fundamental difference between Victorines and the early Cistercians is made by the different roles attributed to love. Both parties agreed that human soul has an affective and a cognitive “part.” Bernard of Clairvaux states that there are two things in us to be cleansed: the intellect (which must be illuminated by Christ) and the *affectus* (which must be cleansed by the Holy Spirit).⁵⁷⁴ William, then Benedictine abbot of Saint-Thierry (only later Cistercian monk of Signy) writes around 1121-1124 that the sight for seeing God is charity; there are two eyes in this sight, love (*amor*) and reason (*ratio*).⁵⁷⁵ A similar doctrine is present among the Victorines, but with many more consequences: in Hugh, the cognitive aspect of the soul (called *ratio* or *cognitio*) is identified with the divine image in the soul, while the affective one (called *dilectio* or *affectus*) is identified with the divine likeness.⁵⁷⁶ This doctrine became a standard Victorine one, as the writings of Richard, Achard and Walther attest.⁵⁷⁷ Equating the duality of the soul with the duality of image and likeness – an element missing from the Cistercians – Hugh gave uncommon importance to the issue: both “parts” of the soul became involved in the programme of human restoration. This means a well-defined character for spirituality: the cognition of God, even the ecstatic one, happens through cognitive faculties. The proper faculty for this cognition is an integral part of the human person; it is higher than reason (called *oculus contemplationis* or *intelligentia*) and its operation is temporarily blocked due to the consequences of the original sin.

The affective/cognitive duality of the soul has a radically different interpretation among the Cistercians. In their view, the cognitive-intellectual part is substantially corrupted – it is so corrupted that it enables no adequate cognition of God in this life. This attitude, postponing the adequate intellectual cognition to the blessed state, is coherent with the later Augustine, but they added a new notion – cognition through love. The theoretical background is better elaborated in William. In the *Orationes meditativae*, he makes it clear that human *intelligentia*, derived from reason (*ratio*) or discursive thinking, cannot reach God; it is necessary to obtain the divine *intelligentia* that descends into the mind from God and illuminates faith.⁵⁷⁸ To the idea of an

⁵⁷⁴ Bernard, *Sermo 3 in ascensione*, 2: “Duo ergo sunt quae in nobis purganda sunt, intellectus et affectus: intellectus, ut noverit; affectus, ut velit.... Intellectus noster turbatus erat, ne dicam caecatus; affectus inquinatus erat, et multum inquinatus; sed Christus intellectum illuminat, Spiritus sanctus affectum purgat.” PL 183: 305B.

⁵⁷⁵ William, *De natura et dignitate amoris* III, viii, 21: “Visus ergo ad videndum Deum naturale lumen anime, ab auctore nature creatus, caritas est. Sunt autem duo oculi in hoc visu, ad lumen quod Deus est videndum naturali quadam intentione semper palpitantes, amor et ratio. Cum alter conatur sine altero, non tantum proficit; cum invicem se adjuvant, multum possunt scilicet cum unus oculus efficiuntur, de quo dicit sponsus in Canticis: ‘Vulnerasti cor meum, o amica mea, in uno oculorum tuorum’ [Ct 4:9].” *Guillaume de Saint-Thierry. Deux traités de l’amour de Dieu*, ed. Marie-Madeline Davy (Paris: Vrin, 1952), 100 = PL 184: 393A.

⁵⁷⁶ See, for example, *De sacr.* I, vi, 2: “Imago secundum rationem, similitudo secundum dilectionem; imago secundum cognitionem veritatis, similitudo secundum amorem virtutis.” PL 176: 264CD; *Hom. 1 in Eccl.*: “Duo quippe sunt, quibus animae rationalis natura tota disponitur, videlicet cognitio et affectus, id est sapientia et amor. Quae duo si anima perfecte obtineat et legitime disponat, beata est. [...] Tota ergo animae rationalis substantia his duobus regitur, id est cognitione et affectu, ut per sapientiam quidem veritatem inveniatur, per amorem autem amplectatur virtutem.” PL 175: 141B.

⁵⁷⁷ See Walther, *Sermo XX*; Achard, *Sermo XIII* and *XV*; *De discretione animae, spiritus et mentis*; Richard, for example, *Bmin* i and iv, *Bmaj* III, xiii.

⁵⁷⁸ See *Med. or.* III, 13: “Quid hic sensus? quid imaginatio valet? quid ratio potest? quid intelligentia rationalis? Nam etsi ratio, Deus, nos ad te mittit; per se tamen te non attingit; nec intelligentia ea quidem, quae de inferioribus ex ratione consistit, rationis terminos excedit, nec mensuram habet pertingendi usque ad te. Quae vero desursum est, quod sursum est redolet; nihil humanum, sed totum divinum.” PL 180: 214B; note the epistemological scheme *sensus* – *imaginatio* – *ratio* – *intelligentia rationalis* and its devaluation. Cf. *Med. or.* II, 16: “fides instruit rationem, ratio per fidem erudit, vel

external *intelligentia* (which is not part of humanity but a gift of grace) William adds the elaborate theory of an affective cognition, outlined in the *Speculum fidei*. Here William explains one particular element of 2Cor 3:18, namely, that people gazing at the “Glory of the Lord” become transformed to it. To explain the concept of transformation, William employs an analogy taken from the contemporary theories of sense perception. He defines love as a faculty of perception (whose operation is the perception of objects pertaining to God); in the process of cognising God, this faculty starts to move, gets transformed into its object, and this transformation results in knowledge of God.⁵⁷⁹ This doctrine of William offers a theoretical, quasi-epistemological justification for the theory: it is only a possible justification, and not even the most important (it does not have a central place in William, and Bernard does not use it at all).

The idea that love may have cognitive function also has its theological justification – this is what really matters – present in both William and Bernard. William has elaborated his theory already in the *De contemplando Deo*, written c. 1119-1120, before he met Bernard and turned to the Canticle interpretation. The doctrines are clearly outlined: the reformation in the image of God (which is also the image to which man was created) happens through love. It occurs through the unity of the spirit (*unitas spiritus*), which is also a moment of the purest and the most selfless love towards God. This love is more than merely human: the love that unites us with God is identical with the Holy Spirit – that is, the mutual love of the Father and the Son.⁵⁸⁰

A most remarkable element of this theory is that the union with God is conceived not as an intellectual act but as an act of love.⁵⁸¹ In the Augustinian tradition, love and will are often synonymous.⁵⁸² Therefore, the perfect state of love coincides with the perfect state of will: happiness (and the union with God) means when human will coincides with the divine one.⁵⁸³ The highest possible state of man in the earthly life is conceived predominantly in affective terms and terms of (ecstatic) love. This can be observed at both William and Bernard: *affectus* and *affici* are central terms in such descriptions.⁵⁸⁴

destruit, et abjicit imaginationem; fidem vero non instruit ipsa ad intelligentiam, sed per fidem desursum eam exspectat a Patre luminum [...]. Intelligentiam autem, non quae ex ratione colligitur, vel ratiocinatione formatur; sed quae de sede magnitudinis tuae merito fidei adducitur, et sapientia tua formatur; similis omnino suae origini, quae veniens in mentem fidelis tui rationem ad se colligit, et sibi conformat; fidem vero vivificat et illuminat.” PL 180: 210D.

⁵⁷⁹ *Speculum fidei* 63-64: “Etenim sicut se habet sensus exterior corporis ad corpora et corporalia, sic et interior ad similia sibi, id est, rationabilia ac divina, vel spiritualia. Interior vero anime sensus intellectus ejus est. Major tamen et dignior sensus ejus, et purior intellectus, amor est, si fuerit ipse purus. Hoc enim sensu ipse Creator a creatura sentitur, intellectu intelligitur quantum sentiri vel intelligi potest a creatura Deus. Sensus enim vel anima hominis [0391A] cum se movet ad sentiendum sentiendo mutatur in id quod sentit: alioqui non est sensus, ut puta, sicut physici autumant, vis visibilis a cerebro per radios oculorum egressa offendit in formam vel colores visibilium: quas cum menti renuntiat, conformatur eis mens ipsa, et fit visus. Non enim aliter videret videns. Quod eque de caeteris sensibus intelligendum est. Sic mens pro sensu habet intellectum, eo sentit quicquid sentit. Cum sentit rationabilia, ratio in ea progreditur: qua renuntiante, mens in ea transformatur, et fit intellectus. 64. In eis vero quae sunt ad Deum, sensus mentis amor est: ipso sentit quicquid de Deo secundum spiritum vite sentit.” PL 180: 390D-391A = ed. Davy, 76-78.

⁵⁸⁰ *De cont. Deo*, 11: “Sic enim ipse spiritus sanctus tuus qui amor dicitur patris et filii et unitas et voluntas per gratiam suam in nobis inhabitans [...] deo nos unit per inspiratam nobis bonam voluntatem.” SC 61bis, 96.

⁵⁸¹ On this question, see McGinn, “Love and Intellect” (on William) and “Love as the Center of Bernard’s Mysticism” (on Bernard) in *The Growth*, 250-260 and 193-223.

⁵⁸² See, for example, *De cont. Deo*, 11: “Nichil enim aliud est amor quam vehemens et bene ordinata voluntas.” SC 61bis, 96.

⁵⁸³ *De cont. Deo*, 11: “Quid enim est beatum esse nisi non velle nisi bonum, et omnia habere quaecumque vult? Te igitur velle, et vehementer velle, quod est amare, et singulariter amare [...] hoc demum est non velle nisi bonum, hoc est habere quaecumque vult omnia: quia habet te quis, in quantum amat te. Ergo et amore et beatitudine uniti deo intelligimus quod vere domini est salus.” SC 61bis, 102.

⁵⁸⁴ *De cont. Deo*, 6: “Amor enim est [...] qui amatur, qui [...] omnem a suo amatore repellit [...] illuminans eos, ut dicit apostolus, a claritate in claritatem, ut in lumine videant lumen, et in amore concipiant amorem. Hic est enim fons vitae [...]. Haec est gloria, haec sunt divitiae [...] haec est vita aeterna [...]. Haec affectio: haec est perfectio.” SC 61bis, 80-82. See Bernard’s description of the ultimate, ecstatic grade of love in his *De diligendo Deo* 28: “O amor sanctus et castus! O dulcis et suavis affectio! O pura et defaecata intentio voluntatis, eo certe defaecatior et purior, quo in ea de

The doctrine of cognition through love, as one encounters it in these two early Cistercians, is a complex idea with many functions. It provides a theological analysis of personal spiritual experiences; it is also a theory anchored by many traditional elements (and, through Gregory's sentence, it seems to have Patristic authentication too). It can offer an interpretation of the Canticum, a Biblical text speaking about love explicitly.⁵⁸⁵ The inherent problems of this theory are visible only from a different perspective. There is always some ambiguity in a doctrine that identifies love with cognition, or asserts the transformation of the former into the latter. While cognition is a matter of epistemology, love is beyond that realm: the exact concepts and the rational discourse that apply to cognition (such as the descriptions of cognitive faculties discussed in Part I) do not apply to love. Talking about love (but also about a "loving cognition") is achieved not through a conceptual language but through metaphors and affects (as these authors give subtle psychological observations on the interplay of love, faith and cognition of God). This makes, from a rational and practical point of view, the sources less intelligible than desired. About such a cognition not much can be said in an epistemological language: the formulations lack conceptual exactness, and the meaning of key terms and expressions (like the *intellectus amoris*) must be conjectured from textual parallels.⁵⁸⁶ These difficulties can be traced back to one theoretical (and anthropological) decision, namely that these authors attribute cognitive potential to the affective "part" of the soul. This also means the rejection of the epistemological discourse. In a sense, this means a certain restriction: while the theory gives an account of the ecstatic union with God in love (ensured and supported with theological arguments), it also lacks the epistemological facet (present in the Victorines). William and Bernard cannot tell which cognitive faculty is operating in this cognition and cannot formulate the relation of love and cognition clearly.⁵⁸⁷

Victorines and Cistercians also differ in the role assigned to different divine persons in their spirituality. As was demonstrated earlier, Victorine theology and spirituality are centred around the various equivalents of Christ the mediator – Wisdom, Light, and Word. This often metaphorically Christocentric treat is common to Victorines, in its various forms. Hugh's theology is centred around wisdom, both divine and human, and the later Victorines took over his ideas. The creation of the world and Scripture came about through the descent of the divine and uncreated Wisdom; man (who is created wisdom) can cognise God through the works of wisdom; it is wisdom (and not love or the Holy Spirit) that illuminates us; it is the Word that restores us, and in contemplation the divine Light is seen. The role left to the Holy Spirit is remarkably meagre. The spiritual works of Richard and Achard suggest the same. In contrast, the Cistercians' theology is centred around the Holy Spirit whose equivalent is love. Love is a universal mediating agent: the Holy Spirit itself is conceived as the mutual love of the Father and the Son; humans are connected to God by love (and not by wisdom), since cognising God comes about through loving God. For William, love is also the organising principle of the kingdom of God (creatures do love the divine love and are loved by it); eternal life is loving love itself.⁵⁸⁸ This does not mean, however, in their case a spirituality exclusively based on the Holy Spirit: Christ has a role in it also. Christ is present as Word, but more

proprio nil iam admixtum relinquitur, eo suavior et dulcior, quo totum divinum est quod sentitur! Sic affici, deificari est." SBO 3, 143.

⁵⁸⁵ See William, *Expositio altera super Cantica* i: "Jam enim incipit cognoscere, sicut prior cognita est; et in quantum cognoscitur diligere, sicut prior dilecta est. Prior enim Sponsi ad Sponsam cognitio divinae fuit sapientiae donatio; prior dilectio sancti Spiritus gratuita infusio; cognitio vero Sponsae ad Sponsum et amor idem est; quoniam in hac re amor ipse intellectus est." PL 180: 491D; also *Epistola ad fratres de Monte Dei* I, xiv, 43: "quantum enim videt, vel intelligit eum cui offert, tantum ei in affectu est, et ei amor ipse est intellectus; quantumque ipse ei in affectu est, tantum sapit ei hoc ipsum si dignum Deo est quod offert: et in eo sibi bene est." PL 184: 336A; Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermo 29 de diversis* (with reference to Gregory): "Exponit beatus Gregorius, quia amor ipse, notitia est." PL 183: 620BC.

⁵⁸⁶ The present consensus of the research on the meaning of *intellectus amoris*, as McGinn summarises (*The Growth*, 256) is that *intellectus amoris* means "an interpenetration, not an identification, of love and knowledge in a suprarational or supradiscursive mode."

⁵⁸⁷ It is hardly accidental that it was an outsider from a different tradition who was able to create a clear theoretical formulation for a cognition through love; for this solution, see the chapter on Thomas Gallus, Part III.

⁵⁸⁸ See, for example, *De cont. Deo*, 6.

importantly, as Bridegroom loved and desired. The attitude towards his theological person is basically affective (either considered as the Bridegroom of the soul or as an incarnated and suffering divine person): the subtle and intellectual Christ of the Victorines, working illuminating Word and Wisdom that works in contemplation is alien to this set of mind.

b) Different spiritual programmes

The role attributed to the divine persons (the Holy Spirit or the Christ) in the cognition of God is closely linked to the role attributed to love and cognition. In turn, these connections also define different spiritual agendas and patterns. There are limits set to human agency in cognising God, since the highest form of cognition involves grace, and loving God is expected to this cognition too – but beyond these common points the differences are characteristic again. The Victorines seem to prefer a way appropriate to the cognitive “part” of the soul (since for them love has no cognitive function). Hugh’s *De tribus diebus* describes the movement of human – that is, created – wisdom, which through the cognition of the creatures and itself ascends to the cognition of the uncreated wisdom and God. Richard’s *Benjamin major* describes a similar pattern: through the consideration of various creatures, *intelligentia* begins to operate and in the ultimate phase it becomes deified and contemplates the Truth (usually in ecstasy). Achard describes a similar scheme in his *Sermo XIV*: after the ascent through the angelic hierarchies (which is still created) the *intelligentia* contemplates God in itself. The pattern is similar in all these cases: after the cognition of less and less material entities, the cognitive “part” of the mind reaches the immaterial sphere, and cognises the hidden things of God – and the affective “part” of the soul is minimally involved, since the cognition comes about through the cognitive (and not the loving) faculty.⁵⁸⁹ The spiritual agenda outlined by these texts has a strongly intellectual-cognitive character: it starts with meditation – the term meaning a particular form of goal-, problem- and solution-oriented form of thinking – above something. The subject may be nearly anything: a Scriptural passage, creatures, institutions and so on;⁵⁹⁰ then through the mediation of the visible creatures (even utilised as *similitudines*) the cognition turns to the invisible creatures, and after the invisible creatures to the creator. Self-cognition in this model is a turning point, since man is on a borderline, being both a corporeal and an immaterial creature. The most remarkable point in this process is the self-awareness of the mind: what Hugh, Achard and Richard describe is simultaneously a progress of cognition (from the creatures to the creator, through the ontological hierarchy) and a process of cognition (that is, the way in which the mind gathers knowledge about the subjects).

The Cistercian model is radically different. Here love has an instrumental function (since the proper cognition of God comes about through love). The spiritual agenda is about properly using love – that is, justifying and inciting love towards God, then controlling and keeping the proper direction of that love, until divine and human loves coincide. This programme is clearly outlined in William’s *De contemplando Deo* and Bernard’s *De diligendo Deo* (written 1132-1135, a decade after William’s work). The principles define both the topics and the rhetoric applied. Since in this model love is the only real way to cognise God, both William and Bernard build up a rational argumentation for it. Self-knowledge is a starting point: it means the recognition of the soul’s uncleanness and rejected state, all due to the original sin. The condition is painted with the darker colours of the later Augustine: God cannot be seen, the free will is lost, and there is a constant tension between this miserable world of the *interim* and the future blessed state.⁵⁹¹ Loving God

⁵⁸⁹ This does not mean the denial of the presence of love in this process: it is a drive (in Hugh) or a triggering effect (as in Richard) – the point is here that it has nothing to do with the actual *cognition* itself.

⁵⁹⁰ See Hugh’s *De meditatione*; Richard’s *Benjamin major* gives an ample list for possible subjects of the first two contemplations.

⁵⁹¹ To name one example: William’s *Aenigma fidei* 7 verbatim copies the *De Gen. ad litt.* XII, xxvi. Although both texts emphasise the impossibility of a continuous vision of God, William sharpens the opposition of faith and vision by

leads out of this state; therefore, it is necessary us to love God. Such a love is justified, since God loved us first – therefore we are also expected to love him.⁵⁹² Love has a certain gradation of love, from the selfish to the selfless; the ultimate grade is when God is loved without interest, and one loves himself because of God.⁵⁹³ The highest grade of selfless love is, probably, unreachable in this life; if it is achieved, it is rather a miracle.⁵⁹⁴ This focus on love also means a certain voluntarism: human happiness resides in the rightness of will, when human will coincides with the divine will. In this structure, the role of intellectual or properly cognitive elements is limited to the rational argumentation for loving God: the work itself is done by loving and not cognising in an intellectual way.

The spiritual works of William and Bernard are strongly rhetorical texts that serve the same project. Their aim (like that of the *Meditativae orationes* or the sermons on the Canticle) is to create appropriate emotions in the reader. The role of the reader is clear: he has to identify himself with the antagonist of the text – with the Bride or a Soul – and to make the thoughts expounded his own and to feel the emotions orchestrated by the author. What is expected is an affective response to the text that makes the reader's soul malleable, and a most moving method involves reminders of the ultimate example of God's love towards mankind – the incarnation, life, sufferings and death of Christ.

c) Uses of (pictorial) representations

Hugh is well known for his use of images for didactic purposes. He created a *mappa mundi* (now lost: only its texts remain), and the *Arca* treatises also use images, even if the texts leave too much room for speculation on *how* these images worked. Scholars' opinions diverge: some think that these were mental mnemonic images only, while others argue for a set of partial images or one grand image comprehending several ones, executed as one drawing or painting.⁵⁹⁵ Richard also used images or diagrams, with a similar didactic purpose, in his literary commentary on Ezekiel's temple vision (*In visionem Ezechielis*) in order to explain the plan of the buildings.⁵⁹⁶ Both Hugh and Richard took an intellectual use of images: these are didactic means to explain or display something. Richard's theory of contemplation implicitly sets the limits of them: mental representations (*similitudines*) belong to a lower level of cognition, and the higher levels (the fourth to sixth contemplations) exclude the working of imagination. The images address the cognitive-intellectual "aspect" or "part" of the soul.

William of Saint-Thierry had a very different take on the issue of images, diametrically opposed to the Victorine attitude on almost every point. William suggests to the "beginners" the meditation on particular kinds of images – devotional images depicting events from the life of Christ. In the *Epistola ad fratres de Monte Dei* he mentions images of the "humanity, the birth, the

adding "Alterius enim uite hoc est et quisquis omnia que ibi habenda sunt uult hic habere ostendit se fidem non habere. Sed credenti colligitur meritum uidenti redditur premium," ed. Davy, 96.

⁵⁹² *De cont. Deo* 10; *De diligendo* I, 1.

⁵⁹³ *De cont. Deo* 7: "Et certe possibile est amori deum amantis, ubi magna occurrit gratia, eo proficere, ut nec te nec se amans propter se, et te et se propter te solum amet et per hoc reformatur ad imaginem tuam, ad quam creasti eum." SC 61bis, 84; the doctrine is expounded in Bernard's *De diligendo* 22-30.

⁵⁹⁴ See, for example, *De diligendo* X, 27.

⁵⁹⁵ The literature on the problem of that image is ample, and "reconstructing" the image described in the *Libellus de formatione archæ* (formerly edited as *De arca Noe mystica*) is a popular challenge. On this controversial question, see Patrice Sicard's *Diagrammes médiévaux et exégèse visuelle* (Turnhout, 1993) and Conrad Rudolph's "First, I Find The Center Point." *Reading The Text Of Hugh Of Saint Victor's The Mystic Ark. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 94 No. 4 (2004).

⁵⁹⁶ As Coulter aptly describes, "The diagram fosters contemplative vision by helping the reader 'see' the whole at once. It offers a symbol that holds together (*colligere*) the disparate parts of investigative analysis." Coulter, *Per visibilia*, 148.

passion and the resurrection of the Lord,”⁵⁹⁷ in the *Meditativa oratio* X, he suggests the active imagining of the cradle, the childhood, the crucified and the resurrected Christ.⁵⁹⁸ The function of the meditation on these images, both imaginary and material, is to raise the appropriate emotion of love. William makes it clear that this practice belongs to the beginners who need the sensible form of the Mediator. Here an affective usage of images is to be observed, coherent with the Cistercian focus on love: the images do not explain but remind the spectators (or readers) of something and trigger an affective, strongly emotive answer from them.

d) *Literary preferences*

The importance and popularity of the Canticum among the Cistercians is a well-known fact. Bernard commented on it in a series of sermons; William wrote two commentaries on it. Later Cistercians also interpreted its text, such as Bernard’s secretary Geoffrey of Auxerre (a commentary), Gilbert of Hoyland (d. 1172; 48 sermons on the Canticum), Gilbert of Stanford (a commentary), Baldwin of Ford (d. 1190; three spiritual treatises), John of Ford (d. 1214; 120 sermons on the Canticum), Thomas of Perseigne (a commentary written 1170-1189).⁵⁹⁹ Among twelfth-century Victorines, the Canticum did not enjoy such popularity at all. No sermons or commentaries were written about it: its imagery and text were used only sparsely. This difference in preference may be also directly related to different theological principles.

Where love is the proper cognitive faculty to cognise God, the Canticum becomes a crucial text, in tropological reading: this tendency is present among the Cistercians but also later at Thomas Gallus. Tropological interpretation traditionally means that the interpreter identifies the bride with the individual soul longing for God – but combined with the principle of an affective cognition, this traditional reading takes on new dimensions. If love *is* cognition, then the emotions recorded in the text – such as longing, desire, despair and joy – points beyond themselves: the dynamics of emotions and changes of mood describe the dynamics of cognition of God through love. Under such circumstances, the Canticum operates as a mystical text (describing a special relation between God and the soul), while its commentaries operate as mystagogical texts. The commentary simultaneously explains the content of the Canticum and (by rhetorical strategies) conditions the reader to an affective state that can lead to such a special relation with God.

Where love has no cognitive function – and it is so among the Victorines – the Canticum and its interpretation is far less important. It may describe the affective aspect of the man-God relation, it gives a picture of the human self – but it is mostly about the affective part of the soul, and not about the cognitive one – and it is this latter which cognises God. Richard’s *De IV gradibus* is a particularly good example for this difference. Its first part gives a phenomenology of secular and

⁵⁹⁷ *Ep. ad fratres de Monte Dei* 172 = I, xiv, 43 (PL 184: 336AB): “Hujusmodi homini oranti vel meditati [...] proponitur imago Dominicae Humanitatis, Nativitatis ejus, Passionis et Resurrectionis: ut infirmus animus, qui non novit cogitare nisi corpora et corporalia, habeat aliquid cui [0336B] se afficiat, cui juxta modum suum pietatis intuitu inhaereat. [...] In quo pauperibus spiritu, et simplicioribus filiis Dei, tanto primum solet esse affectus dulcior, quanto humanae naturae propinquior. Postmodum vero fide migrante in affectum, amplexantes in medio cordis sui dulci amoris amplexu Christum Jesum, totum hominem propter hominem assumptum, totum Deum propter assumptum Deum, incipiunt eum non jam [0336C] secundum carnem cognoscere, quamvis eum necdum secundum Deum plene possint cogitare.”

⁵⁹⁸ *Med. or. X*: “Cum enim sensualis imaginationis meae rudimenta necdum supergressus sim, permittes et gratum habebis, ipsa mentis imaginatione circa humilia tua, infirmam adhuc animam meam suam indolem exercere; scilicet nascentis amplecti praesepia, et sanctam adorare infantiam, pendentis in cruce lambere vestigia, tenere et deosculari pedes resurgentis, mittere manum in loca clavorum, et exclamare: Dominus meus et Deus meus. [...] Mediante namque imagine passionis tuae, Christe, cogitatum a nobis circa nos bonum tuum repente nos transfert in summi boni affectum.” PL 180: 235D-236D.

⁵⁹⁹ See McGinn, “Commentary on the Song of Songs,” in *The Growth*, 297-308, with references. Gilbert’s sermons are edited in PL 184; Baldwin’s treatises in PL 204; John of Ford’s commentary as CCCM 17-18; the commentary of Thomas of Perseigne (Thomas Cisterciensis) in PL 206 (see also Maur Standaert, “Thomas le Cistercien,” in DS 15, 796-800).

sacred love, with remarkably few references from the Canticum. The four stages are called “grades of love,” rather metaphorically: in the exposition, the main underlying imagery is not the *Brautmystik* but the elevation into the heavens (modelled on Paul’s rapture). In this scheme, activities of the affective “part” of the soul (which constitutes the ecstasy among Cistercians) belong to the first, beginning phase: it is followed by the activities of the cognitive part.⁶⁰⁰ Since Richard is the most preoccupied and most explicit Victorine about theory of *similitudo*, perhaps his attitude may signal a more general Victorine approach. Since love is *not* cognition, the Canticum has no particular priority due to its content, the loving relation of the soul to God: it uses *similitudines* like other books of Scripture, and the doctrines beyond these *similitudines* are expounded in other books through other *similitudines* too.

Conclusion

The present chapter attempted to justify the concept of an autonomous twelfth-century Victorine theological anthropology. First it investigated the similar doctrinal elements in Victorine works; then observed a similar place attributed to community in their theory of contemplation. The doctrinal elements shared by Achard, Walther, Richard go, ultimately, back to Hugh’s theories. These elements are the following: 1) The divine image and likeness in man is conceived as the duality of a cognitive and affective aspect or faculty in the soul. 2) The functions of these faculties are no interchangeable or convertible. Cognition and love as working of different faculties are and remain separated: the affective faculty has no cognitive function, the cognitive one has no affective function. 3) The prelapsarian state has special importance as the original state. It is conceived as a state when man (Adam) immediately saw (that is, contemplated) God. 4) The consequences of the Fall can be overcome in a “restoration.” It is partly possible through institutional means: the programme of “learning the truth and loving the virtue” (*cognitio veritatis et amor virtutis*) is conceived as a gradual progress in the framework of the monastic life, involving monastic exercises, the sacraments, Scriptural learning and so on. The other, individual, way is contemplation, that is, some sort of immediate cognition of God in this life. 5) Man is predisposed to contemplation, since there is an inborn cognitive (and intellectual) faculty dedicated to the vision of God: Hugh (and Walther) calls it metaphorically the “eye of contemplation,” Achard and Richard *intelligentia*. Although its operation is blocked, grace can enable its working, and a vision of God (or the truth) in ecstasy is possible. Contemplation takes place as a cooperation of grace and the cognitive faculty: it is not a miracle (at least not as the Augustinian and the Scholastic tradition conceives it) but rather a connatural disposition, since it belongs to the “normal activity” of a faculty. 6) Contemplation is conceived primarily through a visual imagery as seeing God. As these doctrinal elements are shared, and they can be derived from Hugh, and are also definitive for an anthropological model, it is plausible to consider them as elements of a common anthropology characteristic of Victorines. This justifies the concept of a Victorine theological anthropology.

Another, not strictly doctrinal element of this model is the attitude towards the community in the context of contemplation. For comparison here I used Bynum’s observations on Cistercian spirituality, where contemplative ecstasy was primarily a self-centred, individual experience ending with a painful return. Richard’s and Achard’s writings show a different attitude: return from contemplation is not particularly painful. Indeed, the return from ecstasy is part of the model: it is a return to the brethren, imitating the incarnation of Christ.

Finally a comparison of the Victorine and the Cistercian spirituality (latter based on William of Saint-Thierry and Saint Bernard) marked the characteristic differences which are related to theological anthropology. In the two models, the relation of love and cognition is conceived

⁶⁰⁰ *De IV gradibus*: “Et sicut in priori gradu degustata suavitas animum satiat, affectumque transfigit, sic in hoc gradu inspecta claritas cogitationem ligat, ut illius oblivisci, vel aliud cogitare non possit.” PL 196: 220C.

differently: for the Victorines, it is the mediator Christ (also in form of Wisdom) who has central role while for Cistercians, the Holy Spirit (also in form of love). This also defines different spiritual programmes leading to the cognition of God: the Victorine model, where the divine image is a cognitive aspect, has an intellectual-cognitive edge: it is the human wisdom that cognises God, through the creatures and with the mediation of the divine Wisdom-Christ. The Cistercian model has a dominant affective character: it is based on love as the only sufficient way towards the cognition of God, through the working of the Holy Spirit. These differences also define their attitude towards the use of images at the lower grade of cognition of God. In the Victorine model, images have an intellectual function transmitting knowledge (Hugh used diagrams for teaching, while Richard talked about the usage of *similitudines*); in the Cistercian one, the function of images, both sensual and mental, is to raise and stimulate love that is instrumental in the cognition of God (as the case of William of Saint-Thierry shows). The same difference in attitudes also explains the different character of the theological literature created. The characteristic works for Cistercian authors are Canticle interpretations, since this book describes for them the very act of cognising God. Among Victorines there is no similar privileged Scriptural book or text type, and the Canticle interpretation remains marginal.

Chapter V. The early Scholastic theories on prelapsarian cognition of God (c. 1140-c. 1200)

Introduction

The previous chapters have sufficiently demonstrated that Hugh's theory about prelapsarian cognition belonged to the foundation of his theological anthropology. Later Victorines – Achard, Richard and Walther – also shared this model of anthropology connecting prelapsarian contemplation of God to other instances of the cognition of God. The doctrinal community of the Victorine school can explain the similarities of these individual variants. A later part will demonstrate that Victorine theological anthropology was discontinued in the thirteenth century, since its basic doctrines became unintelligible or untenable. The present chapter investigates the beginning and the earliest phase of this process in the twelfth century. While Hugh's theory about the prelapsarian state was crucial to the Victorines, outside the school it was just an inspiring doctrine. This chapter will present the parallel theories on the same subject: that is, contemporary non-Victorine theories, elaborated in the period stretching from the late 1130s to the early 1200s. Following a chronological outline, the first part presents the adaptations that Odo of Lucca and Peter Lombard made from Hugh's doctrines (c. 1138-1156); the second part investigates the few related theories in the works of Peter of Poitiers and Peter the Chanter (around 1160-1170) and the earliest interpretations of the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard (c. 1165 to the early 1200s). For a fuller coverage of this issue, one Appendix contains the relevant passages from those less successful, and mostly uninvestigated, books of sentences which were compiled from the works of Odo or Peter Lombard (c. 1145-c. 1245).

The following chapter will demonstrate that the validity of a Victorine theological anthropology was limited already in the twelfth century. Outside the Victorine school, their doctrine as regards Adam – the cornerstone of their anthropology – was regarded only an alternative, which became soon replaced by Peter Lombard's variant. Peter's text preserved certain key terms from Hugh, but it has distorted the original Victorine doctrines; the later interpretations of these terms show that by the end of the century these terms even in Peter's variant became unintelligible for the readers.

Before beginning philological and historical investigations, it must be emphasised again: the epistemological condition of the prelapsarian state was always a very specific (and very marginal) issue. Normally, theologians did not have any theories about it. The Victorines' case was exceptional: Hugh elaborated a theory for reasons internal to his own theological system, and the Victorines inherited it. Odo of Lucca and Peter Lombard had such a theory for practical reasons, since they were compiling textbooks and took over current doctrines. Later the discussion of the issue was limited to those spheres where the *Sentences* was interpreted in institutional form, as the reception history will show (outlined in Part III).

I. Adaptations: the *Summa sententiarum* and the *Sentences* of the Lombard

The twelfth century was an age of the expansion of theological education, with demand for theological textbooks. A coherent theory about the epistemological dimensions of the prelapsarian state was first the monopoly of Hugh, but the doctrine (as the only existing one addressing the issue) was soon taken by two masters compiling their own textbooks. One was the *Summa sententiarum* of Odo of Lucca (written 1138-1141), a book of sentences influential in the 1140s and 1150s; the other was the *Sententiarum libri IV* of Peter Lombard (last revised c. 1156), the work

which later served as the half-official (then official) textbook of theology. (For the less successful books of sentences see the Appendix). The historical and philological relationship between the texts of Hugh, Odo of Lucca and Peter Lombard is clear: Odo took ideas for his *Summa sententiarum* from the *De sacramentis*, and Peter Lombard utilised both works. The books of sentences written by Odo and Peter are important not for themselves, but rather for the place that they had in the doctrinal development. While Odo and Peter read Hugh's text and rephrased its ideas, later twelfth-century theologians, unfamiliar with Hugh's original doctrine, knew only a simplified and altered version transmitted by these works – and this altered version was what defined the later Scholastic doctrines on prelapsarian cognition. This role of them is what justifies here a detailed study of their text.

1. The *Summa sententiarum* of Odo of Lucca (c. 1138-1141)

The *Summa sententiarum* is book of sentences consisting of six treatises written around 1138-1141 by Odo (Otto) of Lucca.⁶⁰¹ It enjoyed a moderate success; its material was used most notably by the Porretan *Sententiae divinitatis* and Lombard's *Sentences*.

The *Summa sententiarum* includes a treatise on the sacraments and the commandments given to Moses (*tractatus* IV). In the opening chapter Odo investigates three questions: the meaning of the term "sacrament," the reasons for which sacraments were established, and the structure of sacraments (*quid sit sacramentum, quare institutum, et in quibus consistat*).⁶⁰² The chapter is essentially a well-edited extract from several chapters of Hugh's *De sacramentis* I, ix (*De institutione sacramentorum*). In Hugh's discussion on sacraments, the prelapsarian cognition appears only where he explains the *raison d'être* of the sacraments.

Composing his own book of sentences, Odo focused on the sacraments, and so dropped all the material only remotely connected to that central subject. Most of his changes are editorial: he keeps the three reasons of the sacraments but changes their order (to the sequence is *eruditio*, *humiliatio* and *exercitatio*).⁶⁰³ Odo also keeps the explanation of these reasons: erudition through the material and visible means of sacraments is necessary for the cognition of the invisible; humiliation refers to the fact that for salvation humans (as spiritual beings) must turn to sacraments (as to material, and hence inferior, things). Exercises, finally, refer especially to the exercise of good deeds like participation in the mass and making confession (at this point Odo abandons the position of Hugh and adds a division of exercises).

On the *raison d'être* of the sacraments, however, Odo's summary brings more than editorial changes for a tighter structure. His direct source, Hugh's *De sacramentis* I, ix, 3 (*Quare instituta*

⁶⁰¹ Edition: PL 176: 41-174, although what Migne printed as its seventh treatise is Walter of Mortagne's *De sacramento conjugii*. The attribution to Odo was quite convincingly established as early as the late 1950s: see Roger Baron, "Note sur l'énigmatique 'Summa Sententiarum'," RTAM 25 (1958): 26-41, Odon Lottin, "A propos des sources de la 'Summa sententiarum'" RTAM 25 (1958): 42-58, and most recently Ferruccio Gastaldelli, "La 'Summa sententiarum' di Ottone di Lucca. Conclusione di un dibattito scolastico," *Salesianum* 42 (1980): 537-546. Marcia Colish in her *Peter Lombard* (vol. I page 63) still speaks about an unknown author's work of seven treatises.

⁶⁰² *Summa sententiarum*, tract. IV, i, PL 176: 117B-118C.

⁶⁰³ The same three reasons for the institution of sacraments appears in the same sequence in a *questio* on the sacraments of Ms Châlons-sur-Marne 72 (80) fol. 119r-119v: "Videndum est quid sit sacramentum, et que est causa et in quo consistat. Sacramentum est uisibilis forma inuisibilis gratiae. Vel sacramentum est signum. Vel secundum hugonem sacramentum est naturale signum ex similitudine representans, ex institutione significans, ex sanctificatione conferens specialem gratiam. Causa eius triplex: eruditio, humiliatio, exercitatio. Eruditio, ut per exteriorem ablutionem erudiemur de interiori; humiliatio, ut in natura nobis inferiore non tantum ab ea speraremus salutem; exercitatio, ne in noxia occupemur superstitione." See Odo Lottin, "Questions inédites de Hugues de Saint-Victor," RTAM 26 (1959): 177-213 and 27 (1960): 42-66, transcription quoted from RTAM 27 (1960): 42. The context, the definition of sacrament and the abbreviated auctoritas ("Secundum h" in the manuscript) suggest that the manuscript gives Hugh's doctrine, as Lottin comments (*ibid.*): "Nous ne présentons certes pas cette question comme un écrit de Hugues de Saint-Victor, puisqu'il est cité comme un théologien du temps. De fait, cette définition secundum h. est celle du *De sacramentis*, I. I p. 9 c. 2 (PL 176: 317D). La suite de l'exposé s'inspire aussi du même ouvrage (c. 3, 4, 6)."

sint sacramenta, PL 176: 319A-322A) is a long chapter containing a substantial narrative on the Fall and restoration. For Hugh, these issues clearly belonged to the context, as he saw in the sacraments remedies against the Fall and means of restoration. But Odo, composing a practical manual on sacraments, cut these elements: the sole remainder of Hugh's account is one single-sentence reference to Adam's prelapsarian cognition as immediate vision of God:

Tria sunt propter quae instituta sunt: propter eruditionem, humiliationem, exercitationem. Propter eruditionem; quia cum homo ante peccatum haberet cognitionem veritatis et tunc sine medio posset Deum videre, per superbiam excaecatus est; et ut ad cognitionem redeat necessaria sunt haec visibilia per quae eruditur mens ad intelligenda invisibilia.⁶⁰⁴

[For three reasons were established (the sacraments): for education, for humiliation and for exercise. For education: because the man became blinded by pride, although before the Sin he cognised the truth and then he was able to see God immediately (*sine medio*), and these visible things – by which the mind is taught to understand the invisible things – are necessary for him in order to return to cognition.]

The meaning of Odo's words *sine medio* can be conjectured (even if he nowhere else returns to the issue). *Medium* in itself has an indefinite meaning: it may refer to anything "in the middle" or "between two things." The expression *sine medio* must be resolved as *sine medio [interposito]*, meaning "without the interposition of something," namely between the seer and the thing seen. In the context of a visual metaphor of cognition, *sine medio* has an adverbial meaning: referring to a direct and unblocked vision, its meaning is "immediately." Odo's concept here seems to be a free rendition of two separate Hugonian concepts: that of the *medium divisionis* and of Adam's immediate cognition. *Medium divisionis* was, as earlier discussed, an expression by which Hugh described the effects of the original sin (*De sacramentis* I, ix, 3): in his narrative, the disobedient Adam found a "medium" between God and himself that separated God and the human mind. Odo's expression *sine medio* makes perfect sense, if one reads it back into Hugh's text: before the original sin Adam saw God without the *medium divisionis* (which later blocked that vision).

Odo conceived the prelapsarian cognition of God as vision or *cognitio veritatis*. The idea cannot be found in this form in *De sacramentis* I, ix, 3 (there the key notions are the presence of God and Adam's immediate adherence to God), but can derive from other Hugonian passages: seeing God through the eye of contemplation belonged to that state (see *De sacramentis* I, x, 2) and *cognitio veritatis* appears wherever Hugh outlines his interpretation of the *imago et similitudo* in man.

Read along the text of the *De sacramentis*, Odo's expression – a vision of God *sine medio* – is only a new synonym for other Hugonian concepts expressing the immediateness of the primordial cognition (Hugh's own expressions were *sine medio divisionis*, *praesentia contemplationis*, *prima perfectio* and *contemplatio*). Odo's expression formulates the Hugonian notion of immediacy in a negative way, by emphasising the lack of something interposed between the seer and the thing seen, and leaves that "medium" undefined. This undefined expression of Odo turned into a hermeneutical challenge for the next decades, after Peter Lombard copied it into his book of sentences.

2. The Sentences of Peter Lombard (1156)

Peter Lombard (d. 1160) was one of the famous Paris masters teaching theology in the 1140s and 1150s.⁶⁰⁵ From the historical perspective, he became one of the most influential authors of the later

⁶⁰⁴ *Summa sententiarum*, tractatus IV, i, PL 176: 117D.

⁶⁰⁵ Peter Lombard (Petrus Lombardus or Langobardus) appeared in 1134 in Paris carrying a letter of recommendation by Bernard of Clairvaux directed to Hilduinus, the abbot of Saint-Victor (see Bernard, Ep. 410); by the mid-1140s

twelfth century through his two textbooks, the *Sentences* and the commentary on the Pauline letters (*Collectanea*). In the changing world of theological education, Peter's book of sentences acquired exceptional popularity, and it did so in a very short time. The text was finally revised by the author around 1156; the first glosses on it were written in the 1160s, and from the early thirteenth century onwards it became the official textbook of theological education for centuries.⁶⁰⁶

Peter Lombard appears in his *Sentences* to be not so much an original thinker as a teacher providing his student with material for classroom work. Keen on the current debates and the ideas in the schools of Paris, he gave a balanced coverage to all issues of his time – by taking over themes, and transcribing, editing or modifying acceptable material from the accessible sources. Concerning the origin of the sacraments, Peter compiled his text from Odo's *Summa sententiarum* and Hugh's *De sacramentis*, borrowing Odo's reference on the prelapsarian vision (*Sent.* IV dist. 1); he also covered the question of prelapsarian cognition with materials borrowed directly from Hugh's *De sacramentis* (*Sent.* II dist. 23). Peter's final texts are not true renditions of Hugh's doctrines. The following analysis investigates the way in which Peter creates his own doctrines by altering, and in a way distorting, the original.

Sine medio Deum videbat. Sent. IV dist. 1

Odo of Lucca's *Summa sententiarum* already contained a well-structured account of the origins of the sacraments, based on Hugh's *De sacramentis*. Peter used both works when he composed the first distinction of Book Four of his *Sentences*. Enumerating the reasons for the existence of the sacraments, he kept Hugh's order (*humiliatio - eruditio - exercitatio*), and explaining the reason of erudition he creates a text conflated from both of his sources (see the table below). In order to explain the pedagogical function of the sacraments, Peter first takes over Hugh's idea contrasting the external *species* and internal efficiency of the sacrament (*Propter eruditionem... erudiatur*). When he explains why an education through sacraments is necessary, he combines the doctrines of his sources. Hugh's text explained the necessity of that education by general anthropological premises (comparable to his theories in the *In Hierarchiam*): man knew the visible things but not the invisible ones, and to learn about divine things, he had to leave human things. Odo gave a more dramatic explanation: due to the original sin, man has lost the immediate vision of God, and has become blind due to his pride – *therefore* he needs the sacramental education through visible things.

Hugh, <i>De sacramentis</i> I, ix, 3 (PL 176: 320AB)	Odo of Lucca, <i>Summa sententiarum</i> , tract. IV, i (PL 176: 117D)	Peter Lombard, <i>Sententiae</i> IV distinctio 1 cap. 5, 3 (ed. Quaracchi; tom. I, 235 = PL 192: 840)
Propter eruditionem quoque instituta sunt sacramenta, ut per id quod foris in sacramento in specie visibili cernitur, ad invisibilem virtutem quae intus in re sacramenti constat agnoscendam mens humana erudiatur.	Propter eruditionem [instituta sunt sacramenta],	Propter eruditionem etiam instituta sunt [sacramenta], ut per id quod foris in specie visibili cernitur, ad invisibilem virtutem quae intus est cognoscendam mens erudiatur.
Homo enim qui visibilia noverat, invisibilia non noverat;	quia cum homo ante peccatum haberet cognitionem veritatis et tunc sine	Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio Deum videbat,

became a renowned master, teaching at the cathedral school of Notre-Dame; in 1159 he became the Archbishop of Paris. On his life and the *Sentences*, see the monograph of Marcia Colish, *Peter Lombard* (2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994).

⁶⁰⁶ Critical edition: *Magistri Petri Lombardi Sententiae in IV libros distinctae*, ed. I[gnatius] Brady (Grottaferrata: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1971-1981); non-critical edition: PL 192: 521-962.

	medio posset Deum videre, per superbiam excaecatus est;	per peccatum adeo habuit, ut
divina agnoscere nullatenus posset nisi humanis excitatus.	et ut ad cognitionem redeat necessaria sunt haecabilia per quae eruditur mens ad intelligenda invisibilia.	nequaquam divina queat capere, nisi humanis excitatus. [<i>var.</i> exercitatus]. ⁶⁰⁷

Peter's own text gives a combination. He includes Odo's remarks on the prelapsarian vision of God, on its loss, and the effect of the original sin; then he adds Hugh's emphasis (and words) on the importance of "leaving the human things" as the sole way to cognise the divine ones. The result of these editorial moves is a largely Hugonian paraphrase which includes Odo's ideas in a simplified form, speaking of a factual vision of God (*videbat*, instead of *posset videre*). Peter nowhere explains the meaning of the term *sine medio* or the *medium* involved.

Non sicut sancti neque in aenigmate. Sent. II dist. 23, 4

More subtle and substantial changes can be observed in *Sentences* Book II dist. 23. The second half of *distinctio* 23 contains an elaboration on the threefold knowledge of the prelapsarian man: about the created world, about God and about himself. The entire issue is adapted from Hugh's treatise on the prelapsarian condition, *De sacramentis* I, vi (*de creatione hominis et statu ejus ante peccatu*), 12-15. In *Sent. II dist. 23, 4* Peter gives a tendentiously altered version of Hugh's ideas on prelapsarian cognition of God.

Peter's text demands special attention. Read alone in itself, it can show how Peter changed the original notions of Hugh towards a less specific and more traditional direction; a wider historical context gives even more importance to these changes. From the late twelfth century onwards, theologians read Peter's *Sentences* as a textbook giving a primer's orientation in theology – and that textbook already covered the issue of prelapsarian cognition. Peter's version has, practically, overwritten the original Victorine concept – and made it incomprehensible outside the realm of Victorine theology. The *De sacramentis* was not consulted for this issue until the 1240s and 1250s, and when a few theologians (predominantly of the Franciscan Order) connected Peter's text with Hugh's original, any form of an immediate vision of God was unthinkable except *raptus* and the beatific vision.

Peter's most conspicuous changes are the abridgements and contractions, as the following parallels show.⁶⁰⁸

Hugh, <i>De sacramentis</i> I, vi, 14 (PL 176: 271CD)	Peter Lombard, <i>Sent. II. dist. 23, 4</i> (PL) = dist. 23 Cap. 3 (138), 4 (ed. Quaracchi) (PL 192: 701 = ed. Quaracchi tom. I pars 2, page 449. lines 19-24)
1. Cognitionem vero creatoris sui primum hominem habuisse dubium non est: quoniam si pro vita temporali conservanda in rebus transitoriis tam magnam scientiam accepit, multo magis pro vita aeterna adipiscenda excellentiorem et abundantiorum in celestibus cognitionem habere debuit.	Cognitionem quoque Creatoris primus homo habuisse creditur.
2. Cognovit ergo homo creatorem suum non ea	Cognovit enim a quo creatus fuerat; non eo modo

⁶⁰⁷ *Sentences* manuscripts have both variants, "exercitatus" and "excitatus" (the difference is a stroke above the letters marking the syllable -er-). Obviously, the intended meaning (and hence the correct form) is "humanis excitatus," that is, "leaving behind human things" (*humana*) when thriving for the divine – as Hugh taught. The form "humanis exercitatus" means the precise opposite of the idea, "dealing with" or "exercise in" human things. This scribal error must derive from the noun of the next, adjacent sentence: "humanis excitatus. Propter exercitationem similiter."

⁶⁰⁸ The editors of the critical text noted in the apparatus: "[dist. 23] Cap. 3 conflatur ex verbis Hugonis, *De sacram.*, I, 6; et quidem... num. 4 ex c. 14." *Sententiae*, tom. I pars 2, 448.

cognitione que foris ex auditu solo percipitur, sed ea potius que intus per aspirationem ministratur; non ea qua Deus modo a credentibus absens fide queritur,	cognoscendi quo <i>ex auditu</i> solo percipitur, quo modo a credentibus absens quaeritur,;
sed ea qua tunc per praesentiam contemplationis scienti manifestus cernebatur.	sed <u>quadam interiori aspiratione</u> qua <u>Dei praesentiam contemplabatur</u>
3. Sciendum tamen est quod primam illam cognitionem hominis quam de creatore suo habuit, sicut maiorem et certiolem illa cognitione quae nunc in sola fide constat veraciter [0271D] dicimus: ita etiam illa que postmodum in excellentia contemplationis divinae manifeste revelabitur, minorem necesse est, confiteamur.	non tamen ita excellenter sicut post hanc vitam sancti visuri sunt, neque ita <i>in aenigmate</i> qualiter in hac vita videmus.

Hugh describes the cognition of Adam in a most elaborate form. In order to make the differences from the present condition clear, he employs a most artistic, carefully balanced sentence structure, built upon diametrical oppositions and parallels. The oppositions are written up in two perfect isocolons, a most powerful rhetoric and mnemonic form. For a better overview of Hugh's position, his sentences can be outlined thus:

Cognovit ergo homo creatorem suum

[A] non ea cognitione

que foris ex auditu solo percipitur,

[B] sed ea [cognitione]

que intus per aspirationem ministratur.

[A'] Non ea [cognitione]

qua Deus modo a credentibus absens fide quaeritur;

[B'] sed ea [cognitione]

qua [Deus] tunc per praesentiam contemplationis scienti manifestus cernebatur.

Hugh uses negations (A and A') and assertions (B and B') contrasted with each other. The negations describe the original condition as being unlike the present one, while the assertions describe it as it was. The oppositions organised into isocolons mark the differences. First (A), it was a cognition "from inside" (*intus*) and through *aspiratio* (and seeing), not "from outside" (*foris*) and not through hearing. A cognition "through hearing" must refer to faith (cf. Rm 10:17, *fides ex auditu*); it also returns in the next clause A', *a credentibus fide quaeritur*. Then the second isocolon makes the differences between faith and Adam's cognition more contrasted. Each element describing the present cognition through faith has its precise counterpart:

nunc (now)	tunc (then)
absens ([God] absent)	scienti manifestus ([God] manifest to the knowing one)
quaeritur (is sought)	cernebatur (was seen)
a credentibus (by the believers)	scienti (to the knowing one)
fide (through faith)	per praesentiam contemplationis (through "the presence of contemplation")

Creating his own text, Peter regroups the elements found in Hugh's text by dissolving the isocolons and parallel antithetic structures of *non... sed... non... sed* (changing the order from ABA'B' to AA'BB'):

Cognovit enim a quo creatus fuerat;

non eo modo cognoscendi

[A] quo *ex auditu* solo percipitur,

[A'] quo modo a credentibus absens quaeritur,

[B] sed quadam interiori aspiratione
 [B'] qua Dei praesentiam contemplantur;
 non tamen ita excellenter sicut post hanc vitam sancti visuri sunt,
 neque ita *in aenigmate* qualiter in hac vita videmus.

Peter drops as crucial elements of Hugh's text as Hugh's reference to Adam's knowledge (*sciens*) and the Hugonian opposition of faith and knowledge (*credentibus / scienti*). The clause "[Deum] per praesentiam contemplationis cernebatur" is now contracted into "Dei praesentiam contemplantur," hence the Hugonian expression "praesentia contemplationis" disappears, and the direct object of the verb of vision is changed from God to God's presence. These changes "soften" the marked Hugonian contrasts into a general opposition of faith and inspiration.

The remainder of Peter's text is a free paraphrase of the theme that Adam's cognition of God was between our knowledge through faith and the future eschatological cognition. Hugh's text explicitly mentions faith (*nunc sola fide*), but it formulates the eschatological cognition as revealed "in the excellence of the divine contemplation" (*postmodum in excellentia contemplationis divinae manifeste revelabitur*). Peter gives different descriptions: he simplifies the description of eschatological vision (*post hanc vitam sancti visuri sunt*) and replaces the explicit reference to faith with a synonym (*in aenigmate videmus*). The Lombard also omits Hugh's sentence about the certainty of Adam's cognition compared to faith.⁶⁰⁹ Among these changes perhaps the most momentous was the least conspicuous one, the replacement of "faith" with "see in enigma."

The change itself is seemingly legitimate (the Biblical expression taken from 1Cor 13:12 was considered indeed a synonym for believing), but its consequences were adversary for the Victorine theory. With this small change, Peter rewrote the visual imagery of the prelapsarian cognition, and imported such doctrinal elements which made unintelligible the original as the *Sentences* became a regularly read work. To understand these consequences, we must consider that when Peter replaced the abstract noun "faith" with an allegory (or *similitudo*), he accomplished several things at once. The expression first evokes the Scriptural passage 1Cor 13:12 (*videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem*)); it evokes an entire imagery too (involving visual elements as the mirror, mirrored image, the very act of seeing and so on) and, probably for many with a theological education in the period, the standard Augustinian interpretation of the same passage.

Let us remember: Hugh had not used the imagery of the mirror in this context. He attributed a vision of God to Adam (which was also knowledge), and opposed it to faith (which is non-vision). Introducing the Scriptural metaphor, Peter changes the imagery: he opposes another vision to Adam's vision: the vision of faith, *in aenigma*. In other words, he opposes two forms of vision (instead of opposing vision and non-vision). Hugh's original account, on the other hand, asserted the similarity between the prelapsarian and eschatological forms of cognition (both are contemplation) and their dissimilarity to the fallen condition (denoted with hearing and, elsewhere, blindness). Peter's text worked differently. The evoked Scriptural verse also opposed the present and the future states (by the opposition of seeing *per speculum in aenigmate / facie ad faciem*) but said nothing about the prelapsarian state; Peter said nothing about the mirror but asserted that in seeing God Adam did not have the enigma.

The other change of implications was less direct but complemented the change of imagery. By introducing the reference to 1Cor 13:12, Peter invited another, non-Victorine reading of the text. His own interpretation of the Scriptural verse can be found in his Pauline commentary (*Collectanea in epistolas Pauli*). There Peter gives an explanation based on Augustine's *De Trinitate*. In practical terms, he perpetuates the traditional Augustinian interpretation: the mirror is an "obscure image" (such as the creatures or the human soul); the enigma refers, generally, to obscurity, and their

⁶⁰⁹ "Modum vero divine cognitionis quam primus ille homo habuisse creditur explicare difficile est, excepto eo quod diximus quia per internam aspirationem visibiliter edoctus, nullatenus de ipso creatore suo dubitare potuit."

opposite (the “face-to-face vision”) has a clear eschatological meaning.⁶¹⁰ In other words, the Lombard confirmed the traditional doctrine: an immediate vision of God may only be the eschatological one. At this point, the Victorine theory conflicts with the traditional one. Hugh’s interpretation of the same locus (discussed above) had a crucial difference: seeing God face to face meant not the eschatological vision but the immediate vision of God *in contemplation*.⁶¹¹ that is, the immediacy of cognition is not restricted to the future state. The different implications regarding the possibility of a face-to-face, immediate vision of God and the change of imagery defined together the final phase of the doctrinal development, as the *Summa Halensis* (and numerous other works: see Part III Chapter II) documents after c. 1245. According to the authoritative doctrine, Adam’s vision of God was not an immediate vision of God (since an immediate vision means an eschatological vision); it was a mediated vision through a clear mirror, in which there was no enigma (see Part III Chapter II). This doctrine merely unfolded the implications given by Peter’s reference to the enigma – Hugh’s original theory contained nothing from the mirror imagery and talked about an immediate vision.

Peter’s text is still curiously neutral in itself. By its very nature (being a very brief paraphrasing extract) it has certain “blank spaces” that may be filled by the readers according to their own background. If Peter’s text is read along with its Victorine source, traces of the Victorine doctrines (such as contemplation as a direct vision of God) are clearly visible, and his text seems to be a poor and simplified extract from Hugh’s text. From the twelfth century, however, I could not find evidence for such a parallel reading. Reading the same text alone, without its source it gives a different reading – and this must have been the usual way. The paraphrases of Odo and Peter Lombard let the Victorine doctrine enter the milieu of urban, professional schools of theology, although in an altered form. Non-Victorine theologians filled the same blank spaces with elements of their own theological background, and their difference resulted in a variance of interpretations between the 1160s and the 1240s. The gradual transformation of the theological education granted the *Sentences* a position unknown earlier. It became a standard text commented upon, without rivals in this genre: its text was not changed (or replaced by another book of sentences) anymore. Theologians learned Peter’s version during their formation and reacted to it: what the words of Peter were assumed to have meant was expounded in the interpretations, glosses and commentaries. These reactions will be discussed by the following chapters in detail.

II. Alternatives and interpretations. The prelapsarian Adam in the schools of Paris

Introduction

Peter the Lombard, the head of the school of Notre-Dame, died in 1160. At that time his *Sentences* (most recently revised by 1156) was already becoming a practical manual in theological education. One among the many recent issues Peter included in his *Sentences* was Adam’s prelapsarian cognition of God, a theme developed first by Hugh of Saint-Victor. The following study investigates what theories Peter’s immediate successors had on this issue, and how the very first interpretations of the *Sentences* dealt with the subject. The time span of the present investigation,

⁶¹⁰ *Collectanea in I. Cor.*: “per speculum, id est per imaginem obscuram. Videmus enim aliquas creaturas, in quibus aliqua similitudo Dei relucet, et hoc satis obscure. Et in aenigmate, id est per obscuram allegoriam.... sicut nomine speciali imaginem significavit, ita nomine aenigmatis similitudinem, quamvis obscuram, et ad perspicendum difficile.... Vel speculum est anima, in cuius aliquo modo Deum cognoscimus. Sed in aenigmate, id est obscure, tunc autem videbimus facie ad faciem, id est manifeste, a simili recto vultu se intuentium. Est enim quaedam visio huius temporis, erit altera visio futuri. Ista est per fidem, illa erit per speciem.” PL 191: 1662D-1663A (cf. *Glossa* [ordinaria] on the same passage: PL 114: 543C). The source is *De Trin.* XV, 9, 15-16 (PL 42: 1068-1069).

⁶¹¹ *De sacr.* I, x, 9 (PL 176: 342BD). Note that for Richard the vision through mirror and enigma means the cognition of God through corporeal *similitudines*, while the face-to-face vision means the immediate vision of the Truth or Wisdom.

therefore, covers approximately the period c. 1160 to c. 1215. The investigated works are products of the urban non-monastic schools of theology: their genres (theological questions, glosses to the *Sentences* of Peter, and another book of sentences) are characteristic of this milieu.

The results of the following analyses will show the doctrinal developments in the school milieu. This process was independent of the Victorine theology, and its final result, the Scholastic doctrine on the prelapsarian vision of God, was incompatible with Hugh's original theory. The concrete development of the doctrine will be the subject of the following investigations.

Before that, however, it is necessary to hint at those institutional and conceptual differences (already present in the twelfth century) that also contributed to the oblivion of the Victorine theory. Hugh's original theory connected doctrinal theology (the theological description of the prelapsarian state) with spirituality and anthropology (the theory on contemplation and the "eye of contemplation"). The Victorine theologians continued this tradition, and this theory also fitted the canonical way of life that they followed. Outside Saint-Victor, theological education became more and more professional and scientific in the second half of the century. The theology of the schools, on the one hand, demanded special intellectual skills: dialectic and argumentative thinking, quick access to information through "finding devices" (instead of storing it in the memory) and a different use of references. On the other hand, this theological education did not need the spirituality that monastic theology had: its focus was on studying theology proper and on preaching (which relied strongly on moral theology). In this period, when the first modern theological textbooks came into general usage (like the *Sentences* itself or the *Historia scholastica*), the voluminous *De sacramentis* does not become one of them. It was the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard that transmitted Hugh's theories on the prelapsarian state to the schools. Peter's variant of the Hugonian theme dropped the anthropological background and added Augustinian elements: this variant gradually became the doctrine on the issue, and Hugh's theory was forgotten until the 1240s.

Besides these historical circumstances, a conceptual difference must also be noted. School theology developed new concepts (and new terms) to describe prelapsarian condition, and these were incompatible with the Hugonian ones. Such new terms were *naturalia* and *gratuita*, appearing, maybe for the first time, with the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard (1156).⁶¹² *Naturalia* means the things that man received in creation: it usually refers to the faculties of the soul (such as *ingenium*, *memoria*, *intellectus*, and even *liberum arbitrium*). *Gratuita* means the things that are "added" to the soul; it usually means virtues. In the *Sentences*, Peter Lombard uses the parable of the good Samaritan (Lc 10:30) to describe the Fall in terms of *gratuita* and *naturalia*. The man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho represents mankind: he fell among robbers and became wounded and robbed. In this allegorical reading, being wounded and robbed means that *naturalia* are corrupted and *gratuita* removed from him; Peter's sentence *vulneratus in naturalibus, spoliatus gratuitis* defines all the later approaches. This usage of the terms *naturalia-gratuita* seems to be unknown to theologians of 1140s,⁶¹³ but after the *Sentences* they became soon generally accepted and pervaded the entire theological literature (even if there were debates *how* to apply the terms⁶¹⁴).

⁶¹² Peter Lombard, *Sent.* II dist. xxv, 8: "Per illud namque peccatum naturalia bona in ipso homine corrupta sunt, et gratuita detracta. Hic est enim ille qui a latronibus vulneratus est, et spoliatus [Lc 10]. Vulneratus quidem in naturalibus bonis, quibus non est privatus, alioquin non posset fieri reparatio; spoliatus vero gratuitis, quae per gratiam naturalibus addita fuerant. Haec sunt data optima, et dona perfecta [cf. Jac 1:17]; quorum alia sunt corrupta per peccatum, id est, naturalia, ut ingenium, memoria, intellectus; alia subtracta, id est, gratuita, quanquam et naturalia ex gratia sint." PL 192: 707. This interpretation of Jac 1:17 suggests to me Hugh as a source, cf. *In Hier.*: "omne datum optimum et omne donum perfectum... bona omnia sive quae natura primum bene condita accepit, sive quae postea per gratiam glorificata obtinere meruit." PL 175: 936AB. Simon of Tournai reads the *locus* in the same way in his *Summa*: "Redditur inter data et dona distinguit Jacobus dicens, Omne datum optimum et donum perfectum desursum est. Data vocat naturalia, dona vero vocat gratuita supererogata." Paris BNF 3114 fol. 32ra. The *Summa sententiarum* of Odo of Lucca, tract. III, xiv speaks about *bona naturalia (ratio, ingenium, memoria et caetera)*, PL 176: 112.

⁶¹³ As it seems, this dichotomic terminology is equally unknown to Robert Pullus (Pulleyn), writing his *Sententiarum libri VIII* around 1143, and to the monastic theologians.

⁶¹⁴ See Praepositinus, *Summa 'Qui producit ventos'*, Ms Paris Mazarine 1004, here fol. 113ra: "Queritur utrum homini simul collata fuerunt naturalia et gratuita, an primo naturalia et post gratuita. De hoc tres opiniones sunt. Dixit enim

The terms were used by both schoolmen (like Peter of Poitiers, Praepositinus, Simon of Tournai, Alain of Lille) and monastic theologians, such as the Cistercian Garnier of Rochefort and Godefroy of Saint-Victor.⁶¹⁵ Hugh's doctrine about the three eyes was not interpreted in these terms, but it must be also noted that neither *naturalia* nor *gratuita* seem applicable to an *inborn* faculty that (with the cooperation of grace) makes a special immediate vision of God possible in *this* life.

1. A transitional Adam of the 1160s

Adam's cognition about God *before* the original sin is too particular an issue for any theologian outside the Victorine tradition. Although Peter Lombard took the theory and included it in his *Sentences*, in his own school, that of Notre-Dame, the subject did not attract much attention. I found three instances from the period 1160-1170 that are related to Adam: a theological question of Peter Comestor, positions recorded in the *Sentences* of Peter of Poitiers, and the so-called *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* to the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard.

Peter Comestor, *Quaestio* 331

Peter Comestor or Manducator (d. 1178) had a career at Notre-Dame cathedral: he was there a student of Peter Lombard, then a master himself at the same school, and finally became the chancellor of Notre-Dame (1168-1178).⁶¹⁶ Posterity granted him fame as *magister Historiarum*, due to his textbook on Biblical history, the *Historia Scholastica* (c. 1170).⁶¹⁷ Peter's position on Adam is outlined through the theological question 331 of Ms Cambrai Bibl. Mun. 561.⁶¹⁸ Two elements of the text demand special attention: Adam being in the "heavenly court" and Adam's exemption from the *via / patria* relation.

From the 1160s onwards, a new complex of ideas appears in theological literature discussing Adam's prelapsarian life. As Comestor writes, Adam was present in the "heavenly court" (*celestis curia*), among the angels, and after having returned from there, he prophesied about the future.⁶¹⁹ These elements were originally Augustine's interpolations into the Genesis narrative on Eve's creation. Augustine had at hand the Vetus Latina translation where God is said to have sent to Adam ecstasy and not sleep (here the Vulgate reads *sopor* while the Vetus Latina reads *extasis*), at

magister Gilbertus, quod homo ante peccatum non habuit gratuita [...] Magister Petrus Lombardus duos status constituit in primo homine ante peccatum, unum in quo naturalia habebat tantum, alium in quo habebat naturalia cum gratuitis [...] Sed beatus Anselmus cantuariensis dixit, quod homo nunquam fuit sine gratuitis ante peccatum, quod nobis verisimilius videtur."

⁶¹⁵ See Peter of Poitiers, *Sent.* II, xx. PL 211: 102AB; Alain, *Distinctiones*, "Donum vel datum," PL 210: 774B; Garnier of Rochefort, *Sermo* 12: PL 205: 654D: "Naturalia sunt memoria, voluntas, ratio, intellectus [...] Gratuita sunt, fides, spes, charitas." See also *Sermo* 34, PL 205: 791C. Godefroy of Saint-Victor, *Microcosmus* I, xviii.

⁶¹⁶ Peter Comestor wrote a treatise on the sacraments, a preface to the *Sentences* of Peter the Lombard, and (partly edited) sermons. For more recent informations on Peter, see James H. Morey, "Peter Comestor, Biblical Paraphrase and the Mediaeval Popular Bible," *Speculum* 68 (1993): 6-35.

⁶¹⁷ Dating based on Henri de Lubac, *Exégèse médiévale. Les quatre sens de l'Écriture* (4 vols. [Paris]: Aubier, n.y.) vol. 3, 379.

⁶¹⁸ Ms Cambrai Bibl. Mun. 561 contains a collection of theological questions "reflecting the schools of Notre-Dame about the years 1160-1170" (I. Brady), containing many questions of Odo of Ourscamp (Odo Suessionensis / Ursi Campi). The collection has been edited by Jean-Baptiste Pitra: *Quaestiones Magistri Odonis Suessionensis. Analecta novissima Spicilegii Solesmensis altera continuatio II* (Paris, 1888). In the collection, questions 288-334 form a separate corpus whose authorship Brady restituted to Comestor: see Ignatius Brady, "Peter Manducator and the oral teachings of Peter Lombard," *Antonianum* 41 (1966): 454-490. Question 331 covers pages 177-179.

⁶¹⁹ In Comestor's words, "Item, dum formatum est mulier, ipse interfuit coelesti curiae, et cum reversus est, prophetavit de Christo et ecclesia, dicens, *hoc nunc os est ex ossibus meis et caro de carne mea* (Gen 2:23)."

the moment when Eve was created from Adam's rib.⁶²⁰ Augustine added that in this ecstasy Adam entered "the court of angels" and "the sanctuary of God," and learned about the future; so Adam's later affirmation about woman ("bone from his bone and flesh from his flesh," Gen 2:23) was a prophecy.⁶²¹ This figure of the prophesising Adam (although without the term *extasis*) is present in Comestor.

The other novelty of Comestor's text is the insight that the terms *via* or *patria* cannot be applied to the prelapsarian state. Peter investigates whether Adam was blessed (*beatus*), and his convoluted ideas lead to multiple answers: he was not *beatus* in the proper sense, because he did not enjoy the *beatitudo*, the face-to-face vision of God (which is usually the meaning of *patria*).⁶²² At the same time, Adam was not in the *via* either. Peter gives two meaning to *via*: it means 1) generally the mortal life, the continuous transition from state to state, misery to misery, and 2) being "on the way" as turning away from evil, moving towards the *patria*.⁶²³ In neither of these ways was Adam *in via*, he concludes.

Peter of Poitiers, *Sentences*

Another indicator of the Parisian theological climate in the late 1160s and early 1170s is the *Sententiarum libri V* of Peter of Poitiers (d. 1205).⁶²⁴ Peter's book of sentences was written c. 1167-1170, a decade after the Lombard's work, and it shows the signs of a new kind of learning, more or less common to the other works rooted in a school context.

The doctrinal positions are followed by chains of questions and objections; doctrines are disputed using the appropriate terminology of *dialectica*. Sharp logic, quick mind and a new awareness of the passing time characterise the work. For the community of the school (and Peter too), writing and careful written elaboration of arguments belong to a despised way of life, to those

⁶²⁰ The text of the Vulgata reads (Gen 2:21-23): [2:21] *inmisit ergo Dominus Deus soporem in Adam cum que obdormisset tulit unam de costis eius et replevit carnem pro ea* [2:22] *et aedificavit Dominus Deus costam quam tulerat de Adam in mulierem et adduxit eam ad Adam* [2:23] *dixit que Adam hoc nunc os ex ossibus meis et caro de carne mea haec vocabitur virago quoniam de viro sumpta est.*

⁶²¹ See *De Gen. ad litt.* IX, 19: "Ac per hoc etiam illa extasis, quam deus inmisit in Adam, ut soporatus obdormiret, recte intellegitur ad hoc inmissa, ut et ipsius mens per extasin particeps fieret tamquam angelicae curiae et intrans in sanctuarium dei intellegeret in novissima. Denique evigilans tamquam prophetia plenus, cum ad se adductam mulierem videbat, eructuavit continuo, quod magnum sacramentum commendat Apostolus: hoc nunc os est ex ossibus meis et caro de carne mea." CSEL 28/1: 294.

⁶²² *Quaestio 331*: "Solutio. Questio est utrum umquam debuerit Adam dici beatus, et inductae sunt et adhuc et contra hoc rationes, haec eadem questio potest fieri de Petro. [...]. Dicimus ergo quod beatitudo, ut proprie accipiatur, est fruitio Dei facie ad faciem. Secundum hoc non fuit Adam beatus, nec Petrus, nec erit quis donec in patria. [...] Vel dicere potes quod beatus dicitur quandoque felix, sive justus; secundum hoc beatus erat Petrus et Adam similiter, quia justissimus fuit Adam et felix." *Quaestiones*, ed. Pitra, 178.

⁶²³ *Quaestio 331*: "Numquid erat tunc Adam in via? Duobus modis dicitur esse in via: dicitur esse proprie in via, qui non stat in ea, sed incedit et semper est in motu. Hac similitudine dicitur esse in via, qui est in fluxu mortalitatis, in qua nec per momentum statur, sed transitur assidue de miseria in miseriam, de siti in famem etc. [...] Alio modo dicitur homo esse in via, hoc est in redditu, scilicet cum per poenitentiam a malo revertitur, et per virtutes ad patriam tendit. Cum vero tendit ad mortem per peccatum, tunc dicitur esse in invio, et non in via. In hac revera non fuit Christus, quia semper fuit in patria. Adam in neutra harum viarum erat ante peccatum, quia nullum defectum, nullam miseriam tunc patiebatur, nec descenderet adhuc, nec in invium abierat; quare nec in reditu orat, at tamen nec in patria." *Quaestiones*, ed. Pitra, 178-179.

⁶²⁴ Peter of Poitiers studied under Peter Comestor and took over his teaching position in 1169. Later he became chancellor of the university (1193). Editions: *Sententiarum libri V*, PL 211: 783-1287; partial critical edition: *Sententiae Petri Pictaviensis liber I*, ed. Philip S. Moore and Marthe Dulong (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame, 1943) and *Sententiae Petri Pictaviensis liber II*, eds. Philip S. Moore, Marthe Dulong and J.N. Garvin (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame, 1950).

people who have free time and do nothing (*otiosi, nil agentes*).⁶²⁵ Although the book is called “sentences,” it contains not purely the doctrines themselves. The opinions of the master, Peter of Poitiers, must be reconstructed from the unquestioned propositions and conclusions; the reader is eventually advised to consult the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard for further details.⁶²⁶

Concerning the prelapsarian Adam, Peter of Poitiers modifies the doctrines of Peter Lombard and adds new elements. Adam had the cognition of himself, of heavenly and earthly things (as Hugh and the Lombard taught), but his knowledge about the heavenly things and himself was imperfect (contrary to Hugh, who spoke about the perfection of Adam).⁶²⁷ The prelapsarian Adam had faith (contrary to Hugh, for whom faith is a replacement of the original cognition).⁶²⁸ Peter of Poitiers states (like Comestor) that Adam was present *in curia angelorum* and prophesied,⁶²⁹ and he was not then either *in via* or *in patria* (*Sent.* II, ix, 33).⁶³⁰

The problem of classification

Peter Comestor and Peter of Poitiers are remarkable witnesses of a transient phase in the doctrinal and conceptual development of Latin theology. The duality of *via/patria* is a basic dichotomy of the Christian theology – but its original function was to contrast the present and the eschatological state. For centuries (practically, until Hugh), the prelapsarian state was far too marginal a state to deal with. It was never interpreted in the dichotomy of *via/patria*: not even Hugh or Peter Lombard did so. The next generation, of Comestor and Peter of Poitiers, already face the problem of classification – and their answer is that the prelapsarian Adam was in *neither* of these states. The final and ultimate interpretation is to be given in the 1240s, when the various “unorthodox” positions on prelapsarian cognition have finally been discarded (see Part Three of the present dissertation): as the *Summa Halensis* defines (probably with the consensual position of the day), Adam was *in via*.

The “neutral” position of the two authors must also be seen in the broader context of the conceptual experiments of the early school theology. The *via/patria* dichotomy is only one of the many similar traditional dichotomies that constitute Christian theology – such as faith/vision, or mediate vision/immediate vision. The decades between c. 1160 and c. 1220 were a transitional period when theologians perceived that these categories cannot be applied in a self-evident way to special cases. Such a special case was Adam’s assumed vision of God, but also Paul’s assumed vision of God in his rapture. The inherited dichotomies were insufficient for these special cases

⁶²⁵ “Et aliae multae auctoritates in id currunt, quas ducere in medium nil gravaret, nisi scripta scribere otiosi, et nil agentis opus videatur.” “Ne ergo scribentes, nil agentis opus agere videamur, ab his supersedendum esse censemus.” PL 211: 795CD and 1264B.

⁶²⁶ E.g. *Sent.* V, ii. Quae sit causa institutionis: “Est autem triplex causa inventionis sacramentorum, humiliatio, eruditio, exercitatio. Et exercitationum alia est ad eruditionem animae, alia ad aedificationem corporis, alia ad subversionem utriusque. Quae omnia non pigritaremur dilucidiora facere, nisi scripta scribere otiosi et nihil agentis opus aestimaremus. Haec autem omnia in libro Sententiarum magistri Petri plenius sunt determinata; hic tamen oportuit memorare, ut ad sequentia facilius fieret transitus.” PL 211: 1229B.

⁶²⁷ “Sciendum est iterum quod anima hominis triplicem habuit scientiam; habuit enim scientiam de coelestibus, et de terrenis, et de seipsa. Scientiam de coelestibus vel de se non plene habuit; ergo imperfectus in scientia fuit.” *Sent.* II, ix. PL 211: 968C.

⁶²⁸ “Quaeritur autem utrum Adam praescivit casum suum? quod sic ostenditur. Adam fidem habuit [...]” *Sent.* II, ix. PL 211: 968D.

⁶²⁹ “Item, Adae post peccatum inflictus est fomes peccati quem non ante habebat. Ergo magis tenebatur diligere Deum ante peccatum quam post. Item, tunc [0971B] legitur interfuisse curiae angelorum et prophetasse de diluvio, et multis aliis, sed non postea. Ergo magis tenebatur.” *Sent.* II, ix. PL 211: 972AB.

⁶³⁰ “Ad quod dicendum quod auctoritas illa, nullum bonum irremuneratum, nullum malum impunitum referenda est ad bona quae fiunt in via. Sed Adam tunc non erat in via, neque in patria. Quod enim, si esset in via vel esset in patria, alibi audisti.” *Sent.* II, ix, 33. PL 211: 970B. The argumentation implied that Adam’s natural love (*dilectio naturalis*) towards God was a virtue; for Peter, in the prelapsarian condition Adam had no virtues: “Non enim fuit virtus, cum nondum haberet virtutes” *Sent.* II, xxii. PL 211: 1037B.

which were first systematically investigated only in the twelfth century – and which had never been interpreted in these dichotomies before. In this period, the appropriate solution was to create a *tertium* in addition to the dichotomy – such as the position that Adam was neither *in via* nor *in patria* or that Paul in his rapture saw God through a “middle” vision (between the eschatological vision and the vision of faith). These solutions had only a short life, as by the mid-thirteenth century the traditional dichotomies were returning.

2. The *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* on the *Sentences*

From the 1160s onward, the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard was used in the classrooms. The most valuable sources for its reception are the glosses written on the text, showing the interpretative efforts of the very first readers. There are three texts that compete for being called the first interpretation of the *Sentences*: the so-called *Sententie Udonis* (an extract of the *Sentences* with occasional additions and modifications, c. 1160-1165); the so-called *Ps.-Peter of Poitiers Gloss* (c. 1160-1165), and the *Stephen Langton Gloss* (a collection of glosses attributed to Stephen Langton, written 1200-1203⁶³¹). For our investigations only the two gloss collections are relevant now.⁶³²

The so-called *Ps.-Peter of Poitiers Gloss* (henceforth *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss*), known also as *Glossae super sententias* is a well-defined body of short explaining remarks covering all the four books of the *Sentences*, written c. 1160-1165.⁶³³ In some manuscripts, these glosses are preceded by Peter Comestor’s prologue to the *Sentences*.⁶³⁴ This gloss collection, like the *Sentences* itself, was in school usage: as Arthur Landgraf demonstrated, three other branches of glosses derived from it, each of them having different additional glosses from various sources.⁶³⁵ Commenting on the *Sent.* IV dist. 1, the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* presents the very first interpretations of the term *medium* and an unusual description for Adam’s cognition: the *visio mediastina*.

<i>Sentences</i> IV dist. 1	<i>Ps.-Poitiers Gloss</i> Ms Neapel BN VII C 14 fol. fol. 47ra
Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio Deum videbat, per peccatum adeo hebuit, ut nequaquam divina queat capere, nisi humanis excitatus.	<u>Sine medio</u> id est sine exteriori aminiculo sacramentorum vel sine speculo scripture. <u>Ante peccatum videbat homo deum</u> , id est quadam visione mediastina ut Paulus raptus ad tertium celum. Non posset esse occisus si vigilet, quin aliquid cogitet vel dicat vel faciat et c(etera).

⁶³¹ The Langton glosses, based on their single Ms known (Neapel BN VII C 14, fol. 86-99v), have been published: *Der Sentenzenkommentar des Kardinals Stephan Langton*, ed. Arthur M. Landgraf (Munster: Aschendorff, 1952). Landgraf preferred to call it a commentary (moreover, the first commentary) to the *Sentences*.

⁶³² The gloss (and the collection of glosses, also called “gloss”) as a genre has its share of problems. Glosses are relatively short interpreting notes to the text (they are rarely longer than four sentences). Commonly, they appear either on the margins of the *Sentences* codices or copied together *en masse*, in gloss collections. Due to the way in which they were used and created, their dating is difficult, because useful older glosses were recopied into newer codices, alongside newer glosses (See J. de Ghellinck, “Les notes marginales du Liber sententiarum,” *Revue d’histoire ecclésiastique* 14 (1913): 510-536 and 705-719). Establishing their authorship is usually hopeless, since anonymous readers added eventually their accidental notes to the text, or copied notes to the text from existing collections (according to their needs), and the constitution of glosses can be, theoretically, different codex by codex.

⁶³³ Dating from Landgraf, *Introduction*, 137.

⁶³⁴ The prologue is present in Ms London BL Royal 7 F XIII; its text has been edited by R. Martin, “Notes sur l’oeuvre littéraire de Pierre le Mangeur,” RTAM 3 (1931): 63-64. Ms Paris BNF lat. 14423 also contains the prologue but with certain additions: see O. Lottin, “La prologue des Gloses sur les sentences attribuées à Pierre de Poitiers,” RTAM 7 (1935): 70-73. It is not known if Comestor wrote a commentary on the *Sentences* (at least no known and existing commentary can be attributed to him).

⁶³⁵ Landgraf, “Drei Zweige der Pseudo-Poitiers-Glosse zu den Sentenzen des Lombarden,” RTAM 9 (1937): 167-204.

The gloss states that Adam saw God without *medium* (that is, without an intermediary), that is, without the external assistance of the sacraments or without the mirror of Scripture.⁶³⁶ It also explains Adam's prelapsarian vision of God: he saw God "by means of a certain middle vision (*visione mediastina*), like Paul caught up to the third heaven." The *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* is the sole witness for the Scriptural interpretation of *medium* among the *Sentences* glosses; this interpretation disappears from the tradition with this collection, already in the twelfth century. The sacramental interpretation is preserved until the early thirteenth century (as the *Langton Gloss* attests).

Another particularly remarkable element in this short gloss is the appearance of the term *visio mediastina*. The *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* itself does not give an elaborate version of the concept of *mediastina visio*, only notes that Adam's cognition and Paul's rapture belonged to the same sort of cognition – *mediastina* here means probably just a different, "middle" sort of vision, in some sense "between" the present cognition and the eschatological vision. Although the single-sentence reference here is too short to build any theory on it, it must be noted that the same term will later have a career in a different context. It will be the key concept in late twelfth-century doctrines on Paul's rapture (usually expounded in Pauline commentaries and *summae*), discussed in Part III.

Since the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* is the first known gloss on the *Sentences*, this is the right place to note a hermeneutical issue that defined all Scholastic interpretations of this passage (including the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* itself). The wording of the *Sentences* IV dist. 1 is ambiguous. It states that Adam saw God *sine medio*, and the expression *sine medio* can be resolved in two different ways. It can be read as an adverb: in this case, the sentence means that Adam saw God *immediately* – and this is the reading that expresses the idea of Hugh, Odo and Peter Lombard. But there is another possibility: *sine medio* can be understood as "without *medium*." The meaning of *medium* is not defined (our investigation will cover its interpretations); however, for now, it is enough to emphasise the opposition between the two, equally valid, interpretation. The Scholastic tradition interpreted this passage in the second way, from the very beginning (that is, from the present gloss onward). The chosen meaning of the term then dictated the interpretation of the passage. The logic behind the glosses can be easily understood or reconstructed: if the prelapsarian Adam saw God without *medium*, we after the Fall necessarily see God through *medium*. In other words, Scholastic theologians interpolated from the context and searched for a *medium* which was absent for Adam but is present now. Although in the course of time several different interpretations were created for this *medium*, all were based on this reverse logic.

