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ALAN OF LILLE'S CONCEPT OF TRINITARIAN PERSONHOOD
IN THE *SUMMA QUONIAM HOMINES*

MA Thesis in Comparative History, with a specialization
in Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies.

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José Osorio

(Perú)

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I, the undersigned, **José Osorio**, candidate for the MA degree in Comparative History, with a specialization in Interdisciplinary Medieval Studies declare herewith that the present thesis is exclusively my own work, based on my research and only such external information as properly credited in notes and bibliography. I declare that no unidentified and illegitimate use was made of the work of others, and no part of the thesis infringes on any person's or institution's copyright. I also declare that no part of the thesis has been submitted in this form to any other institution of higher education for an academic degree.

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Abstract

This study focuses on Alan de Lille's (d. 1203/1204) concept of Trinitarian personhood. It explores Alan's definition of personhood and his solutions to puzzling questions of how to express personhood in theological discourse. The analysis pays particular attention to Alan's use of the trivium – logical and grammatical theory from the *logica modernorum*, and speculative grammar – and the influence of Boethius in Alan's theological method.

The research has produced the following results. First, I will argue that Alan's theological method is deeply intertwined with logic and grammar. Next, I will affirm that Alan is conversant with contemporary developments in fallacy theory. Next, I will suggest that Alan's primary logical source is the *Fallacie Parvipontane*. Finally, I will claim that Alan is critical of Boethius' Trinitarian theology. I do this by showing that Alan applies contemporary, philosophical concepts to Boethius' theology in order to incorporate the late-antique authority into his theology.

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Table of contents

Acknowledgments.....	ii
Introduction.....	1
The State of Speculative Theology in 12 th Century France	4
Alan’s Biography, his Works, and The Question About the Role of the Trivium in Alan’ Theology	10
Chapter 1 - An Introduction to the Philosophical and Theological Sources of Alan of Lille’s Trinitarian Theology of Personhood.....	18
The Inherited Theological Problem	19
Logic and Grammar in Medieval Speculative Theology.....	27
Alan’s Reception of Boethius	32
Chapter 2 - The Definition of Personhood and How to Write Proper Theology of Personhood	39
Alan’s Definition of Trinitarian Personhood	40
Writing Trinitarian Theology.....	46
Conclusion	66
Bibliography	69
Appendix - English Translation of the Prologue of the Summa “Quoniam Homines”	83

Introduction

In his four-volume *Études de théologie positive sur la Sainte Trinité*, a 19th century account of the historical developments of the Trinity, the French theologian and historian Théodore de Régnon proposed a categorization of the main differences between Latin and Greek trinitarian theology – one which would have a profound impact on the specialized literature. De Régnon argues that:

“Latin philosophy first considers nature in itself and continues until the support [the person]; Greek philosophy first considers the support and then enters it to find nature. The Latin considers personality as a mode of nature; the Greek considers nature as the content of the person. These are the opposite aims, which project the concepts of the same reality on different bases”¹.

According to de Régnon, unlike the Greek Patristic trinitarian tradition, the Latin view, which was practiced from Augustine until the medieval scholastic debates, emphasizes the unity of the divine essence over the persons. Only later is it concerned with explaining the plurality of the persons. De Régnon’s twofold paradigm, as Barnes has called it, has been highly influential but also subjected to numerous misinterpretations². Originally designed to account for the different theoretical ways in which to approach the history of the Trinity, the double paradigm

¹ “La philosophie latine envisage d’abord la nature en elle-meme et poursuit jusqu’au suppot; la philosophie grecque envisage d’abord le suppot et y penetre ensuite pour y trouver la nature. Le Latin considere la personalite comme un mode de la nature, le Grec considere la nature comme le contenu de la personne. Ce sont la des visees contraires, qui projettent les concepts de la meme realite sur des fonds differents”, *Études de théologie positive sur la Sainte Trinité*, Vol. 1 (Paris: Victor Betaux, 1892), 433-434.

² Michel René Barnes, “De Regnon Reconsidered”, *Augustinian Studies* 26, 2 (1995): 51-52.

theory would later be employed as the *de facto* classification of the history of Latin trinitarian discourse in most English-speaking manuals³.

For late 12th century Christian thinkers, the concept of personhood was at the center of the effort of explaining the divine unity and the diversity of persons. Medieval theologians quickly realized that the inherited body of Trinitarian literature, both from Greek and Latin fathers, did not employ the concept of personhood univocally. Moreover, they recognized that personhood has a variety of connotations in everyday usage which obscures any possible explanation when transferred in theology. How, then, was the problem of personhood tackled in the late twelfth century, and specifically by Alan of Lille (d. 1203/04), one of the leading theology masters of this period? The answer was to apply contemporary grammatical and logical concepts to understand the mystery of the Trinity.

The basis of this research is Alan's use of grammatical and logical concepts in his discussion of some Trinitarian problems of personhood in the *Summa Quoniam Homines*, Alan's first major work on speculative theology⁴. The investigation aims to show that Alan's theology of personhood is deeply intertwined with grammatical-logical analysis. I will suggest the view that the key to understanding Alan's theory of personhood lies in reconstructing his amendments to the Boethian definition of *persona* and his technique of writing speculative theology. I will do this first by scrutinizing Alan's Boethian definition of *persona* and then

³ See Kristin Hennessy, "An Answer to de Régnon's Accusers: Why We Should Not Speak of "His" Paradigm", *The Harvard Theological Review*, 100, 2, (2007): 179-197. For an illustrative list of English-speaking manuals that implicitly or explicitly defend de Régnon's paradigm.

⁴ Palémon Glorieux, "La somme "Quoniam homines" d'Alain de Lille", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 20 (1954): 111-364. Glorieux dates the *Summa*'s around 1160-1165. D'Alverny, however, believes it is around 1170-1180. See Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny, *Alain de Lille. Textes inédits* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1965), 64. From now on the *Summa* will be referred as SQH.

selected examples which illustrate the degree to which Alan's theology applies logical and grammatical tools – specifically those of *fallacia univocationis*, *suppositio*, and *consignificatio*.

The general structure of the thesis will be as follows. I will proceed from the general aspects to the most detailed parts of Alan's Trinitarian theology. The first chapter will be a general description of the most significant concepts, notions and sources on logic, grammar, and theology, which informed Alan's theology of personhood. The chapter is intended to bring out the theoretical background of Alan's theology in the SQH. Then, in the second chapter I will analyze in detail Alan's use of said concepts. Consequently, concrete examples of Alan's views on logical and grammatical notions, and the theological debates on personhood will be examined in the second. The move from the general to the specific is deliberate. I believe that the treatment of Alan's application of logical and grammatical concepts, as well as his debate with Boethius, is obscure enough not to muddle it even further by explanations on the history of these concepts. The main question I have asked of myself is not *why* Alan employed these tools, but *how* and to *what* level of success.

In the introduction, I will first produce a general overview of the state of theology during the long 12th century, regarding both learning institutions and doctrinal issues. The goal of the introductory first section is to situate Alan's theology historically and intellectually. Then, I will present and discuss the major lines of interpretations regarding the significance of the *trivium* in Alan's theology. As in the first introductory section, the purpose is to position my research in the historiography of Alan's theology.

Before moving to the next section, a word on the meaning of the terms “grammar” and “logic” in this thesis — two crucial concepts which I will use repeatedly. By “grammar”, we mean the

12th century philosophical practice of speculative grammar, i.e., a theoretical approach of linguistic description. As Fredborg explains it, speculative grammar is concerned with the issues of the meaning and reference of terms, a word's function in a sentence, and the parts of speech⁵. By "logic" or "dialectics", I will follow the view which states that the purpose of logic is to separate truth from falsehood. Early medieval logic proceeds, as Garland the Computist explains (d. 1102), by analyzing propositions and their terms with the help of syllogistic theory. In 12th century logic, a distinction must be made between the *logica vetus*, the *logica nova*, and the *logica modernorum*. The first, the *logica vetus*, consists in the study of Aristotle's *Categories*, *On Interpretation*, Porphyry's *Isagoge*, and Boethius' commentaries on Aristotle. By the mid-12th century, however, new Aristotelian texts on logic were made available in the schools of Paris – the *Topics*, *Sophistical Refutations*, and *Prior Analytics* and *Posterior Analytics*⁶. This group of texts is part of what is called the *logica nova*. Finally, the *logica modernorum* consists in the writings which were developed after the *logica nova* during the 12th century, mostly on terministic logic, supposition theory, and fallacy theory,⁷.

The State of Speculative Theology in 12th Century France

As Leclercq remarks⁸, the long twelfth century represents a renewal of theology in France⁹.

The history of philosophy and theology during the first half of the 12th century is marked by a

⁵ Karin Margareta Fredborg, "Speculative Grammar", in *A History of Twelfth Century Western Philosophy*, ed. Peter Dronke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 177.

⁶ Margaret Cameron, "Logica Vetust", in *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Logic*, ed. Catarina Dutilh-Novaes and Stephen Read (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 195-219.

⁷ Lambertus Marie de Rijk edited the texts of the *logica modernorum* in the 1960s in two volumes: *Logica Modernorum: A Contribution to the History of Early Terministic Logic, Vol. 1. On the Twelfth Century Theories of Fallacy* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1962); *Vol. 2, Part 1. The Origin and Early Development of the Theory of Supposition* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1967); *Vol. 2, Part 2. Text and Indices* (Assen: Van Gorcum 1967). From now on, the De Rijk's texts will be referred as LM and the corresponding roman number for each volume. See LM I, 14-15. For the classification of 12th century logics.

⁸ Jean Leclercq, "The Renewal of Theology", in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. R. L. Benson and G. Constable (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 68.

⁹ See Charles Homer Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927). For the periodization of this period (1050-1215), known as "the long 12th century". For the historiography

substantial growth regarding the number of scholars, masters, and learning institutions, as well as a newly available texts. Moreover, this was accompanied by a significant number of controversies about the role of philosophy in theology.

I have decided to divide the introductory description of the status of 12th century theology into two sections, which roughly correspond to halves of the same period. The reasons, although in part arbitrary, lie in the fact that by this time Paris emerged and continually grew as the center of theological and philosophical studies in France. Another reason which makes theology from the second half different is its methodological coherence¹⁰. Finally, since there are fewer documentary sources about the second half of the century, it is significantly more difficult to reconstruct its history¹¹.

Alan of Lille is the heir of an intellectual milieu which begins in the last decades of the 11th century. Theology, broadly understood as an intellectual discipline pursued with the aid of the *trivium* (logic, grammar, and rhetoric), has its initial stages with Anselm of Canterbury. Anselm was engaged in theological discussions and Trinitarian debates during the many years he taught at Bec at the end of the 11th century. Anselm's writings grew in fame and his presence at Bec attracted many young scholars from France and England eager to study under his tutelage. Bec was not only the home of a magnificent library and a vibrant school but also the center one of

of the periodization, see Thomas F. X. Noble, "Introduction", in *European Transformations: The Long Twelfth Century* (Notre Dame Conferences in Medieval Studies), ed. Thomas F. X. Noble and John Van Engen (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 2012), 1-16.

¹⁰ Riccardo Quinto, "La teologia dei maestri di Parigi e la prima scuola domenicana," in *L' Origine dell'Ordine dei Predicatori e l'Università di Bologna*, ed. Giovanni Bertuzzi (Bologna: Edizioni Studio Domenicano, 2006), 81-104; Marcia Colish, "The Development of Lombardian Theology, 1160-1215" in *Centres of learning. Learning and Location in Pre-Modern Europe and the Near East*, ed. Jan Willem Drijvers (Leiden, Brill, 1995), 207-216.

¹¹ John W. Baldwin, "Masters at Paris from 1179 to 1215. A Social Perspective", in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, 138-139; Marcia Colish, "Scholastic Theology at Paris around 1200," in *Crossing Boundaries at the Medieval Universities: Intellectual Movements, Academic Disciplines, and Societal*, ed. Spencer E. Young (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 29-31; Stephen C. Ferruolo, *The Origins of the University: The Schools of Paris and their Critics, 1100-1215* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), 279.

the first theological controversies of the century¹². From a letter, Anselm found out that Roscelin defended a somewhat unorthodox view of the Incarnation and the Trinity. Eventually, Anselm composed Trinitarian treatises exploring the mystery of the Trinity with the purpose of offer an orthodox interpretation of the Trinity. The events which transpired at Bec, both the schooling of scholars from all over Western Europe, and the debates on theology, can serve as a model to understand the state of theology —i.e., its education and production— during the long 12th century.

The debate between Anselm and Roscelin was not the last theological dispute, and Bec did not retain its place as the leading center of theological education in the upcoming years. Many more controversies and different schools would flourish during the following decades. John of Salisbury, for example, studied under 12 different masters in Paris and perhaps in Chartres during the 1130s and 1140s. By the late 1140s and early 1150s, however, the number of scholars and masters at Paris, including those at St. Victor, would rise to more than two dozen¹³. Sometimes cathedral schools consisted not so much of a stable learning institution, but more of a circle of students around one master, such as the cases of Abelard and Gilbert in Paris, Anselm in Laon, and Alberic in Reims¹⁴. In other cases, most notably at Chartres, the study of theology persisted despite the death of the leading master¹⁵.

Urban schools were also the center of a renewed interest in the classics, among them Plato's *Timaeus*, Calcidius' commentary on the *Timaeus*, and other late-antique and early medieval

¹² For the monastic library and the education at Le Bec, see Laura Cleaver, "The Monastic Library at Le Bec", in *A Companion to the Abbey of Le Bec in the Central Middle Ages (11th-13th Centuries)*, ed. Benjamin Pohl and Laura L. Gathagan (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 57-94, 171-205.

¹³ Ferruolo, *The Origins of the University*, 22.

¹⁴ R. W. Southern, "The Schools of Paris and the School of Chartres," in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, 113-137.

¹⁵ See R. W. Southern, "Humanism and the School of Chartres", in *Medieval Humanism and Other Studies* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), 61-85. The importance of the "school of Chartres" has been questioned most famously by Southern.

sources like Pseudo-Dionysius, Martianus Capella, and Macrobius¹⁶. The study of the *trivium* was pursued vigorously in the schools. The efforts towards a reduced dependency on the authority of the late-antique grammarians Donatus and Priscian, and a strive in the direction of a comprehensive study of the liberal arts, are the remarkable features of this period¹⁷. In this context, scholars wrote new grammar textbooks, encyclopedic synthesis, as well as logical handbooks and theological *summae*¹⁸.

Theology was not only practiced in cathedral schools. Monastic theology was also vibrantly produced during the first half of the century. Traditionally, monastic theology has been described in opposition to urban theology and understood as oriented towards contemplation and reflection on the spiritual life of the cloister¹⁹. Nowadays, monastic theology is believed to be less monolithic than in the past. Different trends in theology were practiced in the cloisters, from the speculative theology written by former secular masters²⁰ to the less philosophically-inclined, spiritual writings of Bernard and William of St. Thierry.

A significant issue in the history of theology during the first half of the 12th century is the relationship between the philosophy and theology. Were faith and scripture the only necessary elements to understand God's commands or could one use philosophical tools as well? The debate has been portrayed in the secondary literature as a quarrel between the secular masters and the cloistered theologians. One discussion which is particularly significant is the one between Rupert of Deutz and Anselm of Laon in 1117. According to Rupert, the schools

¹⁶ Paolo Lucentini, *Platonismo medievale: contributi per la storia dell'eriugenismo* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1980).

¹⁷ Karen Margareta Fredborg, "Rhetoric and Dialectic," in *The Rhetoric of Cicero in its Medieval and Early Renaissance Commentary Tradition*, ed. Virginia Cox and John O. Ward (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 165-194; David Luscombe, "Crossing Philosophical Boundaries c.1150–c.1250", in *Crossing Boundaries at Medieval Universities*, 9-27.

¹⁸ Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny, "Translations and Translators", in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, 421-462.

¹⁹ For instance, the early writing of Jean Leclercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, trans. Catharine Misrahi (New York: Fordham University Press, 1982), 198-234.

²⁰ Ferruolo, *The Origins of the University*, 53-54.

employed dialectics and philosophical concepts to interpret doctrinal issues. Rupert contends that such philosophical distinctions should not be used for they would denigrate the Scripture. Other disputes about the place of philosophy in theology would follow, the most famous of these controversies being those of Bernard of Clairvaux first against Peter Abelard and then against Gilbert of Poitiers²¹.

The theology practiced by the generation of theology masters before the foundation of the University of Paris (1200-1215) is somewhat different from that of the previous generations. Unlike in preceding decades, theology masters now required a license (*licentia docendi*) issued by the chancellor of Notre Dame in order to lecture on the authoritative texts and to dispute difficult theological questions. A corporate identity, perhaps fueled by disagreements with church authorities, began to develop among them. Consequently, a rapid process of institutionalization took place in Paris which would lead to the establishment of the University²². While the number of *trivium* masters was greater than those of theology, the masters of theology were both socially and politically the most important group in the academic circles of Paris. Most of the liberal arts texts which have survived remain anonymous. The situation, however, is different in theology. Although biographical details are scarce, we do know the names, place of birth, and social background of many of these masters.

