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Divine Ideas: 1250–1325

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A theory of divine ideas was the standard Scholastic solution to the question "How does God know and produce creatures?" Such a theory was only held to be successful if it upheld the nobility of God's perfect knowledge without violating his supreme simplicity and unity. The theories of divine knowledge coming from philosophers like Aristotle, Avicenna, and Averroes, which posit no divine ideas, uphold divine simplicity, but seem to compromise the nobility of divine cognition because they are forced to say either that God does not know creatures at all, or that he only knows them in a universal (and therefore imperfect) or indeterminate way. They also seem to compromise divine causality because they have to posit either necessary (as opposed to voluntary) or mediated (as opposed to immediate) creation. Yet, positing multiple ideas in God as Augustine does seems contrary to divine simplicity. Faced with these difficulties, the medieval Schoolmen were forced to articulate very precisely how God can know and create a multiplicity of creatures without jeopardizing the divine simplicity.

A complete explanation of how God knows and produces creatures requires the Schoolmen to answer a number of questions that can be divided into two types. The first type of question concerns the status of divine ideas: questions such as what is an idea? Are they speculative or practical? Are divine ideas multiple and, if so, how? How many divine ideas are there? How are the divine ideas related to God? What sort of existence, if any, does an idea enjoy? What is the status of non-existing possibles? The second type of question asks about the scope of divine ideas: questions such as are there divine ideas of singulars, evil, prime matter, genera, species, and number? These questions cause Scholastics to articulate clearly, among other things, their positions on the nature of knowledge, relation, exemplar causality, participation, infinity, and possibility. The goal of this

dissertation is to trace the way in which reflection upon the theme of divine ideas in the period between 1250 and 1325 became increasingly refined as the metaphysical, epistemological, and logical topics related to them became subject to greater scrutiny.

This dissertation by Carl A. Vater fulfills the dissertation requirements for the doctoral degree in Philosophy approved by Timothy B. Noone, Ph.D., as director, and by Gregory T. Doolan, Ph.D., and Kevin White, Ph.D., as Readers.

Timothy B. Noone, Ph.D.

Gregory T. Doolan, Ph.D.

Kevin White, Ph.D.

To my wife Margaret

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Abbreviations

General Abbreviations

a.	*articulus*
arg.	*argumentum*
fm/fa	*fundamentum/fundamenta*
d.	*distinctio*
p.	*pars*
PG	*Patralogia cursus completus*, series graeca, accurante J.P. Migne. Paris, 1857–.
PL	*Patralogia cursus completus*, series latina, accurante J.P. Migne. Paris 1844–.
q./qq.	*quaestio/quaestiones*
s.c.	*sed contra*

Algazel

Met.	*Metaphysica*

Aristotle

AL	*Aristoteles latinus*. Corpus philosophorum medii aevii, Academiarum consciatarum auspiciis et consilio editum. 1939–.
Anal. post.	*Posterior Analytics*
EN	*Nichomacean Ethics*
Met.	*Metaphysics*

Augustine

Conf.	*Confessionum libri tredecim*
De div. qq. 83	*De diversis quaestionibus octoginta tribus liber unus*
De vera rel.	*De vera religione*
Sol.	*Soliloquiorum libri duo*

Averroes

In De anima	*Commentarium Magnum in libros De anima*
In Met.	*Commentarium Mangum in libros Metaphysicorum*

Avicenna

Met.	*Liber de philosophia prima sive scientia divina*

Bonaventure

De reductione	*De reductione artium theologiae*
De scientia Christi	*Quaestiones disputatae de scientia Christi*
De mys. Trin.	*Quaestiones disputatae de mysterio Trinitatis*
In Hex.	*Collationes in Hexaemeron*
In Sent.	*Commentaria in quatuor libros sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi*

Durandus of Saint-Pourçain

In Sent (A)	*In quatuor librorum Magistri Sententiarum elucidationem. Recencio prima*
In Sent (C)	*In quatuor librorum Magistri Sententiarum elucidationem. Recencio tertio.*

Godfrey of Fontaines

PB	*Les Philosophes Belges*, edited by De Wulf and Pelzer. Louvain, 1904–37.

Henry of Ghent

Quodlibet	*Quaestiones de quodlibet*
Summa	*Summa Quaestiones Ordinariae*

John Duns Scotus

Lect.	*Lectura*
Ord.	*Ordinatio*
Quodlibet	*Quaestiones quodlibetales*
Rep. Par. I-A	*Reportatio Parisiensis I-A*

Peter Auriol

In Sent.	*Scriptum super primum Sententiarum*

Pseudo-Dionysius

De div. nom.	*De divinis nominibus*

Thomas Aquinas

De ente	*De ente et essentia*
De malo	*Quaestiones disputatae de malo*
De potentia	*Quaestiones disputatae de potentia*
De prin. nat.	*De principiis naturae*
De sub. sep.	*De substantiis separatis*
De veritate	*Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*
In De Trinitate	*Super Boetium De Trinitate*
In De anima	*Sentencia libri De anima*
In De div. nom.	*In librum Beati Dionysii De Divinis nominibus expositio*
In Ioan.	*Super Evangelium S. Ioannis lectura*
In Liber de causis	*Super librum De Causis expositio*
In Met.	*In duodecim libros Metaphysicorum Aristotelis expositio*
In Phys.	*Commentaria in octo libros Physicorum Aristotelis*
In Sent.	*Scriptum super libros Sententiarum magistri Petri Lombardi episcopi Parisiensis*
QD de anima	*Quaestiones disputatae de anima*
Quodlibet	*Quaestiones de quodlibet.*
SCG	*Summa Contra Gentiles*
ST	*Summa theologiae*

William of Ockham

In Sent.	*Quaestiones in libros Sententiarum (Reportatio)*
Ord.	*Ordinatio*
Quodlibet	*Quodlibeta septem*

CHAPTER I

A. INTRODUCTION

A theory of divine ideas was the standard Scholastic solution to the question "How does God know and produce creatures?" Such a theory was held to be successful only if it upheld the nobility of God's perfect knowledge without violating his supreme simplicity and unity. A variety of sources lead the medieval Schoolmen to raise this question. First and foremost among those sources was the witness of Sacred Scripture. From the very first verse of the Bible, it is declared that God created the heavens and the earth.[1] Creatures did not preexist. They did not emanate from God out of necessity or chance. Rather, God created them. Creation is the result of an intellectual and voluntary act. Not content to declare vaguely that God knows the world, Sacred Scripture consistently claims that God did not gain knowledge from some external source, and that he knows even the minutest details of each aspect of creation.[2] He knows all our actions, our sitting and our standing.[3] He "knows every sound we utter."[4] He foreknows all our thoughts.[5] He knit us together in our mothers' wombs,[6] and has counted the hairs on our head.[7] This providential knowledge extends not only to man, but extends to all of creation. A sparrow does not fall to the ground without God's knowledge of it.[8] He feeds the birds of the air that neither sow, nor reap, nor gather grain into barns, and he makes the lilies grow.[9] God penetrates every division in creation, and "no creature is invisible in his sight; everything is nude and has been laid bare to his eyes."[10] As St. Paul

[1] Gen 1:1.
[2] See Is. 40:12–14.
[3] Ps. 139:1–2.
[4] Wis. 1:7.
[5] Ps. 139:3.
[6] Jer. 1:5
[7] Mt. 10:30.
[8] Mt. 10:29. Cf. Lk 12:22–31
[9] Mt. 6:26, 28.
[10] Heb. 4:12–13.

tells the Ephesians, "We are God's work of art."[11] The divine artist has crafted all of creation.[12] He knows and guides all of its workings.

From the Biblical declaration the Schoolmen knew *that* God knows creation intimately, but Sacred Scripture is silent as to *how* God can have such knowledge. Sacred Scripture was the primary inspiration for the questions that the Schoolmen asked, and it offered the conclusions to which their arguments should arrive, but it does not offer the premises that should lead to those conclusions. Thus, in the second place, the Scholastics turned to the Fathers of the Church and to philosophers. They turned especially to St. Augustine, who spoke explicitly of divine ideas as the eternal and unchanging forms or reasons in the divine mind according to which God knows and produces individual things.[13] They also made constant reference to Pseudo-Dionysius, whose treatise *De divinis nominibus* provided great insight into God's exemplarity.[14] They also turned to Aristotle, Avicenna, and Averroes. In these earlier thinkers, the Scholastic authors found the metaphysical, epistemological, and logical tools to articulate divine knowledge of both existing and possible creatures. They also saw the negative consequences of privileging one aspect of God over another. The emphasis on divine unity and simplicity in these earlier thinkers, as we will see, results in a theory of divine knowledge that does not uphold God's nobility.

Sacred Scripture also proposes God's supreme unity and simplicity to such an extent that it seems like a stumbling block to upholding God's perfect knowledge. God is "I am who am" and "he

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[11] Eph. 2:10.

[12] Rom. 11:36.

[13] See especially, Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46 (PL 40:29–31).

[14] See especially, Pseudo-Dionysius, *De div. nom.*, V, c. 8 (PG 3:823C): "Exemplaria vero dicimus esse rationes in Deo subtantificas rerum et unite praeexistentes, quas divinus sermo vocat praedefinitiones, et divinas atque bonas voluntates, rerum definitrices et effectrices: secundum quas qui est supra substantiam, omnia quae sunt praedefinivit et produxit."

who is."[15] Moses instructs the people "the Lord is one."[16] God is spirit, in whom there is no variation, nor shadow of change.[17] God has not received anything from another.[18]

These scriptural claims render it necessary to say that divine knowledge has its origin in God himself, not from any external exemplar or counselor, but this claim does not resolve a deeper dilemma. How is it that the one God can know many things? It would appear that God's unity and simplicity makes it impossible for him to know a plurality as perfectly and intimately as Sacred Scripture claims. Moreover, Sacred Scripture does not offer a solution to this difficulty. Philosophical inquiry is required to assess the coherence of the two biblical claims.

The next two sections of this chapter will clarify the difficulty in two ways. First, I will briefly explain the way in which the medieval Schoolmen articulated the divine simplicity. The way they explain divine simplicity greatly impacts their explanation of the divine ideas. The compatibility of a plurality of divine ideas with the divine simplicity depends upon the compatibility of distinctions with supreme simplicity. Second, I will briefly explain the theories of divine knowledge proposed by Aristotle, Avicenna, and Averroes. These three theories show how an overemphasis on the simplicity of God can compromise the nobility of divine knowledge.

B. DIVINE SIMPLICITY

There is universal agreement among the Scholastics that God is simple. Simplicity is not attributed to God explicitly in the Bible. We would look in vain for a passage that proclaims, "the Lord, your God, is simple," yet, as Henry of Ghent notes, "all questions concerning the simplicity of God pertain to his unity."[19] God is one, and so also has to be simple. Simplicity provides a

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[15] Ex. 3:14

[16] Dt. 6:4. Cf. Mk. 12:29 where Christ reaffirms this teaching.

[17] Jn 4:24 and Jas. 1:17. Cf. Mal. 3:6.

[18] Rom. 11:35. Cf. Acts 17:22–31, Is. 40:12–14.

[19] Henry, *Summa*, a. 28, q. 1 (ed. Paris, I, f. 165rN): "Hic circa simpliciatem Dei in principio intelligendum est quod omnes quaestiones de dei simpliciate pertinent ad eius unitatem." Cf. a few lines below: "omne quod simplex est unum est. Non autem omne quod unum est simplex est" (*Summa*, a. 28, q. 1 [ed. Paris, I, f. 165rN]).

refinement of divine unity because there are several ways that a thing can be one. Something can be one from composition, as man is one from body and soul, or one without composition. Simplicity is the absence of composition. If God were a composite unity rather than a simple unity, then he could not the one first principle from whom all other creatures have their being.[20]

Simplicity is one of the properties of God, where "property" is understood in the sense of "*proprium,*" i.e., something unique to God. God alone is supremely simple. This declaration follows from the Biblical declaration, "the Lord, your God, is one,"[21] but it "is also certain in itself and from the testimony of creatures."[22] All creatures, regardless of how simple they may be (for clearly some creatures are simpler than others), have a twofold manner of composition: "one in which something is composed from other things (*ex aliis*). Another in which something is composed with other things (*cum aliis*)."[23] Both types of composition must be denied of God. He must have neither internal composition (*ex aliis*), nor external composition (*cum aliis*). For the most part, the Scholastics use "simple" as a general term as opposed to both types of composition, although at times they will use "simple" to deny internal composition in God, and "one" to deny external composition.[24]

In order to see how important divine simplicity is for the Scholastic men, I will first have to examine their arguments that God is entirely (*omnino*) or supremely (*summe*) simple. Second, I will briefly examine some of their arguments for the compatibility of distinctions within God and divine simplicity. In a trend that will mirror our investigation of their theories of divine ideas, the

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[20] See Durandus, *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 8, p. 2, q. 1 (ed. Venice, I.380.18–381:26). Cf. Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, q. 4, a. 1, s.c. 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.218–219).

[21] Dt. 6:4, and Mk 12:29.

[22] Bonaventure, *De mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 2, a. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.61a).

[23] Henry, *Summa*, a. 28, prol. (ed. Paris, I, f. 165rK): "unus quo aliquid compositum ex aliis. Alius quo aliquid compositum cum alio." Cf. Bonaventure, *De mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 2, a. 2, ad 12 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.67a), and Durandus, *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 8, p. 2, q. 1 (ed. Venice, I.380.16–18). This distinction is taken from Augustine, *De Trinitate*, VI, c. 7, n. 8 (PL 42.929), which is quoted in Peter Lombard, *Sent.*, I, d. 8, c. 4, n. 85 (ed. Brady, I.62)

[24] See, e.g., Bonaventure, *De mysterio Trinitatis*, qq. 2–3 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.59–78). In his later *Breviloquium*, Bonaventure puts aside this distinction: "Nam *unum* nominat ens ut *connumerable*, et hoc habet per indivisionem sui in se" (p. 1, c. 6 [ed. Quaracchi, 5.215a], emphasis original).

Scholastics writing from ca.1250–ca.1290 for the most part employ variations on the same arguments for divine simplicity. Then, beginning with John Duns Scotus in ca. 1294, many of the older arguments will drop out of the conversation, or be sharply critiqued. As we will see, William of Ockham takes the simplicity of God so seriously that he rejects almost every prior argument that attempts to allow for some manner of distinction amidst the divine simplicity. Because of the great difference in Ockham's account of divine simplicity, I will treat it separately in a third subsection.

1. Arguments for Divine Simplicity

Of the eleven different arguments that the Scholastics use as proof of divine simplicity two of them argue to simplicity by process of elimination (which Richard of Mediavilla calls an induction), and the rest argue for simplicity directly. I will treat the process of elimination arguments first. Both of these arguments have in common the principle "if God cannot be shown to be composite, then he must be simple." They both then examine, and reject the possibility that God is composite internally, and externally.

The more common process of elimination argument is found in Thomas Aquinas, Henry of Ghent, Richard of Mediavilla, and John Duns Scotus. As Thomas has it, God is not a body (and so lacks quantitative parts), is not composed of form and matter, nor of nature and supposit, nor of essence and existence (*esse*), nor of genus and difference, nor of subject and accidents, so his essence must be entirely simple.[25] Moreover, God cannot enter into composition with things such that he be the soul of the world, the formal principle of all things, or prime matter. Since God is the first efficient cause of things, he must be distinct from all things because efficient causes are numerically distinct from their effects, and a first cause cannot be composite. If a first cause were composite, then we should have to look for the cause of its composition, which would mean that our first cause

[25] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 3, aa. 1–6 (ed. Leonine, 4.35–46). Thomas sums up this argument at the beginning of his response to a. 7 (ed. Leonine, 4. 46b–47a).

is not actually first.[26] Henry concurs with this line of reasoning, but treats the types of composition in a slightly different order, and adds the composition of act and potency as its own question.[27]

Richard also provides a similar process of elimination in a paragraph that includes a short rationale for denying each type of composition. God is the highest being (*summe ens*), but each type of composition is incompatible with the *summe ens*. Therefore, God is supremely simple. Often, his reason why God cannot have a particular sort of composition is because nothing with such a composition supremely exists. These claims typically require more argumentation in order to be truly conclusive, but anyone at all familiar with philosophy in the Aristotelian tradition should readily recognize (and be able to supply an argument) for why no body or no composite of subject and accident supremely exists.[28]

Finally, Scotus offers process of elimination arguments in both his *Ordinatio* and his *Lectura*. Each of the arguments is in three parts. (1) God is not a composition of essential parts. (2) He is not composed of quantitative parts. (3) He is not composed of accident to subject. In the first part, he argues that God cannot be composed of matter and form. In the second, he argues that God could not be composed of quantitative parts because then he would be material. In the third, he argues

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[26] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 3, a. 8 (ed. Leonine, 4.48).

[27] Henry, *Summa*, aa. 28–29 (ed. Paris, I, f. 164vI–178rO). Henry treats internal composition in this order: God is not composed of quantitative parts, nor matter and form, nor genus and difference, nor nature and supposite, nor essence and existence, nor potency and act. He greatly expands the types of external composition, arguing that God could not come into composition with another as form with matter (or vice versa), as an accident with a subject (or vice versa), as a mover with the mobile, as an end with the orderable, nor as a unity with another one. It is only after denying all of these that Henry is willing to declare that God lacks every mode of composition. Henry of Ghent is not the first Scholastic thinker to use the distinction between act and potency in his discussion of divine simplicity. Thomas Aquinas uses the distinction as well, but the distinction does not appear as a distinct article in Thomas's question on simplicity in the *ST*. Thomas seems to assume that it was shown that God cannot be composed of act and potency in the prior question.

[28] Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, a. 3, q. 1 (ed. Venezia, 31rb-va): "Hoc idem patet per inductionem. In Deo cum sit summe ens: non potest esse compositione ex partibus quantitativis: quia omne tale corpus est, nullum autem corpus summe est; nec ex materia et forma quia cum materia dicat infimum gradum entitatis non potest esse de essentia summi entis; nec ex essentia et supposition quia cum essentia sit qua unumquodque est id quod est, supponitur quod non est sua essentia, non summe est; nec ex essentia et esse quia solum purus esse summe est; nec ex genere et differentia quia quod est artctatum ad genus non summe est; nec accidente et subiecto quia nullum tale summe est." This passage appears almost verbatim in q. 1 of the *Quaestiones variae* attributed to Henry of Ghent. In fact, the entire response of both questions is so close that it is obvious that one author has copied the other. I will have more to say about this below.

that because God is neither material nor has quantity, he is not capable of receiving material accidents. He is capable of receiving only what agrees with spiritual beings, namely, intellection, volition, and what corresponds to them. But these qualities are not accidental to God, but are rather his substance. Thus, God is not composed of subject and accident.[29]

We should note that in Scotus's presentation most of the possibilities for composition have fallen off. Scotus does not find it necessary to argue against more types of composition than form and matter, quantitative parts, and subject and accident. The compositions of nature and supposite, essence and existence, genus and difference, and act and potency are not included. So while the same general structure of the argument remains the same, i.e., Scotus argues that God is not composed from others or with others, the threshold for completeness evolves from author to author.

The second type of process of elimination argument appears in Bonaventure, Richard, one of the *Quaestiones variae* ascribed to Henry of Ghent, and Durandus of Saint Pourçain.[30] It argues that since God is neither composed from other things, composed of other things, nor can anything enter into composition with him, he is supremely simple. They argue for the three aspects of the proposition in a variety of ways. Some of these ways overlap with the direct arguments for divine simplicity, but it is worth recounting them here to show the development of the process of elimination argument. Bonaventure claims that they are ruled out because God is first (and so could not have essential parts prior to him), most perfect (and so will not come to constitute a third thing

[29] Scotus, *Ord.* I, q. 8, p. 1, q. 1, nn. 5–14 (ed. Vatican, 4.154–159), and *Lect.* I, d. 8, p. 1, qq. 1–2, nn. 8–23 (ed. Vatican, 17.2–7). In the *Lectura*, Scotus does not argue in favor of the position that God is not composed of subject and accident. Instead, he argues that one of Thomas's arguments and two of Henry's arguments are not conclusive.

[30] Bonaventure, *De mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.70b); Henry, *Quaestiones variae*, q. 1 (ed. Etzkorn, 38.4:55–6:102); Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Venezia, I.31rb); Durandus, *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 8, p. 2, q. 1 (380:16–18).

in combination with others), and last (and so lacks the possibility of composition because other things are ordered to him as to a restful end).[31]

Richard argues against the three types of composition using an argument that eliminates all three possibilities at once. Any possibility of composition would be just that, a possibility. But the highest being has no possibility. So any composition from others, with others, or even the mere possibility of another entering into composition with the highest being, must be ruled out.[32]

Although the question attributed to Henry makes three main arguments against the three types of composition rather than just one, it seems clear that its author has the text of Richard before him as he crafts his answer. His first argument specifically argues against the claim that God can be composed from others. Using Richard's reference to Augustine's *De libero arbitrio*, he argues that God cannot be composed from other things because all such compositions depend on another for their being composed. God, the highest being, cannot depend on another for his existence, and so cannot be composed of others.[33] His second argument amounts to a restatement of the first. The highest being cannot have a cause. Diverse things do not concur in the constitution of one thing unless some cause unify them. Therefore, the highest being, God, cannot be composed from many things. The third argument is the one taken from Richard, and is aimed at all three types of composition at the same time. Every composition includes possibility, but the highest being does not have any possibility. Therefore, the highest being is not composed at all.[34]

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[31] Bonaventure, *De mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.70b).

[32] Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, a. 3, q. 1 (ed. Venezia, I.31rb). After giving the general argument against all three, Richard goes through each of the three showing why it applies specifically to it.

[33] Henry, *Quaestiones variae*, q. 1 (ed. Etzkorn, 38.5:66–78). The quotation from Augustine comes from *De lib. arb.*, II, c. 15 (PL 32.1262).

[34] Henry, *Quaestiones variae*, q. 1 (ed. Etzkorn, 38.5:79–6:102). He cites Aristotle, *Met.* VII, c. 13, 1039a4-6 (AL XXV.3.2.159:752–753), although he says it is from book V; Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 2 (PL 40.11); Avicenna, *Met.* I, c. 6; IV, c. 2; VI, c. 3 (ed. van Riet, I.43:18–20; I.212:43; II.319:12). Durandus makes use of the same three arguments. Against the possibility of God being composed from others, he argues that God is the first being, and has no cause. Against the possibility of God entering into composition with others or others with him, he argues that God is pure act, and so does not have the requisite possibility to allow for any composition to ever occur. His perfection rules out any composition. Despite these similarities, Durandus's clearly wrote his own arguments (Durandus, *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 8, p. 2, q. 1 [380:17–382:74]).

In addition to these two arguments that God is not complex, the Scholastics made nine direct arguments for divine simplicity. Since simplicity is a negation of composition, all of the arguments focus on the incompatibility of composition in God with some already known attribute of God, although some of the authors choose to emphasize the negative aspect of simplicity more than others. The first three arguments are primarily Neoplatonic in that they associate a priority in being with greater simplicity. They are also Aristotelian because, as we will see below, they rely on the pure actuality of the highest being. The argument is based on God's being independent because he does not depend on another and is uncaused. The next argument is patently Aristotelian in virtue

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I think that the author of this question is looking at Richard's text (and not vice versa) for four reasons. First, he gives a more specific reference to the quotation from Augustine's *De libero arbitrio*. Whereas Richard gives a circumlocution describing where the quotation can be found on his manuscript, the text ascribed to Henry names a specific chapter. Richard simply notes "Dicit enim Augustino II *De libero arbitrio* quasi in medio loco inter medium et finem . . ." (*In I Sent.*, d. 8, a. 3, q. 1 [ed. Venezia, I.31rb]). The chapter that the author of the *Quaestiones variae* names (33) is not the chapter that we use today (15), but it is more likely that a later author would have a vague citation and offer a more specific citation, than that he would have a very specific citation and then give a vague one instead.

Second, both of the authorities that Richard cites in his *sed contra* are found in the body of the question ascribed to Henry. If, as Etzkorn notes in the introduction to the edition of the questions ascribed to Henry, the question on the simplicity of God is a disputed question, rather than a quodlibetal question, which means that the *sed contra* would have been offered by the bachelor, and the response by the master ("Analysis of the Text," xi). Thus, the fact that the *sed contra* quotations of Richard appear in the body of the question ascribed to Henry indicates that the latter was reading the former and wanted to work those authorities into his text. This desire would explain why the quotation from Augustine is somewhat awkwardly appended to the end of the body of the question. "Et sic sufficienter probatum est quod Deus summe simplex est. Cui consonat Augustinus, VI *De Trinitate* cap. 2, loquens de aequalitate Spiritus Sancti ipsi Patri, dicens sic: *Aequalis est Spiritus Sanctus, et si aequalis in omnibus, aequalis propter summam simplicitatem, quae in illa substantia est.* Quae auctoritas superius est allegata proprietate hac in opponendo" (Henry, *Quaestones variae*, q. 1 [ed. Etzkorn, 6:114–119]). It should be noted that the first sentence of this citation is a direct quotation of the last sentence of Richard's text (*In I Sent.*, d. 8, a. 3, q. 1 [ed. Venezia, I.31va]).

Third, while Henry's thought was undoubtedly influenced by Bonaventure's thought, he does not seem to be influenced as much as Richard was. Bonaventure's influence over Henry seems to be primarily through his *In Sent.* and *Itinerarium*. He only articulates the three types of composition in his *De mysterio Trinitatis*, however. Thus, I am inclined to think that Richard borrowed the distinction before the author of the question ascribed to Henry.

Finally, Etzkorn notes in his introduction to the edition, Henry does not use William of Moerbeke's translation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, preferring the older, anonymous translation (Etzkorn, "Authorship of the Qustions," in Henry of Ghent, *Quaestiones variae*, xii. Macken, "Les sources d'Henri de Gand," *Revue Philosophique de Louvain* 76 [1978]: 15). Richard, however, does cite from the Moerbeke's newer and better translation. Since both Richard and the author from the *Quaestiones variae* cite Moerbeke's translation of *Metaphysics* VII, it is likely that Richard's was the prior work.

Given that Richard wrote his *In Sent.* in ca. 1281–83, the evidence that Richard's text was prior than the question ascribed to Henry makes me skeptical that it was written by Henry at all. It would not be impossible for the text to be by Henry, but according to Caffarena, Henry had finished the more complete *reductio* argument of the *Summa* in 1279 (Caffarena, "Cronología de la «Suma» de Enrique de Gante por relación a sus «Quodlibetos»," *Gregorianum* 38.1 [1957]: 133). Why would he return to the issue and offer a less complete solution to the question? The question of authorship is irrelevant to our concern here. What matters for our purposes, is that several authors were using this line of *reductio ad absurdum* argumentation in favor of divine simplicity.

of making explicit use of the principle that God is pure act, and so cannot have any potentiality. The following two arguments appear only in Bonaventure and are based on God's perfection and immutability. The last two arguments which are based on necessary being (*necesse-esse*) and infinity are important because they are the only two arguments that Scotus uses as direct arguments in favor of divine simplicity. The other six arguments have fallen by the wayside.[35]

The first argument is from priority. Everything that is first is simplest because to the extent that something is prior, it is simpler. God is the first in the genus of beings in that nothing is, nor can be, nor can be thought to be prior than him. Therefore, God is the simplest, and supremely simple. The major premise is true because every composite is posterior to its components, and a simple is prior to the composite. Thus, Bonaventure adds, the predicate of the major premise is contained in its subject and so is self-evident.[36]

The second argument is based on God's nobility. The first principle of being (*essendi*) has being (*esse*) in the noblest way since something is always nobler in the cause than in the caused. But the noblest way of having *esse* is by something completely being its *esse*. Therefore, God is his esse. But nothing composed is completely its *esse* because its *esse* follows from its components, which are not its *esse*. Therefore, God is not composed.[37]

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[35] Durandus will still use some of the earlier arguments in his third *In I Sent.*, but the circumstances surrounding his second and third commentary on the *Sentences* make it unclear how much he is endorsing a position or merely showing a, somewhat coerced, deference to tradition. As we will see, this problem does not appear in his explication of the divine ideas. His theory of ideas is so different from any that came before him that his endorsement of the position is beyond question.

[36] Bonaventure, *De mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 3, a. 1, fm. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.68a), esp.: "compositum est posterius quam component, et simplex prius composito: causa ergo praedicati est in subiecto in praedicta [sc., in majori] propositione: ergo est vera per se." Cf. Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 2, a. un., q. 1, fm. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, 1.165a); Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, p. 1, c. 6 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.215a); Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, q. 4, a. 1, s.c. 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.218); Thomas, *ST* I, q. 3, a. 7, arg 2 in corp. (ed. Leonine, 4.48). Durandus's argument from priority is slightly different: "Primum ens est primum unum; set Deus est primum ens; ergo est primum unum; set unum compositione non potest esse primum unum; ergo Deus non est unum compositione, set simplicitate. Quod autem primum unum non sit unum compositione, patet, quia sicut se ahbet ad entitatem, sic se habet unitas ad unitatem; set entitas composite supponit entitatem partium; ergo unitas eius supponit unitatem cuiuslibet partis" (*In I Sent. (C)*, d. 8, p. 2, q. 1 [380:20–381:26]). A similar argument is found in Bonaventure, *De mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 3, a. 1, fm. 10 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.69a).

[37] Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, q. 4, a. 1, s.c. 2 and 3 (ed. Mandonnet, I.218–19); Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 2, a. un., q. 1, fm. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, 1.165a); Bonaventure, *De mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 3, a. 1, fm. 5 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.68b).

The third argument is based on God's power. The simpler something is, the more power it possesses, and vice versa because "united power can do more than multiplied power."[38] But God is infinite and immense power. Therefore, he is infinitely simple. Therefore, God is supremely simple.[39]

The fourth argument is based on divine independence, and can be articulated in two different ways. To say that God is independent is to say that he possesses himself perfectly such that he does not depend upon another and is uncaused. This argument has two articulations that emphasize either that God does not depend upon another or that he is uncaused. In its first articulation, it is argued that everything that is whatever it has is simplest. But God is whatever he has. Therefore, he is simplest. Bonaventure proves the minor premise as follows: God has power, wisdom, etc. Therefore, either he is his power or he is not. If he is, then *habemus propositum*. If he is not his power, since he has power, he has to possess it from another. Therefore, God is from another. But this is false. Therefore, God must be whatever he has.[40]

In its second articulation, God is independent because he is uncaused. Every composite being has a cause, for things that are diverse in themselves cannot become some one thing except

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Bonaventure's approach to this argument does not focus as much on *esse* as Thomas's. Bonaventure argues instead that the noblest being must have all the conditions of nobility. Simplicity is a condition of nobility. Therefore, etc.

[38] *Liber de causis*, prop. 9 (10), n. 94 (ed. Pattin, 158–59: 18–23): "Et in primis intelligentiis est virtus magna quoniam sunt vehementioris unitatis quam intelligentiae secundae inferiores; et in intelligentiis secundis inferioribus sunt virtutes debiles, quoniam sunt minoris unitatis et pluris multiplicitatis." The Quaracchi editors cite prop. 7 as the source of this principle, but the closest I can find is the claim that "unitas est dignior ea quam divisio" in prop. 6 (7), n. 70 (ed. Pattin, 151:99–00). Dignitas and potentia are not the same thing, however.

[39] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 2, a. un., fm. 4 (ed Quaracchi, I.168); Bonaventure, *De mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 3, a. 1, fm. 6 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.68b-69a).

[40] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 2, a. un., fm. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, 1.168a); Bonaventure, *De mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 3, a. 1, fm. 7 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.69a); Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, q. 4, a. 1, s.c. 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.218–19); Henry, *Quaestones variae*, q. 1 (ed. Etzkorn, 38.5:66–78). In the *ST*, Thomas argues to God's self-possession in a slightly different way: "Quinto, quia omne compositum est aliquid quod non convenit alcui suarum partium. Et quidem in totis dissimilium partium manifestum est: nulla enim partium hominis est homo, neque aliqua partium pedis est pes. In totis vero similium partium, lecet aliquid quod dicitur de toto, dicatur de parte, sicut pars aeris est aer, et aquae aqua; aliquid tamen dicitur de toto, quod non convenit alicui partium: non enim si tota aqua est bicutiba, et pars eius. Sic igitur in omni composito est aliquid quod non est ipsum. Hoc autm etsi possit dici de habente formam, quod scilicet habeat aliquid quod non est ipsum (puta in albo est aliquid quod non pertinent ad rationem albi): namen in ipsa forma nihil est alienum. Unde, cum Deus sit ipsa forma, vel potius ipsum esse, nullo modo compositus esse potest" (Thomas, *ST* I, q. 3, a. 7 [ed. Leonine, 4.47]).

through some cause. But God does not have a cause. Therefore, he cannot be composite. Therefore, he must be simple.[41]

The fifth argument, which is the most commonly used argument, is based on pure actuality. Every composition includes some manner of potency. But God is pure act and has no potency in him at all. Therefore, God cannot be a composite. Lacking all composition, God must be supremely simple.[42]

The sixth and seventh arguments appear to have be made only by Bonaventure. The sixth argument is based on God's perfection. Every most perfect being is simplest. But divine being (*esse*) is most perfect. Therefore, it is most simple. The minor premise is clear because no condition is more consonant with divine being than perfection. The major premise is proved because what is perfect itself wholly and according to its whole self is more perfect than that which has something perfectible in itself. But every composite or thing capable of composition has something perfectible in itself. Therefore, it is impossible that something be supremely perfect unless it also be simplest. Therefore, God must be the simplest being.[43]

The seventh argument is based on God's immutability. Every composite is mutable. Therefore, from the denial of the consequence, every immutable thing is simple, and everything

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[41] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 3, a. 7, arg. 3 in corp. (ed. Leonine, 4.47a); Henry, *Quaestiones variae*, q. 1 (ed. Etzkorn, 38.5:79–85); Durandus, *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 8, p. 2, q. 1 (381:27–382:56). See Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 2, a. un., q. 2, ad 2, 3, 4 (ed. Quarachi, 1.169b): "Solus autem Deus est independens. Omnia autem alia sunt dependentia, sive comparatione ad principia, ex quibus sunt, sive unum principium componens complicetur ad aliud, sive esse dependens comparatione ad Deum sive ab ipso Deo. Nihil, autem, quod dependet, est sua dependentia: ideo nihil tale est summe simplex, quia omne simplicissimum est absolutissimum."

[42] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 3, a. 7, arg. 4 in corp. (ed. Leonine, 4.47); Bonaventure, *De mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 3, a. 1, ad 4 (e. Quaracchi, 5.71b–72a); Henry, *Quaestiones variae*, q. 1 (ed. Etzkorn, 38.5:87–102); Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, a. 3, q. 1 (ed. Venezia, I.31rb–va); Durandus, *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 8, p. 2, a. 1 (382:57–382:83). Bonaventure offers an interesting derivation of divine simplicity in his *In I Sent.* that ties actuality to nobility, which in turn demands the supreme communication of the Blessed Trinity: "Quoniam ubi *summa* simplicitas intelligitur, oportet summan actualitatem intelligi, si summe *nobilis* est. Et ubi est summa actualitas, summa diffusio et communicatio debet poni; et ista non potest esse nisi in sempiterna poroductione rei omnino infinitae et aequalis in virtute; et hoc non potest esse in alietate essentiae: ergo non potest intelligi divina essentia simplicissima, nisi in tribus personis intelligatur tota esse, quarum una sit ab alia" (d. 8, p. 2, a. un., q. 1, ad 1 [ed. Quaracchi, 1.166a]).

[43] Bonaventure, *De mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 3, a. 1, fm. 8 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.69a).

simply immutable is simple in every way. But divine being (*esse*) is entirely immutable because the highest good cannot be changed into something better, equal, or worse. Therefore, divine being is the simplest.[44]

The eighth argument for divine simplicity is the first direct argument offered by Scotus. Although it seems like he would be amenable to several of the prior arguments for divine simplicity, especially the argument based on God as pure act, he does not use any of them when he treats divine simplicity in his *Ordinatio* and *Lectura*. The eighth argument is based on God as necessary being (*necesse-esse*). If *necesse-esse* were composite, either its components would be *necesse-esse* formally or not. If not, then it would be possible being, and not *necesse-esse*. If yes, then it would not become with the other part because what is *per se ens* does not become one with another being.[45]

The ninth and final direct argument is based on infinity. It is unique to Scotus and he offers two versions of the argument. The first version argues that everything that can enter into composition with another can be part of a whole. But every part is exceeded in perfection by the whole. But an infinite cannot be exceeded. Therefore, God, who is infinite, cannot enter into composition with another.[46]

Moreover, he argues, everything that can enter into composition with another lacks, in itself, that with which it can enter into composition. Therefore, if *a* (God) can be in composition with *b*, then *a* does not have *b* through identity. Therefore, *a* will not be infinite because the composite has *a* and something else. But if it is not infinite, then it is not God. Therefore, if God can enter into composition with another, he will not be God.[47]

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[44] Bonaventure, *De mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 3, a. 1, fm. 9 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.69a).

[45] Bonaventure, *De mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 3, a. 1, fm. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.68b); Henry, *Summa*, a. 29, q. 8 (ed. Paris, I, f. 177vL); Scotus, *Ord.*, I, d. 8, p. 1, q. 1, n. 16 (ed. Vatican, 4.160:2–14); Scotus, *Lect.*, I, d. 8, p. 1, qq. 1–2 (ed. Vatican, 17.8:8–17).

[46] Scotus, *Lect.*, I, d. 8, p. 1, qq. 1–2, n. 26 (ed. Vatican, 17.8:19–22).

[47] Scotus, *Lect.*, I, d. 8, p. 1, qq. 1–2, n. 27 (ed. Vatican, 17.8:23–28). He offers a slightly extended version of this argument in *Ord.*, I, d. 8, p. 1, q. 1, nn. 17–19 (ed. Vatican, 4.160:15–161:13)

The arguments above make it clear that the Scholastics are unanimous in their demand that God be simple.[48] Not only is there only one God, the one God is neither composed out of any parts nor enters into composition with any other being. We have to conclude that God is simple because we find reason to exclude from him all possible compositions, i.e., we conclude that God is simple because is *not* composed. Yet, we are not constrained to this negative conclusion. We can argue from the eminence of God's existence as the highest being that he must be simple. The fact that the highest being is first, noblest, most powerful, independent and uncaused, pure act, perfect, immutable, necessary and infinite forces us to admit that God simple.[49]

2. Arguments for the Compatibility of Distinctions with Divine Simplicity

The continual Scholastic claim that God is supremely (*summe*) and entirely (*omnino*) simple immediately encounters three very serious objections: the Trinity, divine attributes, and divine knowledge. If God is, as all orthodox Christians declare him to be, Triune, then the Scholastics must offer reasons to think that the divine simplicity is compatible with a plurality of persons. Again, God is both good and wise. But goodness and wisdom are not formally the same. Therefore, the divine attributes must be distinct from each other.[50] Since it is not apparent how distinct divine attributes

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[48] Our examination of Ockham below will only strengthen this claim.

[49] Of course, contemporary philosophers and theologians like William Lane Craig and Alvin Plantiga remain unconvinced by these arguments, and offer a variety of reasons for denying that God is simple. Their arguments appear to solve some of the apparent difficulties with positing a simple God (especially concerning divine foreknowledge), but they also engender a host a difficulties because they seem to strip God of the other perfections mentioned above. E.g., if God is not simple, then his priority seems to be in jeopardy because his essential parts would be prior to him. The same holds for the other eight perfections as well. Moreover, if God changed, what assurance could we have that he would not stop loving us? I mention these things only to show that the issue of divine simplicity is not as universally agreed upon and might not be as easy to affirm as the Scholastics make it seem. What matters for our purpose here is that the Scholastics all agreed that God is supremely (*summe*) and entirely (*omnino*) simple. For objections to divine simplicity, see, *inter alia*, Alvin Plantinga, *Does God Have a Nature?* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1980), and J.P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), esp. 517–536. For defenses of divine simplicity, see, *inter alia*, Lawrence Dewan, "Saint Thomas, Alvin Plantinga, and the Divine Simplicity," *Modern Schoolman* 66 (1989): 141–51, Eleanore Stump, "Aquinas on Being, Goodness, and Divine Simplicity," in *Miscellanea Mediaevalia Band 30: Die Logik des Transzendentalen*, ed. M. Pickave, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2003), 212–25, and James Dolezal, *God without Parts: Divine Simplicity and the Metaphysics of God's Absoluteness* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publication, 2011).

[50] As we will see below, Ockham strongly objects to this argument. What is important at this point is that the distinction between goodness and wisdom seems to demand distinction in the simplicity of God.

are compatible with divine simplicity, reasons must be given for such a distinction. And if God is to know all things intimately, then the Scholastics must offer reasons to think that the divine simplicity is compatible with a plurality of things known.

Moreover, these three pluralities must be distinct from each other lest someone declare that there are as many persons in God as there are divine attributes or as many divine persons as there are objects known by God. This section will give only a general introduction to some of the ways that the Scholastics argue for the compatibility of the Trinity and divine attributes with divine simplicity. Such an overview will allow us to see the contrast between Ockham's theory of divine simplicity and his predecessors. Arguments for the compatibility of distinctions among objects of divine thought and divine simplicity will be offered in later chapters under each author's section concerning the plurality of divine ideas.

The Scholastics prior to Scotus makes several sets of distinctions to argue for the compatibility of a certain plurality with God's supreme simplicity. They argue that in God there is no real diversity, plurality or difference. They argue in particular that the divine attributes differ only by reason, i.e., only by our way of considering them. They draw diverging conclusions from this insight, but their shared principle that God's essential perfections differ only by reason gives their theories enough unity for us to present only Bonaventure's account as a representative sample of the types of distinction they draw.

Bonaventure makes three sets of distinctions to help us understand how there can be some distinction within God's supreme unity. First, he says that there are two types of diversity. The first type of diversity is diversity from addition, which is the diversity in absolute properties that are diverse in diverse things as white in Peter and black in Paul. This sort of diversity posits composition and so is incompatible with simplicity. The second type of diversity, however, comes from origin alone as when a person emanates from another. The persons differ, but this is not contradictory to

simplicity because it only posits an order and respect to the other, not a composition. Thus, it does not posit composition, but rather a distinction and differentiation. It is compatible with simplicity.[51]

Second, as a corollary to the distinction among types of diversity, Bonaventure distinguishes two types of plurality. In the first type of plurality, there is more found in two than there is in one, as there is more goodness in two men than in one. This sort of plurality is contradictory to simplicity because it adds to the unity, i.e., it is a diversity from addition. In the second type of plurality, there is just as much in many as there is in one, as there is just as much being, goodness, and power in one divine person as there is in many. This sort of plurality adds nothing to the unity, and so posits no composition. It is a plurality resulting from a diversity of origin. There is no increase of being, goodness, or power when the Son is generated or the Holy Spirit is spirated. There is only a distinction in origin and respect.[52]

Finally, Bonaventure distinguishes three ways that a property can be distinguished from a property: with respect to a subject, with respect to itself, or with respect to an object. A property differs from a property with respect to a subject because they are caused by diverse natures found within it. Thus, there is composition in the subject from a plurality. A property differs from a property with respect to itself as when musical and grammatical differ in Peter. Thus, there is a composition because the subject is subject (*subesse*) to a plurality. Finally, a property differs from a property with respect to an object because it posits the subject as compared to many things. This respect does not posit composition, but distinction, as, e.g., when a point is the beginning of one line, and the end of another. No composition is found in the point simply because it is the extreme of two different lines. It is one point in reality and only two according to reason, i.e., it is two insofar

[51] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 2, a. un., q. 1, ad 2 (ed. Quaracchi, 1.166ab). Cf. Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, q. 4, a. 1, ad 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.219).

[52] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 2, a. un., q. 1, ad 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.166b).

as it is considered as the beginning of one line, and the end of the other. The divine properties, he says, are distinguished in this manner.[53]

In all three of these distinctions we see Bonaventure arguing that divine simplicity admits of distinctions because distinctions do not add to the reality of the one. The first two distinctions allow us to understand how divine persons can be really distinguished from each other, but not add to the divine essence, or differ in being, goodness, or power.[54] The third distinction argues that the variety of divine attributes, such as goodness and wisdom, are really one, and only differ because of our way of considering them. We have to consider goodness as distinct from wisdom, and so we say that God has two different attributes. Yet, they differ by reason alone, not because of any real difference in God.[55]

Scotus agrees with Bonaventure's conclusion, namely, the divine persons and the divine attributes do not derogate the divine simplicity, but he takes issue with the claim that there is distinction between the divine persons and divine attributes only according to reason. A difference of reason is not sufficient, and so we must have recourse to Scotus's formal distinction.[56]

In the *Ordinatio*, he argues this point as follows. A difference of reason consists in diverse ways of considering the same formal object, e.g., the distinction between a wise man and wisdom, or

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[53] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 2, a. un., q. 1, ad 4 (ed. Quaracchi, 1.166b). Cf. Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 2, a. 5 (ed. Mandonnet, 1. 74–76).

[54] The divine persons need to be really distinguished from each other because, as Thomas notes, "dicere personas distingui tantum ratione, sonat haeresim sabellianam" (*In I Sent.*, d. 2, a. 5 [ed. Mandonnet, I.75]). The Sabellian heresy claims that "Father," "Son," and "Holy Spirit" are just three names that the one God takes up at different times. The one God wears, as it were, three different masks. In that case, God would not really be a Trinity.

[55] See Henry, *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 (ed. Paris, f. 150A–151E), Henry *Summa*, a. 32, q. 4 (ed. Macken, 27.67:13–15): "Ecce quod respectus in Deo distinguit per affirmationes et negationes, ita quod omnia divina attributa, sive affirmativa sive negativa, non nisi respectus significant." Godfrey of Fontaines, *Quodlibet* VII, q. 1 (*PB* II.265–278).

[56] The formal distinction plays a central role in Scotus's metaphysics. As King points out, in addition to using it to explain the distinction between the divine persons and the divine essence, and the distinction between the divine attributes, he deploys it to explain, *inter alia*, the distinction between an individual's genus and specific differentia, an individual's essence and proper accidents, the faculties of the soul and the soul itself, and the uncontracted common nature and the individual differentia. See Michael Joseph Jordan, "Duns Scotus on the Formal Distinction," Ph.D. dissertation, Rutgers University, 2005; Stephen D. Dumont, "Duns Scotus's Parisian Question on the Formal Distinction," *Vivarium* 43 (2005): 7–62; Peter King, "Scotus on Metaphysics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Duns Scotus*, ed. Thomas Williams (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 22–25; and Peter King, "Duns Scotus on the Common Nature," *Philosophical Topics* 20 (1992), 50–76.

wisdom and truth. But with the divine attributes, there is not merely a distinction of formal objects because nothing is in intuitive cognition unless it is in the intuitive object cognized. Thus, Scotus argues that there is a distinction preceding any distinction of reason that we might make, namely, that wisdom is in the thing from its nature, and goodness is in the thing from its nature, but the wisdom in the thing is not, formally, the goodness in the thing.[57] Therefore, the two attributes must be formally distinct in God.

He argues that the two attributes do not formally include each other because if infinite wisdom were infinite goodness formally, then wisdom in general would be goodness in general formally. For infinity does not destroy the formal nature (*ratio*) of that to which it is added. Various grades of something do not add or subtract from its nature. So, if wisdom in general and goodness in general do not have the same essential nature, or if the definition of one does not include the other, then they are formally distinct. But the definition of goodness in general does not include wisdom in itself. And since the definition does not only indicate the notion (*ratio*) caused by the intellect, but the quiddity itself, there is a formal non-identity on the part of the thing. Thus, God's wisdom and his goodness are not different merely by reason, but are formally distinct in God himself.[58]

Scotus's argument relies on the fact that we could not understand a distinction in the thing unless that distinction were somehow already there. To Bonaventure's example of the point, Scotus would readily admit that the point is only one, but deny that the difference between the point as end of one line and beginning of another is a difference of reason. There really is a difference in the point itself because to be the beginning of a line and to be the end of a line are not formally the

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[57] Scotus, *Ord.*, I, d. 8, p. 1, q. 4, n. 191 (ed. Vatican, 4.260:11–261:2). Scotus, *Lect.*, I, d. 8, p. 1, q. 4, nn. 172–74 (ed. Vatican, 17.62:7–63:2). See Scotus, *In IV Met.*, q. 2, n. 143 (OPh III.355:7–9): "alietate, inquam, non causata ab intellectu, nec tamen tanta quantam intelligimus cum dicimus 'diverae res'; sed differentia reali minori, si vocetur differentia realis omnis non causata ab intellectu."

[58] Scotus, *Ord.*, I, d. 8, p. 1, q. 4, nn. 192–93 (ed. Vatican, 4.261:3–262:10). Scotus, *Lect.*, I, d. 8, p. 1, q. 4, n. 175–76 (ed. Vatican, 17.63:3–26).

same. But since these two facts about the point, namely, its being the end of one line and the beginning of another, cannot be separated (because then there would be two points, not one) they must be formally distinct, not really distinct.

Thus, there is a superficial agreement among the Scholastics from Bonaventure to Scotus that there must be certain distinctions that do not derogate God's supreme simplicity because otherwise we could not account for certain divine attributes, such as wisdom and goodness. This agreement is only at the most general level, however, and they immediately divide into two camps: those who think the distinctions are merely rational, and those who think the distinction is formal.

3. Ockham on Divine Simplicity

William of Ockham is the fiercest Scholastic defender of divine simplicity. Divine simplicity is so crucial for him that he does not wait until the eighth distinction of his *Ordinatio* to treat it as most of the other authors do. Instead, it is the first thing he treats in the second distinction. He takes the claim that God is supremely (*summe*) and entirely (*omnino*) simple so seriously that he denies that God, strictly speaking, has distinct divine attributes.[59]

Ockham's argument for this daring claim is as follows. Wherever there is some multitude there is some distinction. But everyone (as we have seen) says the attributes are many. Therefore, they are to be distinguished in some way among themselves and even from the essence, since they do not posit the essence as an attribute. Therefore, they are either distinguished from the nature of the thing, or by reason alone. It cannot be by reason alone because Scotus's arguments against this position are decisive.[60] Yet, neither can it be from the nature of the thing because then the attributes

[59] "Dico quod perfectiones attributales, quae demonstrantur de divina essentia, non sunt realiter ipsa divina essentia" (Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 2, q. 1, ad 1 [OTh 2.49:13–15]). As we will see, he argues for this position in q. 2 of the same distinction.

[60] Ockham also argues against the distinction of the divine attributes by reason alone at *Ord.*, I, d. 2, q. 2 (OTh 54:9–60:2).

would have to be formally distinct, which cannot be, or the attributes would have to be distinct things, which everyone denies.[61]

Ockham is convinced that Scotus's formal distinction has to be false. Wherever there is some distinction or non-identity, some contradictories can be verified of the things there. But it is impossible that contradictories be true of each thing, unless those things are (1) distinct things, (2) distinct reasons, (3) beings of reason (*entia rationis*), or (4) a thing and a reason. But if all those contradictories are not (2) distinct reasons or (4) a thing and a reason, then they are distinct things.[62]

The major premise, he says, is clear because if *a* and *b* are not the same in every way, then both "*a* is the same as *a* in every way" and "*b* is not the same as *a* in every way" are both true such that "to be the same as *a* in every way" and "not to be the same as *a* in every way" are verified of *a* and *b*. This is exactly what Scotus claims when he says that divine wisdom is formally divine wisdom, and divine goodness is not formally divine wisdom. Universally, then, wherever there is some distinction or non-identity, something is affirmed of one and truly denied of what remains.[63]

He argues for the minor premise as follows. All contradictories have equal repugnance among themselves. There is as much repugnance between a soul and a non-soul, a donkey and a non-donkey, as there is between God and non-God or between being (*ens*) and non-being.[64] From some contradictories we can infer that those things from which the contradictories are verified are distinct things, distinct reasons, or a thing and a reason. Therefore, universally nothing the same can truly be affirmed and truly denied except because of a distinction of thing(s) or reason(s). He then offers an example of each of the four situations he outlined above for the claim that when *a* is, and *b* is not, there is a distinction of thing(s) or reason(s). For example, if a substance exists and an

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[61] Ockham, *Ord.*, I, d. 2, q. 2 (OTh 2.63:1–10).
[62] Ockham, *Ord.*, I, d. 2, q. 1 (OTh 2.14:10–16).
[63] Ockham, *Ord.*, I, d. 2, q. 1 (OTh 2.14:16–15:5).
[64] Ockham notes one, unrelated exception: "Nisi forte dicatur esse maior repugnantia inter ista quam inter illa propter maiorem perfectionem alicuius partis in una contradictione quam in alia. Sed hoc non est ad propositum" (*Ord.*, I, d. 2, q. 1 [OTh 2.15:9–12]).

accident does not, it follows that they are not one thing, but distinct things (either in act or in potency). From the exhaustive list of examples, he concludes that from the affirmation and negation of the same thing we can infer a real non-identity. Therefore, if to be the same formally as wisdom is truly affirmed of wisdom and truly denied from goodness, it is necessary that divine wisdom and divine goodness convey something that is not really the same. They are not merely formally distinct, but really distinct.[65]

Since, as Ockham has argued, everything that is formally distinct is, in fact, really distinct, divine simplicity demands that from the nature of the thing, the attributal perfections in no way be distinguished from the divine essence. If such perfections were distinguished from the essence as Scotus describes, then we could not distinguish between the divine perfections and the divine persons. In the case of God, Ockham says that we should never distinguish anything formally unless because of a real distinction, and this applies only to the distinction between a divine relation (like paternity), and the essence. The divine essence and paternity are distinguished formally because the essence is filiation, but paternity is not filiation. The same holds true for the other three divine relations. If we distinguished divine attributes in the same way, then we could not distinguish between the divine persons and the divine attributes because, just as paternity is not filiation, it is also not wisdom. And since everything that is the divine essence is either absolute or relative, that which is absolute, like wisdom, goodness, justice, etc. is not distinguished from the divine essence in any way. We should not even concede something of one attribute that we deny of another regardless of whether we do so with any determination whatsoever or without a determination (unless there is a grammatical or logical impediment).[66]

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[65] Ockham, *Ord.*, I, d. 2, q. 1 (OTh 2.15:6–16:3). Ockham offers another, more concise argument that things could not be proved to be really distinct, but only formally distinct. If *a* and *b* can be formally distinct, yet really the same (as Scotus affirms of divine wisdom and divine goodness), then nothing could be proven to be really distinct, but only formally distinct. Even saying that a donkey is not rational and man is rational would not suffice to distinguish them really, only formally. Thus, man would be a donkey formally (*Ord.*, I, d. 2, q. [OTh 2.16:4–14]).

[66] Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 2, q. 1 (OTh 2.19:3–24).

Given that all the attributal perfections are identical with the divine essence in every way, Ockham still has to reckon with the fact that we cannot say that wisdom, goodness, and justice are completely the same. His answer focuses on the fact that *we* cannot say it. An attributal perfection can be taken in two ways. In the first way, it is taken for some divine perfection simply that really is God. This is the understanding Ockham has assumed up to this point in the discussion. In this way, there cannot be many attributal perfections, but only one perfection that is indistinct both in reality and in reason. These perfections are not, strictly speaking, *in* God or *in* the divine essence because they are the divine essence in every way. In the second way, an attributal perfection is nothing but a certain concept or sign that can be truly predicated of God. More properly, we should say that they are not attributal perfections in this case because a perfection is a thing, not a concept. Thus, we should say that they are attributal concepts or attributal names.[67]

Attributal concepts or names introduce the divine essence in three ways. Some do so absolutely and affirmatively, like "intellect" and "will." Some do so connotatively by connoting something else, like "predestinating," "creating," or "creative." Finally, some do so negatively, like "incorruptible," and "immortal." This connotation allows many attributes to be predicated of the divine essence.[68] These attributal concepts or names have been improperly taken as attributal perfections. So if attributal perfections introduce perfection simply, and therefore the divine essence itself, and if attributal concepts or names were attributal perfections, then they would introduce distinctions in the divine essence. They are not attributal perfections, however, because they are

[67] Ockham, *Ord.*, I, d. 8, q. 2 (OTh 2.61:14–62:4).

[68] For Ockham, a connotative term is one that signifies something primarily and something else secondarily. The definitions of such terms express the meaning of the name (*definitio quid nominis*). Connotative terms are opposed to absolute terms, which terms signify primarily everything that is signified by the term, and have real definitions (*definitio quid rei*). He uses "animal" as an example of an absolute term because calls to mind animal, and only animal. "White," however, is a connotative term because it signifies the thing that is white primarily, but secondarily signifies whiteness. See Ockham, *Summa logicae*, I, c. 10 (OPh I.35–38).

names and concepts, but the divine essence is neither many concepts nor names. Therefore, such attributes are not really the divine essence.[69]

Ockham makes an important clarification in his reply to the first objection of *Ordinatio*, I, d. 2, q. 2. Despite the fact that the attributal concepts and names are not the divine essence, the perfections that the names signify really are God. Thus, we truly say "intellect really is God," and "will really is God" because in these statements the words "intellect" and "will" can only have personal supposition.[70] In the statement "intellect and will are attributed," then they could either have personal, simple, or material supposition. If they have personal supposition, then it is simply false because no intellect, divine or created, is attributed. If they have simple or material supposition, then they are true because they stand for the concepts or words themselves. Concepts and words are attributed because they are predicable and knowable of God. If we take the first statements, "intellect really is God" and "will really is God" such that "intellect" and "will" have simple or material supposition, then the statements are also simply false because neither the concepts nor the words are really the divine essence, even though they stand for it.[71]

All of the Scholastics defend the divine simplicity, but none do so as vigorously and as zealously as Ockham. If the divine attributes are taken to be real distinctions in God, and not simply connotations of the essence necessitated by our imperfect understanding, then God is really divided.

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[69] Ockham, *Ord.*, I, d. 2, q. 2 (OTh 2.62:5–22). Ockham says that it is obvious that the divine essence is not names. The divine essence concepts because concepts do not exist (*habet esse*) without an act of the intellect. But whatever is really the divine essence does not depend on an act of the intellect. Therefore no such concept is really the divine essence

[70] Ockham distinguishes between three types of supposition: personal, simple, and material. Personal supposition occurs when a term stands for (*supponit pro*) the thing it signifies, and does so significatively. Simple supposition occurs when a term stands for an intention of the soul that properly is not the thing signified by the term because the term signifies real things and not intentions of the soul. E.g., "Man is a species." Properly speaking, "man" refers to extra-mental objects. But in the sentence "Man is a species," "man" stands for mental ceontent because the content is a species. Material supposition occurs when a term is not used significatively, but stands for some vocal or written sign. E.g., "'Man' is a noun." In contemporary terminology, material supposition obtains when a word is mentioned, not used. See Ockham, *Summa logicae*, I, c. 63 (OPh I.193–195).

[71] Ockham, *Ord.*, d. 2, q. 2, ad 1 (OTh 2.73:10–74:8).

Division is contrary to the divine essence and so must be rejected. We can understand and predicate a variety of concepts and names of God, but these must not be taken as attributes.

C. PROBLEMATIC ACCOUNTS OF DIVINE KNOWLEDGE

From the above analysis, it is clear that the medieval Schoolmen treated divine simplicity with the utmost gravity. God is pure act, and it is precisely because God is pure act that he cannot be composed in anyway. Moreover, God is the first cause because he is pure act. The only reason that God suffices as an explanation for the existence of the world is that he is act *simpliciter*.[72] Stripped of his simplicity, God becomes an intermediate mover, incapable of accounting for his own existence and the existence of the world.

An account of divine simplicity, however, does not explain *how* God can know and produce the world. To this account must be added an account of divine knowledge and production. The history of philosophy gives ample evidence of the difficulty of articulating a precise account that does justice to both divine simplicity and divine knowledge. In this section, I will examine the accounts of divine knowledge and production of Aristotle, Avicenna, and Averroes. We should know these accounts before delving into the theories of the Scholastics because these accounts influenced the Scholastics greatly, and exhibit the consequences of privileging divine simplicity.[73] We will consistently find the Scholastic authors cautiously appropriating insights gleaned from these three authors, while criticizing them for falling short of the truth. In fact, it is Averroes's *Long Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics*, that becomes the proximate cause of the explosion in writing on the divine ideas. We will also see our Scholastic authors criticizing each other for appropriating too much of some of these theories. As we will see, the emphasis that Aristotle, Avicenna, and Averroes

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[72] This follows most directly from the fourth and eighth direct arguments for divine simplicity above.

[73] For a fuller account of the history of divine knowledge and divine ideas prior to the medieval Schoolmen, see Vivian Boland, *Ideas in God according to Saint Thomas Aquinas: Sources and Synthesis* (New York: Brill, 1996), 17–192. Boland focuses on the sources insofar as they influence St. Thomas Aquinas, but his analysis serves as a good introduction for all of the authors because, for the most part, they were all influenced by the same texts and intellectual traditions.

place on simplicity forces them to derogate divine knowledge, despite their claims that God has perfect knowledge.

1. Aristotle (384–322 BC)

Aristotle argues that god, i.e., the Unmoved Mover, is pure actuality and the highest substance. He argues this point in at least two places. In *Metaphysics* IX, he argues that actuality is prior to potency in substance. Every potency is potency for the opposite at the same time, for that which can be might also not be. That which is capable of not being is corruptible. Therefore, anything that is in potency is corruptible. Sempiternal substances do not have potency, so nothing that is incorruptible simply is in potency simply. All sempiternal things, then, are actuality. Moreover, sempiternal things can exist without corruptible things, but if they did not exist, then the corruptible things would not exist either. If *a* can exist without *b* but *b* cannot exist without *a*, then *a* is prior according to substance.[74] Therefore, sempiternal things are prior to corruptible things.[75]

Since, as Aristotle himself notes, nothing prevents a sempiternal thing from being in potency with respect to how much or place, the argument from *Metaphysics* IX does not distinguish between the heavenly bodies and the Unmoved Mover. Aristotle takes the argument a step further in *Metaphysics* XII, c. 6 where he argues for the necessity of some sempiternal, immobile substance, i.e.,

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[74] Aristotle, *Met.* V, c. 11, 1019a2 ([AL XXV.3.2.107:439–40): "Alia [sunt priora] secundum naturam et substantiam, quecumque contingit esse sine aliis et illa non sine illis." I cite the *Aristotelis Latinus* because it is the version that the medieval Schoolmen used. I will typically cite the translation by William of Moerbeke that appeared ca. 1271. Since they had penned most of their texts before then, Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas primarily used an earlier translation of the *Metaphysica*, available in AL XXV.2. I will cite both translations when the variations in translation are philosophically significant. We know for a fact that Thomas had access to Moerbeke's translation of the *Metaphysica* because Moerbeke's translation is the first to translate book XI. Toward the end of his career Thomas switches from citing Aristotle's discussion of the Unmoved Mover from *Met.* XI to *Met.* XII. See Gauthier, *Préface* in ed. Leonine, 1*1.85–86. Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Initiation à Saint Thomas D'Aquin*, vol. 1, *Sa personne et son oevre* (Fribourg: Editions Universitaires Fribourg Suisse, 1993), 328, 337–40. John F. Wippel, *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas II* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 240–71.

It is worth noting that despite the fact that most of his works were written after Moerbeke's translation appeared in Paris, Henry of Ghent did not use it. He preferred to use the anonymous translation. See G. Etzkorn, "Authorship of the Questions," xii. Raymond Macken, "Les sources d'Henri de Gand," 15.

[75] Aristotle, *Met.* IX, c. 8, 1050b7–20 (AL XXV.3.2.190:315–29), esp: "Nichil ergo incorruptibilium simpliciter potentia est ens simpliciter." The anonymous translation has "Nichil ergo corruptibilium simpliciter potentia est ens simpliciter" (AL XXV.2.179:17–18).

the necessity of the Unmoved Mover. Substances are the first of beings, and if they are all corruptible, then all things are corruptible. But it is impossible that motion either come to be or be corrupted (for it always was). Nor can time come to be or be corrupted for neither could there be a before and after if time did not exist.[76] Therefore, motion is continuous like time; for either they are the same or motion is some passion of motion. But motion is not continuous except according to place, and of this only circular motion.[77]

But if there is something that capable of moving or effecting things, but not working it, then there will be no motion. For the one having a potency is able not to act. Therefore, it does no good for us to suppose substances to be sempiternal, as those who believe in the Forms do, if we do not posit some principle of being moved in them.[78] And even this will not be enough if it does not act, for there would still be no motion. Further, even if it does act, but its substance is potency, then its motion will not be eternal because, as we saw in the argument in *Metaphysics* IX, what is in potency is able not to be. Therefore, there must be such a principle whose substance is act. Moreover, such a substance must be without matter, for it must be sempiternal, if anything is going to be sempiternal.[79] Therefore, it is actuality.[80] And since, as he showed in Book IX, actuality is prior to potentiality in substance, this substance which is sempiternal actuality must be sempiternally prior.

The Unmoved Mover, Aristotle says, moves by being desirable and intelligible, i.e., it is the good that moves the desire of those who know it. Being known and loved by the heavenly bodies, it

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[76] Aristotle argues for the truth of this claim in *Phys.*, VIII, cc. 1–2, 250b11–253a21 (AL 7.1.2,277:1–286:13).

[77] Aristotle, *Met.*, XII, c. 6, 1071b4–11 (AL XXV.3.2.254:181–190).

[78] Cf. Joseph Owens, *The Doctrine of Being in the Aristotelian* Metaphysics, 3rd ed., rev. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1978), 441: "The deficiency of the Platonic Forms, as in Book Θ, is that their nature is *potential*. They are not of their own nature actual. They are not 'energy.' They are contrasted with the Aristotelian separate forms as something potential against something whose nature is to act. The difference can hardly be overestimated in comparing the two ways of thinking." Emphasis original.

[79] Aristotle had already argued in *Met.*, XII, c. 2, 1069b14–15 that anything that has matter is mutable (AL XXV.3.2.247:37–38).

[80] Aristotle, *Met.*,, XII, c. 6, 1071b12–23 (AL XXV.3.2.254:191–255:201). As Owens points out, "The argument envisages a type of Entity that is incorruptible both *per se* and *per accidens*. If the Entity were corruptible even *per accidens*, it could not cause *eternal* movement" (*Doctrine of Being*, 439–40).

moves them into motion. The Unmoved Mover remains completely unmoved, however. Since it moves without being moved, it can in no way be otherwise. Thus, it exists necessarily, is necessarily good, and is the first principle.[81]

Since it is the best good and perfect actuality, its activity is best, and its actuality is its pleasure.[82] The best activity, however, is the actuality of thought.[83] In the *Metaphysics* Aristotle offers no philosophical argument for this claim. We are left only with a comparison to man's life. Joseph Owens describes the comparison well: "As actual human thinking is life, so the divine thinking will be an eternally actual and continuous life, the best and most enjoyable life."[84] For a justification of the claim that the Unmoved Mover is thought, we have to examine Aristotle's account of cognition in the *De anima*. Forms can be either principles of material being, or principles of cognition. The prior occurs when the form is in matter, and the latter occurs when a form is received without matter.[85] Immaterial form is thus cognition. As living is the being of living things, so too is intelligence to a wholly intellectual being.[86] An immaterial being is "cognitional as it were by definition. It is in its nature a cognition. Where it exists, it knows. It is a thinking."[87] The life of the Unmoved Mover is thought precisely because it is immaterial, and it is immaterial because it is pure act.

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[81] Aristotle, *Met.*, XII, c. 7, 1072a20–b13 (AL XXV.3.2.256:237–258:270).

[82] See Aristotle, *EN*, VII, c. 17, 1154b24–28 (AL XXVI.1.3.4.519:9–13); Cf. Aristotle, *EN*, X, c. 8, 1178b21–22 (AL XXVI.1.3.4.578:3–4).

[83] Aristotle, *Met.*, XII, c. 7, 1072b14–29 (AL XXV.3.2.258:271–259:287).

[84] Joseph Owens, "The Relation of God to World in the *Metaphysics*," in *Études sur la Métaphysique d'Aristote: Actes du VIe Symposium Aristotelicum*, ed. Pierre Aubenque (Paris: Vrin, 1979), 211. Cf. W.D. Ross, *Aristotle's Metaphysics: A Revised Text with Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), 378: "Having shown that there is a prime mover which is substance and is pure activity or actuality, Aristotle *assumes* that it must be such as the highest actuality or activity that we know." Emphasis mine.

[85] Aristotle, *De anima,* II, c. 12, 424b17–24 (ed. Leonine, 45.1.168); *De anima*, III, c. 2, 425b23–24 (ed. Leonine, 45.1.177); *De anima* III, c. 8, 432a9–10 (ed. Leonine, 45.1.235). Cf. Aristotle, *Anal. Post.*, I, c. 31, 87b28–30 (AL IV.3.57:7–11): "Et iterum non est uia ad hoc ut comprehendatur scientia per sensum; quod est quia sensus non comprehendit nisi hoc indiuiduum et non comprehendit hoc aliud, et quod comprehendit ipsum non est nisi in tempore et secundum quod indiuiduum sit in loco."

[86] Aristotle, *De anima*, II, c. 4, 415b13 (ed. Leonine, 45.1.95): "uiuere autem uiuentibus est esse. Cf. *De anima*, II, c. 2, 413a22–23 (ed. Leonine, 45.1.77).

[87] Owens, "The Relation of God to World," 212.

The simplicity of pure actuality renders divine thought something of a mystery, however. For if the Unmoved Mover understands nothing, then how could it be the most venerable being? How could it inspire love enough to move the sempiternal heavenly spheres? It would be like one sleeping, and this is surely repugnant to pure actuality. Again, if it understands but has another as its principle, then it could not be the best substance. For its substance would not be thinking itself; it would be in potency to understand.[88]

We must conclude, then, that the Unmoved Mover must always be actually thinking and that thinking arise from an internal principle, but the question still remains: What does it think? It must think either itself or something else. If it thinks something else, it will either think about the same thing or something else. If the latter, it would seem like there are some things that it should not think. It is well known that it understands the most divine and honored things, and does not change. Changing its object of thought would make it less noble, and would already be a movement for two reasons. First, if it is not thought, but in potency to thought, it is reasonable to say that the continuation of thought would be laborious for it. Second, because something else would be nobler than its understanding, namely the thing understood, for even understanding and thinking are present in he who thinks the most unworthy things. Therefore, we ought to avoid these consequences, which would render thinking not the best thing, and declare that it understands itself since it is the most powerful thing. It is thought thinking thought.[89]

Two important conclusions follow from Aristotle's account. First, God is the final cause of the world, but not its efficient cause. Second, God does not have knowledge of anything other than himself. The first conclusion might appear strange because on a number of occasions Aristotle says

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[88] Aristotle, *Met.*, XII, c. 9, 1074b15–21 (AL XXV.3.2.264:423–265:430).

[89] Aristotle, *Met.*, XII, c. 9, 1074b22–35 (AL XXV.3.2.265:431–446). R.A. Gauthier and J.Y. Jolif note that God is "l'intelligible au supreme degré, le premier intelligible, et c'est en tant que supreme intelligible que l'atteint la contemplation; Aristote sur ce point n'a jamais varié" (*L'Ethique à Nicomaque*, Commentaire, vol. 2 [Louvain, 1970], 858).

that one being can be the formal cause, the efficient cause, and the final cause.[90] Why could the ultimate final cause of the world not also be its efficient cause? Aristotle has to exclude such a possibility both because of his account of efficient causality and because of his account of the eternity of the world.

In *Physics* VIII, c. 4 Aristotle argues that an efficient cause is always simultaneously active and passive. It is always active, and makes its effect actual whenever it encounters something in potency and any hindrances are removed. Efficient causality is thus an imperfect type of causality because it requires something external to the cause to bring about the effect. If the Unmoved Mover were an efficient cause, then it would be in potency to something other than itself to exercise its efficient causality. Even if that other thing were eternally and unfailing present to the Unmoved Mover, it would still be in potency, which is contrary to its very nature. And lest we think that such potency is not inherent to efficient causality in itself, but only for hylomorphic entities, Aristotle explicitly names learning as his primary example of an activity that needs to have a hindrance removed.[91]

Even if the very nature of efficient causality were not contrary to the nature of the Unmoved Mover, Aristotle's modal understanding of the eternity of the world excludes its being efficiently caused. In *De caelis*, I, cc. 11-12, Aristotle argues that something cannot be both eternal and the effect of an efficient cause. Generation and perishing, he argues, ought to be understood in terms of necessity, possibility, and impossibility because only what is possible can be generated. The latter terms must be understood in relation to existence in time, however. A thing is necessary if it exists at all times. It is possible if it exists at one time, but not another. It is impossible if it exists at no time whatsoever. Given that eternal things exist at all times, they are necessary and not possible. But only

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[90] Aristotle, *Physics*, II, c. 7, 198a25–26 (AL VII.1.2.79:11).

[91] Aristotle, *Physics*, VIII, c. 4, 255a1–b24 (AL VII.1.2.292:15–295:14), esp: "Est autem potentia aliter addiscens sciens et habens iam et non considerans. Semper autem, cum simul activum et passivum sint, fit aliquando actu quod est potential, ut addiscens ex potential esse alterum fit potential (habens enim scientiam non considerans autem potential est sciends quodammodo, sed non sicut et ante addiscere), cum autem sic habeat, si aliquid non prohibeat, operator et considerat, aut erit in contradictione ignoratia." Cf. Owens, "The Relation of God to World," 216 and 223

that which is possible is generable. Therefore, eternal things are not generable. The world is eternal, and so it is not generable.[92]

Final causality, however, avoids the difficulties associated with efficient causality, and is consistent with an eternal and ungenerated world. Since a final cause moves only insofar as it is loved, the Unmoved Mover can be known and loved by lower beings without being affected at all. The end really does cause the physical motion of the world because everything wishes to imitate its pure actuality as much as it can.[93] The Unmoved Mover eternally moves the world because he is, as Boland says, "its model rather than its goal."[94] The Unmoved Mover is the exemplar of the world and things imitate him only insofar as "the lower things strive to attain as best as they can the permanence exhibited by the divine beings."[95] The Unmoved Mover accounts for the order of things, but not their existence.[96] The Unmoved Mover orders the world and that order arises from the desire of things to imitate the Unmoved Mover, but it does not establish anything in being.[97] Aristotle argues for the origin of the movement of the heavenly bodies (and consequently of all lower bodies), but says nothing about the efficient or final cause of the existence of the heavenly bodies. His silence suggests that the heavenly bodies have no efficient or final cause.

This insight leads to the second conclusion, namely, that God does not have knowledge of anything other than himself. This conclusion can be argued for in at least two ways. First, as Owens

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[92] Aristotle, *De caelis*, I, cc. 11–12. As Jon McGinnis points out, the *De caelis* is generally considered to be an early work of Aristotle, and so Aristotle may have abandoned this line of reasoning by the *Metaphysics* (*Avicenna* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2010], 271, n. 12). Thus, he could hold that the world could possibly not be, yet always exist. Aristotle still holds that that whatever is possible can either exist or not exist, but I do not find any strong indication that he thinks the eternity of the world is conditional (*Met.,* IX, c. 8, 1050b7–20 [AL XXV.3.2.190:315–29]).

[93] Paulus, "La Théorie du Premier Moteur chez Aristote," *Revue de Philosophie* 33 (1933): 408: "Pour lui, la fin *meut* réelement, encore que d'autre façon que l'agent; la fin est réelement *motrice*, lors même qu'elle ignore la motion que émane d'elle et ne voit point les êtres que en sont touches." Cf. Ross, *Aristotle's Metaphysics*, II.374.

[94] Boland, 172.

[95] Owens, "The Relation of God to World," 218. Cf. Aristotle, *De generatione et corruption*, II, c. 10, 336b27–337a7 (AL IX.1.76:3–16).

[96] Owens, *Doctrine of Being*, 445.

[97] See Aristotle, *Met.*, XII, c. 10, 1075a16–25 (AL XXV.3.2.266:466–267:477).

points out, the immaterial form and pure act that is the Unmoved Mover is finite, not infinite.[98] As such, it is only its own form, and not the form of all other things, either actually nor virtually, or of being in general (*ens*). *Ens*, Aristotle says, is not the substance of things.[99] It does not contain within itself the forms of all other things. By their being, things do not participate in or share the existence of the Unmoved Mover. The only way that it could know other things is to receive the forms of those things. Such receptivity is incompatible with pure actuality, which means that the Unmoved Mover has no epistemic access to other things: "It contains only its own perfection, not the perfections of other things. In knowing itself it does not know them."[100] It knows itself perfectly, and so knows itself to be a final cause, but it has no knowledge of the effect.

Second, Aristotle claims that there are some things that are not worth knowing, and that it is in fact nobler not to know them than to know them.[101] Unfortunately, Aristotle does not expand upon this claim, but leaves us to fill in the details. I submit that the ignobility of some objects of thought stems from their potency. Base objects of thought are base because they are deprived of being and goodness. They are not actual enough. Thought is supposed to actualize the knower, but Aristotle indicates that these objects deprive their knower of true act. They introduce potency into the knower. If such a situation can occur, then it will occur with any object that the Unmoved Mover thinks other than itself. Potency will accrue to it by knowing other things. Knowing potency will introduce potency into him and deprive him of his pure actuality.

God's knowledge only of himself is no problem for Aristotle precisely because God does not cause the existence of the world. God is not like an artist who must foreknow his painting

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[98] Owens, "The Relation of God to World," 213. Owens cites Aristotle, *Met.*, I, c. 5, 986b18–21 where Aristotle notes that form is related to matter as finite to infinite.

[99] Aristotle, *Met.*, VII, c. 16, 1040b18–19 (AL XXV.3.2.164:871). Cf. Owens, "The Relation of God to World," 226.

[100] Owens, "The Relation of God to World," 220.

[101] Aristotle, *Met.*, XII, c. 9, 1074b33–34 (AL XXV.3.2.265:443–44): "et enim non uidere quedam dignius quam uidere; non si sit optimum intelligentia."

before he paints it. God is instead like an arrogant celebrity who is too self-absorbed to know or care about his fans, yet constantly influences the way the fans act, dress, wear their hair, speak, etc. God brings about the motion of things that, as it were, already exist. God does not create the world blindly for Aristotle because God does not create the world at all. What he does do is inspire everything that is not pure act to become as actualized as it can.

I would be remiss if I did not note that the proper interpretation of *Metaphysics* XII, c. 9 is highly contested. Richard Norman has famously said that the interpretation I have endorsed, following Ross and Owens, "lends an air of unnecessary absurdity to the whole account" and "suggests that the Prime Mover is a sort of heavenly Narcissus, who looks around for the perfection which he wishes to contemplate, finds nothing to rival his own self, and settles into a posture of permanent self-admiration."[102] De Koninck reaffirms that claim holding this interpretation "could not . . . be more completely mistaken."[103] He argues that potency is known and defined with reference to act, and not vice versa. Moreover, the divine intellect is more truly a form of forms than is our own intellect because it is the most intelligible and desirable being.[104] Thus, since forms extend to many as is clear from the potentially infinite number of individuals to which a universal may extend, De Koninck argues that "all that is actual has to be *actually* in *that* form of forms."[105]

While I think that De Koninck's argument fails because it assumes that the Unmoved Mover is the efficient cause of the world, and so does not take seriously enough the claim that Aristotle's God is finite, not infinite, the proper interpretation of Aristotle is secondary for the purpose of the dissertation.[106] What matters is that divine intelligence can be articulated in such a way that God

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[102] Richard Norman, "Aristotle's Philosopher-God," *Phronesis* 14 (1969): 63–64.

[103] Thomas de Koninck, "Aristotle on God as Thought Thinking Itself," *Review of Metaphysics* 47 (1994): 496.

[104] See Aristotle, *De anima*, III, c. 8, 432a2–3 (ed. Leonine, 45.1.235).

[105] De Koninck, "Aristotle on God," 508. De Koninck also argues for his position on the basis of authority. His interpretation, he says, coheres with that of Themistius, Avicenna, Averroes, Maimonides, Thomas Aquinas, and a variety of contemporary authors (511–12).

[106] See De Koninck, "Aristotle on God," 512–13 where he explicitly affirms that he, and the commentators who agree with him think that the Unmoved Mover is the efficient cause of the world. He argues for the truth of this

knows only himself. The simplicity of God as pure act can be emphasized to such an extent that knowledge of anything other than himself would be ignoble for God. Potency could accrue to God even if he were related to the world only by knowledge of it. God knows himself perfectly, and acts as a final cause for the order of the world, but is too perfect to know this effect of himself.

B. Avicenna (980–1037 AD)

Avicenna advances Aristotle's claims about God. He argues that God, whom he calls the Necessary Existent (*Necesse Esse*), is the cause of the existence of everything other than himself, and so has some knowledge of it. To see how he makes these advances, I will first consider how Avicenna's distinction between the necessary and the possible argue for the existence of a simple, Necessary Existent. Then, I will examine his argument that the Necessary Existent is intelligent. Finally, I will investigate his claims about the Necessary Existent's knowledge of particular beings.

a. The Necessary and The Possible.

Avicenna famously claims that "thing, being (*ens*), and necessary" are the first things impressed upon the soul by a primary impression.[107] From our very first intellectual impression we understand the world as modal, i.e., we understand everything that exists to be either necessary or possible. The necessary and the possible are primary divisions of existence because there is nothing prior to them by which we could define them.[108] Moreover, they come to us by a primary impression, which means that are primary intelligibles. For Avicenna, primary intelligibles are received directly from the active intellect, i.e., the *dator formarum*. These intelligibles are primary

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position in "La «Pensée de la Pensée» chez Aristote" in *La question de Dieu selon Aristote et Hegel*, edited by Thomas de Koninck and Guy Planty-Bonjour (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1991), 99–106.

[107] Avicenna, *Met.*, I, c. 5 (ed. van Riet, I.31:1).

[108] Avicenna, *Met.*, I, c. 5 (ed. van Riet, I.40:54–77), esp: ". . . cum volunt definire possible, assumunt in eius definitione necessarium vel impossibile, nec habent alium modum nisi hunc. Cum autem volunt definire necessarium, assumunt in eius definitione possibile vel impossibile, et cum volunt definire impossibile, assumunt in eius definition necessarium vel possibile."

because they are the first intelligibles to emanate to our intellects, and do not require any activity from the sensitive or imaginative levels of the soul.[109]

Avicenna provides greater precision to his understanding of necessity and possibility by the qualification that things enter the intellect in two ways: "considered in itself" and "through another."[110] This distinction allows Avicenna to claim that we can consider everything that exists as necessary because it is either necessary through itself, or through another, i.e., through its cause. That which is necessary through itself must contain all the conditions of its own existence within itself, and so has no cause.[111] Such a being lacks nothing proper to it, and so is neither relative to another, mutable, or many. If such a being exists, it is contradictory to deny its existence.

That which is necessary through another "does not contain the conditions of its own existence."[112] What is necessary through another is, as it were, "necessary on a certain condition."[113] Considered in itself, it need not exist. Its quiddity is sufficient for existence or non-existence. Its existence or non-existence are due to a cause. If it comes into existence, then it does so because of the cause, and if it does not come into existence, it is because of a lack of the cause. Its actual existence or non-existence cannot be discerned from its quiddity alone.[114] Once a cause acts upon

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[109] Avicenna, *De anima*, I, c. 5 (ed. van Riet, I.96:44–102:15). See Michael E. Marmura, "Avicenna's Proof from Contingency for God's Existence in the *Metaphysics* of the *Shifa'*," in *Probing Islamic Philosophy* (Binghamton, NY: Global Academic Publishing, 2005), 135–36. For more on the metaphysical and epistemological role of the *dator formarum*, see Jon McGinnis, "Making Abstraction Less Abstract: The Logical, Psychological, and Metaphysical Dimensions of Avicenna's Theory of Abstraction," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association* 80 (2007): 167–183, Dag Nikolaus Hasse, "Avicenna's Eistemological Optimism," in *Interpreting Avicenna: Critical Essays*, ed. Peter Adamson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 109–119, Deborah Black, "Mental Existence in Thomas Aquinas and Avicenna," *Medieval Studies* 61 (1999): 45–79, and Herbert A Davidson, *Alfarabi, Avicenna, and Averroes on Intellect: Their Cosmologies, Theories of the Active Intellect, and Theories of Human Intellect* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 74–102.

[110] Avicenna, *Met.*, I, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, I.43–48). Lenn Goodman argues that the phrase "considered in itself" is the key to understanding Avicenna's metaphysics of contingency (*Avicenna*, updated edition [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006], 66).

[111] Avicenna, *Met.*, I, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, I.44:24–26).

[112] Goodman, 66. See Jon McGinnis, *Avicenna* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 160–63.

[113] McGinnis, *Avicenna*, 161.

[114] Avicenna, *Met.*, I, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, I.44:38–45:58)

the possible, it must become necessary. If it remained possible, then it would not be appropriated to existence or non-existence. But it assuredly exists, so it must be necessary through the cause.[115]

These two types of necessity, then, absolute necessity and contingent necessity are opposed to each other. Any being that exists after non-existence, then, will be contingently necessary (whenever it exists), and any being that has uncaused existence will be absolutely necessary, i.e., it will be the Necessary Existent. But if we trace the necessity of contingently necessary beings, we have to ask whether the cause is necessary in itself or through another. If it is necessary through itself, then the Necessary Existent exists. If it is necessary through another, then we will have to ask whether that cause is necessary through itself or through another. This line of questioning cannot continue infinitely, so we must reach the Necessary Existent. Therefore, the Necessary Existent exists.[116]

The impossibility of continuing infinitely with caused causes arises from the very nature of causality. Avicenna argues that each of the four types of causality has to be finite, i.e., there has to be a first principle of it. For each type of cause, we can understand three levels of causality: (1) an effect, (2) a cause that is also caused, and (3) a cause that is not caused. It is impossible, however, to have an effect and caused cause without an uncaused cause, even if we suppose an infinite number of caused causes. We must arrive at an uncaused cause because caused causes are not ultimately explanatory. If no part of the collection of causes is self-explanatory, then the whole collection, despite being infinite in number, cannot account for the existence of the effect. There must be a first to account for the existence and causality of all the intermediate causes.[117]

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[115] Avicenna, *Met.*, I, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, I.45:59–63).

[116] Avicenna, *Met.*, I, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, I.45:64–48:39). This argument is the core of Avicenna's complex and widely dispersed argument for the existence of the Necessary Being in his *Metaphsics*. For a good analysis of this argument and a guide to finding all of its premises, see Michael E. Marmura, "Avicenna's Proof from Contingency," in *Probing Islamic Philosophy* (Binghamton, NY: Global Academic Publishing, 2005), 131–148.

[117] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 1 (ed. van Riet, II.376:4–379:62). We would do well here to note the similarity between Avicenna's denial of composition by means of differentiae or by means of accidents and the Scholastics' insistence that God is neither composite *ex aliis* nor *cum alio*.

From the necessity of the Necessary Existent, Avicenna argues further that there can only be one Necessary Existent because of its simplicity. If there were multiple Necessary Existents, then they would have to be distinguished in some way. If the necessary distinctions came from without, then they would be caused, which is contrary to the absolute necessity of the Necessary Existence. Thus, the distinctions would have to be internal to the nature of the Necessary Existence. Such distinctions could only occur through differentiae or through accidents.[118]

Differentiae are not received into the definition of the genus because they do not confer a nature on the genus, but rather confer existence in act. Thus, "rational" does not confer the intention of animality upon animal. Rather, it confers upon it existence in act through the succession of being (*essendi*) properly. It would be absurd to say that the Necessary Existent received being in act from a differentia for two reasons. First, the true nature (*ceritudo*) of necessary being is nothing but the impossibility of non-being, unlike the true nature of animality, which is an intention beyond necessary being. Being comes to animality either as something concomitant, or supervenient. Whence the conferral of necessity upon an unnecessary being is the conferral of a condition of the true nature of its necessity. But, as we just saw, such a conferral does not exist between genus and species. Second, the true nature of necessary being would depend on its necessity being given by another. The differentia, which is not included in the definition, would give existence to the Necessary Existent, which is contrary to the nature of the Necessary Existent.[119]

Accidents are an equally unacceptable candidate for distinguishing multiple necessary existents. If necessary existence were a property of the thing, existing in the thing, then either the thing would have that property by the very necessity of the property itself, or it would have that property possibly, and not from necessity. If the first option, then the attribute would necessarily

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[118] Avicenna, *Met.*, I, c. 7 (ed. van Riet, 49:40–51:83).
[119] Avicenna, *Met.*, I, c. 7 (ed. van Riet, 51:83–52:7).

exist in that thing and it would be impossible for it to exist in another being. It would have to be only in that one. If the second option, then the thing would not be a necessary being considered in itself, which is contrary to the necessity of the Necessary Existent.[120]

Having exhausted the options for distinguishing between multiple necessary existents, Avicenna concludes that the Necessary Existent is what he is in virtue of himself, i.e., in virtue of his essence. The very essence of the Necessary Existent makes it impossible for necessary existence to belong to any other. The Necessary Existent does not have a quiddity that conjoins it to any being except necessary existence itself.[121] Thus, Avicenna concludes that there can be only one Necessary Existent precisely because the simplicity of the Necessary Existent rules out there being more than one.

b. The Intelligence of the Necessary Being.

As a result of the Necessary Existent's simplicity, Avicenna declares, "The Necessary Existent is perfect existence. For he lacks nothing of his existence, nor any of the perfections of his existence."[122] He is good, and beyond goodness because all things come from him. He bestows the perfections of each thing and establishes the truth of each thing.[123] Moreover, the Necessary Existent is pure intelligence because his essence is entirely separated from matter. He is pure intelligence because he is an intelligible, an intellect, and the very act of understanding. Matter and its attachments, not the existence of a thing, are what prevent a thing from being intelligible.[124] Since

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[120] Avicenna, *Met.*, I, c. 7 (ed. van Riet, 52:13–53:20).

[121] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 5 (ed. van Riet, 405:6–406:39), esp: "necessitas essendi non habet quidditatem sibi adiunctatam nisi ipsam necessitatem essendi.

[122] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, 412:55–56): "Necesse esse est perfectum esse. Nam nihil sibi de suo ese et de perfectionibus sui esse."

[123] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, 412:62–413:94).

[124] See, e.g., Avicenna, *De anima*, II, c. 2 (ed. van Riet, I.114:50–115:65) where Avicenna discusses various levels of abstraction culminating in the perfect intellectual abstraction in which the intelligible is completely stripped of matter.

the Necessary Existent is formal existence, and so separated from matter, it is also intelligible existence. The Necessary Existent is pure intelligibility. His essence is intelligibility.[125]

The Necessary Existent is also an intellect because it has itself as an intelligible. As McGinnis puts it, "only intellects are the sort of things that have intelligible objects."[126] But, as we saw above, Avicenna claims that the Necessary Existent's essence is existence and its existence is intelligible. Since he has an intelligible, then, he must be an intellect. In Avicenna's own words: "Because he is intelligence through himself, and is also understood through himself, he is also understood by himself."[127] He is intellect, intellectual apprehender, and the thing understood, yet without compromising his simplicity.

Divine self-knowledge does not compromise simplicity because the Necessary Existent's knowledge of his own knowing does not require an additional faculty. If an additional intellectual faculty were required then that faculty would also be unable to know itself. The Necessary Existent would require yet another intellectual faculty to understand the first additional faculty. This process would proceed *ad infinitum* such that even an infinite number of faculties would never suffice for perfect self-knowledge because the last faculty in the chain would never understand itself. Thus, Avicenna concludes that the Necessary Existent knows itself perfectly in virtue of himself.[128]

Not only does divine self-knowledge not require multiple knowing powers, Avicenna also argues that the realization that God is intelligible and an intellectual apprehender does not even require multiple things in consideration (*in respectu*). We do not get to these two except that his quiddity, stripped of matter through itself, belongs to him, and that his quiddity, stripped of matter, belongs to his essence. But here we have only the priority and posteriority in the order of intentions.

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[125] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, 414:95–97).
[126] McGinnis, *Avicenna*, 172.
[127] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, II.414:7–8).
[128] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, II.416:38–53). His reasoning here mirrors his reasoning with regard to the category of relatives in *Met.*, III, c. 10 (ed. van Riet, I.173:12–183:1)

For the intention that is acquired is clearly one without division. Thus, it is clear that his being an intellectual apprehender and an intelligible does not render him multiple in any way.[129]

Finally, the Necessary Existent is also the very act of understanding. In the *De anima*, Avicenna teaches that we must not understand the intellect's having an intelligible in a physical way. The intellect's having an intelligible is nothing other than the act of understanding.[130] Thus, to say that the Necessary Existent has itself as its intelligible is to say that it is its very act of understanding.

c. The Necessary Being's Knowledge of Particulars.

Having argued that the Necessary Existent is a knower, and that knowing does not capitulate divine simplicity, Avicenna qualifies that the Necessary Existent's knowledge cannot come from without. If He understood things through the things, then the things that he understood would constitute his essence. If this were the case, he would not be the Necessary Existent. He does not acquire knowledge as we do by receiving it.[131]

The Necessary Existent understands all things from himself because he is the principle of all things. He is the principle of the things that are perfect in their singularity and of the things that are generated and corruptible, first in their species and second according as they are individuals. His knowledge of generated and corruptible beings requires qualification because it is contrary to the nature of the Necessary Existent to know changeable beings with their changes insofar as they are changeable in a temporal, individualized manner. If he understood them as existing in one temporal act of understanding and then as not existing another temporal act of understanding, he would have to have two intelligible forms because the forms are not compatible with each other. Thus, he would have a variable essence, and not be the Necessary Existent.[132]

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[129] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, II.416:54–417:61).
[130] Avicenna, *De anima*, V, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, II.137:70–138:85). See McGinnis, *Avicenna*, 140–43.
[131] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, II.417:61–68)
[132] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, II.418:73–80).

Moreover, it follows from the very nature of understanding that corruptible beings, properly speaking, cannot be understood. Corruptible beings are corruptible because they have matter. But they are not understood unless their quiddities are stripped of matter. So their corruptibility cannot, by definition, be understood. Any time they are apprehended with their matter, as in the senses and in the imagination, they can be cognized in their changeability, but this sort of cognition requires a material organ and it is not understanding.[133] To attribute understanding of corruptible creatures insofar as they are changeable, then, is to attribute multiple acts of understanding to the Necessary Being, and to misunderstand the nature of understanding.[134]

From these qualifications, Avicenna concludes, "the Necessary Existent does not understand things except universally, yet with this he does not lack knowledge of any singular thing."[135] He then quotes the Koran is support of the claim that God knows even the least thing in the heavens and on the earth. Such a claim, he admits, is hard to understand and cannot be imagined except by the subtlest of natural geniuses.[136] Avicenna's proof for the curious claim that the Necessary Existent knows singulars universally relies on his bringing every other existent into being. Because the First knows the causes and what is contained under them, he also necessarily knows that to which they are reduced and the temporal intervals between them, and how often they recur. For it is impossible that he should know the first principles without knowing that to which they lead. Therefore, he apprehends particular things insofar as they are universals, namely, insofar as they have attributes.[137]

Marmura reminds us that to understand this claim, we must make a series of distinctions among particulars.[138] First, we must distinguish between the incorruptible particulars in the celestial

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[133] See Avicenna, *De anima*, IV, c. 3 (ed. van Riet, II.44–54).

[134] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, II.418:80–90).

[135] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, II.418:91–92): "Sed necese esse non intelligit quicquid est, nisi universaliter, et tamen cum hoc non deest ei aliquod singulare."

[136] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, II.418:91–419:94).

[137] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, II.419:95–4).

[138] Michael E. Marmura, "Some Aspects of Avicenna's Theory of God's Knowledge of Particulars," *Probing Islamic Philosophy* (Binghamton, NY: Global Academic Publishing, 2005), 78.

realm, and the generated and corruptible particulars in the sublunary world. Second, both of these types of particulars have to be further distinguished into particular beings and particular events. Finally, the particular beings must be distinguished into corporeal beings and incorporeal beings. These distinctions are important because "the fact of a particular's materiality does not prevent its conceptual apprehension under all circumstances. Apprehension of matter is necessary for knowing a particular only when matter is needed as the individuating principle that differentiates one individual from another of the same species."[139] Thus, Marmura argues that for Avicenna God can know the celestial intellects, souls, and bodies because each is the only member of its species.[140] In such cases, the definition of the species belongs to one particular alone, and so knowledge of the definition, i.e., knowledge of the attributes, is knowledge of the particular entity. But since every definition can possibly apply to many such that there can be no definition of singulars, an extraneous argument is required to show that the definition does not, in fact, apply to many.[141] God could also know individual human souls because he explicitly argues that they subsist of themselves, not because of the matter of their bodies.[142] But what of particular beings that share their species with other particular beings, and what of particular events?

Avicenna offers the analogy of the astronomer's knowledge of eclipses to explain particular events. If a man knows all the celestial motions, he also knows every eclipse and every application and disjunction of that eclipse in a universal way. So it can be known that after a certain amount of

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[139] Marmura, "God's Knowledge of Particulars," 80.

[140] Marmura, "God's Knowledge of Particulars," 80–84.

[141] Avicenna articulates this understanding of definition in *Met.*, V, c. 8, which chapter does not appear in the Latin translation that the Scholastic authors possessed.

[142] Avicenna, *Met.*, IX, c. 4 (ed. van Riet, II.485:29–486:60), esp: "Aut sunt formae quarum existentiae sunt per seipsas, non propter materias corporum sicut animae, quia unaquaeque anima on appropriator corpori nisi quia eius action est protper illud corpus et in illo." Cf. Avicenna, *De anima*, V, c. 3 (ed. van Riet, II.109:91–113:43). Deborah Black has argued that Avicenna's discussion of individual intentions had all the necessary premises to articulate divine knowledge of individual human souls, but that he failed to draw them together ("Avicenna on Individuation, Self-Awareness, and God's Knowledge of Particulars," *The Judeo-Christian-Islamic Heritage: Philosophical and Theological Perspectives*, ed. Richard C. Taylor and Irfan A. Omar [Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2012], 255–81).

motion one heavenly body will pass in front of another heavenly body and cause an eclipse. The necessity and incorruptibility of celestial movements would make it such that he would know each and every time the one body would pass in front of the other, and vice versa. Having similar knowledge of all the celestial movements would make all possible eclipses known. Yet these eclipses would be known in a universal manner, for even with this knowledge, a man "might not be able to judge that there is this eclipse or not, unless he knew the singulars, namely by seeing the motion sensibly, and by knowing how much time is between the eclipse being seen right now and the next one."[143] Even perfect knowledge of all the celestial motions seems deficient because intellectual cognition alone does not grant access to the singularity of *this* eclipse.

Avicenna would argue that such a situation is not truly deficient, however. It is simply a result of the distinction between the awareness we acquire from the senses and imagination, and the knowledge we have in the intellect. Thus, Avicenna would also deny that man's intellectual cognition can give him access to *this* eclipse because, simply put, there is no intellectual cognition of singulars. As Adamson has pointed out, intellectual cognition is always universal and never particular for Avicenna.[144] God's knowledge is superior to man's because "He has *only* the best kind of cognitive grasp of particulars, namely knowledge."[145] As soon as Avicenna declared that God is pure intellect, he was forced to choose either that God had no knowledge of particulars at all like Aristotle's

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[143] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, II.420:30–421:32): ". . . fortasse non poteris iudicare modo per hoc ese hanc eclipsim vel non esse, nisi scieris singularia, scilicet videndo motus sensibiliter, et scieris quantum temporis est inter hanc eclipsim visam et illam."

[144] Peter Adamson, "On Knowledge of Particulars," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 105 (2005): 267. He quotes from the *Demonstration* of *The Healing*: "Sensation is not a demonstration, nor is sensation *qua* sensation a principle of demonstration. For demonstrations and their principles are universal, not particularized in time, individual, or place. Sensation supplies a judgment about a particular, at a time and place proper to it. Therefore . . . nothing from [sensation] is universal knowledge" (Avicenna, *al-Shifa': al-Burhan*, ed. Afīfī and Madkour [Cairo: Organisation générale égyptienne, 1956] 249:11–13, quoted on Adamson, 267).

[145] Adamson, "On Knowledge of Particulars," 269.

Unmoved Mover, or that God had knowledge of particulars in the only way available to an intellect, namely, universally.[146]

The Necessary Existent is the cause of all things other than himself, and knows himself to be the ultimate cause of all of those things, but he does not have cognitive access to particular events, and particular beings that are generated and corruptible. Without sensitive awareness, he cannot know the here and now of events, or particular sublunary beings.[147] This situation is disconcerting for two related reasons. First, the Necessary Existent's knowledge is not purely actualized. The universal knowledge remains, as Adamson says, "in a sense merely 'potential' until it has deployed in application to a particular case."[148] The universal knowledge that God has concerning the species "man" awaits the application to a singular man. And it will wait forever because the Necessary Existent does not have access to singular men. God could not identify that this thing is of that species because he lacks the lower faculties necessary to identify particulars under a universal. "Lacking these faculties," Adamson comments, "God is in danger of being like a mathematician with perfect knowledge of geometry, but a total inability to recognize any particular figure as a triangle."[149] He simply would not have epistemological access to the claim "This is a triangle." God

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[146] Adamson, "On Knowledge of Particulars," 270.

[147] This objection was first posed by al-Ghazālī (known in the West as Algazel) in his *Incoherence of the Philosophers* (*Tahāfut al-falāsifa*), discussion 13. This work was not translated into Latin in the time period we are discussing. The only access to Algazel to which the Scholastics had access was the first part of a work that explained and then fiercely criticized Avicenna's metaphysics. Having only the explanation, the medieval men thought that Algazel was a disciple of Avicenna, although nothing could have been further from the truth. Roger Bacon appears to be one of only a handful to have known that Algazel was not a true disciple of Avicenna: "in libris quos recitat Algazel de logicalibus naturalibus, et methaphisicis, ad imitacionem libri Avicenne, de quibus Algazel in prologo librorum illorum asserit quod omnia que recitat in eis sunt secundum opinionem aliorum, in quibus dicit multa contineri que vult reprobare et aliter exponere in libro suo *De controversia philosophorum*" (*Communia naturalia*, I, p. 4 [ed. Steele, III.248:23–28]). For the text of al-Ghazali's argument, see *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, 2nd ed., trans., Michael E. Marmura (Salt Lake City, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 2000), 134–43. For Algazel's reception in the West, see Anthony H. Minnema, "The Latin Readers of Algazel, 1150–1600," PhD dissertation, University of Tennessee, 2013, esp., 56–74, and 130–144.

[148] Adamson, "'On Knowledge of Particulars," 273. As he notes, this position is thoroughly Aristotelian. See *Metaphysics*, XIII, c. 10, 1086b14–87a25 (AL XXV.3.2.299:782–301:830) and *De anima* II, c. 5, 417b17–27 (ed. Leonine, 45.1.114).

[149] See Avicenna, *Demonstration* of *The Healing* (ed. Afīfī and Madkour, 73:1–6). Cf. Adamson, "On Knowledge of Particulars," 266 and 273. The example comes from Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*, I, c. 1, 71a17–24 (AL IV.3.4:2–9).

can know all the essential attributes of all particulars by virtue of knowing all intelligible universals, but he could not identify any individual having any set of attributes, regardless of how specifically the attributes were considered. Without sense awareness of the particular, God could not identify its species.

Second, Avicenna's argument makes it such that a lower and more imperfect being has a perfection that a higher and more perfect being lacks. It is a perfection to be able to identify that a particular is a member of a certain species. The fact that the universal knowledge is related to its application to the particular as potency to act is sufficient to show that such application is a perfection. Man can make this identification, but God cannot. Thus, Avicenna is in the ontologically indefensible position of claiming that a lower being has a perfection not found in the most perfect being.

Given this analysis, we must declare that Avicenna fails to show that God has knowledge of the least thing in the heavens and on earth.[150] We cannot conclude from this failure that Avicenna does not think that God knows particulars, or that he is disingenuous when he quotes the Koran's statement of the same.[151] What Avicenna held for himself, however, is not as important to the Scholastics who will read him as what Avicenna proves. Avicenna argues for a theory of divine knowledge that excludes God's knowledge of particulars. His theory has the advantage of making God more than just the final cause of creation such that he can have knowledge of things other than himself, but the way he articulates God's knowledge makes it impossible for God to know individuals or their deeds. Not only is this conclusion abhorrent to the Christian writers' insistence that God is omniscient, the immediate cause of all creation, and intimately provident, it seems to

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[150] Avicenna, *Met.*, VIII, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, II.418:91–419:93).

[151] This point is made forcefully in Rahim Acar, "Reconsidering Avicenna's Position on God's Knowledge of Particulars," *Interpreting Avicenna*, ed. Jon McGinnis (Leiden: Brill, 2004): 151–156. "One cannot," he reminds us, "deduce the answer to the question 'whether' from the answer to the question 'how,' because the question 'whether' is logically prior to the question 'how.'" See Adamson, "On Knowledge of Particulars," 270 for a reaffirmation that Avicenna's belief in God's knowledge of particulars is sincere despite its being unproven.

impose potency on God. Given that they all describe God as pure act, they will react very strongly against any theory that makes God in any way potential.

C. Averroes (1126–1198 AD)

Of the three pre-Scholastic authors whose theories of divine knowledge we are discussing, the theory of Averroes is the most important because it was the most proximate cause of the explosion of literature on divine ideas in the Latin West. Prior to the arrival of Averroes's *Long Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics*, Christian scholars were generally content to repeat the views that Augustine expressed in his two paragraph articulation of divine ideas in the *De diversis quaestionibus 83*, q. 46, if they mention ideas at all.[152] Peter Lombard's treatment of the divine knowledge and creation in the *Sententiae* never mentions the word "idea."[153] The Latin translation of Averroes's commentary presented the Scholastics with objections to divine knowledge that demanded a response because, as Ockham will say, they are "clearly false and contrary to the authority of Sacred Scripture, as is clear in innumerable places."[154] Thus, the Scholastics expanded and systematized their accounts of the way that God knows things other than himself. By the early 1250s, the few pages of Augustine will have grown to twenty-seven pages in St. Bonaventure's *In I Sent.*, and thirty-nine pages in St. Thomas's *In I Sent.*[155] Averroes's arguments have such force that even in the early 14th century, Ockham feels the need to raise and reject each of them individually in his *Ordinatio*.[156]

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[152] Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46 (PL 40.29–31). This text was, of course, not the only place that Augustine speaks of divine ideas, but it is the most systematic treatment of them. If he did not feel the need to elaborate beyond what he does in those two paragraphs, then we can safely assume that he thought he had expressed himself adequately.

[153] Lombard, *Sent.*, I, dd. 35–36 (ed. Brady, I.2.254–63) and Lombard, *Sent.*, II, d. 1 (ed. Brady, I.2.329–36). He does, however, note that divine simplicity greatly affects the way in which we speak of God's knowledge and wisdom: "Sciendum est igitur quod sapientia vel scientia Dei, cum sit una et simplex, tamen propter varios status rerum et diversos effectus, plura et diversa sortitur nomina" (Lombard, *Sent.*, I, d. 35, c. 1–6 [ed. Brady, I.2.254–55])

[154] Ockham, *Ord.*, I, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.436:7–8): "Ista opinio est manifeste falsa et contra auctoritatem Sacrae Scripturae, sicut patet in locis innumerabilibus."

[155] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, dd. 35–36 (ed. Quaracchi, I.599–632). The editors' scholia account for approximately 6 pages in that range. Thomas, *In I Sent.*, dd. 35–36 (ed. Mandonnet, I.806–845). By the late 1250s, we find Thomas's treatment of divine knowledge and the divine ideas spanning an astounding seventy-nine pages (*De veritate*, qq. 2–3 [ed. Leonine, 22.1.37–116]).

[156] Ockham, *Ord.*, I, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.434–36 and 442–44).

The urgency that the Scholastic men felt to refute the opinions of Averroes was intensified because they came to know his arguments through his *Long Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics*, book XII, c. 51 (*In XII Met.*).[157] Arguments against divine knowledge are not new, and so Averroes's arguments may not have been as alarming if they had encountered them in one of Averroes's independent works, like the *Incoherence of the Incoherence*, or the *Decisive Treatise*.[158] The arguments from *In XII Met.*, however, are offered as the authentic interpretation of Aristotle. If these arguments are accurate, then Aristotle is not the ally that some Scholastics want him to be.[159] Aristotle, whose works were now standard texts in the University, was being presented as an opponent of divine knowledge. His arguments, then, are quite worthy of our attention insofar as they are the most proximate cause of the increased and intense discussion concerning the divine ideas in the second half of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth century.

Averroes begins his fifty-first comment on the twelfth book of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* by specifying the nature of Aristotle's discussion in *Metaphysics* XII, c. 9. The question of what God understands is the noblest of all questions and everyone naturally desires to know the answer to it. In this discussion, therefore, the supreme nobility and perfection of God is assumed. Given that God is the noblest of all beings, he must have understanding, but that understanding could be a disposition that he uses or does not use, i.e., it could be potential or actual. If his understanding is

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[157] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 51 (ed. Iunctina, VIII, ff. 157va–158rb).

[158] Neither of these works were yet translated into Latin.

[159] By ca. 1235, Robert Grossetese had already declared that Aristotle's philosophy contains very serious errors, and cannot be taken wholesale without reservation and emendation. "Ex his itaque et multis aliis quae afferri possent nisi prohiberet prolixitas, evidenter patet quod plurimi philosophorum simul com Aristotele asseruerunt mundum carere temporis principio; quos unius verbi ictu percutit et elidit Moyses dicens: *In principio*. Haec adduximus contra quosdam modernos, qui nituntur contra ipsum Aristotelem et suos expositors et sacros simul expositors de Aristotele haeretico facere catholicum, mira caecitate et praesumptione putantes se limpidius intelligere et verius interpretari Aristotelem ex littera latina corrupta quam philosophos, tam gentiles quam catholicos, qui eius litteram incorruptam originalem graecam plenissime noverunt. Non igitur se decipiant et frustra desudent ut Aristotelem faciant catholicum, ne inutiliter tempus suum et vires consument, et Aristotelem catholicum constituendo, se ipsos haereticos faciant" (*Hexaemeron* I, 8, 4 [ed. Dales and Gieben, 60:30–61:11). Thomas offers a very charitable interpretation of Aristotle, ascribing to him the position that God knows all things insofar as he knows himself to be the principle of all things: "Philosophus intendit ostendere, quod Deus non intelligit aliud, sed seipsum . . . Nec tamen sequitur quod omnia alia a se sint ei ignota; nam intelligendo se, intelligit omnia alia" (*In XII Met.*, lect. 11, n. 2614 [ed. Spiazzi, 608]).

merely potential, then, as Aristotle says, he is like a man dreaming. Such a situation would be ignoble and unfitting for God.[160]

Since God's understanding must be actual, what does he understand at this moment? In his first argument, Averroes reminds us that the principle guiding our answer to this question is divine nobility. He must be so noble in the end that he will be nobler than another being in this regard. Intellection is the perfection of the one understanding. But because God is nobler than all other beings, he must be perfect of himself. He cannot be perfected by anything else. Therefore, he does not understand anything other than himself.[161]

Moreover, God's substance is his understanding. But if he understands something else, then he is in potency to that intelligible. If he is in potency, then his substance will not be his action, but rather will be potency that becomes action through that intelligible. This action would necessarily perfect God just as our intellect is perfected by what it understands. But God would not be the noblest of all beings if he were perfected through another. Thus, he must be perfected by his substance. Therefore, his action must be his substance, and therefore, he does not understand something other than himself.[162]

Averroes's third argument, like the first two, is based upon divine perfection. If God's substance consists in understanding, then he necessarily understands himself or understands another beyond himself. If his being (*esse*) always consists in understanding another, then he would have being (*esse*) through that other. But this is contrary to the first principle. Therefore, God does not know anything other than himself.[163]

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[160] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 51 (ed. Iunctina, VIII.157va1–20).
[161] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 51 (ed. Iunctina, VIII.157va21–25).
[162] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 51 (ed. Iunctina, VIII.157va25–37).
[163] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 51 (ed. Iunctina, VIII.157va37–47).

Averroes's fourth argument states that that which understands another is changed in its substance into the other. This change could only happen if it is possible for it to change into the other. But God cannot change because any change would be a change for the worse. Therefore, he does not understand anything other than himself.[164] As a corollary to this argument, Averroes notes that God's understanding does not have a succession of things understood like ours does.[165]

Moreover, he argues, the noblest principle does not acquire nobility except through its action of understanding. Therefore, if the first principle understands base things, then its nobility comes from understanding lesser things. Because of this its action will be the basest action of actions. Therefore, if noble beings must flee low actions (which is obvious from the fact that there are some things that we are better off not knowing because of their baseness), then God must not understand lower things. Thus, God must understand only himself, and not things other than himself.[166]

Again, knowledge and the thing known are the same, even if the thing known is in matter. This claim is clear from art and artificial things because we say that the artificial form that is in mater and the artificial form that is in the soul are the same. How much more ought this be the case in intelligible things that are not mixed with matter? But God is supremely separated from matter such that what is understood and his understanding are the same. Therefore, he does not understand things other than himself.[167]

These first six arguments could, perhaps, be read in two different ways. In the first way, it could be understood with regard to that which God understands. Understood in this way, God cannot have knowledge of anything other than himself whatsoever because such knowledge would be inconsistent with his supreme nobility. This interpretation would cohere with the interpretation I

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[164] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 51 (ed. Iunctina, VIII.157va53–62).
[165] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 51 (ed. Iunctina, VIII.157va67–b7).
[166] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 51 (ed. Iunctina, VIII.157vb7–26).
[167] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 51 (ed. Iunctina, VIII.157vb56–158ra3).

gave of Aristotle above. In the second way, it could be understood with regard to that by which God understands. Understood in this way, God cannot know by means of anything other than his own substance, namely, his own essence. The things that God knows could not come to him from without. This reading would positively rule out a Platonic understanding of subsistent forms to which God (or the demiurge) looks in order to create, but it would not necessarily rule out God knowing other things by means of himself. Since Averroes does not make such a distinction himself, and since his last two arguments, which we will consider below, exclude determinate divine knowledge of things other than God, it is reasonable to assume that Averroes understood these first two arguments in the first way.[168] So even though these six arguments could be (and in fact were) excised from their context, and used in favor of divine knowledge, we ought to read them as denying divine knowledge of other things for the sake of the divine simplicity and nobility.

Averroes then asks whether what God knows from himself (*intelligit ex se*) is simply one or many composed. Everything that does not have matter is not divided, as is the case with the human understanding. In our understanding, everything understood is the same as the understanding itself such that it is impossible to divide them. Yet, we can find some cause of division in our understanding because that which is understood in some way is other than the intellect. Because our intellect and the thing understood are not in every way one in us, the otherness between the intellect and the thing understood is the cause of multitude. The human intellect is freed from matter in itself, but it is not freed from matter simply because that which we understand has to be abstracted from matter. If a being is freed from matter simply, then understanding and understood are the same in it. But the first principle is simply one without any multiplicity arising because of the alienation of understanding and thing understood, or because of a multitude of things understood.

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[168] Ockham, at any rate, interprets Averroes in this way, and also criticizes him for failing to distinguish between knowledge that is caused by the thing and knowledge that is identical to the thing understood and so is apt to cause the thing. See Ockham, *Ord.*, I, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.442:9–20).

In God understanding and thing understood are one in every way. Therefore, his simplicity excludes a multitude. If a multitude of things understood were in one understanding but they did not become united with the essence of the understanding, then that essence would be other from the things understood.[169]

As Cruz Hernandez comments, thinking that divine cognition is just like our own is "the principle source of error" according to Averroes.[170] We must recognize that "the mode of divine cognition is not analogous to the human mode."[171] Our cognition is ever changing and divisible according to the many different things that we know, but God "is pure intellective simplicity . . . . Divine cognition is his own wisdom that consists in a single unitary act."[172] Averroes emphasizes divine unity so much that by means of the one thing that God understands, i.e., himself, he understands only one thing, i.e., himself.

Averroes adds one final argument against God's knowledge of things other than himself, which argument is aimed specifically against God's knowledge of particulars. Although he does not mention him by name, this argument is meant as a partial attack and partial defense of Avicenna's position, and an attack on the interpretation of Themistius.[173] Themistius was of the opinion that God knows all things from the fact that he understands himself to be the principle of them all. Averroes agrees that God knows all things insofar as he is the cause of their being (*esse*), but he is concerned about the way Themistius understands the word "all." If God is to know *all* things, he

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[169] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 51 (ed. Iunctina, VIII.158ra3–68).

[170] Miguel Cruz Hernandez, *Abu-L-Walid ibn Rusd (Averroes): Vida, Obra, Pensamiento, Influencia* (Cordoba: Monte de Piedad y Caja de Ahorros de Cordoba, 1986), 155.

[171] Cruz Hernandez, 155: "El modo de conocimiento divino no es análogo al humano." In the *Decisive Treatise* Averroes asserts this point quite forcefully: "If the name 'knowledge' is said of knowledge that is generated and knowledge that is eternal, it is said purely as a name that is shared, just as many names are predicated of opposite things . . . . Thus, there is no definition embracing both kinds of knowledge, as the theologians of our time fancy" (n. 17 [ed. Butterworth, 13:24–29. Cf. Averroes, *Epistle Dedicatory*, nn. 6–7 (ed. Butterworth, 40:6–41:14).

[172] Cruz Hernandez, 160: "es pura simplicidad intelectiva . . . . El conocimiento divino es su propria saiduría que consiste en un único action unitario."

[173] The core of this argument reappears in the *Decisive Treatise*, n. 17 (ed. Butterworth, 13:30–14:12).

must know them with either a universal knowledge, or a particular knowledge. Universal knowledge is necessarily knowledge in potency to know the particulars that fall under the universal. God's knowledge is not in potency. Therefore, he does not know things with a universal knowledge. God's knowledge could not be particular either because particulars are infinite. The infinite is not determined to knowledge because it cannot be comprehended. God's knowledge is thus indeterminate with regard to things other than himself.[174] God's knowledge breaks our categories; his knowledge "has been demonstrated to transcend description as 'universal' or 'particular.'"[175] God knows everything as cause, but because his knowledge and ours are equivocal, we have no access to what it means to say that God has knowledge of all things. Any logical inference that we would make concerning God's knowledge cannot be built upon an equivocal use of the term "knowledge."

It should be clear at this point that Averroes offers some very strong arguments against the claim that God has determinate knowledge. Divine simplicity precludes any claim that God knows all things determinately. His simplicity, in fact, makes it impossible to draw any inferences regarding divine knowledge. God is so simple that we cannot really know what it means to say that God knows, or make any claims about what he knows. Averroes, like Aristotle and Avicenna before him, claims that God has perfect knowledge, but cannot explain how God has this perfect knowledge such that he seems to deny his affirmation that God knows all things.

4. Recapitulation and Summary

Aristotle, Avicenna, and Averroes all maintain that God is the highest being. He is pure actuality with no potency whatsoever. Lacking all potency, he lacks all possibility of composition. Thus, God is simple, and even supremely simple. Yet, because of their affirmation that God is supremely simple, Aristotle, Avicenna, and Averroes each end up denying that God has the perfectly

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[174] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 51 (ed. Iunctina, VIII.158ra68–b33).
[175] Averroes, *Decisive Treatise* n. 30 (295a).

intimate knowledge of all things that all of the Scholastic authors will want to affirm. Aristotle denies that God knows creatures at all because having such knowledge would render him ignoble. He does not think that God having knowledge only of himself is a derogation of God's nobility because God is only the final cause of the world. If God were cause of the world by any other type of causality, then he would have potency.

Avicenna makes a step toward God's knowledge of the world by articulating him as the efficient cause of the world. God is not just the cause of the order of the world, but the cause of the world's very existence. As such, he knows himself as the principle of all other things, and the consequences that follow from being principle. Despite his claims to the opposite, however, Avicenna argues that God does not know particular things. Because God only has the best type of cognition, namely, knowledge, he does not have epistemic access to particular beings because those particular beings can only be known in their particularity by means of lower cognitive powers. To the mind of the Scholastics, then, this theory marks progress toward the truth, but still has some fundamental flaws.

Averroes's theory also emphasizes that God is the noblest being, but also denies that God has knowledge of particular beings. Only by means of pure equivocation can we say that God has knowledge. If our speech is purely equivocal, then none of the inferences that we wish to draw between divine and human cognition succeed. His knowledge transcends our categories of universal and particular. The best we can say is that God knows creatures in an indeterminate way. Such an affirmation, however, falls quite short of the perfect knowledge that the Scholastic authors want to affirm.

D. OUTLINE OF FOLLOWING CHAPTERS

A theory of divine ideas was the standard Scholastic solution to the question "How does God know and produce creatures?" Scholastic authors were primarily motivated to defend divine

knowledge of (possible) creatures and divine production by the biblical claims that God has intimate knowledge of his creatures. The scriptural claims cause the Scholastic authors to posit *that* God has perfect knowledge of creatures that has its origin in himself, but it does not explain *how* God could have such knowledge. Moreover, the biblical claims about God's unity and simplicity make it very difficult to explain how God could have such knowledge. How can a theory uphold the nobility of God's perfect knowledge without violating his supreme simplicity and unity? Aristotle, Avicenna, and Averroes offered the Scholastic men examples of the consequences for divine knowledge of overemphasizing divine simplicity. These theories upheld the divine simplicity to the point that God does not know creatures at all, or that he knows them in a universal (and therefore imperfect), or indeterminate way. Faced with these difficulties, the medieval Schoolmen were forced to articulate very precisely how God can know and create a multiplicity of creatures without jeopardizing his supreme simplicity.

A complete explanation of how God knows and produces creatures requires the Scholastic authors to answer a number of questions that can be divided into two types. The first type of question concerns the status of divine ideas: questions such as What is an idea? Does God have ideas? Are they speculative or practical? Are divine ideas multiple, and if so, how? How many divine ideas are there? How are divine ideas related to God? What sort of existence, if any, does an idea enjoy? What is the status of non-existing possibles? The second type of question asks about the scope of divine ideas: questions such as are there divine ideas of singulars, evil, prime matter, genera, species, and number? Is there an order among the divine ideas? These questions cause the Scholastics to articulate clearly, among other things, their positions on the nature of knowledge, relation, exemplar causality, participation, infinity, and possibility. The following chapters will trace the way in which reflection upon the theme of divine ideas in the period between 1250 AD and

1325 AD became increasingly refined as the metaphysical, epistemological, and logical topics related to them became subject to greater scrutiny.

The next chapter, chapter two, will consider different theories of divine ideas from ca. 1250–ca. 1290. It will focus primarily on St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Henry of Ghent. These theories, as well as the theories of a few other Schoolmen, will be treated together because they share the common feature of characterizing the divine ideas as a *quasi*-secondary consideration of the divine essence by the divine intellect. Each author's theory will be examined according to the division of status and scope noted in the previous paragraph. Each author's general theory of divine cognition will be given insofar as it is helpful for illuminating his theory of divine ideas.

Chapter three will introduce the theory of divine ideas of the little-known Franciscan and student of Henry of Ghent and Matthew of Aquasparta, Raymundus Rigaldus. His theory appears in a set of yet-unpublished disputed questions dated ca. 1287–89 that focuses primarily on the divine ideas. His theory will be examined according to the same two divisions in chapter two. Particular emphasis will be placed on the ways in which Raymundus's theory can be read as a fulcrum that continues, develops, and criticizes the theories that precede his own, and anticipates developments in later theories.

Chapter four will examine later theories of divine ideas (ca. 1294–1325), especially the theories of John Duns Scotus, Durandus of Saint Pourçain, Peter Auriol, and William of Ockham. The theories of Scotus and Auriol will show the full-blown criticism of the earlier theories that posit divine ideas as *rationes cognoscendi*, the objects of cognition, or the very act(s) of understanding. Rather than being constituted primarily by a relation, a divine idea is reducible to the creature as known. This more direct understanding is posited as an attempt to solve difficulties of former theories of divine ideas that seem to make God dependent upon creatures. The theories of Durandus and

Ockham will show a rejection of most of what has gone before. Durandus argues that God cannot have divine ideas except imperfectly because creatures can only imitate the divine essence imperfectly. Ockham argues that God knows creatures directly without a plurality of ideas because of the emphasis he places on divine simplicity.

Chapter five, the conclusion, will recapitulate the trajectory of the positions expounded earlier in earlier chapters, provide a template for how the divine ideas are systematically arranged, and it will draw conclusions regarding the strength and viability of the various positions.

CHAPTER II

Reflection upon the divine ideas greatly increased beginning at about 1250 AD. As I noted in the previous chapter, the advent of Averroes's commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* caused a crisis in the Scholastic teaching on divine knowledge. If Averroes is correct, then it is philosophically indefensible to say that God knows in the way what Christianity claims that he does. Since God is completely immaterial, his knowledge excludes any and all multiplicity.[1] Divine simplicity and perfection make it impossible for God to have any determinate knowledge regarding creatures. God knows all creatures insofar as he is their cause, but his knowledge cannot be called universal or particular. Universal knowledge entails potency to the particular, and particular knowledge is ruled out because particulars are infinite.[2] According to Averroes, we simply have no epistemological access to the way in which God knows.

Rising to meet this challenge to divine knowledge, the scholastic men begin to articulate elaborate accounts of divine ideas. These theories are supposed to account for the multiplicity in God's knowledge without denying divine simplicity. They are also supposed to account for God's knowledge of every creature particularly. Such particular knowledge allows God to exercise personal providence over each and every thing and its actions. This chapter will focus on the earlier theories of divine ideas (ca. 1250–ca. 1290). As we will see, these theories all argue that divine ideas are secondary objects of God's understanding. Moreover, divine ideas are cast as certain relations such that God knows possible creatures by means of a relation. The first section will focus on St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio's theory of divine ideas. The second section will focus on St. Thomas Aquinas's theory. The third section will focus on Henry of Ghent's theory. The fourth section will take up the theories of Peter John Olivi and James of Viterbo. Both Olivi and James begin to

[1] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 51 (ed. Iunctina, VIII.158ra3–68). Cf. Cruz Hernandez, 155.
[2] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 51 (ed. Iunctina, VIII.158ra68–b33).

critique some of the fundamental points of agreement that are found in Bonaventure, Thomas, and Henry, but they still maintain that creatures are known, as it were, indirectly by means of divine ideas. The fifth and final section of the chapter will draw together the main themes of the chapter, noting in particular the points of agreement, disagreement, and development in theories of divine ideas in the period.

A. ST. BONAVENTURE OF BAGNOREGIO (c. 1217–1274 AD)

1. The Place of Ideas in St. Bonaventure's Thought

St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio is a good figure with which to begin our investigation of theories of divine ideas for two reasons. First, Bonaventure's thought is extremely influential for later authors, especially Franciscans, both in general, and with regard to the divine ideas in particular, Second, the divine ideas occupy a preeminent place in Bonaventure's thought. The first point will bear itself out during the course of discussing later authors, but it is worth discussing the second briefly before delving into the details of Bonaventure's theory.