3. Shifting focus: descendants of the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* and the Stephen Langton Gloss

In the school practice, appending glosses to the text of the *Sentences* was a practical activity: acceptable glosses were copied, irrelevant glosses were left out, and new ones were added, often from the recent theological literature produced in the schools. The gloss collections changed at the hands of the students, and the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* also underwent this process: its material was partly transferred, partly dropped. The gloss with *visio mediastina* and the Scriptural *medium* belonged to the dropped material: but what replaced these ideas in the later glosses?

For practical reasons, here only those glosses that were written after the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* but before the university of Paris emerged are investigated (the thirteenth-century glosses connected to the university are discussed in Part III). Landgraf described three collections of glosses which are

⁶³⁶ I use here the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* from Ms Neapel BN VII C 14 (fol. 2-70v); on *Sent.* II dist. 23, 4 it gives the following: "Cognitio(nem) quoque; et c(etera). quo auditu. solo ut nos per auditum scripturarum" (Ms Neapel BN VII C 14 fol. fol. 29ra). The *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* in Ms London BL Royal 7 F XIII (fol. 4r-58v) has no gloss on II dist. 23; for IV dist. 1 it gives a shorter gloss: "Sine medio id est sine exteriori amminiculo sacramentorum vel sine speculo scripture. Ante peccatum videbat homo deum id est quadam visione mediastina: ut Paulus raptus ad tercium celum" (fol. 39rb).

based on the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* (“drei Zweige der Pseudo-Poitiers-Glosse”): the *Glossa* of Ms Vat. Barb. lat. 608, the “*fourth Gloss*” of Ms Neapel BN VII C 14 and the marginal *Glossa* of Ms Paris Mazarine lat. 758. Not much can be known about their dating (precise dating is entirely impossible): generally they can be regarded as collections of glosses closed, at the latest, in the early thirteenth century.⁶³⁷ A fourth, better datable and well-defined gloss collection is the gloss attributed to Stephen Langton, written c. 1200-1203 and preserved in the same Neapel Ms.⁶³⁸ These transitional glosses, written around and after the turn of the century, give Augustinian solutions for *medium* and an explicit rejection of the concept of Adam’s immediate vision. I present them as found in the manuscripts.

The fourth gloss of Ms Neapel BN VII C 14 and the glosses of Ms Paris Mazarine lat. 758 have a lot of common material.⁶³⁹ Their interpretations of *Sent.* II. dist. 23 are almost identical: both give a paraphrase which accentuates the Lombard’s dichotomy and makes its implicit reference to 1Cor 13:12 (*videmus nunc per speculum in enigmate*) clearer – in this life our cognition is not only enigmatic but also “shadow-like” and “seen in a mirror” (*umbratilis et specularis*).

Sent. II dist. 23, 4

Cognitionem quoque Creatoris primus homo habuisse creditur. Cognovit enim a quo creatus fuerat; non eo modo cognoscendi quo *ex auditu solo* percipitur, quo modo a credentibus absens quaeritur, sed quadam interiori aspiratione qua Dei praesentiam contemplabatur; non tamen ita excellenter sicut post hanc vitam sancti visuri sunt, neque ita *in aenigmate* qualiter in hac vita videmus.

Ms Paris Mazarine lat. 758, fol. 73vb

¶ Per internam inspirationem cognitionem habuit minus perfectam, tamen illa que erit in patria, perfectiorem autem ea que est in viviria [*read via*] scilicet enigmatica et umbratilis et speculari.

Ms Neapel BN VII C 14, fol. 117va:

¶ Cognitionem quoque et c<etera>. Interiori aspiratione per internam inspirationem cognitionem habuit; minus perfectam tamen illa que erit in patria; perfectiorem autem ea que est in via scilicet enigmatica, et umbratilis et speculari.

The Mazarine gloss on IV. *Sent.* dist. 1 witnesses the change in the interpretation of *medium*. Instead of a concrete, external *medium* promoting the cognition of God (such as the sacraments or the Bible), a new concept emerges: an internal *medium* which is inherent in the human soul and precludes or proscribes the cognition of God in the fallen state. It is formulated through Augustinian concepts: *medium* is the impact of the original sin on the soul, set “between” God and us, as *nubes peccati*:

Sent. IV dist. 1

Ms Paris Mazarine lat. 758, fol. 140ra

⁶³⁷ What Landgraf writes concerning the fourth gloss of the Neapel Ms, may be applied to the Maz. 758 too: “Eine Datierung der Glosse als Ganzes ist deshalb ausgeschlossen, weil sie eben nicht ein einheitliches Ganzes dartellt, sondern vielmehr darin mehrere auch zeitlich von einander getrennte Schichten, und, wie bereits gezeigt, auch verschiedene Autoren zu Wort kommen, so dass bei jeder einzelner Glosse die Frage nach Autor und Zeit von neuem sich stellt” (“Drei Zweige,” 191). It is somehow indicating that the Neapel Gloss quotes Praepositinus (d. aft. 1210) and the Mazarine Ms Langton and Innocent III (d. 1216).

⁶³⁸ Dating based on Landgraf, *Sentenzenkommentar*. In order to avoid ambiguity, it must be noted that Ms Neapel BN VII C 14 contains four diverse collections of *Sentences* glosses: 1) the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss*, fol. 2-70v; 2) an “in der Nähe Langtons stehende Sentenzenglosse,” fol. 71-84r; 3) the *Stephen Langton Gloss*, fol. 86-99v; 4) and “ein Zweig der *Ps.-Poitiers Glosse*,” for the first two books of the *Sentences*, fol. 100-122. For the detailed description of the MS, see Landgraf, “Problèmes relatifs aux premières Gloses des *Sentences*,” RTAM 3 (1931): 140-157.

⁶³⁹ For Ms Neapel BN VII C 14, see Landgraf’s “Drei Zweige,” 178-195. The marginal glosses of Ms Paris Mazarine lat. 758 cover all the four books of the *Sentences*; see “Drei Zweige,” 195-204.

	(interlinealis to <i>sine medio deum videbat</i>)
Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio Deum videbat	non interposita nube peccati vel sacrificio

In the non-Victorine logic of the readers of the *Sentences*, the expression *sine medio* implies the existence of a *medium* that we do have in the fallen state. The *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* found this *medium* in the sacraments and the Bible. The sacramental interpretation appears in the *Langton Gloss*:

<i>Sent.</i> IV dist. 1	<i>Langton Gloss</i> , ed. Landgraf, 148
Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio Deum videbat	'Sine medio,' sacramentorum adminiculo.

The marginal gloss of Ms Vat. Barb. lat. 608 leaves *Sent.* II dist. 23, 4 unexplained.⁶⁴⁰ Its gloss on *Sent.* IV dist. 1 witnesses some tension: as its author perceives that the term *sine medio* can be an equivalent of the eschatological face-to-face vision, he must emphasise the difference the two visions by redefining *sine medio* as *perfectius*:

<i>Sent.</i> IV dist. 1	Ms Vat. Barb. lat. 608, fol. 104r
Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio Deum videbat	non quod facie ad faciem videret sicut in futuro, sed quia perfectius videbat quam modo.

However unelaborated these glosses are, they foreshadow the later doctrinal solutions concerning Adam's case. Late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century readers of the *Sentences* faced a severe hermeneutical problem, as the *Sentences* received more and more doctrinal authority in school practice. The unchangeable text stated that *homo... sine medio Deum videbat*, but for its readers it was also a self-evident theological position that an immediate vision of God was reserved for the Blessed only. The notion of the *visio mediastina* appears only and once in this context, in the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss*; the discussions on Paul's rapture (where the same concept was used until the end of the twelfth century) seemingly never influenced the interpretation of the *Sent.* IV dist. 1. Readers of the *Sentences* were practically predisposed by all means to *not* understand the text they were reading. Admitting or perceiving the adverbial meaning of *sine medio* in this context would have meant that the Master of the *Sentences* said something unthinkable and absurd, since an immediate vision of God could be only identical with the eschatological vision.⁶⁴¹ From then onwards, the regular duty of the interpreter was to explain why Adam did *not* see God immediately, even if the words of the Master seemingly say so. An anonymous gloss, from a thirteenth-century *Sentences* codex, also witness the problem with the original text: in the middle of the page we read the text of Peter *Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio Deum videbat*; the appended marginal gloss reads: *non ante peccatum sine medio deum vidit*.⁶⁴²

The glosses solved the problem of the passage of the *Sentences* IV dist. 1 by interpretation: the meaning of the ambiguous words was adjusted to the doctrinal realities in their explanation. The ambiguity was noted also outside the exegetical context. Thirteenth-century manuscripts of the *Sentences* often contain a list that enumerates those points where the *Sentences* is *not* accepted (entitled, for example, *Articuli in quibus magister sententiarum non tenetur communiter ab*

⁶⁴⁰ The codex itself is, according to Landgraf, from the mid-thirteenth century but the gloss contains numerous references to doctrines of an Odo who may have been Odo of Ourscamp.

⁶⁴¹ This attitude becomes more explicit in thirteenth-century commentaries where the main question is whether Adam saw God face to face (or *per essentiam*, or immediately).

⁶⁴² Ms BL Royal 9 B VII fol. 130ra.

omnibus). It gives assertions listed according to books, with precise references to the passage in question, according to chapter division. The second problematic article in the fourth book is in the chapter beginning with *Triplici: In quarto libro. Primo [...] Secundo, quod homo sine medio videbat Deum ante peccatum. Eadem dist., cap. Triplici.*⁶⁴³

Conclusion

The overview of the early afterlife of Hugh's theory regarding the prelapsarian cognition has shown that his doctrines had only moderate influence outside the Victorine school. First the *Summa sententiarum* of Odo of Lucca, then the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard transmitted some of his doctrines to the schools, but this took place only with modification. Odo's role was minor: he contracted various notions of Hugh and created an influential concept: that Adam saw God *sine medio*, that is, immediately. Peter in his *Sentences* (II dist. 23 and IV dist. 1) presented a heavily simplified version of the theory of Hugh; his most important contributions were the introduction of the formula *sine medio* (taken from Odo), and a reference stating that Adam did not see God in an enigma, unlike us (a reference to 1Cor 13:12 in II dist. 23). As the Lombard's work became spectacularly influential, his theory (and its wording) defined the accepted doctrine on this field.

The immediate successors of the Lombard at Notre-Dame, Peter of Poitiers and Comestor, as theologians of the 1160s and 1170s, were not particularly influenced by the Lombard's ideas. Thinking about Adam, they had in mind Augustine's idea (outlined in the *De Genesi ad litteram*) of Adam as experiencing ecstasy and prophesying; this element was absent in the Hugonian-Lombardian tradition. Notably, the same authors could not (and refused to) interpret Adam's prelapsarian life in terms *via* and *patria*; the contemporary *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* speaks about a *visio mediastina* by means of which Adam and Paul in his rapture saw God.

The early thirteenth-century *Sentences* glosses reflect a change: now Adam's status is *via* and a prelapsarian immediate vision is unthinkable (as that is reserved for the Blessed). The conceptual changes were also manifested in the interpretation of *Sent.* IV dist. 1. The sentence *Sine medio deum videbat* could no longer mean a direct, immediate, unblocked vision of God (as Hugh and Peter Lombard intended). The original adverbial meaning of *sine medio* was unacceptable, so its readers looked for a concrete "medium" that could distinguish the present state from the prelapsarian one – that is, a "medium" that is present for us but was absent for Adam. The first twelfth-century interpretations suggested external *media*: the sacraments or the Bible; the *Mazarine Gloss* suggests what was already an Augustinian commonplace: the clouds caused by the original sin (*nubes peccati*). Later Augustinian inspiration will define the interpretation of the passage.

⁶⁴³ The list is printed even in the Migne edition of the *Sentences*; see PL 192: 963; the incipit refers to *Sent.* IV dist. 1, 3 (PL division): *Triplici autem de causa sacramenta instituta sunt.*

Part III. The thirteenth-century reception of the Victorine theological anthropology: rejection, transformation, oblivion

Introduction: the thirteenth-century milieu

The present part of the study investigates the thirteenth-century reception of Victorine theological anthropology. Previously I argued that twelfth-century Victorine theological anthropology was a relatively well-defined set of doctrines, particular and characteristic of authors belonging to Saint-Victor but uncommon outside that school. Its thirteenth-century reception shows various reactions against it: rejection, transformation or oblivion. These attitudes, however, were reasonable answers to a problem: namely, that with the passing of time, and due to institutional and doctrinal changes, the Victorine doctrines grew largely unintelligible.

Part II previously demonstrated that Victorine theories on contemplation were internally connected to such doctrinal issues about which there existed no consensual position at that time. Such a doctrinal issue was, in Hugh's case, the prelapsarian cognition of God and, in Richard's (and Achard's) case, the rapture of Saint Paul. In all these cases, Victorine theologians joined theories on contemplation to their own formulations of doctrinal issues. However, the doctrinal development regarding these issues did not come to a halt until the 1240s. Hugh's theory about prelapsarian cognition was once pioneering, being also the first theory accessible on an issue never previously addressed, but it had no influence on the doctrinal development after the *Sentences* was finalised (1156). Paul's rapture was a marginal issue, absent from books of sentences; its doctrinal development was an internal issue of the schools (especially Notre-Dame). Part III will investigate, in three chapters, those fields where Victorine doctrines became unacceptable, at least in the form in which they were understood in the twelfth century.

Chapter I investigates the doctrinal developments related to Paul's rapture: the elaboration of the concepts *raptus* and *visio mediastina*. Richard and Achard of Saint-Victor interpreted the Biblical description of Paul's rapture as the paradigm of contemplative ecstasy – that is, of an experience possible and desired in the life of his readers. This identification was unimaginable in the theology of the urban schools and the university: based on a handful of Augustinian ideas, the school tradition constantly emphasised the miraculous character of Paul's rapture and the radical difference between rapture and the possible experiences of the believer. Until the 1220s, school theology had a limited set of terms and concepts for analysing Paul's rapture; then, in a few decades' time, the ultimate and normative theological interpretation was elaborated.

Chapter II investigates the Scholastic development of doctrines on the prelapsarian cognition of God. As the previous part presented, the very subject of such a cognition was first elaborated by Hugh; while his theories were accepted by later Victorines too, outside Saint-Victor different theories were accepted already in the second half of the twelfth century. After decades of neglect, the original Hugonian concept reappeared in the 1240s, but already as a problem: it seemingly taught Adam's immediate vision of God, which was now unthinkable. The *Summa Halensis* explicitly censured such a reading of Hugh's text and (with Odo Rigaldi's *Sentences* commentaries) set the orthodox interpretation of Hugh's doctrine.

Chapter III discusses the direct reception of Victorine doctrines in spiritual works of the thirteenth century. It is undeniable that the works of Hugh and Richard were copied and also read by later authors. Their popularity, however, by no means meant a proper understanding of their doctrines. The theological anthropology of thirteenth-century authors was based on different concepts, principles and elements from those of the Victorines. This background made most of the Victorine doctrines unintelligible; the spiritual works at the same time present significant alterations and reinterpretations of Victorine texts: for example, Hugh's doctrine of the eye of contemplation was transformed by Bonaventure, while Richard's doctrines on contemplation were explicitly reinterpreted by Thomas Gallus, Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, Hugh of Balma and Rudolph of Biberach.

Before investigating the sources themselves, those early thirteenth-century changes that influenced the reception of Victorine theories (or, more properly, texts) should be considered. Two institutional ones must be mentioned: the “decline” of Saint-Victor and the emergence of the University of Paris, the institution that in many ways – through its intellectual techniques, uniform curriculum, and doctrinal authority – defined the reception of certain Victorine theories. Two theoretical-doctrinal changes must be mentioned, too: these changes set theoretical limitations on the understanding of Victorine ideas. One is a new interpretation of 1Cor 13:12 first emerging in the *Summa Halensis* (early 1240s) as a reaction against the Victorine idea of Adam’s immediate vision of God. The other is the 1241/1244 condemnation of the doctrine of the incognoscibility of God. The condemnation and the definition of the orthodox doctrine embody those changes of the early thirteenth century that made many twelfth-century theological concepts obsolete and unintelligible.

The “decline” of Saint-Victor

The school of Saint-Victor was an eminent school that, due to its openness, in the first half of the century could compete with the schools of Abelard or Chartres. In the second half of the century, however, it reverted to being a school of monastic theology. Hugh died in 1141; in the first half of the 1160s, Andreas left for Wigmor and Achard for Avranches. Research literature often considers the scandalous abbatiacy and laxity of Abbot Ernis (Ervisius / Ervis, 1162-1172) as the beginning of the decline: his behaviour severed the reputation of the monastery and led to direct papal intervention.⁶⁴⁴ The assumed intellectual decline of the monastery is often illustrated (or even proved) by the acerbic remarks of Walther and Godefroy, uttered against the “modernist” theologians and the intrusion of *dialectica* into theology.⁶⁴⁵ It is also generally assumed (although not proved) that the admission of non-Victorine students to the school of the abbey was terminated at some point in the second half of the twelfth century.⁶⁴⁶ Even though the school of the abbey continued the training of canons who were later also encouraged to study at the University (as Crossnoe demonstrated), the intellectual profile of the monastic community had changed. By the end of the twelfth century, the abbey as a theological school had lost its importance. The Victorines fulfilled the usual pastoral and penitentiary ministry of canons; they also acted as confessors for the University students,⁶⁴⁷ but after the turn of the century no remarkable theologian and no notable work of theology is extant from the monastery.⁶⁴⁸ An indicator of this change may be the curious

⁶⁴⁴ Ernis disregarded the Victorine rule, neglected the religious life of the canons, and lived outside the monastery. To restore order, Pope Alexander III initiated two investigations (and also informed the king about the case); finally Ernis was deposed in 1172. On the history of Ernis’ reign, see Dietrich Lohrmann, “Ernis, abbé de Saint-Victor. Rapports avec Rome, affaires financières,” in *L’abbaye parisienne de Saint-Victor au Moyen Âge*, 181-193.

⁶⁴⁵ See Walther’s *Contra IV labyrinthos Franciae* and Godefroy’s *Fons philosophiae*; Helmut G. Walther adduces Abbot Absalom’s (1198-1203) example to prove this turn: “St. Victor und die Schulen in Paris vor der Entstehung der Universität,” in *Schule und Schüler im Mittelalter*, ed. Martin Kintzinger, Sönke Lorenz and Michael Walter (Cologne, Weimar and Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 1996), 53-74. Without the popular decline narrative, however, these elements are mostly and simply the traditional anti-dialectical *topoi* common among monastic authors of earlier decades.

⁶⁴⁶ Marshall Eugene Crossnoe writes, “The claim that non-Victorine students stopped receiving instruction at the Victorine abbey at the end of the twelfth century is far from certain. It is deduced from, but not proved by, diverse pieces of indirect evidence.... But positive evidence for the claim is lacking, a deficiency that is compounded by the existence of positive evidence for Victorine education from later decades.” See his “Animarum lucra quaerentes: the School of St. Victor and the University of Paris in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries” (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1996), 162-163. On the decline of public instruction at the Victorines, see also Ferruolo, *The Origins*, 27-44.

⁶⁴⁷ For this character of the monastery in the early thirteenth century, see Jean Longère, “La fonction pastorale de Saint-Victor à la fin du XIIe siècle et au début du XIIIe siècle,” in *L’abbaye parisienne de Saint-Victor au moyen âge*, 291-313, Crossnoe’s *Animarum lucra quaerentes* and his “Education and the care of souls: Pope Gregory IX, the Order of St. Victor, and the University of Paris in 1237,” *Medieval Studies* 61 (1999): 137-72.

⁶⁴⁸ Jean de Thoulouze (d. 1659), a chronicler of the Abbey, gave the most complete enumeration of the Victorine masters to the early sixteenth century in his *Antiquitates regalis abbatae Sancti Victoris*, Book 7 (for its analysis, see

fate of books in the abbey where Hugh's works were organised into a (manuscript) edition soon after his death. From the first two decades of the thirteenth century, four penitentials are extant, composed in the abbey.⁶⁴⁹ By contrast, the commentary on Isaiah, composed in the same place and in the same period by one of the canons, called Thomas, does not have a single extant manuscript. The extant penitentials were practical books without much theological significance: but the new and original ideas Thomas first outlined in his lost work⁶⁵⁰ (and elaborated in his later writings) defined a new model of spirituality which became immensely popular even in the thirteenth century.

School theology and university (Scholastic) theology

The afterlife of the Victorine theories (or the lack thereof) must be considered in the broader context of the theological education of the period. Outside Saint-Victor, the chance of reception of Victorine doctrines was limited. However disputable the opposition of "monastic theology" and "Scholastic theology" is, these terms indeed describe two separate worlds clearly distinguished by their inhabitants. This separation was not invented by modern historians; the later twelfth-century authors themselves also perceived and noticed it. Differences between the intellectual methods, attitudes and preferences of monastic education and those of the urban schools of theology existed even in the first half of the century, but these differences become sharper after the 1150s. Monastic theology become a way of life, a vocation for the devout, or even a refuge from the world (as in the case of Alain of Lille). School theology (I use this term to denote late twelfth-century theology) become a specialised and professional study of doctrinal theology, but the function of theological education also changed. For a quick career in administration or church offices, the urban schools gave preparation; the time-consuming model of education that Saint-Victor once offered grew anachronistic. Hugh's motto was "learn everything" (*omnia disce*), and the Victorine education was based on cyclical rereadings of the Bible (as Hugh's works and *Richard's Liber exceptionum* attest); Richard speaks about his readers and himself as *contemplativi*. In contrast, the works of Peter Comestor and Peter the Chanter openly address the problem of a different kind of education where time is short: students ought not to waste their time on marginal texts of the Bible, or on reading perplexing glosses; the self-serving questions and disputes (as well as the over-long readings) must be avoided;⁶⁵¹ the focus of theological studies must now be on reading, disputing and preaching.⁶⁵²

The clear separation of theological profiles was reflected in theological literature too: sermons now became primarily a means of preaching (intending primarily moral education) and ceased to bear theological and doctrinal significance (which monastic homilies did). The theologically relevant texts now were the school texts: the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, question

Crossnoe, *Animarum lucra*). He gives the following masters for the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: Absalom, Peter of Poitiers of Saint-Victor, Mendenus (c. 1215), Jacob of Rome (1219-1237), Johannes Rhetoricus (1237-1254), Thibaut (1254-1264), Girard (1306-1317), Aubert de Mailly (c. 1321-1332), Guillaume de Saint-Lô (1345-1349), Pierre le Duc (c. 1375-c. 1395) (Crossnoe, *Animarum lucra*, 32 N.50, based on Ms Paris BNF lat. 14677).

⁶⁴⁹ See Crossnoe, *Animarum lucra*, 38: these are, besides two anonymous works, the *Liber poenitentialis* of Robert of Saint-Victor (Robert of Flamborough) and the *Compilatio praesens* by Peter of Saint-Victor (Peter of Poitiers, d.c. 1215), ed. Jean Longère as CCCM 51.

⁶⁵⁰ A fragment from this work was preserved, since Thomas copied it into his *explanatio* on the *Celestial Hierarchy* (see the relevant chapter).

⁶⁵¹ See Peter Comestor, *Historia Scholastica*, prologus (PL 198: 1053); Peter Cantor, *Verbum abbreviatum* i-vi (PL 205: 23-36). For the schools' milieu, see Stephen C. Ferruolo, *The Origins of the University. The Schools of Paris and Their Critics, 1100-1215* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985). Considering the two radically different models of theology, it is difficult to accept the decline narrative of Saint-Victor. For example, when Marcia Colish writes, "Under the pretext of remaining loyal to its past, St. Victor sank into a narrow traditionalism, unresponsive to the intellectual currents of its time" (*Peter Lombard*, 1, 431), it is hard to imagine a Victorine school "responding" to those currents that were present in the urban schools and that could have emerged only in the environment of those schools, where nearly all intellectual conditions, techniques and goals were different.

⁶⁵² See the famous words of Peter Cantor: "In tribus igitur consistit exercitium sacrae Scripturae: circa lectionem, disputationem et praedicationem." *Verbum abbreviatum* i, PL 205: 25A.

collections, *Sentences* glosses, the early *summae* and commentaries (especially on the Pauline letters). Schoolmen reading and reflected on the up-to-date arguments and positions of other schoolmen; monastic works, written according to different literary standards and purposes, no longer had much influence on theology. These changes defined the reception of those works that carried the Victorine theological anthropology. The sermons of Achard and Walther were copied into sermon collections, and Richard's spiritual works were copied as devotional works. Instead of Hugh's book of sentences, the *De sacramentis*, the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard was introduced into school practice. Twelfth-century Victorine theological anthropology was destined to be unintelligible outside Saint-Victor as early as the late twelfth century.

It was not only Saint-Victor that had its "decline" but the entire twelfth-century scene of theological education, including the schools of Notre-Dame and Sainte-Geneviève. By the 1230s at the latest, all the different theological schools of Paris had evanesced and a new institution had emerged: the theological faculty of the University of Paris. There is no need here to reiterate the poorly documented early history of this institution.⁶⁵³ Here only those factors need emphasis that directly influenced the reception of the Victorine theology.

The university offered a new type of theological education: a highly organised and uniform one. It also created a previously unknown concentration of intellectuals (masters and students) who used the same technique of theoretical investigation, the *quaestio*. The intellectual work was ensured and supported by new means: concordances to the Bible by Hugh of Saint-Cher OP and the Jacobins, the commented scholarly edition of the Areopagitic corpus (*Corpus Dionysiacum Parisiense*),⁶⁵⁴ the new layout of books and large-scale commercial book production.⁶⁵⁵ The uniformity of the education was ensured and supported by a regulated curriculum. The future masters of theology met a special segment of theological literature: theological textbooks created in the mid- or late twelfth century. These works, such as the *Historia Scholastica* of Peter Comestor for Biblical history, the glossed Bible, and Peter Lombard's *Collectanea* and *Sentences*, were based on (or written directly for) theological education in schoolrooms. The usage of standard textbooks was also part of the structural change of education that led to a standardised knowledge. This change must be measured against the earlier practice, especially in the case of the *Sentences* (which had a doctrinal, that is, not exegetical or historical orientation). Earlier generations of theologians, especially before the 1160s, mostly used books of sentences written or compiled by their own masters.⁶⁵⁶

Preferring the Lombard's book to any other one was not unusual even in the late twelfth century, but in the thirteenth century the book obtained an even higher rank. It was now made the

⁶⁵³ For the sources concerning the University, see H. Deniflé and E. Chatelain, eds., *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*. 4 vols. (Paris: Delalain, 1889-1897); for the masters, Palémon Glorieux, *Répertoire des Maîtres en théologie de Paris au XIIIe siècle* (2 vols. Paris: Vrin, 1933-1934), abbreviated henceforth as Glorieux RM. For the history of the universities, see H. Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*. 3 vols (London: OUP, 1935); Hilde de Ridder-Symoens, ed., *A History of the University in Europe. Volume I: Universities of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992); Charles B. Schmitt, ed. *History of Universities* (26 vols. Amersham: Avebury, 1981-), and most recently Nathalie Gorochoff, *Naissance de l'Université. Les écoles de Paris d'Innocent III à Thomas d'Aquin (v. 1200 - v. 1245)* (Paris: Champion, 2012). For details on Oxford, see J. I. Catto, ed., *The History of the University of Oxford. Volume I: The Early Oxford Schools* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986). For education in the mendicant orders, see Bert Roest, *A History of Franciscan Education (c. 1210-1517)* (Leiden, Boston and Cologne: Brill, 2000) and Marian Michèle Mulchahey, *First the bow is bent in study. Dominican Education before 1350* (Toronto: PIMS, 1998).

⁶⁵⁴ See Hyacinthe-François Dondaine, *Le Corpus Dionysien de l' Université de Paris au XIIIe siècle*. (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1953).

⁶⁵⁵ See the monograph of Mary A. Rouse and Richard H. Rouse: *Authentic Witnesses: Approaches to Medieval Texts and Manuscripts* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), esp. the chapter "The Development of Research Tools in the Thirteenth Century," 221-255.

⁶⁵⁶ Abelard's *Theologiae* ('*summi boni*,' *Christiana* and '*scholarium*'), Hugh's *De sacramentis*, Odo's *Summa sententiarum*, then the *Sentences* written by Robert of Pullen, Robert of Melun and lastly by Peter of Poitiers (to name only the more notorious ones) were written for the audience of single schools. Although all these works intended to give a totality of theological knowledge, all had their own particular emphases: the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard also reflected on theology as the master taught it in the school of Notre-Dame.

official textbook, with a special protocol of interpretation. There is no consensual dating of this shift in its authority.⁶⁵⁷ It took place first in Paris: traditionally, it is considered to have been a decision of Alexander of Hales (which might have been taken at some point after 1223 or in the 1230s). The practice was introduced in Oxford by Richard Fishacre in 1247. Several signs show increased interest in the *Sentences* in the 1220s. Alexander read (that is, lectured on) the *Sentences* even as a secular master (1223-1227); he also prepared the text of the *Sentences* for easier use, by dividing it into larger units of distinctions (replacing the original chapter division).⁶⁵⁸ In 1228, the General Chapter of the Dominicans defined three books that the students sent to a *studium generale* must study thoroughly; the *Sentences* was one of them (besides the *Historia Scholastica* of Peter Comestor and the glossed Bible).⁶⁵⁹

The learning, interpretation and teaching of the *Sentences* gradually became an institution in itself. By the mid-thirteenth century, the act of “reading the *Sentences*” (*legere Sententias*) meant public lecturing and commenting on the text in the classroom (*lectura*): this duty included the thematic division of the *Sentences* text and its clarification in *quaestio* form. The explanation of the text was not the privilege of the masters (*magistri*): for one or two years, it also belonged to the duties of the student (called *sententiarius*) supervised by a master. The practice of teaching based on the *Sentences* lasted until the sixteenth century: in the second half of the fifteenth century, Dominicans in Germany started to replace the *Sentences* with the *Summa theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas, but the new textbook was generally accepted only in the next century. Some statistical information may help us to understand the status that the *Sentences* interpretation as an institution had: Steven J. Livesey, the creator of a database for all known *Sentences* commentaries, counts about 893 authors who produced interpretations of the *Sentences*. Even if not all of these explanations survived, their estimated number still may be indicative of the role that the *Sentences* once had.⁶⁶⁰

Speculum et aenigma: the reinterpretation of 1Cor 13:12

The 1Cor 13:12 passage, *videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem*, was always an important argument for the radical otherness of the present cognition of God (as through a mirror in an enigma) and the eschatological cognition (as face to face). The most influential twelfth-century interpretation of the *locus*, Peter Lombard’s *Collectanea* (the standard commentary in the later twelfth-century urban schools), basically gave a loose *cento* of Augustinian passages and paraphrases. According to the *Collectanea*, the *speculum* in 1Cor 13 may refer to creatures or to the soul; *speculum* may also mean an image in general (but also the *imago Dei*), while *aenigma* means a likeness. Vision through the mirror comes about through faith and belongs to this time, while the

⁶⁵⁷ To Roger Bacon, this change was one of the capital sins of emerging Scholasticism (as contrasted with the *Frühcholastik* of the previous century): “Quartum peccatum est quod praefertur una sententia magistralis textui [that is, to the Bible] facultatis theologiae, scilicet liber Sententiarum [...] Alexander fuit primus qui legit, et tunc legebatur aliquando, sicut Liber Historiarum solebat legi et adhuc legitur rarissime. Et mirum est quod sic est exaltatus liber Sententiarum [...]. Item impossibile est quod textus Dei sciatur propter abusum libri Sententiarum.” *Fr. Rogeri Bacon Opus tertium, Opus minus, Compendium philosophiae*, ed. J.S. Brewer (London 1859), 328-329.

⁶⁵⁸ Alexander’s division became generally accepted and used in the 1230s; see Ignatius [Charles] Brady, “The Distinctions of Lombard’s Book of Sentences and Alexander of Hales,” *Franciscan Studies* 25 (1965): 90-116.

⁶⁵⁹ “Statuimus autem ut quaelibet provincia fratribus suis missis ad studium ad minus tribus libris theologiae providere teneatur, et fratres missi ad studium in ystoriis et sententiis et textu et glosis precipue studeant et intendant.” Deniflé, *Chartularium* I, nr. 57, 112.

⁶⁶⁰ See his “*Lombardus electronicus*. Careers in the Arts and Theology Faculties before 1500. Commentators on Peter Lombard’s *Sentences* and their University and Extra-University Lives.” Paper read at the conference *Transformation and continuity in the history of universities*, organised by the International Commission for the History of the Universities (CIHU), Oslo, 2000. <http://www.oslo2000.uio.no/AIO/AIO16/group%201/Livesey.pdf> (accessed 20. April 2008). Also edited in G.R. Evans, ed., *Medieval Commentaries* 1: 1-23. I express here my gratitude to Professor Livesey who kindly granted me personal access to his *Commbase* (*An Electronic Database of Medieval Commentators on Aristotle and the Sentences*) years before it became publicly accessible.

face-to-face vision belongs to the future.⁶⁶¹ The Victorine usage of the *locus* was characteristically different, as Part II has demonstrated.

The early thirteenth-century interpretations, written by mendicant masters and usually based on the *Collectanea*,⁶⁶² followed Augustinian standards. Jean de la Rochelle OFM (d. 1245) in his commentary interprets *speculum* as *creatura rationalis* (created *ad imaginem Dei*) while *aenigma* as *creatura irrationalis* (and *vestigia Dei*); he also adds two more meanings: the mirror is the Son of God and the Holy Scripture.⁶⁶³ His contemporary Hugh of Saint-Cher OP enumerates three mirrors: the mirror of the Son of God, the mirror of the Holy Scripture and the mirror of the creatures.⁶⁶⁴

A substantially different interpretation appears with the *Summa Halensis* (early 1240s), explaining the prelapsarian cognition.⁶⁶⁵ In this interpretation, 1Cor 13:12 speaks about *three* visions altogether: the eschatological face-to-face vision and *two* visions mediated by a mirror. One vision belonged to the prelapsarian state only, as Adam saw God through a clear mirror (*per speculum clarum*); the other vision, which comes about through a mirror obscured by the *aenigma*, belongs to the present state (the *aenigma* is identified with the Augustinian *fomes peccati* or *nebula peccati*). This interpretation becomes authoritative (and also paradigmatic for later works), but it also makes impossible the authentic understanding of the Victorine concept. This is hardly accidental. The same article of the *Summa* discusses Adam's prelapsarian vision of God; it also contains theological censure against unacceptable positions. One among these positions (based on Hugh's text) attributes to Adam an immediate vision of God. The new interpretation, practically, extends the meaning of the *locus* to *all* possible epistemological conditions (before and after the original sin alike) and turns 1Cor 13:12 into a Biblical argument against the immediate prelapsarian vision. *Sentences* commentaries, if they quote Hugh on this issue (besides Peter Lombard), make it clear that Adam had no direct vision of God – even if they seemingly say so. Considered in a broader, historical context, this also means the end of the attempts to formulate the prelapsarian

⁶⁶¹ Peter Lombard, *Collectanea* in 1Cor 13:12: "Videmus nunc de Deo, per speculum, id est per imaginem obscuram. Videmus enim aliquas creaturas, in quibus aliqua similitudo Dei relucet, et hoc satis obscure. Et in aenigmate, id est per obscuram allegoriam. [...] Proinde quantum mihi videtur sicut nomine speciali [read *speculi*] imaginem significavit, ita nomine aenigmatism similitudinem, quamvis obscuram, et ad perspicendum difficile. [...] Vel speculum est anima, in cuius aliquo modo Deum cognoscimus. Sed in aenigmate, id est obscure, tunc autem videbimus facie ad faciem, id est manifeste, a simili recto vultu se intuentium. Est enim quaedam visio huius temporis, erit altera visio futuri. Ista est per fidem, illa erit per speciem." PL 191: 1662D-1663A.

⁶⁶² According to Ceslas Spicq, *Esquisse d'une histoire de l'exégèse latine au Moyen Age* (Paris: Vrin, 1944), esp. 318-330, the following masters commented on the 1Cor in the period in question: Hugh of Saint-Cher OP (d. 1263), Guéric de Saint-Quentin OP (d. 1245), Godefroid de Bléneau OP (d. 1250), Jean de la Rochelle OFM (d. 1245), Eudes de Chateauroux (Odo de Castro Radulphi, d. 1273). On 1Cor 13:12, the postillae of Eudes and Godefroid add nothing original to the *Collectanea* of Peter Lombard (Eudes' *postilla* in 1Cor can be found in Ms BNF lat. 15605 fol. 32vb-63vb, Godefroid's one in Ms Mazarine 180 fol. 41r-64v). Guéric's postilla on 1Cor says nothing about the issue (Ms BNF lat. 15603 fol. 10va-30v, here 25v, and again in the same codex, fol. 56-70, there 66v).

⁶⁶³ Jean de la Rochelle, *Postilla ad 1Cor.*: "Et nota quod est duplex speculum. Primum est clarissimum dei filius... Item est speculum scripture." Ms Paris BNF lat. 15602 fol. 70ra-131v, here fol. 118ra.

⁶⁶⁴ "Triplex est speculum. Unum clarissimum dicitur, ut Sap. sexto d, 'candor est lucis aeternae et speculum sine macula' [Sap 7:26], aptatum ligno crucis et extensum, ut in eo sordes peccatorum nostrorum possimus inspicere, hoc enim exigit peccatorum nostrorum enormitas [111va], in paupertate eius possumus videre divitiarum superfluitatem, in amaritudine delictiarum. Hoc speculum a iudeis fuit consputum ut in eo clarius videremus nosmetipsos. Item est speculum scripture de quo Jac. I. d, 'Si quis auditor est verbi et non factor etc. nativitatis sue in speculo' [Jac 1:23]. Tertium speculum est creaturae, cuius mutatio nostrum mutationem, et corruptibilitatem et mortem designat." *Hugonis de S. Caro opera omnia in universum Vetus et Novum Testamentum*, vol. 7 (Coloniae Agrippinae [Cologne], 1621), 111rb-111va.

⁶⁶⁵ In a classical and early formulation: "In statu vero innocentiae et naturae lapsae videtur Deus mediante speculo; sed differenter, quia in statu innocentiae videbatur Deus per speculum clarum; nulla enim erat in anima peccati nebula. In statu vero miseriae videtur per speculum obscuratum per peccatum primi hominis et ideo nunc videtur per speculum et in aenigmate. Aenigma enim sicut dicit Augustinus, decimo quinto de Trinitatem est similitudo obscura." *Summa Halensis* II inq. 4 tract. 3 qu. 4 memb. 2 cap. 1 art. 2 ad 2 (vol. 2: 769), verbatim transcribed by Bonaventure, *In II Sent.* dist. 23 art. 2 qu. 3 co, Quar. II: 545.

state. Adam was, finally, considered someone *in via*, and his state was closer to us than to the Blessed.

A doctrinal decision: knowing God per essentiam

In 1241, masters of faculty of theology at the University of Paris prohibited the teaching of ten heretical propositions.⁶⁶⁶ The prohibition was not effective enough, and so after three years the condemnation was reiterated in a more solemn way (1244).⁶⁶⁷ Resembling the synods of the previous centuries, in the presence of the Bishop of Paris (William of Auvergne), the Chancellor of the University (Odo of Chateauroux), the *senior* of the masters of theology (Alexander of Hales) and all the masters teaching at the faculty, the rejected theses were contrasted with the Catholic doctrines, and an excommunication was pronounced against their *assertores et defensores*.⁶⁶⁸ The first condemned proposition summarises the doctrine of the incognoscibility of God:

The first [error] is, that the Divine essence in itself will not be seen by any man or angel. We condemn this error, and by the authority of William, the bishop, we excommunicate those who assert and defend it. Moreover, we firmly believe and assert that God in His essence or substance will be seen by the angels and all saints, and is seen by glorified spirits.⁶⁶⁹

The doctrinal decision and the censure of 1241/1244 was unprecedented. From a historical aspect, the masters of the University acted as the ultimate authority of the Western Church, rejecting a dangerous doctrine that was taught at the University in the early 1200s. Their decision normatively defined what can (and what cannot) be stated about the cognition of God. This conceptual regulation defined eschatology by defining *what* will be seen in the blessed state, but eschatological cognition is only a particular segment of the general subject of cognition of God. Its regulation

⁶⁶⁶ For the intellectual milieu, see Marie-Dominique Chenu, “Le dernier avatar de la théologie orientale en Occident au XIII^e siècle,” in *Mélanges Auguste Pelzer. Études d’histoire littéraire et doctrinale de la Scolastique médiévale offertes à Monseigneur Auguste Pelzer* (Louvain: Bibliothèque de l’Université, 1947), 159-81. The authors of the propositions are Stephanus de Varnesia OP (Étienne de Varney) and possibly his Dominican colleagues; as Chenu observed, the propositions are related to issues discussed in the first two books of the *Sentences*.

⁶⁶⁷ Due to the ambiguity of the sources, the date of the decision(s) has been a matter of discussion. Earlier scholars thought of a single event, of 1241. After the reconsideration of the Mss, Callebaut and Doucet brought plausible arguments for *two* declarations, in 1241 and 1244: see André Callebaut, “Alexandre de Halès, O.F.M. et ses confrères en face de condamnations parisiennes de 1241 et 1244,” *La France Franciscaine* 10 (1927): [1-16] = 257-72, and Victorin Doucet, “La date des condamnations parisiennes dites de 1241. Faut-il corriger le Cartulaire de l’Université?” In *Mélanges Auguste Pelzer. Études d’histoire littéraire et doctrinale de la Scolastique médiévale offertes à Monseigneur Auguste Pelzer à l’occasion de son soixante-dixième anniversaire* (Louvain: Université de Louvain, 1947), 183-93. After Doucet’s article, Franz Pelster still argued for the single 1241 event: “Die pariser Verurteilung von 1241. Eine Frage der Datierung,” *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 18 (1948): 405-17. Recently the double dating is more accepted: see, for example, Jacques-Guy Bougerol, “A propos des condamnations parisiennes de 1241 et 1244,” *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 80 (1987): 462-66.

⁶⁶⁸ See the fifth testimony of Doucet: “Anno Domini Mo CCo XLIII. nonis januarii subscripti articuli in presentia universitatis magistrorum theologie Parisiensium de mandato domini Guillelmi episcopi fuerunt examinati et reprobati per cancellarium Odonem et fr. Alexandrum de Ordine Fr. Minorum” (“La date,” 187). The synodal character of the event, centred around the confession of the true faith, has been noted by Jürgen Miethke: see his “Papst, Ortsbischof und Universität in den Pariser Theologenprozessen des 13. Jahrhunderts,” in *Die Auseinandersetzungen an der Pariser Universität im XIII. Jahrhundert (Miscellanea Mediaevalia 10)*, ed. Albert Zimmermann (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1976), 52-94, here 64.

⁶⁶⁹ “Primus [error], quod divina essentia in se nec ab homine nec ab angelo videbitur. Hunc errorem reprobamus et assertores et defensores auctoritate Wilhermi episcopi excommunicamus. Firmiter autem credimus et asserimus quod Deus in sua essentia vel substantia videbitur ab angelis et omnibus sanctis et videtur ab animabus glorificatis.” *Chartularium* I, nr. 128, page 170 (based on Ms Paris Arsenal 532). The printed text gives the solemn formula of 1244, with a contaminated introduction (see Doucet, “La date,” 187-188). English translation by Paul Halsall, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/uparis-cond1241.html>, last accessed May 29, 2012.

influenced other segments too – the prelapsarian cognition the possible cognition *in via* and in *raptus* – but also the terms in which cognition was conceived. In order to understand the changes that the decision brought about, it is necessary to provide a short historical overview of the origins of the concept involved.

The condemned error, the incognoscibility of the divine essence, is originally a Patristic Greek idea formed as the orthodox answer to the radical Arianism of the fifth-century Eunomius of Kyzikos (d. 394). Eunomius had a logical-philosophical stance in theology⁶⁷⁰ and established a close connection between essences and names, asserting that knowing something's essence means knowing its name (and *vice versa*).⁶⁷¹ The orthodox answer, formulated by the Cappadocian Fathers and John Chrysostom, was the negation of the Eunomian position that led to a diametrically opposed position: no created being can see the divine essence (whose cognition is reserved for the Holy Trinity itself) and whatever can be seen or perceived of God, it is not himself (that is, his essence) but a *theophania* (that is, God's descending self-manifestation in us and for us).⁶⁷² The Eunomian heresy (also called anomoianism) was largely a domestic case of the Greek culture of the Empire and had no particular influence on the contemporary Latin theologians.⁶⁷³ This also meant that the formative Latin theologians conceived and expressed their doctrines on the cognition of God in a different way. Speaking in Biblical terms, both Augustine and Gregory the Great spoke positively about the visibility (and a future vision) of God, granted to the glorified souls and the angels. At the same time, the Latin theological idiom described the highest possible cognition of God with Biblical terminology and not in philosophical terms: seeing God as he is (*sicuti est*), face to face (*facie ad faciem*), *per speciem*. The Greek position (and the irreconcilable difference between the Greek and Latin orthodoxies) remained hidden until Eriugena's *Periphyseon*;⁶⁷⁴ then in the later twelfth century, Greek Patristic works with the same doctrines became accessible in Latin.⁶⁷⁵

The Greek doctrine of the radical incognoscibility of God was taught at the University of Paris not only around 1241 and 1244: it was already present in the 1220s, although the sources are rather silent about the (later condemned) doctrine and the masters teaching it. If contemporary official sources name anyone at all in the context of the condemned doctrine of 1241/1244, it is usually Jean Pagus (*errores Pagi*) or the disobedient *frater Stephanus* (de Varnesia). Only modern research has revealed that the first rejected proposition was earlier held even by Alexander of Hales

⁶⁷⁰ On the philosophical background of Eunomius' name theory, see Raoul Mortley, *From Word to Silence*, 2. *The way of Negation, Christian and Greek* (Bonn: Hanstein, 1986), Chapter VIII. "Arian negative theology: Aetius and Eunomius" (vol. 2, 128-159).

⁶⁷¹ Applying this principle to Christian theology, he concluded (in his Arian way) that God's essence (*ousia*) is his ingeneracy (*agennesia*), and hence God's proper name is "ingenerate." Other conclusions of the doctrine led to unusual and scandalous statements (recorded by the orthodox party): God does not know more about himself than us; the essence of God is to the same measure known to him like to us; we may know God in the same way as he knows Himself. The first propositions are from Socrates, *Historia ecclesiastica* IV, 7, the third from Chrysostomus' second homily, *De incomprehensibili*.

⁶⁷² John Chrysostom writes in his *Sermo XV in Joannem* (tr. Burgundio): "Qualiter igitur Johannes dixit, 'Deum nemo vidit unquam'? Ostendens quoniam omnia illa condensationis erant, non ipsius substantie nude visio... ipsum quodcumque est Deus non solum prophete, sed neque angeli viderunt neque archangeli." The text has been edited by Dondaine, "L'objet," here 101.

⁶⁷³ The typical contemporary Latin reactions were just short remarks moralising over the pestilence of heresy: for the Latin fathers, Eunomius was rather a symbolic figure of the heretic with an inclination towards sophistry, mentioned as an example of moral depravity (as by Jerome) or with some respect for his dialectical skills (as by Augustine).

⁶⁷⁴ In 1225 already the codices of the *Periphyseon* had been ordered to be destroyed by Honorius III (see *Chartularium* I, nr. 50, pages 106-107). The decree mentions only *ignotas sententias, profanas novitates* without further specification.

⁶⁷⁵ Besides the translations of the Areopagitic corpus (Eriugena, Joannes Saracenus) such were John Damascenus' *De fide orthodoxa* and Chrysostomus' homilies (translated by Burgundio). For these sources, see Dondaine, "L'objet," 68-74; Chenu, "Le dernier avatar," and "L'entrée de la théologie grecque," in *La théologie au douzième siècle* (Paris: Vrin, 1957), 274-288.

(*Glossa Halensis*, 1220s) and Hugh of Saint-Cher (in his *Postilla in Joannem*).⁶⁷⁶ The traces of the doctrine were removed: all Dominican sources were purged of the condemned doctrines.⁶⁷⁷ Explicit reactions to the condemned propositions can be observed, for example, in the *Sentences* commentaries of Odo Rigaldi and Bonaventure and in the *Summa Halensis*.

The originally Greek doctrine and the Latin reaction against it influenced the language of theology through their terminology. The idea that God has an essence that cannot (or can) be known was present from the early thirteenth century onwards: the declaration of 1241/1244 decided only that God can (and will) be known by this essence, *per essentiam* (with the words of the decree *in sua essentia vel substantia videbitur*), even if the precise elaboration of the concept of what *per essentiam* vision means only later followed the decision.⁶⁷⁸ Both the idea and the wording that God has an essence is alien to the twelfth-century theology thinking in Biblical terms and images. Seeing God in his essence is not a self-evident translation of the terms “seeing God as he is,” or “face-to-face.” The promise behind the decision is also far too daring. Twelfth-century Latin theologians talked about the inscrutable and partly unknowable nature of God, inaccessible to our cognition.⁶⁷⁹ By contrast, the declaration of 1241/1244 implies the idea that God is cognisable (or even *maxime cognoscibilis*⁶⁸⁰). The idea is less traditional than it seems: although traditional restrictions⁶⁸¹ preclude or proscribe a *perfect* cognition of God by a creature, the position that God *otherwise* is (or could be) fully cognisable is daring.

The concept of a cognition *per essentiam* (and the fact that the supreme cognition was conceived in these terms) also introduced new distinctions into thinking, which also meant the restructuring of concepts. If a cognition of God can happen *non per essentiam* or *per essentiam* then all forms of cognition must be measured against these two categories. The Blessed cognise God *per essentiam*; the doctrinal development of *raptus* shows that Paul’s assumed vision of God was also considered as an immediate, that is, *per essentiam* vision. Other forms of the cognition of God did not qualify for a *per essentiam* (or immediate) vision: neither contemplative experience nor Adam’s *sine medio* vision of God.

The previous chapters presented various frameworks of Patristic and twelfth-century thinking, which served as a background to Victorine (and other) theologies. Thirteenth-century theology operated with different concepts. Three specific problems can be mentioned here, also to illustrate the differences between the theologies of the two centuries. The examples belong to anthropology, eschatology and spirituality.

⁶⁷⁶ In Hugh’s case, Dondaine presented contemporary attempts to make his text conform to the decision. Hugh wrote, “Sed quid est hoc quod dicitur I Jo.: Cum apparuerit, similes ei erimus, quoniam videbimus eum sicuti est? Ad hoc dicendum quod Joannes non intendit dicere quod nos aliquo modo consideremus Dei substantiam in patria, quia hoc est impossibile omni creaturae. Unde Chrysostomus, ‘Quod creabilis naturae est, qualiter videre poterit quod increabile est?’ quasi dicat, nullo modo. Intendit ergo Joannes speculum et enigma, quia in patria per immediatam acceptionem luminis aperte videbimus Deum, non tamen essentiam, sed ut gloriam, ut bonitatem, ut veritatem.” The text was reconstructed by Hyacinthe-François Dondaine: “Hugues de S. Cher et la condamnation de 1241,” *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques* 33 (1949): 170-174, here 171.

⁶⁷⁷ See the statute of the Dominican General Chapter (1243): “Errores condemnatos per magistros Parisienses fratres omnes abradant de quaternis,” *Chartularium* I, nr. 130, page 173.

⁶⁷⁸ See William J. Hoye, “Gotteserkenntnis per essentiam in 13. Jahrhundert,” in *Die Auseinandersetzungen an der Pariser Universität im XIII. Jahrhundert* (Miscellanea Mediaevalia 10), ed. Albert Zimmermann (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1976), 269-284.

⁶⁷⁹ See Hugh, *In Hier.* VI (he makes it explicit that in God there unknowable “parts”); a similar notion is present also in William of Saint-Thierry, *Enigma fidei* 1: “essentiam ejus vel naturam, et secreta illa imperscrutabilis iudicii ejus decreta investigare quidem et perscrutari pium est: que tamen cum mens terrena non penetret, inscrutabilia et investigabilia [sic - NCs] esse confitendum est. Quorum alterum religiose voluntatis est, alterum imperscrutabilis nature,” ed. M.-M. Davy, 92 (= PL 180, 397B). As the *apparatus* notes, this paragraph paraphrases Augustine, Ep. 147, xiv, 33 (PL 33: 611-612).

⁶⁸⁰ See Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* I qu. 12 art. 1 co: “Deus... quantum in se est, maxime cognoscibilis est. Sed quod est maxime cognoscibile in se, alicui intellectui cognoscibile non est.”

⁶⁸¹ A *per essentiam* vision of God happens only in the glorified state, and a radical difference remains between God’s self-knowledge and the cognition attainable by the creatures.

a) It was a common principle that the present condition is ruined due to the Fall. To describe this condition, however, thirteenth-century theologians adapted Aristotelian psychology and anthropology. This led to a coincidence: the “natural” of Aristotle and the “fallen” of Christian theology overlapped, and between the realms of “nature” and the “supernatural” a strong contrast emerged. The *per essentiam* vision of God is impossible by means of “natural” faculties. This form of cognition demands a *medium*, a supernatural enhancement on the cognitive faculty making this cognition possible. This concept of a necessary, epistemological *medium*, by and through which God can be seen, is a thirteenth-century novelty, generally foreign to the theology of the previous century.⁶⁸²

b) In the Latin West, the eschatological vision of God is conceived as seeing God as he is, face to face, immediately; seeing something God is (and not something else). The decision of 1241/1244 gives a modern, philosophical formulation to this idea. What is less conspicuous is that the decision also suggests a model of eschatology: a one-stage model where already the disembodied souls of the Blessed can see God in his essence. However, twelfth-century theologians did not usually expect an immediate vision of the divine essence after death. What they expected was mostly a vision of Christ (either of his humanity or his divinity); the full vision of God they expected only later, in the glorified state, when (after the resurrection) souls regain their bodies.

c) The theological content of Paul’s rapture narrative was undefined in the twelfth century and (among monastic authors) that event was considered as something similar to contemplative ecstasy. Even Bernard of Clairvaux compared contemplative ecstasy to Paul’s rapture; among the Victorines, Achard and Richard interpreted it not as a simile but as the paradigm of contemplative ecstasy – of an experience that is a “natural” part of the spiritual life. As a result of the developments of the early thirteenth century, Paul’s rapture became defined as *raptus* involving a *per essentiam* vision of God. Even “mystics” (who had theological education) had to be aware that this extraordinary case may not describe “ordinary,” potential spiritual experiences: they formulate such experiences without relating them to a direct *vision* of God, mostly as an affective union.

This discontinuity of the doctrinal premises may be perhaps the most important factor leading to the special, distorted reception of the Victorine theological anthropology.

⁶⁸² Wicki rightly pointed out that such a concept of *medium* is an adaptation of the *theophania* idea: in his words, *die Vergöttlichung der erigenistischen Theophanie*. See *Die Lehre*, 151.

Chapter I. Paul's rapture and the *visio mediastina*

Introduction

The present chapter investigates the way in which school theology formulated the rapture of Saint Paul in the period between c. 1160 and c. 1244. Two interconnected issues are at the centre of this study: the emergence and the dissolution of the concept of *visio mediastina*, and the gradual elaboration of the concept of *raptus* (which had become the authoritative theological description of Paul's case by the 1240s).

Including these issues in the study of the afterlife of Victorine doctrines demands some explanation. Paul's rapture into the third heaven was an important theme for Richard of Saint-Victor, since he made it the paradigm of contemplative ecstasy. He did so in a period when the Latin Church did not yet have an established interpretation of the rapture narrative of 2Cor 12: 2-4, and even less a single and authoritative interpretation. This was also the period when the monastic and the (early) Scholastic theology coexisted but were separated. Richard's interpretation of Paul's rapture was the most elaborate one produced by a monastic author; his works were also unique, as he applied the imagery of rapture to contemplative ecstasy, instead of the far more common *Brautmystik*. Among monastic authors, comparing contemplation to Paul's rapture was by no means extraordinary but (apart from a few common elements) the precise theological interpretation of Paul's rapture might have varied from author to author (if they devoted attention to it at all). Seen in itself, Paul's rapture as subject is a rather marginal one in monastic works: it was regarded, basically, an extraordinary episode from Saint Paul's life that had already been covered by Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram XII* and *Letter 147*. To elaborate further on this subject required a special interest in spirituality.

The emerging Scholastic theology of the non-monastic schools had a different approach to the rapture narrative of Paul, with two particularly distinctive features: it formed a tradition, and its theories obtained doctrinal authority. In these schools, the interpretation of the rapture narrative was based primarily on commentaries on First Corinthians (as both the *Collectanea* and the *Glossa (ordinaria)* were used as exegetical textbooks), which transmitted the definitive Augustinian interpretation of the Scriptural passage. The teachings of the schools, at the same time, gradually became the representative theology of the West. The ideas of Richard and other monastic authors (even if they were contemporaneous with the evolving school theology) were never competitors of or alternatives to these school doctrines. Whatever a Bernard of Clairvaux or a Richard of Saint-Victor taught about Paul's rapture, it remained unknown in the schools – and it remained so for the later period, too, when theology was taught at universities and monastic theology disappeared. The official and normative Western teaching on rapture was based on doctrines that *were* actually taught in the schools, and not on those doctrines which *could have been* gathered from monastic sermons or spiritual treatises. The living school tradition changed over time through the introduction of new concepts and terms – and these changes, I argue, rendered Richard's doctrine unintelligible after the 1220s at the latest. If Paul's rapture was an extraordinary case, a *raptus*, a miracle (as Scholastic theology holds) then it certainly could not be an ordinary event belonging to contemplative experience, from cooperation of grace and the *intelligentia* (as Richard taught).

This chapter gives an overview of these changes, focusing on two main subjects: the development of the concepts of *raptus* and *visio mediastina*. The relation of the two concepts can be outlined thus. *Raptus* is the Scholastic term denoting by one single word the theological interpretation of the event described by the Apostle in 2Cor 12: 2-4. In school theology, it was evident that Paul in his rapture saw God by means of intellectual vision (as Augustine conceived) – but the precise nature of that vision was ambiguous. The inherited Augustinian doctrines proved to be insufficient to describe it. In the second half of the twelfth century, the doctrine of a “middle” vision (*visio mediastina*) was the appropriate doctrine for describing Paul's cognition in his rapture. A previous chapter has already presented the first occurrence of this concept in the *Ps.-Peter of*

Poitiers Gloss on *Sent. IV* dist. 1 where it was applied, in one sentence, both to Adam's prelapsarian cognition *and* to Paul's vision of God in his rapture, c. 1160-1165; in the later period, the term is more often applied to Paul's case. In the long run, *visio mediastina* proved to be only a transitional concept from a period when there existed no established theories yet for many issues in Western theology. From the early thirteenth century onwards, this concept was gradually eradicated, as Paul's assumed vision of God was assimilated to the immediate vision of the Blessed.

A most remarkable feature of the *visio mediastina* is its analogy with the Victorine doctrines. The concept emerged in the schools around 1160, without any sign of a possible Victorine influence, and was accepted till the end of the century, and it connected the cases of Adam and Paul, attributing to them a more immediate cognition of God than now or in the glorified state. The same two cases were central for the Victorine theological anthropology (whose authors Richard, Achard and Walther were alive at that time); although the Victorines never stated explicitly that the contemplative ecstasy (that is, a rapture like that of Paul) is identical with the prelapsarian vision of God, such a conclusion can be drawn from their passages. However transitional it was, already the mere historical existence of the concept *visio mediastina* is crucial for the reception of Victorine doctrines. It does prove that there existed a "theological intuition" in the second half of the century that grouped together Adam and Paul – and this intuition was shared both by theologians of the school *and* the Victorines.

The eradication of the concept was not accidental: as the following chapter will demonstrate, it happened through its careful removal from the theological vocabulary. The presented attempts at redefining the term are further examples of the discontinuity between twelfth- and thirteenth-century theologies. The concept of *visio mediastina* assumed that the two extraordinary cases (of Adam and Paul) are different from both the present and the blessed states, and that they are in the same way different from them; by contrast, the later development of Scholastic theology gradually assimilated Paul's case to the blessed state, and Adam's case to the present state. Discarding the *visio mediastina* meant discarding a model where there existed three positions for the cognition of God in favour of a model with two positions only. The Victorine concepts were, in this respect, analogous to the former model: the change made, indirectly, the Victorine doctrines unintelligible too.

The literature on the doctrinal development of Paul's rapture focuses mostly on the Scholastic doctrines and ignores the (usually far less elaborate) monastic theories. Nikolaus Wicki's monograph on the blessed state (*Die Lehre von der himmlischen Seligkeit in der mittelalterlichen Scholastik von Petrus Lombardus bis Thomas Aquin*, 1954) gave a first historical outline of the Scholastic theories, and an article by Hyacinthe-François Dondaine on the *medium* in the beatific vision (1952) covered the early thirteenth-century developments.⁶⁸³ Hans Urs von Balthasar's commentary on the *raptus* question of the *Summa theologiae* II-II, qu. 175 in the German *Thomasausgabe* (1954) also gave a standard list of the early thirteenth-century sources with short annotations.⁶⁸⁴ Since that time, the most important thirteenth-century texts have been edited, analysed and studied, mostly by Barbara Faes de Mottoni. The present investigation, due to its particular aims, profits most from Wicki's work.

Before discussing Scholastic conceptual developments, it seems necessary to remark that the monastic theology had a substantially different attitude to Paul's rapture from that of Scholastic

⁶⁸³ See H.-F. Dondaine, "L'objet et le 'medium' de la vision béatifique chez les théologiens du XIII^e siècle," RTAM 19 (1952): 60-130, and Nikolaus Wicki, *Die Lehre von der himmlischen Seligkeit in der mittelalterlichen Scholastik von Petrus Lombardus bis Thomas Aquin* (*Studia Friburgensia*, N.F. 9) (Freiburg, Switzerland [Fribourg (Suisse)]: Universitäts-Verlag, 1954). A comprehensive outline of the doctrinal history of rapture, from the twelfth century to the 1240s can be found in Wicki's *Die Lehre*, 161-174 ("Die Möglichkeit der Gottesschau auf Erden").

⁶⁸⁴ Hans Urs von Balthasar, "Die Entrückung (Fr. 175)," in *Thomas von Aquin. Besondere Gnadengaben und die zwei Wege menschlichen Lebens, kommentiert von Urs von Balthasar. II-II, 171-182* (Heidelberg – Munich / Graz et al: F.H. Kerle / Anton Pustet, 1954) (*Die Deutsche Thomas-Ausgabe* 23), 372-410; for the list, see 380-381.

theology.⁶⁸⁵ The very term *raptus* (as a noun denoting one particular concept) is a Scholastic term from the late twelfth century. It is a shorthand reference to 2Cor 12:2-4 (plus its theological interpretation), and as such, it already presupposes a well-defined concept. In fact, both the term and the concept belong to school theology: the very usage of the term is a distinctively Scholastic trait (present at Simon of Tournai and Stephen Langton) – outside the schools, the term *raptus* was a legal-criminal term meaning abduction, rape or kidnapping. Monastic authors did not use this term:⁶⁸⁶ they usually spoke about *Paulus raptus* and circumscribed the event. They did not have one single term to denote it, as they had various and unsystematic theories about it (usually in a scattered form). They often call this event *contemplatio*, taking a word from their own spiritual vocabulary. In the language of monastic authors, Paul, the Blessed and the angels alike *contemplated* God, but contemplating God was also the final goal of spiritual exercises; Paul was in ecstasy, but ecstasy was also a psychological reality that they experienced. Some monastic theologians have seen in Paul's rapture a unique, miraculous and extraordinary case of grace pertaining primarily to the biography of Paul; some regarded it as something familiar to the experiences of the contemplative life. In a more conventional way, Bernard of Clairvaux thought that contemplatives are sometimes enraptured like Paul; in contrast, the Victorines Richard and Achard conceived, in a more daring way, Paul's rapture as the paradigmatic model of contemplative ecstasy, realised in *excessus mentis*. There was no uniform interpretation of what Paul saw and to what extent: the Augustinian authority granted him a face-to-face vision, while William of Saint-Thierry denied it; Richard of Saint-Victor spoke about a vision of the truth. These monastic interpretations of Paul's rapture faded into oblivion and had no influence on Scholastic developments.

The present investigation follows the order of chronology. A history of the Scholastic interpretation of rapture ought to start with the *Collectanea* of Peter Lombard: this work of the master of Notre-Dame became the textbook and primary reference on this issue, both for the late twelfth and for the early thirteenth century.

⁶⁸⁵ For a detailed overview of the monastic (and Scholastic theories) on Paul's rapture, see my book chapter, "Paulus Raptus to Raptus Pauli: Paul's rapture (2Cor 12:2-4) in the Pre-Scholastic and Scholastic Theologies," in Steven R. Cartwright, ed., *A Companion to St. Paul in the Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 349-392.

⁶⁸⁶ The corpus of the *Patrologia Latina* (giving a fairly good corpus for non-school usage of Latin up to c. 1200) gives no result for the noun *raptus* taken in the Scholastic theological sense; not even in the works of such authors as Peter of Poitiers or Peter the Chanter.

I. Peter Lombard's *Collectanea* (and its limits)

The Apostle in 2Cor 12:2-4 states that some unnamed person was once “caught up” into “the third heaven,” and the same person was, likewise, “caught up” into “the Paradise,” and there heard secret words.⁶⁸⁷ The obscure and unparalleled description of a seemingly extraordinary event drew the attention of Latin theologians, but only Augustine produced comprehensive and coherent interpretations of it, in the *De Genesi ad litteram XII* and *Letter 147*. Due to his interpretation, most medieval authors read 2Cor 12: 2-4 as an account of a spiritual experience from the life of the Apostle, and accepted that his elevation into the “third heaven” and his hearing of “ineffable words” meant that he was elevated to the third form of *vision*, to the immediate, face-to-face, “intellectual” vision of God. Practically no Patristic interpretation rivalled the Augustinian one, either in extent or in importance.⁶⁸⁸ The exegesis of the *locus* was based primarily on Augustine: from the Carolingian period onwards, his explanation from the *De Genesi ad litt. XII* was transcribed in the commentaries on the Second Corinthians, as the commentaries of Haymo of Halberstadt (d. 853), Bruno the Carthusian (d. 1101), the Benedictine Hervaeus of Déols (d. 1150), masters Gilbert of Poitiers (d. 1154) and Peter Lombard (d. 1160) attest.⁶⁸⁹ Only in the eleventh and the twelfth century did there appear other explanations that were added to the Augustinian one: these were collected and promptly summarised by Peter Lombard.

Peter Lombard, the master of Notre-Dame, composed his commentary on the Pauline epistles in two redactions, 1139-1141 and 1155-1158.⁶⁹⁰ His commentary, entitled *Collectanea in epistolas Sancti Pauli*,⁶⁹¹ collected four explanations of the rapture narrative of 2Cor 2-4:

- 1) The first interpretation gives a cosmological interpretation of “heavens.” The first heaven is the aerial heaven, the second is the *firmamentum*, and the third is the *empyreum*, the spiritual heaven, where angels and the blessed souls enjoy the vision of God.
- 2) The second interpretation reproduces Augustine’s positions, being a verbose excerpt from the *De Genesi ad litteram XII* and *Letter 147*. Three heavens mean corporeal, imaginary and intellectual vision, and hence Paul’s rapture was an intellectual vision.

⁶⁸⁷ 2Cor 12:2; “scio hominem in Christo ante annos quattuordecim sive in corpore nescio sive extra corpus nescio Deus scit raptum eiusmodi usque ad tertium caelum, 12:3 et scio huiusmodi hominem sive in corpore sive extra corpus nescio Deus scit, 12:4 quoniam raptus est in paradysum et audivit arcana verba quae non licet homini loqui.”

⁶⁸⁸ Origen’s and Ambrose’s interpretations remained marginal (the latter partly revived by Eriugena’s similarly marginal interpretation. See Origen, *Commentarius in Canticum Canticorum I*, *Origenes. Werke VIII*, ed. W.A. Baehrens (GCS 33) (Leipzig, 1925), 108; Eriugena, *Periphyseon IV*, 18 (PL 122: 832D-833A = CCCM 164, 129) quoting Ambrose, *De Paradiso xi*, 53 (CSEL 32/1, 309 = PL 14: 300B). Nor did the remarks of Gregory the Great, stating that Paul had *not* had a face-to-face vision of God, exert influence; see *Hom. in Ez.* I, homilia 8, 30: “adhuc tamen in carne mortali posita [mens] videre gloriam Dei non valet sicut est. Sed quidquid de illa est quod in mente resplendet, similitudo, et non ipsa est. Unde et ille praedicator qui raptus usque ad tertium coelum fuerat dicebat: *Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate*” (PL 76: 868D). See also *Mor.* XXXI, 51, 103: “Quia quandiu in hac vita sunt qui illam viventium patriam, sicut est, videre non possunt, recte adiungitur, *cernent terram de longe*. [...] Consideremus quam sublimis aquila fuerit Paulus, qui usque ad tertium coelum volavit, sed tamen in hac vita positus e longinquo adhuc Deum prospicit, qui ait: *Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem*. Et rursum: *Ego me non arbitror comprehendisse*. Sed quamvis aeterna valde minus quam sunt ipse conspiciat, quamvis ea se cognoscere perfecte non posse cognoscat, infirmis tamen auditoribus ea ipsa infundere praedicando non potest, quae videre saltem per speculum et imaginem potest” (PL 76: 630AB).

⁶⁸⁹ See Haimo, *Expositio in ep. II ad Corinthios*, PL 117: 660C-664A; Bruno, *Expositio in ep. II ad Cor.*, PL 153: 273-274; Hervaeus (also as Hervé of Bourg-Dieu), *Expositio in ep. II ad Cor.*, PL 181: 1112A-1114D; Peter Lombard includes it twice in the *Collectanea*: PL 191: 1328AC (on Rm 1:20) and PL 192: 80B-82A (on 2Cor 12: 1-4); Gilbert of Poitiers, *Expositio in ep. II ad Cor.*, Paris, BNF lat. 14441 fol. 64va. For an overview of the exegetical works of the period from the ninth to the fourteenth century, see C[eslas] Spicq, *Esquisse d’une histoire de l’exégèse latine au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1944).

⁶⁹⁰ Dating follows Marcia Colish, *Peter Lombard* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), vol. 1, 23-24.

⁶⁹¹ Peter Lombard, *Collectanea* in 2Cor. PL 192: 82A-83A.

3) In the third interpretation, attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite (*secundum Dionysium*), three heavens mean three angelic orders, and Paul's rapture into the third heaven means that he saw God as the angels of the highest hierarchies do.

4) The fourth interpretation is an epistemological one, understanding "heavens" as various types of knowledge. The first heaven is the cognition of heavenly bodies, the second is that of heavenly spirits, and the third is the cognition of the Godhead.

Concerning Paul's rapture, Peter's only merit is that of a compiler: all four interpretations that he presented were accessible in earlier or contemporary commentaries (even if Peter makes no acknowledgement of them). Decades before Peter started the compilation of the *Collectanea*, Bruno the Carthusian presented together the Augustinian, the "Areopagitic" and the epistemological interpretations. Peter's contemporary, Hervaeus of Déols, also added the "Areopagitic" reading to the Augustinian one; Gilbert of Poitiers presented the cosmological, the "Areopagitic" and the Augustinian explanations together. Manuscripts of the *Glossa (ordinaria)* also present the four interpretations.⁶⁹²

Unlike these monastic commentaries, Peter's *Collectanea* had a remarkable afterlife. It transferred the amassed results of monastic exegesis into the world of the urban schools of theology. It became the standard exegetical reference work for the Pauline letters, used in theological education; in the courses on Pauline epistles, it was commented on and discussed. Late twelfth-century discussions on Paul's rapture were substantially based on the *Collectanea* (as the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard does not include this subject). The Pauline commentaries of two masters of Notre-Dame, Peter the Chanter (teaching c. 1170-1196) and Stephen Langton (teaching 1180-1206) were glosses to the *Collectanea* (and not to the Bible text).

Although the *Collectanea* was used in classrooms, the masters certainly observed its theological insufficiency. Peter's text gave four traditional interpretations of Paul's rapture, each of these interpretations being valid and acceptable, both alone or together with the other ones. These interpretations worked well as exegesis to the lemma "being caught up into the third heaven," giving more or less allegorical interpretations of what happened once to Paul, but did not offer a proper theological analysis for the case. In a period when disputation, argumentation and counter-argumentation, and evaluation and analysis of *auctoritates* were common methods of theological education, exercised in the classrooms, the *Collectanea* was helpless. It could not tell its readers how Paul's rapture could be described by the basic terms and concepts that created the framework of Latin theology of the day; it did not explain how Paul's single case related to such well-established concepts as *via* and *patria* (referring to this life and the life hereafter), *viator* and *comprehensor*, immediate or mediated cognition of God, faith and vision, and so on. Neither did the Patristic authorities – and therefore theologians had to create their own models. As the following examples will demonstrate, between c. 1160 and c. 1195 it was an accepted position that Paul in his rapture (like the prelapsarian Adam), was neither in *via* nor in *patria*;⁶⁹³ it was also a widely accepted doctrine that Paul's vision was a third kind, a "middle" vision (*visio mediastina*) between the vision of *via* and that of *patria* (held by some as late as the 1220s).⁶⁹⁴ Such attempts at

⁶⁹² These expositions can be found both in Mss (in extracts) and in earlier printed editions, for example, *Bibliorum sacrorum cum glossa ordinaria [...]* et *Postilla Nicolai Lyranii, additionibus Pauli Burgensis ad ipsum Lyranum / ac ad easdem Matthiae Toringi replicas [...]* tomus sextus (Venetiis, 1601): 447-448. The selective edition of the *Glossa* in the *Patrologia Latina* edition gives only Ambrosiaster's explanation (PL 112: 231A = PL 17: 329).

⁶⁹³ See Peter of Poitiers, *Sententiae* II, ix, 33 (1167-1170): "Adam tunc non erat in via, neque in patria." *Sententiae Petri Pictaviensis liber II*, Philip S. Moore, Marthe Dulong and J.N. Garvin eds (Notre Dame, Ind., 1950), 55 = PL 211: 970B; Magister Martinus, *Summa* (c. 1195): "[Paulus] Nec tunc erat viator nec civis, nec in via nec in patria erat secundum eorum responsum." "Alia est [visio] enigmatica, quam habent viatores, alia presentaria, quam habent cives in patria, alia mediastina, quam habuerunt Adam et Apostolus." Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale lat. 14526 fol. 113vb and 113va = Paris, BN lat. 14556 fol. 334 va and 334rb.

⁶⁹⁴ For a short outline of the history of *visio mediastina*, see Wicki, *Die Lehre*. To Wicki's testimonies given there must be added the *Ps.-Peter of Poitiers Gloss to Sent.* IV dist. 1 from 1160-1165, antedating all examples of Wicki: "Ante peccatum videbat homo deum, id est quadam visione mediastina ut Paulus raptus ad tertium celum." Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale BN VII C 14 fol. 47ra, London, British Library Royal 7 F XIII fol. 39rb. (Dating based on

conceptual framing characterise the late twelfth century; the early thirteenth century introduces new concepts and shows a gradual conceptual development.

The reception of the *Collectanea* points out the functional difference and separation between exegesis and doctrinal theology, a tendency that became more pronounced in the early thirteenth century. The commentaries on Second Corinthians from that period do not offer anything more original than the *Collectanea* for Paul's rapture: instead of new interpretations, commentaries (*postillae*) usually repeated the material of the *Collectanea* (or the *Glossa*), sometimes regrouped under new headings, sometimes with the addition of new elements.⁶⁹⁵ Theories and investigations on framing *raptus* took place in different genres, in theological *quaestiones* and *summae*.

II. The emergence of the *visio mediastina* (c. 1160 to c. 1215). Five witnesses

Theories involving the *visio mediastina* are the earliest systematic school doctrines on rapture. Practically speaking, these were the most developed theories on the issue before the first Scholastic elaboration of *raptus* (*Summa aurea*, 1215-1220).⁶⁹⁶ The scholastic theories on *raptus* may be divided largely into two groups. The first one includes the early theories until c. 1215. The date is only symbolic: it marks the beginning of the composition of the *Summa aurea* of William of Auxerre, the work that presented new standards for the discussion of the subject. Prior to that work, the content of theories was mostly a struggle for concepts and definitions (formulated through a rather simple vocabulary), and the theories were manifested in commentaries, theological questions or early *summae*. After William's *Summa aurea*, the doctrines were usually expounded in the strict format of the Scholastic *quaestio*; under the influence of philosophical epistemology, the doctrines acquired an epistemological profile (beyond the usual theological one), and the concept of *raptus* was subjected to a thorough conceptual analysis. Behind the stylistic and formal changes, a doctrinal change can also be observed: namely, the gradual elimination of the *visio mediastina*.

For the aims of the present study, the *visio mediastina* has particular importance: this eradicated doctrine was the last Scholastic doctrine that can be regarded, however vaguely, as something analogous to the Victorine concept of Paul's rapture. The sole author known to me who has investigated the concept and history of *visio mediastina* is Nikolaus Wicki. His monograph on the *visio beatifica* (1954)⁶⁹⁷ investigated the *visio mediastina* in the context of the possibility of an earthly vision of God (meaning not contemplative experience but a momentary experience of the *visio beatifica*). Wicki found that first around the mid-twelfth century there emerged the need to define the mutual relation of the *raptus* and the vision of the Blessed. He demonstrated a fluctuation of positions: some theologians (such as Honorius Augustodunensis, Peter Lombard and Robert of Melun) granted Paul an immediate vision of God; the next generation elaborated different solutions,

Landgraf, *Introduction*, 137). Peter the Chanter's commentary on 2Cor also interprets Paul's rapture as "media quaedam visio inter viam et patriam" (Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine lat. 176 fols. 195rb-va).

⁶⁹⁵ See the Dominican *postillae* of the 1230s: Godefroid de Bléneau, *Postilla in 2Cor.* (Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine lat. 180 fol. 74r, paraphrasing the *Collectanea* and giving his model for spiritual ascent); Guerric of Saint-Quentin, *Postilla in 2Cor.* (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale lat. 15604 fol. 60v, based on the *Glossa*); Hugh of Saint-Cher, *Postilla in 2Cor.* (*Hugonis de S. Caro opera omnia in universum Vetus et Novum Testamentum* vol. VII. Coloniae Agrippinae [Cologne], 1621, fol. 142va, a one-sentence reference to the *Glossa*); cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Lectura super 2Cor.* (another reprise of the *Collectanea*).

⁶⁹⁶ A few significant passages: 2Cor 5:7 *per fidem enim ambulamus et non per speciem*; 1Cor 13:12 *Videmus nunc per speculum in aenigmate, tunc autem facie ad faciem; nunc cognosco ex parte, tunc autem cognoscam sicut et cognitus sum*; Exo 33:20 *Non poteris videre faciem meam; non enim videbit me homo et vivet*; 1Jn 3:2 *scimus quoniam cum apparuerit, similes ei erimus, quoniam videbimus eum sicuti est*.

⁶⁹⁷ Nikolaus Wicki, *Die Lehre von der himmlischen Seligkeit in der mittelalterlichen Scholastik von Petrus Lombardus bis Thomas Aquin* (Freiburg, Switzerland: Universitäts-Verlag, 1954). The discussion of *visio mediastina* covers pages 162-169.

including *visio mediastina*; later on, theologians again returned to the identification of Paul's rapture and beatific vision.⁶⁹⁸

For the purposes of the present investigation, Wicki's researches are pioneering but insufficient. His remaining merit is that he unearthed the forgotten concept of *visio mediastina* from the manuscript material (mostly from the works of Magister Martinus, Stephan Langton and the famous Ms Douai 434). This concept, however, remained to him marginal, an interlude in the development of the doctrine on beatific vision,⁶⁹⁹ and could not give the dates between which it was valid in this period. This chapter aims to give a different take on the history of the doctrine, from a different angle: we are interested in how the disappearance of the *visio mediastina* changed the conceptual framework of theology, and how this framework defined the reception of Victorine anthropology.

a) The *Ps-Poitiers Gloss*

The term *visio mediastina* can be found in the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* on *Sent.* IV dist. 1.⁷⁰⁰ Explaining Adam's vision of God *sine medio*, the gloss states that Adam saw God "through some sort of middle vision like Paul enraptured into the third heaven." The short reference is momentous. Conceptually, it juxtaposes the two extraordinary cases and considers Adam's prelapsarian vision and Paul's rapture as being substantially alike. It also has a historical significance. Since the *Gloss* is datable (c. 1160-1165), and its text antedates all the other examples found by Wicki, we can assert that the term *visio mediastina* appeared first c. 1160-1165 (which also means the *terminus a quo* of the concept).

b) Peter the Chanter, *Postilla super 2Cor.*

Peter the Chanter (Petrus Cantor, d. 1197) belonged to the school of Notre-Dame. He was already a magister and canon of the Cathedral before 1173; from 1183 he was a *cantor*.⁷⁰¹ His commentary on 2Cor 12 gives an extract from the Lombard's *Collectanea*, reproducing its four explanations.⁷⁰² The remarkable novelty is Peter's interpretation of *intellectualis visio*. Paul's *raptus* was an intellectual vision, between those of *via* and *patria*:

⁶⁹⁸ For the references, see Wicki, *Die Lehre*. For the manuscripts of the unedited works of the late twelfth century, mentioned by Wicki, see Artur M. Landgraf, *Introduction à l'histoire de la littérature théologique de la scolastique naissante*, trans. Louis B. Geiger (Montreal and Paris, 1973).

⁶⁹⁹ The novelty of this dissertation's contribution, compared to Wicki's work, can be summarised thus: I introduce new witnesses of the doctrine (the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss*, Peter the Chanter, Roland and Guericc) and revisit most of those that Wicki named (Langton, Simon of Tournai, Godefroy of Poitiers, with the exception of Ms Bamberg Patr. 136), using their manuscripts directly; the same is true for Ms Douai 434. The most important finding is the occurrence of the term in a well-datable source (the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss*) and those additional sources which testify to its validity and the tendency of its eradication.

⁷⁰⁰ *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* on *Sent.* IV dist. 1, Ms Neapel BN VII C 14 fol. fol. 47ra: "Ante peccatum videbat homo deum, id est quadam visione mediastina ut Paulus raptus ad tertium celum."

⁷⁰¹ Peter (Petrus Cantor) covered the entire Bible with his commentaries, wrote sermons (partly edited), a *Summa de sacramentis* and a *summa* of moral theology called *Verbum abbreviatum* (a version of it in PL 205: 21-554; critical text: *Verbum abbreviatum. Textus conflatus*, ed. Monique Boutry as CCCM 196, 2004). For his life and doctrines see John W. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants: The Social Views of Peter the Chanter and His Circle*. 2 vols (Princeton, 1970); John W. Baldwin, art. "Pierre le Chatre" in DS 12: 1534-1538; Rolf Peppenmüller, art. "Petrus Cantor" in TRE 26: 287-289. For an overview of the intellectual milieu of the Chanter's age, see Baldwin, *Masters, Princes and Merchants*, vol. 1, 17-46 ("The Chanter's circle at Paris").

⁷⁰² I could not find any reference for dating the commentary. Transcript from Ms Paris Mazarine lat. 176 fol. 189r-196v, here 195rb-va. The manuscript presents a slightly confused text, and hence later it ought to be collated with the Mss Paris BNF lat. 682 and lat. 15565.