John W. Baldwin has been able to identify 24 active theology masters during the last quarter of the 12th century, out of which 19 left numerous writings²³. Regarding their social composition, most masters were not Parisian, with a third of them coming from England. Fifty percent of them came from feudal backgrounds and only a small percentage of them were of high nobility or aristocratic families. Many students, perhaps in the hundreds, came from all

²¹ See Giuseppe Allegro, *La teologia di Pietro Abelardo fra letture e pregiudizi* (Palermo: Officina di Studi Medievali, 1990), 117-130. For an excellent summary of the historiography of the dispute.

²² Southern, "The Schools of Paris and the School of Chartres", 114-115.

²³ Baldwin, "Masters at Paris from 1179 to 1215. A Social Perspective", 147-148, 165-170.

the regions of Europe to study at Paris²⁴. The high number of theological *questiones* which have survived from the last decades, many centered around Peter Lombard's *Sentences* as well as the theological *summae*, and the numerous students attracted to public disputes on theology, give us an idea of how vibrant the educational culture of the late twelfth century was²⁵.

Intellectually, the practice of theology changed. Certain academic trends of earlier decades consolidated whereas others vanished. The method of interpreting the authorities and the attitude towards the opinions of contemporaries in theology, for instance, changed significantly. Authorities were interpreted in logical and grammatical terms. The opinions of the *moderni* were no longer discarded for the sake of being modern. Instead, they were adapted, reinterpreted, and incorporated into the production of theology. The masters were similarly concerned with the political and social issues of their times. The large number of anti-heretical texts produced attests to an expanding interest in the affairs of the Church and its relation to fringe groups. Scholars produced high numbers of writings on speculative and pastoral theology, but also on new topics such as handbooks on the intersection of logic and theology and preaching manuals. Finally, although we do not have precise information about the theological curricula nor the schooling of students, the output of many of the theology masters falls under Peter the Chanter's schematic of *lectio-disputatio-predicatio*²⁶. From this piece of information and some contemporary remarks about Parisian classrooms, it is possible to conclude that theology was practiced and taught in the form of readings of the Bible, the

²⁴ Southern, "The Schools of Paris and the School of Chartres", 119; Jacques Verger, *Les universités françaises au Moyen Âge* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 6-7.

²⁵ Ibid; Alex J. Novikoff, *The Medieval Culture of Disputation: Pedagogy, Practice, and Performance* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 136-137.

²⁶ Peter the Chanter, *Verbum Abbreviatum*, in *Patrologiae cursus completus, series Latina* 205, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1841-1857), 1-554. See John W. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants: The Social Views of Peter the Chanter & His Circle*, Vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 88-116; Auguste Châtillon, "Le mouvement théologique dans la France de Philippe Auguste", in *La France de Philippe Auguste. Le temps des mutations. Colloque international du C.N.R.S. 1980*, ed. Robert Henri Bautier (Paris: Editions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1982), 881-902.

production of theological *summae*, and in the discussion of questions in the Parisian classrooms²⁷.

Alan's Biography, his Works, and The Question About the Role of the Trivium in Alan's Theology

In what follows, I will delineate the significant events of Alan's life. Next, I will describe the main lines of interpretation regarding the role of the *trivium* in Alan's theology. Finally, I will criticize each of these positions briefly. The purpose of this section is to position my interpretation regarding the reception of the *trivium* in Alan's theology in the historiography. To understand the debate, however, it is necessary to know Alan's biography and, most importantly, the character of his theological work.

Besides his birthplace in Lille, reliable biographical information derives from mid-13th century sources²⁸. Due to the influence of Thierry of Chartres and Gilbert of Poitiers, some scholars have conjectured that Alan studied either in Paris or Chartres in the mid twelfth century²⁹. The chronicler Otto of St. Blaise observed in his *addendum* to the *Chronicon Frisingense* that in 1194 Peter the Chancer, Alan of Lille, and Prevostin of Cremona were active masters in Paris³⁰. The inclusion of Alan in the list might point to his popularity as a teacher and lecturer. Lastly, since Alan dedicated some of his works to important ecclesiastical and political figures in Languedoc, most notably Ermengaud of St. Gilles, and William VIII, Lord of Montpellier,

²⁷ Riccardo Saccenti, "*Questions et Sentences: l'enseignement entre la fin du XII^e et le début du XIII^e siècle*", in *Les débuts de l'enseignement universitaire à Paris (1200 – 1245 environ)*, ed. J. Verger, O. Weijers (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 280-282.

²⁸ Based on her analysis of the *Lettres Familières*, F. Hudry has argued that Alan of Lille is the same person as a monk from Le Bec and from the British abbey of Tewkesbury. See, *Alain de Lille (?): Lettres familières (1167-1170)*, ed. and comm. Françoise Hudry, pref. Pascale Bourgain (Paris: J. Vrin/École des Chartes, 2003). In his introduction, Pascale Bourgain and, more strongly, François Dolbeau have raised serious doubts against Hudry's thesis. See François Dolbeau, *Archivum Latinitatis Medii Aevi* (= *Bulletin Du Cange*), 61 (2003): 338-342.

²⁹ Most notably, d'Alverny, *Textes*, 20-21; and Gillian Rosemary Evans, *Alan of Lille: The Frontiers of Theology in the Later Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 11.

³⁰ Otto of St Blaise, *Chronicon*, ed. Roger Wilmans, MGH, 20, 326.

some have claimed that Alan spent an unidentifiable number of years in Southern France³¹. Chronicles from the mid-13th century inform us that Alan spent his last days as a Cistercian in the Abbey of Cîteaux where he died in 1203/04³². Supposedly, Alan's remains were found at Cîteaux during an archeological excavation in the 1960s confirming the thirteen century chroniclers³³.

Alan produced a copious and varied body of work. A significant feature of his corpus, and one that makes general interpretations a complex issue, is the fact that Alan wrote on a variety of topics, employed different methods, and relied on diverse sources, some of them even uncommon at the time. For that reason, he sometimes has been called “doctor universalis”. Alan wrote on practical and speculative theology. He also produced poetical-theological works, glosses on the Scriptures and classical authors, as well as manuals and dictionaries on preaching. Moreover, he explored different methods. For instance, the SQH is written as a series of questions on debatable theological topics which range from the knowability of God, His attributes, the Trinity, to the Incarnation. However, Alan would abandon the *quaestio*-technique for the novel axiomatic method in the *Regulae caelestis iuris*³⁴. Eventually, he would return to the scholastic *quaestio*-method in the *De Fide Catholica*³⁵. His preaching manuals, on the other hand, are written in an encyclopedic manner and for less educated readers than the scholastic readership of the SQH and *Regulae*. The work of Alan exhibits the influence of an

³¹ See d'Alverny, *Textes*, 12-13.

³² Francisco Pejenaute Rubio, “El Alain de Lille que conocemos sigue siendo Alain de Lille”, *Helmantica* 60 (2009): 223-225.

³³ M. Lebeau, “Découverte du tombeau du bienheureux Alain de Lille”, *Colleclanea ord. cist. reform.* 23 (1961): 254-260.

³⁴ Alan of Lille, *Regulae caelestis iuris*, ed. Nikolaus Haring, *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen age* 48 (1981). From now on, this text will be referred as *Regulae*.

³⁵ It is possible to classify Alan's theological oeuvre under several categories. He wrote theological poems (*De Planctu Naturae*, *Anticlaudianus*, *Rhythmus de Incarnatione et de Septem Artibus*, *De Miseria Mundi* (*Rhythmus de natura hominis fluxa et caduca*)); glosses on the Bible (*Elucidatio in Cantica Canticorum*, *Glosatura super Cantica*), as well as commentaries on the Creeds; speculative theology (the SQH, *Regulae Theologicae*, *Hierarchia Alani*); texts on practical theology (*Liber Poenitentialis*, *De Sex Alis Cherubim*, *Ars Praedicandi*, *Distinctiones Dictionum Theologicalium* (*Summa Quot Modis*)); and an anti-heretical text (*De Fide Catholica: Contra Haereticos, Valdenses, Iudaeos et Paganos*).

assortment of sources, from older sources like Boethius, Pseudo-Dionysius, Claudianus Mamertus, and Eriugena, to the contemporary texts of Gilbert of Poitiers, Thierry of Chartres, anonymous logical handbooks, Gilbert Crispin³⁶, and the Hermetical commentaries of the 12th century³⁷. In that sense, the variety of influences, methods, and scholastic interests in Alan's work poses a problem regarding the general character of his theology. The question, thus, is how to interpret Alan's Trinitarian theology and its relation to the liberal arts in the context of such a literary and methodologically diverse corpus?

The *status quaestionis* regarding the place of the *trivium* in Alan's theology has provoked large disagreement among scholars. Three broad lines of interpretations can be discerned in the secondary literature. The first one portrays Alan as a scholar who is not afraid of experimenting regarding the use both of sources and methods. The second one argues that Alan's use of the *trivium* in theology is dependent on a specific authority, either Boethius, Pseudo-Dionysius, Gilbert of Poitiers, or Thierry of Chartres. The third is the systematic interpretation which has tried to organize Alan's rich corpus under one general principle.

The first line consists of the interpretations of d'Alverny and Valente. D'Alverny states that despite the presence of the arts of logic and grammar in Alan, what primarily characterizes his work is his eagerness to experiment with different methods and sources³⁸. D'Alverny argues that the liberal arts for Alan are "servants of God in the world, whose nature is to prepare man for the perfect knowledge which only faith can attain"³⁹. In the same track, while acknowledging Alan's membership to the Porretan school, Luisa Valente argues that Alan's

³⁶ *The Works of Gilbert Crispin. Abbot of Westminster*, ed. Gillian Rosemary Evans and Anna Sapir Abulafia (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), xxvii.

³⁷ Paolo Lucentini, "L'Asclepius ermetico nel secolo XII", in *From Athens to Chartres. Neoplatonism and Medieval Thought. Studies in Honour of Edouard Jeuneau*, ed. Haijo Jan Westra (Leiden: Brill, 1992), 398-420.

³⁸ d'Alverny, *Textes*, 29.

³⁹ d'Alverny, *Textes*, 67.

work exhibits more interest in contemporary developments in theology and logic than following Gilbert's doctrine *à la lettre*⁴⁰.

In the second interpretation, some scholars have emphasized the influence of Boethius from Alan's axiomatic theology. For instance, Andreas Niederberger⁴¹, Jean Châtillon⁴², Carlo Chiruco⁴³, and Metchild Meyer⁴⁴ have argued that Alan's theological model is based on the axiomatic writings available during his time – most notably Boethius' *De Hebdomadibus* and the *Book of the 24 Philosophers*. Following Artur Landgraf, the late-12th century masters of theology have been classified in schools of thought based on doctrinal, methodological, and philosophical proximities⁴⁵. Gilbert of Poitiers is considered the head of the significant speculative theology and logic school and his followers and defenders are named either Porretan or Porretani⁴⁶. The *communis opinio* is that Alan of Lille belongs among the followers of Gilbert of Poitiers, either as a direct disciple or as someone influenced by Gilbert's theology. The most important, recent work in this line of thought is Alain de Libera's article on logic in the SQH. De libera contends that logic is the theme which unites Alan's theology. However, de Libera argues that Alan's theology is not directly influenced by Gilbert's writings but by Porretan logic. Alan's theory of supposition, the transferred nature of theological language,

⁴⁰ Luisa Valente, *Logique et théologie: les écoles parisiennes entre 1150 et 1220* (Paris: J. Vrin, 2008), 17-19.

⁴¹ Andreas Niederberger, "Von der Unmöglichkeit des 'translatio': Zur Bestimmung von Philosophie und Theologie als 'scientia' bei Alanus ab Insulis", in "*Scientia*" und "*Disciplina*": *Wissenschaftspraxis im 12. Jahrhundert*, ed. Rainer Berndt (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2002), 187-208.

⁴² Jean Châtillon, "La méthode théologique d'Alain de Lille," in *Alain de Lille, Gautier de Châtillon, Jakemart Gielée et leur temps*, ed. H. Roussel and F. Suard (Lille: Presses universitaires de Lille, 1980), 52-57.

⁴³ Carlo Chiurco, "Tra la teoresi e la prassi: Una possibile interpretazione della teologia in Alano di Lilla," in *Alain de Lille, le docteur universel, théologie et littérature au XIIe siècle, Actes du onzième. Colloque de la Société Internationale pour l'Étude de la Philosophie Médiévale*, ed. Jean-Luc Solère, Anca Vasiliu and Alain Galonnier (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 339-368.

⁴⁴ Mechthild Dreyer, *Razionalità scientifica e teologia nei secoli XI e XII*, trans. G. Reguzzoni (Milan: Jaca Book, 2001), 106-122.

⁴⁵ Artur Landgraf, *Introduction à l'histoire de la littérature théologique de la scolastique naissante*, trans. Louis B. Geiger (Montreal: Publications de l'Institut d'Études Médiévales, 1973), 22.

⁴⁶ See Luigi Catalani, *I Porretani: Una scuola di pensiero tra alto e basso Medioevo* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), 20-50. For a summary of the historiography of the School of Gilbert, Alan's place in it, and other late 12th century members.

semantic conformity and similitude, and the ontological foundation of the appellative nouns are, in his opinion, of Porretan origin⁴⁷. Christian Trottman, however, maintains that Thierry of Chartres is the source for some of Alan's trinitarian arguments⁴⁸.

Lastly, Eileen Sweeney is the only scholar of late who has attempted to interpret Alan's theological work systematically. She argues that Alan writes according to the metaphor of "fighting fire with fire". The reason Alan has written such a diverse body of work, argues Sweeney, is because of his desire to use every available theological genre (poetry, commentary, gloss, or summa) to fight contemporary falsehoods and errors⁴⁹. Regarding the value of the arts in the SQH, Sweeney believes Alan's reception of the liberal arts in theology is rather negative. According to her, the arts in theology are the cause of their own obsolescence⁵⁰.

None of these interpretations are free of problems. Alan is not the first nor the only author in the late 12th century to write axiomatic theology. Since there are contemporary authors who also produced similar writings (e.gr. Nicholas of Amiens's *Ars Catholicae Fidei*, and to a lesser extent Prevostin of Cremona's *Summa Qui producit ventos*), and it is not possible to date with certainty any of the late 12th century axiomatic treatises, this interpretation's primary problem is to affirm without a solid ground that Boethius is the only source of Alan's axiomatic writing.

It is undeniable that Pseudo-Dionysius' theology plays an important role in the SQH and other Alan's writings. Alan's discussion of negative theology and ontology in SQH, and his

⁴⁷ Alain De Libera, "Logique et théologie dans la Summa 'quoniam homines' d'Alain de Lille," in *Gilbert de Poitiers et ses contemporains: Aux origines de la logica modernorum*, ed. Jean Jolivet and Alain de Libera (Naples: Bibliopolis, 1987), 446-450.

⁴⁸ Christian Trottman, "Unitas, aequalitas, conexio: Alain de Lille dans la tradition des analogies trinitaires mathématiques," in *Alain de Lille, le docteur universal*, 401-427.

⁴⁹ Eileen Sweeney, *Logic, Theology and Poetry in Boethius, Anselm, Abelard, and Alan of Lille: Words in the Absence of Things* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 128.

⁵⁰ Sweeney, *Logic, Theology, and Poetry*, 129.

explanation of the authority of Church in the *Summa contra hereticos*, for instance, are adaptations of Pseudo-Dionysius' ideas⁵¹. However, the influence of Pseudo-Dionysius in the *Regulae* is considerably less relevant in the SQH both in terms of negative theology and ontology. Moreover, Alan's knowledge of Pseudo-Dionysius is so idiosyncratic that it is possible he never read it or only had partial access to it⁵². Therefore, it makes more sense to affirm that Alan is *inspired* by Pseudo-Dionysius' theology instead of depending on his writings as a source of theology.

Thierry of Chartres is possibly one of the most important contemporary sources in Alan's theology. Alan is fond of quoting the Chartrian Trinitarian triad of *unitas-aequalitas-conexio* in all his major writings (the *Fide*, SQH, and the *Regulae*). In fact, Alan wrote a short Trinitarian text profoundly inspired by Thierry's *De Sex Dierum Operibus*⁵³. However, at least in the SQH, Alan characterizes the Thierry's triad as a pagan concept⁵⁴. Due to its origins, according to Alan, Thierry's Trinitarian theology has no place in orthodox theology and, consequently, no place in Alan's project in the SQH. The lack of development of a Chartrian inspired theology in Alan's work, unlike in the writings of the Archard of St. Victor, one of his contemporaries, is consistent with Alan's negative judgment of Thierry⁵⁵.

⁵¹ Alan of Lille. "Summa Contra Hereticos", in *Patrologiae cursus completus, series Latina* 210, ed. J.-P. Migne. Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1844-1866, 381B- 382D.

⁵² See Andreas Niederberger, "Les écrits dionysiens et le néoplatonisme d'Alain de Lille", 3-18; and Dominique Poirel, "Alain de Lille, héritier de l'école de Saint-Victor," in *Alain de Lille. Le docteur universel*, 59- 82. On the presence of Pseudo-Dionysius in the Porretan school, see Luigi Catalani's "La presenza dello Ps.-Dionigi nelle opere dei Porretani," in *Adorare Caelestia, Gubernare Terrena. Atti Del Colloquio Internazionale in Onore Di Paolo Lucentini (Napoli, 6-7 Novembre 2007)*, ed. Antonella Sannino, Pasquale Arfé, and Irene Caiazza Lacombe, Vol. 58 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 205-26. A good survey and assessment of Alan's notion of divine hierarchy, its debt to and divergence from Pseudo-Dionysius, and its influence in other 12th century authors is David Luscombe, "The Hierarchies in the Writings of Alan of Lille, William of Auvergne and St Bonaventure," in *Angels in Medieval Philosophical Inquiry. Their Function and Significance*, ed. Martin Lenz and Isabel Iribarren (Farnham: Ashgate, 2008), 15-19.