Metaphysics, Bonaventure says, is the study of being (*esse*). *Esse* is found to be either *ex se*, in which case it has the notion of originating, *secundum se*, in which case it has the notion of exemplifying, or *propter se*, in which case it has the notion of ending/terminating. Metaphysics is thus the study of the principle, middle, and end, and has three branches of study relating to these: emanation, exemplarity, and consummation. Closer examination of these three branches, however, reveals that they are not all equal. When investigating the emanation of all things from the first principle, the metaphysician's task is in agreement with that of the physician, who is also investigating origin of things. When investigating the consummation of all things in their final end, the metaphysician's task overlaps with the moralist/ethicist who reduces all things to one highest good as to an ultimate end by considering happiness either practically or speculatively. Only when the metaphysician investigates the exemplarity of all things is his task wholly unique to him. Thus, Bonaventure says that the true metaphysician investigates exemplarity.[1]

[1] *In Hex.*, col. I, nn. 11-17 (ed. Quaracchi, V.331a-332b), esp.: "Sed ut considerat illud *esse* in ratione *omnia exemplantis*, cum nullo communicat et verus est metaphysicus . . . . Hoc est medium *metaphysicum* reducens, et haec est tota nostra metaphysica: de emanation, de exemplaritate, de consummatione, scilicet illuminari per radios spirituales et reduci ad summam. Et sic eris verus metaphysicus." Emphasis original.

Exemplarism, then, occupies the central and preeminent place in metaphysics. The true metaphysician investigates being as the exemplar of all things. Since, as we will see, the divine ideas are what allow God to know creation, and they are the exemplars according to which he creates, it follows that the divine ideas hold a preeminent place in metaphysics. Denying the divine ideas has two major consequences.

First, to deny the divine ideas entails abandoning the search for truth in its fullness. The true metaphysician cannot be satisfied merely to say that God is the exemplar. The true metaphysician must also make recourse to the medium of all things, the divine Word. The uncreated word is the door to all understanding, and holds the medium position in all things. He is, therefore, "the medium of all sciences."[2] An investigation into the exemplarity of all things through e*sse secundum se* must consider in a particular way the exemplarity found in the Word because "the Father from all eternity generated the Son like himself . . . and expressed all things in him."[3] The Son is thus the *medium* of the Father's art, and "that *medium* is *truth*."[4] Reason alone cannot come to knowledge of the uncreated Word, yet it is the door to full understanding: "If, therefore, you understand the Word, you understand all knowable things."[5] To understand Bonaventure's account of the divine ideas, then, it will be necessary to consider some of the points he raises about the Word.

Second, to deny divine ideas is to cease to be a metaphysician, and leads to several errors. Aristotle, who denies in many places Plato's conception of the Ideas, was not a true metaphysician according to Bonaventure. Aristotle, "who principally looked below," became too focused on

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[2] *In Hex.*, col. I, n. 11 (ed. Quaracchi V.331a): "ipse est medium omnium scientiarum."

[3] *In Hex.*, col. I, n. 13 (ed. Quaracchi V.331b): "Pater enim ab aeterno genuit Filium similem sibi . . . et omnia in eo expressit."

[4] *In Hex.*, col. I, n. 13 (ed. Quaracchi V.331b): "illud medium *veritas* est." Emphasis original. Cf. *In Hex.*, col. III, n. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, V.343b):

[5] *In Hex.*, col. III, n. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, V.344a): "Si igitur intelligis Verbum, intelligis omnia scibilia."

knowledge of things for their own sakes, rather than as signs pointing to God.[6] Without an exemplar, things lose their stability, which is necessary for knowledge. Bonaventure holds Aristotle in high regard, declaring him to have safeguarded the way of science, but once things are said to subsist for their own sake, "they are for us simple objects of curiosity" and not investigated in the pursuit of wisdom.[7] Moreover, as we saw in the introduction, the denial leads to errors God's foreknowledge, and providence.[8]

Divine ideas are so central to Bonaventure that he declares, following Augustine, "he who denies that the ideas exist, denies that the Son of God exists."[9] So crucial are the ideas that to deny them is at least tacitly heretical. So important are they for God's knowledge, the act of creation, the very essences of things, and our knowledge, that one could not deny them and continue to be a Christian. We ought to take note of this centrality because while many of the scholastics we will consider in this study argue that the divine ideas are of great importance, none even come close to the claim that denying the divine ideas is paramount to denying the Trinity. And since by the end of this study we will come to authors who deny that God has divine ideas, we will have to ask ourselves how it is that in the course of approximately 75 years, divine ideas go from having as prominent a position as possible to having no place at all.

2. The Status of the Divine Ideas

Bonaventure's discussion of the divine ideas appears primarily in two places: *In I Sent.*, d. 35 (ca. 1251), and the *Quaestiones disputatae de Scientia Christi*, qq. 1-3 (1254).[10] I will have to draw on things that he says in other places, but the lion's share of the discussion appears in these two texts. It

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[6] *Christus unus omnium magister*, n. 18 (ed. Quaracchi, V.572): "Et ideo videtur, quod inter philosophos datus est Platoni sermo *sapientiae*, Aristoteli vero sermo *scientiae*. Ille enim philosophus aspiciebat ad superiora, hic vero principaliter ad infra."

[7] Étienne Gilson, *La philosophie de Saint Bonaventure*, third edition (Paris: Vrin, 1952), 143: "Mais il faut nécessairement, ou bien que les choses subsistent pour elle-mêmes et soient pour nous de simples objets de curiosité."

[8] See *In Hex.*, col. VI, nn. 2-6. (ed. Quaracchi, V.360b-361b).

[9] *In I Sent.*, d. 6, a. un., q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.130a): "qui negat ideas esse, negat Filium Dei esse."

[10] John F. Quinn, "The Chronology of St. Bonaventure (1217-1257)," *Franciscan Studies* 32 (1972): 168-86.

has been pointed out by many that Bonaventure's thought remains constant throughout his career, and while I think this is generally the case, I will present the accounts from the two main sources separately because I think the two accounts offer a slightly different emphasis which will be instructive for understanding the full picture of Bonaventure's theory.[11]

a. Does God have Ideas?

i. *In I Sententias* (ca. 1251). The thirty-fifth distinction of book I begins the second major division of *In I Sent.* for Bonaventure. Before distinction thirty-five, the Master, Peter Lombard, focused on the Trinity and Unity of God. Beginning with distinction thirty-five, he will begin to treat the conditions according to which God is the principle of causality (*ratio causalitatis*), i.e., his power, wisdom, and will.[12] This preface tells us two important things. First, everything that Bonaventure says must be understood with an eye toward God as *ratio causalitatis*. We should have exemplarity at the front of our minds as we consider what he says. Second, the discussion of the divine ideas is the very first thing we need to understand if we are to understand the relationship between God and what God causes, i.e., creation.

In the first question of distinction 35, Bonaventure asks whether we ought to posit ideas in God. He offers four *fundamenta* in favor of the proposition that make it clear that the divine ideas are of central importance. Divine ideas account for God's ability to foreknow what he creates, our ability to know the truth by means of divine illumination, and God's exemplar causality. Without ideas, both God and man would be ignorant, and the world would be the result of necessity or chance, not a result of knowledge and love. The outlook is very dim without divine ideas, and so we are impelled to posit them.

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[11] Gilson first made the claim in *La philosophie de Saint Bonaventure*, and though not unanimously held, it has had a lasting influence. See Hayes, *The Hidden Center: Spirituality and Speculative Christology in St. Bonaventure* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 7n7 for a brief bibliography of the issue. I wish to emphasize that I do not see the slight difference in emphasis as a real development, but rather merely as a difference of focus.

[12] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, divisio textus (ed. Quaracchi, I.599a).

The first *fundamentum* is from the authority of Augustine who states that "Ideas are eternal and incommunicable forms, which are in the divine intelligence."[13] Plato had preserved the way of wisdom by positing ideas, but erred in making the separate and subsistent. Aristotle rightly criticized Plato for making them separate and subsistent, but erred in ignoring them altogether in his defense of the way of knowledge. Augustine saw the middle way between them, and by placing the ideas in the mind of God is able to preserve both the way of wisdom, and the way of knowledge.[14]

The second *fundamentum* argues by reason that every agent which acts rationally, and not by chance or necessity foreknows the thing before it comes to be. But every knower has the thing known either according to truth, or according to likeness.[15] But a thing cannot be had according to truth by God before it exists. Therefore, he has it according to likeness. But the likeness of a thing through which it is *cognized* and *produced* is an idea. Therefore, God has ideas.[16] Ideas account both for God's knowledge of creation, and his ability to create.

The third *fundamentum* argues that everything which determinately leads to the cognition of another has with it a likeness of the thing cognized, or is itself its likeness. But the eternal mirror leads the minds of those seeing it to cognition of all creatures, as Augustine says, because they are cognized more directly there than anywhere else. Therefore, it holds true that likenesses reside in him. And it also stands true that they are in him as in a knower because not only do they represent to others, but to himself. But this is the whole intelligible content (*ratio*) of an idea. Therefore, God

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[13] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1, fm. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.600a). Cf. Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46 (PL 40.29–31).

[14] See *Christus unus omnium magister*, n. 18 (ed. Quaracchi, I.572a): "Unde quia Plato totam cognitionem certiduinalem convertit ad mundum intelligibilem siven idealem, ideo merito reprehensus fuit ab Aristotele; non quia male diceret, ideas esse et aeternas rationes, cum eum in hob laudet Augustinus; sed quia despecto mundo sensibile, totam certitudinem cognitionis reducere voluit ad illas ideas."

[15] This distinction most likely has its origin in Augustine's discussion of memory in *Confessions* X. There, he argues that memories of sensible things are present by likeness because the external thing is not literally in the memory, i.e., they "have no entry into the memory: only their images are grasped." (X, c. 9, n. 16 [PL 32.786]) The memory of other things, such as those learned in the liberal arts are present in truth. (X, c. 9, n. 16–c. 10, n. 17 [PL 32.786]).

[16] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1, fm. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.600a). Emphasis original.

has ideas.[17] If God did not have ideas, then intellectual creatures would not have access to the truth because, for Bonaventure, we cannot know the truth without divine illumination. Divine ideas explain why anything is intelligible in the first place, and how we can grasp their intelligibility.

The fourth *fundamentum* argues that because things are produced by God, they are, therefore, in God as in one effecting, and God is mostly truly an efficient cause. And similarly, because they are bounded by him, he is most truly an end. So by the same reasoning, because they are cognized and expressed by him, God is most truly an exemplar. But an exemplar in itself has to have ideas of the things exemplified. Therefore, God has ideas.[18] God has to have ideas because he is an exemplar cause.

Bonaventure begins his response to the question by noting that some have tried to reduce the notion (*ratio*) of an idea to the notion of a cause. They say that God does not know by ideas, but by causes.[19] Since God has the power to produce all things, and he cognizes the full extent of his power, he cognizes all things. This argument is weak, however, and Bonaventure offers several quick critiques of the position, of which the third is worth noting. To say that God knows because he can create is to make the effect prior to the cause. Everything that can distinctly produce is able to do so only because it distinctly cognizes, not vice versa. Therefore, "the principle (*ratio*) of *producing* is not the principle of *cognizing*."[20] If God did not already have a distinct cognition of the thing he was going to produce, then he would not be able to produce distinctly.

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[17] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1, fm. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.600a). Cf. Albert the Great, *De bono*, tr. 1, q. 1, a. 8 (ed. Aschendorff, 28.18:45).

[18] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1, fm. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.600ab).

[19] See Alexander of Hales, *Summa theologica* I, inq. 1, tract. 5, sect. 1, q. un., mem. 2, c. 2, n. 165 (ed. Quaracchi, I.248b). God's causality must be articulated carefully. The Fourth Lateran Council (1215) in its condemnation of Joachim of Fiore expressly stated that "inter creatorem et creaturam non potest tanta similitudem notari, quin inter eos maior sit dissimilitudo notanda." (Denzinger and Hünermann, no. 806). The likeness between Creator and creature that could accrue because of the ideas must not be formulated in such a way that the transcendence of God is compromised. There must always be a greater dissimilarity.

[20] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.601a). The closest I have come to finding a source for this objection is Alexander of Hales, *Summa theologica*, p. 1, inq. 1, tr. 3, q. 1, mem. 2, c. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.131a): "Dicendum ergo quod idea in Deo idem est quod divina esentia, tamen alio modo significat eam. Nam essentia divina significatur absolute: et sic significatur per hoc nomen 'essentia'; item significatur ut causa: et hoc vel efficiens vel finalis vel formalis

Instead of saying that God cognizes through causes Bonaventure says that God cognizes through ideas. An idea "bespeaks a likeness of the cognized."[21] There are two types of likeness. The first type, which he calls a univocal likeness, involves the agreement of two things in a third.[22] This type of likeness exists between two species of the same genus, or two individuals of the same species. Spike and Rex have a likeness between them because they agree in the species "dog." God and a creature cannot have a univocal likeness because there is no third thing to which they could agree.

The second type of likeness is one in which one is said to be a likeness of the other. There is no third thing common to the two because "the likeness is itself like."[23] Taken in this manner, the likeness is the principle of cognizing (*ratio cognoscendi*), and is called an idea. In his response to the second objection, Bonaventure makes a further refinement to his division of likenesses. The second type of likeness can be divided into a likeness of imitation and a likeness of expression. This division proposes to look at the likeness from both sides of the likeness. Likeness of imitation looks at the likeness from the point of view of the creature, and this likeness can exist between God and a creature in a small way because "a finite being can imitate an infinite being in a small way whence there is always more unlikeness than likeness."[24] Likeness of expression is the highest because it is caused by the intention of truth. Thus, this likeness takes the perspective of the Creator who knows the full expression of his truth. Bonaventure also emphasizes in his response to the third objection that "this likeness expresses the thing better than the thing expresses itself because the thing receives

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exemplaris. Idea ergo significat divinam essentiam, prout est causa formalis exemplaris, quia ipsa est omnium rerum exemplar." Cf. Albert the Great, *Quaestio de ideis divinis*, a. 1 (ed. Aschendorff, 25.2.265:12–15 and 26–34). In both cases, the author does not claim that divine causality explains divine knowledge, and so neither holds the position proper, but we can imagine the positions of Alexander and Albert being misinterpreted by some, which would deserve a response form Bonaventure.

[21] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.601a): "idea dicitur similitudo rei cognita."

[22] In the reply to the second objection, he also says that this type of likeness can be called a likeness of participation (*In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1, ad 2 [ed. Quaracchi, I.601a]).

[23] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.601b): "similitudo se ipsa est similis."

[24] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.601b).

its principle (*ratio*) of expression from that [likeness]."[25] The divine idea, as the likeness of truth itself, is the highest expression of each thing, and so is the rule according to which the thing itself should be judged.[26]

Finally, Bonaventure clarifies that a *ratio cognoscendi* is different in God and in us. In us, a *ratio cognoscendi* is the likeness, and the thing known is the truth because we are not pure act and have to receive our likenesses from extrinsic sources. God, however, has truth itself as his *ratio cognoscendi*, and a likeness of truth, i.e., the creature itself, as the thing known. And because his *ratio cognoscendi* is the first truth, it is also supremely expressive. The more expressive something is, the more it assimilates the thing cognized in the cognition. Therefore, truth itself, because it makes things know, is an expressive likeness and an idea.[27] That which makes God know is truth itself, and since truth itself is supremely expressive, and creatures are an expression of divine truth, God knows all creatures. It is important to note that the idea and the thing cognized are not identical here. The idea is the *ratio cognoscendi*, i.e., it is truth itself, but the thing cognized through the idea is the creature.

Summarizing Bonaventure's account of divine ideas in *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. 1, we can see that truth is emphasized in this account. Ideas are defined completely in terms of their cognitive role for God. Exemplarity is present, but only as a motive for positing divine ideas. When it comes to the ideas themselves, we can explain them completely without reference to exemplarity.

ii. *De scientia Christi* (1254). When Bonaventure returns to the question of divine ideas again as a master in the *Quaestiones disputatae de scientia Christi*, he arrives at the same conclusion as he did in *In I Sent.*, d. 35, but does so with a very different emphasis. The exemplary role that the divine ideas play appears immediately in the conclusion: "God cognizes things through eternal reasons,

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[25] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.602a): "haec similitudo melius exprimit rem, quam ipsa res se ipsam exprimat, quia res ipsa accipit rationem expressionis ab illa."

[26] See *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1, ad 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.602b).Cf. *Itinerarium*, c. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, 5.305a), and Augustine, *De vera rel.*, c. 30, n. 56 and c. 39, n. 72 (PL 34.147 and 154).

[27] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.601b).

which are exemplary likenesses of things and perfectly representative and expressive and essentially the same, that is, God himself."[28] After educing several quotations in favor of divine ideas from Pseudo-Dionysius and Augustine, Bonaventure steers us away from a bad understanding of the ideas on the basis of their exemplarity. The divine ideas cannot be the very essences or quiddities of things since they are not other than the creator. If they were the very essences of things, then creatures would be God, and the divine ideas would amount to pantheism. So, the essences of Creator and creature must be different. Therefore, Bonaventure says, "it is necessary that they be exemplary forms, and through this representative likenesses of the things themselves, and therefore they are *rationes cognoscendi* because cognition, precisely as cognition, bespeaks an assimilation and expression between the cognizer and the cognized."[29] As Christopher Cullen points out, "likenesses are mandated by the very nature of knowing."[30] Cognition involves the assimilation of the cognizer and the cognized, and so it must be by way of a likeness.[31]

One might be tempted to think that Bonaventure's presentation here is subject to the chastisement he gives in *In I Sent.* to those who say that we can argue from God's causality to his cognition, but that is not what Bonaventure is doing here. He is beginning from the fact of creation. Given that there are creatures, and that the essences of those creatures cannot be identical to God's, we must posit an exemplary form according to which those creatures are made. We must posit an exemplary form precisely because divine cognition has to precede divine causality. It is only because God first has a *ratio cognoscendi* by which he distinctly cognizes the creature that he can produce the creature. Since the *ratio cognoscendi* is that by which God both knows and produces creatures, we have

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[28] *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, conclusio (ed. Quaracchi, V.8b).

[29] *De scientia Christi*, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, V.8b).

[30] Christopher M. Cullen, "The Semiotic Metaphysics of Saint Bonaventure," Ph.D. dissertation, The Catholic University of America, 2000, 145.

[31] Cf. *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, fm. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, V.7a). See Aristotle, *De anima*, III, c. 8, 431b20–21 (ed. Leonine, 45.1.235a).

arrived at the same place as *In I Sent.* that an idea is a *ratio cognoscendi* and likeness, but add that it is also an exemplary form.

Bonaventure continues by noting, once again, that "likeness" can be understood in two ways. In the first way, a likeness is found when two things agree in a third. In the second way, there is likeness when one thing is like another. He immediately divides this type into two types of likeness corresponding to the two poles of the likeness. On one side there is an exemplative likeness, and on the other an imitative likeness. An exemplative likeness is expressing, and an imitative likeness is expressive.[32]

Bonaventure explains expressing and expressive likenesses through the distinction between knowledge that causes a thing, and knowledge that is caused by a thing. When knowledge is caused by the thing, there is an imitative likeness in the knower because the likeness has its source *ab extra*. The likeness in the knower is expressive of the thing known because it was received from the thing and causes a certain assimilation between the knower and the thing known. The thing known is expressing because it causes the likeness in the knower. The thing known is what the imitative likeness is like. The received and imitative nature of the likeness in the knower also entails some composition and addition in the intellect of the knower. If a likeness is received *ab extra*, it enters into composition with the knower and becomes added to the knower's understanding. Such a change and augmentation attests to the imperfection of the knower who must pass from potency to act.

When knowledge causes a thing, however, there is an exemplative likeness in the knower, and this likeness implies every manner of perfection. Because the divine intellect itself is the supreme light, full truth, and pure act, it is sufficient for expressing all things. And because expressing is an intrinsic act, it is an eternal act. And, finally, because expression is a certain

[32] *De scientia Christi*, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, V.8b-9a).

assimilation, the divine intellect, by its supreme truth expressing all things eternally, eternally has exemplary likeness of all things.[33]

Moreover, he argues that it is the mark of an intellect which is pure act to have likenesses. If our intellect were pure act, we would not have likenesses received *ab extra*, but we would still have likenesses as *rationes cognoscendi* because we would use ourselves as a likeness to know other things.[34] Since God is pure act, he uses himself as a likeness to know all other things, and Bonaventure specifies God uses his own essence as his *ratio cognoscendi*. It is the divine essence as known which takes on the notion (*ratio*) of likeness.[35]

In his response to the ninth objection Bonaventure gives some insight into what he means by the word "truth." We saw in *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 that for Bonaventure truth itself is God's *ratio cognoscendi*. Here in *De scientia Christi*, q. 2 he reiterates that the exemplary likenesses of things are the result of the supreme truth expressing itself from all eternity, but he clarifies how we should understand the word "truth." We can understand the word "truth" in two ways. In the first way, following Augustine, "*truth* is the same as the *entity of the thing*."[36] In the second way, following Anselm, "truth is the *expressive light in intellectual cognition*."[37] Taken in the first way, there would be more truth in the thing than in a likeness, but taken in the second way, there is more truth in the likeness found in the intellect because in this case the *ratio cognoscendi* is the exemplary likeness that makes the thing to be what it is. It is because of truth taken in the second way that truth taken in the first way is possible, and so Bonaventure argues that "that exemplary likeness more perfectly

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[33] *De scientia Christi*, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, V.9a).

[34] *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, ad 7 (ed. Quaracchi, V.9b).

[35] See *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, ad 11 (ed. Quaracchi, V.10b), especially: "ipsa essentia, in quantum est ratio cognoscendi, tenet rationem similitudinis; et hoc modo ponimus similitudinem circa divinam cognitionem, quae non est aliud quam ipsa essentia cognoscentis."

[36] *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, ad 9 (ed. Quaracchi, V.10a). Cf. Augustine, *Sol.*, II, c. 5, n. 8 (PL 32.888).

[37] *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, ad 9 (ed. Quaracchi, V. 10a). Cf. Anselm, *De veritate*, c. 11 (ed. Schmitt, 1.191:19–20).

expresses the thing, than the caused thing itself expresses itself."[38] Thus, we should declare that God cognizes things more perfectly through their likenesses than through their essences.

The greater role that exemplarity plays in the *De scientia Christi* is obvious. The reality of creatures and the difference in essence between Creator and creature makes exemplar forms necessary. It is only after seeing the necessity of these exemplar forms that we see that these same forms are God's *rationes cognoscendi*. The emphasis on both aspects of the second type of likeness appears directly in the conclusion, and he more clearly articulates the causality that exists between the likeness of one to another. Just as in *In I Sent.*, the nature of knowing that explains why divine ideas have to be likenesses by which the creatures are cognized, but the increased emphasis on exemplarity makes us better appreciate the causal relationship that exists in a likeness of one to another.

iii. Conclusions. As we can see from the presentation above, the accounts presented in *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 and in *De scientia Christi*, q. 2 argue to the same position, but they do so in a way that brings out the two major roles that Bonaventure ascribes to the divine ideas. The divine ideas are simultaneously *rationes cognoscendi* and exemplary forms. God knows and produces creatures according to their exemplary likeness, the idea, and creatures imitate their ideas by an imitative likeness. We should note the change in vocabulary in from the cognitive role to the productive role. In their cognitive role, ideas are likenesses, and they become exemplars only in the productive role. The distinction in vocabulary allows for an important distinction. While all exemplars are necessarily likenesses, not all likenesses are necessarily exemplars. Only those likenesses which are chosen by the divine will become exemplars. But even when a likeness is chosen to become an exemplar, the creature is still not identical to its idea because the idea is identical to the divine truth, i.e., the divine

[38] *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, ad 9 (ed. Quaracchi, V.10a): "illa enim similitudo exemplaris perfectius exprimit rem, quam ipsa res causata exprimat se ipsam." Cf. Alexander of Hales, *Quaestio de duratione mundi seu de materia prima*, mem. 10A (ed. Wierzbicki, 216:945–217:279).

essence as known, whereas the creature's essence is different from the divine essence. The divine ideas are knowledge that can cause a thing to be, and so God can have knowledge of all things without having to be in potency to knowledge. God knows a likeness of divine truth by means of divine truth.[39] Thus, without introducing any manner of potency or composition into God, St. Bonaventure is able to account for divine knowledge and the possibility of creation.

From the texts above, it is clear that truth plays a central role in Bonaventure's account. There is one divine truth that eternally expresses likenesses of itself, and that the ideas "simply are the divine truth, *ipsa veritas*."[40] The divine ideas are the expressions of truth, and so, we ought to take a closer look at truth as a divine property. Bonaventure asks whether truth is a property of divine being in *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1. As Timothy B. Noone points out, "the term 'property' is used in the text to mean not simply 'attribute' but rather 'exclusive feature of'."[41] While the arguments for and against argue that truth is strictly one or many, Bonaventure's answer argues for some middle ground because of a distinction of that to which truth is opposed. If considered as opposed to falsity, then truth is found in creatures since creatures have a certain privation of division of act from potency, represent the supreme unity, and express themselves clearly enough to be distinguished from one another. If considered as opposed to admixture, then truth is only in God. God alone is undivided without any diversity. God alone is a pure likeness without any unlikeness. God alone is the expression of light without any darkness.[42] Bonaventure claims that all things are true insofar as they imitate the unmixed truth in God, and this claim is rooted God's expressivity. When Anselm says that all things are true by the first truth, we must realize that the word "true by its own imposition bespeaks a comparison to an exemplar cause, just as good to a final cause."[43] As

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[39] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.601b).

[40] Cullen, "Semiotic Metaphysics," 150.

[41] Timothy B. Noone, "Truth, Creation, and Intelligibility in Anselm, Grosseteste, and Bonaventure," *Truth: Studies in a Robust Presence*, ed. Kurt Pritzl, OP (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2010), 121.

[42] *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.151b).

[43] *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.151b).

goodness is related to order, so is truth related to expression, and, as Bissen notes, "this expression is precisely that which we have noted as proper to an exemplar."[44] All things are true by the divine truth because all have their origin in the divine truth. Divine truth is the cognitive likeness of all things giving knowledge the divine intellect by means of ideas, and the ontological exemplar giving existence to the things that God wills to create by means of the ideas.

iv. Exemplar in General. When we move to a discussion of the divine ideas from knowledge to production "the word 'exemplar' always replaces the word 'idea.' Because . . . an idea is strictly speaking a likeness and does not necessarily bespeak production."[45] The role that divine ideas have in production is predicated upon the role they have in knowledge. Ideas belong primarily to the genus of likeness, which bespeaks cognition first and foremost. This likeness does not stop at mere cognition, however, and can take on a productive role. To understand the divine ideas, then, we ought to investigate the shift in vocabulary, and examine what St. Bonaventure means by "exemplar" more closely.

In the *Breviloquium*, St. Bonaventure says that divine wisdom is called "exemplar" insofar as "it is the *ratio cognoscendi* what is foreseen and disposed" because the exemplar is "of things that proceed" from God.[46] As a result, we often speak of exemplar as "*idea, word, art,* and *reason: idea* according to the act of foreseeing; *word*, according to the act of proposing; *art* according to the act of

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[44] R.P.J.-M. Bissen, "Des Idées Exemplaires en Dieu d'apreès Saint Bonaventure," Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Freibourg, 16: "Car, de même que le bien est bien en considération de l'ordre, ainsi la vérité est vérité en considération de l'espression; et cette expression est précisément ce que nous avons noté comme le propre de l'exemplaire."

[45] Bissen, "Des Idées," 15: "le mot exemplaire replace souvent le mot idée. Car comme nous l'avons dit, l'idée est strictement similitude et ne dit pas nécessairement production." Cf. Bissen, *L'exemplarisme divin selon saint Bonaventure* (Paris: Vrin, 1929), 22-23: "L'idée, en effet, consideérée en elle-même, a plutôt relation à l'objet elle est la raison de connaissance; car la similitude, au genre de laquelle l'idée appartient, ne dit pas relation à cee n quoi elle se troube, mais à l'objet don't elle est la similitude: tandis que verbe rappelled plutôt celui qui dit, comme *ars* et *exemplar* celui qui produit."

[46] *Breviloquium* I, c. 8 (ed. Quaracchi, V.216b): "in quantum est ratio cognoscendi praevisa et disposita dicitur *exemplar*; . . . *exemplar,* ut exeuntium." Emphasis original.

accomplishing; *ratio* according to the act of perfecting because it adds the intention of an end."[47] An exemplar, then, has these four aspects: it gives knowledge, proposes for production, carries out the act of production, and adds the intention of an end. Since we have already spoken of the cognitive aspects of idea, we can pass over it, but it is worth speaking about word, art, and reason.

v. Exemplar as Word. An exemplar is a word because of its act of proposing. Bonaventure argues after the pattern of Augustine that "word" (*verbum*) is understood in three ways: the sensible word, the intelligible word, and the middle word. The sensible concerns spoken words, the intelligible concerns cogitation of a thing, and the middle word concerns cogitation of speech.[48] God has spoken two words: the interior word, and the exterior word. The interior word is the Divine Word, the Son of God, and the exterior word is creation. These two words correspond to the two ways of speaking that St. Bonaventure identifies: "*To speak* can be understood in two ways, either *to yourself* (*ad se*), that is with yourself (*apud se*) or *to another* (*ad alterum*)."[49] Speaking *ad se* is nothing other than to conceive mentally, and by understanding conceive something like yourself. "Therefore," St. Bonaventure claims, "by speaking itself with itself conceives through all things like it, and this is the conceived word (*verbum conceptum*)."[50]And when God conceives himself he generates "progeny like himself," and this progeny is the eternal Word.[51]

While our minds generate many *verba concepta*, the Father conceives but a single Word that is simultaneously "the imitative likeness of the Father and the exemplative likeness of things and the operative likeness."[52] The eternal Word is the disposition of the Father because it is through the

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[47] *Breviloquium* I, c. 8 (ed. Quaracchi, V.216b): "Ad *exemplar* autem spectat *idea, verbum, ars* et *ratio*: *idea*, secundum actum praevidendi; *verbum*, secundum actum proponendi; *ars*, secudum actum prosequendi; *ratio*, secundum actum perficiendi, quia superaddit intentionem finis."

[48] *In I Sent.*, d. 27, p. 2, a. un., q. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.489b).

[49] *In I Sent.*, d. 27, p. 2, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.482b): "*loqui* autem est dupliciter, vel *ad se*, id est apud se, vel *ad alterum*." Emphasis original.

[50] *In I Sent.*, d. 27, p. 2, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.482b).

[51] *In I Sent.,* d. 27, p. 2, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.482b).

[52] *In I Sent.*, d. 27, p. 2, a. un., q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.483b).

Word that the Father foreknows and conceives all that he will do. It is because of the Word that the Father can be said to act rationally.[53] The Word proceeds from the Father as the *ratio exemplandi*, and so simultaneously is the perfect image of the Father through which "the Father speaks not only himself, but also disposes other things."[54] The eternal Word is the perfect Word of the Father, and the exemplar of all creation. To be an exemplar is proper to the whole Trinity insofar as an exemplar is a *ratio cognoscendi*, but is also appropriated to the Word insofar as "wisdom" is proper to the Word.[55]

As the wisdom of the Father, the Word is generated by nature principally, and only by the divine will concomitantly. To claim that the Word proceeded through the divine will primarily is to claim that God willed blindly and about things of which he had no knowledge.[56] Moreover, it is through will that God communicates to creatures, and so to say that the Word comes by will would render the Word a creature.[57] To avoid these absurdities, Bonaventure claims that the Word is generated from the First Principle by nature primarily.

Since the divine ideas are appropriated particularly to the Word insofar as "wisdom" is proper to the Word, it follows that the divine ideas, like the Word itself, occur by nature principally, and only by the divine will concomitantly. Since the Word is generated naturally and necessarily, so too all the things the Word can exemplify are natural and necessary. All creatures are disposed to creation by the speaking of the eternal Word, but Bonaventure is quick to qualify that while they are necessarily in God's knowledge, they are not for that reason necessarily created. The ideas are necessary, and all included in the Word's exemplarity (since there is no exemplar except the Word),

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[53] *In I Sent.*, d. 27, p. 2, a. un., q. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.490a).
[54] *In I Sent.*, d. 6, a. un., q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.130a): "non tantum se loquitur Pater, sed etiam cetera disponit."
[55] *In I Sent.*, d. 6, a. un., q. 3, ad 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.130b).
[56] *In I Sent.*, d. 6, a. un., q. 2, fm 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.127a).
[57] *In I Sent.*, d. 6, a. un., q. 2, ad 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.128b).

but "*exemplar* bespeaks a habitual respect," not an actual one.[58] All the ideas are proposed as candidates for creation, but creatures are only actually created by the command of the divine will. As Bonaventure says, "although *actual* production of a creature be voluntary, yet the *potency* of producing and *knowledge* is necessary."[59] If God did not necessarily have cognition of all possible creatures, and the ability to create them, then he would not be able to produce creatures rationally. Thus, the word *verbum* is so appropriately applied to God, and especially the second person of the Trinity, because it expresses the ability to know and express others.[60] Since the divine ideas account for God's ability to know and express creation, it is obvious why St. Bonaventure claims that a denial of ideas amounts to a denial of the Son of God, and that if we know the Son of God, we know all that is knowable.[61]

v. Exemplar as Art. The discussion of *verbum* naturally leads to a discussion of art (*ars*) because once we discuss the *ratio exemplandi*, which makes the production of creatures possible, we should speak of the production itself. The term *ars* includes what is included in the term *exemplar*, but adds the act of accomplishing to our understanding of "exemplar."[62] Just as *verbum* implies a speaker, the thing spoken, and the relationship between the two, so *ars* implies an artist, the artifact, and the relationship between the two. The artist is not just any sort of agent, however. An artist is an intelligent agent. A natural agent produces through natural forms, as when man generates a man, but "an intelligent agent produces through forms which are not something of the thing, but ideas in the mind."[63] Whereas a natural agent is confined by his natural form, and only can produce according to

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[58] *In I Sent.*, d. 27, p. 2, a. un., q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.485b): "*exemplar* dicit respectum in habitu." Emphasis original.

[59] *In I Sent.*, d. 27, p. 2, a. un., q. 2, ad 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.486a): "quamvis *actualis* productio creaturae sit voluntaria, tamen *potentia* producendi et *scientia* est necessaria."

[60] *In I Sent.*, d. 27, dub. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.491b).

[61] See *In I Sent.*, d. 6, a. un., q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.130): "qui negat ideas esse, negat Filium Dei esse." Cf. *In Hex.*, col. III, n. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, V.344a): "Si igitur intelligis Verbum, intelligis omnia scibilia."

[62] *Breviloquium* I, c. 8 (ed. Quaracchi, V.216b): "Ad *exemplar* autem spectat *idea, verbum, ars* et *ratio*: . . . *ars*, secudum actum prosequendi."

[63] *In II Sent.*, d. 1, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, ad 3 et 4 (ed. Quaracchi, II.17b): "agens per *intellectum* producit per formas, quae non sunt aliquid rei, sed ideae in mente."

that form, an intelligent agent can produce a whole host of artifacts that vary in form. Insofar as he is a natural agent, a man can only generate a man, and never a kangaroo or a shark, but insofar as he is an intelligent agent, a man can make the artifacts of which he has ideas. Bonaventure uses the example of a carpenter crafting a chest. The chest proceeds from the carpenter because the carpenter has an idea of it in his mind, and assimilates the wood to the form he has in his mind whenever he wills to do so.

God, Bonaventure claims, produces things in the same way as the carpenter (though infinitely more eminently). God has ideas of all the things he could make, and these ideas are their eternal forms. And just as the chest is not produced except by the will of the carpenter, so neither are the ideas produced except by the divine will. Bonaventure is quick to point out the dissimilarity between the two cases. Strictly speaking, God does not *have* ideas because that would imply that they were distinct from him. Instead, we ought to say that the ideas *are* God.[64] And because the ideas are God, and God is but a single knower, he has but one *ars*.[65] Aristotle was right to criticize Plato for positing ideas, or exemplary forms, outside God as separate substances because such a position robs God of cognition and operation, but Aristotle was completely mistaken in denying that God had any ideas; such a denial robs God of cognition of things other than himself.[66]

The ideas are the divine exemplars according to which God creates. This insight tells us something of the artist, and something of the artifact, but does not yet give us great insight into the nature of the relationship between them. In *In I Sent.*, St. Bonaventure specifies that "an exemplar bespeaks an assimilation."[67] There is an assimilation in *ars* because the artifact is fashioned after the likeness of the exemplar. Just as the carpenter first conceives the house he will build as a *verbum* in

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[64] *In II Sent.*, d. 1, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, ad 3 et 4 (ed. Quaracchi, II.17b).

[65] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 3 ad 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.608b): "et quia multa sunt cognita, et unum cognoscens, ideo *ideae* sunt plures, et *ars* tantum una.

[66] *In II Sent.*, d. 1, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, ad 3 et 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.17b).

[67] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.628a).

his mind, and then crafts the house so that it will exemplify the exemplar in his mind as much as possible, so too God preconceives all things as likenesses of the divine truth before creating them. The assimilation does not need to be great. In fact, St. Bonaventure argues that even "the least assimilation suffices for the notion (*ratio*) of an exemplar."[68] As long as the thing is in some way fashioned after another, that other is an exemplar, and so everything which is from God has an idea in God through which it is in him, and after which it is fashioned.

It is here that St. Bonaventure's distinction between knowledge causing a thing and knowledge caused by a thing comes into play. Knowledge caused by a thing results in an imitative likeness of the thing in the knower. Its origin is *ab extra*, and it attests to the imperfection of the knower. Knowledge causing a thing, however, is exemplary, and perfect because in such cases it is the knowledge which brings about the thing, not the thing bringing about knowledge. When knowledge causes the thing, the thing is measured against the standard of the knowledge. The more the thing is assimilated to the knowledge, the better an imitation it is. And it is proper to speak of assimilation here because all knowledge involves an assimilation of knower and known.[69] Since *ars* brings about things after the model of knowledge, there will always be an assimilation involved.

vi. Exemplar as Ratio. Having discussed *idea, verbum,* and *ars*, it only remains for us to discuss *ratio* as an aspect of an exemplar.[70] In the *Breviloquium*, St. Bonaventure specifies that an exemplar can be understood as "*ratio* according to the act of perfecting because it adds the intention of an end."[71] *Ratio* is the only aspect of the four that Bonaventure explains beyond a declaration of such an act. He specifies that the act of perfecting means adding the intention of an end. Because of

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[68] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 2, fm. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.629a).

[69] Cf. *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, fm. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.7a)

[70] I owe the inspiration of this discussion of *ratio* to Gregory Doolan's parallel insight into Aquinas' definition of idea in *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 (*Aquinas on Divine Ideas as Exemplar Causes* [Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2008], 28-33).

[71] *Breviloquium* I, c. 8 (ed. Quaracchi, V.216b): "Ad *exemplar* autem spectat *idea, verbum, ars* et *ratio*: . . . *ratio*, secundum actum perficiendi, quia superaddit intentionem finis."

the brevity of the *Breviloquium* Bonaventure does not expand upon this claim, but his meaning can be gleaned from the extra clarification he gives. Since the divine ideas are in no way caused by things, but rather cause things, we ought to say that they cause them to be possible in every way. Not only do the divine ideas make created things be the type of things that they are, they also completely determine the nature of those types. Divine ideas do not just determine that Peter will be a man, but determine what it means to be man. Everything that is characteristic of the essence of man is determined by the divine ideas, including all of the characteristic acts, and the end of man. Man seeks out God because, as Augustine says, God has made us for himself.[72] He does not merely make a man according to a model that he took from somewhere else. He expresses the very model after which he fashions man, which model he produces in his own self-understanding. Thus, he perfects what he has made by leading it to the end which he himself has ordained for it.

From Bonaventure's discussion of *idea*, *verbum*, *ars,* and *ratio*, we can draw four important conclusions about exemplars. First, exemplarity belongs to an intelligent cause. An exemplar is only an exemplar "when it is a *ratio cognoscendi* and a *ratio exemplandi*."[73] Natural forms are restricted in their generative power, and can readily occur without knowledge as when the wind carries away a seed that will grow to be like the plant that generated it. In such a case, we could only say that the generating plant is the exemplar of the generated plant if we abuse the term "exemplar." Yes, the generated plant is made after the likeness of the generating plant, but the "exemplar" form in that case would be in the generating plant according to truth, and not according to likeness. The generating plant really is a plant. Its substantial form (or at least its highest substantial form) is vegetative, and so it does not generate according to a likeness, but rather according to what it really

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[72] "Fecisti nos ad te, Domine, in inquietam cor nostram donec requiescat in te." (Augustine, *Conf.*, I.1.i [PL 32.661])

[73] *In I Sent.*, d. 6, a. un., q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.130b): "Exemplatum enim, secundum quod exemplatum, non est in exemplante secundum veritatem, sed per similitudinem, quae, inquam, similitudo, cum sit ratio cognoscendi et exemplandi, dicitur exemplar."

is. Yet, as Bonaventure argues, what is characteristic of an exemplar is not that it is exemplifying according to truth, i.e., according to what the exemplifying thing really is, but rather by a likeness. Thus, an exemplar exemplifies by means of an assimilation. The *exemplatum* is assimilated to the exemplar in the mind of the artist.

Second, there can be a great gap between the perfection of the exemplar and the perfection of the *exemplatum*. The immense gap between the perfection of God and the minimal perfection of the lowest creature does not abrogate the exemplarity between them. As long as there is an assimilation to the divine truth in the *exemplatum*, it finds its exemplar in God. The fact that there is always a greater dissimilarity than similarity between God and creatures does not preclude God's exemplarity and creature's imitation.

Third, ideas and exemplars are not unique to God. Man too can be said to have ideas precisely because man can be an intelligent cause. All knowledge is had by a likeness, and man has knowledge of things by means of likenesses received from the things.[74] Precisely because it is receptive, and therefore evidence of potency, man's knowledge is imperfect, but man still has ideas insofar as he has likenesses of things. Additionally, Bonaventure's use an artisan as an example of acting through intellect (as opposed to acting through nature), and as an analogy for divine action in creation makes it clear that man too has exemplars, and can fashion artifacts according to those exemplars. The divine art infinitely surpasses human art because God can create natural things whereas man can only make artifacts. God creates the whole of the thing whereas man only fashions out of things already created. Yet, man can exercise a real exemplarity with regard to those artifacts. Not only does man make the things he of which he has ideas and exemplars, but he can also establish the ends of the things he makes. To borrow an example from Aquinas, man not only

[74] See *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, ad 7 (ed. Quaracchi, V.9b) where St. Bonaventure argues that even if man's intellect were augmented to perfection such that he would not have to receive likenesses *ab extra*, he would still have to know by likenesses.

makes a knife, but also establishes the end for which the knife is made: cutting.[75] We can take the example one step further and see that a fillet knife is made for separating the skin of a fish from the fillet, whereas a cleaver is made for separating big joints. It is for different ends that these knives are crafted, and the knife-maker only makes them because of the end for which he has established. In every case, there is more dissimilarity than similarity between the divine ideas of God and the ideas of men, but Bonaventure makes it clear that man really does have them.

Finally, exemplarity is only a secondary role that the divine ideas play. The divine ideas are likenesses by which God cognizes all things other than himself. They are also the exemplary forms according to which he creates, but it is clear that the cognitive role takes center stage. The divine ideas allow God to foreknow, propose, make, and establish the ends of all things, but their causal role comes only when the divine will commands. Preserving this distinction safeguards God's almighty power to know more than he creates and to create freely. Divine truth is completely expressive, and there are no exemplars that are not ideas, but it is only by the divine will that that expression becomes exemplary. An exemplar "is the *ratio cognoscendi* of what is foreseen and disposed," but while the divine ideas always foresee, not all that is foreseen is disposed.[76]

viii. Imitative Likeness. Having discussed the exemplative likeness and seen how the divine ideas are *rationes cognoscendi* and *rationes exemplandi*, we have to look at the other end of the likeness and see what Bonaventure means by imitative likeness. To look only at the exemplative likeness in God would be to miss half of the likeness. We cannot just speak about the likeness in the divine ideas, but also look at the likeness found in the *exemplatum*. Once again, we must begin our discussion with the divine Word because it is the imitative likeness of the Father.[77] The divine Word

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[75] Thomas, *De prin. nat.*, n. 4 (ed. Leonine, 43.45:104-108).

[76] *Breviloquium*, I, c. 8 (ed. Quaracchi, V.216b): "in quantum est ratio cognoscendi praevisa et disposita dicitur *exemplar*." Emphasis original.

[77] *In I Sent.*, d. 27, p. 2, a. un., q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.485b).

is expressed because it is made like to the Father. Bonaventure explicitly identifies the Word as image because the word *imago* "bespeaks a mode of expressed emanating."[78] An image always points to that of which it is an image. An image is a sign, and there is no more perfect sign or image of the Father than the Word because the Word is the fullness of the Father's expression. It follows that all creatures, while they imitate the whole Trinity who is their exemplar, also imitate the Word in a very particular way because the Word is the wisdom of God, and exemplar is appropriated to it.[79] And since an image is judged according to its conformity to its exemplar, creatures are judged according to the way in which they imitate divine truth. We find a range of degrees of imitation in creatures then because not all creatures imitate divine truth as fully as others. All creatures are equally exemplified by God, but not all of them have capacity for imitative likeness.[80]

We can end the discussion of the twofold likeness that exist between the divine ideas and creatures by echoing the words of Fr. Cullen: "there is a twofold expression in Bonaventure's exemplarism. First, there has been a definitive and full expression of God from all eternity. This full and perfect expression is Truth. Secondly, all the things that can be are expressed in this truth, and all the things that are are expressions of this truth."[81] God has fully expressed all the ways in which Truth can be exemplified, and brings it about that some of those ways become imitative likenesses.

b. The Unity and Plurality of Divine Ideas

Our discussion of imitative likeness leads very naturally to the next issue that Bonaventure treats: are the divine ideas one or many? From the discussion in the first chapter, Bonaventure's motivation to say that the divine ideas are in a way one, and that they are in a way many are obvious.

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[78] *In I Sent.*, d. 27, p. 2, a. un., q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.488b).

[79] *In I Sent.*, d. 6, a. un., q. 3, ad 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.130): "secundum quod exemplar dicit ratio cognoscendi, sic commune est toti Trinitati et appropriatur Filio, sicut sapientia."

[80] See *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, ad 6 (ed. Quaracchi, V.9b): "Ad illud quod obiicitur, quod una creatura magis assimilator Deo quam alia etc.; iam similiter patet responsio: hoc enim verum est de similitudine *imitative* ex parte creaturae; sed haec non est ratio cognoscendi, sed altera, videlicet *exemplativa*, quae summe et aequaliter exprimit omnia."

[81] Cullen, "Semiotic Metaphysics," 163.

If he says they are not one, then he derogates the unity and simplicity of God. If he says they are not many, then it is unclear how God could know and immediately create many different types of creatures. The motivation for saying both one and many is clear, but what is less clear is how he can adequately explain how this can be without breaking the principle of non-contradiction. If we break this most fundamental principle, then everything that we say will be reduced to nonsense. The fact that Bonaventure devotes two separate questions to the unity and plurality of the divine ideas in *In I* Sent. is evidence that he understood just how paramount and difficult this question is. As with the prior question, Bonaventure consistently maintains the same teaching regarding the divine ideas in *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., qq. 2-3 and *De scientia Christi*, q. 3, but arrives at the same conclusions by slightly different paths so we will once again take the questions separately.

i. *In I Sententias* (ca. 1251). The first and most obvious difference we notice between the presentation of *In I Sent.* and the *De scientia Christi* is that *In I Sent.* treats the topics of unity and plurality in two separate questions, whereas the *De scientia Christi* handles the topics together. Question two asks whether there is a plurality of ideas in reality (*secundum rem*), and question three asks if there is a plurality of ideas according to reason (*secundum rationem*).

As to the reality of the divine ideas, it seems as though they are many. As he notes in the first argument, the fact that we speak of them in the plural, and Augustine calls them "eternal forms" is very strong evidence that they are many.[82] Moreover, as becomes clear from arguments two through four, we speak of them in the plural precisely because divine cognition and exemplarity require that each them be known and exemplified distinctly and according to the whole of it. If there were but one idea, then God could only know things indistinctly, and create them indifferently.[83] If there be

[82] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 2, arg. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.605a).

[83] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 2, arg. 2-4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.605a), note especially from argument 4: "Item, si idea est *ratio cognoscendi*; sed unumquodque cognoscens cognoscit secundum exigentiam rationis cognoscendi: ergo si idea est unum quid, cum in uno non cadit, Deus cognoscit res distincte, sed indistincte." It is important to keep this point in mind because Henry of Ghent tries to argue that the divine ideas are the only *ratio cognoscendi* for God, but then argues

only one idea, we seem to be forced either into Avicenna's account of divine knowledge and emanation. If, as Bonaventure has already claimed, God's only source of cognition is the ideas, i.e., if the ideas are the only explanation for God's cognition, the only *rationes cognoscendi*, then to restrict the number of ideas is to restrict the number of objects to which God has access. Perhaps God could still cognize things of which he did not have ideas, but it would be impossible for those things to be cognized distinctly.

Despite these strong objections, St. Bonaventure argues in the *fundamenta* that there is but one idea *secundum rem*, and offers two arguments from reason. It is more perfect to know and produce many things from one than from many.[84] Since God is most perfect, he cognizes all things through a single idea. Moreover, in every genus of cause the status of cause is in one simply, as it is in the genera of efficient and final causality. Since God is the exemplar in whom there is status in every way, therefore God is supreme unity. An exemplar is not entirely one and simple because it contains many things, but is itself one and simple. Therefore, the divine exemplarity has but one idea *secundum rem*.[85]

In his response, Bonaventure notes that there are two opinions on the matter. The first argues that the ideas are really distinct in God and takes the great multiplicity of forms in God, in the soul, and in the world (i.e., in matter), as evidence. In matter, the forms have distinction, composition, and opposition. In the soul, they have distinction and composition, but not opposition because they are found spiritually. In God, they are distinct, but not composite or opposed because of the supreme simplicity. This real distinction does not prevent them from being one exemplar

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that God distinctly cognizes things of which he does not have ideas. John Duns Scotus objects to Henry's reasoning with just this argument.

[84] As we will see below, William of Ockham uses the same principle to deny the divine ideas.

[85] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un, q. 2, fm. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.605a).

because they remain united in the same way that the many particular forms in a signet ring produce one seal.[86]

This opinion has a certain beauty in it from the divisions that it makes, and seems probable, but ultimately cannot stand. If the ideas were really distinct in God, they would have a real plurality. But the only real plurality in God is the plurality of divine persons. Thus, there would be as many persons in God as there are ideas plus three. God would not be a Trinity, but an Infinity. And if we say that the plurality of ideas does not yield anything absolutely other, but merely relatively, then either that relative is something or nothing. If it be nothing, then they are not really distinct and their cognitive role breaks down, and if it be something, then it cannot be relative to anything except the divine essence. But all things essential characteristics in God are one, so the divine ideas would have to be one too.[87]

As a result of this error, we ought to posit that the ideas are really one (*unum secundum rem*) on the strength of the following argument. An idea in God is a likeness that is a *ratio cognoscendi*, but the means of knowing really is the divine truth. Since the divine truth is one, so too are the divine ideas one *secundum rem*.[88] Divine truth is the only *ratio cognoscendi* that God has. If there were another, then it would denigrate the divine perfection because it would have to come from without and would be evidence of potency in God.

In his reply to the second objection, Bonaventure makes a distinction between a likeness which is a property of a genus, and one which is beyond a genus. The likeness which is a property of a genus cannot be the likeness of many things differing in genus because the likeness is restricted to one genus. Thus, the likeness of a living thing cannot serve as a likeness for a non-living thing

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[86] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.605b), esp.: "Et quamvis in Deo sint distinctae, sunt tamen unum exemplar, sicut plures formae particulares in sigillo faciunt unum sigillum."

[87] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.605b).

[88] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.605b-606a): "idea in Deo dicit *similitudinem*, quae est ratio cognoscendi; illa autem secundum rem est ipsa divina *veritas* . . . et quia illa est una, patet, quod secundum rem omnes ideae unum sunt."

because living and non-living differ generically. A likeness that is beyond a genus, however, is able to serve as a likeness for all because it is not limited to any particular genus. The reason that it can be a likeness of one thing is the same reason it can be the likeness of another, and the reason it is a likeness of any part of something is the same reason it is the likeness of the whole. Divine truth is beyond all genera, and so is able to serve as a likeness for all things. The unity the divine ideas *secundum rem* does not prevent them from being likenesses of all things.[89] Being beyond any genus also allows the divine truth to be so supremely expressive that it can express each thing in all of its conditions.[90]

These qualifications about the supreme expressivity of divine truth provide a good transition to *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 3, wherein Bonaventure argues for the plurality of the divine ideas *secundum rationem*. The reason that the first opinion from question two was so attractive is that it placed a great deal of emphasis on the need for the ideas to be distinct. This line of reasoning features heavily in the *fundamenta* for question three.[91] In the conclusion, Bonaventure argues that while God is not really related to creatures (for such a relationship would yield a potency, and therefore an imperfection in God), we can still speak meaningfully about God's relation to creatures. The divine ideas are the perfect example of this ability because "this name 'idea' signifies the divine essence in comparison or in respect to a creature."[92] As a *ratio cognoscendi*, a divine idea links a knower and a thing known. While the question of unity and plurality *secundum rem* holds more on the part of

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[89] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 2, ad 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.606ab), esp.: "*Alia* est similitudo simpliciter *extra genus;* et haec, quia ad hoc genus non arctatur, qua ratione est huius, ea ratione est illius, et qua ratione est huius secundum partem, eadem ratione secundum totam; et talis similitudo est divina veritas et idea in Deo." Emphasis original.

[90] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 2, ad 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.607a). Cf. Alexander of Hales, *Summa theologica*, p. 1, inq. 1, tr. 2, q. 3, ad 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.92b).

[91] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 3, fa 1-4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.607ab), note especially *fundamentum* four: "Item, Deus, antequam res producat, distincte cognoscit et actu; sed non est distinctio in Deo cognoscente nec in cognito: ergo, oportet, quod sit in ratione cognoscendi." God could not know distinctly unless the *ratio cognoscendi* had some manner of plurality.

[92] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.608a): hoc nomen *idea* significat divinam essentiam in comparatione sive in respect ad creaturam."

the knower, the question of unity and plurality *secundum rationem intelligendi* or *dicendi* holds more on the part of the things cognized. Since the knower is one, and the things known are many, we can say that the ideas in God are on *secundum rem* and many *secundum rationem*.

In his response to the third objection, Bonaventure specifies that the plurality of divine ideas is a matter of connotation. Simply put, there is a plurality of divine ideas because there is a plurality of things connoted in God's understanding. We can understand the things connoted in two ways, however: either insofar as the things connoted are, or insofar as they are connotated. Insofar as they are, the things known in the ideas are only in time. Being known by means of a divine idea does not make the creature exist outside of time. But insofar as creatures are connoted, they can be connoted either eternally or temporally. Eternally because a habitual respect is understood as when a creature is predestined. It does not exist in act, but only *in habitu*. Temporally because an actual existence is implied. The possible creature is actually created.[93] Thus, by the things connotated we understand a multitude of creatures having a respect to the divine truth, and not merely those which exist, but also those which will exist or could exist, but are not created.[94]

Bonaventure argues in the conclusions of *In I Sent.* that the question of unity and plurality can be solved by examining the difference in reference between a *ratio cognoscendi* considered *secundum rem* and a *ratio cognoscendi* considered *secundum rationem*. The former consideration focuses on the knower, and so asks, "How many things cause the knowledge?" In God, the answer is just one thing: the divine truth. The latter consideration focuses on the things known, and so asks, "How many things are known?" In God, the answer is many. Thus, the divine ideas are one *secundum rem* and many *secundum rationem*.

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[93] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 3, ad 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.608b).

[94] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 3, ad 5 (ed. Quaracchi, I.609a): "idea non dicit tantum quod *est*, sed respectum *ad id* quod futurum est, vel etiam potest esse." Cf. Albert the Great, *Quaestio de ideis divinis*, a. 1 (ed. Aschendorff, 25.2.265:7–9).

ii. *De scientia Christi* (1254). In the *De scientia Christi*, Bonaventure again comes to the conclusion that the divine ideas are one *secundum rem* and many *secundum rationem*, but arrives at the same conclusion by a rather different route than he does in *In I Sent.* In the first place, he does not separate the questions, but treats them together. In the second place, he employs different arguments for the conclusion.

As was true of his answer to the question whether God has ideas, Bonaventure's argument for the unity and plurality of divine ideas in the *De scientia Christi* gives much greater emphasis to the exemplarity of divine ideas than does his treatment of the question in *In I Sent.* Once again, Bonaventure begins from God's supreme expression, understood equally as a statement about divine cognition and divine power.[95] God completely expresses all things in the divine truth, and when he cognizes himself, he sees things in many ways and completely in expressing the truth. Thus, despite the fact that he is only knowing one thing, i.e., the divine truth, he sees himself as an exemplary likeness of all things because he is entirely outside of all genera and limited by nothing.[96] There is nothing to limit the exemplarity of the divine truth because being able to exemplify one thing in no way inhibits it from exemplifying something else. Being outside of all genera, the divine truth is able to exemplify all genera just as the genus *animal* exemplifies all animals. Bonaventure further explains this lack of limitation in terms of pure act. Because God is pure act, and all other things have an admixture of potency and matter, they can all be exemplified by God. On one hand, there is no potency to prevent pure act from expressing all things, and on the other hand, pure act can exemplify all the ways in which things can fall short of itself. It can express all the ways in which things can be in act.[97]

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[95] See *De scientia Christi*, q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, V.13b).

[96] *De scientia Christi*, q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, V.13b): "Potens est autem divina veritas, quamvis sit una, omnia exprimere per modum similitudinis exemplaris, quia ipsa est omnino *extra genus* et ad nihil coarctata." Emphasis original.

[97] *De scientia Christi*, q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, V.13b-14a).

We can understand this expression in three ways, however. We can understand the truth itself, the expression itself, and the thing itself. Truth alone is one both in reality and in reason. The things expressed have multiplicity either actually or possibly. Regardless of whether God chooses to create a thing, it is expressed in multiplicity. The expression, however, requires some additional explanation. Insofar as the expression is considered as that which is (*id quod est*) it is nothing other than divine truth, but insofar as the expression is considered as that to which is (*id ad quod est*), it holds on the part of the things which are expressed. Thus, according to *id quod est*, things in the divine truth are one, and not one and another. All things are united in God.[98] As Quinn says, "According to His way of knowing creatures . . . the divine idea is said to be their one similitude and, as such, it is the principle by which He knows them, or expresses their truth."[99] The *ratio cognoscendi* which is the divine truth suffices to know all creatures, and comprises the sole origin of God's cognition and exemplarity. And this unity makes perfect sense for, as Bissen notes, "the foundation for the likeness could only be something absolute in God, and there is nothing more absolute in him than essence."[100] Nothing outside of God could serve as *ratio cognoscendi* for *actus purus*, so something internal to *actus purus* had to fill the role. But everything internal to God is one. Therefore, the ideas are one.

If we consider the expression according to *id ad quod est*, however, then we find a plurality. To explain this plurality, Bonaventure falls back on an example adapted from Augustine and Avicenna: "to express a man is not to express a donkey."[101] Moreover, to use a more Christian

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[98] *De scientia Christi*, q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, V.14a), esp.: "Unde expressio unius rei et alterius rei *in* divina, vel *a* divina veritate, secundum id *quod* est, non est aliud et aliud." Emphasis original

[99] John Francis Quinn, *The Historical Constitution of St. Bonaventure's Philosophy*, (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1973), 497.

[100] Bissen, *L'exemplarisme divin*, 24: "le fondement de la similitude ne peut être que quelque chose d'absolu en Dieu; et il n'y a rien de plus absolu que l'essence."

[101] *De scientia Christi*, q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, V.14a): "exprimere hominem non est exprimere asinum." Cf. Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46, n. 2 (PL 40.30), and Avicenna, *Met.*, V, c. 1 (ed. van Riet, II.228:26–29). Both Augustine and Avicenna use the example of "man and horse" instead of "man and donkey."

example, to predestine Peter is not to predestine Paul, nor is to create a man to create an angel. At no level, generic, specific, or individual, can one idea serve as another. Although the divine act is one, and the ideas are not pluralized by what they signify, that one act connotes many things, and is compared to a plurality.[102]

Bonaventure offers some clarification on the nature of the relation that the ideas express between God and the many creatures connoted by them. The relation cannot imply a real respect in God because God is not really referred to anything extrinsic. God is referred to creatures only by reason of understanding (*rationem intelligendi*). To this rational respect corresponds a real relation in creatures. Therefore, Bonaventure concludes that ideas are one *secundum rem*, and many *secundum rationem*.[103]

iii. Conclusions. Just as we saw in the discussion of the nature of divine ideas, Bonaventure's position on the unity and plurality of the divine ideas does not change. He consistently holds that the divine ideas are one insofar as they are a reality, but that they are many insofar as they refer to the things known. As Cullen puts it, a divine idea "has an ontological identity with the divine essence, but a connotative reference to that which is other than the divine essence."[104] Divine truth is one, and so the divine ideas, which are likenesses of that truth, are also one. Yet, the divine ideas are the means by which God knows creatures, and creatures are in fact many, so the divine ideas must also be many. Insofar as the divine ideas indicate an exemplary likeness, they are one, but insofar as they indicate an imitative likeness, they are many.

Despite this consistency in conclusion, we once again see Bonaventure taking different routes to the conclusion. The conclusion from *In I Sent.* proceeds solely from the cognitive role of

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[102] *De scientia Christi*, q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, V.14a): "plurificari dicuntur non secundum id *quod significant*, sed secundum id *quod connotant*, non secundum id *quod* sunt, sed secundum id *ad quod* sunt sive ad quod comparantur." Emphasis original. Cf. Alexander of Hales, *Summa theologica*, p. 1, inq. 1, tr. 5, q. un, mem. 1, c. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.258b): "ratio vero et idea [plurificantur] ex parte rei cognitae: et propter hoc, sicut res cognitae plures, ita et idea."

[103] *De scientia Christi*, q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, V.14a).

[104] Cullen, "Semiotic Metaphysics," 168.

the divine ideas: An idea is a *ratio cognoscendi* which *secundum rem* is the divine truth. Divine truth is one. Therefore, so is the *ratio cognoscendi*. And so is the idea. Yet, that *ratio cognoscendi* is a likeness of the thing cognized, which are many, and so we posit that the divine ideas are many *secundum rationem*. In the replies to the objections, he offers secondary arguments to the same conclusion based on the nature of a genus and another from the signification and connotation of words, but it is clear that he does not see these arguments as necessary to arrive at his conclusion.

By the time he gives a magisterial presentation of the unity and plurality of the divine ideas, those secondary arguments have made their way from the replies into the conclusion. Their presence in the conclusion suggests that they are more critical for understanding Bonaventure's conclusions. Arguments offered in reply to the objects can sometimes be an extension of the distinctions and reasoning of the conclusion, but they can also be a little *ad hoc*. They reply to *this* objection, but are peripheral to understanding the answer to the question. In this case, it seems like the metaphysical argument from a genus, and the linguistic argument from connotation are more peripheral to the cognitive argument from likeness found in the conclusions of *In I Sent.* questions.

In the *De scientia Christi*, however, these three arguments are woven together to form a single argument. This weaving is made possible by the greater emphasis placed on the exemplary role of the divine ideas. The divine truth is able to exemplify all things because it is beyond all genera. The divine truth is examined not merely cognitively, but metaphysically, as evidenced by Bonaventure's appeal to it as *actus purus*. From there, the argument proceeds to consider the nature of the expression, drawing the argument from signification to the fore. In the grand scheme of things there is not very much development, but there is enough for us to see that in his less mature, bachelor work on *In I Sent.*, he did not see the need to include the additional arguments to make his point, but in the magisterial work of the *De scientia Christi*, he includes them for the sake of a more complete argument.

iv. Real vs. Rational Relations. Unfortunately, neither text spends a lot of time examining the implications of the plurality *secundum rationem*. What sort of ontological status can we ascribe to these rational relations? How should we understand this plurality that evidently does not compromise the unity and simplicity of God? What he does tell us is that we have to account for two distinct cases of plurality in God. The first is the plurality of persons in the Trinity, and the second is the plurality of ideas. Both of these have to be articulated in such a way that they do not destroy the unity in God, and that they are not confused with each other.[105]

He takes up the question of both sorts of plurality in *In I Sent.*, d. 30, a. un., q. 3. There he argues that we can understand relations in two ways, either as real or as in a mode of understanding. Real relations are threefold. (1) Some are founded on an accidental property, as when a likeness is found in two white things. (2) Some are founded on an essential dependence, as matter depends on form. (3) Some are founded on a natural origin, as an effect to a cause or son to a father. The first two types of relation have no place in God because nothing in him is accidental or dependent. The third type, however, can be said of God with respect to the Trinity of persons. A relation of natural origin does not imply any composition or inclination to dependence like the first two, but simply posits distinction and order.[106] Here we should recall our discussion of distinctions within simplicity from chapter one. There we noted that in *In I Sent.*, d. 8, Bonaventure adds that diversity from origin is not properly speaking diversity, but distinction and discretion because a distinction in origin does not imply the composition of addition.[107] This distinction is borne out in the language we use to

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[105] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 2 (ed. Quarcchi, I.605b): "Nam si in Deo esset ponere ideas realiter differentes sive distinctas, tunc esset ibi alia pluralitas realis, quam sit pluralitas personalis; quod abhorrent aures piae."

[106] *In I Sent.* d. 30, a. un., q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.525a), note especially: "Tertia est in Deo . . . respectu personae; haec enim non dicit *compositionem* nec *dependentiae* inclinationem, sicut prima et secunda, sed point *distinctionem* et *ordinem.* Et quoniam vere una persona ordinatur ad aliam et habitudinem habet et alio modo secundum rem se habet ad unam quam ad aliam." Cf. *De mys. Trin.*, q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, V.76a): "Personae autem divinae, quia omnino unum sunt in substantia et forma et nulla habent accidentia, non distinguuntur *qualitate*, sed *sola origine;* illa autem *origo* est ipius personae non per aliquid aliud, sed per se ipsam."

[107] *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 2, a. un., q. 1, ad 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.166b).

describe the relationship between the Father and the Son. Certain prepositions involve an opposition like "against" (*contra*). Others involve a certain distance like "to" (*ad*) or "near" (*prope*). Others a certain causality as "from" (*de*) and "out of" (*ex*). Still others involve a certain fittingness like "in" (*in*) and "with" (*cum*). Those implying opposition and distance are completely excluded from the divine relations, but those implying causality or fittingness can be used. Those implying a cause are not convertible, and so only apply to the Son because, as Quinn points out, "the Father cannot be said to come *from* or *out of* the Son."[108] Those prepositions that imply a fittingness also have a relation of complete reciprocity so we can say that the Father is in or with the Son just as much as we would say the Son is in or with the Father.[109]

When it comes to creatures, however, no real relation can be found in God. Creatures are really related to God according to all three types of real relation noted above, but none of the three types could truly be said of God for creatures. The types that involve an accidental property and an essential dependence still imply imperfection, and so are to be rejected. The third type, which is founded upon a natural origin, cannot apply to God because creatures are not merely distinct by a natural origin, but in essence as well. God's manner of causality is beyond a real relation. Such a relation would introduce dependence in God. As he says in *De mysterio Trinitatis*, q. 3, a. 2, we can understand a relation in two ways, either as a respect (*respectus*) to another diverse in essence or as a respect only to something consubstantial. The latter sense is proper only to the persons of the Trinity and includes no dependence, but the former "includes a certain dependence, and through this falls short of supreme simplicity."[110] To be really related to something with a different essence is to be dependent upon that thing because each thing can exercise some manner of influence or

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[108] Quinn, *Historical Constitution*, 575.

[109] *In I Sent.*, d. 19, p. 1, a. un., q. 4, ad 6 (ed. Quaracchi, I.350): "Ad illud quod quaeritur de hoc quod est *apud* etc.; dicendum, quod quaedam praepositiones important habitudinem *repugnantiae*, ut *contra*; quaedam distantiae, ut hoc quod est *ad* et *convenientiae*, ut *in* et *cum*. Primae et secundae nullo modo recipiuntur, sed tertiae et quartae sic, et tertiae non conversim, sed quartae conversim, quia conventientia est relatio aequiparantiae."

[110] *De mys. Trin.*, q. 3, a. 2, ad 4 (ed. Quaracchi, 77a).

causality upon the other. If God were really related to creatures, then creatures could act upon God, and God would be in some sense passive or in potency to receive this creaturely action. Such a position is contrary to the supreme perfection in God, who is *actus purus*, and so cannot be really related to anything outside of himself.

Though God is not really related to any creature, he must have some manner of relation to creatures because he knows them. Since, as we saw above, all knowledge requires an assimilation. God must have some sort of a logical relation to the objects of his knowledge, i.e., to all possible creatures. St. Bonaventure attempts to explain this relationship with a variety of expressions. He calls it a relation *secundum modum*, *secundum modum intelligendi*, *secundum rationem, secundum rationem intelligendi,* and *secundum rationem dicendi*. The last of these expressions emphasizes that the plurality of divine ideas is required by our way of thinking. We are too complex to understand and express the way the simple way that God knows.

The other expressions point to the real relations that things have to God. Since God's knowledge of things is perfect, he knows the real relation that the creature has (or could have) to himself. As these real relations are not ontologically one, so neither are they intelligibly one. They are intelligibly many. To know one essence really related to God is not to know another essence really related to God. As Quinn puts it, "the ideal reasons of creatures are not pluralized in God, but by us, and so there is a plurality of divine ideas solely according to reason."[111] The divine ideas are pluralized when we consider the things cognized by means of them. The relations that pluralize the divine ideas do so by reason of the things understood. If we consider the divine ideas according to the knower, they are one. If we consider the divine ideas according to the things known, they are many.

[111] Quinn, *Historical Constitution*, 495.

Thus, the relationship between God and creatures is real on the part of creatures, and only *secundum rationem* on the part of God. In support of this "mixed" relationship, Bonaventure cites Pseudo-Dionysius who claims that the relationship between cause and effect is not reciprocal, and Aristotle, who argues that knowledge is referred to the knowable, but not vice versa.[112] A relation does not always induce change in both extremes because one of the extremes can be in act of itself. In such a case, the extreme that is in act causes a change, but is not itself changed. An external object is indifferent to being known or not known. My coming to know it establishes a real relation in me, but does not change the thing itself. In the same way, God is not changed because a creature has a real relation to him.[113]

c. The Infinity of the Divine Ideas

Now that Bonaventure has established that the divine ideas are many, he continues to the next logical question: how many are there? Is there a limit to the number of ideas in God, or are they unlimited? Are they finite in number, or infinite? There are good reasons for siding with either position. Since God is omniscient and omnipotent, then how could there be any limit to the things he could know and create? But if his knowledge comprehends an infinite, then it would seem to be rendered finite by their being known. Moreover, the infinite by its very nature resists comprehension because regardless of how much it is known there is always more to know. As we will see, Bonaventure comes down on the side infinity.

i. *In I Sententias* (ca. 1251). The argument that Bonaventure uses for the infinity of divine ideas in the conclusion of *In I Sent.* is from authority. Psalm 146:5 says that the divine wisdom is

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[112] *In I Sent.*, d. 30, a. un., q. 3, fa 1–2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.525). See Pseudo-Dionysius, *De div. nom.*, c. 9, sect. 6 (PG 3:914–915), and Aristotle, *Praedicamenta*, c. 7 (AL 1.18–23) and *Met.* V, c. 15 (AL 25.3.2.112–114).

[113] Bonaventure also uses the example of money: "Et ratio visa est, quia respicit duplex extremum, et quiia potest unum esse de se in *actu*, altero existente in *potential*: sicut in nummo, qui est in potestate possidentis, quod sit pignus vel pretium vel arrha secundum mutationem factam in ipso; nec advenit nummo aliquid absolutum, sed ordo, qui ex parte nummi erat in *actu*, ex parte illius quod erat in *potential*, fit in actu; et ideo mutatur illud, non mutate nummo" (*In I Sent.*, d. 30, dub. 3 [ed. Quaracchi, I.528a]).

without number, which means that reasons through which it cognizes are without number as well. To be without number is to be innumerable. Nothing finite is innumerable, so the divine ideas cannot be finite, but infinite.[114] This argument is certainly valid, but since it launches from the data of revelation, we will have to rely more on the *fundamenta* and the replies to the objections for a more philosophically persuasive argument.

The third *fundamentum* offers a very simple, but powerful argument for the infinity of divine ideas. God cognizes every species of number, which means they all have ideas in him. But the species of number are infinite. Therefore, the divine ideas are infinite in number. And it could not be argued that they are only infinite for us, and not *secundum rem* because every species of number exists in reality. Thus, an infinity simply exists in act. So if all species of number exist in God as ideas in act, then they must be *secundum rem* and not just for us.[115] The beauty of this argument is that it does not have to appeal to any species other than number. Since numbers are beyond counting, they are beyond finitude. But of which numbers would God's perfect cognition be ignorant? So if God's knowledge is perfect, and all knowledge of things other than himself are by means of ideas, then just by considering that God knows all numbers, we must declare that there are an infinite number of divine ideas.

Fundamentum four is worth noting because, as we will see below in the summary, the major premise seems to be one that Bonaventure denies elsewhere. It runs as follows: God can produce an infinite number of things; but he cannot produce anything unless he has an idea of it. Therefore, he has ideas of an infinite number of things. But, as we saw above, a plurality in things indicates a plurality of ideas. Therefore, an infinity of things has an infinity of ideas.[116] There are an infinite number of things that God could create, though he does not create all of them. God's *ratio operandi*

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[114] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 5 (ed. Quaracchi, I.612a).
[115] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 5, fm. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.611a).
[116] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 5, fm. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.611ab).

habitually extends itself to an infinite number of things, and since God has to have an idea for everything that he could create, he has to have an infinite number of ideas.[117]

In response to the objection that argues that the ideas are finite because the fact that God knows and comprehends them renders them finite, Bonaventure argues by ceding the point that God renders them finite by his comprehension. But the ideas are finite only to God because he alone comprehends them. To any other being the eternal reasons are infinite because no other intellectual power can comprehend them.

In response to the objection that draws upon the older, negative understanding of the word "infinity," arguing that "infinity" denotes imperfection, Bonaventure distinguishes two types of infinity: infinity through defect and infinity through excess. The former is in creatures as in matter, and so is imperfect. This sort of infinite is not in God. The latter cannot simply be in creatures because they are created, composed, and limited. But since God is neither created, composed, nor limited, he can have infinity through excess. God has infinite knowledge because he is supremely perfect.[118]

ii. *De scientia Christi* (1254). By the time Bonaventure takes up the question in the *De scientia Christi*, his argument has become significantly more sophisticated. Part of the reason for the increased sophistication is that the question is broader than it was in *In I Sent.* There, the question was specifically whether the divine ideas are infinite in number, but here the question is whether Christ, insofar as he is the Word, has actual knowledge of an infinite number of things.[119] Given the broader parameters of the question, we would expect arguments to appear that have no place in the more restricted question of the ideas alone. But this difference, as we will see, cannot account for all

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[117] *In I Sent.*, d. 43, a. un., q. 4, conclusio (ed. Quaracchi, I.774b).

[118] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 5, ad 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.612b), note especially: "Infinitas autem per *excessum* non potest simpliciter esse in creatura, quoniam habet esse creatum et compositum et limitatum; Deus autem nihil horum habet, et ideo habet infinitatem, et haec est summae perfectionis." Cf. Alexander of Hales, *Summa theologica*, p. 1, inq. 1, tr. 5, sect. 1, q. un., mem. 3, c. 2, ad 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.252b).

[119] *De scientia Christi*, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, V.3).

of the differences between the two questions, and that the text of the *De scientia Christi* contains insights that are simply not to be found in *In I Sent.*

Bonaventure's primary argument is based on the same reasoning found in *In I Sent.*: God can know and make a potentially infinite number of things, but this can only happen through ideas, and so the ideas have to be infinite in number. To this kernel of similarity, Bonaventure adds a number of arguments we did not see in *In I Sent.* Two *fundamenta* are particularly worth noting in this regard. The third *fundamentum* argues that cognition of an infinite number of things is entailed by the divine simplicity: "The simpler a substance is, the more things it can cognize. Therefore, a substance which is infinitely simpler than some created substance, knows infinitely more things than some creature. Therefore, etc."[120] God's cognitive ability is augmented by his simplicity. As a focused light is more luminous than an unfocused light, so it is with cognitive strength. God's cognition is completely focused because it is completely simple, and so extends to everything cognizable.

The fourth *fundamentum* holds that "God actually comprehends both his essence and his power; but God can [make] an infinite number of things: therefore, if God actually cognizes his power (*posse*), he actually comprehends an infinite number of things. Therefore, etc."[121] This argument is especially important because of the prominence it has in Aquinas' discussion of the divine ideas, and the criticism it draws from Ockham.[122] Since God can produce a potentially infinite number of things, and he comprehends the full extent of his power, he must have an infinite number of ideas.

The conclusion of the question begins with an appeal to the authority of the "ancient doctors." From these authorities come expanded versions of the argument from number made in *In*

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[120] *De scientia Christi*, q. 1, fm. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, V.3a).
[121] *De scientia Christi*, q. 1, fm. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, V.3a).
[122] See, *inter alia*, Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 2, s.c. 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.814); Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.841), Ockham, *Ord.*, I, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.436–37)

I Sent., d. 35, a. un., q. 5, fm. 3. God's wisdom is without number, and by appealing only to the infinity of species of numbers, we are able conclude that God knows an infinite number of things. Which number does God not know? So if the numbers are infinite, then God knows an infinite number of things.[123]

From these ancient doctors, Bonaventure turns to certain "modern doctors" who make a threefold division in the mode of divine cognition based on a diversity of connotation of divine knowledge. These three are cognition of approbation, cognition of vision, and cognition of intelligence. By his cognition of approbation, God knows only good things that actually happen in creation. Since creation is finite, so too is this knowledge. By his cognition of vision, God knows both the good and evil things that happen in creation, and this knowledge is finite for the same reason as before. By his cognition of intelligence, God has knowledge of an infinite number of things because it concerns not only the things that were, are or will be in creation, but also all the possibles that God could have made, but chose not to make. And since God's possibilities are infinite, so too is his knowledge of his possibilities.[124]

Bonaventure emphasizes that God knows an infinite number of things, but that he does not make, will, or dispose all of them. We ought to understand the third mode of cognition as an intrinsic act of God because it is *ad intrinsecum*, *per intrinsecum*, and *secundum modum intrinsecum*. It is *ad intrinsecum* because God does not look beyond himself for knowledge, but only looks to himself as truth. It is *per intrinsecum* because he cognizes whatever he cognizes through eternal reasons which are the same as himself. These eternal reasons are the ideas, and so it is from this aspect of the intrinsic act of God that we can infer an infinite number of ideas. If God knows an infinite number

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[123] *De scientia Christi*, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, V.4b-5a).

[124] *De scientia Christi*, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, V.5a), esp.: "Cognitio vero *intelligentiae* est infinitorum, pro eo quod Deus intelligit non tantum futura, verum etiam possibilia: possibilia autem Deo non sunt finita, sed infinita." Emphasis original.

of things with his cognition of intelligence, and that is only through ideas, then he knows that infinite through the ideas. And since, as we saw above, ideas are multiplied by the connotation of the thing known through the idea, if God knows an infinite number of things, he must have an infinite number of ideas. Finally, God's intrinsic act is *secundum modum intrinsecum* because God knows not only because he is an actual cause, but rather simply because he is a cause. God's knowing does not concern nor connote something actually exterior to God, and so his knowing is merely through the mode of a habit. And since not all of the things known by this intrinsic act of God are actually existing, Bonaventure concludes that God actually knows an infinite number of things, which things are infinite in potency.[125]

iii. Conclusions. Once again, we see that Bonaventure's presentation in the *De scientia Christi* is more magisterial whereas he hardly seems to speak in his own voice in *In I Sent.* We also see him making more distinctions and placing a greater emphasis on the causality of the divine ideas in the *De scientia Christi*. These distinctions make it clear that God's knowledge of an infinite number of things and having an infinite number of ideas does not imply that there are an infinite number of things actually existing. There are things that God knows but does not create. God makes only a finite number of things and so has finite knowledge concerning them, but also knows all the things that he could have created but chose not to create. It is precisely this knowledge which is infinite, not actually created things. This distinction between knowledge and actual existence is not made, but rather seems to be obscured by the major premise of *fundamentum* four that God can (*potest*) produce an infinite number of things.[126]

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[125] *De scientia Christi*, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, V.5ab), esp.: ". . . *divinum scire* secundum tertium modum accipiendi est actus Dei *intrinsecus*. *Intrinsecum* autem dico non tantum, quia fit *ab intrinseco*, sed etiam, quia est *ad intrinsecum* et *per intrinsecum* et *secundum modum intrinsecum*. . . . *Per intrinsecum,* quia per rationes aeternas, quae sunt idem quod ipse, cognoscit quaecumque cognoscit . . ."

[126] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 5, fm. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.611a): "Deus potest infinita producere."

If we had no other text but *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 5 upon which to rely for this question, we would not be able to determine accurately Bonaventure's position on the possibility of an actual infinite. We would have endorsed such a possibility because of the misleading major premise of *fundamentum* four. The account found in *De scientia Christi*, q. 1 is thus far superior for its emphasis that while God does actually know an infinite number of things through an infinite number of divine ideas, not everything known is created, nor could it be.[127] The additional emphasis that we have consistently found on the exemplarity of God in the *De scientia Christi* as opposed to the merely cognitive accounts of divine ideas in *In I Sent.* once again gives us a clearer picture of Bonaventure's understanding of them.

d. The Existence of Things in God and the Possibles

The last aspect of the status of the divine ideas that we have to consider before turning to the scope of the divine ideas is the sort of existence that the divine ideas enjoy. From what we have seen above, it is clear that the divine ideas enjoy a cognitive existence proper to a likeness, and that they are ontologically one with the divine truth. Thus, we should not expect to find Bonaventure claiming that they enjoy any sort of existence independent of the divine intellect, but St. Bonaventure devotes distinction 36 of his *In I Sent.* to this question, so we ought to investigate what he says there. We will be especially interested in the existence enjoyed by those things that never come to be, i.e., the possibles.

i. *In I Sententias* (ca. 1251). In *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 1, q. 1, Bonaventure distinguishes three ways in which things can be in something (*esse in aliquo*). Either they can be there according to actual existence, presence of likeness, or causative potency. In the first way, they are in the universe. In the

[127] The impossibility of an actual infinite can also be found in *In II Sent.*, d. 1, p. 1, q. 2, fa. 1–6 (ed. Quaracchi, II.20b–21a). For discussion on the strength of these arguments, see *inter alia*, Bernadino M. Bonaseo, OFM. "The Question of an Eternal World in the Teaching of St. Bonaventure," *Franciscan Studies* 34 (1974): 7–33. Antonius Coccia, OFM Conv. "De Aeternitate Mundi apud S. Bonaventuram et Recentiores," in *S. Bonaventura: 1274–1974* (Rome: Collegio S. Bonaventura, 1974), 279–306. Francis Kovach, "The Question of the Eternity of the World in St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas: A Critical Analysis," *Southwestern Journal of Philosophy* 5 (1974): 141–72.

second way they are in a cognitive substance. In the third way, they are in their cause. Things are in God only in the second and third ways because God knows and produces creatures. In order for God to know creatures before they are produced, and to be able to produce them, he has to have an idea of them. And because God has had knowledge from eternity, the things in him are also from eternity.[128] No creature either generically, specifically, or individually has existed from eternity in its proper nature, yet in its exemplar it has a claim to eternity. As we saw, the divine ideas are ontologically one with the divine essence, and so are God. Since God is eternal, so too are the ideas.

From the claim that the divine ideas are eternal in God because they are God, Bonaventure asks whether they are such by reason of the divine essence, or by reason of a person. He concludes that while we have reason to say that either, properly speaking we should say neither, and prefer to say that things "are in God as *in a cause*."[129] The divine ideas are the exemplary likenesses of creatures, and God knows creatures precisely under the condition of their being creatable. Thus, the causal role that the divine ideas play comes to the fore, and offers a possible explanation for the almost exclusive emphasis on their cognitive role in *In I Sent.*, d. 35. Bonaventure was not trying to give a purely cognitive explanation for the divine ideas, but was merely delaying his treatment of the causal role.

In *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 2, Bonaventure asks what manner of existence things enjoy in God. What sort of existence does a cognitive likeness and causative potency enjoy in God? The answer comes from the prologue of John's Gospel (1:4): "What was made in him was life." The divine ideas have life in the divine intellect. Bonaventure takes great care to emphasize that life in God extends not only to those ideas which were, are, or will be, but also to all of the possibles. The infinity of

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[128] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 1, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.620b-621a), esp.: "His duobus modis ultimis res sunt in Deo, quia est cognoscens res, andtequam fiant, et potens producere. Unde quia ab aeterno *cognovits*, et *potentiale*, qua produxis ex tempore, in Deo fuit ab aeterno, ideo dicuntur res fuisse in Deo ab aeterno."

[129] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 1, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.622b): "sunt in Deo ut *in causa*."

ideas have life in God.[130] Now things can be in God in three ways: (1) as in a producing principle, which relates to God's power, (2) as in an expressing exemplar, which relates to God's knowledge (*notitia*), and (3) as in a conserving end, which relates to God's will. It is only in the second way, as in an expressing exemplar, that things are life in God because it is only as an expressing exemplar that all things God knows are included, and not merely the ones he makes.[131]

In his reply to an objection, Bonaventure makes an important distinction between the manner of existence that a thing has in God, and the manner that it is represented to have in God. God represents things as they truly are in God, and so, the objector argues, since there are some things that are not living, not all things should have life in God. Bonaventure readily cedes the first part of the objection. God does represent things as they truly are, but it is not necessary that the thing be represented in the same way as it would have existence in itself. It is not necessary for corporeal things to be known corporeally. God can know rocks without literally having matter in his intellect. And if he can know the corporeal spiritually, it follows that he could also know the lifeless livingly.[132]

This distinction is further clarified in his reply to the following objection. Bonaventure points out that the divine ideas are the *ratio intelligendi* of the divine intellect. Since understanding is an act of life, it follows that the divine ideas are living as well. Not only are they living but they are "life itself because the very *ratio cognoscendi* in God is his intelligence."[133] Things in God have an existence that is elevated above their proper existence precisely because they are in God. God's excessive nobility is shared with all the things that are in him because everything that is in God is

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[130] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 2, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.623b): "infinitae rationes rerum vivunt in Deo, ergo non solum entium vel futurum, sed etiam omnium possibilium."

[131] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 2, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.624a), esp.: "Quia vero sun tut in *exemplari exprimente*, sic sunt in ipso vita. Et quia non solum in illo exemplari exprimuntur entia, sed etiam omnia cognoscibilia Deo, ideo omnia sunt in Deo vita, quae in ipso vita." Emphasis original.

[132] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 2, q. 1, ad 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.624b).

[133] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 2, q. 1, ad 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.624b).

one. Here, Bonaventure is paraphrasing the definition of life from the *Liber de causis*: "life is a spiritual act and continuous, flowing from a still and sempiternal being."[134] So even though creatures have a corporeal, variable, and corruptible existence in themselves, that existence is elevated in God. Their corporeality is excluded through spirituality, their variability through stillness, and their corruptibility through sempiternity.

Knowing the sort of augmentation that the likenesses of things have in God, we naturally ask whether a thing exists more truly in God or in its proper genus. The answer to this question depends on our perspective. If we understand "exists" as a comparison of one and the same thing to its diverse modes of existing, then things exist more truly in their proper genera. In its proper genus, a thing exists simply (and not accidentally), according to intrinsic and proximate principles, and in its proper being (not only according to a likeness).[135] From this perspective, then, a thing exists more truly in its proper genus.

If we understand "exists" as a comparison of a thing to its likeness, then we should say that things exist more truly and more nobly in God than in their existence in the world "because it is God himself."[136] Everything in God is God, and so the ideas in God, which are the one divine truth, are God. There is nothing more true or noble than God. So everything exists more truly and more nobly in God than in its proper genus or even in a created intellect. It is precisely the in whom (*in quo*) that makes the thing exist more truly and more nobly. As he says, "the being of life is truer and nobler than not living, but all things live in God, whereas not all live in their proper genus."[137] Therefore, they exist more truly and more nobly in God.

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[134] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 2, q. 1, ad 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.624b): "vita est actus *spiritualis* et continuus, fluens ab ente *quieto* et *sempiterno*." Emphasis original. Cf. *Liber de causis*, prop. 17(18), n. 145 (ed. Pattin, 173:46–47).

[135] These are the reasons educed in *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 2, q. 2, s.c. 1-3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.625ab).

[136] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 2, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.626a): "quia est ipse Deus."

[137] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 2, q. 2, fm. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.625a).

ii. Conclusions. From what we have seen, Bonaventure's position on the existence of things in God is quite straightforward. All things, whether merely possible or actually created, are actually (*secundum re*) one in God, and in no way separated from him such that any existence the ideas could claim would be one with the existence of God. The ideas have no existence beyond what that which they acquire from God. God is life itself, and so everything in God is living, and life itself. Moreover, since the divine ideas are likenesses of the supremely expressive divine truth, the divine ideas are all truth itself. They are spiritual, invariable, and incorruptible. More specifically, though, the divine ideas enjoy only cognitive being. Cognition is a way of being, and the divine ideas enjoy that existence. They enjoy the existence of a likeness of divine truth that could function as a cause for a created effect. They exist as in a cause, and are the exemplary forms after which creatures are modeled whenever God so wills. They exist from all eternity, and exist necessarily.

Though the possibles will never be created because God does not will their creation, yet their possibility is necessary. The very possibility of a possible is necessary because any possible creature must be foreknown by God. The actual creation of any creature is not necessary and subject only to the divine will, but that God knows all possible creatures is necessary. If God only had ideas of the creatures he actually creates, then we would be forced to say that the divine will was constrained to create everything that God knew. Creation would then not be a free activity of love, but a necessary and coerced activity.

Moreover, it would be contrary to the divine perfection to be constrained to create everything for which there is an idea because then a creature could do something that God could not. We are able to imagine many species that do not exist. There is nothing illogical or irrational about the existence of such species, and so if God were constrained to create all that he knew, he could not know these species. But knowledge of these species is a perfection, so then a creature would have more perfection than God. There would be nothing ignoble about saying that God does

not know species that imply a contradiction, and so imply a measure of irrationality and imperfection, but to say that God is ignorant of something noble derogates the divine perfection. To use the standard medieval examples, it would not be contrary to the perfection of divine knowledge to say that God does not know the goatstag, or the square-triangle, but it would offend the divine perfection to say that he does not know about unicorns, leprechauns, phoenixes, etc. The possibles are necessary in order to defend the divine perfection, and the freedom of creation. God is, as Augustine says, "the art full of every living notion."[138] But he would not be full unless he had an infinite number of notions.[139]

3. The Scope of the Divine Ideas

Now that we have taken a look at the status of the divine ideas, we are lead to the question of their scope. Now that we know *what* they are for Bonaventure, we should see *what is known* by them. We can give a partial answer to this question already: the infinite number of things that God could create. All of the things that the supremely expressive divine truth expresses are known by God. This answer is only partially satisfying, however, because it leaves unanswered several key questions. Does God have an idea for each and every individual and singular thing that he creates or could create? Or does he just have ideas of the species, or genera? Does God have an idea of evil, and how does that affect the perfection of divine cognition? What about imperfect things? It is to these questions that we must now turn.

a. Singulars

Does God have different ideas for Peter and Paul, or one idea of man (mammal, animal, etc.) for both of them? At the heart of this question is what specifically pluralizes the divine ideas? Are ideas pluralized by individuals, lowest species, intermediate species/genera, etc.? Knowing that

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[138] Augustine, *De trinitate*, VI, c. 10, n. 11 (PL 42.931): "ars quaedam omnipotentis atque sapentis Dei, plena omnium rationum viventium."

[139] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 2, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.623).

God has an infinite number of divine ideas might lead us to think that the divine ideas are pluralized by singulars, but knowing that the divine ideas are infinite in number is not evidence enough to make a determination. Though it is much easier to imagine an infinity of possible individuals, we can equally imagine that God can create an infinite number of different species. To know by what the ideas are pluralized, then, we will have to make an inquiry into the cognition of singulars and of universals.

In *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 4, Bonaventure asks whether ideas are pluralized down to the level of the species or to the individual, and there seem to be good reasons for endorsing both positions. On one hand, we see that a created artificer can produce many things through one idea as when he builds many houses through the one idea of house. But God is nobler than any creature, so if a creature can make many things through one idea, God can do so all the more.[140] Moreover, if God had an idea of a universal (e.g., man) and an idea of a singular (e.g., Peter), he would have one idea that were more common and one that were more proper. But the common is prior and simpler than the proper. Thus, God would have a real order and essential composition within him.[141] Since such a conclusion is contrary to the divine simplicity, so too is the proposal of divine ideas of singulars.

Yet, we also find that cognition of things is truest when it captures the entirety of the thing. And since singulars add to the universal, then God has to have ideas of singulars in addition to the ideas of universals if he is to know the entirety of all things.[142] Additionally, we saw that the divine

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[140] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 4, s.c. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.610a).

[141] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 4, s.c. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.610a).

[142] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 4, fm. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.609ab): "Item, cognitio rei verissima est secundum rei totalitatem; sed singulare aliquid addit supra universale: ergo cum Deus totum cognoscat, non tantum habet ideam universalis, sed etiam superaditi, scilicet singularis; similiter et alterius singularis. Ergo si addita sunt diversa secundum rationem sive multitudinem idealem, patet etc." This argument is important to remember because it will reappear in Henry of Ghent's analysis of divine ideas of singulars. Henry, however, will deny that singulars add anything to the universal, and so deny that divine ideas of singulars are necessary. See, *inter alia*, Henry, *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1-2 (ed. Wilson, XI.3–35)

ideas are multiplied according to the real relation that the *ideata* have to them. Therefore, any division *secundum rem* in the *ideata* will result in a distinct idea multiplied *secundum rationem*. Since species are multiplied according to individual *secundum rem*, the divine ideas are multiplied *secundum rationem* at the level of the individual.[143]

In his conclusion, Bonaventure makes two key points to argue that the divine ideas are pluralized both according to the multitude of universals, and according to the multitude of singulars. The first point is a reminder that when we discuss the question of divine ideas of singulars, we must not get so caught up in the multiplication of divine ideas that we forget that they are really identical with the divine truth. We must remember this identity because it is a reminder that the divine truth and all its likenesses are the expressive *ratio cognoscendi*. The expression of the divine truth extends not simply to the universal, but also to the singular. Peter is expressed in the divine truth just as much as man is. However, and this is Bonaventure's second point, the universality and singularity are not, properly speaking, in God. God is beyond the distinction between universal and singular such that the likenesses by which he knows are also beyond the distinction. The ideas in God are neither universal nor singular, but are multiplied according to the multitude of universals and of singulars.[144]

A created artificer is able to produce many things through only one idea because he applies the idea to different matter each time. If he had only one idea without any recourse to matter, he could not know more than one. But God knows the diversity of singulars in a simple glance, and so must have ideas that include the proper differences and properties of singulars.[145]

Bonaventure's account of divine ideas is as full as it can be. He frequently refers to God as the fontal fullness (*fontalis plenitudo*) and that fullness is perhaps most evident here in his discussion of

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[143] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 4, fm. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.609b).

[144] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.610ab).

[145] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 4, ad 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.610b), note esp.: "Deus autem simplici aspect cognoscit singularia ut diversa, ita quod secundum totum et secundum proprias differentias et proprietates."

divine ideas.[146] God has an idea of each and every thing that could possibly be an expression of the divine truth, regardless of the redundancies that might create. God has an idea of Peter, man, mammal, animal, living thing, bodily thing, and substance, and every smaller step in between. The divine knowledge is as full as possible, and this fullness is completely in accord with what we have already said. When he argued that the divine ideas had to be pluralized instead of one, he argued that the divine ideas are the means by which God distinctly cognizes, and God does not cognize anything except distinctly. But by means of one thing, only one thing is cognized distinctly, e.g., to know man distinctly is not to know horse distinctly. So it is merely an extension of this line of thinking to say that if God knew singulars solely by means of ideas of universals, he would not cognize the singulars distinctly. By a parity of reason, we can say that God would also not cognize the universals distinctly if he did not have distinct ideas of them as well. What results is a picture of divine knowledge wherein the divine ideas are many even to infinity and cover every possible object of knowledge, regardless of how universal or particular it may be.

By this answer, Bonaventure is able to cede implicitly Averroes's argument that God is beyond any distinction between singular and universal, yet avoid the conclusion that God's knowledge is indeterminate with regard to singular and universal. The ideas are neither universal nor singular because they are one with God. But because supreme truth is supremely expressive and extends to every possible imitative expression, and the ideas are many because of this expression, God has perfect knowledge of every possible object of cognition.

Before moving on we should note that Bonaventure spends almost no time arguing that a singular really does add to the species, and so requires its own idea to be cognized distinctly. It is clear from *fundamentum* two that he does hold this position, and he indicates in his reply to the

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[146] See, *inter alia*, *Itinerarium* c. 2, nn. 7-8 (ed. Quaracchi, V. 301b); *Brevilioquium* I, c. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, V.212a); *De reductione*, n. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, V.319a);

second objection that matter is involved when it comes to our own cognition. But since he denies matter is relevant to the discussion regarding God—preferring to say instead that a simple glance is sufficient for him to cognize singulars as diverse—we are left in the dark as to what exactly the singular adds and how it does so. While we could investigate Bonaventure's theory of individuation for a more precise answer to this question, I think that we should take Bonaventure's silence on the topic as an indication that the cause of the individuation of singulars is not crucial to his argument. It is sufficient to say that we must posit divine ideas of singulars because knowing Peter is not the same as knowing Paul, and that knowing both of them is not the same as knowing the essence of man. The fact that these are not identical is sufficient to demand distinct ideas for each. Knowing the root cause of their diversity is necessary for a complete understanding, but is tangential for determining whether the plurality of the divine ideas extends only to the level of the species, or also to the level of the individual.

b. Evil

The question of whether God has an idea of evil is particularly difficult to answer. Bonaventure wants to affirm that God cognizes evil so that he can punish those who commit it, but he does not want to affirm that evil is in God nor that God is in any way the cause of evil things. It would seem to be the case that if God cognizes evil things, then he would have to have an idea of evil because the ideas are the *rationes cognoscendi* of all things that God knows other than himself. And since God is his cognition, then if he knows evil things, then evil things are in God.[147] Yet, the ideas are expressive likenesses of the divine truth, and since evil has no share in truth or assimilation to it, divine ideas of evil things would seem to be excluded.[148]

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[147] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 1, s.c. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.627a).
[148] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 1, fm. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.627a).

Bonaventure carefully works his way around this issue by saying that evil things are neither in God nor have an idea in him, but he can still be said to know them through his idea of good things, of which evil things are a privation.[149] To justify this claim, Bonaventure refers to Aristotle's claim in the *De anima* that "the straight is the judge of itself, and of the curved."[150] A curved line is known because it is not-straight. Knowledge of the fullness is sufficient for knowledge of what falls short of that fullness. Thus, supreme truth, light and act is the *ratio cognoscendi* of itself, and the oblique, dark, and privation. By reason of his own goodness, and knowledge of good things, God knows all the ways in which things can deflect from goodness. His knowledge would therefore extend not only to the things that suffer evil in the sense of being subject to limited perfection, but also to those actions which actively work against the good.[151]

Since these evil things are known by means of privation, they are not in God. If they were in God, then he would cooperate with them in some genus of causality (especially formal and exemplary causality), but no such cooperation is possible precisely because evil things are privations. An exemplar is so called because it has some manner of assimilation, and as we noted before, even the least amount of assimilation suffices. Privation, however, by definition is opposed to assimilation, and is not assimilable. As a result, an evil thing can be said to be in God only by means of something that will assimilate, and it does so by means of the good. So, God knows and exemplifies good things because of their assimilation, and evil things are known only by a lack of assimilation of the good, and cannot be exemplified for the same reason.[152]

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[149] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 1, conclusio (ed. Quaracchi, I.627b).

[150] Aristotle, *De anima* I, c. 5, 411a5–7 (ed. Leonine, 45.4.58b): "Recto enim et ipsum et obliquam cognoscimus; iudex enim utrorum que canon est [recto], obliquam autem neque sui ipsius neque recti."

[151] See Augustine, *Conf.*, VII, cc. 11-12 (PL 32.742–43).

[152] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.628a), esp.: "malum ratione malitiae dicit solum *privationem*, exemplar autem, secundum quod huiusmodi, dicit *assimilationem*. Quoniam igitur privation, secundum quod huiusmodi, nulli est assimilabilis, hinc est, quod nec malum nec falsitas habet ideam in Deo; suum autem oppositum est assimilabile." Emphasis original.

c. Imperfect Things: Matter, Passion, Multitude

If evil does not have an idea in God because it is a privation, what should we say about other things that bespeak some manner of privation? Matter, passion, and multitude are opposed to form, act, and unity. What prevents us from saying that they God can know an imperfect opposite from a perfect one? We should note here that Bonaventure is using the word "*imperfectum*" to mean "incomplete." Each of the things in question have but an incomplete existence on their own, and require something else to bring them to completion. Potency looks for act to complete it. So the sense of the question is whether these things that enjoy a minimal existence (especially in the case of matter), have distinct ideas in God or whether they can be known from their perfect opposites.

Bonaventure's answer to the question of the idea of evil might lead us to think that he would say the same about things like matter, but denies this conclusion.[153] Unlike evil, which bespeaks a complete privation of goodness, imperfect things have some manner of being (*entitas*) and therefore some manner of truth. If they have some manner of truth, then they have some manner of assimilation to the first truth. And since even a minimal assimilation is sufficient for exemplarity, all imperfect things have an exemplar in God, and if an exemplar, then they are in God.[154]

Though we might expect to conclude that they have divine ideas in God immediately from the fact that they have an exemplar in God, Bonaventure adds an additional precision to the argument that allows his position in this case to be consistent with his denial of ideas of evil. Imperfect things can be considered by reason of what they are under, or by reason of their imperfection. The latter bespeaks a privation. Privation does not assimilate. Therefore, imperfect things cannot be said to have divine ideas by reason of their imperfection. The former bespeaks some essence, and so some degree of assimilation. Therefore, imperfect things have divine ideas by

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[153] Bonaventure (or perhaps one of his students) saw the possibility of this parity of reason, and so it became the first objection (*In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 2 [ed. Quaracchi, I.628ab]).

[154] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.629b).

reason of what they are under. The fact that they are imperfect is no impediment because of the sublimity of the way that God knows. Just as non-living things have living ideas in God, so too do imperfect things have perfect ideas in God.[155]

This answer seems quite satisfying. Certain things are incomplete in themselves, but they are not complete privations, so they are in God insofar as they are something, not insofar as they are nothing. Such a response coheres nicely with a picture of created being on a spectrum. As Augustine says in the *Confessions*, all creatures have a mixture of being and non-being, and some beings have a greater share of being than others and so are rightly called more perfect.[156] All living things have a greater share in being precisely because they are alive. Non-living things, because they have a lesser share in being, are closer to non-being. Since non-being is a privation of being, we can say that non-living things are more privations than living things. Despite the difference in privation, all things both living and non-living equally have perfect ideas in God because the ideas are in God based on the things having being, not the extent to which it is deprived of being. So the answer that Bonaventure proposes here has the advantage of accounting both for the fact that matter and the like have ideas in God, and for the fact that angels, men, irrational animals, plants, etc. all have ideas in God despite having different proportions of being and non-being in their natures.

4. Recapitulation and Conclusion

A divine idea is a likeness of the thing cognized that serves as the *ratio cognoscendi* for divine knowledge. It also serves as the exemplary form for any creature that God wills to create. Thus, in Bonaventure's theory, the divine ideas play two hierarchically ordered roles. First and foremost, they play a cognitive role, and are the means which God knows. It is only secondarily that they play a causal role, and are the patterns according to which God creates. This hierarchy is evident from the

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[155] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.629b), esp.: "Si autem ratione eius quod *subset*, sicut material dicitur quid imperfectum, et material aliquam essentiam dicit, sic habet ideam, sed non imperfectum sed perfectam."

[156] Augustine, *Conf.*, VII, cc. 11-12 (PL 32.742–43).

purely cognitive definition that he gives to the divine ideas, and the fact that he explains the divine ideas with almost no reference to their exemplary role in *In I Sent.*, d. 35.

The reason for employing such a hierarchy is simple: God does not have to create anything. The divine ideas necessarily flow from the divine truth because it is supremely expressive. Yet, it is only because the divine will elects to create that any of these ideas are made. So there is a sort of natural priority to the cognitive role of the divine ideas. God has to know all that he can make, but does not have to make all he knows. Since the former case is the cognitive role of the divine ideas and the latter case is the causal role of the divine ideas, the cognitive role of the divine ideas is logically prior to their causal role.

The divine ideas are likenesses, but not any sort of likeness, they are the sort of likeness in which one thing is like another and the likeness is itself like. Such a likeness has two poles: the exemplative and the imitative. The two are related to each other as expressing and expressive such that the exemplative likeness is the total cause of the imitative likeness. The imitative likeness is what it is because the exemplative likeness has expressed that it should be such, and so is a sort of knowledge causing a thing, rather than knowledge caused by a thing. This sort of knowledge is perfect and without composition because it gives evidence of knower's self-sufficiency. Because God is pure act and supreme truth he does not need anything external to give him knowledge. He himself is sufficient for knowing all things, and knows them by expressing what they should be. And because the things expressed have God as their source, they all point back to him as signs of his truth. They are all assimilated to God because he determined what they are.

Bonaventure consistently couches the discussion of divine ideas in terms of the supreme expressivity of the divine truth, and it is clear that he prefers to speak in terms of divine truth because the divine ideas are first and foremost cognitive likenesses. An act of divine knowing brings about the ideas. The divine truth is the most perfect light that shines forth. We should not ignore,

however, that he also frequently refers to God as *actus purus* when discussing the origin of the ideas, and their perfection in knowledge. *Actus purus* is a phrase associated with the divine essence, and in at least one place, Bonaventure does not shy away from speaking of the divine essence as the source of the ideas: "the very essence, insofar as it is a *ratio cognoscendi*, holds the notion (*ratio*) of a likeness."[157] We must not allow his emphasis on divine truth lead us to think that he leaves the divine essence behind. Divine truth is the divine essence as known. The divine essence is *actus purus* and so *actus purus* is the radiating and expressive light which exemplifies all possible creatures. The divine essence exemplifies all possible creatures precisely because it is perfectly known by the divine intellect and is its *ratio cognoscendi*. It would make sense for Bonaventure to emphasize the role of divine truth in his account because of the emphasis he places on the cognitive role of the divine ideas, but we must not pretend that the divine truth is anything other than the divine essence as known.

Since the divine ideas are all the result of divine truth, we can speak of them in two ways: *secundum rem* and *secundum rationem*. The divine ideas *secundum rem* are identical to divine truth because divine truth is the one and only *ratio cognoscendi* of God. Strictly speaking, there is only one idea through which many things are known. Considered *secundum rationem*, we speak of many divine ideas which are multiplied according to the things known. To know man is not to know horse and so they require rationally distinct ideas. Divine truth is that which (*id quod*) all the divine ideas signify, but that to which (*id ad quod*) they connote are the things known. Thus, the divine ideas are one insofar as they signify the one divine truth, but many insofar as they connote a variety of things that God knows by means of them.

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[157] *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, ad 11 (ed. Quaracchi, V.10b): "ipsa essentia, in quantum est ratio cognoscendi, tenet rationem similitudinis."

Knowing that the divine ideas can be called many according to the things they connote, Bonaventure asks whether they are numerically infinite. If we consider only God's cognition of approbation or cognition of vision by which he knows the good things that he creates, and all the things, good or evil that happen in creation, then God only knows a finite number of things, and so would only have a finite number of ideas. But if we consider his cognition of intelligence, then God knows an infinite number of things, and so has an infinite number of ideas. By his cognition of intelligence, God knows not only the things that were, are or will be, but also all possible beings. Since there is no limit to the number of things that shine forth in the supreme expression of divine truth, the number of possibles is infinite, and so the divine ideas are infinite *secundum rationem*.

The divine ideas enjoy the existence of being thought by God. They are all identical with God, and so can be said to be living because they are one and identical with the divine truth *secundum rem*. They have no independent existence apart from God. They can be nobler and truer than the things they exemplify because they are one with God, and nothing is nobler or truer than God.

To all these points that are focused on the status of the divine ideas, Bonaventure adds that there is a unique idea for each and every thing that God can know. The consequence of this is that God has an idea for every possible individual, as well as for every species and genus. Every individual has a unique relation to God, and since the ideas are distinguished *secundum rationem* according to the real relations that the things known by the idea bear to God, each individual requires a rationally unique idea. A parity of reason reveals that this principle gives a very complete division of divine ideas. An individual and its species bear different relations to God because they are not identical, since knowledge of the species is not the same as knowledge of the individual, and knowledge of the individual includes the determination of certain things that are left undetermined by the species itself. For example, from the knowledge of Peter alone, we could not know that man

is either male or female. As a result, different ideas are required for God to have distinct knowledge of all possible objects of knowledge.

The infinity of divine ideas that extends to all individuals, species, and genera extends also to imperfect beings such as matter, but not to the complete privation of evil. The divine ideas are likenesses, and in order for something to be like, there has to be some degree of similarity and assimilation. If there is a privation, it is deprived precisely for a lack of similarity and assimilation. So if something is an absolute privation, then it cannot have any likeness in God, and therefore no idea. Evil is a privation, and so it has no idea in God. God is still able to know it, however, because as the straight is the judge of the straight and the bent, so too is the good the judge of the good and evil. Imperfect things have a great deal of privation in them, but they are not complete privations, and so they have ideas in God insofar as they are not privations.

Examining Bonaventure's theory of ideas gives us a good indication of the major questions that need to be asked about the divine ideas, and by these questions allow us to foresee some of the major divisions that will occur. Bonaventure emphasizes the cognitive role of the divine ideas over the causal/productive role they play, that they are likenesses and not the things themselves, are one by signification and many by connotation, are numerically infinite and of all possible individuals, species, and genera, and have no existence independent of their being thought by God. By staking these positions, and staking them against other clearly delineated positions, Bonaventure has set the terms of the argument, and as we will see future discussion for the most part does not depart from these limits.

B. ST. THOMAS AQUINAS (1224/1225–1274)

1. The Place of Ideas in Thomas Aquinas's Thought

In the last section, I explained how Bonaventure places exemplarism, and therefore an investigation into the divine ideas, at the heart of the metaphysician's task. The metaphysician is most truly himself when he investigates the exemplary origin of things. Exemplarism also plays a central role in Aquinas' metaphysics, but even a cursory foray into Aquinas' metaphysics reveals a complex and multifaceted investigation such that exemplarism must share the stage with a variety of other metaphysical areas of investigation.[1] As Wippel points out, a host of metaphysical investigations are arguably primary in Thomas's metaphysics: the real distinction between essence and existence, act and potency, the analogy of being, the primacy of the *actus essendi*, and the transcendentals.[2] It would be right to add exemplarism and the divine ideas to this list, but their importance should not be exaggerated. Exemplarism and the divine ideas are important for understanding Aquinas' metaphysics, but they are not *the* hermeneutical key to unlocking his metaphysical thought.[3] It would be a grave lacuna to present an account of Aquinas' thought that did not include exemplarism, but exemplarism does not maintain the central primacy in metaphysics that it does in Bonaventure's thought.

As is often the case with topics in medieval philosophy and theology, Thomas's treatment of the divine ideas has received more attention in the secondary literature than that of his contemporaries. This abundance of investigation affords a rich treasury of discussion on which to draw. The place of the divine ideas in Thomas's thought has surfaced on several occasions in secondary literature. A number of scholars have questioned whether Aquinas really thinks a doctrine

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[1] Étienne Gilson, *Le Thomisme* (Paris: Vrin, 1965), 86: "l'exemplarisme est un des éléments essentiels du thomisme."

[2] Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 200), 94.

[3] As Doolan cautions, "my intention is not to present this doctrine as if it were *the* key to understanding his metaphysical thought; for, simply put, it is not" (*Aquinas on the Divine Ideas*, xiv).

of divine ideas is necessary, or whether he includes an account of them as a way to nod to the venerable tradition of Augustine while tacitly undermining the very need for them.[4] Discussions of divine ideas always follow discussions of divine knowledge, and so, it is argued, the ideas are an unnecessary addition. Thomas can adequately explain that God knows all things by means of his essence, and so it is superfluous to speak of the divine ideas. A less than genuine engagement with the divine ideas would also explain why the divine ideas do not appear in every *ex professo* treatment of divine knowledge, especially the *Summa Contra Gentiles*. In addition to being useless, it is argued, the theory might in fact be dangerous because the divine ideas might be contrary to the divine simplicity.

A number of scholars have resisted these claims against the divine ideas, most notably, Geiger, Wippel, Boland, and Doolan.[5] If the teaching is useless or dangerous, "why did Saint Thomas not see this?"[6] Aquinas is a very careful reasoner who is not afraid to argue against Augustine's theories, so why would he leave the divine ideas in his system simply because *Augustinus dixit*?[7] Moreover, in the prologue of the *Summa theologiae* Thomas states that his purpose is to instruct beginners, and so replace Peter Lombard's *Sententiae* as the novice's textbook. One of the reasons that students struggle with the *Sententiae* is "because of the useless multiplication of questions, articles, and arguments."[8] Since keeping unnecessary questions is contrary to the stated goal of the

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[4] See, *inter alia*, Étienne Gilson, *Introduction à la philosophie chrétienne* (Paris: Vrin, 1960), 170-83; Gilson, *Le Thomisme*, 146-48; Étienne Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1955), 71-72; A.D. Sertillanges, *Somme théologique*, *Dieu*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1933): 403-05; James Ross, "Aquinas's Exemplarism; Aquinas's Voluntarism," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 65 (1991): 171-98; Armand Maurer, "James Ross on the Divine Ideas: A Reply," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 65 (1991): 213-20; Ross, "Response to Maurer and Dewan," *American Catholic Philosohical Quarterly* 65 (1991): 235-243.

[5] See esp., Louis Geiger, "Les idées divines dans l'oeuvre de S. Thomas," in *St. Thomas Aquinas, 1274–1974, Commemorative Studies*, volume 1, edited by Armand Maurer (Toronto: 1974), 175-209, and Boland 7.

[6] Boland, 7.

[7] One of the preeminent examples of Aquinas bucking the Augustinian tradition is divine illumination. See *De veritate*, q. I, aa. 1-5, and Armand Maurer, "St. Thomas and Eternal Truths," *Medieval Studies* 32 (1970): 43-58.

[8] *ST*, prologus (ed. Leonine, 4.5ab): "Consideravimus namque huius doctrinae notivios, in his quae a diversis conscripta sunt, plurimum impediri: partim quidem propter multiplicationem inutilium quaestionum, articulorum et argumentorum . . . . Haec igitur et alia huiusmodi evitare studentes, tentabimus, cum confidentia divini auxilii, ea quae ad sacram doctrinam pertinet, breviter ac dilucide prosequi . . ."

Summa theologiae, why would Thomas retain a question on the divine ideas if they were not necessary?[9] Given these two good defenses, I will not let our discussion be overcome by this controversy, and I will only refer to the various positions when doing so will help clarify Aquinas's position. The divine ideas do play an important role Thomas's thought that cannot be overlooked.

2. The Status of the Divine Ideas

In order to investigate Aquinas's understanding of the divine ideas adequately, I will trace the development of each aspect of the divine ideas through his works first and then give a systematic appraisal. Due to the great number of occurrences of references to the divine ideas in Thomas's works, only the most important occurrences will be treated individually. The remaining occurrences will appear in the footnotes of my treatment of the main occurrences. The historical development of Thomas's work is important to see because his position does not always remain constant. Sometimes this inconstancy can be attributed to the varying needs of the genre in which the account appears or a mere difference in emphasis, as was the case for Bonaventure. Other times Aquinas simply changes his mind, and it is important to note these changes. Changes are important to note both because doing so is the only way to get a complete picture of Thomas's thought, and also because of the great influence that Thomas had on those who follow him. Finally, as was noted above, Aquinas consistently treats the question of divine ideas immediately after the question of God's knowledge. Since this investigation is focusing on the question of divine ideas, I will focus on questions that deal with the divine ideas and refer back to the questions of God's knowledge only when doing so will help shed light on the divine ideas.

a. What is an Idea?

In order to investigate Aquinas' doctrine of divine ideas adequately, it is necessary to consider separately two questions that Bonaventure treated together: What is an Idea? and Does

[9] See Geiger, "Les idées divines," 181-182; Boland, 213–14.

God have Ideas? These questions could be treated together in Bonaventure because he treats the questions together, and because he only treats them in two texts. In Thomas's case, there are more texts to consider for each question, and the distinction between the two questions features more prominently. So I will examine the two questions separately, investigating the ratio of the word "idea" first, and the question of whether God has any ideas second.

i. *In I Sententias* (1252–1256).[10] Thomas's first discussion of the divine ideas appears in his commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sententiae*. In his division of distinction 36, Thomas declares that ideas are that "through which God cognizes things."[11] This division of the Master's text gives us the initial impression that ideas play some sort of cognitive role, and specifically the role of making the knower know things. The ideas are that through which things are known.

Aquinas takes up the question of ideas directly in *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 1. Thomas's solution to the question begins with a distinction borrowed from Averroes. Just as artificial forms have a twofold being (*esse*): one in act in matter, another in active potency in the mind of the artificer, so too do material forms have a twofold *esse*, one in act in the things, another in active potency in the celestial movers (especially the first mover whom we call God).[12] All things are thus in the mind of God as operative forms which we call "ideas." Moreover, the Latin word *idea* comes from the Greek word *eidos* which means "form."[13] Since the form of the thing existing in the intellect is equally the principle of practical knowledge and speculative knowledge, God knows things both practically and speculatively through the ideas. Through the divine ideas God cognizes not only things according as they actually proceed from him, but also as they subsist in their proper natures.

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[10] Unless otherwise noted, dating for Aquinas' texts follows the dating found in Jean-Pierre Torrell's *Initiation à saint Thomas d'Aquin,* vol. 1, *Sa personne et son œuvre*, Nouvelle édition profondément remaniée (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2015).

[11] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, diviso textus (ed Mandonnet, I.829): "Hic est duplex quaestio: prima de his quae a Deo cognoscuntur; secunda de ideis, per quas res cognoscit."

[12] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 18 (ed. Iunctas, VIII.142vb–43vb).

[13] Jacqueline Hamesse, "'Idea' chez les auteurs philosophiques du 12e et du 13e siècle," in *Idea: Vio Colloquio Internazionale del Lessico Intellettuale Europeo (5–7 janvier 1989)* (Rome: 1990), 99–135.

So while the common use of the word *idea* is for a form that is the principle of practical cognition, it is also the principle of speculative cognition. In the former sense it is called an exemplar, and in the latter it is called contemplating form.[14]

From this passage, it is clear that Thomas sees ideas as serving a twofold role. The first role is cognitive, as he hinted in the *divisio textus* of distinction 36. Ideas are the means by which things are known speculatively. This role is emphasized by the fact that the ideas are *contemplating* forms. The second role is ontological, or causal. Ideas are the means by which things proceed from the knower. Thus, ideas are practical and are called "exemplars."

In *In I Sent.*, d. 38, a. 1, q. 1, Thomas adds additional insight into exemplarism through the example of the artist. The knowledge (*scientia*) of the artist shows the end, his will intends that end, and his will commands the act through which the work will be brought about in conformity with a preconceived form (*forma concepta*). Both intellect and will are required for the causality of the artist. Similarly, it is only because God knows, loves, and wills his essence as the principle of the things of which he wishes to be principle that things flow from him.[15]

To sum up Aquinas's account in the *In I Sent.*, the ideas are forms in the mind of God, and it is from these forms that God both knows all things and produces all things. God's knowledge is not limited to what he produces, however. Though the common parlance restricts ideas to the practical, in reality ideas afford God both speculative cognition as contemplating forms and practical cognition as exemplars. Aquinas's account here is unfortunately sparse. He says that ideas are forms with an active potency to be made, but gives us little insight into the nature of the form itself. What

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[14] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.839–40). Cf. Alexander of Hales, *Summa theologica*, I (ed. Quaracchi, I.261b).

[15] *In I Sent.*, d. 38, q. 1, a. 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.899), esp: "Unde sicut est causalitatis artificis per artem suam, ita consideranda est causalitatis divinae scientiae. Est ergo processus in production artificiati. Primo scientia artificis ostendit finem; secundo voluntas eius intendit finem illum; tertio voluntas imperat actum per quam educator opus, circa quod opus scientia artificis point formam conceptam. . . . inquantum Deus cognoscit essentiam suam, et amat vel volute eam, secundum quod est principium rerum, quarum volute se esse principium, fluunt res ab eo."

allows the idea to be the principle of both practical and speculative cognition? Since he began his response with a comparison to an artificer and his artifact, and since he says that the common way of speaking would have ideas be only for practical cognition, it would seem that they are principally about producible things. How, then, would they be related equally to practical and speculative cognition? Aquinas does not yet offer an answer to these questions, but he will give such an answer in later texts.

ii. *De veritate* (1256–1259). Thomas offers his most thorough account of the divine ideas when he returns to the issue as a master in the *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*. As he did in *In I Sent.*, Aquinas offers arguments for God's knowledge (q. 2) before the argument for divine ideas (q. 3). In q. 2 Aquinas argues to divine cognition of things other than himself without any explicit reference to the divine ideas. When he takes up the question of divine ideas in *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 he begins his answer by quoting Augustine's explanation of the word *idea*: "we can translate the word 'ideas' into Latin with either 'forms' or 'species'."[16] But the form of something is threefold. In one way, it is that by which (*a qua*) a thing is formed, as when the formation of an effect proceeds from the form of an agent. But such an understanding of form is not what is meant by "idea." In a second way, it is a form of something according to which (*secundum quam*) something is formed, as the soul is the form of man and the figure of a statue is the form of bronze.[17] Such a form is part of the composite, and so is truly called the form of the thing. But such an understanding of form is also not what is meant by "idea" because the name "idea" seems to signify a form separated from the thing of which it is an idea. Thus, in a third way, it is a form toward which (*ad quam*) something is formed, and this is an exemplar form toward whose imitation something is formed. It is this third way of understanding

[16] Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46, n. 2 (PL 40.30): "ideas latine possumus vel formas vel species dicere ut verbum ex verbo transferre videamur."

[17] For more on what he elsewhere calls *forma partis,* see *In VII Met.*, lect. 9, n. 1469 (ed. Spiazzi, 432); *De ente*, c. 2 (ed Leon., 43.373:274-291).

the word "form" that popularly coheres with "idea" because an idea is a form that something imitates.[18]

There are two ways that a thing could imitate another, however. Either it can imitate from the intention of an agent or it can imitate accidentally and by chance. The first occurs when a painter paints a picture to depict the likeness of something. The second occurs when the painter paints a picture that happens to look like someone or something. The accidental imitation cannot be what is meant by an "idea." When the imitation occurs by chance the thing cannot be said to have been formed toward that form because the "toward" implies an order toward an end. Since an exemplar form, or an idea, is "that toward which something is formed," an exemplar form or an idea must be something imitated essentially (*per se*) and not accidentally.[19]

Yet another distinction is required because there are two ways in which an agent can make a thing for an end (*propter finem*), i.e., two ways in which an agent can intend *per se*. In one way, the agent determines the end for himself, as happens in every agent who acts through intellect. In another way, the agent can be determined to an end by another principle agent, as when the flight of an arrow is determined to an end, but that end is determined by the archer. The second way requires the first way, as is evident in the case of natural agents. Every natural agent acts toward the end that nature gives to it. The nature has been determined to such an end by an intelligent agent, however, and not by the natural agent itself. Given the dependence of the natural determination to an end upon the intellectual determination to an end, Thomas argues that an idea must be intellectual. When man generates man we do not say that the child was formed after the idea of the parents, but we do say that the artifact is formed after the idea or exemplar form existing in the mind of the

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[18] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leon., 22.1.99:163-182), esp: "Tertio modo dicitur forma alicuius ad quam aliquid formatur, et haec est forma exemplaris ad cuius imitationem aliquid consituitur, et in hac significatione consuetum est nomen ideae accipi ut idem sit idea quod forma quam aliquid imitator."

[19] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leon., 22.1.99:183-196), esp: "Unde cum forma exemplaris vel idea sit ad quam formatur aliquid, oportet quod formam exemplarem vel ideam aliquid imitetur per se et non per accidens."

artist. With all of these distinctions in place, Aquinas is able to define ideas: "an idea is a form which something imitates from the intention of an agent who predetermines the end for himself."[20]

I will examine this definition in more detail below, but the emphasis on exemplarity is worth noting. In *In I Sent.*, Thomas argues for the existence of the ideas with an emphasis on their cognitive role. The ideas are forms that are equally practical and speculative. He reserves the discussion of will and exemplarity for a later article. Here in the *De veritate*, however, the questions of knowledge and will are intimately bound.[21]

Aquinas gives a window into the relationship between knowledge and will in *De veritate* q. 3, a. 3. Following Aristotle, he distinguishes speculative and practical knowledge by their ends. The end of speculative knowledge is the truth whereas the end of practical knowledge is operation. Both of these ends can be further distinguished. Practical knowledge can be ordered to an act in the sense that it is actually being ordered and made, as when an artificer proposes to induce a preconceived form into matter. Such cognition is actually practical (*actu practica*), and the preconceived form is a form of cognition. In another sense, it is known that the cognition could be ordered to action, but without the intention to bring it about. This type of practical cognition occurs when the artificer knows that he could bring about some artifact without actually intending to make it. This type of practical cognition is called habitually or virtually practical knowledge (*habitu vel virtute practica*).[22]

Purely speculative knowledge, which is in no way ordered to act, is also twofold. In one way, when the knower is not naturally suited to producing the objects of speculative knowledge through his knowledge. In another way, when the knower could bring about things known by his knowledge,

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[20] *De veritate* q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.99:196-100:223), esp: "Haec ergo videtur esse ratio ideae, quod idea sit forma quam aliquid imitatur ex intentione agentis qui praedeterminat sibi finem." Thomas offers a similar definition of ideas in *Quodlibet* IV, q. 1, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 25.319:30-60), esp.: "Nominat enim ydea formam exemplarem . . . . Hoc enim significat nomen ydee, ut sit scilicet quedam forma intellecta ab agente, ad cuius similitudinem exterius opus producere intendit." *Quodlibet* IV was disputed in 1271.

[21] Thomas offers a similar account in *Quodlibet* VIII, q. 1, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 25.1.54:42-59). *Quodlibet* VIII was disputed in 1257.

[22] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.107:85-100).

but is not considering them insofar as they are operable. Thomas' example for the latter type of speculative knowledge is things that are separable intellectually, but not in *esse*. Thus, the artificer can consider the properties (*passiones*), genus, and differentiae of a house separately, even though they are never found separately. The artificer would have to consider all of them together to have actually practical or habitually practical knowledge of the house. His separate consideration of the aspects of the house is therefore speculative.[23]

Having arrived at this fourfold division of cognition, Aquinas declares that God has all four, and he considers which one is proper to ideas. As Augustine says, properly speaking an idea is a form, and so only applies to cognition of things according as they can be formed. Hence, ideas are properly speaking either actually practical or virtually practical.[24] If we consider the idea itself, however, then the term is understood more broadly as the notion (*ratio*) or likeness (*similitudo*) of a thing. Ideas thus extend to purely speculative cognition as well because "*ratio*" and "*similitudo*" apply equally to speculative and practical cognition.