ET INTELLECTUALIS, QUANDO ANIMA [NON] CORPORA NON YMAGINES EORUM VIDENTUR SED INCORPOREE SUBSANTIE [...] NON IN ENIGMATE, SED PER SPECIEM EST. HOC MODO PETIVIT MOYSES VIDERE DEUM, ID EST IN SUBSTANTIA QUA DEUS EST, QUEM MULTIS FIGURIS VIDERAT ETC<ETERA>. '*Facie ad faciem*,' id est presens locutus est in qua claritate speciei nemo vivens in istis sensibus et illis utens deum videre p<otest> [cf. Exo 33:20]. Hanc visionem habuit apostolus, sed non ita plenam [195va] ut angeli qui speciei habent gustum et odorem speciei, sed mediam quandam visionem inter viam et patriam, quia odorem deitatis de prope aliquod o<do>ravit: nos autem a nobis longe per creaturas et sacram scripturam.⁷⁰³

[Peter Lombard's text] And the intellectual (vision), when the soul sees (not) bodies and not their images but incorporeal substances. ... (this vision) occurs not in an enigma but directly (*per speciem*). Moses asked to see God in this way, that is, in that substance which God is, whom he saw in many forms and so on.

[Commentary by Peter the Chanter] He (i.e. God) spoke "face to face," that is, being present, in that clarity of the face/presence (*speciei*) in which no one living in these senses and using these senses can see God. The Apostle had this (i.e. intellectual) kind of vision, but not as fully as the angels who taste the face/presence (*speciei*) and smell the face/presence (*speciei*); however, (he had) some middle kind of vision, between the *via* and the *patria*: because he smelled something of the (good) smell of the Godhead nearby – but we, by ourselves, do so from far afar, by means of the creatures and of Scripture]

Peter speaks about a direct, immediate vision of God, in the cases of both Moses and Paul, although without much precision. He emphasises the immediate nature of that cognition with the terms *facie ad faciem* (from 1Cor 13:12) and *praesens locutus est* (these terms could refer to the eschatological cognition as well), but at the same time, he separates this cognition from the eschatological one pertaining to *patria*, by describing it as "a certain middle kind of vision" (*mediam quandam visionem*). It is also remarkable that Peter mentions the *fullness* of the vision (stating that Paul's vision was not as full as the angels' vision). At these points, Peter's theological formulation comes quite close to what the Victorines devised as (earthly) contemplation. Hugh's concepts such as the *praesentia contemplationis* and Adam's immediate and *not* full vision of God, Richard's statements about contemplative ecstasy as *quasi facie ad faciem* vision of God, and Paul's rapture as the paradigm for contemplation also could be interpreted in such a theological framework. A later but plausible parallel must be also mentioned: the *Summa Halensis* censures the position that the prelapsarian Adam saw God *medio modo*, meaning *immediate et diminute* (see Part III, Chapter 1). The immediate but not "full" vision attributed to Adam (as opposed to a *plena et perfecta visio*) seems analogous to the Chanter's position on Paul.

c) Magister Martinus, *Summa* (c. 1195)

The *Summa* of the otherwise unknown Magister Martinus, written around 1195, is a compilation from contemporary authors (such as Alan of Lille, Simon of Tournai, Peter of Poitiers, Magister Udo and Odo of Ourscamp).⁷⁰⁴ For the present study, the importance of his work lies in the fact that Martinus is a relatively uninterested, external witness of doctrines on *visio mediastina*, reporting the current opinions of others (unfortunately, without recording their names).

⁷⁰³ Ms Maz. lat. 176 fol. 195rb-va; the text set in small capitals is Peter Lombard's *Collectanea*.

⁷⁰⁴ For the manuscripts of the *Summa* (also known as *Compilatio questionum theologie secundum Magistrum Martinum*), their description, dating and its content see Richard Heinzmann, *Die "Compilatio questionum theologie secundum Magistrum Martinum"* (Munich: Max Hueber Verlag, 1964). The manuscripts are (with the sigla of Heinzmann): Ms Paris BNF lat. 14526 (= P1) and Ms Paris BNF lat. 14556 (= P2).

In his *Summa*, Martinus repeats the usual Augustinian division of visions and remarks that “certain people” introduce a subdivision of the intellectual vision, dividing it into *visio enigmatica*, *visio presentaria* and *visio mediastina*. The “enigmatic” vision belongs to the *viatores*, while the “middle vision” belongs to Adam and the Apostle.⁷⁰⁵ Later on, Martinus adds more details about Paul’s rapture. His references to the *visio mediastina* suggest a third kind of cognition, which is different from the cognition of both *via* (*coniecturis noscere*) and *patria* (*comprehendere*) and gives a “closer and fuller” vision (*planius et vicinius... plenius videbat*). A sentence familiar from the discussions about Adam also appears here: Paul was in his rapture *nec viator nec civis, nec in via nec in patria*.⁷⁰⁶

The concept emerging from the references of Martinus is a well-defined one. *Mediastina visio* is intellectual vision: a separate, third way of cognition of God besides the vision of faith and the vision of the Blessed, and it is the highest and fullest possible way of cognition of God for men (before death). Martinus reports the opinion that both Adam and the Apostle had *mediastina visio* (which is not unprecedented: the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* and Stephen Langton also taught so). Martinus is, however, alone in stating that the Apostle was *nec viator nec civis, nec in via nec in patria*. Earlier, Peter Comestor and Peter of Poitiers used an almost verbatim identical formula – but in the context of Adam’s prelapsarian vision, and decades earlier, in the 1160s and 1170s.⁷⁰⁷ This interpretation of *visio mediastina* as a *tertium*, which is neither *via* nor *patria*, was a transient idea, breaking the dichotomy of *via/patria*. The contemporary Stephen Langton will explicitly deny the existence of a third *status* and subsume *visio mediastina* under the same species as the *visio enigmatica*.

d) Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones* and *Postilla super 2Cor*.

Stephen Langton (d. 1228) was a contemporary of the Chanter, Magister Martinus and Peter of Poitiers. After his arrival in Paris (c. 1170) he probably studied under Peter the Chanter; from 1180, he was a *magister* teaching theology until 1206, when Innocent III called him to Rome, and created him cardinal priest.⁷⁰⁸ His years in Paris, 1180 to 1206, are considered the period of his theological

⁷⁰⁵ Martinus, *Summa*: “*Scio huiusmodi hominem raptum usque ad tertium celum* etc. Tres celi intelliguntur tria genera visionum. Primum est corporalis visio, quando quedam corporaliter videntur dei munere, et per id quod videtur significatur aliquid ut Heliseus vidit ignitos curros quando raptus est Helias. Secundum celum est imaginaria vel spiritualis visio quando aliquis in extasi vel sompno videt non corpora sed ymagines rerum dei revelacione ut Petrus vidit discum. Tercium celum est intellectualis visio quando nec corpora nec imagines rerum videntur sed incorporeis substantiis in cuius mentis mira dei singulari potentia. Hec autem visio ut dicunt quidam triplex est. Alia est enigmatica, quam habent viatores, alia presentaria, quam habent cives in patria, alia mediastina, quam habuerunt Adam et Apostolus.” P1:113va = P2: 334rb. The *titulus* of the chapter in P1 fol. 113vab: AN PAULUS RAPTUS FUERAT IN CORPORE AUT IN ANIMA, in P2 fol. 334rv: QUERITUR DE RAPTO PAULI.

⁷⁰⁶ Martinus, *Summa*: “[P1:113vb] Alii dicunt quod apostolus hac forma verborum, ‘nescio an in corpore an extra corpus’ non est usus dubitando sed potius intelligendo quandam mirabilem et inauditum modum visionis; dubietas enim illa est media [P2: modica] inter esse in corpore et extra corpus, quia hoc vidit [P2:334va] quadam mediastina visione inter enigmaticam et presentariam. Nec tunc erat viator nec civis, nec in via nec in patria erat secundum eorum responsum. Dicunt etiam quod tunc non cognoscebat deum quomodo cognoscere vianum est, id est coniecturis noscere, non comprehendebat deum, quod est triumphantium; nec fuit tunc in tertio ordine angelorum: sed dicitur hoc quadam similitudine quia sicut superiores angeli planius et vicinus contemplantur deum quam inferiores, ita Paulus visione illa plenius videbat deum quam aliquis hominum.”

⁷⁰⁷ Comestor, *Quaestio 311*: “Numquid erat tunc Adam in via? Duobus modis dicitur esse in via [...] Adam in neutra harum viarum erat ante peccatum [...] at tamen nec in patria.” *Quaestiones Magistri Odonis Suessionensis*, 179; cf. Peter of Poitiers, *Sent.* II, ix, 33: “Sed Adam tunc non erat in via, neque in patria.” PL 211: 970B.

⁷⁰⁸ Stephen wrote *Quaestiones*, Biblical commentaries (he commented on Lombard’s *Collectanea*), an (already quoted) commentary on the *Sentences*, sermons (ranging from ca. three to five hundred in number), a gloss on the *Historica Scholastica*, and also made a new chapter division of the Bible. For Stephen, see David E. Luscombe, art. “Stephen Langton,” TRE: 157-160; Phyllis Barzillay Roberts, *Stephanus de Lingua-Tonante. Studies in the Sermons of Stephen Langton* (Toronto: PIMS, 1968); F.M Powicke, *Stephen Langton* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1928). Concerning Stephen’s philology, see Louis Antl, “An Introduction to the *Quaestiones theologiae* of Stephen Langton,” *Franciscan Studies* 12

activity; the consensual dating for his works, 1200-1206, shall be regarded as the date when his writings (or *reportationes* of his students) were set down in collections. Among his contemporaries, Stephen mobilised the most complex theory and terminology to interpret and reinterpret the term *visio mediastina*. His positions can be collected from his theological questions (*Quaestiones*) and from his commentary, the *Postille super secundam epistolam ad Corinthios*.⁷⁰⁹

The manuscripts of the *Quaestiones* can give, beyond Stephen's position on Paul's rapture, a unique and direct insight into the school milieu. The *Quaestiones* are unredacted records of classroom disputes where the students pose various questions to the master who must answer them. Some of these questions arise from mere curiosity, some of them border on dialectical musings, and others aim to corner the teacher and try to lead him to a contradiction or impossible conclusion. The students' questions are of the following nature: Was Paul caught up in the body or out of the body? Why is Paul said only to be "caught up" (*raptus*) instead of "assumed" like the Virgin Mary? Was his vision imaginary or intellectual vision? If the soul was not caught up locally, why is Paul said to be enraptured into the third order of the angels instead of the first? and so on; one of the questions even argues sophistically that Paul was lying and he indeed knew if he was taken up in the body or outside the body.⁷¹⁰ The questions asked are largely oriented by the textbook. They also clearly show that the theoretical background of Langton's students was only a general theological education and the text of the *Collectanea* (and perhaps the *Glossa*), without any particular philosophical (or epistemological) education beyond a general practical knowledge of *dialectica*.

Framing Paul's rapture, Stephen used many doctrines commonly held in the period. Such a doctrine was that both Paul and Adam had a "middle cognition" (*media cognitio*, *media comprehensio*) between faith and the vision of the Blessed (*comprehensio*), and that Paul was neither a real *comprehensor* nor a real *viator*.⁷¹¹ Stephen also accepts the amended Augustinian doctrine: there are three visions (corporeal, imaginary and intellectual), and intellectual vision embraces a *visio enigmatica*, a *visio mediastina* and *comprehensio*. What is remarkable in his case is his attention to the different modes of cognition (cognition by faith and *comprehensio*) in Paul's rapture – which leads to the reevaluation of the meaning of *media cognitio*. Stephen often states that Paul's cognition was not a real comprehension (as that is reserved for the Blessed) and it does not exclude faith either; Paul was not part *viator* and part *comprehensor*, either. To interpret rapture, Stephen redraws the conceptual background behind the accepted terms by distinguishing three states of cognition: one of faith, another for Paul's rapture, and a third one for the Blessed – and Paul's cognition is similar to that of the ordinary faithful. In the interpretation of the term *media cognitio*, Stephen makes an "epistemological turn": he makes *media cognitio* refer not to the subject's status (*status cognitoris*) but to the status of cognition (*status cognitionis*). Due to these changes, *media cognitio* no longer refers to a distinct, third, "middle" cognition (as between faith

(1952): 151-175; George Lacombe and Beryl Smalley, "Studies on the Commentaries of Cardinal Stephen Langton," AHDLM 5 (1930): 5-151 and 152-220; Alys L. Gregory, "Indices of Rubrics and Incipits of the Principal Manuscripts of the Quaestiones of Stephen Langton," AHDLM 5 (1930): 221-266, and Riccardo Quinto, *Doctor Nominatissimus. Stefano Langton († 1228) e la tradizione delle sue opere* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1994) (BGPTM Neue Folge 39).

⁷⁰⁹ Langton's *Quaestiones* is a miscellaneous collection of disputes, existing in eight non-identical manuscripts. These manuscripts present philological problems: not only the sequence of the single questions differs but the questions also contain notable textual variants. There are eight known Mss of the *Quaestiones* forming three families; I had access to two families, one represented by Ms Paris BNF lat. 14556 (= V, xiii, SaintVictor), the other by Mss Paris BNF lat. 16385 (= S, xiii, Sorbonne) and Vat. lat 4297 (= R, xiii); S is of good, V and R are of poor quality. For Stephen's commentary, the *Postille super secundam epistolam ad Corinthios*, I used Ms Paris BNF lat. 14443 fol. 321v-342v (in the Ms Mazarine lat. 268 his commentary breaks and does not extend to the end of the text).

⁷¹⁰ Examples taken from Ms Paris Bibliothèque Nationale lat. 16385 fol. 91rb and lat. 14556 fol. 184vb.

⁷¹¹ Langton, *Quaestiones*, V and R: "So<lutio>. quandam habuit [R: H q] cognitionem mediam inter comprehensionem veram et fidem, et illa non excludit fidem [R om. f], nec fuit verus comprehensor, sed medius inter viatorem et comprehensorem, sicut Adam in primo statu ante peccatum mediam habuit comprehensionem." V fol. 185ra / R fol. 87va. Cf. V fol. 185rb: "Item Paulus habuit comprehensionem non ergo fidem et fuit viator. R<espondeo>. Habuit quandam comprehensionem mediam et forte illa non excluderat fidem sicut Adam in primo statu ante peccatum mediam habuit comprehensionem."

and comprehension), but just to a middle position on a gradual scale.⁷¹² Stephen uses the traditional dichotomies (*via/patria*, *fides/comprehensio*, *viator/comprehensor*) to reject the idea of a *cognitio media* in his commentary on 2Cor. There are two *status* for humans: *viator* and *comprehensor*. There are two ways of cognition: from faith (belonging to *viatores*) or from wisdom or knowledge (belonging to *comprehensores*). Among *viatores* there are the common ones (*purus viator*) and those who “were caught up bodily” ([*viator*] *corpore raptus*) like Paul. The *visio enigmatica* belongs to the common *viator*, and *visio mediastina* to the *raptus*.⁷¹³ In this model based on dichotomies, the dividing line is set between *comprehensio* and *fides*. With this distinction, Stephen wanted to preserve the full autonomy of the Blessed – so that their *status* (*comprehensor*) and their cognition (*comprehensio*) would be utterly different from what earthly men may experience. The *cognitio mediastina*, the equivalent of *visio mediastina*, belongs to the latter – that is, Paul’s cognition was based on faith.

Compared to the other theories involving a *visio mediastina*, Langton’s most important innovation is the elimination of a *cognitio mediastina* as an independent form of cognition: there exists no “middle” between the two forms of cognition, since the “middle” cognition is the same kind as the enigmatic one (*nullum est medium quia mediastina est eiusdem generis cuius et enigmatica*). Besides this conceptual difference, however, the language is also different: Stephen’s key terms are comprehension (versus faith) and cognition, while the terms of Magister Martinus and the Chanter were fullness, vision and immediacy, articulating an immediate but not full cognition.

e) Simon of Tournai, *Disputationes*

The writings of Peter the Chanter, Magister Martinus and Stephen Langton depicted Paul’s cognition in his rapture as some special kind of vision (or cognition). Their precise contemporary Simon of Tournai (d. 1201)⁷¹⁴ devised a different solution. Simon regards Paul’s *raptus* as an Augustinian intellectual vision – but he defines it with categories different from those of other authors, using the dichotomy of *usus/habitus* and two mutually exclusive categories of cognition, faith and “knowledge” (*scientia*). The *habitus* of the *viator* is faith, and the *habitus* of the glorified

⁷¹² Langton, *Quaestiones*, S: “Item in gl<ossa> dicitur quod tres sunt visiones, corporalis, ymaginaria, intellectualis. [...] intellectualis comprehendit tres: enigmaticam que est in via, et comprehensionem que est in patria, et medium quam habuit Paulus. Sed contra, cognitio Pauli media fuit inter cognitionem fidei et comprehensionem, ergo aliquid habuit a cognitione fidei et aliquid de comprehensione; et ita in parte fuit viator, in parte autem comprehensor, quod est impo<ssibile>. R<esponsio>. illa cognitio dicitur ‘media’ non r<espect>u status cognitoris sed cognitionis; t<antu>m enim duo sunt status sed triplex est status cognitionis. Primus fides t<antu>m qui est puri viatoris, qui scilicet cognoscit modo viatoris; et similis ille est quam habuit Paulus in raptu excedens primum modum cognoscendi communem viatoribus. Tercius comprehensionis qui est tantum in patria. Cognitio vero Pauli fuit media ut scilicet [non] esset in medio genere cognitionis, sed media in perfectione, perfectorum [read imperfectorum] enim fuit prima et imperfectorum [read perfectorum] tertia. Et fuit eidem generis cum prima, sed perfectorum [read perfectior], fuit enim cognitio fideique, informata fide.” Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones*, Ms BNF lat. 16385 (= S), fol. 91va.

⁷¹³ Langton, *Postilla super 2Cor*: “Item tres sunt cognitiones, scilicet enigmatica que est viatorum. Comprehensive que est beatorum; mediastina que est in corpore raptorum. Enigmatica est ex fide. Comprehensive ex scientia sive ex sapientia; mediastina ex aliquo medio dono. Dicimus quod nullum est medium quia mediastina est eiusdem generis cuius et enigmatica. Non enim alius est status huius quam illius, licet alius dicatur status puri viatoris quam rapti in corpore, utrumque enim est ex fide. Sed aliud est status et aliud genus comprehensive quam enigmatice, et tamen differentiam ad unguem <nemo> exprimere posset, nisi expertus, licet uterque sit mundicordis. Similiter plenam differentiam inter purum viatorem et in corpore raptum nullus plene assignaret nisi expertus.” Ms Paris BNF lat. 14443 fol. 339ra.

⁷¹⁴ Simon was a student and *reportator* of Odo of Ourscamp / Soissons, then followed him in 1165 as teacher in the school of Notre-Dame. More important works of his are the *Institutiones in sacram paginam* (= *Summa*, c. 1170-1175) and the *Disputationes* (written after the *Summa*), edited by Joseph Warichez as *Les disputationes de Simon de Tournai* (Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1932). For the *Summa*, see Richard Heinzmann’s *Die Institutiones in sacram paginam des Simon von Tournai. Einleitung und Quaestionverzeichnis* (Munich etc.: Schoeningh, 1967); the hitherto known Mss of the *Summa* are Paris BNF lat. 14886 (= A), Paris BNF lat. 3114 (= C) and Paris Arsenal 519 (= B).

soul is “knowledge” (*scientia*, in the sense of *comprehensio*). Paul’s case connects the two separated conditions: in his *raptus*, for a short time, even if he had the *habitus* of faith, he had “use” of “knowledge” (instead of use of faith). This came about through a miraculous working of grace (*habuit usum scientie de Deo miraculose per gratiam*). In this model, from the dichotomy of faith and cognition it follows that Paul must be, in some sense, a *comprehensor*; the function of the *usus/habitus* distinction is to define *in which sense* Paul was a *comprehensor*.⁷¹⁵ A remark of Simon also explains the relation of Paul’s cognition to the eschatological one. The souls after death already have “knowledge” of God, but this cognition will be fuller after the resurrection – in other words, Simon, like many twelfth-century authors, held the two-stage model of eschatology. The same remark also tells us (with a clarity unusual among school theologians) that Paul’s cognition was like that of the souls before resurrection.

Simon’s words draw a model that does not necessitate a special kind of cognition (vision) to explain Paul’s *raptus* (such as *visio mediastina*) but assimilates it in some way to the vision of the Blessed. In the thirteenth century, this model becomes general; William of Auxerre’s *Summa aurea* will give almost precisely the same model (even in eschatology) but with the explicit rejection of the *visio mediastina*.

III. The creation of *raptus* and the elimination of *visio mediastina* (the 1210s to the 1230s)

The Scholastic doctrine about Paul’s rapture as *raptus* was finally elaborated in the 1220s and 1230s. A relatively standard list of the more significant sources, in chronological order, looks like this:⁷¹⁶

- a) William of Auxerre, *De raptu in Deum* in his *Summa aurea* (1215-1220) in critical edition as *Summa aurea* III tract. xxxviii (in earlier editions as *Summa aurea*, tract. xiv);⁷¹⁷
- b) William of Auvergne, *De anima* (1230);⁷¹⁸
- c) Alexander of Hales OFM, (*Quaestio*) *De raptu Pauli* (c. 1220-1236), edited as qu. 68 ‘antequam esset frater’;⁷¹⁹

⁷¹⁵ Disputatio LXXXVIII, qu. II: “Quod secundo quaeritur, an in illo raptu habuit fidem an scientiam, videtur probari quod fidem. Inquit enim auctoritas: *Vivet homo et non videbit me* (Ex 33:20). Ac si dicat: Vivens homo non videbit me. [...] E contra docetur quod scientiam habuit. Inquit enim Apostolus se vidisse *que non licet homini loqui*. Ergo scientiam Trinitatis habuit de Deo: nam si tantum fidem, liceret ei loqui. [...] Reddimus. Credimus Apostolum in illo raptu fidem habuisse habitu, non usu, et scientiam habuisse usu, non habitu: scientia enim habita usu, excludit usum fidei de eodem; et usus fidei excludit usum scientie. Licet enim esset habilis ad credendum constitutus in carne mortali, tamen ad tempus habuit usum scientie de Deo miraculose per gratiam, non quia esset habilis ad sciendum quomodo habilis erit in futuro post resurrectionem. Quod autem dicitur: *Vivet homo et non videbit me*, generaliter dictum est secundum cursum naturae; tamen per miraculum secus est inventum.” *Les disputationes*, ed. Warichez, 253.

⁷¹⁶ The present list is an updated and modified version of von Balthasar’s one. Further, less important or derivative texts are as follows (listed by von Balthasar): Anonymous, *De raptu Pauli*, preserved as qu. 338 in Ms Douai 434/II fol. 12d-13b; Ps.-Alexander Halensis, *De raptu*. Ms Erfurt Amplon. O 68 fol. 132rv, edited in *Magistri Alexandri de Hales OFM Glossa in IV libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi* (4 vols. Quaracchi: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1951-1957), vol. 2: 227-229; Anonymous, *De visione Dei*, preserved in Ms Assisi, Bibl. Comm. 182 fol. 1r.

⁷¹⁷ See *Magistri Guillelmi Altissiodorensis Summa Aurea*, ed. Jean Ribailier, vol. 3, part 2 (Rome and Paris: Rome and Paris: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1986), 698-712.

⁷¹⁸ See *Guillelmi Alverni episcopi parisiensis mathematici perfectissimi, eximii philosophi ac theologi praestantissimi opera omnia* [...] *tomis duobus contenta* (2 vols. Aureliae [Orléans]: F. Hotot et Parisiis: E. Couterot, 1674; reprinted Frankfurt am Main, 1963), vol. 2, Supplementum, 65-228; see also Barbara Faes de Mottoni, “Guglielmo d’Alvernia e l’anima rapta,” in *Autour de Guillaume d’Auvergne* (+1249), ed. Franco Morenzoni and Jean-Yves Tilliette (Turnhout, 2005), 55-74.

⁷¹⁹ Ms Toulouse Bibl. Civit. 737 fol. 102c-104b, edited as *Quaestio LXVIII*, in *Quaestiones disputatae ‘antequam esset frater’ magistri Alexandri Halensis* (3 vols. Quaracchi and Florence, 1960), vol. 3: 1344-1363.

The manuscript Douai, Bibliothèque Municipale (BM) 434⁷²⁰ contains several *de raptu* questions (qu. 230/260, qu. 338, qu. 454, qu. 480; see Wicki, *Die Lehre*, passim) written c. 1225 to c. 1237, of which edited are

d) Hugh of Saint-Cher OP, (*Quaestio*) *De raptu Pauli* (qu. 480);⁷²¹

e) Magister G, (*Quaestio*) *De raptu Pauli*. preserved in two partly identical redactions as qu. 230 and qu. 260.⁷²²

f) the questions of Roland of Cremona OP on *raptus* in his *Summa* III, [qu.] CCCXXXVII-CCCXLII, form practically a topical commentary on the similar section of the *Summa aurea* of William of Auvergne.⁷²³ (Roland's *Summa* is dated both before 1234 and after 1233 by scholars).

To a later period belong Bonaventure's *De raptu* (an interpretative extract, the so-called "brouillon" from Alexander Halensis' question),⁷²⁴ the *Quaestio de raptu* of Albert the Great OP (c. 1246-1252),⁷²⁵ and the *Quaestio de raptu* of Thomas Aquinas OP (1256-1259; it is qu. 13 in the collection entitled *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*).

The present investigation is limited in its scope, focusing on the changes of the theological environment of the concept of *raptus*, and hence it would be pointless to reproduce here the content of these sources, covered already by research literature. Instead, I give here an overview of the most important elements of the conceptual elaborations of *raptus*, then a detailed analysis on all the known early thirteenth-century occurrences of the *visio mediastina*. The analysis will show that, in parallel to the creation of a more and more elaborate theory about *raptus*, the *visio mediastina* was gradually eliminated from Latin theology.

The making of raptus (c. 1215 to c. 1230s)

The *Summa aurea* of William of Auxerre (1215-1220) is the work that created the Scholastic approach to Paul's *raptus*, both in form and content, as it became a reference work for the next few decades. Unlike earlier treatments of the subject, it introduces the well-structured Scholastic *quaestio* format for the discussion.

Interpreting the rapture (already called *raptus*), William partly kept traditional elements: he repeated the four explanations of the *Collectanea*, and also preserved the Augustinian concept of the impediment of body in *raptus*: the Apostle's immediate vision was not as clear as that of the separated souls and angels, due to the impediment of the body (cf. *De Gen. ad litt.* XII, 35, 68).⁷²⁶

⁷²⁰ Questions numbered according to Glorieux.

⁷²¹ Hugh's (*Quaestio*) *De raptu Pauli* and (*Quaestio*) *De prophetia* are preserved in Ms Douai BM 434/ II anonymously, in two redactions: as qu. 480, fol. 130a-132b and 132b-137b (first redaction) and qu. 540, fol. 364-366 (second redaction). See Barbara Faes de Mottoni, "Il ms. Douai, BM 434/II e la questione 480 De raptu," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age* 73 (2006): 165-201

⁷²² Ms Douai BM 434/I fol. 101d and fol. 107a, edited by Barbara Faes de Mottoni, "Il ms. Douai, BM 434/I e le questioni 230 e 260 De raptu," in Stefano Caroti, Ruedi Imbach et al., eds, *Ad Ingenii Acuitionem. Studies in Honour of Alfonso Maierù* (Louvain-la-Neuve, 2006), 103-125.

⁷²³ Edited in *Summae Magistri Rolandi Cremonensis OP liber tercius, editio princeps, curante Aloys. Cortesi* (Bergamo, 1962), 983-1004.

⁷²⁴ Ms Assisi, Bibl. Comm. 186 fol. 14rv, edited by Barbara Faes de Mottoni, "La questione *De raptu* nel ms. Assisi, Biblioteca Comunale, Fondo antico 186". *Arch. verbi* 1 (2004): 67-90.

⁷²⁵ Ms Toulouse Bibl. Civit. 737 fol. 31d-33b, Ms Vat. lat. 781 fol. 14b-16a, edited in *Alberti Magni Quaestiones*, ed. A. Fries, W. Kübel and H. Anzulewicz [= *Alberti Magni Opera Omnia*. Ed. Colon. XXV/2] (Munster, 1993).

⁷²⁶ William, *Summa aurea* III, tract. 37 cap. 2, *solutio*: "Dicimus quod visio Apostoli in raptu fuit comprehensoris et vidit Deum non per speculum, sicut dicit Augustinus; tamen si anima fuit in corpore, quando Apostolus raptus fuit, non potuit ita limpide videre Deum propter impedimenta carnis, sicut vidisset, si esset anima separata a corpore, et si huiusmodi visionem non ita claram vocent magistri mediastinam visionem, bene concedimus in uno casu quod med<i>astine visione vidit Deum, nec de nomine est contendendum." p. 701-702; *ibid.* cap. 4, *solutio*: "Apostolus immediate in illo raptu vidit Deum, sicut dictum est, licet non ita clare sicut vident angeli vel animae separate a corpore," ed. Ribaillier, 709.

Interpreting the vision that Paul had, William rejected the concept of a *visio mediastina* as a third form of vision of God, and positively confirmed that there are only two visions, a mediated vision of *via* and an immediate vision of *patria*. He seems to be the first who uses the authority of 1Cor 13:12 to reject the idea of a *visio mediastina*; this Scriptural authority will later be very common in this function.⁷²⁷

The *Summa aurea* was also the work that introduced epistemology into the discussion of rapture. According to the epistemology of the day, vision demands a *medium* – so Paul must have seen God through a *medium*. William defines *medium* as an image (a likeness) that is identical with its object. The concept is unusual at first sight, but a later text by Alexander of Hales, sharing the same position, makes it understandable as a compromise between the doctrines of Augustine and Gregory the Great. Seeing through an image in rapture is a Gregorian element, while the identical representation in the soul (seen by intellectual vision) is an Augustinian one.⁷²⁸ Later Scholastic theology also preserved the epistemological model of a cognition through a *medium* (even in cases of *immediate* vision, or cognition, of God); the difference consisted only in the definition of what that *medium* was.

Following the *Summa aurea*, in the 1220s and 1230s, a wave of theological works discussed the *raptus*: such are the numerous *De raptu* questions (by Alexander of Hales, Hugh of Saint-Cher and anonymous authors of the manuscript Douai BM 434) and the *summa* of Roland of Cremona, the first Dominican *magister regens* in Paris (1229-1230). A number of issues regarding *raptus* appear first only in this period. Such issues are the reflection on the long-time customary term *raptus* (debating whether the word *raptus* involves violence, and if so in which sense);⁷²⁹ the systematic mapping (and, simultaneously, the conceptual separation) of all possible forms of the cognition of God, clarifying the difference between the “visions” of Paul, the prophets, contemplatives, philosophers, believers, angels, glorified souls and Adam,⁷³⁰ and also the definition of the difference between Adam’s *extasis* or sleep (*sopor*) of Genesis 2:21, Saint John’s *visio* that resulted in the descriptions of the Apocalypse and Paul’s *raptus* (all cases were considered earlier as ecstasies⁷³¹).

The *Summa* of Roland of Cremona OP (1230s) presents further conceptual changes to William’s positions. Roland rejects the idea of an (identical) image as *medium*, and introduces a new concept: seeing God by the mediation of a created light that permeates the mind and makes it able to see God.⁷³² Later in the early 1240s, Albert the Great presents a similar solution to the beatific vision,⁷³³ and the concept (under the name *lumen gloriae*) becomes paradigmatic. Roland’s *Summa* introduces another significant change into the doctrine on rapture by discarding the Augustinian concept of the impediment of body. Roland states that as Paul in his *raptus* did not use

⁷²⁷ William, *Summa aurea* III, tract. 37 cap. 2 [sc]: “Set contra. Aut videbat per speculum, aut non: si per speculum, ergo ad modum viatoris; si non per speculum, ergo facie ad faciem; ergo ad modum comprehensoris; non ergo medio modo videbat, cum nihil sit medium,” ed. Ribaillier, 701.

⁷²⁸ Alexander, qu. 68, [membr. 5], *Quaestiones disputatae ‘antequam esset frater’ magistri Alexandri Halensis* (3 vols. Quaracchi and Florence, 1960), vol. 3, p.1353-1356.

⁷²⁹ See Alexander, qu. 68 [memb. 1], 5 (ed. Quaracchi, 1346); Ms Douai BM 434, qu. 230/260 and qu. 454; Roland of Cremona, *Summa* III, [qu.] CCCXXXVII, 2 (ed. Cortesi, 984); cf. Thomas Aquinas, *De veritate* qu. 13 art. 1.

⁷³⁰ Such catalogues can be found in Ms Douai BM 434 qu. 338, qu. 434, qu. 454 and qu. 480 (Hugh of Saint-Cher) and qu. 68 of Alexander of Hales.

⁷³¹ The problem is discussed in qu. 230 of Ms Douai 434, Alexander’s qu. 68; cf. Thomas Aquinas’ *De veritate* qu. 13 art. 2 arg. 9 and ad 9.

⁷³² Roland, *Summa* III, [qu.] CCCXL, 23: “Dicimus quod Paulus vidit illa secreta celestia sine ymaginibus, sed mediante luce qua fuit suus intellectus perfusus. Et illa lux fuit creata. Et cum illa luce fuerunt impressa quaedam stigmata visibilium archanorum.” *Rolandi Cremonensis OP liber tercius, editio princeps, curante Aloys. Cortesi* (Bergamo, 1962), 996.

⁷³³ On Albert’s doctrine, inspired by his reading of the *Corpus Areopagiticum* and the concept of *theophania*, see Wicki, *Die Lehre*, 154-157, and Bernard McGinn, “Visio Dei. Seeing God in medieval theology and mysticism,” in Jan S. Emerson and Hugh Feiss, eds, *Imaging Heaven in the Middle Ages* (New York and London, 2000), 15-33, here 22-24.

the body as an instrument, his spirit was as free as the separated souls (another element becoming paradigmatic later).⁷³⁴

The dilution of visio mediastina (the 1210s to the 1230s). Five witnesses

Parallel to the gradual conceptual elaboration of *raptus*, by the end of the 1230s at the latest, the concept and the term of a *visio mediastina* had disappeared from Latin theology. The extant sources do not permit us to establish a precise chronology but clearly document two, contemporaneous and contrary tendencies:

- a) the survival of the term *visio media* or *mediastina*, denoting vaguely a “middle” vision (cognition) between the cognition of the Blessed and the *viatores*. This approach reserves an autonomous form of cognition for Paul’s rapture, conceptually different from the two other groups. To this trend belong the *Summa* of Godfrey of Poitiers (1213-1215 or after 1219) and certain anonymous theological questions in Ms Douai Bib. Mun. 434 (c. 1225-1237).
- b) the elimination of the earlier concept of *visio mediastina*, by gradually assimilating Paul’s cognition to that of the Blessed. To this move also belongs the redefinition of the term *visio mediastina*. This tendency is present in the *Summa aurea* of William of Auxerre (1215-1220) and in the *Summa* of Roland of Cremona (early 1230s); it is witnessed also by Gueric of Saint-Quentin OP (d. 1245).

In the long run, it was the second tendency that formed the development of Latin theology. The questions of Ms Douai 434 seem to be the last proponents of *visio mediastina* as a separate form of cognition: the *Summa aurea* of William gives a corrective interpretation of the term, but due to doctrinal changes, the term itself becomes unnecessary. The *Summa* of Roland does not know the precise term (although in the context such knowledge could be expected).⁷³⁵ By the mid-thirteenth century, the concept had been successfully eradicated: the basic insight that Paul’s cognition in rapture took place *medio modo*, different from the one that the Blessed or the *viatores* had, was elaborated using different concepts from that of *visio mediastina*.

1. Godfrey of Poitiers, *Summa*

Godfrey of Poitiers (Gaufridus Pictaviensis, Gaufried, Godefroid) was a student (and possibly a *reportator*) of Stephen Langton⁷³⁶ in Paris; in 1231 he went to Rome with the delegation of William of Auxerre. Although he and William were the closest of contemporaries, they had very different concepts about Paul’s case (and not only because William was a greater theologian). Godfrey includes the Augustinian doctrine about the three heavens in his *summa* (1213-1215 or after 1219).⁷³⁷ He describes Paul’s intellectual vision as “some middle vision,” between the vision of the

⁷³⁴ Roland, *Summa* III, [qu.] CCCXL, 32: “tunc ad horam illam non agravabat corpus illud spiritum Apostoli, nec corrumpebat, quoniam nullo modo tunc utebatur spiritus Apostoli illo corpore tamquam instrumento, sed liber erat spiritus, ac si esset extra corpus. Et quis est ausus qui dicat quod istud non potuerit facere Deus?” ed. Cortesi, 999.

⁷³⁵ It must also be noted that these sources did not have the same authority or popularity: both Godfrey’s *Summa* and the Douai questions are “dead ends”: marginal works, mostly of historical value (the Douai collection is preserved in a single and unique manuscript), while the *Summa aurea* was an authoritative source for Scholastic theology, used in order schools.

⁷³⁶ Dame Smalley mentions the possibility that Ms Paris BNF lat. 14556 (the Langton manuscript “V”) is a *reportatio* by Godfrey’s own hand. Her evaluation of the manuscript does not add much to his reputation: “a poor exemplar, written by a scribe who understood little Latin and perhaps less theology, or who had an inferior text from which to copy” (Smalley, “Studies on the Commentaries,” 162).

⁷³⁷ P. Anciaux dates the *Summa* between 1213 and 1215, “La date du composition de la *Somme* de Godefroid de Poitiers,” RTAM 16 (1949): 165-166. J. Schneider, “Gottfried (Gaufrid) v. Poitiers,” LMA 4: 1604-1605 dates it after 1219.

viatores and the Blessed (*vidit... quadam media visione inter viatorem et comprehensorem*).⁷³⁸ Godfrey's position is rather indefinite if it is compared to the clear concepts of his master Stephen Langton; compared to the position of his contemporary, William of Auxerre, that same position of his is remarkably old-fashioned.

2. *Visio mediastina* in Ms Douai 434: qu. 230/260, qu. 338, qu. 454 (c. 1225-1237)

The Ms Douai Bib. Mun. 434 is a two-volume collection of various theological questions, composed c. 1225-1237 by various authors.⁷³⁹ The collection has special value for the history of theology, being one of the few sources documenting the theological milieu of the 1230s. In the manuscript, most authors are left anonymous or marked with initials only; their identification has only partial results. The codex contains several theological questions on the *raptus* of Paul. These texts were investigated by Nikolaus Wicki (as they also treat the cognition of the Blessed, tangentially); recently Barbara Faes de Mottoni investigated and edited some of the questions related to Paul's *raptus*.⁷⁴⁰

In the codex, *visio mediastina* appears in questions 230, 260, 338 and 454 (Glorieux's numbering); the authors of these questions are unidentified. One of the central problems discussed in these questions is how to define Paul's *raptus* in the dichotomy of *viator/comprehensor* (the typical question being *queritur an in raptu fuit comprehensor*). Using different terminology, these questions essentially describe the same solution: Paul was a *viator*, not a *comprehensor*, but

⁷³⁸ Godfrey of Poitiers, *Summa*, Ms BNF lat. 3143 fol. 54rab: "Item triplex visio apprehenditur in celum. Prima corporalis, secunda imaginaria, tertia spiritualis sive intellectualis. Et notandum quod non omnis corporalis dicitur celum sed illa tantum que aliquid celat sicut visio illa qua vidit Baltasar manum scribentem in pariete 'mane techel phares'. Ymaginaria sicut [54rb] Apocalipsis et visio Ezechiel. Intellectualis fuit visio Apostoli; sed obicitur de hoc quod Paulus dicit videre quod Moyses videre desideravit. Concedatur quod Moyses vidit intellectuali visione si dicuntur et cetera prophete. Ergo vidit sicut Paulus vidit et quod Paulus vidit. Preterea, sustinentur quod anima erat in corpore aut videbat tunc sicut viator aut sicut comprehensor. Si fuit viator ergo non fuit raptus; si dicis comprehensor sed hoc non potest fieri nisi anima in corpore manente; ergo anima non erat tunc in corpore. Preterea, qui magis cognoscit magis diligit sed Paulus magis tunc cognovit quam post ergo magis dilexit quam post. Ergo maiorem et caritatem habuit. Dicimus quod si fuit raptus in corpore; quod non vidit ut viator nec ut comprehensor sed quadam media visione inter viatorem et comprehensorem quali visione Moyses videre desideravit; et quod eidem est adnegato, 'non videbit me homo et vivet'; secundum expositionem 'non videbit sensu humano utens' et procul dubio tunc apostolus non utebatur humano sensu." This section is omitted from BNF lat. 15747, but it can also be found in Ms Avranches 121 fol. 86rv, as the *Catalogue Général des manuscrits latins*, tome IV: 219-233 (Paris: BN, 1958) attests. The way in which Godfrey uses the term "visio spiritualis" for "visio intellectualis" is preceded by Simon of Tournai (*Disputatio LXXXVIII*, quaestio I): "Sunt enim tria genera visionum: corporalis, ymaginaria, spiritualis, Tercia vero hic dicitur tertium celum, ad quam si raptus est Apostolus intellexit archana que non licet homini loqui." *Les disputations*, ed. Warichez, 252-253.

⁷³⁹ For the description of the manuscript, see Palémon Glorieux, "Les 572 Questions du manuscrit de Douai 434," RTAM 10 (1938): 123-152 (description of tome I, dating from here, 123) and 225-267 (description of tome II); Glorieux dates the manuscript c. 1230-1235/1237. See further Odon Lottin, "Quelques 'questiones' de maîtres parisiens aux environs de 1225-1235," RTAM 5 (1933): 78-95; Victorin Doucet, "A travers le Ms. 434 de Douai," *Antonianum* 27 (1952): 531-80. Glorieux in the introduction to *La "Summa Duacensis" (Douai 434)* (Paris: Vrin, 1955), page 11, describes the manuscript: "recueil constitué entre 1228 et 1236." Jean-Pierre Torrel's book contains a detailed literary historical study of the manuscript: *Théorie de la prophétie et philosophie de la connaissance aux environs de 1230. La contribution d'Hugues de Saint-Cher (Ms. Douai 434, Question 481), Edition critique avec introduction et commentaire* (Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense 40, Louvain, 1977), 61-284.

⁷⁴⁰ See Barbara Faes De Mottoni, "Il ms. Douai, BM 434/I e le questioni 230 e 260 De raptu" (containing also a text edition) in *Ad Ingenii Acuitionem. Studies in Honour of Alfonso Maierù*, ed. Stefano Caroti, Ruedi Imbach et al. (Louvain-la-Neuve: Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Etudes Médiévales, 2006), 103-125, and "Il ms. Douai, BM 434/II e la questione 480 De raptu," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age* 73 (2006): 165-201. Partial transcriptions of qu. 230, 260, 338, 454, 480 can be found in Wicki's footnotes. As while working on the dissertation I did not have access to de Mottoni's articles, and so I use everywhere my own transcriptions of the related questions.

temporarily had the cognition of a *comprehensor*.⁷⁴¹ The same solution in other authors, such as William and Roland, replaces or excludes the concept of *visio mediastina* (as a third cognition); in Ms Douai 434 different applications of the term appear, even if with less coherence.

a) Qu. 230 by a “Mag<ister> G” and its variant, qu. 260 has a threefold division for the vision of God (much like the division once reported by Magister Martinus): there is a *visio comprehensoris* of Christ and the Blessed; then a *visio enigmatica* belonging to prophets and contemplatives (!), and finally, a *cognitio* or *visio mediastina*, like the vision of Adam and Paul.⁷⁴² Both Adam and Paul were caught up (*rapti*) and their cognition was supernatural ([*cognitio*] *eorum est supra naturam*); in contrast, both the cognition of the Blessed and the enigmatic cognition of the prophets and the contemplatives remain between the boundaries of their nature (*cognitio in natura*). In this context, the use of *visio mediastina* is not terminological anymore: as far as the elliptical sentences and the corrupted text permit us to conjecture, *visio mediastina* refers only to the supernatural condition of *raptus* shared by Paul and Adam in his sleep. (Here and in the related questions of the Ms, Adam’s *raptus* refers to the Augustinian concept of Adam’s *sopor*; qu. 230/260 sees in this *raptus* an intellectual vision). Hans Urs von Balthasar has a different explanation for the meaning of *visio mediastina* here: in his opinion, the term refers only to the “middle position” of Paul’s vision in rapture, as between the vision of the Blessed and that of the contemplatives: “Die Antwort... teilt die Schauarten in drei Gruppen: 1. Die oberste übersteigt den Raptus: es ist die Schau Christi oder die der Seligen im Himmel. 2. Die unterste erreicht den Raptus nicht, es ist Schauen in natura oder visio aenigmatica.... 3. In der Mitte (visio mediastina) steht die Schau der Entrückung, wie Paulus und Adam sie besaßen.”⁷⁴³ In addition to these examples, in qu. 260 there appears the term *visio media*, but there its meaning is clearly defined by the context – it denotes the “middle one” in the triad of seeing *corporaliter* – *spiritualiter* – *intellectualiter*.⁷⁴⁴ From this triad – based on the Augustinian division of visions outlined in *De Genesi ad litteram* XII – the “middle” vision is the spiritual (that is, imaginary) vision, which may also be called enigmatic vision.

b) Qu. 338 mentions *visio mediastina* in a short reference only, in a similar triad of *visio comprehensiva*, *enigmatica*, *mediastina*. Here *visio enigmatica* pertains not only to the prophets and contemplatives but also to the *activi*. The *visio mediastina* here seems to mean a “middle” cognition, “below” the comprehensive but “above” the intellectual vision.⁷⁴⁵

⁷⁴¹ Qu. 230: “Solutio. Secundum modum comprehensoris apostolus non fuit comprehensor, habuit malum et viator fuit, sed in suo raptu malum viatoris non habuit.” Cf. qu. 260: “Solutio. Tantum modum comprehensoris habuit, sed erat viator, non tamen habuit modum viatoris.” and qu. 338: “R<esponsio>. non erat comprehensor apostolus sed viator, non tamen vidit ut viator sed ut comprehensor et modum habuit comprehensoris; ita in videndo fuit comprehendens non comprehensor, et modum habuit comprehensoris, et ita videndo fuit comprehendens non comprehensor [...]”

⁷⁴² Qu. 230: “Solutio. Secundum modum comprehensoris apostolus non fuit comprehensor, habuit malum et viator fuit, sed in suo raptu malum viatoris non habuit. Unde dicendum quod videre deum contingit tripliciter. Aut sicut Christus vidit et anima glorificata, et sic supra omnem visionem est raptus, et talis est comprehensoris; aut est visio enigmatica, et talis est quod prophetarum et contemplantium; et est visio mediastina, ut visio Ade et Pauli. Primi non sunt rapti s<imiliter> nec secundi quia eorum cognitio est in n<atur>a; tercia sunt rapti quia eorum est supra naturam.” Ms Douai 434/I fol. 102ra.

⁷⁴³ See [Hans] Urs von Balthasar’s commentary on Aquinas’ *Summa theologiae* II-II qu. 175: “Die Entrückung (Fr. 175),” in *Thomas von Aquin. Besondere Gnadengaben und die zwei Wege menschlichen Lebens*, kommentiert von Urs von Balthasar. II-II, 171-182 (Heidelberg – Munich / Graz et al: F.H. Kerle / Anton Pustet, 1954) (Die Deutsche Thomas-Ausgabe 23), 372-410, here 382. Von Balthasar’s words refer here to “Douai 434 I 101d” – that is, qu. 230.

⁷⁴⁴ Qu. 260: “Item Moyses vidit deum corporaliter, petiit et videre spiritualiter vel intellectualiter. Super Ysa. ‘vidi dominum sedentem’ etc. Glosa, cum hoc fuerit negatum Moysi, Paulus hac visione non vidit. Contra, si vidit sic, erat comprehensor et ita evacuata fuit fides in eo. Solutio: media visione, scilicet enigmatica vidit et Moyses simili visione vidit sed non eadem.” Ms Douai 434/I fol. 107ra.

⁷⁴⁵ “Nota quod .vii. sunt gradus sed tres hic distinguuntur: unus est status glorificatorum, similiter status Christi unus est; in hoc statu visio comprehensiva, et est supra omnem raptus. Alia est enigmatica ut activorum, prophetarum

It is hard to draw any further conclusions from the text of qu. 230/260 and qu. 338. Even if their terminology is similar, it does not outline one coherent system behind it. While qu. 230 and 260 call Adam's vision both intellectual vision and *mediastina visio*, qu. 338 distinguishes these two visions (*mediastina... supra intellectualem*). Even if the *enigmatica visio* attributed to prophets and contemplatives (qu. 230/260) could be interpreted as an Augustinian imaginary vision, the inclusion of *activi* in it (by qu. 338) makes this explanation untenable.

c) Qu. 454, like qu. 230/260, applies *visio mediastina* to the *raptus*. But neither here means the term a separate way of cognition – it is applied to *raptus* because that has features belonging both to *via* and to *patria*. Only the features belonging to *via* are explained: these are the original sin, the corruptibility of the body and the faith residing in Paul's soul during *raptus*.⁷⁴⁶

In sum, the way in which the texts of Ms. Douai 434 use the term *visio mediastina* do not reflect one single concept behind the word. What seems to be their common element is that *visio mediastina* refers primarily the cognition acquired in rapture, in the cases of Paul and Adam. Another common element is (in the case of qu. 230, 260 and 338) the fact that the etymology of the term *mediastina* derives from a hierarchy of the visions, where the cognition by rapture is “in the middle” – that is, “below” the vision of the Blessed but “above” that of the believers, contemplatives and prophets. Qu. 454 offers another etymological explanation.

3. William of Auxerre, *Summa aurea*

Investigating Paul's *raptus*, William asks the question whether Paul's vision was one of the Blessed or one of the *viatores* (*Utrum visio, quam habuit in raptu fuit comprehensoris vel viatoris*).⁷⁴⁷ The solution, justified by 1Cor 13:12, is based on the traditional duality. God can be seen only in two ways, argues William: either through a mirror (*per speculum*) or immediately (*facie ad faciem*). As the possible kinds of vision are reduced to the dichotomy of *facie ad faciem* and *per speculum*, and the immediate vision is equated with the vision of the Blessed (*visio comprehensoris*), there remains no room for a third vision (*visio mediastina*). William is aware of the term; he even quotes “certain masters” about the term (whose definition is similar to later twelfth-century ones): *Et dicunt quidam magistri quod medio modo se habuit, quoniam nec ita limpida fuit sicut est visio comprehensoris, nec ita enigmatica sicut visio viatoris*.

Although William discarded the concept of *visio mediastina*, he still attempted to save the term by assigning a new, acceptable meaning to it. According to Augustine's eschatology, the disembodied soul cannot turn its full attention towards God, because it still has an unfulfilled intention towards the body. William teaches that this diverting intention, the *impedimentum carnis*, was present in Paul's rapture: although Paul saw God immediately and *facie ad faciem*, his vision

quorundam et contemplativorum. Alia in medio mediastina infra comprehensivam supra intellectualem.” Qu. 338. Ms. Douai 434/II fol. 12vb.

⁷⁴⁶ Qu. 454: “Ad aliud dicendum quod visio Pauli mediastina dicitur, et bene. Unde quedam communicat que pertinent ad statum vie, quedam ad statum patrie. Ad statum vie ex parte corporis peccatum, carnis corruptibilitas que erat in ipso, et fides ex parte anime que fuit manens in anima Pauli etiam in raptu.” Ms. Douai 434/II fol. 96ra.

⁷⁴⁷ William, *Summa aurea* III tract. 37 cap. 2: “Circa secundum capitulum queritur utrum visio, quam habuit Apostolus in raptu fuit comprehensoris vel viatoris. Et dicunt quidam magistri quod medio modo se habuit, quoniam nec ita limpida fuit sicut est visio comprehensoris, nec ita enigmatica sicut visio viatoris. Set contra. Aut videbat per speculum, aut non; si per speculum, ergo ad modum viatoris; si non per speculum, ergo facie ad faciem; ergo ad modum comprehensoris; non ergo medio modo videbat, cum nichil sit medium. [...] Solutio. Dicimus quod visio Apostoli in raptu fuit comprehensoris et vidit Deum non per speculum, sicut dicit Augustinus; tamen si anima fuit in corpore, quando Apostolus raptus fuit, non potuit ita limpide videre Deum propter impedimenta carnis, sicut vidisset, si esset anima separata a corpore; et si huiusmodi visionem non ita claram vocent magistri ‘mediastinam visionem,’ bene concedimus in uno casu quod mediastina visione vidit Deum, nec de nomine est contendendum. Sed tamen facie ad faciem vidit Deum, quoniam huiusmodi visio bene recipit magis et minus.” *Magistri Guillelmi Altissiodorensis Summa Aurea*, ed. Jean Ribaillier (Rome and Paris: Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1980-1987), here *Liber tercius tomus II*, 701-702.

was not entirely clear, due to that *impedimentum*. This direct but not entirely clear vision of God is what William named *visio mediastina*.⁷⁴⁸ In this way, William turned the unusual term, once referring to a “third” kind of vision, into the name of a traditional Augustinian concept.

4. Roland of Cremona OP, *Summa*

Shaping Paul’s *raptus*, Roland of Cremona, the first Dominican *magister regens* at the University of Paris, follows William’s *Summa aurea* but goes a step further.⁷⁴⁹ The *Summa* of Roland (written perhaps in the early 1230s) first follows William of Auxerre, stating that the cognition of Paul could have been either a *visio viatoris* (*per fidem*) or a *comprehensoris* (*per speciem*), and it was a *visio comprehensoris*. Like William, Roland also remembers that certain theologians (*quidam magistri*) wanted to state that Paul’s vision took place “in a middle way,” as it was neither as clear as that of the Blessed nor as obscure as that of the *viatores*. The way in which Roland rejects the possibility of a “middle” way of vision also follows William’s argumentation: there are only two ways of vision, *facie ad faciem* or *per speculum in aenigmate*, so there is no room for any third, “middle” way.⁷⁵⁰ Although Roland reiterates William’s arguments, one thing is already missing: he does not use the specific term (*visio*) *mediastina*, only the more vague expression *medio modo* – therefore both the original concept and the term denoting it disappear. But beyond the concept of *visio mediastina*, Roland eliminates even an element of the *raptus* itself: the *impedimentum carnis*, the soul’s intention towards the body. Without any further argumentation, Roland declares the following: in the *raptus*, Paul’s soul was not in any way intended towards the body, and he saw God in such an excellent way as if he was out of the body.⁷⁵¹ With this move, Roland not only departs from William of Auxerre: he overwrites the entire tradition of Patristic eschatology created by Augustine and shared by, among many others, Bernard of Clairvaux and Hugh of Saint-Victor. In this tradition, the intention towards the body lasts until the corporeal resurrection, when the vision of God becomes full. Roland’s conception of Paul’s *raptus* implies a different eschatology: the full vision of God is granted to the Blessed after their corporeal death, whether or not they have a glorified body. This model of eschatology will be characteristic of such mid-thirteenth-century theologians as Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure.

⁷⁴⁸ “et si huiusmodi visionem non ita claram vocent magistri ‘mediastinam visionem,’ bene concedimus.” *Summa Aurea*, ed. Ribaillier, 702.

⁷⁴⁹ Roland (d. 1259) was regent in 1229-1230. His work (called *Summa*, *Quaestiones in libros Sententiarum* but also *Summa theologica* and *Liber questionum*) presents philological and dating problems. According to Lottin, it was written after 1233, while Cremascoli dates it before 1234; see O. Lottin, “Roland de Cremona et Hugues de S. Cher,” *RTAM* 12 (1940): 136-143 and Cremascoli, “La ‘Summa’ di Rolando di Cremona. Il testo del Prologo,” *Studi Medievali* 3a Serie 16 (1975): 825-876 (text edition: 858-876). The status of the text is problematic: the single copy of the *Summa* including its fourth book, Ms Paris Mazarine lat. 795, gives only selections of the four books. From the *Summa* of Roland only the third book and the prologue of the first book have been edited: *Summae Magistri Rolandi Cremonensis OP liber tercius, editio princeps, curante Aloys. Cortesi* (Bergamo: Monumenta Bergomensia, 1962) and G. Cremascoli’s article above.

⁷⁵⁰ Roland: “Consequenter queritur utrum illa visio quam habuit Paulus fuit viatoris, aut comprehensoris, is est utrum fuit per fidem, aut fuit per speciem [...]. 1) Et volunt quidam magistri dicere quod medio modo fuit, quoniam nec fuit ita limpida sicut illa que est comprehensoris, nec fuit ita obscura sicut illa visio que est viatoris. 2) Sed illa nulla videtur solutio, quia sancti non dicunt quod videamus Deum nisi istis duobus modis, scilicet per fidem, aut per speciem; ergo illa visio fuit altero illorum modorum; non ergo fuit medio modo. Item contra, ut dicunt magistri, aut videbat per speculum in enigmate, aut fatie ad fatiem, quoniam secundum eos non plures sunt modi, et quodcumque illorum detur, habetur contrarium illius opinionis.” *Summa* III, CCCXXXIX, 1-2. Ed. Cortesi, 987.

⁷⁵¹ “Ad ea que quaesita sunt dicunt magistri alii quod visio illa Apostoli fuit fatie ad fatiem [...] verumtamen si anima fuit in carne in illa visione, non potuit ita limpide videre Deum fatie ad fatiem sicut si vidisset Deum extra corpus. Ita dicunt. Sed istud non videtur quod debeat addi, quoniam non erat tunc anima aliquo modo intenta corpori, ergo ita perfecte videbat Deum sicut si fuisset extra corpus. Quod videtur esse concedendum, quoniam in illa visione sic assumpta fuit anima ut nullo modo carne impediretur, quoniam corpus potest ita vegetari quod nullo modo anima erit intenta corpori secundum quod ipsa intelligit.” *Summa* III, CCCXXXIX, 7. Ed. Cortesi, 989.

5. Guerric of Saint-Quentin OP, *Postilla in 2Cor*

Guerric of Saint-Quentin OP (Guerricus de S. Quintino, d. 1245) was an early Dominican master of theology in Paris c. 1233-1242. A passage of his unedited *Postilla in 2Cor* may illustrate how (and why) the concept of *visio mediastina* disappeared from theological discussions.⁷⁵² Commenting on 2Cor 12:4, the lemma on Paul's rapture, Guerric utilises a variant of the third interpretation of the *Collectanea*: "being caught up into the third heaven" means seeing God as the highest order of the angelic hierarchy, the Seraphim, see God.⁷⁵³ From this interpretation he derives the conclusion that Paul's vision could not have been a *mediastina visio* (because he saw God as the Seraphim do). The impossibility of such a "middle" vision is, then, confirmed by the exclusive dichotomy of *comprehensor/viator*:

Raptus ergo dicitur ad tertium celum ut videret illo modo quo cheraphi<n> [*read* seraphim] vident ex quo patet quod non vidit mediastina visione; quod etiam patet quia non est status medius inter comprehensoris et viatoris q<ualite>r nec cognitio media: licet a<postolus> videret immediate si tunc anima erat in corpore non vidit ita limpide ac si esset extra, ut dic<it> magist<e>r Will<elmus>. Et si hoc appelletur 'mediastina visio', potest concedi quod vidit mediastina visione; sed si non vidit ita limpide ac si esset extra, non vidit ita limpide sicut ceraphi<n> [*read* seraphim], qui omnino separat<ur> a m<ateri>a et materialibus et si hoc, non fuit raptus ad tertium celum, ut scilicet videret sicut cheraphin [*read* seraphim].

[Therefore he is said to be caught up to the third heaven in order that he can see in that way in which the Seraphim see; from (this) it is obvious that he has not seen by means of a middle vision (*visio mediastina*). This is also obvious because there is no middle state between the (states) of *comprehensor* and *viator*, just as there is no middle cognition either; although the Apostle saw (God) immediately, if (his) soul was in the body, he saw not as clearly as if it were outside (the body), as Master William (of Auxerre) said. And if this is called "middle vision," it can be accepted that he saw by means of a "middle vision": but if he saw not as clearly as if (the soul) were outside, then he saw not as clearly as the Seraphim who are entirely detached from the matter and the material things, and if it is so, he was not caught up to the third heaven, namely, in order to see as the Seraphim see.]

Guerric was schooled in a tradition where *visio mediastina* was not a valid concept at all – therefore, from our historical point of view, he has a reverse logic when commenting on the *locus*. The Seraphic vision attributed to Paul (a notion based ultimately on the *Collectanea*'s authority) postulates the clearness of the vision in *raptus*, without the body's obscuring effect – therefore, if that obscured vision is called *visio mediastina*, Paul did not see God *mediastina visione*. This also means the implicit rejection of William's position.

⁷⁵² See *Postilla in 2Cor* (inc. *Fortis in bello, Ihesus Nave successor Moysi in prophetis qui fuit magnus*), BNF lat. 15604 fol. 48ra-62vb; transcript from fol. 60vb. For Guerric, see Kaeppli n.1361-1396; he wrote sermons (BNF NAL 1470), *quaestiones disputatae* (BNF lat. 16417 fol. 25-68, irrelevant for the present study), quodlibets (Maz. lat. 155, Vat. lat. 4245 [both irrelevant]), postilles and commentaries (on *Cant, Prov, Sap, Apoc*), some questions about the *Sentences* (BNF lat. 15571 fol. 109r-125v, 15610 fol. 243v-246r [both irrelevant, the latter mostly on the sacraments], 16417 fol. 25r-65v ["incommunicable" hence inaccessible in winter 2005/2006], BNF NAL 1470).

⁷⁵³ Guerric, *Postilla in 2Cor*: "Quantum vero ad modum videndi, primum celum est videre sicut angeli prime Ierarchie. Secundum vero celum est videre sicut angeli secunde. Tertium vero est videre sicut angeli tertie. Vel magis primum celum est videre sicut primus ordo tertie ierarchie, secundum celum est videre sicut secundus ordo, tertium celum est videre sicut tertius ordo eiusdem. Et hec est .IIIIta. expositio." BNF lat. 15604 fol. 60vb.

Consequences of the development

While creating new concepts, the Scholastic doctrinal development discarded a number of old ones. Victorine theories (including the ones on contemplation) were formulated by twelfth-century concepts themselves, but the *visio mediastina* (and even the two-stage model of eschatology) was also one of them. Thirteenth-century theologians focused on the continuity with the previous periods; here we may focus on the discontinuity and its consequences.

a) Eschatology and spirituality

There was one important Augustinian element that was abandoned by Scholastic theology: the impediment of the body – and this deliberate omission created substantial differences between twelfth-century theologies and the thirteenth-century Scholastic theology. According to the new doctrine, the Blessed, like Paul as well, do see God's essence immediately after death, without any difference caused by the mind's demand for the body. The omission of the impediment of the body rendered the concept of the two-stage eschatology (which was based on the notion of impediment) unnecessary and obsolete. The two-stage model was a common element in many twelfth-century works, written by monastic or school theologians. Now these works became partly invalidated.

The change in eschatology had consequences for spirituality as well. In the earlier two-stage eschatology, the first stage means a special state when the disembodied souls do see God (even before resurrection) but cannot enjoy the full vision of God without the glorified body. For twelfth-century authors, this eschatological state might have been the closest category to contemplative ecstasy and Paul's rapture. Although this similarity (or even identification) was only rarely made explicit, and was not expounded in detail, we may have a few affirmative illustrations. Hugh of Saint-Victor described contemplative ecstasy in terms similar to the first stage; describing contemplative ecstasy Bernard of Clairvaux hesitated, because the extinguishing of the desire for the body is ultimately reserved for the glorified state, although the *unitas spiritus* is the peak of ecstasy;⁷⁵⁴ in the school's world, Simon of Tournai identified Paul's vision with the vision in the first stage of the two-stage model.

Both the two-stage model of eschatology and the *visio mediastina* described a particular structure with a "tertium": an intermediary form of cognition that is equally different from the common cognition of the (fallen) condition and from the full cognition of God. Discarding these concepts substantially narrowed the interpretative framework: those earlier theories that juxtaposed the prelapsarian Adam and the enraptured Paul, or conceived contemplative experience as similar to the first stage of eschatology, now became unintelligible, simply because, conceptually, there no longer existed the "third" category. A vision conceived as an obscure (or not full) but immediate vision of God is unthinkable in the existing conceptual framework: Paul's rapture became a variant of the immediate (eschatological) vision of God; Adam's vision turned into a mediated vision.

The same change, ultimately, led to a general confusion in the modern perception of twelfth-century mysticism as well. According to the doctrines valid since the early thirteenth century, God can be seen only either face to face or through a mirror. All modern scholars asking whether Richard of Saint-Victor or Bernard of Clairvaux attributed a face-to-face or *per essentiam* vision of God to contemplatives move on a trajectory defined by the early thirteenth-century doctrinal developments, forcing the interpretation of earlier theories according to the rules of a substantially different, later, mindset.

b) Victorine *excessus mentis* or Scholastic *raptus*?

⁷⁵⁴ See *De diligendo Deo* X. 29, XI. 30, XIV. 39.

The Victorine concept of Paul's rapture (as Richard and Achard presented it) was a complex one that connected several elements. It was a theory about earthly contemplation, expressed by the imagery of Paul's rapture. Paul's rapture was a historical reality for Richard and Achard (as it was for everyone else), but they also considered it as a *typos* prefiguring the reality of the contemplative ecstasy (unlike anyone else). In addition, due to their particular anthropology, they considered such ecstasy as an event possible in this life. Both authors regarded the cognition acquired in such ecstasy (*excessus mentis*) as a direct, intellectual cognition that surpasses the level of both reason and creatures; using a visual metaphor for cognition, they speak about an immediate vision of the Truth (Richard) or God (Achard). In sum, for these authors contemplation, rapture, ecstasy, and possible personal spiritual experiences (including an immediate, direct and not mediated cognition of God) were all gathered and connected in Paul's rapture. For them, Paul's rapture was typological: it was a pattern that the individual's experience does realise again and again.

Scholastic theologians of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries interpreted the rapture narrative in a substantially different way. For them, Paul's rapture was primarily a historical and miraculous case: it was considered as an intellectual vision of God – but it was not considered as a possible spiritual experience. In this tradition, Paul's rapture cannot be called “contemplation,” since in this context that term implies a mediated cognition (that is, the exact opposite of the immediate vision attributed to Paul). *Raptus* can be even less the paradigm for the possible ecstatic experiences: both Augustine and the later Scholastic doctrines based on him emphasised the extraordinary character of Paul's rapture. In the ultimate phase of Scholastic development, *raptus* was conceived as something substantially different from (even the opposite of) contemplation: a merely theoretical possibility, constantly exemplified with the unique example of Paul. Perhaps the most telling difference between the Victorine and the Scholastic approaches is the way in which the terms “natural” and “nature” appear in the context of Paul's rapture. For thirteenth-century Scholastic authors (taking the classical example of Thomas Aquinas), the cognition that Paul had in rapture was essentially non-natural, or supranatural, occurring against nature, because the “natural” cognition of God takes place in *via* through the mediation of the creatures.⁷⁵⁵ For Richard, the contemplative ecstasy of Paul was natural, as he called the cognition of invisible realities natural – without the classification of the term.

The development of the Scholastic concepts, even in their early stages, was independent of the Victorine doctrines. Victorine theology, in this respect, is a collective name for more or less similar theological doctrines of individuals – but these individuals did not form, in the literary sense, a school tradition comparable to the real school of Notre-Dame or the University. It is a structural analogy at best that can be observed between the *visio mediastina* (attributed to both Adam and Paul), the first stage of the two-stage model of eschatology, and the Victorine descriptions of ecstatic contemplation (by Hugh, Richard and Achard) – but this structural analogy was unknown to later Scholastic theology, after the *visio mediastina* and the two-stage eschatology have disappeared. The vision of God granted to Paul and Adam was considered by Victorines as *contemplatio*, and the school tradition considered it (for a short period) as *visio mediastina*, but later, in the course of Scholastic doctrinal development, Paul's vision of God was assimilated to the eschatological vision, and Adam's vision to the ordinary forms of cognition possible in this life.

c) New directions of spirituality

⁷⁵⁵ Aquinas, Qu. 13 de veritate, art. 1 ad 1: “Sic igitur dicendum est, quod intelligentiae humanae secundum quemlibet statum est naturale aliquo modo cognoscere Deum; sed in sui principio, scilicet in statu viae, est naturale ei quod cognoscat Deum per creaturas sensibiles. Est autem ei naturale quod perveniat ad cognoscendum Deum per seipsum in sui consummatione, id est in statu patriae. Et sic si in statu viae elevetur ad hoc quod cognoscat Deum secundum statum patriae, hoc erit contra naturam, sicut esset contra naturam quod puer mox natus haberet barbam.” For Richard's position, see Part II, Chapter 2.

The doctrinal developments of Scholastic theology – the interpretation of 1Cor 13:12, and the elimination of the two-stage eschatology and of the *visio mediastina* – defined the limits and the possible place of spirituality (or “mysticism”) with a new clarity and exactitude – in a negative way. Seeing God face to face is impossible in this life (as that will be the reward of the Blessed); the *raptus*, which is indeed a face-to-face vision of God (considered by definition as being “not in this life”) is not a real possibility. Contemplating God is a possible way of cognition – but contemplation means a mediated vision only. Those thirteenth-century theologians who insisted on the possibility of an immediate cognition of God in this life had to accommodate their theories to these already given principles. It was a difficult task: the immediate vision of God in this life was theoretically possible only in *raptus* – but *raptus* was conceived then as an extraordinary, miraculous event, which therefore could not be a pattern.

The problem was resolved by finding a new authority on the issue – the *Mystical Theology* of Dionysius the Areopagite. The central notion of the treatise is the “mystical union,” an ecstatic and supra-intellectual union with God, a cognition by unknowing, portrayed as an attainable goal in this life. This notion fitted admirably into the narrow frame that Scholastic theology left for an immediate cognition of God: it granted immediacy (by the union itself); it infringed neither the face-to-face vision of God (being conceived as non-vision) nor the ultimate intellectual cognition of God promised to the Blessed (being conceived as a cognition by unknowing). This model entered Latin theology in various forms: Thomas Gallus (d. 1246) in his pioneering Areopagitic works (written 1224 to 1244) conceived it as a union by an affective and cognitive faculty independent of the intellect (called *synderesis* or *apex affectus*); later, in the 1240s, Albert the Great (d. 1280) elaborated an intellectual and non-affective interpretation of it.⁷⁵⁶ From the second half of the century, the Areopagitic mystical union became a legitimate (and even self-evident) paradigm of spirituality (see Part III Chapter III).

This development also confirmed the separation of *raptus* and the possible spiritual experiences. While *raptus* was considered as ecstatic, extraordinary and miraculous (constantly exemplified with Paul’s rapture), and contemplation was regarded as something ordinary and limited, the new concept of a mystical union offered an accessible alternative – an ecstatic and immediate cognition of God, possible and desirable in this life.⁷⁵⁷ The conceptual refinement also affected the spiritual language and imagery. Being “enraptured like Paul” or “caught up into the third heaven” (which were not uncommon terms for twelfth-century authors to denote contemplative ecstasy) could now refer only to *raptus*. Such references to Paul’s rapture became inadequate expressions for ecstatic cognition of God in this life, while “entering the shining cloud” or “darkness” (*caligo*) like Moses (expressions taken from the *Mystical Theology*) became common ones.

Conclusion

The present chapter gave an overview of the doctrinal developments concerning the interpretation of the rapture narrative of Saint Paul (2Cor 2-4). As Part II demonstrated, Paul’s rapture was for Richard and Achard the paradigm of contemplative ecstasy. Victorine theories on Paul’s rapture were never alternatives to the Scholastic doctrines on the same issue: but to demonstrate the way in which Victorine theories became conceptually unintelligible, a historical outline presenting the development of the authoritative doctrine was necessary.

⁷⁵⁶ For Thomas Gallus, see Part III, Chapter III; on Albert, see William J. Hoye, “Mystische Theologie nach Albert dem Grossen,” in *Albertus Magnus. Zum Gedenken nach 800 Jahren*, ed. Walther Senner (Berlin, 2001), 586-603.

⁷⁵⁷ See Bonaventure on the union, *In II Sent.* dist. 23 art. 2 qu. 3 [ad] 6: “Haec enim [cognitio] est in qua mirabiliter inflammatur affectio [...]. Hunc modum cognoscendi arbitror cuilibet viro justo in via ista esse quaerendum; quodsi Deus aliquid ultra faciet, hoc privilegium est speciale, non legis communis.” *Doctoris seraphici S. Bonaventurae S.R.E. episcopi cardinalis Opera omnia*, tom. 2 (Ad Claras Aquas [Quaracchi], 1885), 546.

For theoretical reasons, our study has focused not on the early thirteenth-century development of *raptus*, the ultimate doctrinal interpretation of the rapture narrative, but on the history of *visio medi(astin)a*. This latter was an earlier concept, which served as the appropriate theological term describing Paul's cognition in his rapture. The *visio medi(astin)a* demands attention for several reasons. It was a late twelfth-century concept, contemporaneous with the later Victorine school, and was (like the Victorine concepts too) an attempt to interpret Paul's rapture. Since it was later superseded (and eradicated) by *raptus*, its history can also illustrate the process whereby earlier concepts became unintelligible or rejected due to incompatibility with later concepts.

The Scholastic interpretation of the rapture narrative began with Peter Lombard's commentary, the *Collectanea*, compiled from Patristic and monastic interpretations of the passage. Peter's work became soon insufficient, and theologians started the conceptual formulation of the rapture in their own way. The idea of a *visio mediastina* appears first around c. 1160-1165 (*Ps.-Poitiers Gloss*): it denoted a concept of a third, "middle" form of cognition "between" those of *via* and *patria*; this form of cognition was attributed to Adam and to Saint Paul in his rapture. Four more witnesses were investigated (Peter the Chanter, *Postilla super 2Cor.*; Magister Martinus, *Summa*; Stephen Langton, *Quaestiones* and *Postilla super 2Cor.* and Simon of Tournai, *Disputationes*); they show that the term kept this meaning until the very late twelfth century.

These sources present the most elaborate and the most original late twelfth-century theories on Paul's rapture. They attest that "rapture" then meant primarily and mostly a theoretical problem of theological classification: theologians struggled to address the individual and extraordinary case of Paul with a handful of old categories, varied and modified. Beyond slight differences, these doctrines are all of the same mould. Their most characteristic common trait is that they were founded on the exegesis of 2Cor 2-4 and they basically discussed the concrete case of Paul's rapture (and not *raptus* as such). Contrary to the monastic exegetical practice, the Biblical account in the schools was never read as an account of *excessus mentis*, that is, as a spiritual experience that can occur to the believer: instead, following a particular set of Augustinian principles (taken only from the *De Gen. ad litt. XII* and *Letter 147* and disregarding other works of Augustine), the rapture narrative was read, instead, as description of an extraordinary miracle. In the context of *raptus*, references to *contemplativi* appear only in the 1220s, in order to make it clear that contemplative experience is not, and cannot be, *raptus*. Theologians before the *Summa aurea* of William of Auxerre (1215-1220) had practically no epistemological theories to describe *raptus*.

After the end of the twelfth century, the concept of *visio mediastina* gradually faded away, while the term itself (already rooted in the theological vocabulary) received different meanings. This process started with Stephen Langton, who denoted with the term a variant of cognition of the *via*: for him, *mediastina* referred to the grade of cognition. Then William of Auxerre's *Summa Aurea* (1215-1220) eliminated the concept, by equating Paul's vision with the vision of the Blessed; however, William kept the term to denote the Augustinian *impedimentum carnis*. Roland of Cremona (in the 1230s) dropped both the concept and the term. The questions of Ms Douai 434, contemporaneous with Roland, show a late usage of the term: it seems to mean a synonym of *raptus* (as in qu. 230 and 260), or denote the twofold nature of the *raptus* (as in qu. 454). After forty years, by the 1240s, Paul's vision of God in his *raptus* had become equated with the vision of the Blessed, as the *visio mediastina* (whose function was to keep separate the earthly vision of God and the eschatological vision) receded.

Many factors led to this result. The conceptual formation of the Scholastic *raptus* was defined by a few ideas taken from Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram XII* and *Letter 147*, sources emphasising the extraordinary and miraculous character of Paul's rapture. This Augustinian attitude, accepted by everyone in the schools, separated rapture from contemplative ecstasy. Augustine's authority made it evident that Paul had a vision of God; as early thirteenth-century theology eliminated the *visio mediastina*, the possible vision of Paul must have been similar to that of the Blessed. In turn, the face-to-face vision of God by the Blessed was declared a vision of the divine essence in 1241 (and 1244) – therefore Paul's vision of God in *raptus* necessarily became a

vision of the divine essence as well. The Scholastic theories on *raptus* kept key elements of Augustine's interpretation, and rephrased the face-to-face vision of God as a *per essentiam* vision or a vision of God's essence.

Three consequences of the doctrinal developments of *raptus* that influenced the reception of earlier theories, including the Victorine ones, were finally pointed out.

a) The fact that the "impediment of the body" became removed from the theory on *raptus* also indicated a change in the eschatological model: the earlier two-stage model was now replaced by the one-stage model. This conceptual change must be considered in the broader context. Twelfth-century frameworks counting with an intermediary "tertium," a separate "third" position (equally different from the present condition and from the full cognition of God) lost their validity. The concepts of a two-stage eschatology and the *visio mediastina* both counted with this "tertium" when the prelapsarian Adam and the enraptured Paul were juxtaposed, or when contemplative experience was conceived as similar to the first stage of eschatology. Twelfth-century theories using this framework cannot be interpreted according to the later, Scholastic set of concepts without this third position. What doctrinal development shows is an accommodation to the dual framework: Adam's prelapsarian vision turns, from a direct but not full vision, into an indirect, mediated vision of God; Paul's vision in rapture becomes a direct and clear vision of God.

b) The authoritative Scholastic concept of *raptus* was based on Augustinian premises, which made the Victorine interpretation of the narrative virtually unintelligible. Richard and Achar of Saint-Victor considered Paul's rapture in a typological way, as the pattern of contemplative ecstasy. The Augustinian interpretation, by contrast, emphasises the extraordinary and miraculous nature of the event that, being exceptional, cannot be a pattern.

c) While monastic authors regarded Paul's rapture as something similar to contemplative experiences, twelfth-century school theology did not consider rapture as connected to contemplation at all. Later, with the elaboration of the *raptus* (which involved a vision of the essence of God), the rapture narrative became inappropriate to describe possible spiritual experiences. The doctrinal changes were connected to an internal problem of spirituality: the formulation of the immediate experience. For doctrinal reasons, the immediacy could not be expressed by visual metaphors (a direct vision of God was *raptus* itself, while an immediate one was "contemplation"). The emerging new "mystical theology" found a solution, expressing the immediacy through a sensual imagery excluding vision. The Victorine model, let us remind the reader, was based on the visual imagery of immediateness: contemplatives *saw* God or the Truth immediately.

Chapter II. The prelapsarian cognition in the thirteenth-century university theology

Introduction: the limits of interpretation

The cognition of God in the prelapsarian state is certainly a marginal and very hypothetical issue of Christian theology.⁷⁵⁸ The previous investigations have already presented its early development: the construction of a theory by Hugh of Saint-Victor, then the way in which Peter Lombard created his own variant of the original. In the course of time, as Peter's book of *Sentences* became an auxiliary work in theological education, the doctrine on prelapsarian cognition became part of the curriculum. It must be remembered that on this subject the *Sentences* was the sole source and the doctrinal reflection on it always occurred in the context of the exegesis of the *Sentences*. In the twelfth century, only a few glosses were written; from the early thirteenth century only a few more glosses can be mentioned. The change came with the 1240s, when the exegesis of the textbook became regular and it was no longer executed in glosses but in commentaries. As the *Sentences* became the official textbook of theological education, thirteenth-century theologians had to become familiar with a mid-twelfth-century concept about Adam, formulated in a way alien to them. The idea of a prelapsarian vision of God (described by the awkward expression *sine medio*) meant to them a challenge: it was a new subject to be incorporated into the larger system of theology. Hugh's theory had only a minor and compromised role in the doctrinal development: when it appears (through a single-sentence argument), it is used to prove the impossible proposition that Adam saw God as the Blessed do.

The present chapter surveys, in chronological order, the various thirteenth-century attempts to frame and solve this problem. Before presenting and analysing the extant sources, it is useful to outline a few factors that defined the thirteenth-century elaborations on the subject, both the character of the source material and its content.

(1) The first factor is the interplay of literary history of theology and the doctrinal development. The reception of a doctrine partly depends on the reception of its source – and the *Sentences* was not at the centre of scholarly attention in the first four decades of the century; consequently, very few sources discussed the prelapsarian cognition. From the 1220s to the early 1240s, the dominant theological genres were theological *quaestiones*, *summae* (which were accumulations of *quaestiones*)⁷⁵⁹ and Scriptural commentaries; at this time, interpreting the text of the *Sentences* was a rather marginal activity, resulting only in glosses. The representative theological works of the first decades of the century do not treat the subject (even if some of them used the *Sentences* and imitated its structure).⁷⁶⁰ Works such as the *Summa (theologiae)* of Petrus de Capua⁷⁶¹ (1201/1202),

⁷⁵⁸ The fact that the prelapsarian state is lost, and that for most theologians it did not have much connection to the postlapsarian state, may explain the general lack of interest in this subject.

⁷⁵⁹ See the already mentioned questions of Alexander of Hales (called “antequam esset frater”), those of Hugh of Saint-Cher (partly in Douai 434); the *Summa* of Roland of Cremona (the first Dominican master of the university) also consists of questions, like the *Summa aurea* of William of Auxerre.

⁷⁶⁰ This can be seen on the order in which questions are organised. Practically, in many cases these *Summae* can be seen as collections of questions (the *Summa de bono* of Philip the Chancellor was also called *Summa quaestionum theologicarum*). The order of questions often follows the order of the issues in the *Sentences*, as contemporary titles show: for example, *Summa aurea super IV libros Sententiarum* (William of Auxerre, Glorieux RM nr. 129); in the literature, Roland of Cremona's work is regarded sometimes as *summa*, sometimes as *Sentences* commentary.

⁷⁶¹ For Petrus de Capua (Capuanus, de Mora), see Werner Maleczek, “Petrus Capuanus,” LMA 6: 1966-1967 and Glorieux RM nr. 108. I checked his *Summa (Theologiae)* in Ms Vat. lat. 4296.

the anonymous *Summa* of Ms Vat. lat. 10754,⁷⁶² the *Summa (theologiae)* of Praepositinus (1206-1210), the *Summa aurea* of William of Auxerre (1215-1220) and the *Summa de bono* of Peter the Chancellor (1225-1228) do not discuss the subject. It is also absent from the early theological works of the mendicant orders, such as the *Compendium theologiae* of Johannes de Treviso OP (1235-1244), the *Breviloquium super IV libros Sententiarum* of Gerardus de Prato OFM (1252-1264) and the *Summa de articulis fidei* of Jean de la Rochelle OFM.⁷⁶³ The *Summa* of Roland of Cremona OP, the first Dominican *magister regens* in Paris, written in the 1230s, also seems to omit this question.⁷⁶⁴ Also the theological *quaestiones* of the manuscript Douai BM 434 attest the lack of interest: the few references where a prelapsarian Adam appears discuss only his ecstatic *sopor*, along with Paul's rapture and Saint John's vision in the Revelations (see Part III Chapter I). The situation changed with the early 1240s, when the first commentaries on the *Sentences* appeared. The commentaries (unlike the glosses) gave detailed and extensive explanation of the text, using the highly formal technique of the *quaestio*. After c. 1240, commenting on the *Sentences* became a well-established institution and the commentary became the dominant theological genre (even if the theological *quaestio* remained in use, to discuss single problems⁷⁶⁵). This also led to the regular, although rarely original, discussion of the prelapsarian cognition.

(2) Another factor was the doctrinal background, which defined the direction of the interpretation. When the commentaries on the *Sentences* appeared, a consensual framework of the Scholastic theological anthropology had for the most part been elaborated. By that time, the concept of *visio mediastina*, which considered Adam's prelapsarian cognition of God and Paul's rapture, had been suppressed. Against such a background, a "literal" reading of the passages of the *Sentences* (and Hugh's *De sacramentis*) or a reconstruction of their original concept was unthinkable. According to the valid Scholastic premises, Adam was considered a *viator*, and the immediate vision of God was considered impossible in this life. The concept of an immediate prelapsarian vision of God was contrary to these accepted premises. With a very few exceptions, all interpretations of these passages performed the same hermeneutical exercise: they accommodated the twelfth-century texts to thirteenth-century premises through exegesis.