⁵³ D'Alverny, *Textes*, 252-262.

⁵⁴ SQH, 168.

⁵⁵ See David Albertson, "Achard of St. Victor (d. 1171) and the Eclipse of the Arithmetic Model of the Trinity," *Traditio* 67 (2012): 101-144.

The strong philosophical connection between Alan and Gilbert of Poitiers in some philosophical and theological topics is indisputable. Gilbert inspires Alan's theory of semantic conformity and similitude and his notion of mathematics⁵⁶. However, as de Libera himself explains, some important elements in Alan's use of logic are foreign to Gilbert and the *logica vetus*. For instance, the use of fallacy, the almost technical use of *supponere pro*, the *instantia*-technique, and the distinction between syncategorematic and categorematic terms, concepts to which I will return in the second chapter, are of non-Porretan origin⁵⁷. It is interesting to note, then, that despite the numerous sources and influences regarding methodology, and philosophical-theological content, Alan's theology is still described as Porretan in modern discussions.

Finally, Sweeney's interpretation is particularly problematic. While I agree with her assessment that Alan's reception of Boethius is not a rewriting, but an original interpretation of him, one of the purposes of this research will be to show the degree of Alan's commitment to the liberal arts in his strategy for writing theology. The "logicized grammar" approach in theology is not an obsession in the 12th century, as she argues, but rather it was believed to be, and this is especially clear in the SQH, the soundest method to produce orthodox theology⁵⁸. I will return to this point in the second chapter.

The different number of Alan's sources, as well as his ability to shift methods, attest to his "free spirit" of methodological experimentation and erudition. Thus, while my purpose here is

⁵⁶ John Marenbon, "Gilbert of Poitiers and the Porretans on Mathematics in the Division of the Sciences", in *"Scientia" und "Disciplina": Wissenschaft spraxis im 12. Jahrhundert*, 37-78.

⁵⁷ De Libera, "Logique et théologie dans la Summa 'quoniam homines' d'Alain de Lille", 455-456. The reference to the *Compendium Logicae Porretanum* is problematic. As C. J. Martin argues, there is much in the *Compendium* which does not depend on Gilbert. See Christopher J. Martin, "The Compendium logicae Porretanum: A Survey of Philosophical Logic from the School of Gilbert of Poitiers", *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen Âge Grec et Latin* 46 (1983): 20.

⁵⁸ Sweeney, *Logic, Theology, and Poetry*, 136.

not to explicitly argue against the inclusion of Alan as a member of the Porretani school, or any particular school for that purpose, my analysis will show that such a path not only obscures Alan's interpretation but also that there is enough evidence to put that long-standing argument into question – at least when it comes to his Trinitarian theology.

Chapter 1 - An Introduction to the Philosophical and Theological Sources of Alan of Lille's Trinitarian Theology of Personhood

In the late 12th century, Parisian speculative theology took a logical-grammatical turn. The Trinitarian theology of Alan of Lille, as well as that of Prevostin of Cremona, Peter of Poitiers, Peter of Chanter, and several contemporary anonymous writers display a prolific interest in resorting to grammatical and logical principles to analyze and solve theological problems. While Boethius' theological writings represent the most prominent source for Alan's logical-grammatical theology, the SQH also exhibits a great familiarity in contemporary discussions in logic and grammar. Any study of Alan's Trinitarian contributions becomes unviable without a proper understanding of Alan's sources, in terms of his concepts as well as his method, and of the preceding discussions on Trinitarian personhood. In what follows, then, I will describe the most important logical and grammatical notions, approaches, and conversations on Trinitarian theology which informed Alan's doctrine of personhood.

The structure of this chapter will follow in three parts. First, I will establish the medieval theological problem of the Trinity. Since the issue of explaining how the plurality of divine persons can also be a single essence is at the heart of the theological debate in the 12th century, it is essential to at least delineate the significant trends which were discussed, and the methodologies which were employed in the debate. Second, I will address the most crucial characteristic of Alan's theological method – his weaving together logical and grammatical theory in theology – to which we will return in the second chapter as we analyze the content of Alan's theology in greater detail. Third, I will examine Boethius' explanation of the nature of theological language and his concept of Trinitarian *persona*. Since Alan's theory is grounded in Boethius' approach, and his own definition of personhood stems from a modification of

Boethius', it seems necessary to sketch Boethius' view on these two topics. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to indicate the Trinitarian problems and above all the analytical tools which Alan employed to tackle them.

The Inherited Theological Problem

The first canon of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) describes the orthodox, approved vocabulary to express God and the inner life of the Trinity in the following manner:

“We firmly believe and openly confess that there is only one true God, eternal and immense, omnipotent, unchangeable, incomprehensible, and ineffable, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; three Persons indeed but one essence, substance, or nature absolutely simple; the Father (proceeding) from no one, but the Son from the Father only, and the Holy Ghost equally from both, always without beginning and end. The Father begetting, the Son begotten, and the Holy Ghost proceeding; consubstantial and coequal, co-omnipotent and coeternal, the one principle of the universe, Creator... This Holy Trinity in its common essence undivided and in personal properties divided”⁵⁹.

In Pope Innocent III's declaration of faith, the divine unity is described as an essence, substance, or an absolutely simple nature (*una essentia substantia seu natura simplex omnino*)⁶⁰. The canon gives the impression that the three terms are interchangeable and equal. A few lines later, the text stipulates that the divine essence is common to all persons. On the other hand, it defines the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit as equal persons (*personae*) and sets up the basic details of their personal properties and the nature of their relationship to one

⁵⁹ Henry Joseph Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary*, (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1937), 236.

⁶⁰ *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, ed. Josepho Alberigo, (Bologna: Istituto per le scienze religiose, 1973), 227-271.

another – the Father is *generans*, the Son *nascens*, and the Holy Spirit *procedens* from both the Father and Son. Moreover, the Lateran creed determines that predicates like omnipotent, eternal, and creator are to be said of the three persons but not exclusively of one. Finally, the issue of the nature of the Holy Spirit’s relationship to the other two trinitarian persons, whether the Holy Spirit proceeds from both Father and Son, or only from the Father, was settled and with it, although only provisionally, the Latin position on the *Filioque* controversy.

The purpose of the first canon of Lateran IV is to authoritatively resolve many of the issues debated in late 12th century Trinitarian theology⁶¹. In previous decades, medieval theologians discussed how the terms substance, nature, and person should be correctly employed to describe the divine essence. However, the first canon does much more than settling trinitarian issues – it is also a window to many of the inaccuracies of 12th century trinitarian discourse. Are we to agree that the Holy Spirit is, like the Father, a creator of the world? Moreover, in what sense ought we to understand the statement? Despite stating what would be evident for any medieval theologian, the text says very little about the meaning of *persona*. Concretely, the canon does not deal with the issue of *how* the three persons, each with their own set of individual properties, are identical in substance. The lack of an explanation is unsurprising, not only because the canon is not a scholastic text itself, but also because the articulation of *persona* in plural and *essence* in singular was a highly technical and complex theological issue in the early middle ages and during the 12th century.

As we can gather from Lateran IV, Trinitarian issues were at the center of the intellectual and philosophical debate in 12th century France. From the fact that there was a high number of

⁶¹ Fiona Robb, “The Fourth Lateran Council’s Definition of Trinitarian Orthodoxy”, *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 48 (1997): 22-43.

theological works produced during the last decades of the twelfth century, it can be deduced that late 12th and early 13th century Christian thinkers believed that they now could solve one of the issues which had troubled Christian philosophers and medieval theologians for centuries: how to think about the Trinitarian persons without compromising the divine simplicity of God. In what follows, then, I will delineate some of the most salient tendencies and issues of the debate in early medieval theology which constitute the background of not only the first canon of Lateran IV, but also of Alan's Trinitarian theology of personhood in the *Summa*.

The early medieval development of the Trinitarian doctrine is a remarkably complex issue. Due to the still unedited or partially edited state of numerous mid and late 12th century theological *summae*, the sheer size of the material, and also a lack of modern research on it, this summary must be schematic. The purpose of this review, however, will be to stress the origin and the continuity across centuries of specific discussions, issues, and methodological approaches which informed late 12th century Trinitarian theology and Alan's. In that sense, the synopsis will focus on ideas and concepts which later, in the second chapter, will be relevant to understand Alan's trinitarian arguments and approach.

Medieval Trinitarian theology begins appropriately with Alcuin in the early 9th century. Alcuin follows the orthodox Trinitarian tradition in affirming that although the personal properties of each person are indeed different, the three persons are of one divine essence. Relying on Augustine's authority, Alcuin distinguishes in his *On the Faith of the Holy and Undivided Trinity* between substantial (*ad se*) and relative predication (*ad aliquid*). The distinction itself allows Alcuin to indicate that although relative predication — about personal and relative

properties — gives the impression of being accidental in nature, this is not the case⁶². Moreover, he affirms that relative statements about God or those containing attributes which are traditionally used to describe creatures (v.gr. God is just) should be understood non-literarily as metaphors. On the contrary, only statements which say something about God's essence are proper and literal accounts of the divine. However, as others have already shown, Alcuin does not satisfactorily explain how the same essence can manifest different personal properties and their corresponding operations, nor why it is true that relative statements are metaphorical⁶³.

A generation later, challenge and criticism to Alcuin's Trinitarian theology came from the Carolingian Gottschalk. Interestingly, Gottschalk is one of the first medieval Latin theologians who appealed to the *trivium* in order to solve Trinitarian issues and attain theological accuracy. Gottschalk insisted that grammatical analysis could provide the key to understanding misconceptions about the Trinity. This can be appreciated, for instance, in his analysis of the expression "deitas trina et una (est)". Gottschalk urges the reader to make a clear grammatical distinction between *trinus* and *triplex*. In his view, those that know the art of grammar can understand that the term *trina*, despite suggesting a certain plurality, means singularity, while the term *triplex* denotes substantial multiplicity⁶⁴. Once this distinction is clear enough, it is possible to maintain without the risk of committing heresy both that God is one and three persons and that the three persons are one God.

⁶² Edmund J. Fortman, *The Triune God: A Historical Study of the Doctrine of the Trinity* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972), 166.

⁶³ Lauge O. Nielsen, "Trinitarian Theology from Alcuin to Anselm", in *The Oxford Handbook of the Trinity*, ed. Gilles Emery and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 158.

⁶⁴ Jean Jolivet, *Godescalc d'Orbais et la Trinité. Méthode de la théologie à l'époque carolingienne* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1958), 47-48.

By the end of the 11th century, Trinitarian debates and their relationship with grammar and logic would once again resurface – specifically in the dispute between Anselm of Canterbury and Roscelin of Compiègne. In 1090, according to Anselm, Roscelin argues that:

“If the three persons in God are only one thing (*res*)—and are not three things, each one [existing] separately in itself (as do three angels or three souls) and yet [existing] in such way that they are wholly the same in will and power—then the Father and the Holy Spirit were incarnate with the Son”⁶⁵.

Anselm complains that Roscelin’s novel claims about the Trinity were putting in danger the orthodoxy of the Trinitarian dogma and therefore he felt the need to defend it. Anselm proceeds to challenge Roscelin by analyzing the semantic content of the word “thing”. Although he complains about the abuse of logic (*dialectica*) in theology, his strategy is to dispute Roscelin by deferring to the *trivium*⁶⁶. In that sense, this dispute marks the beginning of a century-long, rich history of logic and grammar as the tool to solve theological controversies. Anselm argues that Roscelin’s arguments are problematic because, on the one hand, if by “thing” Roscelin suggests “substances”, this would mean that there are three gods. On the other hand, if by “wholly the same” Roscelin insinuates a lack of distinction among the divine persons, then the divine persons would be identical. For our purposes, what is relevant is that, for Anselm, unorthodox theological statements stem from equivocation, that is, from the bad use of logic⁶⁷. Thus, Anselm’s rejection of his opponent’s contentions relies on a semantic analysis of the key terms and of the logical and theological implications that follow from them.

⁶⁵ “Epistola de incarnatione verbi”, in *Anselm of Canterbury*, ed. and trans. Jasper Hopkins and Herbert Richardson, 2nd ed. (New York: E. Mellen, 1975), 265.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, 260-270.

⁶⁷ Nielsen, “Trinitarian Theology from Alcuin to Anselm”, 163.

Anselm's central place in the early phase of long 12th century Trinitarian theology is not only due to his belief in the value of semantic criticism. His Trinitarian arguments are relevant as well since he was perhaps the first person who explicitly posited the centrality – and difficulty – of a proper understanding of the concept of personhood. Regarding the complexity of understanding how and in what sense the divine Threeness is three, Anselm comments in the *Monologion* that:

“Indeed, [this Being is] one and a oneness by virtue of one essence; but I do not know by virtue of what three it is trine and a trinity. For although I can speak of a trinity because of the Father, the Son, and their Spirit, who are three, nevertheless I cannot in a single word name that by virtue of which they are three (as if I were to say “[a Trinity] by virtue of three persons,” as I might say “a oneness by virtue of one substance”)⁶⁸.

The difficulty consists in coming up with a concept of divine personhood which allows one to articulate the distinct individuality of each person, the relationships among the three persons, and the unity of substance altogether. The problem is that if the Son is the Divine Essence as much as the Father and the Holy Spirit are, any careless theologian could wrongly infer that the persons' identity of substance means the identity of personal properties of all three persons⁶⁹. In other words, that each person possesses the same properties. In that regard, Anselm's recognition of the importance of finding a lucid definition of the concepts of personal property will constitute a challenge throughout the rest of the 12th century. His cautionary

⁶⁸ “Monologion”, in *Anselm of Canterbury*, ed. and trans. Jasper Hopkins and Herbert Richardson, 2nd ed. (New York: E. Mellen, 1975), 85.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 54-55.

reflection on the philosophical meaning of the key concepts in Trinitarian theology will have a programmatic air for the future decades.

Next to Anselm, Peter Abelard is a prominent figure in the development of grammatical and logical Trinitarian approach. The reasons lie not so much in the content of Abelard's Trinitarian theology, but in his theological approach. In an analysis of Abelard's theology, Marcia Colish has shown that Abelard's treatment of the crucial Trinitarian concepts *substantia*, *essentia*, and *persona*, is exceedingly unclear. For instance, he sometimes equates *essentia* with *persona* while at others he connects *substantia* with *persona* without clarifying what each term means and what is their relationship in each context⁷⁰. However, Abelard's often-repeated invocation to apply philosophical understanding to theological problems would continue to resonate during the course of the twelfth century. A passage of the *Story of His Misfortunes* provides the most illuminating example of the relation between the liberal arts and theology in Abelard's project:

“Now it happened that I first applied myself to expounding the basis of our faith using analogies based on human reason, and I composed a treatise on the theology of the Divine Unity and Trinity for the use of my students who were asking for human and philosophical reasons and who were demanding something intelligible rather than mere words. In fact, they said that words were superfluous if understanding could not follow them, that nothing could be believed unless it was first understood, and that it was absurd for anyone to preach to others what neither he nor those he taught could grasp in the intellect: The Lord himself criticized the blind who are leaders of the blind”⁷¹.

⁷⁰ Marcia Colish, *Peter Lombard*, Vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 97-98.

⁷¹ Peter Abelard, *The Letter Collection of Peter Abelard and Heloise*, edited with a Revised Translation by David Luscombe After the Translation by Betty Radice (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2013), 550.

Abelard's application of philosophical tools to understand the *sacra pagina*, that is, his enthusiasm for pagan authorities and most specifically the *trivium*, has been defined as the process of comprehending the authority via the means of reason⁷². As Abelard himself says, philosophical analysis can play an important role in theology since, although not necessarily, Christian faith can be based on philosophical reason to reach certitude⁷³.

Another vital point in which Abelard constitutes a crucial figure for late 12th century debate in speculative Trinitarian theology is the concept of theology as transferred or translated language (*translatio/transumptio*). Constant J. Mews and Eileen C. Sweeney have drawn attention to Abelard's interest in understanding the rules of logic and grammar in the context of theological discussions⁷⁴. Abelard's strategy is to confront theological problems by pointing to how the meaning of words denoting ordinary things changes when applied to Trinitarian discourse⁷⁵. We will return to the topic of theological translations in the next section of this chapter. For now, it is sufficient to mention that the central idea of *translatio* is that when the meaning of words from everyday use are transferred to theological subjects like God and the Trinity, the same words change their original semantic content.

⁷² Jean Jolivet, *Arts du langage et théologie chez Abélard* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1982), 231-233.

⁷³ "Surely no discerning person forbids investigating and discussing our faith by means of reasons. One does not rationally agree to things that were doubtful without first setting out a reason why one has to agree. When that reason produces faith in something doubtful, it truly becomes what you call an argument. Certainly, controversy arises in every discipline, both about the text and about the view. And in any battle of disputation, a declared truth of reason is stronger than pointing to an authority", translation in *Ethical Writings: Ethics and A Dialogue between a Philosopher, a Jew, and a Christian by Peter Abelard*, trans. Paul V. Spade (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1995), 99.