In his reply to the third objection, Aquinas further specifies that ideas in the proper sense of the word are exemplar forms. The word "exemplar" signifies the relationship of a cause. Since that relationship can pertains both to the actually practical cognition of things produced outside the knower and to the virtually practical cognition of things producible by the knower. An exemplar is that according to whose imitation things are made, and the same is true of ideas. Properly speaking, there is a perfect overlap between ideas and exemplars. All ideas are exemplars, and vice versa.

To sum up the treatment from the *De veritate*, Aquinas argues both on the basis of teleology and on the basis of the similitude of an effect to its cause that God must have knowledge of things

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[23] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.107:101-121), esp.: "quando ergo consideratur res per intellectum operabilis distinguendo ab invicem ea quae secundum esse distingui non possunt, non est practica cognitio nec actu nec habitu sed speculativa tantum."

[24] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.108:164-168): "Si ergo loquamur de idea secundum propriam noimnis rationem, sic non extendit nisi ad illam scientiam secundum quam aliquid formari potest, and haec est cognition actu practica, vel virtute tantum quae etiam quodam modo speculativa est."

other than himself, and that his knowledge is through ideas. The definition of divine ideas that Thomas offers, which I will treat more in the summary below, includes both of these arguments. An idea is a form in the mind of an agent that includes a predetermination of the effect's end, and it is a form that the effect imitates. The introduction of imitation should be well noted because it will begin to play a more prominent role in Thomas's theory and how it drives the discussion of ideas toward practical cognition. Ideas are, properly speaking, exemplars to whose imitation things are made or could be made. The divine ideas are primarily practical, but can be understood more broadly to include any likeness or notion that God has. Since God has no knowledge that is not at least a likeness or notion, broadly speaking, everything that God knows is an idea.

iii. *In De divinis nominibus* (1266–1268).[25] Having seen the close relationship between ideas in the strict sense, and exemplars, it is worth noting briefly the discussion of divine exemplarity found in Aquinas's commentary of Pseudo-Dionysius' *De divinis nominibus*. As Doolan notes, this work "marks a turning point in his treatment of exemplarism."[26] Beginning with this text, Thomas places greater emphasis on the productive role of exemplars. This shift in emphasis has a great impact on his thinking about the divine ideas.

Pseudo-Dionysius's text gives Thomas the occasion to discuss God as the cause of all beings. In chapter V, lect. 3 of his commentary, Thomas argues that God cognizes whatever virtually exists in him by understanding his unity and power. Thus, he can know many diverse things, all of which he cognizes as producible. Insofar as God knows them to be producible the understanding of these things are called notions (*rationes*). But not all *rationes* can be called exemplars because "an exemplar is that to whose imitation some other thing is made, but God does not will to produce in

[25] Although the dating of this commentary was uncertain for many years, Torrell is now confident that "Les derniers travaux de R.-A. Gauthier permettent de dissiper les doutes et de la situer durant le séjour à Rome après mars 1266" (Torrell, 460).

[26] Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 13.

nature everything that he knows himself able to produce."[27] God knows more than he creates, so only those *rationes* that God wills to produce are called exemplars. All exemplars are *rationes*, but not all *rationes* are exemplars.

Articulated thus, exemplars are only productive, and so only practical. A sharper distinction between the speculative and the practical is drawn here. Employing the fourfold division of the *De veritate*, exemplars are only actually practical. Only when the divine will actually wills that a creature be does a *ratio* become an exemplar. Exemplars are willed *rationes*, and so it is not surprising to see Thomas follow Dionysius in using the term "*voluntates*" as a synonym for "exemplar."[28] This stricter division between *ratio* and exemplar is meant to safeguard the divine freedom in creating. It is more perfect for God to know more than he makes. He is not limited in his power to create by his knowledge. He could have created more than he did, and the emphasis on exemplars as actually practical and actually willed serves to emphasize the divine perfection.

iv. *Summa theologiae* (1266–1268). The next discussion of divine ideas occurs in the *prima pars* of the *Summa theologiae*. As noted in the beginning of this section on Aquinas, the *Summa theologiae* was written for beginning theology students who were having difficulty learning from his lectures on the *Sententiae*. The order of Peter Lombard's text and the needless multiplication of questions made it difficult for them to grasp the most important points and see their connections. The *Summa theologiae* proposes to fix these problems by raising only the important questions in the right order.[29] The

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[27] *In De div. nom.* V, lect. 3, n. 665 (ed. Marietti, 249): Non autem omnes huiusmodi rationes exemplaria dici possunt: exemplar enim est ad cuius imitationem fit aliud; non autem omnia quae scit Deus ex ipso posse prodire, vult in rerum natura producere."

[28] *In De div. nom.* V, lect. 3, n. 666 (ed. Marietti, 249): Hoc est ergo quod dicit, quod *exemplaria dicimus esse* non res aliquas extra Deum, sed in ipso intellectu divino quasdam existentium *rationes* intellectas, quae sunt substantiarum factivae, et praeexistunt in Deo *singulariter*, idest unite et non secundum aliquam diversitatem; et huiusmodi rationes sacra Scriptura *vocat praediffinitiones* sive praedestinationes, secundum illud Rom. 8: *quos praedestinavit hos et vocavit* et vocat etiam eas, *divinas et bonas voluntates*, secundum illud Psalm. 110: *magna opera domini, exquisita in omnes voluntates eius*. Quae quidem praediffinitiones et voluntates sunt distinctivae entium et effectivae ipsorum, quia et *secundum* huiusmodi *rationes*, supersubstantialis Dei *essentia* praedeterminavit *et omnia produxit*." Emphasis original.

[29] *ST*, prologus (ed. Leonine, IV.5), esp.: ". . . tentabimus, cum confidentia divini auxilii, ea quae ad sacram doctrinam pertinent, brevieter ac dilucide prosequi, secundum quod materia patietur."

explicit treatment of divine ideas is a clear sign that the question of the divine ideas is not superfluous after the discussion of divine knowledge. There are four articles that are important for the question of what an idea is in the *Summa theologiae*: q. 15, aa. 1 and 3, q.14, a. 16, and q. 44, a. 3.

Summa theologiae I, q. 15, a. 1 addresses the question of whether there are ideas. After noting that it is necessary to posit ideas in the divine mind, Aquinas says that the word *idea* is translated into Latin as *forma*. Because ideas are forms, the forms of thing are understood through ideas that exist outside of (*praeter*) the things. A form existing outside of a thing can be understood in two ways: either as the exemplar of the thing, or as the principle of cognizing it. Both of these roles make it necessary to posit ideas.[30]

As proof of this necessity, Aquinas argues that all things that are not generated by chance require a form which is the end of generation. But an agent does not act because of a form unless there is some likeness of the form in it. The form can be in the agent in one of two ways. Either the form preexists in the agent according to natural being (*esse naturale*), or according to intelligible being (*esse intelligibile*). The former is true when the agent acts by nature, as when man begets man or fire generates fire. The latter is true when the agent acts by understanding (*per intellectum*), as when the likeness of the house preexists in the mind of the builder. That likeness in the mind is called the idea because artificer intends to assimilate the house to the form which he conceived mentally. Since the world was not made by chance, but by God acting by understanding, God has to have forms in his mind according to whose likeness he makes the world. An idea is the mental form according to whose likenesses things are made. Therefore, God has ideas.[31]

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[30] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 4.199a), esp: "Forma autem alicuius rei praeter ipsam existens, ad duo esse potest: vel ut sit exemplar eius cuius dicitur forma; vel ut sit exemplar cuius dicitur forma; vel ut sit principium cognitionis ipsius, secundum quod formae cognoscibilium dicuntur in cognoscente."

[31] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 1 (ed. Leonine 4.199ab).

Thomas begins the article with the claim that both the cognitive and the productive (or ontological) consideration of ideas make it necessary to posit ideas, but as Wippel points out, "in the rest of art. 1 . . . Thomas bases his argumentation for divine ideas upon the need for divine exemplars, i.e., upon their ontological function."[32] The ontological role of the divine ideas comes to the forefront of the discussion to such an extent that the cognitive role is all but forgotten. Since the cognitive role of the divine ideas is signaled as necessary but left to the side, the question arises, are ideas just practical, or are they also speculative?

The answer to this question comes in article three of the same question, and q. 14, a. 16. In q. 15, a. 3 Thomas asks whether all the things that God cognizes are ideas. In the *sed contra*, he reminds the reader that Augustine says that ideas are notions (*rationes*) in the divine mind. God has a *ratio* for everything of which he has distinct cognition. God has distinct cognition of everything which he can cognize. Therefore, God has an idea for everything that he can cognize.[33]

Thomas's shift in vocabulary from ideas as forms to ideas as *rationes* should be noted. Having defined ideas in terms of form in q. 1, Aquinas emphasizes the ontological role played by the ideas. Having defined ideas in terms of *ratio* here, Aquinas emphasizes the cognitive role played by the ideas, and he does so without any reference to exemplarity. Regardless of whether anything is made in imitation of the thing distinctly cognized, it is an idea.

Aquinas begins the body of the article with the observation that Plato attributed both a cognitive role and an ontological role to the ideas as they are in the divine mind. Insofar as they play an ontological role, they are called "exemplars" and pertain to practical cognition. Insofar as they play a cognitive role, they are called *rationes* and pertain to speculative cognition. The exemplars are, properly speaking, those ideas according to which something will be created at some time.

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[32] Wippel, *Thomas Aquinas on the Divine Ideas* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1993), 33.
[33] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3, s.c. (ed. Leonine, IV.204a).

Exemplars are of the things that are actually created. God has speculative cognition of all the things that he does not create.[34]

In q. 14, a. 16, Thomas offers further precision to the division between God's speculative and practical knowledge. Things that the knower cannot bring about are purely speculative, and things that the knower does bring about are simply practical. God knows himself and evil but cannot cause them so his knowledge of them is speculative. God has practical knowledge of anything that he actually creates Between these two extremes are those things that the knower could bring about but does not. Of these things God has partially speculative knowledge and partially practical knowledge. When the builder examines the individual parts of the house that cannot exist without each other, or when he considers the house does but not order that knowledge to operation, then his knowledge is in this middle ground. In both cases, the builder considers something that he can make, but not insofar as he can make it. All things that God can make but in fact does not make fall into this middle category. The things that the divine will elects to make become known by simply practical knowledge, although the parts of those things (e.g., an animal's heart or brain) would still be known in a partially speculative and partially practical way.

So in the *Summa theologiae*, we find yet another way of looking at the division of speculative and practical knowledge as well as its application to God and his ideas. In *In I Sent.*, Thomas offers a binary division between speculative and practical. In the *De veritate*, he offers a fourfold division between speculative and practical knowledge. Here in the *Summa theologiae*, he presents a threefold division. For the most part, these three divisions cohere with each other well. Thomas consistently calls what is known by practical knowledge an "exemplar." He also insists that the term "idea" can

[34] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, IV.204ab), esp: "Secundum ergo quod exemplar est, secundum hoc se habet ad omnia quae a Deo fiunt secundum aliquod tempus. Secundum vero quod principium cognoscitivum est, se habet ad omnia quae cognoscitur a Deo, etiam si nullo tempore fiant; et ad omnia quae a Deo cognoscuntur secundum propriam rationem, et secundum quod cognoscuntur ab ipso per modum speculationis."

be used for all divine knowledge of things other than God, regardless of whether they are known speculative or practical. There are two important developments to note in Thomas's change of divisions. The first development is that Thomas begins to refer to a proper and improper (or strict and broad) sense of the term "idea" in the *De veritate*, which distinction is not present in *In I Sent.* The second development is that Thomas changes the scope of ideas in the sense of exemplar from the *De veritate* to the *Summa theologiae*. In the *De veritate*, virtually practical knowledge, which includes those things that God knows he could create but does not counts as an exemplar. In the *Summa theologiae*, only those things that are actually created are called "exemplars."[35] These two developments will have important ramifications for Thomas's account of the scope of divine ideas.

There is one last article to consider before drawing conclusions regarding the implications of the threefold division of speculative and practical knowledge for the divine ideas. In q. 44, a. 3, Thomas asks whether there is any exemplar cause other than God. Does God look to anything other than himself in order to make things? In the *sed contra* of the question, he declares that "an exemplar is the same as an idea."[36] Augustine says that ideas are principal forms contained in the divine mind. Therefore, the exemplars of things are also in the divine mind.

The body of the article offers evidence that Thomas thinks exemplars and ideas are identical. An exemplar is necessary for the production of a thing so that the effect will have a determinate form. There are three types of exemplar. First, an exemplar can be conceived interiorly by the mind, as when the artificer invents the thing he will make. Second, an exemplar can be intuited from outside, as when the painter paints a portrait based on the model before his eyes. Third, an exemplar can be natural as when man generates man. In the case of God, only the first type is possible because the divine wisdom has thought out (*excogitavit*) the entire order of the universe, which

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[35] See Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 11 for a helpful chart of Aquinas's divisions of speculative and practical knowledge

[36] *ST* I, q. 44, a. 3, s.c. (ed. Leonine, 4.460a): "Sed contra est quod exemplar est idem quod idea."

consists in the distinction of things. Thus, there are *rationes* of all things in the divine wisdom. Thomas had already called these *rationes* "ideas" in q. 15, a. 1 because they are the exemplar forms existing in the mind. The ideas can be multiplied according to a respect to the thing made by them, but they are not really other than the divine essence. Since they are in reality identical with the divine essence, they are not outside of God, and God is the first exemplar cause of all by his very essence.[37]

The treatment of exemplars in q. 44, a. 3 is instructive for two reasons. First, it reaffirms the relationship between ideas and exemplars. Second, it introduces a new type of exemplar. Before this text, there was a distinction between acting by intellect, and acting by nature. Here, acting by intellect is further distinguished according to the origin of the form by which the intelligent agent is acting. If the ultimate source of the exemplarity is external to the intellectual agent, then the external thing is the true exemplar. But if the artificer thinks up the form to be imitated himself, then it is that mental form, that idea that is the exemplar.

v. The Character of Exemplars. Drawing together the points that Thomas makes in the text considered above, the following conclusions can be reached. First, an exemplar is something in whose likeness another thing is made. This general description results in three types of exemplars.[38] All exemplars are either by intellect or by nature. Exemplars by nature have the form that they impose on another according to natural being (*esse naturale*). They *are* the type of thing that they are exemplifying in another. When a man generates a man, he does so because he is man according to *esse naturale*. In Bonaventure's terminology, the exemplar by nature has the form according to truth.[39] A natural exemplar is not truly an exemplar because it is not intellectual. It is truly a form toward

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[37] *ST* I, q. 44, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.460a).

[38] See *De veritate* q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.100:209-222), *ST* I, q. 15, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 4.199ab), and *ST* I, q. 44, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.460ab) for the following distinctions.

[39] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1, fm 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.600a).

which (*ad quem*) the thing is made, but because it is natural and not intellectual, it does not determine the end for itself. No parent determines the end of his child's humanity.

Exemplars by intellect can either originate outside of the knower, or within the knower's mind. An external exemplar is a true case of intellectual exemplarity because the agent does not have the form according to *esse naturale*, but according to intellectual being (*esse intellectuale*). But external exemplars are imperfect intellectual exemplars because the form in the mind of the artisan is not ultimately that according to which the thing is being made. The painter does determine the end for himself because he alone decides that he will put paint to canvas in order to imitate the landscape in front of him. Yet, the form in the mind of the artisan is not the ultimate standard for such a painting. The painting is judged according as it accurately depicts the landscape that the artist was trying to imitate. The exemplar is outside the mind of the painter. The external exemplarity of the painter cannot be the highest sort of exemplarity because it requires potency on the part of the painter. He must first receive the exemplar that he wishes to imitate on canvas by seeing it.[40]

The most perfect kind of exemplar, then, is the one that the artificer thinks up for himself. Being thought up by the artificer rather than being taken *ab extra* is not the only requirement for a perfect exemplar, however. The mode of cognition that the artificer has with respect to the exemplar is crucial. Thomas consistently avoids using the word "exemplar" for purely speculative knowledge. Objects that the knower cannot make are known by means of *rationes*. He also consistently uses the term "exemplar" for actually practical divine cognition. The things that God actually makes in time are exemplars. When it comes to the things that God could make but does not, Thomas' position is not quite as clear. This middle option is not even present in *In I Sent*. In the *De veritate*, Thomas is

[40] Thomas does not address the issue, but there appears to be a way for an exemplar by intellect to be partially external and partially thought up. Sometimes the artist interprets and adapts what he has received. Such adaptation occurs in the case of the musician who plays an *ad libitum* adaptation on the theme of whatever piece he is playing, and in the case of the architect who invents a new style of building, which style bears at least some influence of the buildings he has already experienced. In both cases, the artist is not merely reproducing what he has seen or heard, but the exemplar of what he is producing is not without external influence.

willing to let what is known by this mode of cognition qualify as ideas in the strict sense, implying that they are both exemplars as well. Because something *can* be made in imitation of them, and God's knowledge of them is ultimately ordered toward production, they are exemplars. The fact that things are not made in imitation of all of them does not matter.

Thomas changes his mind on the matter beginning with his *In De divinis nominibus*. From that text on the term "exemplar" is reserved for only those things known by actually practical cognition. Only those *rationes* to whose imitation things are actually made deserve to be called "exemplars." Exemplars are actually used and not just possibly used. This emphasis on the exemplars as actually exemplifying, and not just possibly exemplifying, explains the reduction of the divisions in speculative and practical knowledge from four in the *De veritate* to three in the *Summa theologiae*. The *De veritate* division draws out a distinction between examining a thing's inoperable parts and not considering it insofar as it is makeable. These two are distinct since the former is inoperable, whereas the latter is operable. The distinction is important for the sake of completeness, but if what it means to be an exemplar is to be actually practical, then the distinction is not relevant. It is sufficient to identify that the cognition is not actually practical to know that an idea is not an exemplar.

The development in Thomas's writings over time for associating the term "exemplar" with the actually practical has a parallel movement for the term "idea." The simplest explanation for this parallel movement is that for Thomas ideas and intellectual exemplars are the same.[41] In the strictest sense of the term, an idea is nothing more than an exemplar in the mind of the artisan. The word "idea" is not merely redundant with "exemplar," however, because it specifies that the exemplar is in the mind of the artisan. An exemplar external to an artisan cannot be an idea. It would be less

[41] *ST* I, q. 44, a. 3, s.c. (ed. Leonine, 4.460a): Sed contra est quod exemplar est idem quod idea."

perfect for ideas to come from without. Strictly speaking, the ideas have to be thought up by the artisan himself.

vi. Two Types of Divine Exemplarity. Our discussion of divine ideas would be incomplete if we did not explain more fully one final distinction in divine exemplarity. As we saw above, Thomas distinguishes three types of exemplar: (1) an exemplar mentally conceived as when the architect thinks up the plan for a building; (2) an external exemplar, as when a painter paints a portrait; and (3) a natural exemplar, as when man generates man. The divine ideas are exemplars in the first sense. God cannot have an exemplar in the second sense because, unlike Plato's demiurge, he does not look beyond his own essence for knowledge. We might think that God is not an exemplar in the third sense because God cannot generate another God in the way man generates man. Moreover, the use of the term "natural" can imply a sort of necessity that must not be applied to God's act of creation. Yet, Thomas says that God is an exemplar in the third sense.

The need for a twofold divine exemplarity becomes clear when we consider the fact that there are some names that express a mode of being which the name "being" (*ens*) does not express. The first mode expresses a special mode of *ens*, and the second mode expresses a general mode of being that follows upon every *ens*. The special modes of *ens* are the division of being into the univocal categories of genera and species. The general modes of *ens* are the transcendentals that all beings have in varying degrees inasmuch as they are beings.[42] Thomas's theory of exemplarity needs to account for the fact that *ens* admits of degrees, but genera and species do not. No turtle is more or less a turtle, but man has more being than turtles.

Thomas explains this twofold exemplarity in *In I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 2 when he considers whether all things are true by uncreated truth. An objector argues that there is a problem saying all

[42] *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 1 (ed. Leonine. 22.1.5:106–129). Cf. *In V Met.*, lect. 9, nn. 885–897 (ed. Spiazzi, 237–240); *In III Phys.*, lect. 5, nn. 15–16 (ed. Leonine, 2.114a–15a).

things are called true by uncreated truth in an exemplary way (*exemplariter*). Each exemplar form is in God because the essence is creative. So if it sufficed to say that all things are true by uncreated truth because uncreated truth exemplifies them, it would seem that we could also call all things colored because color is in God in an exemplary way. Just as all things would be true because they are in God in an exemplary way, so too they would be colored because color is in God in an exemplary way. But it is false that all things are colored, so it is likewise false that all things are true by created truth.[43]

Thomas answers this objection by arguing that God is an exemplar of things in two ways. In the first way he is exemplar by his intellect. The divine ideas in the divine intellect are the exemplars of all things that are from him, just as the intellect of the artificer is the exemplar of all the things he makes through the form of art. In the second way, he is exemplar of that which is in his nature. God is the exemplar of all goodness by reason of the goodness by which he is good. The case of truth is similar. God is the exemplar of both truth and color, but not in the same manner.[44]

God's twofold exemplarity explains why Thomas insists so strongly that the divine ideas are not the divine essence itself, but rather the divine essence *as understood* by God. The divine essence of itself is the natural exemplar of things, and all beings share in the transcendental perfections of being because of God's natural exemplarity. It is only insofar as God understands his essence to be imitable that the diverse essences of things are distinguished. Everything that God creates is a being, one, something, good, and true because it comes from God, but not everything is a color or a man because while all things imitates the divine essence, they imitate it in diverse ways.

This distinction between two types of exemplarity also explains why all of the things that God creates can imitate God deficiently yet be perfect in their species. Every created being

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[43] *In I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, obj. 4 (ed. Mandonnet, I.491).
[44] *In I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 4 (ed. Mandonnet, I.493).

participates in being from God's being, but falls short of the divine nature and so participates in an incomplete and limited way. This sort of exemplarity seems to be precisely what Thomas has in mind when he pens the Fourth Way in *Summa theologiae* I, q. 2, a. 3: "We find in things that something is more or less good, and true, and noble, etc."[45] Though we first associate more or less with quantity, and then, perhaps, quality, Thomas explicitly speaks of more or less with regard to the transcendentals. Everything that exists is a being, but *being* is said of creatures only analogously.[46] The more or less that undergirds the analogous predication requires something that possesses the perfection absolutely. The only reason we can judge that a dog has more being and more perfection than a rock is that we know what the absolute standard is. The influence of Augustine is evident here.[47] For all transcendental perfections, God's perfection is the rule by which the thing is judged, but the standard is not itself judged. God is perfect existence, and all other things are a mixture of existence and tendency toward nothingness.[48] The greater a thing shares in existence, the closer it is to God.

Yet, as Doolan argues, each thing is precisely the sort of thing that God intended it to be, that is, it possesses the perfection of its genus and species. As Thomas says, "each thing attains its perfect imitation of that which is in the divine intellect because such a creature is how God disposed it to be."[49] Socrates is a perfect imitation of his divine idea because God decreed that Socrates should exist as he is. God ordained that Socrates should have exactly the share in being that he has. Put another way, God ordained that Socrates should fall short of divine being in precisely the way

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[45] *ST* I, q. 2, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.32a): "Invenitur enim in rebus aliquid magis et minus bonum, et verum, et nobile, et sic de aliis huiusmodi."

[46] *In I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.492).

[47] Augustine, *De vera rel.*, c. 30, n. 56 and c. 39, n. 72 (PL 34.147 and 154). Cf. Augustine's description of evil as nothing in *Conf.*, VII.11–12 (PL 32.742–43)

[48] *ST* I, q. 104, a. 3, ad 1 (ed. Leonine, 5.468b): "non esse non habet causam per se: quia nihil potest esse causam nisi inquantum est ens; ens autem, per se loquendo, est causa essendi. Sic igitur Deus non potest esse causa tendendi in non esse; sed hoc habet creatura ex seipsa, inquantum est de nihilo."

[49] *In II Sent.*, d. 16, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2 (ed. Mandonnet, II, 2.400).

that he does.[50] Socrates' existence as a man has less being and goodness than does the existence of Michael the Archangel, and more being and goodness than Spike the dog, but all three are perfect in their existence because all perfectly exemplify the respective divine ideas to whose imitation God intended to make them.

vii. The Character of Ideas. From the things that have been said, the answer to the question "What is an idea?" can be seen. An idea is, as Thomas says in *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1, "a form that something imitates from the intention of an agent who predetermines the end for himself."[51] This definition has four aspects that will be treated in turn: form, imitation, intention, and end.

Thomas consistently says that an idea is a form. "Form" is the first translation that Augustine proposes for "idea."[52] Insofar as an idea is a form in the mind of the knower, it is the principle of both speculative and practical knowledge.[53] An idea's role in practical knowledge is primary, however. Ideas are called "forms" because through them the forms of other things are known and preexist in the agent, i.e., ideas are the means by which other things come about. Ideas are that toward which (*ad quam*) a thing is formed.[54] Moreover an exemplar form is an external form, not an intrinsic form.[55] An idea is a form "existing outside of the thing itself."[56] The form exists in the mind of the efficient cause. It is numerically distinct from the thing formed to its likeness.

The mention of likeness leads to the second aspect of ideas: imitation. In the *De veritate*, Thomas says that an intrinsic form forms through the mode of inherence (*per modum inhaerentiae*), but

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[50] Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 149.

[51] *De veritate* q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.100:221-223): "idea sit forma quam aliquid imitatur ex intentione agentis qui praedeterminat sibi finem."

[52] Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46, n. 2 (PL 40:30): "Ideas igitur latine possumus vel formas vel species dicere, ut verbum e verbo transferre videamur."

[53] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 2, q. 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.839-840).

[54] *De veritate* q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.99:177-182).

[55] Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 25. Doolan cites *In III Sent.*, d. 27, q. 2, a. 4, quaestiuncula 3, obj. 1 and solutio 3, ad 1 (ed. Moos, III.884.153 and 889-890.176-177); *De veritate*, q. 14, a. 5, obj. 4 (ed. Leonine, 22.2.451:27-35); *ST* I, q. 5, a. 2, ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.58).

[56] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 4.199a).

an exemplar form forms through the mode of imitation (*per modum imitationis*).[57] A form in the mind of the artificer is an exemplar form because the external thing imitates it and has a likeness to it. Thus, Thomas is wont to describe the ideas as the ways in which God knows his essence to be imitable.[58] But what sort of imitation or likeness is required for exemplar causality? To answer this question, it is necessary to anticipate some of the arguments below. On one hand, since God is the first exemplar cause of all things, any manner of imitation will suffice. Any being, insofar as it has being, imitates God. Even a bad imitation is an imitation as long as it is not an absolute privation.[59] On the other hand, as Thomas says in *In Ioannem*, "art is not the principle or cause of some defect in the artifact, but is the *per se* cause of their perfection and form."[60] It is not the fault of art if a particular sculpture does not turn out as the artist intended. The culprit in such cases is either a defect in the matter that prevents it from receiving the form, or an imperfect possession of the art by the artist.[61] God does not have either of these constraints. As Kovach says, "God's creative idea is the model of all things so efficiently that the creature can be only accidentally dissimilar to God's creative idea of it."[62] As a result, we can say that there is no defect in the world that results from God failing to create as he wanted to create. God created Socrates exactly how he intended. If Socrates lacked a certain physical beauty, it is not because God was unable to create physical beauty in him. Rather, Socrates lacked physical beauty because the divine idea of Socrates did not exemplify physical beauty. If a given lack seems imperfect, it is only because we are unable to see the way in

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[57] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.108:156-160).

[58] See, e.g., *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Marrietti, I.841-842); *De veritate* q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.104:200-105:219; SCG I, c. 54 (ed. Leonine, 13.155a6-19); ST I, q. 15, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4. 201-202).

[59] See, e.g., *De veritate* q. 3, a. 4 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.110:75-80): "unde cum similitudo attendatur secundum formam aliquo modo participatam, non potest esse quod malum similitudinem aliquam in Deo habeat, cum aliquid dicatur malum ex hoc ipso quod a participation divinitatis recedit" and *De veritate* q. 3, a. 4, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.111:95-96): "negationes et privationes non sunt nisi entia rationis."

[60] *In Ioan.*, c. 1, lect. 2, n. 87 (ed. Cai, 18b): "ars non est principium seu causa alicuius defectus in artificiatis, sed per se est cause perfectionis ipsorum et formae."

[61] *In Ioan*, c. 1, lect. 2, n. 87 (ed. Cai, 18b–19a); SCG II, c. 2 (ed. Leonine, 13.275a6-8): "Ea enim quae arte fiunt ipsius artis sunt repaesentativa, utpote ad similitudinem artis facta."

[62] Francis Kovach, "Divine Art in Saint Thomas Aquinas," in *Arts libéraux et philosophie au môyen age. Actes du Quatrième congrès international de philosophie médiévale* (Montreal: Institue d'ètudes médiévales, 1969), 668.

which that imperfection fits into the divine plan for creation and serves some greater perfection. If Socrates is imperfect because he lacks physical beauty, it is because he is meant to be a witness of putting things of the soul ahead of things of the body.

The third aspect of ideas is intention. Intention implies agency and the will.[63] Things that happen by chance are not intended. The painter who looks to a model and attempts to recreate that model in the painting intends the imitation that results. The painting that merely happens to look like something or someone does so by accident. In such cases the painter did not *intend* to assimilate the painting to that model.[64] The agent must know and will to assimilate something to the measure of it in his mind. Knowledge alone is not enough for intention. Thus, if the word "idea" is taken in the strict sense to refer to actually practical knowledge, then there are ideas only of those things that the artisan actually makes.

As a result, God does not have ideas necessarily. If ideas have to be willed, then Thomas's insistence that God is free to create or not to create entails that God did not have to have ideas in the strict sense of exemplar. If idea is taken in the broad sense of *ratio*, then God necessarily has ideas because he necessarily knows all things other than himself. But in the strict sense of exemplar, God need not have ideas. It is only because of the divine will that God has ideas as exemplars.

A discussion of imitation and intention would be incomplete without a discussion of measuring an imitation. The relation of measure and measured is opposite depending on whether we are speaking of speculative or practical knowledge. For practical knowledge, knowledge causes

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[63] Aquinas uses the term *intentio* in two distinct ways. The first way corresponds the word "intention" (without an article) is used in English. This sense is the primary sense of the term for Thomas, and it pertains to that which moves toward an end. The will moves all other powers to their ends. Therefore, Thomas argues, *intentio* is properly an act of will, not intellect. See *In II Sent.*, d. 38, q. 1, a. 3 (ed. Mandonnet, II.973–975); *De veritate* q. 22, a. 13 (ed. Leonine, 22.3.643:1–646:302); *ST* I-II, q. 12, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 6:94); *De malo* q. 16, a. 11, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 23:330:241–331:257). The second way corresponds to the word "an intention" (with an article) is used in English. This sense comes from a translation of Avicenna's use of the term "concept." This usage is especially prominent in the *De ente*. In the prologue, Thomas announces that he will consider the way *ens* and *essentia* are related "ad intentiones logicas, scilicet, genus, species et differentiam" (ed. Leonine, 43:369:9–10).

[64] *De veritate* q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.99:185-193).

the thing, and so it is the measure of the thing that comes to be. The knowledge of the artisan is the measure of the art. The work of art is more perfect and more complete if it attains a greater likeness to the knowledge of the artist because truth is the adequation of the intellect and the thing. Since the intellect is the cause of the thing, is related to the thing as a rule and measure. And this is the way that God's knowledge relates to everything.[65] For speculative knowledge, the thing known is the measure and the knowledge is the measured. Things cause our knowledge of them, and so our knowledge is true to the extent that it attains a greater likeness of the thing known. Since, as Doolan notes, "we simply experience reality and do not determine it," we have to let reality measure our knowledge.[66]

The artist's knowledge is the rule and measure of his artwork, but only because he has willed to produce it. If the artist thinks up a possible imitation, it will never come to be unless there be an act of his will. The form in his intellect is a principle of knowledge about a possible action, not a principle of action itself. An inclination to act from the will is the only thing that can make his daydream become a reality.

The fourth aspect of Thomas' definition of "idea" from the *De veritate* concerns the end. Thomas includes this aspect only in the *De veritate* account, but it proves to be of great importance for understanding his account of ideas. Not only does the agent intend the thing's imitation of its exemplar, he also predetermines the end for himself. There are two ways of taking this qualification. The qualification could mean that the agent is not determined by another, principal agent, or the qualification could mean that the agent establishes what the end of the thing is. If an agent's end is not determined by another, principal agent, then the agent must choose his own actions. Agents

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[65] *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.9:81–84); *ST* I, q. 22, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.259–60); *In X Met.*, lect. 2 n. 1959 (ed. Spiazzi, 467).

[66] Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas,* 27. See, *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.9:85–87). *ST* I, q. 22, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.60);

who choose their actions act intelligently. Agents whose ends are determined by another principal agent are moved passively. Thomas's example of such passive agency is the flight of an arrow.[67] The arrow will fly toward spot only if determined by the archer. The arrow tends toward an end, but only because that end has been determined by another. Only the intelligent agent can determine the end for himself.

If the qualification it taken to mean that the agent establishes the end, then we need to have recourse to a further distinction. As Thomas notes in his *De principiis naturae*, there are two ends to consider: the end of generation and the end of the thing generated. Thomas uses the example of a knife. The end of the artisan in generating a knife is the production of the knife, but being generated is not the end of a knife. The end of a knife, i.e., its operation, is to cut.[68] It is not the mere generation of the thing that Thomas has in mind when he says that an agent predetermines the end for himself. Such an agent also determines the end of the thing he makes. Moreover, it is the end of the thing made that drives the intention of the artisan. Knives are not natural things. It is only because some agent desired to cut something that the knife first came into being. If no one had ever desired to cut, then there would be no knives. The agent intends to impose the form of knife on a hunk of metal because someone intends to use that formed knife to cut.

It is crucial to note that the primary agent gives the end to the thing being made. The idea in the mind of the agent makes the thing to be what it is. Thus, an agent can only have ideas of the things for which he can determine the end. This insight gets to the heart of Thomas's distinction between natural things and artificial things. Man can determine the end of artificial things, like knives, but cannot determine the end of natural things. A man can generate a man, but no father determines the end of the humanity in his child. That end is determined by nature. Since, God is the

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[67] *De veritate* q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.100:202-204).

[68] *De prin. nat.*, §4 (ed. Leonine, 43.45:104-113), esp: "forma enim cultelli est finis generationis, sed incidere quod est operatio cultelli, est finis ipius generati, scilicet cultelli."

exemplar cause of all things, he predetermines the end of all things. God intends both that man and horse should exist, and he also predetermines the end of the two species.[69] The end of all things is determined by their divine ideas.

Why does Aquinas include this last qualification only in the *De veritate*? I think Thomas would say that the characteristic of predetermining the end is a necessary part of intellectual agency and so is present in his other accounts implicitly. Intellectual agency has the character of exemplarity because the agent predetermines the end for himself, and natural agency does not have this character because the agent does not predetermine the end for himself. An exemplar sets the end of that which is assimilated to it. Things are known by their acts, and so the quality of a thing is judged according to how well it lives up to its exemplar. The exemplar determines the perfect act of the *exemplatum*. Although we have seen Thomas speak of a natural exemplarity for God, natural agency is not exemplarity in the primary and proper sense, which entails intellectual determination, because such agency does not determine the end of the things that come from it. The form of the father is not the exemplar of the son. The form of man is the measure against which the form of the son is measured.[70] To speak of an agent that acts by intellect is to speak of an agent that predetermines the end for himself. Thomas's addition of the clause makes the connection between exemplarity and determination of the end more explicit, but it does not add anything that was not already implicitly present. Thus, when he says in the *Summa theologiae* that God is an intelligent agent and that an idea is a form in the divine mind to whose likeness the world is made, he is expressing the same teaching as that in the *De veritate*.

viii. Exemplarity and the Four Causes. Having seen that a divine idea is a form in the divine mind that acts as a cause in the act of creation, we are led to ask what sort of causality divine

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[69] *ST* I, q. 44, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.460ab).
[70] *De veritate* q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.209-220).

exemplars exercise.[71] Aristotle, who does not have anything akin to a theory of divine ideas, argues that there are only four types of causes: material, formal, efficient, and final. Later Neoplatonic authors, notably Seneca, argued that divine exemplarity is a fifth sort of causality because it does not fit into Aristotle's fourfold division.[72] This conclusion is quite sensible given that an exemplar seems to fit into more than one kind of causality. As a form, an exemplar would seem to exercise formal causality. As something intended, it seems to exercise efficient causality. Moreover, given that Thomas declares that an exemplar "has the *ratio* of an end in a certain way," it would seem that an exemplar exercises final causality.[73]

Despite how easy it would be to declare exemplarity a fifth sort of cause, Thomas never does so. But, then, which sort of causality does it exercise? It certainly does not exercise material causality. As Doolan points out, material causality is not implicated by the definition in the *De veritate*, Thomas never associates material causality with exemplarism, and a material cause can never be an extrinsic to the thing caused.[74] Again, an exemplar cannot exercise efficient causality because it cannot exercise any causality independent of the will. The will is the efficient cause, imposing *esse reale* upon the exemplar, which has only *esse intelligible* in the intellect. Finally, an exemplar does not seem to be able to be a final cause because it does not have the right sort of relationship to an efficient cause. Following Aristotle, Thomas holds that the final cause is the cause of causes; the final cause causes the causality of the efficient cause. The final cause of health is causes a man to go for a walk or to see his doctor. Without the final cause, there is no efficient cause.[75]

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[71] The discussion that follows is greatly indebted to Doolan's discussion in *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 33–41.

[72] Seneca, *Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales*, epist. 45 (ed. Gummere, I.448). Cf. David L. Greenstock, "Exemplar Causality and the Supernatural Order," *The Thomist* 16 (1953): 4–5: "Unless we wish to claim that the exemplar forms a fifth class of causes all on its own, we are forced, it would seem, to reduce it to one of the four causes."

[73] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.100:254): "Forma exemplaris vel idea habet quadam modo rationem finis."

[74] Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 35.

[75] See, *De prin. nat.*, c. 4 (ed. Leonine, 43.44:25–31).

By process of elimination, then, it would seem like an exemplar should be a formal cause. This conclusion is strengthened if we recall that an exemplar is an intellectual cause. The *exemplatum* is measured against its exemplar according to its form. The more perfect a work of art attains a likeness of the form in the mind of the artist, the better an imitation it is. And, as was noted above, the imitation does not have to imitate its exemplar in every respect. As Doolan points out, "it is impossible for the effect to imitate the cause according to its mode of being (*esse*) since the form in the mind of the artisan of has only an intentional existence."[76] The exemplar measures the *exemplatum* only by reason of the adequation of form to form.[77]

Formal causality, however, appears problematic because Thomas says that a formal cause is an intrinsic cause. In the *De principiis naturae*, Thomas argues that causes are first distinguished into the intrinsic and the extrinsic. The intrinsic causes are the material cause and the formal cause. The extrinsic causes are the efficient cause and the final cause.[78] Ultimately, this objection is not convincing because it does not consider the context of its source text. In the *De principiis naturae,* Thomas restricts the scope of his comments to nature, i.e., material beings and their natural generation. It is true that there is no such thing as an extrinsic formal cause for natural generation, but this does not mean he rules out the possibility of an extrinsic formal cause completely. In fact, the intrinsic-extrinsic division of the causes only seems to hold when discussing natural generation.

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[76] Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 36.

[77] See *ST* I, q. 18, a. 4, ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.230): "Exemplata oportet conformari exemplari secundum rationem formae, non autem se- cundum modum essendi. Nam alterius modi esse habet quandoque forma in exem- plari et in exemplato: sicut forma domus in mente arti cis habet esse immateriale et intelligibile, in domo autem quae est extra animam, habet esse materiale et sensibile. Unde et rationes rerum quae in seipsis non vivunt, in mente divina sunt vita, quia in mente divina habent esse divinum." Cf. *ST* III, q. 24, a. 3, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 11.274): "Non est necessarium quod exemplatum exemplari quantum ad omnia conformetur: sed sufficit quod aliqualiter exemplatum imitetur suum exemplar." Both of these texts are quoted in Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 36n84.

[78] *De prin. nat.*, n. 3 (ed. Leonine, 43.42:42–52). This objection is endorsed by Theodore J. Kondoleon, "Exemplary Causality in the Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas," (Ph.D. diss., The Catholic University of America, 1967), 146–54.

In his commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Thomas does not even discuss the causes as divisible by intrinsic and extrinsic. Instead, he says they can be divided according to the species of causality and by their mode of causality. Thus, as Francis Meehand notes, "the *first immediate division* of the genus, cause, is the fourfold division into material, formal, final, and efficient."[79] The division according to mode is in terms of the diverse relationships (*habitudines*) that causes have to their effects. This division is, as it were, through accidental differences, not specific differences.[80] The division of the four causes into intrinsic and extrinsic is based on a mode of causality; the division is not based upon the nature of the genus *cause*. Therefore, there is nothing inappropriate about positing an extrinsic formal cause in Thomas's system.[81]

ix. Summary. As is clear from the foregoing discussion, Thomas's thought on the divine ideas shows clear development. As his thought matures, he gravitates more and more toward understanding ideas, taken in the strict sense, as exemplars. The term idea can be used in such a way that it covers all objects of divine cognition, but strictly speaking it applies only to those things which the artisan actually produces. Strictly speaking ideas are practical, and only speculative in the broad sense. The increased emphasis on ideas as exemplars ensures that both intellect and will are required for an idea. For a thing to be produced according to an exemplar, that exemplar has to be foreknown. Without knowledge, any likeness that would occur could be only accidental. Likewise, if an idea is what it is because something has actually been produced according to its likeness, then the command of the will is an essential character of ideas. An intelligent agent who did not will to produce anything would have no ideas. It is only by command of the will, which brings about the actual production of things, that a *ratio* is an idea. The knowledge and willing of an idea do not stop

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[79] Francis X. Meehan, *Efficient Causality in Aristotle and St. Thomas* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1940), 179n40.

[80] *In V Met.*, lect. 3, n. 783 (ed. Spiazzi, 215).

[81] This is supported by the fact that Thomas explicitly says that an exemplar is a formal cause in *In V Met.*, lect. 2, n. 764 (ed. Spiazzi, 211).

at mere generation, however. The idea serves as the measure of the thing that imitates it. Thus, the idea has to determine the end of the things made. If the idea is to be the standard by which the characteristic functions of the thing are judged well-performed or ill-performed, then it has to predetermine what qualifies as good or bad operation.

b. Does God have Ideas?

Having seen in the last section that for Thomas an idea is a form to whose imitation an agent intends to make something, the next logical step is to ask whether God has ideas. Thomas is particularly concerned about this question for two reasons. First, early in his career, Thomas, like Bonaventure, takes the authority of Augustine who says that "he who denies that ideas exist denies that the Son exists."[82] It is heretical to deny the Son, so to deny the ideas is heretical as well.[83] Second, while everyone attributes knowledge to God, many do so in ways that compromise his simplicity, limit his knowledge to actual causality, or speak only in metaphors.[84] Thomas uses three types of arguments for God's knowledge of things other than himself to counter these difficulties: what has been termed the teleological argument, the similitude argument, and the divine self-knowledge argument.[85] Since Aquinas's articulation of these arguments is fairly consistent throughout his life, I will treat them systematically rather than historically, for the sake of space.

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[82] Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46, n. 2 (PL 40.30): "qui negat ideas esse, negat Filium esse."

[83] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 1, s.c. 1 (ed. Mandonet, I.839). This citation should not be taken as undeniable proof that Thomas thinks divine ideas are necessary, at least early in his career. Thomas could be genuine in claiming that denial of divine ideas is heresy, or he could be bringing up divine ideas only because he does not want to be accused of heresy even though his system could easily do without them.

[84] *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.39:109–110). Thomas corrects these errors in *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Leon., 22.1.44:114–95). Perfect cognition results in a unity between the cognizer and the thing cognized. So if there were a perfect soul in which the whole order of the universe and its causes were found, it would be the most perfect. Such unity can be found only if the cognizer and the thing cognized are both immaterial. The determined *esse* that material things have separates things from each other and renders them only potentially intelligible. Things have to be separated from matter in order to be actually intelligible. Thus, Averroes says that the manner in which forms are received in the possible intellect and the manner in which they are received in prime matter are not the same (Averroes, *In III De anima*, com. 5 [ed. Crawford, 387:23–388:32). The former is immaterial, and the latter is material. The immateriality of the cognizable means nothing, however, if the cognizer does not have some manner of immateriality. Only an intellect can receive species without matter or material conditions. It also follows that immterial thigs are intelligible of themselves and more knowable in themselves, even though they are les known to us. Since God is completely separated from matter and potency, he is both the most knowable thing and the most knowing being.

[85] I borrow these terms from Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, ch. 2.

i. The Teleological Argument. Thomas makes frequent use of the teleological argument when he wants to argue that God knows things other than himself. The argument, as he notes in *In I Sent.*, is from causality.[86] Everything that tends determinately to some end either establishes that end for itself or the end is established for it by another. If neither of these were the case, then it would not tend to one end rather than another. But natural things tend toward determinate ends as is evidenced by the fact that they always or for the most part tend toward the same thing, which would not happen by chance. Therefore, since they do not establish the end for themselves (because they do not cognize that end), it is necessary that the end be established for them by another, who is the institutor of nature. But this institutor of nature is he who offers *esse* to all things and is the necessary being through himself, whom we call God. But God could not establish the end of nature unless he understood it. Therefore, God is intelligent.[87]

Just as the smith could not make an ax unless he cognized the act of cutting, the things which the ax would cut, the appropriate material out of which to make the ax, and the form of the ax, so too God has to know the things which are ordered to him because they are ordered to him in the same way that they have *esse* from him. Thus, in some versions of the argument, Thomas will quote Aristotle saying, "the work of nature is the work of intelligence."[88] The very order of the

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[86] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.839).

[87] *SCG* I, c. 44 (ed. Leonine, 13.130a14-b11): "Item. Omne quod tendit determinate in aliquem finem, aut ipsum praestituit sibi finem, aut praestituitur ei finis ab alio: alias non magis in hunc quam in illum finem tenderet. Naturalia autem tendunt in fines determinatos: non enim a casu naturales utilitates consequuntur; sic enim non essent semper aut in pluribus, sed raro; horum enim est casus. Cum ergo ipsa non praestituant sibi finem, quia rationem finis non praestituant sibi finem, quia rationem finis non cognoscunt; oportet quod eis praestituatur finis ab alio, qui sit naturae institutor. Hic autem est qui praebet omnibus esse, et est per seipsum necesse esse, quem Deum dicimus, ut ex supra dictis patet. Non autem posset naturae finem praestituere nisi intelligeret. Deus igitur est intelligens." Cf. *In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.809–10); *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.50:214–51:234); *ST* I, q. 44, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.460); *In I Met.,* lect. 15, n. 233 (ed. Marietti, 81).

[88] *Auctoritates Aristotelis* (1) XII, nn. 281–82 (ed. Hamesse, 138:84–184:139): "Natura nihil facit, nisi rememorata a causis superibus quae sunt deus et intelligentiae. Opus naturae est opus intelligentiae." See James A. Weisheipl, "The Axiom 'Opus naturae est opus intelligentiae' and its Origins," in *Albertus Magnus, Doctor universalis: 1280/1980*, eds. Gerbert Meyer and Albert Zimmerman (Mainz, 1980): 441–64. L. Hödl, "'Opus naturae est opus intelligentiae.' Ein neuplatonisches Axiom im aristotelischen Verständnis des Albertus Magnus," in *Averroismus im Mittealter und in der Renaissance*, ed. F. Niewöhner and L. Sturlese (Zürich: 1994), 132–48.

universe bespeaks divine cognition of it. Unintelligent beings could not tend toward their ends without an intelligence guiding them.

ii. The Similitude Argument. The teleological argument shows that God has to have knowledge of things other than himself, but it does not explain the way in which God cognizes creatures. As a result, Thomas employs the similitude argument and the argument from divine self-knowledge to explain how God cognizes things other than himself. The similitude argument is as follows. In all things not generated by chance, it is necessary that a form be the end of its generation. An agent would not act because of a form except insofar as a likeness of the form is in him. Such a likeness could be in the agent in two ways. In one way, the form of the thing coming to be preexists in some agents according to *esse naturale*, as in agents that act by nature. It is in this way that man generates man, and fire generates fire. In some agents, however, the form preexists according to *esse intelligibile,* as in agents that act by intellect. It is in this way that a likeness of a house preexists in the mind of the builder. Such intellectual likenesses are called "ideas" because the artist intends to assimilate a house to the form conceived in his mind. Since the world did not come about by chance, but was made by God as by an intelligent agent, he must have a likeness of the world in his mind. Thus, God must have ideas.[89]

At the heart of this argument are two of Thomas's favorite principles: every agent makes something like itself (*omne agens agit sibi simile*), and whatever is received is received according to the mode of the receiver (*quidquid recepitur ad modum recipientem recepitur*).[90] An agent cannot give what it does not have to some effect. As a result, the effect is always like the cause in some way, i.e., the form of the effect has to preexist in the agent. As Thomas argues in *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 3, such forms exist either through the mode of inherence (*per modum inhaerentiae*), or through the mode of imitation

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[89] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 4. 199ab). Cf. *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.51:235–61); *SCG* I, c. 49 (ed. Leonine, 13:142a11–19).

[90] For a closer look at these principles, see Wippel, *Metaphysical Themes II*, 152–71 and 113–22, respectively.

(*per modum imitationis*).[91] Thomas does not draw this conclusion explicitly, but it would be pantheism to hold that God has the forms of creatures through the mode of inherence. God, then, has these forms intellectually as exemplar causes in whose imitation he intends to create.[92]

iii. The Divine Self-Knowledge Argument. Thomas also argues for the necessity of divine ideas on the basis of God's self-knowledge. The argument seems to have its inspiration in part from Albert the Great.[93] It does not appear in *In I Sent.* or in the *De veritate*. It makes its first appearance in the *Summa Contra Gentiles* (1259–64), and it becomes the primary argument Thomas proposes in the question on God's knowledge of things other than himself in the *Summa theologiae* (1266–68). Objections to God's knowledge of things other than himself assume that if God knows things, then that knowledge originates *ab extra*. On this assumption, God's perfection and nobility would be compromised. To counter these objections, Thomas argues that God's perfect knowledge of himself necessarily entails knowledge of all things other than himself. It is manifest that God perfectly understands himself because otherwise he would not be perfect. But if something is cognized perfectly, it is necessary that its power be cognized perfectly. But the power of some thing cannot be perfectly cognized unless the things to which its power extend are cognized. Whence, it is necessary that God cognize things other than himself because he is the first effective cause of all beings and divine power extends to other things.[94]

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[91] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.108:156–60).

[92] Cf. *Liber de causis*, prop. 8 (ed. Saffrey, 54): "intelligentia cognoscit id quod est sub se in quantum est causa ei."

[93] Albert the Great, *Quaestio de ideis divinis*, a. 2 (ed. Aschendorff, 266:38–40): "ipse cognoscendo se cognoscit omnia, et ipse uno modo habens se est ad plura et pauciora et etiam infinita, si essent infinita."

[94] *ST* I, q. 14, a. 5 (ed. Leonine, 4.172ab). Cf. *SCG* I, c. 49 (ed. Leonine, 13.142a20–b8); *In XII Met.*, lect. 11, nn. 2602–16 (ed. Spiazzi, 606–08), esp. n. 2615: "Cum enim ipse sit ipsum suum intelligere, ipsum autem est dignissimum et potentissimum, necesse est quod suum intelligere sit perfectissimum: perfectissime ergo intelligit seipsum. Quanto autem aliquod principium perfectius intelligitur, tanto magis intelligitur in eo efectus eius: nam principiata continentur in virtute principii. Cum igitur a primo principio, quod est Deus, dependeat caelum et tota natura, ut dictum est, patet quod Deus cognoscendo seipsum, omnia cognoscit."

The crucial premise in this argument is that perfect knowledge of a being necessarily includes knowledge of the full extent of that being's power. If any of the possible effects of the being are unknown, then the being is not known perfectly.[95] Since God knows himself perfectly, he must have perfect knowledge of all of his possible effects. This argument both is influenced by Avicenna and Averroes and argues against them. God's knowledge is perfectly in act such that he knows himself perfectly. Perfect knowledge of himself does not inhibit knowledge of things other than himself or render it universal or indeterminate. His power does not extend merely to creatures in general or only to the first creature. God's causal power extends to every possible effect and every possible act of every possible effect, so he perfectly cognizes each thing distinctly.[96] The source of God's knowledge is only himself, but it is precisely because he knows himself that he knows all things other than himself perfectly.

iv. Conclusions. Thomas uses three distinct arguments to show that God has knowledge of things other than himself. The teleological argument, the similitude argument, and the self-knowledge argument all argue on the basis of causality. The teleological argument and similitude argument argue from the fact of creation, and so are, in Thomas's terminology, demonstrations *quia* because they begin from an effect more known to us.[97] Given that things exist as they are, God has to have knowledge of them because they could only come from him.

The self-knowledge argument is different from the other two because it argues from the cause—God's causal power—to the effect. God's willing to act as cause is contingent, but that he can act as cause is necessary. This argument allows Thomas to distinguish, as we have seen him do,

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[95] Both Scotus and Ockham will take issue with this principle (See Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 20 [ed. Noone, 402:2–4] and Ockham, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.436:10–437:9). Knowledge of the full extent of a being's power does not necessarily entail knowledge of all its possible effects.

[96] For Thomas's clearest exposition on the extent of God's causal power, see *In Liber de causis*, prop. 1–3 (ed. Saffrey, 4–25). Cf. *SCG* III, c. 67 (ed. Leonine, 14.190), *ST* I, q. 105, a. 5 (ed. Leonine, 5.475–476), and *De potentia*, q. 3, a. 7 (ed. Pession, II.55a–59b).

[97] For the distinction between a demonstration *quia* and a demonstration *propter quid*, see *ST* I, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.30).

between the strict and broad use of the term "idea."[98] Strictly speaking, God has divine ideas only of those things that he wills to create at some time. All divine ideas are exemplar causes. Broadly speaking, God has divine ideas of anything of which there is a likeness or a notion (*ratio*), i.e., anything he could have created regardless of whether he chooses to create it. The self-knowledge argument allows Thomas to defend the claim that God could have created more than he did. The teleological argument and self-knowledge argument cannot make such a defense.

Despite the limited conclusions that can be drawn from it, Thomas shows preference for the teleological argument. As Doolan points out, "the pivotal premise of the entire argument is the principle that whatever acts by necessity of nature must be directed to its end by some knowing agent."[99] Though Thomas often does not offer justification for the principle, he does defend it in *De potentia*, q. 1, a. 5. Every agent, he says, acts because of an end because every agent desires the good. Whatever acts from natural necessity is determined to only one end as its good. The determination of the end must come from another because an action is fitting for an end only if it is adapted and proportioned to it. Such adaptation and proportioning can occur only if the agent cognizes the end, the notion (*ratio*) of the end, and the proportion of the means to the end. Absent such knowledge, the fittingness of the action for the end could happen only by chance. Chance, however, is contrary to the very notion of final causality, and so final causality requires an intellect. This necessity, he says, explains the Aristotelian dictum: "the work of nature is the work of an intelligence."[100] Without an intelligence, there could be no final causality.[101] The teleological actions of natural agents cannot

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[98] See, e.g., *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.102:1–106:313), and *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.204). As we will see below, Thomas articulates what qualifies as a divine idea in the strict sense differently in these two texts. For the time being, I will assume the understanding from the *ST*.

[99] Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 61.

[100] *Auctoritates Aristotelis* (1) XII, nn. 281–82 (ed. Hamesse, 138:84–184:139: "Natura nihil facit, nisi rememorata a causis superibus quae sunt deus et intelligentiae. Opus naturae est opus intelligentiae."

[101] For evalutations on the strength of the teleological argument, see Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 480–85, 578–79; Fernand van Steenberghen, *Le problême de l'existence de Dieu* (Louvain-La-Neuve: Éditions de l'Institut Supérieur de Philosophie, 1980), 52–71; Anthony Kenny, *The Five Ways* (Notre Dame, IN: The University of Notre Dame Press, 1980), 96–120. Cf. George, P. Klubertanz, "St. Thomas' Treatment of the Axiom 'Omne Agens Agit

be understood merely with reference to their efficient causality. We must also have recourse to exemplar causality.[102]

c. The Unity and Plurality of the Divine Ideas

Having seen that God is intelligent and knows things other than himself by means of ideas that are first and foremost practical, but also speculative, the next question to ask concerns the unity and the plurality of the divine ideas. Is there only one divine idea, or are there many? Both positions have an advantage and a drawback. If there is only one idea, i.e., the divine essence, then God's perfection and simplicity is preserved, but his ability to distinctly cognize creatures seems to be jeopardized. If there are many divine ideas, there will be no difficulty accounting for God's distinct cognition of all creatures, but such a multiplicity seems to divide God and to derogate his simplicity. As will become clear from the discussion below, Thomas argues both that there is one divine idea in one respect and that there are many divine ideas in another respect.

i. *In I Sententias* (1252–1256). In *In I Sent.*, Thomas argues for a plurality of divine ideas on the basis of God's distinct cognition of singulars. Since God has distinct cognition of singulars, his essence must be a likeness of singular things according as diverse things imitate it in diverse and particular ways according to their capacity. The divine essence is completely imitable, but creatures cannot perfectly imitate it because of their diversity and defect. Thus, since the name "idea" names the divine essence insofar as it is an exemplar imitated by a creature, the divine essence will be the proper idea of this thing according to a determinate mode of imitation. And because diverse creatures imitate it in other modes, the idea or notion (*ratio*) by which man and horse are created are

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Propter Finem'," in *An Etienne Gilson Tribute*, ed. Charles J. O'Neil (Milwaukee: The Marquette University Press, 1959), 101–17.

[102] See R.J. Henle, SJ, *Saint Thomas and Platonism* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1956), 366–67.

other. The essence imitated is one, but there is a plurality in the ideas according to the respect (*respectus*) to many things that the divine essence is imitated in diverse modes.[103]

Thomas offers the example of being (*esse*), living, and knowing to explain the diversity of imitation. All creatures imitate the divine nature according to being (*esse*), but not all do so according to life. There is a diversity of modes of imitation even among those that imitate only *esse* because some of them are nobler than others. From this diversity there are many ideal reasons according to which God understands his essence as imitable through this or through that mode. Since an idea is a form as understood, these understood ideal reasons, or modes of imitation, are ideas.[104]

Thomas's response to the second objection is very important because the objection argues that Thomas's solution that there are many respects to things in God cannot stand. The relations that are of God to creatures are really in creatures, but not in God. But creatures have not existed from eternity. Therefore, the relations of creatures to God have also not existed from eternity. But, as Augustine says, God does not cognize things he makes in another way than before they were made. Therefore, he does not cognize things through many ideas, but through one alone.[105]

In response to this objection Aquinas argues that although such relations (*relationes*) are really founded in creatures, they are also in God according to reason and understanding. From eternity the divine intellect understood the diverse modes his essence is imitable by creatures. Because of this understanding there is a plurality of divine ideas in the divine intellect from eternity, not in the divine nature. The form of horse and the form of life are not in God according to the same mode. The form of horse is not in God except as an understood notion (*ratio*). Life, however, is in God not only as understood, but also as founded in the nature of the thing (i.e., the divine essence).[106]

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[103] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.841-842).

[104] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.842).

[105] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2, obj. 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.841). Cf. Augustine, *Super Gen. ad lit.*, V, cap. 15, n. 22 (PL 34.332–33).

[106] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2, ad 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.842).

This response is so important because Thomas makes an important twofold distinction in it. First, although the relation that exists between God and creatures is a real relation for the creature, but not a relation for God, that relation cannot simply originate with creatures.[107] The relation between a creature and God exists because God causes it. But God could not have created that relation if he did not foreknow it. So even though no creature is from eternity, God had to foreknow the relation that it would have to him from eternity. Aquinas emphases this point in his reply to the third objection when he says, "the divine intellect is the cause of things; but the distinction of ideal notions (*idealium rationum*) is according to the operation of the divine intellect as he understands his essence diversely imitable by creatures."[108] The diversity between creatures precedes their existence. A creature has a particular relation to God because God foreknew that that relation between a creature and his essence could exist. He knew in advance that a creature could imitate his essence in just that manner. Therefore, since creatures have diverse relations to the divine intellect, God had to know these diverse relations. These diverse relations are diverse according to respect (*secundum respectum*) in God.

The second distinction Thomas makes is between the divine essence and the divine essence as understood. This distinction comes out in the example he uses of the form of horse and the form of life. The form of horse is in God because God knows his essence as capable of being imitated by horses. The form of life is also in God because he knows his essence as imitable by creatures that are alive. The form of life has a different *ratio* from the form of horse and so they are diversified according to the distinction in the previous paragraph. In addition to this distinction, the form of horse and the form of life are diversified because only the latter can be applied to the divine essence

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[107] See *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2, ad 3 (ed. Mandonnet, I.843).

[108] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2, ad 3 (ed. Mandonnet, I.843): "Intellectus enim divinus est causa rerum; distinctio autem idealium rationum est secundum operationem intellectus divini, prout intelligit essentiam suam diversimode imitabilem a creaturis."

itself. The form of horse is found in the divine essence only insofar as the divine essence is known to be imitable. The form of life, however, is in the divine essence directly. The divine essence has (and is) life. The divine essence does not have (and is not) horseness. God causes through his knowledge, not his being. Thus, God does not have to be something in order to cause it. God can cause horses without being a horse because "an idea does not name the essence alone, but the imitable essence."[109] Ideas name the divine essence only insofar as it is known to be imitable. They are not the essence itself, but the essence as *known*. God knows the way in which his essence is imitable, and these diverse ways of imitation that God knows are the ideas.

ii. *De veritate* (1256–1259). When Thomas takes up the question of the plurality of divine ideas in his first magisterial work, he again answers in the affirmative. He is led to this position because of his aversion to Avicenna's position.[110] Avicenna argues that God has only one intention, namely, creature in general, and that the distinction among creatures is made by secondary causes. God first makes one intelligence, and the first intelligence's distinct acts of knowing God as its principle, knowing itself as contingent through itself, and knowing itself as necessary through another produce three things, namely, the second intelligence, its own soul, and its own celestial sphere. The second intelligence has the same process and so produces the third intellect, and so on. The proper ideas of singulars are not in God himself, but in secondary causes.[111]

But this position cannot stand because if the intention of some agent is lead toward one thing only, then it follows that whatever happens to it other than his principal intention is beyond his intention and, as it were, by chance. Thomas explains this proposition with the example of making a triangle. If someone intended to make a triangle, then it would be beyond his intention

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[109] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2, ad 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.842): "idea non nominat tantum essentiam, sed essentiam imitabilem."

[110] Avicenna, *Met.*, IX, c. 4 (ed. van Riet, II.476:40–488:95). Cf. Algazel, *Met.*, p. I, tr. 5 (ed. Muckle, 119–29)

[111] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.103:108-124), esp.: ". . . posuerunt eum habere intentionem unam tantum, scilicet creaturae in universali, sed creaturarum distinctio facta est per causas secundas."

whether the triangle were large or small. But such specializations happen to whatever common intention by something specially contained under it. So if the intention of the agent is to something general only, then it would be beyond his intention if it were determined to some quality by some special thing. For example, if nature intended to generate only animal in general, then it would be beyond the intention of nature that the animal generated were a man or a horse. Thus, if God's intention extended only to creatures in general, then every distinction of creatures would happen by chance. But the distinction of creatures cannot be *per accidens* for God and *per se* for a secondary cause because what is *per se* is prior to what is *per accidens*. As the first proposition of the *Liber de causis* states, a comparison to the first cause is prior to a comparison to the second cause, wherefore it is impossible that something be *per accidens* with respect to the first cause and *per se* with respect to the second cause. It can be the other way around, however, as is evident from the fact that God foreknew and ordered those things that happen by chance among us. Thus, it is necessary that he predefine each distinction of things, and therefore it is necessary to posit in God proper notions (*rationes*) in him. And because of this, it is necessary to posit many ideas in him.[112]

Having seen that it is necessary to posit a plurality of divine ideas in God, Thomas investigates the way in which this plurality is to be understood. A form in the intellect can exist in two ways. In the first way it is a principle of the act of understanding (*actus intelligendi*), as the form which is of the knower insofar as he is understanding. This form is a likeness of the thing understood in him. In the second way the form is the term of the act of understanding, as when the builder by means of understanding thinks out (*excogitat*) the form of a house. Since that form is thought out by the act of understanding and, as it were, effected by the act, it cannot be the principle of the act of understanding as it is the first thing by which the thing is understood. Rather, it is

[112] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.103:124-104:157), esp.: "Unde necesse est dicere quod tota distinctio rerum sit praedeffinita ab eo, et ideo necesse est in Deo ponere singulorum proprias rationes, et propter hoc necesse est ponere in eo plures ideas." Cf. *Liber de causis*, prop. 1, nn. 12–17 (ed. Pattin, 136:39–137:62).

related to the intellect as the thing understood by which the knower works something. Nevertheless, form taken in the second way is that according to which it is understood because the builder understands what he is going to work through the thought-out form.[113]

Thomas first draws out the consequences of this difference for the finite artisan. If the intellect of the builder produced some artifact according to the likeness of itself, then the very intellect of the builder would be an idea, not as it is an intellect, but insofar as it is understood. But in things that are produced to the imitation of another, whenever that which is imitated perfectly imitates it, the operative intellect preconceiving the operated form has as its idea the form of the thing imitated as it is of that imitated thing. But whenever what is to the imitation of another does not perfectly imitate that thing, the operative intellect does not receive the form of the thing imitated absolutely as an idea or exemplar of the thing to be made. Rather it is received in a determinate proportion according as the thing exemplified falls short of the principal exemplar or imitates it. Thomas then transitions to the divine artisan. God produces all things through intellect making them to the likeness of his essence. His essence is the ideas of things not as it is an essence, but as it is understood. But created things do not perfectly imitate the divine essence. God's essence considered absolutely by the divine intellect is not the idea of things, but in proportion as the creature coming to be falls short of the divine essence or imitates it. But diverse things imitate the divine essence in diverse modes and each one according to its proper mode since each one has being (*esse*) distinct from the others. Therefore, the divine essence, with the co-understood diverse proportions of things to it, is the idea of each thing. And since there are diverse proportions of

[113] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.104:158-173), esp.: "Forma enim in intellectu dupliciter esse potest. Uno modo ita quod sit principium actus intelligendi, sicut forma quae est intelligentis in quam est intelligens et haec est similitudo intellecti in ipso; alio modo ita quod sit terminus actus intelligendi, sicut artifex intelligendo excogitate per actum intelligendi et quasi per actum effecta, non potest esse principium actus intelligendi ut sit primum quo intelligatur sed magis se habet ut intellectum quo intelligens aliquid operator, nihilominus tamen est forma praedicta secundum quo intelligitur quia per formam excogitatam artifex intelligit quid operandum sit."

things, it is necessary for there to be many ideas. There is one idea of all things on the part of the essence, but a plurality is discovered on the part of the diverse proportions of creatures to it.[114]

In his reply to the third objection of q. 3, a. 2, Thomas distinguishes two types of plurality of reason (*pluralitatis rationis*). The first type is reduced to some diversity of the thing. Thus, Socrates and Socrates sitting differ by reason, and this difference is reduced to a diversity of substance and accident. Differences that reduce to form and matter (including genus and species) also fall under this type of plurality of reason. This type of diversity attaches to a real diversity in things, and so is repugnant to supreme unity and simplicity. The second type occurs whenever the difference according to reason is not reduced to some diversity of the thing but to the truth of the thing that is intelligible in diverse modes. God has a plurality of notions in the second way, and this way is not repugnant to his supreme unity and simplicity.[115]

In his reply to the fifth objection, Thomas distinguishes a twofold respect (*respectus*) of form in the intellect. Such a form has respect to the thing of which it is, and respect to that in which it is. With the first sort of respect, forms are not equal to each other because some imitate the divine essence more perfectly than others. With the second sort of respect, they are all equal because they are all equally in the divine essence.[116] This response denies that the diverse modes according to which things can imitate God results necessarily in a real diversity of perfection in God. God knows that a horse participates his essence more perfectly than a tulip, but each is still perfectly in God.

Thomas's treatment of this question develops *De veritate* compared to *In I Sent*. He introduces the distinction between a form in the intellect as the principle of the act of understanding, and a form in the intellect as the term of the act of understanding. The form qua principle is a likeness in

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[114] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.104:183-105:219).

[115] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.105:244-259), esp.: "quandoque vero differentia secundum rationem non reducitur ad aliquam rei diversitatem sed ad veritatem rei quae est diversimode intelligibilis, et sic ponimus pluralitatem rationum in Deo."

[116] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2, ad 5 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.105:266-276), esp.: "forma quae est in intellectu habet respectum duplicem, unum ad rem cuius est, alium ad id quo est."

the intellect of the thing understood. For God there can be only one form qua principle, i.e., the divine essence. The only source of divine cognition is the divine essence. He does not look to anything else to receive knowledge. Thus, Thomas says that the divine essence is the idea of things insofar as it is understood.[117] The form qua term, however, is the thing that is thought out (*excogitata*). A form qua term is the form by which an artificer understands what he is going to make.[118] God has many forms qua term because he knows the many diverse modes in which his essence is imitable. This distinction between form as principle and form as term makes possible the paradoxical claim that the divine ideas are simultaneously one and many in number.[119] God foreknows the relations that any possible creature will have to him. None of these relations can substitute for any other relation, so there must be a respect in God to each of the terms of his knowledge.[120] The plurality of these respects is not contrary to God's supreme simplicity, however, because the plurality of forms as terms in the intellect is not a result of any real diversity in God. Rather, they are the result of the imperfect reception of existence that creatures have from God. Creatures imitate the divine essence in a variety of modes. From knowledge of his essence—the one, supremely simple principle form—God can know all the diverse modes according to which his essence can be imitated. The diversity is not a result of any real diversity in the supremely simple divine essence, but rather the truth that the divine essence is intelligible in diverse modes.

The importance of the distinction between form qua principle and form qua term is disputed in secondary literature. Geiger and Farthing argue that the distinction does not play a significant role in Thomas's argument. As Farthing puts it, the distinction "is toyed with for just a tantalizing

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[117] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.104:202-204).

[118] Farthing expresses this distinction quite well: "*What* God understands is multiple: He knows a plurality of actual and possible relations to Himself. But He does so precisely *by means of* His own simple and indivisible essence." (John Lee Farthing, "The Problem of Divine Exemplarity in St. Thomas," *The Thomist* 49 [1985], 206. Emphasis original).

[119] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 105:217-219).

[120] *De veritate*, q. 3, a.2, ad 8 (ed. Leonine, 106:294-301).

moment before Thomas proceeds to pursue the argument along quite different lines."[121] The fact that Thomas immediately speaks of diverse modes of imitating the divine essence leaves the connection between form qua term and idea too vague for these scholars.[122] Thomas makes the distinction between the *primum intellectum* (i.e., form qua principle) and the *secundum intellectum* (i.e., form qua term), but he leaves the connection to the divine ideas unspecified. It is not until the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, argues Geiger, "that St. Thomas is going to make the divine idea explicitly a term produced by knowing."[123] Although the distinction plays an important role for Thomas's theory of divine ideas, Geiger does not think that it plays this important role prior to the *Summa Contra Gentiles*.

Wippel, however, argues that Thomas uses the distinction between form qua principle and form qua term here in the *De veritate*. Thomas uses the distinction to focus "our attention upon the importance of God's understanding the different relationships of imitation different creatures have to his essence and hence, upon the need for many divine ideas."[124] Far from toying with the distinction only to discard it immediately, Thomas fully incorporates the distinction in this text. At the end of the corpus of q. 3, a. 2, Thomas recalls the distinction when he says that "the divine essence itself, with the diverse proportions of things to it being *co-understood*, is the idea of each thing."[125] Creatures are co-understood in the divine essence precisely as term of the act of understanding. The diverse proportions of imitability are not the primary thing understood by God. They are secondary, which explains why Thomas says that they are "co-understood." The possible

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[121] Farthing, 205.

[122] See Geiger, "Les Idées Divines," 197: "Mais on ne dit pas explicitement comme on pourrait s'y attendre, qu'en Dieu l'idée est comme un terme produit par le connaissant, dans lequel et par lequel la créature est connue."

[123] Geiger, "Les Idées Divine," 197: "C'est dans la *Somme contre les Gentils* que S. Thomas va faire de l'idée en Dieu, explicitement, un terme produit par le connaissant." Geiger further argues that this identification is the only way to avoid the conflict between the unity of the divine intellect and the multiplicity of the divine ideas.

[124] Wippel, *Thomas Aquinas on the Divine Ideas*, 19.

[125] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.105:212-215): "Et ideo ipsa divina essentia, cointellectis diversis proportionibus rerum ad eam, est idea uniuscuiusque rei." Emphasis mine.

imitations are known only as the result of knowing the essence. It is by means of the divine essence that the divine ideas are known. It is by means of the one principle of the act of understanding that the multiple terms of the act of understanding are understood.

The second major development of the *De veritate* text from *In I Sent.* is the greater emphasis that Thomas places on the divine ideas as the divine essence *as understood*. The divine essence is source of the divine ideas, but the divine ideas are not the divine essence qua essence. It is only qua understood that there are divine ideas, and the divine ideas are multiple only qua understood with reference to the particular relationship of imitation of each creature to the divine essence.[126] Thomas makes this point in his replies to the objection in *In I Sent.*, but in the *De veritate* it is of central importance to his main argument.

Many scholars distinguish Bonaventure's account of the divine ideas from Thomas's account by emphasizing that Bonaventure speaks of divine truth that expresses itself, whereas Thomas speaks of the divine essence which is imitated.[127] This distinction is not wholly unfounded, but it makes the two accounts appear more dissimilar than they really are. There is no doubt that Bonaventure prefers the term "truth," and Thomas prefers the term "essence," but Thomas is always quick to append "as understood" to "essence." The divine essence insofar as it is understood *is* the divine truth.[128] So it is true to say that the plurality of divine ideas is a result of divine truth.

The distinguishing mark between Bonaventure and Thomas then is a matter of emphasis. Bonaventure emphasizes the way in which divine truth is expressive. The divine ideas are produced, as it were, by the fecundity of divine truth. God as pure act and perfect activity is stressed in

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[126] Wippel, *Thomas Aquinas on the Divine Ideas*, 19.

[127] Bissen, *L'exemplarisme*, 29–31; Cullen, "Semiotic Metaphysics," 163–65

[128] See, *inter alia*, *De veritate* q. 1, a. 7 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.25:27-37): "Dicendum quod veritas in divinis dupliciter accipi potest: uno modo proprie, alio modo quasi metaphorice. Si enim proprie accipiatur veritas, tunc importabit aequalitatem intellectus divini et rei; et quia intellectus divinus primo intelligit rem quae est essentia sua per quam omnia alia intelligit, ideo et veritas in Deo principaliter importat aequalitatem intellectus divini et rei quae est essentia eius, et consequenter intellectus divini ad res creatas." Cf. *De veritate* q. 1, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.5:159-161): ". . . convenientiam vero entis ad intellectum exprimit hoc nomen verum." Wippel, *Metaphysical Themes II*, 65–112.

Bonaventure's account. Thomas, however, emphasizes that the divine essence is already filled with the ways in which it can be imitated. The divine intellect does not in any sense produce the ways in which the divine essence is imitable by knowing it. Rather, as Wippel notes, "by considering the divine essence the divine intellect 'discovers' (*adinvenit*), if one may so speak, the different modes or ways of imitating it in which the plurality of divine ideas consists."[129] God's immutability and eternity are emphasized. These points of emphasis are closely linked, however, and Thomas's claim that God "thinks out" (*excogitat*) or "discovers" (*adinvenit*) the divine ideas is evidence of this link.[130]

Since a divine idea is the form as term of the act of understanding, rather than as principle, the form results from the act of understanding and is "as it were produced" by it.[131] When God looks at his essence, he sees other things by means of it. The consistent use of expressions like *excogitat*, *adinvenit*, and *per actum effecta* can give the impression that God is discovering *de novo* the ways in which the divine essence is imitable. Such an impression is misled. God is not making it up as he goes. Rather, as Wippel says, "he eternally contemplates all the ways in which his essence can be imitated and freely chooses to produce creatures which imitate him in some of these ways, though not in others."[132] *Excogitat* and *adinvenit* are terms used to emphasize that God first knows all the ways that he could create before electing to create a certain set of possible imitations of the divine essence. Thomas's diction speaks against voluntarism. The divine ideas are not in him by any fiat of the divine will. They are first in the divine intellect and then some are chosen in the will. This issue will be examined more fully in the discussion of the status of possibles below.

Finally, Thomas's brief mention of *esse* at the end of the body of q. 3, a. 2 is significant. As Boland notes, "the uniquely proper *esse* of each single thing is the ultimate explanation of the

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[129] Wippel, *Thomas Aquinas on the Divine Ideas*, 20. Wippel cites *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2, ad 6 (ed. Leonine 22.1.105).

[130] *Excogitat* appears in *De veritate* q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.104:166); q. 3, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.107:97). *Adinvenit* appears in *De veritate* q, 3, a. 2, ad 6 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.105:180–182)

[131] *De veritate* q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.104:165-167): "illa forma sit exgotitata per actum intelligendi et quasi per actum effecta."

[132] Wippel, *Thomas Aquinas on the Divine Ideas*, 20.

plurality of ideas which are *creativae et productae rerum*."[133] God creates the *esse* of each thing. Each thing has a distinct esse from another. Therefore, each *esse* has to be known distinctly.

iii. *Summa Contra Gentiles* (1259–1264). The next text to consider for the multiplicity of divine ideas is book I of the *Summa Contra Gentiles*. As has been noted above, there is no explicit treatment of the divine ideas in this work. This absence gives the impression that a doctrine of divine ideas is not necessary.[134] Further evidence of this conclusion would seem to be the fact that an account of divine ideas was present in earlier redactions of the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, but was then removed by Thomas.[135] I will argue that there are reasons to think that this change is not a rejection of the divine ideas, but merely a change in presentation.

Summa Contra Gentiles I, cc. 44–70 is Thomas's most extended discussion of divine cognition. For the most part, the topics covered in these chapters are topics that appear in the same order as they appear in the questions devoted to divine cognition in *In I Sent.*, *De veritate*, and *Summa theologiae*. Against this continuity stands cc. 51–54: "it is not difficult to see that chapters 51–54 form a block that interrupts the exposition."[136] There is a disparallel between the expositions of *Summa Contra Gentiles* I, cc. 49–55 and *Summa theologiae* I, q. 14, aa. 5–7. In *Summa Contra Gentiles* I, cc. 49–50 and *Summa theologiae* I, q. 14, aa. 5-6, Thomas argues that God has cognition of things other than himself, and that he does so with a proper cognition. In the *Summa theologiae*, Thomas immediately asks whether God's knowledge is discursive. In the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Thomas delays the question of

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[133] Boland, 209-210.

[134] See, *inter alia*, Gilson, *Introduction à la philosophie chrétienne*, 170-183; Gilson, *Le Thomisme*, 146-148; Gilson, *History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, 71-72; Sertillanges, *Somme théologique*, II.403-405; Ross, "Aquinas's Exemplarism; Aquinas's Voluntarism," 171-198; Maurer, "James Ross on the Divine Ideas: A Reply," 213-220; Ross, "Response to Maurer and Dewan," 235-243.

[135] For extensive investigation into the redactions of *SCG* I, c. 53, see Louis Geiger, "Les rédactions successives de *Contra Gentiles* I, 53 d'après l'autographe," in *S. Thomas d'Aquin aujourd'hui* (Paris: Desclée de Brower, 1963), 221-240, and Boland, 214–225.

[136] Geiger, "Les Idées Divine," 198: "Cependant il n'est pas difficile de voir que les chaptires 51–54 forment un bloc que interrompt l'exposé." Chapters 60–62, which treat divine truth, are also an exception to the pattern, but this difference is not relevant to a discussion of divine ideas.

discursive knowledge until chapter 55.[137] Between c. 50 and c, 55, Thomas takes a detour to ask how God can know a multitude of objects in cc. 51–54.

The question how God can know a multitude of objects does not seem to fit in Thomas's progression. In c. 50 Thomas points out Avicenna's claims that God has only universal cognition of things other than himself, i.e., he knows them only insofar as they are beings. He spends the rest of the chapter arguing that God cognizes all other things as they are distinct from each other and from God.[138] Some of the arguments in c. 50 also seem to offer answers to the question how God can know a multitude of things, but Thomas is evidently not satisfied that the arguments answer the question. I will examine one of these arguments as an example. Whatever cognizes something perfectly cognizes everything that is in it. But God perfectly cognizes himself. Therefore, he cognizes everything that is in him according to active potency. But all things according to their proper forms are in him according to active potency since he is the principle of every being. Therefore, he has proper cognition of all things.[139] Given this argument, the answer to the question how does God know a multitude of things seems clear. He knows them because all of their proper forms are in him. Thomas offers a similar argument in *Summa theologiae* I, q. 14, a. 6, but proceeds directly to the question of discursive knowledge.[140] Why does Thomas go directly to the question of

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[137] Strictly speaking, these questions are phrased oppositely. *SCG* I, c. 55 treats whether God understands all things simultaneously, whereas *ST* I, q. 14, a. 7 treats whether the knowledge of God is discursive. This variation does not alter the fact that they are addressing the same question.

[138] *SCG* I, c. 50 (ed. Leonine, 13.144a1-8): "Quia vero quidam (sc. Avicenna) dixerunt quod Deus de aliis rebus non habet cognitionem nisi universalem, utpote cognoscens ea inquantum sunt entia, ex hoc quod natura essendi cognoscit per cognitionem sui ipsius; restat ostendendum quod Deus cognoscit omnes alia res prout ab invicem sunt distinctae et a Deo."

[139] *SCG* I, c. 50 (ed. Leonine, 13.144b41-48): "Praeterea. Quiccumque cognoscit perfecte aliquid, cognoscit omnia quae sunt in illo. Sed Deus cognoscit seipsum perfecte. Ergo cognoscit omnia quae sunt in ipso secundum potentiam activam. Sed omnia secundum proprias formas sunt in ipso secundum potentiam activam: cum ipse sit omnis entis principium. Ipse igitur habet cognitionem propriam de omnibus rebus."

[140] *ST* I, q. 14, a. 6 (ed. Leonine, 4.176b). In this text, Thomas specifies that the proper nature of each thing consists in its participation of some mode of divine perfection, and that God perfectly cognizing himself entaiils cognizing all the ways in which things can pariticipate in him. The emphais on participation is perhaps a little clearer than the "active potency" described in *SCG* I, c. 50, but the core of the argument is the same in both: God has proper cognition of other things because he knows the way in which things can procede from him.

discursive knowledge in the *Summa theologiae*, but feels compelled to explain how God knows a multitude of things in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*?

I propose that Thomas's progression of questions differs in the *Summa Contra Gentiles* because of divine ideas. Thomas announces at the beginning of *Summa theologiae* I, q. 14 that the divine ideas will be treated in its own question. Thus, he delays his explanation for *how* God knows a multitude until q. 15. Since the *Summa Contra Gentiles* makes no such announcement, he has to explain *how* God knows many things immediately after he argues *that* God distinctly cognizes everything. Moreover, he has to address how God can know many things because he has to show that such knowledge does not compromise the divine unity and simplicity. The parallel to divine ideas could hardly be clearer.

Thomas begins c. 54 by stating that it is difficult to reconcile the way in which the simple divine essence can be the proper reason (*ratio*) or likeness of all intelligible things. Solving this difficulty is of the utmost importance because "unless we resolve this, we may conclude that God has only a general or universal knowledge of things."[141] Unless we can resolve this difficulty, then we will be forced to agree with the analysis of Avicenna and Averroes.

The divine intellect comprehends in itself the perfections (*nobilitates*) of all beings, not through composition, but through perfection. Every form, whether proper or common, is a certain perfection. It does not include imperfection except as it falls short of true being (*esse*). Therefore, the divine intellect can comprehend what is proper to each thing's essence by understanding the way in which each thing imitates the divine essence and the way each thing falls short of the divine essence. The divine essence, although it is absolutely perfect, can be taken as the proper ratio of singulars, and God can have proper cognition of all of them. Since the proper *ratio* of one thing is distinguished from the proper *ratio* of another, and distinction is the principle of plurality, it is

[141] Wippel, *Thomas Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 26.

necessary to consider a certain distinction and plurality of reasons in the divine intellect. The *rationes* of things in the divine intellect are not many or distinct except as God cognizes the proper and diverse respects by which each thing is assimilable to him. Thomas concludes the chapter by noting that this reasoning is what Augustine had in mind when he said God makes man and horse according to different *rationes* and that the *rationes* of things are multiple in the divine mind. Moreover, this reasoning in some way saves Plato's opinion of ideas because it maintains that all material things are formed by them.[142]

Thomas's solution to the difficulty of saying that God's simple essence is the proper *ratio* or likeness of all intelligible things relies on a distinction parallel to the one he made in the *De veritate* between form as principle and form as term. The divine essence is the only intelligible species for the divine intellect (i.e., its only principle), and from this one intelligible species the divine intellect "forms in itself a certain *intentio* of the thing understood, which is its *ratio*, which the definition signifies."[143] But why does Thomas use *intentio*? Why use new terminology when he could have used the distinction between an intelligible species as principle and an intelligible species as term as he did in the *De veritate*?[144] Is something entailed by "an understood *intentio*" that is not entailed by "an intelligible species as term"?

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[142] *SCG* I, c. 54 (ed. Leonine, 13.1.154b26–155b19), esp.: "Divina autem essentia in se nobilitates omnium entium comprehendit, non quidem per modum compositionis, sed per modum perfectionis, ut supra ostensum. Forma autem omnis, tam propria quam communis, secundum id quod aliquid ponit, est perfectio quaedam: non autem imperfectionem includit nisi secundum quod deficit a vero esse. Intellectus igitur divinus id quod est proprium unicuique in essentia sua comprehendere potest, intelligendo in quo eius essentiam imitetur, et in quo ab eius perfectione deficit unumquodque . . . . Quia vero propria ratio unius distinguitur a propria ratione alterius; distinctio autem est pluralitatis principium: oportet in intellectu divino distinctionem quandam et pluralitatem rationum intellectarum csondierare, secundum quod id quod est in intellectu divino est propria ratio diversorum. Unde, cum hoc sit secundum quod Deus intelligit proprium respectum assimilationis quam habet unaquaeque creatura ad ipsum, relinquitur quod rationes rerum in intellectu divino non sint plures vel distinctae nisi secundum quod Deus cognoscit res pluribus et diversis modis esse assimilables sibi."

[143] *SCG* I, c. 53 (ed. Leonine, 13.150b4–6): "format in seipso quandam intentionem rei intellectae, quae est ratio ipsius, quam significat definitio."

[144] Geiger, "Les Idées Divines," 200: "Ici, il ne se contente pas de distinguer entre l'espèce en tant que forme actualisante et en tant qu'elle est objet."

Thomas explains in c. 53 that the understood *intentio* is necessary for man because it allows him to know regardless of the presence or the absence of the thing. If the intellect did not have an understood *intentio* of the thing, then it could know the thing only while it were present. But this explanation seems doubly unhelpful. Not only does the difficulty of presence and absence seem irrelevant to discussions of divine knowledge, but there is no reason to think that intelligible species could not perform this task. To understand what he means by *intentio*, then, it is necessary to look at his discussion of the eternal generation of the Divine Word in *Summa Contra Gentiles*, IV, c. 11. There, he argues that intellectual life has various levels of perfection corresponding to diverse degrees of potency in self-knowledge. God's intellectual life is the highest because his *intelligere* is not other than his *esse*. Thus, his understood *intentio* is the divine essence itself. He then specifies what he means by an understood *intentio*: "that which the intellect conceives in itself of the thing understood."[145] In man, an understood *intentio* is neither the thing understood itself nor the substance of the intellect itself. Rather, it is a certain conceived likeness of the thing. The *intentio* names an interior word that is signified by an exterior word. Moreover, Thomas clarifies that the *intentio* is to be distinguished from knowing the thing. An *intentio* is not the mere knowing of the thing: "it is apparent that understanding the thing is other than understanding the understood intention itself, which the intellect makes when it reflects upon its work."[146] An understood *intentio* is formed by intellectual reflection. It appears when the intellect looks back upon its work.

In God, since his *esse* and his *intelligere* are the same, the understood *intentio* is the same as his intellect. And because his intellect is the thing understood, when he understands himself he understands all things. When God understands himself, intellect, the thing understood, and the

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[145] *SCG* IV, c. 11 (ed. Leonine 15.32): "Dico autem *intentionem intellectam* id quod intellectus in seipso concipit de re intellecta."

[146] *SCG* IV, c. 11 (ed. Leonine, 15.32b35–38): "apparet quod aliud est intelligere rem, et aliud est intelligere ipsam intentionem intellectam, quod intellectus facit dum super suum opus reflicitur." From this difference, Thomas draws the futher conclusion that the sciences that deals with things (metaphysics, etc.) are other than the science that deals with intentions (logic).

understood *intentio* are the same.[147] And since what is understood *qua* understood has to be in the intellect, God has to be in his understanding *qua* understood. But what is in the one understanding is an understood *intentio* and word. Thus, by God's self-understanding, the Word of God is begotten.[148]

A conceived interior word, an understood *intentio*, is a certain *ratio* and likeness of the thing understood. This is as true for the Word of God as it is for a mental word conceived by a human intellect. And when the interior word is a likeness of another as principle of that other, then it is an exemplar. When the interior word is a likeness of another as to a principle, then it is an image. The likeness existing in the mind of the artificer is both the principle of his operation and the exemplar of his artwork. Since God's self-understanding is the principle of all things understood by him (by intellect and will), and since the principle of all things understood by God is the Word of God, that Divine Word is compared to all things understood by God as exemplar.[149]

From his explanation of *intentio* in IV, c. 11, then, a number of conclusions can be drawn. First, an understood *intentio* is not merely the thing understood. It is conceived in the intellect by an act of reflection upon the thing understood. The thing understood by God is his essence, i.e., himself. By a certain reflective act, as it were, God then forms the *intentiones* or *rationes* of all the things that can have a likeness to his essence. These understood intentions can, by an act of will, be exemplar causes. Since there are many ways of being like the divine essence, there are many *rationes*. Second, a divine understood *intentio*, which is the Word of God, is the exemplar of whatever God wills to create or could will to create. The *rationes* of all things are in God as in an exemplar cause, and they only exist because they were first in God as understood *intentiones*. Third, from these first two conclusions, it should be said that Thomas does hold a theory of divine ideas in the *Summa Contra Gentiles* even though he does not use the terminology of "ideas". Rather than divert from the

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[147] *SCG* IV, c. 11 (ed. Leonine, 15.32b45–33a3).
[148] *SCG* IV, c. 11 (ed. Leonine, 15.33a35–50).
[149] *SCG* IV, c. 11 (ed. Leonine, 15.34a51–b21).

explication of Thomas's texts in their chronological order, I will argue for the presence of the divine ideas in the *Summa Contra Gentiles* at the end of this section.

iv. *Summa theologiae* (1266–1268). Though the word *idea* gives way to *ratio* in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, it returns in the *Summa theologiae*. In q. 15, a. 2 of the latter text Thomas again insists that there must necessarily be many divine ideas. His argument for this position is taken from final causality. In any effect whatever, that which is the final end is properly intended by the principal agent. But that which is best existing in things is the good order of the universe, as Aristotle says in *Metaphysics* XII. Therefore, the order of the universe is properly intended by God, and not *per accidens* arising according to a succession of agents. Avicenna held the latter position saying that God created the first creature only, and that first creature created the second, etc. until there were a multitude of creatures. Thus, God would not have an idea of any creature but the first. But if the very order of the universe is *per se* created by him, and intended by him, then it is necessary that he have an idea of the order of the universe. But the *ratio* of some whole cannot be had unless the proper *rationes* of each of the parts is also had. Thus, the builder cannot conceive the species house unless he has the proper *ratio* of each of its parts. Thus, it is necessary that God have the proper *rationes* of all things. And this position coheres with Augustine's position in *In diversis quaestionibus LXXXIII*, q. 46: "singular things have been created by God according to proper *rationes*." Thus, it follows that there are many ideas in the divine mind.[150]

Realizing that this conclusion seems contrary to the divine simplicity, Thomas immediately qualifies that this plurality is not repugnant to God's simplicity. The compatibility of the two positions is easy to see if we distinguish between the species as that which (*quod*) is understood and the species as that by which (*qua*) it is understood. The species *qua* is the form making the intellect be in act, but the *quod* is the object understood. The plurality of divine ideas is not opposed to divine

[150] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.201b-202a).

simplicity because there is only one species *qua*, and that one species *qua* makes many things known by God. The ideas are many in the divine mind as understood by him.[151]

Thomas then explains how it is possible that God could know many things by means of one species. God perfectly cognizes his essence. He cognizes his essence according to every mode by which it is cognizable. But it can be cognized not only according as it is in itself, but according as it can be participated according to some mode of likeness by a creature. But each creature has a proper species according to which it participates a likeness of the divine essence in some mode. Therefore, insofar as God cognizes his own essence as it is imitable by such a creature, he cognizes his essence as the proper *ratio* and idea of this creature. And similarly with all creatures. Thus, it is clear that God understands many proper *rationes* of many things, which are many ideas.[152]

This response to the question of there being many ideas in God draws together all of the major points of the prior treatments of the question. First, it emphasizes that the divine ideas are posited because God has to know what he creates. But it would be imperfect for him to know what he creates only in a general way. If he is going to know the whole perfectly, he must know how the parts contribute to the whole. Second, he emphasizes that "*idea* does not name the divine essence insofar as it is an essence, but insofar as it is a likeness or *ratio* of this or that thing."[153] An idea is the divine essence as known, but not simply as it is known in itself. When God knows his essence, he knows himself perfectly, but he has, as it were, a secondary consideration of his essence. In this secondary consideration, he knows all the ways his essence is imitable by creatures. His understanding precedes the existence of any of these creatures, and so is not caused by any of them but rather causes them.[154] This twofold consideration makes sense only if we distinguish between

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[151] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.202a).

[152] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.202ab). Cf. *ST* I, q. 44, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.460b).

[153] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 2, ad 1 (ed. Leonine, 4.202b): "idea non nominat divinam essentiam inquantum est essentia, sed inquantum est similitudo vel ratio huius vel illius rei."

[154] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 2, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.202b).

that by which (*quo*) God understands and that which (*quod*) God understands. God's essence alone is that by which he understands. Thus, his wisdom and art are one.[155] An idea, however, is that which God understands, and he knows that he is imitable in many respects. These many respects are in God, not creatures, but they are not real respects like the respects distinguishing the persons of the Trinity. Instead, they are rational respects understood by God.[156]

In sum, the *Summa theologiae* offers the most complete treatment of the plurality of divine ideas from Thomas so far. Not only does he include the position that the ideas are the divine essence as known, and known as imitable in diverse ways, he includes the argument from the order of the universe to give greater context for his claims regarding the plurality of divine ideas. If God is to bring about the order of the universe perfectly, then it is not enough to know the whole, he must also know all of the parts and the arrangement of the parts. If he knew only the whole, then God would know the parts only indistinctly and under a certain confusion.[157] For all intents and purposes, God would be as Averroes described. He would have only indeterminate knowledge of things other than himself. He would be in potency, rather than perfect act.

v. *Quodlibet* IV (1271). Thomas's last treatment of the plurality of the divine ideas occurs in *Quodlibet* IV, q. 1. The question posed to him is whether there are many ideas in God. Thomas begins his response by making the Bonaventurean distinction between a plurality of things and plurality of reason.[158] According to things there are not many ideas in God. An idea names an exemplar form, and the only exemplar form of all things is the divine essence. All things imitate the divine essence insofar as they exist and are good. According to reason, however, there are many

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[155] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 2, ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.202b).

[156] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 2, ad 4 (ed. Leonine, 4.202b).

[157] See *ST* I, q. 85, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 5.336a): "Actus autem perfectus ad quem pervenit intellectus, est scientia completa, per quam distincte et determinate res cognoscuntur. Actus autem incompletus est scientia imperfecta, per quam sciuntur res indistincte sub quadam confusione, quod enim sic cognoscitur, secundum quid cognoscitur in actu, et quodammodo in potentia."

[158] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un, q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.608b): "omnes ideae in Deo sunt unum secundum rem; sed tamen plures secundum rationem intelligendi sive dicendi."

ideas in God. All things imitate the divine essence, but they do not all imitate it in one and the same way. They imitate the divine essence diversely and according to diverse grades. Therefore, the divine essence, according as it is imitable in this way by this creature, is the proper *ratio* and idea of this creature. And similarly with all other creatures. Thus, there are many ideas in God insofar as the divine essence is understood according to the diverse respects that things have to it.[159]

The diverse respects are understood not only by a created intellect, but by the uncreated intellect of God himself. For God knows, and knew from eternity, that diverse creatures would imitate his essence in diverse ways. From eternity, then, there were many ideas in the divine mind as the proper *rationes* of things understood by God. For this name "idea" signifies a certain form understood by an agent, in the likeness of which he intends to produce an exterior work.[160]

To this division between plurality according to thing and according to reason, Thomas adds the distinction between the cognizer and the thing cognized in his reply to the second objection. If we understand the expression "according to this, things are distinctly in proportion as God cognizes their distinction" on the part of the things cognized, then it is a true statement. Things are distinct just as God cognizes them to be distinct. But if we understand the same expression on the part of the cognizer, then it is a false statement. Things cognized would have the same mode of distinction in the divine intellect that they have in themselves. In themselves, things are essentially diverse, but they are not essentially diverse in the divine intellect. God does not receive knowledge from essentially diverse sources. He has but one source of knowledge, namely, his own essence.[161]

Thomas's treatment of the question here is worthy of note for several reasons. First, the question is more ontologically focused than his usual treatment. When he takes up the question of a multiplicity of divine ideas in other places, the primary concern is establishing the cognitive necessity

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[159] *Quodlibet* IV, q. 1 (ed. Leonine, 25.2.319:30–48).
[160] *Quodlibet* IV, q. 1 (ed. Leonine, 25.2.319:49–60).
[161] *Quodlibet* IV, q. 1, ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 25.2.64–81).

of such a multiplicity. By contrast, his response to the question is most concerned with establishing that God knows only his essence. Thus, he begins his response with the claim that according to things, there is only one divine idea. It is only according to reason—i.e., because of diverse respects of imitation—that there are many ideas in God. Thomas does bring up the distinction between cognizer and object of cognition, but waits until the replies to do so. The question, as it is understood here, is ontological.

Second, the reply is remarkably similar to Bonaventure's. The twofold distinction in plurality, the emphasis on diverse respects, and the distinction between cognizer and thing cognized are all employed in exactly the same way as by Bonaventure in his *In I Sent.* and *De scientia Christi*. Thomas adds his characteristic remarks about exemplarism and imitation, but the basic framework of his response is borrowed from Bonaventure. A number of reasons can account for this similarity. The first is that, as was mentioned above, Bonaventure and Thomas offer quite similar accounts of the divine ideas. They differ on some of the details, but the divine ideas are the essence as understood (i.e., truth) insofar as it expresses the diverse ways in which creatures can imitate it. Thus, there is only one divine idea qua source, but many divine ideas qua things known. The Leonine edition of Thomas's *Quodlibet* does not include any reference to Bonaventure, despite the clear parallelism.

A second possible reason for the similarity in this text is that this response appears in a quodlibetal dispute. *Quodlibet* IV has twelve questions, many of which are divided into multiple articles. Since the master had only a single day to prepare his answers to the questions asked him, and only a single day to deliver his replies, it is not surprising that some of the answers might be streamlined. The answer that he provides in *Quodlibet* IV, q. 1 is sufficient to answer the question. He could have offered more precise distinctions and separated his account of the plurality of divine ideas from others' accounts more clearly, but that would have taken time away from other questions. The standard Bonaventurean distinctions were good enough.

A third possible reason for the similarity of Thomas's account to Bonaventure's in this text also is a result of genre of the text. Anyone could have asked him this question. If the question were asked by a novice student, then Thomas might have tailored his answer to the questioner, and focused only on the broad distinctions that a beginner would need to know. The question also could have been asked with the intention of stirring up controversy. In that case, Thomas's response would be a reminder that at the core his position on that matter agrees with Bonaventure's.

A fourth possible reason for the similarity can be taken from a sociological consideration. Bonaventure himself may have been in the audience (or perhaps even asked the question). In the same time period that Thomas gave this *Quodlibet*, Bonaventure was regularly going to the University of Paris to deliver his various *Collationes*. The *Collationes* themselves give evidence that Bonaventure was keeping up with the theological and philosophical debates and atmosphere at the University. It is reasonable to suspect that attending quodlibetal disputes was one of the ways that he did this. Thomas may have offered a particularly Bonaventurean response in order to honor an illustrious member of the audience and to show that his theory was not substantively different from Bonaventure's.

vi. Conclusions. From the foregoing exposition, it is clear that Thomas consistently teaches that there are many divine ideas. There are many of them because the divine ideas are not the divine essence qua essence, but the divine essence qua understood. Only insofar as the divine essence is understood by the divine intellect are their divine ideas. Beginning with the *De veritate*, Thomas further distinguishes the divine essence qua understood into form as principle and form as term. Insofar as the divine essence is the principle of the divine intellect, there cannot be multiple ideas. The only source of God's knowledge is his own essence. His knowledge cannot come from without. If it did come from without, then he would be imperfect. Insofar as the divine essence is the term of the divine intellect, it allows God to know many things. Each of these many things are known by a

distinct divine idea because the many things are essentially diverse such that to know one is not to know another. To know man is not to know horse.

Although Thomas does not make explicit reference to it in any of the texts, we must remember that God's essence is his existence (*esse*). Therefore, each creature has to be like the divine act of being (*esse*). As Branick notes, "To say that the ideas represent God, at least in some proportion, is to say the ideas represent the act of *to be*, for God is this act."[162] To understand the multiplicity of divine ideas correctly, we must understand it as part of the problem of the one and the many. The divine essence is the infinite act of being, and so the divine ideas must express finite imitations of God's very act of being. Thomas's solution to the problem of the one and the many is relative non-being. As he says in his commentary on Boethius's *De Trinitate*, plurality comes from negation and affirmation; the many come from the affirmation of *esse* and its negation (*non esse*).[163] "The more a creature approaches God," he says in the *De veritate*, "the more it has *esse*. But the more it recedes from him, the more it has *non esse*."[164] Each creature is distinct because its act of being, its *esse*, uniquely imitates the divine act of being. Thus, relative non-being has to be in the mind of God because "in knowing things other than himself, God knows how they are *not* himself."[165] He knows all of the ways in which *non esse* can negate his infinite *esse*, and this knowledge is the divine ideas. For Thomas, the introduction of *non esse* into the divine intellect is necessary if God is to be able to produce a plurality of creatures. Yet, there is no cause for worry that divine perfection is compromised. Knowledge of *non esse* does not ontologically reduce God's essence. God remains

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[162] Vincent P. Branick, "The Unity of the Divine Ideas," *The New Scholasticism* 42 (1968): 189–90.

[163] *In De Trinitate*, q. 4, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 50.121:118–23): "Sic ergo patet quod prima pluralitatis vel divisionis ratio sive principium est ex negatione et affirmation, ut talis ordo originis pluralitatis intelligatur, quod primo sint intelligenda ens et non ens, ex quibus ipsa prima divisa constituuntur, ac per hoc plura." Branick and Doolan see confirmation of this argument in *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2 where Thomas argues that creatures imitate the divine essence in proportion as they fall short of its perfection (Branick 195–96. Doolan, 109). See *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.104:204–105:212).

[164] *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 3, ad 16 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.54:508–510): "unde quantum creatura accedit ad Deum tantum habet de esse, quantum vero ab eo recedit tantum habet de non esse."

[165] Doolan, 110. Emphasis original.

Ipsum Esse, even though he knows *non esse*. As Doolan points out, "the only ontological status non-being has is as an *ens rationis*."[166] The divine ideas, as known possibilities of combining *esse* and *non esse*, exist as known beings, and not as actual beings. Thomas's metaphysics of *esse* provides the ontological justification for the multiplicity of divine ideas.

vii. Ideas as Rational Relations. Thomas consistently claims that the multiplicity of divine ideas is a multiplicity according to a respect or reason. Describing their multiplicity in this way is meant to protect his theory from two major errors. The first is an error with respect to the essence of God, and the second is an error with respect to the Trinity. First, his account is meant to protect the simplicity of God from being really divided. As rational relations, the divine ideas do not divide the essence and compromise God's pure act of being. The divine ideas must not put potency in God. Second, describing the divine ideas as rational relations distinguishes them from the Persons of the Trinity. Thomas distinguishes the Persons of the Trinity according to their relations to each other, and so the divine ideas must not be articulated in such a way that the sort of relations that they are, are on par with the relations of the Trinity. If they were, there would be as many Persons in God as there are divine ideas. The Trinity would become an Infinity.

Relation is one of the nine accidental categories of being. Thomas holds a qualified realist stance when it comes to some relations.[167] Relations are real things in nature, and not merely posited by the mind, because natural things themselves have a clear order and relation to each other.[168] He consistently remarks that there are two things that we must understand when it comes to relations

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[166] Doolan, 110.

[167] A strongly realist position, like the one Scotus holds, holds that one thing (*a*) is related (R) to another thing (*b*) "if and only if (i) *a* and *b* are really distinct extra-mental things, (ii) there is a real foundation in *a* for R, and (iii) there exists an extra-mental 'relative thing' R with its own accidental reality really distinct from that of its foundation" (Mark G. Henninger, *Relations: Medieval Theories 1250–1325* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989], 25). Thomas's theory softens the third condition such that "*a* and *b* exist in a certain way. . . . One need not posit any further entity, whether a relative thing or a concept" (Henninger, 25). See Henninger, 23–29.

[168] *ST* I, q. 13, a. 7 (ed. Leonine, 4.152b): "ipsae res naturalem ordinem et habitudinem habent ad invicem."

(or any accident): its *esse* and its *ratio*.[169] Every category of accidents has the same sort of *esse* analogically, but this *esse* defies all of our attempts to define it. There is no more general genus from which we could make a proper definition. We are wont to speak loosely and say that "to be in a subject" is the definition of accidents, but this cannot be their definition.[170] An accident is "a thing to which it belongs to be in another."[171] Every accident is founded upon another, either a substance, or another accident which itself is founded upon a substance. A real relation for Thomas is an accident founded upon another accident. For example, the real relation "whiter than" is founded upon the quality of white which inheres in a subject relative to the quality of white which inheres in another subject.

A *ratio* is "nothing other than that which the intellect apprehends from the signification of some name."[172] In things that can be defined, the *ratio* is the definition of the thing. In things that cannot be defined, like God's attributes or the categories, "the *ratio* is whatever the intellect does understand correctly by the concept signifying the reality."[173] Thus, although the category of relation is strictly speaking undefinable, it still has a *ratio* proper to it which the intellect can apprehend correctly. The category of relation is distinct in that its proper *ratio* does not signify something inhering in something else. Rather, its proper *ratio* is "only a respect to another."[174] Since a respect to

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[169] *In I Sent.*, d. 8, q. 4, a. 3 (ed. Mandonnet, I.223-225); *In I Sent.*, d. 26, q. 2, a. 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.630); *In I Sent.*, d. 33, q. 1, a. 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.765); *ST* I, q. 28, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.321a).

[170] *In IV Sent.*, d. 12, q. 1, a. 1, ql. 1, ad 2 (ed. Moos, 4.499). Cf. *In I Sent.*, q. 4, a. 3 (ed. Mandonnet, I.224), and *ST* III, q. 77, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 12.193–94).

[171] *In IV Sent.*, d. 12, q. 1, a. 1, ql. 1, ad 2 (ed. Moos, 4.499). This definition is important because of the theological question of the Eucharist. Thomas argues that God can bring it about that an accident actually does exist without its substantial subject. In such cases, it still belongs to the accident to exist in a subject, even though it is not doing so at the moment. *Inesse* is the proximate cause of the *esse* of accidents. If the proximate cause is removed, and the accident is not inhering in a subject, then the remote cause (God) is sufficient to make it continue existing. See Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 228–237, esp. 234–237, and Gilson, "Quasi Definitio Substantiae," in *St. Thomas Aquinas, 1274–1974: Commemorative Studies*, ed. Armand Maurer (Toronto: 1974), I.111–129.

[172] *In I Sent.*, d. 2, q. 1, a. 3 (ed. Mandonnet, I.66): "ratio, prout hic sumitur, nihil aliud est quam id quod apprehendit intellectus de significatione alicujus nominis."

[173] Henninger, 15.

[174] *ST* I, q. 28, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 4.318b): "Ea vero quae dicuntur ad aliquid, significant secundum propriam rationem solum respectum ad aliud."

another does not necessarily imply inherence in a subject, a relation need not inhere in a subject. Thomas is clear that a categorical real relation requires inherence in a subject, but non-categorical (i.e., rational) relations and super-categorical (i.e., divine) relations need not have a foundation in the thing of which they are said.[175]

The fact that not every relation requires inherence in a subject, i.e., that not every *ratio* of relation has to be found along with the *esse* of relation, plays a key role in the primary distinction that Thomas makes in relations: some relations are real and others are only rational. A real relation has to be founded upon some real accident in the relation's subject, i.e., it has to have the *ratio* and *esse* of a relation independent of any intellectual apprehension. A real relation is caused by the foundation it has in the subject. A rational relation, however, is caused by an intellect and is sustained in existence by that intellectual activity.

The possibility that each extreme of the relation could be a real or a rational relation yields three possibilities. With the first possibility, both extremes have only a rational relation to each other. They are both rationally related when the bearing, or reference (*habitudo*), cannot be between something except by apprehension alone as when we say that the same is the same as itself. Every relation between being and non-being (*ens et non ens*), and genus and species, is of this type. In the second possibility, both extremes, i.e., the two subjects in which the accidents inhere, are really related to each other. Mutual real relations occur in all relations that follow upon the categories of quantity, and action and passion.[176] In the case of quantity, both of the extremes have a particular quantity and the subjects of those quantities are related to each other. E.g., the relations of taller than and shorter than are founded upon the quantities of height that inhere in the extremes. In the case of action and passion, both extremes are mutually involved in the action. E.g., a mover and

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[175] *In I Sent.*, d. 26, q. 2, a. 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.630).

[176] See *De potentia*, q. 7, a. 9 (ed. Pession, II.208a); *In III Phys.*, lect. 1, n. 6 (ed. Leonine, 2.102–103); *In V Met.*, lect. 17, nn. 1001–05 (ed. Spiazzi, 266). See Henninger, 17.

movable thing, or a father and son. The latter receives the action of the former, and neither would exist without the other. There is no father without a son, and there is no son without a father. The relation inheres in the father because of his act of begetting, and in the son because of his passion of being begotten.[177]

The third possibility is when the relation is real for one extreme and rational for the other. This mixed relation occurs whenever the two extremes are not of the same order.[178] Thomas's example for this type of relation is the way in which the senses and knowledge are related to the sensible and the knowable. The sensible and the knowable exist in the sensible and knowable thing according to *esse naturale*. A puma has the form of puma according to *esse naturale* because it is in fact a puma. When a man senses or knows the puma, he cannot have the form of puma according to *esse naturale* because the man remains a man. He does not become a puma. The man must have the form of puma according to *esse sensibile* or *esse intelligibile*. Thomas periodically prefers the term *esse spirituale* to *esse sensibile* and *esse intelligibile*.[179] *Esse naturale* and *esse spirituale* are not of the same order. As a result, the sensitive or intellectual knowledge is really related to the thing sensed or known because the knowledge is ordered to knowing the thing. The thing sensed or known is only rationally related to the sensitive or intellectual knowledge because the intellect apprehends the thing as the term of the relation of its knowledge. The thing is related to the knowledge only because the latter is referred to the former. In itself, the thing is indifferent to being sensed or known. The thing measures man's sensitive cognition and speculative knowledge, but the thing is in no way measured by the knowledge.[180] If the thing were to cease being sensed or known, there would be no real change in it.

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[177] *ST* I, q. 13, a. 7 (ed. Leonine, 4.152b–153a).

[178] A. Krempel notes that the name "mixed relation" is "bizzare" because there is no mixing of the two relations: "Bref, ce n'est pas la relation qui est mixte, mais une classe de relations." Like Krempel, I preserve the term "mixed relation" because it has become the standard terminology (*La doctrine de la relation chez saint Thomas: Exposé historique et systématique* [Paris: Vrin, 1952], 458).

[179] See, e.g., *In I Sent.*, d. 30, q. 1, a. 3 (ed. Mandonnet, I.708).

[180] *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 2 (ed., Leonine, 22.1.9:81–120). Importantly, Thomas qualifies that the measure–measured relation is the opposite for practical knowledge. A work of art is measured against the standard in the mind of the artist.

Since the relation of the thing sensed or known is rational, it is not really in the thing known, but in the one sensing or knowing.[181]

Thomas's claim about relations being of the same order allows him to solve the problems outlined above. He can say that divine ideas are certain relations without claiming that these relations constitute additional Persons of the Trinity. Since God is outside of every order of creatures (i.e., he is outside of every genus), and since all creatures are ordered to him, but not vice versa, it is obvious that creatures are really related to God, but God is not really related to creatures.[182] Rather, God is only rationally related to creatures.[183] Creatures are really ordered to God because they are finite imitations of his essence and are utterly dependent upon him. That any given creature exists as the type of thing it is depends entirely on God's intellect and will. Creatures are measured by God's knowledge, and so are really related to him. The creature has created existence (*esse creatum*), but God's existence is not created. God is *ipsum esse subsistens*, and so of a different order than creatures.[184] And since the divine essence is the only source of God's knowledge and therefore the only idea that God has, the divine essence and the ideas known by means of it are only rationally related to creatures.

The divine ideas insofar as they are multiple are no threat to divine simplicity because they are only logically distinct. It is only because of the diverse real relations that creatures have to God that the divine ideas are distinguished. Krempel expresses the multiplicity well: "God compares his essence to such or such realizable creature, and understands there the real relations possible to him: from this comparison between himself who is the model, and the creatures who can imitate him,

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The idea in the mind of the artist, therefore, will be rationally related to the work of art, and the work of art will be really related to the idea in the mind of the artist.

[181] *ST* I, q. 13, a. 7 (ed. Leonine, 4.153a).

[182] *ST* I, q. 13, a. 7 (ed. Leonine, 4.153a). Cf. *De potentia*, q. 7, a. 10 (ed. Pession, II.209a–211b) and *De potentia* q. 7, a. 8, ad 3 (ed. Pession, II.206b).

[183] *ST* I, q. 13, a. 7 (ed. Leonine, 4.153a), and *In I Sent.*, d. 30, q. 1, a. 3 (ed. Mandonnet, I.707)

[184] *ST* I, q. 104, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 5.463–64). Cf. *ST* I, q. 6, a. 2, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.67b).

result then, as a formal effect, the logical, 'ideal', divine relations."[185] The divine ideas are nothing other than the rationally distinct ways in which God knows himself to be imitable by creatures. These rational relations are the origin of the real relations that creatures have to God. God is only rationally related to creatures because he is of a higher order than creatures that he knows can imitate his essence. There is no real division in God because of the multiplicity of divine ideas because there is no real relation between God and creatures.

Thomas's explanation of mixed relations also helps to distinguish the plurality of divine ideas from the plurality of divine Persons. Thomas holds, like all Christian thinkers, that the relations between the Persons of the Trinity (such as paternity and filiation) are really in God. If they were not really in God, then God could not be called Father, nor Son. God would only be Father or Son by reason of our understanding alone, which is the Sabellian heresy.[186] Thomas avoids this heresy by arguing that the relations between the divine persons are real because there is proceeding and that from which it proceeds *in the same order*. The Persons of the Trinity all have the same nature, so the relations that exist between them are real. Because they are of the same order, the relation between them has to be real. Paternity really belongs to the Father, and Filiation really belongs to the Son. Procession really belongs to the Father and the Son, and spiration really belongs to the Holy Spirit. There is no worry that the divine ideas are additional real relations in the Trinity, however, because the relations do not have a sameness of order. Since the divine ideas are not of the same order of that to which they are related, namely, creatures, the divine ideas are distinguished only by rational relations. They could not be additional Persons in God because the Persons are distinguished only by the real relations founded in the identity of the divine nature.

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[185] Krempel, 421: "Dieu compare son essence à telle ou telle créature réalisable, y compris le relations réelles possibles à lui: de cette comparaison entre Lui qui est le modèle, et les créatures qui peuvent l'imiter, résultant alors, comme effet formel, les relations logiques «idéales» divines."

[186] *ST* I, q. 28, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 4.318a).

viii. Divine Ideas in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*. It is quite noticeable that Thomas does not devote a section of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* to the divine ideas as he does in every other *ex professo* treatment of the issue. This absence becomes even more conspicuous when we consider that autographed manuscripts prove that I, c. 53 underwent three revisions, and explicit mention of the divine ideas appears in all but the last one.[187] Does his removing divine ideas from the work signal that they are not really necessary for his system? Was he, as Étienne Gilson suggests, merely using them out of deference to tradition?[188] I say no. Thomas holds a theory of divine ideas in the *Summa Contra Gentiles* even though he does not use the terminology. The *rationes* in the divine intellect are the exemplar causes of everything that comes forth from God. Thus, as Wippel says, "his defense of a plurality of divine reasons for individual creatures is equivalent to a defense of a plurality of divine ideas."[189] The fact that he uses the word *ratio* instead of *idea* is of little consequence. Augustine argues that *ratio* is not a great translation for *idea* because *ratio* is the translation for *logos*, but admits that whoever wants to use *ratio* still speaks of the same thing. Moreover, Augustine consistently uses the word *ratio* along with *idea*, *forma*, and *species* in his explanation of the divine ideas.[190]

But if this line of thinking is correct, why would he switch vocabulary in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*? Scholars have offered a number of suggestions for this change. Geiger argues that Thomas had been utilizing the more Aristotelian vocabulary of intelligible species, and so sticks to a more Aristotelian manner of expression when he needed to account for a distinction between the species as actualizing form and object known.[191] Wippel contends that Thomas does not speak of ideas

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[187] For the manuscript see ed. Leonine, 13.20*–22*. For extensive analysis of the revisions, see Geiger, "Les rédactions successives," 221–240, and Boland, 214–225.

[188] Gilson, *Introduction à la philosophie chrétienne*, 173–74: "Pourtant, il est à peine exagéré de dire qu'au fond, tout ce que Saint Thomas a dit des Idées était dans son espirit une concession de plus faite du language d'une philosophie qui n'était pas vraiment la sienne. C'était aussi, n'en doutons-pas, la reconnaissance de l'auctorité théologique de Saint Augustin."

[189] Wippel, "Thomas Aquinas on Divine Ideas," 28. Cf. Geiger, 203–04.

[190] E.g., "Quod si recte dici vel credi non potest, restat ut omnia ratione sint condita. Nec eadem ratione homo, qua equus" (Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46, n. 2 [PL 40.30]).

[191] Geiger, "Les Idées Divin," 204.

because his primary concern in that section of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* is to show how God can *know* many creatures without compromising his unity and simplicity. Since the divine ideas, strictly speaking, fill the ontological role of exemplar causes, it is not surprising that he would choose another term to speak of divine knowledge.[192] Boland concurs with Wippel's analysis and adds that Thomas became more sensitive to divine simplicity and to Aristotle's critique of Plato's theory of ideas. The presence of the word *idea* in prior editions of I, c. 54 "perhaps seemed too Platonic."[193] Since Thomas could express the same theory without the Platonic baggage of the word *idea*, he did not feel the need to save the word.

Doolan also reaffirms Wippel's reasoning and adds that the use of the word *ratio* is crucial for understanding the sort of multiplicity that Thomas wishes to attribute to the divine ideas. The multiplicity of divine ideas is a multiplicity according to reason, not according to reality, i.e., it is a logical multiplicity. Thus, "it might be tempting to dismiss this multiplicity as *merely* logical and, hence, of no philosophical significance."[194] But such a temptation must not be indulged. The multiplicity of ideas is rooted in the ontological reality that the divine essence can be imitated in a multiplicity of ways.[195] The multiplication of *rationes* in God is not man's invention, but precedes man and accounts for the distinction in things: "there is a plurality of natures in things only inasmuch as there is first a plurality of ideas *in* God."[196] The choice of the term *ratio* over *idea* makes

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[192] Wippel, *Thomas Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 29. This reason is plausible, but it does not fully explain why Thomas does not then speak of ideas in *SCG* II or IV. I can see only two ways to account for this absence. The first is to say that since he began speaking of *intentio* and *rationes* in *SCG* I, he chose to be consistent in his language. The second is the suggestion that I will introduce *infra*.

[193] Boland, 224–25.

[194] Doolan, 115.

[195] See *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.105:244–59).

[196] Doolan, 117. Emphasis original. Thomas explicitly argues this point in *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2, ad 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.842); *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2, ad 8 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.106:294–301); *De potentia*, q. 3, a. 16, ad 14 (ed. Pession, II.90a).Cf. Branick, 171n1: "It is not up to us to choose the multiplicity or not. There is a structure of reality which precedes our intellection and which forces us to consider God in a multiplicity of ideas, as long as we are working with ideas."

this point forcefully. Not only does a multiplicity of *rationes* not contradict divine simplicity, it is necessary if God is to know a multiplicity of objects.

All of these reasons are good, but I would like to add one more possible explanation for the omission of the word "idea" in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*. Thomas might not have included a systematic treatment of divine ideas because it would not have been as conducive to the purpose of the work. Unlike his didactic works, like the *De veritate* or the *Summa theologiae*, the *Summa Contra Gentiles* is more apologetic.[197] The work, he says, is meant to promote the truth of the Catholic faith by removing contrary errors. But since many of these errors are held by Muslims and pagans, who do not admit the authority of Scripture, it is necessary to have recourse to the common authority of natural reason.[198] Thus, the first three books of the work are explicitly philosophical and make reference to Scripture only in passing and at the end of some of the chapters.[199] Since reason falls short of a number of divine truths, such as the fact that God is three and one, such truths cannot be demonstrated by philosophical reasoning.[200] As a result, Thomas says that his intention is not so much to convince his interlocutor by overwhelming arguments, as it is to resolve the arguments that

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[197] I do not wish to suggest that the *SCG* is a merely apologetic book. I do not think Thomas intended the work to be used only as a means to convert the Muslims and pagans, and I think Torrell is right to criticize those who would reduce the book to such an end (*Initiation*, I.153–56). Yet, I do think we have to take Thomas seriously when he claims that "propositum notrae intentionis est veritatem quam fides Catholica profitetur, pro nostro manifestare, errores eliminando contrarios" (*SCG* I, c. 2 [ed. Leonine, 13.6a14–b1]). Thomas clearly intends for this book to be an apology in the ancient sense. Thomas writes the *SCG* to defend the truth against anyone who would reject it. Everyone who reads this work is meant to be converted from his errors to the truth. Thus, I could agree with van Steenberghen when he suggests that "Thomas écrit manifestement pour les penseurs chrétiens (théologiens ou philosophes) attachés à leur foi; il n'est pas invraisemblable qu'il ait conçu spécialement la *Somme contre les Gentils* pour l'usage de personnes desinées à prendre contact avec les milieu intellectuels «infidèles», principalement dans des pays musulmans" (*La Philosophie au XIIIe Siècle*, 2nd ed. [Louvain-La-Neuve: Éditions de L'Institut Supérior de Philosophie, 1991], 290). I am more inclined, however, to agree with Gauthier when he writes (contrary to his earlier opinion), that Thomas "n'est pas une intention d'apostolat *immédiat et limité*, mais une intention de sagesse *à portée apostolique universelle*" (*Introduction*, 87).

[198] *SCG* I, c. 2 (ed. Leonine, 13.6a14-b22), esp.: ". . . propositum nostrae intentionis est veritatem quam fides Catholica profitetur, pro nostro modulo manifestare, errores eliminando contrarios . . . . quia quidam erorum, ut Mahmetistae et pagani, non convenient nobiscum in auctoritate alicuius Scripturae . . . . necesse est ad naturalem rationem recurrere, cui omnes assentire coguntur."

[199] *SCG* I, c. 9 (ed. Leonine, 13.22b16-22).

[200] *SCG* I, c. 3 (ed. Leonine, 13.7a10-b7).

his interlocutor has against the truth.[201] In such cases where the truth of the matter is available only by faith, it is sufficient to show that this matter is not contrary to reason. If it were contrary to reason, then it would have to be false. If it is consistent with reason, then it cannot be rejected out of hand.

At first glance, this stated intention at the beginning of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* does not seem to help. Certain theological truths may be beyond demonstration, but Thomas does not think that the divine ideas are theological truths exceeding the capacity of man's reason. The divine ideas are a properly philosophical subject of inquiry because the divine ideas are exemplar causes. Discussion of exemplar causality is a properly philosophical subject. It may have been philosophically appropriate, but I do not think that including divine ideas would have been more conducive to his goal.

A dialogue is always best served when the two parties agree upon their terms. Thomas names Muslims and pagans as his dialogue partners in the work, i.e., he is in dialogue with Aristotle, Avicenna, Averroes, and their intellectual descendants. This fact is important for two reasons. First, the way that Christians use the term "ideas" is completely foreign to his interlocutors. If he wants to uproot his interlocutors' errors and replace them with the truth, why would Thomas introduce a foreign use of a familiar term into the work? Thomas's interlocutors seem to look favorably on Aristotle's critique of Plato's theory of ideas. As a result, Thomas judged it better to use more Aristotelian language. It is clear that his interlocutors (in their Latin translations) are comfortable speaking of *ratio*, so Thomas uses their own vocabulary to argue that positions they are already willing to hold (i.e., that God knows himself perfectly) require that God also then know everything that he can make.

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[201] *SCG* I, c. 9 (ed. Leonine, 13.22a13-17): "Sed quia tales rationes ad secundam veritatem haberi non possunt, non debet esse ad hoc intentio ut adversaries rationibus convincatur: sed ut eius rationes, quas contra veritatem habet, solvantur."

Moreover, as was shown in the introduction, divine simplicity and unity are paramount for Aristotle, Avicenna, and Averroes. Each of the three admits divine knowledge and argues that all things have God as their source, but each does so with a great admixture of error. Either God has no knowledge of creatures, or he knows them in an imperfect way. Thomas wished to correct their error concerning divine knowledge, but had to express the correction in a way that was obviously faithful to divine simplicity. Any solution that even hinted at divine complexity would have immediately turned his opponents away. Since his interlocutors would understand the word "ideas" first and foremost in terms of Platonic ideas, using the term "ideas" would make his task more difficult. Thus, Thomas chose to use the term "*ratio*" instead of "idea" because he thought that it would be more effective at resolving some of the arguments that his interlocutors brought against God's knowledge of things other than himself. Since he could use the terms synonymously, he chose the term that had less philosophical baggage. Thomas intends to articulate a theory of divine ideas, but uses the term *ratio* for apologetic reasons.