(3) A third factor defining the reception was the "life cycle" of the problem posed by the text and its interpretation, which means a certain temporal limitation of the issue. The prelapsarian cognition of God was a non-existent issue until Hugh; its inclusion in the *Sentences* made it a marginal issue. It drew remarkable attention, for a very short time, in the first half of the 1240s, manifested in a great number of different positions (followed by doctrinal censure). After the orthodox interpretation was elaborated (c. 1245), the subject became practically exhausted. In the second half of the thirteenth century, commentaries reprise the single possible theological position. With the passing of time, solutions became traditional, argumentations became generally simpler (even if a few new arguments were elaborated), originality became reduced. After the first commentaries, their accessibility also possibly contributed to the exhaustion. It is known that in Paris Bonaventure perused the *Summa Halensis* and the *Sentences* commentaries of Odo Rigaldi and Albert the Great; Thomas Aquinas knew the commentaries of Bonaventure and Albert;⁷⁶⁶ in

⁷⁶² Among the sources of this *summa* are Simon of Tournai, Petrus de Capua, the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss*. See Artur Landgraf, "Die Quellen der anonymen Summe des Cod. Vat. lat. 10754," *Medieval Studies* 9 (1947): 296-300.

⁷⁶³ I consulted the following manuscripts of the unedited works: Johannes de Treviso, *Compendium theologiae*: Ms Vat. lat. 1187 (fol. 1-76); Gerardus (d. after 1283), *Breviloquium*: Ms Vat. Reg. lat. 430 and Ms Vat. lat. 3159; Jean de la Rochelle, *Summa de articulis fidei*: Ms Vat. lat. 4298.

⁷⁶⁴ The single copy of Roland's *Summa* that includes its fourth book, Ms Paris Mazarine lat. 795, gives only selections of the four books, and does not contain anything on the prelapsarian cognition.

⁷⁶⁵ See Palémon Glorieux, *La littérature quodlibétique de 1260 à 1320*. 2 vols (Kain – Paris: La Saulchoir – Vrin, 1925, 1935).

⁷⁶⁶ As Jacques-Guy Bougerol wrote, "Tous les chercheurs admettent, en effet, que les médiévaux, quelque soit leur rang et leur valeur, des bacheliers aux maîtres les plus chevronnés, avaient à leur disposition une bibliothèque fort réduite lorsqu'ils préparaient leur 'lectura' ou une 'disputatio'. Ainsi Bonaventure préparant sa 'lecture' des *Sentences* avait sur sa table la 'lecture' d'Eudes Rigaud et les reportations de ce qu'Albert le Grand avait 'lu' ou 'disputé' avant son départ de Paris pour Cologne, c'est-à-dire, avant 1248. Saint Thomas préparant en 1253-1257 sa 'lectura' des *Sentences*

Oxford Richard Rufus had access to the commentary of Richard Fishacre, and then in Paris to Bonaventure's. In some of these cases, the dependence of the later on the earlier work is unquestionable.

The exhaustion of the theme was parallel with the changing function of the *Sentences* interpretation. As Bert Roest observed, "[I]n the later thirteenth century and in particular from the *Sentences* commentaries of Pierre d'Auriol and Duns Scotus onwards, the academic *Sentences* commentaries gradually left the structure of Peter Lombard's work behind to develop into series of lengthy questions that mirrored contemporary academic debate."⁷⁶⁷ The prelapsarian cognition was not discussed in such late debates; after the end of the thirteenth century, it mostly disappears. Until the end of the century, it was an exceptional case if a commentary omitted the subject, but after that time, it is the exceptional case if it is included.⁷⁶⁸

These factors define the sources for this chapter. The literature is scarce on this issue: Adam's prelapsarian cognition has not been subjected to systematic studies. Wicki's monograph (1954) rightly observes that it was a marginal issue compared to the cognition of the Blessed, and only Barbara Faes de Mottoni touched upon it in an article (discussing only the commentaries of Bonaventure and Richard Rufus).⁷⁶⁹ The present chapter studies the interpretations of the *Sentences*, written mostly in Paris, predominantly by Franciscans and Dominicans, between the 1220s and the 1300s. The sources are presented according to their chronological order, first the glosses (1220s to 1240s), then the commentaries (1240s to 1300s). I used, beyond the printed material, those interpretations to which I could gain access in the BNF, Paris and in the Vatican Film Library, Saint Louis (Missouri).⁷⁷⁰ Whenever it was possible, I standardised the notation for the sources used.⁷⁷¹

I. Glosses on the *Sentences*

Mapping the first thirteenth-century university interpretations of the *Sentences* is a difficult task. Until the 1240s, the usual form of interpretation was glossing on its text, and there are relatively few extant gloss collections that can be connected to masters at the University of Paris. Such works

avait sous les yeux celle d'Albert le Grand et celle de Bonaventure terminée en 1252." Bougerol, *Introduction à Saint Bonaventure* (Paris: Vrin, 1988), 115; repeated in his "Auctoritates in Scholastic Theology," in Irena Backus, ed., *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West. From the Carolingians to the Maurists* (Leiden: J. Brill, 1997), vol. 1, 305.

⁷⁶⁷ See Bert Roest, *A History of Franciscan Education (c. 1210-1517)* (Leiden, Boston and Cologne: Brill, 2000), 125.

⁷⁶⁸ Such example is the commentary (*Quaestiones*) of the Oxford scholar Robert Kilwardby OP, written 1254-1261, which skips the issue (contrary to the practice of his Paris colleagues); later on, this will be the general rule: the commentaries of John Duns Scotus OFM (d. 1308, lecturing 1302-1304), Gregory of Rimini OESA (d. 1358, lecturing 1343), Thomas of Strassburg OSA (d. 1357, lecturing c. 1334-1335), Landulph Caracciolo OFM (d. 1351, lecturing 1318-1319) and the questions of Robert Holcot OP (d. 1349, lecturing 1331-1333) all omit the problem (these works are all printed).

⁷⁶⁹ See Barbara Faes de Mottoni, "La conoscenza di Dio di Adamo innocente nell' *In II Sententiarum* d. 23, a. 2, q. 3 di Bonaventura," *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 91, no. 1-2 (1998): 3-32.

⁷⁷⁰ I learned too late of the glosses attributed to Johannes Pagus and the unedited commentary of Matthew of Aquasparta OFM to include. Matthew's commentary is preserved in Ms Assisi, Biblioteca Sacro convento 132 (the relevant paragraphs on fol. 117r).

⁷⁷¹ *Sentences* commentaries are usually well-structured texts (especially after the 1240s), constructed from questions. In the manuscripts and the research literature, *Sentences* commentaries (even the same commentary in the various manuscripts) may be called almost anything: *commentarius*, *commentarium*, *quaestiones*, *scriptum*, *lectura* alike. With a few exceptions, it seemed pointless to keep these random names, and therefore I use instead the stereotypical "*In Sent.*" form. For notation of the parts of the Scholastic *quaestio* there is no one single consensual convention. In the following, "dist." refers to *distinctio* of the *Sentences*; "qu." refers to *quaestio*, "art." to *articulus*, "tract." to *tractatus*. In the single questions, "arg." refers to the arguments (which will be usually refuted); "sc" to the *sed contra* arguments (that is, the counter-arguments), "co" to the *corpus* (the central, doctrinal part of the *quaestio*); "ad" to the responses to the single arguments enumerated at the outset of the *quaestio*.

are the glosses of Alexander of Hales and of Hugh of Saint-Cher OP, a gloss in Ms Vat. lat. 691 (attributed to Jean de la Rochelle OFM by modern research) and another one in Ms Padua Biblioteca Antoniana 139 (attributed to Jean Pagus but not discussed here). The sources from the period do not offer much help regarding the problem of the prelapsarian cognition. Beyond these texts, we obtain only three almost entirely illegible glosses from various authors, and the mere names of other authors, who probably had their opinions on this question, but whose interpretations are not extant.

1. The Glossa of Alexander Halensis (1223-1227)

Alexander Halensis (of Halès) taught at the University of Paris from 1220 as a secular master of theology; he entered the Franciscan Order in 1231 and became the first Franciscan master. Two works relevant to the present investigation are connected to his name: a *Glossa* on the *Sentences* (written around 1223-1227) and the *Summa Halensis*, a large-scale cooperative work of the Franciscan theologians (c. 1235-1256).

Alexander's glosses are far more developed than any other, earlier glosses on the *Sentences*. As his explanation extends to both *Sent.* II dist. 23 and IV dist. 1,⁷⁷² it dedicates two separate discussions to Adam's prelapsarian cognition. The gloss on *Sent.* II dist. 23 presents a catalogue of the various forms of the cognition of God; the gloss on *Sent.* IV dist. 1 gives a multiple interpretation of *medium*.

Explaining *Sent.* II dist. 23, Alexander's intention is to classify Adam's cognition; hence he gives a catalogue of all the possible forms of the cognition of God. The main distinction is between cognition in *patria* and cognition in *via*. Cognition in *via* may be a cognition through faith (*cognitio aenigmatica*) or a cognition through revelation. Alexander distinguishes three forms of revealed cognition, exemplified by Paul's *raptus*, the prophetic vision and Adam's sleep (*sopor*). Adam's revelation is conceived as a middle form between the *raptus* and the prophetic vision.⁷⁷³ Alexander's categories can be outlined as follows:

in patria	cognitio apprehensiva (facie ad faciem)
in via per fidem	cognitio aenigmatica
in via per revelationem	in Paulo rapto
	in prophetis (intellectus conjunctus imagini)
	in Adam (sopor, cf. Gen)

The way in which Alexander sets out his categories reflects various elements of the doctrinal development of the early thirteenth century. Adam's cognition is categorised under the cognition in *via* – this means not only that Adam is considered as a *viator* but also that there are only two substantial categories, *via* and *patria*. Consequently, a *visio mediastina* as a third form of cognition, different from the cognition of *via* and *patria*, has no place here. These positions fit into the general,

⁷⁷² The glosses of Alexander were discovered only in the 1940s. Edition: *Magistri Alexandri de Hales OFM Glossa in IV libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, ed. Collegium S. Bonaventurae. 4 vols (Quaracchi: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1951-1957). The editors' dating ("Glossa Alexandri finaliter assignanda nobis videtur circa 1223-1227," vol. 1: 116*) is based on the fact that several theologians used these glosses in the 1230s: Hugh of Saint-Cher, Philippus Cancellarius, Joannes de Rupella, the questions of Ms *Douai BM 434*, Odo Rigaldi, Albert the Great, Fishacre and the *Summa Halensis* (vol. 1: 110*-116*).

⁷⁷³ Alexander, *Glossa* in *Sent.* II dist. 23, 12. "Cognitionem quoque Creatoris. Est cognitio aenigmatica, ut illa quae est per fidem in via. Est etiam cognitio apprehensiva, quam habebimus in patria, quando *videbimus eum facie ad faciem sicuti est*. Est etiam alia cognitio in via, quam habent sancti viri per revelationem Spiritus sancti. Sed talis potest esse triplex. Una enim est in Paulo rapto, et illa nobilior est, quoniam illa est in anima tamquam abstracta. Altera vero est in prophetis, in quibus erat intellectus conjunctus imagini. Tertia fuit in Adam quando *Deus immisit soporem* in eo; et talis nec erat in anima omnino conjuncta imaginis nec omnino abstracta." *Alexandri Glossae*, vol. 2, 202-206.

thirteenth-century trend of devaluing the prelapsarian condition, making of it an extension of the *via* instead of an third, independent state with an appropriate form of cognition. After Alexander, *Sent.* II. dist. 23 will be a typical place where comparative theories about the cognition of God can be included in the *Sentences* commentaries. The juxtaposition of the ecstasy of Adam, of Paul and the prophets, as Alexander presented it, is a transient issue, peculiar to the period between the 1210s and the mid-1240s.⁷⁷⁴

The interpretation of IV *Sent.* dist. 1 follows the pattern of a theological *quaestio*,⁷⁷⁵ where the proposition is implicit. It is given by the letters of the *Sentences* that state that Adam saw God *sine medio* (the reader must know that seeing God *sine medio* may refer only to the eschatological vision). Alexander first gives two counter-arguments: a) he cites the authority of Exod 33:20 (*non enim videbit me homo et vivet* – the traditional argument for the invisibility of God in this life), and b) he paraphrases *sine medio* as face-to-face vision. The solution (*respondemus*) gives the correct interpretation of the expression *sine medio*: the term *medium* means the darkness of the original sin (*nubes peccati*); Adam's vision was not an immediate vision, and he was also able to see God via the creatures.

Alexander's position represents the core of the later consensus. As Adam was *in via* (even before the original sin and the *nubes peccati*), he could not have an immediate vision of God, but a mediated vision, through the mirror of the creatures, was possible. This construction of the prelapsarian state differs substantially from Hugh's original concept, where Adam directly contemplated God, without any mediation of creatures.

2. The Glossa of Hugh of Saint-Cher OP (1231-1232)

Hugh of Saint-Cher (Hugo de Sancto Caro) was the Dominican *magister regens* (1230-1235) in Paris following Roland of Cremona. His glosses on the *Sentences*, written 1231-1232, are generally regarded as the first Dominican *Sentences* commentary in Paris. Two manuscripts of the glosses that I checked, Ms Vat. lat. 1098 (on *Sent.* I-IV) and Ms Vat. lat. 1174 (on *Sent.* IV), give nothing on prelapsarian cognition, neither at *Sent.* II dist. 23 nor at IV dist. 1; a third manuscript, Paris BNF lat. 3406 (on *Sent.* I, III, IV) gives the following traditional interpretation of IV dist. 1:

Lombardus, <i>Sent.</i> IV dist. 1	Hugh of Saint-Cher, <i>In IV Sent.</i> , Paris BNF lat. 3406 fol. 90ra
Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio Deum videbat	<i>sine medio</i> , id est non obstante nube peccati, vel sine sacramento

3. The Glossa of Jean de la Rochelle OFM (1236-1245)

Jean de la Rochelle (Joannes de Rupella) was the second *magister* of the Franciscan chair of theology at Paris (1241-1245). Jacques-Guy Bougerol identified him as the author of a corpus of

⁷⁷⁴ Such discussions can be found, for example, among the theological questions of Ms Douai BM 434, in the *Summa Halensis*, in Odo Rigaldi's *Sentences* commentary (later *Sentences* commentaries focus rather on the question of whether Adam saw God *per essentiam*).

⁷⁷⁵ Alexander, *Glossa* in *Sent.* IV dist. 1, 12: "Triplici autem etc.; sine medio. Contra, 33 Ex. 20: *non videbit me homo*. Praeterea, si *sine medio* videbat, facie ad faciem videbat. – Respondemus: *sine medio*, id est non nube peccati interposita [Ms P *add.* Vel sic: non removetur autem quin creaturis mediis]; non tamen minus videbat per creaturas, et non per speciem. [Ms B *add.* Item, praeter medium creaturarum, est iterum duplex medium, et hoc dico ex parte visivi, non ex parte visibilis, scilicet moles corporis etiam defectus ipsius intellectus quia ex nihilo; et etiam nubes peccati quae postea interposita fuit inter videntem et visum.]" (*Alexandri Glossae*, vol. 4, 20). The inclusion of "moles corporis" and "defectus intellectus" in the addition by Ms B seems to be (an otherwise pointless) attempt to catalogue the possible meanings of *medium* (*defectus intellectus* refers to the ontological distinction between the Creator and the creatures created *ex nihilo*). A similar enumeration of the various *media* can be found in the commentary of Albert the Great.

glosses written on the margins of the *Sentences* codex Ms Vat. lat. 691 (he also dated it between 1236 and 1245).⁷⁷⁶ The gloss interprets only *Sent.* IV dist. 1, and partly repeats the gloss of Alexander: the *medium* refers to *nubes peccati*:

Lombardus, <i>Sent.</i> IV dist. 1. Ms Vat. lat. 691 fol. 122va	(two separate marginal glosses)
Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine* medio Deum videbat	*velamenti positi.
	C<ontra> non videbat me homo et vivet. deut<eronomio> [read Exodo] .XXXIII. Item si sine medio ergo facie ad faciem. R<esponsi>o, sine medio id est sine nube peccati interposita tamen videbat per creaturas et non per sp<eci>em.

4. Lost interpretations of the early 1240s: Mss BNF lat. 15652 and 15702

Written records of the earliest regular interpretations of the *Sentences* are fragmented and meagre. From two manuscripts written in the 1240s, Ms BNF lat. 15652 and BNF lat. 15702, one still may conjecture the amount of those early glosses lost forever.

Ms BNF lat. 15652 is a miscellaneous volume, a personal compilation of a theology student at Paris, dated from the 1240s (or more precisely 1240-1245).⁷⁷⁷ The most relevant materials from the codex are *reportationes*: hastily scribbled classroom notes of *Sentences* lectures delivered by various masters (fol. 32-109). The manuscript contains explanations of various parts of the fourth book of the *Sentences*⁷⁷⁸ by the following theologians: Peter the Archbishop (*Petrus, magister Archiepiscopus*), Stephan of Poligny (*Stephanus de Poli[g]niaco*), Odo Rigaldi OFM, [Jean] Pagus, a *magister Adam*, A. de Putheorumvilla and Jean de Moussy OP (*J. de Montchi* in the Ms); the *introitus* of Albert the Great OP (*frater Albertus*) and Odon de Rosny OFM (*O. de Rooni* in the Ms) was only planned to be copied into the codex. The other volume, Ms BNF lat. 15702 (a *Sentences* codex) contains notes written by the same hand, including further fragments from the commentaries of Bertrand (Strabo) de Bayonne OFM, Odon de Rosny OFM and Jean de Moussy OP. In contrast to the great number of the masters quoted in the manuscript, their extant works are remarkably meagre. It is only Albert and Odo Rigaldi (and perhaps Pagus) whose commentaries have survived: from the other eight authors who were also explaining the *Sentences* there have remained only these scattered fragments.

It must be also mentioned, for the sake of fullness, that the codices contain three, almost entirely illegible glosses on IV *Sent.* dist. 1, explaining Adam's *sine medio* vision. Ms BNF lat. 15702 preserved a gloss from Bertrand de Bayonne OFM⁷⁷⁹ (fol. 144rb), while Ms BNF lat. 15652

⁷⁷⁶ See Jacques-Guy Bougerol, "La Glose sur les Sentences du manuscrit Vat. lat. 691," *Antonianum* 55 (1980): 108-173; for the dating, 166.

⁷⁷⁷ For the description of the Ms see Marie-Dominique Chenu, "Maîtres et bacheliers de l'université de Paris v. 1240. Description du manuscrit Paris, Bibl. Nat. lat. 15652," in *Études d'histoire littéraire et doctrinale du XIIIe siècle. Première série* (Paris and Ottawa, 1932), 11-39. Glorieux hypothetically identified the scribe of the two Mss with Raoul (Ralph) of Colebruge (Corbridge) OFM, the second Franciscan master of Oxford University; see his article "Les années 1242-1247 à la faculté de théologie de Paris," *RTAM* 29 (1962): 239-249.

⁷⁷⁸ The lectures cover only certain distinctions of the four books; some of them were solemn inaugural lectures (*introitus*).

⁷⁷⁹ Glorieux RM nr. 306.

contains glosses from Jean Pagus (“Pagus,” fol. 97rb)⁷⁸⁰ and the obscure “A. de Putheorumvilla” (fol. 73ra).⁷⁸¹ Bertrand de Bayonne names three *media*: the *medium creaturarum*, *medium peccati* and, something that is not usual in this context, *medium ratiocinationis* (*ratiocinatio* refers to the cognition as discursive process).⁷⁸² The glosses of Jean Pagus and A. de Putheorumvilla are practically illegible, due to too small and hasty a cursive hand and the heavily used abbreviations.⁷⁸³ What can be said of them with some certainty is that both use Romans 1:20 together with its interpretation given in the *Glossa ordinaria* (which is a very rare *auctoritas*, used only in these two glosses exclusively), and both think of *rationatio* as a medium.⁷⁸⁴ A. de Putheorumvilla refers to this cognition as one *sine medio peccati vel sine nube, non sine medio creaturarum* – a traditional insight also shared by the glosses of Alexander Halensis and Jean de la Rochelle.

II. The first commentaries on the *Sentences*

The 1240s are certainly the most important period in the doctrinal history of the prelapsarian epistemology. This was the period when the subject was first systematically explored: in a few years’ time, three commentaries (by Odo Rigaldi, Albert the Great, Richard Fishacre) and a *summa* (the *Summa Halensis*) covered the issue, followed soon by other three commentaries in the early 1250s (by Bonaventure and Richard Rufus). These first commentaries connected technical and doctrinal novelties. Instead of glosses scribbled on (and limited by) the two-inch margin of the codex, now commentaries investigated the emerging problems, unrestrained by such external factors. The commentaries applied to the text the inquisitive method of *quaestio*: their readers were looking for arguments and positions to defend or reject.

The early commentaries show a remarkable doctrinal originality, as the subsequent investigations demonstrate. We must think that for a short period the prelapsarian cognition of God was a subject undefined (or rather defined only by the ambiguous text of the *Sentences*). For a few years, there existed no authoritative doctrine on this issue: theologians were free to experiment and create their own interpretations of the subject, as the four earliest commentaries attest. This period of freedom did not last for long. Contrary to the seeming marginality of the issue, theological censures emerged against three interpretations of the passages of the *Sentences*, as the relevant article of the *Summa Halensis* (written c. 1241-1245⁷⁸⁵) shows. The paucity of information does not

⁷⁸⁰ For Pagus, see Glorieux RM, nr. 147. Johannes Gründel identified the *Sentences* commentary of Pagus in Ms Padua Biblioteca Antoniana 139; see his “Die Sentenzenglosse des Johannes Pagus (circa 1243-1245) in Padua, Bibl. Ant. 139” in *Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift* 9 (1958): 171-185. For the description of the codex see G. Abate and G. Luisetto, *Codici e manoscritti della Biblioteca Antoniana* (Vicenza, 1975), vol. 1, 174-178.

⁷⁸¹ Glorieux RM nr. 124. The resolution of the “A. de Putheorumvilla” of the manuscript is debated: Chenu (“Maîtres et bacheliers”) suggested “A. de Pouzzoles” or “Reginaldus de Puteolis,” G. Englhardt suggested “Adam” in his “Adam de Puteorumvilla, un maître proche d’Odon Rigaud. Sa psychologie de la foi,” RTAM 8 (1936): 61-78. Adam de Putheorumvilla is sometimes identified with Adam Pulchrae Mulieris, the author of a *De intelligentiis* (*Memoriale rerum difficile*); see Glorieux, “Maître Adam,” RTAM 34 (1967): 262-270.

⁷⁸² Bertrand de Bayonne’s marginal gloss on *Sent.* IV dist. 1 to *Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio Deum videbat* reads, in form of a graphical division with three branches, reads: “[Sine medio] creaturarum, quia in se ipso deum videbat, post lapsum non videre p<otest> nisi in creatura, vel in gloria videtur deus in seipso [.....] et sic habuit medium statum inter corruptionem et glo<riam>. [Sine medio] peccati, quia nondum opposu<er>at nubem [.....] [Sine medio] ratiocinationis, quia tunc habebat intellectum deiformem [.....].” Ms Paris BNF lat. 15702 fol. 144rb.

⁷⁸³ Bernhard Bischoff calls Ms 15652 “another example of extremely cursive script”: *Latin Palaeography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 138, note 71.

⁷⁸⁴ The mostly illegible gloss of Jean Pagus could be transcribed as follows: “Sine medio ergo erat beatus in statu in[n]nocentie, ergo non potuit peccare; ergo et similiter..... Item Ro. .I. *invisibilia dei* | *per ea que facta sunt a creatura mundi intellecta cognoscuntur*, G<los>a, per..... | ‘invisibilia,’ id est, deus. D<icen>d<um> quod deus potest videri..... s<ecund>o sunt..... ea |... inter nos et deum, quia per eas rationando pervenit<ur> ad deum. Hec non habebat homo | ante lapsum. A<liu>d est medium |..... est..... scilicet..... per illam terciam... | cognitio, ita quod non..... ad.....” (Ms BNF lat. 15652 fol. 97rb).

⁷⁸⁵ On the dating of the relevant part of the *Summa Halensis*, see the next subchapter.

permit us to establish a very precise chronology of these events, but certain relations of the extant sources still can be established. The following table shows the sequence of the earliest commentaries discussed here.

Paris	Oxford
Odo Rigaldi OFM, <i>In Sent.</i> , c. 1242-1245	Richard Fishacre OP, <i>In Sent.</i> , c. 1241-1245
Albert the Great OP, <i>In Sent.</i> , c. 1246	
<i>Summa Halensis</i> [OFM], lib. II 1241-1245	
Bonaventure OFM, <i>In Sent.</i> , 1250-1252	Richard Rufus OFM, <i>In Sent. (Lectura Oxoniensis)</i> , 1250-1252
Richard Rufus OFM, <i>In Sent. (Lectura Parisiensis)</i> , c. 1253-1256	

The first datable commentaries on the *Sentences* were executed nearly simultaneously in Paris and Oxford, in the first half of the 1240s. The two centres had uneven literary output: the Paris material is relatively rich, while from Oxford very few commentaries survived.⁷⁸⁶ The first authors were Odo Rigaldi OFM (c. 1242-45, in Paris) and Richard Fishacre OP (c. 1241-1245, in Oxford); both treated the issue of prelapsarian cognition. From Paris, two other interpretations are extant, roughly from the same period (written perhaps after Odo's one): the commentary of Albert the Great OP (c. 1246), and the Franciscan *Summa Halensis* (1241-1245). The following works are slightly later: the commentaries of Bonaventure OFM (in Paris) and Richard Rufus OFM (in Oxford, *Lectura Oxoniensis*) were written simultaneously, 1250-1252; then follows another commentary by Rufus, written in Paris (*Lectura Parisiensis*, c. 1253-1256). Besides the dating of these works, certain doctrinal connections must also be observed. The *Summa Halensis* contains doctrinal censures: this fact suggests that the issue was debated in Paris at some point in the first half of the 1240s. There is no extant commentary from Paris that represents any of the censured positions, but the position that the Oxfordian Fishacre held in his commentary is overall too similar to what is rejected by the *Summa Halensis*. The commentaries of Rufus also contain something unexpected. His first commentary was written in Oxford (1250-1252), and it gives an interpretation similar to Fishacre's one. Rufus in Oxford probably knew nothing about the decision reached in Paris, but he very soon faced it. After having finished his first commentary, in 1253 he joined the Franciscans in Paris, and composed there a new commentary (*Lectura Parisiensis*, c. 1253-1256). Here the problem of Adam's vision of God already receives an entirely different, and unquestionably orthodox, treatment. Rufus practically replaces his earlier theory with an extract from Bonaventure's commentary (which is, in turn, an edited extract from the *Summa Halensis*). Rufus even copies the censures against the three positions, which Bonaventure copied from the *Summa* as well.

These dates clearly define the relatively short history of the doctrinal development: it started simultaneously in Paris and Oxford, in the first half of the 1240s, with the very first commentaries. In Paris there soon emerges the official doctrine, with the rejection of the untenable positions by censures (*Summa Halensis*, 1245 at the latest). Oxford may have a local tradition: although Rufus is a Franciscan, he seem to be ignorant of that censure until 1253, while it is known to his Parisian confrere Bonaventure. Rufus' second commentary means that he accommodated his position to the doctrinal consensus that existed in Paris. His first commentary was the last witness of dissent regarding this issue: after that, all commentaries give the same accepted doctrine.

⁷⁸⁶ As Rega Wood writes, "[o]nly three Oxford lectures on Peter Lombard's *Sentences* presented before 1280 survive. Two are by the Dominicans, Richard Fishacre and Robert Kilwardby; one is by the Franciscan, Richard Rufus of Cornwall." See Rega Wood, "Early Oxford Theology," in *Mediaeval Commentaries on the Sentences of Peter Lombard: Current Research*, ed. Gillian R. Evans (Leyden: Brill, 2001), 289-344, here 289.

The presentation of the sources follows here an artificial order. First I present the two similar Oxford commentaries, then the two different Parisian ones; the *Summa Halensis*, due to its particular importance, demands to be treated separately later.

1. Oxford: Richard Fishacre OP, In IV Sent. dist. 1

Richard Fishacre OP (d. 1248) was the second Dominican master in Oxford, and the first Dominican master who lectured on the *Sentences* there; his commentary, written c. 1241-1245, is the first representative of that genre from Oxford.⁷⁸⁷ According to the manuscript that I consulted, Ms Vat. Ottoboni lat. 294, Richard discussed the problem of prelapsarian cognition of God only in the context of *Sent.* IV dist. 1 (for the transcript of the text see *Appendix 4*).

Commenting on *Sent.* IV dist. 1, Richard first seems to give a paraphrase of the accepted positions on the passage, then adds his own interpretation. Immediately after quoting the lemma *sine medio Deum videbat* he gives three Scriptural arguments against Adam's vision of God: Exod 33:20 (*Non videbit me homo et vivet*), Jn 1:18 (*Deum nemo vidit unquam*) and 1Tim 6:16 (*habitat lucem inaccessibilem*).

The Biblical authorities are followed by a theological interpretation of the lemma. Richard here seems to reproduce or summarise a *Sentences* gloss. He gives two equivalents for the expression *sine medio* (as *non interposita nube peccati* and *sine sacramento*) and also remarks that it was not a face-to-face vision of God but came about through creatures (*non per speciem set per creaturam*). These two interpretations of *medium*, as sacrament and *nubes peccati*, can be found together only in Hugh of Saint-Cher's gloss on *Sent.* IV dist.1; the added element (*per creaturam*) belongs to the common stock. After this summary Richard gives his own interpretation, which goes strongly against the common opinion:

Augustine certainly does not dare to posit it so daringly [that Adam did not see God directly (*per speciem*), only through creatures]; in the contrary, he seems to incline to the position that he saw God immediately (*sine medio*) and directly (*per speciem*), although in a less lucid way than angels or he himself will see him after glorification – like our contemplatives.

Finally, after digressions to passages of Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram*, he returns to the question of the immediate vision and concludes: if one accepts the validity of the position of the *Sentences*, then the (Biblical) authorities must be interpreted in the context of *via*, this earthly life.⁷⁸⁸ As Richard earlier invoked the authority of Augustine for Adam's immediate vision, this position seems to be his own. It also implies, however, that the prelapsarian Adam was not in *status viae* and he was also "above men" (*super homines*) as he saw God *sine medio*. Other implications of Fishacre's comment are that Adam saw God *sine medio* (that is, without the mediation of creatures), *per speciem*, but it also implies that there are grades in the lucidity of the vision of God: glorified souls and angels see God more clearly, while the prelapsarian Adam and contemplatives see him less clearly (*minus limpide*).

⁷⁸⁷ Dating based on R. James Long's article "Richard Fishacre," in Jorge J.E. Garcia and Timothy B. Noone, eds., *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 563-568; see also Walter Senner, "Richard Fishacre OP," *BBKL* 17 (2000): 1138-1141; for a recent list of Fishacre's manuscripts, see "Richard Fishacre: towards a bibliography" [by Joseph Goering with R. James Long], *New Blackfriars* 80 (1999), 360-369. From Fishacre's commentary only parts are published: *Richard Fishacre. In secundum librum sententiarum*. Teil 1: Prol., Dist. 1-20, ed. Raymond James Long (Munich, 2008) and *Richard Fishacre. In tertium librum sententiarum*. Teil 2: Dist. 23-40, ed. Klaus Rodler (Munich, 2003).

⁷⁸⁸ Fishacre, *In IV Sent.* dist. 1: "Quod si hoc tenetur, scilicet quod sine medio vidit deum: auctoritates superius positas intellige secundum statum vie: inquantum enim deum quis videt super homines est."

Richard's interpretation is quite remarkable. Using Augustine's authority against the by then traditional interpretations of the passage, he gives a new meaning to the term *sine medio*. Inspired only by Augustine (and without using Victorine sources), Richard (re)constructs a meaning of the term *sine medio* that is close to its original, Victorine meaning: "immediately." In addition, the way in which he conceives Adam's prelapsarian vision is surprisingly similar to Hugh's theory. In the *In Hierarchiam*, Hugh talked about an immediate prelapsarian vision, a contemplation of God, through the "eye of contemplation"; he also confirmed there that even if this eye was extinguished due to the original sin, grace may restore its vision and, consequently, a direct vision of God becomes possible in contemplative experience. Richard Fishacre speaks about an immediate prelapsarian vision of God and compares it to the contemplative experience.⁷⁸⁹

2. Oxford: Richard Rufus OFM, *Lectura Oxoniensis*, In II Sent. dist. 23

Richard Rufus of Cornwall was the first Franciscan master lecturing on the *Sentences* in Oxford, and he is the only Oxford Franciscan who is known to have done so between 1245 and 1255.⁷⁹⁰ Rufus commented on the *Sentences* twice: first in Oxford (*Lectura Oxoniensis* or *Sententia Oxoniensis*, c. 1250 to 1252) then in Paris (*Lectura Parisiensis*, c. 1253 to 1255).⁷⁹¹ From the Oxford commentary only the interpretation of Books I-III is extant; the second, Paris commentary is extant in full, covering Books I-IV; both commentaries lie in manuscript (for the *Lectura Oxoniensis* on *Sent.* II dist. 23 I use the partial transcription published by Barbara Faes de Mottoni).⁷⁹² The two commentaries give two substantially different interpretations of *Sent.* II dist. 23. The earlier commentary, written in Oxford, gives an original interpretation of the passage; the later *Lectura Parisiensis* gives, practically, an abbreviation from Bonaventure's commentary, without any particular or individual detail.⁷⁹³ The texts of Rufus and Bonaventure stand in a curious relation: while Bonaventure's commentary explicitly rejects a number of theological opinions concerning the prelapsarian vision of God, Rufus' position in his *Lectura Oxoniensis* is quite similar to one of the rejected positions (as Barbara Faes de Mottoni rightly observed). The later *Lectura Parisiensis* abbreviates Bonaventure's text and reiterates the rejection of that position without any remark.

In the *Lectura Oxoniensis*, explaining the prelapsarian cognition at *Sent.* II dist. 23, Richard Rufus applies a modified concept of Augustine. (For the text see the Appendix.) Adam saw God not through corporeal or imaginary vision but through a sort of intellectual vision. In order to describe this special vision, Rufus discerns different grades in intellectual vision according to its lucidity (*sunt gradus quedam limpidior<a>*, *quedam minus limpidia*). Because the soul has to take care of the body (*administratio*), the quality of the vision (the grade of its lucidity) depends partly on the

⁷⁸⁹ Fishacre, *In IV Sent.* dist. 1: "viderit deum sine medio et per speciem, set minus limpide quam angeli, vel quam visurus est post glorificationem, sicut et contemplat<ivi> nostri"

⁷⁹⁰ Richard Rufus of Cornwall (Ricardus Rufus de Cornubia, d.c. 1260) was the first known (secular) master at Paris teaching Aristotle's metaphysics, physics and psychology. He became a Franciscan in 1238 and returned to Oxford for his noviciate and life in the order. Between 1253 and 1256 he was in Paris again, lecturing on the *Sentences* for a second time. On his life, see Rega Wood, "Richard Rufus of Cornwall," in Garcia and Noone, *Companion*, 579-587.

⁷⁹¹ Dating based on Rega Wood's Richard Rufus Project page, <http://rrp.stanford.edu/works.html> (accessed on 21. 05. 2013)

⁷⁹² The *Lectura Oxoniensis* is preserved in one single manuscript, Ms Oxford Balliol College 62; the *Lectura Parisiensis* is preserved in Ms Vatican Bibl. Apost. Vat. Lat. 12993 (on Book I and II) and Ms Assisi Bibl. Sacro convento 176 (A176) (on Book III and IV) [latter accessible on the homepage of the Società Internazionale di Studi Francescani, <http://88.48.84.154/bbw/>]. See Barbara Faes de Mottoni, "La conoscenza di Dio di Adamo innocente nell' *In II Sententiarum* d. 23, a. 2, q. 3 di Bonaventura." *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 91, no. 1-2 (1998): 3-32; transcription of the Balliol text on pages 15-16. For the interpretation of the *Lectura Parisiensis* (see later) I consulted Ms Vat. lat. 12993.

⁷⁹³ Ms Vat. lat. 12993 fol. 231v-232v.

connection of the soul and the body, and partly on the nature of the body. The more attention the body demands, the less lucid the intellectual vision may be, and to reach intellectual vision, one must separate oneself from sensible things.

Based on these premises, Rufus differentiates between the levels of lucidity of intellectual vision. In the prelapsarian condition only the care for the animal body diminished the vision of God; now, after the original sin, the care for the same body occupies the soul so much that it may have nothing or just a modicum of intellectual vision. In the blessed condition (*in coelo*) the soul will have a spiritual body, which does not demand such care: without this restriction, the perfect cognition of God will be possible. In addition, to contrast prelapsarian and eschatological cognition Richard uses another simile: Adam could not have discerned the single reasons in the divine mind (*rationes causales in mente divina*) as one cannot discern fine details of something seen from a distance; the full cognition will come about through intellectual vision, in a total adherence to God, which also means the elimination of that distance (*visio que est per indistantiam*). The soul's care over the body is another Augustinian idea used in a peculiar way. In Richard's text, it becomes the main restraint from the full cognition of God – but the text also implies that this limitation may be surpassed and intellectual vision can be reached by human agency: *ut enim utamur hac visione, necesse est sensibilia transcendere et subtrahere se ab administratione tali*.

Despite the different points elaborated in their commentaries, the two Oxford theologians Richard Fishacre and Richard Rufus agree at least on two crucial points.⁷⁹⁴ One is the very notion of grades in the vision of God: it presupposes that the differences in the cognition of God (as in *patria*, in *via* and in the prelapsarian condition) are not substantial differences but rather differences in degree. The other idea, underlying the previous one, is less explicit. By assuming only gradual (and not essential) differences in clarity of the vision, both texts speak strongly for a basic possibility of an immediate vision of God in this life – an immediate vision that may be more or less lucid, but still remain immediate.

Such positions soon proved to be contrary to the acceptable ones, as the second commentary of Rufus attests. Theologians of the University of Paris conceived the vision of God in a substantially different way, without permitting grades in the immediate vision. In that formulation, the immediate vision of God means a vision of the “essence” of God (granted to the Blessed and to Paul in his rapture); that being *the* sole immediate vision, it is contrasted with all other, mediated forms of vision of God permitted to Adam and the present humanity.

3. Paris: Odo Rigaldi OFM, In II Sent. dist. 23

Odo Rigaldi (Eudes Rigaud, d. 1275) was a student of Alexander of Hales and Joannes de Rupella, and later he became the third *magister regens* of the Franciscans in Paris (1245-1247). He lectured on the *Sentences* in 1243-1244⁷⁹⁵ and wrote a commentary covering Books I-III⁷⁹⁶ (dated c. 1242-1245). Odo's interpretation is the most sophisticated one among the early commentaries. The *quaestio* is structured in the following way (for the text of the *quaestio*, see the appendix): first Odo creates a dilemma about Adam's prelapsarian cognition, which seemingly can be resolved by

⁷⁹⁴ Rufus knew and used Fishacre's commentary; see Rega Wood, “Angelic individuation according to Richard Rufus, St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas Aquinas,” in *Individuum und Individualität im Mittelalter* (Miscellanea Mediaevalia 24) (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1996), 209-229.

⁷⁹⁵ Dating by the editors of the *Summa Halensis* (vol. 1, *prolegomena*, 348sq), based on Ms BNF lat. 15652.

⁷⁹⁶ From the *Sentences* commentaries copied under Odo's name (called not only *Commentatorium* but also *Lectura* and *Quaestiones*) only those on Books I-III are authentic. The authenticity of the commentary on Book IV attributed to Odo (e.g. in Ms Troyes Bib. Mun. 824 and 1862) is generally doubted and by Kilian F. Lynch explicitly refuted: see his “The Alleged Fourth Book of the *Sentences* of Odo Rigaldi and Related Documents,” *Franciscan Studies* 9 (1949): 87-145. The Ps.-Odo commentary gives the following explanation of the lemma of IV dist. 1: “*Sine medio deum videbat* etc. Contra .XXXIII. Exo. *non videbit me homo* etc. R<esponde>o, ‘sine medio’ id est nube peccati, cum per subjectam creaturam” (Ms Troyes Bib. Mun. 824 fol. 251ra). For the commentary of II dist. 23 I used the Mss Paris BNF lat. 14910, Ms Vat. lat. 5982 and Ms Bruges Bibliothèque de la ville 208.

Hugh's authority. Then he shows, by the *sed contra* argument, that this solution is not viable; in the teaching part (*responsio*) he gives a distinction on the various forms of the cognition of God, then answers the problems raised by the arguments first adduced. Two points of the text are particularly important for our investigations and need to be detailed here: the arguments and the distinction Odo creates as solution.

Odo devises a carefully executed dilemma at the outset, by asking whether Adam had the cognition of this life or that of the Blessed (*queritur cuius cognitionem habuit aut vie aut patrie*). The difficulty of the dilemma is – as becomes clear in the elaboration of the *quaestio* – that the dual oppositions that Odo first offers cannot describe that cognition. *Cognitio patriae* is quickly discredited, because Adam could not stand and fell – therefore his cognition belonged necessarily to *cognitio viae*. Odo gives two possible forms of *cognitio viae*: cognition from faith and from creatures – but he discredits both. Cognition from faith is discredited first: faith (and other virtues) were not given with creation but acquired only later, and faith is from hearing (which was obviously lacking in his case). Then cognition from creatures is also discredited, on quasi-ontological grounds: since in the prelapsarian state the position of man was between the creatures and God, a cognition of God through creatures (instead of a direct cognition) would have been a detour, *ordo retrogradus* (a similar argument can be observed in the *Summa Halensis*).

So far, with these argumentations, Odo created a delicate problem: Adam certainly cognised God, but that cognition was neither that of *patria* nor of *via* (faith and creatures being excluded). At this point he introduces Hugh of Saint-Victor's authority as a seeming solution for the problem, by quoting *De sacramentis* I, vi, 14 as an argument for an immediate prelapsarian vision – one that is neither by means of creatures nor by means of faith (Hugh's text speaks explicitly about a cognition not by means of faith that is also a manifest vision). Odo poses this text as an argument for an immediate cognition solving the problem: *ergo videtur quod manifeste cognosceret deum tamquam presentem, non ergo fide vel creaturis*. Nonetheless, the entire intellectual construction is meant to be false (as the particular structure of *quaestio* demands). Odo has one single *sed contra* argument to annul its validity: cognising God as present and manifest cannot happen in the state of *via*.⁷⁹⁷

The doctrinal part of the *quaestio* resolves the dilemma by a new classification of the *cognitio viae*. Odo defines this cognition with different terms: instead of faith and creatures, he introduces terms of natural, inspired and gratuitous cognition: these categories cover all the possible cases of the cognition of God, and can be outlined thus:⁷⁹⁸

cognitio patriae		
cognitio viae	1. per gratiam gratum facientem	
	2. naturalis	2.1 in speculo 2.2 in vestigio
	3. per inspirationem	3.1 in raptu 3.2 in prophetia 3.3 in sopore (Adam)

⁷⁹⁷ Odo, Textus A: "Set contra hoc est quia si cognoscebat deum tamquam presentem et manifeste ergo videtur quod non esset in statu viatoris."

⁷⁹⁸ Odo, Textus A: "R<esponde>o: ad predictorum intelligentiam est no<tandum> quod multiplex est cognitio. Est enim cognitio vie et est cognitio patrie que est in beata cognitione, visione qua videtur facie ad faciem deus. Hec est in beatiss; hanc non habuit Adam in primo statu. Vie ergo cognitio triplex est; quedam gratuita per gratiam gratum facientem que illuminat; quedam naturalis; quedam per inspirationem. Ista que est per inspirationem est triplex. Aut secundum abstractionem ab omnibus viribus inferioribus; aut secundum abstractionem ab actu vegetative qua<ntu>m ad gratuita; aut secundum abstractionem ab actibus sensuum exteriorum. Prima est in raptu, secunda in prophetia, tertia in sopore. Et de tertia certum est quod fuit in Adam. Naturalis autem cognitiva dei est duobus modis a creatura: vel per considerationem et relucenciam in speculo, <vel> per considerationem ipsius in vestigio suum in suis operibus. Hic enim non videtur deus a creatura neque in semetipso [...] deus videtur duplici cognitione naturali. [...] cum cognitio creatoris indita fuit homini: cognitio naturalis que est per creaturas."

The inspired cognition has three subcategories, according to the different degrees of the abstraction from the body: Odo distinguishes *raptus*, prophecy and *sopor*. Adam had the cognition of *sopor* but also the cognition through creatures, clearer than now, but also the gratuitous cognition.⁷⁹⁹

Odo's interpretation excels among all the early commentaries. It gives the most sophisticated approach, but also the most complex theoretical background. If we read Odo's text as a solution, the underlying problems may also be identified. One is the ambiguity of the *Sentences* text (which results in the question *queritur cuius cognitionem habuit, aut vie aut patrie*); the other is that Hugh's text (talking about a manifest cognition, *manifeste cognoscebat*) suggests that Adam was not *in statu viatoris*. Odo's *quaestio* solves both problems.

The more remarkable features of this commentary can be summarised, therefore, thus: (a) As far as a chronology of *Sentences* commentaries can be established, this is probably the very first instance when a thirteenth-century author introduces Hugh's text into the discussion of *Sent.* II dist. 23 (the *Summa Halensis* may be later or contemporary). The position where it is introduced grants it a specific use: it becomes an argument for Adam's immediate vision of God – an argument that will be necessarily rejected or corrected in the later part of the *quaestio*. Hugh's lemmatic text (the *Cognovit homo* argument) has the same function in the *Summa Halensis* and several later commentaries, as will be demonstrated. (b) The new classification of the ways of cognition gives a better, "finer resolution" to the cases. It can be compared to the categories of Alexander, who divided the *cognitio viae* into that of faith and revelation, and subsumed under the latter the same categories as Odo, under inspired cognition (*raptus, sopor, prophetia*). Odo's novelty here is the wider scope, as he includes the "natural" and the grace-given forms of cognition as well. (c) The argumentation that Odo uses is purely theological and logical, without Scriptural *auctoritates*.

4. Paris: Albert the Great OP, In II Sent. dist. 23

The *Sentences* commentary of Albert the Great (c. 1246) represents his early solution to the question of the prelapsarian cognition.⁸⁰⁰ He comments only on *Sent.* II dist. 23, but that explanation refers also to *Sent.* IV dist.1.⁸⁰¹

Albert's commentary is based on those Augustinian implications that Peter planted into the text of the *Sentences* by his reference to 1Cor 13:12, *neque ita in aenigmate* (See Part II Chapter V). While mirror and enigma had no function for the two Oxford commentators, in Albert's commentary these two Biblical terms play the central role. The final intention of Albert is to harmonise the Lombardian saying *sine medio videbat* with the Biblical *auctoritas* of 1Cor 13:12 speaking of a vision in a mirror and enigma. At the outset he formulates two opposite positions: Adam either saw God *sine medio* or *per speculum in aenigmate*. Seeing in the latter way is, for Albert, an equivalent of the (vision of) faith, and he tacitly subsumes Adam's vision under this kind

⁷⁹⁹ Odo, Textus A: "Est tertia cognitio gratuita. Hac immediate ferebatur in deum sicut dicit Hugo, qua scilicet 'PER PRESENTIAM CONTEMPLATIONIS MANIFESTIUS CERNEBATUR,' et patet in hoc in quo differt sua cognitio gratuita a nostra, quia etsi fidei ferebatur cognitio in deum, tamen sub nubilo et obscuritate et in aenigmate. Si ob<icia>t quod ista esset cognitio patrie, respondetur per Hugonem quia ibi non erat manifestatio tanta quanta est in gloria, set erat media illa inter cognitionem glorie et quam habemus nunc, dicitur enim 'MANIFESTA' non simpliciter set quantum ad illum statum."

⁸⁰⁰ Dating the *In II Sent.* to c. 1246 taken from the chronology of *Albertus Magnus und sein System der Wissenschaften. Schlüsseltexte in Übersetzung* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2011), 28-31, here 28 (with *In Sent.* I and III dated to 1243). Earlier datings gave c. 1240-1249, c. 1245-1250 or c. 1241-1242. The *Summa de creaturis*, the systematic work of Albert written in the same period (1240-1243) does not discuss the question. Here and elsewhere I refer to the volumes of the Borgnet edition: *Beati Alberti Magni Ratisbonensis episcopi Ordinis Praedicatorum Opera omnia*, cura Stephani C.A. Borgnet, 38 vols (Paris: L. Vivès, 1890-1899), abbreviated henceforth as "Borgnet" and volume number.

⁸⁰¹ Albert, *In II Sent.* dist. 23F art. 2, Borgnet 27, 393-394.

of vision.⁸⁰² The solution to the opposition of the *medium* and the mirror is their conceptual identification: both *aenigma* and *speculum* (with their numerous variants) belong to the *medium*.

The main body of his commentary consists of the multiple interpretation given for both *aenigma* and *speculum* (both considered as some sort of *medium*). Finally he singles out those meanings of the two terms that denote effects that were absent in the case of Adam but present in the fallen condition of man: so according to Albert, the intended meaning of *sine medio* in the text of the *Sentences* means the absence of these effects.

For *aenigma*, Albert gives five separate meanings, each being a different sort of obstacle of cognition. One *aenigma* is the created nature of the human intellect (an impediment common to all reasonable beings, including angels). Another one is the human intellect's discursive way of cognition during this life; the third derives from the conjunction of a body to the human intellect (*ex eo quod intellectus carne velatus est*). The prelapsarian condition was defined by these three *aenigmata*. The fourth and fifth *aenigmata* are the consequences of the Fall and belong specially to the fallen condition: one is the obscurity of the intellect; the other is the effect of the corrupted body on the soul.⁸⁰³

Then Albert distinguishes four different relations to (or forms of cognition through) the mirror of creatures (*speculum creaturarum*). The first belongs to God, the second to the angels and glorified souls (hence irrelevant in the context of the prelapsarian cognition). The third cognition came about through the vestige of the uncreated light and through the mirror of creatures before the original sin; the fourth cognition comes about through the created vestige obscured by Adam's sin.⁸⁰⁴ After having mapped the different meanings of *aenigma* and *speculum* in cognition, Albert declares that the term *sine medio* of the *Sentences* IV dist. 1 refers to the absence of those effects that resulted from the original sin. These are the fourth and fifth *aenigmata* and the fourth mirror.⁸⁰⁵

The way in which Albert formulates the prelapsarian cognition foreshadows the later standard formulations where the interpretation of 1Cor 13:12 played a central role. At the same time, Albert's commentary does not narrow the meanings of "mirror" and "enigma" down to one particular theological meaning. The clause "seeing God through a mirror in an enigma" can be stated, simultaneously, of the glorified soul, the prelapsarian Adam and the present, living humans, because the given meaning of mirror and enigma changes according to the subject. In this respect, the commentary follows the tradition of the earlier glosses on the *Sentences*, as Albert creates an inventory of the traditional theological interpretations. Another remarkable point of this interpretation is the emphasis that it puts on the term *medium*. This term had no importance in the interpretation of the Oxfordians and Odo; in Albert's commentary it appeared but with a relatively undefined meaning. In the 1250s the same word takes on another, more specific meaning as a term of epistemology. The late *Summa theologiae* (tract. III and tract. XIV) of Albert, written decades later (c. 1270-1280) gives another interpretation of the question, but already using the results of a conceptual and structural development.

⁸⁰² Albert, *In II Sent.* dist. 23F art. 2 co: "Solutio. Dicendum quod visio fidei est per speculum in aenigmate, sed aenigma multiplex est." 393. Albert here does not treat the question of whether Adam had faith or not (a question typical of the commentaries from the 1250s onwards).

⁸⁰³ Albert, *In II Sent.* dist. 23F art. 2: "Quartum aenigma est obscuritas intellectus, quae accedit ex peccato animae: et sub hoc videmus nos, eo quod numquam ita per poenitentiam revocari possumus in hac vita, quod nihil remaneat de corruptione sinceritatis potentiarum. Quintum est aenigma procedens non ex carne sed ex carnis corruptione; quia corpus quod corrumpitur, aggravat animam etc [Sap 9:15]. Et his ultimis duobus modis Adam limpidius vidit quam nos." Borgnet 27, 393.

⁸⁰⁴ Albert, *In II Sent.* dist. 23F art. 2: "Tertio modo cognoscitur in speculo per vestigium lucis increatae quod est tamen lux creata, nulla ex parte obscurata per peccati infectionem: et sic vidit Adam Deum in speculo creaturae. Quarto modo cognoscitur Deus in speculo creaturae per vestigium creatum et obscuratum, quia Adam peccante omnia in peiorem statum defluerunt." Borgnet 27, 393.

⁸⁰⁵ Albert, *In II Sent.* dist. 23F art. 2: "dicendum quod Magister in quarto Sententiarum non intendit remove omne medium; sed ex parte aenigmatis interioris quartum et quintum, ex parte autem speculi tantum quartum." Borgnet 27, 393.

III. The *Summa Halensis*

The *Summa Halensis* (*Summa fratris Alexandri, Summa theologica*)⁸⁰⁶ is the representative theological work of the early Franciscan school. A collective work of several masters (coordinated first by Alexander of Hales), its composition started at some point after 1235 (another dating gives c. 1240) and lasted until 1256. While the *Summa Halensis* from a formal aspect is not a *Sentences* commentary, it discusses the problem of prelapsarian cognition of God following the structure given by the *Sentences* and discussing the issues that commentaries used to do. The place of the discussion is, formally, a question on the prelapsarian cognition (an attempt to give a more systematic form to the material in *Sent.* II): following the critical edition's division, *Summa* Book II, inquisitio 4, tractatus 3, quaestio 4 *de primo homine quantum ad scientiam*, membrum 2 *de cognitione primi hominis quantum ad cognoscibilia*. The first chapter of memb. 2 deals with the cognition of God (cap. 1 *de cognitione creatoris*, and cap. 2 *de cognitione creaturarum*), in two articles: *utrum Adam cognoverit Deum in specie* (art. 1) and *utrum Adam cognoverit Deum per speculum creaturae* (art. 2).⁸⁰⁷

Here I argue that the *Summa Halensis* marks a turning point in the entire discussion of prelapsarian epistemology, since it presents new elements (both doctrinal and formal-technical) that define the way in which later theologians approached and discussed the subject. Three such elements demand special attention: the introduction of a stricter technique of *quaestio* as the form of discussion, the solution itself that the *Summa* gives, and the already mentioned theological censures.

The dating of this section of the *Summa* is essential to set it into the context of the *Sentences* commentaries, but no dating is available; I regard it as written between 1241 and 1245. This dating is based on the following principles: a) that this part of Book II was written before Alexander's death (1245), meaning that the *terminus ante quem* is 1245;⁸⁰⁸ b) the text calls the invisibility of God an explicitly heretical position. The condemnation of that doctrine was issued first in 1241, then reiterated in 1244, and therefore the *terminus a quo* is 1241.

Quaestio: means of research or format of teaching?

Compared to the first commentaries on II *Sent* dist. 23, the *Summa* shows substantial differences both in form and in content. From the formal aspect, it uses a stricter form of *quaestio* format than the other early commentaries, but the intention of *quaestio* is also substantially different. The authors of the four other commentaries had a certain hermeneutical approach: their authors focused on a concrete and puzzling problem that emerged from the text of the *Sentences*. In the case of Albert, the problem is that the Magister seems to be wrong; Odo asks what sort of cognition Adam

⁸⁰⁶ Alexander wrote the *Summa Halensis* with the cooperation of Joannes de Rupella (regent master 1241-1245) and Odo Rigaldi (regent master 1245-1247); after Alexander's death (1245), the work continued under the lead of William of Meliton (regent master 1248-1253), aided by Bonaventure (regent master 1253-1256). In 1255 Pope Alexander IV's ordered William of Meliton to finish the dragging work (*De fontibus paradisi*), and the work was finished in 1256. Modern critical edition: *Doctoris irrefragibilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis Minorum Summa theologica, seu sic ab origine dicta 'Summa fratris Alexandri'* I-IV (Ad Claras Aquas [Quaracchi]: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1924-1948), henceforth referred to as *Summa Halensis*.

⁸⁰⁷ *Summa Halensis* II inquisitio 4 tract. 3 qu. 4 membr. 2 cap. 1, printed in the critical edition: *Alexandri de Hales Summa Theologica. Tomus II (prima pars secundi libri)* (Quaracchi, 1928), 763-770 (quoted as *Summa*, vol. 2). The old edition gives it as Book II, pars I tract. 3 qu. iv [de primo homine quantum ad scientiam] membr. ii cap. 1.

⁸⁰⁸ In 1245 the *quaestio* on the prelapsarian cognition must already have been written: "Als Alexander starb, dürften vorgelegen haben: das Buch I mit Ausnahme letzte der letzten *Quaestio de missione visibili*, das II. Buch außer *De corpore humano et de coniuncto* und das III. Buch in dem jetzigen unvollständigen Zustand." Werner Dettloff, "Alexander Halesius" in *TRE* 2 (1978), 245-248, here 245. For the 1241/1245 condemnations, see the Introduction of Part II.

had. In contrast, in the *Summa* the function of the *quaestio* form is to display and present the valid doctrine concerning one doctrinal point. The problem investigated is formally defined by a yes-no question: whether Adam knew God face to face (*Utrum Adam cognoverit Deum in specie?*). This doctrinal point – namely, that Adam did not see or cognise God face to face – with the same question will be the one that all the later commentaries discuss and investigate, with a negative answer.

In the case of the *Summa Halensis*, this shift of methodology appears together with a new format, the fully fledged and articulated Scholastic *quaestio*. It is the *Summa Halensis* where the strict rules of its composition are applied to the issue (the other early commentaries do not know these rules yet); as later this format becomes the standard form for the discussion of the issue, it demands a short overview here.

The *quaestio*, constructed according to strict formal principles, revolves around one single issue, which is given in the *titulus*, usually in the form of a question that permits both a positive and a negative answer. The *Summa Halensis* defines the problem of the prelapsarian cognition by a yes-no question: whether Adam knew God face to face (*Utrum Adam cognoverit Deum in specie?*), the question repeated by later *Sentences* commentaries. After the question is asked, first the author gives arguments for the positive answer (*argumenta*). These all will be debunked later. Then counter-arguments follow (*sed contra*) supporting the negative answer. The subsequent “teaching part” of the *quaestio* (the *corpus*) gives the actual doctrine of the author explained. In this structure, the place of the valid doctrines and arguments are the *sed contra* section and the *corpus*, while invalid arguments are grouped in the *argumenta* section at the beginning of the *quaestio*. The *quaestio* is closed by the responses to the opening arguments. Although the four first commentaries deviate from these principles, the *Summa Halensis* and all later works discuss the issue in this order and way. It must be also noted that the *Summa* defined, together with the pattern of investigation, the very object of investigation too. This becomes evident from the later commentaries: the standard question regarding Adam’s prelapsarian cognition of God is whether he saw God immediately (and the obligatory answer is negative).

The internal logic of the *quaestio* (which is also manifested through the structure and the principles of the composition) leads to at least three significant consequences. a) First, that the *quaestio* was a means to present the ultimate doctrine in a safe way, where possible objections are already invalidated. The valid position is presented in the *corpus*, in a triumphant way, showing the falseness of the other positions. Then, b) secondly, refuted position(s) are demanded, in order to fill the places of arguments at the opening of the *quaestio*. With the *Summa Halensis* begins a tradition: the authors systematically build up a false and invalid position, using Scriptural and rational, theological arguments. From then on, commentaries invest often considerable effort into (re)creating a position, according to which Adam saw God as the Blessed do, face to face (or later, *per essentiam*). In these cases it is irrelevant that such a position, in this very form, had not been taught by anyone, and the position that they created has nothing to do with those positions that were once censured as “real” invalid doctrines. And c) thirdly, standard sets of arguments emerge. One set is formed by the arguments for Adam’s immediate vision of God; these arguments prove to be invalid and are refuted. The other set is of (Biblical or theological) *sed contra* arguments: to this set belong also the other valid arguments that appear in the *corpus* and the responses to the opening arguments. For example, the most common *sed contra* arguments are Biblical ones that deny the possibility of seeing God in this life (as Exodus 33:20, *non videbit me homo et vivet* and Jn 1:18, *Deum nemo vidit unquam*), Gregory the Great’s interpretation of Isaiah 6 (from *Hom. xiv in Ezechielem*), or the Augustinian *visio Dei tota merces* argument.

The solution of the Summa Halensis

As the treatment of Adam’s prelapsarian cognition of God in the *Summa Halensis* surpasses all the previous discussions both in length and in complexity, a short overview of its content is necessary.

The question posed at the outset is whether Adam had a face-to-face vision of God (*utrum Adam cognoverit Deum in specie*); it is followed by 8 arguments for the positive answer and 7 *sed contra* arguments. The majority of the doctrinal part is taken by the above-mentioned presentation and refutation of three different interpretations of how Adam's cognition was "between" our cognition and that of the Blessed. The author's own position is presented after the refutations, through an allegorical analogy: although Adam's cognition was indeed between the two forms of cognition (*cognitio gloriae* and *cognitio miseriae*), it was more similar to our cognition than to the Blessed' – as the *earthly* Paradise was closer to this vale of tears than to Heaven.⁸⁰⁹

The refutations and the corrections of the three rejected positions have a few remarkable points. The first position, based on the idea of the absolute invisibility of the divine essence, is explicitly called heretical (giving us a *terminus a quo*). The second position (arguing for the different grades of vision of God) is rejected by three *auctoritates* arguing for the invisibility of God in this life: the Areopagite, Augustine and Gregory the Great. Most remarkable is the inclusion of the Areopagite's *Mystical Theology* as the first among the *auctoritates*: when this part of the *Summa* was written, the popularity of this particular treatise was just emerging.⁸¹⁰ From Gregory, the *quantumcumque* argument is used: however far the mind gets in contemplation, it still cannot reach a vision of God. This argument later becomes a most popular one: it was used to deny Adam's immediate vision of God (a vision described with the words of seeing and contemplating by Hugh).⁸¹¹ The refutation of the third position (which attributed to Adam an immediate and restricted vision of God) is corrected by reinterpretation: before the original sin, God was seen in a certain unobscured light, far more manifestly than now, but not face to face), and this is meant in Hugh's text.⁸¹² It is the next *articulus* (art. 2 *Utrum Adam cognoverit Deum per speculum creaturarum*) where the *Summa* explains that this was a vision through a clear mirror, as contrasted with our vision through a dim mirror (art. 2 ad 2).

Another crucial doctrine of the *Summa Halensis* is the distinction between various meanings of the term *medium*. Peter Lombard's sentence, stating that Adam *sine medio Deum videbat*, caused a hermeneutical problem for the Scholastic mind uninitiated in Victorine theology. As the previous chapters demonstrated, all earlier interpretations (and some contemporaneous ones too) attributed concrete and objective meanings to the term *medium*: *nebula peccati*, sacraments or the Bible itself all are all concrete and objective notions that can stand "between" God and man, and were absent or unnecessary before the original sin. The *Summa Halensis* solved the hermeneutical problem of *medium* by conceptual thaumaturgy. Instead of giving some sort of concrete *medium*, it introduces the abstract *medium*. In this sense, *medium* is a general and indefinite epistemological category, meaning approximately "something" or "means" – the precise meaning of the word is specified by the attached adjective.⁸¹³ The earlier interpretations did not have this abstract concept of *medium*. The *Summa* presents several forms of it: a *medium impediens*, and two kinds of *medium conferens*

⁸⁰⁹ *Summa Halensis* II inq. IV tract. 3 qu. 4 memb 2 cap. 1 art 1 co: "Tenendum est igitur quod cognitio status innocentiae media est inter cognitionem status gloriae et status miseriae, sicut et locus paradisi medius est inter hanc vallem miseriae et patriam caelestem, et quemadmodum paradisi terrestris plus se tenet cum terra quam cum caelo, sic Adae cognitio sive status innocentiae plus conformis est cognitioni status praesentis quam futuri." *Summa*, vol. 2, 765b.

⁸¹⁰ *Summa Halensis* II inq. IV tract. 3 qu. 4 memb 2 cap. 1 art. 1 co: "Dicit enim Dionysius, in libro de mystica theologia, quod excellentissimus modus contemplandi est ignote ascendere, quia nec ipse Moyses Deum valuit videre, et ideo introductus dicitur fuisse in caliginem." *Summa*, vol. 2, 765a.

⁸¹¹ The other use of the argument was a spiritual one: in the affective tradition, it was used to deny the immediate cognition of God through what was called "contemplation," making the case for an immediate cognition through *affectus*. On these questions see the chapter on the spiritual literature.

⁸¹² "Non est ergo intelligendum quod homo in statu innocentiae videret Deum in sua essentia sive facie ad faciem, sed in quadam claritate non obnubilata, in qua quidem claritate longe manifestius apparuit et cernebatur Deus quam in speculo et in aenigmate. Unde illa evidenter visionis in quamdam certitudinem scientiae inducebat, secundum Hugonem." *Summa Halensis* II inq. IV tract. 3 qu. 4 memb 2 cap. 1 art. 1 co, *Summa*, 765b.

⁸¹³ Such an abstract and epistemological usage of *medium* is not a novelty: from the 1220s onwards, discussions on the beatific vision and *raptus* created the abstract meaning for the term; in the present case its application to the exegesis of the *sine medio* passage is the unusual one.

(namely, *medium disponens* and *medium deducens*).⁸¹⁴ *Medium disponens* is the means that makes the eschatological vision of God possible (*medium impediens* is a medium that prevents vision). With three substantially different concepts subsumed under the general term *medium*, the hermeneutical problem of *sine medio* is easily solved. The *medium* missing in the prelapsarian cognition (that is, “vision”) of God was the one that makes the eschatological vision possible. The twelfth-century sentence *sine medio videbat*, in its original context, meant an immediate vision of Adam (even if the details of that immediacy were not elaborated); now it became translated as *sine medio disponente videbat*, meaning anything *except* the immediate vision.⁸¹⁵

The sets of arguments

Giving 8 arguments for Adam’s face-to-face vision of God and 7 *sed contra* arguments, the *Summa* presents the first (and an unusually rich) catalogue of arguments. Discussing the same issue, earlier and contemporaneous *Sentences* commentaries had no such sets of arguments; the later ones significantly reduce the number of both types of arguments, and often repeat arguments presented first here – which also permits us to give an overview of them. The sole point of all these arguments is to create a counterbalance for the actual doctrine expounded in the *quaestio*. No one ever stated what these arguments want us to believe – that Adam saw God as the Blessed do (which is the meaning of seeing “face to face”) – not even Hugh of Saint-Victor. The arguments for Adam’s face-to-face vision are the following:

- 1) Hugh of Saint-Victor, *De sacramentis* I, vi, 14 (the *Summa* quotes Hugh’s words in an abbreviated form). The argument (abbreviated as *Cognovit homo* argument) runs thus: Hugh explicitly states that Adam saw the manifest God; however, seeing the manifest God is seeing God face to face; therefore Adam saw God face to face.
- 2) Exodus 33:11: God talked to Moses face to face; if Moses saw God after the Fall, the prelapsarian Adam must also have seen God face to face, as he was in a superior state.
- 3) Numbers 12:8. Another argument drawn from Moses’ life, confirming the previous one: Moses saw God without an enigma or figures – that is, not through the creatures.
- 4) The *spiritual paradise* argument: Adam was not only in a corporeal but also in a spiritual paradise where his mind enjoyed God (a position usually supported by John Damascenus, *De fide orthodoxa* II, xi); however, enjoying God means a face-to-face vision.
- 5) The *Immediate amabat* argument: before the Fall Adam loved God immediately; through the analogy between love (and *afectus*) and cognition (and *intellectus*), he must have also seen God.
- 6) *Omnis anima recta desiderat Deum videre in se*. The argument is based on the assumption that the soul desires to see God (in a later form, the soul *naturaliter* desires to see God). The *Summa* couples this argument with another one (which also became common later), from Augustine (*Civ. Dei* XIX, xv): whatever Adam wanted to do in Paradise he was able to do; therefore he must have seen God.
- 7) Another argument from Augustine’s concept of Paradise, *Civ. Dei* XIV, x: whatever the good will needed was present in Paradise; therefore, not even the vision of God was lacking.

⁸¹⁴ *Summa Halensis* II, inq. IV tract 3 qu. 4 memb 2 cap. 1 art. 2 ad 2 (*Summa*, 769b); in Bonaventure, the terminology for the same concepts is *medium disponens*, *deducens* and *deferens*: *In II Sent.* dist. 23 art. 2 qu. 3 ad 7, Quar. II, 546.

⁸¹⁵ The other arguments dispersed in the responses and in the subsequent *articulus* (art. 2) are far too many, and too unimportant, to be presented here in minute detail. The ad 3 makes a distinction between seeing *per aenigma*, *per figuram* and *visione intellectuali*; the same response also gives a double interpretation of *videre sicuti est* as *per speciem* and *per effectum* (creating for the clearly eschatological locus a non-eschatological reading); ad 5 introduces the notion, supported with Saint Bernard’s authority, that God can be immediately loved (but not seen). Later another distinction is made on vision: there exists a vision of faith, a vision of contemplation, a vision as *apparitio* and the face-to-face vision. (memb 2 cap. 1 art. 2 co, *Summa*, 768)

8) The *Nihil propinquius* argument: there is nothing closer to the human mind than God, especially if the original sin has not clouded the soul. The argument may derive from both Augustine and the *Liber de spiritu et anima*; another common variant of it is that *nihil est medium inter Deum et mentem*.

From the seven counter-arguments (*sed contra*), only the first five demand attention.⁸¹⁶ These arguments support the position that a vision of God is impossible in this life.

- 1) Exodus 33:20, *non videbit me homo et vivet*.
- 2) John 1:18, *Deum nemo vidit unquam*.
- 3) The *Visio Dei tota merces* argument. A very popular argument later, derived from Augustine: the vision of God is a reward.⁸¹⁷ The *Summa* combines it with another argument: whoever sees God cannot fall; therefore Adam could not have had the vision of God (since he fell).
- 4) The uncreated light is the perfect pleasure, from which no one can turn away; therefore Adam could not have seen it (since he turned away).
- 5) The *Via et patria* argument. There are two *status* and, accordingly, two forms of vision; the *viator* Adam could not have seen God as the Blessed do. The argument presupposes that there are only two *status* and two visions (which is consensual after the elimination of *visio mediastina*); this latter proposition may also serve as a *sed contra* argument.⁸¹⁸

Heterodox positions and the last connoisseurs of Hugh

Regarding Adam's prelapsarian cognition, the commentaries of Odo, Albert, Rufus, Fishacre and the *Summa Halensis* presented different theological positions of their own. The *Summa* is a particularly valuable source, because its theological censure also documented three rejected positions on the same issue. Not much can be known about these three positions. The *Summa* does not give names, but the way in which the positions are introduced (with *dixerunt* and *ponunt*) suggests that these positions were actually taught by theologians of the closer past; when later Bonaventure transcribes these censures, he speaks in a more neutral and theoretical tone only about various *modus dicendi*. We may assume, therefore, that the three positions preserved here originated in the exegesis of the *Sentences* (since this particular issue existed only in this context); they were probably real positions held by some masters and they belonged to the period before the *Summa Halensis* was written. It must be also admitted that no extant *Sentences* interpretation contains doctrines similar to the first or third positions; the second one, however, is reminiscent of Fishacre's commentary (which was contemporaneous with the *Summa*).

The discussion of the rejected positions in the *Summa Halensis* forms a pedagogical excursus before the doctrinal part of the *quaestio*. The author of the *Summa* first says that there is a partial consensus on the issue of Adam's prelapsarian cognition of God. "Almost everyone states that the cognition Adam had about God was an intermediary one between the cognition of the state of misery and the cognition of the state of the glory," he writes; the dissent derives from the

⁸¹⁶ Arguments 6) and 7), rather strangely, argue for the incognoscibility of the divine substance. The sc 6 argues that the knowing one must have command (*potentia*) over the known one (which is impossible as God infinitely surpasses the creature); sc 7 argues that the knowing one must be proportionate to the known one, but nothing can make us proportionate to the "highest light" which always exceeds us infinitely. The refutation of these arguments must have been an important issue around the 1241/1244 condemnations. *Summa*, vol. 2, 764.

⁸¹⁷ The source may be the *Enarr. in Ps 90*, sermo 2 or *De Trin.* I, ix.

⁸¹⁸ See, for example, Albert the Great, *Summa theol.* pars II [tract. XIV], qu. 89 memb. 2, sc 4.

various interpretations of that intermediary cognition (*media cognitio*).⁸¹⁹ Then the *Summa* presents three problematic positions, and corrects them by orthodox explanations; finally it gives its own position (discussed above). The three positions deviate in various ways from the accepted one.

1) The first position (marked as heretical) is an extension of the doctrine on the radical incognoscibility of God to the prelapsarian state. According to this position, God cannot be seen immediately in his essence at all (neither in *via* nor in *patria*); he can be seen only in theophanies (described as “small lights” and “inflowings of light”), insofar as he grants this cognition.⁸²⁰ The heretical position agrees with the orthodox one insofar as it denies Adam’s immediate vision of God, but it is heretical, as it generally denies the possibility of such vision. The doctrine of radical incognoscibility of God was condemned in Paris in 1241 and 1244.

2) The second rejected position speaks of grades of intellectual vision, and can be outlined thus:

- God in himself is, was and will be visible to the purified mind (*purgatis mentibus*) in the present, the prelapsarian and the blessed conditions alike;
- between these forms of vision there is no essential difference; their difference means only a difference of degree, according to the grades of perfection and clarity;
- the cause of the difference is the body, which demands the soul’s administration;
- hence, Adam’s vision of God was less excellent than that of the Blessed but more excellent than the way in which “the saintly men see him among the present misery.”⁸²¹

The presentation of the rejected doctrine in the *Summa* is followed by naming its sources: passages from Augustine’s *De Trinitate*.⁸²² The reason of rejection here is that such a position does not harmonise with the “sayings of the Saints” (*dictis sanctorum*). These sayings are represented by authorities asserting the invisibility of God in the contemplation of this life – the *Mystical Theology* of Dionysius the Areopagite, Gregory the Great and a consensual interpretation of 2Cor 5:7 (*per fidem ambulamus non per speciem*).

Even if such presentations of rejected doctrines may distort the original, it is hard to overlook the remarkable similarity between this position and the doctrines held by the two Oxford

⁸¹⁹ See *Summa Halensis* II inq. IV tract III qu. 4 memb 2 cap. 1 art 1 co: “Respondeo: ad predictorum intelligentiam notandum quod fere omnes ponunt cognitionem, quam habebat Adam de Deo, mediam fuisse inter cognitionem status miseriae et cognitionem status gloriae; sed in modo ponendi multa est differentia.” *Summa* vol. 2, 764.

⁸²⁰ “Quidam [...] dixerunt Deum nunquam in se sive in sua essentia videri nec in via nec in patria [...] putantes quod Deus immediate et in sua essentia videri non possit propter improprietatem lucis increatae ad oculum mentis creatae. Sed dicunt quod Deus per quasdam luminosas influentias sive lucubrationes, id est parvas luces, videri habet [...] Et in iis influentiis dicunt Deum in iis statibus videri magis clare et minus clare, secundum quod Deus magis se oculo mentis creatae vult temperare et clarioribus theophaniis ostendere. – Sed ista positio haeretica est.” *Summa*, vol. 2, 765b.

⁸²¹ *Summa Halensis* II, inq. IV tract. III qu. iv (517) membr. 2 cap. 1 art. 1 co: “Item, alii dixerunt [cf. Bonaventure: Secundus modus dicendi est] quod Deus a purgatis mentibus non solum in patria, sed etiam in statu innocentiae et in statu viae in se ipso videri habet; nec est differentia nisi in gradibus, quia clarius et perfectius in statu gloriae videbitur et minus perfecte in statu innocentiae et minime in statu naturae lapsae. Differentia autem istorum graduum venit ex hoc quod anima in statu gloriae est omnino a sarcina corporis absoluta aut omnino habet corpus spirituale, quod nullo modo impediatur ipsam quin possit immediate in Deum tendere et secundum totum suum posse. In statu vero naturae lapsae, quia habet corpus corruptibile et animale, impeditur et aggravatur ex terrena inhabitatione, ne possit in ipsam lucem intendere perfecte. In statu vero naturae institutae medio modo se habebat, quia corpus Adae, etsi non esset subiectum necessitati moriendi et passibilitati, erat tamen indigens alimoniis et oportebat animam circa regimen et vegetationem sui corporis aliquando occupari, et ideo nec adeo excellenter intuebatur primus homo Deum sicut beati intuentur in gloria, nec adeo exiliter sicut viri sancti intuentur in praesenti miseria. Hanc autem positionem ex auctoritatibus Augustini volunt elicere, qui dicit in libro De Trinitate scilicet VIII quod etiam in praesenti vita potest homo ‘notiorem habere Deum quam fratrem’; et docet in eodem per contuitum veritatis et bonitatis intueri Deum; et etiam alibi dicit quod ‘a purgatissimis mentibus cernitur.’ – Haec autem positio non est sustinenda quia auctoritatibus sanctorum non consonat” (*Summa*, vol. 2, 764-765); compare to Bonaventure, *In II Sent.* dist. 23 art. 2 qu. 3 concl. 22, Quar. II, 544.

⁸²² According to the Quaracchi editors of Bonaventure, *De Trin.* VIII, viii, 12 (*notiorem potest*), I, ii, 4 (*a purgatissimis*) and VIII, ii, 3 (*per contuitum*).

theologians the Dominican Richard Fishacre and the Franciscan Richard Rufus.⁸²³ The other remarkable feature of this account is that it outlines a strongly Augustinian position, formulated in terms that might have been archaic (if not anachronistic) in the 1240s. This position simply assumes that intellectual vision does reach God directly (in accord with the Augustine of the *De Genesi ad litteram* XII), and disregards all those conceptual developments that had taken place in the Paris schools from the late twelfth century onwards. The position rejected has no reference to the cognition of the *essence* of God (an issue debated already in the 1220s); it does not attempt to subdivide intellectual vision (which was a common practice in the late twelfth century), and it does not distinguish the immediate vision from the vision possible *in statu viae*⁸²⁴ (a common feature of early thirteenth-century theology). To mark the contrast, it must be noted that mid-thirteenth-century theology introduces several distinctions to avoid the possibility of any immediate intellectual vision of God in this life. Such distinctions were unknown to Augustine, but they are present in the *Summa Halensis*. For example, there is intellectual vision of the divine essence (in *patria*) and of some influence or grace (*gratiae vel influentiae*); the intellectual vision in contemplation is not a direct vision but a “mirrored” one,⁸²⁵ or that “seeing God as he is” (*videre sicuti est* 1Jn 3:2) may refer not only to an immediate vision of God, but also to a vision of God in his effects.⁸²⁶

3) The third position is based on the two relevant texts of Hugh (*De sacramentis* I, vi, 14) and Peter Lombard (*Sent.* IV dist. 1). Its central element is that it attributes an immediate and “half-full” (*semiplene*) vision to the prelapsarian Adam:⁸²⁷

Other people say (*alii ponunt*) that in the *patria* God will be seen immediately and fully or perfectly, on the part of the seer; in the state of misery, mediately and to a lesser extent (*diminute*); in the state of innocence in a middle way, it is immediately (*immediate*) and to a lesser extent. “To a lesser extent,” I say, in the state of innocence, because the full and

⁸²³ Madame Faes de Mottoni rightly observes (“La conoscenza,” 16, note 48) the similarity of Rufus’ teaching and Bonaventure’s text: “La somiglianza tra ciò che si legge nel testo di Rufo e ciò che Bonaventura riferisce della seconda posizione mi sembra notevole, per attribuire però la paternità di questa a Rufo occorrono più ampi riscontri e maggiori approfondimenti sui Commenti alle Sentenze dei due francescani.” She, however, ignores Fishacre’s commentary and misses the point that Bonaventure largely copied and summarised the *Summa Halensis*.

⁸²⁴ The *Summa Halensis* describes the position thus: “Item, alii dixerunt quod Deus a purgatis mentibus non solum in patria, sed etiam in statu innocentiae et in statu viae in se ipso videri habet.”

⁸²⁵ Cf. Bonaventure, *In II Sent.* dist. 23 art. 2 qu. 3 ad 3 [sol. 5]: “Et illa [cognitio] quam exspectabat, erat cognitio patriae; illa vero quam habebat, erat contemplatio viae, quae erat visio per speculum. Et si tu quaeras, utrum erat visio intellectualis vel corporalis, dicendum quod intellectualis; sed non ipsius divinae essentiae in se sed alicuius gratiae vel influentiae; et illam in se per experientiam nosse et videre poterat, sicut sentit anima sancta, quando liquefit, cum Sponsus alloquitur eam.” Quar. II, 546.

⁸²⁶ *Summa Halensis* II, inq. IV tract. III qu. iv (517) membr. 2 cap. 1 art. 1 ad 3: “Si obiciatur quod videre aliquid visione intellectuali est videre aliquid sicuti est [...] dicendum quod est ‘videre sicuti est’ duobus modis: uno modo per speciem, et hoc modo neque Moyses nec primus homo vidit Deum; alio modo per effectum.” *Summa*, vol. 2, 766a.

⁸²⁷ “Alii autem ponunt quod in patria videtur Deus immediate et plene sive perfecte, quantum est ex parte videntis; in statu miseriae mediate et diminute; in statu innocentiae medio modo, scilicet immediate et diminute. Diminute, dico, in statu innocentiae, quia plena visio et perfecta est plena et perfecta remuneratio, quae non competeat meritis primi hominis; immediate autem, quia nullam habebat velaminis interpositionem. Et hoc videntur sentire verba Hugonis dicentis quod ‘cognovit homo creatorem suum non ea cognitione qua Deus modo a credentibus’ etc. ut supra; per hoc quod dicit ‘sed ea qua tunc per praesentiam contemplationis scienti manifestus cernebatur,’ insinuat nullum fuisse velamen ex parte contemplantis, quia tunc est praesentia contemplati [*var.* contemplanti] quodam modo in contemplatione, quando nullum velamen ex parte contemplantis impedit quin templum templo coniungatur. Et hoc idem vult Magister, IV libro Sententiarum, dist. 1 cap. TRIPLICI AUTEM, dicens ‘Homo, qui ante peccatum deum sine medio videbat, per peccatum a Deo abiit.’ Non est ergo intelligendum quod homo [...] videret Deum in sua essentia sive facie ad faciem, sed in quadam claritate non obnubilata, in qua quidem claritate longe manifestius apparuit et cernebatur Deus quam in speculo et in aenigmate. Unde illa evidentia visionis in quadam certitudinem scientiae inducebat, secundum Hugonem.” *Summa Halensis* II inq. IV tract III qu. 4 memb 2 cap. 1 art 1 co (*Summa*, vol. 2, 765). For the word *velamen*, cf. Richard, *Benjamin major* III, ix.

perfect vision is the full and perfect reward, which was not proper yet to the merits of the first man, and “immediately,” because he had no interposition of any veil.

What remarkable is here is that the unknown theologians, operating with the concepts of immediacy and plenitude of the vision of God, have understood the logic of the Victorine doctrine well. Moreover, they were also able to connect Hugh’s doctrine to the similar passages of the *Sentences* of the Lombard, and understood the same concept behind them (*et hoc idem vult Magister*).⁸²⁸ Hugh’s concept was that Adam contemplated God directly and immediately (as there was nothing yet that could separate them) but not yet perfectly – and this concept returns here, through a later terminology. The emphasis is, rightly, laid on the immediacy: the unknown theologians paraphrase the term *sine medio* with its exact equivalent *immediate*. This is a unique moment in the doctrinal history of the issue. In the history of *Sentences* interpretation no one dared (and will not dare) to read the expression *sine medio* in its original, adverbial sense, as “immediately.” From its very first interpretation, the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss*, onwards, its reading is always “without *medium*”; the thirteenth-century *Sentences* commentaries only refine the meaning of *medium*.

It is perhaps unnecessary to say that the position of these unknown theologians is substantially incompatible with any other Scholastic interpretation. Albert and the *Summa Halensis* itself conceive Adam’s vision as an indirect (mediated) vision through a mirror; the rejected position states its opposite, without the imagery of a mirror at all. The text of the *Summa Halensis* gives no clues to the identification of these theologians. Seen in a broader historical context, the position is a proper rendition of the fundamental Victorine ideas: these unknown theologians seem to be the last connoisseurs of the Hugonian anthropology.