⁷⁴ Constant J. Mews, *Abelard and Heloise* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 111.

⁷⁵ Peter Abelard, *Theologia 'summi boni'. Corpus christianorum (continuatio mediaevalis)*, Vol. 13, ed. Eligius M. Buytaert and Constant Mews (Turnhout: Brepols, 1987), 141.

Logic and Grammar in Medieval Speculative Theology

By the late 11th century, the theology of the Trinity became a scholastic and speculative problem. As Peter Gemeinhardt explains, late 11th century authors were no longer content with merely quoting Augustine or the New Testament when dealing with Trinitarian issues⁷⁶. Although theological interest in linguistic analysis is not an exclusive feature of late 12th century theology, the richer impetus with which it was conducted is. For instance, as we have already seen, Peter Abelard carried out logical and linguistic studies of theological and Trinitarian problems⁷⁷. Likewise, Gilbert of Poitiers develops in his commentaries to Boethius' *Opuscula sacra* what John Marenbon has named a “contextual theory of meaning”, that is a method in which theological problems are resolved by paying close attention to the meaning of concepts in their literary context⁷⁸. However, Chenu has convincingly shown that Parisian theological writings from last four decades of the twelfth century exhibit formerly unseen levels of the usage of logical and grammatical concepts⁷⁹.

As the recovery of ancient and late-antique philosophy gained speed in 12th century Paris, especially Aristotle's new logical works (*logica nova*)⁸⁰, Parisian theologians increasingly realized that pagan logical conceptual tools could be adopted to explain the mystery of the Trinity more satisfactorily. The object of theology for late 12th century masters, then, is the language in which the mystery of God is revealed. Consequently, the methodology used to

⁷⁶ Peter Gemeinhardt, “Logic, Tradition, and Ecumenics. Developments of Latin Trinitarian Theology between c. 1075 and c. 1160”, in *Trinitarian Theology in the Medieval West*, ed. Pekka Kärkkäinen (Vaajakoski: Gummerus Kirjapaino oy, 2008), 11.

⁷⁷ Peter Abelard, *Theologia ‘summi boni’*, 51-87, 179-195.

⁷⁸ John Marenbon, “Gilbert of Poitiers's Contextual Theory of Meaning and the Hermeneutics of Secrecy” in *Logic and Language in the Middle Ages. A volume in Honor of Sten Ebbesen*, ed. J.L. Fink, H.Hansen and A. M. Mora-Márquez (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 49-64.

⁷⁹ Marie-Dominique Chenu, *La théologie au douzième siècle* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1976), 100-110.

⁸⁰ See Bernard G. Dod, “Aristotle latinus”, in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy. From the Rediscovery of Aristotle to the Disintegration of Scholasticism 1100–1600*, ed. Norman Kretzmann, Anthony Kenny, Jan Pinborg (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 45-79. For a general survey of the circulation of the *logica nova* before 1200.

solve this mystery was logical-grammatical. Giuseppe Angelini describes the novel attempts to tackle Trinitarian issues from a logical and linguistic perspective as “grammatical theology”⁸¹. The term suggests an approach which is almost exclusively preoccupied with the analysis of the syntax and meaning of theological language while exhibiting a certain indifference towards biblical authorities⁸². Angelini’s term is misleading, for Alan’s method applies logical concepts as much as grammatical ones. In fact, as we will see in the second chapter, Alan’s method is closer to logic than grammar in regards to the problem of personhood.

In Alan’s trinitarian theology of personhood, two concepts from the disciplines of logic and one from speculative grammar are of great relevance. The first logical one is the concept of fallacy. Although the terminology is never consistent during the late 12th century, as sometimes it is called *fallacia* and sometimes *sophisma*, the fact is that theology masters consistently relied on the argument from univocation, equivocation, and composition and division to analyze and solve Trinitarian problems⁸³. The first medieval source on the concept of fallacy is Aristotle’s *On Sophistical Refutations*, of which a Latin translation circulated in Paris for the first time around the year 1120⁸⁴. As Aristotle explains, fallacies are refutations which only appear to be syllogistic arguments but are false deductions. These refutations are either called sophistical refutations or fallacies, and there are six in number (equivocation, ambiguity, combination, division, accent, and form of expression)⁸⁵. As Aristotle elucidates, the condition of being

⁸¹ Giuseppe Angelini, *L'ortodossia e la grammatica. Analisi di struttura e deduzione storica della teologia trinitaria di Prepositino* (Rome: Università Gregoriana, 1972), 10.

⁸² Fiona Robb, *The Development of Academic Theology on the Trinity in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Century* (Ph.D. diss., University College London, London, 1993), 5.

⁸³ Valente, L., “*Fallaciae* et théologie pendant la seconde moitié du XII^e siècle”, in *Medieval Analysis of Language and Cognition. Acts of the symposium The Copenhagen School on History of Medieval Philosophy*, ed. Sten Ebbesen and Russell L. Friedmann (Copenhague: Munksgaard, 1999), 207-227.

⁸⁴ Dod, “Aristotle latinus”, 46.

⁸⁵ Aristotle, *On Sophistical Refutations*, in Aristotle. *On Sophistical Refutations. On Coming-to-be and Passing Away. On the Cosmos*, trans, E. S. Forster (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955), 164a-165b.

apparent proofs of refutations resides in the ambiguity of terms – that is, in the fact that the addressee of a refutation is unaware that a term has several meanings in the argument⁸⁶.

As previous studies have reported, the recourse to fallacies became significant in 12th century philosophy⁸⁷. The influence the doctrine of fallacy in theology is also significant and can be seen in three late 12th century textbooks. The *Fallaciae magistri Willelmi*, the *Fallaciae in sacra pagina* (still unedited), and Peter the Chanter's *De tropis loquendi* are cases of highly specialized textbooks on how to classify, explain, and provide examples on the use of fallacies in speculative theology⁸⁸. The influence of these textbooks can be perceived not only in the writings of Alan of Lille, of which we will see more in detail in the second chapter, but likewise in his contemporaries, Odo of Soissons and Peter of Poitiers. As several studies have confirmed, this group of theologians saw in the theory of fallacy, especially those of equivocation and univocation, and composition and division, a critical tool to analyze and solve Trinitarian issues⁸⁹.

The second concept which Alan employs in his Trinitarian writings to tackle doctrinal problems is that of *suppositio*. Early medieval scholars distinguished between a common noun's (*nomen appellativum*) signification and its reference. The preferred term was *appellare* in its early development. Ebbesen has proved that in the late 11th century Anselm designed for the first time the technical distinction that between *appellatio* (reference) and *significatio* (meaning)⁹⁰.

⁸⁶ Aristotle, *On Sophistical Refutations*, 167a.

⁸⁷ LM I, 152-178; Valente, L., “*Fallaciae* et théologie pendant la seconde moitié du XII^e siècle”, 207-210; Maria-Luisa Rivero, “Early Scholastic Views on Ambiguity: Composition and Division”, *Historiographia Linguistica* 2 (1975): 25-47.

⁸⁸ Valente, “*Fallaciae* et théologie pendant la seconde moitié du XII^e siècle”, 220-223.

⁸⁹ LM I, 164.

⁹⁰ Sten Ebbesen, “Early Supposition Theory (12th-13th Century)”, *Histoire Épistémologie Langage* 198 (1981): 36.

In the last decades of the 12th century, however, as de Rijk has shown, the terminology concerning reference shifted from *appellatio-appellare* into the *suppositio-supponere pro*.

The concept of supposition and its cognates designate those individuals which a term denotes. As Lia Formigari has put it, supposition “is the sense of the word in context, while signification is its abstract meaning”⁹¹. Thus, from the point of signification, a term is univocal (it has one meaning), but from the point of view of supposition, a term refers to the individual in various ways. For instance, the common noun “horse” signifies the universal nature (i.e., the species) but in a sentence it stands for the specific individual horse⁹².

12th century logicians thought they could make use of supposition theory to solve sophisms and fallacies in logic⁹³. As we will see later, there is ample evidence to prove that this is also the case in Alan’s Trinitarian theology. For example, drawing on Porretan theological sources and other contemporary authors, Luisa Valente and Sten Ebbesen have illustrated how mid to late 12th century theologians introduced supposition theory into theological discussions with the intended goal of clarifying Trinitarian misconceptions⁹⁴. We will see in the second chapter an example of the use of supposition theory in the SQH.

The third relevant concept in Alan’s theology is that of *consignificatio*. The concept originates from the grammatical textbooks of late-antiquity. There is a consensus among specialists that the term(s) *consignificatio* and its cognate(s) *consignificare* initially had two different

⁹¹ Lia Formigari, *A History of Language Philosophies* (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 2004), 71-72.

⁹² L. M. De Rijk, “The Origins of the Theory of Properties of Terms”, in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*, 164-168.

⁹³ Ebbesen, “Early Supposition Theory (12th-13th Century)”, 39.

⁹⁴ Sten Ebbesen, “The Semantics of the Trinity According to Stephen Langton and Andrew Sunesen” in *Gilbert de Poitiers et ses contemporains*; Luisa Valente, “Supposition Theory and Porretan Theology: Summa Zwettlensis and Dialogus Ratii et Everardi”, in *Medieval Supposition Theory Revisited*, ed. E.P. Bos (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

meanings — one syntactic and the other semantic⁹⁵. The first meaning is found in Priscian's *Institutiones grammaticae*, where it is explained that syncategorematic words co-signify by completing the meaning of a sentence⁹⁶. For instance, prepositions and conjunctions convey no meaning in themselves. However, when syncategorematic are combined to other words, verbs or nouns, they complete the meaning of said words. The second meaning comes from Boethius's second commentary on *De Interpretatione*. The late-antique philosopher employs *consignificatio* to refer to the different temporal aspects of a verb⁹⁷. For example, in the sentence “the woman runs”, the verb “runs” consignifies the present time besides the primary meaning of running.

Scholars began to use the concept to mean that terms have a secondary meaning besides its principal semantic content by the 12th century. For 12th century theologians, the theory of *consignificatio* became relevant in the contextual analysis of appellative nouns. Very often, determining which meaning comes first relied upon the morphological traits of a word. At other times, it was resolved that the stress which must be put on one of the two meanings in a specific sentence depends on the context of the word. A generation before Alan, Peter Lombard developed his own method of distinguishing meaning to the essence or to personhood based on the grammatical features of Trinitarian terms⁹⁸. Rosier-Catach has traced the development of the concept of *consignificatio* in late 12th and early 13th century theology and has shown that

⁹⁵ Hannah Rosén, “*Consignificare* and *Possemainein*. Revaluation of a Grammatical Term”, *Historiographia linguistica* 16 (1989): 225-232.

⁹⁶ Priscian, *Prisciani institutionum grammaticalium librorum XVII et XVIII*, ed. Cirilo Garcia Roman, Marco A. Gutierrez Galindo, Maria del Carmen Diaz de Alda Carlos (Hildesheim: Olms-Weidmann, 1999), XVII, 10.

⁹⁷ Boethius, *Commentarii in librum Aristotelis Perihermeneias I–II*, ed. C. Meiser (Leipzig: Teubner, 1877–1880), 65-66.

⁹⁸ Peter Lombard, *Magistri Petri Lombardi Parisiensis episcopi Sententiae in IV libris distinctae*, ed. Ignatius Brady (Grottaferrata: Spicilegium Bonaventurianum, 1971-1981), I, 25, 2. See Nikolaus Haring, “Petrus Lombardus und die Sprachlogik in der Trinitätslehre der Porretanerschule”, *Miscellanea Lombardiana* (1957): 113-127.

consignificatio and *suppositio* were closely linked, and often conflated in speculative theology⁹⁹.

Alan's Reception of Boethius

Father Chenu described the long 12th century theology as an *aetas boetiana*¹⁰⁰. While Andreas Speer has recently criticized the assessment for belittling the influence of other medieval thinkers, the influence of Boethius' writings in the twelfth century theology is ubiquitous¹⁰¹. His influence can be demonstrated with particular intensity in two crucial aspects in Alan's SQH. The first one concerns Alan's discussion of the unique nature of theological language. More specifically, the related problems of applying the Aristotelian predicaments to God and the Trinity, and the transferred or translated nature of theological language. The second one involves Alan's definition of the concept of Trinitarian personhood. In the next paragraphs, I will discuss these two topics. First, the related issues of the transfer of philosophical categories and concepts to theology, and then Boethius' definition of personhood.

Late 12th century Christian thinkers were painfully aware that any Trinitarian account of personhood ought to avoid confusing the meaning "person" when it is employed to describe natural things with the one it should have when employed in divine matters. This predicament amounts to the issue of how to apply the Aristotelian categories (*predicamenta*) in divine discourse. Boethius claimed that of the ten Aristotelian categories only those of "substance" and "relation" could be properly predicated of the Trinity. The reason the remaining eight

⁹⁹ Irene Rosier-Catach, "*Res significata et modus significandi*. Les enjeux linguistiques et théologiques d'une distinction médiévale", in *Sprachtheorien in Spätantike und Mittelalter*, ed. Sten Ebbesen (Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1995), 135-168.

¹⁰⁰ Chenu, *La théologie au XII^e siècle*, 142.

¹⁰¹ Andreas Speer, "The Hidden Heritage: Boethian Metaphysics and its Medieval Tradition", in *Metaphysica—sapientia—scientia divina*, ed. Pasquale Porro (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), 166, 171.

categories fall short is that they imply a subject of predication which can change and have accidents — the divine, simple nature of God transcends change and thus it is not subjected to any accidental properties. Accordingly, because God is a simple and unique being, He can be said to be a substance¹⁰². Divine persons can be described as substances for they too are individuals with distinct properties and some specific *differentiae*. Finally, “relation” in divine discourse is likewise permitted because the category in theology says nothing about the thing itself, in this case God or the Trinitarian persons, but instead indicates a disposition with another thing. In theology, this means only the relationship of one Trinitarian person to the other¹⁰³.

The problem of the Aristotelian predicaments is, therefore, linked to the issue of the transferred or translated nature of theology (*translatio in divinis*). During the second half of the 12th century, one of the most contested theological and philosophical debates was the nature of theological translations¹⁰⁴. In its medieval philosophical and theological meaning, the term *translatio* was employed when theologians wanted to elucidate the reasons and circumstances by which certain words or concepts appear to be properly predicated to the created realm, but not to God. The concept of theological *translatio* derives from the Roman rhetorical literature of Cicero and Quintilian. In its original classical Latin context, the term *translatio* denotes the rhetorical and grammatical trope of transferring or projecting the meaning of one word or concept to another for the sake of eloquence¹⁰⁵. Cicero, for example, defines metaphors as a *modus transferendi verbi*¹⁰⁶, and the late-antique and early medieval rhetorical texts would follow his authority closely. Accordingly, the transferal of meaning from a non-divine entity

¹⁰² Boethius, *De trinitate*, IV, in *Boethius' Theological Tractates and Consolation of Philosophy*, trans. and ed. H. F. Stewart, E. K. Rand, and S. J. Tester (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973).

¹⁰³ Boethius, *De trinitate*, V-VI.

¹⁰⁴ Chenu, *La théologie au douzième siècle*, 100-107.

¹⁰⁵ Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, 8, 3, 24; Cicero, *De Oratore*, 3, 38, 152.

¹⁰⁶ Cicero, *De Oratore*, 3, 38, 155-157.

to another non-divine entity (*translatio in naturalibus*) was believed to be founded upon the existence of a natural correspondence (*similitudo*) among the terms¹⁰⁷. In the metaphor “this person is brave as a lion”, for instance, the comparison between the lion and the person is warranted because both things (lion and human being) share a property, in this case, that of bravery¹⁰⁸.

The concept of *translatio* made its way to medieval theological discussions. In the *Theological Tractates*, Boethius concludes that the predicaments must be understood differently when used in theology¹⁰⁹. While Boethius speaks of a *mutatio* of the categories, later medieval discussions favored the term *translatio*¹¹⁰. Notwithstanding the different terminology, Boethius’ insight would remain highly influential in speculative theology. However, the act of projecting meaning from the created to the uncreated realm conveys philosophical problems. If the possibility of a *translatio* depends upon a certain correspondence among things, concepts, or words, then in theology, where there is no correspondence between created and uncreated things, a solution is needed to avoid theoretical and doctrinal inconsistencies. For instance, the expression *Deus est iustus* opens the question about the appropriateness of the new theological meaning of the concept of *iustitia* and about the specific manner in which the translation was made: can the sense of *iustitia* as it relates to created things express the true nature of divine justice? This means that concepts and words do not preserve their original and proper meaning

¹⁰⁷ Jolivet, *Arts du langage et théologie chez Abélard*, 63-75.

¹⁰⁸ Wanda Zemler-Cizewski, “From Metaphor to Theology: Proprium and Translatum in Cicero, Augustinus, Eriugena, and Abelard”, *Florilegium* 13 (1994): 37-52; Giles Constable, “Medieval Latin Metaphors” *Aviator* 38, 2 (2007): 1-20.

¹⁰⁹ *At haec cum quis in divinam verterit praedicationem, cuncta mutantur quae praedicari possunt*, Boethius, *De trinitate*, IV, 16.

¹¹⁰ The terminological change is perhaps due to the influence of Eriugena who in the 9th century argued that the names and attributes predicated of God are the results of a transference (*translatio*) of meaning from the created to the uncreated realm (*a creatura ad creatorem*).

in a theological context. Nevertheless, this does not amount to the complete abolition of the original meaning, but to regarding its new theological connotation as improper.