This apologetic explanation has the benefit of making greater sense of Thomas's claim at the end of I, c. 54 that "the opinion of Plato, according to which all things are formed that exist in material things, is also in some way saved."[202] The mention of ideas and exemplar causality together lends credence to Wippel's explanation, but it also is a subtle way of introducing his Muslim and pagan interlocutors to a Christian way of expressing the matter. Having argued that the multiplicity of *rationes* in the mind of God are required, Thomas adds this line as if to tell his interlocutors "When you hear the Christian philosopher and theologian speaking of divine ideas, realize that he means nothing more than what I have said here about *rationes*. Our theory of divine ideas is not the

[202] *SCG* I, c. 54 (ed. Leonine, 13.155b16-19): "In quo etiam aliqualiter salvatur Platonis opinio ponentis *ideas*, secundum quas formarentur omnia quae in rebus materialibus existunt." Emphasis original.

theory of Plato. We concur with Plato that the ideas are the forms according to which all things are made, but they do not exist separately. Divine ideas are really *rationes* in the divine mind."

d. The Existence of Things in God and the Possibles

We have so far seen that Thomas thinks that an idea is, strictly speaking, a form that is an exemplar cause and the principle of practical cognition; we have also seen that God has many ideas that are rationally distinct from each other according as each uniquely imitates the divine essence. We now have to investigate what sort of existence the divine ideas enjoy. This investigation involves answering two distinct questions. (1) Do the divine ideas enjoy any existence independent of their being known by God? (2) Why do the divine ideas exist, especially those divine ideas that God never wills to create? Do they exist necessarily, or does God will them to exist?

i. *In I Sententias* (1252–1256). Thomas first takes up the question of whether the things cognized by God are in God in *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 1, a. 3. Like Bonaventure, Thomas quotes the prologue of John's Gospel in the *sed contra:* "what was made in him was life."[203] He begins his reply by distinguishing various ways in which the preposition "in" can be taken. Being in the knowledge of God is other than being in the divine essence, and both of these are other than being in God.

"Knowledge" names a certain cognition. Being in knowledge is nothing other than what is cognized through knowledge. Therefore, all things that God knows, both good and evil, are said to be in his knowledge. "Essence" is signified through the mode of form or nature. Being in the divine essence is nothing other than to subsist in the divine nature, or to be the same as the divine nature. Therefore, creatures cannot be said to be in the divine essence. Only the divine persons, properties, and attributes are in the divine essence. The name "God" signifies a subsisting thing whose being is also his operating. Whence, being in God can be understood in two ways: either (a) that something is in his being or (b) that it adjoins his operating. Creatures are not in God in the first way. In the

[203] John 1:2

second way we say that the works of which we are lord are in us. In the latter way, we say that all things that are from God are in him, but not evil things, which are not from him.

Thomas then concludes that the three terms are related to each other according to a certain order. For whatever is in the divine essence is in God, as it were, pertaining to his being, but the two are not convertible. That which is adjoined to his work is in him, but is not in his essence. Similarly, whatever is in God is in his knowledge, but is not convertible, as is clear from the case of evil things.[204] Thus, Thomas holds that not everything known by God is in God either as a divine Person or as in his essence because God knows things that would be repugnant for him to be or to create.

This position is consistent with the position he takes in the following article, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 1 that an idea is the principle of both practical and speculative cognition, but refers especially to the former.[205] Insofar as a divine idea is an exemplar form of something, that idea is clearly in God's essence. The case of a divine idea insofar as it is speculative is the same. Though God does not intend to make the creatures known by speculative ideas (which is what makes them speculative ideas), those creatures are still in his essence because he could make them. This analysis of the word "in" is helpful because it clarifies that the divine ideas are not merely in the divine intellect but in the divine essence itself because they are the ways in which God knows his essence to be imitable. Yet, the analysis of "in" leaves unanswered an important aspect of our original question, namely, what sort of existence does something in the divine essence enjoy?

Thomas takes up this aspect of the question in his reply to the second objection. The second objector of *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 1, a. 3 argues that things can exist in God only in a qualified sense (*secundum quid*) because they are in him through their likeness, not through their essence. But everything more truly exists through its essence. Therefore, things exist more truly and better in

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[204] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 1, a. 3 (ed. Mandonnet, I.836).
[205] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.839).

themselves than in God.[206] In response to this objection, Thomas argues that the existence of a creature can be considered in four ways. In the first way, the creature exists according as it is in its proper nature. In the second way, the creature exists just as it is in our cognition. In the third way, the creature exists just as it is in God. In the fourth way, the creature exists generally, as it abstracts from the other three ways.[207] When it is said that a creature exists more truly in God than in itself, the first way of consideration is being compared to the third way. Everything that is in something is in it through the mode of that in which it is, and not through its own mode. Whence a creature is in God through uncreated being, but in itself through created being, in which there is less truth of being than in uncreated being. But if the first way of being is compared to the second, it is discovered that they relate according as exceeding and exceeded. For the being that is in the proper nature of the thing, in that which is substantial, exceeds the being of the thing in the soul that is accidental. But the being in its proper nature is exceeded by the being in the soul according as the former is material being, and the latter is intellectual being. Therefore, a thing has existence more truly through its likeness than in itself.[208]

From this text it is clear that things exist in God and that they enjoy uncreated existence in God because they are in him according as he is, rather than as they would be in themselves as creatures. The divine ideas do not enjoy any existence in themselves. They only have the uncreated

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[206] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 1, a. 3, arg. 2 (ed. Madonnet, I.835). For more on the question of whether Aquinas thinks that things exist more truly in themselves or in God, see Gregory T. Doolan, "Aquinas on the Divine Ideas and the Really Real," *Nova et Vetera* 13 (2015): 1059–1091.

[207] This fourfold distinction is clearly indebted to Avicenna's claim that an essence exists either naturally or intellectually, but can be considered in abstraction from both of these modes of existence (Avicenna, *Met.* V.1-2 [ed. Van Riet, II.227–245). Thomas regularly uses the Avicennian distinction, but he departs from Avicenna insofar as he arrives at a fourfold consideration rather than a threefold consideration. I think we can account for this departure from Avicenna by recalling that Thomas is speaking of the *esse* of a creature, not the essence of a creature. The essence of a creature itself would not change depending on whether the knower is God or a creature. The sort of existence that the creature enjoys, however, would change depending on whether it were in a created or an uncreated knower. Avicenna's distinction will be discussed more below in the section on Henry of Ghent. For other uses of this Avicennian principle in Thomas's work, see *In I Sent.*, d. 38, q. 1, a. 3 (ed. Mandonnet, I.905–906); *De ente* c. 3 (ed. Leonine 43.374:1–375:155); *Quodlibet* VIII, q. 1, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 25.1.51–53); *De potentia*, q. 5, a. 9, ad 16 (ed. Pession, II.155a).

[208] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 1, a. 3, ad 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.836–37).

existence of being in God.[209] Thus, the divine ideas exist and have the possibility of being exemplar causes only because they are in the divine essence. "Whatever is cognized has to exist in some way, at least in him knowing it," so in order to be thought by God, the divine ideas have to have some existence, and that existence is in divine cognition.[210] At stake in this question is the ontological status of the thing. Since *esse increatum* is ontologically superior to *esse creatum*, it is clear that things exist more truly in God, even though they are present only as likenesses, because in God they have *esse increatum*.

So, Thomas argues, all of the things that God knows have some sort of existence because they are known, and they are possible because God knows them. But what makes the divine ideas (including the ones that will never exist at any time) possible? Do the divine ideas depend only on the divine intellect such that they are necessarily possible, or do they also depend on the divine will such that they are voluntarily possible? Thomas's answer in *In I Sent.* is clear. Divine ideas can be either principles of speculative or practical cognition. So while the divine will is required for anything to be created, the divine will plays no part in the formation of the divine ideas.[211] God does not have ideas because he wills to have ideas. He has them because he knows himself perfectly. The diverse grades of potency in things have been ordained by divine disposition according as they more or less fall short of the divine power.[212] The divine ideas come about, as it were, because divine power *can* be imitated in a certain way. Divine choice or will is what distinguishes divine ideas that will actually exemplify some real created being from divine ideas that will forever possibly exemplify some real

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[209] *In I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 3, ad 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.496): "Ad secundum dicendum quod rationes ideales rerum, quae sunt in Deo ab aeterno, non sunt aliud secundum rem ab ipso intellectu et essentia divina."

[210] *In I Sent.*, d. 38, q. 1, a. 4 (ed. Mandonnet, I.905): "quidquid cognoscitur, aliquo modo oportet esse, ad minus in ipso cognoscente."

[211] See *In I Sent.*, d. 43, q. 2, a. 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.1007–09).

[212] *In I Sent.*, d. 42, q. 2, a. 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.988): "Seiendum tamen, quod gradus potentiarum, sicut et naturarum, divina dispositione ordinati sunt secundum quod una plus vel minus deficit a perfectione divinae potentiae."

created being, but God's will does not give divine ideas their possibility. Their possibility comes from God knowing himself.[213]

ii. *De veritate* (1256–1259). In the *De veritate* much of Thomas's answer to the question concerning the type of existence that ideas enjoy in God can be answered from what has been said already. God does not receive knowledge from without. The only species by which he knows is his essence, or to phrase it as Thomas does in q. 3, a. 2, God has only one form that is the principle of his act of understanding.[214] Therefore, all of the ideas are identical to the divine essence.[215] Since actually practical cognition, virtually practical cognition, speculative cognition of operables but not insofar as they are operable, or speculative cognition of inoperables can all be called ideas, everything that God knows according to each of these cognitive modes is one with the divine essence.

Thomas adds to this response in *De veritate*, q. 4, a. 8. He declares that everything that has been made is life in the Word. Things are in the Word either by a comparison to the Word or by comparison to the thing existing in its proper nature. The likenesses existing in the Word are life in both ways. Things are said to live when they have a principle of motion and vital operations in them. Since, as Aristotle says in the *De anima*, living is the being (*esse*) of living things, that *esse* that has a thing as it is moving itself to some operation is properly called the life of a thing. No operation in us to which we move ourselves is our *esse*, but the understanding (*intelligere*) of the Word is its *esse*, and similarly a likeness of it. Whence the likeness of a creature in the Word is its life. It follows from this that the likeness of a creature in the Word is productive and motive of a creature existing in its

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[213] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 3 (ed. Mandonnet, I.814): "est intellectum secundum ipsa res, quae per similitudinem illam intelligitur. . . . Sed si accipitur intellectum secundum, sic non tantum se intelligit, set etiam alia."

[214] *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 13 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.89:156–58); Cf. *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.104:158–63).

[215] *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 3, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.52:328–32): "Similiter nec in Deo, cum agat per suam essentiam, effectus eius in eo est distinctus ab essentia sua sed omnino unum, etr ideo hoc quo cognoscit effectum non est aliud quam essentia sua."

proper nature.[216] Because a creature is in the Word according to the manner in which it is in the Word and not the manner in which it is in its proper nature, its existence is proper to the Word's existence, and not as it would be in its proper nature. Even though certain things are non-living and material in their proper nature, nevertheless they are immaterial and living in the Word.[217]

From the fact that things have life in the Word, it follows that they exist more truly in the Word than in their proper natures. From the authority of Pseudo-Dionysius, Thomas argues that when an effect falls short of its cause, the great distance between the two allows for something to be truly predicated of the effect that is not predicated of the cause.[218] The fact that pleasures are not properly said to be pleased despite being the cause of our being pleased is evidence of this principle. This situation occurs only when the mode of the causes is more sublime than the modes predicated of the effects, as happens in everything caused by an equivocal agent. The Word is such an equivocal agent with respect to creatures. It causes the truth of the thing as well as the truth of predication of the thing. With regard to the former, it is beyond doubt that there is more truth in the Word than in the things themselves because, as Thomas argued in *De veritate*, q. 1, aa. 4–5, the truth in the divine intellect is first and properly truth. The truth in the divine intellect is the only eternal truth, and all things are true because of the truth of the divine intellect.[219]

With regard to the truth of predication, there is more truth in the proper nature of the thing than in the Word. It is more proper to predicate "man" of a man existing in the flesh than in the Word. The creature as it exists in the Word does not have its proper operations, and so it is more fitting to predicate those operations of the thing existing in its proper nature. Thomas argues that

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[216] *De veritate*, q. 4, a. 8 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.135:36–136:75).

[217] *De veritate*, q. 4, a. 8 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.135:76–87).

[218] *De veritate,* q. 4, a. 6 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.133:51–56). See, Ps.-Dionysius, *De div. nom.*, II, 52, §8 (PG 3.654).

[219] *De veritate*, q. 1, aa. 4–5 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.11:1–22:504). See Maurer, "St. Thomas and Eternal Truths," 43–58. It is important to note that while Thomas thinks that the intelligibility of the world can only be explained by reference to the eternal truth of the divine intellect, he does not think that our knowledge of truth requires access to eternal truth. There is no need for divine illumination. The things themselves are sufficient for us to have knowledge of truth.

this position is not because of any deficiency in the Word, but because of its supereminence. The likeness of the thing in God causes the thing to exist, and gives it all of its operations.[220] So while it is truer to predicate "runs" of man in his proper nature, it is only truer because God has put that operation into man.[221]

This distinction between the truth of predication and the truth of the thing is important because it allows Thomas to give a nuanced answer to the question whether things exist more truly in themselves or in God than he did in *In I Sent.* In *In I Sent.*, the only question at stake was the truth of the thing. Since *esse increatum* infinitely surpasses *esse creatum*, things exist more truly in God. In the *De veritate*, however, the truth of predication is also part of the question. Thomas is consistent in claiming that things exist more truly in God according to the truth of the thing, but he is more insistent that things exist more truly in themselves according to the truth of predication.[222]

iii. *Summa theologiae* (1266–1268). Thomas again takes up the question of the existence of things in God in *Summa theologiae* I, q. 18, a. 4. There, he argues that God's life (*vivere*) is his understanding (*intelligere*). His understanding includes his intellect, what is understood, and the very act of understanding. Thus, whatever is in God as understood is his life. Whence, since all things that are made by God are in him as understood, it follows that all things in him are the divine life itself.[223]

Thomas offers clarifications to this argument in his replies to the objections. Things can be said to be in God in two ways: either as contained and conserved by divine power or as in God as in a knower. In the first way, creatures are said to be in God even as they are in their proper natures because God causes their living and being. In the second way, they are in God through their proper

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[220] *De veritate*, q. 4, a. 6, ad 1 and ad 4 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.134:82–85 and 94–98).

[221] *De veritate*, q. 4, a. 6 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.134:66–77), esp.: "verius enim praedicatur homo de re quae est in propria natura quam de ea secundum quod est in Verbo, nec hoc est propter defectum Verbi sed propter supereminentiam ipsius, ut dictum est."

[222] See Doolan, "Aquinas on Divine Ideas and the Really Real," 1076–77.

[223] *ST* I, q. 18, a. 4 (ed. Leonine, 4.229b).

rationes, which *rationes* are not other than the divine essence. Thus, in the second way, they are the divine essence.[224] These proper *rationes* are the divine essence because an exemplar has to agree with its *exemplatum* according to the intelligible content of its form (*ratio formae*), an exemplar does not have to agree with its *exemplatum* according to its mode of existence (*modus essendi*). Just as the form of the house is immaterial and intelligible in the mind of the builder, but exists materially and sensibly outside of the soul, so too the proper *rationes* have divine existence (*esse divinum*) in the mind of God, even though the proper natures enjoy only a creaturely existence.[225] The divine ideas are ontologically one with the divine essence, and so they enjoy the uncreated existence (*esse increatum*) proper to the divine essence. So, natural things have truer being in God (absolutely speaking) than in themselves because they have *esse increatum* in the mind of God. But since the character of natural things includes matter, this being (*hoc esse*), such as a man or a horse, has truer *esse* in itself than in God. It pertains to the truth of man to be material, but man does not have material existence in the divine mind. Therefore, it is nobler for things to exist in God, but they exist more truly in matter, where they exist in act, not merely in potency.[226]

iv. Conclusions. Thomas's answer to the two questions posed at the introduction to this section should now be clear. In response to the first question regarding the sort of existence enjoyed by the divine ideas, Thomas answers that the divine ideas share in the divine life. They have uncreated, divine existence in the divine essence. Thomas arrives at this conclusion as a direct result of his claims regarding divine simplicity. God is the only being whose essence is his *esse*. All of God's attributes are united and convertible even though we have access to them as only logically distinct. Since God is his *esse*, his understanding is his *esse* as well. Thus, all the things that he knows have his

[224] *ST* I, q. 18, a. 4, ad 1 (ed. Leonine, 4.229b–30a).
[225] *ST* I, q. 18, a. 4, ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.230a).
[226] *ST* I, q. 18, a. 4, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.230).

esse as their *modus essendi*. The divine ideas have perfect existence in the divine mind and have existence only there.

The divine existence that things have in God's intellect is a truer existence in one sense, and not truer in another. According to the truth of the thing, things exist more truly in God than in themselves precisely because *esse increatum* is ontologically superior to *esse creatum*. According to the truth of predication, things exist more truly in themselves because the nature of the thing is meant to have *esse creatum*. The essences of material beings, for example, are meant to exist materially, and so while it is nobler for that essence to exist immaterially in a mind (human or divine), it is truer for that essence to exist materially.

As Doolan points out, Thomas speaks of the relationship between the truth of the thing and the truth of predication in *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 2. The two types of truth are connected by means of what measures and what is measured. The divine intellect is the measure that is not measured. Natural things are measured by the divine intellect, and they measure our intellects. Finally, our intellect is measured by natural things (although it measures artificial things). Natural things are true in two respects because they are related to two types of intellect, the divine and the human. Natural things have the truth of the thing because of the divine intellect, and insofar as they produce in the intellect a true estimation of themselves, natural things have the truth of predication because of the human intellect. Even if a natural thing were not known by any human intellect, it would still have the truth of the thing because it is known by God. The only way to remove the character of truth from them would be for all intellects, including God, not to understand them.[227]

Natural things, then, exist in God and have *esse increatum* in him. Since, as we saw above, things are in God according to their divine ideas, we may say that things exist more truly in their

[227] *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 2 (ed. Leonine. 22.1.9:41–120); See Doolan, "Aquinas on the Divine Ideas and the Really Real," 1079–81.

divine idea according to the truth of the thing. According to the truth of predication, however, things exist in themselves more than in their divine idea. Since the divine ideas are the divine intellect as understood, divine ideas are *of* certain things, they are not the things themselves. They are objects of divine thought. As Doolan notes, "The divine Idea that God has of me is *not* me."[228]

In response to the second question posed above regarding the existence of divine ideas, especially divine ideas according to which God never wills to create, Thomas answers that their existence is a matter of divine knowledge alone. The divine will elects which divine *rationes* will become exemplar causes, but it does not determine that there be *rationes*. Since Thomas says that the *rationes* are divine ideas in the broad sense, it follows that the divine will does not determine the divine ideas in the broad sense either. The divine intellect offers the divine will a host of ideas of possible things that the latter could choose to create. It is telling that Thomas chooses the term "*ratio*" in *ST* I, q. 18, a. 4, rather than "idea." By choosing "*ratio*" Thomas makes it clear that every creature's existence is possible before it is actually created. No act of divine will creates the existence of any divine idea in the broad sense; the divine will only makes a divine idea actually exemplify a really existing creature. The divine will chooses from an array of options established by the divine intellect.

Taken in the broad sense of *ratio*, then, the divine ideas are in God necessarily, and the creatures known by means of them are necessarily possible. But it might be objected that, as we saw above, divine ideas are relations, not the creatures themselves. Thomas thinks that there is a plurality of divine ideas because God knows the diverse ways in which creatures can be really related to him. God knows the creature by means of the divine idea, but the divine idea is not the creature itself. So, an objector could argue, when Thomas says that all things in God enjoy *esse divinum*, he does not mean to say that the creatures themselves enjoy *esse divinum*. The creature itself has no ontological

[228] Doolan, "Aquinas on the Divine Ideas and the Really Real," 1086.

status unless God chooses to create it. On this objection, then, the divine will's act of creation bestows an ontological status.[229] Such an objection would say something true, but ultimately misses the point.

The divine ideas are indeed God's knowledge of the diverse real relations that possible creatures could have to him; they are not creatures themselves. A divine idea is that in imitation of which a creature is made.[230] Prior to their creation, creatures do not have existence on their own. Absolutely speaking, possible creatures do not have any existence independent of God.

The argument misses the point, however, for two reasons. First, it removes possible creatures from God's understanding. In *Summa theologiae* I, q. 18, a. 4, Thomas emphasizes that God's living (*vivere*) is his understanding (*intelligere*). God's *intelligere* includes his understanding, that which is understood, and the very act of understanding itself. But that which is understood by God is the possible creature. By knowing the real relation that could imitate his essence, God knows the creature. Since the creature is included in God's *intelligere*, it must share in God's existence. In order to hold that possibles have no ontological status at all prior to their creation, we would have to hold that God has epistemic access only to the real relation that the creature could have to him, and not to the creature itself. Thomas expressly denies this claim. A possible must have *esse divinum* as a result of being known by God.

As a result of having *esse divinum* the possible creature also has to be one with its divine idea. An actual creature has existence distinct from the *esse divinum* and so cannot be identified with its divine idea, but such a distinction cannot be made for a possible creature. Thus, we should conclude with Wippel that "from an ontological standpoint, one may say that a possible is identical with its

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[229] Although he does not explicitly speak in terms of relation, this objection seems to be at the heart of Ross's objection to Wippel: "The 'maximum degree of reality' for a thing before its creation I say, is *none* at all (*De potentia Dei* 3,5 ad2). The possibility 'before creation' is not the reality of me, but of God's ability to make things. God sees what might be '*not in themselves but in himself*' (*ST* I,14,5c)" (Ross, "Aquinas's Intellectualism; Aquinas's Voluntarism," 185. Emphasis original).

[230] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine. 22.1.97:1–102–373).

appropriate divine idea."[231] The possible does not have any existence distinct from God because he has not made it, but neither does it have no existence because God knows it. The existence that it does have has to be identical with its divine idea, i.e., its *ratio* because God knows it only by means of that *ratio*. That *ratio* is the only existence that it has.

Moreover, the objection overlooks an important distinction that Thomas makes in the term "possible." Something can be possible in two ways. In one way, something is possible because it is in potency. Things can be in potency either by an active potency or a passive potency. A thing is possible in virtue of an active potency because there exists an agent that can bring it about. A building is possible because a builder who could bring it about has the power to bring it about. A thing is possible in virtue of a passive potency because of some already existing passive potentiality. Thus, it is possible for wood to be burned. In another way, something is possible because there is no repugnance between the terms, i.e., it is not self-contradictory or incompatible. There is no potency in the subject; the thing's possibility is simply a matter of predication. Anything that can be predicated of a subject without contradiction is possible. Thus, being a rational animal is possible for man. This sort of possibility is called "absolute possibility."[232]

Wippel suggests that this distinction is helpful for understanding the possibles. Possibles are not possible in the sense that they have any passive potency. If they were possible in this way, then Thomas would have to admit something that preexisted creation and was in potency to receive creation. There is no preexisting passive potency or matter from which creation could be created.

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[231] Wippel, *Metaphysical Themes I*, 168. Wippel admits that a logical distinction, "from the psychological side" could be made between a possible and its idea because "a divine idea also imples that God understands that he understands that he understands his essence as being imitable in a given way" (168). Any such distinction would not affect the ontological status of the idea and its possible, however. They would still be one.

[232] See *De potentia*, q. 3, a. 14 (ed. Pession, II.80b). Thomas makes further precisions with regard to the latter sort of potency. Something is possible without potency "vel metaphorice, sicut in geometricis dicitur aliqua linea potentia rationalis, quod praeterrnittatur ad praesens; vel absolute, quando scilicet termini enuntiationis nullam ad invicem repugnantiam habent." The second option, absolute possibility, is most important in this context. Cf. *SCG* II, c. 37 (ed. Leonine, 13.354b3–9); *ST* I, q. 25, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.228).

God, however, had an active potency to create the world because he had the power to create the world *ex nihilo*. Moreover, the world was absolutely possible because there was nothing contradictory about the world's existence.[233]

If we apply this insight to the divine ideas, we find that they do not enjoy any reality apart from the divine essence. They have no real being in themselves. They exist only in the divine intellect. In themselves, they have merely intentional being. Yet, they have real being because God has an active potency to create them. The divine intellect necessarily knows all the way that the divine essence is imitable. The ways that it knows this imitability are the divine ideas, understood as *rationes*. Thus, it necessarily has the divine ideas *qua rationes* in it. But God is his *esse* so everything in him is his *esse*. Therefore, it is necessary that God have divine ideas *qua rationes* that have *esse divinum*. He does not necessarily have divine ideas *qua* exemplars because only those ideas that God wills to create at some time are exemplars. Since God does not have to create, no divine idea *qua* exemplar is necessary.

3. The Scope of Divine Ideas

Having examined the status of the divine ideas, we turn to the question of the scope of the divine ideas, that is, of what are there divine ideas? We saw that Bonaventure's account of the divine ideas was, as it were, as full as possible. There is a divine idea for every single distinct object of knowledge that God has. From what was said before, it seems likely that Thomas will agree in proposing divine ideas for as many objects of knowledge as possible. Since Thomas's reason for holding a plurality of ideas is that knowing one thing is not the same as knowing another, we might expect there to be ideas for each and every thing. Yet, this expectation also seems unwarranted for two reasons. The first reason is that Thomas frequently treats the question of the scope of God's knowledge separately from the question of whether God has divine ideas of everything that he

[233] Wippel, *Metaphysical Themes I*, 165.

knows. Such a separation might make us think that Thomas wants to deny that there are ideas for everything that God knows. The second reason is that the above reasoning seems to run contrary to some of the other principles that Thomas holds. E.g., Thomas argues that "every form is common of itself; whence the addition of form to form cannot be the cause of individuation."[234] Individuation only comes through matter, and individuals are only knowable in conjunction with matter. Since, ideas are forms, it would seem as though God could not know individuals.[235] Thus, it is necessary to trace Thomas's answers to questions concerning the scope of the divine ideas to see that he does think that God has ideas of the vast majority of the things that he knows other than himself, but does not think that God has distinct ideas of everything that he knows.

a. Singulars, Species, and Genera

The question of God's knowledge of singulars is very important for Thomas. He is motivated to posit divine ideas of singulars by his desire to uphold that God knows creatures, creates them without an intermediary, and exercises providence over them individually. While it seems like Thomas's more general theory of cognition would lead to the conclusion that God, like man, does not know the singular directly, Thomas is anxious to affirm that God does know singulars.[236]

i. *In I Sententias* (1252–1256). In *In I Sent.*, Thomas insists, against the teaching of Avicenna, Averroes, and Rabbi Moses, that God has cognition of all things, both universals and particulars. God has this cognition because he knows his essence which is the cause of things. Since God is the total cause of all things, that is to say, the immediate principle of both their forms and their matter, he cognizes what is in the thing, both formally and materially. Whence he not only

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[234] *Quodlibet* VII, q. 1, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 25.1.12:1–15–212).

[235] See, *inter alia*, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.99:159–182), and *ST* I, q. 15, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 4.199a).

[236] Thomas's concern about singulars is evident in the very first sentence of his response to the question in *In I Sent.*: "Respondeo dicendum, quod Deus absque dubio omnium, et universalium et singularium, cognitionem habet" (d. 36, q. 1, a. 1 [ed. Mandonnet, I.830]). For his denial that man knows singulars except by a certain reflection to the phantasm, see *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 6 [ed. Leonine, 22.1.65–67]); *ST* I, q. 86, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 5.347).

cognizes things according to their universal natures (as the objection above would lead us to believe), but according as they are individuated by matter.[237]

Turning from divine cognition generally considered to divine ideas in particular, Thomas insists that God does have divine ideas of particulars. In his *solutio* he offers a general argument for the position that God has ideas of everything he produces. An idea is a likeness or notion (*ratio*) of the thing existing in God as productive and predeterminative of the thing itself. Thus, God has an idea of everything that he produces. Put another way, since every agent makes something like itself (*simile agit sibi simile*), God produces things according to the likeness he has in him. This likeness of a thing in God is its divine idea. Since God produces all things, the ideas of all things exist in him.[238]

He applies this general argument to ideas of singulars in his reply to the third objection. The objector argues that while God knows singulars, he does not need ideas of singulars because all the singulars of a single species agree in form. An idea of the form of any given species is sufficient for God to know and produce all the singulars that partake of the form. Thomas argues that even singulars have proper ideas in God because the *rationes* of individuals are diverse like the *rationes* of species. The *ratio* of Peter is other than the *ratio* of Martin just as the *ratio* of man is other than the *ratio* of horse. They are other in diverse ways, however. The diversity of man and horse is according to form, to which an idea perfectly responds. The essential distinction of singulars of one species is according to matter, which does not perfectly have an idea. Therefore, the distinction of *rationes* responding to diverse species is more perfect than the distinction responding to diverse individuals. Thomas is quick to qualify that the lack of perfection refers to the things imitating the divine essence, and not to the divine essence itself.[239]

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[237] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 1, a. 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.829–832).

[238] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 3 (ed. Mandonnet, I.844). Cf. *SCG* I, c. 65 (ed. Leonine, 13.179–80), esp.: "Similitudo autem formae intellectus divini, cum pertingat usque ad rerum minima, ad quae pertingi sua causalitas, pervenit usque ad singularitatem formae sensibilis et materialis."

[239] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 3, ad 3 (ed. Mandonnet, I.845).

There are two things to take from his treatment of the issue in *In I Sent.* First, Thomas uses the term "idea" here only in the strict sense. The term "idea" refers only to practical divine cognition. Thomas refers only to those things that *are* produced. Since he does not speak explicitly about those singulars that God could produce but does not, we cannot draw any firm conclusions with regard to whether God has ideas of them. The fact that he speaks only of what is produced makes it seem unlikely that God would have ideas of what he does not produce.

Second, ideas of species are more perfect than ideas of individuals. All ideas are, as it were, defective because the things known by them fall short of God's infinite *esse*. Ideas of singulars are especially deficient because their matter makes them more imperfect. Matter is both less perfect and less intelligible than form because it is a principle of potency and not a principle of act. God is able to know the matter in individual things because he is the total cause of their being, but their matter makes it such that they do not perfectly have ideas in God. Thomas is quick to clarify that the imperfection is only in the thing imitating the divine essence, not the divine essence itself, but his statement is strange nonetheless. On the one hand, he is affirming that God has ideas of singulars, but on the other hand, he claims that the ideas are not perfect. Thomas sees no contradiction between the imperfection of the ideas and the perfection of God because the ideas are only imperfect insofar as the creature that they signify is imperfect. Thus, they do not derogate God's perfection.

ii. *De veritate* (1256–1259). In *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 8, Thomas again takes up the question of divine ideas of singulars. The second *sed contra* explicitly incorporates Thomas's theory of *esse*. Ideas are ordered to the *esse* of things. But singulars have truer *esse* than universals because universals do not subsist except in singulars. Therefore, singulars have to have ideas more than universals do.[240] By applying his own theory of *esse* to the question of the scope of divine ideas, Thomas is led to

[240] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 8, s.c. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.115:35–39).

conclude that divine ideas are primarily of the singulars. Unlike universals, singulars are primary substances and, so, are creatures primarily. When God creates, he creates substantial *esse* first and foremost. Since substantial *esse* belongs first and foremost to singulars, the ideas according to which God creates that creaturely *esse* have to be of the singular.

Thomas argues in his reply that God is the cause of singular *esse*, both of the form and the matter. He also declares that all singulars are determined by divine providence. God could not have such providence without ideas of singulars, so there must be ideas of singulars.[241] It is of no consequence that there are a potentially infinite number of singulars because divine ideas are multiplied only by rational relations, and, as Avicenna says, rational relations can be multiplied *ad infinitum*.[242]

In his reply to the second objection, Thomas's emphasis on the divine ideas as practical comes to the fore. Properly speaking, an idea is of a thing insofar as it is producible. Thus, one idea corresponds to the singular, species, genus, and individuating characteristics because Socrates, man, and animal are not really distinguished (*non distinguuntur secundum esse*) in the singular. If the term "idea" is used broadly to mean likeness or notion (*ratio*), then the ideas and likenesses of the singular, species, and genus are many because the consideration of Socrates *qua* singular, the consideration of Socrates *qua* man, and the consideration of Socrates *qua* animal are diverse considerations.[243]

Since the divine ideas, strictly speaking, correspond to God's practical knowledge of what is actually produced or virtually producible, and since only singulars are produced in *esse*, ideas belong only to singulars, and to their species and genera insofar as they too exist in the singular. On the

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[241] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 8 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.116:64–68). Cf. *SCG* I, c. 54 (ed. Leonine, 13.154-155), esp.: "Sic igitur patet quod essentia divina, inquantum est absolute perfecta, potest accipi ut propria ratio singulorum. Unde per eam Deus propriam cognitionem de omnibus habere potest." Wippel says that Thomas does not explicitly state that thre are distinct *rationes* for individuals in this chapter (*Thomas Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 41). Wippel is correct that Thomas does not say "*sunt rationes singulorum in mente divina*," but such a conclusion is the inevitable conclusion of the chapter.

[242] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 8, ad 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.116:69–73). See Avicenna, *Met.*, III, c. 10 (ed. van Reit, I.182:80–82).

[243] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 8, ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.116:74–84).

basis of this claim, Doolan argues that Thomas thinks "there are properly speaking only ideas of individuals because only individual things can actually be produced."[244] In the broad sense of the term, there are distinct ideas for all singulars, species, and genera. In the strict sense of the term, there is only one idea for a singular, its species, and its genus, and the idea is of the singular primarily.

iii. *Quodlibet* VIII (1257). At around the same time that Thomas was disputing the divine ideas in class at Paris, he was asked about divine ideas of singulars during a quodlibetal dispute. The question posed to him in *Quodlibet* VIII, q. 1, a. 2 is whether the notion (*ratio*) of the ideas in the divine mind is first related to creatures by reason of their singularity or by reason of their specific nature. Thomas answers the former. Divine ideas are formal exemplars of the things to be made, just like the forms of the things to be made in the mind of the artificer. But unlike the created artificer, whose forms presuppose matter, which is the principle of individuation, God's formal exemplars make the whole of the thing, both form and matter. Therefore, the divine ideas are related not only to the nature of the species, but also to the singularity of the individual.[245]

Thomas is quick to qualify this assertion, saying that the ideas are first related to the nature of the species. An exemplar is that in imitation of which something comes to be. Whence the definition (*ratio*) of an exemplar requires that the assimilation of the work to the exemplar be

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[244] Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 127. In his review of Doolan's book, Antoine Côté has argued that Doolan's interpretation is "a little strained" ("Review of Gregory T. Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas as Exemplar Causes*," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 47.4 [2009]: 624). Côté's primary reason for rejecting Doolan's interpretation is that there is little textual evidence for the claim. Côté might be right that Thomas only explicitly takes this position in *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 8, but Côté is wrong on two points. First, Côté argues that the only textual evidence is the second *sed contra*, but Thomas explicitly makes the argument in his response to the second objector as well. Second, while Thomas does not draw the implication explicitly on other occasions, he consistently holds the premises that lead to this conclusion. Thomas consistently teaches that neither species nor genera have substantial existence. They exist only in singulars (See, *inter alia*, *In I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 1 [ed. Mandonnet, I.484–90]; *In II Sent.*, d. 17, q. 1, a. 1 [ed. Mandonnet, II.411–15]; *De ente* c. 2 [ed. Leonine, 373:243–59 and 292–308]; *In II De anima*, c. 12 [ed. Leonine, 45.1.115:95–116:151; *In VII Met.*, lect. 11, n. 1536 [ed. Spiazzi, 370b]). Strictly speaking, the singulars, and not the species or genera are produced. And since, as we saw above, Thomas holds that when the term "ideas" is taken strictly, it applies to what is actually produced or virtually producible, it follows that God only has one idea for the singular, its species, and its genus. Thus, I think Doolan's interpretation is the best account of Thomas's position.

[245] *Quodlibet* VIII, q. 1, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 25.1.53:1–54:40).

intended by the agent. Therefore, the intention of the agent is included in the *ratio* of an exemplar. Thus, the exemplar is first related to what the agent intends primarily in the work, and any agent whatever especially intends what is more perfect to be in his work. The nature of the species is the most perfect thing in any individual whatsoever because it perfects a twofold imperfection. First, it perfects the imperfection of matter, which is the principle of singularity and which is in potency to the form of the species. Second, it perfects the imperfection of the general form, which is in potency to a variety of specific differences as matter is in potency to form.[246]

As a result, the primary intention of nature is the most specific species. Nature does not principally intend to generate Socrates. Rather, nature intends to generate man in Socrates. Similarly, nature does not principally intend to generate an animal, otherwise its action would stop when it had brought about an animal. Therefore, Thomas concludes, an exemplar in the mind of God relates first to the nature of the species in any creature whatsoever.[247]

Lest we be left confused how the first relation to the singular is related to the primary intention of the nature of the species, Thomas clarifies in his response to the first objection that what is first in the order of intention is last in the order execution.[248] Although nature first intends to generate man, *this* man is generated first because man could not be generated unless *this* man is generated. And because everything that arises does so according to the ideas, the order of execution also arises by the ideas. Since the singulars are first in the order of execution, they arise first from the ideas.

Although Thomas's reply in *Quodlibet* VIII appears to contradict his response in *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 8, the disagreement is only apparent because they approach the issue from two different angles.

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[246] *Quodlibet* VIII, q. 1, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 25.1.54:40–59).

[247] *Quodlibet* VIII, q. 1, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 25.1.54:59–55:74).

[248] See *ST* I-II, q. 1, a. 1, ad 1 (ed. Leonine, 6.6b) and *In II Phys.*, lect. 5 (ed. Leonine, 2:70a). Thomas typically uses Aristotle's example of health. Health is the final cause that causes the efficient cause of walking. If someone where to ask, "Why did he walk?" The answer is "Because he wants to be healthy." Health is first in the order of intention, but comes about only at the end.

In the *De veritate*, Thomas approaches the issue from the divine perspective. Since what God creates is the totality of a singular being, both its form and its matter, God must have ideas of singulars. The species, and the genus only exist because the singular exists. In *Quodlibet* VIII, however, Thomas takes the creaturely perspective, asking about how ideas are related to individuals. We know from the *De veritate* that the divine idea is related to the individual *qua* individual, *qua* species, and *qua* genus. What Thomas specifies in *Quodlibet* VIII is that divine ideas are primarily related to the individuals *qua* species. As Doolan points out, "this article says more about the creature as it is related to its exemplar idea than it does about that idea itself."[249] The divine ideas *are* of individuals, and their primary intention is the species.

iv. *Summa theologiae* (1266–68). In *Summa theologiae* I, Thomas first takes up the question of divine ideas of singulars during his discussion of God's speculative and practical cognition in q. 14, a. 16. Knowledge that is speculative by reason of the thing known is purely speculative, knowledge that is speculative according to the mode or the end of knowing is partly speculative and partly practical, and knowledge that is ordered to operation is purely practical. Since God cannot produce himself, his self-knowledge is purely speculative. Concerning all other things, however, God has both speculative and practical knowledge. He has speculative knowledge of those things that we cognize by defining and dividing and those things that he could make but never does. He has practical cognition of everything that he makes at some time. Evil things, even though he never makes them, fall under his practical cognition insofar as he permits, impedes, or orders them.[250]

Thomas applies this distinction to the question of divine ideas in response to an objection in q. 15, a. 3. It yields the distinction between ideas in the strict sense of practical knowledge, and ideas in the broad sense of speculative knowledge. Strictly speaking, God has ideas only of those things of

[249] Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 130.
[250] *ST* I, q. 14, a. 16 (ed. Leonine, 4.196–197).

which he has practical cognition, that is, of those things of which he is a productive principle and is an exemplar. Broadly speaking, however, God has ideas of everything of which he is a cognitive principle and has a *ratio*.[251]

In his reply to the fourth objection Thomas applies this distinction to divine ideas of singulars. The objector holds that while God knows individuals, species, genera, and accidents, he only has ideas of species because that is Plato's position.[252] In his response, Thomas makes explicit statements about divine ideas in the strict sense, although we can infer what he would say about divine ideas in the broader sense. Strictly speaking, genera cannot have an idea other than the idea of the species because a genus never comes to be except in some species. By inference, there can be different ideas of genus and species in the broad sense since knowledge of a genus is other than knowledge of a species. When it comes to singulars, Thomas notes that Plato held that there are only ideas of species for two reasons. First, there are only ideas of species because matter individuates singulars. Plato held matter to be uncreated and a co-cause with the idea. Thus, the singular had no place in the idea. Thomas makes no explicit rebuttal to this argument here, but argues later in the *Summa theologiae* that matter is created by God.[253] Second, Plato argues that the intention of nature consists in species, and it produces species only so that it may save the species in them. Thomas objects that divine providence, unlike Plato's intention of nature, extends not only to the species, but to the singular as well.[254] Since Thomas claims that Platonic ideas were only of the species because Platonic providence extended only to the species, we may infer from Thomas's extension of divine providence to singulars that he holds divine ideas of singulars as well.

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[251] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.204).

[252] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3, arg. 4 (ed. Leonine, 4.204).

[253] *ST* I, q. 44, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.457–458). For more on this article and the best way to interpret it, see Anton C. Pegis, "A Note on St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I, 44, 1–2," *Mediaeval Studies* 8 (1946): 159–68.

[254] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3, ad 4 (ed. Leonine, 4.204). Cf. *ST* I, q. 22, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.264–266).

v. Conclusions. Over the course of his career, Thomas's position on divine ideas of singulars is consistent in one way but shows development in another. Thomas consistently teaches that God's ideas are of individuals precisely because God creates singular beings. God is the total cause of each and every creature, and so both the form and the matter are from him. Strictly speaking, there are ideas only of individuals because only the individual is created. There are no subsisting species or genera. When the term "idea" is taken in the broader sense of *ratio*, then the individual, species, and genus have distinct ideas. Knowledge of a material singular does not exhaust a species.[255] Knowledge of a species does not exhaust a genus. Knowledge of a genus without knowledge of the species and knowledge of a species without knowledge of the individuals is not actual or distinct knowledge, but is knowledge in potential and confused knowledge.[256] Thus, insofar as divine ideas can be understood as cognitive principles of speculative knowledge, there is a distinct idea for every possible individual, every possible species, and every possible genus.

Despite this consistency in his teaching, Thomas also develops his thinking about divine ideas of singulars. In the *De veritate*, Thomas permits divine ideas in the strict sense to apply to what he calls actual practical cognition and virtual practical cognition. Thus, God has divine ideas of singulars that he makes at some point in time, such as Socrates and Plato, and singulars that never come about, such as my fifth brother or some phoenix.[257] In the *Summa theologiae*, Thomas restricts the strict sense of "idea" only to those things that God actually makes. Those things that God could make but never does have divine ideas only in the broader sense of *ratio*. In the strict sense, therefore, only those individuals that are created at some point in time have divine ideas. God has no exemplar of my fifth brother or some phoenix because he does not will to produce such

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[255] The qualification "material" is necessary because Thomas holds that an angel does exhaust its species such that there can be more than one in a species. Michael the Archangel *is* his "*Michaelitas*." Thomas comes to this conclusion because unlike most of his contemporaries he rejects universal hylomorphism. See *ST* I, q. 50, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 5.5–6).

[256] See *ST* I, q. 86, a. 2, ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 5.350).

[257] Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 132.

creatures. These possible creatures have divine ideas in the sense of *ratio*, but not in the sense of exemplar.

This is a significant change in Thomas's teaching. The theory that he lays out in the *De veritate* demands that God have an infinite number of divine ideas in the strict sense, i.e., an infinite number of exemplars. Even though the number of exemplars is restricted to singular thing itself, and the species and genus do not add to the number of exemplars, there is no finite number of exemplars that could exhaust the divine essence. There are an infinite number of ways in which singular beings could imitate the divine essence, and so there are an infinite number of exemplars.

The theory that he lays out in the *Summa theologiae*, however, eliminates divine ideas of possible singulars. Only those singulars that are actually created have exemplars in the divine intellect. On a strictly philosophical level, this change does not change Thomas's teaching. By means of reason alone, Thomas thinks, we cannot exclude the possibility of an eternally created world. The propositions "to be created by God" and "to have existed always" are not only incompatible, but are possible both because a creative efficient cause need not precede its effect in duration and because the nonexistence (*non esse*) of the effect need not precede it existence in duration.[258] If the world had existed from eternity, then an infinite number of individuals would exist. God would then have an infinite number of divine ideas in the strict sense.

When the issue is raised to the level of theology a sharp change arises in Thomas's thought. Though he argues there is nothing false about the *possibility* of an eternally created world, the proposition "the world was eternally created" is false. God in fact created the world *ex nihilo* in time. Time is finite from the beginning of the world until now and will be finite from now until the *eschaton*. Only a finite number of creatures can exist in a finite amount of time. Thus, God has only a

[258] *De aeternitate mundi*, (ed. Leonine, 43.86:82–87): "Si enim repugnant, hoc non est nisi propter alterum duorum, uel proptere utrumque: aut qua oportet ut causa agens precedat duration, aut quia oportet quod non esse precedat duration porter hoc quod dicitur creatum a Deo ex nichilo fieri." See Wippel, *Metaphysical Themes I*, 191–214.

finite number of divine ideas in the strict sense of exemplars. The number of divine ideas in the broader sense of *rationes* does not change because God's knowledge is not augmented or decreased by the number of exemplars he possesses, but Thomas is forced to contract the number of divine ideas in the sense of exemplar.

This change marks a major departure in the theories of Bonaventure and Thomas. As will be recalled, Bonaventure argues very strongly for an infinite number of ideas because of the perfect diffusion of supreme truth. Bonaventure can hold this position because he argues that the divine ideas are primarily cognitive principles. God has an infinite number of divine ideas from which he chooses the ones he will create. Thomas, for whom the divine ideas are primarily causal principles, is forced to deny that the divine ideas can be infinite in number because God wills to create only a finite number of things. Thomas agrees with Bonaventure that God has an infinite number of divine ideas (in the sense of *ratio*) from which the divine will chooses the ones he will create, but he disagrees that the cognitive role of the divine ideas is their primary role. For Thomas, the divine ideas are the principles by which he knows the creatures that will be created at some point in history, not the creatures he *could* create. This position would denigrate the divine perfection if the divine ideas in the strict sense were God's only cognitive principles. He would know only the things that he does in fact create, and not be free to create any others. Such a theory would deny divine omnipotence. Thomas's theory avoids this unhappy consequence because he argues that divine ideas in the strict sense are not God's only cognitive principles. There are also divine ideas in the sense of *rationes*, and God knows everything that he could create by means of these ideas.

b. Evil

The question of whether there be a divine idea of evil is perhaps the biggest test case of Thomas's position with regard to the scope of divine ideas. On one hand, Thomas has said that the divine ideas are multiple because God fully knows the ways in which his essence is imitable, even

down to the least being. Evil, though it radically falls short of God's perfection, has some measure of existence.[259] Thus, God should have a divine idea of evil. On the other hand, divine ideas are, as we have seen, formal exemplars. So if God has an idea of evil, then he would seem to be the cause of evil. God cannot be the cause of evil, however, so there must not be a divine idea of evil. Both of these conclusions follow from the premises to which Thomas has already assented. Let us turn to his treatment of the questions to see how he extricates himself from these contradictory conclusions.

i. *In I Sententias* (1252–1256). Thomas first takes up the question of God's knowledge of evil and whether there are divine ideas of it in *In I Sent.* He argues that God can be said both to know and not to know evil because while he does have knowledge of evil, he lacks a proper knowledge of it, knowing it only through knowledge of its opposite, namely, good. Thus, he knows evil in the same way that he knows everything other than himself. Things other than himself are not God's *primum cognitum*, but they are the second things understood by him.[260] In the same way that God does not have proper knowledge of evil, but only through the good, so too he does not have a proper idea of evil. Evil *qua* evil is nothing, since it is a certain privation like blindness. Therefore, an idea of the evil of a thing (*rei malae idea*) is in God, not *qua* evil, but *qua* thing. God, from whom the thing's subject to privation fall short, cognizes evil itself through the opposing good.[261] As Wippel concludes, "there is no divine idea for evil as such, but there is a divine idea for the thing in which evil resides."[262] God has an idea of evil through an opposing good, namely the thing that is suffering evil.

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[259] "Ita cognoscit malum, cum in defectu ratio mali consistat." (*In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 2, ad 3 [ed. Mandonnet, I.835]). "Nomine mali significetur quaedam absentia boni" (*ST* I, q. 48, a. 1 [Leonine 5.490–491]). Cf. Augustine, *Conf.*, VII, cc. 11–12 (PL 32.742–43).

[260] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 2, *corp.* and ad 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.834)

[261] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 2, a. 3, ad 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.844).

[262] Wippel, *Thomas Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 45. Cf. Doolan, 137.

ii. *De veritate* (1256–1259). As has been true of his treatment of most other aspects of the divine ideas, Thomas's fullest treatment of the question of whether God has an idea of evil comes in the *De veritate*. Thomas applies his distinction between the strict sense and the broad sense of divine ideas to the question. In the strict sense, an idea is a form that is the principle of formation of some thing. Thus, since nothing in God could be a principle of evil, there cannot, properly speaking, be an idea of evil in God. In the broad sense of *ratio* or likeness there is also no idea of evil. As Augustine says, evil names what does not have form.[263] Since a likeness is founded upon a form that is participated in some way, evil cannot have a likeness in God.[264]

In his reply to the seventh objection, Thomas reaffirms his position in the response, declaring that evil has no idea in God. He then argues that God knows evil by means of an idea of an opposed good. In this way evil is related to divine cognition as if it had an idea, but not such that the privation of an idea corresponds to God's understanding for an idea, because there can be no privation in God.[265] Doolan interprets this passage as in continuity with his statement in *In I Sent.* Thomas is merely clarifying, he says, that there is no privation in God's understanding. The only privation is in the created (or creatable) thing; "God's knowledge of evil, then, is his knowledge that the good is not present in such a thing where it ought to be present."[266]

iii. *Summa theologiae* (1266–1268). Thomas devotes very little time to the question of a divine idea of evil in the *Summa theologiae*. In q. 15, a. 3, the first objector argues that God does not

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[263] Augustine, *De natura boni*, c. 4 (PL 42.553).

[264] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 4 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.110:66–80).

[265] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 4, ad 7 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.111:124–130), esp.: "et per hunc modum se habet ad cognitionem ac si haberet ideam."

[266] Doolan, 138. I think that Doolan's point holds, although it overlooks a distinction in grammatical construction between in the two texts. In *In I Sent.*, Thomas places the claim about an idea of evil of a thing in the present indicative: "rei malae idea quidem in Deo est" (d. 36, q. 2, a. 3, ad 1 [ed. Mandonnet, I.844]). In the *De veritate*, the claim that there is no idea of evil is in the indicative, and the claim that God knows evil in such a way that it is as if he had an idea is a hypothetical contrary to fact: "et per hunc modum se habet ad cognitionem ac si haberet ideam" (q. 3, a. 4, ad 7 [ed. Leonine, 22.1.111:130]). I do not think that the difference in construction reveals a change in thought, but rather a change in clarity. Thomas's position is clearer in the *De veritate*.

have an idea for all things that he cognizes. If God had an idea of evil, then there would be evil in God. But God cognizes evil things. Therefore, God does not have an idea of everything that he cognizes. In his reply, Thomas agrees with the objector that God has no idea of evil, but points out a flaw in the objector's reasoning. The objection seems to assume that if God cognizes evil, then he does so by means of a *ratio* of evil. God does not cognize evil by means of a proper *ratio*. He cognizes it through the *ratio* of the good, so not only does God not have an idea of evil in the strict sense of exemplar, he does not have an idea of evil even in the broader sense of a *ratio*.[267]

iv. Conclusions. Throughout his writings Thomas consistently affirms that God does not have an idea of evil in the strict sense of idea taken as an exemplar. Farthing expresses this point well: "Since God's knowledge by exemplars is creative, God could have a separate idea of evil only by transforming it from the status of nonbeing to the status of some kind of being—so that immediately His idea would correspond to something other than evil."[268] God could have an idea of evil only by making it something, when in fact it is nothing. Thomas is also consistent throughout his career in the claim that God could not have a full-fledged idea of evil. Thomas is clear that God does not have an idea of evil in any way whatsoever, which means that God does not have an idea of everything that he cognizes.

c. Prime Matter

In each of his major works, Thomas turns from the question of a divine idea of evil to a divine idea of prime matter. To understand Thomas's answer to this question better, a few comments on his position on prime matter are in order. Prime matter is that matter which is understood completely without any form or actuality. It is pure potency that receives its first perfection from a substantial form. Lacking all form, it lacks definition. There is also no cognition of

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[267] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 204b). Cf. *SCG* I, c. 71 (ed. Leonine, 13.205–07).
[268] Farthing, 209.

it because both definition and cognition happen through form. We come to know prime matter only by analogy, yet it is a real and intrinsic principle of every being. It is neither generated nor corrupted because every generation is from something, and that from which (*ex quo*) generation occurs is matter. It is numerically one in all things because it is without the necessary dispositions that would make it differ in number. Finally, it can never exist *per se* because being (*esse*) in act comes only through some form. As Wippel notes, Thomas consistently defends the view that prime matter is pure potentiality, having no form or actuality of itself.[269] That Thomas teaches consistently regarding the nature (*ratio*) of prime matter is important because, as has been pointed out by many commentators, Thomas changes his teaching on the question of divine ideas of prime matter.[270]

Thomas's early positions on the divine ideas could lead us to affirm either that there is a divine idea of prime matter or that there is no divine idea of prime matter. On one hand, the word "idea," as Thomas affirms many times, names a form. But prime matter is not some form, just as the prime act, which is God, has no matter. If prime matter had some form, and if God had some matter, then neither would be primary. Therefore, it seems that God has no idea of prime matter.[271] One the other hand, God, he insists, has ideas of all the things he produces. God produces prime matter.[272] Therefore, it seems that God has to have an idea of prime matter.

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[269] Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 317. In support of this claim, Wippel examines Thomas's treatment of prime matter in *De prin. nat.*, c. 2 (ed. Leonine, 43.41:70–119); *In I Sent.*, d. 39, q. 2, a. 2, ad 4 (ed. Mandonnet, I.934); *In II Sent.*, d. 12, q. 1, a. 4 (ed. Mandonnet 2.313); *In II Sent.*, d. 34, q. 1, a. 4 (ed. Mandonnet, 2.884); *De veritate*, q. 8, a. 6 (ed. Leonine, 22.2.238:148–153); *De veritate*, q. 21, a. 2, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 22.3.597:117–120); *SCG* I, c. 17 (ed. Leonine, 13.46–47); *SCG* I, c. 43 (ed. Leonine, 13.124–25); *SCG* II, c. 16 (ed. Leonine, 13.299–300); *De potentia*, q. 1, a. 1, ad 7 (ed. Pession, 8–9); *De potentia* q. 3, aa. 2 and 5 (ed. Pession, 41–42 and 48–49); *ST* I, q. 5, a. 3, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.59); *ST* I, q. 7 a. 2, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.458); *ST* I, q. 44, a. 2, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 5.237); *ST* I, q. 115, a. 1, ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 5.539); *QD de anima*, q. 12, ad 12 (ed. Leonine, 24.1.111:306–09); *QD de anima*, q. 18, ad 5 (ed. Leonine, 43.1.159:397–399); *De malo*, q. 1, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 23.11:164–166); *In XI Met.*, lect. 9, n. 2289 (ed. Spiazzi, 544).

[270] Cajetan, *Commentary*, I, q. 15, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.205). Cf. Wippel, *Thomas Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 42.

[271] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 3, obj. 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.843). Cf. *De potentia*, q. 3, a. 1, arg. 13 (ed. Pession, 2.38b).

[272] This premise is controversial. As Thomas says in *De prin. nat.*, c. 1, "forma dat esse materiae" (ed. Leonine, 43.39:33). Since prime matter has no form, strictly speaking it cannot be produced. What is produced exists in actuality, and prime matter is, by definition (*ratio*), incapable of existing in actuality. At the same time, it must also be held that God *does* produce prime matter, for two reasons. First, nothing is co-eternal with God. Therefore, if prime matter "exists" at all, it will have its source in God. Second, material beings are generated out of substantial form and prime matter. Since material beings exist, prime matter must have been "produced." For more on form giving existence, see Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 327–51.

i. *In I Sententias* (1252–1256). In *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 3, ad 2, Thomas argues that there is an idea of prime matter in God because prime matter comes from God. To the extent that being (*esse*) is attributed to prime matter, an idea of it is attributed to God. Every being (*esse*) insofar as it is perfect is led exemplarily by the divine being. But perfect being does not agree with matter in itself, but only insofar as matter is in a composite being. It itself, he argues, prime matter has imperfect being according to the lowest grade of being, which is being in potency. Therefore, matter does not have an idea according to the perfect *ratio* of an idea except insofar as it is in a composite being. Considered in itself, matter has the imperfect *ratio* of an idea because ideas are ways the divine essence is imitable by a finite being according to perfect being. The divine essence is imitable by matter according to imperfect being, and in no way imitable by privation. Therefore, the composite being has an idea in God perfectly because of its form, whereas matter has one imperfectly, and privation does not have one at all.[273]

ii. *De veritate* (1256–1259). When Thomas turns to the issue in *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 5, he articulates his answer in contrast to Plato's position. Plato did not posit an idea of prime matter. He posted the ideas as causes of the *ideata*. Prime matter, however, was not caused by an idea; it was a co-cause with the ideas. Matter, he said, has two principles, the great and the small, and form has one principle, the ideas. Thomas, however, claims that God causes matter. It is necessary to posit an idea of it in God in some way since whatever is caused by him retains a likeness of him in one way or another. But if we take the word "idea" properly, we cannot say that prime matter has an idea in God distinct from the idea of the form or the composite because an idea properly speaking bespeaks the thing according as it is producible in being (*esse*). But prime matter cannot exist in *esse* without form nor vice versa, whence properly speaking "idea" does not correspond to matter alone, nor to form alone, but to the entire composite being. Broadly speaking, anything that is essentially distinct

[273] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 3, ad 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.844–45).

can have an idea by which it can be distinctly considered even if it cannot exist separately. Thus, nothing prohibits there being an idea of prime matter.[274]

Thomas's presentation here is quite different from his presentation in *In I Sent.* He leaves behind the curious conception of matter as having an idea according to the imperfect *ratio* of idea, and instead applies the more helpful distinction between "idea" taken in the strict sense, and "idea" taken in the broad sense. In the strict sense of the word, there are ideas only for things that God knows with actually practical cognition or virtually practical cognition. Since being producible does not agree with the *ratio* of prime matter, it cannot have an idea in the strict sense.[275] Despite not existing by itself, prime matter can be considered by itself. Being able to be considered by itself is all that is required for God to have a likeness of it. Thus, he has an idea of prime matter in the sense of a *ratio* or likeness.

iii. *Summa theologiae* (1266–1268). In *Summa theologiae* I, q. 15, a. 3, ad 3, Thomas offers yet another answer to the question of whether there is a divine idea of prime matter. He begins, as he did in the *De veritate*, by offering Plato's position. Plato held that prime matter was not created and so said there is no idea of matter because it is a co-cause with the ideas, not an effect of the ideas. Thomas, however, holds that matter is created by God, although not without form. Thus, it has an idea in God, but not an idea other than the idea of the composite. For matter of itself neither has *esse* nor is cognizable.[276] This response is drastically different from the imperfect idea he postulated in *In I Sent.*, and the idea in the broad sense in the *De veritate*. Thomas here declares that

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[274] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 5 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.111:28–112:55).

[275] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 5 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.112:72–75). *De potentia*, q. 3, a. 1, ad 13 (ed. Pession, II.41a). Despite the fact that Thomas's response speaks of *materia* generally, we can be assured that he is speaking of *materia prima* because at the end of his reply to the twelfth objection Thomas specifies that prime matter has a likeness with God insofar as it participates in being (*ens*). Just as the stone is like God insofar as it is a being (*ens*), although it is not intellectual like God, so too prime matter has a likeness with God insofar as it is a being (*ens*), not insofar as it is a being in act (*ens actu*). Being is generally in a certain way for potency and for act (*De potentia*, q. 3, a. 1, ad 2 (ed. Pession, II.41a)

[276] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.204), esp.: "Nam materia secundum se neque esse habet, necque cognoscibilis est."

there is no distinct idea for prime matter in any way whatsoever. It has an idea in the strict sense insofar as God fully knows and wills the composite, but there is not a distinct idea of prime matter.

iv. Conclusions. The question of whether God has a divine idea of prime matter is a case where Thomas's thought clearly undergoes development. He is consistent in holding that God does not have a distinct idea of prime matter taken in the strict sense of exemplar, but changes his mind as to whether God has a distinct idea of prime matter taken in the broad sense of *ratio*. He consistently argues that prime matter comes from God insofar as it has being, but it has being only insofar as it (along with the form) is concreated in the composite. This position is in accord with his position on divine ideas of singulars. Strictly speaking, there is but one idea for the singular, its species, and its genus because the species and the genus do not exist separately, but only in the singular. Since the singular is the composite, we can add to this claim and say that Thomas holds there is but one idea for the singular, its species, its genus, and its intrinsic principles of matter and form. God does not have distinct ideas of Socrates, Socrates' matter, and Socrates' form any more than he has distinct ideas of Socrates, man, and animal. All of these are one divine idea insofar as idea is taken in the strict sense of exemplar.

Thomas is not consistent as to whether there can be a distinct idea of prime matter when "idea" is taken in the broad sense of *ratio*. At the beginning of his career, he holds that God can have such an idea of prime matter. By the end of his career, he denies that God can have an idea of prime matter because prime matter is not cognizable. I think Thomas's position in the *Summa theologiae* is the most consistent with the rest of his thought. The solutions from *In I Sent.* and *De veritate* force Thomas to deny a central tenet of his epistemology: matter inhibits intelligibility. He persistently argues that matter is inherently unknowable, and that knowledge requires that a species be abstracted not only from matter, but even from all material conditions. In itself, a form is always

intelligible. Only when the form is in matter or under material conditions do we not know.[277] To argue that God has some sort of imperfect idea, or an idea *qua ratio* of prime matter is to argue that prime matter is intelligible of itself. Thomas never affirms any intelligibility to matter.[278] He is right to argue that God has an idea of matter insofar as it is a principle of a composite and concreated with the composite, but its intelligibility comes only from being united to form.

d. Accidents

The question of whether God has ideas of accidents is difficult for two reasons. First, accidents, like prime matter, do not subsist on their own. So it seems as though they should not have distinct ideas from the idea of their subject. Second, the case of the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist presents a particular difficulty. Since we typically encounter accidents inhering in a subject, it would be easy for us to think that they must be treated in exactly the same way as prime matter or species. We might think that there is one idea for both the singular and all the accidents that it has at any given time. The difficulty with jumping to this conclusion is that the *ratio* of an accident is not "to be in a subject." As we saw in the discussion of his teaching on relations above, Thomas rejects this definition and instead offers the pseudo-definition of an accident as "a thing to which it belongs to be in another."[279] When the priest says the words of consecration over the bread and wine, the substance of bread and wine is removed, but the accidents of the same remain. If there were just one divine idea for the substance and its accidents, then it would seem that God could not cause the accidents to remain without their normal substance. Thus, Thomas's answer to this question has far-reaching effects.

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[277] See, *inter alia*, *ST* I, q. 85, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 5.330–32); *In II De anima*, c.12 (ed. Leonine, 45.1.115:69–94).

[278] See Wippel and the texts cited above in note 269.

[279] *In IV Sent.*, d. 12, q. 1, a. 1, ql. 1, ad 2 (ed. Moos, 4.499). See Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 228–237, esp. 234–237, and Étienne Gilson, "Quasi Definitio Substantiae," in *St. Thomas Aquinas, 1274–1974, Commemorative Studies*, vol. 1 (Toronto, 1974), 111–129.

i. *In I Sententias* (1252–1256). Thomas takes up the question of divine ideas of accidents in *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 3. An objector argues that since accidents are not *per se* subsisting, neither do they participate in a distinct idea. Thomas's response grants that accidents do not have perfect *esse*, and so fall short of the perfection of an idea. It is precisely this defect, he notes, that led Plato to deny ideas of accidents and posit them only of substances. Nevertheless, according as accidents have existence (*esse*) through imitation of the divine essence, so the divine essence is the idea of them.[280]

This response is unhelpfully brief. From the first part of the response, we might infer that accidents, like prime matter, have imperfect ideas. The last line gives us reason to pause, however. Thomas concludes that because accidents have their *esse* from God, the divine essence is the idea of them. Idea is singular here. We might be tempted to think that God has but one idea for all accidents, but such a reading can only be correct in the sense that the "the essence imitated is one."[281] Since each accident imitates the one divine essence in a unique manner, each accident must have a unique divine idea. Thus, it is proper to conclude from Thomas's brief reply to an objection that he thinks that there are many divine ideas of accidents, but that these ideas cannot have the perfect nature (*ratio*) of an idea because they can only have imperfect *esse*.

ii. *De veritate* (1256–1259). In *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 7, Thomas once again contrasts his position with that of Plato. Plato denied ideas of accidents because ideas are the proximate causes of things. Accidents, however, are immediately caused by the substance. Thus, there are no ideas of them in God. This line of reasoning is not sound because God is the immediate cause of each and every thing that is caused, even if it comes about by a secondary cause. God works in every secondary cause, and every effect of the secondary cause arises from his predefinition. He causes not only the *esse* of the secondary cause, but its very causality as well. So while the substance is the

[280] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 3, ad 4 (ed. Mandonnet, I.845).
[281] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.842).

proximate cause of its accidents God still has ideas of the accidents because he immediately causes the causality of the substance.[282]

Thomas then draws a distinction between proper accidents and separable accidents. Proper accidents are never really (*secundum esse*) separated from their subject. These accidents are produced in being (*esse*) by one operation with their subjects. Thus, since an idea, properly speaking, is the operable form of a thing, there are not distinct ideas of these accidents. Each of these ideas shares an idea with its subject. Thomas uses the example of a builder who has one form of a house and for all the things that accrue to the house. The builder produces the house in being along with these accidents (e.g., being quadrilateral).[283]

Separable accidents, as their name suggests, do not follow their subject inseparably, nor do they depend upon it from its principles. These accidents are produced in being (*esse*) by a different operation than the one that produces the subject. Thomas uses the example of man. Just because a man comes into being does not mean that a grammatical man comes into being. A man becomes grammatical by a different operation. Such an accident strictly speaking has an idea in God distinct from the idea of their subject. If the term "idea" is taken in the broad sense of likeness or *ratio*, then both types of accidents have a distinct idea in God because they can be considered distinctly *per se*.

iii. Conclusions. In all of his works after *In I Sent.* Thomas's position on divine ideas of accidents is consistent. Accidents that come to be in the same act as their subject do not have

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[282] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 7 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.114:42–65), esp.: "Sed quia nos ponimus Deus immediatam causam uniuscumque rei secundum quod in omnibus causis secundis operator et quod omnes effectus secondi ex eius praediffinitione proveniat, ideo non solum primorum entium sed etiam secundorum in eo ideas ponimus, et sic substantiarum et accidentium sed diversorum accidentium diversimode." Thomas's clearest statement of the relationship between God and secondary causes is found in *In Liber de causis*, prop. 1–3 (ed. Saffrey, 4–25). Cf. *SCG* III, c. 67 (ed. Leonine, 14.190), *ST* I, q. 105, a. 5 (ed. Leonine, 5.475–476), and *De potentia*, q. 3, a. 7 (ed. Pession, II.55a–59b).

[283] Cf. *ST* I, q. 15, q. 3, ad 4 (ed. Leonine, 4.204). Doolan points out that while Thomas does not state it explicitly in this text, we can rightly infer that God has distinct ideas for all accidents insofar as the word "idea" is taken in the broad sense of likeness or *ratio* (*Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 137). This inference is consistent with his claim in q. 15, a. 2 that there are a plurality of divine ideas insofar as God knows himself to be imitated in a variety of ways. Since every accident imitates the divine essence in a distinct way, there ought to be distinct divine idea for every accident.

distinct idea in God. Thus, in the strict sense of idea taken as exemplar, the accident risible would not have a distinct divine idea in God from the idea of an individual man. Since he has distinct exemplar ideas of singulars, God has a distinct exemplar idea of Socrates, but God does not have a distinct exemplar idea of Socrates' risibility. In the broad sense of idea as *ratio*, God does have distinct ideas of man and risibility. Accidents that are separable from their subject can be acquired or lost by the subject. Such accidents do have distinct ideas in God. The exemplary operation by which the subject exists and the exemplary operation by which the subject has the separable accident are distinct, and so require distinct exemplary forms, i.e., distinct ideas.

This position in the two later works is consistent with his position in *In I Sent.* in one sense, and inconsistent with it in another. Thomas is consistent in claiming that the divine essence is the idea of accidents because accidents have their origin in God. The claim that ideas have only an imperfect *ratio* of an idea seems to be consistent only with his later position regarding inseparable accidents. Inseparable accidents have an idea in God, but not a perfect idea because their idea is not distinct from the idea of their subject. Separable accidents, however, would seem to have perfect ideas because they only come to be by a distinct act. The accidents that are created by them are imperfect because it is not in their nature (*ratio*) to exist without a subject, yet that does not prevent the idea of them from being perfect. The imperfect being of the *ideatum* does not necessitate an imperfection in the being of the idea.[284]

[284] It could be argued that Thomas is using the term "idea" in the broad sense in *In I Sent.*, and so the distinction between separable and inseparable accidents is not necessary. This interpretation of the text would make his position consistent with the positions in *De veritate* and *ST*, but I find no evidence that we should read the text in this way. Since the question in *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 3 is whether God has ideas of all the things that he knows, the response focuses on God's ability to produce what he knows, and Thomas is consistently explicit when he is using the term "idea" in the broader sense of likeness or *ratio*, it is unlikely that Thomas would have switched the way he was using the word without signaling the change.

e. Possibles

The last special case to be considered with regard to the scope of the divine ideas in Thomas's theory is the question of pure possibles, that is, things that God could have made, but elected not to bring about at any point in time. Several years ago, Thomas's view of the metaphysical status of divine ideas of possibles was called into question, and it was questioned whether Thomas's system truly requires a doctrine of divine ideas.[285] The question concerning the metaphysical status of the divine ideas of possibles was treated above, so I will focus only on the question of whether Thomas holds that God has ideas of non-existing possibles.[286]

i. *De veritate* (1256–1259). Thomas explicitly raises the question of ideas of pure possibles in the *De veritate*.[287] In q. 2, a. 8, he asks whether God cognizes non-beings that never did exist, do not exist, nor will ever exist. He argues that God's cognition of creatures may be likened to that of the artist who knows his artwork before he wills to make it. His knowledge is the cause of the thing's coming into being, but does not imply an intention to produce the thing. Only the will can supply the necessary intention to make the thing. Of itself, the intellect's cognition of the thing is indifferent to its existence or non-existence. Such indifference is characteristic of speculative cognition. The cognition becomes practical only through the intention to make. Thus, God's knowledge of those things that were not, are not, nor will be is *quasi* speculative cognition.[288] Applying this general insight to divine ideas in his response to the third objection, Thomas notes

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[285] Wippel, *Metaphysical Themes I*, 163–89; Ross, "Aquinas's Exemplarism; Aquinas's Voluntarism," 171-198; Maurer, "James Ross on the Divine Ideas: A Reply," 213-220; Lawrence Dewan, OP "St. Thomas, James Ross, and Exemplarism: A Reply," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 65 (1991): 221–34; Ross, "Response to Maurer and Dewan," 235-243; Gregory T. Doolan, "Is Thomas's Doctrine of the Divine Ideas Thomistic?" in *Wisdom's Apprentice: Thomistic Essays in Honor of Lawrence Dewan, O.P.*, ed. Peter A. Kwasniewski (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007), 153–69.

[286] For treatment of the metaphysical status of ideas of possibles, see II.B.2.d.

[287] Thomas does not explicitly address this question prior to the *De veritate*, but what he says in *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.842) should lead to the conclusion that there are divine ideas of possibles. Since God knew the way his essence was imitable, he has ideas of anything that he could make.

[288] *De veritate*, q. 2, a 8 (ed. Leonine, 69:28–70:91). Cf. *SCG* I, c. 66 (ed. Leonine, 13.184–85).

that since in the common way of speaking of an idea is a form of practical cognition, there are only ideas of the things God makes at some time. But if an idea is also the form of speculative cognition, then nothing prohibits there being ideas of things that were not, are not, nor will be.

In q. 3, a. 6 Thomas explains the case differently. Properly speaking, an idea bespeaks practical cognition not only in act, but in habit as well. Since God could make those things that never were, are not, nor will be, he has virtually practical cognition of them. Thus, it follows that he can have an idea of what is purely possible. Yet, the ideas of pure possibles are not ideas in the same way as ideas of things that come to be at some time because the latter are determined to be produced by the divine will whereas the former are not. The ideas of non-existing possibles, then, are in a certain way indeterminate ideas. Thus, he allows for divine ideas of non-existing possibles.

ii. *Summa theologiae* (1266–1268). In the *Summa theologiae,* as in the *De veritate*, Thomas takes up the question of whether God knows non-beings and whether he has ideas of them. In q. 14, a. 9, he affirms that God knows all things that exist in any way whatsoever, and he distinguishes between the knowledge of vision—by which God knows things that exist at some time—and the knowledge of simple intelligence—by which God knows things that never were, nor are, nor will be. Those things he knows by simple intelligence exist in active potency in his power.[289]

When Thomas takes up the question of ideas of possibles in q. 15, a. 3, ad 2, he says that God has only virtual practical cognition of things that were not, are not, nor will be. Since an idea in the strict sense is an exemplar, God does not have ideas of possibles in the strict sense. In the broad sense of *ratio*, however, God does have ideas because a divine *ratio* can be known with speculative knowledge and need not ever be created.

iii. *Quodlibet* IV (1271). The last place from which we can glean insight into Thomas's position on divine ideas of possibles is *Quodlibet* IV, q. 1, a. 1. In this text Thomas defines an idea as

[289] *ST* I, q. 14, a. 9 (ed. Leonine, 4.181). Cf. *De potentia*, q. 1, a. 5, ad 11 (ed. Pession, 2.20b).

a certain form understood by an agent to whose likeness he intends to produce an exterior work. God has, he argues, many such forms in his mind as the proper *rationes* of the things he understands. From the explicit references to intention and production, we can infer that there are no divine ideas of possibles because possibles lack the intention for production. Yet, his response emphasizes that God has many ideas insofar as the divine essence is imitable by this creature and that creature. The divine essence is the proper *ratio* of each. Such reference to the possibility of imitation, rather than the mere fact of imitation, could imply that God does have ideas of possibles if we understand the word "idea" in a broad sense. Thus, Wippel argues that while Thomas does not explicitly allow divine ideas of possibles in this text, neither does he exclude them.[290]

iv. Conclusions. When he takes up the question of divine ideas of possibles, Thomas consistently employs his distinction between an idea in the strict sense of exemplar and an idea in the broad sense of likeness or *ratio*. In the broad sense, the term "idea" applies to everything that *could* imitate the divine essence. An emphasis on the modality of "could" makes it easy to see why the possibles have ideas in the broad sense. They are called "possible" precisely because such genera, species, and singulars are ways that the divine essence *could* be imitated. God is infinite perfection, and infinite perfection can be imitated in an infinite number of ways. This finite world could never exhaust the ways in which God knows himself to be imitable, and so God must have *rationes* of the creatures that were not produced.

Thomas's understanding of "idea" taken in the strict sense changes as his career progresses, and this change affects his answer to the question of divine ideas of possibles. As we have averted to many times, in the *De veritate*, a divine idea in the strict sense falls under either actually practical cognition or virtually practical cognition. Since anything that the knower knows he can produce falls under virtually practical cognition, possibles qualify as ideas in the strict sense. By the time he pens

[290] Wippel, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 37. Cf. Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 142–43.

the *Summa theologiae*, Thomas's teaching with regard to exemplars has come to emphasize the intention of the knower and the thing exemplified. Thus, he separates actually practical cognition and virtually practical cognition such that divine ideas in the strict sense of exemplar only fall under the former.

f. The Scope of Divine Exemplars

From the examination of the passages above, we find Thomas's distinction between divine ideas in the strict sense of exemplar and divine ideas in the broad sense of likeness or *ratio* play a progressively more important role in his discussion of the scope of divine ideas. In both *In I Sent.* and the *Summa theologiae*, Thomas explicitly treats the scope of the divine ideas as a question of their relationship to divine cognition. Is there a one-to-one correspondence between God's cognition and his ideas? Does he have ideas of all the things that he cognizes? Regardless of whether "idea" is understood in the strict sense or the broad sense, Thomas's answer to this question is negative. God does not have an idea of evil or an idea of prime matter. Earlier in his career, Thomas was more anxious to affirm the proposition that God has ideas of all the things that he cognizes and so argued that God has "an idea of the evil of the thing . . . not insofar as it is evil, but insofar as it is a thing," and that "considered in itself, [prime matter] has the imperfect *ratio* of an idea in God."[291] By the time he wrote the *Summa theologiae*, he had abandoned both of these positions entirely. God cognizes evil only through the *ratio* of the good, and so he has neither an exemplar nor a *ratio* of evil in him.[292] Since ideas are either exemplars or *rationes*, God does not have an idea of evil. The case is similar with prime matter. Of itself, prime matter neither has *esse* nor is cognizable.[293] Thus, it has to be cognized through another. Just as evil has no *ratio* of its own but has to be cognized through the *ratio*

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[291] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 3, ad 1 and 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.844–45): "rei maliae idea in Deo est, non quidem inquantum mala est, sed inquantum res est . . . . in se vero considerata, habet [materia prima] in Deo imperfectam rationem ideae."

[292] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3, ad 1 (ed. Leonine, 4.204).

[293] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3, ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.204).

of the good, so prime matter has no *ratio* of its own and has to be cognized through the *ratio* of form. God cognizes both evil and prime matter, but he in no way has an idea of either.

With regard to everything else that God knows, Thomas is far more lenient. God has an idea in the broad sense of everything else (other than himself) that he knows. God has ideas of individuals, species, genera, accidents, and pure possibles. All of these require distinct *rationes* because God fully cognizes himself and knows everything that he knows perfectly. Perfect cognition entails knowing all the ways in which things can exist. All *esse* is either the divine essence or an imitation of the divine essence. Thus, God's perfect cognition entails knowing his essence and all the ways in which his essence can be imitated. God has this perfect cognition simply by knowing the divine essence. This single form actualizes the divine intellect enabling God know many things. What God knows is many. That by which he knows is one. The unity of this divine idea would suffice if God did not have to know each of the many things perfectly. God could know everything simply by knowing being, but that would be confused knowledge.[294] I can know the species man in the genus animal, but I would not know man distinctly. I would still be in potency to knowing him in a more perfect way. To know something perfectly is to know its *ratio* distinctly. Thus, if God knows everything that he knows perfectly, then he has the *ratio* of each distinctly. He has a ratio of Socrates, of man, of animal, etc. Since these *rationes* include individuals, species, and genera of both substances and accidents that God could have made but did not make, and these possibles are infinite in number, God has an infinite number of divine ideas in the broad sense.

The scope of divine ideas, taken in the strict sense, is far more restricted. Since ideas taken in the strict sense are ontological principles, and not merely cognitive principles for Thomas, it makes sense that his restricted metaphysical outlook would contract the number of divine ideas. In the strict sense, there are divine ideas only of singulars and (singular) separable accidents that God

[294] See *ST* I, q. 86, a. 2, ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 5.350).

chooses to bring about at some time. As commentators on Thomas regularly observe, this position forces a Platonic conception to conform to an Aristotelian world-view.[295] Divine providence extends not only to the species, but also to the singulars in which that species exist.[296] The species and genus are not distinguished from the singular in being (*secundum esse*).[297] In fact, singulars exist more truly than do the universals species and genus because the latter do not subsist except by the former. Given that ideas are ordered to the *esse* of a thing, it follows that singulars have ideas more truly than do universals.[298]

This interpretation of Thomas's thought, which privileges ideas of singulars and denies distinct ideas of universals (in the strict sense of idea), is confirmed by the constant contrast that Thomas draws between Plato and himself with regard to the scope of the divine ideas. Thomas draws this contrast a total of six times in the fourteen articles in which he considers the scope of divine ideas. Moreover, most of these contrasts occur in the *De veritate* and *Summa theologiae*, the texts that contain his most authoritative and systematic teaching on the divine ideas.

Thomas's restriction of the divine ideas to singulars and separable accidents that God chooses to produce at some time, as was pointed out above, first appears in his commentary on Dionysius's *De divinis nominibus*.[299] In that text, he stresses the intention of the agent to produce a likeness of the form in that which imitates the idea. The emphasis on intention is present in earlier texts, but he seems to take it more seriously beginning with the commentary on Dionysius. In *De*

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[295] See Doolan, *Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 144; Boland, 226; Branick, 194–95; Mark D. Jordan, "The Intelligibility of the World and the Divine Ideas in Aquinas," *The Review of Metaphysics* 38.1 (Sep. 1984): 23–24.

[296] *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3, ad 4 (ed. Leonine, 4.204).

[297] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 8, ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.116:74–79).

[298] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 8, s.c. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.115:35–39). In the terminology of *In I Sent.*, only those things that have *esse perfectum* can have distinct ideas in the strict sense of the term (d. 36, q. 2, a. 3 [ed. Mandonnet, I.845]). Cf. Jordan, 21: "Again, strictly speaking, prime matter has no separate Idea, but is comprehended within the Idea of the composite being, which has complete being, *esse perfectum*. Each particular being, having *esse perfectum*, also has a corresponding Idea in God. Let me repeat: every concerete singular, every singular substance, answers to a distinct divine Idea."

[299] *In De div. nom.* V, lect. 3, n. 665–66 (ed. Marietti, 249). Cf. Dewan, "Exemplarism: A Reply," 233–34.

veritate, q. 3, a. 1, as we saw above, Thomas defines an idea as "a form that something imitates from the intention of an agent who predetermines the end for himself."[300] It is strange that he allows virtually practical cognition to qualify as an idea in the strict sense of the term in *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 3 because while the things known by means of virtually practical cognition are operable, and so can be intended to an end, "nevertheless, [the agent] does not intend to work them."[301] If the *ratio* of an idea includes the agent's intention, and virtually practical cognition explicitly removes an intention from the agent, then there should be no ideas in the strict sense of things known by means of virtually practical cognition. Thomas is inconsistent with his own teaching. Therefore, I think the shift that begins in *In De divinis nominibus* does not reveal a change in Thomas's principles, but rather a realization of what should have followed from those principles in the first place. The emphasis on the ontological role of the divine ideas permeates Thomas's work. It even plays a greater role than Thomas himself seems to realize at times.

4. Recapitulation and Conclusions

For Thomas an idea is the "form that something imitates from the intention of an agent who predetermines the end for himself," i.e., it is an extrinsic formal cause.[302] Ideas have a twofold function: they are both cognitive principles and causal principles. Ideas are principles of cognition insofar as the forms of cognizable things are in the cognizer. They are causal principles insofar as they are the exemplars in the likeness of which things are made. Although their role as cognitive principles is a necessary condition for their role as exemplars, Thomas prioritizes the causal role of divine ideas. Thomas speaks of divine ideas almost exclusively in terms of their causal role.

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[300] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.100:220–23): "Haec ergo videtur esse ratio ideae, quod idea sit forma quam aliquid imitatur ex intentione agentis qui praedeterminat sibi finem."

[301] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.107:98–99): "non tamen operari intendit."

[302] *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.100:220–23): "Haec ergo videtur esse ratio ideae, quod idea sit forma quam aliquid imitatur ex intentione agentis qui praedeterminat sibi finem."

Thomas argues that God has ideas using three main arguments. These arguments rely on our inability to account for the fact that all things seek an end, the fact that all things make something like themselves, and the fact that God knows the full extent of his power as a cause. Each of these arguments further shows the emphasis that Thomas places on ideas as exemplar causes. Unlike Bonaventure, who argues from the supreme expressivity of divine truth, all three of Thomas's arguments emphasize God's causality.

Thomas gives further insight into the status of divine ideas by stating that God has a divine idea for everything that he knows, except himself. Divine ideas are not merely the divine essence, but rather the divine essence as God knows it to be imitable. God has to have a plurality of divine ideas because he knows that his infinitely perfect essence can be imitated, and he knows all the ways in which it can be imitated. Since, as Augustine said, knowledge of man is diverse from knowledge of horse, God's knowledge can be fully actualized only if he has the proper *rationes* of each thing that he knows.[303] The diversity of the proper *rationes* is the plurality of the divine ideas. These diverse relations are not contrary to the divine simplicity because the plurality of the divine ideas does not imply a plurality of means by which God knows. The divine essence is the only intelligible species that God has. The plurality of divine ideas is a result of the rational respects understood by God. The plurality of the divine ideas is not caused by the things, but by the divine intellect comparing his essence to the thing. The divine idea is not a creature itself (whether actual or possible), but the relationship that God knows a creature could have to him.

From eternity God knows all of the ways that a creature could imitate the divine essence. To say anything else is to ascribe potency, and therefore imperfection, to God. Since God's knowledge of the diverse relations that creatures could have to him is a matter of the divine intellect alone, God necessarily has all the ideas, in the sense of *rationes*, that he has. God does not choose the ways in

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[303] Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46, n. 2 (PL 40.30).

which his essence *could* be imitated. By means of his divine will, God chooses from among the infinite possible ways that the divine essence can be imitated, and then God creates things in their likeness. The divine ideas of things chosen to exist at some time are divine ideas taken in the strict sense of exemplar. Only those *rationes* of things that God chooses to create at some time are exemplar forms because only they have the requisite intention of the agent.

Given the restriction of divine ideas to exemplar forms, Thomas is forced to say that strictly speaking only individuals and the separable accidents that God creates at some time have divine ideas. Knowledge of a singular, its species, and its genus are not identical, but the act by which they are created is. Species and genera do not enjoy a separate existence from the singular in which they exist. The same is true of the form and matter that are the principles of any material singular's existence, and its inseparable accidents (such as risibility in man). Since Thomas restricts the divine ideas in the strict sense to those things that exist at some time, and since he also claims that time is finite, Thomas implicitly holds that divine ideas in the strict sense are finite in number.

I will speak in more detail about the comparison between authors' theories at the end of the chapter, but I think a few words of comparison between the theories of Bonaventure and Thomas would be helpful. The two theories are remarkably similar if we take Thomas's broad understanding of the term "idea." The divine ideas are the means by which God knows creatures. They are the *rationes cognoscendi* of God's knowledge of all things except God himself. They are not the creatures themselves, but the real relations that God knows that creatures can have to him. Although the preference between supremely expressive truth and imitation of the divine essence yield different ways of examining the plurality of the divine ideas, Thomas's emphasis that the divine ideas are *not* the divine essence itself, but rather the divine essence *as understood,* mitigates any substantial difference that could arise from the diverse modes of expression.

The differences between the two theories emerge when we take Thomas's strict understanding of the term "idea." For Bonaventure, the divine ideas are primarily cognitive principles. They play a crucial role in divine exemplarity, but this is not their primary function. Thomas holds that divine ideas, in the strict sense, are exemplar forms in imitation of which God creates creatures. They are not infinite in number because God does not create an infinite number of things, although it would not be philosophically inconsistent for him to do so. Both Bonaventure and Thomas agree that God has more *rationes* than exemplars and that the exemplars are finite in number, but Thomas's insistence that the exemplars are, as it were, the more important sense of divine ideas results in a large divergence between the two theories.

Also worth noting is that Thomas does not take up the question of the ordering of the ideas. I do not think Thomas thought this question was worth raising. Since the divine ideas are identical with the divine essence, there can be no ontological ordering among them in that sense. Presumably, Thomas would hold that ideas would have a logical ordering amongst themselves. Genera and species, substances and accidents, and ideas of various substances would have some sort of logical ordering. But since Thomas does not speak of it, we can only speculate. What we can say for sure is that there is that the divine ideas are only rational respects in God, and so can have no real order amongst themselves.

C. HENRY OF GHENT (BEFORE 1240–1293)[1]

Henry of Ghent occupies a unique spot in this study for several reasons. The first reason is that he was a secular priest. All of the other major thinkers in this study belonged to religious orders. The works of religious authors are readily preserved by their orders. It is a matter of just pride, e.g., for the Franciscans to preserve the works of Bonaventure. They would hold them up as a model for pursuing the truth and a good starting point for their inquiry. As a result, the works of religious authors were diligently copied and distributed. Lacking an order to promote the preservation of his works, Henry of Ghent's thought is preserved solely because of its brilliance. His work survives because of the meticulous reasoning and originality that was manifest in his treatment of every issue.

The second reason that Henry of Ghent is unique in this study is the length of his tenure as a regent master at the University of Paris's Faculty of Theology. Henry reigned in his chair from 1276 until his death in 1293. Unlike the religious orders, who would cycle their scholars through the Parisian faculty as quickly as the University would permit, namely, in one or two years, Henry was a Master in Paris for nearly twenty years. Such a long tenure allowed him to influence the thinking of countless students. We tend to think of Thomas Aquinas as the dominating figure in second half of the thirteenth century. Thomas's thought was undoubtedly influential in his own time, but the last quarter century of century was really dominated by Henry. John Duns Scotus begins his inquiry into almost every issue by recounting Henry's position on the matter because Henry's thought was insightful, well known, and could not be ignored.[2]

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[1] Traditionally, Henry is said to have been born in either 1217 or 1223. I follow Porro who argues that neither of these dates have any foundation in the evidence available to us. All we can say for certain is that he was born prior to 1240. See Porro, "A Historiographical Image of Henry of Ghent," in *Henry of Ghent. Proceedings of the International Colloquium on the Occasion of the 700th Anniversary of his Death (1293)*, ed. W. Vanhamel (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 199), 377.

[2] Tobias Hoffmann, "Henry of Ghent's Influence on John Duns Scotus's Metaphysics," in *A Companion to Henry of Ghent*, edited by Gordon A. Wilson (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 339.

1. The Place of Divine Ideas in Henry's Thought

For Henry, metaphysics is the first and primary rational science. It is not as high as theology, but metaphysics is the highest science that reason can attain without the aid of divine revelation. A perennial concern in metaphysics is assigning a subject for the science that can adequately uphold both the dignity and unity of the science. Henry does not have a question explicitly devoted to the question of the subject of metaphysics, but we can reconstruct his position from statements he makes in a variety of places in the *Summa*.

Following Avicenna, Henry argues that being insofar as it is being (*ens in quantum est ens*) is the first concept that is impressed upon our intellects by a primary impression. As a result, there must be some concepts that are impressed upon our intellects by a primary impression.[3] This broadest concept of being insofar as it is being is being is taken simply (*ens simpliciter*), and is the subject of metaphysics *Ens simpliciter*, as the broadest conception of being, does not distinguish between being in act and being in potency. Since it does not distinguish between being in act and being in potency, *ens simpliciter* is an analogous concept common to both Creator and creature.[4] As a simple concept, *ens simpliciter* is prior to all judgment, which means there is no determination regarding existence or non-existence (*esse vel non esse*) at all.[5] The subject of metaphysics, then, is essences, not existence. As will be explained in greater detail below, Henry frequently argues that essences are things (*res*) in two ways. An essence is either a *res* derived from *reor, reris* (I think, you think) or a *res* derived from *ratitudo* (ratification or verification). Anything thinkable is a *res a reor*. A

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[3] *Summa*, a. 34, q. 3 (ed. Macken, 190). Cf. Avicenna, *Met.*, I, c. 2 (ed. van Riet, I.13:36–38). Pickavé laments that Henry assumes rather than argues for the necessity of a first principle for propositions, but suggests that he would refer us to the principle of non-contradiction as "the necessary condition for meaningful speech and predication" (Martin Pickavé, "Henry of Ghent on Metaphysics," in *A Companion to Henry of Ghent*, edited by Gordon A. Wilson [Leiden: Brill, 2010], 156)

[4] *Summa*, a. 21, q. 3 (ed. Badius, I.138rD). Cf. *Summa*, a. 24, q. 3 (ed. Badius, I.138vP). Although Henry holds that God is the *primum cognitum* and that knowledge of God is one of the main goals of metaphysical inquiry, he does not hold that God is or falls under the subject-matter of metaphysics. See Pickavé, 171.

[5] *Summa*, a. 24, q. 3 (ed. Badius, I.138vP).

res a ratitudine, however, is naturally suited to exist. *Res a ratitudine* can be further divided into those whose essence includes *esse* and those whose essence does not include *esse*. The former is God alone. The latter are the ideas by which God knows and creates everything other than himself.[6] Divine ideas, then, are a crucial part of the metaphysical enterprise. Moreover, divine ideas are the measures against which the truth of all beings is measured. Divine ideas play an irreplaceable and central role in Henry's metaphysics *and* epistemology. Thus, "no scholar would ever raise the question whether 'the internal logic' of Henry's thought 'really requires a theory of divine ideas at all,' as did Gilson about Aquinas."[7] Divine ideas are an essential and necessary part of Henry's metaphysics, and central to his entire philosophical system.

2. The Status of Divine Ideas

Henry of Ghent's thought comes down to us in two works that spring directly from his role as regent master. The first of these works is the *Summa quaestionum ordinariarum*. This work is the revised edition of Henry's classroom disputations. Henry calls it his *Summa* both because he intended it to be a systematic inquiry into the truth of God and creatures, and because he intended it to rival and replace Thomas's *Summa theologiae* as a pedagogical text. Despite his long career Henry was unable to complete the text, leaving us only the voluminous section on God.[8] He never completed the planned section on creatures.[9]

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[6] See *Quodlibet* V, q. 2 (ed. Badius 154rD); *Quodlibet* V, q. 6 (ed. Badius, 161rK); *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 26:46–28:87). For an explanation of Henry's comprehensive sketches of reality, see Jan Aersten, "Transcendental Thought in Henry of Ghent," in *Henry of Ghent: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on the Occasion of the 700th Anniversary of his Death (1293)*, ed. W. Vanhamel (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996), esp. 1–18.

[7] Roberto Plevano, "Divine Ideas and Infinity," in *Henry of Ghent and the Transformation of Scholastic Thought: Essays in Memory of Jos Decorte*, ed. Guy Guldentos and Carlos Steel (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003), 191, quoting Wippel "Thomas Aquinas on the Divine Ideas," 1.

[8] See J. Gómez Caffarena, *Ser participado y ser subsistente en la metafísica de Enrique de Gante* (Rome: 1958), 4–5: "las *Summae quaestionum ordinarium*, del mismo estilo general de *Questiones disputatae*, / si bien ordenadas con más plan y método, y destinas a formar una obra de conjuto, que quedó truncada."

[9] Henry lays out his general plan for the *Summa* in introduction to a. 21: "Visis quasi praeambulis ad intentum nostrum principale, quomodo scilicet theologia sit de Deo, et quod de rebus divinis sit scientia, et quomodo de eisdem in eadem locution sit habenda, restat de principali intent prosequi: quae scilicet et qualia in hac scientia de Deo et de rebus divinis ex ea sunt sentienda. Et quia, ut dictum est supra in quaestione de subiecto det materia huius scientiae, proprius ordo et modus procedendi in ea, est incipere a Deo et procedure ad creaturas, hic dubitandum est de duobus in summa.

The second major work is a set of fifteen *Quaestiones quodlibitales*. For the most part, Henry appears to have participated in the biannual exercise for Masters of Theology once a year, usually in Advent.[10] Though he was not able to control what questions he treated during this exercise, he was frequently asked about topics that he was treating in class. Thus, Henry frequently treats the same question in a number of places. This variety of treatments affords Henry the opportunity to approach the same question from a variety of perspectives, and incorporate these different approaches into his overall thought. That he intends his various treatments to be read together is obvious from the frequent references he makes in both the *Summa* and *Quodlibets* to other places that he has addressed the same question. These cross-references also allow us to see any development in his thought.

Due to the great number of places that Henry treats divine ideas in his opera, I will treat only the most original and influential treatments of the issues. Reference to other treatments will appear in the footnotes. The *Summa* presents a difficulty to a historical way of proceeding that I should address. On the one hand, the *Summa* is meant to be a systematic inquiry and so offer a myopic account. This single and comprehensive view of things ought to be treated all at once as was the case for the works of Bonaventure and Thomas above. On the other hand, the text of the *Summa* was written over Henry's entire career as a Master. Thus, each of the articles, despite being from the same work, do not necessarily bear the myopic lens that we would expect from a systematic work. As a result, I will treat individual articles (and sets of articles) of the *Summa* separately so that any

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Primum est de Deo, ut subiecto principali huius scientiae. Secundum est de creatures, ut de materia suiecto attributa" (*Summa*, a. 21, introduction [ed. Badius, I.123r]). For a discussion of the incompleteness of this work, see Macken "Étude Critique," cxxv–cxxix, Wilson, "Critical Study," xxvii–xxviii and lxviii–lxix, and Mário S. de Carvalho, "On the Unwritten Section of Henry of Ghent's *Summa*," in *Henry of Ghent and the Transformation of Scholastic Thought: Studies in Memory of Jos Decorte*, ed. Guy Guldentops and Carlos Steel (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003), 327–370. Note especially the appendix of places where Henry refers to the section *de creatureis* at the end of de Carvalho's article.

[10] For the Chronology of Henry's *Quodlibets*, see J. Gómez Caffarena, "Cronología de la «Suma» de Enrique de Gante por relación a sus «Quodlibetos»," *Gregorianum* 38.1 (1957): 133, and the slight amendations by Macken, "Introduction," xvii. Both authors claim that twelve of the fifteen *Quodlibets* were during Advent. Only *Quodlibet* III, IX, and XIII are said to have been disputed during Lent.

development in Henry's thought is more easily seen. This choice is also problematic because it is well known that Henry consistently went back and revised many of his works, but I will proceed under the assumption that the chronology offered by Gómez Caffarena is more or less accurate.

a. What is an Ideas?

i. *Summa quaestionum ordinariarum*, a. 1 (1276).[11] Henry's earliest known treatment of divine ideas occurs in the first article of his *Summa*. I will offer each of Henry's usages first, and then draw a summary of his account of the divine ideas in *Summa*, a. 1. In *Summa*, a. 1, q. 1, ad 4, Henry states that Augustine, interpreting the words of Plato more soundly than Aristotle did, posits that the principles of certain (i.e., correct) science and of cognition of the truth consist in rules or eternal, unchanging reasons existing in God, by participation of which rules or reasons through intellectual cognition is cognized any pure truth is cognized in creatures, such that, just as by his being (*entitas*) he is the cause of all existing things insofar as they exist, so also by his truth he is the cause of all cognizing insofar as things are true.[12]

Henry brings up the divine ideas several times in *Summa*, a. 1, q. 3. In the first occurrence he compares a corporeal vision to intellectual vision. In corporeal vision light illuminates the eye to sharpen it, the species of color alters the eye to consider, and the configuration determines the eye to discern. These three correspond to three aspects in intellectual vision on the part of God, who is the reason (*ratio*) working the act of understanding. Spiritual light illuminates the mind's eye to sharpen

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[11] The dating of the *Summa's* first five articles is necessarily imprecise because there is evidence that the text had two official exemplars. On the one hand, Godfrey of Fontaines appears to have had a copy of the text by 1276–77. On the other hand, Henry also seems to have delivered the first 61 articles of *Summa* all at once to the *stationarius* in Paris at about 1289. See Wilson, "Critical Study," esp., xix–xxii, xxv–xxviii, and xxxviii–lxvii; R. Wielockx, "Henry of Ghent," in *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jorge J.E. Gracia and Timothy B. Noone (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 296; and Marrone, "Henry of Ghent in mid-career as interpreter of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas," in *Henry of Ghent: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on the Occasion of the 700th Anniversary of his Death (1293)*, edited by W. Vanhamel (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996), 208–209.

[12] *Summa*, a. 1, q. 1, ad 4 (ed. Wilson, 25:384–391): "Unde Augustinus sanius interpretans dicta Platonis quam Aristoteles, ponit principia certae scientiae et cognitionis veritatis consistere in regulis sive rationibus aeternis incommutabilibus existentibus in Deo, quarum participatione per intellectualem cognitionem cognoscitur quidquid sincerae veritatis in creaturis cognoscitur, ut, sicut sua entitate est causa omnium existendi in quantum sunt, sic et sua veritate est causa omnium cognoscendi in quantum vera sunt."

its vision, the form or species alters it to consider, and the figure or character configures it to discern. In keeping with these three distinct roles that God places in intellectual vision, the saints call God the *ratio intelligendi* in three ways. Sometimes they call him *ratio intelligendi* as light, sometimes as species or form, and sometimes as exemplar or idea or rule. But in every perfect intellectual cognition God is the *ratio intelligendi* according to all three.[13]

Just below this text Henry again speaks favorably of Plato's emphasis on ideas in the context of divine illumination. Plato, who according to Augustine "posited that souls lived before bodies" and perceived the free light of ideas, posited that soul, shadowed in the cloud of the body, initially had no cognition of pure truth in the light of ideas, but only imaginary cognition in the light of a creature. But because they were always more and more purified by abstraction from sensible bodies, and they were established in pure truth in the light of the ideas as it were by remembering under the forgotten cloud of the body, such that they were not able to see the truths of things in the naked light of the ideas, which is the divine essence, unless they were completely abstracted from the body and sensible bodies either through death or through rapture.[14]

Henry then returns to the three ways of understanding *ratio cognitionis*. The third way, i.e., the way in which *ratio cognitionis* is exemplar, idea, or role is of particular interest here. As exemplar, a *ratio cognitionis* is a character transfiguring the mind to understand distinctly. In this character of the eternal rules contained in the divine art, all which conditions of things and circumstances they exemplify as exemplar figures indicating all of their angles and curves in which the expressed truth of the thing is contained. The thing contains this truth in itself by relating (*habendo*) whatever of it

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[13] *Summa*, a. 1, q. 3 (ed. Wilson, 73:84–76:149), esp: Et propter ista tria dicitur Deus a sanctis aliquando ratio intelligendi ut lux, aliquando ut species sive forma, aliquando vero ut exemplar sive idea vel regula. Sed tamen in qualibet intellectuali cognition perfecta est ratio intelligendi secundum haec tria." Cf. *Summa*, a. 1, q. 2 (ed. Wilson, 40:235–39): "Primum exemplar rei est species eius existens apud animam universalis, per quam acquirit notitiam omnium suppositorum eius, et est causata a re. Secundum exemplar est ars divina continens omnium rerum ideales rationes, ad quod Plato dicit «Deum mundum instituisse», sicut artifex ad exemplar artis in mente sua facit domum, non autem ad primum." See Plato, *Timaeus*, 28C (ed. Waszink, 21:14–15).

[14] *Summa*, a. 1, q. 3 (ed. Wilson, 79:190–199).

represents its exemplar. The thing would only be false to the extent that it falls short of its exemplar. And because of this deflection from the exemplar the closest and perfect *ratio cognoscendi* of pure truth or the truth simply of anything whatever with perfect, distinct, and determined cognition is the divine essence insofar as it is an art or exemplar of all things imprinting on the mind a likeness word of the thing's truth because it has it in its ideas and eternal rules, most expressive likeness of all things which it imprints on concepts of the mind. Through the likeness word it also seals and characterizes the mind in its image and most expressively, like a ring seals wax. The perfect word of truth ought to be a formed cognition according to the highest and perfect likeness to the thing itself, which cannot happen unless that exemplar be eternal because it contains in itself the perfect and most expressive likeness of the thing, being in "no part dissimilar" as Augustine says at the end of *De vera religione*. Because "it is full of all living reasons" and therefore is a most expressive likeness of all things, to which everything that is has been produced as like from like, and to whose image and imitation has whatever is of truth in it.[15]

Later in the response he continues to speak of the likeness between things, their divine exemplars, and man's knowledge of them. From the eternal exemplar, the intellect receives a complement and perfect information with the result that there is a word of an expressed likeness to the thing, just as the species itself of the eternal exemplar is the most perfect likeness through its proper idea, to which thing it is produced, and through which alone either simply or pure truth and infallible knowledge is had of the thing in the mind.[16]

In the opening article of the *Summa*, then, Henry emphasizes that divine ideas are both the principles of being and of knowing pure truth. Being and knowing are set up in a strict parallel. In all things, God works through particular creatures to bring about an effect, but this mode of working is

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[15] *Summa*, a. 1, q. 3 (ed. Wilson, 82:250–83:277).
[16] *Summa*, a. 1, q. 3 (ed. Wilson, 86:336–42). Cf. *Summa*, a. 1, q. 4 (ed. Wilson, 104:288–106:312).

necessarily imperfect so he also works immediately. The divine ideas are the divine essence, and they exist because the divine essence is the perfect and most expressive likeness of all things. The divine ideas are the divine art by means of which God knows and creates. As the artist preforms his work of art mentally before imposing it on canvas, so too God, by means of the divine idea foreknows his work. The divine ideas are the perfect exemplars of creatures. Creatures strive to live up to the rule by which they are measured, although they fall short. It is important to note that in *Summa*, a. 1, q. 3, Henry seems to use "exemplar," "idea," and "rule" synonymously. Since the immediate context of Henry's discussion of divine ideas in *Summa*, a. 1 is man's cognition, we cannot say for sure whether all ideas are exemplars for Henry, but the identification here is enough for us to say that all ideas *could be* exemplars. All ideas are ways in which things could exist, i.e., if God has an idea, then there could be a creature that is measured by that idea as its exemplar.

ii. *Summa quaestionum ordinariarum*, a. 21 (1277). The next place where Henry discusses divine ideas is in *Summa*, a 21. Articles 21–24 of the *Summa* investigate God's essence and existence, and article 21 asks whether God exists in himself and absolutely. After arguing in question one that God has *esse*, Henry asks whether God has *esse* in common with creatures in question two. Henry's response specifies the sort of imitation that a creature has to its exemplar, i.e., to its divine idea. Responding to the question, Henry says that being (*ens*) does not even signify an intention common to substance and accidents. It signifies each of the ten categories by a primary signification; so being cannot be common to substance and accidents by a real commonality. Therefore, there will be far less agreement between the notion (*ratio*) of existing of the Creator and the notion of existing of a creature. *Esse* is not something really common in which God is in common with creatures. If being is predicated of God and creatures, it is only a commonality of the name, nothing of the reality. Thus, they are not predicated univocally, but Henry is quick to add, neither are they

predicated equivocally because the definition of equivocal terms occurs by change. Thus, being is predicated of God and creatures in a middle way as analogously.[17]

In order to explain what he means by analogously, Henry argues that the agreement between two things occurs most in their form, and that ways in which a form is communicated occurs in two ways. In the first way, two forms have the same notion (*ratio*), which is called an agreement of likeness (*conventientia similitudinis*). In this case, both of the forms really participate in a third form as when two white things participate in whiteness or two men in humanity. Their mutual participation in the third makes a univocal agreement that does not occur with God and creatures. *Esse* does not stand as a third thing above God and creatures such that each participates in it.[18]

In the second way, there is an agreement in form according to one notion and another notion, which is called an agreement of imitation (*conventientia imitationis*) and is universally in makers and things made, causes and things caused. Henry then offers a version of Thomas's similitude argument. Since every agent, even whenever they are contraries acts for an end like itself, but an agent insofar as it is similar does only produces something similar. Every agent acts through its form, and produces the thing caused in some formal *esse*. Therefore, it is necessary in all such agents that there is always some likeness of the agent's form in the thing caused and in the effect. If this likeness between the cause and the thing caused is not according to the same notion of species, as occurs between the man generating and the man generated, yet there will be a likeness according to some imitation, as something generated by the sun. Even if it does not approach the likeness of species with the sun so that it receives the form in some way proportional and corresponding to the form of the sun. And universally, to the extent that the agent is closer and more immediate to the

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[17] *Summa*, a. 21, q. 2 (ed. Badius, I.124rF–G), esp: "si ens autem esse predicatur de Deo et creaturis, hoc est sola nominis communitate, nulla rei; et ita non univoce per definitionem univocorum, nec tamen pure aequivoce, secndum definitionem aequivocorum casu, sed medio modo ut analogice."

[18] *Summa*, a. 21, q. 2 (ed. Badius, I.124rG).

thing produced, to that extent there is a greater agreement of imitation between the producer and the thing produced, and less agreement where the agent is more mediate and remote.[19]

From this argument, Henry concludes that God is the cause of all effects of creatures, although by other mediating causes for some of those effects. And because of the fact that he is the first and most remote principle, every creature necessarily has some agreement with God according to some form, at least according to the imitation of form to form. Thus, *esse* is said of God and creatures analogously. Things that are said analogously signify one of the things signified firstly and principally, and the other in order and in respect or in proportion to the first. Thus, *esse* signifies God first and foremost, and creatures in order and in respect or in proportion to God.[20]

Henry then identifies three ways in which creatures imitate God. All creatures, he says, are attributed to God as to one end, and to one form, and to one efficient cause. They are attributed as to an end by whom they are perfected in their well-being. They are attributed as to a form from which they participate that they are said to have essential being. They are attributed as to an efficient cause from whom they have that actual existential being agrees with them simply. Here, Henry distinguishes the way in which "thing" (*res*) is said. Things that are called *res* from *reor, reris* ("I think, you think") are indifferent to being or non-being. But those things which have essential being are not determined to actual existence or not, yet they are naturally suited to existing actually. These things, as he explains in a. 21, q. 4, are called *res* from *ratitudine* ("ratification" or "verification").[21] Whatever does not have an exemplar in God is pure non-being.[22] And, as he specifies in a. 21, q. 3,

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[19] *Summa*, a. 21, q. 2 (ed. Badius, I.124rG–H).

[20] *Summa*, a. 21, q. 2 (ed. Badius, I.124rH–I).

[21] *Summa*, a. 21, q. 4 (ed. Badius, I.127rO):

[22] *Summa*, a. 21, q. 2 (ed. Badius, I.124rI–vK), esp: "omnes vero creaturae attribuuntur De ut uni fini, et uni formae et uni efficienti, ut fini a quo perficiuntur quoad bene esse, ut formae a qua participant quod decant habere esse essentiae, ut efficienti, a quohabent quod eis conveniat simpliciter esse actualis existentiae." As we will see below, Henry's position on the relationship between *res* and *ens/esse* changes over his career. By the time of his sixth quodlibetal dispute, he argues that *res a reor* are not exemplars, but they are not pure non-being because they are thinkable. See *Quodlibet* V, q. 6 (ed. Badius, 161rK).

the form with which God has an agreement of imitation of form to form with a creature is the divine essence, which insofar as it makes God to be God is the cause of his difference from creatures.[23] All possible creatures bear a likeness to the divine essence, and if there is no likeness to God then it is pure non-being because God cannot make anything in an effect of which he has no exemplar notion (*ratio*) in himself.[24]

God and creatures are related as exemplar and image. There are no creatures that do not have some degree of likeness to God. This likeness requires that the creaturely essence preexist in God in some way. Henry distinguishes the existential being of a creature in the creature itself from the essential being of an essence in God to account for this preexistence. He does not use the term "idea" in this part of the *Summa*. He refers to essences, notions, and things in order to establish divine exemplarity, but never speaks of "ideas." He will only begin to use this term "idea" when he wishes to speak of the role of the divine intellect and will in divine exemplarity.

iii. *Summa quaestionum ordinariarum*, aa. 36–42 (1279–1281). The next section of the *Summa* in which Henry treats the divine ideas marks an important stage in Henry's thought. Beginning with a. 36 Henry begins to speak of them as "ideas" more frequently because he begins to treat the issue of divine knowledge and willing explicitly. In *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4 Henry asks whether the intellect in God is a speculative or a practical power. He begins his response to this question by clarifying what makes our intellect speculative or practical before arising to the divine intellect. Aristotle declares that the diversity between speculative and practical arises from three factors: from

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[23] *Summa*, a. 21, q. 3, ad 2 (ed. Badius, I.126vI): "Illa autem forma in Deo est divina essentia, quae inquantum dat Deo esse Deum, est causa differentiae eius a creaturis."

[24] *Summa*, a. 21, q. 4 (ed. Badius, I.127rO): "talem rationem exemplarem in Deo non habet purum nihil est in natura et essentia, nec est res alicuius praedicamenti nec possibile fieri in effectu, quia Deus nihil potest facere in effectu cuius rationem exemplarem in se non habet ut sit in qualibet creatura." Roland J. Teske translates "*rationem*" as "idea" here, but I think it should be translated as "notion" because Henry has not yet given any indication that the *ratio* is in God intellectually. Ultimately, Teske's translation is correct because, as we will see below, Henry defines an idea as a *ratio cognoscendi*. See Roland J. Teske, SJ, *Essays on the Philosophy of Henry of Ghent* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquete University Press, 2012), 127.

the part of the objects, from the part of the mode of cognizing, and from the part of the end. From the part of the objects, the intellect is speculative when its objects could not be otherwise, and practical when the objects are contingent that could be otherwise. From the part of the mode of cognizing a speculative intellect cognizes scientifically, and a practical intellect cognizes consultatively. From the part of the end, a speculative intellect seeks truth, and a practical intellect seeks an act or operation.[25]

Henry then denies that God's intellect can be practical in any of these ways. God's intellect cannot be practical on the part of its object because he only knows himself. If he knows anything other than himself, it will be only through knowing himself. He will only have speculative knowledge with regard to himself because he is only a cognizable true and a loveable good, but in no way an operable good. God's intellect cannot be practical on the part of the mode of cognizing because his cognition is not received from things, nor according to the conditions of things. He knows them only by knowing himself, and so knows them in a necessary way. Finally, God's intellect cannot be practical on the part of the end because his intellect is supremely ordered to understanding himself. Since God is only a speculative good, and not an operable good, he cannot have any end but truth and knowledge.[26]

Not content with denying that God's intellect is practical on the authority of Aristotle, Henry offers another argument that God has only speculative cognition. If God's intellect were truly practical, it would not only consider things that are operable, but also determine their operation as the end of its cognition. Because this determination of to be done or not done would agree with the divine intellect from itself absolutely and immediately before any action of the will concerning the

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[25] *Summa*, a, 36, q. 4 (ed. Wilson, 106:21–107:36). Cf. Aristotle, *EN*, VI, c. 2, 1138b35–1139a16 (AL 26.1.3.253:5–23), and Aristotle, *De anima*, III, c. 10, 433a14–15 (ed. Leonine, 45.1.244).

[26] *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4 (ed. Wilson, 107:37–108:66).

matter because the will follows the determination of such an intellect as well as that of which work it carries it.[27]

This position is especially problematic because God's intellect is a purely natural power. It is in no way free such that it could not understand what it understands or understand what it does not understand. Rather, it is necessary that it both understand what it understands and that it understand all simple intelligibles (*intelligibilia incomplexa*). Therefore, whatever God's intellect understands, determines absolutely nothing (*nihil omnino*) concerning what is to be done, such that, if it determined something to be done, it would determine it by natural necessity. Whence, if the divine intellect were practical, then it would determine all things from eternity without the divine will. Creation would be necessary, not a free act.[28]

Wanting to avoid this conclusion, Henry says that the knowledge or intellect of God does not determine a work, nor does it sense something to be done or not to be done. Rather, insofar as it is of itself, God's intellect is equally related from eternity to those things that God was never going to make, and to those things that he was going to make at some time. Such a determination comes from the will alone. But no intellect that is truly practical, Henry says, can be indifferent like this. A practical intellect considers the things that are to be done *as* to be done, and determines what is to be made and not to be made.[29]

God's intellect determines nothing per se to be done or not done, or to be fled, or to be chosen, but only speculatively. God's intellect knows that what it knows can be done or not done, fled or chosen, but his intellect cannot be a first principle of things to be worked because he does not predetermine what is to be done. His intellect is only a cause *sine qua non* because the will cannot

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[27] *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4 (ed. Wilson, 108:67–109:74).

[28] *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4 (ed. Wilson, 109:74–110:00). Cf. *Summa*, a. 36, q. 5 (ed. Wilson, 122:3–130:95). Note especially what he says in his reply to the second objection: "Necessitas autem in intelligibilibus circa divinam essentiam est absoluta necessitas intelligendi ipsa in divino intellectu" (*Summa*, a. 36, q. 5, ad 2 [ed. Wilson, 129:80–82]).

[29] *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4 (ed. Wilson, 110:01–18). Cf. Averroes, *In III De anima*, c. 46 (ed. Crawford 514:15): "pars speculative nihil considerat de rebus operativis."

determine unless the thing be in some way cognized. His will is the first and immediate cause and reason for all works that are going to come from God concerning creatures.[30] God does not have greater practical knowledge of those things that he makes or is going to make than of those things that he has neither made nor is going to make. And thus he has equally speculative knowledge of things he will do as of those things he is not going to do. Whence, the divine intellect neither establishes the things that God will do, nor considers them under the notion of doing, but only under the notion of its what it is, although it understands well what is better and what is worthier concerning things to be done.[31]

Even though the divine intellect knows what the will chooses to do and what it chooses not to do, it has no role in establishing what is to be done. If God did determine what was going to be done with his intellect, then his will would be coerced into choosing it. So coerced, none of the divine will's choices and actions would be free, but rather necessary. Since it is unacceptable to posit necessary creation, the divine will must be free to choose what will be created and what will not be created. Thus, the divine will, and the divine will only, has to determine whether any particular essence will be created or not. God's intellect only knows the essence that is to be determined by the will.

In his reply to the first objection, Henry applies this conclusion to divine ideas. Ideas in God are not notions (*rationes*) of practical cognition, but purely speculative. Whence, God does not have more practical knowledge of things to be made, nay, much less practical knowledge than the builder insofar as he considers a house, by defining what it is, and to what and to which use it would be good, and by dividing from what and from which parts, and in what way of orders, and from which sort of material the house better comes to be.[32]

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[30] *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4 (ed. Wilson, 112:43–60).
[31] *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4 (ed. Wilson, 113:68–76).
[32] *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4, ad 1 (ed. Wilson, 114:92–99).

He offers an argument for this claim in his response to the second objection. When it is objected that God's intellect considers things to be done, it is well said, but it is not as things to be done in the work of carrying it out, but only as speculating, as the artificer whenever he speculates about things to be done. Knowledge has a twofold end, namely, the end of the knowledge itself, and the end of the knower. The end of knowledge is that because of which it is; the end of the knower is that which he intends from knowledge. The end of knowledge is twofold: principal, and non-principal. The principal end of knowledge is that to which it is ordered per se and from itself. The non-principal end of knowledge is the end to which it is not ordered from itself, but to which it can be ordered from the intention of the knower. Whence the non-principal end is the end of the knowledge because it is the end of the knower.[33]

Only the principal end of knowledge is called speculative or practical knowledge. The non-principal end of knowledge or any of the ends of the knower have any bearing on the question of speculative or practical knowledge. Henry uses the example of geometry. Some knower can choose to put geometry to a practical use, but the intention of the knower does not affect whether the knowledge is speculative or practical. But that knowledge that per se, as knowledge, is only for operation and is purely practical. Henry uses the example of ethics, whose end is doing the good, and not speculation of the truth.[34]

God's speculation concerning things to be done is speculative simply, and not practical except *per accidens*, namely, as by his will close to the speculative works the ratio of speculation. In this, he is like the geometer whose knowledge is accidentally practical. The divine intellect speculates about the truth of things to be done by standing only in the knowledge of the true, determining and pre-establishing nothing of the thing to be done. And thus by intending no further end from that

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[33] *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4, ad 2 (ed. Wilson, 115:10–33).
[34] *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4, ad 2 (ed. Wilson, 115:34–117:59).

speculation, this essential thing is in him insofar as he is the divine intellect, and it is the principle end of his consideration.[35]

In light of this argument that God has only speculative understanding, Henry takes aim at Thomas, declaring that those who distinguish both speculative and practical understanding in God are guilty of empty reasoning. Neither on the part of the thing known, on the part of the mode of cognizing, nor on the part of the end does God have practical knowledge except accidentally.[36]

Thus, in *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4, Henry argues quite strongly that a divine idea is a principle of speculative knowledge only. The divine ideas are in the divine intellect, and the divine intellect does not determine whether anything is to be done or not. Only the divine will determines whether something will come to be or not. Thus, the divine ideas are *rationes* of speculative cognition. They are the notions from which the divine will chooses to create. The divine ideas are all possible creatures without any distinction between those that have been made or will be made and those that will remain merely possible.

Henry expands the conclusion that God's intellect has only speculative cognition when he discusses divine habits. In *Summa*, a. 37, a. 2, he asks whether we ought to posit notions (*rationes*) of all intellectual habits in God. In his response, he argues that the five intellectual virtues (prudence, art, science, understanding, and wisdom) are not really different in God, but only rationally different from a certain respect to the diverse things known by God. Properly speaking, God's cognition ought to be named wisdom because he per se and objectively in himself cognizes only himself. He cognizes others only as he is their principle and cause. Thus, speaking specifically of God's prudence and art, these intellectual habits are the notion of all things to be done and to be made in the divine intellect, as much for himself as for any creature. Unlike our prudence and art, which are defective

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[35] *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4, ad 2 (ed. Wilson, 117:79–118:92).

[36] *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4, ad 2 (ed. Wilson, 118:93–120:40). Henry quotes almost verbatim Thomas, *ST* I, q. 14, a. 16 (ed. Leonine, IV.196b–197a).

both because they involve deliberation and questioning, and result in our intellect practically determining whether something is to be done or made, the divine intellect is not discursive and does not determine what ought to be done or be made.[37] Although God does many things and makes many things, he has but one prudence and one art. Unlike man, who has one art by which he is a doctor and another art by which he is a carpenter, God has but one art by which he makes all things that are. Not only does he have just one art, but this one art is really identical to his wisdom.

The final text from the *Summa* to consider is a. 42, q. 2. Most of this text argues that God has ideas, and so will be treated in the section below. The very end of Henry's response, however, gives us insight into what an idea is in itself. Created things are limited, and this limitation occurs from the nature of the creature's essence itself. Because the essence is finite, it cannot receive *esse* except as limited and finite in a determined grade with respect to the *esse* of another creature, and under the infinite *esse* of God. These grades are finite in themselves, but are so unified in God that they are unlimited and infinite according to the mode of God's *esse*.[38]

The perfections of a creature's *esse* fall in God's knowledge by reason of ideas, which, although in themselves are not limited or finite, are nevertheless the notion (*ratio*) of a limited and finite thing, and ought to be of a limited and finite thing. God's essence or *esse* are not thus limited and finite because an idea bespeaks nothing but a respect to a creature, but not thus his essence or *esse*. Whence from the essence of God and his essence, no various and diverse limited thing or something at all in a creature would be produced except there were an ideal *ratio* in God. These ideal

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[37] *Summa*, a. 37, q. 2 (ed. Wilson, 151:3–159:99)

[38] *Summa*, a. 42, q. 2 (ed. Hödl, 46:60–73). Cf. *Summa*, a. 32, q. 3 (ed. Macken, 38:82–85): "Secundo modo nomine cuiuslibet creaturae potest Deus nominari, non solum quia idea eius est in ipso Deo, sed quia ratio perfectionis eius propria in Dei perfection includitur, in qua fundatur ratio idealis in quantum concipitur a divina sapientia, ut infra declarabitur." The *infra* to which Henry refers is here in *Summa*, a. 42, q. 2.

reasons do not force God to create, however. The diversity of creatures is not in God's essence, but in his wisdom. There are many things in his wisdom that are not in his essence.[39]

This short section of a. 42, q. 2 adds several things to Henry's theory of divine ideas. First and foremost, it emphasizes that divine ideas are the *only* means by which God can create. If God did not have ideas, then he could not create anything because he would not know anything other than himself. Ideas are the means of knowing creatures. Second, these ideas are really in God, but they are only in him intellectually. God knows all possible creatures by means of divine ideas, but they are not really in his essence such that his essence would be divided or shared with creatures in a pantheistic way. Third, creatures imitate divine ideas and the ideas are the perfect exemplars of the creatures. The creatures cannot help but be finite and limited by their essences, yet these essences as the exist as divine ideas in the divine wisdom do not suffer the same limitation. Fourth, an idea bespeaks nothing but a respect or relatedness to a creature. We will see below on the section concerning the plurality of ideas that this emphasis on idea as *respectus* will be the primary source of there being many divine ideas. Finally, Henry reiterates the position that ideas in no way coerce God's will. A divine idea is a possible exemplar, but could never be an actual exemplar of itself. Only the divine will determines whether an idea will become the actual exemplar of some creature with existential being.

iv. *Quodlibet* V (Christmas 1280 or Easter 1281). The next place that Henry speaks of ideas is in *Quodlibet* V, q. 1. The question concerns the possibility of a plurality of distinct essential attributes in God. In the course of his answer, Henry carefully distinguishes the plurality of God's essential attributes, like goodness, from the plurality of divine ideas. The majority of the article is more appropriately treated below in the section concerning the plurality of divine ideas, but Henry

[39] *Summa*, a. 42, q. 2 (ed. Hödl, 46:74–85), esp.: "Secundum tamen modum huius limitationis bene cadunt perfectiones esse creaturae in scientia Dei ratione idearum, quae, licet in se non sunt limitatae aut finitae, sunt tamen ratio limitati et finite, et limitandi et finitandi. . . . Multa sunt in eius sapientia, quae non sunt in eius essentia."

offers the closest thing to a definition of a divine idea that we have seen thus far, which merits our attention now.

The divine essence, he says, contains in its one simple reason the integrity of every manner of perfection. Containing all perfections the simple divinity is thus imitable by all creatures. And insofar as these perfections are in the intellect, they are called notions (*rationes*). Taken in this way, a *ratio* is nothing other than the conception of a determinate perfection in God from a respect in him corresponding to a determinate perfection in a creature. Thus, to every perfection in a creature insofar as it is a certain thing and essence, there corresponds the *ratio* of an idea in God, and similarly it the notion of its perfection.[40]

There are several points that should be drawn from what Henry says here. First, an idea is an ideal to which a creature strives to attain. Henry himself plays on the similarity between idea and ideal (*idea, idealis*) and refers to an ideal as the "ideal notion" of a creature.[41] This claim is consistent with Henry's repeated insistence that ideas are the uncreated exemplars by which both God and man know the truth of created things. The exemplar is the ideal to which the thing made in its likeness tries to imitate.

Second, an idea is a way in which the supreme perfection of God can be imitated. An idea is a way in which something can be like God. The thing cannot be like God except in a limited and imperfect way, but it imitates divine perfection nonetheless. The same thing could be said negatively: without imitation of divine perfection, there is no idea. There are only ideas of things that imitate the divine essence.

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[40] *Quodlibet*, V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 150vC–151rF), esp.: "Et inquantum perfectiones huiusmodi sunt in conceptu intellectus: rationes vocantur. . . . omnis perfectio in creatura inquantum ipsa est res et essentia quaedam, habet in Deo rationem ideae: et similiter rationem perfectionis sibi respondentem."

[41] *Quodlibet*, V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 151rG): "ratio idealis."