III. After the *Summa Halensis*: a dozen variants of the same

The *Summa Halensis* presented the sole acceptable theological position regarding the prelapsarian cognition of God. The later works, written between the 1250s and c. 1300 and discussed here, add almost nothing to the issue. When the mass production of *Sentences* commentaries began in the 1250s, the doctrine concerning the prelapsarian cognition of God was already defined. The change from free theological opinion to a defined doctrine also defined the task and the approach of the later theologians.

The most important change is that commenting on the *Sent.* II. dist. 23 no longer had any exegetical intention. While the first commentators saw here a problem to investigate, later theologians did not ponder the meaning of the text. They pose and answer a stereotypical question, in *quaestio* format. The question is *Whether Adam saw God per essentiam* (that is, whether Adam saw God in the same way as the Blessed do) and the answer is always negative: Adam saw God “not as the Blessed do,” “not immediately,” “not face to face,” “not in his essence.” This position is repeated in later sources, often with the same arguments and *sed contra* arguments. Practically speaking, all the later interpretations give the same doctrine in the same form: the difference lies in the various ways and means through which the authors present the same solution. The overview of the sources shows that the issue was not particularly interesting anymore. It was regularly discussed in *Sentences* commentaries, but it was debated only once in open discussion (*quaestiones disputatae*), in Thomas Aquinas’ series of *quaestiones* called *De veritate* (qu. 18). It also appears in

⁸²⁸ In the Ms London BL Add. 10960 (*Sentences* codex, XIII. s.) I found glosses which give cross-references to Hugh’s work. The glosses on II dist. 23 “Cognitionem quoque” reads glo. suprascr.: “hu<go> li
o p<rim>o par<te> .VI. ca<pitulo>o XIII” (fol. 168v); on IV dist. 1 “Triplici autem” reads glo. suprascr. “hu<go> de sac<ramentis>. li
o p<rim>o par<te> IX – ca<pitulo> III” (fol. 298rb).

two theological *summae* (by Aquinas and Albert the Great): these works were a more independent form of theological summary than the *Sentences* commentaries.

In these sources, the *quaestio* format no longer served the investigation but the presentation of a doctrine, and that doctrine was given before the commentary was actually composed. The formal difference of theological genres means, practically, nothing for the issue: the very same question is asked and discussed in the commentaries and the *summae* (both genres composed of *quaestiones*); Aquinas' qu. 18 *de veritate* is only a particularly long elaboration of the same question, with an unusually inflated argument section of 16 arguments (among the commentaries, the 8 arguments of the *Summa Halensis* remained unsurpassed).

Given the question to be asked and given the logic of the *quaestio* format, all these works present only two positions: the valid one, elaborated through the *sed contra* arguments, the responses and the *corpus* (the doctrinal part proper) – and the contrary position, presented in the arguments and attributing a *per essentiam* vision to Adam. This later position is merely an artificial construction: its function is to be refuted, and it is never presented as a real position held by anyone. References to two rejected positions, a *per essentiam* vision *in via* or a vision only in theophany, appear, but only rarely.⁸²⁹

The internal logic of the composition of the *quaestio* defined the place and the function of Hugh's text as well. The *Summa Halensis* presented a Hugonian-Lombardian position among the rejected ones: apart from the two derivative commentaries (by Bonaventure and Rufus), this position does not appear anymore. The lemma of Hugh's text received its regular place among the arguments for Adam's *per essentiam* vision, and became reinterpreted in the response section. Sometimes the same lemma received another function, since commentaries introduced the question whether Adam had faith in the Creator. The consensual thirteenth-century doctrine is that Adam had such faith; therefore Hugh's text (which explicitly denied it) went again among the arguments and was reinterpreted in the response section.⁸³⁰

The new elements in these commentaries are relatively few and not substantial. It is a general trend that dist. 23 of the second book gradually becomes the place where issues of the prelapsarian state and cognition were treated. The one-sentence reference of *Sent.* IV dist. 1 (speaking of Adam's *sine medio* vision) is also treated here, as commentaries on the beginning of Book Four grow into treatises on sacraments. The issue is discussed in a standard *quaestio* format; the only change is that some late authors give responses not only to the arguments but also to the *sed contra* arguments.⁸³¹ In a few cases also a new, epistemological approach appears: Thomas Aquinas and Guillelmus de Mara describe the prelapsarian cognition with terms of philosophical epistemology. This approach is justified to them because they conceive the cognition of God as a *vision* of God – and they transfer the epistemological theories of (corporeal) vision to the cognition of God. These philosophical descriptions, however, do not affect the theological doctrine.

The remainder of the present chapter attempts to give an overview of the theological literature discussing the prelapsarian cognition of God. This picture remains necessarily incomplete, as not all the commentaries once written were accessible to me, but the sources presented still can

⁸²⁹ See Aquinas, *Scriptum super Sent.* II dist. 23 qu. 2 art. 1 co (both positions); *De veritate* qu. 18 art. 1 co (against a *per essentiam* vision *in via*); William de la Mare OFM, *Scriptum in Sent.* II dist. 23 qu. 6 co [respondeo]: “dicunt aliqui quod numquam videtur Deus nisi per quasdam theophanias” (ed. Kraml, 296); Hannibaldus de Hannibaldis OP, *Comm. in Sent.* II, dist. 23 qu. 2 co [responsio]: “quidam dixerunt Adam in primo statu Deum per essentiam vidisse, non tamen ita clare sicut in patria videbitur” (Aquinas, ed. Parma, vol. XXII, 183a).

⁸³⁰ The present investigation cannot cover the history of this question. It must suffice to note that the question of Adam's assumed faith, usually discussed directly after his vision of God, is not based directly on the text of the *Sentences*, and it does not emerge in the early commentaries (not even in Aquinas' *Scriptum*). It is present, however, in the *Summa Halensis*, and Aquinas' Qu. 18 *De veritate*, and in several later commentaries.

⁸³¹ Such are the commentary of Guillelmus de Mare (1268-70) and the *Summa* of Albert the Great (c. 1270-1280).

give a general impression of the issue.⁸³² The present study's focus being on the afterlife of the Victorine doctrine on Adam and the doctrinal development of the prelapsarian cognition, a detailed analysis of these works would be pointless. Besides the question asked, also most of the arguments and counter-arguments are stereotypical: these I give in a form as short as possible. The principle of the presentation is the chronological order, as far it can be established and presented in the following table:

A chronology of the sources treated	
1250-1252	Bonaventure OFM, <i>In Sent.</i>
1253-1255	Richard Rufus OFM, <i>In Sent. (Lectura Parisiensis)</i>
1253/54-1257	Thomas Aquinas OP, <i>Scriptum in Sent.</i>
c. 1256	Thomas Aquinas, <i>De veritate quaestio</i> 18.
1257-1259	Petrus de Tarantasia OP, <i>In Sent.</i>
1258-1260	Hannibaldus de Hannibaldis OP, <i>In Sent.</i>
1265-1268	Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa theologiae</i> pars prima, qu. 94 art. 1
1268-1270	Guillelmus de Mara OFM, <i>Scriptum in II Sent.</i>
c. 1270-1280	Albert the Great OP, <i>Summa theologiae</i> tract. III and XIV
c. 1269-1272	Aegidius Romanus (Giles of Rome) OESA, <i>In Sent.</i>
1270-1272	Romanus de Roma OP, <i>In Sent.</i>
1282-1284	Richardus de Mediavilla OFM, <i>In Sent.</i>
1300-1303	James of Metz OP, <i>In Sent.</i> (two redactions)

Bonaventure OFM

Bonaventure read the *Sentences* and composed his commentary between 1250 to 1252.⁸³³ While composing it, he certainly had open the commentaries of Odo Rigaldi, Albert and Richard Rufus,⁸³⁴ but the interpretation of the prelapsarian cognition that he gives is almost entirely identical with the *Summa Halensis'* discourse on the same issue. His explanation consists of seven arguments, four *sed contra* arguments; the *corpus* contains an explanation about four doctrinal positions concerning the prelapsarian cognition (of which three are rejected) and a distinction of four modes (*modus*) of knowing God. The responses to the arguments include Bonaventure's doctrine on the Dionysian elevation into unknowing (ad 6) and his doctrine about the different *media* (ad 7). After the responses, the *quaestio* ends with the list of the ten propositions condemned in 1241 and 1244.

Most of the material that Bonaventure presents here is taken, with minor changes, from the two corresponding articles of the *Summa Halensis*.⁸³⁵ From the 7 arguments of Bonaventure, 5 are taken directly from the *Summa*,⁸³⁶ and all the material of the 6 *sed contra* arguments,⁸³⁷ likewise the entire doctrinal part⁸³⁸ and most of the responses to the arguments.⁸³⁹

⁸³² This overview is based on the one hand, Glorieux's and Kaeppli's works and, on the other hand, on printed editions and the Vatican manuscripts I could access at the Vatican Film Library at the Pius XII Memorial Library of the Saint Louis University.

⁸³³ Bonaventure, *In II Sent.* dist. 23 art. 2 qu. 3, Quar. II, 542-547. For an analysis of the text, see Barbara Faes de Mottoni, "La conoscenza di Dio di Adamo innocente nell' *In II Sententiarum* d. 23, a. 2, q. 3 di Bonaventura." *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 91, no. 1-2 (1998): 3-32. Mottoni does not state that Bonaventure's text mostly derived from the *Summa Halensis*.

⁸³⁴ See Bougerol, *Introduction*, 115; for Rufus, see Rega Wood, "Angelic individuation."

⁸³⁵ The material Bonaventure uses is mostly taken from *Summa Halensis* II inq. IV. tract. 3 qu. 4 memb. 2 cap. 1 art. 1 and art. 2 (abbreviated here as art. 1 and art. 2).

⁸³⁶ The seven arguments of Bonaventure are the following: 1) Hugh, *De sacramentis* I, vi, 14; 2) IV. *Sent.* dist. 1; 3) Moses' face-to-face vision (Exod 33:11 combined with Num. 12:3); 4) Adam was in both a spiritual and a corporeal paradise (based on John Damascenus and Augustine); 5) *afflictio* argument; 6) *mente humana nihil propinquius*; 7) a

The originality in Bonaventure's treatment is mostly in his accents, which foreshadows him as a spiritual author. Bonaventure interprets both Hugh's *auctoritas* on Adam's cognition and Lombard's *sine medio* passage as texts regarding contemplation so that in Adam's case it was not a *medium* that was removed but the obscurity of the original sin.⁸⁴⁰ The third *sed contra* argument explains that no one can see God through the act of contemplation (*nullus in praesenti per actum contemplationis Deum videat*) while the response to the fourth argument confirms the superiority of an affective cognition over the intellectual cognition, attributed to Bernard (and taken from the *Summa Halensis*).⁸⁴¹ In the seventh response (ad 7), Bonaventure adds his own remark to a Dionysian reference of the *Summa*, stating that the ultimate form of the desirable and viable spiritual experience is an ecstasy that is an elevation into the Dionysian *caligo* (which is not a vision of God but a replacement of the vision).⁸⁴² All these remarks in the *Sentences* commentary are compatible with the views that Bonaventure held later. The commentary – a work composed as a school assignment, between 1250 and 1252 – contains the fundamentals of such later spiritual works as the *Breviloquium* (1257) and the *Itinerarium* (1259).

Richard Rufus OFM, *Lectura Parisiensis*

In 1253 the Franciscan Richard Rufus of Oxford arrived in Paris for a sojourn of three years. He had already composed a commentary in Oxford, but he wrote another one in Paris, using the recent commentary of Bonaventure. Even though for certain issues that usage meant a critical approach to Bonaventure's arguments,⁸⁴³ Richard's discussion of the prelapsarian cognition is almost entirely a transcript of Bonaventure's text, including the rejection of the three unacceptable positions on the prelapsarian cognition, missing only the list of the ten propositions.⁸⁴⁴ In itself, Richard's second commentary is uninteresting, being a copy, but it gains peculiar value when seen in contrast to his

long argumentation in form of a primitive *quaestio*, arguing that both Adam and the Blessed see God through the some kind of *medium*. Arguments 1 and 3-6 are taken from the *Summa Halensis*, art. 1 arg. 1, 2, 4, 6 and 8.

⁸³⁷ Bonaventure's six *sed contra* arguments: 1) Exod 33; 2) Jn 1:18; 3) Gregory the Great's interpretation of Isaiah 6:1; 4) *visio Dei tota merces*; 5) *lux increata perfecta delectatione delectat*; 6) *status viae et status patriae distincti*. *Sed contra* arguments 1-2 and 4-6 are identical with the *Summa's sed contra* arguments 1-5, the third one is originally an argument against the second rejected position in the *corpus* of art. 1.

⁸³⁸ The presentation of four positions derived from art. 1 co; the doctrine on *quadruplex modus cognoscendi* from art. 2 co (originally *visio multiplex*).

⁸³⁹ Bonaventure does not elaborate the responses ad 1-3 (*iam patet responsio*); ad 4 is based on *Summa*, art. 1 ad 5; ad 5 is *quasi verbatim* from art. 1 ad 6; ad 6 is partly from art. 1 ad 8; ad 7 is taken from art. 2 ad 2.

⁸⁴⁰ Bonaventure, *In II Sent.* dist. 23 art. 2 qu. 3 ad 1-2-3: "Omnes enim intelliguntur de contemplationis cognitione, non per remotionem cuiuscumque medii, sed per remotionem velaminis et obscuritatis, qualis est in his qui aliquo vitio peccati infecti sunt." Quar. II, 545.

⁸⁴¹ ad 4: "Amor enim, sicut vult Bernardus, multo plus se extendit quam visio [...] Et ipse etiam dicit in libro de amore Dei, quod ubi deficit intellectus, ubi proficit affectus." Quar. II, 545.

⁸⁴² Bonaventure, *In II Sent.* dist. 23 art. 2 qu. 3 ad 6: "Concedo tamen nihilominus, quod oculi aspectus in Deum figi potest, ita quod ad nihil aliud aspiciat; attamen non perspiciet vel videbit ipsius lucis claritatem, immo potius elevabitur in caliginem [...] et vocat istam cognitionem doctam ignorantiam. Haec enim est, in qua mirabiliter inflamat affectio, sicut eis patet, qui aliquoties consueverunt ad anagogicos elevari excessus. Hunc modum cognoscendi arbitror cuilibet viro justo in via esse quaerendum; quodsi Deus aliquid ultra faciet, hoc privilegium est speciale, non legis communis." Quar. II, 546. Cf. *Summa Halensis*, art. 1 co, *Summa*, vol. 2, 765, as above.

⁸⁴³ See Rega Wood's "Angelic individuation according to Richard Rufus, St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas Aquinas," in *Individuum und Individualität im Mittelalter* (Miscellanea Mediaevalia 24) (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1996), 209-229.

⁸⁴⁴ Rufus uses the same arguments and counter-arguments, in the same order, as Bonaventure: the difference is that he omits from the arguments the Lombard's *sine medio* and the *nihil Deo propinquius* arguments (arg. 2 and 6 of Bonaventure). Ms Vat. lat. 12993 fol. 231v-232v: "___ ergo alia quod a purgatis mentibus ___ statu videri [fol. 232ra] potest deus in seipso, nec est differentia nisi in gradu, quod clarius et perfectius in statu glorie videbitur, et minus perfecte in alio statu; et hec differentia graduum provenit ex hoc quod anima in statu glorie omnino est a sarcina corporis absoluta, quia corpus spirituale habet quod non impedit. In statu alio corpus corruptibile et animale impedit. Sed hec positio dictis sanctorum non satis consonat."

first commentary, the *Lectura Oxoniensis*. Practically speaking, Rufus replaces his earlier interpretation with an entirely different one, copying from Bonaventure, without any reference to his earlier position – while that earlier position is remarkably similar to one of the unacceptable positions on the list copied from Bonaventure.

Thomas Aquinas: *Scriptum in Sententias* and *Qu. 18 de veritate*

Thomas Aquinas discussed the questions of prelapsarian cognition three times, first in his *Sentences* commentary (*Scriptum in Sententias*, 1253/54-1257), then among the *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate* (qu. 18, c. 1256) and lately in the *Summa theologiae* (I qu. 94, 1265-68). The most important novelty of Aquinas' commentary lies in the philosophical-epistemological approach to the prelapsarian cognition copied by several later commentaries. Thomas uses traditional theological arguments, but his overall position is based on the epistemological model of bodily vision – as it was understood in the 1250s. Thomas interprets the metaphor of “seeing God” according to the paradigm of physical vision. In the *Sentences* commentary, the elements of this interpretation are separated: his distinction between the three various forms of vision (*per essentiam* and two forms of a vision *per effectum*) is presented in *Super Sententias* II dist. 23 qu. 2 art. 1 co, while the epistemological background for this interpretation – the doctrine on three *media* (a *medium* “*sub quo*,” a *medium* “*quo*” and a *medium* “*in quo*”) – is presented in *Super Sententias* IV. dist. 49 (qu. 2 art. 1 ad 15).

In this context, it is not the term *medium* that is unusual, but the meaning that Thomas gives to it in its various occurrences. Already the *Summa Halensis* introduced the notion of *medium disponens, deducens, impediens* – but these in terms *medium* had a general meaning, specified by adjectives, according to its function. *Medium deducens*, for example, means that medium that leads to the cognition of God like a mirror. In contrast, in Thomas' case the term *medium* receives a concrete meaning – in its various forms, it refers to those epistemological *media* that describe the process of vision. The three forms of *medium* are defined by a particular model of perception: Thomas makes it explicit that the same three *media* may be discerned in *any* forms of vision.⁸⁴⁵ Thomas' theory is fully developed in his *Sentences* commentary and in the *quaestio 18 de veritate*. Later several authors follow Aquinas' lead by arguing with the epistemological paradigm. The introduction of that merely philosophical means into the discourse, however, is not necessary: other authors produce purely theological interpretations.

Interpreting the *Sent.* II dist. 23 Aquinas first offers five arguments for Adam's *per essentiam* vision: 1) IV. *Sent.* dist. 1; 2) *inter mentem et Deum nihil medium* (Augustine); 3) 1Cor 13: 12; 4) the *afflictio* argument; 5) *naturaliter ordinatur ad videndum*. The *sed contra* arguments are 1) Jn 1: 18 (*Deum nemo vidit unquam*) and 2) *visio Dei est tota merces*. The *corpus* explains the way in which Adam could have seen God, and it ends with a short excursus against two false positions, known already from the *Summa Halensis* (which was written a decade earlier). One is the heretical proposition that God's essence cannot be seen ever; the other position, contrary to the “authority of the saints,” is that God's essence can always be seen. Aquinas' argument against the two propositions repeats those two *auctoritates* that the *Summa Halensis* introduced against them, of Dionysius and Gregory the Great.⁸⁴⁶

⁸⁴⁵ Thomas, *De veritate* qu. 18 art. 1 ad 1: “Ad primum igitur dicendum quod in aliqua visione triplex medium considerari potest: unum est medium sub quo videtur, aliud quo videtur, quod est species rei visae; aliud a quo accipitur cognitio rei visae.”

⁸⁴⁶ Thomas, *Super Sententias* II dist. 23 qu. 2 art. 1 co: “Unde patet quod modus quo Adam in primo statu Deum videbat, medius est inter utrumque. Quidam vero aliter dicentes, errant, ponentes, Deum nunquam per essentiam nec in patria nec in via videri: quod haereticum est, et Scripturae contrarium, ut patet 1 Corinth. 13, et 1 Joan. 3. Quidam vero e contrario dicunt, Deum per essentiam in omni statu videri; et his etiam auctoritates sanctorum repugnant; quia Dionysius dicit, quod si aliquis videns Deum scivit quid vidit, non ipsum vidit, sed aliquid eorum quae sunt ejus; et Gregorius dicit, quod quantumcumque homo in statu viae profecerit, ad statum tamen illum contemplationis quo Deus per essentiam videtur, non pertingit.”

The *Quaestio 18* of the collection *De veritate* consists of eight articles discussing the various aspects of the prelapsarian state. The first article is a “de luxe” elaboration of the question whether a *per essentiam* cognition of God was possible in the prelapsarian state. Thomas introduces 16 arguments for a *per essentiam* vision and four *sed contra* arguments;⁸⁴⁷ the solution is based again on the analogy between bodily and intellectual visions and the threefold distinction of the *media*. The fourth argument for Adam’s *per essentiam* vision is taken from Hugh (for the argument’s sake, Thomas equates seeing God *per praesentiam contemplationis* with a *per essentiam* vision).⁸⁴⁸ In the answer, Thomas reinterprets Hugh’s text: in contemplation there is a *medium*, the “light of wisdom” (*lumen sapientiae*): even though it elevates the mind to seeing the divine things, it does not facilitate an immediate vision of the divine essence.⁸⁴⁹

Hannibaldus de Hannibaldis OP

The *Sentences* commentary of Hannibaldus (d. 1272) was written between 1258 and 1260.⁸⁵⁰ It gives a very simple theological interpretation, with three arguments: 1) *IV. Sent. dist. 1*; 2) *1Cor 13:12*; 3) *sicut sensus ad sensibile ita intellectus ad intelligibile*. The two *sed contra* arguments are 1) *Jn 1:18* and 2) *esse viatorem et comprehensorem soli deo Christo convenit*. The solution permits Adam a double cognition through the creatures and an internal hearing or illumination.⁸⁵¹ The solution also contains a reference to a group (*quidam dixerunt*) who held that even in the prelapsarian state God was seen *per essentiam*.⁸⁵² The explicit condemnation of this position is present in the *Summa Halensis* (the second rejected opinion).

Petrus de Tarantasia OP, *In Sent.*

The commentary of the Dominican Petrus de Tarantasia (Peter of Tarantaise, the later Pope Innocent V) was written 1257-1259.⁸⁵³ The very brief commentary represents a purely theological interpretation, without any philosophical demand. Peter gives six arguments for Adam’s *per essentiam* vision: 1) *IV. Sent. dist. 1*; 2) *inter humanam mentem et Deum nihil est medium* (Augustine, *Liber 83 quaestionum*, qu. 51); 3) *animus bene dispositus*; 4) *Quod naturaliter tendit in aliquid coniungitur illi*; 5) *Num. 12* and *major erat cognitio Paradisi quam exilii*; 6) Hugh of Saint-

⁸⁴⁷ The *sed contra* arguments are: 1) *visio Dei est tota merces* (Augustine, *De Trin. I*); 2) *in status viae Deus potest totus diligere sed non totus videri* (“Bernardus”); 3) *even in statu innocentiae anima per corpus deprimebatur*; 4) *Christus solus viator et comprehensor*.

⁸⁴⁸ Thomas, *De veritate* qu. 18 art. 1 arg. 4: “Praeterea, Hugo de Sancto Victore dicit quod homo in statu illo creatorem suum cognoscebat ea cognitione qua tunc per praesentiam contemplationis manifestius cernebatur. Sed videre Deum per praesentiam contemplationis est videre ipsum per essentiam, ut videtur.”

⁸⁴⁹ Thomas, *De veritate* qu. 18 art. 1 ad 4: “Ad quartum dicendum, quod Deus in contemplatione videtur per medium quod est lumen sapientiae mentem elevans ad divina cernenda; non autem ut ipsa divina essentia immediate videatur; et sic per gratiam videtur etiam a contemplativis post statum peccati, quamvis perfectius in statu innocentiae.”

⁸⁵⁰ The commentary of Hannibaldus (inc. *Transite ad me omnes... inter ceteras doctrinas christianae religionis*, (Glorieux RM nr. 19) comments only *Sent. II dist. 23*. Edited in *Sancti Thomae Aquinatis doctoris angelici ordinis praedicatorum opera omnia*, 25 vols (Parma: Petrus Ficcadori, 1852-1873), vol. 22 (1868), here 183ab, also Ms Vat. Ottob. lat. 182 fol. 71vb-72ra.

⁸⁵¹ Hannibaldus, *In II Sent. dist. 23 art. 3 co*: “Unde Adam, qui beatus non erat, deum per essentiam non videbat; habebat autem duplicem cognitionem de deo: unam gratie per internam allocutionem sive illustrationem; aliam nature per creaturas. Non quidem ut ex creaturis in dei cognitionem veniret sicut nos; sed quia in creaturis deum considerabat, quem interiori revelatione plenius cognoscebat.” Ms Vat. Ottob. lat. 182 fol. 72ra.

⁸⁵² Hannibaldus, *In II Sent. dist. 23 art. 3 co*: “¶ Responsio. Dicendum quod quidam dixerunt Adam in primo statu deum per essentiam vidisse, non tamen ita clare sicut in patria videbitur, et ideo non erat beatus. Sed hoc non potest esse, quia distinctio beatus a non beato non sufficienter accipitur per hoc, quod est clarius vel minus clare videre, cum talis [fol. 72r] distinctio et inter ipsos beatos inveniatur.”

⁸⁵³ Edition: *Innocenti Quinti, Pontificis Maximi ex ordine Praedicatorum assumpti, qui antea Petrus de Tarantasia dicebatur, in libros Sententiarum commentaria* [...], 4 vols. Tolosae [Toulouse], 1649-1652 (Reprint: Ridgewood, New Jersey: The Gregg Press, 1964), here *In II Sent. dist. 23 qu. 2 art. 1*, vol. 2, 195-196.

Victor, *De sacramentis* I, vi, 14.⁸⁵⁴ He brings five *sed contra* arguments: 1) Exod 33; 2) Gregory the Great, *Quantumcumque mens*; 3) the distinction between the two states (*Videre Deum facie ad faciem status est comprehensoris*); 4) Adam's intellect was not in the ultimate potentiality of the created intellect (*in supremo posse intellectus creati*); 5) *Qui semel immediate coniungitur ultimo fini amplius non ab eo separatur*. The solution is based on the interpretation of 1Cor 13:12 such as the *Summa Halensis* had: Adam had seen God in the mirror of the creatures without the obscurity caused by the original sin.⁸⁵⁵ Accordingly, Hugh's text is reinterpreted as referring to a contemplation of God in the soul and in the created world.⁸⁵⁶

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*

The *pars prima* of Thomas' *Summa theologiae* was written c. 1265-1268, roughly a decade later than his commentary and Qu. 18 *De veritate*. It presents in *pars prima*, qu. 94 art. 1, the issue of the prelapsarian cognition in a slightly different way from that in his earlier works. The question is the same, but the arguments had a different structure: in the argument section it is not single and direct *auctoritates* that support the *per essentiam* vision of Adam (as usual) but elaborate and rational arguments, which are supported by multiple *auctoritates*. Thomas offers three arguments: 1) the first man in Paradise had a blessed (*beata*) life, and hence also saw God (a position supported by John Damascenus, *De fide orth.* II and Augustine, *De civ. Dei* XIV); 2) Adam had whatever the well-ordained love may demand (supported by Augustine, *De civ. Dei* XIV); 3) the *per essentiam* vision is a *visio sine medio* and without an enigma, supported by *Sent.* IV dist. 1 and Augustine, *De Trinitate* XV (enigma and obscurity coming from the original sin). The single *sed contra* argument is based on 1Cor 15 (the animal state is before the spiritual one). In the *corpus*, Aquinas permits a possible *per essentiam* vision for Adam's *sopor*, in rapture. In the third response (ad 3) he introduces two new epistemological concepts for *medium*, seemingly independent of his other interpretations presented elsewhere.⁸⁵⁷

Guillelmus de Mara OFM, *Scriptum in Sent.*

The commentary of Guillelmus de Mara (William de la Mare), written c. 1268-1270, is a particularly philosophical discussion of the problem, representing the late phase of the discussion of the prelapsarian cognition.⁸⁵⁸ The arguments, both for and against a *per essentiam* vision of God, are presented in a contracted form, as Guillelmus gives usually only the incipits of the *auctoritates*⁸⁵⁹ and at the end of the *quaestio*, he answers all the arguments, also including the *sed*

⁸⁵⁴ Petrus quotes Hugh in a contracted form: "Cognovit Adam [Hugh: ergo homo] creatorem suum non ea cognitione [quae foris ex auditu solo percipitur, sed ea quae potius intus per inspirationem ministratur. Non ea quidem – missing in Peter] qua Deus modo a credentibus absens fide quaeritur; sed ea qua tunc per praesentiam contemplationis scienti manifestius cernebatur." PL 176: 271C, *Innocenti* vol. 2, 195. Hugh's words in the same lemmatic form are quoted by the *Summa Halensis* and Bonaventure's commentary.

⁸⁵⁵ Petrus de Tarantasia, *In II Sent.* dist. 23 qu. 1 art. 1 co: "in statu quidem coeli videtur Deus facie ad faciem sine speculo et in aenigmate; in statu vero mundi, in speculo tantum et in aenigmate ut distinguit Apostolus 1. Cor. 13. videmus nunc per speculum et in aenigmate etc. Unde in statu Paradisi videbatur Deus medio modo, scilicet per speculum creaturae, sine aenigmate obscuritatis alicuius." *Innocenti* vol. 2, 196.

⁸⁵⁶ Petrus de Tarantasia, *In II Sent.* dist. 23 qu. 1 art. 1 ad 6: "Hugo. Resp. Cognitionem manifestam vocat non cognitionem immediatae visionis, sed clarae et indubitatae contemplationis qua videbat Deum relucens in se ut in imagine, et in mundo exteriori ut in vestigio." *Innocenti* vol. 2, 196.

⁸⁵⁷ Thomas, *Summa theologiae* pars I qu. 94 art. 1 ad 3: "duplex est medium. Quoddam, in quo simul videtur quod per medium videri dicitur; sicut cum homo videtur per speculum, et simul videtur cum ipso speculo. Aliud medium est, per cuius notitiam in aliquid ignotum devenimus; sicut est medium demonstrationis. Et sine tali medio Deus videbatur, non tamen sine primo medio."

⁸⁵⁸ Edition: *Guillelmus de Mare. Scriptum in secundum librum sententiarum*. Herausgegeben von Hans Kraml (Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften – Beck, 1995), here *In II Sent.* dist. 23 qu. 6, 296-299.

⁸⁵⁹ Guillelmus, *Scriptum In II Sent.* dist. 23 qu. 6 [arg. 1-4] and [sc. 1-2] are the following: "Queritur utrum homo in statu illo Deum videret per essentiam. Videtur quod sic: [arg. 1] Hugo, li. 1. p. 6. c. 14: 'Cognovit homo' etc. [arg. 2]

contras. He brings four arguments for Adam's *per essentiam* vision: 1) Hugh, *De sacramentis* I, vi, 14 (*Cognovit homo*); 2) if Paul saw God *per essentiam*, then Adam too (supported by Augustine, *Ad Orosium* and *De Gen. ad litt.* XII); 3) Peter Lombard, IV. *Sent.* dist. 1; 4) *diligeat per essentiam*. The two *sed contra* arguments are 1) Exod 33 (*non videbit me homo et vivet*) and 2) Gregory the Great, *Quicquid de illo conspicitur adhuc non est ipse sed sub illo*. (*Homilia xiv in Ezechielem*).

The *corpus* of the *quaestio* is a depository of epistemological doctrines that debate Adam's cognition in various paradigms of vision. The first position of "someone" (*aliqui*) that Guillelmus presents is that God can be seen only in certain theophanies; Gregory rejects it not by virtue of the condemnation of 1241/1244 but through the authority of Gregory the Great. Another position concerns the *per essentiam* vision in the *patria*, which, according to "someone," takes place in such a way that the essence of God is both the object seen and the *ratio videndi*. Guillelmus remarks that this position is detested by many (*non placet multis*); himself also rejects it in favour of a different model where a likeness received is necessary for that vision. Finally he turns to the problem of the prelapsarian cognition, presenting two positions. The first interprets Adam's vision as a momentary vision, as in his *sopor*; here Guillelmus tentatively permits a vision of God without a separation from the senses. The other approach to the theme (*Aliter dici potest*) is, without naming its source, the theory of Aquinas: God can be seen *per essentiam* or through a likeness and an effect made either in the mind or outside the mind. Guillelmus prefers the first one because it does not demand a *species genita* for a vision of God.⁸⁶⁰ Apart from the epistemological inlays, the doctrine has no novelty: the prelapsarian man could have a *per essentiam* vision in his *sopor* but otherwise probably not. The epistemological orientation of Guillelmus also appears in the way in which he reformulates the meaning of the Hugonian lemma: Adam had a firm knowledge about complex truths (which we know only by faith) but Hugh does not want to say that Adam saw the divine essence.⁸⁶¹

Aegidius Romanus OESA, *Quaestiones in Sent.*

The commentary of Aegidius Romanus (Giles of Rome) on the *Sentences* (written c. 1269-1272) presents a curious Augustinian take on the issue of the prelapsarian cognition.⁸⁶² He brings forth five arguments for the *per essentiam* vision of the first men (*primi parentes*), including two *auctoritates* of Augustine, and the two opposed *sed contra* arguments are also taken from Augustine.⁸⁶³ The solution of *quaestio* (here *resolutio*) is based on the analogy between vision and

Item Augustinus, *Ad Orosium*, et 12. Super Genesim ad litteram, dicit quod Paulus vidit Deum per essentiam sicut sancti in patria, ergo multo fortius primus homo in statu innocentiae. [arg. 3] Item Magister dicit, 4. li. Sententiarum, quod primus homo Deum videbat sine medio, ergo per essentiam. [arg. 4] Item amor sequitur cognitionem. Sed prius homo Deum diligebat per essentiam, ergo etc. [sc. 1] Contra: Exo 33: 'Non videbit me homo et vivet.' [sc. 2] Item Gregorius, Super Ezechielem homelia 14, exponens Isa 6: 'Vidi dominum sedentem' etc et ibidem supra: 'Quicquid de illo conspicitur adhuc non est ipse sed sub illo.' 296.

⁸⁶⁰ Guillelmus, *Scriptum in II Sent.* dist. 23 qu. 6 [co]: "Prima solutio videtur melior quia ista ponit quod Deu possit videri sine specie genita in intellectu." 298.

⁸⁶¹ Guillelmus, *Scriptum in II Sent.* dist. 23 qu. 6 [ad 1]: "Ad primum prime partis dicendum quod est duplex cognitio: Credulitatis et haec est veritatis complexae quae est veritas propositionis. Formationis sive imaginationis et haec est veritatis incomplexae. Hugo ergo non loquitur de cognitione formationis sive imaginationis sed credulitatis. Cognovit enim primus homo in statu innocentiae per certam scientiam multas veritates complexas de deo quas etiam modo cognoscimus per fidem ut Deum esse trinum et unum, omnipotentem, creatorem omnium et huiusmodi. Non enim intendit dicere quod videret divinam essentiam simplici visione intellectus. Et quod loquatur de cognitione credulitatis non formationis, patet per hoc quod subdit in fine illius capituli, 'Per internam' inquit 'inspirationem invisibiliter edoctus nullatenus de ipso creatore suo dubitare potuit.' Doctrina enim et dubitatio pertinent ad actum credulitatis, intellectus vero ad actum formationis." 299.

⁸⁶² Aegidius Romanus (Giles of Rome, Egidio Colonna, c. 1243-1316) was a direct disciple of Thomas Aquinas, then the first Augustinian master teaching at the theological faculty of Paris. Edition: *Aegidii Columnae Romani eremitorum d. Augustini [...] in secundum librum Sententiarum quaestiones [...]*. Venetiis [Venice]: apud Franciscum Zilettum, 1581 (reprint: Frankfurt: Minerva, 1968), here *In II Sent.* dist. 23 qu. 2 art. 1 and 2, 228-233.

⁸⁶³ The arguments are: 1) IV. *Sent.* dist. 1; 2) Augustine, *Liber 83 quaestionum, Qu. de imagine* (homo haeret veritati divinae nulla interposita creatura) and 3) *De Trinitate* XIV (*naturali ordine supra animam nisi Deus*); 4) *afflictio*

cognition (supported here by John Damascenus),⁸⁶⁴ the epistemological doctrines and a fivefold distinction of *media* as a) *medium specular* like a mirror or the creatures; b) *medium situale*; c) *medium confortativum* like the sensible light or the agent intellect of Aristotle and the intelligible light of Augustine; d) *medium habituale* like the *species intelligibilis* in the memory; e) *medium actuale* like the act of understanding derived from the *species intelligibilis*. The next article (*In II Sent.* dist. 23 qu. 2 art. 2) investigates whether Adam had faith. Aegidius' answer, as was common in the age, is positive. Hugh's *auctoritas* is introduced in the first two arguments against such a faith. Aegidius' doctrine is that faith is always from hearing; Adam had an inspired and revealed cognition by God, through an interior hearing, about matters belonging to faith and supernatural knowledge. Through this interpretation, Aegidius turns the original Hugonian idea into its opposite. For Hugh, Adam had a direct, revealed vision of God and faith was the replacement of that vision; for Aegidius, the revealed vision of Adam was a form of faith, through "interior hearing and interior revelation."⁸⁶⁵

Richardus de Mediavilla OFM, *Quaestiones in Sent.*

Richardus de Mediavilla⁸⁶⁶ lectured on the *Sentences* 1282-1284; his commentary is a purely theological one. Richard gives four arguments for Adam's *per essentiam* vision: 1) *Sentences* IV dist. 1; 2) if Paul saw God in the fallen state in his rapture, Adam must also have done so; 3) if Moses had seen God (Num. 12), Adam also had to; 4) a well-disposed nature desires to see God *per essentiam*. There are two *sed contra* arguments: 1) Jn 1: 18 and 2) John Damascenus, *De fide orthodoxa* I, cap. iv (*de Deo dicere quid est secundum substantiam impossibile est*). Like everyone else, Richardus de Mediavilla denies the possibility of Adam's *per essentiam* vision, but tentatively permits a *raptim* vision in *sopor*. Hugh's authority appears only in the next *quaestio*, discussing whether the prelapsarian Adam had faith. The answer of Richard is positive; the first two arguments for the lack of faith are taken from Hugh's *De sacramentis* (lib. I pars vi cap. xiv), which explicitly states the lack of faith.⁸⁶⁷ The central argument of Richard's doctrinal part is that even if Adam did not have a *per essentiam* vision of God, he had the beginning of the blessed state (*inchoatio futurae beatitudinis*) – and such a beginning comes about through faith. In the answers to the arguments, Hugh is corrected: his authority may be kept if understood as being about an inspiration that does not exclude faith – otherwise it must be rejected.⁸⁶⁸

argument 5) *naturaliter ordinatur ad videndum*. The *sed contras* are from *De Trinitate* I: 1) *visio Dei vita aeterna* and 2) *visio Dei est tota merces*.

⁸⁶⁴ *De fide orthodoxa* II, xii: "sicut est oculus in corpore ita est in anima intellectus."

⁸⁶⁵ Aegidius, *In II Sent.* dist. 23 qu. 2 art. 2 ad 1-2: "[ad 1] Ad primum dicendum, quod Adam non cognovit ea cognitione quae foris auditur, quia non habuit fidem per auditum exteriorem, sed per auditum interiorem et per inspirationem. [ad 2] Ad secundum dicendum, quod Adam non habuit cognitionem de Deo eo modo quo a credentibus absens fide invenitur sed per praesentiam contemplationis prout manifestius cernebatur. Sed ex hoc non habetur quod nullo modo habuerit fidem: sed quod non habuit fidem per auditum exteriorem, sed per auditum interiorem et per revelationem interiorem, in qua manifestius et clarius cernebat quid credendum esset de Deo quam habentes fidem ex solo auditu exteriori." 234-235.

⁸⁶⁶ Richardus de Mediavilla (Richard of Menneville, earlier identified as Middletown / Middleton) was regent master 1284-87 (see Glorieux RM nr. 324). Edition: *Clarissimi theologi magistri Richardi de Media Villa seraphici ord. min. convent. Super Quatuor libros sententiarum Petri Lombardi Quaestiones subtilissimae*, 4 vols. Brixiae [Brescia], 1591 (Reprint: Frankfurt am Main: Minerva, 1963); here *In II Sent.* dist. XXIII, art. 2 qu. 1, vol. 2, 285-286.

⁸⁶⁷ Richardus de Mediavilla, *In II Sent.* dist. xxiii art. ii qu. 2: "[titulus] Utrum Adam in statu innocentiae habebat fidem. Et videtur quod non. [arg. 1] Hugo I. lib. de Sacramentis par. 6. cap. 14. loquens de cognitione primi hominis, pro statu innocentiae dicit, quod cognovit homo creatorem suum, non ea cognitione, quae foris ex auditu solo percipitur, sed ea potius quae intus per aspirationem ministratur. Sed secundum Apostolum, ad Rom. 10, fides ex auditu: ergo videtur, quod Adam fidem non habuit. [arg. 2] Item eodem cap. dicit Hugo non ea, scilicet cognitione, qua Deus modo a credentibus absens fide quaeritur, sed ea quae tunc per praesentiam contemplationis scienti manifestius cernebatur." vol. 2, 286.

⁸⁶⁸ Richardus de Mediavilla, *In II Sent.* dist. xxiii art. ii qu. 2 ad 1-2: "[ad 1] Ad primum in oppositum dicendum, quod auctoritas Hugonis in praesenti materia non videtur tenendam, nisi intelligatur de aspiratione habitum fidei non

Romanus de Roma OP, *In Sent.*

Romanus de Roma OP wrote his *Sentences* commentary between 1270 and 1272.⁸⁶⁹ His commentary is another purely theological one. He develops five arguments: 1) there are only two kinds of vision, *per speculum in aenigmate* or *facie ad faciem*; 2) IV. *Sent.* dist. 1; 3) dignity argument: as man is the noblest creature, he was not led to God by any other creature; 4) *ordinatus ad visionem*; 5) the *afflictio* argument. The single *sed contra* argument is that *visio per essentiam beatum facit*.

The *Summa theologiae* of Albert the Great

The *Summa theologiae* is a late work of Albert, written c. 1270-1280. It twice discusses the question of Adam's prelapsarian cognition, once in the treatise on the cognoscibility of God (tract. III) then in the treatise on the prelapsarian state (tract. XIV). The two discussions had different contexts: in the third treatise, Albert demonstrates that the prelapsarian Adam had the same way of cognition of God as everyone else now has – that is, through the cognition of the creatures by sense perception; in treatise XIV he demonstrates that the prelapsarian cognition was unlike the face-to-face vision of the Blessed.⁸⁷⁰

Treatise III of the *Summa theologiae* is a monograph dealing with the cognition and cognoscibility of God. In six questions it discusses key terms pertaining to the cognition such as *cognoscere per essentiam* and *theophania* (qu. 13 memb. 1), *cognoscere facie ad faciem* and *per speciem* (qu. 13 memb. 4-5, with interpretations of the related Biblical passages), *medium* (qu. 15 memb. 1), the *vestigia Dei* and *imago Dei* as *medium* (qu. 15 memb. 1 art. 1-2). In qu. 14⁸⁷¹ Albert asks how Adam cognised God in the prelapsarian state, and first builds up the position that Adam had a different way of cognition from ours, without using creatures. He offers four arguments: 1) *Sent.* IV dist. 1, concluding that Adam did not use the *media* of grace or nature (*videtur quod nec medio naturae nec medio gratiae utebatur*); 2) the Augustinian argument *inter mentem hominum et Deum nihil est medium*, concluding that Adam had a different way of cognition from ours (*aliter cognovit quam nos cognovimus*). Arguments 3 and 4 are taken from Hugh's *De sacramentis* I, vi, 14 (the *Cognovit homo* argument), and both proves that Adam cognised God without the use of creatures.⁸⁷² Then Albert offers five counter-arguments proving that Adam indeed needed creatures for the cognition of God; in the solution he repeats it, and makes it explicit that this cognition is the natural way of cognition.⁸⁷³ In the responses, Albert interprets the *auctoritas* of the *Sentences* as

excludente. Fides enim non est ex auditu solo, sed principaliter per inspirationem interiorem. [ad 2] Ad secundum dicendum, quod quamvis Adam habuerit fidem, perfectius cognoscebat, secundum communem statum illius vitae, quam secundum communem statum modo cognoscatur, et sic potest exponi auctoritas, et si ita expresse alicubi negaverit Hugo, Adam in statu innocentiae fidem habuisset quod glosari non possit, ibi non est consentiendum sibi." vol. 2, 287.

⁸⁶⁹ For Romanus (d. 1273), see Glorieux RM nr. 28. Without access to Ms Vat. lat. 1099, I used Ms Vatican Pal. lat. 331 (containing the commentary of the first three books; Ms. Vat. Ottob. 1430 gives only an abbreviation). The present *In II Sent.* dist. 23 qu. 2 art. 1 can be found in Ms Vat. Pal. Lat. 331 49r-50r.

⁸⁷⁰ Albert, *Summa theol.* tract. III. De cognoscibilitate, nominabilitate et demonstrabilitate Dei (= qq 13-18), Borgnet 31: 52-123; tract. XIV. De primi hominis statu ante peccatum (= qq 83-91), Borgnet 33: 127-192.

⁸⁷¹ Albert, *Summa theol.* tract. III qu. 14 memb. 2 qu. 1, Borgnet 31: 73-75.

⁸⁷² Albert quotes Hugh in the following way, arg. 3: "Cognovit homo creatorem suum, non ea cognitione tantum quae foris auditu percipitur, sed ea quae intus per inspirationem monstratur." Hugh's original is "Cognovit ergo homo creatorem suum, non ea cognitione quae foris *ex auditu solo* percipitur, sed ea quae potius intus per inspirationem *ministratur*" (PL 176: 271C, emphasis is mine). The second quotation of Albert, arg. 4, is a selection from the text with a single difference: "Non ea quidem qua Deus modo a credentibus absens fide quaeritur; sed ea qua tunc per praesentiam contemplationis scienti manifestius cernebatur [*ostendebatur* in Albert] [...] non tamen ita excellenter sicut postea cognoscere debuisset si perstisset" (271CD). Borgnet 31, 73.

⁸⁷³ Albert, *Summa theol.* tr. III qu. 14 memb. 2 qu. 1 solutio: "Solutio. Dicendum, quod Adam per creaturas Deum cognovit: quae cognitio propria et naturalis est homini in carne posito, sicut probatum est." Borgnet 31, 74.

speaking about the *medium peccati* as *medium cognoscentis* (ad 1). Hugh's central term is also reinterpreted (ad 3-4): the *praesentia contemplationis* must mean a manifestation of God in effects, through a vision that is clearer (*clarior*) than the vision possible for men after the original sin.⁸⁷⁴

Treatise XIV of the *Summa*, entitled *De primi hominis statu ante peccatum*, is a monograph on the prelapsarian state; its qu. 89 (*De triplici cognitione primi hominis, scilicet rerum, creatoris et sui ipsius*) gives his views on the prelapsarian cognition of God.⁸⁷⁵ The second member of the question (entitled *Quomodo et qualiter primus homo habuerit notitiam Creatoris*) is, practically, an interpretation of Peter Lombard's *Sent.* II dist. 23, executed in the way that *Sentences* commentaries treat the subject.⁸⁷⁶ Contrary to his earlier *Sentences* commentary, here Albert follows the strict compositional rules of *quaestio*. He introduces 6 arguments for Adam's *per essentiam* vision: 1) seeing the present God by intellectual vision is the face-to-face vision as of the Blessed; 2) Exod 33:11 (God talked to Moses face to face); 3) Num 12:6; 4) IV. *Sent.* dist. 1; 5) *immediate dilexit*; 6) the "spiritual paradise" argument (John Damascenus, *De fide orthodoxa* II.). The 5 *sed contra* arguments are also traditional: 1) Exod 33:20 with a gloss; 2) John 1:18; 3) John Chrysostom on the incognoscibility of the divine essence (Hom. 8); 4) *non sunt nisi duae visiones*; 5) *visio est tota merces* (Augustine). Albert presents the usual solution in a personal way, involving the notion of *theophania*. He interprets Adam's vision and the Hugonian "interior aspiration" as an "aspiration of light and *theophania*." This means not an immediate vision of God but an intellectual vision of God, a cognition through a sign,⁸⁷⁷ which was clearer than the vision through a mirror in an enigma (characteristic of *via*).⁸⁷⁸ Moses too saw God in such a *theophania*.⁸⁷⁹

Jacobus Metensis OP, *In Sent.*

Jacques de Metz read the *Sentences* at least twice, probably c. 1300-1301 and c. 1302-1303.⁸⁸⁰ His second commentary gives a greatly simplified, epistemological elaboration in a confused structure. Metz gives only two arguments: 1) the idea that *per essentiam* vision is a clear vision without an enigma, but the obscurity of cognition entered the soul due to the original sin, and 2) the *nihil*

⁸⁷⁴ Albert, *Summa theol.* tr. III qu. 14 memb. 2 qu. 1 ad 3-4: "Ad hoc quod objicitur de Hugone, dicitur, quod praesentiam contemplationis vocat manifestationem Dei in clariori effectu quam post peccatum manifestari potuerit, et ex parte videntis, et ex parte visibilis. Et hoc accipitur ex quadam glossa super epistolam ad Romanos VIII, 22 [...] quae dicit quod 'Adam peccante totus mundus in pejorem statum cecidit.' Et sic Adam post peccatum minus clare vidit, et creata magis obscure opificem manifestaverunt. Praesentia ergo Dei in clariori effectu contemplata, ibi praesentia contemplationis vocatur." Borgnet 31, 75.

⁸⁷⁵ Albert, *Summa theol.* tr. XIV, here Borgnet 33, 165-169.

⁸⁷⁶ Albert, *Summa theol.* pars II tract. xiv qu. 89 membr. 2: "Secundo quaeritur, Quomodo et qualiter notitiam creatoris habuit? Hoc enim dicit magister in libro II Sententiarum, distinct[ione] xxiii, in illo cap[itulo] 'Cognitionem quoque creatoris primus homo habuisse creditur,' et definit eam sic dicens, 'cognovit eam [...] visuri sunt Deum.'" Borgnet 33, 165.

⁸⁷⁷ Albert, *Summa theol.* qu. 89 memb. 2 ad 4: "expresse dicit Magister, quod vidit quadam interiori adspiratione, qua Dei praesentiam contemplabatur, hoc est in qua cognovit Deum esse praesentem, non specie sed signo." 167

⁸⁷⁸ Albert, *Summa theol.* [pars II tract. 14] qu. 89 memb. 2 ad 1: "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod facie ad faciem Deum non vidit Adam, nec sicut cernitur post hanc vitam: sed sicut dicit Magister, interiori adspiratione luminis et theophaniae, in qua altius videtur Deus, quam in speculo et in aenigmate, et praesens esse cognoscitur, sicut praesens est illis in quibus est per inhabitantem gratiam." p. 166; also ad objectionem 1 (= ad sc. 1): "dicendum quod Adam in primo statu Deum facie ad faciem non vidit; tamen, ut dicit Magister in Sententiis, clarius vidit quam nos quamdiu sumus in via. Vidit enim eum per inspiratam illuminationem visione intellectuali, in qua clarius relucebat Dei praesentia quam in vestigio et speculo et aenigmate, in quibus nos videmus." 167.

⁸⁷⁹ Albert, *Summa theol.* qu. 89 memb. 2 ad 2: "Moyses enim aliter non vidit Deum nisi in illuminatione intellectuali quae a Dionysio theophania dicitur." 167.

⁸⁸⁰ On Jacques (Jacobus Metensis), see Glorieux RM nr. 63; also Russell L. Friedmann, "James of Metz," in Garcia and Noone, *Companion*, 330-331. The second redaction is accessible in Ms Vat. Borg. 122 (fol. 1-114, covering I-IV) and in Ms Vat. Borg. 317 (covering I and II dist. 1-26). The *In II Sent.* dist. 23 can be found in Ms Vat. Borg. lat. 311 fol. 20ra and Vat. Borg. lat. 122 fol. 66rb.

deerat argument; the sole *sed contra* argument is Jn 1:18.⁸⁸¹ The doctrinal part contains the division of *medium* into a *medium sub quo*, a *medium quo* and a *medium quod* (an element first present at Aquinas)⁸⁸² and a distinction of seeing God *per essentiam* and *per effectum*, demonstrated by the analogy of corporeal vision.⁸⁸³

Conclusion

There are remarkably few extant gloss collections on the *Sentences* that can be related to the university of Paris: these are the three *Glosses* written by Alexander Halensis (1223-1227), Hugh of Saint-Cher OP (1231-1232) and Jean de la Rochelle OFM (1236-1245); the Mss BNF lat. 15652 and 15702 attest that there certainly existed more interpretations that are lost by now. The extant university glosses show a certain uniformity, but also a number of changes if compared to the late twelfth-century glosses. A formal novelty is the application of the *quaestio* to discuss the text of *Sent.* II dist. 23 and IV dist. 1; at the same time, characteristic twelfth-century concepts, such as the *medium* conceived as sacrament or Bible, and the *visio mediastina*, disappear from the explanation. Instead, the glosses attribute several related meanings to *medium*: *nubes peccati*, *moles corporis*, *defectus intellectus (quia ex nihilo)*; *ratiocinatio*, and *medium creaturarum*. All these meanings derive from the same Augustinian matrix, all are commonplaces, and all go back to the same set of ideas. A particular feature of Alexander's *Glossa* is an element missing from the two other collections: the overview of the possible forms of the cognition of God. This element will often return in the commentaries later; similar overviews can be found in the contemporary discussions of Paul's rapture.

The earliest *Sentences* commentaries were executed in the first half of the 1240s, in Paris and in Oxford. The following authors' commentaries belong here: Odo Rigaldi OFM (c. 1242-1245), Albert the Great OP (c. 1246), the Franciscan *Summa Halensis* (lib. II, 1241-1245), all from Paris, and the works of the Oxford theologians Richard Fishacre OP (c. 1241-1245) and Richard Rufus OFM (1250-1252). The extant interpretations indirectly show that the issue was somewhat debated: besides the unquestionably orthodox interpretations (Odo, Albert, the *Summa*), the *Summa Halensis* contains theological censures against three interpretations; the interpretations of Fishacre and Richard Rufus (in his first commentary) show great similarity to one of the censured positions.

A common feature of the extant early commentaries is that their primary intention is to solve an exegetical problem in the *Sentences* – and their solution is reached in different and individual ways (which also shows a pluralist milieu without a general consensus). The commentary of Albertus consists mostly of the multiple interpretation given for both *aenigma* and *speculum*; the author singles out from these multiple interpretations those that can refer to *medium*. Odo Rigaldi's

⁸⁸¹ Jacobus, *In II Sent.* dist. 23: "Utrum Adam in statu innocencie viderit deum per essentiam. Arguitur quod sic, quia visio per essentiam in qua videtur res clare sine enigmate. Sed Adam tunc vidit deum clare, quia obscuritas cognitionis introducta est post per peccatum secundum Augustinum; ergo et cetera. ¶ Item summum bonum habere vel videre est desideratissimum. Sed secundum Augustinum voluntati Ade nichil deerat quod desideraret ergo et cetera. ¶ Contra, deum nemo vidit unquam." Ms Vat. Borg. lat. 122 fol. 66rb.

⁸⁸² Jacobus, *In II Sent.* dist. 23: "¶ Solutio. Potest deus videri per essentiam intrinsecum videnti vel extrinsecum, et si queratur utrum Adam sic videbat+ deum, distinguunt doc<tores> de medio: quia est medium 'sub quo' ut lux, et medium 'quo' ut species, et 'in quo' sicut speculum in quo videtur ymago videntis vel alterius; et illud medium 'in quo' est 'medium visum' ut speculum. Modo sic potuit Adam videre deum per medium, scilicet 'in quo' scilicet in creatura per speciem creature, [...] vel [...] per medium 'quo', scilicet per illam speciem creature vel intrinsecam ut sui vel extrinsecam ut alterius creature." Ms Vat. Borg. lat. 122 fol. 66.

⁸⁸³ Jacobus, *In II Sent.* dist. 23: "¶ R<espondeo> deus potest tripliciter videri: per essentiam in mente et per effectum ex<isten>tem in vidente et per effectum ex<isten>tem extra videntem, sicut lux videtur per essentiam, licet non videatur esse lucis que est in oculo, sed lux dicitur videri per essentiam, quia est ratio videndi alia s<cilicet> colorem et lucem extra, et ideo illud exemplum non sufficit ad propositum [...]. d<icitur> quod aliquid potest tripliciter videri: vel per essentiam ut lux, vel per speciem que est in vidente ut color vel per speciem extra ut ymago in speculo." Ms Vat. Borg. lat. 122 fol. 66rb.

question is whether Adam had the cognition of this life or that of the Blessed; the solution (the negative answer) is reached through an overview of the forms of cognition of God. In this work there appears first an argument taken from Hugh's original text (the one on which the account of the *Sentences* was based). Odo assigns a special role to it: Hugh's words seem to support the position that Adam had the cognition of the Blessed (the position to be proven false). The theories of the two Oxford theologians Richard Fishacre and Richard Rufus were based on different Augustinian premises. Fishacre's position is not much elaborated, but it assumes (supported by Augustine) that Adam saw God immediately, although in a less lucid way than the angels or the Blessed do. Rufus' position is more detailed: Adam saw God immediately, by means of intellectual vision; intellectual vision has certain grades (according to its lucidity). Neither of these interpretations were compatible with the principles that the theologians of Paris accepted.

The *Summa Halensis* presents so many features that became common later (returning in commentaries on II *Sent.* dist. 23) that it can be regarded as a work setting a new paradigm for the question of the prelapsarian vision of Adam. In the *Summa*, the formal-methodological and doctrinal approach to the subject coincided. It applied the fully developed *quaestio* format to the problem of the prelapsarian vision of God, with all its elements (including two sets of arguments), and the question asked was a single well-defined question. Unlike other early commentaries, which focused on their own questions emerging from the ambiguous wording of the *Sentences*, the *Summa* focuses on a theoretical question: whether Adam saw God face to face or not. The function of the *quaestio* format here is to present the negative answer. All later commentaries repeat this single question; therefore, practically, the *Summa* defined the sole issue about the prelapsarian cognition of God.

One of the doctrinal novelties of the *Summa* was the radically new interpretation for *sine medio* and *medium*. All the earlier interpretations translated *medium* as some intermediary (such as creatures, sacraments, or even *nubila peccati*); the *Summa*, instead, introduces the concept of an epistemological medium (that is, there are various *media* promoting or precluding cognition, such as *medium disponens* and the like). Here there appears also a new, later paradigmatic, doctrine based on 1Cor 13:12, attributing to Adam a vision through a mirror but *without* an enigma.

The theological censures (copied later by Bonaventure and Richard Rufus) also give a prominent place to the *Summa* in the reception history of Victorine doctrines. It rejects a position that attributed to Adam an immediate but "diminished" vision of God. This position is supported by Hugh's text as well: the rejected position is, however, an adequate and modern formulation of the original Victorine doctrine. The very fact of the censure suggests that there existed theologians (even after the "decline" of the Victorine school), who understood Hugh's concept well, but it also reveals a conflict between the Victorine-inspired and the mainstream Scholastic theologies.

After the doctrinal definition of the *Summa Halensis*, both the format and the content of the discourse became standardised: the *Sentences* commentaries presented the standard and accepted theological doctrine, and Hugh's text had only an instrumental role, with a predefined interpretation. After the survey of the theological literature on this issue – the commentaries written by Bonaventure, Richard Rufus, Thomas Aquinas, Petrus de Tarantasia, Hannibaldus de Hannibaldis, Guillelmus de Mara, Aegidius Romanus, Romanus de Roma, Richardus de Mediavilla and James of Metz, the *summae* written by Thomas Aquinas and Albert the Great, and the *De veritate quaestio* 18 of Aquinas – the following conclusions may be drawn regarding the doctrine of prelapsarian cognition.

1) By the 1250s, the function of the interpretation of the *Sent.* II dist. 23 had been substantially changed. The first commentaries, written in the 1240s (including the *Summa Halensis*), aimed at the interpretation of a problematic passage that, seemingly, attributed a special and direct cognition to Adam. Commentaries written from the early 1250s onwards had a different function: all of them are more or less crafted explanations of the doctrine that Adam certainly had not seen God immediately. The first such commentary is Bonaventure's one (1250-1252), written in Paris. The last commentary that displayed a different approach is the first commentary of Richard Rufus, written in Oxford, 1250-1252.

2) The functional change derived from a doctrinal change. The *Summa Halensis* presents doctrinal censures against three positions and gives the authentic doctrine: Adam could not have seen God in the same way as the Blessed do. Although the *Summa Halensis* was a Franciscan work of Paris, it seems to reflect a consensual position among the Paris theologians, as no later theologian (either Dominican or Franciscan) gave a different theological interpretation. A more direct witness for the doctrinal authority of the theologians at the University of Paris is Richard Rufus. This Oxford theologian visits Paris and writes there a new commentary on the *Sentences* (c. 1253-1255); commenting on the subject, he replaces his earlier, questionable position with the Parisian position, copying it from Bonaventure's recent commentary (which, in turn, copies the *Summa Halensis*).

3) A conceptual change that obliterated any authentic understanding of the Victorine concept can also be observed. Already the *Summa Halensis* equated the immediate vision of God with the eschatological, face-to-face vision of God (which was later termed a *per essentiam* vision of God). All the investigated interpretations written after 1250 are based on a simplified Augustinian paradigm where the non-vision and the full vision of God are opposed. A vision of God that is immediate but not the ultimate eschatological one cannot be interpreted in this dichotomy. The third doctrinal censure of the *Summa Halensis* – the official rejection of an *immediata et semiplena visio* – marks the end of any proper understanding of the original position of Hugh and Peter Lombard. From the historian's perspective, the rejection and reinterpretation of Hugh's text seems a necessary move: Hugh's text was authoritative and it could not refer to a rejected doctrinal position.

4) Equating the *immediate* vision with the eschatological vision was only one of the major changes, as the entire concept of the prelapsarian cognition had been redesigned by the 1250s. This concept is made most explicit in the *Summa Halensis*: even if Adam had a better cognition of God than we can, he still was a *viator* in *via*, and accordingly, his cognition could have been not a direct cognition (or a direct vision) of God. In the 1240s these doctrines were not yet settled (as the two Oxford commentaries and the censures of the *Summa Halensis* show). This position refers generally to the prelapsarian state; the interpretation of Adam's *sopor* is rarely debated and its interpretation may vary.

5) The changes in the theological formulation of the prelapsarian cognition can be seen in parallel with certain changes of the languages of theology and spirituality. By the early thirteenth century it had become consensual that no immediate intellectual cognition of God is possible in *via* – that is, in this life. The sole exception to this rule is the *raptus*. The gradual elaboration of the doctrine termed *raptus* as a direct vision of God. Simultaneously, partly by the elimination of the *visio mediastina*, it also became settled that only *raptus* is a direct vision of God: the cognition called “contemplation” must be only an indirect cognition. The doctrinal development was closed by the 1240s, and it made it impossible to use the metaphor of a direct vision to articulate the immediateness of the cognition of God in the earthly life. The case for an immediate cognition of God in this life – that is, the case of “mysticism” – was saved by a new set of ideas, which avoided the visual metaphor: the idea of an “affective” and non-intellectual cognition, and the discovery of the Areopagite's *Mystical Theology*, which described the ultimate possible cognition of God in *via* as a union, with special emphasis on the non-vision of God. The Latin theological spectrum was saturated by such doctrines, as the examples of Thomas Gallus, Bonaventure, Albert the Great (and numerous others) show.

From a textual aspect, the sources investigated show a one-sided reception of Hugh's text. 1) The passage of Hugh *De sacramentis*, on which the account of Peter Lombard was based, appeared first and foremost during the exegesis of the related passages of the *Sentences*. This happened relatively late, in the 1240s: the earlier glosses and most of the first commentaries do not quote its text. Hugh's text appears first in Franciscan works: in the commentary of Odo Rigaldi OFM (c. 1242-1245) and the *Summa Halensis* (1241-1245). Later on, authors of both mendicant orders quote him: among the Franciscans, Bonaventure (1250-1252), Richard Rufus (*Lectura Parisiensis*, 1253-1255) and Guillelmus de Mara (c. 1268-1270); among the Dominicans, Thomas Aquinas' *Qu. 18 de veritate* (c. 1256), the *Sentences* commentary of Petrus de Tarantasia (1257-1259) and the *Summa theologiae* of Albert the Great (1270-1280).

- 2) These interpretations do not betray a thorough knowledge of Hugh's position. It is only one single paragraph (from *De sacramentis* I, vi, 14) that appears in these works, often in a contracted form, sometimes with minor changes in the text. Practically, Bonaventure, Richard Rufus and Petrus de Tarantasia use word for word the same lemma as the *Summa Halensis*.
- 3) The function of Hugh's lemmatic text is very much limited and defined by the genre of theological *quaestio*. After the *Summa Halensis*, the lemma serves as an argument for Adam's direct, *therefore* face to face, vision of God, which will be reinterpreted among the responses to the arguments.
- 4) Three Franciscan sources, the *Summa Halensis* and the commentaries of Bonaventure and Richard Rufus, gave a more subtle interpretation of Hugh's text, describing an unorthodox position attributing to Adam a *sempierna et immediata* vision of God. These sources are interconnected (as Bonaventure copied the *Summa* and Rufus copied Bonaventure) and belong to belong to the period between c. 1241 and c. 1256. In later sources such subtle interpretations of Hugh's position do not appear anymore.
- 5) Basically, the interpretation of Hugh's words was defined by two elements of the text: the expression of "presence of contemplation" (*praesentia contemplationis*), and the statement that God was seen manifestly (*manifestus*) or in a more manifest way (*manifestius* – both forms occur). When these commentaries were written, in the theological vocabulary "contemplation" meant a mediated vision of God (contrary to the Victorine usage of the term), the opposite of the immediate vision in *raptus* and of the *patria*. The (re)interpretations of the Hugonian lemma, therefore, followed one single pattern: Adam could not have seen God immediately; he contemplated God (that is, he saw God by contemplation), in a clearer way than anyone else, after the original sin, may. As Adam is considered to be someone in *via*, his cognition is like the cognition of *viatores*, even if special in some respect.

Chapter III. Reinterpretations of the Victorine theological anthropology in the spiritual literature

Introduction

The present chapter attempts to give an overview of the direct reception of the Victorine theological anthropology in the thirteenth century, presenting the way in which thirteenth-century theologians read, integrated or adapted Victorine theories and texts.

The two previous chapters demonstrated that the indirect reception of the Victorine theological anthropology was a failure. The Scholastic doctrinal development regarding prelapsarian cognition of God and Paul's rapture (two issues that were central to Victorines) was autonomous and not influenced by Victorine theories; the final, authoritative Scholastic doctrines on these issues were incompatible with Victorine theories. This conflict was rarely shown, if at all, because Victorine works did not belong to those basic textbooks that students normally encountered during their theological education (even if they sometimes used Hugh's *De sacramentis* and Richard's *De Trinitate*). The situation was seemingly different in the field of spirituality. Richard and Hugh were considered as authors of spiritual literature, and their works became devotional readings. The investigations below will show that their reception was a rather distorted one: their ideas were decontextualised, adapted or changed by later spiritual authors – but were not understood according to their original sense. Their texts were read into the new context, according to new premises, sometimes even contrary to their intentions.

Reading Victorine works in a new context

Even if the early thirteenth-century doctrinal theology was incompatible with Victorine theological anthropology, the works of Hugh and Richard were read and copied. From Hugh (regarded as *magister Hugo*) the *De sacramentis*, from Richard the *De Trinitate* enjoyed the most attention from Scholastic theologians for their doctrinal elements.⁸⁸⁴ From those twelfth-century Victorine authors who dealt with spirituality, only the works of Hugh and Richard survived oblivion: the names of Achard and Walther do not appear in Scholastic works nor in spiritual works of the next century. In contrast, Hugh and Richard were regarded as significant authors on certain fields: Bonaventure's famous eulogy names Hugh as a teacher of doctrinal theology, preaching and contemplation alike, and Richard as a teacher of contemplation.⁸⁸⁵ The following table, compiled from the manuscript

⁸⁸⁴ For a general statistical approach to the Franciscan reception of Hugh's and Richard's works, see J.-G. Bougerol, "The Church Fathers and auctoritates in Scholastic theology to Bonaventure" in Irene Backus, ed., *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), vol. 1, 289-336 and Sylvain Piron, "Franciscains et victorins. Tableau d'une réception," in Dominique Poirel, ed., *L'école de Saint-Victor in Paris*, 521-545. None of these studies investigates questions of theological anthropology.

⁸⁸⁵ Bonaventure, *De reductione artium*: "Unde tota sacra Scriptura haec tria docet, scilicet Christi aeternam generationem et incarnationem, vivendi ordinem et Dei et animae unionem. Primum respicit fidem, secundum mores, tertium finem utrique. Circa primum insudare debet studium doctorum, circa secundum studium praedicatorum, circa tertium studium contemplantium. Primum maxime docet Augustinus, secundum maxime docet Gregorius, tertium vero docet Dionysius. Anselmus sequitur Augustinum, Bernardus sequitur Gregorium, Richardus sequitur Dionysium, quia Anselmus in ratiocinatione, Bernardus in praedicatione, Richardus in contemplatione - Hugo vero omnia haec, id est, omnes sequitur." Quar. V, 321.

censuses, show the number of the extant and datable manuscripts of their most important spiritual works. In order to make a contrast, also the *De sacramentis* and *De Trinitate* are included.⁸⁸⁶

	Hugh							Richard		
	De sacr. summ a (I-II)	In Hier.	De tribus diebus	In Eccl.	De arrha	De V septen is	Arca Noe	De Trin.	Bmin	Bmaj
s. XII	117	27	51	30	36	39	58	4	51	8
s. XIII	67	24	27	16	56	20	42	33	54	27
s. XIV	20	12	10	2	92	11	20	25	43	25

In Hugh's case, the numbers show a strong thirteenth-century interest in the *De sacramentis* almost par to the *De arrha animae* and the *De Archa Noe*; in Richard's case, the *Benjamin minor* is the most copied work.

Copying texts means, however, merely a passive form of reception. Its positive forms – such as interpretative citation, (re)interpretation or adaptation – are far more important, although even less investigated. Modern critical editions and special studies sometimes register the influence of the Victorine works on other, later authors – but such accounts are of no avail for the present study.⁸⁸⁷ Viewed from our point, such later works present not an “afterlife” but much more a history of distortion of Victorine thinking.

Thirteenth-century Scholastic spiritual writings show certain uniformity if compared to the variety of style, genre and content of twelfth-century spiritual works. The features mentioned below are more or less common to all the discussed works, and to some extent explain the way Victorine texts and their doctrines were received.

a) Thirteenth-century Latin spiritual authors were usually erudite theologians formed in the Scholastic milieu, with minds defined by the intellectual methods of Scholasticism. Quoting certain “reference works” of spirituality and the argumentation using references and *auctoritates* is rather the rule than the exception among them. The Latin spiritual works of the period are often based on spiritual texts of the past; the rather few original ideas about contemplation (or other forms of the cognition of God) appear often as interpretations of earlier authoritative texts. It is remarkable that even Hugh of Balma, a most vehement and anti-intellectualistic opponent to Scholastic education, quotes extensively the works of Thomas Gallus.

b) Thinking of the cognition of God, thirteenth-century theologians had a certain predilection towards patterns of gradual progression where the soul (or mind) goes through subsequent ascending stages. These patterns (sometimes called explicitly “grades” or “steps” of contemplation) were partly excerpted from earlier spiritual works, partly newly invented. Such new, thirteenth-century (and later popular) inventions are, for example, Thomas Gallus' pattern based on the nine angelic orders (in the order given by the Areopagite), or Aegidius of Assisi's pattern of seven

⁸⁸⁶ Data compiled from Rudolf Goy's works: *Die Überlieferung der Werke Hugos von St. Viktor* (Stuttgart, 1976) and *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung der Werke Richards von St. Viktor im Mittelalter* (Turnhout, 2005). The table contains only the major spiritual works and was based on the datable manuscripts.

⁸⁸⁷ A sketch of Richard's influence on medieval authors is given by Châtillon, “Richard de Saint-Victor,” 646-650, mentioning, among others, Thomas Gallus, Thomas Cisterciensis, John of Ford OCist, Hadewijch and Guigues de Pont OCarth. Gervais Dumeige (*Ives. Epître*, “Introduction,” 107-109) has briefly indicated the influence of the *De IV gradibus* in the following works: Pierre de Blois, *De amicitia christiana* (1185-1195), Gerard of Liège OCist, *Quinque incitamenta ad Deum amandum ardentem*, Dionysius Carthusiensis (d. 1471), *De perfectione charitatis* (artt. 17, 18, 22) and Francis of Osuna OFM (d. 1542), *Third and Fourth Spiritual Alphabets*.

grades.⁸⁸⁸ Old and modern patterns are sometimes presented together as variants on the same theme, without any intention to harmonise them. This can be clearly illustrated with the examples of Bonaventure and Rudolph of Biberach. Commenting on the Gospel, Bonaventure notices a disagreement: Matthew speaks about six, Luke about eight days between Christ's teaching and the Transfiguration (Mt 17, Lc 9). He reads Matthew's account as a reference to the six grades of contemplation, as Richard divided them in the *Benjamin major*; then he resolves the eight days of Luke as seven plus one days (pertaining to *via* and *patria*) and presents two sevenfold patterns: one from Augustine's *De quantitate animae*, the other from the Franciscan Aegidius of Assisi. In all these cases he gives the reference to the sources of the patterns.⁸⁸⁹ Rudolph of Biberach in his *De septem itineribus aeternitatis* presents contemplation as one of the seven possible forms of spiritual experiences. Under the heading "contemplation" he juxtaposes four different patterns of contemplation, taken from the spiritual literature accessible to him: the ninefold angelic scheme of Thomas Gallus, the sixfold scheme from Richard's *Benjamin major*, a sixfold scheme based on one of the anthropological texts of the *De spiritu et anima* and a sixfold scheme attributed to Origen.⁸⁹⁰

c) Another factor defining the reception of the Victorine theories was the new, affective paradigm of spirituality. Authors following this tradition shared a few anthropological premises: they assumed that not only the intellect (or reason) can operate as a cognitive faculty but also the *affectus*; they also assumed that *affectus* gives a more adequate and better cognition of God in this life than the intellect could. In the twelfth century, similar positions were held by William of Saint-Thierry and Bernard of Clairvaux – but at that time it was only an alternative, and the Victorines, as the previous part argued, had a different alternative, keeping separate the functions of intellect and *affectus*. In the thirteenth century, however, the affective alternative turns into a most popular paradigm. Its principles – such as the idea that in this life, the intellectual cognition of God always remains indirect, while love can have a direct access to God, and in this life the union with God can come about through love only – became commonplaces of spiritual works. After Thomas Gallus presented these principles as the hidden meaning and the authentic reading of the *Mystical Theology* of the Areopagite, the erudite Latin spirituality and theological anthropology underwent a substantial change: the *Mystical Theology* entered the repertoire of the spiritual literature, and concepts as "knowing through unknowing" and "supra-intellectual union" with God became commonplaces.

Scholastic reasoning and formal structures, predilection towards gradual patterns, and the new affective paradigm: these are the most important elements that determined the reception of the Victorine spirituality. Even though Hugh and Richard were considered as authorities of spiritual literature, their writings were read in such a new context. It rarely disturbed the thirteenth-century authors that the Victorine theological anthropology was not compatible with their own one. The writings of Hugh and Richard do not present the Victorine theological anthropology in a systematic and coherent form, and make not explicit the relation of earthly contemplation to the eschatological vision of God – therefore their doctrines may be quoted out of context, or read according to utterly different premises. The usual approach to Victorine spiritual doctrines was their inclusion in an utterly different context, by redefining the meaning of their terms.

* * *

The present investigation is necessarily limited: it covers only Latin works written by theologians and disregards lay or vernacular spiritual literature. These limitations permit us to focus on the most relevant part of the reception. As the previous chapters demonstrated, the Scholastic doctrines on the prelapsarian cognition and Paul's rapture – the two central issues on which the Victorine

⁸⁸⁸ Interestingly, sevenfold pattern of Bonaventure's *Itinerarium* (often treated as a representative of medieval spirituality) does not appear in the spiritual literature of the thirteenth century.

⁸⁸⁹ See Bonaventure, *Comm. in evangelium Lucae*, IX, 48, Quar. VII, 231.

⁸⁹⁰ See Rudolph, *De septem itineribus*, Iter III.

anthropology was based – had received their final Scholastic form by c. 1250 at the latest. Due to these conceptual and doctrinal changes, the Victorine doctrines on the same issues become not only obsolete and irrelevant but also unintelligible by the concepts of the day. The Victorine spirituality also became unintelligible, as Scholastic theology produced its own characteristic model of spirituality, which was incompatible with the Victorine one. The affective spirituality, justified with the authority of the Areopagite, became immensely popular. Although by thirteenth-century authors it was usually called “mystical theology” and claimed to be part opposed, part superior to “Scholastic” theology (the latter meaning the doctrinal theology taught in schools), it was rather a safe complement to that. This form of spirituality offered room for personal and individual spiritual experiences but it did so without infringing the church doctrines.

In the first half of the thirteenth century, the twelfth-century doctrinal complex that I have called “Victorine theological anthropology” had a particular fate. Its authors were regarded as authorities, while its theological foundations were abandoned, and an essentially different spiritual model ruled the day. The Victorine sources still were read: this chapter tries to depict the result of their reading under an adverse climate. The present chapter investigates the case of six authors: the “last Victorine theologian” Thomas Gallus (d. 1246), the Franciscan Anthony of Padua (d. 1231), Saint Bonaventure (d. 1274), the Dominican Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), the Carthusian Hugh of Balma (fl. around 1300?) and the Franciscan Rudolph of Biberach (d. c. 1326). They adapt the Victorine heritage in various ways and on various scales. Thomas Gallus, a canon educated in Saint-Victor itself, abolishes the Victorine anthropology, creates a new paradigm (copied by later authors) and rewrites Richard’s *Benjamin major*; Anthony of Padua uses carefully selected and adjusted passages of Richard’s works (without naming Richard); Bonaventure bases his anthropology on Hugh’s doctrines (though his result is un-Victorine enough); Hugh of Balma, through his obscure references, gives a rather humble place to Richard’s (?) system. Finally, Rudolph adapts the Victorine doctrines to the principles of the affective spirituality, by setting testimonies from the works of Hugh and Richard in a new context.

1. Thomas Gallus

Since the early twentieth-century rediscovery of his works, Thomas Gallus (d. 1246), the former canon of Saint-Victor and later abbot of Vercelli (Vercell), is regarded both as the last significant theologian of the Victorines and as a major figure of the early thirteenth-century spiritual literature. By now, most of his works have been identified and edited, although studies on his theology are remarkably scarce.⁸⁹¹ Thomas should have a special place in the histories of spirituality. He created a distinctive pattern in theological anthropology, which combines the theory of cognition through *affectus* with a special reading of the *Mystical Theology* of the Areopagite and the *Canticle*. This combination of concepts became extremely popular under the name “mystical theology,” as early as the thirteenth century, but it was regarded as a spiritual doctrine as late as the seventeenth century.⁸⁹² The present study investigates his work under three headings. First I give an overview of his main ideas (repeated or modified later by Bonaventure, Hugh of Balma and Rudolph of Biberach), there then follows a study of his position on the prelapsarian cognition (an issue particularly important to the Victorines), and finally his attitude towards the doctrines of other spiritual authors – especially of Hugh and Richard – will be investigated.⁸⁹³

1. Thomas Gallus, “mystical” theologian

It is well known that with and through Thomas Gallus a new period begins in the Western reception of the *Corpus Dionysiacum*. In two decades’ time, between 1224 and 1244, Thomas built up an immense interpretative *corpus* to accompany the Areopagitic writings. Using the Saracenus translation, he wrote glosses on the *Celestial Hierarchy* (1224) and the *Mystical Theology* (1232-1233); later he created paraphrases (*extractiones*) of the four treatises and the *Letter 9* (1238), and finally he wrote commentaries (*explanationes*) on the four treatises (c. 1241-1244) and the first five letters (1242-1243).⁸⁹⁴ These works were executed according to the new Scholastic techniques of

⁸⁹¹ On the doctrines of Thomas and his reception, see Jeanne Barbet’s introduction to her edition of Thomas’ second and third commentaries on the *Canticle*: *Thomas Gallus. Commentaires de Cantique des Cantiques. Texte critique avec introduction, notes et tables* (Paris: Vrin, 1967) and her article “Thomas Gallus” in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, vol. 15, 800-816 (1991); also see the following: Patrice Sicard and Dominique Poirel, “Figure vittorine: Riccardo, Acardo e Tommaso,” in Inos Biffi and Costante Marabelli, eds., *La fioritura della dialettica X-XII secolo Figure del pensiero medievale* 2 (Milan, 2008), 596-618; Robert Javelet, “Thomas Gallus et Richard de Saint-Victor mystiques,” *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale* 29 (1962), 206-233, and 30 (1963), 88-121; James Walsh, “Thomas Gallus et l’effort contemplatif,” *Revue d’histoire de la spiritualité* 51 (1975): 17-42; Kurt Ruh, *Die Mystik des deutschen Predigerordens. Geschichte der abendländischen Mystik, Bd. 3* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1996), 59-81. More recently, see Boyd Taylor Coolman, “The Medieval Affective Dionysian Tradition,” in *Re-thinking Dionysius the Areopagite*, edited by Sarah Coakley and Charles M. Stang (Oxford, 2009), 85-102, and Csaba Németh, “The Victorines and the Areopagite,” in *L’école de Saint-Victor in Paris*, 333-383. Most of the works of Thomas are edited. His two extant commentaries on the *Canticle* have been edited by Barbet (henceforth referred to as *Comm II* and *Comm. III*, followed by Thomas’ number-and-letter reference and the page number of Barbet’s edition). The *De septem gradibus contemplationis* (inc. *Contemplativorum aquilinos obtutus*) has been several times edited among Bonaventure’s writing, most recently as *S.R.E. Cardinalis S. Bonaventurae [...] opera omnia*, ed. Peltier, vol. 12: 183-186 (Paris: Vives, 1868). The *Spectacula contemplationis* has two editions: one Johannes Vahlkampff: *Thomas Gallus (Vercellensis). Explanationes. Band 1: Kommentar zur Mystischen Theologie und andere Schriften* (Dollnstein: Verlag Neue Orthodoxie, 2001), 85-92 (based on two manuscripts), and recently, with a study, by Declan Lawell, “Spectacula contemplationis (1244-46). A Treatise by Thomas Gallus,” *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie Médiévales* 76 (2009): 249-285. For the Areopagitic works of Thomas, see a following note.

⁸⁹² See, for example, Maximilianus Sandaeus, *Theologia mystica* (Moguntiae, 1627).

⁸⁹³ The first third of the present chapter (“Thomas Gallus, ‘mystical theologian’”) has been published, in a slightly different form, as part of my article “The Victorines and the Areopagite”: see the previous note.

⁸⁹⁴ The Areopagitic works of Thomas are edited. The *extractiones* of Thomas are accessible in two modern editions: in P. Chevalier’s *Dionysiaca* (Bruges-Paris, 1937 and Paris, 1950), and edited together with the works of Dionysius Cartusianus: *Doctoris Ecstatici D. Dionysii Cartusiani opera omnia*, t. XV and XVI, Tournai, 1902. The *explanatio* on

his century: before commenting the texts, Thomas established first his own *divisio textus* for the entire *Corpus Areopagiticum* – as it was made for the Bible by Stephen Langton, and for the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard by Alexander of Hales – and his works are interspersed with cross-references to other works of the *Corpus*. The texts of Thomas found their way to the theologians of the University of Paris. The paraphrases (*extractiones*) were incorporated into the cumulative work of the Latin Areopagitic research called *Corpus Dionysiacum Parisiense*.⁸⁹⁵ His doctrines, presented originally in commentaries and paraphrases, will define a new model of Western spirituality, where the summit of spiritual experiences is an affective and ineffable union with God – a model that will become popular through guidebooks of spiritual edification.

Thomas is unquestionably indebted to the Areopagite: his own doctrines are founded on his systematic and coherent reading of the Areopagitic *corpus* and the Canticle. It is a different question whether he can be regarded as a Victorine theologian. Thomas was certainly a Victorine canon, and he was also a theologian. In the following I argue that he may be called a *Victorine* theologian only in this strictly biographical sense – especially because his teachings openly contradict the basic and characteristic doctrines shared by Hugh, Richard, Achard, Walther – that is to say, they contradict Victorine theology.