Now we move to the second issue — Boethius' definition of *persona*. Around the year 512 C.E. a letter from the East addressed to Pope Symmachus reached Rome. Read at an assembly, its content on Christology, as Boethius tells us in the introduction of *Contra Euthychen*, provoked loud and bitter protestations from all those attending¹¹¹. According to Boethius, Nestorians confess that there are two distinct persons in Christ. On the other hand, Eutychians believe that Christ's human nature was completely absorbed after the Incarnation. The purpose of Boethius' theological tractate then is to explain both parties' errors and to propose a solution to the problem of Christ' nature.

Before defining personhood, Boethius addresses the issue of nature. Boethius clarifies that nature can be predicated of every kind of substance and said in four different ways. The first sense of "nature" is predicated of every substance apprehended by the mind, i.e., substances and accidents, except for God, pure matter, and the soul. Although the most general in scope, the first definition is problematic when it comes to God, for He cannot be apprehended by the mind. Thus, the necessity to formulate another definition arise which can embrace Him and other incorporeal substances for theological discourse. The second sense of "nature" is that of things which can act or be acted upon. Unlike the first one, the second definition applies to substances and comprehends the soul and God. The third one is "nature" understood as the principle of motion inherent in things. Finally, the fourth sense is that specific difference which gives a form to something. "Nature" then is the special property which distinguishes one thing from the other.

¹¹¹ Boethius, *Contra Eutychen et Nestorium*, I, 74 in *Theological Tractates*.

Next, Boethius moves to define “person”. Boethius proceeds to eliminate as possible candidates those meanings of nature which seems unapt for the theological meaning of person. Boethius hints at the criteria of what the definition ought to be. Taking Christ as the standard of person, Boethius’ argumentation implies that only rational beings, whether corporeal or not, can be persons. This means that any definition must include both a corporeal and incorporeal substances. Moreover, the definition of personhood cannot be predicated apart from nature. Since Christ’s personhood is not accidental, Boethius affirms that the first meaning of nature is excluded. Boethius concludes then that only rational substances are persons and since this definition agrees with that of nature, then personhood is also what defines a substance. Now it is possible to understand Boethius definition of personhood as “an individual substance of rational nature (*naturae rationabilis individua substantia*)¹¹². Person is predicated only about rational, incorporeal and corporeal individuals but not about universals. Likewise, personhood functions as a form which gives individuality to particular substances. Thus, the definition embraces all the potential objects of theological discourse (God, the soul, the angels, and human beings) by laying the common essential characteristics to them.

Boethius’ divine personhood is squeezed in between the categories of relation and substance. A divine person is an individual substance (v.gr. Father) that, unlike created substances, shares its essence with the other divine persons. In that regard, the relation of each person to the others (v.gt. the Father to the Son) is the constituting element of its individual substance (v.gr. the Father *is* the Father because He has a Son). Thus, substance and relation are central to understand the nature of each divine person. However, the divine persons are not different from the divine unity of God. The three persons *are* the divine essence. Therefore, the task of a

¹¹² Boethius, *Contra Eutychen et Nestorium*, III, 171-172.

definition of personhood is to articulate the insight that a divine person is God, and, at the same time, it is what it is (v.gr. in the case of the Father, its fatherhood) in relation to the other divine persons.

The intellectual challenge lies in the fact that the categories of substance and relation refer to worldly or created objects, not to divine entities. *In naturalibus*, the reason why Socrates is different from Plato is that of the two, Socrates is subject to certain accidents which Plato is not (v.gr. baldness, ugliness, oldness). Thus, personal properties constitute substances but not relational properties. In Trinitarian theology, this is not the case. The issue in speculative theology is how personal properties can distinguish individual substances yet remain essentially the same. For instance, if the properties of the Father exclude that of the Son (v.gr. divine Power excludes Wisdom), then both persons would not be the same essence. Nevertheless, in orthodox theology the Father and the Son are the same essence.

As Daley has shown, the *Contra Euthychen* is molded in the fashion of highly technical, argumentative, and logically-oriented theology. In Byzantine philosophical theology, great stress was put on finding general definitions of key theological terms such as “nature” and *persona*¹¹³. However, this feature is also the source of some of the problems of Boethius’ definition. In the first place, the definition does not mention relationality. Boethius provides no means to explain the different ways in which each Trinitarian person relates to the others. For instance, how the Son relates to the Father and more importantly how it constitutes Sonhood from the relationship. Second, the dictum does not state in what manner each person is rational. Third, Boethius does not clarify the relationship between divine substance and person. In

¹¹³ Brian E. Daley, “Boethius's Theological Tracts and Early Byzantine Scholasticism,” *Medieval Studies* 46 (1984): 170-171.

Contra Euthychen, Boethius does not go beyond affirming that *persona* is always predicated on the divine substance as well. Finally, the definition places God and each Trinitarian person within a genus, that of rational incorporeal substances, when God has been traditionally described, including in Boethius¹¹⁴, as beyond substance¹¹⁵. Overall, the definition does not account for the unique character of each person, the common element of the three persons, and most importantly, does not illuminate the relation between personhood and the divine essence.

In this chapter, I surveyed the main trends in early medieval theology of personhood. Then, I presented the logical and grammatical theories which Alan applies in his theology of personhood. Finally, I discussed Boethius influence on Alan's project. I have tried to show that there was a long-standing commitment to employing concepts and theories from the liberal arts as analytical tools in the early medieval debate on the Trinity. The chapter's goal was to situate Alan's theology in its broader theological and philosophical context. Because of the vastness of the material covered, this chapter reads like a series of *essais de synthese* on the liberal arts and theology. In chapter two, I will go into much more detail when I examine Alan's application of the theories and methodologies which I covered in this chapter. By including different traditions from theology and philosophy, Alan's theology of personhood in SQH lies at the intersection of tradition and novelty and innovation and authority. That is the subject of the next chapter.

¹¹⁴ Boethius, *De trinitate*, IV, 18.

¹¹⁵ Bradshaw, "The Opuscula Sacra: Boethius and Theology", 121-122; J. W. Koterski, "Boethius and the Theological Origins of the Concept of Person", *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 78, 2 (Spring 2004): 221-222.

Chapter 2 - The Definition of Personhood and How to Write Proper Theology of Personhood

Despite Alan's remark that there is nothing new in his work which one could not find already in the writings of the Fathers¹¹⁶, we have suggested in the previous chapter that Alan's Trinitarian theology is heavily indebted to contemporary developments in logic and speculative grammar, as well as influenced by Boethius' Trinitarian writings. To prove that Alan's writing is state-of-the-art, it is time to turn our attention from Alan's framework to his Trinitarian theology.

At the beginning of part two of chapter one of the SQH, Alan draws a general classification of the traditionally employed terms to describe God and the Trinity. As Alan explains, there are terms which fall under the category of "essential" because they refer exclusively to God and do not consignify something else like one of the persons. Among the most famous are charity, God, essence, nature, and substance (*caritas, deus, essentia, natura, ousia, substantia*). There are also "coessential" terms (*cohessentialia*), which are those that add relations to the divine essence. These terms, like lord, cause, and origin (*dominus, causa, origo*) indicate a relationship between God and its creation. Then, there are terms which are "partially essential and partially personal" such as *persona* and *trinitas*. By "partially essential and personal", Alan has in mind, as he will later explain, names that refer both to God and one or all three persons. Finally, Alan classifies the terms Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (*pater, filius, spiritus sanctus*) under the label of *personalia*. These are the names which represent the personal property of each Trinitarian person¹¹⁷.

¹¹⁶ SQH, 129. See the appendix for a complete, English translation of the *prologus*.

¹¹⁷ SQH, 198-199.

Alan's classification raises a conceptual problem — how to make sense of all these different names? In other words, how to explain the nature of each Trinitarian term and the differences between them? The goal of Alan's Trinitarian theology, then, is to clarify the nature and scope of personhood through a logical and linguistic analysis of the terms which are employed in theological discourse. More specifically, Alan is interested in the first Trinitarian section of the SQH to explain, on the one hand, what is personhood, and, on the other, how some Trinitarian statements can be thought free of contradiction.

In the first subchapter, I will tackle the issue of Alan's definition of personhood and later the explanation of the different forms of writing Trinitarian theory. My treatment of this topic will include Alan's etymology of *persona* and his offered definitions of personhood. My primary objective is to show that Alan's theory of personhood incorporates the logical and grammatical conceptual tools which were introduced in the previous chapter. Further, I will show that Alan's concept, although based on Boethius, departs significantly from his authority. In the second subchapter, through some chosen examples, I will illustrate Alan's procedure on writing Trinitarian theology – refuting arguments and analyzing complex statements.

Alan's Definition of Trinitarian Personhood

In this subchapter, I will defend the thesis that Alan's Trinitarian theology of personhood is based on the concepts of *forma similitudinis/disssimilitudinis* and supposition. Also, I will claim that Alan's theory of personhood is a critique of the accepted Boethian definition. Although Vasoli and Piemonte have previously recognized both statements, these scholars

have done little to show what this change amounts to¹¹⁸. Thus, the overall goal of this section is to illustrate the manner in which Alan employs said concepts in this Trinitarian investigation.

Although Alan starts his investigation of *persona* first by discussing its differences with *essentia* and *substantia*, his study presupposes an already defined concept of personhood. Thus, it seems necessary to begin our investigation by unraveling the meaning of *persona*. Following the late-antique etymology of Placidus, Alan states that *persona* comes from *per se una*¹¹⁹. As Louis G. Kelly and Siegmund Schlossmann comment, the etymology permits connecting personhood with the concepts of *alteritas* and *pars una*, i.e., with concepts which determine individuality¹²⁰. Alan was keen on capitalizing on the intuition behind this etymology: *persona* makes reference to those characteristics which solely belong to something. How does Alan develop the insight? His argument is that this sense of personhood can be grasped by applying the conceptual pair of *forma similitudinis/dissimilitudinis* (which is of Porretan origin)¹²¹, the transferred nature of theological language, and the concept of consignification.

Alan begins by accepting the Boethius' definition of *persona*:

¹¹⁸ Cesare Vasoli, "La theologia apothetica di Alano di Lilla", *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia* 16 (1961): 286; F. Piemonte, "Filosofia e teologia nelle opere di Alano di Lilla: pluralità delle forme letterarie e unitarietà del sapere", (Ph.D. diss., University of Salerno, Salerno, 2014), 35.

¹¹⁹ SQH, 180. Maurice Nédoncelle, "*Prosopon et persona* dans l'antiquité classique. Essai de bilan linguistique", *Revue des Sciences Religieuses Année*, 22 (1948): 286. For the origins of this etymology.

¹²⁰ Siegmund Schlossmann, *Persona und πρόσωπον im Recht und im christlichen Dogma* (Leipzig: Lipsius & Tischer, 1906), 13; L. G. Kelly, *The Mirror of Grammar: Theology, Philosophy and the Modistae* (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 2002), 90.

¹²¹ Gilbert of Poitiers, *On Contra Eutychen* 3, 5, 272, in *Gilbert of Poitiers: The Commentaries on Boethius*, ed. Nikolaus Häring (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1966).

“Likewise, Boethius says that the definition of “person” is appropriate to God, man, and angel: an individual essence of a rational creature (*rationalis creature individua essentia*)”¹²².

Alan’s definition is a slight variation of Boethius’ original wording (“an individual substance of rational nature (*naturae rationalis individua substantia*)”). According to Alan, Boethius’ definition “has nothing of superfluous nor small”¹²³. However, Alan maintains that the correct term should be *essentia* rather than *substantia*. The reason is that *essentia*, and its Greek equivalent terms *hypostasis* and *ousia*, denote the most general of genres, i.e., God, and by extension the rational creatures apprehend by intellect¹²⁴. Although sometimes the Latins or even the Greeks employ substance to mean the most general of genera, Alan goes on, the term substance was in reality “discovered” to refer to things as subjects with accidents, that is, to concrete, material, individual things such as Plato and Socrates. The term “substance” does not allow for the “secondary substance” meaning. Thus, without forgetting that the Boethian definition designates the soul, the angels, human beings, and God, Alan believes the term *essentia* is preferable because it designates divine entities.

The Boethian definition similarly states that persons are, besides being rational creatures, individuals. The principle of individuation is a complex issue in late-antique and medieval philosophy. Alan follows Porphyry’s and Boethius’ theory of individuality to a certain extent¹²⁵. He argues that “individuality” refers to those properties which differentiate one thing from another. The heuristic tool to discover whether something is an individual is by employing

¹²² *Item dicit Boetius quod deffinitio persone convenit Deo et homini et angelo, hec scilicet: rationalis creature individua essentia*, SQH, 145.

¹²³ *Hec diffinitio nichil habet superfluum; nichil est in ea diminutum*, SQH, 172.

¹²⁴ SQH, 170-171.

¹²⁵ SQH, 173.

the categories of *forma similitudinis/dissimilitudinis*, which Alan attributes to the authority of Hilary (who in fact is Gilbert of Poitiers). The concept means those shared and unshared features among things. By shared features, Alan means the properties (both accidental and substantial) which make an individual similar to others. For instance, Socrates is like Plato on the base that both share the properties of being Greek, male philosophers. On the contrary, they are dissimilar because, of the two, only Socrates possesses some properties such as ugliness or baldness. From this one can move to the concept of species. Since both Socrates and Plato share a significant number of traits, both can be placed under the same species.

Whereas one can say that Socrates and Plato are individual substances of the same species, one cannot claim the same about God. Alan rejects the view that God can be said to be under a species¹²⁶. Since the Trinitarian persons are not composites of form and matter (they do not have accidents like Plato and Socrates), the divine persons cannot be considered substances in the ordinary sense. In short, the problem is that the Boethian concept of individuality has been constructed to understand commonalities and differences of non-divine individuals which do not partake of the same essence. How, then, to apply the concept of individuality in the understanding of Trinitarian persons? Alan recurs to the transferred nature of language to save the Boethian definition. After arguing that the Boethian definition applies to neither soul nor God¹²⁷, Alan states that a Trinitarian person is an individual because each person has a set of properties that makes him or it different from the other person. For instance, the Father's individual state (*individualis status*), that is, those properties which only He has (*paternitatis*, *innascibilitatis*), make Him different from the Holy Spirit¹²⁸. In this way, Alan thought he could

¹²⁶ SQH, 200.

¹²⁷ SQH, 173, 175.

¹²⁸ "This name "person" it is said transferred of the three persons. Person then says properly that which distinguishes from every other thing so that its substantial or accidental features are not found in the same things. What it is not found in the Father or in the Son or in the Holy Spirit. Although the Father differs from the Son in its own state, yet that which is substantially is not only of the Father but also is also of the Son and of the Holy Spirit... By this reason the Father or the Son or the Holy Spirit is said "person" because just as in natural

best understand the Boethian theory of trinitarian personhood as *quasi-individuals* with a specific set of properties¹²⁹.

Individuality, then, is based on those features which are not shared with others. The personal properties are what distinguish one divine person from the other. However, too much emphasis on personal differences and tritheism is dangerously close. How does one explain that, besides the common personal features, the persons and God are of one essence? In other words, the concept of *forma similitudinis/dissimilitudinis* seems to be useful to explain personal differences and similitudes in terms of properties but not to articulate person and essence. Alan's answer is the concept of *consignification*. Throughout the SQH, he states that *persona* refers first to the divine essence and second to the individual state of each person. Moreover, Alan introduces a historical element in the justification of consignification in Trinitarian theology: "It was necessary to the Catholics to come up with words by which to answer the unity of essence and the plurality of persons... Thus, they came up with the name "persona" which chiefly signifies essence, but consignifies the distinction of the persons"¹³⁰.

Alan considers that most Trinitarian statements have two different semantic references – the person in question and the divine essence. For example, Alan affirms that "when one says that

things a "person" has acquired its individual state or personal state out of the combination of its substantial or accidental features, by which it is distinguished from any other thing, so the Father gets its individual and proper state which it is understood out of the combination of what agrees with the Father, i.e. paternity, unborn, by which is distinguished from the Son and the Holy Spirit" (*Ad hoc dicendum est quod hoc nomen persona translative dicitur de tribus personis in trinitate sicut et alia nomina. Persona enim proprie dicit illud quod ita ab omni alia re distinguitur quod eius substantialia vel accidentalia eadem in alio non reperiuntur. Quod non reperitur in Patre vel Filio vel Spiritu Sancto. Quamvis enim Pater distinguitur a Filio suo proprio statu, tamen illud substantiale quod est Patris est Filii et Spiritus Sancti. Hac tamen ratione Pater vel Filius vel Spiritus Sanctus dicitur persona quia sicut in naturalibus persona suum individuum statum sive personalem contrahit ex concursu suorum naturalium et accidentalium per quem discernitur ab omni alia re, ita Pater habet suum proprium statum qui intelligitur ex concursu que conveniunt Patri, scilicet paternitatis, innascibilitatis, per quem discernitur a Filio et Spiritu Sancto*), SQH, 175.

¹²⁹ SQH, 180, 181.

¹³⁰ *Excogitaverunt ergo hoc nomen persona quod principaliter significat usiam, consignificat autem personarum distinctionem*, SQH, 180.