Third, not only are there ideas only of things that imitate the divine essence, but Henry adds the additional qualification that the perfection in the creature be "a certain thing and essence."[42] An idea has to be a thing or an essence. "An ideal notion," he says, "has regard to (*respicit*) the divine essence as it is conceived in God's intelligence, and similarly all the notions not only as they are objects of the intellect in respect to perfections in creatures, or as they are perfections simply, but as they are *rationes intelligendi* the very perfections that are in the creatures themselves."[43] The creature itself is known through the divine idea as object of cognition, but not just as object of cognition (or even as object of cognition and exemplar for creation). A divine idea is the divine essence as *ratio intelligendi* of a created *thing*.[44]

Finally, Henry insists that divine ideas are in the divine intellect. Divine ideas have their origin in the divine essence. Ideas are not self-subsisting entities to which God looks to gain knowledge. Ideas are the result of God knowing himself. Divine ideas are, as it were, already in the divine essence, and emerge when God knows his essence in his one, perfect act of knowledge. Moreover, God only has ideas because he knows himself. There are no ideas in the divine essence itself. God's perfections are not ideas except insofar as he knows his perfections as ways he can be

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[42] *Quodlibet*, V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 151rF): "inquantum ipsa est res et essentia quaedam."

[43] *Quodlibet*, V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 151rG): "ratio vero idealis respicit eandem ut conceptam in eius intelligentia, et similiter omnes rationes praedictas non solummodo ut sunt obiecta intelligentiae in respectu ad perfectiones in creaturis, ut sunt simpliciter perfectiones, sed ut sunt rationes intelligendi ipsas perfectiones quae sunt in ipsis creaturis." Cf. *Quodlibet*, VII, qq. 1–2, s.c. 2 (ed. Wilson, 4:30–32): "Quoniam idea in Deo non est nisi ratio factibilis, secundum Augustinum in pluribus locis, eius ergo quod non est per se factibile, non est per se et proprie idea." *Quodlibet*, VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 8:5–6): "idea autem non est ratio nisi rei sub ratione completi in natura et essentia." Since these two questions concern the scope of divine ideas, Henry continues the quotation to the effect that only the lowest species are things complete in nature and essence. Therefore, there are only ideas of the lowest species, not individuals.

[44] Here, it is helpful to anticipate a point that will be made below during the discussion of the scope of divine ideas. Created perfections that are not *things* or essences do not have ideas. Plevano uses the helpful example of man to express this point. Man has a divine idea because it is an essence. The species may be expressed in terms of its genus and difference: "rational animal." Animality and rationality are perfections and essential qualities of man so God conceives them in his divine idea of man. So, the "notion of *rationalitas* is rationally distinct from the idea of man, but it is part of its essence. There is no divine idea of it" (Plevano, "Divine Ideas and Infinity," 187). Essences have ideas, but essential parts of essences do not.

imitated. If, *per impossibile*, God did not know himself, or if he did not know himself to be imitable, then there would be no divine ideas.

v. *Quodlibet* VIII (Christmas 1284). In the first question of his eighth *Quodlibet*, Henry is asked whether God has practical ideas. Henry's response to this question is partially consistent with the answer he gives in the *Summa*. Henry refers the reader to the *Summa* at the end of the arguments *sed contra*, but will also affirm the principle arguments.[45] The divine essence eminently contains the truth of every limited being (*esse*) and essence.[46] This truth bears itself out as a respect to God that agrees with him from a consideration of the intellect comparing his essence to the essences of creatures as imitable by them. They are more the notion (*ratio*) of an idea that the essences of creatures are certain things of the divine essence than vice versa. Just as the divine essence is the *ratio cognoscendi* the very essences of creatures, so the thing cognized as it is ideal reasons, is the *ratio cognoscendi* the differences of all things other than itself, even to the least difference.[47]

Knowing that the ideal reasons are the divine essence as imitable, Henry says that God knows things other than himself according to the ideal reasons in two ways. In the first way, he knows things other than himself as they are of a certain essence or existence in himself. In another way, he knows them as they are certain things operable by God. In the first way God cognizes it by purely speculative knowledge, and the ideas as they are the notions of cognition are purely speculative ideas. Plato, he says, posited ideas of this kind in God. In the second way God cognizes some things by practical knowledge, and through practical ideas as they are the *rationes cognoscendi* of those things. Properly speaking, practical knowledge and speculative knowledge do not differ by

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[45] *Quodlibet*, VIII, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 299vA and 301rF): "Propter istam quaestionem et sequentem oportet hic videre in summa quomodo Deus cognoscat se et alia a se. . . . Et secundum hoc possunt diversimode concedi argumenta utriusque partis."

[46] *Quodlibet*, VIII, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 299vA): "quia propter suam illimitationem eminenter continet in se omnis omnis esse et essentiae limitatae veritatem." Henry's argument for this position will be considered in the next section on God's having ideas.

[47] *Quodlibet*, VIII, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 300rB).

different notions of things understood, but rather according to different notions of ends to which they are. Just because knowledge is of something operable does not make it practical. Operable things can be considered by speculative knowledge if they are considered to the same end to which the purely speculative things in mathematics and natural things are considered. The end of practice is work. Thus, operable things can be considered in two ways just like moral matters. In one way, as what virtue and what vice are and in which way virtue consists in the mean are known precisely. This consideration is always speculative. Extending this consideration to action as when one intends not only the cognition of the true, but seeks to know according as the will acts according to what is true the consideration is immediately practical.[48]

In light of the distinction in practical cognition, Henry argues that the divine intellect can be practical, but only in a speculative way. He can know what is to be done and not done, and what manner of working is more fitting in all circumstances, but without any judgment. His intellect remains indeterminate of itself. To understand how this may be the case, Henry distinguishes two ways to understand that a thing ought to be made. First, we say that a thing ought to be made only insofar as the agreement of things is concerned. Second, we say that a thing ought to be made insofar as the fittingness of the agent is concerned. The second is properly practical because in such a case it would be unfitting for the agent not to make. God's intellect cannot be practical in this way because the intellect would coerce the will. The first way is less properly practical insofar as it only considers the quality of the things to be done and the manners of working which it proposes to the will. It is fitting that it be done on the part of the object, but the agent is not constrained to act or not to act. In this way, God prejudged all things according to his precognition and determined all things according to his goodness and justice.[49]

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[48] *Quodlibet*, VIII, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 300rD–vD).
[49] *Quodlibet*, VIII, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 300vE).

Henry is quick to emphasize that the determination by God's goodness and justice needs to be subdistinguished. We could understand it as saying that what is going to be made from the fittingness of things makes it so that God ought to make them. This is false and impossible because, as Avicenna says in *Metaphysics* IX, there would be imperfection in God and he would acquire perfection through his cause. Thus, something temporal as it is in God's knowledge would cause something eternal in God. We could understand it as saying that what is to be made is from the fittingness of things because it would be good for things to come about in this way. It is in no way inappropriate to call the divine intellect practical in this way. Understanding God's knowledge as practical in the second way allows for the divine intellect to propose certain ways of working to the will as good, but leaves the will free to choose what it will. In this way, we posit practical ideas in God and say that God produces things according to practical ideas, which ideas are nevertheless really in a speculative and a practical manner. As speculative, they are only *rationes cognoscendi* of things in their essence. As practical, they are *rationes producendi* of things in their existence. This dual role is affirmed by Augustine when he says that ideas are certain principal forms or stable and unchanging notions of things. Thus, Henry concedes both the arguments in favor of practical ideas, and the arguments against practical ideas at the beginning of the question in diverse ways.[50]

On one hand, Henry's argument in this question is consistent with the argument he offered in the *Summa*. God does not have practical cognition because if the divine intellect determined what was to be done, then the divine will would be constrained to carry out what the intellect commanded. God would not have been free to create (or not) because the divine intellect would have already determined not only that the world would be created, but also that *this* world would be created. This conclusion is unacceptable, and so Henry continues to reject it. Henry is also

[50] *Quodlibet*, VIII, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 300vF–301rF).

consistent in declaring that God has knowledge of what is to be done. Although, his intellect does not determine what his will chooses, God is not ignorant of what he makes.

Despite this continuity, Henry's answer in *Quodlibet* VIII develops a position that goes beyond what he said in the *Summa*. In the *Summa*, Henry was reluctant to say that God had any practical knowledge at all, and he certainly did not have any practical ideas. In *Quodlibet* VIII, Henry argues that God has both practical knowledge and practical ideas. God knows the way in which a creature can imitate his essence, and this knowledge is the idea of a possible creature. The idea is the way that God knows possible creatures, i.e., they are his *rationes cognoscendi* of creatures. In knowing these ideas, God also knows the possible combinations of creatures. These possible combinations are not all equal, and the divine intellect knows which are better and more just than others. It is simply more fitting for some things to be produced with others. It is better, for example, that God create man in combination with plants and other animals because plants and animals are man's only food. It would be possible for God to have created man without creating a food source for him, but it would not be good or just for him to do so. As a result, the divine intellect, as it were, recommends some possible combinations more than others. Thus, God has practical cognition not only insofar as he knows that the will choose, but insofar as his intellect proposes some possibilities for creation as better than others.

In addition to practical cognition, Henry also emphasizes that God has practical ideas. When the divine will elects to create some possible creatures, it does so according to the divine ideas. The divine ideas are not merely cognitive principles, but ontological and causal principles as well. This text is the first time that we have seen Henry specifically argue for the causal role of ideas. Prior to this text, Henry placed more emphasis on the cognitive role that ideas play for both God and man. In *Quodlibet* VIII, Henry emphasizes that ideas are the *rationes producendi* of all creatures. Divine ideas are the models of created things.

vi. *Quodlibet* IX (Christmas 1286). Henry's most complete account of ideas appears in *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2. He asks whether God could have produced many specifically different creatures if there were not a plurality of ideas in him. In the course of his answer, Henry articulates "where" ideas are in God, what an idea is, why they are many of them, what sort of existence they have in God and why God has them. The first of these two topics are relevant here because in order to articulate what an idea is, Henry has to articulate what it means to have an idea.

Henry begins is response by making a series of distinctions regarding the object of cognition. Nothing understands something unless it is the per se object of the power by which it cognizes, or that of which the per se object is a *ratio cognoscendi* because the power by which the intellect understands, that is, its intellect, is passive and not moved to the act of understanding except by the per se object. The object of the intellect can be something in two ways: in one way by informing the intellective power to the act of understanding by its action, and in another way by terminating the act of understanding by its cognition.[51]

In the first way, nothing is the per se object of the divine intellect except the divine essence as it is a certain intelligible having the notion of the true. If something else informed the divine intellect, then, as Averroes says, God's "substance would not be the most noble of all, because there would be no nobility in it except because it was perfected through another. The other would be necessary for it to be nobler."[52] God does not receive knowledge from anything other than his own essence.[53]

In the second way something can be the object of the intellect in two ways: either primarily or secondarily. The primary object is the object informing the act of understanding. God's primary object is only the divine essence, which God understands per se and nothing other than it. The

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[51] *Quodlibet*, IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 26:20–27).
[52] Averroes, *In XII Met.*, c. 51 (ed. Iunctias, VIII.335F-G).
[53] *Quodlibet*, IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 27:28–36).

secondary object is something other than God. If God did not cognize something other than himself in any way, then he would be most ignorant.[54]

The secondary object of cognition can also be understood in two ways: in one way by cognizing that which a creature is in God, in another way by cognizing the existence (*esse*) that a creature has in itself, other than God, although it does not have *esse* beyond his knowledge. Knowing the creature as it exists in God consists in knowing an image according as it is a thing (*res*), and not insofar as it is an image. By knowing images as *res*, God cognizes a possible creature as it is in his essence, and not as other than his essence, with the result that all of the images are one, simple with him in every way.[55]

God cognizes creatures truly when he cognizes them according to the existence that they have in themselves. Without this cognition he would not have perfect knowledge because he would never cognize an image as an image. No one would never cognize Hercules perfectly in an image of Hercules unless he cognized the image as an image. So too God does not cognize things other than himself by his essence as it is an essence simply. Instead, he cognizes his essence as it is a notion (*ratio*) and has the notion of respect by which he relates to things other than himself. He does not do this as they are something through existence beyond himself, but as they are something through existence in divine cognition. Obviously, then, understood in this way the divine essence is a *ratio* and exemplar form of those things such that it is a form and cause and formal principle of exemplified things.[56]

The *ratio* according to which the divine essence is the *ratio* by which he knows things other than himself is nothing other than an imitability by which he is imitated by others, which we call an idea. Such a *ratio* or respect in the divine essence is not from itself as an essence is *per se* and

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[54] *Quodlibet*, IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 27:37–44).
[55] *Quodlibet*, IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 27:45–53).
[56] *Quodlibet*, IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 28:54–65).

absolutely, except virtually and, as it were, in potency, but as it is already cognized and the first object of the divine intellect according to act. And because it is in act that *ratio* has existence (*esse*) in the essence from a consideration of the intellect concerning it, comprehending it under the notion of imitability. Thus, the formal definition (*ratio*) of an idea is nothing other than a respect of imitability from a consideration of the intellect on the divine essence itself.[57]

This definition of idea is the most complete definition that Henry offers, but even it is not complete. Henry adds two important clarifications concerning what it means to say that an idea is a "respect." Since an idea is a respect discovered in a consideration of the divine essence, Henry emphasizes that an idea is not a cognized object, but rather a certain *ratio cognoscendi* other things as a secondary cognized object.[58] An idea is a means of knowing other things; it is not the things themselves, or even the thing as cognized. Moreover, the ideas are the exemplar forms relatively related to the essences of external things.[59]

Henry's account of ideas in *Quodlibet* IX gives us a definition of ideas in context. Ideas are the means by which God knows and creates things other than himself, but it is not by any sort of knowing that ideas come to be. An idea is not a form informing the intellect, nor the primary consideration terminating the informing form. Ideas are a secondary consideration of the intellect, but not just any secondary consideration of the intellect. An idea is an image. All images can be considered either as images or as things in themselves. A statue of Hercules is a thing in itself, i.e., a formed hunk of marble. If we only look at the statue insofar as it is a hunk of marble, then we have missed the majority of its meaning. The statue is primarily meant to be a means of knowing Hercules. It is only when we view the image of Hercules as an image that we understand it as it was meant to be understood. When we view the image as an image then it becomes a means of knowing

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[57] *Quodlibet*, IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 28:72–81).
[58] *Quodlibet*, IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 29:98–01 and 30:20–23).
[59] *Quodlibet*, IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 30:24–29).

something other than itself. In the case of the statue, a block of marble becomes a means of knowing the demigod Hercules. The same holds true for ideas. An idea is a thing in itself, i.e., the divine essence as understood. If God viewed ideas merely as things in themselves, then he would never know anything other than himself. God understands things other than himself only because he views the ideas as images pointing to possible creatures. Only because God sees the respects of imitability as respects pointing to possible creatures does God know those creatures. This difficulty explains why Henry is so insistent that the divine ideas are *means of knowing* and not the *cognized things themselves*. If ideas were the cognized things, then God would be missing all of the respects of imitability that possible creatures have to him. He would not know possible creatures as distinct from his own essence, but only know the unity of his simple essence.

vii. Conclusions. Henry's account of ideas is heavily indebted to his predecessors and, yet it is uniquely his own. Like both Bonaventure and Thomas, Henry assigns a cognitive role and a causal role to the divine ideas. Like Bonaventure, he emphasizes the cognitive role as primary for divine ideas, yet he prefers to speak of knowing the divine essence as imitable like Thomas. But, Henry places a greater emphasis on the relational aspect of ideas than either Bonaventure or Thomas. In order to get a clearer picture of Henry's appropriations and innovations, we will need to look more closely at Henry's definition of ideas and its implications for Henry's emphasis on God's speculative knowledge of possible creatures.

Henry appears to offer two definitions of ideas, one in *Quodlibet* V, q. 1, and the other in *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2. These definitions are not identical, but their divergences mutually serve to build a more complete understanding of ideas. In *Quodlibet* V, q. 1, Henry says that the perfections of creatures in the divine intellect's concept are called *rationes*. These *rationes* have the character of an

idea whenever it is of a perfection in a creature insofar as it is a thing and certain essence.[60] In *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2, Henry says that the formal definition (*ratio*) of an idea is nothing other than a respect of imitability from a consideration of the intellect on the divine essence itself.[61] From these two definitions, a complete account of what it means to be an idea can be gleaned.

The genus of the definition of "idea" is a respect. An idea is something relative, not something absolute. This aspect will be discussed in greater detail in the section concerning the plurality of divine ideas below. For now it suffices to say an idea is an image that points to something beyond itself. An idea is God's knowledge of the relation that a possible creature can have to him. The only reason that the creature can come about is because it bears some relationship to God. It is an abuse of language to speak of a possible creature that has no relation to God at all. If a "possible" creature had no relation to God at all, then it would not be possible. It would be impossible. To be a creature is to be related to God.

It is not enough to know that an idea is a relation to God, however. The relation that a possible creature bears to God is a relation of imitability. Following Bonaventure, Henry emphasizes that God and creatures have an agreement of imitation, not an agreement of likeness.[62] God and creatures are not mutually related to some third thing, rather God exemplifies creatures, and creatures imitate God. More precisely, creatures imitate God's perfection. God in his simple and infinite perfection eminently contains all possible perfections of creatures. An idea is the conception of the degree to which some creature can imitate God.[63] God's perfection is so perfect that not even

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[60] *Quodlibet*, V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 150vC–151rF), esp.: "Et inquantum perfectiones huiusmodi sunt in conceptu intellectus: rationes vocantur. . . . omnis perfectio in creatura inquantum ipsa est res et essentia quaedam, habet in Deo rationem ideae: et similiter rationem perfectionis sibi respondentem."

[61] *Quodlibet*, IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 29:79–81): "idea nihil aliud sit de ratione sua formali quam respectus imitabilitatis ex consideratione intellectus in ipsa divina essentia.

[62] *Summa*, a. 21, q. 2 (ed. Badius, I.124rG–H). See Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.601ab); Bonaventure, *De scientia Christi*, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, V.8b–9a).

[63] *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 151rE): "Ratio enim secundum quod hic accipitur, nihil aliud est nisi perfectionis conceptio in Deo determinatae ex respect ad determinatam perfectionem ei correspondentem in creatura."

the highest and best creature could have a real proportion to it, but this impossibility does not mitigate the fact that the idea of a possible creature images a realizable relation that a creature can have to God, i.e., a realizable way in which a creature can imitate divine perfection. The finitude and limitation of a creature's imitation in fact strengthens the respect that a creature has to God because it means that the creature is nothing other than the relationship it bears to God. Creatures have no perfection that they do not receive from God. Therefore, the divine idea by which God knows and creates the creature exemplifies the entire perfection of the creature.

The third aspect of Henry's definitions is that the ideas are the divine essence. Ideas, as he says in *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2, are nothing other than the divine essence. Ideas do not originate outside of God. The imitations of creatures are the perfections of his own essence. Henry does not discuss the distinction between external exemplars and thought-up exemplars as Thomas does in *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1, but Henry's analysis excludes the possibility of an external divine exemplar.[64] If God looked to anything other than himself as an exemplar for his own knowledge or his causality, then God would be imperfect for precisely the reasons Aristotle noted in the *Metaphysics*. God would receive his perfection from another; he would not be perfect of himself. He would be in potency to receive knowledge. He would not be pure act. All of the perfections of creatures can be traced back to the divine essence, and man cannot know these perfections by his own power. He must have recourse to the divine idea that is the ideal reason and exemplar of the creature in order to know the truth about the creature. By his own powers man can know true things about any creature, but he cannot know the pure truth of any creature unless God illuminate his intellect with the divine idea.

Further, the divine ideas are perfections of the divine essence, but not simply as it is the divine essence. Ideas only arise from God's self-knowledge. Ideas are not in the essence absolutely

[64] Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.99:163–182).

considered, but rather in the divine intellect.[65] Ideas are, as it were, the product of God knowing the respect in which a possible creature can imitate the perfection of his essence. The word "product" is potentially dangerous because it could imply addition and composition that would compromise God's supreme simplicity. Use of the word "product" should entail a recognition that God's knowledge of his essence, as it were, extends beyond his essence. If God did not have ideas, i.e., if it were up to the essence simply as it is in itself, God could not create the diversity that he does. Divine ideas, as he argues in *Summa*, a. 42, q. 2, extend beyond the essence itself.[66] Here, Henry's theory resonates with Thomas's theory of ideas. Henry prefers to speak of ideas being discovered in the essence rather than expressed in divine truth like Bonaventure.[67] Yet, all three theories share the declaration that ideas are in divine truth because they are in the essence insofar as it is known by the divine intellect. Given this definition of idea, Henry declares that God only has ideas insofar as he is the principle and cause of creatures.[68] God only has ideas because he knows that he can create a creature with a particular a relationship to him that it imitates his perfection in just this way. If God did not have an idea of something, then it could not come to be.

Fifth and finally, Henry argues that ideas are images of complete natures. This qualification has two notable consequences. First, fictional beings, like the goatstag, do not have ideas in God.[69] The realm of thinkable beings is broader than the realm of ideas, or, to say the same in Henry's terminology, the realm of *res a reor* is broader than the realm of *res a ratitudine*. We can think of fictional beings because we can combine various aspects of real beings. *Res a reor* can be reduced to *res a ratitudine*, but such chimera do not have ideas simply because the combination of their parts is

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[65] See *Summa*, a. 32, q. 3 (ed. Macken, 38:82–85).

[66] *Summa*, a. 42, q. 2 (ed. Hödl, 46:74–85)

[67] For Thomas, see *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.841-842); *De veritate* q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.104:200-105:219; SCG I, c. 54 (ed. Leonine, 13.155a6-19); ST I, q. 15, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4. 201-202). For Bonaventure, see *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.601b); *De scientia Christi*, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, V.9a).

[68] *Summa*, a. 37, q. 2 (ed. Wilson, 151:3–159:99)

[69] *Quodlibet* III, q. 9 (ed. Badius, 61rO–vO).

thinkable. Second, there are no divine ideas of incomplete natures.[70] Unlike Thomas, who says there can be ideas in the broader sense of *ratio* for any aspect of a creature that can be thought separately, Henry argues that only the complete nature has an idea. Man is a rational animal, and we can consider each part of that definition separately, but neither of the parts have ideas because they could not come to be.[71] More will be said about this restriction below when the scope of divine ideas is considered, but it merited mention here because Henry includes it as part of his definition.

Given Henry's definition of idea, it is not surprising that he argues that ideas are principles of speculative cognition, and only principles of practical cognition in a very qualified way. Since an idea is first and foremost a *ratio intelligendi*, it is first and foremost a way that God knows that he could be imitated. Understanding that something could come to be does not determine whether that thing will come to be or not. If the divine intellect determined that a particular idea was to be made, then the divine will would have to choose to make that idea. Since it is unacceptable for the divine will to be so coerced, Henry denies the antecedent. Since nothing about the consequent can be known when the antecedent is denied, Henry is able to hold that the ideas in the divine intellect leave creation indeterminate. The will remains completely free to create or not to create any particular object represented by a divine idea.

God's intellect does not entail a determination that the thing will or will not come to be. In his zeal to guard the freedom of the divine will, Henry risks making God ignorant of what he wills. Such ignorance would destroy God's providence. As a result, Henry has to adapt his theory. In adapting his theory, Henry borrows a distinction from Thomas's mature theory, although he does not draw the same conclusions from the distinction that Thomas does. Divine ideas are not merely *rationes cognoscendi*, but *rationes producendi* as well. When the divine will elects to create, it elects to create

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[70] *Quodlibet*, V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 150vC–151rF).
[71] Plevano, "Divine Ideas and Infinity," 187.

things according to the likeness of certain divine ideas. The respect that a possible creature could have to God becomes a relationship that an actual creature does have. The speculative cognition that God has of the possible creature becomes practical cognition because his will makes it practical. God knows the things that he makes, and has practical ideas of the things that he makes. Thus, he borrows Thomas's distinction between the strict sense and the broad sense of idea. God has ideas that are *rationes cognoscendi* only, and ideas that are both *rationes cognoscendi* and *rationes producendi*. The distinction between the two is introduced by the divine will. The ideas that God wills to be created at some time become *rationes producendi* in addition to being *rationes cognoscendi*. The difference between Thomas and Henry is which end of the distinction to emphasize. As we saw above, Thomas argues that the term "idea" should really be reserved for what God will actually create at some time.[72] Being willed is essential to the nature of a divine idea. Strictly speaking, a divine idea is not something that God knows, but something God knows and wills. Henry takes the opposite approach. Being willed is completely accidental to the nature of a divine idea. God knows what he wills to create, but being willed does not change the idea as it does for Thomas. Ideas are principles of speculative knowledge. They are ways that God knows his essence *could* be imitated, and even the ways that his essence would be imitated better and best, but every divine idea is complete before the divine will chooses anything. A *ratio producendi* is not more of an idea than a *ratio cognoscendi* that is never willed.

Although the nature of an idea is complete just in being known, Henry's qualification that ideas can be practical insofar as the divine will uses them as *rationes producendi* allows him to account for the fact that divine ideas are also the perfect exemplars for man's knowledge. Man knows the pure truth of a creature's essence insofar as God illuminates his mind with the divine idea according to which the creature was made. Without access to the divine ideas, man can know true things about creatures, but he cannot know the truth about any creature without the divine idea as his exemplar.

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[72] Cf. Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 4.199).

b. Does God have Ideas?

Although divine ideas were mentioned in the previous section because Henry speaks of ideas most in reference to God, no arguments were offered for the position that God has ideas. This section, then, will explore Henry's arguments that God has ideas, i.e., that divine knowledge is such that he has to have knowledge of things other than himself by means of ideas.

i. *Quodlibet* III (Easter 1278). In *Quodlibet* III, q. 9, Henry offers a short argument for the necessity of divine ideas. It will be recalled that in this question Henry adapts the Avicennian account of essence. He argues that essences have a threefold consideration and a threefold existence (*esse*). An essence can be considered in extra-mental existence in which case it has singular existence. An essence can be considered as known in which case it has cognitive existence. An essence can also be considered in itself. Considered in itself, Henry says, an essence has proper existence (*esse proprium*) and is in God's intention.[73]

As Henry understands it, because existence does not agree with something except as it has the notion of an exemplar in the divine intellect, through which it is naturally suited to come to be in external things. Just as a being has that it is a being in effect from a relation and respect to an efficient cause, so too a being has that it is some being essentially from a certain relation and respect to its exemplar as to an external form.[74] Similarly, that being that does not have an exemplar in God, such as a goatstag or a chimera, does not have a nature or essence and is not naturally suited to come to be.[75]

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[73] *Quodlibet* III, q. 9 (ed. Badius, 150vO–151rO), esp.: "hoc esse proprie dicitur definitivum rem, et est Dei intentione." Cf. Avicenna, *Met.*, I, c. 5 (ed. van Riet, I.34–36).

[74] *Quodlibet* III, q. 9 (ed. Badius, 151rO): "Quod intelligo: quia tale esse non convenit alicui nisi cuius ratio exemplaris est in intellectu divino, per quam natum est fieri in rebus extra, circa quod sicut ex relatione et respect ad ipsam ut ad causam efficientem habet quod sit ens in effectu: sic ex relatione quadam, et respect ad ipsam ut ad formam extra rem, habet quod sit ens aliquod per essentiam."

[75] *Quodlibet* III, q. 9 (ed. Badius, 151vO). Henry offers a similar argument in *Summa*, a. 33, q. 3 (ed. Macken, 154:30–157:04). Of particular interest is his explanation that the *ratio* by which something is intelligible in itself can be understood to be the *ratio* by which other things are intelligible in several ways. First, when the cognition of one depends on the cognition of the other such that the latter cannot be had without the former as is the case with correlatives.

God has to have ideas because such exemplars are the only way to account for the existence of created beings. Divine ideas establish the essence or nature of a thing, and things come to be only because of a certain relationship or respect that they bear to their divine idea. The fact that creatures exist in definite essences demands that God have ideas. The possible creatures of which divine ideas are signs are naturally suited to come to be precisely because the divine ideas establish natures or essences that are naturally suited to exist.

ii. *Summa quaestionum ordinariarum*, a. 42 (1281). Henry argues in several places in the *Summa* that God has to have ideas. The most complete of these arguments in *Summa*, a. 42, q. 2. Henry asks whether God is perfect by the perfection of any creature, and he declares that the perfections of things are in God because God is related to creatures in a triple genus of cause, namely as an efficient cause, as a formal and exemplar cause, and as a final cause.

Henry's argument for God as an efficient cause borrows from Thomas's argument from similitude. Since every effect is from an agent actually producing, that which is in act in the effect can only be from that which is in act in the agent because every agent does not act except according as it is in act, and an agent insofar as it is an agent cannot be of a more imperfect disposition than act. But the perfection of each thing consists in its being in act, and according as it is in act, therefore the perfection of the effect is from the perfection of the agent. But what proceeds from another agent in this way is like to that from which it proceeds. The perfection of the effect is always like to the perfection of the agent. But this is what we call the perfection of the effect being in the agent. For the perfection cannot be numerically identical in the cause and in the effect, but

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Second, when a mirror contains the species of others as something other than its essence. Third, when something is the *ratio cognoscendi* of itself and of others but not at the same time. Fourth, when something is contained in a composition, as a genus is contained in the notion of the species. Fifth, when something is naturally suited to actualize (*actu facere*) from his very *ratio* both the understanding of itself and all things other than itself. The first, third, and fifth ways is proper to God. He is the *ratio cognoscendi* of all other things insofar as he is their *per se* and sufficient cause. And just as he is the one *esse* for all beings, containing all *esse* in himself, so too he is the one intelligible for all things, containing all inteligibles in himself. Cf. *Summa*, a. 22, q. 6 (ed. Badius, I.135vK–N)

according to a similarity according to some conformity of nature. Since, therefore, every creature is an effect of the agent God, it is necessary to posit every perfection of a creature in God.[76]

This argument from efficient causality, however, cannot be conclusive unless the perfections of creatures are in divine wisdom, so God must also be the formal and exemplar cause of the perfections in creatures. Such essential perfection of a thing in its nature and essence consists in its first *esse*, which it has formally from its essence, because *esse* is the formal act in a created thing upon its essence. And singulars and the atoms in each thing go about such that nothing is in anything essentially in act and its perfection unless according to the act of being (*actus essendi*), such that the perfection in a thing is greater to the extent that the thing has a superior grade of *esse* appropriating it to the first cause. But the *esse* of each creature is participated from the *esse* of God, who is his *esse* essentially.[77]

Now the condition of the participated being and the condition of that which is such essentially are related to each other such that something cannot be in the participated being in act unless it is in that which is essentially because the participated being takes from him as a wax figure from the signet ring. Therefore, whatever act has *esse* in any participated *esse* whatsoever has *esse* in that which is *esse* essentially pertaining to its essence. As evidence of this principle, Henry uses Thomas's example of a separately existing color. If there were a separately existing color that were color essentially, there could be no perfection in any color existing in manner that that color did not have in itself.[78]

Since God is essentially subsistent *esse* itself, and he is that from whom every *esse* of a creature is participated in each grade of perfection, whatever perfection is participated, in each participated *esse*. As a result, in each creature, it is necessary to posit that perfection in the very

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[76] *Summa*, a. 42, q. 2 (ed. Hödl, 39:71–85).
[77] *Summa*, a. 42, q. 2 (ed. Hödl, 40:02–16).
[78] *Summa*, a. 42, q. 2 (ed. Hödl, 40:17–41:28). See Thomas, *ST* I, q. 3, a. 4 (ed. Leonine, 4.42).

unique and simple *esse* of God. And thus the perfections of all things are in God. These perfections are in him because he is something essentially in act, and not just by reason of diverse ideas that are the paradigms of creatures.[79] Because God has all perfections substantially and gives these perfections to creatures, the *esse* of God is the measure of each creature with the result that each creature has more or less perfect *esse* to the extent that it more or less approaches the *esse* of God.[80]

Finally, God must have all the perfections of things because he is related to them as final cause. The goodness of the end in things that are ordered to an end is proportioned by the power of the effecter and the agent. Just as every agent acts and moves another so any end whatsoever inclines and leads the thing back to itself, and inclines through its goodness. God and creatures are related such that every power of creatures is participated from God. But when agents are related in this way, the higher agent can do immediately whatever he does mediately through the lower agent. Similarly it is necessary to posit in the ultimate end inclining all things to itself through the essence of its goodness the goodness of anything whatsoever that is moved in it by its goodness.[81]

Just as God is the first agent by his power and his esse, so too he is the ultimate end by his goodness, in which the notion of his *esse*'s perfection consists. And just as all agents participate the power of acting from him, so too all things as ordered to an end have goodness from him. Therefore, just as he contains the powers of all others essentially in his power, so he also contains the goodnesses of all others essentially in his goodness. But his essential perfection consists in the goodness of the essential thing, which is being. Therefore, he contains essentially the perfections of all others in his perfection, and therefore all others desire his goodness as much as they can. And they tend toward him as their incomplete goodness is perfected by his perfect goodness.[82]

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[79] *Summa*, a. 42, q. 2 (ed. Hödl, 41:29–35).
[80] *Summa*, a. 42, q. 2 (ed. Hödl, 42:52–54).
[81] *Summa*, a. 42, q. 2 (ed. Hödl, 42:70–79).
[82] *Summa*, a. 42, q. 2 (ed. Hödl, 43:80–89).

In *Summa*, a. 42, q. 2, then, Henry argues that God has to have ideas because he is the efficient, formal and exemplar, and final cause of everything other than himself. At the core of each of the arguments are the principles that nothing can give what it does not have, and an agent makes something like itself. These two principles are different ways of expressing the same idea. God has all of the perfections of creatures because if he did not, then he could not create those perfections in the creatures. And since he can only create according to perfections that preexist in him, he makes something that is like himself. The two principles mutually lead to each other. God makes something like himself because he cannot give what he does not have, and he cannot give what he does not have so something like what he creates has to preexist in him.

iii. *Quodlibet* VIII (Christmas 1284). In *Quodlibet* VIII, q. I, Henry offers an argument that God has ideas that is heavily influenced by Avicenna's argument for divine knowledge. Everyone who knows something knows that which is in some way the very thing cognized. But a knower has the *esse* of the thing cognized in two ways: by information and by essence. The first way everyone knowing something other than itself is the very thing cognized as a per se object, insofar as by its cognition the thing's species informs the knower. Through this, the knower has the *esse* of the thing cognized in a certain way. This mode is characteristic of every created intellect that knows something other than itself, and even knowing itself because it does not cognize itself except as other than itself.[83]

God alone cognizes himself objectively in the second way because he is the same as himself, is entirely immaterial, and separated from every limitation that impedes the thing being a per se intelligible object in others. Those impediments are first in material things, and second in individual

[83] *Quodlibet*, VIII, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 299vA), esp: "Primo modo omne cognoscens alia a se ut per se objectum, est ipsum cognitum: inquantum per cognitione ut sua specie informat ipsum cognoscentem per hoc eum habet esse quodammodo ipsum cognitum." Henry gives an earlier, less complete version of this argument in *Summa*, a. 40, q. 4 (ed. Wilson, 269:14–271:48). Note especially the argument *sed contra*: "Contra. Perfectior est intellectus plurium distinctus, quam indistinctus. Cum ergo divinus intellectus perfectissimus est, ergo etc."

creatures, as Avicenna says in *Metaphysics* VIII. But that whose essence is intellective is essentially intellective and therefore is pure intellect. For what prohibits the thing from being understood is that it is in matter, and matter's conditions (*in materia et in eius appendiciis*), both of which prohibit it from being intellective. Therefore, what is free from matter and its conditions most certainly has separated *esse*, and it is intellective per se. And because it is intellect per se it is also understood per se and even understood by itself. And because it has separated *esse*, the divine essence is a certain intelligible for the divine intellect such that it understands itself. Because it is understood per se, it understands everything other than itself by understanding itself, as Avicenna says in *Metaphysics* VIII. Therefore, he understands his essence, he understands through his essence, and he understands whatever is after his essence through his essence. That he understands his essence is the cause of his understanding that which is after his essence. His understanding of what is after his essence is caused by the fact that he understands his essence and because his essence is unlimited. Thus, because he is unlimited he eminently contains in himself the truth of every limited *esse* and essence, so that he does not cognize things other than himself as proper objects according as they are other than him, but according as they are the same as him in him. If it were otherwise, then God would understand the things cognized informed by receiving them and suffering by their cognition.[84]

iv. *Quodlibet* IX (Easter 1286). As we noted above, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 is Henry's most complete account of the divine ideas. In this question he offers four reasons that perfectly explain the necessity of positing ideas.[85] These four reasons, then, are not just four reasons, but *the* four reasons for positing ideas. Neither Bonaventure nor Thomas claimed that their reasons for positing divine ideas in God were exhaustive, but Henry does here. First, it is necessary to posit ideas so that

[84] *Quodlibet*, VIII, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 299vA), esp.: "Hoc igitur quod intelligit suam essentiam, causa est intelligendi id quod est post suam essentiam. Suum igitur intelligere eius quod est post suam essentiam: causatum est eius quod est ipsum intelligere suam essentiam: et hoc quia est illimitata: quia propter suam illimitationem eminenter continet in se omnis omnis esse et essentiae limitatae veritatem."

[85] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 33:7–8): "Et sic dico quod oportet ponere ideas esse in Deo, et hoc propter quattuor, ut perfecte explicemus necessitate ponendi eas."

God might cognize things other than himself perfectly according to the notion by which they are other.[86]

Second, God's knowledge of the divine ideas is the exemplar cause of things such that they become something in themselves essentially. Divine ideas are present in God's knowledge as in an archetypal world, singularly present from eternity. This archetypal world extends both to those things that will never come to be and those that will be realized at some time. As their exemplar cause, God establishes each thing in its quidditative being because they exist by their essence having been constituted by divine knowledge. God could not perfectly cognize himself from eternity if he did not cognize himself as a constitutive principle of other things. As their exemplar cause, God establishes the essences of things in essential being. They do not actually exist, i.e., they do not have existential being, until God wills to create them.[87] Ideas are the essences of things as they exist in divine cognition; the divine essence according to ideal notions is an exemplar form by which the essences of creatures are what they are.[88]

Third, Henry says, it is necessary to posit ideas, although not under the notion of ideas. It is necessary to posit the perfections of things in God, by which he is the proper measure of things. The idea of a thing and a perfection in God differ because a measure is a type of relation, i.e., a measure is that against which things are judged as a standard. The grades of things in dignity of nature and essence are all measured against God. All ordered measures are reduced to some first measure that is simplest and best such that it ought to be the measure of others.[89]

To understand this last claim, Henry says that there are three types of measure. The first type of measure is always exceeded and measures only by replication of itself. The number one is of this

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[86] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 33:9–14). Cf. Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46, c. 1 (PL 40:29).
[87] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 34:15–32).
[88] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 37:00–04).
[89] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 38:22–43).

type; it measures all numbers but only by repeating itself. The second type of measure is sometimes exceeded, sometimes equal, and sometimes exceeds what it measures. The motions of the planets are of this type. Their motion is uniform and their orbits occur without addition or diminution. Their motion, insofar as it includes an intrinsic measure of itself, which is time, exceeds things below it, is equal to itself, and is exceeded by its continual orbits. The third type of measure always exceeds and is proper to God. God is the measure of all beings because he is first, simplest, and best in his nature. The measured is in him virtually, and does not exist in him except from the consideration of the intellect alone.[90]

Finally, it is necessary to posit ideas in God because of the production of things in actual existence. If God did not have ideas (and many of them) as they are notions of imitability in his essence, then he could not produce many things without the use of an intermediary cause. As a summary to all four reasons, Henry adds that if God did not have ideas, then he could not cognize anything outside of himself, and consequently could not produce anything outside of himself.

v. Conclusions. Henry's arguments for the necessity of positing ideas in God are not new, and in most cases, he appears to articulate only the arguments that suit him at the time. At times, he is content simply to say that ideas are the only way to account for the existence of things in definite essences. At other times, he offers extended arguments that God could not exercise formal, efficient, or final causality over creatures by any means other than ideas. Only once, in *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2, does he propose to bring all of these arguments together and systematize them into a definitive list for us. There are four, and only four, reasons that can be offered for divine ideas. We must posit divine ideas to account for God's perfect knowledge of things other than himself, his formal causality of essences, his role as the measure and perfect exemplar of all things, and his efficient causality of things in actual existence.

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[90] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 39:52–41:20).

We can boil these four reasons down to the three *fundamenta* of Bonaventure's *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. 1, q. 1.[91] In that text, Bonaventure argues that without divine ideas, we cannot account for divine knowledge, divine illumination, or divine production. Henry takes these three motivating factors and adds his metaphysical distinction between essential being and existential being. This distinction distinguishes two moments of divine production. In the first, the essence is established as the sort of essence that it is. God is the formal exemplar of the essence because he establishes the forms of all finite essences. In this moment, all of the essences are possible rather than actual, and they have essential being. In the second moment of divine production, God's will elects to create essences, and so brings about singular beings. God is the existential exemplar of the essence because he establishes it in actual existence. In this moment, the essences God chooses to create become actual, and have existential being. More will be said about this below. What matters for now is that we can account for the discrepancy between Bonaventure's list of three and Henry's list of four by appealing to the differences in the two thinkers' metaphysics of essence. Since Bonaventure's theory of essence does not distinguish two sorts of *esse* for essences, he does not distinguish divine production. The distinction that Henry draws also allows us to understand why he thinks his list is exhaustive.[92] Bonaventure's *fundamenta* have identified the main points, but, we can imagine Henry arguing, he fails to make all the necessary distinctions. Since, at least to his own mind, Henry has perfected the metaphysics of essence, he has perfected Bonaventure's almost complete list of reasons for positing divine ideas.

c. The Unity and Plurality of Divine Ideas

Like his predecessors, Henry is concerned to guard the paradoxical claims that God is simple and that he can create specifically diverse creatures immediately. Like Bonaventure and Thomas,

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[91] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. 1, q. 1, fa. 2–4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.600ab).

[92] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 33:7–8): "Et sic dico quod oportet ponere ideas esse in Deo, et hoc propter quattuor, ut perfecte explicemus necessitate ponendi eas."

Henry argues that the divine ideas are really one with the divine essence and only rationally distinct in the divine intellect. The plurality of the divine ideas is the result of God perfectly knowing his essence and what follows from his essence. If God did not have a plurality of divine ideas, then he could not know or create specifically different beings. From one thing only one thing comes, so if God has only one idea, then he can only create one type of being. Taking this position requires him to articulate his theory of relations in general, and his theory of rational relations in particular. Although Henry offers a variety of important distinctions for his account of relation in the *Summa*, he does not devote a particular article to defending the unity and plurality of divine ideas. Thus, I will examine his accounts from his *Quodlibets* individually, and incorporate pertinent developments from the *Summa* only in the conclusions.

i. *Quodlibet* II, q. 1 (Christmas 1277). Henry's earliest argument for the unity and plurality of divine ideas occurs in *Quodlibet* II, q. 1. In this text, he takes up the question in the context of whether God cognizes diverse individuals of the same species through one idea. His argument for the unity and plurality of divine ideas occurs as a preliminary argument that allows him to answer the question.

Henry's response to the question begins with his omnipresent distinction between essential being and existential being. There are two considerations of every created essence or nature: the essence as it is an essence, and its actual existence or subsistence. Insofar as it is from the nature of essence as it is an essence absolutely there is a twofold indifference in it. In one way, it is indifferent to actual existence because of itself it is naturally suited to existence and non-existence. It is not naturally suited to these two in the same way because, insofar as it is left to itself, it always has non-existence, but because it has essence, i.e., insofar as it is an effect of God, from whom it participates

existential being insofar as it is his effect, such that its essence is not its existence, but as it were coming to it and accidentally, participated from God's essence.[93]

In another way, the essence absolutely is indifferent to universal and particular. For according to Avicenna the essence of a thing insofar as it is an essence is only an essence, and universal and particular intention are beyond their intention just as the intention of existing and non-existing are beyond their intention.[94] And the difference to universal and particular is much greater indifference because although the thing is indifferent to existence and non-existence, yet it has non-existence from itself, and has it only from another. And thus it is indifferent to universal and particular because from itself it is neither universal nor particular. It only has a particular notion (*ratio*) insofar as it receives subsisting being in a determinate supposite from another. It only receives universal existence insofar as it is abstracted from supposites by an intellect, in which it has one existence in many, and again is applicable to many by predication.[95]

And thus, according as a thing's essence can be considered in two ways, namely as in itself, and as in one supposite or multiplied in many, so an idea according to which God has to cognize the thing, whose essence is a likeness, has to be considered in two ways: in one way as it is an absolute essence, in another way as it is an essence related to supposites. In the first way, as an absolute essence, according as any species whatever of a creature is in God there is only one idea by which he cognizes the whole power of the essence and its possible multiplication to become through various supposites.[96]

In the second way, the one idea with respect to the essence is as many with respect to the multiplied supposites under the essence. Just as the thing's essence is one in itself and many in

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[93] *Quodlibet* II, q. 1 (ed. Wielockx, 4:30–41).
[94] Avicenna, *Met.*, V, c. 1 (ed. van Riet, II.227:1–238:56).
[95] *Quodlibet* II, q. 1 (ed. Wielockx, 4:42–5:53). See Aristotle, *Anal. post.*, I, c. 11 (AL 4.126:13–18).
[96] *Quodlibet* II, q. 1 (ed. Wielockx, 5:54–61).

relation to supposites, so the idea of the same essence is one as it relates to the essence absolutely, and is many insofar as it relates to the supposites under the identity of the essence. The only difference between these two is the essence in diverse things is really multiplied. Just as many supposites are contained under the unity of the essence, the essence's idea is one with respect to the essence itself and many according to the respects contained in the divine essence. An ideal respect to the essence is one to many ideal respects to supposes because the essence is multiplied through supposites, but the respect of one idea to the essence remains simple and undivided in the various respects to supposites.[97]

As a result, one ideal respect can be one through relation to the essence and, remaining one, be many through relation to supposites because it does not relate to supposites except by the mediation of the essence, just as if one ray descending on some middle point were multiplied by that reflection into many, unless those rays really differed and in subject from the first, not as this respect from the first respect.[98]

This argument is incomplete. In this text, Henry argues that there is only one divine idea, not many. There is only one divine idea because of the unity and simplicity of the divine essence. Any plurality of divine ideas that could be affirmed would not result in any real division of God's essence. The ideas would remain really one (*unum secundum rem*). Many respects are contained under the one essence, however. These ideal respects are really diverse in the supposites that receive from the divine essence, but they have no effect on the unity of the divine essence. The supreme unity and simplicity of God is guarded despite the multiplicity of things that come after him.

If this argument were the whole argument, then Henry would have denied that there are many divine ideas. Instead, he would have argued that many diverse things can come from one idea

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[97] *Quodlibet* II, q. 1 (ed. Wielockx, 5:62–6:75).
[98] *Quodlibet* II, q. 1 (ed. Wielockx, 5:76–81).

because one idea can be received into many supposites. Conspicuously absent from this argument is any mention of the divine intellect and imitability. As we saw above, divine ideas are a respect of imitability resulting from the divine intellect knowing the divine essence.[99] Since Henry does not mention God's intellect or imitability, we must conclude that his response is more concerned with the unity of the divine essence than the plurality of the divine ideas. Henry offers no explanation as to how diverse supposites can receive the divine essence, except to say that their respects are contained (*continentur*) in the divine essence. Moreover, Henry does not clarify what sort of diversity exists among the supposites that have ideal respects to the divine essence. Are they merely numerically diverse? Specifically diverse? Generically diverse? From this text alone we have no reason to think that Henry means anything other than numerically diverse, in which case, this argument can only prove that God creates many identical things and that his unity is not harmed by the fact that these identical things are really distinct from each other. As a result, I submit that this question can only be read as answering half the question, namely, can many things come from one thing, or to put it a different way, can many things be related to one thing without violating the unity of the latter? The divine ideas are really one. In order to know if they are in any way many, we must look at Henry's treatment in other places.

ii. *Quodlibet* V (Christmas 1280 or Easter 1281). Henry again takes up the question of the plurality of the divine ideas in *Quodlibet* V, q. 1. Henry is asked whether the plurality and distinction of God's essential attributes ought to be taken with respect to some external perfections as are found in creatures, or with respect to internal perfections in God himself.[100] Are the divine attributes merely a result of our way of thinking, or are the really in God such that they precede our thinking?

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[99] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 29:79–81): "Ut secundum hoc idea nihil aliud sit de ratione sua formali quam respectus imitabilitatis ex consideratione intellectus in ipsa divina essentia."

[100] *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 150vA): "Circa essentiae perfectiones duo. Unum pertinens ad rationes attribuorum, utrum scilicet pluralitas et distinctio attributorum essentialium accipienda sit penes respectum et comparationem ad aliquid extra ut ad creaturas, vel ad comparationem ad aliquid intra."

The question does not specifically ask about divine ideas, or, to use Henry's preferred term in the response, *rationes ideales*, but Henry brings in the divine ideas because the case of divine ideas is parallel to the case of divine attributes. I will focus on the parts of Henry's reply that concern ideas.

As we saw above, Henry says that every perfection in a creature insofar as it is a certain thing and essence has the notion of an idea or ideal notion in God. There is in God the perfection and idea of a donkey, of a rock and of all other absolute essences, both substances and accidents. His source for this is the ever-present *Quaestio de ideis* of Augustine.[101] An ideal notion signifies (*respicit*) the divine essence as it is conceived in God's intelligence, and all notions not only as they are objects of intelligence with respect to the perfections in creatures, as they are perfections simply, but as they are *rationes intelligendi* of those perfections that are in the creatures, and the creature with respect to the perfections, as they are naturally suited to be understood through the ideal notions.[102]

The names of creatures that are associated with ideas are imposed to signify the essence of things according to a way of being of determinate perfection by which a creature differs from God. Thus, every thing and perfection existing in creatures whether it be substantial or accidental, insofar as it is a thing and nature having a determinate grade of perfection in its essence, has the notion of perfection in God and an idea in his wisdom. Henry gives the examples of man, rock, color, sweet, wisdom, goodness and others of this kind.[103]

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[101] *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 151rF): "omnis perfectio in cratura inquantum ipsa est res et essentia quaedam habet in Deo rationem ideae: et similiter rationem perfectionis sibi respondentem. Est enim in deo perfectio et idea asini, similiter lapidis et caeterarum omnium absolutarum essentiarum, sam substantiarum quam accidentium, et alia et alia singulorum secundum Augustinum *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46, ubi dicit, *Omnia ratione sunt condita: nec eadem ratione homo qua equus: sed singular propriis sunt create rationibus*."

[102] *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 151rG): "Ratio vero idealis respicit eandem [sc. essentia divina] ut concept in eius intelligentia, et similiter omnes rationes praedictas non solummodo ut sunt obiecta intelligentiae in respectu ad perfectiones in craturis, ut sunt simpliciter perfectiones, sed ut sunt rationes intelligendi ipsas perfectiones quae sunt in ipsis creaturis, et hoc in respect ad illas, ut natae sunt intelligi per eas."

[103] *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 151rH): "illa nomina imponuntur ad signifandum rerum essentias secundum modum essendi determinatae perfectionis qua qualibet creatura differt a Deo . . . . Unde omnis res et perfectio existentes in creaturis sive sit substantialis sive accidentalis, inquanum res est et naturaa habens determinatum gradum perfectionis in sua essentia, habet rationem perfectionis in Deo et ideam in sua sapientia, ut homo, et lapis, color et sapor, sapientia et bonitas, et cetera huiusmodi."

The limitation and determinate grade of perfection that ideas signify renders a plurality of ideas necessary. Whatever is characteristic of perfection in creatures simply is more principally in God from himself and his nature, and not with respect to something. Thus, the notion of ideal perfection is not said to be in God except because there be some corresponding notion of perfection ideated in the creature. And this corresponding notion is not according to the notion by which it is perfect, but according to the notion by which it is limited. Thus, the diversity of ideas in God is taken according to diverse grades of limitation of that perfection in creatures.[104]

Later in the lengthy response, Henry argues that God understands himself as both the one understanding and the thing understood, and that he understands all that he understands to be one in reality, and differs only by reason of understanding. He would not even have this difference if he did not have the plurality that results from every respect and comparison to creatures and the distinction of attributes. The plurality of ideas, however, differs only by reason through the respect that they have to creatures. Creatures bear a certain likeness to God as expressing a vestige of him because they have a grade of perfection from their essence, by which they have ideal perfection in God.[105]

From Henry's response it is clear that there is a plurality of ideas because of the plurality of grades of perfection that creatures can have in relation to God. God knows all of the relations that possible creatures could have to him, and so has a plurality of ideas. Yet, it is not clear how Henry understands these relations so he clarifies his position on rational relations and their effect on divine simplicity in his reply to the objection. The objector begins his argument with the traditional example of the left and right of a column and the consideration of a geometrical point as the

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[104] *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 151vL), esp.: "secundum diversos gradus limitationis illius perfectionis in creaturis, sumuntur diversae ideae in Deo."

[105] *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 152rQ). Cf. *Quodlibet* V, q. 4 (ed. Badius, 158vO): ". . . ut relatio secundum huiusmodi respectum Dei ad creaturas sit secundum rationem tantum; e converso, creaturae ad ipsum sit secundum rem."

beginning and end of two different lines. Left and right, as well as beginning and end, are real distinctions in things, but "without reference to other objects, there is nothing in the cylindrical shape of the column or in a point with no extension that would allow for any kind of distinctions."[106] Henry thinks that the objector errs, however, when he infers from these examples that all divine attributes that are truly attributed to God have many and distinct things that are really other in creatures corresponding to them from which they can be attributed to God, as wisdom in God and wisdom in creatures, goodness in God and goodness in creatures.[107]

The objector has been deceived by the examples. The case of God and creatures are entirely dissimilar. Things can only have *esse* in two ways: one in itself absolutely as it is outside of the intellect, and the other as it is in a concept of the intellect. Further, concepts are either simple intelligence or a comparison to things made. Since divine attributes (and we could add here, divine ideas) do not have any real *esse* absolutely from the nature of the thing, simple intelligence will not suffice to understand them. The attributes are, as it were, in potency and only have *esse* in the consideration of the intellect investigating and collecting them. Through this analysis and synthesis, the notions of the attributes are drawn out (*educere*), which potencies are really in potency of themselves.[108]

What it means to "draw out" has to be distinguished. Rational diversity concerning a thing that is only in potency of itself can either be simple intelligence (*ex mera et sola operatione intellectus circa rem*) or it can include extrinsic circumstances, i.e., possible relations to the object. An act of simple intelligence alone is not sufficient for the intellect to posit, e.g., that the point *qua* point has the character of beginning and end. Only the circumstance of the point occurring in two distinct lines allows us to make such an affirmation. It really is the case that the point is both the beginning and

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[106] Plevano, "Divine Ideas and Infinity," 182.
[107] *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 150vA).
[108] *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 153vA).

the end of the line, but it is in it as it were in habit and accidentally in potency. Only the consideration of the intellect can actualize this potency.[109]

When we apply this reasoning to the divine ideas, Henry says, we find that true and good are rationally distinct in every created thing. They, namely, true and good, have *esse* in the thing with respect to and in comparison to the same thing, yet it is in them according to diverse reasons. Creatures are good with respect to goodness in the divine will, and true with respect to wisdom in the divine intelligence. For there is truth in the essence of every creature insofar as it is an essence and nature, which essence and nature relates to the divine intellect as to its primary exemplar.[110]

The divine intellect produces the truth of each creature to its corresponding divine idea. As Plevano explains, "its truth is founded in its relation to the transcendental being."[111] Each possible creature only comes about because of a relationship to the divine essence. God has to know this relation before creating it in the creature. Diverse creatures have diverse relations to God, and so there have to be many divine ideas. The plurality of divine ideas, however, does not point to a preexisting real distinction in God's essence. Independent of being known by the divine intellect, the divine essence would be potentially related to all creatures, but these relations are not really there without the consideration of the intellect that considers extrinsic circumstances.

iii. *Quodlibet* IX (Easter 1286). In *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2, Henry argues that an idea is "a respect of imitability from a consideration of the intellect on the divine essence."[112] From this definition it is immediately obvious that there cannot be only one divine idea by which God is imitable by a creature simply and in general, for then God would not cognize things other than himself except by a universal cognition and as one. Just as that respect would be one, so he would

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[109] *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 153vA). Henry makes a similar but less concise set of distinctions in *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 152vR–S).

[110] *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 153vB).

[111] Plevano, "Divine Ideas and Infinity," 184.

[112] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 29:79–81).

know the diversity of creatures only in potency. Thus, there must be many ideas according to the absolute essences of things because of the work of the intellect. Now the divine intellect, because it is of infinite perspicacity, penetrates the whole power of its essence when it understands it.[113] God, in cognizing the nature of being simply, which is himself, cognizes the nature of any external being that is capable of participating in him. He cognizes these other beings according to another and inferior nature in essence than the divine essence, and according to the diverse specific natures according to which there are diverse grades of participating in him.[114]

God knows the diverse grades in which beings could exist in a single cognition. He is able to have such vast knowledge from a single cognition because being simply (*ens simpliciter*) virtually contains all other grades of being. By knowing the perfect nature of being in *ens simpliciter*, he knows all the ways in which being could fall short of *ens simpliciter*. The ideas are not the things themselves, but the *rationes intelligendi* the things. They are nothing but a certain respect in which he is relatively related (*relative se habet*) to the essence of external things as exemplar form.[115]

iv. Conclusions. Henry's position on the plurality of the divine ideas is in line with that of his predecessors, and his articulation of the way in which the plurality of ideas is close to, although not identical to, Thomas's. The divine ideas are both one and many. They are one because the ideas are identical with the divine essence. There is not even a hint of division or composition in the divine essence, so the divine ideas are one. When Henry says that creatures are created according to their divine idea, he is not saying that they are created according to the likeness of anything other than the divine essence.

When God knows his essence, however, then plurality is found. Henry uses two similar, but distinct arguments for the plurality of divine ideas. The first argument, found in *Quodlibet* V,

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[113] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 29:82–88).
[114] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 29:3–30:7).
[115] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 30:15–26).

approaches the plurality from the side of creatures. We impose names to signify the various ways in which creatures differ from God. So these determinate grades of being have their origin in God. Since an idea is the *ratio intelligendi* by which God knows the determinate grade of perfection that a creature can have, God has to have many ideas.

The other argument that Henry employs is from *Quodlibet* IX. It approaches the issue from the side of God's perfect knowledge and appears to borrow heavily from Thomas.[116] God is *ens simpliciter* and knows himself perfectly. Because he knows the perfection of being, he also knows all the grades according to which things can fall short of perfect being. Thus, he has many ideas, one for each grade of being. This argument bears a striking resemblance to Thomas's argument from knowledge of his essence as able to be participated. Henry's argument appears similar because it declares that *ens simpliciter* virtually containing all other beings and knows the grades of imitation. The structure of the argument is very similar, but Henry chooses to focus on knowledge of relatives rather than participation. The possible creatures that God knows by means of the divine ideas all bear a relation to him and are what they are because of that relation. And, when one relative is known distinctly, both it and the other relative are necessarily known.[117] Therefore, since God knows one end of the relative perfectly, that is, himself, he necessarily knows the other end, i.e., the creature. Power to bring about any of the ideas does not play a role in Henry's argument.

The fact that Henry's argument is so similar to Thomas's is evidence that Henry was quite familiar with Thomas's argument, and perhaps even had the *Summa theologiae* in front of him. If that be the case, then I think there are two reasons for Henry's deviation from Thomas's argument. The first reason is that for Henry, divine ideas are primarily cognitive principles, not causal principles as they are for Thomas. In both cases, an idea is a way in which the divine essence can be imitated,

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[116] See Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.202).

[117] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 30:28–29): "Cognoscens enim distincte unum relativorum, necessario simul cognoscit et aliud."

which implies God's ability to cause it, but Henry is more concerned with the affect the ideas have on God than the effect they have in creatures. The second reason is that, as I noted at the beginning of this section on Henry, finite beings are first and foremost creatures for Henry. Above all, finite beings are the real relation that they bear to God.[118] Thus, we would expect Henry to articulate the plurality of divine ideas in terms of God's knowledge of relatives. Henry is focused on God's knowledge of the relation that creatures could have to him, and Thomas is more concerned about the being that creatures have when the participate in him.

v. Henry of Ghent on Relation. Relation plays a key role in Henry of Ghent's metaphysics in general, and in his theory of divine ideas in particular.[119] A divine idea is nothing other than a type of relation, or respect, in the mind of God. Moreover, the type of relation that a divine idea is, namely, a rational relation allows Henry to posit many ideas in God. As Flores notes, "creatures are constituted by a twofold relation, by a relation to the divine intellect which determines the essence of the creature, and by a relation to the divine will which determines the existence of the creature."[120]

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[118] See Decorte, "Avicenna's Ontology of Relation: A Source of Inspiration to Henry of Ghent," in *Avicenna and his Heritage*, ed. Jules Janssens and Danniel de Smet (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002), 219: "To Henry, who wants to improve on the Aristotelian metaphysics by making it more of a Christian metaphysics, beings are essentially *creatures*, that is their being created belongs to the very heart of what they are. Their relation to the Creator must belong to the hard core of their being, i.e., to their essence as well as to their existence. In *what* they are as well as in *that* they are they should be thought of as dependent on the creator. This implies that both essence and existence should be thought of as relations, i.e., as modes of being expressing a relation of the foundation toward, or a dependence of that foundation on, the divine intellect and will respectively."

[119] A complete account of Henry's theory of relation is beyond the scope of this paper. The biggest obstacle to such an account is that Henry's thinking on relation develops in his career. Decorte identifies three "periods" in Henry's metaphysical thinking: (I) before 1278 including *Quodlibet* I-II and *Summa*, aa. 1–25, (II) 1278–1284 including *Quodlibet* III-VIII and *Summa*, aa. 26–54, and (III) 1285–1292 including *Quodlibet* IX–VX and *Summa*, aa. 55–75. Relation plays almost no role in (I). Relation plays a larger role in (II) as Henry realizes its utility for certain Trinitarian problems. Henry's metaphysics of relation is fully developed in (III) in large part because of the influence of Simplicius's *Commentary on the Categories*. William of Moerbeke's translation of the commentary appeared in 1266, but Henry's work shows very little influence on Henry's thought before 1285. This section will not be able to investigate these developments. Instead, I will focus on the aspects of Henry's theory of relation that are most relevant for his theory of ideas. See Jos Decorte, "*Relatio* as *Modus Essendi:* The Origins of Henry of Ghent's Definition of Relation," *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 10 (2002): 310–11. Marrone offers a similar, but not identical, division of Henry's thought. See Stephen P. Marrone, *Truth and Scientific Knowledge* (Cambridge, MA: The Medieval Academy of America, 1985), x–164, and Stephen P. Marrone, "Henry of Ghent in Mid-Career as Interpreter of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas," 193–209.

[120] Juan Carlos Flores, "Henry of Ghent on the Trinity," in *A Companion to Henry of Ghent*, ed. Gordon A Wilson (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 149. See *Summa*, a. 29, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 171vF): "Cuiuslibet enim esse creaturae nihil aliud est in creatura quam respectus ad Deum, inquantum sub ratione similis, est eius effectus, sicut veritas in creatura non est nisi respectus in ea ad Deum, ut ad causam formalem exemplarem, bonitas vero ut ad causam finale perfectivum, . . . sic

If Henry were not able to appeal to relations in general and rational relations in particular, then he would not be able to account for God's knowledge of creatures. God would either not know creatures at all, or at best know them in a universal and indistinct way. Henry would also not be able to account for God's production of things in actual existence. Given the importance of relations in Henry's thought, I will offer some remarks on the distinctions that he makes in relations, focusing especially on his account of rational relations.

There are two important distinctions that need to be examined. The first distinction concerns the *res* and the *ratio* of the category relation. The second distinction concerns the distinction between real and rational relations. Following but adapting Thomas's position, Henry argues that the categories of being have a *res* and a *ratio*. The *res* of a category is whatever is contained in the order of some category through its essence and nature. The *ratio* of a category is more properly the mode of being of those things contained in the category.[121] Thus, the *ratio* of substance is to subsist or to stand under, and the *res* of the category substance is everything that agrees with that *ratio*. Similarly, the *ratio* of quantity is to measure a thing according to the parts., and the *res* of quantity all that in which such a *ratio* is discovered essentially.[122] Not all of the categories have a distinct *res*, however: "In the whole universe of creation there are only three genera of things, namely, substance, quality, and quantity."[123] Henry reduces the other seven categories to the one category of relation and they do not have a *res* distinct from the *res* of absolute category on which

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entitas in creatura non est nisi respectus in ea ad Deum, ut ad causam eius efficientem." Cf. *Quodlibet* III, q. 9 (Badius, 61rO).

[121] *Summa*, a. 32, q. 5 (ed. Hödl, 79:15–18): "aliud est res praedicamenti, aliud vero ratio praedicamenti. Res praedicamenti est quidquid per essentiam et naturam suam est contentum in ordine alicuius praedicamenti; ratio praedicamenti est proprius modus essendi eorum quae continentur in praedicamento."

[122] *Summa*, a. 32, q. 2 (ed. Hödl, 36:37–40): "ratio substantiae est subsistere sive substare, res praedicamenti substantiae est omne illud cui convenit ista ratio; 'ratio quantitatis est secundum partes rem mensurare, res quantitatis est omne illud in quo per se ratio talis invenitur.'" For quantity, Henry is quoting Aristotle, *Met.*, V, c. 13 (AL 25.3.2.110–111).

[123] *Quodlibet* V, q. 6 (ed. Badius, 161vO): "In tota universitate creaturae non sunt nisi tria genera rerum, videlicet, substantia, qualitas, quantitas."

they are based, i.e., relations do not have a *res* distinct from the substance, quantity, or quality that is related to something else.[124]

Given that Henry denies a *res* of the category of relation, the only thing that remains to distinguish it as a category is its *ratio*. The tradition coming to Henry from Aristotle traditionally held that relation is the weakest sort of being (*ens debilissimum*) and necessarily entails dependence.[125] It was argued to be the weakest because it could come to be or be destroyed without any change in the quality in which it is founded or the substance in which the quality is founded being affected.[126] Relation is supposed to entail dependence because its being-toward-another (*ad aliud esse*) depends on the other. Henry grants that both of these claims are true of relations in creatures, but they are not true of relation itself. In both cases, the debility and dependence of the creaturely *res* renders the relation weak and dependent. Being founded upon a weak and dependent *res*, the relation incurs weakness, but "the *ratio* of respect simply does not have weak being, but rather strong being: for there is as much true being in its genus being-toward-another, as there is in absolute being-in-itself in its genus."[127] The nature of a relation or a respect is nothing other than being-toward-another.[128] The *ratio* of the category of relation is being-toward-another.[129] This *ratio* is compatible with any

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[124] *Quodlibet* V, q. 6 (ed. Badius, 161vO): "Unde septem praedicamenta alia, quae ad unum praedicamentti relationis habent reduce, . . . non habent in se aliam rem significatam quam sit res praedicamenti absolute, supra quam fundantur in subiecto. Unde propriam rem non habent, nec addunt supra essentiam rei, supra quam fundantur." Cf. Roland J. Teske, "Aspects of Henry's Debt to Avicenna's Metaphysics," in *Essays on the Philosophy of Henry of Ghent* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2012), 133.

[125] Aristotle, *Met.*, X, c. 4, 1055a35–b1 (AL 25.2.3.205). Averroes, *In X Met.*, com. 28 (ed. Iunctina, VIII.312G–H). Both of these positions appear as objections in *Summa*, a. 32, q. 5 (ed. Macken, 79:4–12).

[126] "Suppose a white wall and a white door. The white door is then as-white-as the white wall. Now it seems that, when we pain the wall black, the being-as-white-as with respect to the wall is destroyed in the door, without its being-white destroyed, and *a fortiori* without its being-a-door being destroyed. So relational being can come to or disappear from a thing without its qualitative being being affected; and the accidental being can come to be or disappear without its substantial being being affected (we can paint the door black, and it will still be a door" (Jos Decorte, "Relation and Substance in Henry of Ghent's Metaphysics," *Henry of Ghent and the Transformation of Scholastic Thought*, ed. Guy Guldentops and Carlos Steel [Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2003], 4). Cf. Thomas, *In XII Met.*, lect. 4, n. 2457 (ed. Spiazzi, 578).

[127] *Summa*, a. 32, q. 5 (ed. Macken, 120:41–44).

[128] *Summa*, a. 32, q. 5 (ed. Macken, 120:49–51): "Ex natura autem relationis vel respectus simpliciter, nullam rationem dependentiae ab alio dicit, sed solum esse ad aliud."

[129] See *Quodlibet* V, q. 2 (ed. Badius, 155rN): "quod est ratio praedicamenti relationis: scilicet ad aliud esse nudum."

being, regardless of its *res*. In fact, the more absolute and independent a being is, the more other beings depend on it.[130]

Having distinguished the *res* and *ratio* of relation in this way, Henry argues that a relation contracts its reality from its foundation and that it is nothing but a mere relatedness (*habitudo nuda*). Its mere relatedness is nothing but a certain mode of having to another thing, and so is not a *res* of itself, but only a mode of a *res*.[131] This position seems to follow quite naturally from his claim that only the categories of substance, quantity, and quality have an absolute *res*. If the *res* of a relation is reducible to the *res* of the substance, quantity, or quality in which it is found, then the relation will not have a *res* of its own, but rather be a mode of the absolute *res*.[132]

With the definition of relation in hand, we pass to Henry's second distinction, which distinction should be familiar. Henry distinguishes two types of relations: real relations and rational relations (*relatio realis* and *relation secundum dici*/*relatio secundum rationem tantum*). Henry appeals explicitly to Avicenna for this distinction, although we have also seen it in Bonaventure. Real relations exist in singulars, and they exist simply and absolutely toward another (*ad aliud*). Rational relations, on the other hand, only exist in the intellect, and they do not agree with things as they are conceived in the intellect.[133] Henry explains both types of relation in great detail. He treats real relations in *Summa*, a. 35, q. 8, and he discusses rational relations in *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1.

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[130] *Summa*, a. 32, q. 5 (ed. Macken, 121:52–54).

[131] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 3 (ed. Macken, 56:85–89 and 59:61–68). Cf. *Summa*, a. 55, q. 6 (ed. Badius, II.110rI–112vZ). I should note that Henry offers another definition of relation earlier in his career. In *Quodlibet* V, q. 1, ad 1 (ed. Badius, 155rN), Henry says "praedicamentum relationis est res cui convenit in alio esse non absolute, sed in respectu ad aliud." This definition seems to say that the category of relation is not merely the *ratio* of *ad-aliud-esse*, but rather says that relation has its own *res*, i.e., its own accidental being. Scotus identifies this tension, arguing that the two definitions seem contrary to each other (*Ord.*, II, d. 1, q. 5, n. 169 [ed. Vatican, VII.96:4–6]). For an analysis of the two definitions and Scotus's criticism, see Decorte, "'Modus' or 'Res': Scotus's Criticism of Henry of Ghent's Conception of the Reality of a Real Relation," in *Via Scoti: Methodologica ad mentem Joannis Duns Scoti*, vol. 1, ed Leonardo Sileo (Rome: Paa-Edizioni Antonianum, 1995), 407–429.

[132] See *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2, ad 2 (ed. Wilson, 24:98–25:10). Cf. Decorte, "Avicenna's Ontology of Relation," 209–10.

[133] *Quodlibet* III, q. 4 (ed. Badius, 51rN): "Et respondet Avicenna determinando quod quaedam relation realis est et habet hesse in singularibus, quaedam verosecundum dici solum, quia non habet esse nisi in intellectu. Relatio autem realis quod habet esse in singularibus et illa quod convenit eis quod sunt simpliciter et absolute ad aliud. Relatio vero

In *Summa*, a. 35, q. 8, Henry does two things of note. First, he distinguishes the terms *relatio* and *respectus*. Every respect is a relation and vice versa in the general sense of "relation." In this sense, relation and respect mean simply being-toward-another (*esse ad aliud*). Thus, every true relation is a true respect: a real relation is a real respect, and a rational relation is a rational respect. If we take the word "relation" in its proper signification, however, then it is no longer synonymous with "respect." In the proper sense of "relation," every relation is still a respect, but not every respect is a relation. Henry uses the example of "father" and "fatherhood" to draw out the distinction. Both names are *respectus* because they imply a being-toward-another, and so both are *relationes* in the general sense. Turning to the proper sense, we find that only one of the names is predicated of the "other" to which both names have being-toward. "Father" is a name of the subject such that we can say that a father is the father of the son. The case is not the same for "fatherhood." "Fatherhood" is related to "sonship," but cannot be predicated of it. Fatherhood is not the fatherhood of the sonship. Thus, "father" is both a *respectus* and a *relatio*, but, in the proper sense, "fatherhood" is only a *respectus*.[134] From this, we can ascertain the proper nature (*ratio*) of a *respectus*: the *ratio respectus* "lies in being a name of a relatedness toward something else, disregarding the fact whether or not that name is also the name of the *subiectum* of that relatedness. In the former case the *respectus* is a *relatio*, in the latter it is not."[135] "Father" is the subject of the relatedness to the son and so is also a *relatio*. "Fatherhood" is not the subject of the relatedness to the son, and so is merely a *respectus*.

The distinction between *relatio* and *respectus* may appear small, but it looms large in Henry's definition of divine ideas. Since a divine idea is a *respectus* of imitability, it must be the case that the idea has a relatedness, a being-toward-another, for that which imitates the divine essence, but it is

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secndum dici quod solum habet esse est illa quod convenit rebus quod non sunt simpliciter et absolute ad aliquid, sed solum secundum quod ab intellectu concipiuntur." See Avicenna, *Met.*, III, c. 10 (ed. van Riet, I.173–83).

[134] *Summa*, a. 35, q. 8 (ed. Wilson, 81:34–82:60)

[135] Decorte, "'Modus' or 'res'," 411.

not the subject of the relatedness. The divine idea of a dog is not the subject of the relatedness of the dog to God. Rather, the dog itself is the subject of its relatedness to God. This point allows Henry to deny that divine ideas impose any dependence on God. As he says in *Summa*, a. 32, q. 5, when applied to God, the category of relation does not remain according to its proper nature (*ratio*). All that remains is a *respectus*-toward-another, which, as we saw just above, does not imply any dependence.[136]

The second thing that Henry does in *Summa*, a. 35, q. 8 is to declare five conditions for a real relation. First, there must first be being-toward-another in both extremes of the relation. This condition, he says, is common and general to every respect, i.e., to every respect that is not a relation in the strict sense. Second, there must be being-in-something in both extremes of the relation. This condition ensures that there is a real dependence and respect of that which is to that in which it is, but not vice versa. Third, the extremes must be mutually said of each other. Fourth, they must be mutually said of each other with consequentiality, i.e., one must be the consequence of the other, but, and this is the fifth condition, neither is the cause of the other. The last three conditions allow for relations like same and diverse, one and many, like and unlike, equal and unequal to be real mutual relations, but exclude the relations that exist between knowledge and thing known, generator and generated, and action and passion from being real mutual relations.[137]

The exclusion of knower and thing known is particularly relevant for the discussion of divine ideas because a divine idea is precisely a *respectus* that exists between a knower and a thing known, i.e., between the divine intellect and the divine essence. The exclusion of the knower and the known means that divine ideas cannot be real relations for God. There is a real relation on the part of the creature, but divine ideas can only be rational relations for God. Henry identifies five types of

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[136] *Summa*, a. 32, q. 5 (ed. Macken, 95:42–48).
[137] *Summa*, a. 35, q. 8 (ed. Wilson, 82:62–87:99).

rational relations in *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1. As was observed above, a rational relation is not founded in the thing without the consideration and operation of the intellect. This consideration can occur in two ways. In one way it occurs by causing a *relatio* in both of the extremes, and in another way it occurs by causing a *respectus* in one of the extremes and a real relation in the other, i.e., it causes a mixed relation in which the relation is real for one extreme and rational for the other extreme.[138]

The first way can occur in two ways. In the first way, the intellect makes diverse relations having a diversity from the nature of the thing that are in some way diverse. This first sort of rational relation is the sort that occurs between genus and species when considering man and animal. In the second way, the diversity occurs from the intellect's consideration alone without any diversity in the thing. This sort of rational relation is identity of a thing with itself.[139]

The second way, i.e., the way that results in a mixed relation, also occurs in two ways. In one way, concerning that which does not present any relatedness (*habitudo*) of itself such that the intellect would make the relation concerning it, as in the case of right and left in a column. Unlike an animal, whose face makes one side of it naturally left and the other naturally right, a column does not have any inherent left or right so any relation that it might acquire would be imposed by the intellect.[140]

The second way of the second way concerns that which from itself has some relatedness (*habitudo*) from itself such that the intellect would make the relation concerning it. This way is twofold. In one way, which is the fourth type of rational relation, a real relation preexists in one of the extremes and the rational relation is formed in it according to its correspondence. In this way, the real relation is in a certain way the cause of the rational relation. This sort of relation universally occurs in the relation of the measure to the measured, and those things that are of God to creatures

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[138] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1 (ed. Macken, 6:72–78). Cf. *Quodlibet* V, q. 4 (ed. Badius, 158vO): ". . . ut relatio secundum huiusmodi respectum Dei ad creaturas sit secundum rationem tantum; e converso, creaturae ad ipsum sit secundum rem."

[139] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1 (ed. Macken, 6:79–7:85).

[140] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1 (ed. Macken, 7:86–92).

temporally.[141] The measured is really related to the measure and as it were causes the rational relation in the measure. This sort of rational relation occurs in all creaturely knowing.

In another way, which is the fifth type of rational relation, the rational relation is naturally prior to the real relation, and the extreme that has the real relation has being because of the correspondence of the extreme that has the rational relation. The rational relation is the *ratio causandi* of the real relation. This type of rational relation universally exists in relations that are from eternity in God to creatures, and on the part of the divine intellect and the divine will.[142]

Henry's division of rational relations specifies the sort of relation that exists between God and a divine idea. Divine ideas fall under the fifth type of rational relation, and in fact, Henry seems to have established this type of rational relation specifically for divine ideas. A divine idea is the rational relation that God has had from eternity to a creature. It is the way in which God knows himself to be imitable. The creature that is fashioned after the divine idea has a real relationship to God because it really depends on him, but this real relation only exists because it was (at least logically) preceded by the rational relation that the divine idea is. This point is worth emphasizing: the divine idea is a rational relation. On Henry's account, God does not know creatures directly. He knows them by means of divine ideas. Armed with the knowledge that a divine idea is a rational relation existing between the two extremes God and the creature, we can restate the previous sentence as follows. God knows the extreme through the rational relation he bears to it. God's knowledge of the relation is logically prior to his knowledge of the other extreme to which the relation refers.

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[141] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1 (ed. Macken, 7:93–00).
[142] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1 (ed. Macken, 7:1–7).

d. The Finitude of the Divine Ideas

Knowing that there are many divine ideas, the next logical question to ask is, how many? Are there an infinite number of divine ideas, or only a finite amount? Since Henry has argued that divine ideas are primarily cognitive principles like Bonaventure did, and not primarily ontological principles as Thomas did, we might expect him to argue that there are an infinite number of divine.[143] If a divine idea is the rational relation of imitability that the divine essence has to a creature when that essence is known by God, then surely God would have an infinity of them because God knows all creatures. Yet, Henry argues precisely the opposite in *Quodlibet* V, q. 3.[144]

Henry begins his response by distinguishing two difficulties. The first difficulty comes from divine ideas themselves, and the second comes from the things known. Concerning the second difficulty, Henry notes that divine ideas and divine knowledge are not identical. As we have seen, divine ideas are only a secondary consideration of the divine essence, and so do not exhaust the whole of divine knowledge. God knows an infinite because of the infinity of his attributes. God would not lack knowledge of the infinite if he does not have an infinite number of ideas.[145]

Concerning the first difficulty, Henry emphasizes that an idea bespeaks a respect to the essences of things such that he who would posit an infinite number of ideas necessarily posits an infinite number of creaturely essences according to species.[146] This claim already begins to separate Henry's position from Bonaventure's and Thomas's. When the latter two thinkers took up this question, they were considering an infinite number of ideas distinguished according to individual, not according to species. When Bonaventure says there are an infinite number of ideas, he can say

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[143] Richard of Mediavilla also held that there were not an infinite number of divine ideas because God does not create an infinite number of creatures. See Richard of Mediavilla, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 2, q. 5 (ed. Venezia, 112ra): "In Deo sunt ideae infinitorum extend nomen ideae ad rationes cognoscitivas, quia, ut inferius ostenditur, divina essentia infinita est infinitae quae dicit perfectionem et includit positionem . . . Quamvuis et aliqui aestiment non esse in Deo ideas infinitorum, sed quod dicit rationes cognoscitivas et operativas simul, eo quod Deus numquam producet infinita."

[144] For more on this question, see Plevano, "Divine Ideas and Infinity," 192–97.

[145] *Quodlibet* V, q. 3 (ed. Badius, 155vO).

[146] *Quodlibet* V, q. 3 (ed. Badius, 155vO).

so even if he appeals only to one species. God could create an infinite number of sharks, and so has an infinite number of ideas. For Henry, appeal to sharks alone yields only a single divine idea because, as we will see below and as Henry states explicitly here, "individuals do not have proper ideas in God."[147] As a result, since each species imitates God according to a distinct grade of perfection, to say that there are an infinite number of ideas in God is to say that there are an infinite number of diverse grades of perfection according to which creatures imitate God. An infinite number of ideas entails an infinite number of distinct essences.[148]

The question of whether there are an infinite number of divine ideas boils down to the question, can an essence always exceed another in perfection *ad infinitum*. An essence has a greater or less degree of perfection in imitating the divine perfection through an addition to form because every perfection is from form. Thus, a superior grade in imitating God is a more perfect form. Infinite degrees of perfection would thus require an infinite addition of forms. But this position cannot stand because such augmentations are potentially infinite, but can never be actually so.[149]

Henry also argues from the essential order of the universe. The universe is arranged such that essences are essentially ordered to each other. They have an essential order among themselves through the natural influence of higher, incorruptible things both among themselves and upon inferior and corruptible things. Essentially ordered things cannot proceed to infinity. An infinite number of divine ideas would require an infinite number of essentially ordered things. Therefore, there cannot be an infinite number of divine ideas.[150]

An infinity of divine ideas is impossible because of the limits of the divine ideas themselves. God's knowledge is not diminished or imperfect because he does not have knowledge of an infinite

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[147] *Quodlibet* V, q. 3 (ed. Badius, 155vO): "individua proprias ideas in Deo non habent."
[148] *Quodlibet* V, q. 3 (ed. Badius, 155vO).
[149] *Quodlibet* V, q. 3 (ed. Badius, 155vR).
[150] *Quodlibet* V, q. 3 (ed. Badius, 156rT).

number of specifically diverse essences. He does not have such knowledge because it is impossible.[151] As Henry notes in his reply to the first objection, there is a limit to the perfection of creatures, a term beyond which a creature cannot imitate God. This limit is only because of an imperfection or limitation in the creature.[152] The imperfection of creatures sets a ceiling of perfection beyond which a creature could not imitate.

God cannot have an infinite number of divine ideas because there cannot be an infinite number of grades of perfection according to which creatures imitate God. Henry's position on this matter is unique because he denies that God could have an infinite number of ideas even as cognitive principles. Bonaventure and Thomas differed from each other because of which role of the divine ideas they favored. As cognitive principles, both allowed for an infinite number of divine ideas. As causal principles, both argued for a finite number of ideas. They differed because Bonaventure thought of divine ideas first and foremost as cognitive principles and Thomas thought of divine ideas first and foremost as causal principles. Henry departs from both of them because he denies that divine ideas could be numerically infinite even as cognitive principles. Because divine ideas have to constitute a specifically distinct grade of perfection, it is impossible for them to be infinite in number. Such an infinite would require breaking all of the rules that we have concerning the infinite. The limitations and imperfections inherent in all creaturely essences make it impossible for there to be an infinite number of divine ideas. The total number of divine ideas is surely an astronomically large number. There are a tremendous number of essences that God choose to create and even more that he could have created, but despite its size, that number is still finite.

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[151] *Quodlibet* V, q. 3 (ed. Badius, 156rT). Cf. Plevano, "Divine Ideas and Infinity," 196–97: "It is the metaphysical contingency and finitude of all created essences, both in their number and in their degrees of perfection, which dictates the limit of the number of God's ideas of them, since, as relations of imitability, ideas refer primarily to creatures, and only secondarily and notionally to the divine essence."

[152] *Quodlibet* V, q. 3, ad 1 (ed. Badius, 156vT).

e. The Existence of Things in God

Having determined what a divine idea is, why God has to have them, and why there are many, but not an infinite number of them, it remains to be seen what sort of existence divine ideas have in God. This question cuts to the heart of Henry's metaphysics because it is where his famous distinction between essential being (*esse essentiae*) and existential being (*esse existentiae*) comes to the fore. This distinction, to which I alluded in the first part of this section on Henry, is one of the most important distinctions in Henry's metaphysics. It is also a source of great controversy because he appears to argue that divine ideas have some sort of existence independent of God prior to their being created. This interpretation of Henry's text began with Scotus, and its clearest recent articulation is found in an article by Fr. John Wippel.[153] Recently, Richard Cross has challenged this long-standing interpretation. He argues that essential being is "a component of God's mental life."[154] Henry is not trying to ascribe any existence to essences independent of God's mind, but rather emphasizing that an essence in itself necessarily includes *esse cognitum* in God's intellect. I will examine Henry's accounts of the existence of things in God, and then use the interpretations of Wippel and Cross to draw conclusions about Henry's position.

i. *Quodlibet* I (Christmas 1276). Henry's earliest treatment of the existence of the divine ideas occurs in question nine of his first *Quodlibet*. The questioner asks whether a creature's essence is its existence (*esse*). Henry begins his response by distinguishing two ways in which a creature participates *esse* from God, who is pure *esse* itself essentially. In one way, we can understand the creature's very essence as an underlying something (*aliquid substratum*), and its *esse* by which it participates as something received in it as a certain form of being. This way of understanding the

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[153] For Scotus, see, *inter alia*, *Lect.*, I, q. 36, a. un, n. 6 (ed. Vatican, 17:462–63) and *Ord.*, I, d. 36, a. un., n. 13 (ed. Vatican, 6:276). Wippel, "The Existence of Non-Existing Possibles," 729–58, esp. 740–51 and the appendix on 757.

[154] Richard Cross, "Henry of Ghent on the Reality of Non-Existing Possibles – Revisted," *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 92 (2010): 131.

creature's essence is like the way in which a body is said to be white by receiving the form of whiteness in itself. Those who say that essence and *esse* are really other in creatures understand creatures to participate *esse* in this way. Quoting Thomas's *Summa theologiae*, Henry compares the relationship between a creature and God to air and an illuminating light. Just as the sun, which shines by its nature and is nothing other than its light, so God has *esse* by his nature and essence because he is only *esse*. And just as air is obscure of itself, and from its nature is entirely devoid of light unless the sun illuminate it, so a creature of itself and its essence does not have any character (*ratio*) of *esse*, but is in the darkness of nonbeing (*non entitas*), unless God illuminate and give it the *esse* by which it participates in him.[155]

In another way, we can understand a creature to participate *esse* by understanding the creature's essence as something abstracted by the intellect, indifferent to *esse* and non-*esse*. We can make this abstraction because although it has a formal idea in God through which it is a certain being in God before it becomes a being in proper nature, the essence is a certain nonbeing (*quoddam non ens*) of itself. Anything whatsoever has the *esse* being-in-God and then becomes a being-in-act when God, by his power, makes it to the likeness of its formal idea, which he has in him. From this act of making the creature is said to participate because it is its expressed likeness in the effect from that pure *esse* that God is. The likeness that occurs in the thing's essence is a certain likeness to God's *esse* because the thing's essence is a certain effect of God. But the very likeness of God by which the creature participates *esse* is not something other than the creature's essence, really differing from it and impressed upon it.[156]

The first way of understanding participation is insufficient because we ought not imagine that a creature's essence is like air, indifferent to obscurity and brightness. Rather, it is like a certain

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[155] *Quodlibet* I, q. 9 (ed. Macken, 48:34–49:52). Cf. Thomas, *ST* I, q. 104, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 5.464b).
[156] *Quodlibet* I, q. 9 (ed. Macken, 49:53–67).

ray that is naturally suited to subsist in itself, having been produced by the free will of the sun, not by the necessity of nature. If the sun could produce a per se subsisting ray by free will, that ray, of itself and in its nature, would be indifferent to *esse* and non-*esse*, and would be a certain non-being. But insofar as it is from the sun, could receive *esse* in itself, and would receive it when it was effected by the sun. It would not receive *esse* as something added to its essence and differing from its essence, but rather participate the light of the sun through its essence and in its essence. The case is similar with creatures and God. The creature participates God's *esse* in it because its essence a certain likeness of the divine *esse*. In any creature whatsoever *esse* is not something really other from its essence and added to it such that the creature exits. Rather, its essence, by which it is the sort of creature that it is, has *esse* insofar as it is an effect and likeness of divine *esse*.[157]

Henry then argues that there is a sense in which a creature's essence is its *esse*. The essence that is a likeness of divine *esse*, which likeness is not really other from the essence and added to it, is has an *esse* essentially of itself, which Henry calls essential being (*esse essentiae*). Although it has essential being, the essence still has it participatively insofar as it has a formal exemplar in God. Essential being is the sort of *esse* that an essence has in a mental concept before actually existing.[158] No creature has actual existence from its essence, but only from God insofar as it is an effect of the divine will after the pattern of its exemplar in the divine mind. This actual existence, which Henry calls existential being (*esse existentiae*), occurs only through the impression of creation upon the essence.

Although Henry does not use the term "divine ideas" in this text, he is clearly speaking of them. Divine ideas exist in the divine mind as formal exemplars and efficient exemplars. As formal

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[157] *Quodlibet* I, q. 9 (ed. Macken, 49:68–50:92). This distinction has its origin in Avicenna, who argues that God alone is necessary in himself. Everything else is merely possible in itself, but can be necessary through another. See Avicenna, *Met.*, I, c. 6 (ed. van Riet, I.43–48, esp. 44:24–26).

[158] *Quodlibet*, I, q. 9 (ed. Macken, 53:69–54:75), esp.: "est illud esse rei definitivum quod de ipsa ante esse actuale solum habet existere in mentis conceptu."

exemplars, they establish the essence in its essential being. Henry calls the essential being of an essence its definitive being because it establishes the definition of the essence. As a formal exemplar, the divine idea establishes the essential characteristics of the essence as a likeness of divine *esse*. The divine ideas are the essences of creatures existing in the divine mind. They are made to be what they are by God's knowing them. As an efficient exemplar, the divine idea is that to whose likeness God creates a thing. Divine ideas are not efficient exemplars except by the fiat of the divine will. Whereas a divine idea seems to be a formal exemplar only because of God's knowledge, a divine idea cannot become an efficient exemplar unless the divine will chooses to place the relatedness of creation in the created thing.[159] Thus, each idea has an existence proper to it, namely, its essential being. Its essential being makes it to be like the divine *esse*, and it has essential being because of the action of divine intellect only. Moreover, the divine idea is its essential being. This sort of existence is not distinct from it nor does it come to it as an accident. This identity of essence and essential being does not rival the unity of God's essence and existence because the divine idea's essential being is not subsistent, but rather participates the divine *esse*. When God chooses to create a creature, he gives the essence a new sort of being, existential being, which being establishes the creature in actual existence. This sort of existence comes to the essence *ab extra*, and is not identical with the essence.

ii. *Summa quaestionum ordinariarum*, a. 21 (1277). The next place that Henry discusses the existence of the divine ideas in *Summa*, a. 21, q. 4. In this question, Henry asks whether God's *esse* is his essence. In the course of his affirmative answer to the question, Henry explains the sort of identity and distinction that are proper to essence and existence, and so what sort of existence a divine idea enjoys.

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[159] "Creatio enim, ut supponimus et verum est, nihil rei ponit in creato, nisi respectum ad Creatorem" (*Quodlibet* I, q. 9, ad 3 [ed. Macken, 57:52–53]).

Essence and existence differ in every creature, and the notion (*ratio*) of its existence is other than the notion of its essence. This difference is not only true of its existential being, which is more obvious because the essence receives existential being *de novo* and temporally. The difference is also true of the essential being and the essence itself, although this latter case is not as clear.[160]

In order to help us understand the difference between essential being and the essence, Henry makes use of his famous distinction of the transcendental "thing" (*res*) based on the (pseudo-)etymology of the word. *Res* derived from *reor, reris* (I think, you think) is other than its essential being, which belongs to it from the fact that it is a certain nature and essence. *Res* derived from *ratitudo* ("ratification" or "verification") has the notion of an exemplar in God.[161] For every creature is called a *res* absolutely from the fact that of itself it bespeaks something from which some concept is naturally suited to be formed in the soul. But it is called a certain essence or nature from the fact that it has the notion of an exemplar in the divine *esse*. Since it has an exemplar in the divine essence it is naturally suited to be produced in actual *esse*, from which essential being belongs to it. Whence, whatever does not have such an exemplar in God is pure nothing in nature and essence, nor is it a thing of some category, nor could it come to be in an effect because God can make nothing of which he does not have an exemplar notion in himself.[162]

When something is called a *res a reor*, it is a thing merely from the fact that some concept of it can be formed in the soul, but this intention of the thing does not determine that it be a certain essence exemplified in God. Instead, it is related indifferently to having an idea in God. Therefore, it is another intention concerning the same thing by which a thing is a certain essence and nature from which essential being belongs to it. Thus, essential being does not belong to it because it is a thing

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[160] *Summa*, a. 21, q. 4 (ed. Badius, 127rN).

[161] See *Summa*, a. 21, q. 2 (ed. Badius, 124vK). Aersten has traced the origin of this distinction of *res* to at least as early as Bonavenure, *In II Sent.*, d. 37, dub. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, II.876). See Aersten, "Transcendental Thought in Henry of Ghent," 11.

[162] *Summa*, a. 21, q. 4 (ed. Badius, 127rO). Cf. Augustine, *De lib. arb.*, II, c. 20, n. 54 (PL 32.1269): "Sciri enim non potest quod nihil est."

absolutely, but only because it is a certain nature and essence. Because, nevertheless, a thing has that it is a certain essence and nature in itself, and that essential being belongs to it from the same relation, namely from a respect to the notion of a divine exemplar, so that its proper being, which is called essential being, does not come to the essence *de novo* as its existential being does, it is not clear that essential being is another intention from the intention of the essence. Thus, although no creature can be said to be its existential being, it might seem to someone that it can be said that a creature is its essential being so that, just as God is his unparticipated essential being, so a creature it is participated essential being. For it is from its essential being that a thing has an exemplar notion in God that it not be in itself some nature and essence participating essential being.[163]

So a divine idea is a *res a ratitudine* because it is an exemplar notion in God. It is not merely thinkable (as is a *res a reor*), but it is naturally suited to being made.[164] A divine idea has a proper existence, namely, its essential being, and this essential being establishes the act that is proper to the essence.[165] As he distinguishes them here, *res a ratitudine* and *res a reor* are opposed to each other and related as more and less real. The indifference that a *res a reor* has to existence or nonexistence is evidence of its imperfection. A *res a ratitudine* has greater reality because it has some existence, namely, essential being. Its essential being makes it more than just thinkable; it makes it apt to be made in actual existence, but not necessarily exist actually. As Teske points out, Henry's position

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[163] *Summa*, a. 21, q. 4 (ed. Badius, 127rO–vO)

[164] In *Quodlibet* V, qq. 2 and 6 and *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 Henry sketches a comprehensive view of reality. The theories presented in the two *Quodlibets* do not completely agree with each other, but they do agree on this important point: Every *res a reor* is reducible to the various *res a ratitudine* that constitute its parts. If a *res a reor* were not reducible to a *res a ratitudine*, then it could not be thought at all. Since all *res a ratitudine* are either the divine essence or divine ideas, everything that is thinkable are reducible to the divine essence or the divine ideas. Moreover, *res a reor* are indifferent to any existence whatsoever, and *res a ratitudine* have essential being, but are indifferent to existential being. See *Quodlibet* V, q. 2 (ed. Badius 154rD); *Quodlibet* V, q. 6 (ed. Badius, 161rK): "Res hic appelatur non figmentum et ens secundum animam tantum, quod dicitur a reor reris, neque respectus aliquis . . . sed quicquid est natura et essentia aliqua absoluta habens rationem exemplarem in Deo, nata existere in extistentia operatione divina." *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 26:46–28:87). For the consequences of this view of reality, see Aersten, "Transcendental Thought in Henry of Ghent," esp. 1–18.

[165] *Summa*, a. 21, q. 4 (ed. Badius, 127vQ): "Deus enim causando naturam esentiae dat ei esse tanquam proprium actum eius in seipsa, sicut proprius actus lucis est lucere, qui nihil reiest aliud a luce, quam in se agit, etsi non esset extra quod posset luminare."

here means that "both *esse essentiae* and *esse existentiae* are accidental, i.e., are outside of the intention of a thing. For a thing taken from *reor*, *reris* is indifferent to *esse essentiae*, and a thing taken from *ratitudine* is indifferent to *esse existentiae*."[166] Divine ideas, then, are indifferent to actual existence, but they are not indifferent to all existence. They necessarily have essential being. If they did not, then they would not be naturally suited to being made.

iii. *Quodlibet* VII (Christmas 1282). In *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2, Henry again "sketches a most comprehensive picture of the structure of 'reality' that beings with the most general and ends with the categorical modes of being."[167] This sketch differs from the one he constructed in *Quodlibet* V. He again has recourse to his distinction between *res a reor* and *res a ratitudine*, but they divide reality differently. The most general of all, containing all in a certain analogous scope, is thing or something. Considered in most general way, nothing is opposed to it except pure nothing. Pure nothing neither is, nor is naturally suited to be, in a thing outside of the intellect, nor even in some intellect's concept because nothing is naturally suited to move the intellect unless it has the notion of some reality. *Res* or something taken generally does not have the character of a category, for then there would be one category containing both Creator and creature.[168]

The most general concept of *res* is divided into that which is either is or is naturally suited to be in the intellect only, and that which either is or is naturally suited to be in things outside of the intellect. The first type of *res* is a thing according to opinion only and is derived from *reor, reris*. This sort of *res* includes things that the intellect has made up, like a golden mountain or a goatstag. These fictional beings are true in their parts, e.g., gold and mountain. If these parts had no truth, then they

[166] Teske, "Aspects of Henry's Debt to Avicenna's Metaphysics," 130.
[167] Aersten, "Transcendental Thought in Henry of Ghent," 4.
[168] *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 26:46–27:58).

could not be in the intellect at all. A *res a reor* is thus a being according to its parts; its whole is not a thing in any category of being. These things, Henry says, do not have proper ideas in God.[169]

The second type of *res*, the type which is naturally suited to be in things outside of the intellect, is called a *res a ratitudine*. They are not yet the categories of being, but are distinguished into that which is something that is its *esse*, and that which is something to which *esse* either belongs or is naturally suited to belong. The first is uncreated, and the second contains every creaturely thing. Only the latter can have being in a category. They are the quiddity and nature of any creature whatsoever considered in itself under the notion by which it is that which it is only, relating indifferently to all other things. Henry refers to his other discussions for the existence of these essences, but insists that they have ideas in God.[170]

Unlike *Quodlibet* V, in which *res a reor* was the most general category and included *res a ratitudine*, Henry argues that *res a reor* and *res a ratitudine* are divisions of a most general sense that is opposed to pure nothing. Every r*es a reor* is reducible to the *res a ratitudine* that constitute its parts. If *res a reor* were not reducible to *res a ratitudine*, then they could not be thought at all. Since all *res a ratitudine* are either the divine essence or the divine ideas, everything that is thinkable (i.e., all *res a reor*) are reducible to the divine essence or the divine ideas. It is impossible for something to be thinkable if its parts could not be actually existing things.[171] Since, in the other texts to which he refers, Henry argues that *res a reor* are indifferent to any existence whatsoever, and *res a ratitudine* have essential being, but are indifferent to existential being, we can conclude that that which is indifferent to any existence whatsoever is reducible to that which has essential being.

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[169] *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 27:59–70)

[170] *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 27:71–28:87).

[171] For the consequences of this position on Henry's theory of transcendentals, see Aersten, "Transcendental Thought in Henry of Ghent," esp. 1–18.

iv. *Quodlibet* IX (Easter 1286). *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 is a particularly helpful text on the existence of the divine ideas because it is the only in text in which Henry is only concerned with explaining the existence of the divine ideas in God. He does not attempt to fit the question into a greater derivation of all of reality or in the context of the distinction between essence and existence. Instead, Henry approaches the question in terms of divine knowing, and specifically, God knowing himself according as he has the notion of a formal exemplar. Because God is the formal cause of the divine ideas, the things exemplified have some *esse* essentially (*per essentiam*) in their being known.[172]

The being of the things exemplified is like how our intellect constitutes the beings made by it in being known (*esse cognito*). And just as they are diminished beings with respect to other existing things, of which our intellect is not the cause, they neither have being simply because that comes only from God, nor do they have cognitive being (*esse cognitum*) because it is the being that they have in our intellect. The diminished beings are more powerful causes than our intellect because in they are not in our intellect's cognition as the object cognized and worked by the intellect, but are present as the acting and making objects of the intellect with the result that our intellect be an intellect according to act. Through this action they make the intellect itself be an intellect in act because they would not do so unless they were true beings according to act of themselves, with respect to which the intellect is in a certain way a being in potency.[173]

These same beings are diminished beings with respect to the being that God is, yet they are not so diminished that they are like the beings worked by our intellect. The diminished beings in our intellect are in no way naturally suited to have some true existence outside of the intellect beyond the cognitive being that they have in the intellect. But these beings existing in cognitive being are not thus diminished with respect the being that God is, rather they are something of themselves

[172] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 30:30–31:32).
[173] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 31:32–44).

essentially (*per essentiam*) in that existence, which is naturally suited, by the efficiency of God, even to exist outside of the divine intellect beyond cognitive being, in existential being that is true and perfect being.[174]

In this *Quodlibet*, Henry takes the decisive step of introducing a parallel between the divine intellect and the divine ideas on the one hand, and our intellect and the things we know on the other hand. As Maurer has pointed out, "[i]t appears that Henry of Ghent was the first to take this step."[175] Just as our intellect gives cognitive being to the things that it knows, but cognitive being is diminished from the true being that a thing has outside of the soul, so too God gives being to the divine ideas, and this being is diminished relative to God's supreme existence. But, as God is greater than man, the cognitive being that he bestows upon the ideas is not mere cognitive being. The cognitive being that man's intellect bestows could never exist outside of the intellect, but the divine ideas could exist outside of God's intellect if only God wills to be their efficient cause. Thus, Henry says that a divine idea is not merely something that God thinks, but becomes a something of itself essentially (*aliquid ad se per essentiam*).[176]

v. Conclusions. Henry's position with regard to the sort of existence that the divine ideas comes at the intersection of three important distinctions: essential being and existential being, *res a reor* and *res a ratitudine*, and the true being of a thing outside of the soul and the diminished being of it in the soul. The relationship between these distinctions is obscure, and several competing interpretations have been offered as the authentic teaching of Henry. The competing claims appear to fall into two main camps. The first camp is the traditional interpretation of Henry proposed by

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[174] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 31:44–52). Cf. Gómez Caffarena, *Ser participado*, 32: "así también el Entendimiento divino constituye a sus objectos en un ser, que es *diminuto* por respecto al de Dios, pero no tan diminuto que non puedan llegar a existir fuera del entendimiento por una acción consiguiente de Dios. Tal es el ser de esencia."

[175] Armand Maurer, "*Ens Diminutum:* A Note on its Origin and Meaning," *Mediaeval Studies* 12 (1950): 220.

[176] See Jean Paulus, *Henri de Gand: Essai Sur les tendances de sa métaphysique* (Paris: 1938), 89: "il faut bien que le créable devienne quelque chose de pensable, de reel, un *aliquid per essentiam*: il acquiert, en ce processus, un *esse essentiae*." Cf. Gómez Caffarena, *Ser participado*, 32.

Scotus. Though this interpretation has many adherents, I will primarily follow Wippel's expression of the interpretation and advert to others in the footnotes. The second camp, exemplified by Cross, pushes back against the traditional interpretation. I will explain these interpretations in turn and then conclude with my own observations.

The traditional interpretation places great emphasis on Henry's claim that an essence has not only three modes of consideration but also three modes of being.[177] As we saw in the discussion of *Quodlibet* III, q. 9 above, this claim expands Avicenna's claim that there are three modes of consideration and two modes of being for an essence. According to Avicenna, an essence can be considered (1) absolutely in itself without any reference to its existence in either singulars or in the intellect, (2) insofar as it exists in singular things, or (3) insofar they exist in an intellect. The second and third modes of consideration are also modes of existence. A mode of existence appends certain accidental characteristics to the essence, such as one or many, and universal or particular. When an essence is considered absolutely in itself, all of the accidental features that accrue to it from existence are bracketed so that only what is essential to the essence is considered. As Avicenna likes to say (and Latin authors like to quote), considered absolutely horseness is just horseness.[178]

In Henry's interpretation of Avicenna's theory, the absolute consideration is prior to the other considerations, and so "Henry also takes Avicenna to assign not only a distinctive intelligible content to an essence or nature when it is considered absolutely and in itself, but also a distinctive kind of *esse*, a distinctive kind of being."[179] This kind of being, essential being, is distinguished from the essence's existential being.[180] An essence has essential being because God is its formal exemplar.

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[177] Cf. Paulus, 83.

[178] See Avicenna, *Met.*, V, cc. 1–2 (ed. van Riet, II.227–245), esp.: "equinitas ergo in se est equinitas tantum."

[179] Wippel, "The Reality of Nonexisting Possibles," 742.

[180] Henry argues that essential being and existential being are intentionally distinct. For the intentional distinction, see, *inter alia*, *Quodlibet* I, q. 9 (ed. Macken, 55); *Quodlibet* X, q. 7 (ed. Badius, 417r–418r); and *Quodlibet* XI, q. 3 (ed. Badius, 441r–v). Cf. the analyses of the intentional distinction in Paulus, 220–36, 284–91; Gómez Caffarena, *Ser participado*, 65–92; Raymond Macken, "Les diverses aplications de la distinction intentionelle chez Henri de Gand," *Sprache und Erkenntnis im Mittelalter*, ed. W. Kluxen (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1981), 769–776; Teske, "Aspects of Henry's Debt

Essential being also entails that the essence is a *res a ratitudine*. By having essential being, an essence is naturally suited to have existential being if God wills to create it. All of this happens because of the work of the divine intellect knowing the divine essence as imitable. These essences, which are identical with the divine ideas, do not have merely cognitive being, however. They have some manner of real being, which being is "a strange and intermediate kind of reality."[181] Henry posits this strange and intermediate kind of reality for two related reasons: (1) anything with essential being has a real relation to God, and (2) Henry states that they are essentially something of themselves (*aliquid ad se per essentiam*).

In at least two places Henry argues that essences with merely essential being are really related to God. In *Quodlibet* V, q. 4, Henry distinguishes between essential being, which is the quidditative being of things, and existential being. Speaking of essences with essential being, Henry says "the relation of God to creatures, according to this kind of relation, is only according to reason. But conversely, that of the creature to him is a real relation (*secundum rem*)."[182] Not only is the relation between a divine idea and God classified as a real relation in this text, but the divine ideas are also called creatures. Everything that exists is either God himself or a creature. According to this text, divine ideas are the latter, and they have to be if they are going to have a real relation to God. The only real relations that exist in God are the divine persons, so if divine ideas are going to be really related to God, then they have to have some sort of creaturely existence independent of God.[183] This existence is a strange one, however, because it occurs only insofar as God is formal exemplar of the divine ideas. The divine will plays no role in assigning essential being to the divine ideas. Thus, if

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to Avicenna's Metaphysics," 126–134; Roland Teske, "Distinctions in the Metaphysics of Henry of Ghent," in *Essays on the Philosophy of Henry of Ghent* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2012), 93–115.

[181] Wippel, "Reality of Nonexisting Possibles," 747. Cf. Maurer, "*Ens Diminutum*," 220.

[182] *Quodlibet* V, q. 4 (ed. Badius, 158vO): "ut relatio secundum huiusmodi respectum Dei ad creaturas sit secundum rationem tantum; e converso, creaturae ad ipsum sit secundum rem."

[183] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1 (ed. Macken, 14:78–85). Cf. *Summa*, a. 53, q. 4 (ed. Badius, II.64rC–D); *Summa*, a. 55, q. 5, ad 2 (ed. Badius, II.109vD). Henry does not even allow that relations like the equality of the persons be real relations. See *Summa*, a. 55, q. 6 (ed. Badius, II.110vK).

divine ideas are creatures, then Henry is guilty of positing both that creatures are necessary and that they emanate from the divine intellect rather than from the divine will's act of love. Perhaps creatures would only *really* exist when the divine will elected that they exist, but God would not be creating *ex nihilo*. He would be creating from already existing essences.[184]

Henry's position on the real relation between the divine ideas and God is reaffirmed *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1. Immediately after Henry identifies the five types of rational distinction, he argues that the essences have a real relation to God. From the divine intellect's consideration of the divine essence, there are ideal notions (*rationes*) in the essence. These notions are relations according to reason in God to the essences of creatures, which are something according to essence (*aliquid secundum essentiam*) as a result, because they correspond to the ideal notions existing in God, the essences have a real relation to God.[185] In this text, Henry does not refer to the essences as creatures, but he insists that they have a real relation to God. Prior to its creation, an essence is really related to God. This real relation, Wippel argues, is the basis between Henry's distinction between *res a reor* and *res a ratitudine*.[186] Divine ideas are *res a ratitudine* because they are really related to God. Chimera and other merely thinkable things lack any real relation to God, and so are not naturally suited to having any being beyond cognitive being.

Moving to the second point, Henry argues that because they have essential being and are *res a ratitudine*, divine ideas have diminished being which is not merely cognitive being. As we saw in *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2, Henry argues that things existing in cognitive being are not so diminished with

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[184] Giles of Rome, Godfrey of Fontaines and James of Viterbo are the first to level this criticism against Henry. For Giles, see *De esse et essentia*, q. 12 (ed. Venice, 17va). For Godfrey, see *Quodlibet* II, q. 2 (PB I.53–68); *Quodlibet* VII, q. 3 (PB II.285–87); *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (PB III.189–208). For James, see *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (ed. Ypma, 63). Cf. E. Hocedez, "Giles de Rome et Henri de Gand sur la distinction réelle (1276–1287)," *Gregorianum* 8 (1927): 360; John F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Godfrey of Fontaines* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1981): 130–45.

[185] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1 (ed. Macken, 7:8–8:14): "Ex consideratione enim divini intellectus circa divinam essentiam ut est intellecta ab ipso, sunt in ipsa rationes ideales secundum modum exponendum in sequente quaestione. Quae sunt relationes ex hoc in Deo secundum essentiam, quod respondent rationibus idealibus existentibus in Deo et ratione ipsius essentiae earum habent relationem realem ad Deum."

[186] Wippel, "The Reality of Nonexisting Possibles," 745.

respect to divine being that they are not naturally suited to exist outside of the intellect. Rather, in that being they are something of themselves essentially (*aliquid ad se per essentiam*) because they are naturally suited, by the efficiency of God, also to exist outside of the divine intellect beyond cognitive being, in existential being, which is true and perfect being.[187] Divine ideas, which are respects of imitation that are naturally suited to exist outside of the intellect, do not have merely cognitive being. They are also something of themselves essentially. Here, Wippel reminds us that divine ideas are secondary objects of divine cognition. Secondary objects of divine cognition occur in several ways. In one way, a secondary object is viewed as a certain thing, and not as an image. Viewed as a thing, divine ideas are viewed as one and simple with the divine essence in every way. In another way, he cognizes a secondary object properly because he views it under the notion by which it is an image. In this way a secondary object "may be also be viewed as enjoying some reality in themselves from eternity and hence in some way as distinct from the divine ideas and the divine essence, thought as always dependent upon them."[188] The essence that God knows by means of the divine idea has some sort of existence of itself. It does not enjoy merely cognitive being, but is something of itself essentially.

This traditional interpretation has not been without its critics. Several scholars have challenged this interpretation, arguing that essential being is simply the term that Henry uses for *divine* cognitive being. Essential being does not bestow any extramental reality; Henry does not posit "a 'ghostly' realm of things distinct both from all really existent items and from all merely mental items."[189] Cross in particular takes up the challenge of refuting the traditional interpretation, and

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[187] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 31:48–52): "Ista autem non sunt sic diminuta respectu entis quod Deus est, et existentia in esse cognito, quin in illo esse sint aliquid ad se per essentiam, quod natum est, Deo efficiente, etiam existere extra divinum intellectum praeter esse cognitum, in esse existentiae quod est esse verum et perfectum."

[188] Wippel, "The Reality of Nonexisting Possibles," 746. Cf. Paulus, 87–92.

[189] Cross, "Henry of Ghent on the Reality of Non-Existing Possibles," 122. Cf. Gómez Caffarena, *Ser participado*, 32–33: "Pero creo que es más conforme al sentido obvio del texto de Enrique que acabamos de analizar, decir que el ser de esencia es el mismo *esse rationis* prorio de todo ser conocido en cuanto tal; pero de una especial consistencia por ser Dios quien lo forma. El ser de razón es un ser *del objeto*, heco por nuestro entendimiento . . . ; el ser de esencia es

argues that the texts most important for Wippel's interpretation do not support any extra-mental existence for the divine ideas.

In the first place, Cross points out that in *Quodlibet* V, q. 4, Henry specifically argues that what is something essentially and by nature (*per essentiam et naturam*) has to have some sort of ideal perfection in God, "even though it is not in some existence (*existentia*) outside of the intellect."[190] Divine ideas have no existence outside of God. Lest we think that *existentia* refers only to existential being, such that the divine ideas could have essential being outside of the intellect, Cross points out that Henry specifically denies this interpretation in *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2. When Henry distinguishes the two ways in which secondary objects can be considered by the divine intellect, he is careful to point out that the secondary object exists only in God's intellect in both cases: "God can know anything other than himself in two ways . . . . In one way, by knowing about the creature what it is in God; in the other way by knowing about it what it is in itself, other than God, even though it does not have being (*esse*) outside of his knowledge."[191] The creature lacks extramental being regardless of whether it is considered as in God or as in itself. The fact that Henry uses *esse* and not *existentia* here shows that he wanted to rule out essential being as having any sort of existence outside of the divine intellect.[192]

Cross also interprets later sections of *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 as further evidence that Henry denies that essential being constitutes a distinct, intermediate kind of reality. "God's cognition in cognizing himself according to the notion of a formal exemplar, by which the exemplified things have being

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el ser de razón hecho por el Entendimiento divino, de consistencia esencialmente superior, pues El es la causa del ser." Tobias Hoffmann, *Creatura intellecta: Die Ideen und Possibilien bei Duns Scotus mit Ausblick auf Franz von Mayronis, Poncius und Mastrius* (Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2002), 120: "Der Doctor Solemnis fragt nach dem Sein, das den Geschöpfen in Gott *als Gedachtsein* zukommt. Das von Gott Verschiedene könne, wie Heinrich sagt, auf zweierlei Weisen betrachtet warden . . . ; andererseits, sofern es, wenngleich nu rim Denken Gottes, in sich selbst etwas ist (insofern hat es ein *esse obiectivum*)."

[190] *Quodlibet* V, q. 4 (ed. Badius, 158vO): "Quod enim est aliquid per essentiam et naturam, licet non sit in existentia aliqua extra intellectum, non potest non esse tale, nec potest non habere rationem perfectionis idealis in Deo."

[191] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 27:45–48), esp.: "quamvis non habeat esse extra eius notitiam."

[192] Cross, "Henry of Ghent on the Reality of Non-Existing Possibles," 122–23.

something essentially according to the notion of a formal cause in its cognitive being. And this is just as our intellect constitutes beings made by it in cognitive being."[193] Once again, Henry ascribes only cognitive being to the essences of which God is formal exemplar. God knows all of the ways that his essence can be imitated, and "these imitations are themselves merely mental objects of divine thoughts, things with *esse cognitum*, and it is these divine mental objects that are the bearers of *esse essentiae*."[194] "Essential being" does not denote a realm of beings distinct from the realm of beings with cognitive being. Rather, it denotes nothing more than cognitive being in the mind of God.

This interpretation of essential being helps explain the comparison that Henry makes to diminished being in *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2. Henry is arguing that just as out intellect bestows being upon its objects of knowledge, so too does God's intellect. In both cases, the mode of existence that the object of knowledge enjoys in the intellect is inferior to the existence enjoyed by the knower. The difference is that God's existence is so great that he can make other things exist too. Thus, the diminished being that divine ideas enjoy in the divine mind can become true and perfect existential being if God wills it. The key, as Cross sees it, is that diminished "is not a marker of a degree of reality, but, as it were, of a degree of possibility."[195] Our objects of cognition are so diminished because they cannot exist outside of the intellect. They are mere *res a reor*; they could even be impossibles, i.e., things that could never come about. The objects of divine cognition, however, can exist outside of the intellect. They are diminished insofar as they have merely possible extra-mental

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[193] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 30:30–31:34). Cf. Pasquale Porro, "Universaux et *esse essentiae*, Avicenne, Henri de Gand et le «troisième Reich»." In *Le réalisme des universaux* (Caen: Presses universitaires de Caen, 2002), 38: "Henri n'admet pas que'en tant que tells, les essences possibles existent quelque part indépendamment d'être en acte dans les indivius ou dans un quelconque intellect . . . : *par consequent, si ells n'existent pas dans la réalité, ells existent dans un intellect, autrement dit, en l'espèce, dans l'intellect divin*." (Italics original.)

[194] Cross, "Henry of Ghent on the Reality of Non-Existing Possibles," 124. Cf. *Summa*, a. 59, q. 5 (ed. Badius, 150rO): "Bene verum est quod essentiae creaturarum immutabiliter ut obiecta et cognita quaedam ab aeterno habent esse in divina cognitione id quod sunt ad se."

[195] Cross, "Henry of Ghent on the Reality of Non-Existing Possibles," 128.

existence, but they are *res a ratitudine*. They can come about. Thus, "the issue is not metaphysical status, but semantic content."[196] *We* can think impossibles, but God can think only possibles.

Having argued that divine ideas are not something of themselves, Cross has to reckon with the fact that Henry states that the essences have a real relation to the divine essence considered as imitable. A real relation, Henry says, "is founded in the thing (*res*), and precisely from the necessity of the nature upon which it is founded without any consideration or work of the intellect or will concerning the thing, since it already preexists."[197] Cross argues that Henry is using the word *res a ratitudine* in a very general sense. *Res a ratitudine* does not always refer to items that are real, i.e., items with extramental existence. Henry uses the word *res* "to cover anything possible: i.e., to include compossible mental contents as well as real extramental items."[198] A divine idea can be the subject of a real relation because the essence of which the divine idea is a *ratio intelligendi* entails a relation to a real item, namely, the divine essence. In fact, the relation is logically prior to the essence and constitutive of it: "For the being of any creature whatsoever is nothing other than a respect to God, insofar as, under the notion of likeness, it is his effect, and just as truth in a creature is only a respect in it to God as to a formal exemplar cause . . . so being (*entitas*) in a creature is only a respect in it to God as to its efficient cause."[199] The *res a ratitudine* is constituted by having a real relation to God, but that real relation does not entail something above and beyond the divine essence as thought. A *res a ratitudine* has essential being because it has divine cognitive being. Far from creating the thing,

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[196] Cross, "Henry of Ghent on the Reality of Non-Existing Possibles," 128.

[197] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1 (ed. Macken, 14:70–73): "Relatio vero secundum rem sive realis est . . . quae in re fundata est, et hoc praecise ex necessitate naturae ipsius super quam fundantur, absque omni consideration aut opere intellectus vel voluntate circa ipsam ut iam praeexistentem."

[198] Cross, "Henry of Ghent on the Reality of Non-Existing Possibles," 125.

[199] *Summa*, a. 29, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 171vF): Cuiuslibet enim esse creaturae nihil aliud est in creatura quam respectus ad Deum, inquantum sub ratione similis, est eius effectus, ut sicut veritas in creatura non est nisi respect in ea ad Deum, ut ad causam formalem exemplarem, bonitas vero ut ad causam finalem perfectivum, . . . sic entitas in creatura non est nisi respectus in ea ad Deum, ut ad causam eius efficientem." Cf. *Summa*, a. 27, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 162rN).

essential being leaves the divine idea indifferent to its being created or not.[200] Only the divine will determines creation.

I think that both of these interpretations of Henry have their merits, but both of them leave Henry's theory in jeopardy. The traditional interpretation forces Henry to deny that God creates *ex nihilo*. If the essential being that essences enjoy is being above and beyond the cognitive being of objects of the divine intellect, then when God wills to create, he creates out of already existing essences. Henry must have known this objection. Giles of Rome raised this objection in his classroom questions *De esse et essentia* prior to 1285, and Godfrey of Fontaines publically raised this objection in his second *Quodlibet* no later than Easter 1286.[201] All of the texts that I examined above date from Easter 1286 or earlier, so it is possible that Henry could have changed his mind and recanted the position later, but he did not do so. Henry continued to hold his position on essential being. In *Quodlibet* X, q. 7, dated Christmas 1286, Henry is asked whether the essence of a creature is really the same as its being. As Hocedez points out, "it is manifest that this question is a direct response to Giles's treatise."[202] In his response, Henry says that he answered this question in his first Quodlibet, and he still gives the same answer. A creature's being is not something really absolute other than the essence of a creature added to it such that it becomes in effect. Essential being belongs to the essence insofar as it is a likenesses of the divine essence according to formal causality. In fact, essential being is not added to the essence because it is not even an essence if it does not exist. [203]

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[200] Teske, "Aspects of Henry's Debt to Avicenna's Metaphysics," 130.

[201] Giles, *De esse et essentia*, q. 12 (ed. Venice, 17va). Godfrey, *Quodlibet* II, q. 2 (PB I.53–68). For the dating of Giles's work, see Hocedez, 360–61. For the chronology of Godfrey's works, see Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Godfrey of Fontaines*, xxiii–xxviii

[202] Hocedez, 365.

[203] *Quodlibet* X, q. 7 (ed. Macken, 151:45–152:60): "Super identitate esse et essentiae in creaturis: habita est quaedam quaestio determinate in nostro primo Quodlibet diximus et adhuc dicemus: quod esse creaturae non est aliquid re absoluta aliud ab ipsa essentia creaturae additum ei ut sit in effectu: immo ipsa creatura esentia sua qua est id quod est, habet esse, non inquantum est essentia secundum se et absolute considerata, sed ut considerata est in ordine et comparatione ad divinam essentiam. Inquantum enim ipsa re ipsa absque omni absoluto additio est similitudo divinae

Henry doubles down on the conviction that an essence enjoys essential being prior to being created in existential being. The fact that Henry refers to his teaching on this matter as being consistent with his first Quodlibet twenty years earlier is a strong indication that both the questioner and Henry himself had Giles's (and perhaps also Godfrey's) criticism in mind when approaching this question. If Henry is willing to reaffirm his continual teaching on essential being, then he must not think that the criticism of Giles and Godfrey applies to his theory. The very tone of Henry's response is personal: "But our adversary argues against us in this matter."[204] He knows the serious objection that has been raised against him, and he seem flabbergasted at the absurdity of the claim.[205] Essential being is just being that is divided into the ten categories and this being adds nothing to the essence of the thing, just as neither truth, unity, nor goodness add to the essence.[206]

If Henry is willing to continue his teaching on essential being, then he must either have given up on *creatio ex nihilo* or not have interpreted his own teaching according to the traditional interpretation. Henry has not abandoned *creatio ex nihilo*. He regularly affirms it even one or two questions away from questions about essential beings. As a result, I think we ought to be wary of the traditional interpretation of essential being.[207] The fact that Henry does not interpret his own text according to the traditional interpretation is not conclusive proof against the traditional interpretation, but it should make us hesitate to confirm it. It is possible that the traditional interpretation is the correct interpretation of the text, but it is hard to imagine that a man of Henry's

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essentiae secundum rationem causae formalis convenit ei esse essentiae. . . . esse essentiae non proprie dicitur addi essentiae, quia non est essentia proprie nisi illo esse."

[204] *Quodlibet* X, q. 7 (ed. Badius, 416rH): "Sed arguit contra nos in hoc adversans nobis." See Hocedez, 365: "Le ton est personnel; bien vite Henri abandonne le pluriel conventionnel . . . . La passion s'en mêle; la parole deviant acerbe; Henri a été piqué."

[205] *Quodlibet* X, q. 7 (ed. Badius, 416vN–417rN): "Quod quantum absurdum sit patet omnibus: absurdum est ergo in quo fundatur dicta solutio."

[206] *Quodlibet* X, q. 7 (ed. Badius, 416vM): "uno modo dicitur ens quod dividitur in decem praedicamenta, quod est ab esse essentiae et hoc nihil addit super essentiam rei, sicut nec veritas, unitas, aut bonitas."

[207] See, *inter alia*, *Quodlibet* I, q. 7–8 (ed. Macken, 37:41); *Quodlibet* X, q. 7 (ed. Macken, 145–197).

intellectual acumen would not have perceived this heretical consequence in his teaching, even after Giles and Godfrey confronted him with it.

The more recent interpretation by Cross rightly stresses Henry's constant claim that the essences have cognitive being. Essential being is the definitive being of the thing which of itself only has existence in a concept of the mind before actual being.[208] An essence is what it is because it is in another formally, that is, as it is in the divine intellect.[209] The essence has essential being, but it does not have existence or being outside of God's intellect.[210] The traditional interpretation misses this constant insistence that essential being is nothing beyond cognitive being in the divine intellect. Yet, Cross's interpretation still has two major flaws. First, it does not adequately address the fact that Henry argues that essences have some being of their own such that they have a real relation to God prior to his bestowal of existential being in creation.[211] Second, it results in a lower power being able to do something that a higher power cannot.

As we have seen, essential being entails a real relation to God. So if essential being is nothing other than divine cognitive being, then the real relation entailed by it is *in God*. But the only real relations in God are the relations of the divine persons. Therefore, there would be as many divine persons in God as there are objects of divine cognition with essential being. This state of affairs directly contradicts what Henry says about real relations in God.

Henry argues that the divine nature is supremely active and, so, supremely diffusive, but its supreme diffusion is only by the emanation of communicating its nature in the diversity of

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[208] *Quodlibet* I, q. 9 (ed. Macken, 53:72–54:74): "illud esse rei definitivum quod de ipsa ante esse actuale solum habet existere in mentis conceptu."

[209] *Quodlibet* III, q. 9 (ed. Badius, 62rQ): "Quia enim homo est homo vel animal hoc, per certo hoc est esse quod est, et res hoc quod est in certitudinem essentiae sive non habet alio effective, quia quo ad hoc non est aliquid factum, but solum habet hoc quia est in alio formaliter: ut in intellectu divino sicut dictum est."

[210] *Quodlibet* V, q. 4 (ed. Badius, 158vO): "Quod enim est aliquid per essentiam et naturam, licet non sit in existentia aliqua extra intellectum." Cf. *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 27:45–48), esp.: "quamvis non habeat esse extra eius notitiam."

[211] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 31:49–50): "in illo esse sint aliquid ad se per essentiam." Cf. *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1 (ed. Macken, 7:8–8:14).

persons.[212] Because it is in God's nature to know and will, the Word and the Holy Spirit are generated and spirated from the Father.[213] From this generation and procession, certain real relations arise, namely, paternity, filiation, procession, to generate, to be generated, and to proceed.[214] These relations are the only real relations in God. Even relations like goodness, truth, and equality are not real relations or in God.[215] If Cross's interpretation be correct, then there are not a small handful of real relations in God, but a countless (yet finite) number of real relations. The real relations of equinity to God and dogness to God would exist in God. It will not suffice to say they are a mixed relation and only rational respects on the part of God. The foundation for the real relation is not a creature with being distinct from God. It is a creature (for Henry does call these essences creatures) that has divine existence. Since the essences have divine being, albeit only divine cognitive being, and they are really related to God, it follows that divine cognitive being would be really related to God in diverse ways. The divine Word, in whom the divine ideas and essences are found in Cross's interpretation, would not be really related to the other persons by filiation, being generating and generation of the Holy Spirit only. It would also be related to the other persons in as many ways as there are ideas. The fact that Henry does not want to affirm more real relations in God ought to give us pause with regard to Cross's interpretation.