Literature crediting Thomas with the name “Victorine” often overlooks the historical and doctrinal context of Thomas’ mystical theology. When Thomas left Saint-Victor in 1219, he left behind a centre of pastoral and penitentiary ministry, and not a centre of theology.⁸⁹⁶ While in the previous century the monastery was famous for learning, in Thomas’ time the school of the monastery served as an internal school – practically no memorable theologian (or work of theology) is known from the thirteenth-century Saint-Victor.⁸⁹⁷ Although the theological formation of Thomas is still an uninvestigated matter, a few observations may be made. The general absence of Hugonian doctrines, accepted so widely among theologians of the previous century, is quite obvious. The familiar way in which Thomas refers to the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard at one point implies a schooling based on that work (questions about the *Sentences* were already a classroom practice in the first decades of the century).⁸⁹⁸ He refers only to a small selection of Victorine works – Hugh’s

the *Mystical Theology* was first edited in the “introuvable” edition of Théry: *Thomas Gallus. Grand Commentaire sur la Théologie mystique* (Paris, 1934) and recently by Vahlkampff, in *Thomas Gallus (Vercellensis). Explanationes. Band I*, 1-29. The *Explanationes* on the five letters are edited by James Walsh: “The ‘Expositions’ of Thomas Gallus on the Pseudo-Dionysian Letters,” *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 38 (1963): 199-220. Most recently see also Lawell’s edition, *Thomae Galli Explanatio in libros Dionysii cura et studio Declan Anthony Lawell* (CCCM 223) (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011). For the fragment of Thomas’ commentary on Isaiah’s vision of Seraphim (Isa 6), preserved by the *explanatio* on the *Celestial Hierarchy* I used the then only accessible edition, that of Vahlkampff: *Thomas Gallus (Vercellensis). Explanationes. Band I*, 69-74. Although it is not clear whether his (now lost) writing was a full commentary on Isaiah or just an explanation of the vision of the Seraphim, I refer to its text as *In Isaia*. A group of glosses on the *Mystical Theology* were identified as Thomas’ work and edited by James McEvoy: *Mystical Theology: The Glosses by Thomas Gallus and the Commentary of Robert Grosseteste on “De mystica theologia”* (Paris, Leuven and Dudley, Mass.: Peeters, 2003). Recently, Declan Lawell demonstrated that these glosses are not the work of Thomas (contrary to the position of McEvoy) but were written by someone using his works extensively, see Lawell, “Thomas Gallus’s Method as Dionysian Commentator: A Study of the Glose super Angelica Ierarchia (1224), with some Considerations on the Expositio librorum beati Dionysii,” *Archives d’histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 76 (2009), 89-117. (Here Lawell also questions the authenticity of the *Spectacula contemplationis* which here I treated as a work of Thomas). Lawell also edited a gloss on the *Celestial Hierarchy*: *Thomae Galli Glose super Angelica Ierarchia. Accedunt indices ad Thomae Galli Opera* (CCCM 223A) (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011).

⁸⁹⁵ See H.-F. Dondaine, *Le Corpus Dionysien de l’ Université de Paris au XIIIe siècle* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1953).

⁸⁹⁶ See the Introduction to Part III.

⁸⁹⁷ It can be seen as an emblematic fact that while four penitentials composed in Saint-Victor in the first two decades of the thirteenth century are extant, the single original works of Thomas written there in the same period – his explanation of Isaiah – survived only because he found it important enough to copy into his *explanatio* on the *Celestial Hierarchy*.

⁸⁹⁸ See the fragment of *In Isaia*: “Ad sequentium vero faciliorem intelligentiam nota quod sicut divina sapientia quadam generali notitia cognoscit omnia... quadam vero speciali notitia... ut solet dici super illud capitulo primo Sententiarum: *Simul itaque* etc,” ed. Vahlkampff, 69. Thomas must be referring to *Sent.* I dist. xxxix, 4, 3: “Simul itaque

In *Ecclesiasten*, Richard's *Benjamin major* and *De Trinitate* – which may betray a special, personal interest in contemplation, but certainly not an education in that Victorine theology whose curriculum was elaborated by Hugh.

Thomas' approach is understandable, as he is essentially an early thirteenth-century theologian. Even if he was a Victorine canon, his thought is defined not by the outmoded *De sacramentis* of Hugh (which never reached the status of official textbook) but by the new standards of the rising professional Scholastic theology. And one of the major issues of that theology was the reshaping of theological epistemology. Through a systematic approach and new definitions, theologians were able to classify, redefine and interpret in one single framework the various cases of cognition (vision) of God. This classification and regulation created a unified theological background for the interpretation of Biblical cases (such as the revelation of the prophets and Saint John, Adam's ecstasy, or Paul's rapture), earthly contemplation and beatific vision alike.⁸⁹⁹

This new approach assigned a rather limited space and scope for what "mysticism" is considered. The immediate vision of God is reserved for the *patria*; during this life, *in via*, it is basically impossible (with the extraordinary exception of Saint Paul in his *raptus*). In this life the cognition of God is limited to a mediated vision, through the mirror of the soul or the mirror of creatures, as the traditional interpretation of 1Cor 13:12 (*videmus nunc per speculum et in enigmate tunc autem facie ad faciem*) confirms.⁹⁰⁰ These doctrines are deeply traditional (being simplified Augustinian ones): but their normative application and universal acceptance created a new, standardised theology. While in the previous century the schools of theology elaborated their "dialects," their own characteristic theologies, often differing in concepts, terms and doctrines (such as those of Chartres, the Victorines, Laon and the Cistercians), the thirteenth century gave the student of theology a unified language with predefined concepts, backed by the institutional authority of the University. One telling example must be mentioned here. Several spiritual works of the twelfth century contain passages where the contemplative experience is described in terms of some momentary and immediate vision of God – such ambiguous passages can be found not only in Hugh and Richard, but also in Bernard of Clairvaux and William of Saint-Thierry, and are still puzzling and disputed loci for modern scholars. However, thirteenth-century theologians already *know* – thanks to the reformed terminology and concepts – that God cannot be seen directly in this life, and Paul (who indeed saw God immediately in his *raptus*) was *not* in this life.

Not even the Victorine Thomas Gallus was an exception from the general trend. His *theologia mystica* (the theology that Thomas elaborated himself but attributed to the Areopagite) is not in conflict with the doctrinal theology of his age at all – it is rather a supplement to the generally accepted theological presuppositions. Seen from this angle, his entire theological project is a solution to an inherent question, rising from the principles that he (and his contemporaries) accepted: What kind of immediate cognition of God is possible in this life, if his vision is excluded? The answer is a cognition that is not regarded as a vision.

The theological thinking of Thomas revolves around a few ideas. His doctrines form one coherent system that emerges throughout his oeuvre from the beginning. This coherence also results in the uniformity and a certain monotony of his works – especially if compared to the rich Biblical imagery and various literary genres that previous Victorines applied to describe contemplative ascent or moral development. Thomas has one single scheme for ascent, one that he repeats again

et immutabiliter scit Deus omnia quae fuerunt et sunt et erunt, tam bona quam mala; praescit quoque omnia futura, tam bona quam mala."

⁸⁹⁹ See Nikolaus Wicki, *Die Lehre von der himmlischen Seligkeit in der mittelalterlichen Scholastik von Petrus Lombardus bis Thomas Aquin* (Freiburg, Switzerland: Universitäts-Verlag, 1954), and Hyacinthe-François Dondaine, "L'objet et le 'medium' de la vision béatifique chez les théologiens du XIII^e siècle," RTAM 19 (1952): 60-130. These questions were treated in theological questions (see, for example, Ms Douai Bibl. Mun. 434 quaestio 230, 260, 338, 454, 480), then often in *Sentences* commentaries written on II dist. 23.

⁹⁰⁰ See, for example, Peter Lombard, *Collectanea* in 1Cor 13:12, PL 191: 1662D-1663A, the *Glossa*, PL 114: 543C; both based on *De Trinitate* XV, ix, 15-16, PL 42: 1068-1069.

and again: the hierarchy of the angels, according to the Areopagite's description.⁹⁰¹ His main works are exegetical writings, ruminating on the same few texts – besides his Areopagitic explanations (executed in various genres) he wrote three commentaries on the Canticum (of which the last two are extant). The limited exegetical and literary interest of Thomas has its rationale, however. Thomas thought that the Canticum described the practice of that “mystical theology” (the affective-unitive cognition of God) whose theory had been expounded by Dionysius, in the treatise of the same name.

The double cognition of God

Even in his earliest works – in the commentary on Isaiah (1218) and his glosses to the *Celestial Hierarchy* (1224) – Thomas already discerned two different sorts of cognition (*modus cognoscendi*) or cognitive powers in the soul: the *intellectus* (aimed at the truth) and *affectus* (aimed at the good).⁹⁰² The difference of these cognitive powers also means different forms of knowledge: *intellectus* has an intellectual cognition of God, and *affectus* an “experiential,” affective cognition. The twofold model of cognition is closely tied to the traditional interpretation of 1Cor 13:12, where the *vision* of God means the (intellectual) cognition of God. In this life this cognition remains constantly restricted, mirrored and enigmatic cognition (*intellectus speculativus et enigmaticus*), limited to the mirror of the creatures, while a clear and immediate *vision* will be given after this life.⁹⁰³

For Thomas, the possibility of an unlimited, immediate cognition in this life is saved through the affective cognition. In his glosses to the *Celestial Hierarchy* (1224) Thomas opposes it to the intellectual cognition: while vision through a mirror brings only mediated cognition, all the other senses seize their subjects immediately, through “experience” and through “union.” This addition to the traditional epistemological imagery justifies the immediacy of the affective cognition, and gives its superiority to the intellectual cognition, too.⁹⁰⁴ This opposition of

⁹⁰¹ The *De septem gradibus contemplationis* (inc. *Contemplativorum aquilinos obtutus*), edited several times among Bonaventure's works and regarded now as an early *opusculum* of Thomas (c. 1224-1226), means a single exception: here Thomas takes over and modifies the scheme of Egidio da Assisi, giving the sequence of *ignis – unctio – ecstasis – speculatio – gustus – quies – gloria*.

⁹⁰² In *Isaiam*: “spiritus rationalis ex conditione naturae quadam simplici notitia apprehendit et sua et aliena, quadam autem alia interiori scientia cognoscit et apprehendit... Primus autem modus praecipue consistit in pulchro et claro, et hiis delectantur et naturaliter in qui sitivus est veritatis. Secundus in dulci et suavi, et facit desiderium bonitatis. Primus dicitur intellectus, secundus affectus,” ed. Vahlkampff, 70.

⁹⁰³ See, for example, the *explanatio* on the Letter 1: “visio illa intellectualis et speculativa terminabatur in aliquo existente, tanquam Dei speculo.” Walsh ed., 204, and the late *Comm. III*, 20, 165: “Post hanc vitam mortalem assumatur sponsa ad claram et comprehensivam sponsi contemplationem et cognitionem secundum modum patriae, Cor. 13: *tunc cognoscam* etc.”

⁹⁰⁴ *Glosa in Hierarchiam Caelestem III*: “INSPECTORUM SANCTORUM PERFECTIVE SCIENTIE. Duplicem ostendit scientiam. Unam illuminativam, aliam superiorem, quam dicit perfectivam: hec est sapientia. Utraque tamen gratia dicitur scientia, quia per utramque deum cognoscimus. Per primam intellectualiter, videndo, et hanc solam puto philosophis innotuisse. Per aliam experiendo, sentiendo, gustando, et olfaciendo summa vi anime, que est principalis affectio ascendens in divina infiniter super intellectum, non enigmatice se extendens in deum, adhuc imperfecte. [...] Hec enim scientia indoctrinalis est, quia doctrina per auditum fit, auditus autem et visus anime secundum intellectum sunt. Gustus, tactus et olfactus secundum affectum vel affectionem; et sicut corporaliter sic spiritualiter utrisque sensibus propria sensata cognoscimus. Scientia autem affectionis, que perfectiva est uniendo nos ille perfectioni, non capitur ab intellectu. Unde in primo Mystice theologie, ubi Dionysius dirigit Thimotheum ad hanc sapientiam iubet eum deserere omnes intellectuales opiniones et omnia opera intelligibilia et ignote consurgere ad unionem Dei qui est super cognitionem.” Ms Paris Mazarine lat. 715 pag. 418ab. Cf. *Comm. III*, 51 (204-205): “Valde enim notabile est quod sponsus hic dicitur esse totus desiderabilis, cum ipse totus non intelligibilis, sicut patet ex premissis: unde colligitur quod incomparabiliter plus excedit ascendendo vis desiderativa, vel unio, vel apex affectionis intellectuum theoricum [...]. Intellectus enim speculativus est, et necessario consistit in speculo quod est creatura, Cor. 13: *videmus nunc per speculum* etc; unio autem vere nescit speculum, sed penitus pertransit et unit mentem theoriis pure veritatis, De div. nom. 7 i [...].”

(intellectual) *scientia* and (affective) *sapientia* returns later, in the prologues of the commentaries on the Canticle, as *scire et nosse* (based on Jer 9:24, *In hoc gloriatur qui gloriatur scire me et nosse me*). The two modes of cognition are separated and radically different: the results of intellectual cognition can be shared with others, while the experience of the affective cognition, by its very nature, cannot be communicated: *illa mea experientialis unitio nec scribi, nec dici, nec intellectu potest concipi*.⁹⁰⁵

The affective cognition comes about through a special, affective cognitive power that can become united with God, called by various names, such as *principalis affectio*, *apex affectus* and *scintilla synderesis*. This anthropological doctrine is Thomas' invention, and he is well known for the special, "mystical" usage of the last term, *synderesis* – while the majority of the medieval theologians understood it in the context of morality and conscience.⁹⁰⁶ The term, originally used by Jerome in his Ezekiel commentary, was excavated from the *Glossa ordinaria*, when the theologians of Paris tried to formulate their ideas on moral responsibility. The prevalent moral-ethical discourse of *synderesis* (where it was connected to notions such as *potentia*, *habitus*, infallibility, will, conscience and natural law) was first created by William of Auxerre and Philip the Chancellor in the 1220s and 1230s. Thomas Gallus, at that time already in the remote town of Vercelli, was left out of these discussions – which gives a plausible reason for his unique and independent usage of the term.

Christian theology and the *Mystical Theology*

Thomas credited to the Areopagite his own theory of twofold cognition – and by doing so, he also reevaluated the Christian tradition of theology. From his point of view, the entirety of pagan philosophy and the vast majority of the Christian theological literature deal with the mirrored and enigmatic intellectual knowledge about God, which derived from the investigation of the creatures – and which can be obtained through study and teaching. As an exemplary work for this kind of cognition, he mentions Hugh's *In Ecclesiasten (Comm. III)* and the books of the Areopagite except the *Mystical Theology*. Richard is another referred author: the first five contemplations, as described in the *Benjamin major*, pertain to the intellectual cognition, while the sixth surpasses it: *sextum (gradum) philosophia humana ignorat*.⁹⁰⁷ The *Benjamin major*'s description of the grades of contemplation is completed by the *De Trinitate*.⁹⁰⁸ For that work, Richard obtained a special esteem from Thomas: he is called Seraph, because he founded a new art of demonstrating the trinity of God, based on the experience of *affectus*.⁹⁰⁹

In Thomas' interpretation, the *Mystical Theology* contains the theory of the affective-unitive cognition of God. In the first chapter, the Areopagite exhorts Timothy to a union with God through an unknown manner (*ignote consurge ad unionem*), by leaving both corporeal sensation and intellectual acts of mind⁹¹⁰ – and this exhortation summarises and justifies the doctrines of Thomas, too. For him, abandoning sense perception and intellectual activities means the abandonment of the intellectual investigation of the *vestigia Dei*. The positive side of the suggestion, the *ignote*

⁹⁰⁵ *Comm. III*, 6B (206).

⁹⁰⁶ See the magistral work of Odon Lottin, "Synderèse et conscience aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles," in his *Psychologie et morale aux XIIe et XIIIe siècles*, vol. II-I (Louvain, 1948), 103-349.

⁹⁰⁷ For Hugh, see *Comm. III*, *Prol.* (107): "[cognitio] intellectualis que comparatur per considerationem creaturarum in Ecclesiaste secundum expositionem venerabilis doctoris magistri Hugonis." For the Areopagite and Richard see *Explanatio super Mysticam theologiam*, ed. Vahlkampff, 2.

⁹⁰⁸ *Spectacula contemplationis*, ed. Vahlkampff, 85.

⁹⁰⁹ *In Isaïam*, ed. Vahlkampff, 73.

⁹¹⁰ See the key passages of the *Mystica theologia* I, in the Saracenus translation: "Tu autem o amice Timothee, circa mysticas visiones forti contritione et sensus derelinque, et intellectuales operationes, et omnia sensibilia et intelligibilia... et sicut est possibile ignote consurge ad eius unionem qui est super omnem substantiam et cognitionem."

consurgere, has multiple meaning. It means the usage of a non-intellectual and still cognitive force (as Thomas interprets *affectus*), but it also means an ascension through a cognitive faculty that was unknown prior to the Areopagite. Thomas here radically rewrites the previous models of theological anthropology. What he says is that everyone except Dionysius (pagan philosophers and Christian theologians alike) had an insufficient model of anthropology (consisting of *sensus*, *imaginatio*, *ratio* and *intelligentia*) and an insufficient way of the cognition of God – they did not know about the existence of the *principalis affectio* and the affective cognition.⁹¹¹ Thomas was certainly right: this model of affective cognition was certainly unknown – not only to the Christian theologians, but to the Areopagite himself, too. As Paul Rorem put it once, “it mattered not that Dionysius never put love above knowing and unknowing in the approach to God, for a Western Dionysian tradition was now supplying this crucial amplification.”⁹¹² The model that Thomas created defined the Latin interpretation of Dionysius.^f

The angelic hierarchy of the soul

The angelic orders of the soul form a central doctrine of Thomas’ mystical theology. This was present in his very first work, the commentary on Isaiah’s vision (1218); he repeated it in his later works several times – by transcribing it in the explanation of the Celestial Hierarchy (1243), by epitomising in the prefaces of the *Second Commentary* (1237-1238) and the *Third Commentary on the Canticle* (1243) and in the *Spectacula contemplationis* (1244-1246). Thomas even expected the reader to know this scheme by heart.⁹¹³

The doctrine goes back to a single sentence of the *Celestial Hierarchy* where the Areopagite tangentially mentions the “first, middle and last orders of the soul.” That issue, with its sole occurrence, is marginal in the *Corpus Areopagiticum*, but Thomas builds his theology on this remark. Unlike his predecessors who interpreted these “orders” as hierarchised powers or virtues of the soul, Thomas projects into these “orders” the Areopagitic orders of the angels.⁹¹⁴ The result is a novel and original idea. The nine Areopagitic orders no longer provide a mere description of the celestial beings, but a frame of reference and pattern of any “hierarchised” (both human and angelic) mind.⁹¹⁵ Technically speaking, Thomas gives a tropological reading of the Areopagitic classification of angels, denoting different grades of the cognition of God by the names of different

⁹¹¹ *Explanatio super Mysticam theologiam*: “In hoc autem libro alium et incomparabiliter profundiorum modum cognoscendi Deum tradidit, id est, superintellectualem et supersubstantialem quem ideo philosophus gentilis non apprehendit, quia non quaesivit, nec esse putavit [...]. Putavit enim summam vim cognitivam esse intellectum, cum sit alia quae non minus excedit intellectum quam intellectus rationem, vel ratio imaginationem, scilicet principalis affectio, et ipsa [3] est scintilla synderesis quae sola unibilis est Spiritui divino [...],” ed. Vahlkampff, 2-3.

⁹¹² Paul Rorem, *Pseudo-Dionysius* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 217.

⁹¹³ “Quod de angelicis hierarchicis operibus dicitur et de ordinibus mentis per quamdam similitudinem intelligendum est, iuxta illud quod semper est memoriter retinendum, Ang. hier. 10b (f) ‘addam autem, et hoc non inconvenienter,’ usque ‘perfecte perfectionis.’” *Comm. III*, #F, 184.

⁹¹⁴ CH 10, in the Saracenus translation: “unaquae et caelestis et humana mens speciales habet et primas et medias et ultimas ordinationes et virtutes.” For the Maximus gloss, the three orders meant the soul’s substance, power and ordination (“Tres isti ordines sive ordinationes intelligendi sunt ita. quia omnis animus habet substantiam secundum quam primus est. Deinde virtutem, secundum quam contentus est. Postremo ordinationem, secundum quam propria operans pie agit.” Ms Cologne Dombibliothek 30 fol. 18rv); for Eriugena intellectual, rational and moral *virtutes* (PL 122: 226); for Hugh, the order of (moral) virtues (PL 175: 1103CD). Thomas knew Anastasius’ interpretation, as his own glosses on the *Celestial Hierarchy* attest (written in 1224): “Prout autem potuimus explanavimus eam [sc. reductionem] in illius transitus expositione Ys[ai]a .VI. *Vidi dominum sedentem* etc. Qualiter autem hoc intelligit Anastasius, potest in libro veteri ad Karolum tres enim ierarchias in mente intelligit, substantiam, virtutes et vite ordinem” (Ms Paris Maz. lat. 715 pag. 437b).

⁹¹⁵ See *Spectacula contemplationis*, written 1244-1246: “[Consideratio] Sexta attendit ter trinam distinctionem hierarchicam in qualibet mente hierarchica angelica vel humana.” Vahlkampff, 90. Note that according to Thomas, the very act of pondering this pattern of ascent belongs to the sixth consideration of the fourth level of contemplation.

angelic orders: the higher cognition is named after the higher orders of the hierarchy.⁹¹⁶ The three angelic hierarchies evolve into three forms of cognition: cognition by natural powers, by human agency (*industria*, meaning the cooperation of nature and grace) and by grace alone. The contemplative mind first has to go “through” the first two angelic hierarchies (which means a gradual ascent through six grades of contemplation), then may expect an ecstasy elevating it into the higher grades.⁹¹⁷

While the *natura-industria-gratia* division fits well into Richard’s tradition, the way in which Thomas describes the cognition through grace is far less Victorine: here Thomas integrates his model of twofold cognition into the angelic pattern. The mind reaches higher and higher levels in the cognition of God, through both cognitive forces, while the last three stages of cognition, denoted by the highest hierarchy of the angels, happen through ecstasy (*per excessum mentis*). The *intellectus* and *affectus* work together in the ecstasy of the seventh (Thrones) and eighth (Cherubim) order – but the cognition of the *intellectus* stops at the level of Cherubim. The last and highest order of Seraphim means the supra-intellectual cognition taught by the *Mystical Theology*: incomprehensibly to the *intellectus*, here *affectus* becomes unified with God.⁹¹⁸

The “anti-intellectualism” of Thomas?

It is a well-known, explicit and often repeated doctrine of Thomas that *affectus* and *intellectus* cooperate until the penultimate level of cognition (Cherub). At this level the cognition of *intellectus* stops while the *affectus* goes further and reaches the highest level (Seraph): the non-mirrored, immediate cognition of God (the union) is reserved for the latter. This doctrine of Thomas might have been the source of claims for his “anti-intellectualism,” a term debated and rightly rejected by Jeanne Barbet.⁹¹⁹ The doctrine above describes the working of the cognitive and affective powers in the course of contemplative experience. There is a different context, however, where the term “anti-intellectualism” is acceptable, but it seems to have escaped scholarly attention. This context is the personal disposition and attitude towards the intellectual and affective ways of cognition. According to Thomas, the more one exercises oneself in the intellectual cognition (of the existent things) the less one will be capable of the affective cognition (of God). The doctrine is present in the Third Commentary, where operations of reason and intellect are called (together with the inordinate desires) “obstacles” on the roads to eternity; these “obstacles” retard the working of the highest

⁹¹⁶ Cf. his own words (*In Isaiam*): “Illas ergo cognitiones tam affectus quam intellectus arbitror ordine cherubym moraliter contineri in quantum affectus ibi intellectum non excedit, quod recte ‘plenitudo scientiae’ non ‘sapientiae’ dicitur,” ed. Vahlkampff, 70.

⁹¹⁷ *Comm. III*, prol. Q (109-110): “Mens itaque contemplativa, decursis seriatim sex gradibus cotelationis in culmine sexti aciem figens in ordine dominationum, mentis nititur in theoricis excessus cupiens in ordinem thronorum mentis assumi, ut igitur ibidem assit deitati ‘que omnibus adest’ iuxta doctrinam magni Dionysii, De div. nom. 3a. Tribus artificiis utitur in hoc libro, scilicet castissimis orationibus, revelatione mentis et aptitudine ad unionem.”

⁹¹⁸ *Comm. II prol.* = *Comm. III prol.*: “Octavus ordo continet omnimodam cognitionem intellectus [...]. Simul enim attrahuntur et quasi coambulant affectus et intellectus usque ad novissimum defectum intellectus, qui est in summitate huius ordinis cherub, quem intellectus etiam attractus non excedit, sed ibi habet sue cognitionis et sui luminis consummationem: unde ordo ille cherubim vocatur. Nonus continet principalia in Deum suspiria, superintellectuales extensiones et immissiones, fervidos fulgores et fulgidos fervores, ad quorum omnium sublimes excessus et excedentes sublimitates intelligentia trahi non potest, sed sola principalis affectio Deo unibilis.... Iste ordo Deum amplexatur et sponsi amplexibus amicitur, speculum nescit” (67, 109).

⁹¹⁹ See Barbet, “Thomas Gallus,” 3. Doctrine, Note préliminaire, DS 15, 807. Barbet deliberately avoids the term “anti-intellectualism” (unlike, for example, Gabriel Théry). Her argument may be reduced to two substantial points: that the very word “intellectualism” (*intellectualisme*) is a twentieth-century neologism, which can be applied to medieval issues only with caution (while the prefix “anti-” makes the word even more obscure) – and that the word “superintellectualis” cannot be translated as “anti-intellectual” at all.

hierarchies of the mind from the supersubstantial union with God.⁹²⁰ The *Explanatio* to *Letter 1* says the same: he who goes too far in intellectual knowledge will be deprived of the far superior, supra-intellectual one.⁹²¹ It is true that Thomas himself did not deny the function of the intellectual cognition (in the *Spectacula contemplationis* gave it a detailed discussion) – but these passages give it the rather lowly place of an obstacle.

2. Thomas Gallus on prelapsarian cognition

The prelapsarian cognition is a decisive point where Thomas clearly departs from twelfth-century Victorine doctrines and joins the thirteenth-century standard position.

For twelfth-century Victorines such as Hugh, Achard and Richard, the prelapsarian cognition of God was a direct, immediate, unblocked vision of God, a *contemplatio* of God, in the presence of God. Scholastic theologians from the mid-1240s onwards conceived it in a different visual paradigm: following Peter Lombard's hint at 1Cor 13:12, they assumed that Adam saw God in a mirror (like us) but without the enigma (unlike us). After the *Summa Halensis* this will be the common theological interpretation of *Sentences* II. dist. 23. Thomas Gallus (of whose university studies nothing is known) reached a similar conclusion: he explicitly denied Adam's immediate vision of God, attributing to him a vision through a mirror and in an enigma.

Thomas' position on the prelapsarian condition can be known from his interpretation of Cant 2:9 as presented in his second and third Canticle commentaries (written 1237-1238 and 1243). The text of Cant 2:9 mentions the Bridegroom standing "behind our wall." Thomas interprets that "wall" as something separating us from the vision of God. The two commentaries repeat the same two meanings for "wall," outlining the same doctrine: Adam did not see God immediately in the prelapsarian condition, and nor could he have done so. In his explanation, one meaning of the "wall" refers to the consequence of the original sin. In the wording of the *Second Commentary*, original sin created a "division" between the "divine face" and the human mind, and this "division" now forbids the "clear and pure contemplation" of God (the idea is remarkably similar to Hugh's notion of *medium divisionis* outlined in *De sacramentis* I, ix, 3). The *Third Commentary* calls the same inability a "common blindness for Adam's sin" (*communis caecitas pro peccato Adae*).⁹²² The other meaning of "wall" refers to the ontological difference between God and man: the "wall" is an impediment deriving from human nature (*obiex propriae naturae, obiex nostrae naturae*), since the "incomparable supereminence of the divine supersubstantiality" is inaccessible to human *intelligentia*.⁹²³ While the "common blindness" is post-lapsarian, the impediment based on human nature characterises both prelapsarian and post-lapsarian conditions.

⁹²⁰ *Comm. III*, 2H (155): "offendicula sunt non solum concupiscentia carnis, concupiscentia oculorum et superbia vite cum suis familiis, sed etiam opera et cogitationes active et interdum operationes rationales et intellectuales circa investigationem vel considerationem quorumlibet existentium."

⁹²¹ *Explanatio* to *Letter 1*: "Hoc *excessive* etc. quasi dicat: hiis duobus exemplis premissis intendo ostendere quod qui firmiter innituntur sapientie intellectuali, eo ipso privantur superintellectuali divino lumine," ed. Walsh, "The 'Expositions'," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 38 (1963): 204.

⁹²² "En ipse stat post parietem nostrum. [Cant 2:9] Paries est divisio quam primum peccatum statuit inter mentem nostram et faciem divinam, excludens nos a clara et pura eius contemplatione, Isa. 59a, Exo. 33g, 1Cor 14g: *per speculum*, Num. 24: *videbo eum sed non proprie*, Iob 36f: *intuetur procul*, scilicet enigmatice et obscure. Post istum parietem quasi stat dilectus quando, prout permittit divisio ista, ad nos dignanter accedit, quia mentibus contemplativis, quasi per medium istius parietis obscuri, quasdam aperturas, lumini interni baiulas, dispensa mente indulget. [...] Vel parietem intellige nature nostre obicem, quia Adam, etiam ante peccatum non vidit Deum per speciem sed per speculum sive enigmate, id est de luto generis nostri interiecto." *Comm. II* 2D, 80.

⁹²³ "Mentes ergo que supersubstantialiter extenduntur et *ad supersubstantialem radium immituntur*, De div. nom. 1g [...]. Sed illorum superluculentum claritas radiorum intelligentie nostre conspectibus intercluditur, non solum communi cecitate, pro peccato Ade, Exo. 33g: *non videbit me homo et videt*, sed etiam obice proprie nature in statu sue prime conditionis ante peccatum, a qua divina supersubstantialitas incomparabili supereminencia inaccessibiliter segregatur [...]. Hunc ergo nature nostre obicem vocat 'parietem nostrum.' [...] Adam, etiam ante peccatum, non vidit Deum per speciem, sed per speculum sive enigmate." *Comm. III* 2F, 152-153.

Given that the “common blindness” (the consequence of the original sin) removed the contemplation of God, we may tentatively conclude that, according to Thomas, before the original sin Adam had a “clear and pure contemplation of God” – a contemplation that was not a *per speciem* vision of God, due to the limitation set by human nature. In order to emphasise the difference between prelapsarian and eschatological cognition, Thomas evokes 1Cor 13:12 in both passages, speaking of a vision “through a mirror, or in an enigma” before the Fall. The meaning of “mirror” or “enigma” here is undefined: Thomas draws only a sharp contrast between the prelapsarian contemplation *per speculum* and the direct, eschatological vision of God *per speciem* (latter also called a “comprehensive” contemplation and a “cognition according to the heavenly fatherland”).⁹²⁴

The explanations to the verse of the Canticum can be understood according to the logic of Thomas’ theology. For him, “seeing” is a metaphor reserved for intellectual cognition of God: Adam’s cognition (and our cognition, too) is called either blindness or a mirrored vision (depending on the context). It is also a principle for Thomas that in this life no one can escape the mirrored vision. Consequently, the “principal remedy” of the human nature against the original sin, the “mystical” experience (as nowadays it would be called) that takes the soul away from the fallen state, is *not* a vision but an experience that excludes any mirror⁹²⁵ – that is, the *mystica theologia* taught by the Areopagite.

The theory about the prelapsarian cognition does not have much importance for Thomas’ theological anthropology, since both the prelapsarian and the present cognition necessarily come about through a mirror. This proposition was shared by theologians after the 1240s, but not by earlier Victorines. For Hugh, Richard and Achard, the momentary, direct cognition of God was conceived as a direct vision of God (excluding the creatures and the signs): they used the imagery of a direct gaze to express the immediateness of that experience. Thomas Gallus had different premises and, therefore, a different imagery. The element of immediateness in experience is kept by him, but (since vision is reserved for the intellectual cognition, possible only *in patria*) he uses a different imagery to express that immediateness: the union by *affectus* and love, and sensual metaphors excluding vision.

Thomas’ position on the prelapsarian cognition is in perfect harmony with the orthodox position of his time. His two commentaries were written 1237-1238 and 1243; the *Summa Halensis* treated the same issue at some point between 1241 and 1245 (see the previous chapter). Both Thomas and the *Summa* speaks of a mirrored vision of Adam, and nothing from the censured positions can be found in Thomas. In this respect, the unknown theologians thinking about an *immediata et semiplena visio* were truer disciples of Hugh than Thomas was.

3. Thomas Gallus: the spiritual author as spiritual reader

Thomas had his own, well-defined theory about contemplation based on Areopagitic texts – but at the same time, he knew various texts and doctrines by Hugh and Richard of Saint-Victor, and his own contemporary, the Franciscan Aegidius (Giles) of Assisi. His approach to these spiritual works is still largely uninvestigated. Taking over, copying or adapting others’ spiritual doctrines (including those of twelfth-century authors) was not uncommon among thirteenth-century spiritual

⁹²⁴ See *Comm. III*, 5F: “Languor usque ad mortem ducit. [...] mors est separatio a speculo ad speciem, Iob 3q: *separantur*.” and *Comm. III*, 2O: “Post hanc vitam mortalem assumatur sponsa ad claram et comprehensivam sponsi contemplationem et cognitionem secundum modum patriae, Cor. 13: *tunc cognoscam* etc.” (ed. Barbet, 199 and 165). The terms can be grouped thus: *clara et pura contemplatio, per speculum* (prelapsarian condition); *caecitas, per speculum* vision (now); *clara et comprehensiva contemplatio, per speciem* (*patria*).

⁹²⁵ Thomas, *Comm. III*, 1C (124): “Hec refectio non fit per speculum, sed per divine dulcedinis experientiam, iuxta quod gustus et tactus non exercetur per speculum [...]. Hec est etiam principalis medicina nature nostre ad reparationem antequam ruine, quando in primo Adam spoliati fuimus gratuitis et vulnerati in naturalibus.” Cf. Peter Lombard, *Sent. II* dist. 25, 8: “Vulneratus quidem in naturalibus bonis [...] spoliatus vero gratuitis.” PL 192: 707.

writers (as other examples of the present part will show).⁹²⁶ Thomas is exceptional in this regard, too. Instead of transcribing and altering the extant theories, he uses various strategies, such as adaptation by commenting (for Aegidius), creating an order among the works, or remodelling a work (for Richard).

Adapting the scheme of Aegidius of Assisi

The treatise *De septem gradibus contemplationis* clearly demonstrates the confidence of Thomas in dealing with spiritual doctrines elaborated by others. Aegidius (Giles) of Assisi (1190-1262) belonged to the earliest followers and friends of Saint Francis. Beyond his personal sanctity, he was also known for the scheme of spiritual ascent of seven grades that he elaborated. This scheme was particularly popular in the milieu of Franciscan spirituality: the anonymous Franciscan Canticle commentary called *Deiformis animae gemitus* contains it, and Bonaventure several times refers to it. Thomas Gallus (who in Vercelli also taught some followers of Francis) wrote his own interpretation of Aegidius' scheme in his short treatise entitled *De septem gradibus contemplationis*.⁹²⁷

Aegidius' concise scheme describes an ascent through the following subsequent stages: *ignis – unctio – ecstasis – contemplatio – gustus – requies – gloria*. In *De septem gradibus*, Thomas first repeats the scheme (replacing the word *contemplatio* with *speculatio*) and adds his own theories as an explanation of the names of the grades created by Aegidius. *Ecstasis* comes about through virtues of humility and purity and the divine love. From the next, fourth grade, *speculatio*, onwards, Thomas substantially accommodates the scheme to his own theology. *Speculatio* means a grade of cognition, when both *intellectus* and *affectus* (more precisely, the *apex intelligentiae* and the *principalis affectio*) operate. The intellect is "speculating," seeing through a mirror, and hence "remains outside," while affectivity "enters" by desiring and becomes unified with God.⁹²⁸ The same degree of *speculatio* also means the "angelification," the angelic transformation, effected by the contemplation of the glory of God (cf. 2Cor 3:18).⁹²⁹ The rest, *gustus*, *quies* and *gloria*, are less

⁹²⁶ It seems to be a common trait of thirteenth-century spiritual authors that instead of elaborating original spiritual doctrines, they use (take over, modify or copy, with or without references to the original) doctrines found in spiritual works of earlier periods, including the twelfth century. Popular sources were the texts of Bernard of Clairvaux, William of Saint-Thierry, Hugh and Richard of Saint-Victor and the *De spiritu et anima*.

⁹²⁷ For the references, see Gabriel Théry, "Thomas Gallus et Egide d'Assise. Le traité 'De septem gradibus contemplationis.'" *Revue Néo-scholastique de Philosophie* 36 (1934): 180-190. My conclusions are based on the edited text, even if it is only one of the three redactions (see the *Prolegomena* of the Quaracchi editors in Bonaventure's *Opera omnia* VIII, cxiv). The authorship of the commentary *Deiformis animae* is disputed: Théry attributed it to Thomas Gallus and saw it as Thomas' first commentary on the Canticle, while Barbet argued that it cannot be Thomas' work (and, consequently, she regarded the first commentary still as lost). Barbet's position is generally accepted (a notable exception: Ruh, *Geschichte III*, 63). The text of *Deiformis animae* has two editions: in the *Thesaurus anecdotorum novissimus* tom. 2 pars 1, col. 500-689, ed. Bernard Pez (1721) as by Thomas, and *Un commentaire vercelien du Canticum des cantiques: Deiformis animae gemitus*, ed. J. Barbet and F. Ruello (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005) as by anonymous.

⁹²⁸ Thomas, *De septem gradibus*: "Speculatio est beatorum et supercoelestium, et soli Deo scibilium divitiarum intellectualis et affectualis pia investigatio. Contemplantur autem hi duo, scilicet intellectus et affectus; sed intellectus longe dissimiliter ab affectu. Cum enim animus contemplativus, sensibus spiritualibus suspensis, synderesim in specula aeterna extendit, apex intelligentiae et principalis affectio pariter feruntur mutuo in divina se promoventes, et aequaliter ascendentes, illa speculando, haec vero desiderando. Praecurrente autem intelligentia nec ingredi queunte, utpote per speculum videns, foris remanet. Affectus vero quae nescia est speculi, intrans unitur secundum illud: *Qui adhaeret Deo, unus spiritus est*." Bonaventure, ed. Peltier, vol. 12, 184

⁹²⁹ Thomas, *De septem gradibus*: "Felix nimis qui hujus gradus collem attingit: hic plane angelificatus in praesenti, futuram jam inchoavit vitam. [...] Ubi [that is, in 2Cor 3:18] potissime divinus ille Apostolus utilitatem expressit contemplationis. Quid enim est 'revelata facie gloriam Domini speculari' nisi [...] 'gloriam Dei', id est tam superignotam, et simplicissimam et supersplendentem aeternitatis claritatem, quam superineffabilem [...] supercoelestium substantiarum supertranquillissimam pacem pie, pure, devoteque rimari? Quid vero est taliter

substantial and less elaborated. The ultimate, seventh grade, *gloria* is still remarkable, as no *viator* can reach this grade. Thomas names only two exceptions: the Holy Virgin and Saint Paul, who was enraptured (*raptus*) to that degree.⁹³⁰

Using the scheme of Aegidius, Thomas presents the same key doctrines that he expounds elsewhere – such as the duality of *affectus* and *intellectus* and the priority of *affectus*.⁹³¹ The new elements of this adaptation are few: he contracts the two ultimate degrees of his own, angelic scheme (the *seraph* and *cherub*) into one degree called here *speculatio*, he explicitly speaks about the angelic transformation, and he mentions Paul's rapture (a very rare issue in his works). The *De septem gradibus* of Thomas shows his versatile mind transforming a contemporary scheme according to his own theory. Thomas had a similar attitude towards the twelfth-century Victorine spiritual works as well. He found a place for Hugh's and Richard's works.

Thomas and Victorine sources

In his writings, Thomas Gallus refers to the works of Hugh and Richard several times. These references are limited to a few works, and the presentation of the works mentioned by Thomas is defined by his own theological preferences. From Hugh, he mentions only the *In Ecclesiasten*, and from Richard, the two *Benjamins*, the *De Trinitate*, and the *Adnotatio in Ps 2*. All these works are seen from the particular aspect of the new Areopagitism that Thomas elaborated through the reading of the *Mystical Theology*. According to Thomas, the vast majority of the Christian theological literature (together with the entire pagan philosophy) deals with the intellectual knowledge about God – the mirrored and enigmatic knowledge that derives from the investigation of the creatures: this is the lower form of cognition if compared to the unifying cognition through *affectus*. Hugh's *In Ecclesiasten* is Thomas' example for this form of cognition (but also the Areopagitic works except the *Mystical Theology*).⁹³² Richard's spiritual writings had a higher reputation: Thomas projects into them an ascending order (which is a unique idea in their reception), an "anagogical" hierarchy leading from the intellectual to mystical cognition, and makes his own version from those parts of the *Benjamin major* that refer to the created world.

Richard and the Areopagite

In his third commentary on the Canticum commenting on Cant 2:11 (*jam hiems transiit*), Thomas makes a digression on the ways leading to eternity (*itineria aeternitatis*) and the obstacles of those ways.⁹³³ According to Thomas, the Areopagite teaches these ways in his works, "completing their ascensions" by his *Mystical Theology*. Curiously, one of the manuscripts (Ms B) contains a similar

'speculantes in eadem imaginem transformari,' nisi [...] de hominibus in quodammodo Angelos transformari?' Bonaventure, ed. Peltier, vol. 12, 184-185.

⁹³⁰ Thomas, *De septem gradibus*: "De septimo tutius tacendum censui, quam loquendum, quoniam nulli viatorum ascensus, sive visio hujus gradus patere potuit, nisi illi coelesti Paulo, qui se raptum usque ad hujusmodi per sacram Scripturam asserit. Felix certe superdulcissimae et gloriosissimae Virginis Mariae anima, cui hoc datum est in via, quod nulli sanctorum aliquando possederunt." Bonaventure, ed. Peltier, vol. 12, 185.

⁹³¹ Théry's article presents parallels from the *explanatio* of the *Divine Names*, Chapter 4.

⁹³² *Comm. III, Prol.* (107): "[cognitio] intellectualis que comparatur per considerationem creaturarum in Ecclesiaste secundum expositionem venerabilis doctoris magistri Hugonis."

⁹³³ The "obstacles" are various desires and vices, acts and thoughts pertaining to the active life (but also the rational and intellectual investigations pertaining to the things which are existing), *Comm. III, 2H* (155): "offendicula sunt non solum concupiscentia carnis, concupiscentia oculorum et superbia vite cum suis familiis, sed etiam opera et cogitationes active et interdum operationes rationales et intellectuales circa investigationem vel considerationem quorumlibet existentium." The continuation of the text makes it clear that intellectual operations do retard the working of the highest hierarchies of the mind from the supersubstantial union with God.

reference to Richard that creates a similar ascending order among the works of Richard.⁹³⁴ Thomas writes that Richard prepared those “ways of eternity” in his book called *Quare fremuerunt* (that is, by the *Adnotatio in Ps 2*); he began those ways in the *Benjamin minor*, to be extended in *Benjamin major* and completed in the book *Iustus meus* (that is, by the *De Trinitate*). The same idea of a hierarchy among Richard’s works (though concerning only the *Benjamin major* and *De Trinitate*) is repeated in the *Spectacula contemplationis*.⁹³⁵

The parallel between the Areopagite and Richard, similarly to the hierarchical order of their works as well, is the existence of new ideas, but for the *De Trinitate*, Richard enjoyed special esteem. Richard is credited with being the founder of the experimental affective mysticism (*novam artem super experimentum affectus fundavit*) by that work as he “cried ‘Holy, Holy, Holy!’ through his Seraphim.”⁹³⁶ Proclaiming doxology through one’s Seraphim belongs to the ultimate level of cognition in Thomas’ system: the Seraphim are the last and highest order of the angels, denoting the ultimate degree of the cognition of God, when the intellect has already stopped and the pure *affectus* cognises God.⁹³⁷ Richard himself, of course, did not teach that particular doctrine, which Thomas attributes to the Areopagite: his knowledge of the corpus seems to be reduced to the Celestial Hierarchy (or rather to its Hugonian commentary).⁹³⁸ Attributing such cognition to Richard is more than a gesture towards the Victorine master: it also creates the sense of continuity between Thomas’ brand new theology based on new premises and a most venerated theological⁹³⁹ author – who, moreover, once belonged to the same monastery as Thomas did.

Interpreting and remaking the *Benjamin major*

The *Benjamin major* contains Richard’s most explicit doctrines on contemplation. Thomas knew these doctrines and, in his own interpretation, also integrated them into his own theories. A short summary of Richard’s work is included in the *Explanatio in Mysticam theologiam*. A strange partial remake of its first four “grades” of contemplation also appears in the *Spectacula contemplationis*, a work attributed to Thomas; although the attribution has been questioned recently by Lawell, here I treat it as authentic.

In the *Explanatio in Mysticam theologiam*, Thomas (like many other Scholastic readers) reads Richard’s six contemplations as one single gradual pattern of ascent divided into six stages. The first five contemplations, as described in the *Benjamin major*, pertain to the intellectual cognition. The first three “grades” of contemplation (the three first contemplations in Richard) deal with the proprieties of the visible and invisible creatures and involve imagination. The fourth degree

⁹³⁴ *Comm. III*, 2H (155): “Hec itinera preparat Prior Ricardus Sancti Victoris Parisii in libro suo qui dicitur et incipit ‘Quare fremuerunt’; inchoat autem directe in priori et minori Benjamin; extendit in maiori Benjamin qui incipit ‘Misticam’ etc.; complet in libro qui dicitur ‘Iustus meus’ ubi evidentibus rationibus declarat que de divinis invisibilibus, sive essentialibus, sive personalibus, sive notionalibus, sentit et credit Ecclesia. Hec itinera docet Dionysius in singulis libris suis, quorum ascensum complet in libro Myst. theol.” Concerning *De Trinitate* see also *Explanatio super Mysticam theologiam*, iii: “praecipua mihi videtur esse doctrina prioris Richardi de Sancto Victore Parisiensi in volumine quod dicitur ‘Iustus meus.’ Siquidem in primis duobus libris tractat de hiis quae pertinent ad unitatem divinae essentiae, in tertio et in quarto de hiis quae pertinent ad personarum Trinitatem, in quinto et in sexto de notionalibus,” ed. Vahlkampff, 22-23.

⁹³⁵ *Spectacula contemplationis*: “Spectacula contemplationis secundum ascensum primum gradum vi [read: VI] quos distinguit prior Richardus ordinis Sancti Victoris Parisius in Maiori Benjamin et complet in Iustus meus iuxta quae et alia occurrunt similia exercitatis ad divinum radium secundum istas considerations,” ed. Vahlkampff, 85.

⁹³⁶ *In Isaiam*: “inventus est aliquis qui [...] novam artem super experimentum affectus fundavit et necessariis satis rationibus ‘Sanctus Sanctus Sanctus’ per Seraphim suum clamavit, scilicet Richardus in libro qui dicitur ‘Iustus meus’,” ed. Vahlkampff, 73.

⁹³⁷ *Spectacula*: “Summus ordo Seraphyn continet omnes motus et suspiria principalis affectionis excedentis attractum intellectum, scilicet quando ultra trahi non potest intellectus,” ed. Vahlkampff, 91.

⁹³⁸ See Németh, “The Victorines and the Areopagite.”

⁹³⁹ Unlike Richard’s spiritual works, the *De Trinitate* was always an influential work among Scholastic theologians, as it became a reference work for trinitarian theology.

cuts off the operation of imagination and investigates the invisible things in the visible ones through the “common understanding” (*per communem intelligentiam*). The fifth degree of contemplation investigates those “divine and eternal spectacles” that can be grasped by intellect only and are reasonable.⁹⁴⁰ All this knowledge belongs to the intellectual knowledge (which embraces the knowledge both deriving from the creatures and grasped by the intellect). The sixth grade of contemplation is “unknown to human philosophy” (that is, to intellectual cognition): *sextum (gradum) philosophia humana ignorat*. Dividing Richard’s six contemplations into five grades pertaining to intellectual cognition plus an ultimate, “unknown,” non-intellectual grade is more coherent with the general theory of Thomas: intellectual cognition is followed and surpassed by the unknown, non-intellectual one (elsewhere he declares that Richard’s definition of contemplation describes the intellectual contemplation⁹⁴¹). This is a basic pattern repeated in Thomas’ works in various contexts and on various levels.

Thomas did not accord much esteem to the intellectual cognition, as his remarks make obvious. It is even stranger then that he devoted to that very issue a short treatise entitled *Spectacula contemplationis*.⁹⁴² The treatise is practically a partial remake of the *Benjamin major*’s first four contemplations, which deal with the cognition deriving from creatures.

The *Spectacula* in itself is a rather unusual work. Thomas keeps Richard’s descriptions for the first four contemplations and the definition of contemplation, but also creates new subdivisions for the four contemplations (which means altogether 27 considerations) (Thomas uses the “kind” (*genus*) and “grade” (*gradus*) of contemplation as synonyms).⁹⁴³ The first contemplation deals, *in imaginatione secundum imaginationem*, in seven considerations, with the multitude and immensity of the visible creatures and their individual qualities (1-2); with everything perceived by the other senses (3); with the works of nature and human industry (4-5); with the divine and human institutions (6-7). The second contemplation, *in imaginatione secundum rationem*, consists of seven grades investigating the immensity and innumerability of the (visible) creatures, their harmony and the powers given to them (1-3); the “reason and cause” behind all the visible creatures, lifeless and alive, which lets them move and live (4), and the way in which all creatures hint at the existence of God (5). The last considerations ponder the same creatures for their usefulness (due to their potential sign-like character) and for their vanity and transitory nature (6-7).

⁹⁴⁰ *Explanatio super Mysticam Theologiam*: “Ut enim docet prior Richardus in distinctiones graduum contemplationis, primus gradus et secundus et tertius versantur circa visibilium sensibiles proprietates et invisibiles naturas, rationes, ordines, causas etc. Et illi tres imaginationi inmiscetur, nec puram intelligentiam attingunt. Quartus gradus semoto imaginationis officio illis solis intendit quae imaginatio non attingit, id est, invisibilibus in visibilium naturis, proprietatibus, virtutibus, viribus, dispositionibus etc., qualia et in mentibus nostris experimur et per communem intelligentiam comprehendimus, et iste gradus exercetur potissime in natura rationali. Quintus assurgit in divina et aeterna spectacula tantum intellectu apprehensibilia et humanae rationi consona. Sextum philosophia humana ignorat. Quaecumque igitur scientia vel sapientia praedictis modis obtinetur et ex praexistente visibilium cognitione ingignitur aut intellectu apprehenditur, ad primum modum et communem cognoscendi Deum pertinet: et ad istum pertinent omnes doctrinae liberales non solum gentiliū philosophum, sed doctorum catholicorum et etiam sanctorum patrum quae vel studio intellectuali vel doctrina possunt a mortalibus comparari et in facultatem communis intelligentiae reduci. Ad istum pertinent omnes libri beati Dionysii [...]” ed. Vahlkampff, 2.

⁹⁴¹ *Spectacula*: “Contemplatio est secundum priorem Richardum libera mentis perspicacia in sapientiae spectacula cum admiratione suspensa. Haec est descriptio contemplationis intellectualis citra mentis excessum; superintellectualis vero et unitiva, quae est summum exercitium tam hominum quam angelorum, secundum quod scribi potest continetur in Mystica theologia quae est sapientia Christianorum quam Apostolos loquebatur inter perfectos,” ed. Vahlkampff, 85.

⁹⁴² Working on this chapter I had access only to the first, Vahlkampff edition and had no knowledge of Lawell’s conclusions.

⁹⁴³ *Spectacula*: “Primum genus contemplationis consistit in imaginatione et secundum imaginationem quando, scilicet pura intelligentia, quasi flectit oculum ad considerationem quarumlibet formarum seorsim secundum quod per officium imaginationis repraesentatur cum admirationis creatoris sapientiae sine qualibet investigatione.” “Secundum genus sive secundus gradus contemplationis attendit invisibiles visibilium causas, rationes, dispositiones, unde consistit in imaginatione secundum rationem.” “Tertius gradus consistit in ratione secundum imaginationem in quo per collationem sensibilibus ascenditur ad cognitionem invisibilium nostrorum angelicorum et divinorum.” “Quartus gradus sive quartum genus contemplationis consistit in ratione secundum rationem, quando mens suspensis prorsus sensus et imaginationis officiis purificata in se ipsam aciem reflectit,” ed. Vahlkampff, 85, 86, 87, 88.

The third grade of contemplation, consisting in *ratione secundum imaginationem*, gives an amplified variant of Richard's third contemplation, subdivided into six considerations (Richard had five). All these considerations use external, sensual elements in order to cognise the invisible things belonging to humans, angels and God (Thomas' term is *comparatio*). Thomas' changes include a thematic division and the introduction of the non-Biblical symbolism. The first four considerations create comparisons between sensible elements of the created world and the invisible realities – comparisons of the created world to the invisible realities in general (first consideration), comparisons that could be called “allegorical” (in the exegetical sense), connecting elements of the world to theological-historical realities of the Church (second and third consideration), and comparisons (which could be called “tropological”) connecting elements of the world to the anthropological structure of the soul. The fifth consideration uses Biblical symbols. The last two considerations compare secular practices (*exercitia saecularia*) to church practices and natural operations (sixth consideration) or to the operations of the soul (seventh consideration).

The fourth grade of contemplation, “in reason according to reason,” deals directly with the immaterial realities except God (that is, with the human soul and angelic spirits), without using sense perception and imagination. The subjects are first the human soul (considered in its essence, in its powers and virtues, first to third considerations), and next the angels (fourth and fifth considerations). The last two considerations investigate things common to angels and men: the “hierarchy” and the divine image in the (human and angelic) mind (sixth and seventh considerations).

Several subjects of the fourth contemplation are peculiar to Thomas' own theology (and foreign to Richard's).⁹⁴⁴ Such is the consideration of the ninefold angelic orders (and their hierarchy) and the particular working of the single orders (fourth and fifth considerations). The inclusion of the angels in the gradually ascending scheme of contemplation is characteristic of Thomas, who (unlike twelfth-century Victorines) attributed a function to the angelic hierarchy in human contemplation. The sixth consideration is dedicated to “hierarchy” itself, a concept central to Thomas. At this point, “hierarchy” does not mean the concrete hierarchy of the angels, but a hierarchical pattern that appears in the “hierarchical” (or “hierarchised”) minds of both angels and humans.⁹⁴⁵ This notion of hierarchy in Thomas derived from a tropological reading of the Areopagitic ranks of angels, which he identified with the “orders of the soul.” The levels of the hierarchy (denoted with the names of the nine angelic orders) mean various stages of cognition of God (the highest three orders, for example, denote various degrees of ecstasy, of *excessus mentis*). The “hierarchy,” considered as a gradual pattern for contemplation, is a hallmark of Thomas' theory: he found this pattern so important that he repeated it several times in his writings and even expected the reader to know it by heart.⁹⁴⁶ The consideration and study of “hierarchy” here, in the *Spectacula contemplationis*, finds its place in a grand system. Reading along with his interpretation of the *Benjamin major*, this account grants a prominent place for Thomas' own theory in the general scheme of contemplation (and also means a rare self-reflective moment in the history of spirituality). Studying the “hierarchy” is an inevitable task for any reader of Thomas (his Canticle commentaries are unintelligible without doing so) – and this very study belongs to the sixth, penultimate consideration of the fourth contemplation. The next (and last) stage in the cognition of

⁹⁴⁴ Richard's fourth contemplation is divided into three branches according to creation, justification and glorification. The first one is subdivided into three grades (according to *esse*, *scire*, *velle*); the second is subdivided into two grades (according to *propria industria* and *divina gratia*); the third is subdivided into five, according to the considerations of the following subjects: the properties of the soul as such (1); the cognitive powers of the soul (2); wills and affects of the soul (3); the deliberative working of the mind (4), and the inspiration of grace in the soul (5).

⁹⁴⁵ *Spectacula*: “[Consideratio] Sexta attendit ter trinam distinctionem hierarchicam in qualibet mente hierarchica angelica vel humana,” ed. Vahlkapf, 90.

⁹⁴⁶ See *Comm.* III, 4F (184). The pattern can be found in the prefaces of both Canticle commentaries (1237-38 and 1243), in the *Spectacula contemplationis* (1244-1246), and in the commentary on the *Celestial Hierarchy* (1243, in form of a transcribed fragment from his lost *In Isaiam*).

creatures is the consideration of the divine image closing the fourth contemplation; the next contemplation already deals with the intelligible “divine spectacles”

Conclusion

While the foundations of the “mystical theology” of Thomas are the works of the Areopagite, he also reflected on the spiritual doctrines of other, “modern” authors: his Victorine predecessors, Hugh and Richard, and his immediate contemporary, Aegidius of Assisi. Thomas deals with their spiritual authority in a particular way. Unlike those contemporaries who take over, adapt or simply transcribe doctrines from such spiritual works without crediting their authors, Thomas mostly uses an interpretative strategy, as he did in the case of the Areopagite. In the case of Aegidius’ scheme of spiritual ascent, Thomas uses the method of commentary, and projects his own theology into Aegidius’ short and unelaborated text. In the case of the Victorines, he has different methods. His own theology (with a clear preference for the Areopagite) basically defines the worth and position of Victorine works. The *In Ecclesiasten* of Hugh belongs to the intellectual cognition through the creatures, similarly to some parts of Richard’s works. Curiously, in his *Spectacula contemplationis*, Thomas still recreates that part of Richard’s *Benjamin major* that deals with the same subject. For Richard’s spiritual works in general, Thomas has another interpretative method as well, similar again to what he employed on the Areopagitic corpus. He saw a parallelism between the works of Richard and the Areopagite: as the Areopagitic works give an ascending order culminating in the *Mystical Theology*, Richard’s spiritual works culminate in the *De Trinitate*. This parallelism is not only made explicit: Thomas even states that, ultimately, Richard teaches the same affective cognition as the Areopagite in the *Mystical Theology*. Even if that claim is substantially false, it shows that Thomas, using various interpretative strategies, could subordinate the most different spiritual doctrines to his own one.

This survey of Thomas’ spirituality demonstrated that he was a theologian indebted to the Areopagite – but how far can he be regarded as a Victorine theologian? I contend that he can be so far less than is usually assumed: although he was educated in the Saint-Victor, his intellectual background, attitudes and theological premises have more common elements with other early thirteenth-century theologians than with twelfth-century Victorines. It must be noted that Scholastic theology of the early thirteenth century – that is, the doctrinal background of Thomas – was basically incompatible with several of the key Victorine doctrines, being a new paradigm based on different premises. The difference is clearly visible at three points, each defining a key aspect of spirituality and theological anthropology – and Thomas does not side with the Victorines.

1. Hugh thought that the prelapsarian Adam saw God as present, in contemplation, immediately and with the certitude of knowledge (*praesentia contemplationis*); Richard and Achard held similar positions. Thomas explicitly denied Adam’s immediate vision, attributing to him a vision through a mirror, as the following will demonstrate.⁹⁴⁷

2. For Hugh, Achard and Richard the summit of the earthly contemplation – that is, the highest possible cognition of God in this life – was conceived as an immediate vision of God in ecstasy – something theoretically excluded and rather impossible after the twelfth century. In Thomas, the

⁹⁴⁷ See Hugh, *De Sac.* I, vi, 14 (PL 176: 271CD); the unusual notion was taken over by Odo of Lucca, *Summa sententiarum*, tractatus IV, i (PL 176: 117D), then by Peter Lombard, *Sent.* II dist. 23 and IV dist. 1; Richard in *Bmaj* V, xiii is less specific: “[Adam] haberet promptum quotidie coeli civibus per contemplationem interesse, divinis illis secretis licenter ingerere” (PL 196: 183AB); cf. Achard, *Sermo* V, 4: “Antequam enim homo peccasset, habuit deum presentem per intelligentiam, cuius contemplatione fruebatur,” 71. For Thomas, see *Comm.* II, 2D and *Comm.* III, 2F, ed. Barbet, 80 and 152-153. Adam’s vision through a *speculum clarum* as opposed to our vision through a mirror obscured by sin becomes a standard doctrine in the commentaries and glosses on the *Sentences* II dist. 23 and IV dist. 1. from the 1240s onwards.

notion of an immediate vision in ecstasy is replaced with the concept of an immediate affective cognition in ecstasy.⁹⁴⁸

3. For Achard and Richard, the rapture of the Apostle in *excessus mentis* is an exemplary and paradigmatic case of earthly contemplation. The same event in the thirteenth century is seen as an exception to every rule, a miracle-like *raptus* and in no way an example that can be positively followed.⁹⁴⁹ Instead, with and after Thomas, the example for spiritual experiences is the “mystical union” fashioned after Areopagitic patterns, using the imagery of entering the cloud as Moses did.

⁹⁴⁸ See Hugh, *Commentary*: “Qui autem spiritum Dei in se habent, et Deum habent: hi Deum vident” (PL 175: 976AB); Achard, *Sermo XII*, 6: “Quinta [sc. transfiguratio] fit per contemplationem, cum quis... non opera Dei vel Deum in operibus suis contemplatur, sed ipsum in seipso, quantum possibile est, oculo mentis intuetur, et quomodo cum Christo in sinu Patris commoratur.” 127; *Sermo XV*, 35: “Excedens Deo mente, conversatur in celestibus, et absconditur vita eius cum Christo in Deo.... Ex parte maxima ibi deponit formam servi et liber assumit formam Dei.” 239; for Richard, see the examples of the relevant chapter.

⁹⁴⁹ See, for example, Achard, *Sermo XIV*, 22: “Parturit vero quotiens... quasi in lumine contemplationis posita, tota nititur in contemplationem ipsam erumpere... parit autem cum... in abscondito faciei divine absconditur, cum Paulum consequens in tertium celum rapitur.” 194; Richard, *Bmaj III*, iv: “Nam, cum Paulus, vel Paulo similis, elevatur supra seipsum, rapitur usque ad tertium coelum, profecto arcana illa, quae non, licet homini loqui, non investigat per spiritum proprium sed revelat ei Deus per spiritum suum.” and *Bmaj III*, viii: “Si ergo cupis evolare usque ad secundum, seu etiam usque ad tertium coelum, sit tibi transitus per primum.” PL 196: 114C, 118C.

2. The sermons of Anthony of Padua OFM

The Augustinian canon Anthony of Padua (1195-1231) belonged to the early followers of Saint Francis. He met Thomas Gallus, probably between 1222 and 1224; according to a later account of Thomas, Anthony knew the mystical theology, as he was taught about everything by a divine unction.⁹⁵⁰ Although Anthony is not a major author of spirituality, in his sermons he uses elements from Richard's spiritual writing, as Jean Châtillon has demonstrated, accommodating them to an affective theology.⁹⁵¹ For the purposes of the present study, it seems to be enough to give a short overview of Châtillon's findings.

The sermons of Anthony fall into two collections: the *Sermones dominicales* and the later *Sermones festivi*. Anthony does not quote Richard as an *auctoritas* in these sermons: he takes over certain some doctrinal elements and formulas from Richard's writings but does not name or make reference to Richard.⁹⁵² These borrowings (or adaptations) are not too numerous and extend only to a few sentences; Anthony's passages have substantial changes or omissions if compared to their sources. In the *Sermones dominicales* Anthony used only a few works of Richard (the two *Benjamins*) while the *Sermones festivi* use, beside the two *Benjamins*, also the *De Trinitate*, the *De eruditione* and the *Adnotatio in Ps 121* – the difference may be explained, as Châtillon suggests, by the personal influence of Thomas Gallus. His adaptations from the spiritual works of Richard are, however, fewer than a dozen.⁹⁵³

As Châtillon's analyses show, Anthony's alterations follow a pattern that adapts Richard's texts to the new, affective spirituality that will be a hallmark of the Franciscans. Three cases of such alterations demand special attention.

a) Richard's *Adnotatio in Ps 121* contains an allegory based on Saint Paul's rapture narrative (2Cor 12), giving allegorical explanations of the three heavens. Here Richard describes the *excessus mentis* – the usual twelfth-century contemplative experience – by the words of the Apostle: in *excessus*, the mind is enraptured into the third heaven and its secrets (*tunc ad tertii coeli secreta mens cuiuslibet rapitur*). Anthony, transcribing the passage, keeps the allegories of heavens but leaves out the lines that identify *excessus* and Paul's rapture. Châtillon observes that "Antoine omet de nouveau les mots *raptum* ou *rapi* et... néglige tout ce qui se rapporte à l'*excessus mentis*.... Bref, Antoine renonce à décrire les états proprement mystiques dont Richard avait pourtant traité." (284). This omission must also be considered in a historical context: the Scholastic concept of Paul's *raptus* (based on the exegesis of 2Cor 12) was never connected to any possible spiritual experience, and Anthony's theological formation took place in a Scholastic milieu.

b) *Benjamin major IV*, 11 describes Abraham's vision at Mambré: here Richard describes *excessus* as a *quasi facie ad faciem* vision and contemplation of God and the light of the supreme Wisdom (*summae sapientiae lumen*) without mirror and enigma, without *integumentum*. Anthony leaves out from his variant the double reference to 1Cor 13:12 (face to face and not through a

⁹⁵⁰ Thomas, *Explanatio* to the Ecclesiastic Hierarchy, 3: "quosdam autem sanctos episcopos [...] unctio docuit de omnibus [...] Quod eciam in sancto Antonio [...] expertus sum qui misticam theologiam prompte hausit et firmiter retinuit." Quoted by Châtillon, "Saint Antoine," 271.

⁹⁵¹ See Jean Châtillon, "Saint Antoine de Padoue et les victorins," in *Le mouvement canonial au moyen âge: réforme de l'Eglise, spiritualité et culture. Etudes réunies par Patrice Sicard, edited by Patrice Sicard* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), 255-292, here 281-292.

⁹⁵² As Châtillon writes, "Antoine, certes, ne nous trompe pas, puisqu'il ne déclare nulle part qu'il a l'intention de citer Richard ou de transmettre son enseignement à ses propres lecteurs. Mais il demande au victorin des moyens d'expression et un vocabulaire qu'il puisse adapter à ses propres vues." 291.

⁹⁵³ *Sermo in Dominica II in Quadr.* (I, 95): Ben. min. 71, 73-74; *Sermo in Dominica II post Pent.* (I, 424): Ben. maj. I, 1; *Sermo de sanctis Apostolis Petro et Paulo* (III, 287): Ben. min. 2-4 and Ben. maj. IV, 11; *Sermo in circumcissione* (III, 64): *Adn in Ps 121*; *Sermo in festo s. Joannis ev.* (III, 32): Ben. maj. V, 5; *Sermo in conversione b. Pauli* (III, 97): Ben. maj. V, 2; *Sermo in resurrectione* (III, 186-187): Ben. maj. V, 14. References to the critical edition: *S. Antonii Patavini, O. Min. doctoris evangelici Sermones dominicales et festivi ad fidem codicum recogniti*, curantibus Beniamino Costa, Leonardo Frasson, Ioanne Luisetto (Padova: Messaggero, 1979), 3 vols.

mirror, without enigma), and speaks only about a vision of the light – therefore he leaves out the key notion of some sort of immediate vision of God in *excessus*, as Châtillon rightly remarks.

c) The most visible difference between Richard's Victorine spirituality and Anthony's affective spirituality may be observed in Anthony's adaptation of the fifth book of the *Benjamin major*.⁹⁵⁴ Richard discerned three forms of contemplation: *mentis dilatatio*, *sublevatio* and *alienatio* (*Bmaj* V, ii); Anthony dropped the first one (*dilatatio* is a result of human efforts), and kept definitions of the two latter forms that involve the operation of divine grace (either cooperating with the soul or working alone). The way in which Anthony creates a functional hierarchy between them and attributes different origins to them is a clear indication of the new spirituality. While the intellect leads the soul to *sublevatio*, its working stops there; *alienatio* is on a higher level, which can be reached by the affect. What pertains to *sublevatio mentis* is a sweetness deriving from the activity of the intellect; what pertains to *alienatio* is a sweetness from the affect.

Considering these examples in a historical context, several conclusions may be drawn. Anthony's writing has the traces of a model of affective spirituality that is thoroughly compatible with Scholastic theology. The role of intellect is restricted in contemplation, in favour of the role of affect; contemplation through affect (*alienatio*) is the superior one and it is conceptually detached from Saint Paul's rapture. Richard's writings in their original form could not support this model, only through a specific reading and adaptation. The sermons of Anthony were written in the second and third decades of the century, between the late 1210s and his 1231 death. To understand his adaptations and changes, one must also consider that in this period metaphors for "seeing God" became tightly regulated. In school theology, the theory of *visio mediastina* was eliminated; the concept of *raptus* was being created, and the proper (immediate) vision of God became reserved for the Blessed and Saint Paul's *raptus*. This was also the period when Thomas Gallus first elaborated the theory of an immediate experience of God in this life that is *not* a vision. These tendencies explain why Anthony is selectively taking over Richard's texts: unlike Richard, he does *not* identify the *excessus* and Paul's rapture; he drops the terms referring to *raptus* (such as *rapi*, *raptus*, *facie ad faciem*) from the context of contemplation. The chronological approach reveals another remarkable point. Whenever the sermons of Anthony were written, they witness a particular, affective pattern of spirituality. In the same period, a similar model can be observed in Thomas Gallus: even if all his major works are from a later period, his *Glosses to the Celestial Hierarchy* (1224) and the (now lost) commentary on Isaiah (before 1219) were already extant in Anthony's lifetime. The testimonies of Anthony and Thomas not only prove the existence of an affective theology even in the 1220s, but also show that the same basic model could have had different elaborations. Anthony's solution is more conventional, but Thomas' solution – joining the same model to the *Mystical Theology* of the Areopagite – was revolutionary.

⁹⁵⁴ See Châtillon's analyses of *Sermo in conversione b. Pauli*, "Saint Antoine," 286-88.

3. Saint Bonaventure OFM

With the works of Saint Bonaventure, the seventh Minister General of the Franciscan Order, the characteristically Franciscan spirituality received a Scholastic and systematic presentation. Educated at the Paris University and working on the *Summa Halensis* with his confreres, Bonaventure was aware of the doctrines of Hugh and Richard; the present chapter investigates the way in which he adapted them to his own preferences.⁹⁵⁵

Before discussing Bonaventure's doctrines it is necessary to mention his doctrinal background. Bonaventure received his theological formation at the University of Paris between 1243 and 1254.⁹⁵⁶ In this period he learned the fundamentals of theology, the standard Scholastic model for theological anthropology already elaborated. Since his spiritual works discussed here are later (written between the late 1250s and 1274), their doctrinal background must be noted here again. In this period, an immediate vision of God meant a face-to-face vision of God (meaning also a *per essentiam* vision since 1241). The primary context of this vision was the eschatological one, but such vision was also predicated about Paul in his rapture. Unlike the case in twelfth-century Victorine theology, now grace and human efforts were seen rather as mutually exclusive categories (instead of cooperative ones). *Raptus* was now conceived as a direct vision of God, an extraordinary case by grace only, while contemplation was regarded as a cognition of God mediated by creatures, a result of human effort.⁹⁵⁷ Paul's rapture, regarded now as a miracle, could not be a paradigm for spiritual experiences (even less an imitable example of it); from the 1220s onwards, contemplation and *raptus* were explicitly separated (as Part III, Chapter I demonstrated). The fundamental ideas of Bonaventure's spirituality – the affective union with God through a special, affective cognitive faculty, and the justification of this union by the *Mystical Theology* of the Areopagite – were elaborated prior to Bonaventure's studies, by Thomas Gallus (1224-1244). Bonaventure uses the same model throughout his works (including his *Sentences* commentary written at the beginning of his career, 1250-1252) even if he never mentions Thomas in his spiritual works.⁹⁵⁸

1. Rewriting Hugh: the anthropological matrix of Bonaventure

Bonaventure distinguishes six cognitive forces in his anthropology: according to the often quoted list of the *Itinerarium*, their names are *sensus*, *imaginatio*, *ratio*, *intellectus*, *intelligentia* and *apex*

⁹⁵⁵ The relation of the anthropologies of Bonaventure and the Victorines seems to be a question left uninvestigated. To my best knowledge, the sole article addressing the question of Richard's influence on Bonaventure is Robert Javelet's "Saint Bonaventure et Richard de Saint-Victor," in *Bonaventuriana*, ed. Francisco de Asis Chavero, vol. 1, 63-96 (Rome, 1988). I had no access to it. Bougerol's article, "The Church Fathers and auctoritates in Scholastic theology to Bonaventure," does not enlist the *Benjamins* among those works which influenced Bonaventure (contrary to Bonaventure's explicit references). Similarly, his *Introduction à Saint Bonaventure* (Paris: Vrin, 1988, here 106-109) gives an exhaustive list of those works of Richard which were used by Bonaventure (including even such peripheric opuscles as the *De spiritu blasphemiae*), but no reference is given to the two *Benjamins*.

⁹⁵⁶ After his studies in *artes* (1235-1243), he finished the theological curriculum: studies in theology (1243-1248), acting as *baccalaureatus biblicus* and subsequently *sententiarius* (1248-1250 and 1250-1252), then *baccalaureatus formatus* (1253-1254); finally he obtained the *licentia docendi* in 1254.

⁹⁵⁷ See Bonaventure, *In II Sent.* dist. 23 art. 2 qu. 3: *In statu vero innocentiae et naturae lapsae videtur Deus mediante speculo.*

⁹⁵⁸ In the index volume of the Quaracchi edition (vol. 6) the name of Thomas Gallus does not appear among the entries. This fact, beyond Bonaventure's general silence about Thomas, may explain why Thomas' influence on Bonaventure is only sensed and assumed but not demonstrated with compelling textual arguments. Their relation is a matter practically uninvestigated.

mentis seu synderesis scintilla.⁹⁵⁹ It is also well known that the first five cognitive forces also occur in twelfth-century authors (most notably in the *Liber de spiritu et anima*), while the sixth one is, most probably, taken from Thomas Gallus.⁹⁶⁰ Several scholars take it for granted that this sixfold division and the six stages of ascent derived directly from Richard of Saint-Victor's theory of six kinds of contemplation. I will argue for the opposite idea: namely that Bonaventure's theological anthropology owes nothing to Richard, especially because it is based on Hugh's ideas that were harmonised with sources.

The idea that Bonaventure's model follows Richard's one was introduced by an article of Friedrich Andres (1921); his opinion was accepted, perpetuated and embellished by Bernard McGinn's article (1974). Neither article produced stringent argumentation for the filiation as both argue with assumed structural similarities only, but the literature, accepting their authority, still popularised the opinion that the sixfold pattern of the *Itinerarium* derived from Richard's scheme.⁹⁶¹

The most immediate objection against this position is the very fact that Richard's doctrine on contemplation is easily discernible. It is indisputable that Bonaventure knew the *Benjamin major* of Richard: the *Itinerarium* incorporates some of his ideas about the condition of *excessus*, and the first sermon on Holy Saturday gives a summary of Richard's doctrine on contemplation, explicitly naming him.⁹⁶² Richard had, on the other hand, a characteristic theory: if someone quotes it (as do, for example, Aquinas, Hugh of Balma, Rudolph of Biberach, Pierre d'Ailly, and Bonaventure himself) they usually do not miss his name and his distinctive terminology. However, at those numerous passages where Bonaventure expounds his own anthropology in a more systematic form (as he does in the *Itinerarium*, the *Breviloquium* and the *Collatio V in Hexaemeron*), no traces of Ricardian thought can be found. Instead, as the following will demonstrate, the reader may find there clear indications of Hugh's doctrines.

⁹⁵⁹ Unless otherwise indicated, references to Bonaventure's works here and elsewhere will be to the critical Quaracchi edition: *D.S.S. Bonaventurae opera omnia, edita studio et cura pp. Collegii a S. Bonaventura*, 10 vols (Quaracchi: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1882-1902), abbreviated as "Quar." Dating of the works and biography according to Jacques-Guy Bougerol's chronology, from his *Introduction à Saint Bonaventure* (Paris: Vrin, 1988), 3-11.

⁹⁶⁰ See, for example, Endre von Ivánka, "Zur Überwindung des neuplatonischen Intellektualismus in der Deutung der Mystik: intelligentia oder principalis affectio," *Scholastik* 30 (1955): 185-194, McGinn, "Ascension and Introversion," and Bougerol, "L'aspect original."

⁹⁶¹ See Friedrich Andres, "Die Stufen der Contemplatio in Bonaventuras *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* und im *Benjamin major* des Richard von Sankt Viktor," *Franziskanische Studien* 8 (1921): 189-200 and Bernard McGinn, "Ascension and Introversion in the *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*," in *S. Bonaventura 1274-1974*, ed. Jacques Bougerol (Rome: Grottaferrata, 1974), 3: 535-552 (speaking even about a "direct influence of the Victorine"). A typical example for this kind of "argumentation" is the following, taken from McGinn: "The most immediate similarity between the two authors is the formation of the six grades by means of a dialectic of *per* (or *secundum*) and *in* which results in a similar mingling and overlapping of neighboring stages." Grover A. Zinn in the *Introduction* to his translations of Richard also took over the idea: "Richard's influence on Bonaventure and Franciscan tradition was profound, for in the *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* the pattern of six kinds of contemplation is taken from Richard." *Richard of St. Victor. The Twelve Patriarchs. The mystical Ark. Book Three of the Trinity* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 4; the same claim has been repeated by him recently in a entry ("Mysticism") of a manual: William W. Kibler, ed., *Medieval France: an encyclopedia* (London: Routledge, 1995), 655 ("Bonaventure here drew upon the six levels of knowing/contemplating as outlined by Richard of Saint-Victor"). The idea is repeated without hesitation in a specific article even dedicated to the very issue by Stephen F. Brown: "When, however, we open the *Benjamin major* or *The Mystical Ark* of Richard of St. Victor, we clearly have Bonaventure's immediate source for the six stages of contemplation upon which he meditates in his classical work (Andres 1929, 189-200)." See his "Reflections on the structural sources of Bonaventure's *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*," in *Medieval Philosophy and Modern Times*, Ghita Holmström-Hintikka, ed. (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2000), 2; likewise, in a commentary on the work, *Bonaventura, Itinerarium mentis in Deum. Der Pilgerweg des Menschen zu Gott. Lateinisch – Deutsch. Übersetzt und erläutert von Marianne Schlosser* (Münster: LIT, 2004), 117: "das *Itinerarium* auch Motive der theologischen Tradition verwendet, vor allem Formulierungen von Richard von St. Victor" (with a reference to Andres).

⁹⁶² See *Itin. IV; Sermo I in Sabbato sancto* (Quar. IX, 269sq) gives three models of contemplation (by Bernard of Clairvaux, Richard and Aegidius of Assisi [brother Giles]), and summarises Richard's *Benjamin major* there.

Bonaventure rewriting Hugh

Hugh's allegorical anthropology of the three eyes is a constant theme of Bonaventure from the late 1250s: it is present in the *Breviloquium* (1257), the *Itinerarium* (1259) and in the *Collationes in Hexaemeron* (1273-74). Bonaventure modifies Hugh's original theory to his own theories, but he uses the same model in his early and latest spiritual works, too.

The *Breviloquium* (pars II, cap. vi) describes the progress of *speculatio*, the non-revelatory cognition of God, as it develops through the cognitive forces. The progress has six grades: beginning at the sense perception, it gradually proceeds through imagination, reason, intellect (*intellectus*) and *intelligentia* until it reaches "wisdom" (*sapientia*) or "ecstatic cognition" (*notio excessiva*), the ultimate level of cognition that only begins in this life but will be consummated in the next one.⁹⁶³ The entire sequence ending with wisdom seems to be adapted from the *De spiritu et anima* xi.⁹⁶⁴

The *Breviloquium* (pars II cap. xii) also contains an adaptation made from Hugh's doctrine of three eyes, now in the context of prelapsarian cognition. Bonaventure here simply repeats Hugh's doctrine about the functions of the eyes of body, reason and contemplation (without the catalogue of cognitive forces), and adds his own variant of the "eye of contemplation." According to Bonaventure, the eye of contemplation has lost its functionality due to the original sin; it can regain it to some extent through faith and the understanding of the Bible, but the full functionality comes only in the blessed state.⁹⁶⁵

The *Itinerarium* I, 6, contains another catalogue of cognitive forces, containing *sensus*, *imaginatio*, *ratio*, *intellectus*, *intelligentia* and *apex mentis seu synderesis scintilla* (the last two expressions are synonyms here). The catalogue is mostly identical with the list of *Breviloquium*: the difference is that here Bonaventure gives the proper name of the highest cognitive faculty instead of its function. In the *Itinerarium*, Bonaventure creates a parallelism between the six speculations and the six faculties of the soul, stating that "according to the six grades of ascent" are six cognitive forces (called *gradus potentiarum animae*) were naturally given, deformed by sin and will be restored.⁹⁶⁶ The parallelism is rather misleading for focusing on the numerical identity, it obscures that the six speculations are followed by a substantially different stage, the ecstatic union – and this stage is reached through the sixth cognitive force. The *Itinerarium* (I, 4) contains one more anthropological scheme: Bonaventure distinguishes three "principal aspects" of mind. One is turned towards the external corporeal things (*animalitas seu sensualitas*), another towards the mind and the

⁹⁶³ *Breviloquium* pars II cap. vi: "Quae quidem contemplatio in prophetis fuit per revelationem quantum ad triplicem visionem [...], in aliis vero iustis reperitur per speculationem, quae incipit a sensu et pervenit ad imaginationem et de imaginatione ad rationem, de ratione ad intellectum, de intellectu ad intelligentiam; de intelligentia vero ad sapientiam sive notitiam excessivam, quae in hic via incipit, sed consummatur in gloria sempiterna." Quar. V, 260.

⁹⁶⁴ See *De spiritu et anima* xi: "Cum ab inferioribus ad superiora volumus ascendere, prius occurrit nobis sensus, deinde imaginatio, postea ratio, intellectus et intelligentia, et in summo est sapientia. Summa namque sapientia ipse Deus est. Sapientia hominis est pietas, id est, cultus Dei." PL 40: 786.

⁹⁶⁵ *Breviloquium* pars II cap. 12: "in statu innocentiae [...] sufficebat liber creaturae, in quo se ipsum exerceret homo ad contuendum lumen divinae sapientiae [...]. Propter quam triplicem visionem triplicem homo accepit oculum, sicut dicit Hugo de Sancto Victore, scilicet carnis, rationis et contemplationis [...] oculum contemplationis quo videret Deum et ea quae sunt in Deo, et sic [...] videret [...] oculo contemplationis ea quae sunt supra se. Qui quidem oculus contemplationis actum suum non habet perfectum nisi per gloriam, quam amittit per culpam, recuperat autem per gratiam et fidem et Scripturarum intelligentiam, quibus mens humana purgatur, illuminatur et perficitur ad caelestia contemplanda; ad quae lapsus homo pervenire non potest, nisi prius defectus et tenebras proprias recognoscat; quod non facit nisi consideret et attendat ruinam humanae naturae." Quar. V, 230.

⁹⁶⁶ *Itin.* I, 6: "Iuxta igitur sex gradus ascensionis in Deum, sex sunt gradus potentiarum animae per quos ascendimus ab imis ad summa, ab exterioribus ad intima, a temporalibus conscendimus ad aeterna, scilicet sensus, imaginatio, ratio, intellectus, intelligentia et apex mentis seu synderesis scintilla. Hos gradus in nobis habemus plantatos per naturam, deformatos per culpam, reformatos per gratiam; purgandos per iustitiam, exercendos per scientiam, perficiendos per sapientiam." Quar. V, 297.

things in the mind (*spiritus*) and a third one towards the things above the mind (*mens*).⁹⁶⁷ The *Itinerarium* presents the two schemes independently, and leaves the relation of the six forces and the three “principal aspects” unexplained.