“the Son is wisdom begotten”, the term “begotten” is redundant in the subject and not in the predicate because “wisdom” here means essence”¹³¹. If the adjective “begotten” refers to the Son, the statement becomes redundant because by definition the Son is begotten. Nevertheless, if “begotten” refers to wisdom, the statement makes sense, Alan believes, because instead it is being affirmed that wisdom is a property of the divine essence. The concept of consignification is necessary to understand that the divine names and the Trinitarian properties they describe operate somehow differently *in divinis*. Consignification, therefore, is Alan’s solution to the question about identity of the unity of essence and plurality of persons.

For Alan, the reception of Boethius’s Trinitarian theology is of crucial significance, albeit an insufficient one. While Alan embraces many of *Contra Euthychen*’s features, most notably the definition of *persona* and the general framework of theology as transferred language, Boethius’ quest for a general definition of personhood and divine essence is not received uncritically. Nevertheless, rather than discard it thoroughly, Alan’s central theses on personhood are built on the Boethian legacy. Alan’s central arguments on these topics are that *persona* means that which makes a person different from the others — or as it is named in the *Summa*, the “individual status”, the form of dissimilitude of each person, or that which is of each (*per se una*)¹³². This seems to me to be a clarification of the second aspect of the Boethian definition of personhood expressed in 12th century terminology. Furthermore, regarding the relationship between personhood and divine substance, Alan affirms that Trinitarian predication refers first to the substance and then to the persons. In Alan’s explanation, the consignification of *persona* allows Trinitarian discourse to articulate at once the plurality of persons and the simplicity of the divine substance without compromising the nature of each.

¹³¹ *Cum dicitur Filius est sapientia genita, hoc nomen genita redundat in suppositum et non in appositum, quia hoc nomen sapientia ibi significat essentiam*, SQH, 179.

¹³² SQH, 172, 177, 180-181.

Writing Trinitarian Theology

Alan's Trinitarian account on personhood is not limited to the enterprise of defining it. It offers also an interpretation of how to identify mistakes, errors, and puzzling assertions regarding the use of personhood. Often, Alan is prone to establishing general rules on how to correctly employ theological terms – a tendency which will be actualized some years later in the *Regulae*. As it was announced at the beginning of the chapter, in what follows I will focus on Alan's method to solve Trinitarian complexities on personhood. Since a large section of Alan's account is devoted to correcting various mistakes in Trinitarian theology, I will mainly pay attention to examples which demonstrate the employment of logical and grammatical tools. I will choose and analyze three example of Alan's logical-grammatical procedure; one instance for each type of philosophical tool – that of the fallacy of univocation, supposition, and consignification – in his treatment of personhood. I will suggest that Alan's treatment of the logical-grammatical tools mentioned in chapter one illustrates the intersection of the *trivium* and theology. Next, I will conclude that Alan was not always successful in employing said philosophical and grammatical tools.

Let us examine the case of the “fallacy of univocation” first. Alan ask whether it is possible to affirm that since the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one, are they not different?¹³³ Because the concept of “difference” is misleading, the authorities, according to Alan, are not clear regarding this question. Some, like Boethius, uphold the view that the holy persons differ in number while others, for instance Augustine, sustain that the persons do not differ either in number, genre nor species. Hence, the issue raised here is the nature of *difference*. How should the concept of difference be understood in the theory of personhood? Alan's answer is as follows:

¹³³ SQH, 250.

“In theological discourse, however, the difference is understood in a broad sense as “distinction” is called “difference.” But it is not said there that it is diversity because this term is mistrustful, and rather has been considered for the plurality of substances than this name “different.” The fallacy of univocation (*univocationis*) occurs in this following argument. For when it is said that the Father is not different (*indifferens*), this term “not different” refers to the essence. But when one says that the Father is different from the Son, this verb refers to the distinction [i.e. of personal properties]. Falsification: this spear, which is thicker than the other spear, is unequal to the first spear. Therefore, is not equal to that in length”¹³⁴.

Alan argues that “diversity” operates differently in theological language. The problematic element here is the references of “diversity” or “difference”. One thing is different from another by the former being the possessor of some properties which the later does not own. As we have seen, in theological context the meaning of individuality is not altogether different from that of non-theological language: Trinitarian persons are also different from each other because of their properties. But the transferred nature of theological discourse should direct the theologian’s attention to the fact that while the *meaning* of “diversity” might be the same, the *reference* is not. Whoever argues, for instance, that the Trinitarian persons are not different incurs in the mistake of confusing references, called here a fallacy of univocation. The correct meaning of the expression “the Father is not different (*indifferens*)” is that the Father is not of a different essence.

¹³⁴ *In theologicis autem large sumitur differentia, ut distinctio differentia nuncupetur. Sed non dicitur ibi esse diversitas quia hoc nomen suspiciosum est, et potius respectum habet ad pluralitatem substantialium quam hoc nomen differens. In sequenti argumentatione incidit fallacia univocationis. Cum enim dicitur Pater est indifferens, hoc nomen indifferens facit in usiam; cum vero dicitur Pater non differt a Filio, hoc verbum differt facit in distinctionem. Instantia: ista hasta que est grossior illa est inaequale isti haste; ergo non est equalis illi in longitudine. Similiter instandum sequenti argumentationi, SQH, 251-252.*

The fallacy of univocation is a 12th century phenomenon. Moreover, its very nature as a fallacy and its relationship with the fallacy of equivocation were debated issues during the same period. Aristotle explains that *equivocation* happens when one does not properly recognize that different things are being called by the same name in an argument¹³⁵. For instance, when the word “dog” is used to describe an animal and a star. On the other hand, univocation according to Boethius is the appearance of a contradiction from equivocation. Univocation happens when two propositions seem to be contradictory due to sharing the same word with the same meaning. But because the words stand for something different in each proposition, i.e., they suppose something dissimilar, there is no contradiction. For example, the propositions *homo ambulat* and *homo non ambulat*, according to Boethius, are not contradictory because in the first sentence *homo* could stand for the species while in the second sentence it could stand for an individual¹³⁶. In sum, univocation occurs when identical words with identical meaning have different suppositions.

De Rijk has shown that univocation was consistently discussed during the 12th century. While Boethius considered that univocation is a property of words, Abelard extended univocation to cover objects as well. As a result, Abelard explains that univocation can occur only when one does not consider accidental differences in substances to be relevant. In a restricted sense, things and the words which designate them are never univocal, for even the smallest accidental difference among apparently identical things causes their signifying words to have different meanings¹³⁷. As Terence Parsons observes, one could argue that the words in Boethius’ example have different meanings. If one does not accept Boethius’ claim, it follows then that

¹³⁵ Aristotle, *On Sophistical Refutations*, 165b-166a.

¹³⁶ Boethius, *On Aristotle, On Interpretation*, 1–3, trans. Andrew Smith (London: Duckworth, 2010), 132, 1-134, 7.

¹³⁷ Irene Rosier-Catach, “Evolution des notions d’equivocatio et univocation au XII^e siècle”, in *L’ambiguïté, cinq études historiques*, ed. Irene Rosier-Catach (Lille: Presses universitaires de Lille, 1988), 110-111.

univocation becomes the fallacy of equivocation¹³⁸. In many of the 12th century anonymous commentaries to the *Peri Hermeneias*, for instance, the authors argue that the fallacy of univocation should be classified under equivocation¹³⁹.

While Abelard stated that univocation is not a central fallacy in the study of logic, other logicians were eager to apply it¹⁴⁰. Alan's source is likely the *Fallacie Parvipontane*¹⁴¹, a late twelfth-century textbook on logical fallacies, and classified among the *logica modernorum* corpus. There, univocation is defined as “the varied supposition of a name, the signification remaining the same; for although supposition varies, signification remains the same”¹⁴². The *Fallacie Parvipontane* also describes and provides examples of the types of univocation:

“There are three types of univocation. The first one happens when a word is taken about itself or about its meaning. About itself when one says, “master is the name”. For here the name “master” is transferred to be about itself. It is transferred to be about its meaning as when one says, “man is the species”. The second type happens when a word is transferred now to talk about another of the things in a certain manner, now in a different manner, as when one says, “man is the worthiest of all creature”. For so the sentence can be understood as a word saying something about of the appellations of the word “man”. It can also be understood as to say something about the manner of the things, in the same way it must be understood when one says “gold is the most precious

¹³⁸ Terence Parsons, “The Development of Supposition Theory in the Later 12th Through 14th Centuries”, in *Handbook of the History of Logic* 2, ed. Dov M. Gabbay and John Woods (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2018), 193.

¹³⁹ LM I, 114, 121, 123.

¹⁴⁰ Rosier-Catach, “Evolution des notions d' equivocatio et univocation au XIIe siècle”, 111-112.

¹⁴¹ The anonymous author of the *Fallaciae Magistri Willelmi* and Peter of Chanter's *De tropis loquendi* do not discuss the fallacy of univocation. Peter of Poitiers, however, does mention it: *fallacia univocationis, ex variata appellatione terminorum secundum diversa adiuncta*, Peter of Poitiers, *Sententiae*, ed. P. S. Moore and M. Dulong, Vol. 1 (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1943), 57.

¹⁴² *Univocatio est manente eadem significatione variata nominis suppositio; quia etsi variatur suppositio, manet tamen eadem significatio*, LM I, 562.

of metals” or “pepper is sold here and at Rome” ... The third type consists of an ampliation or restriction of a word, just as it usually happens to every appellative noun. An appellative noun, if it stands for a verb in the present time, it has in itself an appellation only to the present time; if it stands for a verb in the future, it has to the present and to the future [v.gr. every man is white; no man lacks being white. Thus, every man will be white]¹⁴³.

If we go back to the SQH’s passage, Alan’s explanation falls under the second type of univocation quoted above. In Alan’s text, univocation happens because although the meaning of the concept “difference” is the same in each proposition, in theological language, i.e., in a discourse where its terms have been transferred, the Father always has two possible suppositions. In that sense, when in Trinitarian theology one speaks of the Father, its reference could be either the divine essence or the properties shared by all three persons. All in all, even in the absence of a detailed discussion of univocation, it is clear that Alan has a good command of the concept. His handling implies the distinction of its central elements –meaning, reference, supposition, and contextual meaning. Alan’s passage on univocation, then, can be added to the growing list of examples of theological works where the influence of the new developments in logic can be demonstrated¹⁴⁴.

¹⁴³ *Sunt autem tres species univocationis. Prima est quando aliqua dictio sumitur ad agendum de se vel de suo significato. De se ipsa ut cum dicitur: "magister" est nomen; hic enim transsumitur hoc nomen 'magister' ad agendum de se. Transsumitur ad agendum de suo significato ut cum dicitur 'homo' est species'. Secunda species est quando aliqua dictio transsumitur modo ad agendum de aliqua rerum alicuius maneriei, modo de tali manerie rerum, ut cum dicitur: 'homo est dignissima creaturarum'. Potest enim sic intelligi ut fiat sermo de aliquo appellatorum huius nominis 'homo'; potest etiam intelligi ut fiat sermo de tali manerie rerum. Eodem modo intelligendum est cum dicitur: 'aurum est preciosissimum metallum', 'piper venditur hic et Rome'. Tertia species est que consistit in ampliatione et restrictione alicuius dictionis, quemadmodum accidere solet in omnibus appellativis. Nomen appellativum si supponat verbo presentis temporis, habet se per appellationem ad presentia tantum; si verbo futuri, habet se ad presentia et ad futura [sc. 'omnis homo est albus, et nullus desinit esse albus, ergo omnis homo erit albus'], LM I, 562.*

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, 163; Rosier-Catach, “Evolution des notions d'equivocatio et univocatio au XIIe siècle”, 134; Valente, “Fallaciae et théologie pendant la seconde moitié du XIIe siècle”, 220-230.

Alan's treatment of the fallacy of univocation has as a corollary the introduction of the *instantia*-technique, another logical tool almost exclusive of the late 12th century. As defined by the anonymous author of the *Summa Sophisticorum Elencorum*:

“Falsification is the introduction of another argument by similarity, which must have terms of the same kind and as many as the argument A to be refuted. The reason why it is called falsification is not that it makes the argument A, against which it is introduced, false (for A is false at the outset), but that it makes clearer that A is false. The falsity is sometimes hidden, and therefore falsification is introduced to show clearly that A is false”¹⁴⁵.

The *instantia* is a logical technique whose goal is to show, or in the best possible scenario to prove, the invalidity of an argument. Logicians during the second half of the same century compiled many cases of *instantiae* to illustrate when some else's argument is flawed¹⁴⁶. As Iwakuma has proven, many times the authors of *instantiae* try to do this by producing an *instantia* which is based on sophistical argumentations or faulty inferences. In that way, once the sophistical inference of the *instantia* is grasped, the main argument's fallacy will also be understood. Often, though, *instantiae* are clumsy and unclear illustrations of fallacies and sophisms.

It is significant that in the quoted passage Alan proceeds first by utilizing the fallacy of univocation to demonstrate the mistake and then, as most logicians during the period do, by providing an *instantia* to illustrate the mistake. We find examples of this procedure in Alan's

¹⁴⁵ Translation in Y. Iwakuma, “*Instantiae*: An Introduction to a Twelfth Century Technique of Argumentation”, *Argumentation* 1 (1987): 437-453.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 444.

contemporary theologians, most notably Peter of Poitiers, Prevostin of Cremona, Etienne Langton, and Peter of Capua. It was common in speculative theology to conflate the concepts of fallacy, in this case of univocation, and *instantia*, as for example in Peter of Poitiers. Alan, however, does not do it¹⁴⁷.

The *instantia* can be summarized in the following manner:

- 1) Spear A is thicker than spear B,
- 2) Thus, A and B are unequal;
- 3) Therefore, A is not equal to B in length.

Three different concepts seem to be employed here – those of thickness, (un)equalness, and length. If thing A is thicker than thing B, then it follows that A and B are different in respect to their thickness. Thus, A and B are different. The fallacy would lie in inferring from the unequalness of A to B regarding thickness that A and B are also unequal in length. Although the conclusion in the *instantia* is patently false, it does not illustrate the fallacy of univocation for, in that passage, the issue lies in the different references of the term “different”, not in unwarranted conclusions about two physical objects regarding different criteria. Thus, this *instantia* does not help either to illustrate how the fallacy of univocation has taken place nor to disprove that it is not a fallacious argument.

The brief look at the passage shows that Alan is conversant in at least two important trends in contemporary logic. It also allows us to delve into some depth regarding his knowledge of those

¹⁴⁷ Valente, “Fallaciae et théologie pendant la seconde moitié du XIIe siècle”, 228. However, Alan does confuse the two terms in other passages. See SQH, 174, where *instantia* is synonymous with the fallacy of equivocation.

same developments. While the use of the fallacy of univocation implies the *Parvipontane* definition, and it is properly employed to explain the complex Trinitarian sentence, his *instantia* shows that the favorite scholastic technique was not entirely understood.

The second example is that of supposition. How can we understand expressions which assemble the Trinitarian persons and God? Alan does not employ the concept of fallacy to prove that the proposition "God is the Father and the Son", understood without any proviso, is false. Rather, by analyzing the possible, different suppositions which the noun "God" has in the proposition, Alan is able to show that the proposition is false:

"Since this name "God" can stand for the person, the question is raised whether [this following statement] should be accepted: "God is Father and Son."

The statement seems to be false because, since "God" stands there for a [single] person and not for many, it is not true that "God is Father and Son" unless we say that such term [God] is taken collectively by the opposing reason. So, just as in the right way, in this one, namely: "Father and Son are God" is the supposition for Father and Son or the other way around.

And because this term [God] sometimes is taken as designation for the three persons, Augustine says in this way: God, that is Trinity. We can say, however, that if the supposition of this term God is for the essence, then indeed God is Father and Son and Holy Spirit, but if it is for the person, then never"¹⁴⁸.

¹⁴⁸ *Set queritur, cum hoc nomen Deus possit supponere pro persona, utrum concedendum sit: Deus est Pater et Filius. Quod videtur esse falsum. Quia cum ibi supponat pro aliqua persona non pro pluribus, non est verum Deum esse Patrem et Filium nisi dicamus illum terminum sumi collective, ratione converse; ut sicut in recta, in hac scilicet: Pater et Filius sunt Deus, sit suppositio pro Patre et Filio, aut in conversa. Quod autem iste terminus in designatione trium personarum aliquando sumitur, ostendit Augustinus sic exponens: Deus, id est trinitas. Possumus tamen dicere quod si fiat suppositio pro essentia hoc nomine Deus, verum est Deum esse Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum; si vero pro persona, nequaquam, SQH, 218.*

The primary argument operative here is that the term “God” can have two different suppositions. It can either stand for “Trinity” or for one of the Trinitarian persons. The intuition behind the discussion is that although every Trinitarian person is in fact God, there must be a way in which to articulate said intuition without committing faulty reasoning. If “God” stands for one Trinitarian person but not for the others, for instance only for the Father, then the expression is meaningless. That God (the Father) is the Father and the Son is in part redundant, since the Father is always the Father, but is also in part false because the Father *sensu stricto* is not any of the other persons. Consequently, without any clarification, the statement is incorrect. Alan concludes that “if that such term [God] is taken collectively,” meaning that if “God” stands for a term which embraces the three persons, rather than excluding some of them, then the expression is theologically meaningful. The correct supposition for the noun “God” is, therefore, *trinitas*, which in this context is synonymous with essence. The argument can be summarized in the following way: depending on the context, indifference to whether a term stands *pro persona* or *pro essentia* will sometimes produce meaningless sentences at best and heretical ones at worst.