Cross's interpretation also results in a lower power being able to do something that a higher power cannot. Cross argues that "being 'diminished' is not a marker of a degree of reality, but, as it were, of a degree of possibility: we can, and God cannot, think of *impossibilia*."[216] Man can think of *res a reor*, i.e., man can think of chimera like the goatstag. God, on Cross's reading, cannot. On the

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[212] *Summa*, a. 54, q. 3 (ed. Badius, II.79vP): "est summe active, et ideo sui ipsius summe diffusa. Summa autem diffusio non est nisi per emanationem communicando alteri suam naturam in diversitate personae."

[213] *Summa*, a. 54, q. 6 (ed. Badius, II.98vG). Cf. Flores, "Henry of Ghent on the Trinity," 138.

[214] *Summa*, a. 55, q. 5 (ed. Badius, II.109rB). He calls them real relations in his reply to the second objection, and argues that they entail none of the weakness that we might associate with relation the category of relation (ed. Badius, II.109vD).

[215] *Summa*, a. 55, q. 6 (ed. Badius, II.110vK): "proprietates attributales relationes sive respectus reales non sunt."

[216] Cross, "Henry of Ghent on the Reality of Non-Existing Possibles," 128.

one hand, we might argue that thinking of chimera is not a cognitive perfection. Thinking of fantastical beings is an imperfection; it is a mark of the finitude and weakness of our intellects. It is an imperfection because such beings cannot exist. They are not naturally suited to come to be. In this sense, denying that God can think of *impossibilia* is not a big deal. On the other hand, it is problematic that God cannot think of these things even when man can. If God cannot think of *impossibilia*, then God cannot know all the thoughts of men. God's knowledge will be contracted to a mere subset of thinkable things. Such a position is both contrary to the biblical account of God's knowledge and contrary to Henry's own claims. Henry claims that God is omniscient. If there is even one object of thought that escapes God's knowledge, then God is not omniscient. Cross's account explicitly denies that God can think of some objects that are thinkable.

In the end, then, neither of the interpretations examined leave Henry's thought in a good position. Regardless of whether essential being is interpreted as being above and beyond cognitive being in the divine mind or not, Henry is forced to deny another major tenant of his thought. Either he denies creation *ex nihilo*, or he seemingly adds extra persons to the Trinity. In either case, Henry's position on essential being does not fit into his thought as a whole. As a result, the two interpretations ought to be weighed with a narrower view of Henry's thought, namely, which interpretation coheres with Henry's texts on essential being. In this regard, I think that Cross's reading of the text is superior because it takes into account the many times that Henry says that things with essential being do not have being outside of the divine understanding. Henry makes such a statement almost every time he speaks of essential being. The fact that it reoccurs in the discussion so consistently means that Henry wants it to be part of his theory of essential being. Essential being is just Henry's shorthand for cognitive being in God's mind. The traditional interpretation can only work if these parts of his explication are left out. Cross's interpretation does not save Henry's system, but at least it locates Henry's problems in the right place.

f. Recapitulation

Henry posits divine ideas as the only means by which God can know things other than himself. They are the only way to account for his perfect knowledge of things, his role as formal exemplar, his role as the measure of all things, and his role as efficient cause. An idea is nothing other than a respect of imitability from the consideration of the intellect in the divine essence.[217] This definition succinctly articulates Henry's theory of the status of divine ideas. Divine ideas are the ways in which God knows himself to be imitable. When he considers the divine essence, he knows all the ways that creatures can imitate him. In particular, he knows the real relation that a creature could bear to him. This relation which is real in the creature is nonetheless merely rational on the part of God. God is not really related, and therefore not dependent, upon the possible imitations. And since God's knowledge has to be perfect, God has to have many ideas. If he had just one idea, then he would only know creatures generally and with an admixture of potency. Thus, he requires a plurality of divine ideas. The plurality of divine ideas cannot be infinite in number, however. Since the divine ideas are respects of imitability, their plurality is the result of many grades of imitation. So if there were an infinite number of divine ideas, there would be an infinite number of grades of imitation. Such an infinite number of grades because there is a limit to the perfection of creatures; a term beyond which a creature cannot imitate God. This limit is only because of an imperfection or limitation in the creature.[218] An infinite number of degrees of imitation would necessitate that some creature have infinite perfection. Only God has infinite perfection, so there must be a finite number of divine ideas. Finally, the divine ideas are in the divine essence as known. As I argued, divine ideas have essential being, but that being is nothing other than cognitive being in the divine mind. Divine ideas do not have any sort of existence independent of being known by God. This interpretation of

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[217] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 29:79–81): "Ut secundum hoc idea nihil aliud sit de ratione sua formali quam respectus imitabilitatis ex consideratione intellectus in ipsa divina essentia.

[218] *Quodlibet* V, q. 3, ad 1 (ed. Badius, 156vT).

Henry's theory of essential being does not solve all of the problems associated with the theory, but it at least locates the problems properly.

3. The Scope of the Divine Ideas

Armed with the knowledge that Henry posits a finite number of divine ideas, but that his knowledge of things other than himself is infinite, we can expect that Henry will not argue that God has an idea for absolutely everything that he could make, as Bonaventure does. The scope of the divine ideas will be limited for Henry, but it is not exactly clear in what way they are limited. The fact that Henry identifies divine ideas with the things that have essential being demands that his limitation be different from the limitation that Thomas gives. Henry cannot say, as Thomas did, that only what actually exists at some time has an idea properly speaking because Henry associates those things that actually exist with existential being, not essential being. Thus, we can expect him to hold that the scope of divine ideas is wider than the things that actually exist, but from the texts that we have seen we cannot be more specific about what this will mean for Henry's theory. As we will see, Henry offers a peculiar and implausible set of restrictions on the scope of divine ideas. Ultimately, we will find that the fact that Henry argues that divine ideas are God's only *rationes cognoscendi* renders any restriction in scope of divine ideas a restriction in the scope of divine cognition.

As with the other authors, we will investigate Henry's answers to the questions of divine ideas of singulars, species, genera, and accidents. However, Henry will introduce a new question in the scope of divine ideas: numbers. This question was not an issue for earlier authors because earlier authors posited an infinite number of ideas (at least in the broad sense of the term). Since Henry posits that there are a finite number of divine ideas, he has to address the question of divine ideas of numbers. Since numbers are infinite, Henry needs to account for God's knowledge of them without assigning each its own divine idea.

a. Singulars, Species, Genera

i. *Quodlibet* II (Christmas 1277). From the very beginning of his career, Henry consistently argues that God cannot have ideas of singulars.[219] Henry's earliest treatment of the question of divine ideas of singulars appears in the first question of his second *Quodlibet*. In the fundamental argument, Henry posits that diverse individuals of the same species imitate God according to the same grade of perfection. But creatures are cognized by God according as their perfections are in him, which perfections are imitated according to their own grades. But the same grade of perfection corresponds to the same notion of perfection in God. Therefore, God cognizes diverse individuals of the same species by the same notion of perfection. But the notion of a creature's perfection in God is its idea in him. Therefore, God cognizes individuals of the same species by the same idea.[220]

The major premise of this argument, namely, that diverse individuals of the same species imitate God according to the same grade of perfection, is not obvious. In fact, Thomas's argument for divine ideas of singulars relies on the fact that individual creatures imitate God diversely.[221] Thus, in his solution Henry argues for this premise. After noting in agreement with Augustine that this is an obscure question, Henry recalls that a created essence or nature can be considered in two ways: either as it is an essence, or as it actually exists. Considered in the first way, the essence in itself is subject to a twofold indifference. The first indifference is to actual, existential being or not. The second indifference is to universal or particular being. Following Avicenna, Henry argues that the essence of a thing, insofar as it is an essence, is the essence alone and the intention of universal and

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[219] "Bereits in *Quodlibet* II q. 1 behauptet Heinrich, Gott habe nur von den Wesenheiten eigene Ideen" (Tobias Hoffmann, "Ideen der Individuen und intentio naturae: Duns Scotus im Dialog mit Thomas von Aquin und Heinrich von Gent." *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie* 46 [1999]: 142).

[220] *Quodlibet* II, q. 1 (ed. Wielockx, 3:11–17).

[221] See Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 8, s.c. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.115:35–39): "Praeterea, ideae ordinantur ad esse rerum; sed singularia habent verius esse quam universalia cum universalia non subsistant nisi in singularibus; ergo singularia magis debent habere ideas quam universalia." Each singular has its own, distinct *esse* by which it imitates God, and so requires a distinct idea.

particular are beyond its intention.[222] The essence in itself is neither universal nor particular. It only has the notion of a particular when it receives substantial being in a determinate supposite from another. It has the notion of a universal when it is abstracted from supposites by an intellect and becomes predicable of many.[223]

Just as the essence of a thing can be considered in two ways, namely as it is in itself, and as it is in one supposite or multiplied in many, so an idea according to which God has to cognize the thing, of whom the essence is a likeness, can be considered in two ways: in one way as it is an absolute essence, and in another way as it is an essence related to supposites. In the first way, there is one idea in God for each species of creature, by which idea he cognizes the whole power of the essence and its possible multiplication to come to be through various supposites. In the second way, the one idea is as many with respect to the multiplication of supposites under the essence. Just as the essence of one thing is one in itself and many in relation to supposites, so the idea of the same essence is one as it relates to the essence absolutely, and is many insofar as it relates to the supposite under the essence's identity. The fact that the various things that have the essence are really distinct does not result in many ideas because in the many supposites are contained diverse respects under one notion of respect to the essence. The essence is multiplied through supposites, but the one respect of the idea to the divine essence remains simply and undivided in the various respects to the supposites. Thus, there can be one ideal respect through a relation to essence, and, remaining one, be many through a relation to supposites.[224]

This response to the question has three advantages. First, it explains the major premise of the fundamental argument. Singulars of the same species imitate the divine essence according to the same degree of perfection because the numerical diversification of the essence does not result in

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[222] See, Avicenna, *Met.*, V, c. 1 (ed. van Riet, II.227:1–238).
[223] *Quodlibet* II, q. 1 (ed. Wielockx, 4:24–5:53).
[224] *Quodlibet* II, q. 1 (ed. Wielockx, 5:54–6:81).

creatures that are essentially diverse. The essence remains the same as it is received by many supposites. Fido and Rex only diversify the idea dog by being two different supposites. The essence of dog is unchanged in this diversity of supposites; these two dogs do not diversify what it means to be a dog.

Second, it provides a fitting parallel between the divine essence's relation to the divine ideas and divine ideas' relation to individuals. Just as the divine essence remains one despite its many ideal respects to the divine ideas, so too each of the ideas remains one despite its relation to all of the individual supposites. Yet, the reason for the plurality is not the same in both cases. Whereas the plurality between the divine essence and the divine ideas stems from specific or formal differences, the plurality between the divine ideas and the individual supposites is only a difference in number. The essence in each individual is the same, and the individuals are only diversified by the cause of their individuation. The cause of an individual's individuation is a double negation that comes to the essence not *in se*, but *per aliud*.[225] Thus, individuation is merely a determination of the essence that adds nothing formal to the individual.

Third, Henry's position seems to be the most faithful to Augustine. In his letter to Nebridius, Augustine says that "each man is made by one notion, by which man is understood. But, as people understand it, although there is one notion, yet it is not the notion of a man, but of men."[226] So while Augustine holds that man and horse are created by diverse ideas, Peter and Paul are not created by diverse ideas.[227]

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[225] *Quodlibet* II, q. 1 (ed. Wielockx 6:88-7:5). For Henry's theory of individuation as a *duplex negatio*, see *Quodlibet* II, q. 8 (ed. Wielockx, 47), *Quodlibet* V, q. 8 (ed. Badius 166rM), and Stephen F. Brown, "Henry of Ghent (B. ca. 1217; D. 1293)," in *Individuation in Scholasticism: The Later Middle Ages and the Counter Reformation, 1150-1650*, ed. Jorge J.E. Gracia (Albany, SUNY Press, 1994), 195-219.

[226] Augustine, *Ep.* 14, n. 4 (PL 33:80): "Itaque quilibet homo una ratione, qua homo intelligitur, factus est. At, ut populus fiat, quamvis et ipsa una ratio, non tamen hominis ratio, sed hominum."

[227] Augustine, *De div qq. 83*, q. 46, n. 2 (PL 40:30).

ii. *Quodlibet* V (Christmas 1280 or Easter 1281). As will be recalled from above, Henry argues in *Quodlibet* V, q. 3 that the divine ideas are not infinite in number. In the same question, he applies this conclusion to the question of divine ideas of singulars. The number of divine ideas is finite because an infinite number of divine ideas would imply an infinite number of distinct grades of imitation of the divine essence. But individuals do not have their own, distinct grades of being. Individuals of the same species are distinguished by matter, not form. But all perfection is in form such that the multiplication of species (and of ideas) comes through form. Here, Henry compares the matter and form of an individual to a continuous quantity. Just as a continuous quantity is possibly infinite through being divided into discrete quantities, so too a form is potentially in an infinite number of singulars through being "divided" by matter. A thing is finite through form, but infinite through matter. The same form can become infinite by being received into matter, but there can be no addition of form to form *ad infinitum*.[228]

Moreover, the way in which such an infinity would have to be known is incompatible with divine knowing. God equally knows beings and non-beings because non-beings can be something in their nature and essence. The number of beings and possible beings is infinite, so God would have knowledge of an infinite number of individuals. But he could only have such knowledge discursively because potency of this kind of infinite is reducible to the act of existence by a natural or supernatural agent, or to the act of cognition by a created intellect. Some of the potential beings never were, nor are, nor would be, but some of them were not, do not exist now, but *will be* in

[228] *Quodlibet* V, q. 3 (ed. Badius, 155vR–156rT), esp.: "Unde quia generatio huusmodi et universaliter multiplication individuorum per materiam est aut modo materiali sub specie, sicut et division continui, ideo absque omni inconvenienti potest procedure in infinitum, nec oportet dare processum huiusmodi aliquando finiri secundum actum. E converso autem multiplication specierum secundum gradus perfectionis est per forma determinationem Philosophi non potest propter naturam formae augmentum procedere in infinitum." Cf. Hoffman, "Ideen der Individuen und *intentio naturae*," 143–44).

succession. But God does not know discursively. Instead, he knows by receiving the whole infinity all at once according to a simple intuition.[229] Thus, God does not have ideas of singulars.

iii. *Quodlibet* VII (Christmas 1282). Henry's most comprehensive account of divine ideas of singulars appears in *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2. In his solution, Henry makes a series of distinctions. Among created things some are natural things, and some are not things (*res*), but only second intentions or artificial things. The latter do not have proper ideas in the divine intellect because they can be derived from the ideas of natural things. Among natural things, some are added *secundum se* and *ad se ipsas*, and some are only with respect to another. The former are what falls under the first three categories: substance, quantity, quality. Only essences in these three categories have ideas. The latter are what falls under the other seven categories, and do not have ideas.[230] Then, among the natural things that are *secundum se* and *ad se ipsas* some of them are such essentially, and some only accidentally. Only the quiddities and specific essences of the *species specialissimae* qualify fall in the essentially kind. Genera, differentiae, and individuals are of the accidental kind. Only those things that are natural things that are *secundum se* and *ad se ipsas* essentially have divine ideas. Genus and differentia do not differ from the species except by the notion (*ratio*) of incomplete and complete. There are only ideas of complete essences, so there are no ideas of genus and differentia, only *species specialissimae*.[231] Thus, Henry excludes ideas of individuals from the divine intellect because individuals "add nothing of the thing upon the essence of the species to that which is real in it."[232]

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[229] *Quodlibet* V, q. 3, ad 1 (ed. Badius, 156vY–157rY), esp.: "notitiam Deus habet non secundum discursum acceptionis in infinitum sicut dies et agon: qualiter potential huius modi infinitorum reducibilis est ad actum existentiae ab agente naturali et supernaturali: vel ad actu cognitionis ab intellectu creato . . . . Alia eorum quae nec fuerunt nec sunt, erunt tamen per successionem."

[230] See *Summa*, a. 32, q. 5 (ed. Macken, 87:26–96:90) for Henry's derivation of the last seven categories.

[231] *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 6:52–8:7), esp.: "idea autem non est ratio nisi rei sub ratione complete in natura et essentia, quae non est nisi in specie specialissima."

[232] *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 8:8–9): "Similiter neque individual sub specie, eo quod nihil rei addunt super essentiam specie ad id quod est reale in ipsa."

In his response to the first objection, Henry introduces another distinction to explain why individuals do not have divine ideas. A man, e.g., Peter, although he exists in a certain way *per se*, nevertheless he does not have existence *per se* and first according to an imitation of the divine *esse* according as he is Peter, having in himself *this* humanity, but according as man simply, having humanity in himself simply.[233] It is not enough to be a substance, and therefore exist *per se* in a certain way. In order to have a unique divine idea there must be a specific or formal difference. Peter is not an imitation of God qua Peter as if there were a divine idea of the humanity of Peter. Rather, Peter imitates God by having humanity in him. There is nothing that would make humanity simply, which exists here in Peter, become the idea of the humanity of Peter. Peter is only a determination of the divine idea, and adds nothing formally to the idea. Thus, he does not have a divine idea beyond the *species specialissima* of man.

iv. *Quodlibet* IX (Easter 1286). As will be recalled from earlier treatments of *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2, the perfection of divine cognition requires a cognition that is not imperfect and in potency, but complete and actual. Thus, Henry is quick to affirm that the divine ideas must be multiplied as far as the *species specialissimae* because these species are all formally distinct, i.e., each species is an absolute essence of things. The essence differs from all other species in both form and number. Each *species specialissima* is a distinct grade of being, and so is not perfectly and actually cognized generically with other essences. If God had but one idea, then he would know species only in their genera, which would be imperfect and in potency.[234]

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[233] *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1-2, ad 1 (ed. Wilson 21:20-23): "Petrus enim, licet quodam modo per se, non tamen per se et primo habet esse secundum imitationem divini esse secundum quod est Petrus, habens in se hanc humanitatem, sed secundum quod homo simpliciter, habens in se humanitatem."

[234] This conclusion, he notes, is Averroes's conclusion. See, Averroes, *In XII Met.*, com. 51 (ed. Iunctas, VIII.337B): "Illud cuius scientia est universalis, scit particularia quae sunt in actu, in potentia."

Individuals, however, "do not add form upon the form of the *species specialissima*, but only its determination."[235] God is able to cognize many individuals perfectly in a single idea. He only requires as many divine ideas as there are *species specialissimae*. In his response to the second objection, Henry draws a familiar analogy between the divine ideas and an artificer. Just as the builder makes many houses by the same form, so God makes many individuals by the same divine idea. We must not allow ourselves to speak too loosely, however, because the house in the intellect of the builder is not, properly speaking, the form by which the house is made. More properly, we should say that the builder builds according to the form of circular house, quadrangular house, etc. These additions are "as it were (*quasi*) differences in species," and so mirror the division of ideas in God's mind. Just as all circular houses share a common form in the intellect of the builder, but circular houses and quadrangular houses do not, so to do all rational animals share a common idea in the divine intellect, but rational animals and neighing animals do not.[236]

v. Conclusions. Henry consistently argues that God has ideas of *species specialissimae* only, and not singulars, genera, or differentiae. He uses three distinct arguments for the position. These arguments appear to have been influential; both Godfrey and John of Paris argue that God does not have ideas of individuals.[237] The first argument is based on the individuation of an essence in singulars. He articulates this argument both in terms of essence and supposite and in terms of form and matter. In each case the essence or form is diversified into many supposites because of matter. The singulars are not essentially different from each other and so do not require more than one divine idea. A form of the *species specialissima* is sufficient to account for all of the singulars.

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[235] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 33:91–92): "individua non addunt formam super formam specie specialissimae sed solummodo determinationem eius."

[236] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2, ad 2 (ed. Macken, 45:46–46:59).

[237] Godfrey, *Quodlibet* II, q. 2 (PB I.53–68). John of Paris, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 6 (q. 122) (ed. Müller, I.380).

In the second argument, Henry argues that an infinite number of singulars is incompatible with God's way of knowing. Such an infinite could only be known discursively because some of the possible beings were not in the past, are not in the present, but will be in the future in succession. Since God does not know things discursively and in succession, God could not have such an infinity of ideas.

In the third argument, Henry argues that only those essences that are *secundum se* and *ad se ipsas* essentially qualify as ideas. All other objects of divine cognition are reducible to these complete essences. A *species specialissima* could be distinguished into genus and differentia, but the latter are related to the former as incomplete to complete. Thus, they do not have divine ideas. Individuals do not add any form to the essence and so are only numerically distinct. Individuals do not imitate the divine essence qua individuals, but as possessors of an essence simply. God does not have an idea of the humanity of Peter, but of humanity simply, in which Peter participates.

A close examination of Henry's position reveals a devastating internal inconsistency in his denial of divine ideas of singulars.[238] We noticed in Quodlibet IX, q. 2 that the primary reason for multiplying ideas was for the sake of diving cognition. The divine ideas are the *rationes cognoscendi* for all things other than God. Positing multiple divine ideas is necessary for God to know all things other than himself perfectly. If there were only one divine idea, then God's knowledge would be only universal. God would not have knowledge of things through their essences, but a cognition that is merely imperfect and in potency. Since the ratio of the one genus is not sufficient to have perfect cognition of the *species specialissimae*, then each species requires its own ratio. But if knowledge through one idea would not be sufficient for perfect cognition of *species specialissimae*, then neither

[238] Scotus will offer a similar criticism in Scotus, *Rep. Paris. I-A*, d. 36, q. 3–4, n. 39 (ed. Noone, 438:25–439:8). In the paragraphs that follow this criticism, Scotus also criticizes Henry's position on the principle of individuation, and argues that both individuals and genera are not *ad se accidentaliter*, but *ad se essentialiter*. These criticisms will be examined in greater detail in the section on Scotus below.

would knowledge through one *species specialissima* be sufficient for perfect cognition of individuals. Henry's parallel relies on individuals not adding anything to the form of the *species specialissima*. Since they add nothing, then can be understood perfectly through another, without their own ratio. But if that were true, then by the cognition of a *species specialissima* should be sufficient for perfect cognition of the individual. Even a cursory examination of individuals and their essences reveals that such perfect cognition cannot be had by the essence alone. The essence of man, e.g., does not exist in individuals except as male or female, but from the essence alone we could never know if *this* individual is male or female. If such an elementary judgment cannot be made by the essence alone, then by Henry's own principles, God's divine idea of man would at least have to be divided into two ideas. Further examples could lead us to such a level of specificity that each man would need his own *ratio* so that such a determination could be made. Henry argues that individuals are just determinations of the *species specialissimae*, but these determinations are not distinctly and actually found in the *species specialissmae*. So if the *species specialissimae* are the only *rationes cognoscendi* that God has of things other than himself, and the *species specialissimae* are not sufficient for perfect cognition of individuals, how could God ever have perfect cognition of individuals?

It might be argued in Henry's defense that male and female are not an essential division of man. It is surely the case that men and women are not two different species, but the distinction between men and women qualifies as one of the "*quasi* specifically differences" that Henry introduces in *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2, ad 2.[239] The builder does not build by the form of house simply. This form is multiplied into circular house and quadrangular house. But circular and quadrangular are not essential divisions of the essence of house. The particular shape of a house is incidental to its being a house, yet it is necessary for a perfect and actual cognition of the house. In the same way, the particular sex of a person is incidental to his being man, yet it is necessary for perfect and actual

[239] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2, ad 2 (ed. Macken, 45:47).

cognition. Henry's rejection of divine ideas of singulars is incongruent with his theory of divine ideas as a whole.

b. Accidents

From the discussion of *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 above, certain conclusions can already be drawn about Henry's position on divine ideas of accidents. Since only natural things that are *secundum se* and *ad se ipsas* essentially have divine ideas, it follows that God has some ideas of accidents, but not for all accidents. Since they are only with respect to another, accidents in the categories of relation, time, place, position, habit, action, and passion do not have divine ideas corresponding to them. These accidents can be reduced to the categories of substance, quantity, and quality, and God knows them through the ideas he has corresponding to these three categories. Even within the two remaining accidental categories, quantity and quality, Henry restricts the number of accidents. There are only divine ideas of the complete essences in these categories, i.e., there are only divine ideas of the *species specialissimae*. Just as the genera and differentiae of substances are incomplete and have no divine ideas, so too the genera and differentiae of quantities and qualities have no divine ideas.[240] Henry would posit divine ideas for scarlet and periwinkle, but deny that God has divine ideas of red, blue, and their genus color.

He does not make any sort of distinction between proper and separable accidents like Thomas does, but I think it is safe to conclude that he would only grant divine ideas of separable accidents. Proper accidents, such as risible in man, do not have a complete essence, and so would be included in the divine idea of the *species specialissimae* to which they belong. An example from quality will have to suffice because, as we will see below, the number of divine ideas from the category of quantity is of particular difficulty for Henry.

[240] *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 6:74–8:2).

c. Number

The question of divine ideas of discrete quantities and number are of particular difficulty for Henry. Discrete quantities are infinite in number, so if God had an idea of every number, then he would have to have an infinite number of divine ideas.[241] In *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2, Henry says that properly speaking numbers from the category of quantity do not have a proper idea in God. The form of continuity and continuous quantity has an idea in God because it contains the unities of number whenever they were continuous or naturally suited to be continued insofar as it from the nature of matter and the form of continuity, although not by reason of a further form, like humanity. Number, properly speaking, is nothing but a multitude spilling forth from a unity, namely through division of continuity. Because the part of number or its unity is not another essential form than the form of continuity in the first unity from which it is descended or naturally suited to be descended, neither is there a difference between continuous and discrete except according to a certain respect and order of parts amongst themselves. In continuous quantity the parts are united to a common terminus, but never in discrete quantity. This unity never occurs in discrete quantity from the nature of something positive that adds to the continuum, although it is more of a negative nature that falls short of the continuous. The negative nature explains why Aristotle says that number does not exist nor is understood except as a privation of the continuous. Therefore, number or discrete quantity adds nothing to the continuous except the notion of negation or a respect of parts to each other. But negations or privations do not have proper ideas in God because they are not naturally suited to be known except by an idea that God already has.[242]

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[241] Thomas offers this reasoning in *SCG*, I, c. 54 (ed. Leonine, 13.154a1–b25).

[242] *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 9:47–10:76), esp.: "numerous sive discreta quantitas nihil addit super continuum nisi rationem negationis aut respectus partium ad invicem. . . . Negationes autem seu privationes non habent proprias ideas in Deo, quia non sunt natae cognosci nisi per ideam habitus."

d. Form and Matter

Since Henry denies that second intentions, relations, artifacts, genera, differentiae, individuals, privations, and numbers have proper ideas in God, and since he argues that divine ideas extend as far as the *species specialissimae*, we might expect him to deny that God does not have ideas of form and matter insofar as they are principles of an individual.[243] Toward the end of *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2, however, Henry declares that God does have proper ideas of form and matter. Matter is entirely unmakeable according to itself outside of a composition, but it has a proper idea in God other than the idea of the form, through which it is makeable in composition. This one idea of matter is to all parts of matter that are naturally suited to be joined in the unity of a material singular, as the form of the continuous is one to all continuous things that are naturally suited to be joined in the unity of a continuous singular.[244]

It does not follow from the fact that God has a divine idea of matter that the specific essence in material things is two principle ideas. The *esse* of a composite is principally in the form, and the *esse* of the form and the *esse* of the composite are not other than each other, but the same (although it is principally the composite). In the same way the idea of the form is also principle of the whole composite as it is whole, and not principally of the form, but it has *esse* in the composite. The case is different for the form of matter. The idea is of the form existing in the composite because it is also the idea of the form itself and not only as it is something composed. There is an idea of matter only insofar as matter is in something composed, and in this as the *esse* of the form is communicated to matter as it is in the composite.[245]

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[243] *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 18:31–35): "Dicimus igitur, breviter recolligendo, quod isti octo modi entium proprias ideas in Deo non habent: intentiones secundae, relationes, artificialia, genera, differentiae, individua, privationes et numeri. Restat igitur quod proprias ideas solummodo habent specificae rerum essentiae.

[244] *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 20:97–21:3).

[245] *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 21:3–15).

The divine idea of matter, then, is the idea of matter insofar as the form needs something with which it can enter into composition. This divine idea of matter is not an idea of prime matter, devoid of all form, nor is it of *this* matter of any given singular. It is the divine idea of the passive principle of any composite whatsoever. This idea would seem to be as diminished as possible because it does not make anything to be what it is; it simply allows the form to become particular.

Understanding the divine idea of matter in this way allows it to cohere with the rest of his system. If Henry meant that the divine idea of matter was of prime matter, then he would be positing an essence for prime matter. Matter would have essential being, and somehow exist without form. If Henry meant that God's idea of matter was of *this* matter, then it seems to contradict his denial of divine ideas of singulars. Rather, he would have to hold that God creates both the form and the matter of the thing (from two different ideas), and so would have divine ideas of singulars insofar as the two ideas resulted in the singular. Both of these interpretations muddle Henry's thought, and should be rejected. Henry's conception of a divine idea of matter is just the idea of matter insofar as it is the passive principle of composite beings.

4. Recapitulation and Conclusions

Henry posits divine ideas as the only means by which God can know things other than himself. They are the only way to account for his perfect knowledge of things, his role as formal exemplar, his role as the measure of all things, and his role as efficient cause. An idea is nothing other than a respect of imitability from the consideration of the intellect in the divine essence.[246] This definition succinctly articulates Henry's theory of the status of divine ideas. Divine ideas are the ways in which God knows himself to be imitable. When he considers the divine essence, he knows all the ways that creatures can imitate him. In particular, he knows the real relation that a creature

[246] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 29:79–81): "Ut secundum hoc idea nihil aliud sit de ratione sua formali quam respectus imitabilitatis ex consideratione intellectus in ipsa divina essentia.

could bear to him. This relation which is real in the creature is nonetheless merely rational on the part of God. God is not really related, and therefore dependent, upon the possible imitations. And since God's knowledge has to be perfect, God has to have many ideas. If he had just one idea, then he would only know creatures generally, and with an admixture of potency. Thus, he requires a plurality of divine ideas. The plurality of divine ideas cannot be infinite in number, however. Since the divine ideas are respects of imitability, their plurality is the result of many grades of imitation. So if there were an infinite number of divine ideas, there would be an infinite number of grades of imitation. Such an infinite number of grades because there is a limit to the perfection of creatures; a term beyond which a creature cannot imitate God. This limit is only because of an imperfection or limitation in the creature.[247] An infinite number of degrees of imitation would necessitate that some creature have infinite perfection. Only God has infinite perfection, so there must be a finite number of divine ideas. Finally, the divine ideas are in the divine essence as known. As I argued, divine ideas have essential being, but that being is nothing other than cognitive being in the divine mind. Divine ideas do not have any sort of existence independent of being known by God. This interpretation of Henry's theory of essential being does not solve all of the problems associated with the theory, but it at least locates the problems properly.

Given his insistence that the divine ideas are finite in number, it is not surprising that Henry restricts the scope of the divine ideas. There are only divine ideas of *species specialissimae*. Relations, artifacts, genera, differentiae, singulars, privations, and numbers do not have ideas in God. Singulars do not have ideas because they are not essentially different. Singulars do not add any form to a *species specialissima* such that they cause the essence to be formally different. Singulars are diversified by a double negation, not a formal difference. Genera and differentiae do not have divine ideas because they are incomplete and can be perfectly understood through their *species specialissimae*. Relations are

[247] *Quodlibet* V, q. 3, ad 1 (ed. Badius, 156vT).

one of the seven categories of being that can be reducible to the categories of substance, quantity, and quality, which are *secundum se* and *ad se ipsum* essentially. Numbers are merely the privation of continuous quantity. If God had a divine idea for each discrete quantity, then there would be an infinite number of ideas. Despite all of the restrictions that Henry puts on the scope of the divine ideas, he posits a divine idea of matter insofar as it is in a composite. Henry's motivation for positing this idea seems to be the necessity of accounting for the passive component of the composite.

Henry's account of divine ideas both borrows heavily from his predecessors and innovates sharply against them. He borrows from Bonaventure that divine ideas are primarily cognitive principles. Yet, he does not express their cognitive role as truth expressing itself. Instead he borrows the language of imitability from Thomas. This appropriation of terms is perhaps surprising because Thomas and Henry hold contrasting positions on the speculative and practical roles of divine ideas. Thomas holds that divine ideas can be principles of speculative cognition, but they are primarily principles of practical cognition. Henry rejects any hint of practical cognition with regard to the divine ideas out of fear that practical principles in God's knowledge would coerce the divine will and necessarily predetermine what creatures God would create. Like both Bonaventure and Thomas, Henry argues that divine ideas are not the essence qua essence, but a secondary consideration of the divine essence by the divine intellect. There are only divine ideas insofar as the divine essence is *understood*.

The biggest points of disagreement concern the scope of divine ideas. Both Bonaventure and Thomas argue that God has an infinite number of ideas (in the broad sense of the term) because the infinite God could be imitated by an infinite number of creatures. Each singular creature imitates God uniquely, and so an infinite number of ideas does not necessitate an infinity of grades of imitation. Bonaventure and Thomas would object to Henry's claim that there cannot be a creature of infinite perfection, but they do not think that the divine ideas must be limited to the *species*

specialissimae. Thomas agrees that there are only a finite number of divine ideas in the strict sense because God only makes a finite number of beings. But this position is a far cry from Henry's theory which holds that not only does God have a finite number of divine ideas in practice, but he has a finite number in theory. His rejection of divine ideas of singulars plays a major role in the differences in the scope of the divine ideas. Had he allowed divine ideas of singulars, his theory would be far closer to Bonaventure's and Thomas's theories.

D. OTHER THEORIES OF DIVINE IDEAS

The theories that have been examined to this point have had some fundamental differences. Does God have an infinite or finite number of divine ideas? Does God have divine ideas of singulars or only of the species? What sort of existence do the divine ideas enjoy? Do they have merely cognitive being, or do they have some sort of existence independent of their being thought by God? These differences yield distinct, and at times, incompatible theories of divine ideas. Yet, for all of their disagreements on the status and scope of divine ideas, the theories developed by Bonaventure, Thomas, and Henry all agree about the most basic aspect of divine ideas: divine ideas are the rational relations that God has to creatures. God knows creatures through the divine ideas, but he only knows them through knowing the relation that they can bear to him. This position was the majority opinion and the most influential opinion, but it was certainly not the only position that authors took in this time period. There were two other opinions that authors took with regard to the divine ideas. It is to these two theories that we now turn. These theories challenge some of the fundamental agreement that we find in Bonaventure, Thomas, and Henry. Proceeding in chronological order, the first of these opposing theories was proposed by Peter John Olivi. He argued that the divine ideas are the very act of the divine intellect. God's act of knowing is itself the divine ideas. The second theory was proposed by James of Viterbo. James argues that the divine ideas are the very object cognized. The divine essence is God's *ratio intelligendi*, but he knows the divine ideas insofar as he understands his essence as cause. A cause necessarily entails an other and distinct effect, and so the ideas are the effect as the object cognized.

1. Peter John Olivi (ca. 1248–1298)

Peter John Olivi was a Franciscan in the late thirteenth century. He began his studies in theology at Paris in about 1267, although he never became a master. In 1283, the Franciscan order established a commission, which included the future Franciscan master Richard of Mediavilla, to

study aspects of Olivi's thought that seemed dangerous.[1] The commission determined that Olivi's thought contained several errors. As a result, he was called to Avignon and he was forced to clarify and recant these positions publically.[2] Despite his clarification in 1283, the scandal surrounding Olivi continued in Paris, and he was sent down in 1285.[3] One of the aspects of Olivi's thought that seemed dangerous concerned the divine ideas. Olivi's response delivered in defense of the inquiry affords us a unique opportunity to see the debate over the proper interpretation of divine ideas in action.

In addition to Olivi's defense delivered in Avignon, his *In I Sent.*, q. 6, which survives in two manuscripts, offers valuable insight into Olivi's theory of divine ideas. A portion of this question has appeared in a French translation by Sylvain Piron, but no edition of the question has yet been produced.[4] This question, especially the response to the twelfth objection, is invaluable for our understanding of Olivi's understanding of divine ideas because he situates his own position between a critique of Thomas Aquinas's position and what he considers the proper understanding of Bonaventure's position. The dating of *In I Sent.*, q. 6 is difficult because it is known that Olivi continued to work on the text after he was sent down and into the 1290s. As a result, it is unclear how much of *In I Sent.*, q. 6 was disseminated orally and in writing prior to 1285. I will proceed

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[1] *Chronica XXIV Generalium* (*Analecta franciscana*, III.374–75): "Anno Domini MCCLXXXIII idem Generalis iuxta definitionem Argentinensis capituli visitando venit Parisius et omnia, quae in doctrina fratris Petri [Iohannis Olivi] male videbantur sonare, recolligens ipsa determinanda et examinanda exposuit fratribus Droconi, Ministro Franciae, Iohanni Garau, Simoni de Lensi, Athlete de Prato sacrae theologiae magistris, nec non fratribus Richardo de Mediavilla, Aegidio de Bensa, Iohanni de Murro, Parisius bachalariis . . ."

[2] *Chronica XXIV Generalium* (*Analecta franciscana*, III.376).

[3] *Chronica XXIV Generalium* (*Analecta franciscana*, III.382): "Hic Generalis processum sui praedessoris contra fratrem Petrum Iohannis Olivi et eius doctrinam continuans propter turbationes et scandala, quae sequi dicebantur, eundem fratrem Petrum Iohannis citavit Parisius, ut veniret personaliter ibidem responsurus. Sed cum idem Frater Athlotus per annum in officio vixisset, appositus est ad sanctos Patres et requescit. Et sic dictum negotium remansit indiscussum."

[4] Sylvain Piron, "Pierre de Jean Olivi," in *Sur la sience divine*, ed. J.-C. Bardout and O. Boulnois (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2002), 208–225. Cf. Sylvain Piron, "La liberté divine et la destruction des idées cez Olivi," in *Pierre de Jean Olivi (1248–1298)*, ed. Alain Bourdeau and Sylvain Piron (Paris: Vrin, 1999), 81–89.

under the assumption that the theory expounded in *In I Sent.*, q. 6 was at least incipiently present in Olivi's original lectures prior to 1283.

Olivi's *In I Sent.*, q. 6 investigates the primacy with regard to the intellect and the will.[5] This issue, as we noticed in the section on Henry of Ghent above, had become a burning issue in Paris following the condemnations of 1277. The sixteenth objection brings up the invariability of God's knowledge. If God knows what he knows invariably, then from all eternity, he knows what he wills. Yet, eternal knowledge seems to limit and coerce the divine will. In the course of his response, Olivi examines closely "what is signified by divine exemplar and ideas in God."[6] He begins with the opinions of several other authors, especially Thomas and Bonaventure. Thomas and his followers want to say that "exemplar" signifies the divine essence as it is can be participated and imitated in diverse ways by diverse creatures. One notion (*ratio*) of imitability bespeaks one idea, and especially a respect to those that God has so disposed or willed to create.[7]

Bonaventure and his followers want to say that the light of the divine intellect from the fact that it is an exemplar of things has the power to express not only one genus of things, but all things. Therefore, as the divine light is expressing, it is the exemplar of all things. But its determinate expressions are determinately the notions of things, which with respect to what happens some call "ideas." For they say that since the divine light is its own exemplar, therefore the expressions thus determinately expressed each thing, which nevertheless are not many lights (*lumina*), but only one light (*lux*). But there would be something similar, as they say, in the light of the sun. If the sun were

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[5] "Utrum Deus potuit nole quod voluit et utrum velle quod noluit nec vult" (Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6 [MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 154ra]). Cf. Piron, "Pierre de Jean Olivi," 205.

[6] Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 158ra): "necesse est scire quid per divinum exemplar et ideas significentur in Deo."

[7] Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 158ra): "Quidem enim voluit quod exemplar significet divinam essentiam prout est diversimodi participabilis et imitabilis a diversis creaturis. Una vero ratio imitabilis unam dicatur ideam; et specialiter respectu illorum quod Deus sic disposuit seu voluit." Cf. Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.201–02) and Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.102–106).

its rays, then we could not speak of many rays that are under the relations of different terms and places, but in itself and its essence that are one light.[8]

Olivi is concerned about Thomas's position because "it seems contrary to faith and reason."[9] He offers several reasons for rejecting the position of which the second and third reasons are especially important. In the second objection, Olivi argues that positing divine ideas as distinct from the divine act of understanding renders that act imperfect. It is as if the divine act of understanding alone is deficient to know all things. Moreover, it is as if the divine understanding did not subsist in the same way as the divine act of being, caused by no power, nor sustained in existence by the lesser representative reasons.[10] In short, this conception of divine ideas renders God imperfect.

Olivi's third objection takes issue with the indirect way that God knows. Thomas's theory of divine ideas does not allow God to know the things immediately, nor as the things are in themselves. This is because in a certain way the divine intellect apprehends the things as absent and according as they are represented to him in the exemplar that is opposed to their object, more than as they are in themselves. It even seems that he does not understand them without a certain comparison, namely, by comparing them to the divine essence through the manner of its ability to participate.[11]

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[8] Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 158ra): "Alii vero volunt quod lux divini intellectus ex eo quod est exemplar genus, est potens exprimere non solum unum genus rerum sed omnia; ipsum igitur ut est lux divinia exprimens est exemplar omnium. Expressiones vero eius determinatae sunt rationes rerum determinatae, quas respectu fiendorum quidam ideis vocant. Dicuntque quod quia divina lux est sua expressio, ideo ipsas expressiones sic determinate exprimunt unamquaque rem; quod tamen non sunt plura lumina si solum unum lux . . ." Cf. Bonaventure, *De scientia Christi*, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, V.9a).

[9] Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 158ra-b): "Primus enim modus videtur esse contrarius fidei et rationi." The commission that investigates Olivi takes exception to this claim, and argues "Dicere quod idea dicit essentiam divinam ut imitabilem a creatura, non est contrarium fidei, nec etiam rationi, sed est potius communis opinio, et secundum sanctos." Olivi responds: "Hanc sententiam accepto, prout essentia est idem quod divina intelligentia, et si contrarium dixi, revoco" ("Responsio quam fecit . . .," n. 3 [ed. Laberge, 126: 20–25]). Cf. "Responsio quam fecit . . .," n. 17 (ed. Laberge, 395:36–396:4).

[10] Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 158rb): "videntur ponere in divinam essentiam quaedam rationes ideales ad quas aspiciat divinus intellectus ad hoc quod possit in actum intelligendi existere actum per re et ex sua sola ratione non possit divinus intellectus intelligere omnia. Immo, actum divinum intelligere non sit actu existens sicut ea divini esse, qui nulla potentia causis nec alia ratione representativa ad suum existentiam adiutur"

[11] Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 158rb): "Tertio patet per hoc quia secundum hanc viam divinum intelligere non refertur immediate super res nec per quod sunt in re ipsis. Unde quodammodo apprehendit eas ut absentes sibi et per hoc quod in exemplari sibi objecto repraesentatur; potius quam per hoc quod sunt

Not only is the thing, as it were, absent when God knows it, Thomas's theory makes it necessary for God to know the relation *before* (or at least logically before) he knows the terms of the relation. But, Olivi argues, relations do not work in this way. It cannot be the case, as Henry says, that the distinctly cognizing one extreme of the relatives necessarily causes cognition of the other extreme at the same time.[12] It is necessary to know the terms of the relation before the relation itself. Thus, God must know the creature by something other than a relation of imitability.[13] A theory based on relations of imitability requires the relation to be prior to its terms. However, as Piron notes, a relation of imitability "does not suffice to make the imitable thing known because it presupposes that it is in fact already known."[14] Since Olivi thinks that such a position is contrary to the way that relations function, he rejects that divine ideas are relations of imitability.

Olivi argues that the proper interpretation of Bonaventure's theory will align closely with his own. Bonaventure's theory could be interpreted such that it aligns closely with Thomas's theory, as I did above in the section on Thomas. This interpretation, Olivi thinks, suffers the same flaws that Thomas's theory does. If, however, we understand "divine light" as actuality and the clarity of the divine understanding, then the "expressions" of which Bonaventure speaks are nothing other than

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in re ipsis videtur et quod non intelligeret eas nisi cum quadam comparatione comparando scilicet eas ad divinam essentiam per modum participationis eius." Cf. Olivi, *Quodlibet* III, q. 2 (ed. Defraia, 174).

[12] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 30:28–29): "Cognoscens enim distincte unum relativorum, necessario simul cognoscit et aliud."

[13] Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 158rb–158va): "Praeterea, oportet intelligere exremum aliquae relationis quam ipsam re, aut saltem simul; nec ipsum extremum intelligo per ipsum respectum, ergo per aliud oportebit intelligere creaturam quam per respectum ymitabilitatis secundum quam divina essentia diversitate refertur ad creaturas, seu potius creature ad ipsam; oportebit ergo prius intelligere ipsa extrema seu terminos huius respectus," Cf. Peter John Olivi, *In II Sent.*, q. 55 (ed. Jansen, II.346): "Certum enim est quod relatio non potest naturaliter praecedere sua extrema." Peter John Olivi, *Quodlibet* III, q. 2 (ed. Defraia, 174). For more on Olivi's theory of relation, see Alain Boureau, "Le concept de relation chez Pierre de Jean Olivi" in *Pierre de Jean Olivi (1248–1298)*, ed. Alain Bourdeau and Sylvain Piron (Paris: Vrin, 1999), 41–55. Boureau notes that Olivi's theory of relation plays an important role in the transition from the realist positions of earlier authors like Aquinas to the nominalist position of Ockham.

[14] Piron, "La liberté divine et la destruction des idées chez Olivi," 83: "De la sorte, la découverte d'un rapport d'imitabilité ne suffit pas a faire connâtre la chose imitable, puisqu'il la suppóserait en fait déjà connue."

the very understanding of God as the actual expression of each of its objects according to its proper reason.[15]

Olivi's own opinion is that the divine act, which consists in understanding, as he is actual intelligence and the act of intellection of all things that are possible to God. And of the things that he does make, he is the exemplar of these things. As he is his actual understanding of this or that thing, he is the idea or reason of that thing, as singularly as it was entirely determined to it.[16] The divine ideas are God's very act of understanding. Insofar as God is the actual understanding of this or that creature, he may be said to have an idea of things and exemplars. The divine ideas are not the divine essence in the proper sense, but only in a secondary sense.

One of Olivi's students, Petrus de Trabibus, clarifies Olivi's point by arguing that God's cognition through ideas "connotes a respect" to something makeable, and bespeaks a likeness of imitation whereby effects imitate a cause.[17] Petrus's clarification, which borrows both the language of connotation and the distinction between a likeness of univocity and a likeness of imitation from Bonaventure, strengthens our conviction that Olivi did not see himself as introducing a novel theory.[18] To say that the divine ideas are the act of the divine intellect is to say only that God's act of understanding expresses all the ways in which creatures could come to be. Petrus argues that the ever-present example of the artificer is misleading. God is likened to the finite artificer because he acts by art and not by nature. The agent acting by nature has a natural form by which he exists. The

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[15] Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 158vb): "Secundus autem modus potest sane intelligi si 'lux divina' sumatur pro actualitate et claritate divini intelligere, et si nomine 'expressionum suarum' non aliud intelligatur quam ipsum Dei intelligere, ut est actualis expressio unucuisque obiecti secundum suam propriam rationem, et hoc modo non differt ab ultimo modo."

[16] Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 158ra): "Quidem vero alii volunt quod actus divinus qui est intelligere in quantum est actualis intelligentia seu actuale intelligere omnium rerum Deo possibilium; et etiam fiendorum, est exemplar rerum in quantum vero est actuale intelligere huius vel illius rei, ita proprie sicut si totus esset determinatus ad ipsum, est illius ratio rei, vel idea."

[17] Petrus de Trabibus, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, ad 2–3 (MS Assisi 154, f. 93va): "cognitio sui non connotat respectum ad aliquid factibile nec importat aliquam immutabilitatem. Cognitio autem creatorum seu creabilium connotat et importat, et ideo non se cognoscit Deus per ideam. . . . similitudo imitationis qua effectus imitantur et talis similitudo est inter Deum et creaturam." Cf. Olivi, *In III Sent.*, q. 1 (ed. Emmen, 43); Boureau, 49–50.

[18] See Bonaventure, *De scientia Christi*, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, V.8b–9a).

agent acting by art and science has an artificial form or species by which he cognizes and according to which he acts. Yet, the analogy can only go so far. God and the artificer are alike in acting by art, but in the uncreated agent, there is not a natural form by which he exists and an artificial or knowable form by which he knows, just as neither are nature and knowledge other in him except according to reason because his form is his knowledge.[19] Earlier authors have not seen that the analogy breaks down precisely where they need it to succeed.

God still has perfect knowledge for Olivi and Petrus.[20] Moreover, his perfect knowledge is by means of ideas; an idea bespeaks a cognitive, causative, and exemplary notion of a thing disposed or determined to come to be. A cognitive notion in God, however, is not other than his cognition, and his cognition is not other than his understanding. An idea, then, is God's very understanding. Causal and exemplary notions are also God's understanding, but add the potency to production and the notion of determinate perfection Such a determinative notion is the divine will.[21] The divine ideas function as cognitive principles of divine knowing by the mere act of the divine intellect because they are nothing other than the act of the divine intellect. They become causal principles only when God wills to create the creatures he knows by that act of the intellect.

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[19] Petrus de Trabibus, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1 (MS Assisi 154, f. 93rb): "agens per naturam habet formam naturalem qua existit; agens per artem et scientiam habet formam seu speciem artificialem qua cognoscit et secundum quam agit. . . . In agente autem non creato non est sic. Non enim est in eo alia forma naturalis qua exsistit et alia forma artificialis seu scibilis qua cognoscitur, sicut nec aliud est natura et scientia nisi secundum rationem quoniam sua forma est sua scientia."

[20] "Ratio etiam essentiae divinae hoc ostendit: quoniam ipsa transcendit totam rationem entis scibilis, ita quod habet set haec ad illam sicut punctus ad pelagus essentiae infinitum; oportet ergo necessario quod essentia Dei totam rationem entis intra se sufficientissime comprehendat; sed divinum intelligere est eius essential; ergo et cetera. — Praeterea, essentia Dei et suae intelligentiae est veritas universalissima comprehendens in se omnem puram veritatem; ergo impossibile est quod divinus intellctus intelligat se, quin intelligat omnem veritatem scibilem" (Peter John Olivi, *In II Sent.*, q. 3, ad 1 [ed. Jensen, I.57]).

[21] Petrus de Trabibus, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2 (MS Assisi 154, f. 93va–b): "Dicit enim idea rationem cognitivam causativam et exemplarativam rei dispositae seu determinatae ad fiendum. . . . Ratio autem cognitiva in Deo non est aliud quam sua cognitio et sua cognitio non est aliud quam suus intellectus. Ratio autem causativa et exemplarativa addit super rationem cognitivam potentiam ad producendum et rationem determinatae perfectionis, cui potest res producibilis assmilari. Etiam cognoscit alia quae ab eo non causantur nec ei assimilantur, ut mala. Ratio vero determinativa est voluntas divina. In ipsa enim consistit quid, quando, quomodo fiat vel non fiat. Non enim facit omnia quae scit vel quae potest, sed omnia quae vult."

Several aspects of Olivi's theory of divine ideas are in continuity with his predecessors. The divine ideas are a secondary consideration of the divine essence. The essence insofar as it is an essence is not a divine idea, nor does God cognize himself through an idea. He has ideas only insofar as he cognizes himself as the cause of all things.[22] Ideas are both cognitive and causal principles. Ideas are the ways that God knows creatures can imitate him by a likeness of imitation. They are cognitive principles as a result of the act of the intellect, but only become causal principles by the act of the divine will.[23]

Despite these similarities, Olivi's theory introduces two important points of originality. First, although he agrees that an idea bespeaks a respect to a possible creature, he insists that the idea cannot be the respect itself. It is contrary to the nature of relations for the relation to be known prior to the extremes.[24] Relations are not the cause of the *relata*, the *relata* are the cause of the relation. This objection will prove influential in the debate going forward, especially in the theory of John Duns Scotus.[25] Second, since the divine ideas cannot be some sort of relation, Olivi insists that they must be identical to the act of divine understanding. This claim is founded on the claim that all things are one in God. We speak of many attributes in God, but they are not really distinct. Similarly, the many likenesses that God knows are not really distinct from God. Since they are not really distinct from God, they have to be one with his act of knowing. There is no need speak of some sort of intermediary likeness because all things are one in God.

Although Olivi tries to interpret Bonaventure's theory such that it foreshadows (if not holds outright) Olivi's theory, this last point is a clear point of departure from Bonaventure's theory. It will

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[22] Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 158ra). Cf. Petrus de Trabibus, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, ad 2 (MS Assisi 154, f. 93va).

[23] Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 159ra). Cf. Petrus de Trabibus, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2 (MS Assisi 154, f. 93vb)

[24] Peter John Olivi, *In II Sent.*, q. 57 (ed. Jansen, II.346): "Certum enim est quod relatio non potest naturaliter praecedere sua extrema."

[25] Scotus, *Rep. Paris. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 38 (ed. Noone, 409:16–29).

be recalled that Bonaventure argued that it is the mark of an intellect that is pure act to have likenesses. If man's intellect were pure act, it would not receive likenesses *ab extra*, but it would still have likenesses as *rationes cognoscendi* because it would use itself as a likeness to know other things.[26] To jettison likenesses is to jettison Bonaventure's theory. Since Olivi was a thoroughgoing critic of intelligible species, it is not surprising that his theory would be at odds with Bonaventure's theory on this point.[27]

2. James of Viterbo (ca. 1255–1308)

James of Viterbo was an Augustinian master at the end of the thirteenth century. He was appointed Master of Theology in either 1292 or 1293. He succeeded Giles of Rome as the second Augustinian master at Paris.[28] James's theory of divine ideas is particularly important because it is the first to question the logic of divine ideas as *rationes cognoscendi*. As we will see, much of James's theory follows the established divisions, but he is concerned about saying that a divine idea is a relation. If a divine idea is the rational relation that God bears to a possible creature, what about the other end of the relation? How can God know a relation before the other extreme of the relation? This criticism, which will not appear in its fullest form until Scotus, leads James to posit that a divine idea is the object cognized (*objectum cognitum*). Since James does not bring up the same issues in many places, I will examine his theory of divine ideas more systematically, rather than examine the texts individually first.

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[26] Bonaventure, *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, ad 7 and 10 (ed. Quaracchi, I.9b and 10b).

[27] Olivi argues that a theory of intelligible species makes the external world unknowable. See especially *In II Sent.*, q. 58, ad 14 (ed. Jensen, II.469–70) and *In II Sent.*, q. 70 (ed. Jensen, III.122–23). For an explanation of Olivi's rejection of intelligible species, see Pasnau, *Theories of Cognition in the later Middle Ages* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 236–47.

[28] The chapter records make it clear that James had to have been promoted at the end of 1292 or the beginning of 1293, but leave the exact date open for debate. See, *Analecta Augustiniana* 2 (1907), 272 and 345. Wippel argues for the earlier date; Ypma argues for the latter date. See Wippel, "The Dating of James of Vibero's *Quodlibet* I and Godfrey of Fontaines's *Quodlibet* VIII," *Augustiniana* 24 (1974): esp., 348–50, and 372–74. E. Ypma, "Recherches sur la carrière scolaire et la bibliothèque de Jacques de Viberbe †1308," *Augustiniana* 24 (1974): 247–92.

a. James on Divine Ideas

James explicitly addresses the question what is an idea in *Quodlibet* III, q. 15. The response that he gives is obviously influenced by Thomas's treatment of the same question in *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1. An idea is the same as a form or species, but not every form is an idea. Only that form to whose imitation something comes to be is an idea. But everything that comes to be does so either by nature or by intellect. Only that to whose imitation something comes to be by an agent acting through intellect is properly called an idea. Thus, an idea is called both a *ratio* and an exemplar. It is a *ratio* insofar as it is something conceived by the intellect, and it is an exemplar insofar as it represents an extrinsic form. Moreover, it is called an exemplar because the concept of the thing is, in a certain way, the thing itself. Although something existing outside of the intellect can be called an exemplar, it is not called an idea except as it is conceived by the intellect.[29]

This position entails a possible difficulty when we apply it to God. For if an idea is the concept of some form, then, since the intellectual concept of some thing is called a "word," it seems that idea and word are the same. If this be the case, then the divine word would be identical to the divine ideas. James admits that both an idea and a word entail a concept of the intellect, but insists that they do so in different ways. A word entails a concept of the intellect because it is a concept in which something is conceived according to itself and according to its nature. An idea, however, is a concept in which something is conceived as it is an exemplar. These two are really other in us, but the same in God, differing only according by reason. Because of this identity, the Word of God is

[29] James, *Quodlibet* III, q. 15 (ed. Ypma, 195:17–196:52), esp.: "idea est idem quod forma vel species. . . . illa forma ad cuius imitationem fit aliquid. . . . Hinc est quod idea et dicitur ratio in quantum est aliquid conceptum ab intellectu, et dicitur exemplar in quantum representat formam extrinsiceam; quae dicitur exemplar quia conceptus rei est quodam modo ipsa res. Unde, licet aliquid existens extra intellectum possit dici exemplar, idea tamen non dicitur nisi u test ab intellctu conceptum." Cf. James, *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (ed. Ypma, 65:107–108): "Completive autem et formaliter est idea, quae nihil est aliud quam divina essentia ut imitabilis intellect ab ipso Deo."

called "the full art of all living notions," namely, of ideas, as Augustine says.[30] But because of their difference, an idea bespeaks an actual respect to a creature, and Word bespeaks a habitual respect.[31]

Finally, an idea is referred to the thing that imitates it, the *ideatum*, according to the notion of knowability because an idea is that which is (*quod quid est*), or the quiddity of the *ideatum*. A quiddity is the very essence as it is signified through a definition. Since a definition signifies a concept of the intellect, a quiddity bespeaks the essence of a thing as conceived. Here, James makes an important distinction between the ways in which a thing can be considered. In one way, it can be considered as it is a thing of itself. Understood in this way, the essence of a thing is called its essential quiddity. In another way, it can be considered as it is caused or causable. Thus understood, it is understood in its cause, for when the cause is understood, the effect is understood in it. In this way, the essence as it is understood by the intellect is called the quiddity of an effect, not an essential quiddity, but a causal or exemplar quiddity. Therefore, an idea bespeaks that which is, or the quiddity of the *ideatum*, not the essential quiddity, but the causal quiddity.[32] James adds this qualification to distance himself from Henry.[33] He does not want to say that ideas are the formal exemplar of essences prior to their being efficiently created. An idea is the causal essence of the thing, i.e., it is the essence that a being *could* have. It is a real possibility, but it is not yet actual; it is only potential.

An idea is both a cognitive principle and an ontological principle. As a cognitive principle, it is a concept in the intellect making something else known. As an ontological principle, it is an exemplar to whose imitation a thing is made. This exemplar is not borrowed from anything external. The painter looks to a man's face as his exemplar for a portrait, but an idea has its origin in the

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[30] Augustine, *De Trinitate*, VI, c. 10 (PL 42.931).

[31] James, *Quodlibet* III, q. 15 (ed. Ypma, 197:53–64).

[32] James, *Quodlibet* III, q. 15 (ed. Ypma, 197:78–198:102). James specifies that ideas are also related to the *ideata* in two other ways. First, they are related according to the notion of unity since the *ideatum* is similar to the idea that it imitates. Likeness implies a certain unity. Second, they are related according to the notion of causality because an idea the cause and active principle of the *ideatum*. See James, *Quodlibet* III, q. 15 (ed. Ypma, 197:72–77).

[33] See M.D. Gossiaux, "James of Viterbo and the Late Thirteenth-Century Debate Regarding the Reality of Possibles" *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales* 74 (2007): 514

intellect itself. This explication of ideas as exemplars resonates with the theory of Aquinas. It will be recalled that Aquinas assigned four aspects to an idea: form, imitation, intention, and end. James echoes the first three aspects. He explicitly says that an idea is the same as a form, and borrows Thomas's language of that "to whose imitation" (*ad cuius imitationem*) a thing is made. An idea entails intention because an idea is an intellectual, not a natural exemplar. An intellectual exemplar includes the will, without which the intellect would do nothing external.[34]

James includes the aspect of the end, although he does so in a qualified way. When Thomas speaks of predetermination of the end, he means that the agent establishes the end of the thing made according to the exemplar.[35] In *Quodlibet* I, q. 5, James argues that God's exemplar of creatures is the very divine essence as it is imitable, insofar as it virtually contains a creature because it is the cause of that possible creature.[36] Thus, James does hold that God, by knowing all the diverse ways in which his essence can be imitated, establishes the ends of all things. He establishes the causal quiddities of things, but not their essential quiddities. An idea establishes the end of an essence, but it does not establish the essence as an essential quiddity. To say the same in terms more familiar to Henry of Ghent, an idea is not the formal exemplar of a quiddity. It does establish the essence as an essence, but only as potentially created by God.

Having established that an idea is an exemplar, we have to take a closer look at James's theory of *divine* ideas. His clearest presentation of divine ideas comes from question five of his first *Quodlibet*. Beginning from Augustine's insight that "before creatures came to be, they were and were not. They were in God's knowledge, but were not in their nature," James argues that the divine

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[34] James, *Quodlibet* III, q. 15 (ed. Ypma, 195:21–22): "Sub intellectu autem comprehenditur voluntas, sine qua nihil operatur intellectus extra."

[35] See. Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.100:202-204); Thomas, *De principiis naturae*, §4 (ed. Leonine, 43.45:104-113),

[36] James, *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (ed. Ypma, 65:104–107): "Exemplar autem creaturarum, ut dicunt, radicaliter quidem est ipsa divina essential ut imitabilis est, in quantum continet virtute creaturam. Et hoc est dicere ut causa est."

essence can be considered in two ways.[37] In one way it is considered as it is an essence, and in another way as it is a potency and cause. Created beings are in God's essence in both ways. They are in it as it is an essence because they are God, and they are in it as it is a cause and potency because God can produce and cause them. Since they are in God's essence in two ways, they also are in God's knowledge in two ways. In the first way, as they are understood as not distinguished from him, and so God understands creatures as he understands his perfections. In the second way, he understands that as they are other than distinct from him. Thus, he understands creatures properly.[38]

This distinction between the essence as essence and the essence as potency and cause leads James to the insight that divine ideas are not the *rationes cognoscendi* of essences, but rather the *obiecta cognita*. Things, before they exist in act and in their natures, are in God's knowledge both as they are not other than him and as they are distinct from him. So if God cognizes creatures before they exist as they are other and distinct from him, then they are understood as the object cognized, which has to be something. For that which in no way is and is entirely nothing is not understood. Thus, it is manifest that a creature, even before it exists in effect, is something as an *obiectum cognitum*.[39]

In order to explain why divine ideas have to be the *obiecta cognitum*, not merely the *rationes cognoscendi*, James considers the way in which God understands creatures. Since God is of supreme nobility and goodness, the best and noblest mode of understanding belongs to him. The best and noblest mode of understanding is to know through a cause. But the first, most general, and proper cause of all things, containing every cause and having every mode of causality in itself in advance, is his essence. Therefore, he cognizes things other than himself through his essence, i.e., by cognizing his essence not only as it is as essence, but also as it is a cause. For to know something through a

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[37] Augustine, *De gen. ad lit.*, V, cap. 18 (PL 34.334).
[38] James, *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (ed. Ypma, 62:21–63:55).
[39] James, *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (ed. Ypma, 64:63–69).

cause is to cognize it not only as it is a cause, but also to cognize that to which it is a cause, and because it is the cause of it.[40]

James specifies that when God cognizes creatures through his essence as it is a cause, his essence is both the object cognized, and the *ratio cognoscendi* of the effect, namely, the creature. That which is always a *ratio cognoscendi* as a cause requires something other be cognized, of which it is a *ratio*, because just as nothing is the cause of itself, so nothing is the *ratio cognoscendi* of itself as cause. For although we say that God cognizes himself through his essence and that the essence is the *ratio cognoscendi* of himself, we do not say it because the essence is the cause of itself, but because nothing other than it is the cause of cognizing. Therefore, if God cognizes creatures through his essence as it is a cause, it is necessary to posit that something other than the divine essence is the *obiectum cognitum*. But this something else is nothing but a creature. Therefore, a creature, before it is in effect, is some thing as *obiectum cognitum*, even as it is other and distinct from God.[41]

It may seem strange for James to speak of the divine essence as both the *ratio cognoscendi* and the *obiectum cognitum* because the divine essence is just as much a cognized object as a creature. James introduces a distinction reminiscent of Henry of Ghent to explain what he means. The divine essence and the creature are really one cognized object because one is understood through another as the material and secondary is understood through the formal and principle. Wherefore, because of the formal and principle thing cognized, i.e., his essence, God understands nothing outside of himself. But because the divine essence is the principle and formal object, a creature is the secondary and material thing cognized. This diversity does not refer to different modes of divine cognition, but to the things cognized.[42] The divine essence is the *ratio cognoscendi* because God does not look to anything other than himself to gain knowledge. He knows everything that he know *by means of* his

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[40] James, *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (ed. Ypma, 64:70–83).
[41] James, *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (ed. Ypma, 64:90–65:102).
[42] James, *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (ed. Ypma, 68:225–69:235).

essence. The primary thing that God knows by knowing his essence is himself. God is the principle object of his own cognition. Things other than himself are secondary objects of divine cognition because God is able to understand his essence not only as it is an essence, but as it is a cause. When he understands himself as cause, that which he cognizes is other than himself. What he cognizes other than himself are the divine ideas, and these are the *obiecta cognita*, i.e., creatures.

One final point of James's theory must be emphasized. Like his predecessors, James insists that the divine ideas are necessary. For when it is said that God necessarily understands and wills things other than himself, it is in one way true, and in another way not true. God necessarily understands things other than himself because he necessarily understands his power. But by understanding his own power, he understands those things to which his power extends. Consequently, he understands things other than himself, but not because they have to have *esse* in their proper natures. It suffices that they are in God's power. It is sufficient that a thing be possible for it to be understood. For thus it can be understood in that and through that through which it is called possible. And similarly it ought to be said that God, in a certain way, necessarily wills things other than himself, namely, as they are in his potency, because he necessarily wills to be able to produce other things. But he does not necessarily will them as they are according to themselves and in act.[43] God necessarily knows and wills his productive power, and so knows the extent of that power.

James is undoubtedly borrowing this argument from Thomas. The fact that Thomas's influence has been evident is no surprise. James's teacher, Giles of Rome, likely studied under

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[43] James, *Quodlibet* II, q. 10 (ed. Ypma, 126): "Cum enim dicitur quod Deus necessario intelligit et vult alia a se, uno modo est verum, alio modo non. Deus enim intelligit necessario intelligitalia a se hoc modo, quia necessario intelligit potentiam suam. Intelligendo autem suam potentiam, intelligit ea ad quae se extendit sua potentia. Unde ad hoc quod intelligat alia, non oportet quod habeant esse in propria natura, sed sufficit quod sint in ipsius Dei potentia. Ad hoc enim quod res intelligatur, sufficit quod sit possibilis. Sic enim potest intelligi in illo per illud, per quod dicitur possibilis. Et similiter dicendum est quod Deus aliquot modo vult necessario alia a se, scilicet ut sunt in eius potentia; quia necessario vult se posse producere alia. Non autem vult ea necessario ut sunt secundum se in actu."

Thomas Aquinas during Thomas's second stint as master in Paris from 1268–1272, and many of Giles's teachings are highly influenced by Thomas.[44] Giles did not slavishly adopt all of Thomas's thought, but made several of his own insights. James's theory of divine ideas is evidence that Giles passed his spirit of critical appropriation of Thomas on to James. As we have seen, James's theory of divine ideas is highly indebted to Thomas, but it is not without its innovations. The crucial innovation that we see in James is his insistence that knowledge of a cause entails knowledge of the effect such that the effect becomes the object known. When it comes to God's knowledge of his causality, the effect is nothing other than a creature. So when God knows things other than himself, he does not know a relation or a respect that a potential creature could bear to him. Instead, he knows the essence of that potential creature. The divine ideas are not *rationes cognoscendi*, they are the *obiecta cognita*.

b. Godfrey of Fontaine's Criticism of James's Theory of Divine Ideas

James of Viterbo's theory of divine ideas as *obiecta cognita* prompted an immediate response from Godfrey of Fontaines. Since James's theory of divine ideas as a whole makes many of the distinctions that had become standard by his time, Godfrey's theory of divine ideas coheres for the most part with James's. Divine ideas have both a cognitive and a productive role for Godfrey. God has ideas because he is a sufficient likeness of all things, and so knows things other than himself by knowing his own essence and the ways in which that essence can be imitated.[45] The divine ideas are really identical with the divine essence,[46] yet there are many of them because of the diverse ways in which God's essence can be imitated, and Godfrey agrees with Henry of Ghent that the plurality of divine ideas extends only to the *species specialissima*.[47]

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[44] Sylvia Donati, "Giles of Rome," in *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jorge J.E. Gracia and Timothy B. Noone (Malden MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 266.

[45] Godfrey, *Quodlibet* II, q. 2 (PhB 2.87–88); *Quodlibet* VII, q. 4 (PhB 3.272); *Quodlibet* VIII, q. 3 (PhB 4.44).

[46] Godfrey, *Quodlibet* VIII, q. 3 (PhB 4.47): "idea non differt essentialiter a Deo nec ab alia idea."

[47] Godfrey, *Quodlibet* IV, q. 2 (PhB 2.229–33 and 2.321–22). This question appears in both a long and a short form, both of which have been cited. For more on this point, see Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought of Godfrey of Fontaines*, 115–

These agreements cannot obscure the great difference between James's theory that posits a divine idea as the *obiectum cognitum*, and Godfrey's theory that posits a divine idea as the *ratio cognoscendi*. The root of the disagreement is James's distinction between God understanding the essence as essence, and his understanding the essence as cause. After rehearsing James's argument, Godfrey offers two criticisms.[48] First, he rejects James's distinction. According to the distinction, God understands creatures in his essence as essence, and yet he does not understand them as distinct from his essence in which and through which he understands them. This occurs when creatures do not have *esse* in act, since they are not something really distinct in act from God nor from anything else. Thus, it can be true that God understands non-existing things, which are yet possibly existent, and things existing before they exist not as distinct in act from essence (since they have no real *esse* outside of the essence). But since they have *esse* in potency and are potential things, he understands this potential reality according to which potencies are really distinguishable from God and from each other in act. According to this it must be said that he understands creatures as other than himself, not in act, but in potency. But God should have distinct, not potential and confused knowledge of each creature. Even if it will be said that to cognize creatures in his essence as it is an essence, that is as God understands his perfections by understanding himself, this position cannot be saved because by this distinction God understands creatures only insofar as he understands his perfections under the notion of certain imitabilities of this kind according to which he is imitable by creatures in diverse ways. Thus, it must be posited that he understands the

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30. It is worth noting that while Godfrey agrees that the scope of the divine ideas should be limited to the *species specialissimae*, it seems unlikely that he would also reject that God has a different divine idea for each kind of number because one of his arguments for restricting the scope of divine ideas is based on the fact that every number four is measured in the same way, but not a four and a three: "Sicut unitas est mensura omnium numerorum, ita essentia divina secundum diversas ideas sive imitabidlitates est mensura omnium creaturarum. Sed unitas eodem modo et per unam rationem est mensura omnium numerorum. Eiusdem specie, quia unitas per eandem rationem mensurat omnes quaternarios, non tamen per unam rationem mensurat quaternarium et ternarium. Ergo a simili essentia divina est mensura et ratio cognoscendi respectu omnium individuorum eiusdem specie per unam ideam" (Godfrey, *Quodlibet* IV, q. 2 [PhB 2.321]). See Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought of Godfrey of Fontaines*, 129.

[48] Godfrey, *Quodlibet* VIII, q. 3 (PhB 4.48–49).

distinction of creatures even as the essence is understood as essence. Therefore, he who posits that God cognizes creatures as in no way other and distinct from himself, posits that he in no way cognizes them in act and formally and distinctly, but only virtually, or universally in potency, and confusedly.[49]

Second, Godfrey argues that James's theory is contrary to a proper understanding of act and potency. The things being cognized by God posit no entity or reality in act except the very cognition of God Thus, the creatures only have being in potency. And thus a creature before it exists is not cognized by God as something distinct from him except in potency alone. It is not necessary that, although it be something as cognized, that because of this it be something really other from being cognized except as in potency. As Wippel notes, "there is no need to conclude that they must actually be things or *res* in themselves and actually distinct from God prior to their creation."[50] Their being potential is sufficient for God to have knowledge of them. God does not need to posit creatures as actually distinct from himself to cognize them, even as cause because it suffices that he be their cause in potency, and that he also be something other than their cause in potency. Thus, the idea and the *ideatum* really differ when the *ideatum* is in act, but they differ only in potency whenever the *ideatum* exists only in potency.[51]

Godfrey's critique of James's theory is strong in the sense that James's distinction between God knowing his essence as essence and as cause is problematic. It seems like James wants the distinction to account for both the real identity and unity of the divine ideas with the divine essence and the plurality of the divine ideas coming from the diverse ways and grades that creatures can

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[49] Godfrey, *Quodlibet* VIII, q. 3 (PhB 4.49), esp.: "qui ergo point quod Deus cognoscit creaturas ut nullo modo alias et distinctas a se, point quod illas nullo modo cognoscit actu et formaliter et distincte, sed tantum virtualiter vel universaliter in potential, et confuse." Cf. Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought of Godfrey of Fontaines*, 145.

[50] Wippel, *Metaphysical Thought of Godfrey of Fontaines*, 145.

[51] Godfrey, *Quodlibet* VIII, q. 3 (PhB 4.50).

imitate God. Unfortunately, the distinction that James articulated goes well beyond saving the unity and plurality of ideas. It does indeed force him to say that God's knowledge is in potency.

Despite its strength, Godfrey's criticism does not address the most pressing concern in James's innovation. To say that a divine idea is a *ratio cognoscendi* is to say that God knows a relation before knowing the other extreme of the relation. Earlier authors insisted that God knew things other than himself (*alia a se*), but what they really meant by this was that God knew a relation, not a thing. James's theory, then, seems to be a strong step forward because it argues that when God knows a divine idea, he is knowing the potential creature that could imitate him, not merely a relation. Godfrey's criticism does not address this strength of James's theory.

3. Conclusion

The theories of divine ideas advanced by Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, and Henry of Ghent differ in important ways, but they all agree on the fundamental point that an idea is a *ratio cognoscendi* of the respect that a creature can have to God. The theories of Peter John Olivi and James of Viterbo are evidence that the fundamental unity of earlier theories started to weaken by the mid- to late-1280s. No longer did the points of disagreement occur at secondary levels of inquiry into the divine ideas. The very question "What is an idea?" was a point of contention. The theories that Olivi and James offer both give evidence of certain difficulties that begin to appear in the prior theories. The earlier theories argued that a divine idea is a relation so that God knows the creature secondarily. Olivi challenges this claim directly, arguing that the claim that God knows the relation prior to knowing the extreme or the term of that relation is contrary to the very notion of a relation. James also challenges this claim, although in a subtler way. God's essence is still a *ratio cognoscendi*, but the divine idea is the essence of the creature. God, in a certain sense, knows the creature by divine ideas, not the relation the creature can have to him. The divine idea is the object cognized. By

digging up these objections, Olivi and James have tilled the soil out of which Scotus will cultivate a number of strong objections to the earlier theories and grow a new way of approaching divine ideas.

E. RECAPITULATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Between ca. 1250 and ca. 1294, reflection on divine ideas drastically expanded. The issue that was treated in two pages by Augustine and passed over in silence by Peter Lombard became a central pillar of metaphysics. Divine ideas suddenly played an essential role in the account of God's knowledge of things other than himself. The arrival of Averroes's commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* played an indispensable role in this change. Averroes's account of the divine knowledge cannot account for the sort of knowledge necessary for immediate creation and providence. Despite their variety, the theories expounded during this time all agree on a couple fundamental points. First, they all agree that the only principle of divine knowledge is the divine essence. God does not look to anything other than himself to gain knowledge. When he knows his essence, God primarily knows himself; he knows things other than himself only in a secondary reflection. God knows things other than himself only as secondary objects of his essence. Second, divine ideas are ways in which God knows that he can be imitated. God knows all of the ways in which creatures could participate his being and goodness. God's perfect knowledge of himself leads to the third major point of agreement. The divine ideas are both one and many. They are really one (*unum secundum rem*) with the divine essence, but they are many according to reason (*secundum rationem*). Divine ideas are multiplied by diverse ways in which possible creatures can imitate God. If there were only one divine idea, then God would not be able to have distinct cognition of each and every creature. To know a species only through its genus is to know that species indistinctly, and therefore, imperfectly.

After this initial agreement, we find disagreement among the authors. Bonaventure, Thomas, and Henry are all in agreement that at its core a divine idea is a rational respect that God has to possible creatures. Divine ideas are God's *rationes cognoscendi*, i.e., the means by which he knows. God knows the relation directly and the creature by means of the relation. Olivi and James, however, disagree. Olivi, in a move that will highly influence Scotus, argues that God cannot know the real

relation that exists from a possible creature to himself before knowing the creature itself. As a result, he argues that divine ideas are the very act of divine understanding. James, on the other hand, says that divine ideas are the object of God's knowledge rather than the *rationes cognoscendi*.

The authors are also highly divided when it comes to the question of divine ideas as principles of speculative or practical cognition. Bonaventure and Thomas both argue that divine ideas perform both speculative and practical roles. Bonaventure favors the cognitive aspect of divine ideas and so regards them as principally speculative. Thomas, however, gives precedence to the causal role that divine ideas play in creation. Divine ideas, in the strict sense of the term, are exemplars. Since the notion of an exemplar includes the intention of an agent, divine ideas are primarily principles of practical cognition. In the broad sense of the term, however, divine ideas are called *rationes*, which are principles of speculative cognition. If we were to read only Bonaventure and Thomas, then we might be tempted to think that the different points of emphasis that the two men have is merely a matter of taste. Both accept that divine ideas play cognitive and causal roles, and neither offers much argument for emphasizing one role over the other. Henry, however, argues that divine ideas can in no way be practical. Divine ideas, since they concern only the divine intellect are only principles of speculative cognition. If they were in any way practical, then the divine intellect would coerce the divine will. No divine idea can have "having-to-be-created" as part of its *ratio*.

The question of the existence of things in God is also something of a point of disagreement. Bonaventure and Thomas agree that things do not have any more being in God than accrues to them as a result of being known by God. They have *esse cognitum* and nothing more. Henry, however, has been traditionally read as positing a distinct mode of existence for divine ideas which he calls essential being. Essential being, the interpretation runs, is somehow distinct from God's being. But, as I argued above, the traditional interpretation of essential being is not the best reading of Henry's

thought. Essential being is not a third realm of being beyond extramental existence and existence in the soul. Rather, it is Henry's way of referring to existence in the divine mind.

When it comes to the scope of divine ideas, there are also many important differences. Although they all agree that God has many divine ideas, they do not agree about how many he has. Bonaventure argues that there are an infinite number of divine ideas, whereas Henry argues that the number is finite. Thomas stands between them arguing that divine ideas in the strict sense are numerically finite, but numerically infinite in the broad sense. This disagreement plays out most prominently with regard to the question of divine ideas of singulars. Bonaventure and Thomas argue that God has to have ideas of singulars. Thomas argues that God creates both the matter and the form of each thing so he must have a distinct idea for *this* form and *this* matter. In contrast, Henry argues that he only has ideas of the *species specialissima*. Ideas are distinguished according to form, but singulars are not distinguished from each other according to form. Therefore, there are no distinct ideas for singulars.

So it should be clear that while the authors differed on a great number of the aspects related to divine ideas, they were in fundamental agreement that divine idea are a secondary reflection of the divine essence, and entail a rational relation. It is important to take note of this agreement because the agreement will be challenged in the years to come both by authors who wish to affirm that God has ideas (but are concerned about the consequences of one or both of the positions) and by authors who wish to deny that God has ideas (or at least does not have them except imperfectly).

CHAPTER III: RAYMUNDUS RIGALDUS (D. 1295)

A. LIFE AND DATING OF THE *QUAESTIONES DISPUTATAE XXV*

As is the case for most 13th century friars, we know very little about the life of Raymundus Rigaldus, OFM. Historical records explicitly mention Raymundus only a few times. We know that he was elected provincial minister of Aquitaine in present-day Southern France on November 30, 1279, when Bonagratia of Bologna was Minister General of the Franciscan Order.[1] It is unclear how long he held the office of provincial minister, but his time as provincial minister must have ended before the general chapters of Milan (1285) and Montpellier (1287) since Peter (called William in one text) of Falgar is named provincial minister of Aquitaine.[2] In 1295, Raymundus was re-elected provincial minister at the chapter in Brieve.[3] He only held the office for a year, however, because we are told that he died on November 29, 1296.[4]

The entries concerning his second election as provincial minister and his death are instructive because they indicate that Raymundus, the distinguished and extraordinary man, was a master of sacred theology, and specifically a master of Paris. The fact that he is not described as a master in 1279, but he is called a master in 1295 allow us to conclude with Delorme that Raymundus exercised his academic activity between his two terms in office.[5] One last historical reference to

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[1] *Chronica XXIV Generalium* in *Analecta franciscana*, III.373: "Obiit sub isto Generali pater venerabilis frater Vitalis de Podio, Minister Aquitaniae, anno Domini MCCLXXIX post capitulum provincial Albiae celebratum. Et eodem anno in capitulo Agenni fuit electus Minister Aquitaniae in festo sancti Andreae frater Raymundus Rigaldi."

[2] Salimbene, *Chonica* in *Monumenta Germaniae historica SS XXXII,* 643, and *Catal. Gen. Min.* in *Monumenta Germaniae historica SS XXXII*, 668. Cf. *Chronica XXIV Generalium* III.382.

[3] *Chronica XXIV Generalium*, *Analecta franciscana*, III, 432: "Et anno praefato MCCXCV frater Amaneus de Mota, Minister Aquitaniae, absolutus a ministerio factus fuit in Romana curia Ordinis procurator, et fuit electus in capitulo Brivae Minister Aquitaniae frater Raymundus Rigaldi, sacrae theologiae magister."

[4] *Chronica XXIV Generalium*, *Analecta franciscana*, III, 432: "Et eodem anno [sc. MCCXCVI] decessit vir eximius frater Raymundus Rigaldi, magister Parisiensis et Minister Aquitaniae, in festo sancti Saturnini post capitulum provincial Figiaci in Nativitate beatae Virginis celebratum . . ."

[5] Delorme, "Quodlibets et Questions disputées de Raymond Rigaut, maître franciscain de Paris, d'après le Ms. 98 de la Bibl. Comm. de Todi," BGPTM, suppl. iii.2, Aus der Geisteswelt Mittelalters (Münster: Aschendorff, 1935), 826-841.

Raymundus makes the dating of his academic career more certain. Raymundus's name appears on a Parisian tax roll published in the *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis* and dated April 10, 1287.[6] Masters were taxed upon their reception of the title, and so we can safely say that Raymundus became *magister regens* that year, and probably began teaching in the fall. Raymundus is listed as *frater* on the tax roll, but this does not mean he was not already a master for two reasons. First, in the prior year's tax roll the Augustinian master Giles of Rome is listed as *frater* as well, but it is likely that he was already a master at the time.[7] Second, in the entries for both Raymundus and Giles the text specifies that *magistri theologiae* were taxed, and then specifies only two names. If the author of the entries meant to exclude the *fratres*, he would not have put the subject and verb in the plural. In the entry concerning Giles, Giles's name is listed before the other master. If the author had intended to indicate that the other man were master, but not Giles, he would not have put Giles's name first. In both lists, the author proceeds alphabetically. Thus, I think it we should conclude that Raymundus and Giles are listed as *frater* rather than *magister* because they are religious friars (*fratres*) rather than secular priests.

Knowing that he became a master in 1287 allows us to make a number of inferences regarding his educational history. As has been well documented, the Franciscan educational scheme was divided into two courses, the lectorate course and the baccalaureate course. The lectorate course was taken first and was four years long for Franciscans.[8] Candidates for the lectorate were required to have two or three years of study after the novitiate and were chosen by the province and the provincial minister.[9] The lectorate program was primarily intended to groom provincial teachers and

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[6] *CUP* II, 30: "Anno Domini 1287 taxaverunt magistri in theologia, magister Ernuplus de Brusella, et frater Remondus Rigaldi et quatuor magistri in artibus et duo burgenses."

[7] *CUP* II, 28: "Anno Domini 1286 taxaverunt magistri in theologia frater Egidius et magister Jacobus Dalos, et quatuor magistri in artibus et duo burgenses."

[8] Courtenay, "Parisian Franciscans," 159–160.

[9] *CUP* II, 57: "Item mittendi Parisius ad stadium generale exerceantur tribus vel duobus annis post novitiatum in aliquot studio provincie sue vel vicine, nisi literati fuerint quod post novitiatum continuo possint mitti. Non mittantur tanem nisi de auctoritate ministry cum consilio et assensu Capituli porvincialis."

leaders for the order. One of the reasons that the course had such a practical goal is that while each province was permitted to send up to four friars to the Parisian *stadium generale* per year (two *de gratis*, two *de debito*), the entire order could send only a single candidate to the baccalaureate course every year.[10] The many friars who completed the lectorate course but were not chosen to continue in the baccalaureate course were sent back to their home provinces to mold the next generation of friars and lead the province. The advantage of having educated provincial leaders is obvious.

The baccalaureate course was quite involved. Those selected by the Minister General to enter the baccalaureate course were required to attend or to have attended six years of lectures on the Bible and Peter Lombard's *Sententiae*; if they had not, the University in which they would be baccalaurei would have to grant an exception or grace. After this "coursework," the candidate became a *baccalaureus Sententiarum* and would lecture on the *Sententiae* for two years. Upon completing these lectures, he became a *baccalaureus biblicus* and lectured on the Bible for one year. After these years of study and teaching, the candidate, now called a *baccalaureus formatus*, he could be considered for inception as a *magister theologiae*. Upon inception, the new master would be in regency for two years. In an effort to push as many friars through the program as possible, Franciscan regent masters would only sit in congregation for one year. As Courtenay points out, it is unclear whether the master was still in regency after one year and shared the title of *magister regens*, or if he became *magister non regens*.[11]

Given these educational requirements, we can make a number of conjectures about Raymundus's life. Without a doubt, he must have completed the lecturate course and attended the lectures in the baccalaureate course before he was elected provincial minister in 1279. It is possible that he had also completed one or both of his teaching requirements as well. The election of a

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[10] Bert Roest, *A History of Franciscan Education (c. 1210–1517)* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 102.

[11] William J. Courtenay, *Schools & Scholars in Fourteenth-Century England* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 60.

baccalaureus formatus as provincial minister is not unrealistic. Raymundus, then, must have been in Paris by 1269 at the latest. If he were in Paris by 1269, then it is plausible to think that he heard Bonaventure deliver the *Collationes in Hexaemeron*.

B. THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT OF THE *QUAESTIONES DISPUTATAE XXV*

Since he became *magister regens* in Paris in 1287, there are two things to consider about the immediate context of Raymundus's ascension to the chair of theology. First, Matthew of Aquasparta, who was *magister regens* from 1277 to 1279, was elected Minister General of the Franciscan Order in the same year.[12] Matthew of Aquasparta's work was already influential in Paris, but his election as Minister General would only make his thought more influential. Second, Richard of Mediavilla was Raymundus's immediate predecessor. He was *magister regens* from 1285 to 1287. This detail is important because it is likely that Raymundus worked very closely with Richard and knew his work well. As a result, a few preliminary remarks about the theory of divine ideas in Matthew and Richard will help set the immediate context for Raymundus's own teaching.

1. Matthew of Aquasparta (c. 1237–1302)

According to the standard narrative of Franciscan thinkers, Matthew of Aquasparta's thought should be diametrically opposed to his contemporary Dominican thinkers, especially Thomas Aquinas. The facts that he was a student of John Pecham and was immediately preceded in the Franciscan chair of theology by William de la Mare, who wrote the *Correctorium Fratris Thomae* in 1278, lead us to believe that Matthew would be predisposed to oppose Thomas's thought. Matthew does oppose Thomas in his disputed questions *De cognitione*, but, as we will see, that opposition does not carry over to his theory of divine ideas.[13]

The most relevant text for our purposes is *De productione rerum*, q. 2. In this question Matthew asks whether every entity is really, truly, and essentially in the first being. As John Dowd points out, by the term "entity" (*entitas*), "Matthew is not asking whether all being (*ens*) or beings

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[12] *Chronica XXIV Generalium* in *Analecta franciscana*, III.406–407.

[13] H.M. Beha, "Matthew of Aquasparta's Theory of Cognition," *Franciscan Studies* 20 (1960): 161–204, and 21 (1961): 1–79, 383–465.

(*entia*) are in God. The question is to know whether and how every perfection of being is in God."[14] The term *entitas* is being used synonymously with *perfectio*.

Matthew argues that every perfection (*entitas*) is in the first being in several ways. They are present through a cause, through equivalence, and through real and true existence. Part of what it means to say that every perfection is in God through a cause is to say that the first being is the formal exemplar cause of every being. The first being is a formal exemplar cause because it makes or conserves nothing irrationally or by natural necessity. It knows, foreknows, and predisposes everything that it makes. Therefore, it is necessary that notions (*rationes*) of things to be made and conserved eternally and immutably preexisted in it. He then notes, following Aquinas, that Pseudo-Dionysius calls these notions "exemplars, substantial notions, or predefinitions," and Augustine calls them "ideas."[15]

These notions are really and truly in God, but not in the sense that every created entity is in the uncreated being essentially such that every creature is in the creator essentially, really, and truly. If the creature were in the creator essentially, then God would be a creature and a creature would be God. This position amounts to pantheism. Instead, it must be said that nothing of entity, perfection, or anything that has the notion of absolute entity is in other beings that is not in the first being in a more perfect and nobler way. The first being has to have all entity and perfection in a more perfect way because a cause must be more perfect, nobler and more sublime than its effect. Nothing can give what it does not have, so the first being could not give life if it were not living.[16]

Moreover, every being that is not the first being is a being by participation. But whatever agrees with beings that exist by participation agrees with the first being simply and essentially (*per*

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[14] J.D. Dowd, "Matthew of Aquasparta's *De productione rerum* and its relation to St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Bonaventure," *Franciscan Studies* 34 (1974): 42.

[15] Matthew of Aquasparta, *De productione rerum*, q. 2 in *Quaestiones disputatae de productione rerum et de providentia*, ed. Gideon Gàl, *Bibliotheca Franciscana Scholastica Medii Aevi*, volume 17 (Quaracchi: Typographia Collegii S. Bonaventurae, 1956), 36. See Ps.–Dionsyius, *De div. nom.*, c. 5, §8 (PG 3.823C), and Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46 (PL 40.29–30).

[16] Matthew, *De productione rerum*, q. 2 (ed. Gàl, 38–39).

essentiam). Therefore, whatever entity and perfection is in these posterior beings is in the first being by a more perfect and noble way. It follows from this conclusion that all other beings are beings to the extent that they imitate the first being, such that there are diverse grades of beings according to the grades of participation and imitation. Thus, as Thomas says, a divine idea is the divine essence as imitable by a creature. An idea of a donkey is not other than the divine essence according to this mode and grade of imitated being or the grade imitable by a donkey. The same follows for all other beings.[17]

These distinct grades of imitation can be distinguished into two distinct types. Some are beings that imply perfection simply. Others are beings that imply in themselves a certain mode of annexed imperfection. Life, wisdom, and the like imply perfection simply. Motion, composition, part, and the like imply some imperfection. Since imperfection must not be posited in the first being, Matthew sets as a rule that whatever bespeaks and implies perfection simply in created beings is in the uncreated being in a more perfect way. But whatever bespeaks imperfection or perfection with some annexed imperfection is only in the perfect being to the extent that they are perfect.[18]

A parallel distinction is found in being. Some imply and bespeak being absolutely without any particularity or contraction, like true, good, etc. Some bespeak and imply being as particular and contracted, like man, horse, etc. Therefore, Matthew establishes as a rule that everything that bespeaks and implies being absolutely is in the first being simply, and whatever implies and signifies being as contracted and particular is in the first being in a more perfect way. Thus, horseness is more perfect in God than it is in any created horse.[19]

These two distinctions allow Matthew to maintain Thomas's distinction between two types of imitation of the divine essence. On the one hand, creatures imitate God according to his

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[17] Matthew, *De productione rerum*, q. 2 (ed. Gàl, 40–41). Cf. Thomas, *SCG* I, c. 54 (ed. Leonine, 13.154–55).
[18] Matthew, *De productione rerum*, q. 2 (ed. Gàl, 42).
[19] Matthew, *De productione rerum*, q. 2 (ed. Gàl, 42–43).

transcendental perfections. For example, everything that exists is true and good. Creatures imitate these perfections imperfectly and so are less true and less good than God, but could be more true and good than another creature. Thus, man is said to be truer and better than a horse, but is incomparably less true and good than God. On the other hand, creatures imitate God according to the type of thing that they are. Every created essence implies a certain particularity and contraction of being. The essence "man" implies being contracted to a rational and bodily existence. Thus, a man can imitate the first being perfectly and imperfectly. He can imitate God perfectly according to his own nature, yet imitate God imperfectly in his truth and goodness.

In his response to the eighth objection, Matthew distinguishes two ways of understanding what is understood (*intellectum*). In one sense, what is understood is the intelligible species of thing, which is the *ratio cognoscendi*. In the second sense, what is understood is the very thing understood, the object understood. This distinction sheds light on the statement "the first being does not understand anything outside of itself." If understood in the second sense of object understood, the statement is false because God understands both himself and things other than himself, which are outside of himself. If understood in the first sense of *ratio cognoscendi*, then the statement is true because God's knowledge comes from no other source than himself. With him and in him are notions and ideas of all things to be known, which are his very essence and truth.[20]

Matthew does not speak of the scope of divine ideas except to say that evil is not in God except perhaps as in a knower. God cognizes evil things, but he does not do so through a proper idea, but through an idea of good things of which the evil things are privations. Just as the straight is the judge of itself and the curved, so too is an idea of something good the idea of the good thing and the evil thing.[21]

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[20] Matthew, *De productione rerum*, q. 2, ad 8 (ed. Gàl, 45–46).
[21] Matthew, *De productione rerum*, q. 2, ad *l* (ed. Gàl, 52).

On this point, Matthew aligns himself very closely with Aquinas. Divine ideas are the eternal reasons and exemplars of things in God. They are not many *rationes cognoscendi* informing the divine intellect, but rather many things known in the divine intellect. God has to have them because he has to know what he creates. He has many of them because things imitate him in many ways. God knows the many ways and grades in which creatures can imitate him, and so he has ideas for each of the ways that he can be imitated. Matthew's order of presentation is all his own, but he consistently expresses the same teaching as Aquinas.[22]

2. Richard of Mediavilla (c.1249–c.1308)

Richard of Mediavilla takes up the question of divine ideas in *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3. Not surprisingly, he argues that God has divine ideas. Following Augustine, Richard argues that ideas in the intellect are certain likenesses of the things cognized, and so are called forms, i.e., likeness of the things understood in the intellect. But God has likenesses of creatures in his intellect, through which he cognizes them. He has to have such likenesses. Without them he would not cognize creatures. Following Bonaventure, Richard notes that some have said that God does not cognize creatures through ideas because he knows them through a cause. But this position cannot stand. For to cognize a thing through a cause and through an idea are not contradictory. Effects are not cognized through causes unless there were likenesses of the effects in the causes, through which the effects shine forth again (*relucent*) in them. Therefore, God cognizes creatures through himself as through a cause. And since he is the sufficient cause of all creatures, there are ideas of all of them in him, through which ideas the creatures shine forth again in him.[23]

Richard then asks whether to be an idea belongs to the divine essence alone or whether it belongs as it is cognized as imitable by a creature. He begins his response to the question by arguing

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[22] See Dowd, 46.
[23] Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 1 (ed. Venezia, I.110va).

that the term "idea" can be taken in three ways. In one way, according as it names quiddities of those sensibles really separated from their sensibles. This is the theory that Aristotle attributed to Plato. Ideas in no way agree with the divine essence in this way. In a second way, "idea" can be taken according as it names the essence of a creature insofar as it is understood by the divine intellect. In this way, the essence of a creature in the divine intellect is in some way its own exemplar as it is in a real, actually existing, produced essence. This way of understanding ideas does not agree with the divine essence either because although the essence of man is understood by the divine intellect from eternity, that essence was not the divine essence. The essence of man was not existing intrinsically in God, but is a secondary object of the divine intellect.[24]

In the third way, the term "idea" is taken according as it bespeaks a cognitive and operative notion (*ratio*) of creatures in God. Richard notes that it seems to some that this way of taking the term "idea" can be understood in two ways. (a) In one way, the divine essence is said to be an idea insofar as it is imitable by a creature. (b) In another way, the divine essence is said to be an idea insofar as it is understood as imitable by a creature. If idea is taken as (a), it is prior according to *ratio intelligendi* than (b). The divine essence is imitable by a creature. Therefore, God understands his essence as imitable by a creature, and not vice versa. In this way, an idea bespeaks a rational respect in God, as in potency to a creature and connotes in the creature a real respect in potency to God. And thus a plurality of ideas is a plurality according to reason in potency. So God cognizes a creature through an idea insofar as there is a form or intellect expressing it to himself from which he is imitable.[25]

Taken as (b), "idea" bespeaks a rational respect in act in the divine essence to the creature and connotes a rational respect in act in a creature as well as a real respect in potency to God. Thus,

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[24] Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 2 (ed. Venezia, I.110vb).
[25] Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 2 (ed. Venezia, I.110vb).

a plurality of ideas is a plurality according to reason in act. So God does not cognize a creature through an idea because an idea taken in this way presupposes cognition of the creature and divine essence according to a *ratio intelligendi*. For cognition of a notion according to the mode of understanding presupposes cognition of both extremes. God cognizes a creature in an idea thus understood insofar as he intuits himself to be the exemplar of the creature. He sees it shine forth again in himself. But it is not the same to say that one cognizes the thing "through" (*per*) something and to say that one cognizes the thing "in" (*in*) something. If God has to know both extremes, then not only would the divine essence be the immediate object of the divine intellect, but also the essence of the creature.[26] Richard does not want to endorse this opinion, so he falls back upon God's knowledge of himself as exemplar.

These two ways of understanding idea in the third sense yield two different opinions. Some want to say that an idea does not belong to the being of the divine essence except insofar as he is understood as imitable by a creature. Through his essence God does not cognize a creature except insofar as he understands himself as imitable by a creature. Whence God truly cognizes a creature through an idea and in an idea; for although the divine essence under the notion of an idea does not know the reason for cognition by which God cognizes a creature since he cognizes himself and a creature with the same cognition. Yet, there is a notion through which the cognition by which God cognizes relates to the creature as a secondary object. This is perhaps because they do not want to say that there is a notion by which God cognizes a creature not by a comparison to act, but to the thing cognized.[27] This opinion insists that the notion of an idea is not present in God except according to (b).

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[26] Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 2 (ed. Venezia, I.111ra).
[27] Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 2 (ed. Venezia, I.111ra).

Others are content to allow the notion of an idea according to (a). They do not see any contradiction in saying that God can know his essence as imitable because it already is imitable. The divine intellect discovers the rational respects that God has to creatures in potency, it does not establish them *de novo*. Richard appears to think both of these opinions are acceptable. He does not make a determination as to which opinion is better, and he answers the principal objections on behalf of each position.

Having determined that God has divine ideas, Richard argues that God has many ideas. He articulates the way in which God has many ideas by a process of elimination. There cannot be many according to some absolute thing because of God's supreme simplicity. There cannot be many according to some related thing because such a distinction only exists between the Persons of the Trinity and their notions. There cannot be many according to some real relation in God to creatures because God is not really related to creatures. There cannot be many according to real relations of creatures to God because then he could not have many from eternity. The only option is to posit diverse rational relations (*relationes rationis*). Rational relations follow upon a thing only when it is understood, and so the plurality of divine ideas is only a plurality insofar as he understands his essence as representative of diverse creatures and as imitable by them. No creature actually existed from eternity, but many possible creatures were understood from eternity. As a result, in the divine essence there were many relations according to reason to diverse (not really existing) creatures represented in the divine intellect.[28]

This plurality, Richard argues, extends to singulars in a qualified sense. An idea in God does not only bespeak a way of knowing, but also a way of making things. As a result, God's will to make something is a factor in determining the scope of divine ideas. Like Thomas, Richard says that God has notions (*rationes*) in God of all possible beings. These *rationes* are the means by which God

[28] Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 3 (ed. Venezia, I.111rb–va).

cognizes the possibles, but these *rationes* are not ideas. Only what has imitated or is going to imitate God at some point in time has an idea in God. Against Henry's declaration that ideas extend only as far as the species, Richard argues that God does not only know his essence to be imitable by species, but also by individuals. Two singulars of the same species are not the same either to each other or to their species. Peter, for example, differs from man insofar as Peter bespeaks determinate being (*esse signatum*), but man bespeaks indeterminate being (*esse non signatum*). As a result, the scope of ideas extends to singulars that God has made or is going to make. God has *rationes* of all things that he could make and knows them speculatively, but he only has ideas of what is actually created at some time. And since God is only the source of good and never the source of evil he only ideas of good things.[29]

Although we might expect Richard's restriction of divine ideas to singulars that God makes at some time to have predictable ramifications for the number of divine ideas, it does not. God has an infinite number of divine ideas if the name is extended to cognitive notions. Such an infinite posits an infinite perfection in God because God can be imitated in an infinite number of ways. Each distinct way of imitating God bespeaks a single idea. Therefore, God has an infinite number of ideas.[30]

We might have expected Richard to articulate Thomas's theory that God has an infinite number of ideas only in the strict sense because he only creates a finite number of things. Richard is aware of this argument and states it explicitly. Yet, he still denies the conclusion. If God's ideas were finite according to some determinate number, then there would be some future things of which there is no idea in God. Since that from which singulars are produced is without an end, they exceed every determinate, finite number. So if God had only a determinate, finite number of ideas, there

[29] Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 4, corpus and ad 5 (ed. Venezia, I.111vb).
[30] Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 5 (ed. Venezia, I.112ra).

would be singulars that God did not know. God has to have ideas of all future singulars, so he cannot have a determinate, finite number of ideas. The finite number cannot be indeterminate either because then God would have to have ideas *de novo*, which is repugnant to divine knowing. As a result, God has to have an infinite number of ideas. And since God cannot have any admixture of potency, he has to have this infinite number in pure act.[31]

I am not convinced by this argument. It does not follow from that fact that God has a determinate, finite number of ideas that he would not know all future singulars. Rather, it follows that creation is finite. It is not incoherent to argue that God has ideas of everything that he actually will make and that he actually will make a finite number of creatures. Richard is right to say that God has an infinite number of ideas understood as cognitive principles because his possibilities for creation are endless. But since he has specified that the proper sense of ideas includes only what God has made or will make, it follows that he must have the same number of ideas as there will be creatures. If God will create an infinite number of creatures, then he will have an infinite number of ideas. But if he will create a finite number of creatures, then he will have to have a finite number of ideas, lest there be ideas that God wanted to make but was somehow unable to do so. Richard's theory is incoherent on this point. He accepts the Thomistic emphasis on ideas as what God will actually make, but he does not accept the further conclusion that God would have a finite number of ideas.

3. Summary

Matthew of Aquasparta and Richard of Mediavilla shed light on the immediate context of Raymundus's theory of divine ideas. The positions of both authors reveal that Thomas Aquinas's theory of divine ideas was more influential than Bonaventure's, even among Franciscan authors. I argued above that Bonaventure and Thomas articulate similar theories, but the terminology and way

[31] Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 5 (ed. Venezia, I.112ra).

of expressing divine ideas that survives is clearly Thomas's. Despite the immense influence of Bonaventure among Franciscans, neither Matthew nor Richard speaks of divine truth as expressive. Instead, they speak of God's knowledge of his essence as imitable. Richard even incorporates Thomas's emphasis on the exemplarity of divine ideas. The fact that he stops short of arguing that God has a finite number of ideas in the sense of exemplars seems to be evidence that he wants to be faithful to Bonaventure, despite appropriating Thomas's language.

One final note about Matthew and Richard is in order. Both Matthew and Richard write before Henry of Ghent's immensely influential *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (1286). This question is the primary source used to explain Henry's thought on divine ideas, both for medieval and contemporary commentators. The fact that the question is so succinct and comprehensive makes it no surprise that most authors would look to it for a clear articulation of Henry's position. This question must also be included as part of the immediate context of Raymundus's theory of divine ideas.

C. RAYMUNDUS RIGALDUS ON DIVINE IDEAS

1. Preliminary Remarks on the Manuscript and Order of Questions

Raymundus's *Quaestiones Disputatae XXV* survives in a single manuscript, Todi ms. 98. It is preceded in the manuscript by nine sets of quodlibetal questions that are also by Raymundus, and it is followed by several miscellaneous questions. There is an anonymous question on the Decalogue, two questions on predestination by Vital du Four, a question on fraternal correction by Henry of Ghent, an index of questions for Raymundus's *Quodlibet* I and II, and a Christmas sermon. The manuscript, which is from the thirteenth century, was written by nine distinct hands, each of which likely had a transalpine education.[32] If each of the scribes had a transalpine education, then they were likely from the area near Raymundus's home friary in Aquitaine. This educational background is in part confirmed by the frequency in which the author (mis)spells the word *cognitio* with *cognisio*, which spelling corresponds more accurately to the pronunciation of the term in southern France. The general practice of assigning Masters socii from the same geographical area also seems to confirm the educational locus of the authors.

The *Quaestiones disputatae XXV* appear to have been written by the same hand since they all have the same round gothic letters, and the scribe consistently presses down hard with his pen.[33] Internal text evidence points to the manuscript being a copy of a *reportatio* transcribed by a scribe with no Latin. The scribe frequently repeats and expunges words, and he anticipates words that come later in the sentence. These sorts of errors are only made when copying from a text. In addition to these copying errors, the author separates words and writes words in the wrong number and case; e.g., both of these errors appear on f. 55va. There he twice writes "*suppono et de claro quod*"

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[32] Massimiliano Bassetti, "75 (*ms.* 98)" in *I Manoscritti Medievali della Biblioteca Comunale «L. Leonii» di Todi*, ed. Enrico Manestó et al. (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo, 2008), 380–81, esp.: "Pare possibile assegnare tutte le esecuzioni ad educazione transalpina."

[33] Bassetti, 381.

instead of "*suppono et declaro quod*." He also writes the plural "*supposita*" as the subject of a singular verb.

Looking at the text itself, the first three questions concern what is first known. Questions 4–19 concern divine ideas and divine exemplarity. Questions 20–25 concern grace and beatitude. In the section that concerns divine ideas, the order in which Raymundus treats the questions is curious for two reasons. First, he does not offer a sustained and uninterrupted investigation of the status and scope of the exemplars in God. Instead, he pauses the investigation to ask about the finite creature's knowledge of God. These interruptions also appear in the questions on grace. There are two possible explanations for these interruptions. The first explanation, which I find more likely, is that Raymundus's primary concern is the limits of finite and especially man's cognition. Since the set of disputed questions begins with what is first known, it is not surprising that Raymundus might be preoccupied with the extent of human cognition. In that case, he uses the investigation of divine ideas and grace as a means to explaining better our own cognition. The second explanation is that his students were quite concerned with the extent of human cognition, and so Raymundus adds these questions to give help to his students. Aquinas's investigation of divine knowing in *De veritate*, q. 2 is interrupted by just such a question, so there is precedent for such an occurrence.[34] I favor the first explanation, however, because there is no indication that the original course of the questions is being altered. From the text itself, it would appear that Raymundus treated the questions in exactly the order that he intended to treat them.

Second, Raymundus does not always treat the questions of the status and scope of divine ideas in the order that the subject matter seems to demand. The most glaring example is the question whether divine ideas are speculative or practical. Previous authors took up this question

[34] After examining divine and human cognition of singulars in *De veritate*, q. 2, aa. 5–6, Thomas begins a. 7 by noting that the question is being asked "propter positionem Avicennae superius tactam" (ed. Leonine, 22.1.67:2–3).

early on in the status of divine ideas, but Raymundus delays the discussion until the very last question of the section (q. 19). We cannot know the reason for this delay with certainty, but asking it last makes it seem like an afterthought. To have such a position with regard to whether divine ideas are speculative or practical is strange considering the condemnation of 1277 and the urgency with which Henry argued that divine ideas can only be speculative. In any case, a systematic treatment of Raymundus's theory of divine ideas will demand that his questions be treated out of order at times.

2. The Status of Divine Ideas

a. What is an Idea?

Raymundus addresses the question of what a divine idea is through the question of a divine exemplar. In order to understand a divine exemplar, he first explains the notion of an exemplar in general. Ideal exemplarity is the most perfect *ratio cognoscendi*, of expressing, of assimilating, and of causing everything made, to be made, and makeable.[35] An exemplar is the notion (*ratio*) by whose mediation the exemplified thing proceeds from the one doing the exemplifying, as writing from writing, a picture from a picture, with a conceived notion mediating between the two. The exemplar, therefore, is conceived by the operator and really differs from him as art from the artificer. And because the exemplar is the reason for knowing (*ratio notitiae*) the exemplified thing, therefore the exemplar is observed objectively. And because the agent is directed by an observed exemplar, the exemplar is what is directed the agent. And because the directed agent acts according as discretion directs, the creative, assimilative exemplar is of the thing produced.[36]

Applying these insights to God, Raymundus says that an exemplar in divine things bespeaks a reason of intelligibility (*ratio intelligibilitatis*) by which the divine essence is intelligible under the

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[35] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 9 (MS Todi 98, f. 56ra): "exemplaritas idealis est perfectissima ratio cognoscendi, exprimendi, assimilandi, causandi omne factum, fiendum atque factibile."

[36] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 5 (MS Todi 98, f. 53vb), esp.: "Exemplar igitur est ratio qua mediante exemplatum procedit ab exemplante sicut scriptura a scripture, pictura a picture, mediante concepta ratione."

notion of truth expressive of itself and of all natural things in consequence of life naturally shining forth again (*vitam relucentem naturaliter*) from itself to it. The thing understood also bespeaks imitability under the notion by which the divine essence, from a fontal primacy, contains the notions of all perfect attributes and ideas. It also bespeaks the causality under the notion by which it exemplifies the things exemplified according to imitative participations of the divine essence. It modifies, specifies, and signates the things produced.[37] Divine ideas are the source of the intelligibility of the things that are made. They explain why God knows things other than himself, how things can be like God, and how God can make them.

It is worth dwelling on the three points made in the last paragraph because of their influences and developments. The first point, that the divine essence is expressive truth bears the clear imprint of Bonaventure.[38] Of all the authors of this study, Bonaventure and Raymundus are the only authors to speak of divine truth as expressive. Because divine truth is supremely expressive, it expresses both itself and all things other than itself. The latter of these expressions are the divine ideas. Although Raymundus has appropriated Bonaventure's emphasis on expression, he is simultaneously innovating. He omits Bonaventure's discussion of likeness and the ways in which something can be a likeness. The only vestige of Bonaventure's use of likenesses remaining in Raymundus's text is that a factive exemplar is still assimilative of the thing. The thing made is like the exemplar, but the exemplar is not defined by its being a likeness. Instead, he emphasizes that divine truth expresses all natural things by naturally shining life forth again (*relucentem*) to itself.

Raymundus's use of *relucens* is telling for two reasons. First, it emphasizes that divine ideas are secondary. Divine truth principally and primarily is expressive of itself, but it is also expressive of all natural things by a sort of reflective act of expression. Second, the term *reluceo* will play a major

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[37] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 5 (MS Todi 98, f. 53vb).
[38] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.601b).

role in Scotus's account of intelligible species and divine ideas.[39] For both authors, the term signifies that what is known is present to the intellect objectively (as opposed to subjectively or formally). Raymundus emphasizes that "an exemplar is the way of knowing the *exemplatum*, therefore the exemplar is what is observed objectively."[40] If it were present subjectively or formally, then it would be present in its subject as an intrinsic form, not an intentional form.[41] By being present objectively as shining forth again, the divine idea is able to make something other than divine truth itself known.

The second point, that the divine essence contains the notions of all attributes and ideas from its fontal primacy reveals the influence of both Bonaventure and Thomas. Bonaventure frequently uses the term "fontal" to refer to the "fontal fullness" of God the Father in emanating the Son, in producing creation, and in Christ.[42] By using this term, Raymundus reaffirms that truth is an expressive treasury. God is a fullness from which everything else receives. This fullness is present as the notions of all perfect attributes and ideas. The mention of perfect attributes is reminiscent of Aquinas because he spoke of two types of divine exemplarity. According to one type of exemplarity, creatures participate their idea and could imitate him perfectly. According to the other type of exemplarity, creatures participate the attributal perfections of the divine essence and can only imitate him imperfectly. Raymundus does not make this distinction in divine exemplarity explicitly, but it appears to be operating quietly in the background.

The third and final point, that a divine exemplar exemplifies the *exemplatum* as imitable participations of the divine essence is a clear reference to Thomas. Divine truth is supremely

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[39] See Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 3, q. 4, n. 119 (ed. Wolter and Bychov, 218). Cf. King, "Duns Scotus on Mental Content," 76–77. It is worth noting that Bonaventure does speak of "those things that are, were, or will be shining forth again in the art of divine wisdom," but this expression is not dominant in his thought of divine ideas. When he speaks of divine ideas, he always speaks of likenesses (*De scientia Christi*, q. 7 [ed. Quaracchi, V.40a]).

[40] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 5 (MS Todi 98, f. 53vb): "quoniam exemplar est ratio notitiae exemplati, ideo exemplar quid inspectum obiective."

[41] For more on this difficulty, see King, "Duns Scotus on Mental Content," 72.

[42] Used for the emanation of the Divine Word, see Bonaventure, *De mys, Trin.*, q. 8 (ed. Quaracchi, V.114). Used for creation, see, Bonaventure, *Brev.*, I, c. 9 (ed. Quaracchi, V.218). Used for Christ, see Bonaventure, *Christus unus omnium magister*, n. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, V.567).

expressive, and it expresses the diverse ways in which the divine essence can be participated by creatures. These participations establish the essences of possible creatures. It imprints what it means to be *this* type of thing. Raymundus's use of expressive truth and participations of the divine essence strengthens the argument that I made above that Bonaventure and Thomas are articulating the same theory using different terminology. The divine essence as known is expressive of all the ways in which creatures could be produced. These possibles creatures are imitative likenesses participating the divine essence.

From these three points, Raymundus draws three corollaries. First, an exemplar does not really differ (*non differt re*) from the one exemplifying, but only differs in reason. Second, the *exemplatum* differs from the exemplar not only in reason but in reality. Third, the exemplar and the *exemplatum* are always referred causally and by an extrinsic relation.[43] These three corollaries place Raymundus in line with his predecessors, especially Thomas, Matthew and Richard.[44] The first corollary emphasizes that Raymundus wishes to exclude external exemplars. The artist could have an external object as the ultimate model, as when a painter paints a landscape, but this is not the sort of exemplar that Raymundus has in mind. Rather, the exemplar has to be one with the one exemplifying. Such a unity has to be an intellectual unity.[45] An intellectual unity is the only way for the *exemplatum* to be present objectively in the one exemplifying. If the unity of exemplar and one exemplifying were a natural unity, then the exemplar would be present subjectively or formally, which Raymundus denies. The second corollary emphasizes that an exemplar is an external formal cause. It makes the *exemplatum* to be the sort of thing that it is, but it does not enter into composition with the *exemplatum* as an integral part. An exemplar is that after which the thing is

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[43] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 5 (MS Todi 98, f. 53vb).

[44] See Thomas, *De veritate* q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.100:209-222). Matthew, *De productione rerum*, q. 2 (ed. Gàl, 36). Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 1 (ed. Venezia, I.110va).

[45] *Quaestiones disputatae* XXV, q. 5 (MS Todi 98, f. 53vb): "exemplar sit agentis per intellectum et voluntatem."

patterned, but is not part of the thing. The only way that such an arrangement is possible is if the exemplar and *exemplatum* are causally related by an extrinsic relation, which is the third corollary. Mention of causality begins to bleed into the question of divine ideas, so we will now investigate Raymundus's account of divine ideas.

b. Does God have Ideas?

Raymundus's investigation into whether God has ideas has two distinct aspects. The first aspect seeks to determine whether God has ideas. In line with all of his predecessors, Raymundus answers that God has to have ideas because he is the cause of everything other than himself. The second aspect seeks to determine whether God has ideas essentially or personally. Like his predecessors, Raymundus argues that God has ideas essentially, but there is a way in which they can be appropriated to the Divine Word.

As he notes in the third corollary above, an exemplar can only be related to what it exemplifies because it causes (or in God's case, could cause) the *exemplatum* to exist. He does not say so explicitly, but his third corollary makes it clear that some likeness that occurs by accident or chance would not satisfy the notion exemplarity.[46] An exemplar has to be willed, and so intended by the one exemplifying. By his intention and will, the one exemplifying causes the *exemplatum* to be modeled after the exemplar. As he declares in q. 5, God is the efficient, final, and exemplar cause of things, so he has to have exemplars of all things.[47]

Not content merely to claim that God is a cause, Raymundus offers an argument for the position in q. 7. A primarily first principle is most independent because it does not depend on something prior, something equal, nor something posterior. If it depended on anything prior or

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[46] See Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leon., 22.1.99:183-196).

[47] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 5 (MS Todi 98, f. 54ra): "Deus est causa rerum efficiens, finalis, et exemplaris." Cf. Matthew, *De productione rerum*, q. 2 (ed. Gàl, 34): "Per causalitatem omnis entitas est in primo ente secundum triplicem causae habitudinalem, scilicet efficientis, formalis exemplaris, et finalis."

equal, then it would not be primarily first. So it is necessarily the case that a primarily first principle be most absolute, and consequently, pure act. For since it neither has *esse* nor receives *esse*, but is its *esse* from itself as necessarily *esse* depends causally on real *esse*. And because the first principle is most absolute, whatever is in it is it. Therefore, it is the simplest and pure absolute without any dependence and composite conception. And because the first principle in God is most simple, therefore it is in a boundless infinite because it is not a componible being from another, some other itself, nor other for itself. Neither it is understood to be limitable or limited. As a result, God is the exemplar of every possible and makeable effect by a most universal causality because the first alone is rich through himself.[48]

Lest we think that God produces necessarily, Raymundus emphasizes that the first principle's reason for producing entails that the will moves, knowledge disposes, and power carries out. The extrinsic production of creatures is voluntary. By a single act of willing, God wills every act of willing and moves everything that is makeable. And this act of will presupposes knowledge of what it wills since God does not act by fortune or chance. It would be ignoble for him to cause without understanding. So just as he understands himself and all things by one act of understanding, so also he disposes all things that are to be created (*fiendum*).[49]

Knowing that God has exemplars of all things because he is the cause of all things, Raymundus argues that God has to have these exemplars essentially, not personally. He has several arguments for this point, of which two are important. God is the efficient, final, and exemplar cause of things, but it is impossible for an efficient and final cause to be said personally. Therefore, the same is true of an exemplar cause.[50] Furthermore, divine exemplars have to be said essentially since

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[48] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 7 (MS Todi 98, f. 54vb–55ra). Cf. *Liber de causis*, prop. 20(21) (ed. Pattin, 180): "Primum est dives per seipsum et non est dives maius."

[49] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 7 (MS Todi 98, f. 55ra).

[50] Here I think the scribe has made a mistake. The manuscript clearly reads "Postremo Deus est causa rerum efficiens, finalis, et exemplaris; sed causam efficientem et exemplarem impossibile est personaliter dici; ergo et exemplarem" (*Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 5 [MS Todi 98, f. 54ra]). It would be trivially true, however, for Raymundus

the divine essence is the notion of all exemplified essential action. Since an exemplar does not bespeak an intrinsic notion and every notion follows the reason of the agent, it is necessary that an exemplar be said essentially.[51]

The second argument requires additional explanation. Two principles underlie this argument. The first principle is that all divine action *ad extra* is the action of the entire Trinity. The action of the entire Trinity is not proper to any one Person and so is said of the divine essence.[52] The second principle is that divine exemplars do not signify an intrinsic relation within the Trinity. If they did, then they would constitute additional Divine Persons. Divine exemplars seem like they would be said personally of the Divine Word because the notion of art and the notion of exemplar are the same. But only the word is an art. Therefore, it is also an exemplar.[53] Yet, this line of thinking does not consider that divine exemplars neither bespeak a notion of generation nor do they refer to God the Father by an intrinsic relation like the Divine Word as Image does. Divine exemplars do not bespeak any sort of natural causality; rather, they bespeak an intellectual causality that results in an *exemplatum* that is really distinct from the one exemplifying. The Father is not really distinct in the sense of separable from the Son. Moreover, the Word is an image of the Father, but a divine exemplar is not the image of the Father, nor is it an exemplar of the Father. Instead, it is an exemplar of a creature. In order for divine exemplars to be the Word, properly speaking, they would have to be exemplars of the Father just as the Word is the image of the Father. Divine exemplars bespeak a relation external to the Trinity, not an internal relation. Since it bespeaks an external relation, a divine exemplar must be said essentially of God, and not personally.

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to infer that an exemplar cause cannot be said personally because an exemplar cause cannot be said personally. Thus, I think that the scribe ought to have written "finalem" in place of the "exemplarem" in the minor premise.

[51] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 5 (MS Todi 98, f. 54ra).

[52] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 5, fm. 5 (MS Todi 98, f. 54va): "Praeterea regula est in omnibus divinis quod omne nomen importans respectum ad creaturam est essentiale et commune tribus; sed exemplans importat respectum ad creatum sicut ad suum exemplatum; quare etc."

[53] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 5, s.c. 4 (MS Todi 98, f. 54va).

c. The Plurality of Divine Ideas

Raymundus treats the question of a plurality of ideas in q. 11 of his set of disputed questions. He asks whether the *rationes* in the divine exemplar really differ or only rationally differ. Like his predecessors, Raymundus wants to account for the distinction of ideas without, on one hand, reducing this distinction to the personal distinctions of the Trinity or the distinction of the attributes, or, on the other hand, abandoning divine simplicity and unity. Like the aspects of the theory that we that we have seen so far, Raymundus's account is highly indebted to his predecessors. There is one aspect, however, that is worth noting because it will be directly contradicted by Scotus and Ockham. Raymundus argues that the rational relation that constitutes the divine ideas has to be something, not nothing.

Raymundus begins his response to the question by recapitulating what the terms "idea" and "*ratio*" mean. The most important part of this summary is that the plurality or infinity of imitability is in no way distinguished by a comparison to the difference to the intelligence that apprehends itself as cognitive of the things cognized just as he also cognizes himself imitable by an infinite number of things. Therefore, ideas are not said to be in the divine essence but rather are contained in divine intelligence.[54] Divine ideas are more properly said to be in the divine intellect because they are the result of a comparative act. Divine ideas are only the result of God knowing himself to be imitable.[55]

Since divine ideas are in the divine intelligence, it follows that they can only be distinguished rationally. This rational distinction must be in the divine intelligence, however. If it were merely in a human or angelic understanding, then the plurality of divine ideas would not satisfy the requirements set by Augustine. Distinctions made by a human or angelic intellect are not stable, unchanging and

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[54] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 11 (MS Todi 98, f. 57vb): "Rursus quia pluralitas vel infinitas imitabilium nullo modo distinguitur per comparationem ad differentiam ad intelligentiam quae apprehendit se ut cognitorum cognitivam sicut et cognoscit se ab infinitis imitabilem, ideo ideae non dicuntur <dub. T> in divina essentia sed potius in divina intelligentia continentur <dub. T>."

[55] See Matthew, *De productione rerum*, q. 2 (ed. Gàl, 40–41). Cf. Thomas, *SCG* I, c. 54 (ed. Leonine, 13.154–55).

eternal, but divine ideas must be all of these things. So the rational distinction of divine ideas has to precede all distinct things and therefore be a result of the divine stably, unchangingly, and eternally contemplating the infinite ways it is imitable.[56]

These reflections are sufficient for Raymundus to see the need for a plurality of rationally distinct divine ideas, but it does not yet argue for how this plurality is distinguished. He distinguishes the plurality of divine Persons, divine notions, and divine attributes before distinguishing the plurality of divine ideas. In God there is a certain relative plurality of emanation, and this is the personal plurality. There is no mutual predication between the persons and the identity of the essence. There is also a certain plurality of disparate opposition, and this is the notional plurality. The identity of essence and persons stands in this case because many notions can be in the same person and one notion in many persons. Nevertheless, one notion is not the other notion nor is it simultaneously one in all things.[57]

There is also a plurality of distinct reasons and this is ideal plurality. It is ideal in the same essence and in any essence, and it is one in all things in any divine Person at the same time. Yet, one idea is not the other, nor are there two of them the same or reference the same possible creature. And there is a plurality denuded of consideration and this is the intellectual plurality of essential attributes. Divine attributes do not distinguish the essence or a person, nor mutual predication nor respect to a creature. They are distinguished through consideration alone. They only bespeak a universal vestige with respect to a creature and therefore attributal notions are predicated of each

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[56] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 11 (MS Todi 98, f. 57vb): "Ac per hoc impossibile est ideas re sed solum ratione distingui; non quidem ratione creata humana vel angelica tantum -- sic enim distinctio idearum non esset stabilis, incommutabilis et aeterna -- sed divina contemplante, scilicet <sed T> divina intelligentia infinitos modos imitabilitatis essentiae <dub. T> stabiliter, incommutabiliter et aeterne."

[57] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 11 (MS Todi 98, f. 57vb): "Circa secundum attendendum quod in divinis quaedam est pluralitas relativae <dub. T> emanationis, et haec est personalis, cum qua stat identitas essentiae non personae vel praedicationis mutuae. Est quaedam pluralitas disparatae oppositionis et haec est notionalis, cum qua stat identitas essentiae et personae quia plures notiones possunt esse in eodem persona et una in pluribus. Non tamen una est alia nec est in omnibus simul una.

other. Ideal notions (i.e., ideas) are to some singulars because singulars are made according to distinct ideas. This distinction holds not just on the part of the creature ideated but on the part of divine intelligence. Thus, among ideas there is not mutual predication as there is among attributes.[58]

These four pluralities, then, are distinguished according to the way in which they are predicated of God. Personal plurality is the result of something being predicated of one of the Persons, but not the others as identical with the divine essence. Notional plurality is the result of something being predicated of some of the Persons and the essence, but never all at once. Attributal plurality is the result of something being predicated of all of the Persons and the essence all at once. Ideal plurality is the result of something being predicated of the essence but each idea refers to some singular outside the essence and so has to be distinguished from all other ideas.