More than a decade later, the *Collationes in Hexaemeron* (V, 24) makes the relation between the six cognitive powers and the three “aspects” clear. Here Bonaventure defines three “powers” (*potentiae*, instead of “aspects”), each having two “operations,” thus comprising all the six cognitive faculties listed in the two earlier works. The operations of *potentia animalis* are *sensus* and *imaginatio*; to the *potentia intellectualis* belong *ratio* and *intellectus*, and to the *potentia divina* belong *intelligentia* and a certain “loving or unifying power” (*vis unitiva sive amativa*). The various names that this ultimate, sixth cognitive faculty receives in the three works convey its function clearly. It is *scintilla synderesis* and *apex mentis*; it works in “wisdom” (*sapientia*) or “ecstatic cognition” (*notio excessiva*), it loves and unifies the soul with God – this is the proper cognitive faculty that makes the supra-intellectual affective union possible.⁹⁶⁸ The same *collatio* also reveals the source of the threefold division of the “powers” or “aspects” – it is Hugh’s doctrine of the three eyes. Bonaventure writes that “the soul has its three powers (*potentiae*) according to the threefold eye of the body, the reason and the contemplation.” The *potentia divina* is Bonaventure’s variant on Hugh’s *oculus contemplationis*, accommodated to the new doctrine of the affective cognition, as its operation is not only the intellectual *intelligentia* but also the *vis unitiva*.

The overview of these accounts from the three works of Bonaventure permit us to draw two conclusions. First, that Bonaventure’s various catalogues of cognitive forces describe the same model with a minimal variance of terminology:

<i>Breviloquium</i> II, vi	<i>Itinerarium</i> I, 6	<i>In Hexaem.</i> coll. V. 24
sensus	sensus	sensus
imaginatio	imaginatio	imaginatio
ratio	ratio	ratio
intellectus	intellectus	intellectus
intelligentia	intelligentia	intelligentia
sapientia sive notitia excessiva	apex mentis seu synderesis scintilla	vis unitiva sive amativa

Secondly, the same sixfold division can be ultimately reduced to Hugh’s theory about the three eyes. The “principal aspects” of the *Itinerarium* are identical with the various “powers” of the *Collatio* V, and all they are Bonaventure’s less metaphorical equivalents to Hugh’s “eyes.” McGinn’s opinion that Richard’s *imaginatio*, *ratio* and *intelligentia* are the “equivalents of Bonaventure’s *sensualitas*, *spiritus* and *mens*” is simply wrong.⁹⁶⁹ The six cognitive forces are subordinated to them, in the following manner:

⁹⁶⁷ *Itin.* I, 4: “Secundum hunc triplicem progressum mens nostra tres habet aspectus principales. Unus est ad corporalia exteriora, secundum quem vocatur animalitas seu sensualitas: alius intra se et in se, secundum quem dicitur spiritus; tertius supra se, secundum quem dicitur mens.” Quar. V, 297. The editors missed to identify the source of the doctrine, Hugh.

⁹⁶⁸ *In Hexaemeron* collatio V, 24: “Habet enim anima tres potentias: animalem, intellectualem, divinam, secundum triplicem oculum: carnis, rationis, contemplationis. Primus viget, secundus caligat, tertius excaecatus est. Potentia animalis duplex est, [...] sensus et imaginatio. Intellectualis etiam est duplex: aut ut considerat universales rationes abstractas, ut abstrahit a loco, tempore et dimensione, aut elevatur ad substantias spirituales separatas; sic sunt duae potentiae, scilicet ratio et intellectus: per rationem confert, per intellectum cognoscit se et substantias spirituales [...]. Similiter operatio vel potentia divina duplex est: una, quae se convertit ad contuenda divina spectacula; alia, quae se convertit ad degustanda divina solatia. Primum fit per intelligentiam, secundum per vim unitivam sive amativam, quae secreta est, et de qua parum vel nihil noverunt. Ergo triplex est potentia et sex sunt operationes.” Quar. V, 358.

⁹⁶⁹ McGinn, “Ascension,” 547.

("eyes")	("powers")	(faculties)
oculus carnis	potentia animalis, "animalitas" seu sensualitas" (<i>Itin.</i>)	1. sensus 2. imaginatio
oculus rationis	potentia intellectualis, "spiritus" (<i>Itin.</i>)	3. ratio 4. intellectus
oculus contemplationis	potentia divina, "mens" (<i>Itin.</i>)	5. intelligentia 6. vis unitiva sive amativa

Hugh's original allegory changed its function and meaning as Bonaventure transposed it into an utterly different (and more complex) system of theological anthropology.

The main changes affect the doctrine of the eye of contemplation. The *Breviloquium* teaches that it can partly regain its function through faith; this interpretation is clearly contrary to Hugh's original intention. Hugh made it clear that faith is *replacing* and not *restoring* contemplation. Bonaventure entirely misses Hugh's other doctrine about the vision of God in this life as he is, through the "Spirit of God." This omission can be explained by the theological consensus of the day.

Another substantial change compared to Hugh is that Bonaventure subsumes under the eye of contemplation (which he also calls "divine power" and "divine activity of the soul") two "activities" (or rather faculties), *intelligentia* and *vis amativa* (latter also called *scintilla synderesis*, *apex affectus*, *apex mentis* and *vis unitiva*). Hugh's original concept of ecstatic contemplation (through the "Spirit of God") lacked the affective aspect. Bonaventure connects two conceptually different forms of cognition to these two "activities." The cognition of the *vis amativa* is the affective union with God (outlined most notably in the *Itinerarium*).⁹⁷⁰ This cognition, exemplified by the figures of Moses entering the cloud and Francis in his ecstasy, is the paradigmatic and desirable form of cognition that can be experienced by the believer. In contrast, the cognition of the *intelligentia* does not give an example worth setting as an ultimate goal for this life (although this is not explicit in this form in Bonaventure). The consequence of the standard Scholastic theological anthropology is that the intellectual cognition of God is impossible in this life – except in miraculous cases (as in Paul's rapture). The six speculations of the *Itinerarium* shows the limited possibilities of that mediated, mirrored cognition. The other case for cognition through *intelligentia* is the *raptus* – which is certainly not an option or a real possibility. It is telling that Bonaventure in the *Itinerarium* sets the example of Francis to be followed – and attributes to him not a *raptus* but an affective ecstasy.

The duality of intellectual and non-intellectual cognition leads to two ways of cognition, speculation (*speculatio*) and ecstasy (*excessus mentis*). The two ways are connected: speculations bring the soul to perfection and prepare it for ecstasy.⁹⁷¹ Speculation is a mediated and intellectual cognition of God (its synonyms in the *Itinerarium* are *contemplatio* and *consideratio*): it means cognition through an intermediary (in the *Itinerarium*, the vestiges, the image and the names of God) but, with reference to 1Cor 13:12, it is a limited cognition only. Ecstasy (*excessus mentis*, *alienatio mentis*) comes about through the *vis unitiva*: this affective faculty can immediately

⁹⁷⁰ See *Itin.* VII, but also *Breviloquium* V cap. 6: "Quo quidem desiderio ferventissimo ad modum ignis spiritus noster non solum efficitur agilis ad ascensum, verum etiam quadam ignorantia docta supra se ipsum rapitur in caliginem et excessum [...]. Quam nocturnam et delitiosam illuminationem nemo novit nisi qui probat, nemo autem probat nisi per gratiam divinitus datam, nemini datur nisi ei qui se exercet ad illam." Quar. V, 260.

⁹⁷¹ See, for example, *Itin.* VI, 7: "In hac autem consideratione est perfectio illuminationis mentis [...] iam pervenit ad quandam rem perfectam, ut cum Deo ad perfectionem suarum illuminationum in sexto gradu quasi in sexta die perveniat, nec aliquid iam amplius restet nisi dies requiei, in qua per mentis excessum requiescat humanae mentis perspicacitas ab omni opere, quod patrarat."

experience God (ecstasy is also called *experientia* and *experimentalis cognitio*).⁹⁷² For Bonaventure, the two forms of cognition are complementary and form a unity: the cognition of God begins with speculation, then it turns into experimental cognition. As his early work the *Sentences* commentary already clarifies (*In Sent.* III dist. 35), the experimental knowledge involves both cognitive and affective activities of the soul, the cognitive one is first and preparatory only (*primus, disponens*) while affective is the main and the fulfilling (*praecipuus, complens*) one.⁹⁷³ It must also be noted that ecstasy and *raptus* are not identical: *raptus* is beyond ecstasy and granted only to a few.⁹⁷⁴

2. The *Itinerarium* as a model of spiritual ascent

The *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* gives perhaps the best structured and detailed account of Bonaventure's theories on intellectual and affective cognition.⁹⁷⁵ The text of the treatise fulfils several separate functions. According to its introduction, its intention is to give a theological and epistemological analysis of the spiritual experience Saint Francis once had on Mount Alverna. For this analysis, Bonaventure practically creates a model of contemplation and defines the ultimate form of the cognition of God a human can reach in this life. Unsurprisingly, these ultimate limits are what Francis reached in his ecstasy (at least in Bonaventure's interpretation). A third function of the text is a spiritual programme for the Franciscans: Bonaventure, the Franciscan General makes Francis, the founder the spiritual example to be followed: Francis is the example of perfect contemplation and deifying ecstasy.⁹⁷⁶ The *Itinerarium* is an analysis of a legendary account, a system of contemplation and a programme for spiritual experiences in one.

The *Itinerarium* has a double structure. One is the ascending order of the speculations or contemplations that culminates in ecstasy. The six speculations follow each other in a linear fashion: as the soul moves from one into the next one it also ascends to a higher level – until finds its rest in the seventh state, the *excessus* (also called “peace”).

The other structure is a six-plus-one scheme that creates internal coherence but also gives the literary form of the treatise. The group of six gathers similar elements together while the seventh one is a substantially different one. This structure suits Bonaventure's general anthropological premise well, the duality of the two different, intellectual and affective forms of cognition and the superiority of the latter. That structure is repeated in various forms: contemplation has six grades

⁹⁷² *In III Sent.* dist. 35 qu. 3 ad 5: “in amore Dei ipsi gustui conjuncta est cognitio. Optimus enim modus cognoscendi Deum est per experientiam dulcedinis; multo enim excellentior et nobilior et delectabilior est quam per argumentum inquisitionis.” Quar. III, 775.

⁹⁷³ See Bonaventure, *In III Sent.* dist. 35, here *In III Sent.* dist. 35 qu. 1 co: “Quarto modo dicitur sapientia magis proprie, et sic nominat cognitionem Dei experimentalem; et hoc modo est unum de septem donis Spiritus sancti, cuius actus consistit in degustando divinam suavitatem. Et quoniam ad gustum interiorem, in quo est delectatio, necessario requiritur actus affectionis ad coniungendum et actus cognitionis ad apprehendendum [...]; hinc est quod actus doni sapientiae partim est cognitivus, et partim est affectivus: ita quod in cognitione inchoatur et in affectione consummatur, secundum quod ipse gustus vel saporatio est experimentalis boni et dulcis cognitio. Et ideo actus praecipuus doni sapientiae propriissime dictae est ex parte affectivae [...] sapientia non potest esse nimia, quia excessus in experimento divinae dulcedinis potius est laudabilis quam vituperabilis, secundum quod patet in viris sanctis et contemplativis, qui prae nimia dulcedine modo elewantur in ecstasim, modo sublevantur usque ad raptum, licet hoc contingat paucissimis.” Quar. III, 771-788, here 774.

⁹⁷⁴ *Collatio III in Hexaemeron*, 30: “Sexta est visio intelligentiae per raptum in Deum absorptae. [...] Haec enim sublevatio facit animam Dei simillimam, quantum potest in statu viae – nec est idem ecstasis et raptus – unde, ut dicunt, non habent habitum gloriae sed actum; et sicut illa visio est in confinio viae et patriae, sic illa est in confinio unionis et separationis a corpore.” Quar. V, 347.

⁹⁷⁵ The *De triplici via* (1259-60) gives a far more conventional, moral take on the issue, based on the three Areopagitic phases. On the belated popularity of the *Itinerarium*, see Jacques Guy Bougerol, “L'aspect original de *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* et son influence sur la spiritualité de son temps,” *Antonianum* 52 (1977): 309-25.

⁹⁷⁶ *Itin.* VII, 3. “Quod etiam ostensum est beato Francisco, cum in excessu contemplationis in monte excelso [...] in Deum transiit per contemplationis excessum; et positus est in exemplum perfectae contemplationis; sicut prius fuerat actionis, tanquam alter Iacob et Israel, ut omnes viros vere spirituales Deus per eum invitaret ad huiusmodi transitum et mentis excessum magis exemplo quam verbo.” Quar. V, 312.

followed by the *excessus*; creation had six days followed by the Sabbath; six steps lead to the throne of Solomon⁹⁷⁷ – and the *Itinerarium* itself also consists of six chapters describing the six grades plus the seventh one, describing *excessus*. That Bonaventure has chosen a particular, sixfold structure to denote intellectual cognition is not arbitrary. In his *Commentum in Lucam*, he equates the six steps to Solomon's throne with the six contemplations of Richard as outlined in his *Benjamin major*.⁹⁷⁸ In this way, the six-plus-one structure reveals the same intention that Thomas Gallus had: the affective cognition is superior and ulterior to the degrees of the intellectual one.

The group of six speculations also has its internal structure. The six speculations are six ways in which the “pauper” can see God; the number six comes from the double subdivision of three categories. Early in the treatise (I, 2), Bonaventure distinguishes three categories of intermediaries that make the cognition of God possible: outside us is the vestige, in us is the image, and above us is God, the first principle.⁹⁷⁹ In this form, the three categories are a combination of a Hugonian distinction on the three objects of cognition (*extra nos*, *intra nos*, *supra nos*)⁹⁸⁰ and the Augustinian concepts of *vestigia Dei* and *imago Dei*. Bonaventure also projects an ascending order into this division, progressing from the lower to the higher one.⁹⁸¹ This idea of progress is alien to Hugh but can be explained from Augustine's position, which explicitly preferred *imago* to *vestigia*. Another division of the same six ways is given by Bonaventure's distinction between “videre *per*” and “videre *in*” that leads to four categories: seeing God through and in the vestiges, through and in the image; two more speculations are added for seeing God as Alpha or the Being and seeing as Omega or the Good.⁹⁸²

One of the functions of such parallel divisions for the same subjects is to create coherence. If the rhetoric of the author is disregarded, the treatise falls apart into several discussions, not necessarily connected at all, and artificial, sometimes arbitrary divisions. The first speculation (*per vestigia*) discovers that the created world mirrors the divine power, wisdom and goodness. The second speculation sees God in vestiges (*in vestigiis*); what Bonaventure presents here is a psychology of perception, introduced by the theory of microcosm. The third and the fourth grades of speculation use the image of God, the human soul – which basically means introspection. The third speculation sees God “through the image” (*per imaginem*) in the soul as it is created. This speculation follows basically the Augustinian agenda concerning the *imago Dei* – the discovery of the Trinitarian structure in the soul by introspection (though Bonaventure aggregates several other trinities to the original *memoria - intelligentia - amor* (or *voluntas*) triplet). The fourth speculation sees God “in the image” (*in imagine*) – that is, in the image reformed by the virtues. This speculation is a dynamic process in which the soul – as the image of God – becomes reshaped and “hierarchised.” The same speculation also draws the limits of that cognition of God that can be derived from introspection. The

⁹⁷⁷ *Itin.* I, 5: “necesse est hos tres gradus principales ascendere ad senarium [...] sic minor mundus sex gradibus illuminationum sibi succedentium ad quietem contemplationis ordinatissime perducatur. In cuius rei figura sex gradibus ascendeatur ad thronum Salomonis.” Quar. V, 297.

⁹⁷⁸ Bonaventure, *Comm. in evangelium Lucae*, IX, 48: “Et secundum Matthaeum numerantur sex dies ad insinuendum sex gradus contemplationis, quos exprimit Richardus in libro de Arca sive Contemplatione, sic inquit primo libro sexto capitulo, ‘Sex sunt contemplationis genera [...]’. Prima duo sunt circa corporalia, secunda duo circa spiritualia, tertia duo circa sempiternalia et incomprehensibilia. Haec autem sex genera per sex dies intelliguntur et per sex gradus, quibus ascendeatur ad Solomonis thronum, secundum illud tertii Regum decimo, quod ‘Salomon fecit sibi thronum [...] qui habebat sex gradus.’” Quar. VII, 231.

⁹⁷⁹ *Itin.* I, 2: “Cum rerum universitas sit scala ad ascendendum in Deum [...] ad hoc, quod perveniamus ad primum principium considerandum [...] oportet, nos transire per vestigium, quod est corporale et temporale et extra nos [...]; oportet, nos intrare ad mentem nostram, quae est imago Dei aeviterna spiritualis et intra nos [...]; oportet, nos transcendere ad aeternum, spiritualissimum, et supra nos aspiciendo ad primum principium [...]” Quar. V, 297.

⁹⁸⁰ In the *Breviloquium* (written in 1257, two years before the *Itinerarium*) Bonaventure uses the three Hugonian categories (pars II cap. 12. V, 230).

⁹⁸¹ *Itin.* I, 3: “via trium dierum in solitudine,” “triplex illuminatio unius diei,” I, 4: “Secundum hunc triplicem progressum.”

⁹⁸² *Itin.* I, 5: “Quoniam autem quilibet praedictorum modorum geminatur, secundum quod contingit considerare Deum ut alpha et omega, seu in quantum contingit videre Deum in unoquoque praedictorum modorum ut per speculum et ut in speculo, seu quia una istarum considerationum habet commisceri alteri sibi coniunctae et habet considerari in sua puritate; hinc est, quod necesse est, hos tres gradus principales ascendere ad senarium.”

process begins with the soul being invested with the three theological virtues; then the working of these virtues repair the spiritual senses so that the soul becomes able to perceive the divine Word in various ways and capable of ecstasy (*mentalis excessus, excessus mentis*).⁹⁸³ Having experienced *excessus*, the mind becomes “hierarchical” and assimilated (*conformis efficitur*) to the Heavenly Jerusalem.⁹⁸⁴ While the first four speculations are based on traditional concepts, the *vestigia* and *imago Dei*,⁹⁸⁵ the last two grades are based on typically thirteenth-century concepts: these are practically metaphysical speculations on two names (or rather concepts) pertaining to God, the Being, and the Good(ness). Thinking of God as *esse purissimum et absolutum* and *bonum* are the highest possible speculations.

All sorts of speculation (the *Itinerarium* gives six sorts of it), even if they use higher and higher cognitive faculties, are mediated cognition, involving discursive thinking and investigation. The immediate intellectual cognition of God is reserved for the glorified state.⁹⁸⁶ The speculations prepare the soul for the affective ecstasy when the *apex affectus* becomes “transferred and transformed into God.” This transformation means the process outlined by the *Mystical Theology* of the Areopagite: leaving the intellectual activities, after which the *apex affectus* transforms itself into God in a secret and mystical manner, marked with the silence and the cloudy, shining darkness of unknowing, the *caligo*.⁹⁸⁷ This is the ultimate degree of the cognition of God in this life: a cognition that is markedly non-vision (contrasted with the vision that can be fulfilled only in the eschatological vision) but a union in “anagogical ecstasy” as described by Dionysius.⁹⁸⁸ The concept of this cognition was present already in the *Sentences* commentary of Bonaventure (both on II *Sent.* dist. 23 and III dist. 35). The real goal that may be set in this life to realise is reaching that “cloud of unknowing,” through the restored operation of the *oculus contemplationis*, cured by faith, grace and the reading of Scripture.

3. Triggering ecstasy?

Bonaventure gives a crucial role to *excessus mentis* in the cognition of God. The ultimate grade of the possible cognition of God, the affective union, can be reached only in ecstasy that surpasses the limits of speculation – and therefore experiencing ecstasy is necessary to reach that degree. Concerning ecstasy, it was still Richard’s *Benjamin major* that was the best reference work, and

⁹⁸³ In the *Itinerarium* IV, 3, Bonaventure describes the recuperation and working of these senses in terms of *Brautmystik*: “Quibus sensibus recuperatis, dum sponsum suum videt et audit odoratur, gustat et amplexatur, decantare potest tanquam sponsa Canticum canticorum, quod factum fuit ad exercitium contemplationis secundum hunc quartum gradum.” In the *Breviloquium* he gives a theological definition (pars II cap. vi): “Sensus vero spirituales dicunt perceptiones mentales circa veritatem contemplandam.” Quar. V, 260.

⁹⁸⁴ Both the inclusion of the angelic orders in the contemplative agenda, and the idea of a “hierarchising” of the soul are ideas present in Thomas Gallus, but the sources do not permit us to speak about a direct filiation.

⁹⁸⁵ The traditional commentary of the Pauline letters, the *Collectanea* of Peter Lombard, gives both the soul and the created world as the meaning of *speculum* (*Collectanea* on 1Cor 13:12). Also Bonaventure calls them mirrors: “speculationes subiectas propono, insinuans, quod parum aut nihil est speculum exterius propositum, nisi speculum mentis nostrae tersum fuerit et politum.” *Itin.* Prol, 4.

⁹⁸⁶ In II *Sent.* dist. 23 art. 2 qu. 3 co: “in solo statu gloriae videbitur Deus immediate et in sua substantia,” “sic est cognitio qua videtur Deus in vultu suo, sive facie ad faciem” Quar. II, 545.

⁹⁸⁷ *Itin.* VII, 4: “In hoc autem transitu, si sit perfectus, oportet quod relinquantur omnes intellectuales operationes, et apex affectus totus transferatur et transformetur in Deum. Hoc autem est mysticum et secretissimum, quod nemo novit, nisi qui accipit, nec accipit nisi qui desiderat, nec desiderat nisi quem ignis Spiritus sancti medullitus inflamat, quem Christus misit in terram.” Quar. V, 312.

⁹⁸⁸ In II *Sent.* dist. 23 art. 2 qu. 3 ad 6: “Concedo tamen nihilominus, quod oculi aspectus in Deum figi potest, ita quoad ad nihil aliud aspiat; attamen non perspiciet vel videbit ipsius lucis claritatem, immo potius elevabitur in caliginem et ad hanc cognitionem [...] et vocat [Dionysius] istam cognitionem doctam ignorantiam. Haec enim est, in qua mirabiliter inflamat affectio, sicut eis patet, qui aliquoties consueverunt ad anagogicos elevari excessus. Hunc modum cognoscendi arbitror cuilibet viro justo in via esse quaerendum; quodsi Deus aliquid ultra faciet, hoc privilegium est speciale, non legis communis.” Quar. II, 546.

Bonaventure utilised it for his own purposes. He took over the doctrines from Richard, both in his *Itinerarium* (1259) and the *De perfectione vitae ad sorores* (1259-1260), in order to explain why *excessus* occurs (it may be the consequence of overflowing devotion, admiration or joy).⁹⁸⁹ His alterations are notable in two points: the attitude towards ecstasy and the imagery that he employs.

The writings of Richard usually treat contemplation in a descriptive manner. The two *Benjamins* present a particular model of anthropology, and contain theories and sometimes observations and reflections on the experiences in contemplation – but the overall tone is neutral. For Richard, *excessus mentis* is not something extraordinary or unusual, nor something to strive for: under certain conditions it used to happen, *fieri valet et solet*, and Richard's theological anthropology has explanatory theories on what happens in ecstasy, and why.

In Bonaventure, *excessus* has a very different background. For him, *excessus mentis* is a desired and expected goal to be reached. In the *De perfectione*,⁹⁹⁰ Bonaventure gives advice on how to attain it: one *must* concentrate the mind, forget everything and elevate the self above itself. *Debes teipsam colligere, debes omnium oblivisci, debes te levare supra te*: the spiritual leader⁹⁹¹ here does not describe the experience but prescribes what to do to obtain it.

The other difference is in the usage of Biblical imagery, especially the bridal imagery of the Cantic. For Richard, bridal imagery does not have a central, privileged position (even if it was used both in the *Benjamin major* and in the *De IV gradibus*). The bridal imagery is only one of the possible forms of expression for Richard, interchangeable with other imageries based on different Biblical images – such as, most notably, the rapture to the third heaven or the Mambre vision. In contrast, Bonaventure is an adherent of one particular imagery: that of the Cantic. The tradition on which he depends, in this respect, is the twelfth-century Cistercian one, where the Cantic and its imagery were privileged as the appropriate form of expression of the cognition in and through love. Bonaventure even demands the realisation of the Cantic: the soul must run into the “embrace” of the Bridegroom – that is, into alienation and transformation to Christ.⁹⁹² But not only the affective union is set as a goal. In the *De perfectione*, Bonaventure also prescribes the soul's ascent above the hierarchy of the angels, the contemplation of the Trinity, the humanity of Christ (a project foreshadowed in *Itinerarium*) and the meditation on the blessed souls. But, as Bonaventure remarks with resolution, only a few men have free time (*vacant*) for these exercises.⁹⁹³

Conclusion

⁹⁸⁹ Richard, *Bmaj* V, v, cf. *Itin.* IV, 3: “disponitur anima ad mentales excessus, scilicet per devotionem, admirationem et exultationem, secundum illas tres exclamaciones, quae fiunt in Canticis canticorum.” Also *De perfectione vitae ad sorores* V, 6: “tribus de causis in mentis alienationem deducimur: aliquando prae magnitudine devotionis, aliquando prae magnitudine admirationis, aliquando prae magnitudine exultationis.” Quar. VIII, 119. The three verses of Cantic as referring to these three reasons (*Itin.* IV, 3) come from *Benjamin major* V, v-xiv.

⁹⁹⁰ See *De perfectione* v, 5-10 (VIII, 119-120), here v, 5: “Cum stas in oratione, totam debes temetipsam colligere et cum dilecto tuo in cubiculum cordis tui ingredi et sola cum solo morari, omnium exteriorum oblivisci et toto corde, toto mente, toto affectu, toto desiderio, tota devotione debes te levare supra te. Nec debes ab oratione spiritum relaxare, sed tamdiu per devotionis ardorem sursum ascendere.” Quar. VIII, 119.

⁹⁹¹ Bonaventure wrote the *De perfectione* for the Abbess of Longchamp: see Bougerol, *Introduction à Saint Bonaventure*, 252-253.

⁹⁹² *De perfectione* v, 5: “cordis oculo dilecto tuo viso et utcumque degustato, quam suavis est Dominus [...] in amplexus eius ruas, impressis labiis intimae devotionis oscula figas, ut sic tota a te alienata, tota in caelum raptata, tota in Christum transformata [...] dicas: Renuit consolari anima mea: memor fui Dei et delectatus sum.” Quar. VIII, 119.

⁹⁹³ *De perfectione* v, 10: “Sic ergo debet famula Dei exercere animum suum in studium orationis devotae et discere per frequentem orationis usum per mundati et purificati cordis oculum, per infatigabilem devotionis spiritum, qualiter efficiatur idonea ad contemplanda divina et degustanda divinae dulcedinis suavitatem. [...] ascendere debet super Cherubim et volare super pennas ventorum, id est ordines angelorum, ad contemplandam ipsam Trinitatem et Christi humanitatem, et meditari gloriam et laetitiam supernorum civium, scilicet angelorum et sanctorum omnium. Sed qui sunt hodie, qui huiusmodi meditationibus vacent, qui sint exploratores gaudii caelestis, qui corde et animo conversentur in caelis? Rari sunt.” Quar. VIII, 120.

Bonaventure used and adapted a number of Victorine doctrines in the field of theological anthropology. His general attitude was defined by positions of the affective Areopagitism elaborated by Thomas Gallus. Even if Bonaventure does not mention him, the basic structures of his own thinking – such as cognition through a privileged affective and non-intellectual faculty, conceived as a union with God, as “entering the cloud” in unknowing – can be found in Thomas. The theories of twelfth-century Victorines are also integrated into Bonaventure’s model, but with accompanying reinterpretation. With Bonaventure (as with the university-educated theologians), the meaning of the twelfth-century terms are changed. Contemplation (like speculation) means only a mediated *and* intellectual vision (contrasted with the Victorine concept of an immediate and intellectual vision); ecstasy belongs now to the affective cognition (and not to the intellectual cognition in ecstatic contemplation). Due to the Scholastic developments, the affective ecstasy is conceptually separated from *raptus*: the legitimate goal of the spiritual men is to reach ecstasy, but *raptus* is beyond human possibilities as it depends on grace solely. In the Victorine concept, as Richard and Achard presented, contemplative (that is, also intellectual) ecstasy was largely identical with rapture (they did not possess the Scholastic concept of *raptus*) – meaning that Paul’s rapture was the paradigm of earthly contemplation. The original Victorine concept of an ecstatic contemplation leading to the vision of God (or to a direct vision of the Truth) is unthinkable in this period: its disintegrated elements are implemented into various parts of Bonaventure’s model. In this model, as I tried to demonstrate, it was Hugh’s theories that served as a basic pattern (and not Richard’s ones, as the literature usually assumes). The Hugonian doctrine of the three eyes of the soul was reworked to include the fivefold epistemological scheme of the *De spiritu et anima* and a sixth, affective power called by various names. The *oculus contemplationis* of Hugh now became reworked to include both an intellectual and an affective cognitive faculty. Richard’s theories have less influence: he is used as an authority on ecstasy, but his characteristic doctrines on contemplation are omitted.

4. Thomas Aquinas OP

Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) does not belong among the spiritual authors of Latin theology. He knew, however, Richard's *Benjamin major*, and used it as a reference work when he discussed contemplation: both in his early *Sentences* commentary (*Scriptum super Sententias*) and in his late *Summa theologiae* (II-II qu. 180 art. 4, written 1271-1272). His approach to Richard's work differs characteristically from that of all the other authors discussed above and below. Thomas used only the first book of the *Benjamin major*, where Richard outlined the theoretical aspects of contemplation in a scholarly way. Unlike the other authors, his treatment of the source lacks the personal spiritual dimension: instead of giving a guideline for contemplation, Thomas sets elements of Richard's doctrines into a general theoretical framework and adapts them according to his "modern" thirteenth-century standards and concepts.

When Thomas started his theological studies, commenting on the *Sentences* was already a duty of future theologians. The *Sentences* discussed a few issues pertaining to the contemplative life (*Sent.* III dist. 35); when Thomas explained the text, his doctrines were based on the theories he found in the *Benjamin major*.⁹⁹⁴ In *Scriptum in III Sent.* dist. 35 qu. 1 art. 2 qc. 2, Thomas asks whether contemplative life consists in operations of reason. The answer is negative: contemplative life consists exclusively in operations of the intellect, not those of reason.⁹⁹⁵ Richard here is introduced in (arg. 3) as an authority for the rejected position. Thomas quotes his doctrine on the various forms of the motion of contemplation, from *Benjamin major* I, v (PL 196: 68D-69B). In the quoted passage, Richard uses the term "contemplation" in a broad sense, covering also discursive thinking (which he calls elsewhere, more properly, meditation or speculation), and therefore Thomas can easily reinterpret it. In the next *quaestiuncula* (qc 3), Thomas narrows the subject, asking whether all operations of the intellect pertain to the contemplative life (the answer is negative). In arg. 3, Thomas paraphrases Richard's description of the six contemplations, concluding that all activities of the intellect (that is, all the six Ricardian contemplations) belong to the contemplative life.⁹⁹⁶ In the responses, Thomas reevaluates this position, saying that Richard does not mean by the six contemplations the contemplative life itself, just that they are used to reach the goal of the contemplative life.⁹⁹⁷

Later, in the *Summa theologiae* II-II qu. 180 (1271-1272), Aquinas gives another systematic treatment to contemplation. Elements of Richard's doctrines, again all taken from the *Benjamin major*, appear in three articles. Article 3 asks whether different acts pertain to contemplation; Thomas' answer is permissive: although "contemplative life" has one ultimate act, the contemplation of the truth, there are also several subordinate acts leading to that goal (the term

⁹⁹⁴ As there is no systematic study of the interpretations of *Sent.* III dist. 35 (at least, to my knowledge), it cannot be said how original or stereotypical Thomas was in referring to Richard. The commentaries of Bonaventure and Richard of Mediavilla do not quote Richard.

⁹⁹⁵ *Scriptum super Sent.* III dist. 35 qu. 1 art. 2 qc. 2 arg. 3: "Praeterea, Richardus de sancto Victore dicit in libro de contemplatione: contemplationis nostrae volutus multiformiter variatur; nunc de inferioribus ad summa ascendit, nunc de superioribus ad ima descendit; et nunc de parte ad totum, nunc de toto ad partem discurrit; nunc a maiori, nunc a minori argumentum trahit. Sed iste discursus videtur ad rationem pertinere. Ergo vita contemplativa principaliter in actu rationis consistit."

⁹⁹⁶ *Scriptum super Sent.* III dist. 35 qu. 1 art. 2 qc. 3 arg. 3: "Praeterea, Richardus de sancto Victore ponit sex species contemplationis. Prima est, quando sensibilia per imaginationem considerantes, in eis divinam sapientiam admiramur. Secunda est, quando earum rationes inquirimus. Tertia, quando ex visibilibus in invisibilia ascendimus. Quarta, quando, remota imaginatione, in solis intelligibilibus versamur. Quinta, quando ea consideramus quae ex divina revelatione cognoscimus, non humana ratione. Sexta, quando ea consideramus quibus etiam humana ratio contradicere videtur. Sed in his speciebus comprehenditur omnis operatio intellectus. Ergo omnis operatio intellectus ad vitam contemplativam pertinet."

⁹⁹⁷ *Scriptum super Sent.* III dist. 35 qu. 1 art. 2 qc. 2 ad. 3: "Ad tertium dicendum, quod Richardus non intendit quod in illis discursibus principaliter consistat vita contemplativa, sed quia utitur eis ad suum finem, sicut dictum est."

“contemplative life” stands here for the act of contemplation itself).⁹⁹⁸ Richard’s division of thinking, meditation and contemplation (*Bmaj* I, iii) appears in arg. 1 representing the various acts; in ad 1 Thomas confirms that “contemplation” belongs to the simple vision of truth (*ad simplicem intuitum veritatis*), and quotes another of Richard’s definitions of the same triad (*Bmaj* I, iv), which defines contemplation as *perspicax et liber contuitus animi*.

Article 4 discusses whether “contemplative life” means a contemplation of God or contemplation of any truth whatsoever (*cujuscumque*). Aquinas’ doctrine (as presented in the *corpus*) is that although contemplation of the “divine truth” is the final goal of our existence, it will be perfect in the next life, seeing God face to face; in this life the contemplation of that truth can be only imperfect, through a mirror in an enigma.⁹⁹⁹ In this framework, Thomas first (arg. 3) gives a succinct and adequate summary of Richard’s six species of contemplation, concluding that contemplation attains not only the divine truth but also the truth in the creatures.¹⁰⁰⁰ The response (ad 3) gives Thomas’ own, greatly simplifying reading of Richard’s doctrine.¹⁰⁰¹ As is usual among thirteenth-century authors, Thomas conceives Richard’s six species as a pattern of gradual ascent, with grades or steps (*gradus*). The objects of contemplation are also reduced: contrary to Richard’s triple division into *sensibilia*, *intelligibilia* and *intellectibilia* (*Bmaj*. I, vii, PL 196: 72C) where *intellectibilia* was a category reserved for those things that surpass reason, Thomas speaks only about sensible and intelligible things (*sensibilia* and *intelligibilia*), and makes from the six contemplations a pattern of transition from the invisible to the intelligible. The “sixth grade,” the consideration of those intelligible things that cannot be found or understood by reason, pertains to the perfective contemplation of the divine truth. A less substantial discussion takes place in qu. 180 art. 6. Here Aquinas investigates the “moves” of contemplation (that is, the metaphors of motion applied to contemplation) and justifies the Areopagite’s position, which speaks of a circular, a right and an ascending one (*Div. nom.* iv). Richard’s own metaphors comparing contemplation to the flight of birds (*Bmaj* I, v) are introduced first as a counter-argument; then they will be subsumed under the Areopagite’s terms (arg. 3 and ad 3).

The anthropological and doctrinal background of Thomas’ position is also made explicit. Contemplation can be twofold in this life: if one is in this life *actualiter* (that is, using one’s senses) then contemplation cannot reach the essence of God; if only *potentialiter* (as Paul was in rapture), contemplation can reach the vision of that essence, which is also the supreme grade of earthly

⁹⁹⁸ Thomas, *Summa theologiae* II-II qu. 180 art. 3 co: “ultimus autem contemplativus actus est ipsa contemplatio veritatis.”

⁹⁹⁹ Thomas, *Summa theologiae* II-II qu. 180 art. 4 co: “ad vitam contemplativam pertinet contemplatio divinae veritatis, quia huiusmodi contemplatio est finis totius humanae vitae. [...] Quae quidem in futura vita erit perfecta, quando videbimus eum facie ad faciem, unde et perfecte beatos faciet. Nunc autem contemplatio divinae veritatis competit nobis imperfecte, videlicet per speculum et in aenigmate, unde per eam fit nobis quaedam inchoatio beatitudinis, quae hic incipit ut in futuro terminetur.”

¹⁰⁰⁰ Thomas, *Summa theol.* II-II qu. 180 art. 4 arg. 3: “Praeterea Richardus de sancto Victore distinguit sex species contemplationum, quarum prima est secundum solam imaginationem, dum attendimus res corporales; secunda autem est in imaginatione secundum rationem, prout scilicet sensibilibus ordinem et dispositionem consideramus; tertia est in ratione secundum imaginationem, quando scilicet per inspectionem rerum visibilibus ad invisibilia sublevamur; quarta autem est in ratione secundum rationem, quando scilicet animus intendit invisibilibus, quae imaginatio non novit; quinta autem est supra rationem, quando ex divina revelatione cognoscimus quae humana ratione comprehendi non possunt; sexta autem est supra rationem et praeter rationem, quando scilicet ex divina illuminatione cognoscimus ea quae humanae rationi repugnare videntur, sicut ea quae dicuntur de mysterio Trinitatis. Sed solum ultimum videtur ad divinam veritatem pertinere. Ergo contemplatio non solum respicit divinam veritatem, sed etiam eam quae in creaturis consideratur.”

¹⁰⁰¹ Thomas, *Summa theologiae* II-II qu. 180 art. 4 ad 3: “Ad tertium dicendum quod per illa sex designantur gradus quibus per creaturas in Dei contemplationem ascenditur. Nam in primo gradu ponitur perceptio ipsorum sensibilibus; in secundo vero gradu ponitur progressus a sensibilibus ad intelligibilia; in tertio vero gradu ponitur diiudicatio sensibilibus secundum intelligibilia; in quarto vero gradu ponitur absoluta consideratio intelligibilium in quae per sensibilia pervenitur; in quinto vero gradu ponitur contemplatio intelligibilium quae per sensibilia inveniri non possunt, sed per rationem capi possunt; in sexto gradu ponitur consideratio intelligibilium quae ratio nec invenire nec capere potest, quae scilicet pertinent ad sublimem contemplationem divinae veritatis, in qua finaliter contemplatio perficitur.”

contemplation.¹⁰⁰² Contemplation in this life cannot be without phantasms, asserts Thomas with Aristotle, but in the phantasms one may contemplate the “pureness of intelligible truth.”¹⁰⁰³ With this doctrine, Thomas practically finds an anthropological argument taken from Aristotle to support the doctrine that no one can see God in this life; what is less obvious is that by this move he also identifies the general Aristotelian description of man with the description of the post-lapsarian nature. Thomas’ text, as a clearly doctrinal and theoretical text, with great clarity expounds the relation between contemplation and *raptus*: contemplation generally (conceived as a possible, ordinary experience) cannot see the divine essence, but that contemplation that indeed can, the *raptus*, is a miracle that works *against* the human nature. The works of affective spirituality investigated above all are compatible with this principle, since the ecstatic affective union with God is not *raptus* (*raptus* involves the activity of the intellect).

This last point of Thomas also reveals a crucial difference between the thirteenth-century and the Victorine anthropology. The *raptus* (as a vision of God) is not natural: it is supernatural and also unnatural to man, since it is an intrusion of grace. The Victorine attitude was the opposite one: seeing God was already the original and natural state (from which Adam fell), the cooperation of grace and human nature. The attitude towards (ecstatic) contemplation in this life is similar: for Richard, contemplative ecstasy is equivalent with Paul’s rapture into the third heaven, and when he talks about ecstatic contemplation of this life as the *natural* destination of the human spirit in *Adnotatio in Ps 113*, his position is obviously incompatible with the thirteenth-century standards.

¹⁰⁰² *Summa theologiae* II-II qu. 180 art. 5 co: “in hac vita potest esse aliquis dupliciter. Uno modo, secundum actum [...] Et sic nullo modo contemplatio praesentis vitae potest pertingere ad videndum Dei essentiam. Alio modo potest esse aliquis in hac vita potentialiter [...] sicut accidit in raptu. Et sic potest contemplatio huius vitae pertingere ad visionem divinae essentiae. Unde supremus gradus contemplationis praesentis vitae est qualem habuit Paulus in raptu.”

¹⁰⁰³ *Summa theologiae* II-II qu. 180 art. 5 ad 2: “contemplatio humana, secundum statum praesentis vitae, non potest esse absque phantasmatibus, quia connaturale est homini ut species intelligibiles in phantasmatibus videat, sicut philosophus dicit, in III de anima. Sed tamen intellectualis cognitio non sistit in ipsis phantasmatibus, sed in eis contemplatur puritatem intelligibilis veritatis.”

5. Hugh of Balma OCart

Not much is known about the author of the treatise *Viae Sion lugent* (or *Mystica theologia*) and the single theological *quaestio* copied with it (*Quaestio unica*). Traditionally, he is identified as Hugh of Balma, the prior of the Charterhouse of Meyriat located in south-eastern France; his works are dated between 1289 and 1297.¹⁰⁰⁴ The two works represent a simplified form of Thomas Gallus' affective anthropology, adapted to the needs of a non-Scholastic public. The *Viae Sion lugent* is a treatise on the cognition of God divided into three chapters named after the triad of *via purgativa*, *illuminativa* and *unitiva*. The adjoined *quaestio* (*Quaestio unica*) discusses one related question: whether the soul can be unified with God merely by the activity of affections, without any previous operation of the intellect. Hugh's answer is positive: the soul can move into God merely by love, without previous intellectual activity.

The doctrines of Hugh show a fusion of Thomas Gallus' Areopagitic theology with the practice of religious piety. For Hugh, the ultimate spiritual work is the *Mystical Theology* of the Areopagite, in the interpretation of Gallus, the *commentator Vercellensis*. Hugh keeps the central doctrines of Thomas: the intellect and the affect are two separate cognitive faculties, and affect is superior, as it can be unified with God; the most important part of the *Viae Sion* is an explanation of the first chapter of the *Mystical Theology*, explaining how the union with God can be reached by leaving sense perception, reason and intellectual operations (*Via unitiva*).

The most distinctive feature of the *Viae Sion*, even among the works of the affective Areopagitism, is its surprisingly radical anti-intellectual attitude. The superiority of *affectus* over the intellect is characteristic of the entire tradition based on Thomas Gallus; even the doctrine that a progress in intellectual cognition hinders the affective cognition can be found in Thomas. But the *Viae Sion* draws radical conclusions from the same anthropological principles concerning intellectual cognition. The intellectual cognition of God, although it has some value, is far inferior to the affective cognition, states Hugh, since the intellect is tainted by phantasms.¹⁰⁰⁵ The union with God (more precisely, with the Holy Spirit) is possible, but only through the highest power of the soul, the *affectus*.¹⁰⁰⁶ As the experience of the "unifying wisdom" demands only faith and love, it is accessible even to laymen (*aliquis simplex vel laicus*) – and as the wisdom can be received in the heart immediately from God, through love, it demands no formal or higher religious or philosophical education¹⁰⁰⁷ (accordingly, Hugh rejects whatever is inaccessible and unacceptable to

¹⁰⁰⁴ The *Viae Sion lugent* has been several times edited among or together with Bonaventure's works, most recently as *Sancti Bonaventurae... opera*, tom. XI (Venetiis: Stephani Orlandini et J.B. Albritii, 1755), 344-404 and *S.R.E. cardinalis Bonaventurae... opera omnia*, cura A.C. Peltier, tom. VIII (Paris: Vivés, 1866), 2-53; new critical edition by Francis Ruello: *Hugues de Balma. Théologie mystique*, 2 vols. SC 408-409 (Paris: CERF, 1995-1996; dating from Ruello, *Hugues de Balma*, vol. 1, 12). The text has two modern English translations, by Jasper Hopkins (*Hugh of Balma on mystical theology: a translation and an overview of his De theologia mystica*. Minneapolis: A.J. Banning Press, 2002) and by Dennis D. Martin (*Carthusian Spirituality: The Writings of Hugh of Balma and Guigo de Ponte*. New York: Paulist Press, 1997). On Hugh of Balma (also *de Palma* or *de Dorchiis* [of Dorche]), besides the introductions of these translations, see Anselme Stoelen, "Hugues de Balma," DS 7 (1969): 859-873 and Francis Ruello, "Statut et rôle de l'Intellectus et l'Affectus dans la Théologie mystique de Hugues de Balma," in James Hogg, ed., *Karthäusermystik und -Mystiker. Analecta Cartusiana* 55 (1981) Band 1, 1-46. For a detailed study of the reception of Victorines among Carthusian authors, see Trottmann, "Lectures chartreuses des victorins," in Poirel, ed., *L'école de Saint-Victor de Paris*, 547-582.

¹⁰⁰⁵ *Viae Sion* cap. 3 partic. 1: "intellectus ex communicatione carnis corruptae phantasiis est admixtus: ideo debet in consurrectione amoris amoveri. Sed in patria purgabitur, in qua carnis corruptio deponetur; ideo per solam affectus igniti consurrectionem erigitur, quia ibi affectiva intelligentia incomparabiliter praeexcellit" (ed. Peltier, 23).

¹⁰⁰⁶ See *Quaestio unica*, co: "Unde illa potentia, quae est affectus, et supremum in spiritu hominis, Spiritui sancto immediate amoris vinculo est unibilis. Et haec potentia, ut est supremum in spiritu, quasi ab omnibus ignoratio, nisi ab illis in quibus ab igne Sancti Spiritus mediate affectus tangitur et movetur" (ed. Peltier, 51).

¹⁰⁰⁷ See *Viae Sion*, Prologus: "haec summa sapientia non potest ab homine edoceri... laicus in schola dei existens hanc sapientiam ab ipso immediate recipiat... per amoris affectum, quam nullus philosophus, nullusque alius scholaris saecularisque magister, nulla humana intelligentia quantumcumque studeat, apprehendit," ed. Peltier, 2.

devout laymen: sophisticated intellectual musings, literacy, formal theological education, schooling and philosophy). In Hugh, the superiority of *affectus* (and the affective cognition) also defines the preparation for the union. Earlier, both Thomas Gallus and Bonaventure saw in intellectual cognition – in speculation – a lower form of cognition, which precedes the ecstatic affective cognition. In contrast, Hugh in the *Viae Sion* constructs a purely affective model of cognition, entirely excluding the intellectual elements. In order to reach the union with God no intellectual activity, discursive thinking or meditation is necessary. The preparation is prayer, which incites and raises love in the soul (Hugh includes two explanations of the Lord's Prayer); in the course of these exercise one may think of God but may not meditate on God, angels or creatures.¹⁰⁰⁸

From the spiritual tradition of the Victorines, the *Viae Sion lugent* refers only to Richard's *Arca mystica* (that is, *Benjamin major*). Hugh of Balma twice gives the same reference to that work (with minor differences), in two different contexts. According to Hugh's account, Richard taught in his *Arca mystica* the cognition of God through the mirror of creatures, and divided his teaching into 42 (!) meditations (or considerations) about the creatures, organised into six grades. The mind, adorned with the light of understanding (*intelligentiae lumine decorata*), passes through the 42 considerations and reaches the cognition of the supreme truth, as the people of Israel proceeded from Egypt and reached the Promised Land through forty-two stages or dwelling places.¹⁰⁰⁹

This account of Richard's work is inaccurate enough to cast doubts on Hugh's real knowledge of Richard's *Arca mystica*. Knowing about six contemplations of Richard was a commonplace, but subdividing them into 42 considerations – without further details – is obviously an exaggeration. Even the author of the *Spectacula contemplationis* (who may or may not be identical with Thomas Gallus) created only 27 considerations altogether when he recreated Richard's first four contemplations (Richard subdivided the six contemplations into even fewer units). The origin of the number 42 must have been the Old Testament parallel, used as a Scriptural justification (the usage of Scriptural analogies as arguments has its precedents in the text). Anselme Stoelen interprets the reference as being to Hugh of Saint-Victor's *Arca mystica*, attributed to Richard "par distraction." But even though Hugh's *De archa Noe* contains a reference to the 42 mansions, that reference is unrelated to contemplation.¹⁰¹⁰

The two near-identical references to the *Benjamin major* appear in two different contexts. One occurrence is in the very last and most important part of the *Viae Sion lugent*, cap. 3 particula 4. The subject of this sub-chapter is "the wisdom taught immediately by God": most of the text is a commentary on the first chapter of the *Mystical Theology* of the Areopagite, explaining how the separation from sensual and intellectual operations and sensible and *intellectible* things can be realised in order to become unified with God. The commentary (mostly paraphrased from Thomas Gallus) is introduced by a threefold distinction on the cognition of God. One form of it uses the mirror of the sensible creatures; another one uses the *intelligentia* to learn the primal cause from its effect, and through the consideration of the exemplary forms reaches the eternal truth. The third form of cognition is far superior: it reaches the object immediately (without any *medium*

¹⁰⁰⁸ *Quaestio unica, solutio*: "Alius autem modus consurgendi [...] est sapientia unitiva, quae est in amoris desiderio per affectiones flammigeras superius aspirando [...] ista sapientia sine omni investigatione, vel meditatione praevia, amantis affectum sursum trahit. Unde non ibi oportet cogitare, nec de creaturis, nec de angelis, nec de Trinitate; quia haec sapientia non per meditationem praevia, sed per affectas desiderium habet aspirando consurgere," ed. Peltier, 50.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Hugh of Balma, *Quaestio unica, solutio* [25]: "Quaedam enim est meditatio, vel contemplatio, ab inferioribus ad superiora; quaedam e converso, scilicet descendens a superioribus ad inferiora. De prima determinat Richardus de Sancto Victore in *Arca mystica*, ostendens per quadraginta duas meditationes vel considerationes in creaturis, quomodo mens lumine intelligentiae decorata ad cognitionem summi Creatoris debet attingere, et sicut Israeliticus populus pervenit ab Aegypto per quadraginta duas mansiones ad terram promissionis, sic anima fidelis per illas quadraginta duas considerationes, in sex gradibus ordinatas, usque ad cognitionem summae veritatis attingit, omni rationali spiritui adoptatam." ed. Peltier, 50. Cf. *Viae Sion*, cap. 3 particula 4: "Unde cum sit triplex cognitio, una videlicet quae per speculum creaturarum sensibilibus respicit, quae docetur a Richardo de Sancto Victore in *Arca mystica*, ubi per quadraginta duas considerationes olim in populo Israelitico ab Aegypto ad terram promissionis veniente expressissime figuratas docet pervenire, et per sex gradus ascendere ad omnium Creatorem." ed. Peltier, 39.

¹⁰¹⁰ See Stoelen, art. "Hugues de Balma," DS 7: 865; Hugh of Saint-Victor, *De archa Noe* IV, xiv (PL 176: 700).

disponens), through the unifying love, through unknowing and without the working of the cognitive faculties (*imaginatio*, *ratio*, *intellectus* or *intelligentia*). Besides the three forms of cognition, Hugh names their reference works, too: Richard's *Arca mystica* for the first, Augustine's *De magistro* and *De vera religione* for the second, and the *Mystical Theology* of the Areopagite for the third.

The other reference to Richard's work appears in the *solutio* part of the *Quaestio*, under a fourfold division of the cognition of God. Here the principle of the division is different: Hugh of Balma discerns two contemplations in the intellect (*contemplatio in intellectu*) and two, superior cognitions through the "heat of love" (*ardor amoris*). One intellectual contemplation proceeds from the lower to the higher, the other proceeds reversely. Hugh here repeats the doctrines presented earlier, naming Richard's *Arca mystica* again as example for the first.¹⁰¹¹ Cognition through love has two forms: one "common and Scholastic" one and a "secret and mystical" one. The latter means the affective Areopagitic programme: an affective union with God in unknowing, without intellectual investigation, meditation or reflection; the Scholastic form of that loving knowledge comes about through a meditation on the creatures and divine illumination.¹⁰¹²

¹⁰¹¹ "Sed notandum, quod [...] duplex est contemplatio in intellectu: similiter, et ardor amoris dupliciter acquiritur in affectu. Quaedam enim est meditatio, vel contemplatio, ab inferioribus ad superiora; quaedam e converso, scilicet descendens a superioribus ad inferiora. De prima determinat Richardus de Sancto Victore in *Arca mystica* [...]," ed. Peltier, 50.

¹⁰¹² "Multo enim excellentior, et multo amabilior, et ad obtinendum facilius est ardor amoris. Sed ad istum ardorem amoris est duplex modus attingendi: unus scholasticus, et communis; alius mysticus, et secretus. Primus enim est per modum inquisitionis et elevationis, et incipitur ab inferioribus usque ad summum per exercitium diuturnius ascendendo. [...] Alius autem modus consurgendi in Deum est multo his omnibus nobilior, praedictis etiam ad habendum facilius: et haec est sapientia unitiva, quae est in amoris desiderio per affectiones flammigeras superius aspirando [...] ista sapientia sine omni investigatione, vel meditatione praevia, amantis affectum sursum trahit. Unde non ibi oportet cogitare, nec de creaturis, nec de angelis, nec de Trinitate; quia haec sapientia non per meditationem praevia, sed per affectus desiderium habet aspirando consurgere," ed. Peltier, 50-51.

6. Rudolph of Biberach OFM

The *De septem itineribus aeternitatis* is a popular fourteenth-century manual for spiritual edification, written by Rudolph of Biberach (fl. c. 1270-c. 1326), the lector at the Franciscan *studium generale* of Strasbourg.¹⁰¹³ His work is unique in its own way. The core doctrines that he presents are not new at all: the duality of a superior *affectus* and an inferior intellect in the cognition of God, and a supra-intellectual union with God by the former (described by Areopagitic terms), are all commonplaces of the affective spirituality that he quotes directly from the works of Thomas Gallus. The new element of the treatise is not the originality but the comprehensive and systematic presentation of spirituality. As the extensive quotations attest, Rudolph had access to a remarkable collection of spiritual literature: besides Patristic authors (such as Augustine and Gregory the Great), he also used the modern Areopagitic works of Thomas Gallus, the commentaries of Hugh of Saint-Victor and Robert Grosseteste on the *Celestial Hierarchy*, the *De spiritu et anima*, and several writings of Hugh and Richard of Saint-Victor. The following investigation focuses primarily on the way in which Rudolph adopts the Victorine sources in his model.

The great number of sources furnished Rudolph with several possible patterns of spiritual development. He integrates the various patterns into an ultimate pattern consisting of seven “ways” (*itinerata*). The seven “ways” refer to seven different forms of the cognition of God. Their sequence gives an ascending pattern, since the “ways” themselves are also different stages through which the soul makes its progression in the cognition, in the following order:

- 1) first way: a right orientation towards the eternal things (*recta intentio aeternorum*),
- 2) second way: meditation,
- 3) third way: contemplation,
- 4) fourth way: loving charity (*charitativa affectio*),
- 5) fifth way: hidden revelation of eternal things,
- 6) sixth way: experimental foretasting of the eternal things,
- 7) seventh way: those corporeal and spiritual operations that bring merit (*aeternorum meritoria operatio*).

The ascending order reflects the prevalence of the affective cognition over the intellectual one. Contemplation (the third way) is conceived primarily as an intellectual activity – and as such, it means a lower level compared to the cognition through love. It is followed by the loving charity (fourth way), *because* loving charity makes contemplation perfect;¹⁰¹⁴ then charity is followed by revelation(s), *because* charity brings the lover closer and closer to, and makes him more and more similar to, the beloved, and the more something is loved the better it can be known.¹⁰¹⁵

The extensive quotations from the spiritual works of Hugh and Richard are also accommodated within this general framework. Rudolph quotes Hugh and Richard with agreement – from Hugh’s writings, the most important source used is the commentary on the *Celestial Hierarchy*: from Richard’s works, Rudolph uses the *Benjamin major*, the *In Apocalypsin* and *De IV*

¹⁰¹³ Rudolph’s text has been several times edited under the name or with the works of Bonaventure, most recently by A.C. Peltier, *S.R.E. Cardinalis S. Bonaventurae [...] opera omnia*, vol. 8: 393-482 (1866), reedited as *Rudolf von Biberach. De septem itineribus aeternitatis. Nachdruck der Ausgabe von Peltier 1866 mit einer Einleitung in die lateinische Überlieferung und Corrigenda zum Text von Margot Schmidt* (Stuttgart and Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1985). See also Margot Schmidt, “Rudolphe de Biberach,” DS 13: 846-850.

¹⁰¹⁴ See *Iter IV* dist. 1.

¹⁰¹⁵ See *Iter V* dist. 1: “videndum est, qualiter iter occultae revelationis aeternorum, iter charitativae affectionis sequatur. De hoc potest assignari ratio talis. Cum [...] charitas [...] appropinquare faciat amato, quantum potest, ut etiam transformet amantem in amatum secundum Dionysium: quanto ergo propinquius est amans amato, tanto verius, subtilius et perfectius sibi revelatur amatum. [...] Ergo rectissime, quanto aeterna magis amantur, tanto perfectius cognoscuntur.” Peltier 8: 458.

gradibus charitatis. The Victorine texts and their doctrinal elements are interpreted so as to support the overall doctrine of the primacy of the affective cognition – which means their substantial reinterpretation.

From Hugh's *Commentary on the Celestial Hierarchy* Rudolph takes over two important notions: one is the doctrine on three eyes; the other is Hugh's eulogy on the nature of love (as expounded in the context of the Seraphim and Cherubim). From Richard's works several ideas were taken and accommodated: the definition and six forms of contemplation (from the *Benjamin major*), the grades of love (from the *De IV gradibus*), and his doctrine of visions (from the *In Apocalypsin*). All these autonomous Victorine elements are integrated into various levels of Rudolph's sevenfold scheme to support the affective model of spirituality. Richard's theory about contemplation and ecstasy is incorporated into the third way, contemplation; his classification on various forms of love are integrated into the fourth way, *charitativa affectio*, which is a higher grade than contemplation; his theory about vision goes into the fifth way, revelation, as a theory about the lower forms of revelation. Hugh's words on the superiority of Seraphim to Cherubim, referring to the prevalence of love over cognition, also become arguments for the superiority of the affective cognition. The doctrines of the two twelfth-century Victorines have to be edited somewhat for this meaning: he supplies the notion of a cognitive love (*affectus*) from Thomas Gallus.

a) Third way, contemplation

In the third way, Rudolph gives a comprehensive and systematic overview of contemplation. His approach is a synthesising one: the doctrines of various authors are juxtaposed and interpreted so as to make a coherent system. In a Scholastic manner, first he proves the necessity of contemplation (dist. 1), gives its definition (dist. 2), and explains its features by comparing to thinking, meditation, speculation and intuitive vision of God (dist. 3). Then he gives four schemes on the grades of contemplation (dist. 4), explains the utility of contemplation (dist. 5), the way in which in contemplation the soul enters the "secret of Jesus" (meaning mostly the metaphorical "death" in contemplation) and explains the Biblical references inviting to contemplation (dist. 6-7).

In dist. 2, Rudolph takes over the definition of contemplation from Richard (*Benjamin major* I, iv: *contemplatio est libera mentis perspicacia in sapientiae spectacula admiratione suspensa*) then unfolds the definition by explanations. Two of his points are more remarkable: a) reinterpreting Hugh's doctrine on the eyes, Rudolph asserts that the eye of contemplation must be healed by grace, and b) reinterpreting Richard's definition on contemplation, he adds an affective element to contemplation: namely, contemplation comprises, besides cognition, also a certain "good-tasting love" (*saprosa dilectio*).¹⁰¹⁶

In dist. 3, Rudolph clarifies the differences of various forms of cognition (*cogitatio*, *meditatio*, *speculatio*, *contemplatio*, and *intuitiva visio*): their order also means a hierarchical and successive order where the subsequent phase terminates the previous one. Here *speculatio*, meaning cognition through images, demands special attention: Rudolph quotes on *speculatio* Augustine (*De Trin.* XV), Richard's distinction between *speculatio* and *contemplatio* (as seeing the truth without *integumentum*, *Benjamin major* V, xiv). Contemplation terminates *speculatio*, and itself is terminated by the "intuitive vision" of God (which is not possible in the present state).¹⁰¹⁷

¹⁰¹⁶ *Iter* III, dist. 2: "Secundum, quod necessarium est contemplantibus [...] quod oculus contemplationis sit perspicax, id est gratia sanatus. Dicit enim Hugo commentator super Angelicam Hierarchiam, quod triplex est oculus. 'Est enim oculus carnis [...] et oculus rationis [...] et oculus contemplationis [...] oculus contemplationis clausus est.' Haec ille. Igitur necesse est ut oculus contemplationis perspicax sit et sanetur." Peltier 8, 420. "Tertium [...] patet quod Richardus hic non accipit contemplationem ut est actus intellectus praecise, sed etiam ut saporosam dilectionem includit. [...] Igitur spectacula sapientiae sunt cognitio veri et amor sive sapor boni. [...] Actus igitur contemplationis duo includit, scilicet cognitionem et saporosam dilectionem: et dilectio adjuvat cognitionem." Peltier 8, 421.

¹⁰¹⁷ *Iter* III dist. 3: "anima intuitive cognoscentis Deum numquam ad inferiora relabitur, sed sine intermissione et fatigatione Deum in eternum dulciter intuetur, quod in corpore corruptibili fieri non potest. [...] Omnes igitur istae

Distinction 4 gives four schemes of contemplation. Rudolph calls these models “grades,” that is, distinct phases of the progress of cognition and love that contemplate God *sub ratione veri et boni*; he presents them as described in the “considerations of the saints” and “traditions of the teachers.”¹⁰¹⁸ Distributed in four articles, he outlines four different patterns of ascent. The first is the model of Thomas Gallus based on the hierarchies of the mind (art. 1); the second is Richard’s theory of six contemplations, from the *Benjamin major* (interpreted as six grades), and his explanations of the causes of ecstasy (art. 2); the third one is the epistemological model of *De spiritu et anima*, consisting of the six grades of contemplation in *sensus*, *imaginatio*, *ratio*, *intellectus*, *intelligentia* and *sapientia* (this model, based ultimately on the definitions of Isaac de Stella, was also adapted by Bonaventure). The fourth one is not really a pattern of contemplation, but rather Origen’s observations on the real contemplative (based on *Super Cantica* ii): it is an example illustrating Rudolph’s conviction that all other models of contemplation can be reduced in some way to the three models outlined.¹⁰¹⁹

b) Fourth way, loving attitude

The fourth way is *charitativa affectio* – that is, love or a loving attitude towards the eternal things. Under the heading of the fourth way, Rudolph gives a comprehensive treatment of love. For the cognition of God, love is also necessary, and Rudolph gives a rationale for it, based on the will/intellect distinction. Man has both intellect and will, and for the cognition of their supra-natural object, God, each faculty needs its supra-natural *habitus*. On the intellect’s behalf this *habitus* is faith, on the will’s behalf, a specific form of love (*amor gratuitus*).¹⁰²⁰ Rudolph gives a classification of various forms of love (dist. 3), the signs of the various stages of love (dist. 4: *charitas genita*, *roborata* and *perfecta*). Finally, he gives altogether three gradual patterns of *charitativa affectio* (dist. 5): the 6 grades of *amor gratuitus*, the 4 grades of *amor violentus* (art. 2) based on Richard’s *De IV gradibus*, and the 5 grades of Seraphic love (art. 3; this kind of love cannot be realised in this life but can serve as an example to follow). The discussion of the Seraphic love is based on the commentaries of Hugh of Saint-Victor and Grosseteste on a sentence of the seventh chapter of the *Celestial Hierarchy*, describing the attributes of the Seraphim.

c) Fifth way, revelation

As the fifth way, revelation follows the level of ardent love. Rudolph distinguishes three kinds of revelation: sensual, intellectual and supra-intellectual. The gradation of these three kinds also reflects the affective paradigm, both in its form and in the sources used. Rudolph’s doctrine on the two lower forms of revelation is based on Richard’s theories on the four forms of vision (as

differentiae [between contemplation and intuitive vision] sunt secundum clariorem et minus clarum aspectum ad Deum [...] contemplatio proficiendo terminatur in intuitivam cognitionem, tamquam in suam perfectionem.” Peltier 8, 423b.

¹⁰¹⁸ *Iter* III dist. 4 art. 1: “videndum est qualiter contemplationis iter per diversos gradus vel modos secundum varias considerationes sanctorum et diversas traditiones doctorum distinguatur.” “Gradus contemplationis sunt quidam progressus et profectus intellectualis cognitionis et saporosae dilectionis ad contemplandum Deum sub ratione veri et boni. [...] Loquendo tamen secundum consuetum modum gradus contemplationis dicuntur illa incrementa contemplationis et illae distinctiones quae magis intellectum et affectum coadiuvant ad contemplandum, et quae distincta sunt, et tradita a sanctis doctoribus.” Peltier 8, 423, 424.

¹⁰¹⁹ *Iter* III dist. 4 art. 4: “Ad hos gradus sive species contemplationis supradictorum doctorum quasi omnium aliorum doctorum gradus et species contemplationis mediate vel immediate possunt reduci, ut patet de sex gradibus contemplationis Origenis.” Peltier 8, 431.

¹⁰²⁰ *Iter* IV dist. 2: “sicut intellectus per fidem, quod est lumen supernaturale, elevatur ad beatifici objecti supernaturalem cognitionem, ita et affectus sive voluntas per supernaturalem habitum charitatis elevatur ad beatifici objecti supernaturalem affectionem.” Peltier 8, 438.

expounded in his *In Apocalypsin*); for the highest, supra-intellectual revelation he uses Grosseteste's explanation of the *Mystical Theology*.

Sensual revelation (*revelatio sensibilis*) has two forms according to Rudolph; both come about through the senses, but one has a mystical meaning behind the things seen, while the other does not. Rudolph formed the two categories of *revelatio sensibilis* from Richard's two categories of corporeal vision.¹⁰²¹ Intellectual revelation also has two forms, defined again by Richard's word: one comes about through *similitudines* of visible things, the other one (also called here *intellectual vision*) without such intermediaries, through internal inspiration.¹⁰²² These categories derive from Richard's two kinds of spiritual visions. Richard's theory of spiritual visions was based on Hugh's distinction between *symbolum* and *anagoge* – and therefore he knew no higher level of vision or cognition than the cognition without representing images:¹⁰²³ for him even the stricter meaning of “contemplation” is a direct vision of the truth without obstructing images. For Rudolph this is not the ultimate level of cognition.

Supra-intellectual revelation (dist. 5-7), the ultimate level of revelation, is constructed by Rudolph after the doctrines and authoritative texts of affective spirituality. Supra-intellectual revelation means a non-intellectual cognition and an affective union with God, founded on the priority and superiority of the act of love to the act of cognition. It comes about not through intellectual cognition but through the most ardent love (*superfervida dilectio*) and “experimental knowledge.” This supra-intellectual revelation cannot be thought or told,¹⁰²⁴ and (as Grosseteste taught) is void of all “symbols and images.” It has three grades: leaving the sensible things, then leaving the intelligible ones, and ultimately entering the cloud where God appears.¹⁰²⁵ Rudolph's authorities are the *Mystical Theology* and its commentary by Robert Grosseteste (*Lincolniensis commentator*), the *Canticum* commentary of Thomas Gallus (*Vercellensis*), Gregory the Great and Hugh of Saint-Victor (*Hugo commentator Dionysii*).¹⁰²⁶ Rudolph quotes Hugh's explanation of the penetrating (Seraphic) love, but inserts it into a different context, making it an argument for the superiority of affective cognition over the intellectual one.

Rudolph's doctrines concerning the “experimental” cognition that through ardent love show the ultimate integration of Victorine doctrines into a model of affective spirituality. The basic doctrines of this spirituality – the duality of intellectual and affective cognition and the superiority of the affective cognition – are repeated in various ways. The third way, contemplation, is surpassed by

¹⁰²¹ *Iter V* dist. 3: “Et haec revelatio [sensibilis], ut dicit Richardus, scilicet sensibilis, fit dupliciter. Fit enim quandoque per signa sensibilia, ut quando res videtur corporalibus sensibus extra, absque significatione mystica, ut Pharaonis et hujusmodi, qui nullum sensum spirituales vel mysticum intellexerunt. [...] Est et alia revelatio sensibilis, sive visio corporalis, quae fit sensibus exterioribus, ut quando res videntur in quibus latet significatio mystica, qualis facta fuit patribus veteris legis et novae, ut dictum est.” Peltier 8, 459.

¹⁰²² *Iter V* dist. 4: “Et haec revelatio non fit oculis carnis, sed mentis, ut dicit Richardus. Et fit dupliciter: quia quandoque fit, quando per Spiritum sanctum animus illuminatus, formalibus rerum visibilium similitudinibus praemonstratis, sive praesentatis, ad invisibilium cognitionem ducitur: qualiter Joannes vidit in Apocalypsi, et Ezechiel propheta [...]. Haec revelatio ad aeterna ducit, quia per eam intellectus in invisibilium et aeternorum cognitionem exsurgit et perducitur, ut dicit Richardus. Secundo modo fit hoc revelatio aeternorum, sive visio intellectualis, ut dicit Richardus, quando spiritus humanus per internam inspirationem suaviter tactus, nullis mediantibus rebus visibilibus, ad caelestium cogitationem erigitur, sicut vidit propheta David, qui vidit in spiritu.” Peltier 8, 460.

¹⁰²³ See Richard, *In Apocalypsin* I, i, 1 PL 196: 686-687; cf. Hugh, *In Hier.* II, PL 175: 941CD.

¹⁰²⁴ *Iter V* dist. 6: “revelatio aeternorum ista sit superintellectualis, et ideo nec cogitari nec dici possit, ut supra patuit.” Peltier 8, 462.

¹⁰²⁵ *Iter V* dist. 6: “revelatio superintellectualis non fit per intelligibilem cognitionem, sed per ardentissimam, imo superfervidam dilectionem, et experimentalem notitiam. Ex his etiam apparet, sicut dicit Lincolniensis, quod haec revelatio quae fit incircumvelate et vere, absque symbolis et imaginibus, secundum sui nudam apparitionem, solum fit his, qui [...] introeunt in caliginem, hoc est actualem ignorantiam omnium, ubi vere est, ut eloquia aiunt, qui est super omnia.” Peltier 8, 463.

¹⁰²⁶ See the excursus in Part II Chapter I about the development of the subject.

the fourth one, “loving charity,” in the fifth way, intellectual revelation is followed by the supra-intellectual one, which is an affective union with God. The selected doctrines of Hugh and Richard are embedded in this framework and adapted so that they support these premises: Richard’s system of six contemplations is conceived as one of the three basic patterns of contemplation; the classification of love of the *De IV gradibus* appears on the next, fourth, level, of love; Hugh’s passages from the *In Hierarchiam* describe here the ideal type of love. A similar pattern is repeated in the case of revelations, too: Richard’s model of corporeal and spiritual visions becomes transformed into lower forms of revelation; the summit of the revelations is the supra-intellectual revelation (also union) through love, confirmed and illustrated again with Hugh’s text on angels.

Rudolph’s text shows the limits of the possible reception of Victorine anthropology. On the one hand, Victorine doctrines are regarded as authoritative ones, some of them even have a key structural function in the system of seven ways – but, on the other hand, these doctrines are given a corrective reinterpretation. Twelfth-century Victorines knew nothing about the affective reading of the *Mystical Theology*; so for Richard, the sixth contemplation was the ultimate possible form of cognition and there existed no higher “vision” than the contemplation of the truth without intermediary representations, and for Hugh, the angels circling around God do not have a cognitive kind of love. The way in which Rudolph adapts these doctrines to the affective model is often contrary to their original intentions.

Conclusion

The reception of Victorine doctrines in the thirteenth-century spiritual literature can be described basically as adaptation to a substantially different model of theological anthropology. The reception affected only the works of Hugh and Richard (since other Victorines had faded into oblivion by then); the usual techniques of the adaptation were selective quoting or paraphrase, reinterpretation and even exegesis of their texts. Seemingly none of the investigated authors – the Victorine canon Thomas Gallus, the Franciscans Anthony of Padua, Saint Bonaventure and Rudolph of Biberach, the Carthusian Hugh of Balma and the Dominican Thomas Aquinas – was interested in understanding the original meaning of the Victorine texts. The reception of Victorine doctrines in the spiritual literature of the thirteenth century seems to be defined by two main factors.

a) The early thirteenth century was the period when the Scholastic theological anthropology was elaborated. Histories of mysticism generally overlook the fact that there is a coherent and (due to the new form of education) universally accepted theological-anthropological system behind the various forms of thirteenth-century spirituality. This framework defines the possible place of any immediate “experience” (or cognition) of God and the possible statements about it too. The term “seeing God” now obtained the meaning of (intellectually) cognising God, and such an intellectual cognition of God became the privilege of the Blessed. The intellectual faculties of man in this life cannot give an adequate cognition of God (being either corrupted or needing a special addition of the *medium disponens*). The prelapsarian Adam saw God through a mirror (even Thomas Gallus thinks so), and this is also true for the present life too; the *raptus* (which involves an immediate vision) is an exceptional and unique case only. Contemplation now took on the meaning of an intellectual and, necessarily, mediated vision, and it became conceptually separated from *raptus*. The consolidation of this conceptual framework is perceptible already in the 1220s and it ends in the 1240s.

b) This doctrinal background defines the possible forms of “mysticism,” or more properly (using the contemporary term) that of “mystical theology.” The present investigation has focused on the so-called affective spirituality (since there Victorine texts were used extensively); Thomas Aquinas represents a different tradition. The affective model in its full form is the invention of the thirteenth century and fully complies with the doctrinal premises mentioned above. Technically speaking, the function of this model is to grant an immediate cognition of God under conditions

where an immediate intellectual cognition is excluded (being either impossible or a miracle, as in *raptus*). The affective spirituality has its own anthropological premises (added to the consensual anthropology). The critical premise of this model is that besides the cognitive intellectual faculty (most commonly called *ratio*) there is another cognitive faculty, an affective-cognitive faculty (called by various names: *synderesis*, *affectus* and so on) that can deliver immediate knowledge of God. This latter faculty is superior to the intellectual one: while reason can acquire only mediated knowledge, the affective faculty can have an immediate, non-discursive, affective “knowledge” of God, which does not have any intellectual character. Historically seen, the coherent and earliest elaboration of this model was given by Thomas Gallus, presented as the authentic interpretation of the *Mystical Theology* of the Areopagite; thus, in the same period (roughly the 1220s and 1230s), similar doctrines can be found also in Anthony of Padua, although in a less systematic form and without Areopagitic references. The affective tradition means the later popularisation and radicalisation of these principles in the works of Bonaventure, Hugh of Balma and Rudolph of Biberach.

These two factors – a new anthropology and a new model of spirituality – defined the possible reception of the Victorines in spiritual literature. Elements that supported the modern premises were utilised – but this usage also depended on individual differences and preferences of the single authors. From Hugh, such elements were the doctrine of three eyes (Bonaventure, Rudolph) and Seraphic love (Rudolph). Richard, being an author on contemplation, was more extensively used: his psychological analyses on the modes of ecstasy (Anthony, Bonaventure) and the system of six contemplations were also known (Thomas, Bonaventure, Hugh of Balma, Rudolph); Rudolph of Biberach even uses his analysis of the grades of love (from the *De IV gradibus*) and the theory about revelation (from the *In Apocalypsin*). The elements borrowed from the Victorines were nonetheless accommodated within the new premises. On the one hand, Richard’s six contemplations were conceived as a scalar model of ascent; on the other hand, it was considered as a model of contemplation – that is, a model of the intellectual cognition of God through creatures. Compared to the immediate affective cognition of God this mediated and intellectual one is necessarily a lower form, and the superiority of affective union is regularly spelled out, although the personal preferences of the thirteenth-century authors also vary the reception.

Thomas Gallus (d. 1246) had a special esteem for Richard, although his writings display only a minimal interest in his works, consisting mostly of references to the six contemplations, an unusual partial remake of the first four contemplations of the *Benjamin major* (in the *Spectacula contemplationis*). Thomas observed an ascending order in Richard’s works (starting with the *Adnotatio in Ps 2* and continuing with *Benjamin minor*, *Benjamin major* and culminating in the *De Trinitate*) and set this sequence in parallel with the works of the Areopagite culminating in the *Mystical Theology*. Thomas must have seen in Richard a precursor of his own: for the *De Trinitate* he calls Richard the founder of the new, experimental affective mysticism, and in the structure of the six contemplations he sees five intellectual forms and a sixth, non-intellectual form of cognition (this high and qualified esteem for Richard, or any attempt to (re)construct a line of thought in his works, cannot be observed in later authors). Perhaps the most important (though indirect) contribution to the Victorine reception of Thomas was the invention, justification and formulation of the affective-cognitive faculty: this anthropological element greatly defined the way in which Victorine texts were read by himself and many others.

The Franciscan Anthony of Padua (d. 1231), presumably under the personal influence of Thomas, uses several works of Richard (especially the two *Benjamins*). Unlike Thomas who restricted himself to giving general outlines of Richard’s theory, Anthony takes over and modifies texts of Richard, deleting his references to *raptus* and face-to-face vision in contemplation.

The writings of Saint Bonaventure (d. 1274) show a combination of the principles of Hugh, Richard and Thomas Gallus. He takes over Hugh’s theory about three eyes and makes it the basic structure of his own theological anthropology by duplicating the original triple division in a sixfold scheme (present in *Breviloquium* II, vi, *Itinerarium* I, 6, *In Hexaem. coll.* V. 24). The popular

opinion that this scheme derives from Richard cannot be maintained in the face of Bonaventure's texts. The uncredited influence of Thomas can be observed in the highest two faculties, the derivatives of the "eye of contemplation": the lower one is *intelligentia*, while the higher (and also the highest) is called *apex mentis*, *synderesis scintilla*, *vis unitiva sive amativa* – the affective-cognitive faculty that becomes unified with God. Richards' inspiration seems to be reduced to the explanation of the modes of contemplation (based on *Bmaj V*).

The works of Hugh of Balma, the *Viae Sion lugent* and the *Quaestio unica* present the most disturbing account of Richard. The two works give the standard affective agenda in a radicalised and popularising form, where Richard stands as a representative of intellectual cognition. According to Hugh, Richard taught in his *Arca mystica* the cognition of God through the mirror of creatures, organised into six grades and divided into forty-two meditations on creatures. This account, with its vagueness, may well indicate the "affective" attitude towards the "intellectual" model of Richard.

The *De septem itineribus* of the Franciscan Rudolph of Biberach is exceptional among the examined works, since it gives the fullest account of Victorine material. Here the Victorine texts become structuring elements of the author's own comprehensive system, although in any case modified to fit the affective premises. Among other elements, Richard's sixfold scheme of contemplation appears together with other models in the "third way," the chapter devoted to contemplation; the subsequent "fourth way," discussing affective cognition, surpasses contemplation and contains doctrines from the *De IV gradibus* on love and from Hugh's *In Hierarchiam* on Seraphic love. The "fifth way," revelation, contains Richard's doctrines but again with a corrective: the four visions of the *In Apocalypsin* are defined as sensual and intellectual revelations, to be surpassed by the supra-intellectual revelation (which is again the affective union with God).

The five authors mentioned all belong to the affective mainstream of spirituality: their works show the affective adaptation of Victorine doctrines. The examples of Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) attest that however popular the affective spirituality was (especially if joined to Areopagitic mysticism) it was not the only possible framework: Aquinas represents an academic rewriting of the six contemplations.

With the end of the twelfth century, Saint-Victor ceased to be the centre teaching the characteristically Victorine theology: by then, the greatest and formative theologians of the school were dead, and theological education had received new institutional form and new doctrinal content. With the formation of the professional, properly "Scholastic" and "formal" theology (which had its institutions, sources, techniques and genres) there also emerged its counterpart, the "mystical" theology, with its own subjects and literature. In such a context, the Victorine theological anthropology lost its ground: from a theological aspect, it was based on early or mid-twelfth century concepts already obsolete; from the spiritual aspect, its concepts were foreign to the spirituality of the day. The Victorine doctrines were no longer current and valid doctrines taught in a school (Thomas Gallus' reference to the *Sentences* is telling in this respect): they were more or less authoritative sentences of two revered spiritual authors, Hugh and Richard, open to adaptation and reinterpretation.

The emergence of the new theology brought conceptual changes that made the Victorine theories practically unintelligible. Key terms, such as "seeing God," "contemplation," "seeing through a mirror" and "rapture," became redefined; in the so-called affective spirituality, a new, affective-cognitive faculty was invented and introduced (which had no equivalent in Victorine thinking). In thirteenth-century texts one can observe, beyond the quotations (which attest the "influence" of the Victorines), also the erasures and corrections that outline the unaccepted elements of the Victorine doctrines.

Part IV. Conclusion. The Victorine theological anthropology and its decline

The central concern of the present study has been to give an account of what Victorine theological anthropology is, and what afterlife it had. The study of the works of four twelfth-century Victorine authors, Hugh, Achard, Richard and Walther of Saint-Victor, enabled us to observe a common doctrinal pattern present in their works but absent from the works of other authors. This pattern, consisting of doctrinal positions, is considered here as the theological anthropology of the Victorines. This model is peculiar to twelfth-century Victorines; Thomas Gallus (d. 1246), the last mentionable theologian connected to the school, is not a representative of this model. Another study investigated the possible afterlife or the reception of the Victorine model in the thirteenth century. Due to the transformations of the theology and the institutions of theological education, the investigation considered both the developments of doctrinal theology and spirituality (or “mysticism”). Two doctrinal subjects were investigated: they were both central to the Victorines, and Scholastic theologians treated them as well. These are the prelapsarian cognition of God and Paul’s rapture. In the spiritual literature the reception of the works of Richard and Hugh is undeniable, but the nature of that reception is worthy of study by itself.

1.

For Hugh and other Victorines, the idea of the image and likeness of God (cf. Gen 1:26) refers to two different orientations in the human soul that were originally turned towards God. Image (*imago*) is a cognitive faculty called *cognitio*, *ratio* or the like: it is an intention towards truth, knowledge and wisdom. Likeness (*similitudo*) is a non-cognitive, affective and moral faculty (called *amor*, *dilectio*, *affectus* and the like), an intention towards virtue and justice. The duality of the cognitive and affective aspects of the soul appears in other authors of the period as well, but their identification with the image and likeness is a characteristic Victorine element.

This definition of image and likeness also defines a particular form of spirituality. Image and likeness, cognition and love are and remain two separate instances with separate functions (which Richard also makes explicit, comparing them to the light and the heat of the same fire): although they mutually promote the other’s working, they cannot take each other’s function. The affective faculty can only love, just as the cognitive one can only cognise: love is merely a drive of cognition, and by itself (without the working of the cognitive faculty) it cannot result in cognition. This is also evident in the descriptions of (ecstatic) contemplation: it is described primarily as an activity of the cognitive faculty (whether it be called metaphorically an “eye of contemplation” or called *intelligentia*) and a cognitive act in which love does not (since it cannot) participate.

The prelapsarian state had a prominent and unusually important role for the Victorines. Hugh’s predecessors and contemporaries saw in that state a remote and past condition from which the most important element was the devastating Fall, leading to the present fallen state. Accordingly, this attitude resulted in a limited and rather standard list of theological subjects. Hugh himself, in contrast, considered the present state from a hermeneutical and historical perspective. He interpreted and described the present state of man in relation to the original state, implying that the understanding of the present condition depends on understanding the original one. With an unusually self-reflective move in the period, he also considered the epistemological perspectives of the present in connection with the prelapsarian ones. The prelapsarian cognition of God is conceived by Hugh as a vision (contemplation) of God through a cognitive faculty dedicated to this operation (Hugh and Walther call it metaphorically “eye of contemplation,” Achard and Richard *intelligentia*). The Fall is conceived as a loss of this contemplative vision, a fall into darkness (that is, into ignorance and concupiscence) – but it does not result in the loss of that faculty, rather only in its inoperability. This element set the Victorine model apart from the more traditional

Augustinian stream, where (as in the case of Saint Bernard and William of Saint-Thierry) the consequence of the Fall was considered as a radical and irrevocable change. For the Victorines, “contemplation” means primarily an immediate cognition of God (expressed through visual imagery). This aspect was strongly pronounced already in Hugh: Adam contemplated God immediately; the disembodied souls contemplate God (although not yet so fully as after resurrection); the contemplative experience is also described as a perception and vision of God. Even the expressions that describe these different accounts of cognition are similar: God is cognised through the “contemplative presence” (*praesentia contemplationis*); both the prelapsarian Adam and the “spiritual men” see God with the “eye of contemplation,” and both the disembodied souls and those who are in contemplation see “glory in the hiddenness of the Lord.” The concept of an immediate cognition (vision and contemplation) of the present God with a cognitive faculty dedicated to this function (and operating through inspiration or illumination) connects these states in Hugh, and its variants can be found in other Victorines too.