Alan’s terminology, as in the previous examples, is rather unsophisticated. He uses the 12th century grammatical expressions “*supponere pro*” or *designatio* to indicate the nouns which in a sentence have a different linguistic reference. In most cases, nevertheless, his terminology is not consistent, switching from one to the other. In several passages of the SQH, Alan distinguishes between *appellatio* and *significatio* when discussing the references of the term “God”. For instance, Alan comments the term *ousia* means (*significat*) and stands for (*appellat*) the same¹⁴⁹. Further down the line, Alan explains that in certain instances the noun “God”

¹⁴⁹ SQH, 181.

means (*praedicat*) nature but stands for (*appellat*) for person¹⁵⁰. In the example discussed above, Alan uses supposition –the standard technical term in late 12th century logic– for *appellatio*, his preferred technical term. Luisa Valente believes that Alan’s closest parallel for his terminology on supposition is Peter Helias’ *Summa super Priscianum*. According to Valente’s analysis of a Trinitarian passage in Peter’s *Summa*, Alan’s supposition terminology is a slight modification of Peter’s use of *nominatio* and *significatio*. Thus, she affirms, Alan’s treatment of supposition theory is either closer to or dependent on the mid-century use in grammar theory. Alan of Libera, on the contrary, considers that Alan’s supposition theory relies on the logic school of the Porretani and, in a certain sense, it is an anticipation of the *logica modernorum*¹⁵¹. I will argue here that Alan’s closest source is once again the *Fallacie Parvipontane*.

While explanations of technical terms are not found in the SQH, there is one passage which throws much light onto Alan’s understanding of supposition. When discussing the Trinitarian expression regarding deity and one of the Trinitarian persons (*deitas est pater*), Alan elucidates what he understands as supposition:

“There are those who state that this proposition “the Father is deity” is reversible, and it is said that in the reversible form a supposition for the person takes place: “deity is the Father” where a supposition for the Father takes place. But if this is true, this noun “deity” is appellative of the persons, and according to this, it truly can be said that deity begets and is begotten. And that the noun can stand for the person, they prove it in this way: when it is said that “the Father is deity”, the subject, deity, assigns its meaning to

¹⁵⁰ SQH, 199.

¹⁵¹ De Libera, “Logique et théologie dans la *Summa* 'quoniam homines' d'Alain de Lille”, 447-448.

a reference of its name – the Father. Therefore, when it is said “deity is the Father”, it can stand for the same reference. To this we respond: this is true in those names which signify something but stand for something else. But this name “deity” signify and stand for the same. From where it is said: when it is said “that man,” the pronoun “that” supposits its meaning for that which the noun “man” predicates. Therefore, when it is said, “is that man,” the term “that” can be attributed because the noun man is predicated. But those people say a supposition for something takes place when it is said that the essence of three persons is the Father. For it doesn’t seem there that a supposition for a person can take place. For if they say that therefore a supposition for a person can take place because any person is the essence of the three persons, for the same reason it must be said that in this periphrasis “Son of the Father” a supposition for the deity could take place, because the deity is the Son of the Father”¹⁵².

Here the explanation to understand a problematic proposition follows along the same lines of the previous example. Alan’s reconstruction of the criticized argument is that in the statement “the Father is deity” or in its opposite form, “deity is the Father”, a supposition needs to take place in order to be meaningful. In the first case, the Father stands for God while in the second it is instead deity which stands for God. What is more interesting, however, is Alan’s explanation of how those scholars prove it. The noun “deitas”, which is the subject of the first

¹⁵² *Sunt qui dicunt hanc propositionem Pater est deitas, habere conversam, et in eius conversa fieri suppositionem pro persona cum dicitur: deitas est Pater, ut fiat suppositio pro Patre. Sed si hoc est, hoc nomen deitas appellativum est personarum; et secundum hoc vere potest dici deitas gignit vel gignitur. Quod autem possit supponere pro persona sic probant: cum dicitur Pater est deitas, hoc subiectum deitas suam significationem attribuit appellato huius nominis Pater. Ergo pro eodem appellato potest supponere cum dicitur deitas est Pater. Ad hoc dicimus: hoc verum est in illis nominibus que aliud significant et aliud appellant. Sed hoc nomen deitas idem significat et appellat. Unde sic instandum: cum dicitur iste homo, hoc pronomen «iste» supponit suum appellativum ei quod predicatur hoc termino «homo». Ergo cum dicitur homo est iste, hoc termino «iste» potest attribui illud quod predicatur hoc termino. Sed predicti pro quo dicunt fieri suppositionem cum dicitur esse trium personarum, est Pater; non videtur enim ibi posse fieri suppositio pro persona. Si enim dicunt quod ideo potest fieri suppositio pro persona quia quelibet persona est esse trium personarum, eadem ratione tenentur dicere quod hac circumlocutione Filius Patris posset fieri suppositio pro deitate, quia deitas est Filius Patris, SQH, 194-195.*

sentence, assigns its meaning, i.e., God, to the predicate –the Father– through an amplification of its meaning to include the predicate. Then, both “Father” and “deity”, regardless of their syntactic function, have the same reference. Thus, because the semantic reference of both terms is the same, the identity expressed in the sentence is meaningful. However, while Alan supports the view that Trinitarian personal nouns such as Father or Son stand for God in a given sentence, he does not agree with those who affirm that a restriction of the original meaning of either Father or deity has taken place.

Alan’s answer and own evaluation about the unnamed thesis is stated a few lines before the quoted passage:

“The expression “the Father is deity” does not have a simple opposite form, because the term “deity” cannot stand for person; and so, the meaning of the name prevents this, so the term does not have a simple opposite form. From where we do not accept this proposition “deity is Father” if the terms are kept in their particular meanings. However, if the whole proposition is transferred, we admitted it, and this is the sense of it: “deity is the Father”, i.e., deity is the essence of the Father. And accordingly, the proposition must not be interpreted individually but collectively”¹⁵³.

Unlike those that believe that the expression “deity is Father” is identical to its opposite form, and consequently a supposition of either subjects needed, Alan contends that the aforementioned proposition is not acceptable unless its transferred character is properly

¹⁵³ *Pater est deitas, non habet simplicem conversam, quia hoc nomen deitas non potest supponere personam; et ita impedit nominis significatio ne illa habeat simplicem conversam. Unde non concedimus istam: deitas est Pater si teneantur vocabula in suis propriis significationibus. Si tamen tota oratio transsumitur, admittimus, ut sit sensus: deitas est Pater, id est deitas est esse Patris. Et secundum hoc non est interpretanda oratio singillatim sed in summa, SQH, 194.*

recognized. Once that is done, then the satisfactory interpretation is that solely deity stands for essence, not for person. In rule 32 of the *Regulae*, Alan restates the same argument in a clearer way, namely that terms such as deity or divinity “suppose the essence and add them meanings that are almost mathematical and principal”¹⁵⁴. The unidentified thesis is refuted granting that only deity, according to rule 32 of the *Regulae* and SQH 194, can stand for the essence. A simple supposition of deity has taken place rather than an ampliation or, conversely, a restriction of the meaning of both terms. Although a restriction or ampliation of the supposition is often done in non-theological language, Alan argues, this is not what happens in theology. For instance, although it is not stated in a clear manner, in the case of the proposition “this man”, the syncategorematic term “this” narrows the supposition of the categorematic term “man”. The same, nevertheless, cannot be said in theological language since the terms deity and the Trinitarian persons do often suppose the same: the divine essence.

Is it possible to determine with absolute conviction the source or sources of Alan’s use of supposition in this passage or in the previous? The negative reason is partly because of the opacity of Alan’s use of restriction and supposition, which obscures any possible direct textual connection with contemporary logical writings, and partly because other late-12th century theologians were likewise relying on some of the same logical-grammatical terms, most notably Peter of Poitiers and the anonymous *Summa Zwettlensis*. The widespread use in the same decades in the same city of supposition theory in theology, then, allows for the possibility that some of the mentioned authors might be Alan’s source. Nevertheless, I believe that since Alan is familiar with features of supposition theory – ampliation, restriction, and appellation – which are clearly demonstrated in the *Fallacie Parvipontane* textbook, one could venture to

¹⁵⁴ *Essentialia dicuntur omnia illa nomina que supponunt essentiam et apponunt que sunt quasi mathematica et principalia, Regulae, 146.*

affirm that this is his source¹⁵⁵. Despite our lack of sufficient knowledge, both examined passages are illuminating examples of the intermingling of logic and grammar in Alan's Trinitarian theology, although, granted, not altogether well-argued¹⁵⁶.

Before moving on to the third example, Alan provides a different answer about the meaning of the proposition "deity is Father" in the *Regulae caelestis iuris*. His answer there will allow me to connect supposition theory to consignification. Alan asserts in Rule 50¹⁵⁷:

"When it is said: "Deity is Father, " person is predicated of the *ousia*, so that the sense is that Deity is the Father, i.e., that one who begets; according to this, the noun, "Father" is made substantive by an article which is implied, as is made clear by the French *li Pere*. Nor is it peculiar that person is predicated in divine things, although in natural things it is not predicated except the property of a thing. For in natural things something is predicated by inherence, when something is shown to inhere in or join to another, as

¹⁵⁵ LM I, 563-564. See Alain de Libera, "The Oxford and Paris Traditions in Logic", 175 and L. M. De Rijk, "Origins of the Theory of the Properties of Terms", 165; in *The Cambridge History of Later Medieval Philosophy*.

¹⁵⁶ See *L'ortodossia e la grammatica*, 131. Angelini believes that Simon of Tournai is the target of Alan's criticism. This is an interesting conjecture, for it would establish Alan's SQH as posterior to Simon's writings, which according to others is dependable on Alan. I believe Angelini is mistaken in affirming that the emphasis of Alan's solution lies in the nature of the verb to be. As I have shown in the analysis of the passages, the focus lies instead in supposition theory. For the dependence of Simon on Alan, see: Odon Lottin, "Alain de Lille, une des sources des. Disputationes de Simon de Tournai", *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale* 17 (1950): 175-186; Richard Heinzmann, *Die "Institutiones in sacram paginam" des Simon von Tournai: Einleitung und Quästionenverzeichnis* (Munich: Schöningh, 1967), 13; Landgraf, *Introduction à l'histoire de la littérature théologique de la scolastique naissante*, 120; Glorieux, 116. Haring argues that there is an unwritten, common source to both Alan and Simon, which could be Gilbert. See Nikolaus Haring, "The treatise 'Invisibilia Dei' in Ms Arras, Bibl. mun. 981 (399)" *Recherches de Théologie ancienne et médiévale* 40 (1973): 115-116.

¹⁵⁷ *Verbi causa cum dicitur: Deitas est pater, hic praedicatur persona de usya, ut sit sensus: Deitas est pater i.e. ille qui generat. Et secundum hoc substantivatur hoc nomen pater, subintellecto articulo, ut sic exponatur Gallice: Deitas est pater i.e. li pere. Nec mirandum si in divinis persona praedicatur, cum in naturalibus non praedicetur nisi rei proprietas. In naturalibus enim aliquid praedicatur per inhaerentiam quando aliquid ostenditur alicui inhaerere vel convenire tamquam rei proprietas. In divinis vero, ubi nichil inhaeret, nichil concretivum, non ostenditur quid de quo vel quid cui inhaereat sed quid quid sit vel quomodo se habeat. Ut cum dicitur: Deitas est pater, hic non attenditur quid de deitate dicatur vel quid ei inhaereat, cum nil ei insit, sed potius quid sit deitas. Unde ad interrogationem factam de deitate, quid ipsa sit, convenienter respondetur: Pater. Non enim dicere possumus ibi praedicari relationem de deitate, cum deitas nec generans nee genita nec procedens sit, nec relations personales in deitate esse intelligantur per quas deitas a patre vel filio vel spiritu sancto distinguatur. Regulae, 156-157.*

the property of a thing. In divine things, where nothing inheres, nor is concreative, one does not indicate anything concerning anything, or what inheres to what, but what it is, or how it is disposed. When one says, "Deity is Father, " one does not consider what is said of deity or what inheres in Him, since nothing inheres in Him, but rather one considers what deity is. Therefore, to the question "what is it?", asked concerning deity, a suitable answer is, "the Father." We cannot say that there a relation is predicated of deity, since deity is neither the begetting one, nor the begotten, nor the proceeding, nor are personal relations understood to be in deity through which deity might be distinguished from the Father, Son, or Holy Spirit"¹⁵⁸.

Alan argues that the proposition can have different meanings. The title of the rule 51 expresses all five possibilities. The noun "Father," said of God, predicates either (1) a Trinitarian person, (2) a personal Trinitarian property, (3) a relation of the Father to the Son, (4) a relation of the Father to creature with respect to creation, or (5) a relation of the Father to men with respect to re-creation. For our purposes, I will focus on Alan's explanation of how to understand the meaning of the proposition in the first case, i.e., in relation to the person of the Father. In the case of the predication of a person, the meaning is that the Father consignifies the divine essence (*ousia*). Since there are no personal relations between the persons and the essence, nor is the divine essence exclusively one personal Trinitarian property (v.gr. the Father's begetting), then there is no other option than an identity between both terms. The identity can only be understood if the Father also consignifies, besides its first meaning, the secondary meaning of essence. Thus, the "Father's" consignification of the essence, which Alan

¹⁵⁸ Modified translation of Suzanne Elizabeth Potter, "A Study of the *Regulae de Sacra Theologia* of Alan of Lille" (Ph.D. diss, Columbia University, New York, 1972), 270-271.

comments later is made plainer in French by the definite article “li” attached to it, allowing the expression to be meaningful.

The third and final example is that of consignification. We have already seen in the first chapter the essential traits of the theory of consignification. Before moving to the analysis of the example, it is relevant to remember something which was said there. The theory of consignification and of supposition were very often conflated. In the previous passages, Alan takes both theories to indicate almost the same features of Trinitarian theology. Occasionally, as in the case of supposition, his explanation emphasizes semantic references. Other times, Alan instead underlines a term’s double meaning. In any case, terms such as *persona*, *deitas*, *pater*, and *filius* have one semantic content but can refer to something else. Other times, these terms have two meanings but only one of them is implied in a passage. While the terminology for consignification is erratic¹⁵⁹, Alan’s attempts to strengthen his argument with the help of consignification theory indicate not only the importance that grammar has in his work, but also a nuanced understanding.

The most noteworthy use of the theory of consignification is regarding the concept of personhood itself. The term consignifies the Trinitarian persons but signifies the divine essence¹⁶⁰. At this central point, Alan will build a considerable set of rules to understand how consignification works for the most important Trinitarian terms. Of importance is the difference between grammatical genders and their relationship to the classes of signification (to the person or the essence) that they perform in sentence analysis. How does one distinguish, then, when terms might mean the essence instead of the person? For Alan, the signifier of whether a term

¹⁵⁹ Alan employs *designare*, *appellare*, *notare*, *facere* in, and *referre* for *consignificare*.

¹⁶⁰ *Hoc nomen persona ratione consignificationis notare ipostasim, ratione vero significationis notare usiam*, SQH, 180.

means essence or person is its gender or, in the case of nouns, the gender of the adjective attached to it. In discussing whether the Father is the same as the Son in person or in substance, Alan is concerned with whether the adjectives *alius/aliud* used here, the former in masculine while the latter in neuter, make a difference. Put differently, since the genders are unlike, does the gender of the term become relevant to understanding Trinitarian theology? Alan says:

“But the question is raised if the Father is one with the Son in person or is He different? And if He is one with the Son in substance or is He different? To this, we say that expressions of this type are incongruous because adjectives of this type (e.g., one, different, the same, and similar) signify the person in masculine and feminine, but the substance in neuter. From where it is said wrongly that the Father is one or different in person with the Son because the term that signifies the substance it is put with a personal name, and just as on the contrary, the Father is one or different in substance, because the term that signifies the person is put with the name of substance, just as if one would say the lord’s cloak. And this is the reason. Because just as in grammar an adjective in masculine or feminine makes a difference of the sex or the gender, and the determinate wishes to be referred to the object of the genus and not to the genus the object. Therefore, the substantive wants to be supported by something, as the white horse, or white woman; in neuter, however, because the genus or the sex is not distinguished, since neuter it is said by negation of the two sexes and not because is the genus of a true name, it is put as indefinite. Hence, it is put substantively, and this common name is understood. And so, they are redundant to the genus of the object, but not to the object of the genus. Thus, in theology adjectives of this type are put determinately in masculine and feminine so that they can make a distinction between the person, and so they do this to the person and are redundant in the object of genus, i.e., to the person and not to

the genus of the object, i.e., to the essence. However, in neuter is the opposite. Hence, those expressions in which the adjectives are put in masculine or feminine with the essential names or in neuter with the personal adjectives are not suiting. But if the opposite happens, then they are suiting”¹⁶¹.