Raymundus thinks that the plurality of ideas and *rationes* is primarily evident on the part of the cognizer, i.e., God. His argument is taken from the well-known argument from Aquinas. The divine intellect cognizes his essence insofar as it is cognizable. Therefore, he cognizes himself not only in himself, but also insofar as he can be participated and imitated by every creature general and by each and everything singularly. Whence, just as the essence is unique and imitable by many, so all the ideas are really one and rationally many (*unum re et plures ratione*).[59]

The plurality of divine ideas is also clear on the part of the things that God can cognize. The first agent is a voluntary agent, and whatever is from him exists because of some intended end. But what is intended is not by chance. Therefore, it is necessary that he have the *ratio* of the whole

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[58] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 11 (MS Todi 98, f. 57vb–58ra): "Est pluralitas distinctae rationis et haec idealis in eadem essentia et in qualibet essentia et in qualibet persona simul in omnibus una est <lin. T> nec tamen <tantum T> una est alia, nec duae eiusdem vel ad idem ideant. Et pluralitas nudae considerationis et haec est intellectualis, scilicet, essentialium attributorum quae non distinguunt essentiam nec personam, nec praedicationem mutuam nec respectum ad creaturam, sed distinguuntur per considerationem solam et dicunt universale vestigium tantum respectu creaturae et ideo rationes attributales adinvicem praedicantur. Rationes vero ideales sunt quibus singulis secundum Augustinum singula condita sunt secundum id quod sunt unum alia et alia est idealis ratio huius et illius non solum ex parte creaturae ideatae, sed ex parte divinae intelligentiae. Unde inter ideas non est praedicatio mutua, sicut est inter attributa.

[59] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 11 (MS Todi 98, f. 58ra). Cf. Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.202). Cf. Thomas, *ST* I, q. 44, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.460b).

universe and through this, a notion of each of its parts.[60] Once again, we find the influence of Aquinas, who argued in his *Summa theologiae* that God could not know the whole universe perfectly unless he understood all of the relations of the parts.

The conclusion of this argument marks the end of the two sections that Raymundus announced at the beginning of the response. We might expect him to begin answering objections, but he does not. Instead, he introduces a third section to which he did not allude in the beginning. In this section, Raymundus argues that the *rationes* in the divine exemplar cannot really be multiplied (*plurificari*). If they were really distinguished from the thing absolutely, then either they would be absolutely diverse things, which the divine *esse* does not sustain, or some respectively diverse things. If they are respects and the respect is nothing in reality, then they are not really distinguished because nothing is not intelligible, or the respect is something. If it is something the respect is either a respect of origin, such that an idea will be distinguished from an idea as a divine Person is distinguished from a divine Person. And since *in divinis* nothing can arise unless it is substantive, then there would be as many persons as ideas. If the respect is a consequence of origin then it is a notional respect, and then there will be as many ideas as notions. But then, even though the divine ideas would not agree equally with the three Persons, determinate ideas would be related to determinate persons (not the essence), which is entirely false. If the respect is entirely after the origin, then the only respect will be to the essence, in which case, this essential and real respect will result in as many essences as there are ideas.[61]

This third section is important because it emphasizes that the respect cannot be nothing in itself. If the respect is nothing in itself, then it is not intelligible. Nothingness is not intelligible. This point will be addressed more fully in the next section, but it is worth noting because both Scotus and

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[60] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 11 (MS Todi 98, f. 58ra). Cf. Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.201b-202a).

[61] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 11 (MS Todi 98, f. 58ra).

Ockham will argue that God knows possible creatures directly and that these possible creatures are nothing in themselves.[62]

d. The Existence of Things in God

Raymundus takes up the question of things existing in God in q. 10 of his set of disputed questions. There are several things about the text that highlight just how hotly debated this subject was at the time. The first thing to note is the very question being asked. Raymundus asks whether a creature exemplary existing in God is God. This question clearly references the controversy surrounding Henry of Ghent's position on essential being and existential being. If his critics are correct, then Henry does not think that the exemplars of creatures existing in God are God. They have a being that is proper to them independent of divine being. Prior to Henry, it seems like the answer to this question would be an obvious affirmation. Reason dictates that God's essence is so unified that everything in it is God, and Sacred Scripture proclaims, "what was made in him was life."[63] But Henry's position has muddied the water such that a host of arguments have been raised on both sides.

The second point flows from the first. Raymundus's response to the question is preceded by seven arguments that the creature existing exemplary in God is God, and twenty-five arguments *sed contra*. It will be helpful to examine a few of these arguments since some of them will resurface in later authors. The affirmative arguments are highly indebted to Augustine and Anselm; four of the seven mention their works by name. The fifth argument states that a point does not extend a point, they all make one point. But creatures in God are simple like points. Therefore, they are God and do not extend him.[64] At the heart of this argument is that God's simplicity cannot be augmented or

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[62] Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 54 (ed. Noone 418:16–17). Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 36, q. un, ad oppositum (OTh IV.524).

[63] John 1:3–4.

[64] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10, fm. 5 (MS Todi 98, f. 56vb).

extended. So anything in God would have to be God, lest his simplicity be compromised. The seventh argument argues that a creature in God is eternal, but nothing is eternal except God. Therefore, a creature in God has to be God.[65] This argument is particularly worth noting because it reappears as the primary objection to Ockham's theory of divine ideas. Ockham will argue that divine ideas are not the divine essence, but if they are not the divine essence, then it seems contradictory to say that they are eternal.[66]

The arguments *sed contra* are telling because they foreshadow the move away from divine ideas as the divine essence toward divine ideas as the creatures themselves. The seventh argument states that a creature in God is at an infinite distance from God; but neither of infinitely distant things is essentially predicated of the other.[67] Therefore, a creature cannot be predicated essential of God and so be God. Two comments have to be made about this argument. First, in order for the conclusion of this argument to follow, a creature exemplarily existing in God has to be the creature itself. As the first *sed contra* argument points out, being in God either takes away the creature's being or serves it. If it takes it away, then neither is the creature God or anything else. If it serves the creature's being, then the creature is God. If divine ideas are the creatures themselves, and they are God, then an account of divine ideas is pantheistic. There are two ways to avoid this difficulty. The first is to say that the creature existing in God is a likeness of the creature like Bonaventure. A likeness of the creature is not infinitely distant from God because the likeness is not an actually existing creature. Bonaventure has no trouble arguing that a creature existing exemplarily in God is God because the creature existing exemplarily is an expressive likeness of the thing, not the thing itself.[68]

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[65] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10, fm. 7 (MS Todi 98, f. 56vb).

[66] Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.494:18–495:1). Cf. Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46 (PL 40.30). As we will see, Ockham's argues that eternal does not mean subjectively eternal, but rather eternally known by God.

[67] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10, s.c. 7 (MS Todi 98, f. 56vb).

[68] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 1, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.620b-621a).

The second way to avoid the difficulty is to banish divine ideas from God's being. As the twentieth *sed contra* has it, a creature cannot be said of God nor ought to be said of God by reason of a likeness alone.[69] A creature *qua* creature is finite, and God is infinite. Since it is impossible that the finite and the infinite be the same thing, no creature can be God.[70] In fact, the distance between the infinite and the finite is completely beyond proportion, which means that a creature in God cannot be God.[71] The fact that a creature is always more unlike God than it is like God entails that a creature exemplarily present in God cannot be God. Bonaventure's claim that even "the least assimilation suffices for the notion (*ratio*) of an exemplar" may be true, but a high degree of assimilation is required for something to be God.[72] The definition of a creature does not agree with God as it is a creature, so neither does it agree as the creature is in God.[73] Creatures existing exemplarily in God cannot be sufficiently united with God, i.e., they are too distinct from God, to be God himself. So, to the mind of the objectors, whatever being they have, it cannot be identical with God's.

Raymundus's own response to the question first investigates the nature (*ratio*) of a creature absolutely. It then identifies the diverse ways in which a creature has *esse*. Finally, it investigates the way in which a creature in God can be truly said to be God. As for the first, Raymundus says that a creature's nature bespeaks an effect by another from nothing, a being what (*ens quid*). Since creation is a first, intrinsic production and is a first participation of God, creation necessarily terminates in *esse*. It has to terminate in *esse* because, as it says in the *Liber de causis*, *esse* is the first of created things, and as Avicenna says, *esse* is the first apprehension of the intellect.[74] It has to be from another

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[69] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10, s.c. 20 (MS Todi 98, f. 56vb): "Item creatura in Deo est secundum similitudinem; sed creatura ratione solius similitudinis non potest nec debet dici Deus; quare, etc."

[70] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10, s.c. 17 (MS Todi 98, f. 56vb): "Item cretura ut creatura est finita, ut Deus est infinita <substantia>; ergo idem erit finitum et infinitum; sed hoc est impossibile; quare etc."

[71] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10, s.c. 13 (MS Todi 98, f. 56vb).

[72] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 2, fm. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.629a).

[73] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10, s.c. 18 (MS Todi 98, f. 56vb).

[74] *Liber de causis*, prop. 4, n. 37 (ed. Pattin, 142:37). Avicenna, *Met.* I, c. 5 (ed. van Riet, I.31:2–3).

because what necessarily is only of itself (*a se ipso solum*) necessarily formally is what is necessarily only one. This necessary being is he from whom all other *esse* necessarily is causally *esse* because nothing can give itself *esse*, lest it be before it is.[75]

Given what a creature is, Raymundus argues that a creature can exist in four ways. In one way, a creature's *esse* is real *esse* that exists in act and thus is the act-being of an entity. This *esse* makes a creature makes the essence of a form be in matter by unity and one. Thus, *esse reale* is properly the extreme of contradiction because everything either is or is not. In a second way, a creature can have intelligible or intentional *esse*, as the sense is the sensibles and the intellect is the intelligibles. And so universally every cognized thing has *esse* in the cognizer and intellectually in the one understanding, with the result that the soul is in a sense all things, namely, in that way that all things have or could have intelligible *esse* in it.[76]

In a third way, a creature can have essential being (*esse essentiale*).[77] Essential being is the quidditative being of any being whether it exists in act or not. This *esse* is signified through the definition of the thing because it is an absolute, prior *esse*. It is the being of the essence considered in itself, like humanity or donkeyness according to Avicenna. For a quiddity neither is one nor many, nor external in singulars nor understood in the soul.[78] Given the third way that a creature can have *esse*, it seems clear that Raymundus takes the common understanding of Henry of Ghent's essential being. Every creaturely essence has a sort of being proper to it independent of and prior to its actual

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[75] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10 (MS Todi 98, f. 56vb–57ra). For this last principle, Raymundus cites Richard of St. Victor, *De Trinitate* I, c. 6 (PL 196.893–94).

[76] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10 (MS Todi 98, f. 57ra). Cf. Aristotle, *De anima* III, c. 7, 431b21–22 (ed. Leonine, 45.1.235).

[77] Here, the manuscript seems to read "essentia essentiale," but this has to be an error. Not only is it not clear how the *esse* of a creature is supposed to be an "essential essence," but the manuscript immediately continues: "essentia essentiale quod est esse quiditativum."

[78] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10 (MS Todi 98, f. 57ra). Cf. Avicenna, *Met.* V, c. 1 (ed. van Riet, II.228:26–29). The fact that Raymundus uses donkeyness rather than horseness indicates that he is not looking at Avicenna directly. He is most likely looking at Henry, *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 151rF). It is possible that he is looking at Bonaventure, *De scientia Christi*, q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, V.14a), but this possibility is far more remote.

existence in real *esse* or intentional *esse*. Yet, unlike Henry's account of essential being, Raymundus's account could not be interpreted as being in the mind of God. Raymundus cuts off this possibility by declaring that in a fourth way, a creature's *esse* is ideal or exemplar *esse*, which is *esse* in the First Cause. This fourth way of being is common to every being because there is no being that does not have *esse* in the mind of God.[79] Since Raymundus had already offered arguments that God has ideas in qq. 5 and 7, he offers no justification for the fourth mode of being.

Raymundus's fourfold taxonomy of being is relatively unique among the authors in this study. With the exception of Aquinas early in his career, no one else at the time is arguing that there are four ways of being, and most (following Avicenna) argue that there are only two.[80] Henry alone seems to argue for a third sort of being. The introduction of a fourth way of being could be Raymundus's way of disambiguating Henry's theory. Neither Godfrey of Fontaines, Giles of Rome, nor Scotus give any indication that Henry might think that essential being is being in the mind of God. Perhaps Raymundus saw this possible interpretation of Henry, but rejected it. Introducing ideal *esse* after essential *esse* makes it clear that essential *esse* is not being in the mind of God.

This explanation makes a certain sense of Raymundus's text, but it leaves the status of essential *esse* somewhat mysterious. It is clear that essential *esse* is not the extramental existence of a singular, nor universal existence in a finite mind. The only access that we have to it is to consider the definition of the thing, but it is not merely existence in our minds. It is some sort of actual, extramental being that is distinct from real *esse*. It is to be distinguished from real *esse* because essential *esse* is not subject to the metaphysical distinction of one and many, nor is it subject to the

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[79] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10 (MS Todi 98, f. 57ra). Cf. Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 1, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.620b-621a), who proposes three ways that something can be in something: (1) in the universe, (2) in a cognitive substance, (3) in their cause.

[80] See Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 1, a. 3, ad 2 (ed. Madonnet, I.836–37).

logical distinction of singular and universal. Without more information, not much more can be said about this third way of being.

Raymundus then turns to the question of what it means to exist in God. *Esse* in God, he cautions, is not *esse* as in time, in part, or in a whole because God is beyond the distinction of whole and part. *Esse* in God is also not as in a genus or a species because God is beyond them as well. Since God is beyond composition and place, *esse* in God cannot be as a form in matter or act in a subject. Therefore, God things are in God as in a causal principle, in a simple and divine way. For *esse* in God is nothing other than effects existing in a cause. In this way, he says, things can be understood to be in God as in an efficient, exemplar, and final cause.[81]

Turning to the question of whether things existing exemplarily in God are God, Raymundus notes that there are two schools of thought on the matter. Some deny that a creature in God is God because this determination in God either is posited on the part of the thing predicated, or it is posited on the part of the subject. If the former, then it is not bound fast, nor determines only posted on the part of the subject. If the latter, then it implies something false about the subject, since a subject without a form is from God, not in God under its proper notion.[82]

Again, a creature in God is said to be the notion of an idea to which it is assimilated. Therefore, just as the proposition "a creature having an idea in God is God" is false, so the proposition "a creature in God is God" is also false. Just as "the idea of the ideated is God" does not hold, so neither does "idea *qua* idea is God" hold.[83]

Others following the letter of Augustine simply concede that a creature in God is God, just as the idea of a creature is God since these two are communicated. For since an ideal reason is a perfect notion, the notion is communicated to a creature, as creation bestows total being, i.e., the

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[81] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10 (MS Todi 98, f. 57ra).
[82] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10 (MS Todi 98, f. 57ra).
[83] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10 (MS Todi 98, f. 57ra).

notion of a creature is perfectly saved in its ideal reason. It will be ideally and because an idea is God, a creature, ideally being, is God.[84]

Raymundus's own opinion coheres with those who say that a creature in God is God. Because ideal reasons are in God from eternity and God is simple, therefore, creatures are in God from eternity. The notion of a creature either as it is creatable, to be created, or created is in God. In God the term "idea" always entails a respect to a creature in potency or in habit. But God is called creative in habit or in act when he is creative, going to create a creature, or creating by reason of which respect a divine idea of a creatable, to be created, or created creature can be called a creature in God and consequently God.[85]

Although Raymundus sees the tide shifting toward the position that ideas and creatures existing exemplarily in God are not God, he holds fast to the position of his predecessors. The crux of the problem, he thinks, is that creatures are not actually in God such that the creature itself exists from eternity. To say that a creature exists exemplarily in God is not to say that a creature exists as created. In God, the truth of a creature posits only ideal, uncreated *esse*.[86] A creature is not really different in God, but is really existing in God.[87] In real *esse* a creature is really different from God and from other creatures, but the same is not true when the creature exists in its ideal reasons. In this way of being it is really identical to God, and differs from him only in reason.[88] This account of the existence of things in God coheres well with the accounts found in Bonaventure and Thomas. Divine ideas have a sort of ideal *esse* that is proper to things cognized by God. But in God, all *esse* is supremely united, so divine ideas are God. A divine idea is a creature existing exemplarily in the

[84] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10 (MS Todi 98, f. 57ra–b).
[85] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10 (MS Todi 98, f. 57rb).
[86] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10, ad 2 (MS Todi 98, f. 57rb).
[87] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10, ad 3 (MS Todi 98, f. 57rb).
[88] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 10, ad 4 (MS Todi 98, f. 57rb).

sense of an ideal reason to whose likeness the creature will be created. A divine idea is not identical with the actually created thing.

3. The Scope of Divine Ideas

Raymundus takes up the question of the scope of divine ideas in q. 13 of his *Quaestiones disputatae*. He does not treat the full spectrum of the topic. He does not ask about prime matter, evil, numbers, or possibles. Instead, he restricts himself to the question whether the nature of a divine exemplar is of universals alone or of singulars. Since Henry of Ghent's claim that divine ideas are multiplied only as far as the lowest species still loomed large at the time, it is not surprising that Raymundus would restrict the question in this way.

Many common and expected arguments are presented for both sides of the dilemma. On the one hand, divine ideas ought to be of singulars because there nothing that is made or is makeable except singulars. But God only has notions of what is made, is makeable, or is going to be made.[89] Moreover, God providentially cares for all things equally. Since operations and actions are all singulars, God has providential care for them. But he only cares for what is cognized ideally. Therefore, he has ideas of singulars.[90]

On the other hand, divine ideas ought to be of universals only. Singulars are individuated by matter, which means that there is one formal and ideal notion for all singulars of the same species.[91] Moreover, only the species is intended essentially, so only the species ideated essentially as intended.[92] Again, it is contrary to divine perfection for there to be ideas of singulars. Since God is most universally one, he only has one supremely universal idea.[93] Ideas of singulars could only be a confused and unordered infinite, but there is no such thing in God.[94] Finally, it is more perfect for

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[89] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 13, arg. 2 (MS Todi 98, f. 61vb).
[90] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 13, arg. 4 (MS Todi 98, f. 61vb).
[91] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 13, s.c. 4 (MS Todi 98, f. 61vb).
[92] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 13, s.c. 5 (MS Todi 98, f. 61vb).
[93] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 13, s.c. 7 (MS Todi 98, f. 61vb).
[94] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 13, s.c. 8 (MS Todi 98, f. 61vb).

cognition to be through one species than through many. Therefore, God has just one, universal species because everything that is more perfect belongs to God and is to be attributed to him.[95]

Raymundus's own response to the question is somewhat obscure. After noting that Augustine addressed this question well but darkly, he proposes to address the topic from the part of the exemplar and from the part of the *exemplatum*. His response on the part of the exemplar makes two assumptions. The first assumption is the truth of his fourfold division of *esse* into ideal, quidditative, intellective, and real. The second assumption is that God singularly produces what he cognizes, and God provides, disposes, conserves, and administrates what he produces. Raymundus declares truth of the question from the first assumption, and he confirms it by the second assumption.

From the first assumption, Raymundus reaffirms that a creature in God according to ideal being is its idea. This *esse* is to be distinguished from quidditative being because quidditative being is indifferent to universal and particular. Understood as quidditative being, singulars all share the same essence. Ideal being also has to be distinguished from intelligible being because that which is in the intellect is the subject of science. Science does not concern itself with singulars as such, but with universals.[96]

Raymundus thinks that some have been misled concerning divine knowledge because they failed to distinguish quidditative being and intellective being from ideal being. They argue that singulars are understood through a reflection upon the phantasm, not directly. Singulars cannot be understood directly because intelligible species in the intellect are abstracted entirely from matter and from the conditions of matter. These authors transfer what is true of our intellects to God; just

[95] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 13, s.c. 9 (MS Todi 98, f. 61vb).
[96] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 13 (MS Todi 98, f. 61vb).

as singulars are not in the human intellect properly speaking, so neither are they in the divine intellect.[97]

Against this position, some say that singulars according to the real being that they have in their proper genera have proper ideas. He offers three quick reasons for this position. First, according to Augustine and Aristotle, singular things are made by singular notions since there are diverse quiddities of diverse singulars. Second, according to Aristotle, individuation is not merely through accidents and something extrinsic. Third, since diverse productions and corruptions are of singulars, a diversity of *esse* and diverse imitations of being follow.[98] The first two reasons, despite their appeals to authority, are not very convincing. The authorities could be read in more than one way. Augustine, for example, only says that man and horse are created according to diverse notions.[99] He makes no claim about two individuals of the same species. Raymundus needs to offer more of an argument for these two reasons to be convincing.

Raymundus's third argument is also incomplete, but it is easier to see how it might be completed. Each creature has a distinct and unique *esse* by which it imitates the divine essence. We typically speak of divine ideas in terms of essence, but it is more proper to speak in terms of *esse*. All men may have a specifically identical essence, but each has his own *esse*. Thus, God has to have a distinct idea to create each distinct and unique *esse*. This interpretation has to assume that Raymundus is appropriating quite a bit of Thomas's metaphysics.[100] I cannot support this assumption from Raymundus's texts, but I do not see a better way to understand the text.

Having argued that God has ideas of singulars, Raymundus seeks to prove it from God's distinct cognition, production, conservation, and administration of things. First, God has to have

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[97] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 13 (MS Todi 98, f. 62ra). Although this was a rather common position at the time, I suspect that Raymundus is thinking particularly of Aquinas. See, Thomas, *ST* I, q. 84, a. 7 (ed. Leonine, 5.325–26).

[98] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 13 (MS Todi 98, f. 62rb).

[99] Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46 (PL 40.30).

[100] See, Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 8, s.c. 2 (ed. Leonine, 115:35–39).

distinct cognition of singulars otherwise they would come about only by chance, and not by a proper intention. Second, every production is determined to a this something (*hoc aliquid*) for every one of God's effects is singular. Therefore, since every agent intends to assimilate an effect to itself and every effect is equally like its cause, it is necessary that every effect be assimilated by a proper divine exemplar and a singular likeness. Third, every provision is of singulars, since a provision is an order of things to an end. But everything that is orderable to an end and is reducible according to proper and singular operations is reduced and ordered. And through this it is assimilated to a singular, providential, ordering, and reducing likeness. Fourth, everything according to its proper esse by which it exists as a singular in act is conserved and administrated. Therefore, singulars are neither conserved nor administrated except singularly. Nor do they singularly participate divine being except according as they are assimilated to it. But it does not belong to singulars to be assimilated singularly except under singular likenesses. Therefore, there have to be ideas of singulars.[101]

This set of confirming arguments is more clear and convincing than the arguments above. In order for God to cognize, produce, and providentially govern creatures he has to have a distinct idea for each of them. If ideas were of universals, then God would only cognize, produce, and providentially govern singulars indistinctly, imperfectly, confusedly, and potentially.[102] None of these adverbs is fittingly applied to God, who is pure act.

The fact that Raymundus begins his position with a reference to his fourfold distinction of being makes me think that Raymundus is primarily intending to oppose Henry of Ghent's position. Since, according to the traditional reading, Henry argues divine idea have essential being, which corresponds to the essence considered in itself, Raymundus thinks that he has erred in three respects. First, he misidentifies divine ideas as indifferent to the distinctions of one and many and

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[101] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 13 (MS Todi 98, f. 62rb–va).
[102] *Quaestiones disputatae XXV*, q. 13, ad 4 (MS Todi 98, f. 62ra).

universal and particular. Second, he thinks that divine ideas are subject to the same indifference as essences that have been stripped of matter and all conditions of matter. The confluence of these two errors results in the claim that divine ideas extend only as far as each species can be formally distinguished. The third error seems to indicate that the discussion of essence itself is misplaced. Divine ideas are distinguished more by the *esse* of each creature than the essence of each creature. Since each creature's real *esse* is distinct from every other creature's real *esse*, there must be a correspondingly distinct ideal *esse* in God for each creature.

4. Recapitulation and Conclusions

Raymundus Rigaldus's theory of divine ideas is valuable as a synthesis of the theories of his predecessors. Divine ideas are the exemplars of divine expressive truth that express the ways in which the divine essence is imitable. He appropriates the fontal terminology of Bonaventure, the emphasis on exemplarity and imitability from Thomas Aquinas and Matthew of Aquasparta, and the terminology of *relucens* from Richard of Mediavilla. Inspired by Thomas, Raymundus argues that these exemplars are not really distinct from God, but they are rationally distinct because God understands himself perfectly. In order to understand himself perfectly, he has to understand his imitability perfectly. In order to understand his imitability perfectly, he has to cognize each possible imitation distinctly. If he did not understand each possible imitation perfectly, then God would not know how all of the parts are related to the whole.

Raymundus offers some originality when speaking of the existence of things in God. He articulates a fourfold distinction of *esse*. Unlike Thomas, who argues that there two types of *esse*, and unlike Henry, who argues, according to the traditional reading, that there are three types of *esse*, Raymundus argues that there are four types of *esse*. There is the real *esse* of actually existing things, the intellective *esse* of things in the intellect, the quidditative (or essential) being of essences that prescind from the question of existing in act, and the ideal (or exemplar) *esse*, which is *esse* in the First

Cause. Ideal *esse* is common to every being because there is no being that does not have *esse* in the mind of God. This sort of *esse* is identical with God because it is in God. Since divine ideas have ideal *esse*, it follows that divine ideas have divine being.

Raymundus's treatment of the scope of divine ideas is restricted to the question of divine ideas of singulars. He clearly argues that there are divine ideas of singulars. The reasons that lead him to think that there should be divine ideas of singulars are also clear, but his reasons for this position are not clear. That God should have divine ideas of singulars is evident from the requirements of divine cognition, production, and providence. Each of these three positions would be lacking in God if he did not have divine ideas of singulars. The reasons that he offers to explain how God has ideas of singulars are incomplete at best. They rely primarily on appeals to the authority of Augustine and Aristotle instead of reasoned arguments. The third reason that Raymundus gives is the closest that he comes to an argument. This reason, which is based on each singular having a distinct *esse*, is a promising way to argue for divine ideas of singulars if Raymundus intends for it to be supported by the sort of metaphysics of *esse* that Thomas endorses. Since it cannot be confirmed that Raymundus endorses a Thomistic account of *esse*, I cannot be certain that his statement is meant to argue as I surmised.

CHAPTER IV

A. JOHN DUNS SCOTUS (ca. 1265–1308)

1. The Role of Divine Ideas in Scotus's Thought

John Duns Scotus's theory of divine ideas is an intersection for many of Scotus's original and innovative metaphysical theories. Like Thomas, Scotus argues that being qua being, not immaterial substance is the subject of metaphysics.[1] For Thomas, God does not fall under the subject of metaphysics; instead, he is the cause of the subject.[2] For Scotus, God does fall under the subject of metaphysics because the notion of being taken from creatures does apply to him.[3] Yet, he is investigated in metaphysics, primarily, under the transcendental disjunction of being into finite and infinite. God alone is infinite being, and Scotus's proof for God's existence is an argument than an Infinite Being exists. God is the source and principle of all that exists. He performs this role by means of his intellect and will. He knows and loves creatures into existence. His knowledge of things cannot be detached from ideas. Unlike Thomas's presentation in the *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Scotus's theory of divine knowledge could not withstand a discussion of divine knowledge without discussing ideas. In fact, "in Scotus's thought, the question of divine knowledge (formed from complex propositions) rests on the doctrine of ideas (simple, representative concepts combined by knowledge)."[4] Divine ideas are the bedrock of God's knowledge of creation, and so Scotus preserves and continues the line of masters who defended divine ideas. His theory of divine ideas, however, signals a clear departure from the standard way of understanding divine ideas. His predecessors, despite their differences, all articulated theories of divine ideas in which ideas arose from "the divine

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[1] *In VI Met.*, q. 4, nn. 10–12 (OPh IV.87–88); cf. *Rep. Par. I-A*, prol., q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Wolter and Bychov, I.75–77)

[2] Thomas, *In De Trinitate*, q. 5, a. 4 (ed. Leonine, 50.154:175–206).

[3] For Scotus's theory of the univocity of being, see, *inter alia*, *In De anima*, q. 21, nn. 25–32 (OPh V.218–221); *In VI Met.*, q. 1, nn. 47–48 and q. 4, n. 11 (OPh IV.19–20 and 87–88); *Lect.*, I, d. 3, p. 1, qq. 1–2, nn. 97–113 (ed. Vatican, 17.261–67); *Ord.*, I, d. 3, p. 1, qq. 1–2, nn. 26–55, and q. 3, nn. 131–66 (ed. Vatican, 3.18–38 and 3.81–103).

[4] Olivier Boulnois, "Jean Duns Scot," in *Sur la science divine,* edited by J.-C. Bardout and O. Boulnois (Paris: Presses Universalitaires de France, 2002), 245.

intellect's grasping the divine essence insofar as it is related to other things that are capable of imitating it."[5] The divine ideas were construed as relations of imitability. Scotus, as we will see, rejects this theory and replaces it with the creature itself as known.

Scotus was also concerned with the growing trend to limit the number of divine ideas. Parallel to his metaphysical commitments with regard to universals, Scotus wants an unlimited scope for divine ideas. He wants to say that there are an infinite number of ideas. He wants to return to the fullness of divine ideas found in Bonaventure's theory, but without committing himself to the relations of imitability that comes with Bonaventure's explanation of truth as supremely expressive.

Scotus lectured on Peter Lombard's *Sententiae* three times, twice in Oxford and then once in Paris. These three sets of lectures resulted in the *Lectura, Ordinatio,* and *Reportatio Parisiensis*. In the *Lectura* and the *Ordinatio*, Scotus focuses exclusively on questions related to the status of divine ideas. He omits entirely any question of the scope of divine ideas. Only in the *Reportatio Parisiensis* does Scotus consider the scope of divine ideas. It is difficult to account for this difference. Undoubtedly, Scotus was familiar with the controversy surrounding the scope of divine ideas before he went to Paris soon after the turn of the 14th century.[6] Not only does Scotus give evidence that he is familiar with Henry's theory as a whole in the *Lectura* and *Ordinatio*, he uses the question of divine ideas as an opportunity to oppose Henry's theory of *esse essentiae*.[7] Scotus knew that Henry's theory contracted the number of divine ideas, but did not feel the need to address the question.

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[5] Timothy B. Noone, "Scotus on Divine Ideas: Reportatio Paris. I–A, d. 36," *Medioevo* 24 (1988): 359.

[6] Courtenay argues quite strongly that "Scotus would have gone from Oxford to Paris, probably for the first time, in 1300 or 1301" ("Scotus at Paris," in *Via Scoti: Methodologia ad mentem Joannis Duns Scoti. Atti del 244 Duns Scotus Bibliography Congresso Scotistico Internazionale Roma 9–11 marzo 1993*, ed. Leonardo Sileo, vol. 1 [Rome: Edizioni Antonianum, 1995], 157). Wolter seconds this "cardinal fact" ("Scotus at Oxford," in *Via Scoti: Methodologia ad mentem Joannis Duns Scoti. Atti del 244 Duns Scotus Bibliography Congresso Scotistico Internazionale Roma 9–11 marzo 1993*, ed. Leonardo Sileo, vol. 1 [Rome: Edizioni Antonianum, 1995], 183). Cf. Ignatius Brady's introductory remarks in *Fr. Rogeri Marston O.F.M.*, *Quodlibeta quatuor*, ed. G.J. Etzkorn and Ignatius Brady (Quaracchi, 1968), 36*–38*. Brady argues that the political climate between England and France in the 1290s positively rules out an earlier trip across the channel for Scotus.

[7] For Scotus's knowledge of Henry's theory in general, see, e.g., *Lect.*, I, d. 35, q. un., n. 9 (ed. Vatican, 17.446:18–25); *Ord.*, I, d. 35, q. un., n. 12–13 (ed. Vatican, 6.248–49). For Scotus's arguments against *esse essentiae*, see, *Lect* I, d. 36, q. un. (ed. Vatican, 17.461–76); *Ord.*, I, d. 36, q. un., nn. 13–25 (ed. Vatican, 6.276:5–281:4).

In addition to being the only text in which he discusses the scope of divine ideas, the *Reportatio Parisiensis*, disputed ca. 1302–04, is also Scotus's most influential treatment of the question. As Noone points out, earliest Scotists, such as William of Alnwick, showed a clear preference for the Parisian lectures over the *Ordinatio*'s treatment of the divine ideas.[8] So, since it is Scotus's most complete, latest, and most influential treatment of the subject, I will focus exclusively on the *Reportatio Parisiensis*, noting Scotus's parallel treatments in the *Lectura* and *Ordinatio* in the footnotes.[9]

2. The Status of Divine Ideas

Scotus treats the status of divine ideas in the first two of four questions in the *Reportatio Parisiensis*. He asks whether something other than God and the divine essence are in the divine intellect as a per se intelligible object by it, and whether the things that the divine intellect cognizes other than himself by a simple intellection, require distinct relations to be understood distinctly. Scotus treats these two questions together, so the usual division of the questions will have to take from various parts of Scotus's treatment. For example, Scotus's analysis builds to a definition of an idea. His definition of divine ideas comes after and incorporates his explanations of the objects of divine cognition, the plurality of divine ideas, and the existence enjoyed by objects of divine cognition. Since we have to understand all of these aspects before we can understand what he means

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[8] Noone, "Scotus on Divine Ideas," 360. See, William of Alnwick, *Determinationes* 22 (Civitas Vaticana, Palatini lat. 1805, f. 148r). This point should be emphasized. Many scholars in the 20th century argued that Scotus and Alnwick were in at odds with regard to divine ideas, especially with regard to their existence. E.g., Maurer writes, "For Scotus, the production of the divine ideas is not a creation, for their *esse intelligible* is not a real being. Scotus places the being of the divine ideas between real being and a simple being of reason (*ens rationis*). William of Alnick, an 'independent Scotist,' opposed Scotus on this point; he denied that the divine ideas are produced by God in *esse intelligibile* on the ground that this would amount to an eternal creation of the ideas" ("The Role of Divine Ideas in the Theology of William of Ockham," in *Being and Knowing: Studies in Thomas Aquinas and Later Medieval Philosophers* [Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1990], 374). Maurer misinterprets Scotus because he does not take into consideration that Scotus's theory of the existence of things in God matures in the *Reportatio*. Alnwick is not so much opposing Scotus as he is following the position that Scotus laid out in the later writing. I will address this misinterpretation more below. Cf. Étienne Gilson, *Jean Duns Scot: Introduction a ses Positions Fondamentales* (Paris: Vrin, 1978), 284, n. 2.

[9] See, Boulnois, "Jean Duns Scot," 245: "Mais la relation entre ces deux derniers texts [i.e., la *Reportatio Parisiensis* et l'*Ordinatio*] est complexe, et, sur certaines questions, don't celle de l'extension des idées divines, le texte de la *Reportatio* reflète une position substantiellement différente et sans doute dernière."

by divine ideas, we will have to delay the final answer to the question "What is a divine idea?" even though it is the question we have been treating first.

a. What is a Divine Idea?

As I noted at the beginning of the section on Henry of Ghent, Scotus begins almost every topic by explaining Henry's position on the matter.[10] Divine ideas are no exception to this trend. Scotus begins his response to the first question by offering a version Henry's series of distinctions about the object of cognition.[11] The object in the intellect can be related to the intellect in two ways: (1) in one way it is related as a mover to something mobile; (2) in another way it is related just like the act of a terminating potency, either (a) as it primarily terminates the act of a potency according to a proper notion as a sensible primarily terminates the act of a sense or (b) as it secondarily terminates the act of a potency insofar as it is included in the notion (*ratio*) of another object primarily terminating the act of the power, as a common sensible like quantity secondarily terminates the act of sensing with respect to a proper sensible.[12]

Having made these distinctions in the object of the intellect, Scotus applies them to God. As for (1), which is like a mover to something mobile, nothing other than the divine essence is an intelligible object for the divine intellect. In this, he agrees with his predecessors, although the reason he offers for this claim is unique.[13] Any divine intellection whatsoever is formally infinite. But nothing created moves what is formally infinite to act because nothing moves or acts on something more noble than itself, neither in equivocal or univocal motion. But a created thing is formally finite,

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[10] Hoffmann, "Henry of Ghent's Influence on John Duns Scotus's Metaphysics," 339.

[11] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 10–14 (ed. Noone 398:5–399:29). Cf. Henry, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 26:20–28:65). Scotus cites Aristotle as an authority, but arrives at the same distinctions that Henry does.

[12] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, q. 1–2, n. 10 (ed. Noone, 398:5–21).

[13] This point needs to be emphasized. For all of their differences, every single one of the authors in this study agrees on the most fundamental point that God has only one source of his knowledge: the divine essence. See Gilson, *Jean Duns Scot*, 286: "on doit commencer par souligner leur accord sur un point fundamental. . . . il n'est permis de dire que l'intellect de Dieu soit mû par un autre objet que l'esence divine elle-même."

not infinite, regardless of whether it exists extramentally or in the divine intellect. Therefore, only the divine essence has the notion of intelligibility for the divine intellect.[14]

If we understand the object of the intellect as terminating the act of a potency in the sense of (2a) a primary terminating object, then the object is only God. An object that primarily terminates an act of some potency is necessarily emitted to that act. Because vision in the thing seen would be caused by anything at all, even by God, something would necessarily be co-emitted in the notion of the first terminating act of vision. But no created or finite thing is necessarily coemitted to an infinite act because then it would not be infinite, but possible without it. Therefore, no finite thing primarily terminates an infinite act.[15] As Noone points out, if some creature were the object of God's intellect in the sense of (2a), it would be as if "God's eternal understanding somehow depended on thinking about creaturely being and that His blessedness, logically consequent on His supreme act of self-understanding, also depended on His awareness of creaturely being."[16] God primarily knows himself when he knows his essence. His knowledge and beatitude in no way depend on creatures, even just the knowledge of creatures.

But if we understand the object of the intellect in the sense of (2b), an object secondarily terminating the act of the divine intellect, then God does have knowledge of creatures because they are included eminently in the primary terminating object, and they terminate by reason of the primary object. This situation is possible because such a secondary object is not necessarily coemitted to the act but more follows the act and depends upon it. For the secondary object is not related to the act of the divine intellect as a measure, but as something measured to its measure.[17]

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[14] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, q. 1–2, n. 11 (ed. Noone, 398:22–399:4).

[15] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, q. 1–2, n. 13 (ed. Noone, 399:11–20).

[16] Noone, "Scotus on Divine Ideas," 362. Cf. Timothy B. Noone, "Aquinas on Divine Ideas: Scotus's Evaluation," *Franciscan Studies* 56 (1998): 309.

[17] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, q. 1–2, n. 14 (ed. Noone, 399:21–29).

To argue that God cognizes things other than himself by means of his essence, Scotus offers arguments from the part of the object, from the part of the intellect, and from the part of foundation. On the part of the object, every intellect cognizes any being whatsoever insofar as it is cognizable. This principle holds because being is the first adequate object of the intellect, so whatever is contained under being can be understood by some intellect. Therefore, the divine intellect can supremely cognize all cognizable beings. The consequence holds because, as Aristotle and Averroes argue, there are only two impediments to perfect cognition: (1) the excellence of the cognizable thing and a defect of the intellect, and (2) the imperfection of the cognizable thing.[18] But the divine intellect does not suffer either of these impediments. The divine essence is the most excellent object of cognition, and the divine intellect is capable of comprehending an infinite object. Again, no imperfection in the cognizable thing prohibits divine understanding; instead, he perfectly understands it. And being able to cognize things of lesser intelligibility is the mark of a greater cognitive power.[19] Therefore, God's intellect perfectly cognizes every cognizable being according to its proper intelligibility and grade of being.[20]

Second, on the part of the intellect, Scotus argues that each specific difference bespeaks a certain grade of being and determinate perfection with respect to the perfection of all being. Therefore, since things are related to the cognized as to being (*esse*), each specific difference bespeaks a determinate species of intelligibility. But the divine intellect relates to all being. Therefore, it cognizes each thing according to its grade of being and intelligibility.

In connection with this argument, Scotus mentions two arguments from his predecessors that can be understood well or poorly. The first argues that God, in knowing the totality of the

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[18] Aristotle, *Met.*, II, t. 1, 993b9–11 (AL 25.3.43). Averroes, *In II Met.*, com. 1 (ed. Iuntina, VIII, f. 14ra–b).

[19] See Aristotle, *De sensu*, c. 6, 445b3–11. Cf. *Lect.*, II, d. 2, p. 2, qq. 5–6, nn. 269, 391 (ed. Vatican 18.180–81, 219); *Ord.*, II, d. 2, p. 2, q. 5, nn. 294, 390 (ed. Vatican, 7.281–282, 326).

[20] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 16–17 (ed. Noone, 400:1–401:3).

divine essence, knows himself as the cause of all other things, and so knows the things to which his causality extends.[21] This argument has its roots in Pseudo-Dionysius and Alexander of Hales, but it should be familiar to us from Bonaventure and Petrus de Trabibus.[22] If we understand this argument to mean that the effect is understood in the very act of intellect by which the cause is comprehended, then the argument is false. Such an interpretation would require that cognition of a creature be included in the very act by which God understands himself. This is to be rejected for the same reason that God does not know anything other than himself as the primary terminating object of his cognition. But if we understand the argument as positing that he who comprehends a cause insofar as it is cognizable can cognize those things to which its causality extends, then it is true because the cognition follows in the intellect comprehending the cause in potency to comprehending all things caused by it.[23]

The second argument states that God perfectly cognizes his essence as imitable in diverse ways. This argument is clearly from Thomas and Henry.[24] If we understand this argument as saying that cognizing something under the notion of imitation with respect to the first intelligible that cognizes it quidditatively, then it is false. Imitation is not a specific difference of this or that being. Someone can cognize that white is more or less participatable by colors yet not know the specific differences of each of the colors. If we understand the argument as saying that God perfectly cognizes every mode of imitation, then we have to include the foundation of the imitation, i.e., the

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[21] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 19 (ed. Noone, 401:11–16).

[22] Ps.-Dionysius, *De div. nom.*, c. 7, §2 (PG 3:883A). Alexander of Hales, *Summa theologica* I, inq. 1, tract. 5, sect. 1, q. 2, c. 2, n. 165 (ed. Quaracchi, I.248b). Bonventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.601a). Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 3, ad 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.817–818). Petrus de Trabibus, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2 (MS Assisi 154, f. 93va).

[23] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 20 (ed. Noone, 401:17–402:16).

[24] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 14, a. 6 (ed. Leonine, 4.176). Thomas, *ST* I, q 15, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.202). Henry, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 28:72–29:81). Noone suggests that Scotus might have Roger Marston, *Quodlibet* IV, q. 4, ad arg. in opp., (ed. Etzkorn and Brady, 372) in mind because the argument from imitability had become commonplace by the end of the 13th century (Noone, "Scotus on Divine Ideas," 364). Since the argument was commonplace, Scotus may not have had anyone in mind. But if he did have someone in mind, I am inclined to think that he was thinking of Henry. Having just borrowed Henry's distinctions regarding the object of cognition from the beginning of *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2, it makes sense that he would be thinking of what Henry says just paragraphs later about imitability.

singular creatures that do the imitating.[25] Knowledge of the imitation alone will not suffice; the other extreme of the imitation must also be known.

Finally, on the part of the foundation in which the imitation is founded, Scotus argues that whatever contains another in real existence (*esse reale*) contains it virtually in intellectual existence (*esse intellectuale*). But God contains all things really according to his *esse reale*. Therefore, he contains all things intellectually according to intelligibility, and as a result, all other things have *esse intelligibile* in him. The major premise must be true because unless the first cause contained all things virtually, they would not be contained in anything neither formally nor virtually. There is nothing in a second cause, neither virtually nor formally, that is not more eminently contained in the first cause.[26]

By this analysis Scotus offers us part of his answer to the question "What is a divine idea?" A divine idea is a secondary consideration of the divine essence by the divine intellect. All things have intelligible being in the divine intellect as secondary objects terminating God's understanding prior to their real, created existence, i.e., they are "virtually included in the primary object terminating the divine mind, the divine essence."[27] For the most part this answer is in continuity with that of his predecessors. Notably, although Scotus borrows liberally from Henry's *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 for his derivation of the objects of cognition, he omits the final part of Henry's distinctions. He does not include the distinction between cognizing an image insofar as it is an image and insofar as it is a thing.[28] From Scotus's answer to the first question, it is not clear why he has omitted this aspect of Henry's analysis. The reason for this choice will become clearer only when we examine the other

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[25] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 22–23 (ed. Noone, 402:23–403:17). The last point is particularly important because, if Scotus is right, then Henry's theory of ideas is incoherent with regard to ideas of singulars. As we will see below, Scotus thinks that Thomas denies ideas of singulars as well, so presumably he intends this critique to extend to Thomas as well.

[26] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 24 (ed. Noone, 403:18–31). Cf. *Liber de causis*, prop. 1 (ed. Pattin, 134:1–138:70), esp.: "Et quando removetur causa secunda a causato suo, non removetur ab eo causa prima, quoniam causa prima est maioris et vehementioris adhaerentiae cum re quam causa propinqua. Et non figitur causatum causae secundae nisi per virtutem causae primae."

[27] Noone, "Scotus on Divine Ideas," 365.

[28] Henry, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 27:49–28:65).

aspects of the *ratio* of idea. Only after we see Scotus's arguments for the plurality of divine ideas will we be able to see why he only includes part of Henry's analysis.

b. The Plurality of Divine Ideas

Although Scotus was happy to appropriate his predecessors' arguments for the object of divine cognition, he rejects a significant portion of their arguments for the plurality of divine ideas. When asked whether distinct relations are required in God to account for his distinctly cognizing distinct intelligibles, Scotus answers that one part of the question is certain and one part remains subject to doubt. It is certain that there are distinct relations and distinct ideas in God for cognizing distinct intelligibles, when speaking of God's simple knowledge of distinct quiddities like rock, man, etc.[29] Anything a created and imperfect intellect can do can be done by a perfect and uncreated intellect. But a created intellect can compare the divine essence to every created intelligible. Therefore, God can through his comparative act cause diverse relations of reason, not *de novo*, because no real or rational relation exists *de novo* between God and a creature. Therefore, by eternally comparing his essence to created intelligibles he creates in himself rational relations to them.[30]

This argument is not novel or controversial, but it is also not really what is at stake. Everyone concedes such ideal relations in God, but this is not the question. The question is whether these ideal reasons must be posited in God in order that he have distinct cognition of the distinct things cognized through them. The received wisdom is that such relations are necessary for God to have distinct cognition.[31] It will be recalled that Bonaventure argued that such relations are necessary because if the divine ideas were the creaturely essences themselves, then a theory of divine ideas would amount to pantheism.[32]

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[29] Scotus is careful to distinguish this sort of knowledge from knowledge of future contingents. (*Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 27 [ed. Noone, 404:14]).

[30] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 26–28 (ed. Noone, 404:8–26).

[31] See, e.g., Henry, *Quodlibet* VII, q. 4 (ed. Wilson, 39). Henry, *Quodilbet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 28:72–29:81).

[32] Bonaventure, *De scientia Christi*, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, V.8b).

Scotus identifies three arguments for the necessity of these relations. Some, like Bonaventure and Henry, posit the relations in the divine essence as the *ratio cognoscendi* of creatures.[33] Others, like James of Viterbo, posit the relations as the object cognized.[34] A third group, including Peter John Olivi and Petrus de Trabibus, posit the relations in the essence as necessary in the very act of understanding.[35]

Although Scotus thinks that the second position is the most probable of the three, all three positions are deficient. The first position could also be acceptable to the extent that it is reduced to the second position because the *ratio intelligendi* does not really differ from the object. The intelligible object in itself is not present in our intellect because of the imperfection that we have in our post-lapsian state. For the stone is not in the soul, but its species, and our intellection is only abstractive and not intuitive. Thus, *we* require a determinate species of the object, and this *ratio* as a species of this object is not the *ratio* of another object; therefore, many species are required to understand many things distinctly and the complete reason is the imperfection, finitude, and limitation of the representing species in our intellect. But it is entirely the opposite in divine things because God's intellect is perfect. He does not lack the species of any object such that he cognizes, nor is something on his part is required such that he representatively cognizes other things because the essence alone by his understanding is *per se*, primarily, and exclusively representative of itself and of all other things. And so no *ratio intelligendi* is required for the act nor a notion informing or quasi-informing the intellect so that he distinctly cognizes. Because the divine essence is always present to the divine intellect, it is the *ratio cognoscendi* of all other intelligibles, not "that by which" (*quo*) as a quasi-informing understanding, but as a principle, as "that by which" (*quo*) it is cognized, that by

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[33] See, e.g., Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.601b). Henry, *Quodlibet* VIII, q. 1 (ed. Badius, 300rB).

[34] James of Viterbo, *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (ed. Ypma, 64–65).

[35] Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 158ra). Petrus de Trabibus, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 1, a. 1, q. 2 (MS Assisi 154, f. 93va–b). Scotus recounts these three in *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 30 (ed. Noone, 406:2–5).

which a conclusion is cognized. For a principle is not a *ratio cognoscendi* of a conclusion unless it is cognized primarily in itself in which the cognition of the conclusions are virtually included. In the same way, the divine essence is representative of other things by itself, as the primary object is the *ratio cognoscendi* of all secondary objects. Thus, the opinion of Henry of Ghent *et al.* is reduced to the opinion of James of Viterbo.[36]

Scotus is concerned that the first and third positions are forced to conclude that the relations in the divine intellect are real in God. A rational relation is always posterior to an act of understanding, but proponents of the first and third positions argue that the *ratio intelligendi* precedes intellection or an act of understanding. If the *ratio intelligendi* is a relation that is prior to the divine act of understanding, then it must be a real relation.[37]

The second position, which posits ideal relations in the essence as it is the object cognized, is the most probable because the ideal reasons are part of the object, not in itself but as cognized. It follows that they are rational relations. Yet how can they be cognized relations in this way and still be *rationes cognoscendi* of other things determinately? Both the relation of imitability and the creaturely essence would have to be known to explain God's knowledge; otherwise, the divine intellect would be comparing itself to something unknown. But comparison presupposes knowledge of both extremes. Since the ideal relations are introduced to explain knowledge of the creaturely essence, they are rendered inert.[38] Scotus endorses Peter John Olivi's critique of defining ideas as relations, while rejecting the solution he proposes as a replacement.

At bottom, the problem with all three positions is that they require relations of imitability to explain God's knowledge of creatures. In response, Scotus denies that any relation is necessary on the basis of a comparison to our knowledge of external objects. If God needs a rational relation to

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[36] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 34 (ed. Noone, 407:20–408:25).
[37] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 35–36 (ed. Noone, 408:26–409:4).
[38] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 38 (ed. Noone, 409:16–29).

know external objects, then how according to any of the three positions could a finite intellect cognize an external object without any rational relation? Therefore, if that through which the external object is cognized is not limited to this or that thing (as the divine essence is), this thing can be distinctly cognized by it as much as that thing without any rational relation to it. Whenever we know the species white, no rational relation is required to related us to the species. If we did require such a relation, then we would never cognize whiteness unless we had previously compared its species to it, which would eliminate the reason for positing the species in the first place. Moreover, a reflective act would precede a direct act. Therefore, the species of white leads to cognition without any respect preceding or following the act.[39]

Scotus offers four arguments in support of the consequence, of which the third is of particular interest. Because a finite equivocal cause can produce many things distinctly without any respect determining it, therefore all the more can an infinite equivocal cause produce such things and do so without any determining respect. Therefore, similarly it can produce many things in intelligible being and so it can cognize without any respect in it.[40]

Given that Scotus has argued that the essence alone is the principle of representing things distinctly and determinately without any respect, he still has to explain how this is possible. He outlines two ways in which this position may be defended. First, he reminds us that the relation between God and creatures is according to Aristotle's third mode of relation.[41] The third mode of relation is unique in that one extreme of the relation is not referred to the other except that the

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[39] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 40–42 (ed. Noone, 411:10–412:14)

[40] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 45 (ed. Noone, 413:1119). Cf. *Liber de causis*, prop. 1 (ed. Pattin: 136:39–41): "Iam igitur manifestum est et planum quod causa prima longinqua est plus comprehendens et vehementius causa rei quam causa propinqua." All four of Scotus's proofs for the consequence are found at *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 43–46 (ed. Noone, 412:15–414:7). Scotus also offers two more arguments against the need for relations. The first of these arguments is based on an infinite regress. Either God's essence is the *ratio cognoscendi* of other things immediately or an infinite regress of relations to explain relations results. The final argument argues that the act of the intellect is one, so it is principle will be *per se* one. But the divine essence plus a rational relation is not *per se* one. Thus, we must jetison the relation. See, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 47–49 (ed. Noone, 414:8–415:23).

[41] Aristotle, *Met.* V, c. 5, 1021a27–b3 (AL 25.3.2.113:611–114:621).

other is referred to it. Thus, an intelligible object is not related to us except because our understanding is related to it. This example yields the universal principle that the measure is not related to the measured unless the measured is first referred to the measure. The divine intellect is the measure of every intelligible thing, just as the artificer is the measure of the artifact because he is the cause of the thing.[42] This line of thinking is reminiscent of Henry's fivefold division of rational relations in *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1. Henry argued that in the last type of rational relation, which type was characteristic of divine ideas, the rational relation is naturally prior to the real relation because the real relation was caused by the rational relation.[43] Scotus denies that a divine idea is a rational relation at its core, but, as we saw above, he does think that distinct relations and distinct ideas are required for God to cognize distinct intelligibles.[44] Each idea is the measure of that which it measures. But the distinct relations are on the part of the measured, not on God's part. The distinct relations exist on the part of the things that are referred to the divine intellect. The divine intellect terminates the relation of each and every intelligible through a merely absolute relation, and not through some relation in God corresponding to the relation of the measured to it.[45] Scotus agrees that the idea is the cause of the real relation in the thing, but denies that it is a rational relation prior to the real relation. Instead, they are "logically consequent upon God's knowledge of creatures."[46] If God did have such a rational relation instead of terminating the relation by an absolute relation to the whole essence, then the requirements of a relation of the third mode would not be met.[47]

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[42] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 50 (ed. Noone, 416:1–20). Boulnois expresses this well: "Quand la mesure se rapporte au mesuré, ou la pensée à l'objet, ce n'est pas l'objet qui est causé par notre pensée, mais l'inverse: notre pensée dépend de l'objet qu'elle vise. L'objet est le principle et le term de la relation d'intellection, et il n'est pas constitué par elle. Mais en Dieu, la relation d'intellection va en sens inverse: les objets son adéquats à la pensée divine, car produits par elle, et non la pensée divine aux objets" ("Jean Duns Scot," 248).

[43] Henry, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1 (ed. Macken, 7:1–7).

[44] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 27 (ed. Noone, 404:11–14).

[45] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 50 (ed. Noone, 416:15–19): "Et ideo quaelibet res alia refertur ad intellectum divinum ut mensuratum ad mensuram et ipsum [sc., intelligere divinum] terminat relationem cuiuscumque intelligibilis per rationem mere absolutam, et non per relationem aliquam in Deo correspondentem relationi mensurati ad ipsum."

[46] Noone, "Aquinas on Divine Ideas: Scotus's Evaluation," 315.

[47] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 53 (ed. Noone, 418:3–11).

The second way to defend that God does not need a relation in order to understand things other than himself is based on the fact that God has no real relation to creatures. It follows that he cannot have a rational relation either because, as was shown above, it is impossible for a rational relation to exist at the same time as the divine intellection of something other than himself or to precede such intellection. Comparative intellection cannot precede simple intellection. Thus, if some relation were simultaneous or preceded divine intellection, then that intellection would be a real relation and be from the nature of the thing.[48]

These two defenses yield two positions that Scotus is willing to concede. The first holds that a rational relation exists in the understood object to the divine understanding as a measured to a measure and not vice versa. The second denies any respect in either extreme because it is difficult to see what an understood thing in *esse cognitum* is from eternity such that it could be referred to intellection. If it were already something, it would be absolute and could be understood primarily under an absolute notion. But since it has no existence of its own, it cannot be related to anything.[49] The consequences of these positions seem completely devastating for his predecessors' accounts of divine ideas. In the first place, they seem to destroy the ideas by which Augustine said, "no one can be wise without them."[50] In the second place, they seem to destroy every eternal relation in God to creatures, even though Scotus had conceded that distinct relations and distinct ideas exist in God. If, as the second position argues, there are no rational relations nor real relations between the divine intellect and its object, then it could not compare itself to creatures.[51]

In his response to the first objection, Scotus offers his definition of divine ideas. An idea is "an eternal notion (*ratio*) in the divine mind in accordance with something formable according to its

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[48] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 51 (ed. Noone, 416:21–29).
[49] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n.55 (ed. Noone, 418:26–419:4).
[50] Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46 (PL 40.29): "nisi his intellectis sapiens esse nemo possit."
[51] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 56 (ed. Noone, 419:9–15).

proper notion."[52] The notable difference of this definition from the definitions we examined earlier is the conspicuous absence of relation. By Scotus's definition, an idea is not some relation but the object cognized in the divine mind. Creatures are in the divine mind objectively as the object cognized. A divine idea is the creature itself as known as a secondary object terminating the divine act of understanding. God still knows creatures on this definition and so is still able to act wisely: "there is no idea of stone except stone as understood."[53] His essence represents all things simply by one and the same thing, yet God does not make man and donkey by the same notion. Divine ideas are still really one, but many according to the things known by God. Divine ideas do not arise externally such that they would lessen his intellect. Moreover, they are eternal notions. They are eternal precisely because God is eternal. It follows that there is no shadow of change in the ideas. God has known from eternity the sorts of creatures that he could create.[54]

Scotus spells out the way in which God knows creatures from eternity in his reply to the second difficulty. The relation (or lack thereof) does not affect God's ability to distinctly cognize all things; his essence is sufficient for cognition in every way of anything whatsoever. As a result, God has perfect cognition of all possible creatures regardless of whether there is a rational relation like that of the measured to its measure, or no rational relation at all. In both cases, Scotus's theory of instants of nature legitimizes his position. On the first position, Scotus says that God cognizes his essence in the first instance. In the second instant, he cognizes and understands his creatures by the mediation of his essence. This cognition occurs directly, without the mediation of a rational relation between the divine essence known in the first moment and the creatures actually known in the

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[52] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 57 (ed. Noone, 419:17–19): "idea est ratio aeterna in mente divina secundum aliquid formabile secundum propriam rationem eius."

[53] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 58 (ed. Noone, 420:11): "idea lapidis non sit nisi lapis ut intellectus." Cf. Beckmann, 372: "erkennt er di Ideen, nach denen er jedes Seiende als geschaffen bzw. schaffbar befreift. 'Idea est res ut cognita' — mit dem Austruck 'Idee' bezeichnet man nach Duns Scotus das (schaffbare bzw. geschaffene) Einzelseiende, insofern es von Gott erkannt ist. So ist die Idee des Steines nichts anderes als der erkannte Stein."

[54] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 58–62 (ed. Noone, 419:22–421:6).

second instant. Thus, according to this way the intelligible object depends on the divine intellect for its *esse cognitum* because they are constituted in *esse cognitum* by that understanding. In this instant, creatures are related to God by a rational relation insofar as God's knowledge measures them. In the third instant, God compares his essence to that intelligible object and understands the rational relation between the think known and the divine essence.[55] On the second position, which rejects rational relations, God still knows his own essence in the first instant. In the second instant God cognizes the object and constitutes it in *esse cognitum*. Since the object is still nothing but an object of thought in this instant, God does not understand any reference or dependence of the object to himself. In the third instant God compares himself to the object as understood, and as it has a rational relation to him. Finally, in the fourth instant he can understand the rational relations to his essence of the creature as understood. By knowing the rational relation, God knows the degree to which the creature imitates the divine essence.[56]

Scotus appeals to the series of instants in each of his commentaries on the *Sententiae*, but the list that Scotus proposes in the *Reportatio Parisiensis* is distinct in several ways. In the *Reportatio*, Scotus offers two sets of instants. The first set is threefold, the second fourfold. In the *Lectura* and the *Ordinatio*, he only offers a fourfold series of instants. The *Reportatio*'s threefold series that results from a rational relation in the thing as cognized similar to that of the measured to its measure does not appear in the earlier commentaries. In the threefold series from the *Reportatio* and the fourfold series from the Oxford commentaries, Scotus insists that there will necessarily be a relation of the creature as known to divine knowledge because of the creature's dependence on God's knowledge.[57]

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[55] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 63 (ed. Noone, 421:7–24).

[56] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 64 (ed. Noone, 421:25–422:9).

[57] *Lect.*, I, d. 35, q. un., n. 19 (ed. Vatican, 17.451:3–8): "Igitur videtur quod non est necessarium propter actum intelligendi, in quantum est actus intelligendi, esse aliqua relatio in intellectu vel in obiecto, sed propter dependentiam unius ab alio, – et sic ipsius lapidis ad scientiam divinam erit necessario relatio, et non necessario e contra in actu intelligendi directo." Cf. *Ord.*, I, d. 35, q. un., n. 28 (ed. Vatican, 6.257:1–2): ". . . ergo praecise sufficit ponere relationem in altero extremo, ubi est dependentia: illud est obiectum ut cognitum."

He insists that this relation will exist, but never argues for it. He offers several arguments (four in the *Lectura* and three in the *Ordinatio*) that God does not require a rational relation to understand the creature, but no arguments concerning the relation of the creature as understood to God.[58] He assumes that the dependence of the creature on God in the order of intelligibility necessitates a relation.

By the time he revisits the question of divine ideas in the *Reportatio*, Scotus has thought through the issue of dependence more thoroughly. The fact that one thing depends on another does not necessarily entail a relation of one to another. In God, the object measured by God's understanding has *esse cognitum* only and is nothing in reality (*secundum rem*). Since it is nothing of itself, it does not have any dependence whatsoever. To have dependence it would have to have some reality of its own. And since it does not have any dependence, the only reason that Scotus used to have for positing a rational relation on its part is dissolved.[59]

This difference in consideration of dependence and relations results in two acceptable ways of understanding the relation (or lack thereof) between the object as understood and the divine intellect. These two positions result in a different number of instants. In both cases, the end goal is for God to understand the comparison of his essence to the object according to a rational relation. The threefold series of instants already posits a rational relation on the part of the object as understood, so all God has to do is understand that relation. It is a one step process. If, however, there is not already a relation between the object as understood and God, as the fourfold series of instants posits, then God has to compare the creature as understood to himself, "gives rise to" the rational relation on the part of the object as understood.[60] Giving rise to the rational relation is not

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[58] *Lect.*, I, d. 35, q. un., nn. 18–21 (ed. Vatican, 17.450:10–452:5). Cf. *Ord.*, I, d. 35, q. un., nn. 28–30 (ed. Vatican, 6.256:16–257:17).

[59] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 54 (ed. Noone, 418:15–19).

[60] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 64 (ed. Noone, 422:3–5): "Et tunc, sicut prius, Deus comparat se ad lapidem ut intelligitur, et sic habet relationem rationis ad ipsum."

identical to understanding the rational relation, so these logically distinct acts result in logically distinct instants in the series. The fact that the rational relation is not already present means that an instant has to be added that establishes the relation.

This analysis makes the comparison of the *Reportatio* to the *Lectura* and *Ordinatio* interesting because the Oxford texts both have a fourfold series of instants, *and* they posit a rational relation immediately in the object as known. Since the lack of a rational relation in the second instant was the only reason Scotus posits a fourfold relation in the Paris text, there must have something extra in the Oxford texts that causes them to have four instants. In the *Lectura* and the *Ordinatio*, Scotus says that God understands his essence in the first instant. In the second instant, God produces objects other than himself in intelligible being and understands it. God's knowledge of the creature results in a relation of the creature as known to the divine intellect (but not vice versa). Because of the one-sidedness of this relation, Scotus emphasizes that God's act of knowing is not a comparative act. He knows, e.g., a stone directly. In the third instant, the divine intellect compares the divine essence to the object in intelligible being, which act of comparison causes a certain ideal or rational relation. In the fourth instant, God, as it were, reflects upon the relation caused in the third instant, which results in the ideal reason being cognized, and thus the idea is cognized. The idea, he says, follows the intellection of the creature in the third instant, and then God has cognition of the idea in the fourth instant.[61]

The difference between these earlier texts and the Parisian text comes between the second and third instant. In the *Reportatio*, Scotus denies any relation at all in the second instant, and then posits a rational relation from God to the creature as known in the third instant. At no point in the Parisian fourfold series of instants is the creature as known said to be related to God.[62] The divine

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[61] *Lect.*, I, d. 35, q. un., n. 22 (ed. Vatican, 17.452:12–453:3), and *Ord.*, I, d. 35, q. un., n. 32 (ed. Vatican, 6.4–18).

[62] The text of the *Reportatio* is somewhat vague in the third instant: "Et tunc, sicut prius, Deus comparat se ad lapidem ut intelligitur, et sic habet relationem rationis ad ipsum" (*Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2 [ed. Noone, 422:3–5]).

idea, i.e., the rational relation that exists from God to the creature as known is caused in the third instant, and known in the fourth instant, but the creature as known has absolutely no relation to God. God constitutes it in intelligible being in the second instant, but it is neither referred to God, nor depends on God in this instant because then it would already be something. In the immediate context of the *Reportatio*, Scotus does not indicate when the creature as known would become related to God, but it seems likely that it would not be related to God until God creates it. The creature in intelligible being is nothing in and of itself, and so has no relations until God creates it in existential being.[63] Only actually created beings have any relation to God.

I suspect that one of the main factors motivating Scotus's revision of his thought is his increased reflection on Henry of Ghent's distinction between essential being and existential being. Henry's doctrine permeated the teaching that Scotus received as a student, and Scotus often situates his answers to philosophical and theological questions in direct opposition to Henry. As I noted above, Scotus was an especially fierce critic of Henry's doctrine of essential being. I think that Scotus's continued reflection and development in the *Reportatio* were aimed at further distancing himself from Henry. The danger with Henry's theory is that essential being seems to be existence over and against intelligible being. In the *Reportatio*, Scotus emphasizes that creatures as understood are absolutely nothing in themselves. They have no manner of existence beyond being thought by God. The consequences of this denial for the relation of the creature as understood is that is has no rational relations at all. Before its actual existence, the creature is absolutely nothing but the object of divine thought. An object of divine thought is not related to the divine intellect because it is the

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What is the "it" that is related to "it"? I propose that God is related to the stone for two reasons. First, this interpretation preserves the relation of subject and object in the first half of the sentence. Second, "sicut prius" refers to the threefold division that Scotus had given in the previous paragraph. There, Scotus is clear that God has a rational relation to the creature as known: "In tertio autem instanti potest comparare essentiam suam ad illud obiectum intelligible extra secundum relationem rationis" (*Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 63 [ed. Noone, 421:21–23]). Any other interpretation would make the third instant identical to the second instant.

[63] *Lect.*, I, d. 35, q. un., n. 22 (ed. Vatican, 17.452:21–23): "Deum creare lapidem nihil aliud est quam lapidem in esse existentiae productum referri ad Deum, qui ut terminat illam relationem absolutus intelligitur."

divine intellect. By cutting off all relations to God, Scotus avoids the errors he sees in Henry. I think Scotus would be especially anxious to argue against Henry while in Paris. Not only was Paris the most prestigious place to study, Henry's thought was especially influential in Paris because Henry had taught there.[64]

Having discerned a reason for the distinct lists of instants, I think it is worth noting that divine ideas do not arise until the fourth instant in all three lists. As Scotus himself noted at the beginning of his response to the second question, everyone concedes that ideal relations exist in the divine intellect to the thing known.[65] A divine idea arises when God causes diverse rational relations in himself through his comparative act.[66] Since an idea is in the divine mind, and since God does not know this diverse relation until the fourth instant, it follows that the divine idea exists only in the fourth instant. Although the rational relation is established in the third instant, God does not know the relation until the fourth instant. Thus, the idea comes about only in the fourth instant.

The fact that the divine idea exists only in the fourth instant as divine knowledge of the rational relation that exists between God and a possible creature makes Scotus's position appear very similar to that of his predecessors. Henry's definition of an idea as a *respectus imitabilitatis* seems as though it could work for Scotus.[67] In fact, Scotus himself seems worried that he will be accused of denying that God has rational relations to creatures, and so he says, "Thus, it is clear that I do not deny rational relations to creatures to exist there, but I do say that they are not necessary for God's intellection of creatures."[68] Given the investigation that Peter John Olivi received as a result of

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[64] "The English province sent its most promising candidates to Paris when an opportunity in the rotation presented itself. In being sent to Paris, Scotus was receiving the highest honor at his stage of career; not a substitute for what might otherwise have been a long wait at Oxford" (Courtenay, "Scotus at Paris," 152).

[65] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 29 (ed. Noone, 404:27–405:1): "omnes concedunt tales relationes ideales in Deo."

[66] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 28 (ed. Noone, 404:21–22): "Deus per actum suum comparativum causare relationes rationis diversas in se."

[67] Henry, *Quodlibet*, IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 28:72–81).

[68] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 64 (ed. Noone, 422:6–7): "Sic igitur patet quod non nego ibi relationes esse rationis ad creaturas sed dico quod non sunt necessariae ad intellectionem Dei circa creaturas."

denying that rational relations in divine ideas, perhaps Scotus is right to be concerned.[69] He does not argue that saying that an idea is the divine essence as imitable is contrary to the faith or reason, but he does argue that rational relations are not required for God to know the creature. God does not have divine ideas in order that he may know creatures; he has divine ideas because he knows creatures. Divine ideas are indeed rational relations, but they are not necessary for divine understanding of creatures. As the above argument has shown, to say otherwise either results in a real relation or breaks the proposition that rational relations only exist after both of the extremes are known. Scotus avoids this problem, but he is still able to say that God is the source of creaturely intelligibility and being as existent.

If divine ideas are not necessary to know creatures, then what purpose do they serve in Scotus's system? If, as his theory of instants holds, creatures are known in the second instant, and then the relation that God has to them is established and known in the third and fourth instants, what does knowing this rational relation do for God? It will be recalled that Scotus defines a divine idea as "an eternal notion in the divine mind in accordance with something formable according to its proper notion."[70] An idea is not merely some relation, but is a direct object of cognition for God. In the second instant, God knows only the creature. By knowing the rational relation that he has to the creature in the fourth instant, God knows it as formable by him. In the second instant, God is just a knower, but in the fourth instant, he is a knower in the same way that an artisan is a knower. Just as a house is in the mind of the artisan, so too are creatures in the mind of God. The idea is the creature as cognized. And just as the artisan knows he can produce the house, so too, because he has

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[69] The committee investigating Olivi argued "Dicere quod idea dicit essentiam divinam ut imitabilem a creaturis, non est contrarium fidei, nec etiam rationi, sed est potius communis opinio, et secundum sanctos; et licet idem si[n]t re intelligere divinum et idea, differunt tamen secundum rationem" ("Responsio quam fecit . . .," n. 3 [ed. Laberge, 126: 20–23]).

[70] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 57 (ed. Noone, 419:17–19): "idea est ratio aeterna in mente divina secundum aliquid formabile secundum propriam rationem eius."

an idea of a creature, God knows he can produce a creature. There are many ideas because God does not make, e.g., a man and a donkey by the same notion. Rather, their notions are distinct.

c. The Existence of Things in God

Before turning to questions three and four of the *Reportatio*, which deal with the scope of divine ideas, I will examine Scotus's position on the existence of things in God. As I noted in the section on Henry of Ghent, Scotus is very critical of Henry's theory of essential being. In both the *Lectura* and *Ordinatio* Scotus offers several proofs against his understanding of essential being.[71] The details of this criticism need not concern us here. Of greater importance is Scotus's own teaching. In order to understand Scotus's position on the existence of things in God, I will first explain Scotus's position on what it is to be a "thing," and then I will explain Scotus's claim that things in God have objective being (*esse obiectivum*).

i. Scotus on *Res*. Scotus gives his most complete account of "thing" (*res*) in *Quodlibet*, q. 3 (Christmas 1306 or Easter 1307). In that text, Scotus claims that *res* can be understood in several ways. The most important sense for our purposes is the most general sense. In this sense, *res* extends to anything that is not "nothing." There are two ways of being "nothing." First and most truly, that which is "nothing" includes a contradiction that excludes both mental and extramental existence. Contradictions are not even intelligible. Although we can speak of a "square circle," we cannot

[71] *Lect.*, I, d. 36, q. un., nn. 13–22 (ed. Vatican, 17.464:3–467:29). *Ord.*, I, d. 36, q. un., nn. 13–25 (ed. Vatican, 6.276:5–281:4).

conceive of such a thing. Thus, there is no object corresponding to the phrase.[72] Second, that which is called "nothing" is so called because it neither exists nor could exist as some being extramentally.[73]

Since a *res* is "not nothing," it follows that a thing is first and foremost what does not include a contradiction. Both beings of reason (*entia rationis*), which only exist in the consideration of the intellect, and real beings (*entia realia*), which exist extramentally, do not include contradictions, and so qualify as *res* in the first sense. In the second sense, a *res* is anything that has or can have extramental existence. This second sense, Scotus notes, is more restricted than the first sense. An *ens rationis* is always a thing in the first sense, but it may not be a thing in the second sense. Thus, logical intentions of "genus" and "species," rational relations, etc. are things in the first sense, but not the second sense. As Pini notes, "[t]here is no contradiction included in the notion of what it is to be a species or what it is to be a genus. . . . Nevertheless, there is nothing in the extramental world whose essence is *to be a species* or *to be a genus*."[74] Extramental things like sharks fall into genera and species, but unlike sharks, we cannot point to anything and say "genus" or "species." Genera and species are things in the first sense that identify certain essential relations existing between things in the second sense.[75]

This distinction between *res* as non-contradictory and *res* as possibly existing extramentally sheds light on a distinction that Scotus draws between ratified beings (*entia rata*) in *Ordinatio* I, d. 36.

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[72] *Quodlibet*, q. 3, nn. 6–7 (ed. Alluntis, 92–93). Cf. *Ord.*, I, d. 43, q. un., n. 15 (ed. Vatican, 6.359): "Et ex hoc apparet quod falsa est imaginatio quaerentium impossibilitatem aliquorum quasi in aliquo uno, quasi aliquid unum—vel intelligible vel qualecumque ens—sit ex se formaliter impossibile sicut Deus ex se formaliter est necesse esse. Nihil enim est tale primum in non-entitate, nec etiam entitatis oppositae tali non-entitati est intellectus divinus ratio possibilitatis oppositae; nec etiam intellectus divinus est praecisa ratio possibilitatis oppositae de nihilo, quia tunc teneret illud argumentum 'de causis praecisis in affirmatione et negatione.' Sed omne 'simpliciter nihil' includit in se rationes plurimum, ita quod ipsum non est primo nihil ex ratione sui, sed ex rationibus illorum quae intelligitur includere, propter formalem repugnatiam illorum inclusorum plurium; et ista ratio repugnatiae est ex rationibus formalibus eorum, quam repugnatiam primo habent per intellectum divinum."

[73] *Quodlibet*, q. 3, n. 7 (ed. Alluntis, 93).

[74] Giorgio Pini, "Scotus and Avicenna on What it is to Be a Thing," *Scientia Graeco-Arabica: The Arabic, Hebrew and Latin Reception of Avicenna's Metaphysics*, ed. Dag Nikolaus Hasse and Amos Bertolacci (Boston: De Gruyter, 2012), 376.

[75] *Quodlibet*, q. 3, nn. 8–9 (ed. Alluntis, 93–94).

On one hand, a ratified being is that which has a firm and true being from itself. On the other hand, a ratified being is distinguished from a fictional being (*figmentum*) because existence is not repugnant for it. An *ens ratum* in the first sense is so called because it actually exists. Except for God, such beings are not ratified of themselves, but by their efficient cause. Of themselves, they are merely possible, but they are *entia rata* whenever God efficiently causes them and for as long as they exist. An *ens ratum* in the second sense is so called because existence is not formally repugnant to the thing as such.[76] Such beings could be created, but it is not clear whether or not they have been created just from the fact that it is an *ens ratum ex se* in the second sense. Fictional beings, such as chimera and goatstags, are not *entia rata* in any sense because extramental existence is formally repugnant to them. Not only do they not exist, they could not exist.[77] They cannot exist, but they surely can be thought. Fictional beings, then, qualify as *res* in the most general sense of being non-contradictory. There is nothing so contradictory about the concept of a goatstag that it cannot be thought. Yet, a goatstag cannot exist in the extramental world, and so it cannot be a *res* in the more restricted sense, nor an *ens ratum*. The more restricted sense of *res* is identical to the more general sense of *ens ratum*. By either name, a thing of itself has the possibility of existing. Such a thing does not actually exist, or become an *ens ratum* in the strict sense unless it is efficiently caused by God, but it is possible of itself.[78]

Although Scotus is highly indebted to Henry of Ghent for the distinction between thing in the most general sense of thinkable and thing in the more restricted sense of possibly existing extramentally, he articulates the distinction in a way that makes him depart from Henry's understanding of the distinction in *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2.[79] In *Quodlibet* VII, Henry emphasizes that

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[76] *Ord.*, I, d. 36, q. un., nn. 48–50 (ed. Vatican, 6.290:5–291:9).

[77] *Ord.*, I, d. 36, q. un., nn. 60–63 (ed. Vatican, 6. 296:1–297:11). As Pini notes, Scotus seems to take the impossibility of a chimera existing extramentally "as a primitive fact. There is a contradiction between that it is to be a chimera and to exist in the extramental world" ("Scotus and Avicenna on What it is to Be a Thing," 377).

[78] Scotus says that these senses of *res* and *ens* are what Avicenna meant when he said that *ens* and *res* are impressed into the intellect (*Quodlibet*, q. 3, n. 10 [ed. Alluntis, 94]; cf. Avicenna, *Met.*, I, c. 5 [ed. van Riet, I.31:2–3]).

[79] Henry's understanding of *res* in *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 differs from his articulation in *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2. In *Quodlibet* V, q. 1, Henry says that the most general concept is common to both empty concepts (*conceptum vanum*) and to

fictional beings are dependent upon real beings because the parts of fictional beings are reducible to real beings. A goatstag is merely the amalgamation of the real beings, goat and stag. The goatstag, which has no essence, is reducible to several essences. As a result, any possible object of thought has to have its origin in real essences.[80] Scotus's account of *res* in the most general sense drops the requirement of essences and prefers what is merely non-contradictory. As Pini notes, Scotus makes "the object of the intellect by a way of a merely formal and logical requirement. Quite simply, in order for something to be thinkable, it is sufficient for it not to include a contradiction. It is not necessary for it to be an essence or a combination of essences."[81] By shifting from essences to non-contradiction, Scotus streamlines the determination that something is a *res*. If it is thinkable, it is a thing. No further investigation into whether the thing could exist need be made. The criterion for something to be a *res* in the most general sense is a logical criterion. No ontological criteria need be consulted until we ask whether a thing in the most general sense is also a thing in the more restricted sense of *ens ratum*.[82]

When the more restricted sense of *res* is considered, Scotus's refusal to speak of essence distinguishes his theory from Henry's in yet another way. Scotus and Henry agree that if a thing is a real essence, then it is a *res* in the more restricted sense. Scotus, however, rejects that the converse is

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true concepts (*conceptum verum*). Empty concepts are those in which that which is in no way naturally suited to exist in reality is conceived in a privative way, such as chimera and the goatstag. True concepts are those in which that which is something through its essence and naturally suited to exist outside of the intellect is conceived in a positive way. These are the concepts of the divine essence and creatures. This general concept is the concept by which *res a reor, reris* is conceived, and contains both the imaginary thing and the true thing under it. The true thing is the nature or essence of something that either exists or is naturally suited to exist, and so is also called a *res a ratitudine*. If the true thing is pure *esse* because it is necessary *esse*, then it is the divine essence. If the true thing is naturally suited to exist, then it is a *res a ratitudine* because it has an exemplar notion in God. See Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* V, q. 2 (ed. Badius, 154rD). Cf. Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* V, q. 6 (ed. Badius, 161rK). Scotus's account of *res* in *Quodlibet*, q. 3 is very similar to this account from Henry. The mark of a *res a reor* is that it is thinkable and therefore does not entail a contradiciton. The mark of a *res a ratitudine* is that it is naturally suited to exist, i.e., it is possible in itself. Scotus would surely object to the language of essence in this account, but in this case, I think the disagreement would be merely linguistic. What Henry means by essence here is just that it has an exemplar notion in God and so could be created by God. Henry's articulation of *res* in *Quodlibet* V, q. 1 does not necessitate his theory of essential being.

[80] Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 27:59–70).

[81] Pini, "Scotus and Avicenna on What it is to Be a Thing," 378.

[82] See Pini, "Scotus and Avicenna on What it is to Be a Thing," 379.

true. Just because a thing can have extramental existence does not mean that it is an essence. There are things that God could have created but did not. These non-existing possibles are *res* in the restricted sense, but they are not essences. As Pini notes, "[s]omething is an essence if and only if it was made the object of God's act of creation."[83] Being known as a thing in the more restricted sense by God does not establish the essence of anything. According to Scotus, essential being and existential being are, practically speaking, the same thing since one is never without the other.[84] Only that which exists extramentally, i.e., only that which is an *ens ratum* in the strict sense, has an essence.

Scotus's derivation of *res,* then, leaves us with three levels. First, there are things that are non-contradictory; i.e., that which is logically possible. This level of things includes any being that can be thought, including fictional beings. Second, there are things that are able to exist extramentally, but without determining whether any of these *entia rata* actually exists. This level of things includes both the things that God has, or will create at some time, and those things that God has chosen never to make; i.e., that which is ontologically possible. Third, there are things that are *entia rata* in the strict sense and have an essence. Since divine ideas have to be at the second level of Scotus's division, it follows that divine ideas do not have essences for Scotus. This denial of essence to ideas has important ramifications for the existence of things in God.

ii. *Esse Obiectivum.* As will be recalled from the discussion above, Scotus says that "an idea is not some relation but the object cognized in the divine mind, in which creatures exist objectively."[85] What does it mean to "exist objectively" in the divine mind? What is objective being (*esse obiectivum*)? To understand what Scotus means by objective being, it will be helpful to look to what he says about intelligible species in man's intellect. At Scotus's time, it was not in fashion for a

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[83] Pini, "Scotus and Avicenna on What it is to Be a Thing," 380.

[84] *Ord.*, I, d. 36, q. un., n. 48 (ed. Vatican, 290:5–8): "'ens ratum aut appelatur illud quod habet ex se firmum et verum esse, sive essentiae sive existentiae (quia unum non est sine altero, qualitercumque distinguantur)."

[85] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 57 (ed. Noone, 419:19–21): "idea non est relatio aliqua sed obiectum cognitum in mente divina in qua sunt creaturae obiective."

Schoolman to include intelligible species in his theory of cognition. If there be an intelligible species in the intellect, then it would inform the intellect as an accident informs its subject. Therefore, the intellect would undergo a real relation (*passio*) to its object, not an intentional passion. As King notes, if intelligible species are present in the intellect in the same way that any other accident is present in its subject, then "the intelligible species, like whiteness, can then only makes its subject have the features it engenders, and so *not* be 'intentionally directed' at something else—any more than the presence of whiteness in a white body somehow makes that white body to be 'about' whiteness."[86] Since intelligible species are posited only as a way to explain the intentional presence of objects of knowledge, if the intelligible species is present as an accident, then it cannot perform the very role for which it was posited.[87]

In response to this difficulty, Scotus posits that each intelligible species has two *passiones*. First, the intellect receives the species as an accident and a real attribute. Once this reception is accomplished, there follows a cognizable or intentional attribute through which the intellect receives the object in the species intententionally. Therefore, the understanding is a motion for the soul because it is moved by the object as it is in the species. First, the *passio* is in the intellect through the received species present in the intellect. Second, it is by the object as it shines forth again in the species.[88] Scotus accepts the difficulty and distinguishes another aspect of the intelligible species that

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[86] King, "Duns Scotus on Mental Content," 72.

[87] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 3, q. 4, n. 86 (ed. Wolter and Bychov, I.208). Cf. *Ord.*, I, d. 3, p. 3, q. 1, n. 336 (ed. Vatican 3.336), and *Lect.*, I, d. 3, p. 3, q. 1, n. 254 (ed. Vatican, 16.327). This argument is taken from Henry of Ghent, *Quodlibet* V, q. 14 (ed. Badius, 175vF). See Pasnau, *Theories of Cognition*, 306–10, and Richard Cross, *Duns Scotus's Theory of Cognition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 84–90. As Pasnau points out, Henry's rejection of intelligible species was not as overarching as the critique of Peter John Olivi. See Peter John Olivi, *In II Sent.*, q. 58, ad 15 (ed. Jansen, II.469): "Nunquam species actu repraesentabit obiectum ipsi potentiae, nisi potentia aspiciat ipsam, ita quod convertat et figat aspectum suum in ipsam. Sed illud ad quod convertitur aspectus potentiae habet rationem obiecti, et illud ad quod primo convertitur habet rationem primi obiecti. Ergo species istae plus habebunt rationem obiecti quam rationem principii intermedii seu repraesentativi." For Olivi's rejection of intelligible species, see Pasnau, *Theories of Cognition*, 236–47.

[88] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 3, q. 4, n. 119 (ed. Wolter and Bychov, 218): "dico quod intellectus patitur duplici passione, sicut potentia organica vel sensus organicus. Primo realiter recipiendo speciem, licet non sit realis sicut passio materiae, et hac praemissa, sequitur passio cognoscibilis sive intentionalis qua patitur ab obiecto in specie intentionaliter, et ideo intelligere est motus ad animam, quia ab obiecto ut in specie. Prima ergo passio est in intellectu per speciem praesentem receptam in intellectu, secunda est ab obiecto ut in specie relucente."

can account for its ability to make an object present in cognition. Emphasis must be placed on its making the *object* present. The second *passio* of the intelligible species is self-effacing. It does not make the knower think about himself or the intelligible species. It makes him think about the *object* that is cognitively present in his intellect. Thus, Scotus emphasizes that the object, as the mental content of the thought, "shines forth again in the species": "'once again' because it is the cognizable rather than the real presence of the object; and it 'shines forth' because the object transparently discloses itself in the act of thinking."[89] So when Scotus speaks of objective being, he is referring to the way in which the object is cognitively present in the intellect. The intelligible species is first present subjectively as an accident in a subject. These species "are real forms in the category of quality."[90] The mental content of the intelligible species is objectively present because it makes the object present. It points to the external object that it makes known.

Parallel to these two aspects of an intelligible species are two sorts of causality. Each of the aspects is caused differently. The first aspect of the intelligible species is caused formally by the phantasm and the agent intellect working together. The second aspect of the intelligible species is not caused formally, but objectively.[91] To be caused formally is to be caused as a form; i.e., the intelligible species becomes an accidental form in the intellect. To be caused objectively, however, is to be caused intentionally. The real action of being cause formally is a necessary condition for the intentional action of being caused objectively.[92] This causality causes a twofold being in the intellect. The first is the formal or subjective being of the intelligible species as it is an accident existing in a

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[89] King, "Duns Scotus on Mental Content," 76–77.

[90] Maurer, "*Ens Diminutum*," 221.

[91] *In VII Met.*, q. 18, n. 51 (OPh IV.353:1–4): "causatur species intelligibilis a phantasmate et intellectu agente simul; qua causta in intellectu possibili formaliter, simul causatur obiectum abstractum ibi, non formaliter sed obiective."

[92] *In VII Met.*, q. 18, n. 51 (Oph IV.353:8–9): "illa numquam est intentionaliter nisi propter aliquam realem." Cf. *Ord.*, I, d. 3, p. 3, q. 1, n. 386 (ed. Vatican, 3.235:4–9). Pini, "Scotus on Objective Being," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 26 (2015): 353. Cross, *Duns Scotus's Theory of Cognition*, 30.

subject. The second is the objective being of the object. It is to the existence of this objective being that we now turn.

iii. The Existence of *Esse Obiectivum*. Scotus says that objects that are intentionally present in the intellect have objective being (*esse obiectivum*). Scotus's choice of the term "objective being" is somewhat confusing. On one hand, "objective being" has a clear contrast to the "subjective being" of the accident existing in the intellect. On the other hand, by Scotus's time there was an explosion of terms for the existence of things in the intellect. It was variously called diminished being (*esse deminutum*), cognized being (*esse cognitum*), being in opinion (*esse in opinione*), being in intellection (*esse in intellectione*), exemplified being (*esse exemplatum*), represented being (*esse representatum*), intentional being (*esse intentionale*), and even spiritual being (*esse spirituale*). How are each of these terms related? Scotus insists that they are all synonyms.[93] In the *Reportatio*, Scotus compares the object of cognition to the image of Hercules in a statue: "The universal object *qua* universal only has diminished being as cognized, just as Hercules in the statue only has diminished being because it is represented in the image."[94] Diminished being can be cognized or represented. In both cases, diminished being has the notion of a sign, i.e., it points to something other than itself. In the case of cognition, diminished being points to the object being cognized. The intentional object of cognition cannot exist by itself, however, because the term of the real action of the agent intellect is not diminished, or cognized, or represented being, but something real. It follows that the action of the agent intellect terminates in a real form in existence that formally represents the universal as universal. This real form that terminates the action of the agent intellect "is the form existing

[93] *Ord.*, I, d. 36, q. un., n. 34 (ed. Vatican, 6.284:10–13). Scotus does not include the last two terms (*esse intentionale* and *esse spirituale*) that come from Thomas Aquinas. One reason that he might have omitted them is that Thomas will use the terms to refer to sensible species in addition to intelligible species. Since there is no indication that Scotus intended his list to be exhaustive, the fact that each of the terms signifies a sort of *esse secundum quid* justifies including *esse intentionale* and *esse spirituale* as equivalent to the extent that these terms are applied to being in the intellect.

[94] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 3, q. 4, n. 105 (ed. Wolter and Bychov, 213): "universale obiectum sub ratione universalis non habet nisi esse deminutum ut cognitum, quemadmodum Hercules in statua non habet esse nisi deminutun, quia repraesentatum in imagine."

subjectively in the mind, which is not to be confused with the object existing objectively in the mind."[95]

In the *Ordinatio* Scotus clarifies that diminished being is related to real being as *secundum quid* is related to *simpliciter*. Diminished being exists *secundum quid* and is reduced to what exists simply, which is the being of the very intellection.[96] So, in this text, objective being is a qualified being. The qualification is that it cannot be understood simply by itself. It has to be related to something that exists *simpliciter*. Thus, diminished being "is not absolute but relative, since it necessarily implies a relation to God as knower."[97] The object being signified is not diminished, but its being is diminished insofar as it is an object of cognition.[98] Since this diminished being has to be reduced to what has being *simpliciter*, objective being in the divine mind has to be reduced to the very act of divine intellection that produces the objective being.[99] This articulation of objective being bears a striking similarity to the interpretation of Henry's essential being that I endorsed in chapter II. Objective being is just existence in the divine mind. The divine intellect creates the intelligibles that it knows in intelligible being, which distinguishes the divine intellect from our intellects. This distinction seems sufficient for some scholars to claim that for Scotus the objects of divine cognition constitute a sort of third ontological realm distinct from existence in things and in finite intellects.[100]

This interpretation seems like the best reading of the *Ordinatio*, but I do not think it is the best reading of Scotus because he changes his mind about the relation between the object and the divine intellect in the *Reportatio*. Not only does Scotus not use the term "diminished being" in the

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[95] King, "Duns Scotus on Mental Content," 81.

[96] *Ord.*, I, d. 36, q. un., n. 46 (ed. Vatican, 6.289:4–14).

[97] Maurer, "*Ens Diminitum*," 222. See the second instant in Scotus's derivation of divine ideas, which moment necessarily entails a relation of the object in intelligible being to God (*Ord.*, I, d. 35, q. un., n. 35 [ed. Vatican, 6.258:5–9]).

[98] *Ord.*, I, d. 36, q. un., n. 34 (ed. Vatican, 6.284:13–21).

[99] *Ord.*, I, d. 36, q. un., n. 28 (ed. Vatican, 6.281:18–282:12).

[100] See, e.g., Normore, "Meaning and Objective Being," in *Essays on Descartes's* Meditations, edited by A.O. Rorty (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2986), 232–233. D. Perler, "What Am I Thinking About? John Duns Scotus and Peter Aureol on Intentional Objects," *Vivarium* 32 (1994): 79–80.

Reportatio, he omits the entire distinction in which the discussion of diminished being appears. Instead of discussing divine ideas in distinction thirty-five and essential being in distinction thirty-six, as he does in the *Ordinatio*, in the *Reportatio* Scotus discusses God's knowledge in general in distinction thirty-five and divine ideas in distinction thirty-six. There are many reasons that he could have changed his *divisio textus*, but a desire to avoid discussing essential and diminished being is a strong candidate.[101] As we saw above, in the *Reportatio* Scotus argues that when God understands an object (like a stone), he constitutes it in cognized being, but the stone is not related to God. The stone in cognitive being is really nothing (*nihil est secundum rem*).[102] Since the stone is no longer related to God, it cannot have diminished being. Diminished being is a sort of relational being, so the only way that the stone could have diminished being is by having a relation to God. But a denial of such a relation is Scotus's primary insight in the *Reportatio*. So when Scotus argues that essences in the divine intellect are present objectively, he is not assigning any being to them whatsoever.[103]

Objective being, then, is not a type of being at all. The objects of divine cognition are nothing in reality (*nihil in re*). Yet, they are not nothing. Anything that has objective being is non-contradictory.[104] Thus, objective being is a way for Scotus to emphasize that something is, in fact, intelligible. Scotus typically uses the example of a stone for what has objective being in God's intellect, but he could have just as easily replaced that example with the example of a second

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[101] It is worth noting that this change in *divisio textus* entails a rejection of Bonaventure's division of the *Sentences* in favor of Thomas's division. It could be the case that Thomas's division had become the standard way of dividing the text in Paris, in which case Scotus would just be following convention. Even if this be true, I think there is strong internal evidence to suggest that Scotus's change was made out of more than just convention.

[102] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 54 (ed. Noone 418:16–17): "lapis in esse cognito tantum nihil est secundum rem." Cf. *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 64 (ed. Noone 421:25–422:3): "in secundo instanti quo Deus intelligit lapidem et constituitur in esse cognito non refertur lapis ad Deum nec dependet, quia sic adhuc nihil est in re et in omni illo sive in toto instanti intelligit Deus lapidem sine omni dependentia lapidis ad ipsum."

[103] Pini argues persuasively that this change in the *Reportatio* only applies to divine cognition. Man's cognition still requires relation. See Pini, "Scotus on Objective Being," 337–67. This position tempers the swiftness with which King and Cross transition from a discussion of divine understanding to a discussion of human understanding. King, "Duns Scotus on Mental Content," 83–84. Cross, *Duns Scotus's Theory of Cognition*, 191–92. Since the scope of this discussion only concerns divine understanding, Pini's criticism does not touch the thesis expounded here.

[104] See *Quodlibet*, q. 3, nn. 7 (ed. Alluntis, 93).

intention or another *ens rationis* that is not a *res* in the stricter sense of a possible. It follows from this position that objective being is not the sort of being that an essence enjoys. Indeed, objective being cannot be the being of an essence because essences are entirely posterior to objective being. Objective being is not so much a type of being, but a way of explaining the sort of representational content that the objects of divine cognition signify.[105]

One final note about objective being needs to be made. Objective being is broader than divine ideas. Objective being extends to any object that is non-contradictory and so extends even to chimera. An idea, however, is the proper notion of something formable.[106] Since extramental existence is contrary to the notion of a chimera, there can be no ideas of chimera. This point will be explored more closely below.

d. Recapitulation and Conclusions

Scotus's account of the status of divine ideas is simultaneously groundbreaking and mundane. On the one hand, he takes a decisive stand against his predecessors with regard to relations in divine knowledge. God can know things without any relation whatsoever. God does not know creatures by means of a relation. Rather, he comes to know a relation by means of a direct knowledge of the possible creature. An idea is an eternal notion in the divine mind in accordance with something formable according to its proper notion.[107] Initially, he says that this eternal notion is not some relation but the object cognized in the divine mind. From this claim, it sounds like an idea involves no relation whatsoever. In his discussion of the four instants of God's knowledge of things other than himself, Scotus specifies that an idea does not entail any relation on the side of the object cognized. The stone is not related to God, but God still does compare himself to the stone. This

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[105] See Cross, *Duns Scotus's Theory of Cognition*, 194. Pasnau, *Theories of Cognition*, 35.

[106] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 57 (ed. Noone, 419:17–19): "idea est ratio aeterna in mente divina *secundum aliquid formabile* secundum propriam rationem eius." Emphasis mine.

[107] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 57 (ed. Noone, 419:17–19).

comparison results in a rational relation of God to the stone, which relation God knows directly in the fourth and final instant.[108] This clarification is paramount because the *ratio* of an idea is only complete at the fourth and final instant. It is only when God knows the rational relation of himself to the object cognized that he knows that object as formable by him. God's knowledge of the object is logically prior to his knowledge of his ability to create the object. A divine idea is still a relation for Scotus as it was for Bonaventure, Thomas, and Henry before him, but the relation is not a means to further cognition. The relation is a result of prior cognition. Scotus thinks that James of Viterbo's articulation of divine ideas as the object cognized is closest to the truth because God does not require a relation to know creatures. He requires a relation to know the creature as formable.

Scotus's account of the existence of things in God is a point of major development in the history of theories of divine ideas. The theories developed prior to Scotus all ascribed some sort of existence to divine ideas. The sort of existence ranged from nothing more than being thought by God to some manner of independent and real being called essential being.[109] Scotus rejects all of the prior opinions because they all posit some manner of existence. Scotus, however, denies that the objects of divine cognition have any being whatsoever. His predecessors insist that divine ideas have some sort of existence because they posit a relation between the thing and God. If the thing has a relation, then it must exist in some way. Since the objects of God's cognition are not related to God on Scotus's account, there is no need for him to posit any sort of existence for the objects of divine thought. The objective being that Scotus ascribes to divine ideas is not a type of existence, but a way of referring to the representational content of the idea.

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[108] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 64 (ed. Noone, 422:3–9).

[109] I should reiterate that I do not think that this interpretation of essential being is the best interpretation of Henry of Ghent. Yet, it deserves to be mentioned in the range of opinions because it was widely thought to be Henry's position.

3. The Scope of Divine Ideas

After discussing the status of divine idea in the *Reportatio*, Scotus asks two questions concerning the scope of divine ideas. As I noted at the beginning of this section on Scotus, Scotus only asks about the scope of divine ideas in the *Reportatio*. In both the *Lectura* and *Ordinatio* he only asks questions that pertain to the status of divine ideas. As a result, what follows will rely entirely on his treatment in the *Reportatio*. The emphasis that Scotus places on the divine will, and his desire to return to a Bonaventurean *plenitudo* with regard to the scope of divine ideas will become clear in the course of the discussion. Scotus treats the last two questions of *Reportatio*, d. 36 together. The third question asks whether God has distinct ideas of everything other than himself that may be distinctly cognized. The fourth question asks whether God has an infinite number of ideas. Once again, the way in which Scotus treats the scope of divine ideas does not lend itself to the usual division. Scotus's own division will replace the usual division.

a. Ideas for Everything Distinctly Cognizable

The objectors to the first of the two questions argue that that the evil of guilt, matter, and essential or quantitative parts positively rule out divine ideas of everything that God can distinctly cognize.[110] In the *sed contra*, however, Scotus argues that whatever God cognizes as other than himself, he cognizes as it imitates his essence. Therefore, whatever he cognizes distinctly, distinctly imitates his essence. But cognizing all things other than himself to imitate his essence distinctly, he can cognize himself as imitable by everything other than himself, and this is the being of ideas of all things. Therefore, he has distinct ideas with respect to all things other than himself that he can distinctly cognize.[111]

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[110] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, nn. 1–3 (ed. Noone, 425:12–426:3).
[111] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 4 (ed. Noone, 426:4–10).

i. Scotus on Thomas Aquinas's Position. He begins his reply to the first question by criticizing the opinions of Thomas Aquinas and Henry of Ghent. With regard to Thomas, Scotus emphasizes heavily Thomas's references to Plato. Since Plato posits ideas as both speculative and practical principles, ideas ought to be posited in God in both ways. Insofar as an idea is a principle of making and generation of things it is called an exemplar and pertains to practical cognition. And as it is a principle of cognition of a thing it is properly called a notion (*ratio*) and pertains to speculative cognition that is of all things that God can cognize, even if he never creates them. Exemplars, however, are only of things that will exist at some time. As a result of this distinction, Scotus says that Thomas rejects a number of things from idea in the sense of exemplar. First, he excludes those things that neither were, nor are, nor will be, and even non-beings (such as chimera). Second, he excludes matter because matter neither exists nor can be cognized per se. Third, he excludes genera because they never come to be independently of some species. Fourth, he excludes inseparable accidents because they always come to be in the same time as their subject. (Ideas of separable accidents do have proper ideas.) Fifth, he excludes ideas of individuals because singulars are individuated by matter, which does not have a proper idea. Moreover, because the intention of nature consists in the existence of the species and not in individuals except insofar as they preserve the species.[112]

Scotus begins his response by noting that the root error of Thomas's position is the distinction between speculative and practical cognition in God. He does not see any benefit to distinguishing between speculative and practical based on whether an *ideabile* comes to be or not. "Having-to-come-to-be" (*fiendum*) and "not-having-to-come-to-be" (*non-fiendum*) do not belong to the divine intellect. From the divine intellect alone, no determination is made concerning *fiendum* or

[112] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, nn. 11–16 (ed. Noone, 428:6–430:2). Cf. Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.204). With regard to Thomas's position on ideas of individuals, Scotus's account is simply false. More will be said about this just below.

non-fiendum. Ideas are not inherently pure possibles or exemplars. Before the act of the divine will, a practical idea is not distinguished from a speculative one. If *fiendum* or *non-fiendum* is part of any idea insofar as the divine intellect presents it to the divine will, then one of two difficulties arises. On the one hand, if the divine will cannot will contrary to the *fiendum* or *non-fiendum*, then it will not be free, but necessary with respect to things other than God. On the other hand, if the divine will can will contrary to the *fiendum* or *non-fiendum*, then it could will contrary to right reason commanded by the divine intellect. In this case, the divine will would be "morally deficient."[113] Both of these situations are impossible, so the distinction of speculative and practical ideas cannot be accepted.[114]

Moreover, Scotus does not think that the distinction between speculative and practical knowledge is an essential distinction in God. Speculative and practical knowledge are applied to God on an analogy with man's knowledge. For man, the distinction between speculative and practical knowledge is essential when it is taken from the part of the ends. These ends are taken from the nature of the art itself, and not the artificer. The end of the medical art is not determined by the doctor, but by the medical art itself; "otherwise, the doctor qua doctor could have a habit of knowing and performing his art that consisted in killing sick people."[115] Since the end is taken from the art itself, the end is naturally prescribed. But divine knowledge does not naturally prescribe anything. *Fiendum* and *non-fiendum* are not essential differences of practical and speculative ideas, either in objects or in ends. Only the act of the divine will accepting that this thing will come to be (or not) makes the possible thing *fiendum* or *non-fiendum*.[116] Not only does the distinction between speculative and practical knowledge in God have disastrous consequences, it stems from a misunderstanding of the distinction between speculative and practical knowledge itself.

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[113] Noone, "Scotus on Divine Ideas," 375.
[114] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 18 (ed. Noone, 430:7–25).
[115] Noone, "Scotus on Divine Ideas," 376.
[116] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 19 (ed. Noone, 431:2–11).

After critiquing Thomas's principle for determining the scope of divine ideas, Scotus turns to some of the specific points. Beginning with matter, Scotus claims that "matter is a being (*ens*) in and of itself, therefore it can come to be *per se* and consequently has a proper idea in God."[117] Matter has to be a being because it is a principle of composite substances. If matter were nothing, then "a sensible substance would be composed of form and nothing."[118] Since it must be some sort of being, God can know it distinctly. The intellect cannot understand ignobly from what is nobler, nor can it understand from another universally by collection. So, if God perfectly cognizes all things, then he cognizes them according to their proper notions and natures as they are in themselves. But God understands all things nondiscursively. Therefore, he cognizes matter according to its proper notion and nature, not by an analogy to form or through the nature of form. Thus, it has a proper idea. Matter is the least intelligible thing that there is, but this is only a problem for our debilitated intellect. Matter is intrinsically more intelligible than man can know it in this life, but this is not a problem for God.[119]

With regard to genera, Scotus agrees that they exist only in their species. Yet, he denies the principle that if it cannot come to be *per se*, then it does not have an idea. The obvious counter-example to this principle is that since an artificer produces the whole and whatever parts are in the whole, not only does he cognize the *per se* whole, but he also distinctly cognizes whatever is in the whole as an essential part. Otherwise he would produce some essential part in the whole which he did not distinctly cognize, which is unfitting. But God, insofar as he is an artificer, produces not only the whole but even each part of the whole distinctly in the whole. Therefore, he has to have distinct cognition of each part, and his cognition is not merely of the part *qua* part. God knows the proper

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[117] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 21 (ed. Noone, 431:22–24): "materia est ex se et secundum se ens, ergo per se potest fieri et per consequens habet propriam ideam in Deo."

[118] Noone, "Scotus on Divine Ideas," 376.

[119] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, nn. 21–24 (ed. Noone, 431:22–433:10).

notion of each part. Therefore, he will have a proper idea of each part. This argument can also be applied to inseparable accidents.[120]

Finally, Scotus responds to the claim he ascribes to Thomas that individuals do not have ideas because individuals come to be by matter, and because individuals are not the intention of nature. As regards the first, Scotus argues that matter is a quidditative part of the species. The species is not merely the form. Therefore, if an individual adds matter beyond the quidditative being of the species, so too does it add form. And just as it adds the condition of matter, so it adds the condition of form. Thus, just as nature is individuated by matter, so too is it individuated by form.[121] At stake here, of course, is Scotus's doctrine of haecceity. The principle of individuation is not matter, but an individual form that makes each individual to be a *this*.[122]

As regards the second point, that individuals are not the intention of nature, Scotus has two very serious critiques. First, if individuals are not the intention of nature, how can divine providence be primarily concerned with individuals? If we maintain that God has ideas only of species, then it becomes impossible to explain how he can exercise providence beyond the scope of his ideas. Agents that do not know their ends act only for that end because they are directed to it by a higher agent that does know the end. Nature is such an agent. So if nature produces individuals insofar as it is directed by God and if his providence consists not only in species but principally in individuals, it is necessary that the intention of nature not only concern species, but more principally concern the

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[120] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, nn. 25–28 (ed. Noone, 435:11–435:13).

[121] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, nn. 29–30 (ed. Noone, 435:14–436:1).

[122] See *Ord.* II, d. 3, p. 1, qq. 1–6 (ed. Vatican, 7.391–494). For a good overview of Scotus's theory of individuation, see, *inter alia*, Allan B. Wolter, OFM, "John Duns Scotus" in *Individuation in Scholasticism: The Later Middle Ages and the Counter-Reformation 1150–1650*, ed. Jorge J. E. Gracia (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994), 271–98. Allan B. Wolter, OFM, "Scotus' Individuation Theory," in *The Philosophical Theology of John Duns Scotus*, ed. Marilyn McCord Adams (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990), 68–97. Timothy B. Noone, "Individuation in Scotus," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 69 (1995): 527–42. Timothy B. Noone, "Universals and Individuation," in *The Cambridge Companion to Duns Scotus*, ed. Thomas Williams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 100–28. Jorge J. E. Gracia, "Individuality and the Individuating Entity in Scotus's *Ordinatio*: An Ontological Characterization," in *John Duns Scotus: Metaphysics and Ethics*, ed. Ludger Honnefelder, Rega Wood, and Mechthild Dreyer. (New York: Brill, 1996), 229–49.

production of individuals. Second, individuals and primary substances are maximally substances because whatever is such bespeaks unity and maximally real entity. But secondary substances like species are not maximally substances because they do not exist except in really existing primary substances. Therefore, since nature maximally intends that which is of greater perfection and being, individuals must be the primary intention of nature.[123]

Scotus's critique of Thomas's position stands on two points: the distinction between practical and speculative knowledge does not apply to divine knowledge, and divine providence extends beyond the species. The first has two aspects. Scotus argues that Thomas's theory is too intellectualist such that the divine intellect predetermines the act of the divine will. This argument is not very convincing. Thomas does indeed distinguish between ideas in the strict sense of exemplars and ideas in the broad sense of *rationes*, but he does not make this distinction over and against the divine will. God has exemplars precisely because he knows what he is going to will. Thomas does not think that God's knowledge coerces his will. Rather, as he says in the *De veritate*, an idea is "a form that something imitates from the intention of an agent who predetermines the end for himself."[124] Thomas's emphasis on intention demands recourse to the divine will.[125] The divine will completes the *ratio* of an idea. An idea is not merely a cognitive principle, but primarily a causal principle by which God wills to bring about a creature. Without the divine will, God would not have any ideas in the strict sense. He would only have ideas as *rationes*. The divine will's election to create an entity known through an idea in the broad sense is, as it were, the cause of God's having ideas in the strict sense of exemplar. It seems like Scotus's biggest problem with Thomas's account is that he is not as explicit as he could be that there is a logical moment when God is, as it were, ignorant of

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[123] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, nn. 31–32 (ed. Noone, 436:2–19).

[124] Thomas, *De veritate* q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.100:221-223): "idea sit forma quam aliquid imitatur ex intentione agentis qui praedeterminat sibi finem."

[125] Thomas argues that intention is an act of will, not intellect at *In II Sent.*, d. 38, q. 1, a. 3 (ed. Mandonnet, II.973–975); *De veritate* q. 22, a. 13 (ed. Leonine, 22.3.643:1–646:302); *ST* I-II, q. 12, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 6:94); *De malo* q. 16, a. 11, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 23:330:241–331:257).

what he will create. Since Thomas does not make this instant explicit, Scotus reads him as coercing the divine will. I think Scotus interprets Thomas's emphasis on the causal role of the divine ideas incorrectly. A divine idea for Thomas is not a merely intellectual object. It is an intellectual object that has been given the *fiat* of the will. Scotus's criticism does not hold because he does not see his own theory of instants tacitly at work in Thomas's position.

Scotus's second argument against speculative and practical knowledge in God does not appear to use the terms "speculative" and "practical" in the same way that Thomas uses them. Scotus thinks that the distinction between speculative and practical knowledge only "arises in a setting wherein there are naturally preordained ends."[126] The doctor, in order to be a doctor, has to act for the sake of health precisely because the end of the medical art is health. No such conditions attach to God. Nothing is *fiendum* or *non-fiendum* prior to his willing it. This argument is strong. Practical knowledge in man arises from some sort of habit, the form of which sets the parameters for acting. On the condition that the builder has willed to build, he has to set a strong foundation because the art of building requires it. Yet, this distinction does not seem to be what Thomas has in mind for two reasons. First, the builder might have to set a strong foundation, but that presupposes that he has willed to build. The builder does not *have* to build a house, i.e., there is no *fiendum* in the idea of house, but the builder is not ignorant of whether he has willed to make it. Scotus wants to emphasize that there is no *fiendum* or *non-fiendum* inherent in any idea prior to the action of the divine will, but he surely does not want to claim that God remains ignorant of *fiendum* or *non-fiendum* once the divine will has willed. God *does* know what he wills to create. He does not know it in a logical prior moment to the divine will's act of willing, but he does know it. To deny this point would be to deny providence. How could God exercise providence over any particular individual if he did not know that he created it? Given that God has knowledge that he creates (or has created or will create)

[126] Noone, "Aquinas on Divine Ideas: Scotus's Evaluation," 318.

this thing, the only question is what terminology should be used to distinguish between God's knowledge of what he knows that he wills and what he knows he will never will? Put another way, what terminology should be used to distinguish between God's knowledge of the cognitive role of the divine ideas and the causal role of the divine ideas? Thomas chooses the terms "speculative" and "practical."

The second point about the distinction is that the same parameters that accrue to the builder do in fact appear to apply to God as well. God does not have to create man, but on the condition that he wills to make a man, he *has* to make a rational animal. So at the heart of the disagreement between Thomas and Scotus here is whether the divine will plays any role in God's knowledge. Thomas thinks that, strictly speaking, the *ratio* of an idea is completed only after the action of the divine will. Scotus, however, thinks that ideas are cognitive principles. The *ratio* of an idea is completed whenever God knows the proper notion of the thing to be formable by him. The divine will has no bearing on what it is to be an idea. Scotus clearly thinks that Thomas's position should be ruled out, but his criticisms seem to talk past Thomas's arguments more than engage them. Despite Scotus's criticism, I think Thomas can still argue that God has ideas precisely in order to propose possibilities for creation to the divine will. The will freely chooses which possibilities to create, and the divine intellect knows what the divine will chooses. It is worthwhile for a philosopher to distinguish the two moments of divine knowledge, and Thomas does so with a broad and strict sense of the term "idea." Scotus might be right that the terms "speculative" and "practical" are abused by Thomas (or perhaps used analogically), but that critique does not overturn the legitimacy of the view Thomas expresses with those terms.

If Scotus's critique of speculative and practical knowledge is only qualifiedly successful, his critique of Thomas's theory of divine ideas of individuals fares even worse. In the analysis of *Summa theologiae* I, q. 15, a. 3 above it was determined that Thomas is not as explicit about declaring that

there are divine ideas of singulars, but he certainly does not deny them. Plato held that there were ideas only of species. Thomas objected to Plato's position saying that it restricts divine providence only to the species, instead of to singulars.[127] Thus, we inferred that Thomas would hold divine ideas of singulars. This inference seemed especially justified in light of the fact that Thomas argued consistently from the beginning of his career that God has divine ideas of singulars. Scotus, however, does not make this inference. Scotus's arguments about divine providence and primary substance are well taken, but they are nothing to Thomas. Scotus has misinterpreted Thomas's text. Noone argues that Scotus's misinterpretation is the result of a flawed text. Scotus faithfully works his way through *Summa theologiae* I, q. 15, a. 3 for his account of Thomas's position up until the point that Thomas describes the opinion of Plato. Scotus ascribes Plato's position to Thomas, which is strong evidence that Scotus's text had no reference to Plato.[128] I think this thesis is probably correct. It is unlikely that a careful reasoner like Scotus would intentionally misrepresent an argument simply for effect.

It might also be the case that Scotus had access to Aquinas's *Quodlibet* VIII, in which Thomas emphasizes the intention of nature.[129] I argued above that Thomas's emphasis on the intention of nature was merely the result of taking the question of divine ideas of singulars from two different angles, but it possible that Scotus did not read the text in this way. Since Scotus treats questions of scope in the same order as Thomas presents them in the *Summa theologiae*, I think it is more likely that he was simply working from a faulty text, but if he were aware of this *Quodlibet*, then it would have confirmed his reading of the faulty text. It is regrettable that Scotus did not have *De*

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[127] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3, ad 4 (ed. Leonine 4.204b): "Individua vero, secundum Platonem, non habebant aliam ideam quam ideam speciei . . . . Sed providentia divina non solum se extendit ad species, sed ad singularia."

[128] Noone, "Scotus on Divine Ideas," 378–79.

[129] Thomas, *Quodlibet* VIII, q. 1, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 25.1.53:1–55:74). Cf. Thomas, *ST* I, q. 85, a. 3, ad 4 (ed. Leonine, 5.337b): "Et inde est quod ultima naturae intentio est ad speciem, non autem ad individuum, neque ad genus; quia forma est finis generationis, materia vero est propter formam."

veritate, q. 3 in front of him when he wrote this text, but I think he should be excused for this error.[130]

ii. Scotus on Henry of Ghent's Position. After criticizing Thomas, Scotus turns his gaze to Henry of Ghent. As we saw above, Henry denies that there are divine ideas of second intentions, relations, artificial things, genera, differentiae, individuals, privations, and numbers.[131] Only *species specialissimae*, which are *secundum se* and *ad se ipsas* essentially, have divine ideas according to Henry.[132] He does allow divine ideas of the essential parts of material things, namely, matter and form, but he only allows them insofar as they are *per se* and makeable of themselves. They only have divine ideas as they come to be in a composite. Thus, there is still only a single idea of a composite because the idea of the form is principally of the composite, and secondarily of its form.[133]

Scotus is highly critical of Henry's position. He begins his criticism by noting in passing that he disagrees with Henry's claim that a respect does not bespeak another thing beyond its foundation.[134] If Scotus is correct, then Henry's rejection of ideas for the categories of relation, time, place, position, *habitus*, action, and passion cannot stand.

The rest of Scotus's criticism is directed against Henry's denial of divine ideas of individuals. For the sake of space, I will only examine two of Scotus's arguments. First, Scotus says that

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[130] Noone also notes that a rejection of divine ideas was endorsed by "the distinguished Thomist John of Paris in his *Quaestiones* on the *Sentences* published at Paris between 1292 and 1296" ("Scotus on Divine Ideas," 379). It is reasonable for Scotus to think that a distinguished Thomist would faithfully present Thomas's position or at least note where he deviated from it. See John of Paris, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 6 (q. 122) (ed. Müller, 380): "Unde quia idea proprie in Deo est principium productivum rerum, et earum sunt distinctae ideae in Deo, quae secundum esse differunt et secundum formam. Quia licet individua differant secundum existentiam, quia existentia unius ab alterius existentia non dependet, non tamen differunt secundum formam quia in forma speciei convenium, ideo ipsorum non sunt diversae ideae."

[131] *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 18:31–35): "Dicimus igitur, breviter recolligendo, quod isti octo modi entium proprias ideas in Deo non habent: intentiones secundae, relationes, artificialia, genera, differentiae, individua, privationes et numeri. Restat igitur quod proprias ideas solummodo habent specificae rerum essentiae.

[132] *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 6:52–8:7).

[133] *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 20:97–21:15)

[134] An in depth account of this disagreement would prove to be too great a digression. Scotus argues against this position in depth in *Lect.*, II, d. 1, qq. 4–5, nn. 184–222 (ed. Vatican, 18.61–70); *Ord.*, II, d. 1, qq. 4–5, nn. 200–230 (ed. Vatican, 7.101–15); *In IV Met.*, q. 2, n. 73 (OPh III.337); *In V Met.*, qq. 5–6, n. 150 and qq. 12–14, n. 33 (OPh III.481–81 and 622); *In VII Met.*, q. 1, n. 13 and q. 13, n. 51 (OPh IV.94 and 235); *In IX Met.*, qq. 1–2, n. 26 (OPh IV.518).

something requires a proper *ratio cognoscendi* if it cannot be distinctly cognized through the notion of anything else. An individual is such a thing because if it could be distinctly cognized through the notion of something else, this would be through the quidditative notion of the species. But an individual cannot be distinctly cognized through the quidditative notion because the latter is only common through predication and does not virtually contain others except in potency and confusedly. It is not a distinct *ratio cognoscendi* of what is contained under it. The relation of species to individuals is such a relationship. Therefore, if individuals ought to be cognized distinctly according to their proper notions, this will be through their proper and distinct ideas.[135]

Second, Henry's claim that genera and individuals bespeak being *ad se* accidentally because it accrues to the nature of the species that this individual subsist in it, or that a genus be abstracted from it, amount to nothing. Because nothing is more essential than something that exists *per se* in the first mode. But the nature of the species belongs *per se* in the first mode to the individual itself. Whence this is *per se* in the first mode: "Socrates is a man." Therefore, if an individual exists *ad se* by the nature of the species, it will not be so accidentally, but essentially.[136]

Scotus's arguments against Henry are quite devastating. Since Henry thinks that divine ideas are the only means by which God can know things other than himself, then he ought to hold that there are divine ideas of individuals. Since anything that cannot be distinctly cognized by another requires a divine idea for Henry, individuals must have their own ideas because they cannot be distinctly cognized by their species. Moreover, Scotus's criticism about individuals being *ad se* essentially is crucial. In the section on Henry, I noted that Henry had to posit a plurality of divine ideas because a species could not be distinctly cognized by its genus, but the case was not analogous between the species and the individual. Scotus's argument declares that Henry cannot deny that the

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[135] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 39 (ed. Noone, 438:25:–439:8).
[136] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 41 (ed. Noone, 439:20–27).

two cases are parallel. Noone explains the force of Scotus's argument well: "although it is incidental to the specific nature, say humanity, to be in a given individual, the individual conversely is not merely incidentally a member of the species any more than it is incidentally what it is."[137] Man is not accidentally something for which rational accrues to animal. It is accidental to animal that it should be rational, but it is not accidental to man; "both rational and animal belong essentially to the understanding of the third item, namely, man."[138] Similarly, it is accidental for humanity to exist in Peter, but it is not accidental to Peter. Man and Peter's unique individuation belong essentially to the understanding of the third item, namely, Peter. Scotus's criticisms remove Henry's reservations about restrictions on divine ideas. The status *ad se accidentaliter* is removed from individuals and genera such that they require divine ideas in addition to the species.

iii. Scotus's Reply to the Question. Scotus begins his reply to the question by stating that, "with the other ancient doctor," he holds that if an idea is a principle of cognizing or a principle of action, then there is a distinct idea for each thing and for each aspect of each thing.[139] From the fullness of divine ideas proposed by this account, it is clear that Scotus has Bonaventure's theory in mind. I find Scotus's statement curious It is interesting that Scotus speaks of the "doctor" in the singular. Does he not think that anyone prior to Bonaventure advocated that anything *factibile* has a distinct idea? If so, then it would seem like he grants that Henry has the correct interpretation of Augustine. When Augustine says that man and horse are created by different ideas, he only means the species "man" and the species "horse." He does not mean that Peter, Paul, Secretariat and Seattle Slew each have distinct ideas. These four individuals were created after the pattern of two ideas, not four.

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[137] Noone, "Scotus on Divine Ideas," 382.
[138] Noone, "Scotus on Divine Ideas," 382.
[139] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n.46 (ed. Noone, 441:1–7), esp.: "cum alio doctore antiquo."

Scotus is convinced that each and every thing and aspect of each thing corresponds to a distinct idea regardless of whether we understand an idea as the object cognized or as a *ratio cognoscendi*. If ideas are the objects cognized then whatever is distinctly cognizable by God has a distinct idea. But anything that is *factibile* in itself or in another (whether absolutely or relationally) is a distinctly cognizable object for the divine intellect. It is the mark of perfection in our intellect that it can cognize all things insofar as they are distinctly cognizable. So all the more would it be a perfection in God. If ideas are *rationes cognoscendi*, then every positive thing must have a distinct cognition. The created intellect can compare the divine essence to each and every object as imitable of the divine essence. The divine intellect can also make such comparisons. So since our intellect can compare the divine essence to every positive thing, both as a whole and in its parts absolutely or relatively, as imitable in diverse grades, the divine intellect can also make such comparisons, and has done so from eternity. Since the divine essence in this comparison or respect is the idea, if God has a distinct comparison to each distinct thing, then each of the things will have a distinct idea.[140]

As an addendum to his reply, Scotus offers his own thoughts on speculative and practical ideas. Each idea, he says, is practical in its mode, not simply such that its objects are produced whenever according to them, but that according to them the creature is naturally suited to be produced if the divine will accepts it by its act of willing. Because the artisan producing something operable through cognition according to the whole that is in him has distinct cognition of all of the things that operable in him, both as wholes and in each of their parts and *per se* accidents. God is just such an artisan, and so he has distinct practical cognition of all the operable things that are produced by him. Consequently, he has a distinct principle of practical cognition, which is the idea. This point is meant to distinguish his position from that of Thomas's, but as I argued above, I think that this is

[140] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, nn. 47–49 (ed. Noone, 441:8–442:8).

Thomas's position. Ideas are speculative insofar as they make God know, and practical insofar as he knows that he can will them.

Scotus's position, then, is important insofar as he resists the trend to reduce the scope of divine ideas to as few as possible. It should be noted, however, that Scotus's position cannot be that God has ideas for everyt*hing* that he knows. As noted above, God has cognition of *figmenta* like chimera, which are not *factibile*. Chimera are things in the broadest sense of non-contradictory. The goatstag, unlike the square circle, is cognizable, but Scotus does not think that the goatstag is *factibile*. There is nothing contradictory about chimera being thought, but there is something contradictory about their existing in the extramental world. As Pini notes, Scotus seems to regard the repugnance between *figmenta* and extramental existence "as a primitive fact."[141] As a result, I am not sure why *figmenta* cannot possibly exist, but because they cannot exist, they restrict the scope of divine ideas. So I do not think that Scotus answers the question in a way that coheres with his larger system. The question is whether God has distinct ideas of everything that he distinctly cognizes. Scotus answers affirmatively, but the answer has to be negatively. Scotus's scope of divine ideas is vastly expanded compared to the scope advocated by Thomas and Henry, but his scope is not as unbounded by the divine imagination. Not every thing has an idea, only the *entia rata*.[142]

b. An Infinite Number of Ideas

Scotus's answer to the fourth question on the number of divine ideas is far more concise than the previous question. Once again, he declares "with that ancient doctor" that there are an

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[141] Pini, "Scotus and Avicenna on What it is to Be a Thing," 377. See, e.g., *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 74 (ed. Noone, 450:2–7): "entitas quiditativa quae est ratitudo rei, et cuius est esse ratum, non differt a fictitiis nisi per hoc quod potest in re extra et in effectu existere. Sed fictitiis hoc repugnat, ut chimaerae; non sic entitati quiditativae. Cui ergo repugnat ese existentiae, non potest habere esse quiditativum quae est tota ratitudo rei."

[142] Since the question is "utrum Deus omnium *aliorum a se* distincte cognitorum habeat distinctas ideas," it would be possible to interpret the question as referring only to things that can exist extramentally. It appears that Scotus has interpreted the question in this way. Yet I still think that the question has to include all things, even things that cannot possibly exist. Although they can never be "other than" God extramentally, *figmenta* are not God and so are still "other than" God.

infinite number of ideas in God.[143] Although he treats this question second, he thinks that this question is in some way prior to the previous question. It is prior in the sense that a fear of positing an infinite number of divine ideas drove his predecessors to limit the scope of the divine ideas. So Scotus's declaration that there are an infinite number of divine ideas naturally follows from the position that God has ideas of everything that is *factibile* both as a whole and in its parts. He offers several expected arguments for this position. God has an idea for each individual. But there are potentially an infinite number of individuals. Therefore, there are an infinite number of divine ideas. Moreover, as Augustine says, there are an infinite number of numbers. Since God has a distinct idea for each of these, the divine ideas must be infinite in number. The number of shapes and parts of a continuous quantity yield the same result.[144]

To these more mundane arguments Scotus adds his own argument. An intellect that comprehends a more perfect being also comprehends less perfect and equal beings. But the infinity of the divine essence is more perfect than the infinity of ideas, understood either as objects cognized or as *rationes cognoscendi*. But the infinity of his essence, which is the cause of the other infinity, can perfectly comprehend the very nature of infinity. Therefore, it will comprehend every other infinity all the more. And if ideas are the objects cognized (as Scotus thinks they are), then there will be an infinite number of ideas in his mind because everyone agrees that God comprehends an infinite number of objects.[145]

In order for this argument to succeed Scotus has to address three assumptions. The first assumption is that there are an infinite number of objects of cognition. The second assumption is

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[143] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 64 (ed. Noone, 446:9–10): "Ad secundam quaestionem dico consequenter cum illo doctore antiquo quod in Deo sunt infinitae ideae." Cf. Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 5 (ed. Quaracchi, I.612).

[144] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, nn. 64–67 (ed. Noone, 446:9–447:1). Cf. Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, XII, c. 19 (PL 41.368).