Hugh constructed his doctrinal positions partly by making a selection and rewriting (or altering) commonly accepted Patristic doctrines. Later Victorines repeated and varied Hugh’s doctrines, but authors outside the Victorine tradition relied more on the traditional positions – which creates a noticeable tension between Victorine and other models of anthropology (including the later Scholastic one).

The most important differences affect the Augustinian tradition. Augustine’s definition of the (divine) image and likeness in man was a trinity (or several trinities) in the soul constituted of psychological realities. Hugh included it in his works, but his own theology was defined by his own concept of image and likeness. The works of Richard, Achard and Walther entirely miss the Augustinian concept and give the Victorine one instead. Another characteristic omission is that of the doctrine of three visions (corporeal, imaginary and intellectual), common among other authors. All four authors omit it (Hugh and Richard even elaborate comparable theories instead of it). Both the omitted theories belonged to the common Augustinianism and became formative Scholastic doctrines as well. Two of Hugh’s Augustinian reinterpretations are particularly important for the Victorine model.

Augustine’s interpretation of 1Cor 13:12 defines the meaning of seeing God “through a mirror in an enigma” as seeing God’s image in the trinitarian structures of the powers of the soul (*De Trinitate* XV, 8, 14). The Scriptural passage thus (together with other explicit statements of Augustine) confirms that an immediate vision of God is basically impossible during this life; this interpretation of 1Cor 13:12 became traditional. While keeping certain elements of the Augustinian doctrine, with his alterations Hugh also subverts it in *De sacr.* I, x, 9. In the parlance of medieval theology, seeing “through a mirror” became a synonym for faith; moreover, faith and the vision (of God) were also considered as mutually exclusive. Hugh conceives faith as a sacrament valid for the present: it stands for and is used instead of the immediate, face-to-face vision of God (in this sense it is coherent with another Augustinian principle, *sacramentum est sacrae rei signum*). Based on the sign-like character of faith, Hugh goes further and turns to the literary imagery of the mirror: he equates “seeing through a mirror” not only with “seeing through faith” but also with “seeing the image” of something, as a sign representing something else. The meaning of “seeing face to face” is, in turn, not only the future eschatological contemplation but also “seeing the thing” (represented by the sign). Hugh’s interpretation removes the usual eschatological meaning of 1Cor 13:12 and gives it a simpler, “semantic” meaning too, referring to a mediated and an immediate cognition, coherent with his other theories. In his own writings, the interpretation of the passage does not acquire particular importance, since his theory about representations could be sufficiently expounded through the exegesis of Areopagitic and Eriugenian notions. The “semantic” interpretation of the *locus*, however, becomes dominant in Richard, where “seeing through a mirror” will refer merely to the cognition happening through intermediary representations. Another subverted Augustinian doctrine is that faith and a vision of God mutually exclude each other: in this life only faith is possible, an (immediate or face-to-face) vision of God impossible (cf. *Letter 147*). This doctrine is taken over by Hugh, and it is even coherent with his positions on faith: faith is a replacement of the original (prelapsarian)

contemplation; moreover, faith is also a sacrament (meaning a sign), a representation standing for the future eschatological vision. The subversive element added by Hugh is the notion of presence: while he accepts the opposition of seeing and believing, he conceives seeing as seeing something present. The presence of the object seen leads to certainty and direct knowledge (whereas absent and unseen things can be believed only). The Augustinian concept was created to be exclusive and focused on the eschatological vision, since it granted the vision of God only to the Blessed and a few unspecified exceptional cases besides Saint Paul, who was “caught up.” The Victorine concept based on the presence (or even *praesentia contemplationis*) allows many more cases for a vision of God: besides the eschatological and prelapsarian vision even the highest “degree” of faith (which also coincides with the ecstatic contemplation) is conceived as having the “presence of contemplation.” In Hugh, the transition from faith to vision (and presence) is not postponed to the afterlife and is not restricted to a few chosen ones. This connection of presence and cognition also means that the investigated Victorines do not conceive faith as proper cognition; the only exceptions to this are Richard’s (?) *Adnotatio in Ps 2* and Walther’s sermons (and Walther also makes other commitments to the non-Victorine standards of his age).

The notions of immediacy, presence and vision are connected in the Victorine model so that contemplative experience is described positively as vision: a vision of God (Hugh, Achard, Walther) or that of the Truth (Richard). This element sets Victorine and other traditions apart. Hugh’s Cistercian contemporaries Bernard of Clairvaux and William of Saint-Thierry conceived contemplative experience in a way that carefully avoided visuality and the concept of a vision of God: instead they talk about an affective union with God (which excludes vision). Scholastic theology also kept the Augustinian principles when it elaborated the concept of *raptus*, the concept reserved exclusively for the (otherwise impossible) vision of God in this life. The “mystical theology,” that immensely influential and popular concept of Thomas Gallus, was even created to comply with the same Augustinian principles: since an immediate vision (that is, a direct cognition) of God is impossible in this life, he developed the notion of an affective cognition described through metaphors of the other senses except vision. But it was not only the visual imagery applied to contemplation that separated the Victorines from other contemporary and later schools. The definition of image and likeness as a cognitive and an affective aspect of the soul led to other consequences as well. The comparison with the Cistercians demonstrated how different spiritual agendas, different rhetorics, different stylistic and literary preferences and different use of (pictorial) images resulted from the different models of theological anthropology.

2.

The study of Victorine theology, especially the study of its reception, demands a certain archaeology of concepts. The twelfth century and the early thirteenth century formed a period of large-scale transformations in Western theology. The immediate reception of the Victorine theories took place in a milieu where institutional and doctrinal changes occurred together. Doctrinal development means a struggle to articulate ideas that were never before articulated, and attempts to formulate theological intuitions, often using first an inherited and limited vocabulary. The results of these developments were often transitional: categories and terms became redefined, concepts became discarded and eradicated, and old pieces of evidence were replaced by new ones. The reception of Victorine doctrines is an example of how previously valid doctrines become unintelligible and obsolete due to conceptual changes.

Two themes demanded special attention among Victorine anthropological doctrines: the prelapsarian cognition and Paul’s rapture. Both doctrines were important in themselves. Hugh created for theology the issue of prelapsarian cognition, and his theories on it served as a fundament for the anthropological model of his school. Paul’s rapture was for Richard (but also for Achard) the paradigm for (ecstatic) contemplation: the contemplative experience was modelled on and identical with Paul’s rapture. In addition, the two issues were also interconnected: when Richard refers to

people who in contemplation enter through the “iron gate” (*Bmaj* V, xiii), he implies that the present (ecstatic) contemplation and the prelapsarian cognition of “the secrets of God” are the same.

There are even more reasons why these two issues are important for the reception history. Independently of Victorine doctrines (which did not have much direct influence outside Saint-Victor), the two issues had their own course of doctrinal development in the school theology of the later twelfth century, and then in the university theology. The overview of their developments shows what the school doctrine was at a given moment.

It must be emphasised again: Victorine doctrines (as they appeared in the works of a Hugh, a Richard or an Achard) did not have much doctrinal authority in themselves, belonging to the tradition of a monastery. It was the school theology (represented mostly by Notre-Dame) that became authoritative; it used the *Sentences* and the *Collectanea* of Peter Lombard, and the Scholastic theology of the university is the continuation of this tradition. The positions of the school theology, therefore, can show what the publicly taught and discussed authoritative Church doctrines were. Since “monastic” theology lost its influence on doctrinal development, it was the Scholastic theology (based on school theology) that defined both the authentic Church doctrine and the terminology and concepts by means of which the doctrine was explained. With the gradual elaboration and development of Scholastic doctrine the Victorine theories became less and less intelligible. The common ground gradually shrunk. Victorine concepts had no equivalents in school theology, and Scholastic terminology (based on different concepts) could not have described Victorine concepts (although there was no demand for that either).

To illustrate what these theoretical considerations refer to it is enough to juxtapose the twelfth-century Victorine and mid-thirteenth-century Scholastic doctrines on the same two subjects. The prelapsarian Adam saw God immediately (that is, contemplated him), taught Hugh; Paul’s rapture was (ecstatic) contemplation according to Richard, an immediate vision of the Truth, which used to occur to contemplatives. According to the consolidated Scholastic standards, Adam saw God not immediately but through a mirror, and Paul’s experience was not contemplation but *raptus*: he saw God *per essentiam* by a form of cognition that is impossible in this life (unless a miracle occurs) since it is contrary to human nature. The same two subjects that the Victorines considered to be similar and closely related were considered to be utterly different in the thirteenth-century Scholastic theology. The Scholastic positions outlined above were unquestioned and self-evident from the late 1240s (at the latest), but they represent only the final stage of the doctrinal development. In earlier stages the evidence was very different.

The development of the school tradition started in the 1160s. The masters teaching at Notre-Dame started the theoretical articulation of the two issues, as they met them in their textbooks, the *Sentences* and the *Collectanea* (and the *Glossa*). Contrary to the later Scholastic position) they perceived the two issues as not only extraordinary but extraordinary in the same way. The short and unelaborated remarks on these two (then rather marginal) issues reveal the difficulties in articulating earlier unknown concepts by means of the traditional terminology. The *Ps.-Peter of Poitiers Gloss* on the *Sentences* IV. dist. 1 states that Adam saw God through a “middle” vision like Paul, *quadam visione mediastina ut Paulus raptus ad tertium celum* (c. 1160-1165); Peter Comestor thinks that Adam’s condition cannot be formulated in the traditional duality of *via/patria* (*Quaestio* 331, c. 1160-1170); Peter of Poitiers states that in his sleep (*sopor*) *Adam tunc non erat in via, neque in patria* (*Sententiae* II, ix, c. 1167-1170); decades later Magister Martinus reports the same on Paul, who in his rapture was *nec viator nec civis, nec in via nec in patria* (*Summa*, c. 1195). Curiously enough, these authors, without being influenced by their Victorine contemporaries, grouped together the prelapsarian vision and Paul’s vision much in the same way as the Victorines did (although without mentioning ecstatic contemplation at all). The doctrinal solution for these two cases was the creation of a new concept, the “middle” or “intermediary” vision (*visio mediastina*). This “middle” vision (attributed to both Adam and Paul) referred to the triple subdivision of the Augustinian intellectual vision: it was “between” the “enigmatic” vision of faith (cf. 1Cor 13:12) and the comprehensive, face-to-face vision of the Blessed. This formulation was also analogous to

Hugh's' original idea (*De sacr.* I, vi, 14) taken over by the Lombard (*Sent.* II dist. 23): Adam's cognition (conceived as vision) was between that of us and that of the Blessed.

The later doctrinal development, however, separated the two cases: the prelapsarian state underwent a devaluation, while the rapture of Paul acquired more and more appreciation. By the 1230s, the *visio mediastina* (as a third, separate form of cognition) had been eradicated from the valid theological concepts through the writings of Stephen Langton, the *Summa Aurea* of William of Auxerre (1215-1220) and the *Summa* of Roland of Cremona (mid-1230s?). This doctrinal development also reconfigured the remaining concepts: to the two states (*via* and *patria*) there can belong only two forms of vision (mediated and immediate). Since Paul's case had been continuously discussed from the 1170s in various forms (in Scriptural commentaries, theological questions and *summae*), it developed into an issue by itself. After the concept of a "middle" vision was discarded (although sporadic uses of the term still occurred), Paul's vision was assimilated to the immediate (face-to-face) eschatological vision: this element of Paul's *raptus* was accepted by the late 1230s.

The Scholastic theory of *raptus* is the sole possible and authoritative interpretation of the rapture narrative of Paul – and being such, it makes the interpretations of Richard and Achard incomprehensible. In the Scholastic terminology, *raptus* as the sole form of the immediate vision of God is the opposite of *contemplatio*, the mediated vision of God. For Richard (and Achard), what the rapture described was *contemplatio*; the immediate vision of the Truth (or God), as opposed to the mediated *speculatio*. Scholastic theology silently equated human nature with the fallen nature, introduced the distinction between natural and supernatural, and denied the existence of any "natural," inborn faculty that could see God in this life. In the Scholastic theology Paul, like the Blessed, had a necessary *medium* that enhanced his cognition to make him able to see God. The Victorine concept of an inborn *intelligentia* was constructed differently: the natural condition and destination was the contemplation of God (which had already happened in Adam), and the *intelligentia* cooperating with grace was able to reach that goal. The anthropological differences between the standard Scholastic and the Victorine models are radical. The Victorine model assumes a native faculty that was part of the prelapsarian constitution of man as well (an eye of contemplation or *intelligentia*); it can work again by cooperating with grace. For the Scholastic anthropology the prelapsarian and postlapsarian states are nearly equal in this respect, since the vision of God is possible only in the eschatological state; the prelapsarian Adam, like the fallen one, was not able to see God face to face, and nor did he have a faculty for such a vision (considered to be a supernatural vision). The "supernatural" enhancement of the cognition belongs to the eschatological state only, and the *raptus* is a momentary participation in that. The Victorine and the Scholastic models differ in all aspects (involving even the role attributed to grace).

3.

Compared to the rich theological literature on *raptus*, Adam's prelapsarian cognition was an incomparably marginal theme. The very knowledge about this issue depended on whether the *Sentences* was used or not in the theological education. Until the 1240s, the question was discussed exclusively in texts explaining the *Sentences*: in glosses (c. 1160 to the early 1240s) and commentaries (from the early 1240s onward). The theological literature outside this tradition knew nothing about the issue: it was omitted from late twelfth-century question collections, but also from such works as the *Summa (theologiae)* of Praepositinus (the second half of the 1200s), the *Summa aurea* of William of Auxerre (the second half of the 1210s), the *Summa de bono* of Peter the Chancellor (the second half of the 1220s). It appeared first in the *Summa Halensis* (c. 1245) and, rather sporadically, in the *Summae* of Thomas Aquinas and Albert the Great, and the *Quaestio 18 de veritate* of Aquinas. Unlike the theories on *raptus*, the doctrinal development on the prelapsarian cognition was based on the exegesis of a given master text – which happened to be, practically, a mid-twelfth century book of sentences. This also meant a hermeneutical task for the readers: namely, they had to accommodate the (assumed) meaning of the invariable text of two passages

(*Sent.* II dist. 23 and IV dist. 1) to the valid theological doctrines of the day. The interpretation of *Sent.* II dist. 23 was less difficult; the explanation of *Sent.* IV dist. 1 demanded serious efforts over the decades. Due to Peter Lombard's compilatory skills, at this point of the *Sentences* there remained a hint at the original Victorine concept of immediateness: the prelapsarian Adam, writes Peter, *sine medio Deum videbat*. The chronological overview of the interpretation of the term *sine medio* explains a lot about how the entire Victorine model became unintelligible to the later readers.

The original meaning of *sine medio* was "immediately" and it expressed the complex Hugonian concept of immediacy of presence and vision. The concept could not be conceived or understood outside the Victorine tradition. Outside Saint-Victor the traditional Augustinian premises had their validity: practically no one dared to state that contemplation enables one to see God (directly), or that an immediate vision of God is possible in this life. Outside Saint-Victor seeing God immediately meant seeing God face to face (cf. 1Cor 13:12): the latter clearly meant the eschatological vision, and attributing it to Adam in that context was rightly regarded as an absurdity. Since an immediate vision of Adam was unthinkable, theologians started to think in a reverse way, in order to find a meaning for the term: disregarding its original adverbial meaning, they looked for a "medium" that now separates God from men but was absent in the prelapsarian condition. The solutions developed: first they identified the "medium" with the sacraments or the Bible; later on the term took the meaning of an intermediary inherent in the soul (*nubes peccati, moles corporis, defectus intellectus, ratiocinatio, medium creaturarum*). Finally, after the mid-1240s, *medium* took on the sense of cognitive medium (imported from the epistemology of the day).

The study of the sources also revealed that (unlike the case of *raptus*) the doctrinal development of the prelapsarian cognition was closed by a direct theological censure. In the first half of the 1240s, simultaneously with the first extensive commentaries on the *Sentences*, various and seemingly independent formulations of the subject emerged, and these (as the related part of the *Summa Halensis* implies) became a debated issue in Paris at some point in the first half of the 1240s. There are four first datable commentaries on the *Sentences* written by Richard Fishacre OP (c. 1241-1245), Odo Rigaldi OFM (c. 1242-1245), Albert the Great OP (c. 1246) and Richard Rufus OFM (*Lectura Oxoniensis*, c. 1250-1252). Practically everyone accepted that Adam's cognition of God was somehow "midway" between our cognition and the Blessed's cognition; the difference consisted in the way in which this middle state was articulated. In this respect, Albert and Odo (both working in Paris) had rather conservative positions coherent with the early thirteenth-century interpretations, but the two Oxford authors presented utterly different theories based on Augustine. Their theories were incompatible with whatever Paris theologians had developed until then: Fishacre suggested that Adam saw God directly (*sine medio* and *per speciem*) although in a less lucid way than angels or the Blessed do; Rufus, similarly, talked about Adam's intellectual vision of God that was more lucid than any that we can now possess. The two differently elaborated interpretations seem to be based on the same premise: the differences in the vision (cognition) of God in the various states (prelapsarian, present and future) are not substantial but merely differences in degree. A particularly valuable witness of the doctrinal development is the Franciscan *Summa Halensis* (its pertinent part written c. 1241-1245), which contains theological censures and defines the authoritative doctrine on the issue.

Both the definition and the censures are definitive for the Victorine model. The first gives the final theological interpretation of the issue: by extending the traditional interpretation of 1Cor 13:12, it states that even Adam saw God through a mirror (like us), although that mirror was a clean one, without the "enigma" induced by the original sin. In other words, the reinterpreted Scriptural passage becomes an ultimate argument justifying the contention that Adam did not see God face to face (unless he had a rapture as Paul had). This doctrine makes Adam vision a mediated (in the best case, also inspired) vision of God, obviously contrary to the original concept. Many signs show that this declaration had authoritative weight: Bonaventure copies it directly (with the attached censures), and no other theological interpretation of the issue is produced. Quite remarkably, Thomas Gallus (who is often regarded as a Victorine theologian) also taught that Adam saw God through a mirror (*Comm. II* and *Comm. III*, in Cant 2:9), even before the declaration (1237-1238

and 1243).

From the three rejected positions only the second and the third are relevant. The second rejects the position that God is, was and will be visible to the purified mind (*purgatis mentibus*) in all states and that between the different forms of vision is there is only a difference of degree (according to the grades of perfection and clarity). The rejected doctrine is close to what Richard Fishacre outlined previously and to what Richard Rufus, working in Oxford and certainly unaware of the decision brought in Paris, elaborated in 1250-1252. His case is thus the clearest indication of the authoritative power of the censure: during his stay in Paris he wrote another *Sentences* commentary (c. 1253 to 1255) where the section on prelapsarian cognition of God is a mere transcript from Bonaventure's commentary, and includes the censures too. The third censure addressed a position that explicitly refers to Hugh's original text (*De sacr.* I, vi, 14) and its paraphrase by the Lombard (*Sent.* II dist. 23) and is presented as their interpretations. The *Summa Halensis* gives it in the following form: "in the *patria* God will be seen immediately and fully or perfectly, on the part of the seer; in the state of misery, mediately and to a lesser extent (*diminute*); in the state of innocence in a middle way, it is immediately and to a lesser extent." This formula seems to be the closest possible rendition of Hugh's original position: it keeps the element of an immediate vision that is not identical with the eschatological one. Not a single known commentary preserved this doctrine, but the wording of the *Summa* (*alii ponunt*) suggests that it might have been a real doctrine held by someone. The two censures obliterate the concept of any immediate vision attributed to Adam (whether it be conceived as an immediate intellectual vision brighter than now, or as an immediate vision "diminished" compared to the eschatological vision). This made positively unthinkable and unintelligible the original Hugonian concept (and, as a consequence, the Victorine anthropology too): the explicit authoritative doctrine stated that Adam saw God mediately, through a mirror.

4.

The Victorine and the Scholastic anthropological models were substantially different and even contrary in crucial aspects, since they were based on radically different concepts. The central concept of the Victorine anthropology was the immediate cognition of God through an inborn cognitive faculty cooperating with grace – but the doctrinal developments of school and Scholastic theology made this concept practically unthinkable. The numerous changes (such as the eradication of a *visio mediastina*, the explicit rejection of the idea of Adam's immediate vision of God, the Scholastic interpretation of the term *sine medio*, the creation of *raptus* as an extraordinary miracle and its separation from contemplation, and so on) redefined the theological vocabulary to the point where the Victorine concepts were unintelligible. The Victorine model attributed an immediate vision of God to Adam, the contemplatives and the Blessed alike (even if not all details were elaborated), and conceived the immediate vision as not being identical with the eschatological one; the Scholastic model reserved the immediate vision to the Blessed only (and to the extraordinary case of *raptus*), and explicitly denied it to Adam and the contemplatives. The Victorine model, it must be also admitted, was a matter of the past, while the Scholastic model functioned as a valid conceptual framework, consensual, accepted and taught in the institutions of theological education.

The spiritual literature of the thirteenth century seems not to be exceptional in this respect, either. Hugh and Richard were regarded as spiritual authors too: their writings were known and quoted by the authors of thirteenth-century spiritual works. Their readers (who were trained theologians) could not be unaware of the normative Scholastic anthropology and its regulations. The present work has focused primarily on those thirteenth-century authors who wrote Latin and belonged to the so-called affective spirituality (Thomas Gallus CRSA, Anthony of Padua OFM, Bonaventure OFM, Hugh of Balma OCart and Rudolph of Biberach OFM), because they form the circle wherein Victorine spiritual works were used, quoted and interpreted. Among them, the most original was certainly Thomas Gallus, who created an anthropological model for affective spirituality, taken over by many as the authentic interpretation of the *Mystical Theology* of the

Areopagite. Thomas was fully aware of the Scholastic premises that in this life an immediate vision of God is impossible, only a mediated vision being possible through the study of the creatures (the *raptus* is not considered as a real possibility), but also that “vision” is reserved for intellectual cognition. To grant the possibility of an immediate cognition of God in this life, Thomas creates the idea of an affective-cognitive faculty (*synderesis*, *affectus*) that is superior to the intellectual faculty (which is substantially harmed due to the Fall) and can deliver an immediate, non-intellectual, non-discursive and affective “knowledge” of God. Thomas’ theory offered a perfect “mystical” addition to the valid Scholastic premises without infringing on them; thus it became an immensely popular model (accepted even in the seventeenth century). Although the anthropological premises of Thomas were utterly incompatible with the principles of twelfth-century Victorine anthropology (where an “affective” cognition through love would mean an absurd category mistake), the followers of the affective tradition utilised the Victorine spiritual works.

The utilisation meant mostly a selective quoting and reinterpretation of the texts of Hugh and Richard. The borrowed material (whether it be direct selections, quotations or doctrinal elements taken over and reformed) was used in a context where “affective” cognition (reached by an affective union with God) was considered as superior to the “intellectual” cognition. The preferences of the single authors varied. Anthony of Padua uses Richard’s spiritual writings; when he transcribes the *Benjamin major*, as Châtillon has observed, Anthony deletes Richard’s original references to *raptus* and face-to-face vision (which were incompatible with the Scholastic premises) from the context of contemplation. The writings of Saint Bonaventure (d. 1274) show a combination of the principles of Hugh, Richard and Thomas Gallus: he takes over Hugh’s theory about three eyes and makes it the basic structure of his own theological anthropology by duplicating the original triple division in a sixfold scheme (*Breviloquium* II, vi, *Itinerarium* I, 6, *In Hexaem. coll.* V. 24); Richard’s inspiration seems to be reduced to the explanation of the modes of contemplation (based on *Bmaj* V). The most comprehensive use of adapted Victorine material can be observed in the *De septem itineribus* of the Franciscan Rudolph of Biberach. Among other elements, Richard’s sixfold scheme of contemplation appears as one of several possible models of contemplation (*Iter III*); the chapter on affective cognition (*Iter IV*) demonstrates the superiority of love to cognition by doctrines from the *De IV gradibus* and from Hugh’s *In Hierarchiam* (on Seraphic love); the chapter on revelation (*Iter V*) contains Richard’s doctrines on corporeal and spiritual visions (cf. *In Apocalypsin*) redefined as sensual and intellectual revelations, to be surpassed by the supra-intellectual revelation (which is the affective union with God). The spiritual literature of the affective tradition seems to be the most influential tradition in the thirteenth century, and it happened to be the immediate successor of the twelfth-century spiritual literature – but it did not contribute at all to the understanding of the Victorine theology, even if the texts of Richard and Hugh are literally quoted. The spiritual literature of this tradition was based partly on the premises of the Scholastic theological anthropology, and partly on the notion of an affective cognition; both were inherently alien to the Victorine model of theological anthropology, and neither acquired concepts that could have made it intelligible to anyone of the period.

* * *

The Victorine anthropology and theology, in sum, was an innovative attempt at a theological system in the twelfth century. It was one among several others, but it used the traditional doctrines freely, it created a coherent and comprehensive system of thought, and it became the theology of a monastery with a school. The central element of this anthropological model was the concept of an inborn cognitive faculty that can cognise God immediately: this element connects such different issues as theories on the prelapsarian state, on contemplation, on exegesis and on the restoration of the image and likeness. To establish this system, Hugh freely used the traditional theological tradition, altering or disregarding doctrines, especially Augustinian ones, that had been standards elsewhere. While Saint-Victor flourished, the theological education was gradually restructured: first the urban schools of theology acquired growing importance (as victorious competitors against the monastic form of

theology) and later the university emerged. Regarding anthropology, this school tradition relied on the solid and traditional Augustinian doctrines and their elaborations, and finally formulated its anthropological theories (also on *raptus* and the prelapsarian cognition) in a modified but still Augustinian framework. Victorine concepts did not enter this school tradition directly, and, since they were based on different premises and were not part of the textbook, they became unintelligible and were forgotten.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Hugh of Saint-Victor, *De sacramentis*: corrected passages

- 1) *De sacramentis* I, vi, 14
- 2) *De sacramentis* I, ix, 3

Appendix 2. The reception of the transformed Adam – a dozen marginal witnesses (c. 1145-c. 1245)

1. Compiling from the *Summa sententiarum*: the *Sententiae divinitatis* and the *Sententiae Sidonis*
2. Compiling from the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard: ten witnesses

Appendix 3. Anonymous glosses on the *Sentences*

Appendix 4. Richard Fishacre, Richard Rufus and Odo Rigaldi on the prelapsarian cognition

- Richard Fishacre, *In IV Sent.* dist. 1
- Richard Rufus, *Lectura Oxoniensis*, *In II Sent.* dist. 23
- Odo Rigaldi OFM, *In II Sent.* dist. 23
 - Textus B, transcript from B 273rbvb
 - Textus A, collated text, P fol. 154va, V fol. 110ra

Appendix 1. Hugh of Saint-Victor, *De sacramentis*: corrected passages

The text of Hugh's *De sacramentis* is accessible in two editions: the nineteenth-century, non-critical text of Migne's *Patrologia Latina* edition (PL 176: 173-618, first printed 1854) and in the recent (half-)critical edition of Rainer Berndt, *Hugonis de Sancto Victore De sacramentis Christianae fidei* (Munster: Aschendorff, 2008). While the *Patrologia* edition goes back to previous printed editions, Berndt's text is based on two early codices only, BNF lat. 14509 (c. 1150) and Paris IRHT collections privées 60 (c. 1140). In order to get beyond the printed text, I collated the *Patrologia* text with a number of twelfth- and thirteenth-century manuscripts for the most important passages of *De sacramentis* I, vi, 14 (*De cognitione creatoris*) and I, ix, 3 (*Quare instituta sint sacramenta*). The following manuscripts were used (dating from Goy's *census*):

Vatican, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana

Vat. lat. 677

Vat. lat. 678

Vat. lat. 7590

Vat. lat. 9408

Vat. Barb. lat 508 (abbreviated as Barb)

Vat. Pal. lat. 318 (abbreviated as Pal)

Vat. Ross. lat. 464 (abbreviated as Ross)

London, British Library, Harleian collection (abbreviated as H)

Harl. 1897 (XIII / XIV?)

Harl. 3094

Harl. 3108 (XIII?)

Harl. 3847 (XII / XIII?)

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Latin Mss. (abbreviated as BNF)

BNF lat. 14508 (Victorine)

BNF lat. 15314 (Sorbonne)

BNF lat. 15694 (late XII, Sorbonne)

BNF lat. 15696 (XIII, Sorbonne)

1) *De sacramentis* I, vi, 14

Collated texts: PL 176: 271CD and 15 Mss: V677 fol. 27rab / V678 fol. 42vab / V9408 fol. 129vb-130ra / V7590 fol. 8?vab / Barb fol. 29rab / Pal fol. 100v-101r / Ross fol. LXXIIrb-va / H3847 fol. 35rv / H3094 fol. 30rab / H1897 fol. 68rv / H3108 fol. 129ra / BNF14508 fol. 39vab / BNF 15696 fol. 36rb-va / BNF 15694 fol. 22rb / BNF 15314 fol. 30ra. Sentence numbers were inserted into the text to make reference easier.

1. Cognitionem vero creatoris sui primum hominem habuisse dubium non est: quoniam si pro vita temporali conservanda in rebus transitoriis tam magnam scientiam accepit, multo magis pro vita aeterna adipiscenda excellentiorem et habundantiorem in celestibus cognitionem habere debuit.

2. Cognovit ergo homo creatorem suum non ea cognitione que foris ex auditu solo percipitur, sed ea potius que intus per aspirationem ministratur. Non ea qua Deus modo a credentibus absens fide queritur; sed ea qua tunc per praesentiam contemplationis scienti manifestus [PL: manifestius] cernebatur.

3. Sciendum tamen est quod **primam illam cognitionem hominis** quam de creatore suo habuit, sicut **maio rem et certio rem** illa cognitione quae nunc in sola fide constat veraciter [0271D] dicimus: ita etiam illa que postmodum in excellentia contemplationis divine manifeste revelabitur, **minore m** necesse est, confiteamur.
4. Cognovit ergo creatorem suum homo non tamen ita excellenter sicut postea cognoscere debuisset si perstitisset.
5. Sicut enim inobedientia hominis per subsequentem ignorantiam primae cognitioni multum abstulit: sic eidem cognitioni si in obedientia [PL: inobedientia] homo perstitisset per subsequentem revelationem plurimum addendum fuit.
6. Modum vero divine cognitionis quam primus ille homo habuisse creditur explicare difficile est, excepto eo quod diximus quia per internam aspirationem **visibiliter** edoctus, nullatenus de ipso creatore suo dubitare potuit.

1. Cognitionem vero] vero om. V678 • adipiscenda] V9408: adhipiscenda
2. ex auditu] V9408: auditu • ea potius que] H3847, H3094, PL: ea quae p. • per aspirationem] H1897, PL: per inspirationem • ministratur] V9408: amministratur / Barb: operatur ministratur • Non ea qua] Non ea quidem qua: H3094, H3108, PL • manifestus] PL, Barb: manifestius
3. primam illam cognitionem hominis] p i c h: Pal / i p c h: PL, V9408, V678, ross, V7590 / i p h c: V677, ross • sicut maiorem et certio rem illa] ross: s c et m i / BNF15696: s maiorem illa • illa cognitione – ita etiam illa: Pal, V678, Barb, V9408, V7590; ita etiam illam: V677, ross • etiam illa... minore m necesse est] Ross: etiam illam... maiorem necesse est.
6. Modum vero] modum ergo V9408, Barb • divine cognitionis] PL: cognitionis divinae • quam primus ille homo] V9408: q i p h / H3847, H3094, H1897: q p illae h / PL: q illae p h / H3108: q primus h • diximus quia] PL: diximus quod • aspirationem] Barb, H1897, PL: inspirationem • visibiliter] invisibiliter: Pal, H1897, BNF15696, BNF15694 • edoctus nullatenus] H3094: n e

The collation leads to the following conclusions:

- instead of *inspiratio* of the PL, a clear majority reading is *aspiratio*;
- majority reads, with PL, *visibiliter edoctus*, instead of *invisibiliter*;
- majority reads *manifestus cernebatur*, against the *manifestius* of PL.

The majority reading, thus, confirms that Hugh conceived Adam's prelapsarian cognition as a direct and unblocked vision of God. This vision was "manifest" (*manifestus*), in an absolute sense, not "more manifest" (*manifestius*), in a comparative sense. Thirteenth-century *Sentences* commentaries usually quote this sentence with the *manifestius* form. *Visibiliter edoctus* confirms the visual imagery

2) *De sacramentis I, ix, 3*

The chapter tangentially discusses the Fall, in the context of the establishment of sacraments. Two points of the text demand attention here: the notion of the *medium* separating God and the human mind, and the proper attitude towards "human things" ("excitatus" or "exercitatus"?).

a)

Collated texts: PL 176: 319C. Mss: V7590 fol. 74ra / V677 fol. 43rb / V678 fol. 63ra / V9408 fol. 49v / Barb fol. 42vab / Pal 318 fol. 160v / Ross fol. CVIIIvb / H3847 fol. 51r / H3094 fol. 40rv / H1897 fol. 100rb / H3108 fol. 145 / BNF4508 fol. 48v / BNF15696 fol. 52vb-53ra / BNF15694 fol. 32vb- 33ra / BNF15314 fol. 45ra.

Iusta igitur recompensatione qui suo superiori per obedientiam subiectus esse noluit: per concupiscentiam suo se inferiori subiecit, ut jam ipsum inter se et deum medium inveniatur divisionis, non mediatorem reconciliationis.

Hoc enim medio dividente humana mens et obnubilatur ne creatorem suum agnoscere valeat: et refrigescit ne ipsum per dilectionem requirat.

Iusta igitur recompensatione] Pal: Iuxta i recompensationem • suo superiori] V678: superiori suo • subiectus] H3094: subditus • suo se inferiori] Ross: suo i. / Barb: suo i. se • subjecit] V7590: subiescit • inter se et deum] PL: inter se deum • medium divisionis] H3094: medium damnationis / Barb: medium desertionis

The manuscripts unanimously give the form *inter se et Deum medium invenit*, against the PL text *inter se Deum*. The reading of the manuscripts suggests that here the printed text is faulty (missing a word), and also confirms that here *medium* means something separating. A remarkable element is the afterlife of the term *medium divisionis*, appearing as *medium damnationis* and *medium desertionis*.

b)

Collated texts: PL 176: 320; Mss: V677 43va / V678 fol 63rb / V9408 fol. 50rb / V7590 74vb / Bar fol. 42vab / Ross fol. CVIIIrab / Pal fol. 161v / H3847 fol. 51r / H3094 fol. 41r / H1897 fol. 100v / H3108 fol. 145.

Propter eruditionem quoque instituta sunt sacramenta, ut per id quod foris in [320B] sacramento in specie visibili cernitur, ad invisibilem virtutem quae intus in re sacramenti constat agnoscendam mens humana erudiatur. Homo enim qui visibilia noverat, invisibilia non noverat; divina agnoscere nullatenus posset nisi humanis **excitatus**.

in re] iure Pal, Bar • divina agnoscere nullatenus posset] Bar: d n c p • excitatus] H3094 ex{er}citatus (correction by the scribe)

While in the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard (IV dist. 1), the manuscripts give two readings, *homo [...]* *adeo hebuit, ut nequaquam divina queat capere, nisi humanis excitatus* and *exercitatus*, the source, Hugh's text, gives unanimously *excitatus* – meaning that to the cognition of the divine things one must leave the human ones.

Appendix 2. The reception of the Odonian-Lombardian Adam: a dozen marginal witnesses (c. 1145-c. 1245)

Both the *Summa sententiarum* of Odo (1138-1141) and the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard took over elements from Hugh's elaboration on the prelapsarian cognition. Peter Lombard's work enjoyed a well-known, spectacular success. Already in the twelfth century, its text was subjected to interpretative processes: it was glossed (the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss*, its descendents and the *Langton Gloss*) but also served as subject material for theological *quaestiones*.

There also existed lower (and less investigated) levels of reception. Both the *Summa sententiarum* and Peter's *Sententiarum libri* were used as reference books. Contemporary theologians scanned their text for acceptable or fitting doctrines and transcribed passages into their own books of sentences (as once Odo and Peter did) that were perhaps intended only for their students. Another form of reception, typical to the second half of the twelfth century and to Peter's *Sentences*, is the abbreviation: Theologians, without claiming originality, produced their own, "shortened," selective versions of Peter's *Sentences* by keeping what they found important. Such an attitude towards the text of the *Sentences* reflects its growing importance as a useful textbook but not yet a "canonised" classroom reading (the *entire* text of the Lombard's book will be demanded only later, in the course of the university education of theologians).

The works in question do not add much of originality to the history of the reception. In the context of the institution of the sacraments, they copy or paraphrase Odo's and Peter's words. All agree that three reasons made necessary the sacraments, and only the sequence of the reasons varies (*humiliatio – eruditio – exercitatio* for those who follow Hugh and Peter Lombard, *eruditio – humilitas – exercitatio* for followers of the *Summa sententiarum*). Some also include a half-sentence-long reference to the prelapsarian cognition – even if such a reference to the prelapsarian condition in the proper context of sacraments might have been seen as inappropriate. These works still offer some circumstantial evidence on the reception of the doctrine. The transcription of the reference may show not only the acceptance of Peter Lombard's authority: but also the fact that, for a period, compiler-authors were not baffled by attributing to Adam an immediate vision of God. The datable sources show that until the second half of the 1160s the reference was transcribed from Peter's *Sentences*, while later on it was left out.

It may be a coincidence that roughly at the same time emerges the concept of *visio mediastina*: both in the first commentary on the *Sentences* – that is, in the *Ps.-Poitiers Gloss* (c. 1160-1165) – and in the theological works of Peter of Poitiers and Peter Comestor.

1. Compiling from the *Summa sententiarum*: the *Sententiae divinitatis* and the *Sententiae Sidonis*

The *Sententiae divinitatis* is a Porretan sentence collection, written c. 1145-1150.¹⁰²⁷ Its *tractatus V de sacramentis* gives the three reasons for the institution of sacraments, known from Odo, but it does not mention the prelapsarian vision of God (which was connected to the *sine medio* idea). At the same time, curiously, it does introduce the notion of *medium* in a different form, calling the sacraments *media bona ecclesiastica*, mediating goods of the Church:

¹⁰²⁷ B. Geyer. *Sententiae divinitatis. Die Sententiae Divinitatis, ein Sentenzenbuch des Gilbertschen Schule. Fotomechanischer Nachdruck der 1909 erschienen Ausgabe mit Textverbesserungen und einem ergänzenden Nachtrag des Verfassers* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1967), here page page 107*. (BGPTM 7 Heft 2-3)

“Et notandum, quia tribus de causis instituta sunt sacramenta, propter eruditionem, humilitatem, exercitationem. Homo enim de gloria et immortalitate lapsus pro peccato in miseriam et mortalitatem in tantam quidem stultitiam devenit, ut pro Deo ligna et lapides coleret. Verum ut ad illam dignitatem et gloriam, ad quam conditus fuerat, restitueretur, data sunt ista media bona ecclesiastica, scilicet sacramenta. In his enim docemur de fide et spe et caritate, per quae humana natura reparatur et incessanter eruditur.”

The *Sententiae Sidonis* is a large, anonymous sentence compilation covering topics of theology and canon law.¹⁰²⁸ Divided into 18 parts, it follows the structure typical to early twelfth-century sentence collections. The collection is preserved in one single known copy, Ms Vat. lat. 1345 (the title *Sententiae Sidonis* was given by Van den Eynde). Concerning the institution of the sacraments, its text follows the *Summa sententiarum* and speaks of a vision *sine medio*:

“Quapropter cum de peccato tam originali quam et actuali tractatum sit, de sacramentis que ad eorum sunt inventa remedia deinceps oportet peragere. Que quidem tribus de causis esse instituta creduntur. Propter eruditionem videlicet ac humiliationem necnon et exercitationem. Propter eruditionem ideo sunt inventa, quia [fol. 74r] cum homo ante peccatum habuit veritatis cognitionem, et tunc *sine medio deum videre posset*, per superbiam excaecatus est, et ut ad agnitionem redire valeat, necessaria sunt hec visibilia, quatenus mens per ipsa erudiatur ad intelligenda invisibilia.”¹⁰²⁹

2. Compiling from the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard: ten witnesses

The following series of testimonies based on the *Sentences* of the Lombard shows an emergence of Peter's book as the primary source of theological knowledge. It also shows a quick success, since Peter's *Sentences* was finalised c. 1156 and the author died in 1160. Curiously enough, those datable witnesses which give references to Adam were written before the middle of the 1160s, and those that omit it, after that time. I give the testimonies in a chronological order as possible, with explanations where needed; the numbers set in brackets [1-3] mark the three Lombardian arguments in the text.

Ysagoge in theologiam (1135-1139 or 1148-1152)

The *Ysagoge in theologiam* is a systematic introduction to theological studies in three books. Its author, an otherwise unknown Odo, utilised with originality the works of Hugh of Saint-Victor and Abelard. The dating of the *Ysagoge* is debated: according to Evans, it was written between 1135 and 1139, according to Landgraf between 1148 and 1152.¹⁰³⁰ Despite its remarkable originality, it was

¹⁰²⁸ This manuscript acquired some notoriety through Landgraf, “Die Summa Sententiarum und die Summe des Cod. Vat. lat. 1345,” RTAM 11 (1939): 260-269. Landgraf pointed out two characteristics of the collection – the preface to part 11 in Ms Vat. lat. 1345 is to a great extent identical with the preface of the *Summa sententiarum*, and that when the manuscript presents the same Patristic references as the *Summa sententiarum*, it gives a fuller quotation and a more precise reference – and concluded that the Vatican manuscript could be the source of the *Summa sententiarum*. Later Damian Van den Eynde refuted this thesis by demonstrating that Ms Vat. lat. 1345 borrowed material from the four first treatises of the *Summa sententiarum* (see his “La ‘Summa Sententiarum’ source des ‘Sententie Sidonis’ Vat. lat. 1345,” RTAM 27 (1960): 136-141). The sources of this sentence collection are the *Summa sententiarum*, the *Panormia* of Ivo of Chartres and Walter of Mortagne's *De sacramento conjugii*.

¹⁰²⁹ *Sententie Sidonis*, pars VIII. Ms Vat. lat. 1345 fol. 73v-74r.

¹⁰³⁰ Edition by Arthur Landgraf, in *Écrits théologiques de l'école d'Abélard. Textes inédits*, 63-285 (Louvain: Spicilegium sacrum lovaniense, 1934); for dating, see pages LIII-LIV; see also Michael Evans, “The Ysagoge in

not a popular work, surviving only in one full manuscript. The *Ysagoge* gives a cautious circumscription, speaking, instead of an immediate *vision* of God, about an immediate *cognition*:

Tres autem sunt institutionis sacramentorum cause, scilicet humilitas, eruditio, exercitatio.... Erudicio quoque huius institutionis causa fuit. Ante peccatum enim tantam veritatis agnitionem habuit homo, quod absque medio Deus illi innotescebat. Deinde per superbiam excaecatus, ut ad cognitionem rediret, necesse habuit per hec visibilia ad invisibilia intelligenda erudiri.¹⁰³¹

Sententie Udonis (c. 1160-1165)

The *Sententie Udonis* is an extract of the *Sentences* with some additional material: it keeps the Lombardian sentence.

Triplici autem ex causa instituta sunt sacramenta: propter humiliationem, et eruditionem vel ex [sic] exercitationem. [1] Propter humiliationem quidem ut dum homo insensibilibus rebus quae natura infra ipsum sunt, ex praecepto creatoris se reverendo subiecit. Ex hac humilitate et obedientia Deo magis placeat, et apud eum mereatur, cuius [fol. 3rb] imperio salutem querit, in inferioribus se: etsi non ab illis, sed per illa a Deo. [2] Propter eruditionem etiam instituta sunt, ut per id quod foris in specie visibili cernitur, ad invisibilem virtutem que intus est, agnoscenda mens erudiatur. Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio Deum videbat, per peccatum adeo hebit, ut nequeat divina capere, nisi humanis exercitatus. [3] Propter exercitationem similiter instituta sunt, quia cum homo ociosus esse non possit, proponitur ei utilis et salubris exercitatio in sacramentis, qua vanam et noxiam declinet occupationem. (Ms Vat. Pal. lat. 328 fol. 3ra-rb)

An anonymous abbreviation of Peter Lombard's *Sentences* I found in Ms Vat. Pal. lat. 325 also keeps the doctrine.¹⁰³²

Triplici autem ex causa sacramenta instituta sunt: propter humilitatem, eruditionem et exercitationem. [1] Propter humilitatem quidem ut dum homo insensibilibus rebus que natura infra ipsum sunt, ex praecepto Creatoris se reverendo subiecit, ex hac humilitate et obedientia deo magis placeat et apud eum mereatur; cuius imperio salutem querit in inferioribus se, etsi non ab illis, sed per illa a Deo. [2] Propter eruditionem item instituta sunt, <del. quod cum homo> ut per quod foris in specie visibili cernitur, ad invisibilem virtutem que intro est agnoscendam mens <del. mens> erudiatur. Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio deum videbat, propter peccatum adeo ebuit, ut nequeat divina capere, nisi humanis exercitatus. [3] Propter exercitationem etiam instituta sunt, quia cum homo otiosus esse non possit, proponitur ei utilis et salubris exercitatio in sacramentis, qua vanam et noxiam declinet occupationem. (Ms Vat. Pal. lat. 325, fol. 92r)

From the second half of the 1160s the reference to Adam disappears from works copying and extracting the *Sentences* – both from abbreviations and theological works recycling Peter's text. This can be observe in the following works:

theologiam and the Commentaries Attributed to Bernard Silvestris," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 54 (1991): 1-42, here pages 1-2.

¹⁰³¹ *Ysagoge in theologiam*, Liber II, De sacramentorum causis, ed. Landgraf, 178.

¹⁰³² Inc. "Nove legis continentiam diligenti i<nda>gatione etiam atque vel considerantibus nobis," almost identical with the incipit of the *Sentences*. This abbreviation seems to be unknown to the literature.

- 1) Peter Comestor, *De sacramentis* (1165-1170), a treatise on the sacraments
- 2) Peter of Poitiers, *Sententiarum libri V* (c. 1167-1170), a book of sentences reorganising the material of the Lombard's similar work
- 3) Magister Bandinus, *Sententiarum libri IV* (c. 1170), an abbreviation of the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard
- 4) Gandulphus of Bologna, *Sententiarum libri IV* (1175-1180), a book of sentences relying also on the Lombard's work
- 5) William of Auxerre, *Summa aurea* (1215-1220), an early *Summa* largely following the structure of the *Sentences*
- 6) *Filia magistri* (1232-1245), an abbreviation of the *Sentences* usually attributed to Hugh of Saint-Cher OP
- 7) *Breviarium sententiarum magistri Petri Lombardi*, a previously unknown abbreviation of the *Sentences* I found preserved in Ms London BL Royal 7 F XIII.

1. Peter Comestor, [*Sententie*] *De sacramentis* (1165-1170)

Tribus de causis instituta sunt sacramenta. [1] Primo propter humiliationem ut homo scilicet peccator hac humilitate et obedientia Deo magis placeret [2] Secundo propter eruditionem, ut homo scilicet per ea que foris in specie visibili cernuntur, ad invisibilem divinam virtutem agnoscendam que intus est erudiretur. [3] Tertio, scilicet, ut homo qui otiosus esse non poterat sacrificiorum exercitatione occupatus ab illicitis declinaret. Non enim facile capitur a tentatore, qui bono vacat exercitio.¹⁰³³

2. Peter of Poitiers, *Sententie* V, ii. Quae sit causa institutionis (c. 1167-1170)

Est autem triplex causa inventionis sacramentorum, humiliatio, eruditio, exercitatio. Et exercitationum alia est ad eruditionem animae, alia ad aedificationem corporis, alia ad subversionem utriusque. Quae omnia non pigritaremur dilucidiora facere, nisi scripta scribere otiosi et nihil agentis opus aestimaremus. Haec autem omnia in libro *Sententiarum* magistri Petri plenius sunt determinata; hic tamen oportuit memorare, ut ad sequentia facilius fieret transitus. (PL 211: 1229B)

3. Magister Bandinus, *Sententiarum libri IV*, IV dist. 1 (c. 1170)

Quae triplici ex causa instituta sunt, ut scilicet humiliemur, erudiamur, exerceamur. [1] Homo enim qui maiorem se contempsit, placet Deo, dum visibilibus rebus, et se inferioribus reverenter ex praecepto Creatoris humiliatur, [2] quando etiam per id quod in specie visibili cernitur, ad invisibilem virtutem cognoscendam mens eruditur. [3] Per haec etiam sacramenta noxiam occupationem vitat, et utiliter exercetur qui otiosus esse non posset. (PL 192: 1091A)

4. Gandulphus of Bologna, *Sententiarum libri IV*, IV, 4 (1175-1180)

4. Triplici autem ex causa instituta sunt sacramenta: propter humiliationem, eruditionem, exercitationem. [1] Propter humiliationem, ut dum homo insensibilibus se inferioribus subicitur, Deo ex oboedientia magis placeat, et inde exaltetur. [2] Propter eruditionem, ut cum illud, quod foris est, specie visibili cernitur, ad cognoscendam invisibilem virtutem quae intus est, mens erudiatur. [3] Propter exercitationem similiter sunt instituta, quia, cum

¹⁰³³ Edited as "Appendix" to *Maitre Simon et son groupe. De sacramentis. Textes inédits. Appendice Raymund M. Martin*, ed. Henri Weisweiler (Louvain: Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense, 1937), here page *9.

homo otiosus esse non possit, proponitur ei utilis et salubris exercitatio in sacramentis, qua vanam et noxiam declinet occupationem.¹⁰³⁴

5. William of Auxerre, *Summa aurea* IV tractatus I, ii (1215-1220)

Causa autem institutionis sacramentorum in generali triplex est. [1] Prima est, quia dicit Augustinus: “meliores iudicavit Deus servos suos, si ei liberaliter deservirent”; et propter hoc dedit eis Deus liberum arbitrium. Dedit etiam eis remedia contra peccatum, ut, si contingeret peccare, possent redire per illa remedia: hec autem sunt scarmenta. Hoc ergo una causa institutionis sacramentorum, scilicet iustificatio a peccatis. [2] Secunda causa est, ut homo assuesceret se humiliare visibilibus, qui nesciebat se humiliare invisibilibus, ut, cum ipse humiliat se creature inferiori querendo salutem suam in ea ut in agno paschali et in aqua baptismi, magis humiliet se creatori, qui est dator illius salutis. [3] Tercia causa est, ut homo per signa visibilia expressa perveniat ad cognitionem invisibilium.¹⁰³⁵

6. *Filia magistri* (1232-1245)

Triplici autem ex causa instituta sunt sacramenta, [1] propter humiliacionem, prima causa, qua homo ex imperio dei salutem in inferioribus se querit. [2] Propter eruditionem, secunda causa, quoniam per id quod foris in specie visibili cernitur ad invisibilem virtutem que intus est agnoscendam, mens erudiatur. [3] Propter exercitationem, tertia, qua noxiam declinet occupationem. (Ms Vat. lat. 2647 fol. YYY rb)

7. *Breviarium sententiarum magistri Petri Lombardi* (Ms London BL Royal 7 F XIII)¹⁰³⁶

Causa vero institutionis sacramentorum est tripartita, humiliatio, eruditio, exercitatio. [...] Eruditio ut per visibilem speciem ad invisibilem virtutem que interius est cognoscendam mens erudiatur. (Ms London BL Royal 7 F XIII fol. 146ra)

Appendix 3. Anonymous glosses on the *Sentences*

Dating short anonymous glosses without any reference is almost impossible. The following glosses on *Sentences* IV dist. 1 may attest the thirteenth-century tendency, as *nubes peccati* becomes the most usual interpretation of *medium*.

Lombardus, Ms Vat. Pal. lat. 333	fol. 104va
Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio Deum videbat	sine nube peccati
Lombardus, Ms Vat. lat. 14345 (xiii)	fol. 109ra, marginal
Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio Deum videbat	scilicet peccati quia nunc per speculum et in enigmate videmus etc.

¹⁰³⁴ *Magistri Gandulphi Bononiensis Sententiarum libri quatuor*. Ed. Johannes von Walter (Vienna and Breslau: Aemilius Haim et socii, 1924), page 358.

¹⁰³⁵ *Magistri Guillelmi Altissiodorensis Summa aurea. Liber quartus*. Ed. Jean Ribailier (Paris: Éditions du CNRS and Grottaferrata – Rome: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1985), page 13.

¹⁰³⁶ The text covers Ms London BL Royal 7 F XIII fol. 129-156, Inc. Hic incipit breviarium sententiarum magistri Petri Lombardi. In *Scriptura sacra non solum voces sed et res*. The abbreviation seems to be unnoticed by the literature. On *Sent.* II dist. 23 it gives the following (fol. 139ra): “Creatorem suum cognoscebat interiori aspiratione qua eius contemplabatur presentiam non tamen ita excellenter sicut s<anct>i visuri, nec inigmate [sic] sicut in hac vita.”

Lombardus, Ms Royal 9 B VI (c. 1300)	fol. 191rb, interlinear
Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio Deum videbat*	*id est sine nube peccati interposita vel <u>sine medio</u> id est sacramento qualia nunc instituta fa<c>ta.

The following gloss gives a rather peculiar treatment of the text: the gloss “overwrites” the text by stating that Adam *did not* see God *sine medio*.

Lombardus, Ms Royal 9 B VII (xiii)	fol. 130ra
Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio Deum videbat	non ante peccatum sine medio deum vidit

The next gloss follows the logic of the *quaestio* and the (extended) Augustinian ideas: *medium enigmatis*, *speculum creaturae*. *Medium abumbrans* and *ammiculans* are typical for the terminological development of the 1240s-1250s when the abstract meaning of *medium* was elaborated.

Lombardus, Ms BL Add. 10960 (xiii)	fol. 298va
Homo enim qui ante peccatum sine medio Deum videbat	¶ Sine medio deum videbat. Set con<tr>a visio sine medio est ipsorum [<i>read ipsorum</i>] beatorum ergo in statu ante peccatum erant beati. ¶ ad quod ho<mo> ante peccatum deum vidit sine medio enigmatis quod ex peccato contractum est set non sine medio speculi creature, vel dicitur quod homo ante peccatum vidit deum sine medio obumbrante, non sine medio ammiculante.

Appendix 4. Richard Fishacre, Richard Rufus and Odo Rigaldi on the prelapsarian cognition

Richard Fishacre, *In IV Sent. dist. 1*

Transcribed by Csaba Németh, from Ms Vat. Ottoboni lat. 294. fol. 203ra.

Sine medio deum videbat. Contra Exo. 33 *non videbit me homo et vivet.* Io. 1. *deum nemo vidit umquam.* Tim. 6 *habitat lucem inaccessibilem quem vidit nullus hominum nec videre potest.*

¶ Q^{uesti}o, dicunt ‘sine medio,’ id est ‘non interposita nube peccati,’ vel ‘sine sacramento,’ tamen non per speciem set per creaturam.

¶ Set certe non audet ita audacter h^{oc} Augustinus asserere, immo po^{ci}us ad hoc videtur inclinari quod viderit deum sine medio et per speciem, set minus limpide quam angeli, vel quam visurus est post glorificationem, sicut et contempla^{tiv}i n^{ost}ri. Unde dicit l^{ibro} .3. super Ge^{nesim} ad litteram versus finem loquens de anima Ade, quia ipsa rationalis creatura est, et ipsa eadem cognitione, scilicet qua angeli, perfecta est et in^{fr}a. Homo ‘in ipsa agnitione creatus est antequam delicto veterasceret. Unde rursus in eadem agnitione renovaretur.’

¶ Verumtamen l^{ibro} .8. in fine dubitat an preceptum de non comedendo pomo datum sit homini mediante creatura. An viderit in ipso verbo dei voluntatem, similiter l^{ibro} .XI. versus fine, sic enim dicit: ‘fortassis intrinsecus illis loquebatur sicut cum angelis loquitur ipsa incommutabili veritate illustrans mentes eorum et si non tanta participatione sapientie quantam capiant angeli, tamen pro humano modulo quantumlibet minus set in ipso genere visionis et locutionis in illo qui sit per creaturam sive sicut in extasi sine sensibus corporis.’

¶ Quod si hoc tenetur, scilicet quod sine medio vidit deum: auctoritates superius positas intellige secundum statum vie: inquantum enim deum quis videt super homines est.

¶ Ad hoc etiam fat^{endum} quod dicit l^{ibro} .XI. quod sp^{irit}uali mente peditus erat, non corpore.

Richard Rufus, *Lectura Oxoniensis, In II Sent. dist. 23*

Transcribed by Barbara Faes de Mottoni, from Ms Oxford Balliol 62 fol. 158rb. Published: “La conoscenza di Dio di Adamo innocente nell’ *In II Sententiarum* d. 23, a. 2, q. 3 di Bonaventura,” *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* 91, no. 1-2 (1998): 3-32, here pages 15-16.

Respondetur hic quod in visione intellectuali sunt gradus quedam limpidior^a, quedam minus limpidia et anima cum nata sit omnia cognoscere non impeditur ab hoc nisi per culpam aut per corporis administrationem; ergo ante peccatum sola administratio corporis animalis fuit causa qua re homo minus videret deum. Quia enim corpus erat animale indigebat alimonia et per consequens oportuit animam uti operibus vegetative, que sunt augere, nutrire, generare, et similiter operibus sensitive utendo sensibus. Quanto autem amplius administrationi corporis intenditur, tanto minus utitur anima visione intellectuali; ut enim utamur hac visione, necesse est sensibilia transcendere et subtrahere se ab administratione tali. In celo ubi erit corpus spirituale, non erit necesse sic administrare corpori et ideo tunc per corpus in nullo impiedetur anima. Nunc vero fere totaliter anima in tali administratione occupatur, et ideo aut nulla aut modica est in nobis visio intellectualis. Anima enim sic intenta corporis animalis administrationi in primo homine vidit quasi a longe deum visione intellectuali, sed rationes causales in mente divina discernere non potuit. Sicut est de visione

corporali quod aliquid visum a remotis videtur <?> quidem, sed subtiles partium differentie non discernuntur nisi proprius accedatur. Cognitio ergo perfecta dei per visionem intellectualem que est omnino adherentium deo, hec est vita eterna, Cor 6: Qui adheret deo unus spiritus est; hec ergo visio que est per indistantiam est vita eterna, et talem non habuit Adam ante peccatum, sed a longe quasi et per distantiam.”

Odo Rigaldi OFM, *In II Sent. dist. 23*

The commentary (called also *Lectura* or *Quaestiones* or *Commentatorium super II Sententiarum*) is dated as of 1243-1244 or c. 1242-1245. The disjunctive differences broke the three manuscripts I saw into two recensions, noted here as Textus A and B. Textus A is preserved in Ms BNF lat. 14910 (manuscript P), fol. 154vab, and Ms Vat. lat. 5982 (manuscript V), fol. 110rab; Textus B by Ms Bruges, Bibliothèque de la ville 208 (manuscript B), fol. 273rbvb (*sigla* given by me). The manuscripts do not divide the text into *quaestio* structure; for the sake of convenience, I introduced the usual abbreviations into the collation, and kept the original paragraph marks. For the Textus A, P was used as the base text; the different readings of V are given in notes. Note the difference of Textus A and B in ad3, A giving a more complete sense; another disjunctive difference is the sentence *Hic enim non videtur deus a creatura*, ending with *in semet ipsa* (B, referring to the creatures) and *neque in semetipso* (A, referring to God).

Textus A, based on P	Textus B
¶Secundo queritur quo ad cognoscibile et posset primo queri in comparatione ad se, utrum potuit esse prescius sui casus; set hoc supra excussum est de angelo dist<inctione> .IIIa.	¶Secundo queritur quo ad cognoscibile et posset primo queri in comparatione ad se, utrum potuerit esse prescencia sui casus. Sed hoc discussum est supra de angelo, distinctio .III.
¶Queritur autem de cognitione eius in comparatione ad deum. Et queritur cuius cognitionem habuit aut vie aut patrie.	Aut queritur de cognitione eius in comparatione ad deum. ¶Et queritur cuius cognitionem habuit, aut vie aut patrie.
[arg1] Patrie non quia tunc fuisset beatus et ¹⁰³⁷ nunquam cadere potuisset. Si vie, aut ergo cognitione fidei aut cognitione que est mediantibus creaturis.	¶Patrie non quia tunc fuisset beatus et iam nunquam cadere potuisset; si vie aut <habuit> ergo cognitionem fidei, aut cognitionem que est mediantibus creaturis.
[arg2] Fide non, quia fidem et alias virtutes non statim habuit cum creatus est set post. Preterea fides ex auditu.	Fidei non, quia Adam et alias virtutes non statim habuit cum creatus est sed post. ¶Preterea fides ex auditu.
[arg3] Similiter neque cognitionem que est mediantibus creaturis. Cum enim homo sit medius inter creatorem et creaturas, videtur ergo ordo retrogradus quod a creaturis perveniat ad creatorem, cum ipse sit mediator et maxime q<uando> natura erat condita et non lapsa; et sic erat superior quam alia creatura.	Item nec cognitionem que est mediantibus creaturis, cum homo non sit medius inter creatorem et creaturas. Videtur ergo ordo retrogradus quod a creaturis perveniat ad creatorem cum ipse sit immediacior, et maxime quando erat natura condita et non lapsa; et sic erat superior omni alia creatura.

¹⁰³⁷ et] et ita V.

<p>[arg4] ¶Item Hugo: ‘COGNOVIT HOMO CREATOREM SUUM NON EA COGNITIONE QUE FORIS EX AUDITU PERFICITUR SET EA POCIUS QUE INTUS INSPIRATUR; NON EA QUE FIDE QUERITUR ABSENS, SET EA QUE PER PRESENTIAM CONTEMPLATIONIS MANIFESTIUS CERNEBATUR’. Ergo videtur quod manifeste cognosceret deum tamquam presentem, non ergo fide vel creaturis.</p>	<p>¶Item Hugo: COGNOVIT HOMO CREATOREM SUUM NON EA COGNITIONE QUE FORIS EX AUDITU PERFICITUR SED EA POTIUS QUE INTUS INSPIRATUR NON EA QUA FIDE ABSENS Q<UERITU>R. SED EA QUA PER PRESENTIAM CONTEMPLATIONIS SCIENTI MANIFESTUS CERNEBATUR ergo vi<detu>r quod manifeste cognosceret deum tamquam presentem, non ergo fide vel per creaturas.</p>
<p>[sc] ¶Set contra hoc est quia si cognoscebat deum tamquam presentem et manifeste ergo videtur quod non esset in statu viatoris.</p>	<p>¶Sed contra hoc est, quod si cognoscebat deum tamquam presentem et manifeste [fol. 273va] ergo videtur quod non esset in statu viatoris.</p>
<p>[co] ¶R<esponsi>o: ad predictorum intelligentiam est no<tandum> quod multiplex est cognitio. Est enim cognitio vie et est cognitio patrie que est in beata cognitione, visione qua videtur facie ad faciem deus. Hec est in beatis; hanc non habuit Adam in primo statu.</p> <p>Vie ergo cognitio triplex est; quedam gratuita per gratiam gratum facientem que illuminat; quedam naturalis; quedam per inspirationem. Ista que est per inspirationem est triplex. Aut secundum abstractionem ab omnibus viribus inferioribus; aut secundum abstractionem ab actu vegetative qua<ntu>m ad gratuita; aut secundum abstractionem ab actibus sensuum exteriorum.</p> <p>Prima est in raptu, secunda in prophetia, tertia in sopore. Et de tertia certum est quod fuit in Adam. Naturalis autem cognitiva dei est duobus modis a creatura: vel per considerationem et relucenciam in speculo, <vel> per considerationem ipsius in vestigio suum in suis operibus.</p>	<p>¶R<esponde>o, ad predictorum intelligentiam est notandum quod est triplex cognitio. Est enim cognitio vie, et est cognitio patrie que est in beata visione qua intuetur deus facie ad faciem. Hec est in beatis: hanc q<uidem> non habuit in primo statu.</p> <p>Cognitio vie triplex est quedam gratuita scilicet per gratiam gratum facientem que illuminat; quedam n<atura>lis; quedam per inspirationem. Illa que est per inspirationem est triplex: aut secundum abstractionem rationis ab omnibus viribus inferioribus; aut secundum abstractionem ab actu negati<on>e qua<ntu>m ad gen<er>ativam; aut secundum abstractionem ab actibus sensuum exteriorum.</p> <p>Prima est in raptu, secunda est in sopore, tertia in prophetia; et de secunda certum est quod fuit in Adam. Naturalis autem cognitio dei est duobus modis a creatura: vel per considerationem et relucenciam tanquam in speculo, vel per considerationem ipsius in vesti<gi>o sui in suis operibus.</p>
<p>Hic enim non videtur deus a creatura neque in semetipso sicut enim sol non potest in sua spera ab oculis nostri videri set videtur per repercussionem ad montes radiorum vel etiam per relucenciam in speculo: sic deus videtur [V:110rb] duplici cognitione naturali. Sed angelus haberet gratiam, videbat deum in se tanquam per relucenciam in speculo, nam ipse est speculum. Homo autem videbat et cognoscebat in creaturis, ergo cum cognitio creatoris indita fuit homini: cognitio naturalis que est per creaturas.</p>	<p>Hic enim non videtur deus a creatura in semet ipsa. Sicut enim sol non potest ab oculis nostris videri in sua spera sed videtur vel per repercussionem radiorum ad montes, vel etiam per relucenciam in speculo: sic deus dicitur int<ueri> cognitione naturali, sed angelus ante gratiam videbat deum in se tanquam per relucenciam in speculo, nam ipse est speculum. Homo autem videbat et cognoscebat in creaturis et ita cognitio creatoris homini indita fuit cognitio naturalis, que est per creaturas.</p>
<p>Set si tunc queras que differentia sit inter hanc cognitionem et illam, hanc scilicet quam modo habemus.</p> <p>¶R<esponde>o quia creature dicuntur per</p>	<p>¶Sed si tunc queras que sit differentia inter hanc cognitionem et illam, ‘hanc’ scilicet quam modo habemus, R<esponde>o: est quod creature d<icu>n<tu>r [read <i>videntur</i>]</p>

peccatum obnubilare ita ut sol non luceat in eis neque splendeat sicut ante: nec ita lucide nec ita limpide potest intueri sicut et tunc. Vnde tunc erat clara cognitio naturalis, nunc autem enigmatica et obscura per peccatum.	per peccatum obnubilare; ita ut sol non luceat nec splendeat, sicut ante; similiter nec ita lucide, nec ita limpide potest homo intueri sicut modo [read <i>tunc</i>]. Unde tunc erat clara cog<niti>va naturalis, non autem est enigmatica et obscurata per peccatum.
[ad 3] ¶ Ad id autem quod obicitur, quod non videtur esse [P:154vb] ordo iste immo inordinatio, r<esponsi>o est quia licet homo sit medius inter creatorem et creaturam secundum complexionem et nobilitatem, cum propter nimiam excellenciam et luciditatem divine essencie non poterat ferri immediate in deum, nisi oculis mentis eius esset dispositus per gratiam et ita ordinate et recte primo ferebatur aspectus eius in cognoscendo super creaturas et mediantibus illis que erant visui suo proportionales, ferebatur in deum. Est tertia cognitio gratuita. Hac immediate ferebatur in deum sicut dicit Hugo, qua scilicet 'PER PRESENTIAM CONTEMPLATIONIS MANIFESTIUS CERNEBATUR,' et patet in hoc in quo differt sua cognitio gratuita a nostra, quia etsi fidei ferebatur cognitio in deum, tamen sub nubilo et obscuritate et in enigmatate.	¶ Ad illud quod obicitur, quod non videtur esse ordo iste immo inordinatio, R<esponde>o quod licet homo sit medius inter creatorem et creaturam secundum complecionem et nobilitatem, tamen quia propter nimiam excellenciam et luciditatem divine essencie non poterat ferri immediate in deum; nec oculus, nec oculus mentis eius esset dispositus per gratiam et ratio [fol. 273vb] ordinate et recte primo ferebatur aspectus eius in cognoscendo super creaturas, et mediantibus illis que erant visui suo proportionales, ferebatur in deum q<uem> scilicet PER PRESENTIAM CONTEMPLATIONIS MANIFESTUS CERNEBATUR; et in hoc patet in quo differt cognitio sua gratuita a nostra, quia etsi cognitione fidei feramur in deum, tamen sub nubilo et obscuritate et in enigmatate.
[ad 4] Si ob<icia>t quod ista esset cognitio patrie, respondetur per Hugonem quia ibi non erat manifestatio tanta quanta est in gloria, set erat media illa inter cognitionem glorie et quam habemus nunc, dicitur enim MANIFESTA non simpliciter set quantum ad illum statum.	¶ Si obicias tunc quod ita esset cognitio patrie r<espond>et per Hugonem quod ibi non erat MANIFESTA tanta quanta est in gloria, sed media erat cognitio illa inter cognitionem glorie et quam habemus nunc; dicitur autem MANIFESTA non simpliciter sed in comparatione ad statum istum.

Textus A: collated text based on P fol. 154va, V fol. 110ra

¶ Secundo queritur quo ad cognoscibile et posset primo queri in comparatione ad se, utrum potuit esse prescius sui casus; set hoc supra excussum est de angelo dist<inctione> .IIIa.

¶ Queritur autem de cognitione eius in comparatione ad deum. Et queritur cuius cognitionem habuit aut vie aut patrie. Patrie¹⁰³⁸ non quia tunc fuisset beatus et¹⁰³⁹ nunquam cadere potuisset. Si vie, aut ergo cognitione¹⁰⁴⁰ fidei aut cognitione que est mediantibus creaturis. Fide¹⁰⁴¹ non, quia fidem et alias virtutes non statim habuit cum creatus est set post. Preterea fides ex auditu. Similiter neque¹⁰⁴² cognitionem que est mediantibus creaturis. Cum enim homo sit medius inter creatorem et creaturas, videtur ergo ordo retrogradus quod a creaturis perveniat ad creatorem, cum ipse sit mediator et maxime q<uando> natura erat condita et non lapsa; et sic erat superior quam alia creatura.

¹⁰³⁸ Patrie] om. V.

¹⁰³⁹ et] et ita V.

¹⁰⁴⁰ cognitione... cognitione] cognitionem... cognitionem V.

¹⁰⁴¹ Fide] fidei V.

¹⁰⁴² neque] nec V.

¶ Item Hugo: ‘COGNOVIT HOMO CREATOREM SUUM NON EA COGNITIONE QUE FORIS EX AUDITU PERFICITUR¹⁰⁴³ SET EA POCIUS QUE INTUS INSPIRATUR; NON EA QUE FIDE QUERITUR ABSENS, SET EA QUE PER PRESENTIAM CONTEMPLATIONIS MANIFESTIUS¹⁰⁴⁴ CERNEBATUR’. Ergo videtur quod¹⁰⁴⁵ manifeste cognosceret deum tamquam presentem, non ergo fide vel creaturis.

¶ Set contra hoc est quia si cognoscebat deum tamquam presentem et manifeste ergo videtur quod non esset in statu viatoris.

¶ R<esponsi>o: ad predictorum intelligentiam est no<tandum> quod multiplex est cognitio. Est enim cognitio vie et est cognitio patrie que est in beata cognitione, visione¹⁰⁴⁶ qua videtur facie ad faciem deus. Hec est¹⁰⁴⁷ in beatis; hanc¹⁰⁴⁸ non habuit Adam in primo statu. Vie ergo¹⁰⁴⁹ cognitio triplex est; quedam gratuita¹⁰⁵⁰ per gratiam gratum facientem que illuminat; quedam naturalis; quedam per inspirationem. Ista que est per inspirationem est triplex. Aut secundum abstractionem ab omnibus viribus inferioribus; aut secundum abstractionem ab actu¹⁰⁵¹ vegetative qua<ntu>m ad gratuita; aut secundum abstractionem ab actibus sensuum exteriorum. Prima est in raptu, secunda in prophetia, tertia in sopore. Et de tertia certum est quod fuit in Adam. Naturalis autem **cognitiva <v: [del. quod fu] neg<ati>va>** dei est duobus modis a creatura: vel per considerationem et relucenciam in speculo, <vel> per considerationem ipsius in vestigio suum in suis operibus.

Hic enim non videtur deus a creatura neque¹⁰⁵² in semetipso sicut enim sol non potest in sua spera ab oculis nostri videri¹⁰⁵³ set videtur per repercussionem ad montes radiorum¹⁰⁵⁴ vel etiam per relucenciam in speculo: sic¹⁰⁵⁵ deus videtur [V:110rb] duplici cognitione naturali.

Sed angelus¹⁰⁵⁶ haberet gratiam, videbat deum in se tanquam per relucenciam in speculo, nam ipse est speculum. Homo autem videbat et cognoscebat in creaturis, ergo¹⁰⁵⁷ cum cognitio creatoris indita fuit homini: cognitio naturalis que est per creaturas. Set si tunc queras que differentia sit inter hanc cognitionem et illam, hanc scilicet quam modo habemus.

¶ R<esponde>o quia creature dicuntur per peccatum obnubilare ita ut sol non luceat in eis neque¹⁰⁵⁸ splendeat sicut¹⁰⁵⁹ an<te>: nec ita lucide nec ita limpide potest intueri sicut et¹⁰⁶⁰ tunc. Vnde tunc erat clara cognitio naturalis, nunc autem enigmatica et obscura¹⁰⁶¹ per peccatum.

¶ Ad id autem quod objicitur, quod non videtur esse [P:154vb] ordo iste immo inordinatio, r<esponsi>o est quia¹⁰⁶² licet homo sit medius inter creatorem et creaturam secundum complexionem¹⁰⁶³ et nobilitatem, cum propter nimiam excellenciam et luciditatem divine essencie non poterat ferri immediate¹⁰⁶⁴ in deum, nisi oculis mentis eius esset dispositus per gratiam et ita¹⁰⁶⁵

¹⁰⁴³ perficitur] perficiatur P.

¹⁰⁴⁴ manifestius] manifestus V.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Ergo videtur quod] P: Ergo videtur quod manifeste cognosceret deum tamquam presentem et manifeste, ergo videtur quod non esset in statu viatoris.

¹⁰⁴⁶ visione] in beata visione V.

¹⁰⁴⁷ est] enim V.

¹⁰⁴⁸ hanc] hanc quidem V.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Vie ergo] Cum e. v. V.

¹⁰⁵⁰ gratuita] add. scilicet.

¹⁰⁵¹ ab actu] ab actibus <del. sensuum> v.

¹⁰⁵² Neque] nec V.

¹⁰⁵³ potest... videri] potest ab o. n. in s. s. v. V.

¹⁰⁵⁴ repercussionem... radiorum] rep. r. ad m. V.

¹⁰⁵⁵ sic] sicut V.

¹⁰⁵⁶ angelus] add. antequam V.

¹⁰⁵⁷ ergo] et ita V.

¹⁰⁵⁸ neque] nec V.

¹⁰⁵⁹ sicut] sicut et V.

¹⁰⁶⁰ et] om. V.

¹⁰⁶¹ obscura] obscurata V.

¹⁰⁶² quia] quod V.

¹⁰⁶³ complexionem] completionem V.

¹⁰⁶⁴ immediate] lucide V.

¹⁰⁶⁵ ita] ideo V.

ordinate et recte primo ferebatur aspectus eius in cognoscendo super creaturas et mediantibus illis que erant visui suo proportionales, ferebatur in deum. Est tertia cognitio gratuita. Hac immediate ferebatur in deum sicut dicit Hugo¹⁰⁶⁶, qua scilicet ‘PER PRESENTIAM CONTEMPLATIONIS MANIFESTIUS CERNEBATUR,’ et patet in hoc in quo differt sua cognitio gratuita a nostra, quia etsi fidei ferebatur cognitio in deum, tamen sub nubilo et obscuritate et in enigmate.

Si ob<icia>t¹⁰⁶⁷ quod ista esset cognitio patrie, respondetur per Hugonem quia ibi non erat manifestatio tanta quanta est in gloria, set erat media¹⁰⁶⁸ illa inter cognitionem glorie et quam habemus nunc, dicitur enim ‘MANIFESTA’ non simpliciter set quantum ad illum statum¹⁰⁶⁹.

Textus B, transcript from B 273rbvb

¶ Secundo queritur quo ad cognoscibile et posset primo queri in comparatione ad se, utrum potuerit esse prescencia sui casus. Sed hoc discussum est supra de angelo, distinctio .III. Aut queritur de cognitione eius in comparatione ad deum.

¶ Et queritur cuius cognitionem habuit, aut vie aut patrie.

¶ Patrie non quia tunc fuisset beatus et iam nunquam cadere potuisset; si vie aut <habuit> ergo cognitionem fidei, aut cognitionem que est mediantibus creaturis. Fidei non, quia Adam et alias virtutes non statim habuit cum creatus est sed post.

¶ Preterea fides ex auditu.

Item nec cognitionem que est mediantibus creaturis, cum homo non sit medius inter creatorem et creaturas. Videtur ergo ordo retrogradus quod a creaturis perveniat ad creatorem cum ipse sit immediacior, et maxime quando erat natura condita et non lapsa; et sic erat superior omni alia creatura.

¶ Item Hugo: COGNOVIT HOMO CREATOREM SUUM NON EA COGNITIONE QUE FORIS EX AUDITU PERFICITUR SED EA POTIUS QUE INTUS INSPIRATUR NON EA QUA FIDE ABSENS Q<UERITU>R. SED EA QUA PER PRESENTIAM CONTEMPLATIONIS SCIENTI MANIFESTUS CERNEBATUR ergo vi<detu>r quod manifeste cognosceret deum tamquam presentem, non ergo fide vel per creaturas.

¶ Sed contra hoc est, quod si cognoscebat deum tamquam presentem et manifeste [fol. 273va] ergo videtur quod non esset in statu viatoris.

¶ R<esponde>o, ad predictorum intelligentiam est notandum quod est triplex cognitio. Est enim cognitio vie, et est cognitio patrie que est in beata visione qua intuetur deus facie ad faciem. Hec est in beatis: hanc q<uidem> non habuit in primo statu.

Cognitio vie triplex est quedam gratuita scilicet per gratiam gratum facientem que illuminat; quedam n<atura>lis; quedam per inspirationem. Illa que est per inspirationem est triplex: aut secundum abstractionem rationis ab omnibus viribus inferioribus; aut secundum abstractionem ab actu negati<on>e qua<ntu>m ad gen<er>ativam; aut secundum abstractionem ab actibus sensuum exteriorum.

Prima est in raptu, secunda est in sopore, tertia in prophetia; et de secunda certum est quod fuit in Adam. Naturalis autem cognitio dei est duobus modis a creatura: vel per considerationem et relucenciam tanquam in speculo, vel per considerationem ipsius in vesti<gi>o sui in suis operibus.

Hic enim non videtur deus a creatura in semet ipsa. Sicut enim sol non potest ab oculis nostris videri in sua spera sed videtur vel per repercussionem radiorum ad montes, vel etiam per relucenciam in speculo: sic deus dicitur int<ueri> cognitione naturali, sed angelus ante gratiam videbat deum in se tanquam per relucenciam in speculo, nam ipse est speculum.

Homo autem videbat et cognoscebat in creaturis et ita cognitio creatoris homini indita fuit cognitio naturalis, que est per creaturas.

¹⁰⁶⁶ Hac... Hugo] Hac i. s. d. H. f. in deum V.

¹⁰⁶⁷ obiciat] obiciat tunc V.

¹⁰⁶⁸ e. m.] m. e. V.

¹⁰⁶⁹ ad i. s.] ad s. i. V.

¶ Sed si tunc queras que sit differentia inter hanc cognitionem et illam, ‘hanc’ scilicet quam modo habemus, R<esponde>o: est quod creature d<icu>n<tu>r [*read* videntur] per peccatum obnubilant; ita ut sol non luceat nec splendeat, sicut ante; similiter nec ita lucide, nec ita limpide potest homo intueri sicut modo [*read* tunc]. Unde tunc erat clara cog<niti>va naturalis, non autem est enigmatica et obscurata per peccatum.

¶ Ad illud quod obicitur, quod non videtur esse ordo iste immo inordinatio, R<esponde>o quod licet homo sit medius inter creatorem et creaturam secundum complecionem et nobilitatem, tamen quia propter nimiam excellenciam et luciditatem divine essencie non poterat ferri immediate in deum; nec oculus, nec oculus mentis eius esset dispositus per gratiam et ratio [fol. 273vb] ordinate et recte primo ferebatur aspectus eius in cognoscendo super creaturas, et mediantibus illis que erant visui suo proportionales, ferebatur in deum q<uem> scilicet PER PRESENTIAM CONTEMPLATIONIS MANIFESTUS CERNEBATUR; et in hoc patet in quo differt cognitio sua gratuita a nostra, quia etsi cognitione fidei feramur in deum, tamen sub nubilo et obscuritate et in enigmate.

¶ Si obicias tunc quod ita esset cognitio patrie r<espond>et per Hugonem quod ibi non erat MANIFESTA tanta quanta est in gloria, sed media erat cognitio illa inter cognitionem glorie et quam habemus nunc; dicitur autem MANIFESTA non simpliciter sed in comparatione ad statum istum.

Bibliography

1. Census of the manuscripts consulted
 - Works by anonymous / unidentified authors
 - Works of identified authors
2. Bibliography of printed sources
 - Victorine Sources
 - Other sources
3. Selected list of secondary literature

1. Census of the manuscripts consulted

Abbreviations

BL: London, British Library

BNF: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France

Mazarine: Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine

Vat.: Vatican City / Citta del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

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Questions of Douai 434. Bibl. Munic. Douai 434.

Ps.-Peter of Poitiers Gloss

Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale BN VII C 14.

BL Royal 7 F XIII,

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BL Add. 10960; BL Royal 9 B VI; BL Royal 9 B VII; Vat. Pal. lat. 333.

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Hugh of Saint-Victor. *De sacramentis*. Vat. Pal. lat. 318. Vat. lat. 7590. Vat. lat. 677. Vat. lat. 678. Vat. lat. 9408. Barb. lat 508. Ross. lat. 464. BL Harl. 3847, BL Harl. 3094, BL Harl. 1897, BL Harl. 3108

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Abbreviations used

BGPTM	Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie [und Theologie] des Mittelalters (Munster: Aschendorff)
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina (Turnhout: Brepols, 1953-)
CCCM	Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina, Continuatio Mediaevalis (Turnhout: Brepols, 1966-)
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (Vienna: Hölder / Pichler / Tempsky, 1866-)
PL	<i>Patrologiae cursus completus series Latina</i> , ed. Jacques Paul Migne (Paris, 1841-1864)
SC	Sources Chrétiennes (Paris: Cerf, 1947-)
Quar.	<i>D.S.S. Bonaventurae opera omnia, edita studio et cura pp. Collegii a S. Bonaventura</i> (Quaracchi: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1882-1902)

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Abbreviations used

AHDLMA	Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge
BGPTM	Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie und Theologie des Mittelalters (Munster: Aschendorff)
DS	Dictionnaire de spiritualité ascétique et mystique (Paris: Beauchesne, 1937-)
DTC	Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique (Paris: Letouzey et Ané)
LMA	Lexikon des Mittelalters (Zürich: Artemis)
RMAL	Revue du moyen âge latin
RSPT	Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques
RTAM	Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale
RTPM	Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie médiévales
TRE	Theologische Realenzyklopädie (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1977-)

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