In the first of the pair of sentences (*Pater est unum cum Filio in persona vel aliud*), the statement asks about the person, but the adjectives are in neuter. In the second (*Pater est unus cum Filio in substantia vel alius*), the statement asks about the divine substance, but the adjectives are in the masculine. Why does Alan argue that these statements are incongruous as they stand? The reason is grammatical. He argues that just as in non-theological language the gender of a term distinguishes between sexes, the same happens in Trinitarian discourse, albeit between classes of predication (*genera*). The grammatical form (*vox*) of a term determines under which class the meaning of the term belongs. If a term like *aliud* is attached to a personal name such as Father, then it must mean the essence. On the contrary, if it is expressed in the masculine, to the person. The addendum of genus besides sex in the original Latin is important because it allows Alan to claim that the grammatical gender of a term distinguishes between predications to the essence or to the person. The meaning of the analogy, then, is that grammatical gender is in non-theological language as classes or genera of signification are in

¹⁶¹ *Sed queritur si Pater est unum cum Filio in persona vel aliud? Et si est unus cum Filio in substantia vel alius? Ad hoc dicimus quod huiusmodi locutiones sunt incongrue; quia huiusmodi adiectiva: unus, alius, idem, et consimilia in masculino et feminino faciunt in personam, in neutro in substantiam. Unde inconvenienter dicitur Pater est unum vel aliud in persona cum Filio, quia nomen quod facit in substantiam ponitur cum nomine personali, sicut et e converso Pater est unus vel alius in substantia, quia nomen quod facit in persona<m> ponitur cum nomine substantie; sicut si diceretur capa cathica. Et est ratio quare. Quia sicut in grammatica adiectivum in masculino et feminino facit discretionem sexus vel generis, et determinate vult ad rem generis non ad genus rei referri, unde desiderat substantivum cui innitatur, ut albus equus, alba mulier; in neutro vero, quia non dissernit sexum vel genus, quia neutrum per abnegatione duorum dicitur, non quod sit veri nominis genus, confuse ponitur; unde et substantive ponitur et intelligitur hoc nomen generale; et ita redundat in genus rei, non in rem generis. Sic in theologia huiusmodi adiectiva in masculino et feminino determinate ponuntur ut faciant persone distinctionem, et ita faciunt in persona<m> et redundant in rem generis, id est in persona<m> et non in genus rei id est in usiam. In neutro vero e converso. Unde inconvenientes sunt omnes huiusmodi locutiones in quibus huiusmodi adiectiva in masculino vel feminino ponuntur cum nominibus essentialibus, vel in neutro cum personalibus. Sed si e converso fiat, congrue sunt, SQH, 182. Corrections to text, introduced by brackets, are mine.*

theological language. The transferred nature of theological language transforms the grammatical distinction of genders in distinctions of predication.

Alan states the same argument about the relation between grammatical gender and class of predication in a more concise manner in the *Regula* 27:

“Nor is it strange if masculine and feminine nouns or distinctive pronouns pertain to person while in the neuter they pertain to the essence, since in natural things masculine or feminine nouns pertain to the thing of the genus, neuter now is to the genus of the thing... Similarly, in divine things, because of their difference, distinctive names in the masculine and feminine pertain to person; in the neuter, because of their indefiniteness, they pertain to essence”¹⁶².

By the *Regulae*'s time, the analogy between grammatical genders and classes of predication became a rule to be followed in theology. In the *Fallacie Parvipontanae*, as well as in the late 12th century theology textbooks on fallacies, mistakes on consignification appear under the category of a “fallacy from combined meanings” (*ex varia consignificatione*)¹⁶³. The fallacy occurs when the meaning of a word changes because of a new context. In the SQH, Alan prefers to employ the terminology of amphibology¹⁶⁴. Elsewhere, Alan employs consignification theory to discuss the temporal aspects and the semantic content of a verb. There, Alan follows the traditional meanings of consignification found in grammar and the *logica vetus*¹⁶⁵.

¹⁶² *Nec mirum si nomina vel pronomina distinctiva in masculino et in feminino pertineant ad personam, in neutro ad essentiam, cum in naturalibus nomina in masculino et feminino pertinent ad rem generis, in neutro et ad genus rei... Similiter in divinis ratione discretionis nomina distinctiva in masculino et feminino pertinent ad personam, in neutro vero ratione confusionis ad essentiam. Regulae*, 143-144. Translation in Potter, 253-254.

¹⁶³ Rosier-Catach, “Res significata et modus significandi. Les enjeux linguistiques et théologiques d'une distinction médiévale”, 135-168.

¹⁶⁴ See SQH 234, although the *fallacia ex diversis consignificationibus* is mentioned in SQH 228.

¹⁶⁵ See SQH, 240.

In this chapter, I have discussed Alan's application of logic and grammar to Trinitarian theology of personhood. To accomplish this purpose, I considered what I believe are the most important examples of the intersection of logic, grammar, and theology. My analysis has yielded positive results for the history of theology and the reception of Boethius in the late-twelfth century. As I hope I have been able to show, Alan is conversant with numerous contemporary developments from speculative grammar and, most significantly, from the *logica modernorum*. I have argued that the *Parvipontane* manual could be Alan's source in his use of supposition and univocation theory. Furthermore, Alan's theological method is framed in the Boethian conception of theology as transferred or translated language. Because theological discourse is of a different nature than everyday language, Alan reminds the student of theology of the intellectual challenges that come from applying logic to theological discourse. The transferred nature of theological language forces the theologian to be particularly alert when, as in the case of the fallacy of univocation or consignification, theological terms may have alternative semantic references or suppositions. Finally, Alan employs the Boethian definition of personhood. However, he is not shy of changing its basic features and applying contemporary theological concepts to use it. In that sense, Alan's Boethian definition is updated for the late 12th century theological debate on personhood.

Conclusion

During the reconstruction of Alan's strategy on defining the concept of Trinitarian personhood and its orthodox employment, I have suggested that Alan's methodology is deeply reliant on some crucial, contemporary developments in logic and grammar. From my analysis of Alan's treatment of personhood, it can be concluded that the reliance upon dialectics is more significant than that upon grammar. Also, Alan's knowledge of the logical and grammatical concepts discussed in this research show a high-level of integration in his theology, though one not always systematic. Finally, the influence of Boethius is ubiquitous. The Boethian view of theology as a *sui generis* language, where categories and terms change meaning, and his definition of personhood, is of major significance for Alan's theology. However, concerning Boethius' definition, Alan modifies it and incorporates supplementary concepts from logic to make it part of his theological project.

As Gillian comments, not every contemporary theologian was equally eager to embrace logic and grammar theory into speculative theology¹⁶⁶. Some, as Peter Lombard, kept the use of the liberal arts at a minimum. Others did venture into the palace of the liberal arts. Simon of Tournai and Peter the Chanter were aware of the potential benefits of the application of grammar and logic into *theologia*. However, Alan's use of logic and the degree of it in the SQH makes his theological technique a rich and illustrative case for the history on the intersection of the liberal arts and theology in pre-University Paris.

In the prologue to the SQH, Alan stated that heresies are often the result of incorrect uses of the liberal arts. The modern reader may ask what precisely Alan means by that. From the

¹⁶⁶ Gillian Rosemary Evans, "Alan of Lille and the threshold of theology 1980", *Analecta Cisterciensia* 36 (1980): 132.

frequency of Alan's use of logic and grammar in the *quaestiones* on personhood, I now can venture to answer. By incorrect uses of the liberal arts, Alan means a careless application of dialects and grammar. Any theology student who wishes to write theology, then, should do it with the utmost concern. Thus, Alan's goal in the SQH has been to show his readership, on the one hand, how to recognize theological mistakes and, on the other, how to write orthodox theology on personhood.

Because of the inherent limitations of writing an MA thesis, the second chapter has limited the study of the application of logical and grammatical concepts to the problem of personhood. A future avenue of research would cover all the cases and examples of the intermingling of logic, grammar, and theology in the SQH. An investigation on this line would produce a more accurate picture of Alan's knowledge of the *logica modernorum*, his potential contribution to this tradition, and contemporary speculative grammar and theology. Due to the still unedited state of the majority of Alan's contemporary, speculative theology writings, most notably Prevostin and Simon of Tournai, as well as the theological handbooks on the use of logic mentioned in this text, my research has made comparisons to contemporary views on personhood and to applications fallacy theory only when possible. A further avenue of research, once these texts have been published, is to make a comprehensive comparative analysis of the reception of the *logica modernorum* in late 12th century theology.

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Appendix - English Translation of the Prologue of the Summa “Quoniam Homines”¹⁶⁷

Quoniam homines a vera suae rationis dignitate degeneres letheo ignorantiae poculo debriati, retento hominis nomine, amisso numine debacchantur oculis orbi mentalibus ab orbita veritatis exorbitant, nec solum liberalium artium iniurantes honori in eis sui erroris imaginantur figmenta, verum etiam infra coelestem scientiam suae temeritatis supercilium erigentes theologicae facultatis derogant dignitati, qui dum in theologicis divinorum verborum miraculosas significationes obstupescunt, in eis confingunt monstrosa.

Because men, degenerate from the true nobility of their reason, drunk by a letheal cup of ignorance, having retained the name of man, having lost the divine, fly into rage, deprived of their mental eyes, get derailed from the orbit of the true, not only imagine fictions insulting the honor of the liberal arts in this their error, but they also, raising the eyebrows of their temerity below the celestial science, diminish the dignity of the theological faculty, who while they are stupefied of the miraculous meanings of the divine words in theological matters, in these they fabricate monstrous meanings.

Et quia, ut aristotelica tuba proclamat, qui virtutis nominum sunt ignari, cito paralogizantur, dum illi in theologicorum scientia deficiunt, diversas erroris imposturas conficiunt, ignorantes quod sicut res divine natura preeminentes miraculose sunt, ita et eas nomina non naturaliter sed miraculose significant. Unde summus testatur Hilarius: Sermo nature succumbit, et rem ut est verba non explicant.

¹⁶⁷ The Latin text is taken from: P. Glorieux ed., “La somme “Quoniam homines” d’Alain de Lille”, *Archives d’Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Âge* 20 (1953).

And because, as the Aristotelic trumpet proclaims, those who are ignorant of the power of names quickly paralogize; while those who are lacking in the science of theological things compose different deceptions of the error; these men are ignorant, because just as the preeminent things of divine nature are miraculously, also those names signify not naturally, but miraculously. As the great Hilary testifies: the speech naturally succumbs, and words do not explain the thing as it is.

Cum enim termini a naturalibus ad theologica transferuntur, novas significationes admirantur et antiquas exposcere videntur. Hoc ignorantes plerique iuxta naturalium semitam de divinis, sumentes iudicium celestia terrenis conformant, quasi in terris bestialiter viventes, non ad veram intelligentiam ingenii fastigium attollere valent; et ut magnus testator Dionysius Areopagita, non sursum ferunt purgans animae, in turpibus imaginibus suum materiale cogentes quiescere.

Thus, when the concepts from natural things are transfer to theological matters, these men admire the new meanings and they seem to demand the old ones. From this, the majority ignore the path of natural things to divine things; they acceptingly conform the judgment of celestial thing to earthly things, as if they would be like beasts in the earth; they are not strong enough to lift the summit of the natural disposition to the true intelligence; and as the great Pseudo-Dionysius says, they aren't carried upwards to purge the soul, they judge their soul should rest in base images of material nature.

Qui dum vix scenicas et theatrales scientias comprehendere possunt, divinis colloquiis et angelicis disputationibus interesse contendunt; sicque, liberalium artium non praeconsulentes scientiam, non earum recta aurigatione deducti, dum ad ineffabilia conscendunt, in varios

errores ineffabiliter ruinosi descendunt; cumque liberalium artium ponte introductorio in imperialem theologiae facultatis regiam intruduntur, in varias haereses et in varia haeresis praecipitia detrusi naufragantur, qui, dum inconsultis ostiariis reginae vultui praesentantur indigne, regalem offensam dignissime promerentur.

And while they are hardly capable of understanding the theatrical and scenery sciences, these men contend to be present in divine discussions and in angelic disputations; and so, not consulting the science of liberal arts, not lead by a right steering of it while they are climbing to the ineffable things, they descent in different indescribable errors, ruined, and when they introduce an introductory bridge of the liberal arts in the imperial palace of the theological faculty, from the precipice they fall in different heresies and in several heresy and they drown; and because they are presented to the queen's face without having consulted the doorkeepers, they deserve the most worthily royal offense.

Igitur sicut olim philosophia cum familiari et secretario suo Boetio querimoniale lamentum deposuit, epicureorum vexata vesaniis, stoicorum angariata fallaciis aliorumque vulgarium hominum lacescita iniuriis, suarum vestium passa discidium, sic in presenti theologia lacrimabilem querimoniam cum suis familiaribus videtur deponere, eorum loquens iniurias qui falsorum dogmatum commentis eius dignitatem offendunt variisque debacchantes erroribus ipsam in diversa distrahunt, et sic quodammodo eius vestimenta diripiunt.

Thus, just as once philosophy entrusted her plaintive lament with her intimate and confidant Boethius, shaken by the madness of the Epicureans, compelled by the fallacies of the Stoics and tired by the injuries of other vulgar men, she suffers the tearing apart of her garments; so, in the present, theology is seen to lay down her plaintive tears with her confidants, she discusses

the injuries of those false doctrines which offend her dignity in their commentaries and rage in their various errors; they tear her apart in opposite things, and thus, in a certain way, tear her garments.

Aequum est igitur ut ipsius familiares sui ipsius presidio militantes, ad ipsius defensionem divinarum auctoritatum munimentis armati, necessariarumque rationum armatura muniti, nostre regine hostes iniuriosos debellent, et hostibus debellatis cum errantibus errores exterminent.

It is just¹⁶⁸ that her confidants soldiers, in her defence, are armed for her protection with the arms of the divine authorities, and fortified by the armour of necessary reasons; the insulting enemies attack our queen and the enemies, having been attacked with errors, banish the errors.

Nos ergo qui theologie profitemur militiam, ex sanctorum patrum auctoritatibus firmamenta sumentes, cum sancto Moyse circa montes sacrae scripturae terminos statuamus ultra quos nemini qui civis theologicus est concedatur progressus.

Us, therefore, that declare service in theology, we gathering strength from the authorities of the sacred fathers, with holy Moses, near the mountains, we establish the [terms boundaries] of the Holy Scripture so that no one who is a theological citizen it is allowed to go beyond.

¹⁶⁸ Reading *aequum* instead of *equum*. However, *equum* is attested at least in the Klosterneuburg manuscript and some commentators understand it to be that. D’Alverny, for example, translates *equum* as a “loyal chevalier”.

Sic ergo horto sacre scripture circumponantur excubie ne inter herbas fructiferas inimicus seminet zizania, ne flores sacre scripture per malos defloratores defloreat, ne eorum petulantia in diversis sententias virginales defloreat.

Thus, the sacred scriptures are guarded in the garden by the watch so that in the fruitful grass the enemy doesn't plant any weed; nor the flowers of the Holy Scripture are deflowered by bad deflowerers; nor their petulance in different matters deflowers the virginal sentences.

De nostris ergo nulla influere laboremus nec de nostro thesauro nova proponere, sed ex antiquorum patrum tractatibus antiqua elicere ut quasi ex diversis flosculis nostri interventu laboris mellita quedam doctrina emergat, ut non nostrum inventum sed totum potius furtum esse credatur. Huiusmodi tamen furtum non penam sed veniam promeretur.

From our part, therefore, we work to flow nothing nor to propose new thing of our vault, but from the treatises of old fathers we elicit old meanings just as by the intervention of our labor from different flowers a sweet-honeyed teaching emerges, so not of our invention, but rather every deception is believed. Yet of this kind, the deception brings out not a punishment, but pardon.

A lectoribus vero veniam peto ne ab eis nostra culpetur oratio si a gentilium tractatorum operibus nostrae assertionis firmamenta sumamus. Consequens enim est ut gladio Goliae eius retundetur hostilitas, ut his quibus spoliantur Egyptii ditentur Hebrei.

But to the readers I ask pardon that our speech is not blamed for these things, if from the works of the pagan treatises we accept the fundamentals of our assertions. The consequence is thus that

their hostility is beat back by the sword of Goliath as the Hebrews may be enriched by the spoils of Egypt.

Indignis vero nostri tractatus claudatur intelligentia; attestante enim Aristotele: minuit secretorum maiestatem qui indignis secreta divulgat; nec fas est, ut Dionisii testantur eloquia: in porcos projicere invisibilium margaritarum inconfusum et luciforme beneficumque ornatum.¹⁶⁹ Ab hoc etiam opere demolientium emulorum arceatur accessus, ne eorum venenosis obiectaminibus eclipsim nostri operis patiatur igniculus.

But to the unworthy the understanding of our treatise is closed, as attested by Aristotle: it diminishes the majesty of the secrets who reveals the secrets to the unworthy; as the words of Pseudo-Dionysius testify, the divine books say: do not throw the pureness, shining, beneficent order of the invisible pearls to the pigs. Yet, from this deed of the envious destroyers the access is closed, nor the fire of our work is eclipsed by their poisonous obstacles.

Nos ergo rerum ordini tractatus ordinem conformantes, primo ad creatorem, secundo ad creaturae creationem, tertio ad eiusdem recreationem styli vertamus officium; et ita nostri operis integritas trina librorum distinctione complebitur.

We, then, make to agree the order of the treatise to the order of things: first, we turn the service of the stylus to the creator; second, to the creation of the creature; third, to its recreation; and so, the soundness of our work will be completed in a triple distinction of books.

¹⁶⁹ Alain is misquoting Eriugena's translation of Pseudo-Dionysius. Eriugena's translation is as follow: "Non enim fas, ut eloquia aiunt, in porcos projicere invisibilium margaritarum inconfusum et luciformem beneficumque ornatum".