[145] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 68 (ed. Noone, 447:2–11). As Noone notes, this argument will be particularly influential on later Scotists, including William of Alnick ("Scotus on Divine Ideas," 386). Cf. William of Alnwick, *Determinationes*, 22 (Civitas Vaticana, Palatini lat. 1805, f. 148r).

that ideas are *obiecta cognita*. The third assumption is that the divine essence is the most perfect infinity. The first two assumptions were answered earlier in the distinction. The first assumption is readily granted by his contemporaries. The second assumption should have been proven by his reply to the second question on the status of divine ideas. The third assumption, however, is still outstanding, so Scotus immediately gives an argument for this assumption. The infinity of the divine essence will be primary, unparticipated, and, as it were, the efficient cause of the other infinity in cognized being or in relations of knowing. The other infinity is participated and, as it were, caused and not primary. Thus, it is necessary that the participated infinity reduce to the prior infinity that is entirely one because every plurality must be reduced to what is simply one.[146]

After these arguments, Scotus turns to Thomas's argument for God's knowledge of infinity and Henry's criticism of it. Thomas argues that infinity can be understood in two ways. In the first way, it entails examining each part successively; in the second way, infinity entails comprehending all the potential parts all at once as a whole. An infinite in the first sense is completely unknowable, even by God; an infinite in the second sense can be understood by God, but not by us.[147] Henry objected to the possibility of an infinite number of divine ideas because it is repugnant to the very notion of divine ideas that they be infinite. Since each idea imitates the divine essence according to a distinct grade of perfection, if there were an infinite number of divine ideas, then some being would imitate the divine essence according to infinite perfection.[148] To this argument Henry adds another on which Scotus focuses. Something can be incompatible (*repugnare*) with something else in two ways: either according to quidditative being or according to existential being. Therefore, that which

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[146] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 69 (ed. Noone, 447:12–19). The principle that plurality must be reduced to what is one simply has a long history. See, *inter alia*, Aristotle, *Met.* II, c. 2, 994a1–b31 (AL 25.3.2.44:35–47:100); Ps.-Dionysius, *De div. nom.*, c. 13 (PG 3.978); Proclus, *Elementatio theologia*, c. 21 (ed. Vansteenkiste, 273); Matthew of Aquasparta, *De productione rerum*, q. 1 (ed. Gàl, 9). Scotus, *Ord.*, I, d. 2, p. 2, qq. 1–4, n. 301 (ed. Vatican, 2.305).

[147] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 70 (ed. Noone, 448:3–449:2). Cf. Thomas, *ST* I, q. 14, a. 12, ad 1 and ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.185b).

[148] Henry, *Quodlibet* V, q. 3 (ed. Badius, 155vR).

is incompatible with something according to essential or quidditative being is repugnant to its knowability because knowability entails such being. But that which is incompatible with its existential being is not necessarily contrary to its knowability because it can be known through that in which its knowledge is eminently contained. In the first manner knowability is not incompatible with infinity because quidditative being is not repugnant in itself, but only with existential being. Therefore, an infinite can be understood by God in whom its knowledge is eminently contained.[149]

Scotus is favorably disposed to Thomas's argument and somewhat mystified by Henry's attack on it. Quidditative being, which is a ratification of the thing, does not differ from fictitious beings like chimera except that the former can exist in reality. Chimera cannot exist in existential being and so cannot have quidditative being. Therefore, the use of the distinction between quidditative being and existential being does not add anything to the argument. Still, Scotus responds to the substance of the claim using two arguments. First, Scotus claims that the argument is fallacious. It commits the *fallacia dictionis*, turning an accidental term into a substantial term. The term "whatever" (*quidquid*) bespeaks a substance and only distributes for speaking about what exists substantially. "Infinity" bespeaks the mode of existence of a thing, not its substance. Second, it is simply false that whatever is repugnant to being according to some mode of existence is repugnant to it according to knowability. For example, it is repugnant for blackness and whiteness to exist simultaneously in the same subject, yet it is not incompatible for blackness and whiteness to be in the subject absolutely speaking. It is not repugnant to think about them at the same time. Whence, whatever is absolutely repugnant to something's being is repugnant to its being thought, but not everything that is repugnant to being according to some mode (like the mode of simultaneity) is repugnant according to the same mode of its knowability. Infinity is only repugnant in the second, weaker sense. An infinite number of things cannot exist simultaneously, but nothing prevents them

[149] Henry, *Quodlibet* V, q. 3 (ed. Badius, 157vF)

from being understood simultaneously by an infinite intellect comprehending all the parts at once. Scotus, then, agrees with Thomas's analysis of the intelligibility of the infinite, and rejects Henry's unqualified objection. Henry is right to say that what is absolutely repugnant to existence cannot even be thought, like a square circle, but not everything that is incompatible with existence is unthinkable.[150]

4. Recapitulations and Conclusions

John Duns Scotus's account of divine ideas marks a crucial moment in the development of theories of the status of divine ideas. Scotus's major predecessors disagreed on a number of important points, but they all agreed on the most fundamental point: divine ideas are God's knowledge of the relation that could exist from the possible creature to him. Scotus agrees with his predecessors in the claim that a divine idea entails that God know the rational relation from him to the possible creature, but he rejects the more fundamental point that the possible creature has any relation to God whatsoever. To say that God knows the relation before he knows the possible creature is contrary to the very *ratio* of a relation. It is impossible to know a relation before the two things being related are known. The divine idea simply is "the eternal reason in the divine mind in accordance with something *formabile* according to its proper notion. Thus, it is clear that an idea is not some relation, but the *obiectum cognitum* in the divine mind in which creatures exist objectively."[151] To be known by God is to "exist" objectively in God. In his earlier writings Scotus articulated this objective existence as a sort of diminished being. This way of understanding divine ideas is somewhat similar to a proper understanding of Henry of Ghent's theory of essential being. In his later *Reportatio Parisiensis I-A*, however, Scotus changed his mind about objective being. It is not a

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[150] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, nn. 74–78 (ed. Noone, 450:2–451:18).

[151] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 57 (ed. Noone, 419:17–19): "idea est ratio aeterna in mente divina secundum aliquid formabile secundum propriam rationem eius. Et sic patet quod idea non est relatio aliqua sed obiectum cognitum in mente divina in qua sunt creaturae obiective."

sort of being at all. Scotus does not have to ascribe any sort of being to it at all precisely because he does not ascribe any relation from the known essence to God. Since it does not even have a relation to God, it does not have to have any existence.

When Scotus turns to the scope of divine ideas, he does so in dialogue with the three major thinkers from chapter two: Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, and Henry of Ghent. He endorses all of Bonaventure's conclusions, although he does not speak about Bonaventure's arguments at all. He is quite critical of Thomas's conclusions and arguments, and even more disparaging of Henry's position. He thinks that Thomas has a twofold error. First, Scotus thinks that Thomas's distinction between ideas in the strict sense of exemplar and ideas in the loose sense of *ratio* destroys the freedom of the divine will. A divine idea in the strict sense of exemplar is not merely possible, but will become actual at some point in time. If *fiendum* is integral to the divine idea, then either the divine will would be forced to choose to create it, or the divine will would have to sin by choosing not to create it. Second, Scotus thinks that Thomas is wrong to exclude genera, differentiae, prime matter, and individuals from the scope of divine ideas. As I argued above, I think that Scotus misunderstands Thomas's distinction between divine ideas as exemplars and divine ideas as *rationes*. The distinction is not logically prior to the act of the divine will, but rather posterior to it. A divine idea in the sense of exemplar is a divine idea that God knows that the divine will will freely choose to create at some point in time. The distinction arises not as a means of coercing the divine will, but rather as a means of ensuring that God knows creation and can exercise providence over it. In addition, Scotus is simply wrong about Thomas's position on divine ideas of individuals. Thomas does posit divine ideas of individuals, and Scotus's error on this point is likely the result of a faulty text.

Scotus's critique of Henry is more severe than his critique of Thomas for two reasons. First, Henry restricts the divine ideas even more than Thomas. Thomas did not think that there were

divine ideas in the strict sense of exemplar for genera and the like, but he did think that there were divine ideas in the broad sense of *ratio* for them. They do not exist as exemplars but they do exist as distinct cognitive principles. Henry does not even think that there are divine ideas for second intentions, genera, individuals, numbers, or privations even as cognitive principles. This denial leads to the second reason that Scotus critiques Henry. Since Henry argues that divine ideas are the only means of knowing things other than himself, his restriction of the divine ideas renders God ignorant of individuals. His system as a whole is self-defeating.

Scotus's own response to whether God has an idea of everything other than him of which he has distinct cognition is positive. If an idea is an *obiectum cognitum*, as Scotus had already argued, then each and every thing, and each and every aspect of every thing that God can make is a distinctly cognizable object for the divine intellect. And since it is a perfection to distinctly cognize everything that is cognizable, God has such distinct cognition because he is perfect. Even if an idea is understood as a *ratio cognoscendi* it follows that God has ideas for everything because God can do anything that we can do. But we can compare God's essence to each and every individual as well as each and every positive aspect of every individual. Therefore, God also makes such comparisons. *Ex hypothesi* these comparisons in the divine mind are divine ideas. Therefore, God has divine ideas of each and every thing and each and every positive aspect of every thing. All of these ideas, Scotus says, are practical insofar as God knows all the necessary details to create them. This practical knowledge does not coerce the divine will, although God does know what the divine will freely elects to create.

I argued that Scotus's response to the question entailed a small contradiction in his system. Scotus argues that the object covered by an idea has to be *factibile*. Only things to which extramental existence is not contradictory can be ideas. The set of *factibilia*, however, does not exhaust the set of things that God can know. God is able to know anything that is non-contradictory, which includes

figmenta. It is not possible for *figmenta* to exist extramentally, which means there are no divine ideas for them. There are no divine ideas for *figmenta*, but God still knows them distinctly. Therefore, there is not a divine idea for everything that God knows distinctly. His argument is strong insofar as it readmits genera, second intentions, individuals, and numbers to the scope of divine ideas, but the scope of divine ideas is still a subset of the things that God can cognize.

Scotus's arguments for the scope of divine ideas naturally entails that God have an infinite number of divine ideas. In addition to the commonplace arguments found in his predecessors, Scotus adds a very insightful based on the priority of the divine infinity. Since God is the primary, unparticipated, and *quasi*-efficient cause of every other infinite, every other infinity has to be reduced to him because every plurality has to be reduced to what is simply one. Thus, despite the fact that there are an infinite number of divine ideas, God can still comprehend them because they have God as their principle.

B. PETER AURIOL (CA. 1280–1322)

1. The Place of Divine Ideas in Auriol's Thought

The life of Peter Auriol (also spelled Auriole, Aureol, Aureoli) is largely unknown. The details of his life that concern us most are that he entered the Order of Friars Minor sometime before 1300. He studied in Paris sometime between 1300 and 1310, which means that it is possible that he heard Scotus lecture. His *In I Sent.*, which he seems to have completed by the Fall of 1314 and read in Paris between 1316–1318, is a massive work spanning 1100 folio pages in the manuscript. He was consecrated Archbishop of Aix-en-Provence in 1321, but died soon after assuming the episcopal chair in January 1322.[1]

Much of the work that has been done on Auriol's theory of divine knowledge has focused on his account of divine foreknowledge.[2] As a result, his theory of divine ideas is little known.[3] The theory of divine ideas that Auriol articulates is simultaneously highly innovative and traditional. On the one hand, he is highly critical of many of the major theories that preceded his, especially the theories of Thomas Aquinas, Henry of Ghent, and John Duns Scotus. He is especially critical of their distinction between primary and secondary objects of divine cognition and their articulation of relations as hypostasizing the divine ideas. In their place, Auriol says that the divine essence is the only principle to which we must refer to explain God's acts of knowing and creating; God's divinity (*deitas*) is both necessary and sufficient for both of these activities. Divine ideas are connotatively

[1] For more on Auriol's life, see A. Teetaert, "Pierre Auriol ou Oriol," *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, XII/2 (Paris, 1935), cols. 1810–81 and the introduction in Peter Auriol, *Scriptum super primum sententiarum*, vol. 1, ed. E.M. Buytaert (St. Bonaventure, NY, 1952), vii-xxviii.

[2] See, *inter alia*, Christopher D. Schabel, *Theology at Paris 1316-1345: Peter Auriol and the Problem of Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2000).

[3] There is only one article on Auriol's theory of divine ideas in secondary literature. Alessandro D. Conti, "Divine Ideas and Exemplar Causality in Auriol," *Vivarium* 38.1 (2000), 99–116. The article is a good introduction to Autriol's thought, but has several serious deficiencies. Since the scope of the paper is limited to the exemplar causality of the divine ideas, it only examines what Auriol says in *In I Sent.*, d. 35 (especially p. 3, a. 2). As a result, it ignores Auriol's most important treatment of divine ideas in *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2. Also, as will be examined in more detail below, the conclusion of the paper makes a sweeping claim about the "evident heresy" of necessary creation entailed by Auriol's account of divine ideas without much explanation. I think that a close look at Auriol's system shows that the possibility of creation is necessary for Auriol, but not very act of creation itself.

known when the divine essence is known. Divine ideas, then, are relatives according to speech (*relativa secundum dici*) that are connotated obliquely by the simple notion of divinity. On the other hand, Auriol's theory clings tightly to authorities of the past. The authority of Augustine is decisive for his determination of the meaning of the name "idea." Moreover, his insight into connotation, which will greatly influence the theory of Ockham, has certain forerunnings in Bonaventure.[4] Divine ideas, then, have a somewhat contested role in Auriol's account. Divine ideas are necessary insofar as they account for God's knowledge of things other than himself. But the way that he articulates divine ideas differs so drastically from his predecessors that he seems to have abandoned divine ideas.

Auriol's *divisio textus* of Peter Lombard's *Sentences* bears a striking resemblance to Thomas Aquinas's division of the work. He speaks of divine cognition in general in *In I Sent.*, d. 35, and includes some reflection on divine ideas there, but Auriol does not take up the question of divine ideas systematically until the second half of distinction 36. As a result, what follows will focus mostly on what Auriol says in d. 36, and examine what he says in d. 35 to help clarify certain conclusions that Auriol assumes in d. 36.

2. The Status of Divine Ideas

a. What is a Divine Idea?

When Auriol examines the status of divine ideas in *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1, he says that the status of divine ideas can only be determined after a fourfold investigation. That investigation asks what the name "idea" means, what an idea is in reality (*secundum rem*), how many ideas there are, and

[4] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. un., q. 3, ad 3 (ed. Quaracchi, I.608b). Cf. Ockham, *Ord.*, I, d. 35, q. 5, a. 3 (OTh 4.485:18–486:1): "Circa primum sciendum quod idea non habet quid rei quia est nomen connotativum, vel relativum secundum alium modum loquendi. Nam omnis idea necessario est alicuius idealis vel ideati idea. Et ideo non praecise significat aliquid unum, sed significat unum et connotat aliquid aliud vel illud idem quod significat."

whether they exist and why. The first two of these investigations fall under the investigation "What is a Divine Idea."

i. The Name "Idea." Auriol's account of the signification of the name "idea" relies entirely on Augustine's account of divine ideas in *De diversis quaestionibus LXXXIII*, q. 46.[5] The Greek term "idea," he says, is best translated into Latin as form or species. Notion (*ratio*) is a less proper translation because of its connection to the Greek term "logos." Yet, in a clear reference to Aquinas's account, Auriol says that all of these terms seem appropriate because an idea is called a form or species insofar as it is a principle of operation, and it is called a *ratio* insofar as it is a principle of speculative cognition.[6] Auriol thinks this interpretation of Augustine's text is inferior because it seems like *ratio* and form are synonyms in this case. For *ratio* is taken for that which is quidditative and formal in something; *ratio* signifies the name that is its definition.[7] Whence it customarily said that specific differences differ in *ratio*. Moreover, form and species can be understood in two ways: sometimes for the intrinsic and constitutive form of a thing, and other times for an extrinsic form and exemplar. Ideas are not called intrinsic forms and species, but are extrinsic forms and exemplar *rationes*.[8]

Having ascertained that an idea is both a form and a *ratio*, Auriol points out that Augustine attributes seven properties to ideas. First, they are principle forms because they are more principally that to whose imitation something comes to be than that which comes to be. Second, they are stable, incommunicable, and eternal forms. They are not formed, but always the same. If they were not stable, incommunicable, and eternal, then they would be formed to the likeness of some other form, which regression would proceed to infinity until stable, incommunicable, and eternal forms

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[5] Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46 (PL 40.29–30).
[6] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 4.199).
[7] See Aristotle, *Metaphysics* IV, c. 7, 1012a28 (AL 25.3.2.90:629–30).
[8] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 3:127–141).

were found. Third, everything that can arise or end, or does arise or end is formed according to these forms. Fourth, the rational soul can intuit these forms insofar as such a soul makes itself holy and pure. Fifth, the soul's blessedness consists in the immediate vision of these forms. Sixth, these forms are only in the divine intelligence because God intuits them when he makes something other than himself. Seventh, these forms are not only ideas or likenesses, but rather they are true and have truth. Thus, Auriol says, ideas are certain truly existing, stable, incommunicable, and eternal principal forms that are in no way formed, contained in the divine intelligence, according to which everything that arises or perishes is formed, to whose contuition the rational soul can arrive, and, when it arrives, understands them in a most blessed vision.[9]

ii. The Reality of Ideas: Contra Thomas and Henry. Having clarified the signification of the term "idea," Auriol asks what ideas are in reality (*secundum rem*). He begins by explaining the positions of his predecessors. Of particular note are his consideration of the accounts of Thomas, Henry, et al. and Scotus.[10] Thomas, Henry, and their followers say that formally ideas are certain rational respects understood about the divine essence. For the one existence is imitable by many creatures and there are as many respects of imitability as there are species of creatures.[11] As a result, ideas are nothing other than the divine essence under theses diverse respects and rational relations.[12]

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[9] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 3:142–164), esp: "Sunt enim ideae formae quaedam principales, vere existentes, stabiles, incommutabiles, et aeternae, nullo modo formatae, in divina intelligentia contentae, secundum quas omne formatur quod interit vel oritur, ad quarum contuitum potest rationalis anima pervenire et, cum pervenerit, intelliget eeas beatissima visione." Auriol's use of "contuitum" is reminiscent of Bonaventure's theory of divine illumination (Bonaventure, *De scientia Christi*, q. 4 [ed. Quaracchi, 5.17–27]). In Bonaventure's theory, the term signifies a certain seeing along with, but the term can also mean to look directly at and consider attentively. Auriol has the latter meaning in mind here.

[10] It should be noted that Auriol has a quite detailed account of Plato's position on the reality of divine ideas. This account in far more penetrating and balanced than his predecessors. Whereas most of his predecessors are content to delcare that Plato asserted the existence of subsisting forms on the authority of Aristotle, Auriol delves more deeply into the account, looking for a way to save it. Ultimately, he comes to the same conclusion as his predecessors: "illae formae subsistentes quas Plato appellat ideas, ut per eas fugeret opinionem Heracliti, qui nihil esse scibile asserebat." This position simply cannot fit into any Catholic synthesis. See *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 3:165–5:226)

[11] As we will see below, Auriol also does not interpret Thomas's account of divine ideas of singulars correctly. I suspect that he is following Scotus's account.

[12] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 5:236–240).

This account cannot stand, however, and Auriol introduces several arguments against it. The most important of those arguments for our purposes states that an idea is an exemplar in God that every creature imitates. But it is obvious that creatures do not imitate a rational relation, but rather the bare essence of divinity. Creatures do not imitate those respects of imitability, but the substratum of those respects. Therefore, these respects fall short of (*accidunt*) the formal character of the idea. This conclusion is confirmed because just as color is visible *per se* in the second mode, not because of a respect of visibility, but the very color abstracted from such a respect, so a creature imitates the divine essence abstracted from every respect, although apprehension can immediately rise up to the respect of imitability. And because of this it some rational respect is not the formal nature of the idea, which the creature imitates.[13]

Most of Auriol's argument is straightforward, but his claim about the substratum of the respects requires some additional explanation. In the earlier *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 3, a. 2, Auriol argues that God's divinity, according to its absolute simplicity both in reality and in notion, is the eminent likeness and proper exemplar of each and every being. There is no need to appeal to the two roles that Thomas ascribes to divine ideas. In fact, if we make such an appeal, then "God's essence would not really be the exemplar cause of everything."[14] If there are many notions, then either they would be related to the notion of the divinity as to a substratum or as to a whole of which the ideas were parts. God cannot be the substratum because then he would not be an exemplar cause formally and *per se* insofar as he would be subject to the exemplar notions. Because he is the final cause of all

[13] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 5:245–53). Immediately after Auriol adds an interesting, but fallacious theological argument. Ideas are unformed principle forms, the direct vision of which is beatifying. But it is manifest that rational relations are not principle forms, but rather diminished beings and only according to reason, nor is the vision of such a respect beatifying. Only vision of God's divinity makes us blessed. Therefore, rational respects do not have the *ratio* of an idea. *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 5:254–58). This argument seems like something of a strawman against Thomas and Henry since neither of these two authors argues that the beatific vision consits in knowing the divine ideas. The argument does follow from his definition of the term "idea," however.

[14] Conti, 112.

things through his divinity, anything that is beatified is beatified in the notion of his divinity. Therefore, under the same notion, namely, the notion of divinity, it will be the exemplar cause of all things. Thus, since notions of this kind are not present in the notion of deity except through the act of intellect, it would follow that God would not be an exemplar from himself or essentially (*ex natura rei*), but through something that the consideration of the intellect confers upon him. Thus, notions of this kind would be diminished beings and made by the intellect. But the notion of an exemplar is eminent and nobler and more actual than the notion of the thing exemplified. But no diminished notion has as much being as a creature, which truly is real. Whence it cannot be argued that some notion created (*ratio facta*) by intellect is an exemplar with respect to the being of creatures. The second option, in which God's divinity would be a whole of which the ideas are parts, is equally problematic because that would violate his simplicity. Therefore, God cannot be the exemplar of things by distinct notions (*per aliam et aliam rationem*).[15]

If many notions are posited in God, then God is only an exemplar cause insofar as he is known by his own intellect. Considered in this way, divine ideas seem to emerge from the divine essence like accidents in a subject. The divine essence is the pincushion from which the divine ideas protrude. It is clear that Auriol takes very seriously Thomas's claim that the divine intellect "discovers" the divine ideas in the divine essence. God is not intrinsically an exemplar cause of creatures, but only insofar as he is known. Moreover, Auriol says, Thomas's solution begs the question and complicates the matter in the process. Thomas posits both a cognitive and a causal role to the divine ideas, but this multiplication of entities merely declares its own explanatory power. It is more difficult to see how a plurality of distinct principles can preexist in God's absolute simplicity. It is far easier to see how one simple being is the likeness of diverse things.[16]

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[15] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 3, a. 2 (ed. Paladini, 12:6:27–13:642).
[16] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 3, a. 2 (ed. Paladini, 11:558–65), esp: "Sed iste modus dicendi petit principium."

Again, the imperfect is contained in the perfect formally and quidditatively. Whence it is true to say that "man is an animal," and it is true to say that lesser numbers are contained in greater numbers, as two is in three potentially and through the mode of a part. But it is manifest that the proper forms of creatures are not contained in God formally and quidditatively because it is not true that "a stone is God," nor is it contained in him as part of God's divinity.[17] Therefore, creatures are not in God as an imperfect act in a perfect act. As a result, it is not proven that he who knows God cognizes beings according to their proper notions, even though he who knows man would know animal.[18] Thus, as Conti says, "according to Auriol, Aquinas' conception of divine ideas hypostasizes them, so that God's being itself is nothing but the 'union' of divine ideas."[19] On such a position, God's absolute simplicity is compromised because the divine essence is constituted by the divine ideas that arise from the action of the divine intellect. The essence in itself is incomplete without ideas as essential parts.

iii. The Reality of Ideas: Contra Scotus. After arguing against Thomas and Henry, Auriol considers Scotus's opinion. Scotus posits that ideas are in the mind as the creature itself objectively shining forth again. Just as a house comes to be from the house that is objectively in the mind of the artificer, so too creatures come to be from the possible creatures that are objectively in the divine intellect. They are not present in some species because then his intellect would get worse, but they are in the essence itself. The idea of a stone is nothing more than a stone as understood.[20]

Before turning to Auriol's criticism of this position, we should note his use of "shining forth again" (*relucente*). This term appears only in Scotus's treatment of divine ideas in the Parisian *Reportatio*; it does not appear in distinctions 35 or 36 of the *Lectura* or the *Ordinatio*. We can be

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[17] Auriol would, of course, admit Jesus Christ as the one unique case in which the proposition "man is God" is true.

[18] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 3, a. 2 (ed. Paladini, 11:580–12:587).

[19] Conti, 107.

[20] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 5:264–274).

confident that Auriol had at least some exposure to Scotus's most mature reflection on divine ideas. This point is important because in his criticism of Scotus's position Auriol clings to a diminished being interpretation of Scotus.[21] The fact that he knows *relucente*, but not that Scotus abandoned the terminology of diminished being seems to indicate that Auriol did not have direct access to Scotus's *Reportatio*. He probably had the *Ordinatio* at his disposal and merely knew that Scotus also taught the divine ideas as *relucente* from one of his Masters. I find it unlikely that Auriol would have been looking directly at the *Reportatio* and not seen the changes that Scotus introduces into the four instants that lead to a divine idea.

Auriol is dissatisfied with Scotus's articulation of divine ideas, and he offers several arguments against it. The most important of these arguments for our purposes is the first argument. Creatures are in no way terminations of the divine intuition as primary or secondary objects. But it is manifest that ideas are in God as all Catholics concede. Therefore, it cannot be said that created objects shining forth again in the divine essence are ideas.[22] Auriol offers an argument for the major premise in *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 3, a. 2. There he argues that the distinction between primary and second objects of cognition results in considering one and the same thing as if it were two things. The divine essence does not display (*exhibeat*) another present thing other than the very eminent presence of all things. The image that reflects (*lucet*) in a mirror does not produce another presence other than the presence of the original object. There are not two presences: the thing in the image, and the "presence" of the thing in the mirror. Similarly, there is no other presence of creatures in the divine essence than the divine essence itself. Therefore, we cannot posit creatures in distinct

[21] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 6:286–89): "Praeterea, secundum eundem idea sunt formae principales, nec solum ideae sunt, immo verae sunt. Sed manifestum est quod creaturae, dato quod essent obiective in mente divina, non haberent esse verum et principale, sed intentionale et deminutum. Igitur dici non potest quod essent ideae de quidbus loquitur Agustinus."

[22] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 5:275–6:278).

represented being from the essence, nor is there some distinct rational relation mediating between them since they are not distinct extremes.[23]

This criticism applies to Thomas and Henry just as much as it does to Scotus. Each of them argues that the primary object terminating God's cognition is God himself. Creatures are only known in a secondary manner.[24] Auriol's critique is not finished, however. Not only would positing primary and secondary objects treat one object as if it were two, it would also require two acts and two distinct cognitive principles to understand the divine essence as these two objects. Whenever something looks upon something as in a mirror, then there is an act of seeing and a separate species or notion by which the mirror is seen and by which the thing in the mirror is seen. This is clear from the fact that the mirror is seen through the species representing the glass and its figure and form. But the thing is seen through another, proper species, although the species of the mirror and the species of the thing concur in the same eye at the same time. So if God's understanding is likened to knowledge shining forth again in a mirror, then he will understand creatures through another likeness than he understands through his essence, yet the essence will not be related as a mirror. Therefore, since God does not see creatures through another likeness, it is obvious that his essence is not related through the mode of a mirror. Moreover, God cannot understand creatures through reflection. For a reflective act seems to be more imperfect than a direct act. But if the divine intuition first examines the essence, and then proceeds to creatures as through a certain mirror, it would see them through reflection.[25] Therefore, it would be more imperfect.

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[23] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 3, a. 2 (ed. Paladini, 10:515–24), esp: "Sicut imago quae lucet in speculo non aliter exhibet faciem praesentem, nisi quatinus est praesentalitas ipsius faciei. Non enim sunt duo praesentialitas faciei in ipsa imagine, et ipsa imago." Cf. Conti, 110–11.

[24] Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.105:212-215). Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, a. 2, ad 1 (ed. Leonine, 4.202b). Henry, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 26:20–28:65). Scotus, *Rep. par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 10 (ed. Noone, 398:5–21).

[25] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Paladini, 6:303–17).

The strength of this criticism is somewhat hard to gauge. Scotus had argued for the distinction between the two instants because creatures are not co-emitted with an infinite act because then they would be infinite, and God's blessedness would somehow be logically consequent upon knowing creatures.[26] The secondary object, Scotus argued, is somehow included eminently in the primary terminating object, and they terminate as a result of the primary object. They follow and depend upon the primary act and are related to the divine intellect as something measured to its measure.[27] Yet, this explanation does not seem sufficient. If God sees creatures in his essence as we see things in a mirror, then he will have to act twice (1) to have knowledge of his essence and (2) to have knowledge of creatures. These two acts of knowledge will be accomplished through two different species. Scotus seems to fall prey to this argument because he argues that God first knows his essence, and then knows creatures in a second instant. Scotus tries to link the first instant in which God knows his own essence with the second instant in which God knows creatures by saying they are related as measure and measured, but this explanation seems to grant precisely what Auriol is condemning, namely, that there are two "species," (1) the measure, and (2) the measured.

Yet, Auriol's criticism also seems to assume that if there are two species, then they will both require their own being. If God's intuition of creatures results in two objects of intuition, God and creature, and there is a plurality and multiplicity of things understood in the divine intellect, then creatures in the divine intellect will have to have being. That which terminates the act of the intellect has to have some real being distinct from the intellect. So if divine ideas are terminative of the divine intellect then they have to have some diminished being separate from God, which cannot be admitted.[28] This consequence might follow for Scotus's account of divine ideas in the *Lectura* and

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[26] Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, q. 1–2, n. 13 (ed. Noone, 399:11–20). Cf. Noone, "Scotus on Divine Ideas," 362 and Noone, "Aquinas on Divine Ideas: Scotus's Evaluation," 309.

[27] Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, q. 1–2, n. 14 (ed. Noone, 399:21–29).

[28] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 2, a. 2 (ed. Paladini, 10:478–91): "Ubi considerandum est quod aliquid dicitur intelligi terminative, aliquid vero denominative: terminative quidem res extra quantum ad illud esse quod habet per modum nostri conspicui, quod est esse in anima et esse diminutum; denominative vero quantum ad illud esse quod habet in re

Ordinatio, where Scotus speaks of diminished being, but certainly cannot follow for the *Reportatio* because Scotus explicitly denies that the creatures as understood have any being; creatures in divine cognition are *nihil in re*. As a result, although Scotus appears to fall under the first half of the criticism, his position is not touched by the underlying concern that motivates the criticism. By denying that creatures as understood by God have any real being, Scotus is able to fall back upon his formal distinction to defend himself against the first criticism. Scotus does appear to make God have two distinct types of species in his understanding, one for the essence and one for creatures, but the fact that these two are only distinguished formally preserves God's simplicity. If Auriol really wants to show that Scotus's theory abandons divine simplicity, then he would have to show that the formal distinction is not a real distinction.[29]

iv. The Reality of Ideas: Auriol's Position. Having argued that divine ideas cannot be relations or even a secondary object of the divine intellect, Auriol says what seems to him to be true. The name "idea" or "exemplar" is not simply absolute because an exemplar is an exemplar of something, and an idea is an idea of something. To be "of something" does not belong to what is absolute. Ideas cannot be formally relative either because to be an idea or an exemplar is not other than to be that which something else imitates. But that something does not imitate a relation; it imitates some absolute notion (*ratio*). As a result, a divine idea cannot formally be a relation. Therefore, it has to be a connotative notion (*ratio connotativa*). They are like those things that are in

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extra, quod verum est et reale; et licet sit eadem res, non tamen esse reale et intentionale sunt idem esse. Sic igitur Deus non intelligit creaturas terminative quasi ipsae terminent ituitum divinum, nec in esse esse reali nec in esse intentionali; sed alio terminante, videlicet divina essentia, ipsae dicuntur denominative intelligi, sicut si res posita in esse intentionali non solum differet secundum esse diminutum a re existente extra, immo secundum ese reale. Constat enim quod tunc res exterior intelligeretur denominative alia re intuitum terminante. Ut verbi gratia, si rosa quae lucet in mente haberet esse reale, sicut habet esse diminutum, ea terminatnte intuitum intellectus, rosae omne particulares exterius existentes denominative intelligi dicerentur, non minus perfecte."

[29] As we will see below, Ockham takes just this approach: "Contra istam opinionem [sc. instantias] posset argui per dicta prius, ubi ostensum est—ut mihi videtur sufficienter—quod talia instantia non sunt ponenda. Et ita impossibile est poni aliquod instans in quo prius intelligatur essentia quam creatura" (*Ord.*, I, d. 35, q. 4 [OTh 4.468:14–17]; Ockham is referring to his *In I Sent.*, d. 9, q. 3 (OTh 3.294–97 and 311–12).

the genus substance according to their substantial notions whenever they connote another, as is clear from the fact that a hand is called the hand of another and flesh the flesh of another. Notions in the category quality are connotative like this as well; virtue, natural potency and impotency are all of something. Even humanity is called the humanity of someone in this way. Therefore, an idea and an exemplar are relatives according to speech or connotative notions. Such things bespeak something directly and bespeak a certain connotation obliquely because of which an idea and exemplar are not something principally and directly except the simply notion of divinity, which ideates and exemplifies every creature, and which all creatures imitate. An idea of this kind implies creatures connotatively and obliquely. And thus an idea does not differ from the divine essence except as the same notion is taken with the thing connoted or without the thing connoted. As a result, it is not necessary to appeal to a respect of imitability, to real notions, or to something else.[30]

With this response, Auriol strips the divine ideas of all of the metaphysical apparatus that had been erected by prior authors. He accounts for the divine ideas with the logical and grammatical notion of connotation. A term is connotative if it denotes one thing and also implies something else. The connotation is nothing in itself; it is a derivation that has no existence separate from the term's denotation. In the same way, the divine ideas are implied by the divine essence, and do not have any sort of separate existence. Just as the hand always implies the whole person and does not have any being other than the being of the whole person, so too the divine ideas always imply the divine essence and have no being other than the simple notion of the divinity. The divine essence itself implies possible creatures. An idea does not differ from the divine essence except that the divine essence can be considered without considering the connotated divine idea.

By making ideas connotative notions Auriol successfully avoids the problem of positing two species by which the divine intellect knows. Even if we consider God as knowing a divine idea, the

[30] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 6:291–307).

divine idea is nothing other than a connotation of the divine essence. Yet there are two possible objections to this solution. The first objection comes from Scotus. If divine ideas are connotated by the divine essence, then it would seem like God's beatitude depends upon knowing possible creatures. This conclusion seems unfitting because divine perfection should not rely on the imperfection of creatures. I think Auriol would say that this problem is not a true problem. Since the divine idea need not be considered with the connotation of the divine ideas, such dependence need not follow. And even if the divine ideas are included as necessary for God's beatitude, it does not follow that God's beatitude depends on something finite. The divine ideas are not finite; they are God's very divinity. By knowing the divine ideas, God is really knowing himself and his own exemplary power. It is not unfitting that God's beatitude depend upon knowing his ability to create creatures (even if we say that he knows his ability to create *this* creature).

The second objection is internal to Auriol's system. If the divine essence can be taken with or without the thing connotated, then it seems like God would have two distinct acts. The primary act would be to consider the divine essence without the connotated divine ideas; the secondary act would be to include a consideration of the divine ideas. How is a connotation exempt from Auriol's critique of the mirror? If the divine essence can be taken only directly, or also obliquely, how is this relevantly distinct from considering a mirror itself, or also what is in the mirror? I do not have an adequate response for this objection on Auriol's behalf. He would surely object that a mirror does not produce its own images, and has to receive them *ab extra*. To use an anachronistic analogy, God is better likened to a television, which, as it were, produces its own images. The switch in analogy has the advantage that Auriol does not have to posit that ideas have some sort of distinct, diminished being in order to shine forth, but he still seems to need two distinct acts to account for God's knowledge of both himself and things other than himself. Perhaps Auriol thinks he has accomplished his task by eliminating any sort of separation from the divine essence from the divine

ideas. They cannot be thought without the divine essence because they are connotative notions, and they do not have any sort of existence distinct from God's divinity. We can still distinguish two acts, but Auriol has accomplished what he set out to do. I think his account would be greatly improved if he had denied that the divine essence would be taken without the divine ideas being connotated because they he would have just one divine act, but he did not do so.

b. The Plurality of Divine Ideas

After determining that the divine ideas are merely connotative notions that always imply the divine essence and have no being distinct from the divinity, Auriol turns to the question of plurality of divine ideas. He notes that his predecessors argued for a plurality of divine ideas insofar as they understood ideas as being something formally and principally and directly. On this interpretation of ideas, Auriol grants that his predecessors were forced to argue that there were many ideas. For if ideas formally were certain distinct notions in God from the nature of the thing, or if they were respects of imitability crafted by the divine intellect from the divine essence, and if they were the creatures themselves objective in the divine intellect, there must be many ideas to account for God's distinct knowledge. But an idea is not formally and directly anything except that which the ideated and exemplified things imitate. And all things imitate God according to one supremely simple thing (*unum quid simplicissimum*) the divinity both in reality and in notion. Therefore, it must be said that an idea is nothing but the only and simple thing with respect to the creator of all things insofar as that which is introduced principally and directly, but it is multiple in things connotated which are introduced obliquely.[31]

The difficulty with his predecessors' accounts is that they appeal to indeterminate concepts. Each idea, since it is the direct object of the divine intellect, could be an abstract and general concept. Since abstract and general concepts do not yield distinct cognition, many ideas need to be

[31] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 6:309–19).

posited. There need to be as many ideas as are necessary to satisfy God's omnipotence. The solution to this problem is not a Scotistic theory of instants because, Auriol argues, his theory includes indeterminate concepts. Indeterminate concepts are necessarily distinguished from things connotated, since they cannot be distinguished from their proper reasons because they do not introduce anything determinately. Whence the idea of a rose expresses another concept from the idea of man or of lion, not because of a principle that is entirely indifferent (like that which the rose imitates), but because of the rose that is connotated. Therefore, God is full of notions of this kind, insofar as all these concepts, which are many, can be applied to him, rather they are abstracted from the one simple notion of divinity and its attributes.[32] There can be said to be many ideas because many things can be connotated from God's divinity. The diversity of creation is sufficient evidence of this plenitude.

c. The Existence of Things in God

Although the majority of Auriol's thoughts about the way in which ideas exist in God can be extracted from what he has said above, he adds a short section in which he clarifies the way he understands the existence of ideas in God. The divine essence has the notion of an idea or an exemplar and principle form, not insofar as it is the *obiectum cognitum* or *ratio cognoscendi*, but insofar as divinity exists and under the proper notion through which it is every being eminently because it is an eminent likeness of each being. Whence *esse cognitum* does not give it the notion of an idea, nor does being a principle of cognizing or acting give it the notion of an idea. It has the notion of an idea because the formal notion of an idea or exemplar consists in being that which another imitates or from which another is exemplified or ideated. But it is manifest that all things imitate the divinity itself and not those extrinsic notions, namely *esse cognitum* or the being of a principle of cognition or production. Therefore, these notions, although it belongs to them to be an exemplar or idea

[32] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 7:331–52).

extrinsically, are accidental and are not the formal notion of an idea. Ideas are not relations or respects because an exemplar *qua* exemplar does not bespeak a respect, just like a measure does not bespeak a measured. For to be a measure or an exemplar is not to be relative formally. Thus, just as to be a virtue or a hand or foot is not to be a relative, although they are said to be to another (*ad alterum*), so neither is an exemplar.[33]

Auriol further argues that although his predecessors were wrong to say that to be a principle of cognition and a *ratio cognoscendi* was part of the formal notion of an idea, yet they were right to say that an idea is a *ratio cognoscendi* for the divine intellect. They are not a mediating notion between the divine intellect and its intellection or *rationes cognoscendi* objectively, but it is a *ratio cognoscendi* as much as it denominates an object or connotes creatures. For if the divinity were not an exemplar and eminent likeness of all others, then it would not follow that all things were eminently already cognized and foreknown in its intuition or outlook. Because an idea adds to divinity not something intrinsic but an extrinsic connotation, it is true to say that when the essence is cognized without a connotation, a creature is not said to be cognized. But every entity bespeaks a cognized idea that is cognized because an idea adds every entity through the mode of connotation. And from this it is clear in what way an idea is a principle of operation, not elicitively, but determinatively and directively; but directing and determining it has elicitive power insofar as it is a *ratio cognoscendi*.[34]

These points are especially important to note because Auriol uses them to begin to explain the relationship between divine ideas and the divine will. Although divine ideas are not formally *rationes cognoscendi* or *rationes operandi*, yet they do perform these functions. Divine ideas do make God know and they are the principles that he uses to create. Thus, when Auriol says that God's divinity is the only and supremely simple principle, he does not mean to say that they do not play any role in

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[33] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 8:400–17).
[34] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 8:418–31).

divine cognition or production.[35] Divine ideas are nothing other than notions connotated from the divine essence, and so are not distinct cognitive and productive principles in the way that Thomas, et al. wish to claim, but if God did not have divine ideas then he would not know anything other than himself. If God only knew what the divine essence denotes and directly, then he would only know himself. Because God also knew what the divine essence connotates, he knows things other than himself. Moreover, he creates according to the connotations. Thus, divine ideas are legitimately *rationes cognoscendi et operandi*. They present ways in which God could act, and God then wills certain of those ways. Thus, it must be said that God's imitability is a proper feature of his divine essence, and not a relation of reason. Were it not a proper feature, then God would never know creatures by means of his essence. Conti declares that in this position "creation, which is the effect of this imitability becomes as necessary as the divine essence itself—an evident heresy."[36] Conti is right to declare necessary creation an evident heresy, but I think he is wrong to ascribe it to Auriol here. Auriol does declare that the divine essence necessarily connotes certain ways in which divinity can be imitated, and he also says that the supremely active God is not "activated" by the divine will, but he does not say that God necessarily selects some or all of them for creation.[37] In fact, he constantly stresses that creation is not necessary. God's creative options are necessary, but the choice is free.

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[35] Conti argues that Auriol denies these roles: "according to Auriol, the divine essence is the only principle of divine creation: ideas do not play any effective role in it. Nor are they the principles (*rationes*) of divine thought—the first of the two functions performed by divine ideas according to Aquinas—since divinity (*deitas*) is the necessary and sufficient principle of that" (111–12). Here, Conti's reliance on only Auriol's position in d. 35 leads him astray. Auriol does indeed wish to deny that divine ideas are formally cognitive and causal principles, *contra Thomam*, but God does know and create things other than himself because of them.

[36] Conti, 115–16. Conti cites Lauge Olaf Nielson, "Dictates of Faith versus Dictates of Reason: Peter Auriole on Divine Power, Creation, and Human Rationality," *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale* 7 (1996): 213–41. See *In I Sent.*, d. 42, p. 1, a. 2 (ed. Capullius, 968bB–972aB).

[37] *In I Sent.*, d. 42, p. 1, a. 2 (ed. Capullius, 970aF–b): "Tertia quoque imperfectio tollitur; quia activa potentia, ut in Deo, nullo modo determinatur ad agere, non-enim determinatur necessitate naturae, sicut ignis ad calefactere; quia hoc omnia produxisset necesitate naturae; quod erroneum est; nec etiam actu aliquo intrinseco voluntatis, quia cum illo de necesstate sit Deus, nec possit esse non Deus, eadem necessitate determinaret potentiam activam divinam ad agere, et sic necessario omnia produxisset: unde nihil est in Deo, nec est possibile est, quin omni eo posito, adhuc eius activa remaneat penitus indeterminata ad agere, et non agere quemcumque effectum ad extra: et ideo quando Deus agit, non debet intelligi, quod sua activa potentia praedeterminetur necessitate naturae, aut actu aliquo intriseco voluntatis, aut aliquo alio, immo ipsa indeterminata penitus existente, oritur, et profluit determinata actio, et aliter est impossibile salvare, quin de necessitate producat."

Here, an important point from Bonaventure is worth recalling: "although *actual* production of a creature be voluntary, yet the *potency* of producing and *knowledge* is necessary."[38] Translated into Auriol's terms, although actual production of a creature be voluntary, yet the connotation of the divine essence that allows knowledge of what can be produced is necessary. Auriol's emphasis on God's simplicity and pure actuality cannot account for the voluntariness by anything but a negative argument, but he firmly holds that it is voluntary.[39]

d. Recapitulation

Peter Auriol's theory of the status of divine ideas jealously guards the absolute simplicity of the divine essence. Divine ideas cannot formally be *rationes cognoscendi*, objects of divine understanding, or the creature as known as his predecessors held because these accounts are not compatible with divine simplicity. At the heart of the problem is that Auriol's predecessors relied on a distinction between primary and secondary objects of the divine intellect. To speak of divine ideas as *objects* (even secondary ones) is to make divine ideas terminate the divine understanding. Such a position results in a false distinction in the divine essence "equivalent to holding that the image of an object on a mirror and the 'presence' of the object in the same mirror are two different 'things'."[40] There is no distinct being for a creature in the divine intellect. Rather, divine ideas are merely things connotated by the divine essence and so are always *of something*, namely divine essence. They *are* the divine essence and cannot be understood separately from it any more than a hand is separate from the body. Separated from the body, a hand loses its life and is only so called equivocally. Similarly, a divine idea that had any being distinct from the being of the divine essence would lose its life and only be called an idea equivocally.

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[38] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 27, p. 2, a. un., q. 2, ad 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.486a): "quamvis *actualis* productio creaturae sit voluntaria, tamen *potentia* producendi et *scientia* est necessaria."

[39] *In I Sent.*, d. 42, p. 1, a. 2 (ed. Capullius, 971bF): "Quomodo ergo stent ista simul, quod non sit Deus semper agere, et tamen non sit in aliqua potentia ad agere, difficile concipere nec possibile est salvari, nisi via praedicata [scilicet, via negationis]." Quoted in Nielen, 238.

[40] Conti, 110.

Since the connotations that are the divine ideas connote ways in which the divine essence is imitable, there have to be many divine ideas. God is imitable in many ways and so there are many ideas. This plurality does not mitigate divine simplicity because connotations are not the divine essence directly, but only obliquely. The divine essence remains one directly, and only has many ideas obliquely. Just as having many connotations does not destroy the unity of a word, so too having many connotations does not destroy the unity of the divine essence.

Divine ideas do not have any distinct existence whatsoever. They are not formally *rationes cognoscendi* and *producendi*, but they still perform these roles. If there were no connotations in the divine essence prior to its being known by the divine intellect, then possible creatures could never be known. Auriol's emphasis on the connotations being in the divine essence prior to their being known makes the divine ideas necessary, but does not in any way coerce the divine will or compromise its freedom. Divine ideas do not have *fiendum* or *non-fiendum* as part of them. The only thing they do have is *potest fieri*. Thus, divine ideas are necessary, but creation is not.

3. The Scope of Divine Ideas

Turning to the scope of divine ideas, it should be noted that Auriol is a conceptualist. He holds that everything that has extramental existence is singular.[41] Given this presupposition, it is clear that he will reject any theory of ideas that does not include divine ideas of singulars. As a result, he is very critical of Thomas's and Henry's accounts of the scope of divine ideas.[42] The problem with Thomas's theory (as Auriol misunderstands it), is that it is based on a faulty account of individuation. Since matter is the principle of individuation, and matter in itself is indifferent to this

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[41] *In II Sent.*, d. 9, q. 3, a. 3 (ed. Rome, 114a): "omnis res eo quod est singulariter est . . . . Ideo quaerere aliquid per quid res, quae extra intellectum est singularis, nihil est quaerere."

[42] Like Scotus, Auriol errs with regard to Thomas's position: "similiter individua, quia addunt materiam, non habent in Deo ideam" (*In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 2 [ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 9:452]). He is also mislead by Thomas's account of individuation. It is clear that Auriol is using Thomas's *Summa theologiae*, but since he does not quote the text directly, the root of his error cannot be determined. He may have a defective text like Scotus did, he might be relying on Scotus's account, he might have been mislead by John of Paris, or this misinterpretation of Thomas could have been the standard interpretation of Thomas at the time.

form or that form, Thomas's theory cannot account for God's knowledge of individuals *qua* individuals. Moreover, matter in itself is not makeable or knowable, so to add matter to form does not seem to give any greater knowability to the individual beyond the form. Thus, God could not know the individual *qua* individual.[43]

Expounding his own position, Auriol first reminds us that no thing has a proper idea in God by referring to a property to that which is formally in an idea. Rather, all things have one common and simply indistinct idea, i.e., the notion of supremely simple divinity. Therefore, all property and plurality of ideas has to be taken in connotations or even in general and confused concepts. These general and confused concepts are only distinguished by the things connotated. In itself, the divine essence can be indeterminately applied to anything that imitates it.[44] Divinity is a likeness appropriated to all signet individuals, not immediately, but by a mediating demonstration. Mediation is required because each of the individuals imitates the divine essence in a distinct grade.[45] Each individual is a distinct imitation of divinity and so a (possible) stone does not represent only stone, certain and distinct in itself, but with its own unique demonstrability or demonstration. Thus, God has distinct cognition of this stone.[46]

As a result of God's distinct cognition, Auriol declares that everything that an angelic or human intellect can intuit distinctly and separately simply connotes the notion of divinity as distinct and separated. But divinity connotes those things that are inseparable from their nature with each understanding, precisely because they are inseparable in themselves, as indistinct, insofar as it is an exemplar and eminent likeness of them as unable to be separated. These criteria result in a way of distinguishing the scope of divine ideas. There is a divine idea for everything that can be distinctly

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[43] See *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 4, a. 3 (ed. Friedman, 19:943–51) and *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 3 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 9:450–52).

[44] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 3 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 9:491–10:504).

[45] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 4, a. 3 (ed. Friedman, 21:1113–21).

[46] *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 4, a. 3 (ed. Friedman, 23:1146–50).

and separately cognized. Those things that can only be cognized as inseparable from another do not have distinct ideas, but they do have "co-ideas" with the things from which they cannot be separated. The scope of divine ideas, then, is restricted to individuals, species, and genera in the category of substance. Since, as we just saw, each individual uniquely imitates divinity, they all have ideas. There are also divine ideas of primary intentions like man and animal because even though they are not distinct things, they are connotated as distinct things and as distinct things shining forth again in the divine intellect, as if something extramental were intuited. Form and matter, relative and absolute accidents, and second intentions do not have divine ideas because they are inseparable. Form and matter are not things, but related as act and able-to-be-actuated. Accidents are inseparable from their substances. Second intentions are rational respects, and rational respects are not connoted distinctly.[47]

Only one question remains concerning the scope of divine ideas, namely, are there ideas of privations and negations. Since evil is a privation, this question is especially concerned with whether there is an idea of evil. The question of privations and negations is particularly difficult because they are not actually in things; whence there is no darkness in the air, blindness in the eye, or privation in matter outside of every apprehension of it.[48] So to answer the question, Auriol distinguishes two ways of talking about evil. It is one thing to say that evil things cannot be understood without some created good, and it is another thing to say that they cannot be understood except through a created good as through a *ratio cognoscendi*. The first way of speaking is entirely true. Evil cannot be cognized without a twofold created good. For some underlying good (*bonum substratum*) and some deprived good are included in every concept of evil. Evil is the privation of some good with regard to some good subject because pure evil cannot exist. The second way of speaking is entirely false because no

[47] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 2 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 10:505–524).
[48] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 11:579–81).

habit represents its privation, and so cannot be the formal principle of knowing the privation. It follows from this distinction that by knowing its essence the divine intellect cognizes all evils not through the notion of the good, but because divinity is a certain eminent likeness and exemplar. It is not the eminent likeness and exemplar of evil things insofar as they are evil (because such privations are nothing), nor insofar as the evils are in things (because they can in no way actually be in things according to real being). Therefore, divinity is a likeness of them according as they are rational beings (*entia rationis*) having intentional being. There are ideas of evil in God connoting them not insofar as they are evil, but insofar as they are *entia rationis*, and so it must not be conceded that evils insofar as they are evil have an idea in God or exist or live in him.[49]

Auriol's articulation of the scope of divine ideas is somewhat hard to place in the range of theories of the scope of divine ideas that we have seen so far. He clearly avoids the infinite plenitude advocated by Bonaventure and Scotus. With that said, he does advocate for an infinite number of divine ideas because there can be an infinite number of individuals. Auriol does not advocate, as it were, an infinite number of infinites like Bonaventure and Scotus, but rather a finite number of infinites. Additionally, Auriol denies that God has ideas of some of the things that he can and does create, while simultaneously affirming that God has ideas of some things that he cannot and does not create. God does not have an idea of the brownness of my hair, but he does have an idea of animal, which exists through me. But since divine ideas, as connotations of the divine essence, are the only means that God has of knowing things other than himself, Auriol slips in "co-ideas" that are known along with the idea.

The strangeness of this system can be clarified if we recall that accidents are all connotations for Auriol. Brownness inherently includes the qualification "of something," e.g., the brownness *of my hair*. Divine ideas are connotations, but Auriol does not need to appeal to connotations of

[49] *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 13:661–86).

connotations. Although genera and species are not things in the world the way that individuals are, we can still think of them separately in a way that we cannot think of accidents. I cannot think of brownness without thinking of some subject in which it would exist, but I can think of animal without thinking of an individual animal. Man and animal are connotations insofar as I consider Socrates distinctly, but I could consider man without thinking of Socrates. Since they can be considered distinctly, there are divine ideas of them.

This explanation makes some sense of Auriol's theory, but there are still two points of confusion. The first concerns co-ideas. Nothing that Auriol says earlier in dd. 35 and 36 prepares the reader for this declaration, and the conception of "co-ideas" is never clarified. When Auriol says that God has a co-idea of some accident, does he mean to say that the co-idea is of a particular accident, such as the brownness of my hair, or is that co-idea of brownness in general? Presumably, he intends the former, but he never says so explicitly. Moreover, what is the status of these co-ideas? The declaration of co-ideas is unfortunately *ad hoc* and unexplained. I am inclined to think that Auriol does not mean for a co-idea to mean anything. What God really has ideas of are individuals, and this idea includes all of the accidents that the individual has.

The second difficulty concerns the criteria that Auriol uses to determine the scope of the divine ideas. Auriol's criterion of separability is not adequately justified. Why should being able to exist separately be a criterion? The criterion makes sense in light of Auriol's conceptualism, but if Auriol were simply following the claim that everything in the extramental world is singular, then it seems like he would be more beholden to a position like Aquinas's. For Aquinas, strictly speaking there are only ideas of individuals and their separable accidents. Only these can exist separately from the intellect. Species and genera in every category do not have distinct ideas in the strict sense for Thomas because they do not exist extramentally except in individuals. If being able to exist separately is part of Auriol's criteria for the scope of divine ideas, then he should not admit ideas of

substantial species and genera. I can think about man without thinking about Socrates or Plato, but because man is a universal, it has no extramental existence. Auriol would want the scope of divine ideas to extend to non-existing possibles in a way that Thomas's strict sense of ideas does not permit, but even then the non-existing possibles would still be possible singulars. I think that his claims about the scope of divine ideas are not consistent with his system.

4. Recapitulation and Conclusions

Peter Auriol's theory of divine ideas represents the most significant break with other theories of divine ideas that we have seen yet. Scotus deviated by denying that divine ideas were relations, favoring a theory in which the idea was simply the creature as known by God. Auriol makes an even more fundamental break with the tradition by denying that ideas are a sort of secondary reflection of the divine essence. If divine ideas are a secondary object of the divine intellect, then either the divine essence is reduced to a substratum for the ideas, or a whole comprised of the ideas. If God has a secondary object terminating his understanding, then the divine essence is taken as two things requiring two distinct acts when really there is only one thing and one act. It is like considering that the object in a mirror and the "presence" of that object in the mirror are two different things, when really they are one. Moreover, the relationship between the divine essence and the divine ideas becomes unclear in this scheme precisely because it requires positing some sort of being for the divine ideas.

Auriol proposes a logical and grammatical solution to this problem. Divine ideas are nothing other than connotations of the divine essence. As connotations, divine ideas are always the divine ideas *of the divine essence* in the same way that the hand is always the hand of the person or a virtue is the virtue of someone. The divine essence by its very nature connotes an exceeding likeness and exemplar of things other than God. These things are not thereby necessitated, but they have to be

there already if the divine essence is going to know them. If the essence did not naturally have connotative reasons, the divine intellect could not find them in it when it goes to understand them.

God has ideas of individuals, species, and genera in the category of substance. He has co-ideas of every other aspect of creatures. Since there could be an infinite number of individuals, Auriol posits an infinite number of divine ideas despite dramatically restricting their scope. This account of their scope seems insufficient because it is unclear why substantial universals are included and accidental particulars are excluded. This lack of clarity becomes particularly obscure when it is considered that Auriol denies that universals can exist except in a mind.

C. DURANDUS OF SAINT-POURÇAIN (CA. 1275–1334)

Durandus of Saint-Pourçain is the second Dominican author to appear in this study. He entered the Dominican Order at the age of nineteen and was studying at the University of Paris by 1303. He produced his first commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences* as a bachelor in the academic year 1307–08. Like Scotus, Durandus produced three commentaries on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, but unlike Scotus, Durandus did not produce these three commentaries because he lectured on them multiple times. In 1286, the Dominican Order had officially endorsed the study, promotion, and defense of Thomas Aquinas's work. Durandus's first commentary on the *Sentences* was highly critical of certain positions that Thomas had taken, and he was made to revise the commentary between 1310 and 1313. He incepted as a Master of Theology in 1312 while he was performing this first redaction. Before he completed his first year of teaching, he was called to the Papal court in Avignon to answer objections to his teachings. He was made a bishop in 1317, leading two different dioceses until his death in 1334.

Durandus's episcopacy is noteworthy for two reasons. First, he was free to write a third and final version of his *In Sent.* This third version comes the closest to the teachings in Paris, yet, as Weisheipl notes, the third version includes large blocks of text that have been copied verbatim from the first draft and his Avignon defense of it such that the "final version, completed in 1327, abounded in compromises and contradictions."[1] Second, Durandus was one of six theologians appointed to the commission formed to investigate William of Ockham's commentary on the *Sentences*. Although he was on the commission, Durandus's name does not appear on the final document that censures many propositions from Ockham. This omission could either signal his

[1] James A. Weisheipl, "Durandus of Saint-Pourçain," *The New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), 4.1114–16. In what follows, I will quote only from Durandus's final version because there is no significant change in Durandus's thought from the first version to the final version. I wish to thank Peter John Hartman for sharing his transcriptions of the A edition.

disagreement with the commission's judgment, or that he had to leave before he could sign the document.[2]

1. The Role of Divine Ideas in Durandus's Thought

Durandus's comments about ideas are somewhat convoluted. On one hand, he devotes the vast majority of *In I Sent (C)*, d. 36 to a discussion of divine ideas. He argues that, most properly speaking, only God has ideas. He gives a very precise account of divine ideas as producible forms, and how they are the things known as objects. He writes his account with a clear understanding of the debates of his time, and articulates a nuanced position in response to the arguments of his predecessors. In these respects, divine ideas play an important role in his theory because they account for God's ability to know the way in which he can produce the world.

On the other hand, Durandus seems to destroy any need for divine ideas. As will be discussed in greater detail below, Durandus argues that the divine essence cannot have the notion of an idea with respect to creatures except imperfectly. Creatures can only imitate the divine essence imperfectly according to a certain analogy and proportion, but not univocally. Since we ought not to attribute imperfection to God, then it would seem as if we should not attribute divine ideas to the divine essence. We can and should attribute them to the divine intellect, but not to the divine essence. This position is confusing at best, and it seems to destroy the divine ideas.

2. The Status of Divine Ideas

a. What is an Idea?

i. The *ratio* of an Idea. Durandus derives his understanding of the word "idea" from Augustine's famous question on ideas.[3] Noting that "form" and "*ratio*" are acceptable translations of the Greek *idea*, Durandus argues that an idea has to be an intellectual form to whose imitation

[2] The latter suggestion appears in J. Koch, *Durandus de S. Porciano, O.P.* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1927).
[3] Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46, n. 2 (PL 40.30).

something is producible. No form in matter is properly called a *ratio* so an idea must be an intellectual form. But not every intellectual form can be called an idea because Pseudo-Dionysius and Seneca call them exemplars.[4]

To this initial account, Durandus adds that the notion of a thing in the divine mind is what is actual, intellectual, factive, incommutable, and first or principle. A form is the active principle in a thing. Since an idea is an intellectual form, it must be actual. They must be intellectual because the very form in a thing is not a *ratio*. They have to be factive because although they form everything that comes to be and passes away, they are not formed things themselves. They are incommutable because they are eternal. Finally, they are first or principle because everything comes to be from them.[5]

In order to clarify further the notion of an idea, Durandus asks how ideas are related to God. There are four things to consider, namely, the intellect, the notion according to which it understands, the act of the intellect, and the thing understood. The first three are identical in God and only differ according to reason. The fourth, however, sometimes really differs (*differt secundum rem*) from the other three and sometimes does not. For God, the first thing understood primarily and principally does not differ from the intellect, the notion according to which it understands, and the act of in the intellect except according to reason. It does not differ because the first and principle object of the intellect of the divine intellect is the divine essence. The secondary object of the divine intellect, which is a created thing, really differs (*differt realiter*) from the other three.[6]

In *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 1, Durandus offers an argument for the distinction between primary and secondary objects. It is impossible to understand many things equally, primarily, and principally

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[4] *In I Sent (C)*, d. 36, q. 3 (ed. Venice, I.1017:28–1018:46), esp.: "Non omnis tamen forma intellectualis potest dici 'idea', set solum illa ad cuius similitudinem aliquid est producibile." Cf. Ps.-Dionysius, *De divinis nominibus*, 5 (PG 3.360). Seneca, *Ep. ad Luc.*, 65, c. 7 (ed. Prechac, II.108). The quotation from Seneca is almost certainly taken from Henry, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 35:48–54).

[5] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 3 (ed. Venice, I.1019:82–1020:93). Cf. Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46, n. 2 (PL 40:30).

[6] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 3 (ed. Venice, I.1020:94–104).

at the same time (otherwise one operation would equally, primarily, and principally terminate in many terms, which is unfitting). But God understands himself and others by a single intellection. Therefore, it is impossible that this be equally, primarily, and principally. But if the divine essence were not the *ratio intelligendi* of other things, then the other things would equally be the principal objects of the divine intellect, since they are the essence, and thus there would be many equally principal objects of the divine intellect.[7]

This argument is somewhat surprising in the sense that it does not engage with Auriol's objections to primary and secondary objects of divine cognition. Since Durandus wrote his first *In I Sent.* in 1307–08, several years before Auriol finished his *In I Sent.* in 1314, he certainly would not have known Auriol's arguments. The third version of Durandus's *In I Sent.*, however, which was written between 1317 and 1327, should have responded to Auriol's objections. Durandus is not concerned that one operation terminate in many terms, but only that it not end in many terms equally, primarily, and principally. He is willing to allow multiple terms of the one operation as long as they are unequal. Thus, the one divine essence is made to be two things.

Durandus then applies the distinction between primary and secondary objects of the divine intellect to ideas. The secondary objects of divine understanding are the creatable or created things, which means that Durandus has to add to his definition of idea. In addition to being the notion of a thing in the divine intellect to whose imitation something is producible, Durandus adds that the idea exists in the divine intellect objectively. By this claim, Durandus tacitly joins Scotus in rejecting any theory that posits divine ideas as relations. A divine idea is simply the creature as known by God to be producible. The creature that God creates according to his divine idea imitates its divine idea

[7] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 1 (ed. Venice, I.979:144–980:151).

because divine understanding causes the existence of things, but divine understanding has the creature as known as its secondary object, not a relation.[8]

ii. Two Types of Exemplar. The mention of imitation affords Durandus an occasion to speak about ways in which something can be an exemplar. Following Thomas's example in the *De veritate*, Durandus distinguishes two sorts of exemplar.[9] The first sort is, as it were, invented by the intellect. The second is taken from an external source. It is indeed possible for an extramental thing to be the exemplar to whose imitation another thing is made. The artificer can make a chest by looking at another chest, but this sort of exemplar is inferior to the first sort of exemplar and depends upon it. Although the artificer look to an extramental chest to imitate it, the new chest is still not produced except as it is in the mind of the artificer as understood. The second chest imitates the first chest but only by the mediation of the second chest as understood. Absent the idea in the mind of the artificer, no imitation comes to be. God's ideas are not like this, however. God does not look to an external exemplar for inspiration. The inspiration for the divine ideas comes solely from the secondary consideration of the divine essence by the divine intellect.[10]

iii. Two Types of Divine Exemplarity. Having seen that the secondary consideration of the divine essence constitutes the notion of ideas, Durandus asks whether the primary consideration of the divine essence might also have the notion of an idea. Once again, this question is inspired by Thomas.[11] Not only is God an exemplar of things intellectually, the divine essence is in a certain sense an exemplar of all creatures. There are certain perfections common to God and creatures, e.g., being, living, and cognizing. There are other perfections that belong to God alone, e.g., to be

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[8] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 3 (ed. Venice, I.1021:126–1022:148).

[9] Thomas, *De veritate* q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leon., 22.1.99:196-100:223). Since he has already argued that an idea is an intellectual form, Durandus omits Thomas's example of the natural exemplar as when man generates man.

[10] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 3 (ed. Venice, I.1022:155–1023:170).

[11] See, Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 4 (ed. Mandonnet, I.493).

omnipotent, infinite, etc. These latter perfections have corresponding opposites in creatures, e.g., to be finite, created, etc.[12]

The perfections that belong to God alone and have corresponding opposites in creatures cannot have the notion of an idea and thing ideated. That which cannot be related as imitable and imitative cannot be related as idea and ideated. But the divine essence and creatures cannot be related as imitable and imitative insofar as they are opposed to each other. But if we consider God and creatures insofar as they have common perfections like being (*esse*), living, cognizing, intellect and will, then the notions of imitable and imitative are found. For all things that exist imitate the divine essence such that they exist, and all living things such that they live, etc. And in this way the divine essence has the notion of an idea with respect to creatures. The imitation only occurs imperfectly, however, which means that the notion of an idea is only present imperfectly as well.[13]

iv. Speculative vs. Practical Cognition. Durandus's emphasis on exemplarity and being able to be produced make it clear that ideas pertain primarily to practical cognition. A notion is an idea insofar as the knower knows that he can produce it. Durandus does not think that ideas are solely for practical cognition, however. Ideas are also accidentally (*secundum quid*) for speculative cognition. Knowledge is called simply practical or speculative from the nature of the thing knowable, not from the intention of the knower or user except accidentally. This distinction applies to God as much as to man. But the consideration by which God considers ideas essentially is of the rules of making because an idea is an exemplar to which a surveying artificer works. Therefore, such consideration is essentially and simply practical. Yet, it is accidentally speculative insofar as God

[12] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 3 (ed. Venice, I.1025:229–242).

[13] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 3 (ed. Venice, I.1025:243–1027:281). This point will be especially important to note during the discussion of the plurality of divine ideas.

considers ideas of operable things that he does not intend to make or produce, either because they are already produced, or because he does not will to produce them from his good pleasure.[14]

This argument shows the partial influence of both Thomas and Henry. In both cases, I think that Durandus's appropriation of the authors yields a weakness in his argument. First, he uses Henry of Ghent's distinction between the end of knowledge itself, and the end of the knower, but he arrives at a conclusion contrary to Henry's.[15] Henry argued that the end of the knowledge itself could be distinguished into the principal end and the non-principal end. The non-principal end is the end to which the knowledge could be ordered by a knower. Henry does not think that the non-principal end can properly be called speculative or practical because it is outside of the end of the knowledge considered only in itself. Durandus does not explicitly make the distinction between a principal and a non-principle end of the knowledge itself, but he seems to agree with Henry that the principal end of knowledge is merely speculative. God, he says, has speculative cognition of what he does not intend to create or has already created. Yet, Durandus does not think that Henry understands ideas correctly. An idea is an exemplar. Despite the fact that Durandus consistently says that an exemplar entails that it is "producible" or "makeable," he insists that an exemplar entails practical cognition. Because the surveying artificer produces to the likeness of his idea, Durandus thinks that ideas are inherently practical.

To this argument must be added yet another. Durandus argues that God's knowledge (*scientia*) is the cause of creatures through the mode of directing, the divine will is the cause through the mode of inclining. Neither of these is the immediate cause of creatures; rather power (*potentia*) is the cause of things as executing and immediately moving. In explaining why God's knowledge directs, Durandus distinguishes between God's knowledge and divine ideas. Both direct, but they do

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[14] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 4 (ed. Venice, I.1033:45–60).
[15] Henry, *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4, ad 2 (ed. Wilson, 115:10–33).

so in different ways. An idea directs only through the mode of an exemplar, because as such it is nothing of the agent itself, but only related objectively to the agent. Knowledge or art directs as a habit in which true and certain cognition of the exemplar and the exemplified thing is had and there is something of the actor himself and is related to him subjectively according to our mode of understanding.[16] Divine ideas are, as it were, separated from God because they are the creatures as known, not something subjective in God.

I am not convinced by Durandus's argument here. To know something as producible is not necessarily to have practical cognition. The artificer knows that he can build the house, but he is not for that reason producing the house. I readily grant that there is something practical about this knowledge, but it is not (as Thomas would say) actually practical.[17] If Durandus had argued that divine ideas of things that God has already produced and divine ideas of things that will never be produced was also practical knowledge, then I think his argument would be more formidable. But since he says that these two types of ideas are speculative, the only thing that makes an idea practical is the intention of the will to produce it. But, as Henry argues, the intention of the will is not the end of the knowledge itself, but the end of the knower. I do not think Durandus has provided enough of an argument to show that ideas are essentially and simply practical and accidentally speculative. From the argument he has provided, he should say that ideas are essentially and simply speculative, and accidentally practical by the knower's will.

Second, Durandus's insistence on exemplarity is clearly influenced by Thomas. Thomas argued that divine ideas in the strict sense are exemplars. Thus, there are divine ideas only for those things that God wills to create at some time in history.[18] Durandus agrees with this general point, but

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[16] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 38, q. 1 (ed. Venice, 1072:29–1073:47).

[17] Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 3 (ed. Leonine 22.1.111:89–94). Cf. Thomas, *ST* I, q. 14, a. 16 (ed. Leonine, 4.196b–197a): "Unde, si quis aedificator consideret qualiter poset fieri aliqua domus, non ordinans ad finem operationis, sed ad cognoscendum tantum, erit, quantum ad finem, speculativa consideratio, tamen de re operabili."

[18] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.204).

makes a further distinction. Divine ideas are only practical insofar as God intends to create them *in the future*. I suspect that Durandus trying to follow certain logical consequences of Thomas's theory. If, as Thomas holds, the *ratio* of an idea is only complete once the will intends it, then the *ratio* of an idea is removed whenever the will no longer intends it. But no one intends to do things that he has already done. Once Socrates has been created, God no longer intends to create him because he has already done it. Therefore, the proper *ratio* of a divine idea is exhausted and removed once God has created something to its likeness. The divine idea is only speculative for God because he knows that he created it.

Durandus does not explain exactly how this process is supposed to work. How can a divine idea transition from practical to speculative without resulting in a real change in God? Moreover, how can Durandus square this position with his definition of ideas as producible? Durandus does not answer either of these questions explicitly. For the second question, presumably Durandus thinks that a divine idea is only producible insofar as it has not yet been produced.

b. Does God have Ideas?

Durandus argues that such forms exist in God and that they exist most properly in him. In *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, he offers only one concise argument for the first point. Every intellectual agent has in it the notion of the thing coming to be (*rei fiendae*), which it cognizes and according to which it exemplarily produces the thing. This premise is confirmed by Aristotle, who argues in *Metaphysics* VII that things that come from art are species in the soul, as health comes to be in matter from health in the soul.[19] But God produces things through intellect and art (which is obvious from the fact that only an intelligent agent has dominion over his actions, and it is nobler for an agent to have

[19] Aristotle, *Met.* VII, c. 7, 1032a32–b1 and b11–12 (AL 25.3.2.143–144). Cf. *Auctoritates Aristotelis* (1) I, n. 171 (ed. Hamesse, 129:91): "Ex sanitate in anima fit sanitas in natura."

dominion over his actions rather than act from necessity).[20] Therefore, God has in himself the notions of the things which he cognizes and according to which he produces things. But these notions are called ideas. Therefore, God has ideas of the things he cognizes and produces things according to them.[21]

In *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, Durandus offers two additional arguments for the position that God has ideas. The first of these additional arguments is a version of Thomas's teleological argument.[22] Every agent that establishes the end for itself is an intellectual agent (*agens per intellectum et cognitionem*). But God is an agent establishing the end for himself. Therefore, he is an intellectual agent. He proves the minor premise inductively. If God does not establish the end for himself, then either he produces by chance (which is unfitting since chance and fortune are accidental causes), or he acts for an end established by another (which is unfitting because they he would be an instrumental agent and not be the first agent). Having eliminated the only other options, Durandus concludes that God has to establish the end for himself.[23]

The second additional argument is a version of Thomas's argument from divine self-knowledge.[24] The most perfect potency tends in a most perfect way to everything that falls under the character of its object. But the divine intellect is the most perfect cognitive power under whose object all things, both God and creatures, fall. But the most perfect way of cognizing is to cognize comprehensively. Therefore, the divine intellect cognizes itself and all other things comprehensively.

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[20] Durandus offers this justification for God's being an intelligent agent in *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, a. 1 (ed. Venice, I.975:26–40), esp.: "nobilissimus autem modus causandi est per intellectum et voluntatem. . . . quantum autem ad alterum parte, scilicet quod nobilissimus modus causandi sit per intellectum et voluntatem, patet, quia nobilius est habere dominium sui actus quam agere ex necessitate; set sola illa quae agunt per intellectum et voluntatem habent dominium sui actus, cetera vero non habent, set agunt ex necessitate; ergo agere per intellectum et voluntatem est nobilissimus modus agendi."

[21] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 3 (ed. Venice, I.47–56).

[22] See Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 1 (ed. Mandonnet, I.809–10); Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.50:214–51:234); Thomas, *SCG* I, c. 44 (ed. Leonine, 13.130a14-b11); Thomas, *ST* I, q. 44, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.460).

[23] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 1 (ed. Venice, I.975:41–976:52).

[24] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 14, a. 5 (ed. Leonine, 4.172ab). Cf. Thomas, *SCG* I, c. 49 (ed. Leonine, 13.142a20–b8); Thomas, *In XII Met.*, lect. 11, nn. 2602–16 (ed. Spiazzi, 606–08).

The last premise, that the most perfect way of cognizing is to cognize comprehensively, requires the most support. To cognize a thing comprehensively is to cognize it in every way in which it can be cognized. So a thing is understood comprehensively whenever nothing more of the thing can be cognized, either absolutely or comparatively. It follows that this is the most perfect way of cognizing each and every thing, or at least lacking this cognition is not the most perfect way of cognizing.[25]

Having argued that God has ideas, Durandus argues that God most properly has ideas. A thing, he says, has existence (*habet esse*) in six ways: (1) in the potency of matter, (2) in its agent and natural causes, (3) in itself when it has already been produced, (4) in our intellect, (5) in the intellect of a celestial mover, and (6) in the first intellect since God is the cause of all beings by his intellect. Durandus quickly dispenses the possibility of ideas in the first three ways. Matter is potency, but an idea is actual, so matter cannot have ideas. Natural and agent causes do not act according to intellect and so cannot have the *ratio* of an idea. The existence of a thing in itself is more something made than something that makes (*factivum*), and whatever does not have the notion of making (*factivum*) is not an idea. Our intellect does not have ideas because ideas are immutable, but we are not. An angelic intellect does not properly have ideas because ideas are primary and principal, but angels are not primary and principal. By process of elimination, only God could properly have the *ratio* of an idea, and he in fact does have ideas because everything in the divine mind is something actual, intellectual, making (*factivum*), immutable, and primary or principal.[26]

For Durandus, God has ideas, and he alone has ideas most properly. He has to have ideas because he has created the world by intelligence and art. To make something by intelligence and art is to make it to the likeness of some idea. This argument is conditional because it presupposes that God has created the world. This premise is easily granted, but Durandus offers another argument

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[25] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 1 (ed. Venice, 976:67–978:109).
[26] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 3 (ed. Venice, 1018:57–1019:84).

that does not require any conditional presuppositions. God's intellect is most perfect, which entails that it operates as perfectly as possible. The perfect operation of the intellect is to comprehend its object. The object of God's intellect is being (since he is pure being). Therefore, God perfectly understands being. This argument is similar to Thomas's argument based on God's self-knowledge, but with an important difference. Thomas's argument requires that God know the full extent of his power. To know his power comprehensively, God must know that to which his power can extend comprehensively.[27] Durandus does offer this argument in *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 2 as evidence that God has distinct cognition of everything that he knows, but does not use it again here in d. 36.[28] As we will see below, Ockham will attack Thomas's inference; it is possible, he says, to know a power perfectly without knowing all of its possible effects.[29] The fact that Durandus uses the argument in d. 35 makes it seem like he did not foresee Ockham's objection, but it is telling that he does not simply recycle the argument in d. 36. He offers a much stronger argument in d. 36 than in d. 35. God has distinct cognition of everything that is cognizable not because he knows that he could bring them about, but because he knows being. God knows that many of these objects are things that he could bring about, and so he has ideas of them. Durandus includes a thing's ability to be produced in establishing divine ideas, but not in establishing divine knowledge of things other than God.

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[27] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 14, a. 5 (ed. Leonine, 4.172).

[28] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 2 (ed. Venice, 988:190–202): "essentia divina per hoc representat res distincte quod ipsa secundum id quod est absque alterius adiutorio vel concursu est sufficiens causa omnium, et ideo omnia praehabet in se et continet, non formaliter, ut speculum habet imagines, sed virtualiter modo quo causa effectiva praehabet effectum; propter quod intellectus qui plene et perfectissime novit essentiam divinam et virtutem, qualis est intellectus divinus, plene novit et distincte distinctione specifica omnia ad quae se extendit eius causalitas; extendit autem se ad omnia quae sunt in rebut creatis et quae constituunt res in esse specifico et distinguunt; quare intellectus divinus, qui perfectissime et comprehensive novit essentiam suam, novit etiam perfecte omnes res creatas quantum ad earum distinctionem specificam."

[29] Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.436:20–437:6). Cf. Ockham, *Ord.* prol., q. 9 (OTh I.241–244).

c. The Plurality of Divine Ideas

Durandus takes up the question of a plurality of ideas in two places. In *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 2, he argues against a plurality according to reason (*secundum rationes*), and in d. 36, q. 4, he argues that God has a plurality of ideas. God understands that one thing is other and distinct from another, but this plurality cannot be the result of many notions. The distinction of notions in God is taken from the real distinction that we see in creatures such that according to our mode of understanding, God apprehends the real distinction existing (or possibly existing) in creatures before he forms a diversity of reasons about his essence. But the posterior is not the cause of the prior. Therefore, the divine essence taken as many notions cannot be the *ratio intelligendi* of the distinctions of things.[30] The unity or plurality of understood notions concerning the divine essence has absolutely no effect on God's ability to represent some possible creature.[31]

When Durandus takes up the question of a plurality of divine ideas in d. 36, q. 4, he first refers to a distinction in the word "idea" that we noted above. An idea can be called a creatable thing as understood, which is imitable by itself as an effect, or it can be called the divine essence as it is imperfectly imitable by a creature. If we take idea in the first sense, then it follows that there are many ideas in God because there are many creatable things that God knows by an eternal understanding. They are in God objectively according to which mode of ideas pertains to the intellect. But if we take idea in the second sense, then properly speaking there is only one idea in God, although there are many ideal notions. Many rational respects concerning something are not posited unless there is a plurality of notions. But many respects of imitability of the divine essence

[30] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 2 (ed. Venice, 985:115–23). Durandus argues at length for the claim that the distinction of notions is posterior to Gods knowledge of the real distinction among creatures in *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 2, q. 3 (ed. Venice, 182:78–189:269).

[31] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 2 (ed. Venice, 986:149–51): "unitas enim vel pluralitas rationum intellecta circa divinam essentiam nihil omnino facit ad hoc quod essentia divina aliquid representaret."

by creatures are only rational respects. Therefore, they do not posit a plurality in the divine essence except as a plurality of notions.[32]

In both understandings of the word "idea" there is a plurality, but the pluralities show up differently. The first plurality corresponding to "idea" as the creature understood appears as an immediate result of the inequality of creatures. A man is not equal to a horse, a rock, or an angel. The second plurality corresponding to "idea" as the divine essence as imitable appears derivatively. There is no plurality of divine essences, only a plurality of rational respects. This plurality results from the unequal imitations of the divine essence in creatures. A being imitates the divine essence less perfectly than a living being does. A living being imitates less perfectly than a cognizing being.[33]

This distinction between the creature as known and divine essence as imitable leads to the conclusion that there are, as it were, imperfect ideas in God. Since creatures cannot imitate the divine essence except imperfectly, there cannot be a perfect idea of them in God. God could only have a perfect idea if the thing ideated were itself perfect. Since God cannot create another God, he does not have any perfect ideas of creatures.

There are three things that need to be said about this account of plurality of divine ideas. First, Durandus distinguishes between the plurality of ideas that is creatures as known by in the divine intellect, and the plurality of ideal notions. He specifies that the ideal notions are rational respects of imitability to the divine essence, but he does not specify how the two pluralities are related. Are the ideal notions also in the divine intellect, or is being known accidental to them? The fact that Durandus does not attempt to connect the two pluralities leads me to think that they are distinct. The ideal notions are ideas simply from the divine essence itself, and not because they are known.

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[32] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 4 (ed. Venice, I.1032:24–1033:37).
[33] See *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 4, ad 2 (ed. Venice, I.1034:90–1035:99).

Second, Durandus's remark that the divine essence does not have ideas except imperfectly seems devastating for a theory of divine ideas. Presumably, Durandus posits the two types of exemplarity in order to account for the fact that a creature can be imperfect with respect to the supreme perfection of the divine essence and yet be perfect in its species. Durandus seems to be following Thomas in attempting to account for this important fact, but he does not succeed.[34] As will be recalled, Thomas accounted for this twofold divine exemplarity by emphasizing that a divine idea is the divine essence as understood. A divine idea is the divine essence known to be imitable. The same is not true for Durandus. A divine idea for Durandus is not the divine essence as understood, divine ideas are the objects, i.e., the creature as known. The difference is slight, but important. Durandus's shift in emphasis entails that the essences of things and all the perfections of those things do not have the divine essence as their idea. They are only in God objectively. God perfectly knows creatures, but the divine ideas are imperfect. Durandus denies that there is any subjective and real inequality in God, but he also says that there is inequality objectively and according to reason.[35] Insofar as a creature is perfect, the divine essence is not its exemplar subjectively. The divine essence is only the exemplar of a creature subjectively insofar as the creature imperfectly imitates the divine essence. So while Durandus argues that God has divine ideas, he simultaneously undercuts the theory by making them imperfect.

Third, it is unclear how Durandus can even allow the divine essence to have an imperfect notion of idea. He emphasized that an idea is an intellectual form. The divine essence is an intellectual form insofar as the divine intellect knows it, but the divine essence itself is not an intellectual form. Yet, Durandus claims that the divine essence is an idea simply because it can be imitable by a creature. He makes no mention of its being known. If he consistently held to his

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[34] See, *inter alia*, Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 4 (ed. Mandonnet, I.493); Thomas, *In II Sent.*, d. 16, q. 1, a. 2, ad 2 (ed. Mandonnet, II, 2.400).

[35] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 4, ad 2 (ed. Venice, I.1035:98–99).

understanding of idea, then he would deny that the divine essence *qua* imitable is an idea at all. As a result, Durandus should not say that the divine ideas are one, but only many. Perhaps they are one insofar as they are all contained in the divine intellect, but it is not clear how they could be ontologically one except in the sense that they are known by the same intellect.

d. The Existence of Things in God

The difficulty of determining how the divine ideas could be one leads us to ask how divine ideas exist in God. To answer this question, Durandus distinguishes two ways in which created things can be considered. In one way, they can be considered according to their formal being (*esse formale*) and the nature of the proper genus. In another way, they can be considered according to the virtual being (*esse virtuale*) of their cause. If they are considered according to their *esse formale*, then they are said to exist in God because they are in God's knowledge and power (*potentia*), but not in God's essence. Since a creature in its *esse formale* is not the same as God, it can only be related to God in a relation of an object terminating his operation and not in a relation of identity. It cannot be in God's essence because just as "being able" is called a "potency," and "knowing" is called "knowledge," so to "essence" has been named from "being (*esse*)." Whence just as some things are said to be in God's power because he can do them, and in his knowledge because he knows them, so some things are said to be in God's essence because they are God or because they subsist in him. And because God does not relate to a creature in a relation of identity, neither according to essence nor according to natural existence, it cannot be said that things considered in their *esse formale* are in God's essence, properly speaking. Although the essence of God is not other than his power or knowledge, yet the terms do not have the same connotation.[36]

If creatures are considered according to *esse virtuale*, according to which they preexist in their cause, then creatures can be said to be in God's essence because they are the divine essence itself,

[36] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 2 (ed. Venice, I.1013:26–1014:51).

which is its productive power of creatures. It is in this sense that Anselm speaks of a creature in God as a creator essence; thus, a creature is also in God's knowledge because God knows his essence, as it is a productive power of creatures. Yet, it should not be said that a creature is in God's power because the divine essence is not subject to his power as object.[37]

3. The Scope of Divine Ideas

Durandus has very little treatment of the scope of divine ideas. In fact, he does not have a single question devoted to the question. He does, however, ask about whether God has distinct knowledge of singulars and how he knows evil, so we will be able to investigate these two questions for the insight that they give us into the scope of divine ideas according to Durandus.

a. Singulars

Durandus offers several arguments for divine knowledge of singulars. In the *sed contra* of *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 3, he argues that God knows singulars because they are more knowable. That which has more being (*magis de entitate*) is more cognizable. But singulars have more being than universals. Therefore, God cognizes them more. The major premise is clear because since each thing is cognizable insofar as it has *esse*, if that which has more entity were not cognized more, the defect could only be on the part of the knower. But God is in no way a defective knower. As proof of the minor premise, Durandus argues that singulars have real existence (*esse reale*) by reason of their singularity, but universals do not have *esse reale* because of their universality. Rather, universals have only an existence of reason (*esse rationis*), which is a qualified and diminished existence in comparison to *esse reale*.[38]

In his response to the same question, Durandus offers a qualified acceptance of Thomas's argument for divine knowledge of singulars. Thomas argued that God knows singulars because he is

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[37] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 2 (ed. Venice, 1014:51–61).

[38] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 3 (ed. Venice, 991:11–21). This argument appears to be based on Thomas, *De veritate* q. 3, a. 8, s.c. 2 (ed. Leonine, 115:35–39).

the total cause of the thing, i.e., he causes both the form and the matter. God's knowledge extends as far as his causality, so his knowledge of things extends not only to the universality of forms, but also to matter from which the notion of individuation and singularity is taken.[39] Durandus approves of this argument insofar as it holds that God's knowledge extends as far as his causality and further declares that God's causality extends to all things by reason of their singularity. These are obvious because it is clear that a thing is makeable in extramental existence and that such existence is singular.[40]

He objects to the argument insofar it assumes that matter is the principle of individuation and that form merely has the notion of universality. There seems to be greater community between matter and form than Thomas's argument allows. Just as form (of itself) is common to many individuals of the same species, so too matter (of itself) is common to many things that are of the same genus. Moreover, the same matter is successively in diverse individual, but form is not. Because of this fact, it seems like individuals are less distinguished by matter than by form and so less constituted in their individual *esse* by matter. Again, not all singulars have matter (like the angels). Therefore, from matter or its production no general reason can be assigned why God knows singulars.[41]

Durandus responds that singularity does not impede God's understanding. God *per se* and primarily understands his essence, which is a certain singularity. Materiality does not impede his understanding either since he understands the quiddities of sensible things, in which matter is included. Therefore, neither singular materiality nor material singularity impedes in any way that something material and singular is understood by God. The divine essence is the sufficient notion of

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[39] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 3 (ed. Venice, 991:24–31). See Thomas, *De veritate* q. 3, a. 8 (ed. Leonine, 116:64–66).

[40] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 3 (ed. Venice, 992:36–41).

[41] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 3 (ed. Venice, 992:41–56). Durandus argues for the second point in greater detail in *In II Sent. (C)*, d. 3, q. 2 (ed. Venice, 136va–137rb).

representing any thing whatsoever according to all of its condition, and he has this sufficiency from the perfection of his power according to which it happens that he universally contains every thing and can produce them.[42]

The implications of these arguments for the scope of divine ideas should be clear. There are divine ideas of singulars. Divine ideas are the forms or notions to whose likeness an agent can *produce* something by art.[43] Since singulars have *esse reale*, they are, properly speaking, producible. Therefore, there are divine ideas of singulars. Moreover, since singulars have greater being than species or genera, it follows both that it is more proper to say that there are divine ideas of singulars than of species or genera, and that there are no divine ideas of species and genera for Durandus. Species and genera are not producible, and so there are no ideas of them.[44] Like many scholars of the 14th century, Durandus is something of a nominalist. He does believe that there is a foundation in things for universals, but everything that exists is singular.[45] So if divine ideas are going to be of things that God can make, then all of them will have to be of singulars. Not only does God have divine ideas of singulars, he only has ideas of singulars.

b. Evil

In his discussion of God's knowledge of evil, Durandus notes that all of his contemporaries concede that God cognizes evil. He knows all of the parts of the universe and the relations (*habitudines*) between them. But the parts of the universe are related such that the generation of one is the corruption of another. Evil consists in corruption, so God cognizes it. He does not cognize it

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[42] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 35, q. 3 (ed. Venice, 997:175–185).

[43] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 3 (ed. Venice, 1018:45–46).

[44] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 4 (ed. Venice, 1033:61–1034:65): "Unde cognitio speculativa quam Deus habet de rebus, qualis est illa qua cognoscit de rebus intentiones logicas, ut 'hominem' esse speciem vel 'animal' esse genus, quia secundum istas proprietates res non sunt factibiles, non pertinet ad ideas."

[45] See *In II Sent.*, d. 3, q. 7, n. 8 (ed. Venice, 140rb): "frivolum est dicere quod universalis fiat in rebus, quia universalitas non potest esse in rebus, sed solum singularitas." For more on Durandus's nominalism, see M.J.F.M. Hoenen, "Nominalismus als universitäre Spekulationskontrolle," *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie médiévales* 73 (2006), 349-374, esp. 365-367; H.A. Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism* (Cambridge, MA, 1963).

directly, however. He cognizes it through the opposed good. Just as the straight is the judge of itself and the curved, so the good is the judge of itself and evil.[46]

There are two ways of clarifying this general agreement. According to the first way, God cognizes evil through the species of the good, not any good whatsoever, but the good that is deprived. Thus, if God did not cognize a good other than himself, he would in no way cognize evil according to the special notion of evil.[47] According to the second way, the first opinion is contrary to the express statement of Pseudo-Dionysius, who likens divine cognition to light. If light were cognitive, it would cognized darkness, not receiving from another, but itself. In the same way, God, who is existing goodness, cognizes evil, which is a privation of the good. God cognizes all good things insofar as they agree with his art, and he cognizes all evil things insofar as they do not agree with his art.[48]

Durandus is inclined to agree with the first way of clarifying God's knowledge of evil and offers two arguments for his agreement. First, God, they say, cognizes good things insofar as they agree with his art, and he cognizes evil things insofar as they disagree with it. But God cannot cognize in which way something disagrees or can disagree with his art unless he foreknows the way in which something can agree with his art. Therefore, God cannot cognize evil things except by foreknowing the cause or causable good things that can agree with the divine art. He argues for the minor premise as follows. To disagree (*discordare*) is to deviate from agreement (*concordantia*), but no one can know what it is to deviate from agreement unless he knows what it is to agree, since to agree is included in the understanding of disagreement. Therefore, no one can cognize in what say something can disagree with art unless he foreknows in what way it can agree.[49]

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[46] See Aristotle, *De anima*, I, c. 4, 411a5–6 (ed. Leonine, 45.1.58).
[47] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 1 (ed. Venice, 1008:63–67).
[48] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 1 (ed. Venice, 1009:93–1010:126). See Ps.-Dionysius, *De div. nom.*, c. 7 (PG 3:870A–C).
[49] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 1 (ed. Venice, 1010:127–1011:141).

Durandus's second argument is as follows. Evil is the lack of some good that ought to be present. For a defect of good that need not be present, as a lack of vision in a stone, does not have the character of evil. Therefore, this is the notion of evil without which it is impossible to understand evil. But that good that ought to be present, whose lack is evil, cannot be the divine essence, which is naturally suited to be in nothing but the divine supposites, in which it necessarily is. Therefore, there is some created perfection. Therefore, without those created things it is impossible to understand evil.[50]

From what Durandus says about God's cognition evil it seems like he would deny that God has an idea of evil. God cognizes evil because he knows the way in which a created thing disagrees with his art. God does not make the disagreement, nor could he. Evil is not producible by God, which means there are no ideas of evil.

c. Additional Conclusions

Durandus's articulation of the scope of divine ideas, like his general metaphysical outlook, is greatly reduced. Since an idea has to be *factibile*, the scope of divine ideas only extends as far as God's power to create. Only singulars are *factibile*, so there are only ideas of singulars. God does not have ideas of species or genera because they do not exist extramentally. God knows species and genera like "man" and "animal," but he does not have ideas of them. He only has ideas of singulars, like Socrates. Although he does not discuss them explicitly, Durandus also denies that God has divine ideas of evil. Evil is not *factibile*. God knows evil as a consequence of having divine ideas, but he does not make evil, so he does not have an idea of it.

Durandus does not discuss divine ideas of substances and accidents, but it seems like he would affirm God has ideas of each substance and each separable accident. I am inclined to think that Durandus would deny divine ideas of proper accidents because they flow from the substance. It

[50] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 1 (ed. Venice, 1011:150–57).

is hard to imagine that Durandus would argue that God has one idea for Socrates and another idea for Socrates's risibility.

It might be tempting to say that Durandus argues for an infinite number of ideas because an idea does not *have* to exist, but only *could* exist. Durandus, however, denies this line of argumentation in *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 44, q. 2. There, he argues although the divine essence is infinitely perfect in itself, it is not infinitely imitable by creatures. Regardless of whether we understand God's imitability as grades of perfection as Henry did, or as singulars as Bonaventure and Thomas did, Durandus denies that there are an infinite number of ideas. That there are not an infinite number of grades of perfection in creatures is obvious from the fact that no creature has (or could have) infinite perfection.[51]

4. Recapitulation and Conclusions

In Durandus of Saint-Pourçain's thought we see the beginning of the rejection of divine ideas. Durandus still speaks of them and articulates most of the aspects of a complete theory, but they do not play any real role. Divine ideas are a secondary consideration of the divine intellect. They are creatures as known. An idea is a way in which God knows himself to be imitable by something he could make. God has this knowledge because he knows the full extent of his causality and because he knows distinctly everything that falls under being. Moreover, he is an exemplar of creatures in two ways. In the first way, he is an intellectual exemplar. He distinctly knows each creature in its singularity. In the second way, he is a natural exemplar. Creatures imitate his being, living, etc. Insofar as he is a natural exemplar, God only has the notion of an idea imperfectly because creatures can only imitate his being, living, etc. imperfectly. As a result of this distinction, it is not clear how the quiddities and specific perfections of things can have the divine essence as their idea. Divine ideas in the first sense are not, as Thomas would have it, the divine essence as known,

[51] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 44, q. 2 (ed. Venice, 1205:114–1206:138).

but rather the creature as known. Durandus does not clearly articulate the way in which the perfection of creatures is related to the divine essence, except insofar as he says that the divine essence can make them. This sort of relation is insufficient. A carpenter is the cause of the chest, but the chest is not an imitation of the carpenter's essence.

Even if Durandus did articulate the relationship between the divine ideas and the divine essence clearly, divine ideas would still play no effective role in creation. Divine ideas are the ways in which God knows that he can produce something by art. They are even principles of practical cognition. They guide God's action, but they are not immediate causes of it. Not even God's will is the immediate cause of his action. Only the divine executing power is the immediate cause of his action.[52] Such a position emphasizes the complete dependence of creatures on God's completely free action, but it does so at the expense of rendering divine ideas almost useless. An idea directs only through the mode of exemplarity because as such it is nothing of the agent but only related objectively to it.[53] Divine ideas are imperfect and have an unclear relationship with the divine essence. It seems as if Durandus preserved them more out of reverence to tradition than out of conviction.

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[52] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 38, q. 1 (ed. Venice, 1072:29–1073:33).
[53] *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 38, q. 1 (ed. Venice, 1073:42–44).

D. WILLIAM OF OCKHAM (CA. 1285–1347)

The last major figure to be treated is William of Ockham. He was born about 1285 just southwest of London in the village of Ockham. He joined the Franciscans at the age of fourteen and was ordained a priest sometime before he received a license to hear confessions on June 19, 1318. He began to study theology at Oxford sometime around 1309. From 1317–1319 he commented on the *Sententiae*. As his title, *Inceptor venerabilis*, implies Ockham completed all of the requirements to become a regent master, and even gave the first inaugural lecture (the *inceptio*), but he never actually occupied the Franciscan chair at Oxford. While waiting for the chair to become available Ockham was sent to the Franciscan house of studies in London. This period in London was immensely productive. He revised his commentary on book I of the *Sententiae* (known as his *Ordinatio*), commented on Aristotle's logic and physics, and wrote the *Summa logicae* and *Quodlibeta*. In 1324 Ockham was called to the papal court in Avignon to answer charges of heresy brought against him by the chancellor of Oxford University, John Lutterell. The committee charged with investigating his work, which included Durandus of Saint-Pourçain, censured some of the teachings from Ockham's commentary on the *Sententiae*, but he was not formally condemned. While Ockham was in Avignon the Franciscan dispute over apostolic poverty flared up again, this time with Pope John XXII as its opponent. Following the lead of Michael of Cesena, the Franciscan Minister General, Ockham fled Avignon on May 26, 1328 for Munich. After fleeing the papal court, Ockham and his companions were excommunicated. From that time, Ockham ceased writing on issues of logic, metaphysics, and physics. He wrote only political works concerned with poverty and the relations between the Church and the Empire. There is no evidence that he was reconciled with the Church at the time of his death on April 10, 1347.[1]

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[1] For more on Ockham's life, see Léon Baudry, *Guillaum d'Occam. Sa vie, ses ouvres, ses ideées sociales et politiques*, volume 1, *L'homme et les oeuvres* (Paris, 1949); Philotheus Boehner, "Editor's Introduction," in William of Ockham, *Philosophical Writings*, rev. Stephen F. Brown (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Co., 1990), xi–xvi. James A. Weisheipl,

1. The Metaphysical and Epistemological Context of Ockham's Theory of Divine Ideas

Although his theory of divine ideas follows and continues certain patterns that have emerged in this chapter, Ockham's theory greatly differs from his contemporaries because of certain metaphysical and epistemological positions that he takes. As a result, it will be necessary to make some preliminary remarks about Ockham's metaphysical nominalism, and the way he accounts for divine knowledge generally speaking. These remarks are not meant to be exhaustive, but they should be sufficient to give the proper context out of which Ockham's theory of divine ideas emerges.

a. Nominalism

Ockham argues very strongly that everything that exists is singular. As Anton Pegis has argued, Ockham arrives at his theory of nominalism precisely because he accepted the Platonic assumption that unity and intelligibility are incompatible.[2] In the *Sophist*, Plato offers a solution to the problem of the one and the many. In order to account for the multiplicity of Forms, Plato argues that the *logos* of Sameness and is distinct from the *logos* of Difference and the *logos* of Being. So to be *a* being is to be the same as itself and different from others, but only by participation. It follows that each of the Forms is the same as itself and different from all other Forms. Sameness and difference are inherent in being by participation because these preserve the intelligibility of each

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"Ockham and Some Mertonians," *Medieval Studies* 30 (1968): 164–74. William J. Courtenay, *Schools & Scholars*, 194–96. Armand Maurer, *The Philosophy of William of Ockham in the Light of its Principles* (Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1999), 1–3. Francis E. Kelley, "Ockham: Avignon, Before and After," in *From Ockham to Wyclif*, ed. Anne Hudson and Michael Wilks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 1–18. Léon Baudry, "L'Ordre franciscain au temps de Guillaume d'Occam," *Medieval Studies* 27 (1965): 184–211. C.K. Brampton, "Traditions Relating to the Death of William of Ockham," *Archivum Fransicanum Historicum* 53 (1960): 442–49. Gedeon Gál, "William of Ockham Died 'Impenitent' in April 1347," *Franciscan Studies* 42 (1982): 90–95.

[2] Anton C. Pegis, "The Dilemma of Being and Unity," in *Essays on Thomism*, ed. Robert E. Brennan (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1942), 153: "By this conclusion I do not mean merely that Platonism offered Ockham the *occasion* to formualte his distinctive doctrines at the very moment of pursuing mercilessly all the erros of Platonic realism. One has only to read the Ockhamist attack upon the Scotistic formal distinction in order to see that, in Ockham's eyes, the philosophical beginnings of nominalism are to be sought in an attack upon realism. I mean more this, however. For it is only on the basis of a Platonic assumption that Ockham escapes from Platonism in the particuar way that he does; which is the escape of a thinker who also remains a disciple."

of the Forms as well as all of the relations that they bear to each other.[3] The unity that each Form has is only a qualified unity. Each Form is the same as itself, but only if it is also different from all others. To know a Form is simultaneously to know that it is this essence and that it is *not* that essence. Difference and non-being are necessary in order to understand each and every Form; a relation to diversity is not exterior or extrinsic to the Form, but intrinsic to its very existence. Without the unity of sameness or the diversity of sameness being would be reduced to an unintelligible multiplicity. As a result, "the whole of being must be considered not only as being but also as non-being, for non-being is the mysterious co-principle of its interior intelligibility."[4] No part of being is exempt from the interior complex of sameness and difference, is and is not.

This position has a devastating effect on the relationship between unity and intelligibility. Since being is intelligible only insofar as it knows this complex of sameness and difference, being lacks unity to the extent that it is intelligible. No being can be understood merely as identical to itself, and so as completely unified. Paradoxically, a being could be understood as perfectly unified only if it be beyond being and beyond intelligibility.[5] As Pegis notes, "the intelligible character of being makes radically impossible the identification of being and unity. By nature, a being can be whole, but it cannot be one."[6] Every being, insofar as it is a being, cannot be simply one.

It is obvious that this theory which opposes being and unity is problematic for any Christian thinker, who wants to posit that God is simply one, supremely intelligent, and supremely intelligible. Ockham was acutely aware of this conflict, but he chose to work within the conflict rather than renounce it as a paralogism. Thus, he consistently identifies anything that is indistinguishable with the individual, and anything that is distinguishable, he reduces to the indistinguishable things of

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[3] See Plato, *Sophist*, 243D–245E, 250BC, 257A, 258BC, 259A–E (ed. Cooper, 264–66, 272, 280, 281–82, 282–83). Cf. Pegis, "The Dilemma of Being and Unity," 156–57).

[4] Pegis, "The Dilemma of Being and Unity," 157.

[5] See Plato's comments about the Good in *Republic* VI–VII. Similarly, it is no surprise that Plotinus argues that the One is beyond being and intelligiblity. See *Enneads* VI, 9, 1–2 (ed. Armstrong, 302–310).

[6] Pegis, "The Dilemma of Being and Unity," 157.

which it is composed. All of his predecessors seem to agree that "universals are in some way from the part of thing itself, such that universals are really in singulars."[7] Ockham, however, declares that not only is "every singular reality is singular through itself," but "every reality outside of the mind is really singular and one in number."[8] Ockham considers and rejects a variety of different articulations of realism about universals, a complete analysis of which is beyond the scope of these preliminary remarks.[9] For the sake of brevity, I will consider only one line of argumentation.

Ockham argues that even if we assume that some extramental universal exists, we will be lead to the conclusion that this universal is, in fact, not universal but singular. Let us call that universal *a*. Ockham asks whether *a* essentially contains many things or is precisely one thing. If it contains many things, then Ockham asks whether those things included in *a* essentially are finite in number or not. It cannot be said that they are not finite in number because then they would be actually infinite, which is impossible. If they are finite in number, then each of them is one in number and consequently the resulting whole will be one in number.[10] In this case, the universal turns out to be a singular entity composed to singulars. If, instead, *a* is not many things nor contains many things essentially, then Ockham has made his point. If *a* is some thing that does not include a multitude of things of whatever distinctions, then it is numerically one thing. As a result, the universal *a* will be singular.[11] Once again, the *a* is reduced to a singular. And since it was *ex hypothesi* not singular, the entire idea of a universal and common reality is reduced to nothing.

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[7] *Ord.* I, d. 2, q. 7 (OTh II.229:4–6): "omnes tamen in hoc conveniunt quod universalia sunt aliquo modo a parte rei, ita quod universalia sunt realiter in ipsis singularibus." Cf. *Ord.* I, d. 2, q. 7 (OTh II.225:17–226:3): "In conclusione istius quaestionis omnes quod vidi concordant, dicentes quod natura, quae est aliquo modo universalis, saltem in potentia et incomplete, est realiter in individuo, quamvis aliqui dicant quod distinguitur realiter, aliqui quod tantum formaliter, aliqui quod nullo modo ex natura rei sed secundum rationem tantum vel per considerationem intellectus."

[8] *Ord.* I, d. 2, q. 6 (OTh II.196:3): "quaelibet res singularis se ipsa est singularis"; *Ord.* I, d. 2, q. 6 (OTh II.177:15–16): "omnis res extra animam est realiter singularis et una numero." Cf. Pegis, "The Dilemma of Being and Unity," 165.

[9] See *Ord.* I, d. 2, qq. 4–8 (OTh II.99–292). Cf. Adams, *William Ockham*, I.3–69. Maurer, *The Philosophy of William of Ockham*, 62–90.

[10] *In Porph.*, proem., §2 (OPh II.11:35–43).

[11] *In Porph.*, proem., §2 (OPh II.11:44–48).

Even if we ignore this above reduction and grant that *a* is added to Socrates, we are still subject to Ockham's criticism. Either *a* and Socrates are many things or not. If they are not, then *a* is still a singular entity because Socrates is a singular thing. If they are many things and they are not infinite, then they will be some finite number. Socrates and *a* cannot be more than two, therefore there are only two things. If there are two things, then each of them is numerically one. Therefore, this universal is numerically one and so singular.[12] Once again, everything in the world turns out to be singular. Nothing in the world is common to anything else. There are no universal essences or repeatable features in the world; there are just individual essences. Socrates and Plato are only maximally similar; they are not the same in virtue of some essence of man. The essence of Socrates is an essential part of him and cannot be distinct from him.[13] A singular is, as Pegis notes, "that which is one in the sense of being indistinct and indistinguishable from the standpoint of the intellect."[14] There is no distinction within things marking a less than real distinction, which means that every thing can be perceived only as a unity beyond internal intelligibility. It is impossible to "look inside" of things and find rational or formal distinctions. This conclusion is one of the conclusions that necessarily result from accepting the Platonic conflict between intelligibility and unity: "with Platonism it drives unity to a formless isolation above being, and with Ockhamism it maintains unity by driving out intelligibility."[15] Ockham drives essences from singulars precisely because he thinks that the presence of an essence would prevent singulars from being one.

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[12] *In Porph.*, proem., §2 (OPh II.11:49–12:56).

[13] See *Ord.* I, d. 2, q. 5 (OTh II.158:20–159:2): "Ideo dico ad quaestionem quod in individuo non est aliqua natura universalis realiter distincta a differentia contrahente, quia non posset ibi poni talis natura nisi esset pars essentialis ipsius individui; sed semper inter totum et partem est proportio, ita quod si totum sit singulare non commune, quaelibet pars eodem modo est singularis proportionaliter, quia una pars non potest plus esse singularis quam alia; igitur vel nulla pars individui est singularis vel quaelibet; sed non nulla, igitur quadibet."

[14] Pegis, "The Dilemma of Being and Unity," 167.

[15] Pegis, "The Dilemma of Being and Unity," 168.

b. Divine Knowledge

Ockham's acceptance of the conflict between unity and intelligibility has dramatic implications for his theory of divine knowledge. Strictly speaking, Ockham is not willing to admit any attributes in God: "I say that there are not many attributal perfections, but there is only one perfection indistinct in reality and in reason, which properly and by virtue of speech ought not to be said to be in God or in the divine essence, but is in every way the divine essence itself."[16] We cannot say that divine attributes are distinguished by reason insofar as they belong to God himself because properly speaking if something is distinguished, it is distinguished by something.[17] So if divine attributes were distinguished according to reason, then they would have to correspond to something that was already distinguished on God's part, which is impossible. It is only possible to say that the divine attributes are distinguished rationally because the attributes are only certain mental, vocal, or writable predicables that are naturally suited to signify and to supposit for God, predicables which can be investigated by natural reason and applied to God.[18] These names fall into three categories. Some of these attributal concepts or attributal names signify the divine essence absolutely and affirmatively, like intellect and will. Some names, like creator and creative, signify the divine essence connotatively by connoting some else as well. Finally, some names, like incorruptible and immortal, signify the divine essence negatively.[19] It is only necessary to speak of such concepts because of our imperfection. These names do not correspond to anything really distinct in God. All of these names are just various ways for us to understand God's supremely simple essence.[20]

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[16] *Ord.* I, d. 2, q. 2 (OTh II.61:18–21): "dico quod non sunt plures perfectiones attributales, sed tantum est ibi una perfectio indistincta re et ratione, quae proprie et de virtute sermonis non debet dici esse in Deo vel in divina essentia, sed est omnibus modis ipsa divina essentia.

[17] *Quodlibet* II, q. 2 (OTh IX.210:45).

[18] *Quodlibet* II, q. 2 (OTh IX.211:58–62).

[19] *Ord.* I, d. 2, q. 2 (OTh II.62:5–21).

[20] See Maurer, *The Philosophy of William of Ockham*, 184–204. Adams, *William Ockham*, II.903–960.

So, according to Ockham, we can absolutely and affirmatively say that God has an intellect and will, but these predications are in no way evidence that God has distinct powers or features, which we would normally associate with these words. Since we can truly say that God has an intellect, we naturally would want to say that God has knowledge as well. It would not be fitting to say that God has an empty intellect in potency to know. Yet, it is hard to explain how God has knowledge. Thomas's answer that the ability of a being to receive more than its own form because immateriality is the *ratio* of intelligibility and that God is supremely intelligent because he is supremely immaterial cannot stand.[21] In the first place, if receptivity of something else is characteristic of knowledge, then potency-to-receive is essential to knowing. But no one wants to say that God is in potency. So "[i]t seems that Aquinas's argument that God is a knower is based on an epistemological premise that Aquinas did not want, in the end, to apply to God!"[22] Moreover, Thomas himself admits that the medium between the thing and the external sense receives the species of a thing, but he denies that the medium is cognitive.[23] Even if Thomas dropped receptivity in favor of immateriality, the argument would still fail because immateriality is not the cause of something's being cognitive. Many accidents are immaterial but not cognitive; Averroes argues that the form of heaven is immaterial and yet not cognitive.[24] Ockham does not think that Averroes is correct when he says that the form of heaven is immaterial, but he does not see any formal contradiction in the claim as would be the case if immateriality were the *ratio* of cognition.[25]

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[21] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 14, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 4.166). Cf. *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 1 (OTh IV.425:4–11)

[22] Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1018.

[23] Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 18, a. 1, ad 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.2.2.532:227–533:302). Cf. *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 1 (OTh IV.426:4–6). As Maurer points out, "Of course Aquinas would reply that the medium receives *species* materially, not immaterially, as does a knower. This is in acord with his principle that what is received is received according to the mode of the recipient. But then he should have argued from the immateriality of the knower to the immaterial mode of its reception of *species*, rather than from the reception of *species* to the immateriality of the knower" ("The Role of Divine Ideas," 365). Maurer's suggestion seems like the approach that would have been more in line with Thomas's principles, but it also lends credence to Pasnau's contention that Thomas runs afoul of the content fallacy. See Robert Pasnau, "Aquinas and the Content Fallacy," *Modern Schoolman* 75 (1998): 293–314.

[24] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 1 (OTh IV.426:17–21). Cf. Averroes, *De substantia orbis*, c. 3 (ed. Iuntias, IX.5va).

[25] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 1 (OTh IV.427:4–11): Ideo dico aliter ad quaestionem quod immaterialitas non est causa quare aliquid est cognitivum, quia non video quod inclu- dat contradictionem aliquam formam, nullius alterius formae

Turning to his own answer, Ockham argues that God does have knowledge if the word is taken generally for all knowledge. If the word is taken in the sense of something complex that is naturally suited to be caused as the conclusion of some premises, then there is no knowledge in God because he has no cause. He then offers a "demonstration" that God has knowledge. The argument is not a demonstration proper because we can give no "argument and cause why God is a knower."[26] The best we can do is persuasively argue from the fact that there is something of an *a priori* proof whenever it is argued from one proposition to another by a formal consequence, but no formal consequence follows if the propositions are taken in the reverse order. The propositions "God is the supreme being, therefore he is intelligent, knowing, and cognizing" have this one-way formal consequence, and so it must be the case that God knows.[27]

Knowing that God is a knower, can we say what he knows? What informs his knowledge? To what does his knowledge extend? Like his predecessors, Ockham holds that the divine essence is the primary object of his intellect. If anything else were the primary object of the divine intellect, then it would be prior to the divine intellect and consequently prior to the divine essence. Nothing is prior to the divine essence, so the divine essence must be the divine intellect's primary object.[28] As we might expect from what was said above, Ockham and his predecessors part ways immediately after this initial agreement. Whereas most of his predecessors accept things other than God as a sort

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substantialis receptivam nec potentem informare materiam, posse fieri a Deo, illo modo quo ponit Commentator quod in caelo non est materia, quia ipse ponit quod non est aliquod compositum ex materia et forma substantiali. Et tamen possibile esset talem formam simpliciter esse non cognitivam. Nec potest aliqua ratio generalis dari quare aliquid est cognitivum, sed ex natura rei habet quod sit cognitivum vel quod non sit cognitivum."

[26] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 1 (OTh IV.427:14–16): "Non tamen est intelligendum quod aliquid sit ratio et causa quare Deus sit sciens, quia nullam causam habet."

[27] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 1 (OTh IV.427:5–12). Adams does not think that Ockham's argument very strong: "Ockham seems mistaken in regarding 'God is the highest being' as a necessary proposition, however. For even if we assume that God exists necessarily, it will not follow that He is necessarily the highest being any more than it will follow that He is necessarily the Lord of creation. For existence of everything other than God is contingent; and God will be the highest being only if something else exists to which His excellence can be compared" (*William Ockham*, II.1021). I am not convinced by this objection. It does not seem necessary to say that *summum ens* is comparative. Granted *summum* is a superlative term, I think Ockham would argue that God does not have to be compared to any actual creature to be highest.

[28] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 3, s.c. (OTh IV.445:5–7).

of secondary object of the divine intellect, Ockham emphatically rejects this possibility. Looking specifically at Scotus's proposal of instants, Ockham admits that he does not understand many parts of it.[29] In the first place, wherever something is prior in perfection, there corresponds something posterior in perfection. But nothing in God is posterior in perfection, so neither can anything be prior in perfection.[30] Prior is a relative term and so always requires its correlative, namely, posterior. The posterior is always inferior and more imperfect. Since nothing is more imperfect in God, neither is anything more perfect in God. Moreover, intellection is entirely indistinct of itself (*ex natura rei*), which means that one thing is not posterior to another. If we can understand an entire proposition (and therefore many terms) in a single, indistinct act, how much more can God understand each and every thing in one indistinct act?[31]

Again, it is possible to speak of things being ordered according to prior and posterior in two ways. According to the first way, some things are ordered because some extrinsic, ordered things correspond to them such that one corresponds to one and another corresponds to another. Prior and posterior according to time and place are ordered in this way. One part of time or place corresponds to the prior and another part to the posterior. This is the more proper way of speaking because the prior is in something prior in which the posterior is not.[32]

According to the second way, some things are ordered in which no extrinsic order corresponds. God is prior to a creature in this way, even though no time or place is imaginable in this case. This way also corresponds to part and whole, and universally things ordered according to nature, causality, dignity, and community. This way of speaking is less proper because the prior is not in something prior in which the posterior is not.[33] Scotus clearly wants this second way of

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[29] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 3 (OTh IV.447:18): "Ista opinio dicit multa quae non intelligo."
[30] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 3 (OTh IV.448:9–11).
[31] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 4 (OTh IV.469:7–13).
[32] *Ord.* I, d. 9, q. 3 (OTh III.302:4–16).
[33] *Ord.* I, d. 9, q. 3 (OTh III.302:17–24).

speaking for his instants of divine knowing, but Ockham does not think it can work because "[u]nless there is a measure really distinct from what is measured, then there is no such correspondence for the prepositional phrase 'in something prior' to signify."[34] Since God's priority is not contingent on anything other than God actually existing, the divine essence can have no extrinsic and really distinct measure to measure the priority and posteriority.

Scotus would argue that a lack of extrinsic measure is irrelevant. Ockham's reasoning prevents us from saying that God knows in a temporally prior and posterior way, but Scotus did not want his distinction to apply this way. The argument does not eliminate the possibility of speaking of a natural priority and posteriority. Yet, as Adams points out, Ockham's argument is not completely in vain: "For it is far from clear why the fact that God is naturally prior to creatures or prior to them in perfection, should have the consequence that God's understanding of Himself is naturally prior to His understanding of creatures."[35] If God's self-understanding does not have to mediate his knowledge of creatures by means of relations of imitability, then why should there be any priority or posteriority at all? Why should God not understanding himself and creatures in a single, indistinct act in the same way that we understand distinct terms in a single, indistinct act of understanding a proposition?[36]

Ockham also takes particular exception to Scotus's claim that the divine essence is the primary adequate object of the divine intellect.[37] Scotus does not consider the two ways in which something can be said to be an adequate object. In the first way, God is the primary object by a primacy of perfection. Nothing is more perfect than God and so in that sense, the divine essence is the primary adequate object for the divine intellect. The second understanding of an adequate object

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[34] Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1048.
[35] Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1049.
[36] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 4 (OTh IV.469:7–13).
[37] Scotus, *Rep. par. I-A*, d. 35, q. 2, n. 77–80 (ed. Wolter and Bychov, II.374).

corresponds to the logical understanding that Aristotle proposes in *Posterior Analytics* I, c. 4, namely, that what is predicated of something that is *per se* apprehensible. In this latter manner, it is the univocal notion of being, common to both God and creatures, not God himself that is the primary object of the divine intellect.[38]

The combination of the three main claims in this preliminary discussion, namely, (1) the claim that everything that exists extramentally is singular, (2) the claim that nothing can be distinguished in God except by certain attributal concepts or names, and (3) the claim that God does not have anything akin to a secondary consideration in his act of knowing, have dramatic ramifications for his theory of divine ideas. The combination of these three claims positively rules out the possibility that divine ideas be identical with the divine essence. As we will see, Ockham argues that God has knowledge of all things other than himself, but they cannot be "subjectively" present in him in any way. Divine ideas can be "in" God as objects of divine knowledge, but there is no way for them to be one with God.

2. The Status of Divine Ideas

a. God's Knowledge of Things Other than Himself

Before turning to the divine ideas themselves, it is important to answer a question that was unanswered in the preliminary remarks: does God know all creatures? Ockham seems convinced that God does know all creatures, but he does not think it can be adequately explained. Ockham first considers Averroes's objections from his commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. Of the seven arguments, which he declares manifestly false and contrary to the authority of Sacred Scripture, Ockham thinks that those based on God's nobility are the strongest: "if it could be proved that God does not understand things other than himself, it would only be because of the supreme nobility and

[38] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 3 (OTh IV.455:1–456:19).

exceeding everything else in nobility."[39] God's nobility might make it ignoble to know things other than himself or it might be ignoble because it implies dependence on the thing known.

With regard to the first, Ockham thinks we have been misled by our experience. We readily experience that knowing vile things impedes our ability to understand more noble things, and it can even incline us to do a vile or reprehensible act. Such an impediment or inclination is indeed vile, but "merely understanding vile things does not, *of itself*, make a being less noble."[40] God is not prevented from knowing himself or tempted to do evil merely by knowing evil, so there is nothing unfitting about him knowing it.[41]

With regard to the second, Ockham denies that knowledge of something else necessarily entails being dependent upon that thing. The objection seems plausible because we readily experience that we depend on external things for our knowledge of them. Yet, it cannot be proven that this experience holds in all cases. It cannot be proven that the intellection of the intelligence that moves heaven depends on heaven, yet the intelligence moves heaven. But God's intellect is not caused so he is not subject to any dependence.[42]

The objection of dependence arises in another way. That which is known perfects the intellect. If God knows anything other than himself, then he will be changed and perfected by the knowledge of that thing. Thus, he cannot know anything other than himself.[43] This objection turns out to be irrelevant because God never comes to know something for the first time. If God's knowledge were caused, then he would certainly be transformed in passing from potency to knowledge to actually knowing. God's knowledge is completely uncaused, so the objection fails.[44]

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[39] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.440:18–20): "si posset probari quod Deus non intelligit aliud a se, hoc non esset nisi propter summam nobilitatem et excessum in nobilitate respectu cuuscumque alterius."

[40] Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1022. Emphasis original.

[41] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.443:5–10).

[42] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.441:3–11 and 443:1–2).

[43] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.435:15–16).

[44] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.443:3–4).

If it is impossible to prove that God knows only himself, it is equally impossible to prove that God knows things other than himself. The best way to argue that God does know things other than himself is Thomas's argument: whenever something is perfectly cognized, its power is perfectly cognized. The power of some thing is not known perfectly unless that to which the power extends itself is known. But the divine power extends to all things. God perfectly knows himself. Therefore, he knows all things.[45] Ockham admits that this argument is probable. If it could be proved that God understands all things other than himself, his causality of all things would be the best proof. Unfortunately, this strategy suffers a twofold insufficiency. First, it cannot sufficiently be proved that perfect knowledge of a power requires perfect knowledge of all the things to which that power extends. The simple knowledge (*notitia incomplexa*) of one thing is not sufficient to give simple knowledge of something else. This is clear from the senses, which perfectly cognize their objects and consequently their power, but yet it is not necessary that a sense cognize something other to which its power extends.[46] As Adams explains, "since causes are distinct from their effects—really distinct from their actual effects and possibly distinct from their merely possible effects—a thing and the causal power that it can be perfectly conceived of apart from any of its actual or possible effects."[47] Second, it cannot be sufficiently proved that God is the cause of all things or even that he is an efficient cause. Reason alone cannot prove that God causes all things immediately. The best reason can do is argue probably to the chain of intermediate causes posited by Avicenna. In that case, God would certainly have cognition of his immediate effect.[48] But it can be reasonably argued that other

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[45] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.436:10–15), quoting Thomas, *ST* I, q. 14, a. 5 (ed. Leonine 4.172). Cf. Thomas, *In I Sent*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.814–15).

[46] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.436:20–437:6). Cf. *Ord.* prol. q. 9 (OTh I.241–244).

[47] Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1028. The example that Ockham uses by itself only seems sufficient to prove that Thomas has generalized too much. The fact that the senses, which are passive powers do not know everything to which their power extends (i.e., all sensibles), does not seem sufficient to show that perfect knowledge the intellect and will, active and productive powers, entails knowledge of all of their possible effects. Adams's addition strenghens Ockham's argument considerably.

[48] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.441:12–18). Cf. Avicenna, *Met.* IX, c. 4 (ed. van Riet, II.476–88).

causes, like the celestial bodies, are sufficient with respect to many effects with the result that God cannot be proven to cause them immediately.[49] Therefore, it cannot be proven that God is the immediate cause of all things.

Despite not being able to demonstrate that he is the cause of all things, Ockham thinks it can be shown that God is probably the immediate cause of some effect. It is probable that something depends on the first cause such that *per impossibile* if the first were destroyed, its destruction would follow either mediately or immediately. But every such thing has the notion of a cause with respect to another. Therefore, God has to be the immediate cause of something because "if God is the mediate efficient cause of anything, He is the immediate cause of something."[50] Again, it is probable that God is the efficient or moving of cause of some effect because otherwise, unless he could effectively cause something in the universe, his existence would be posited in vain.[51] To this premise, Ockham adds that it is not probable that the first efficient cause does not know that which he produces, for then he would produce and not know what he produced.[52] He cannot sufficient prove either of these premises, but together they yield the probable conclusion that God knows some effect.

b. What is an Idea?

Having shown that God probably knows things other than himself, Ockham asks whether God has ideas of these creatures that he knows. He devotes a lot of time to this question, 36 pages in the critical edition. He is anxious to show both that all of his predecessors are gravely mistaken and that he does hold a theory of divine ideas. As for the first goal, Ockham argues against Henry of Ghent as a representative of each of the authors treated in Chapter II. To accomplish the second

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[49] *Quodlibet* II, q. 1 (OTh IX.107:11–108:20).
[50] Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1031.
[51] *Quodlibet* II, q. 1 (OTh IX.109:43–45).
[52] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 2 (OTh IV.442:2–4).

goal, Ockham goes to great lengths to show that he has the authentic interpretation of Augustine's text. As we will see, it is not entirely clear why Ockham goes to such great lengths to show that he is not in disagreement with Augustine since his argument obviously distorts the clear meaning of Augustine's text. Since Augustine declares that "he who denies that ideas exist, denies that the Son exists," it seems likely that Ockham posits divine ideas only because *Augustinus dixit*, and he wishes to avoid the heretical implication of denying them.[53]

i. Contra Henry of Ghent. Ockham notes that many teachers agree that an idea is really the divine essence and only differs from it by reason. Taking Henry of Ghent as the exemplar of this position, Ockham notes that God is said to cognize things other than himself only insofar as his essence is the *ratio* and exemplar form of those things. The notion according to which the divine essence is the notion by which he cognizes other things is nothing other than the imitability by which his essence is imitated by others, which is called an idea. An idea is nothing other than the formal notion, which is a respect of imitability in the divine essence from a consideration of the intellect.[54]

The suggestion that a being of reason is really the same as something real is abhorrent to Ockham, and so he argues that it is impossible for an idea really to be the divine essence. Either an idea bespeaks (a) the divine essence precisely, or (b) the respect precisely, or (c) the aggregate of the essence and the respect.[55] If (a), then there will be only one idea because there is only one divine essence. Everyone argues that there are many ideas, so it cannot be (a). If (b), then that respect must be either real or rational. If it is real, then it would be paternity, filiation, or spiration, which everyone denies. If it is rational, then Ockham's point is made because everything that is really the

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[53] Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46, n. 2 (PL 40.30): "qui negat ideas esse, negat Filium esse."

[54] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.480:5–19). Cf. Henry, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 29.79–81).

[55] In theory, the idea could also bespeak the essence and something absolute or precisely something absolute other than the essence. Since no one holds these positions Ockham does not treat them.

same with a real being is truly a real being and so not a rational being. Thus, it is impossible for some rational being to be really the same with a real being. Therefore, an idea cannot be a real respect. If (c), then Ockham's point is made again because at bottom, no aggregate is identical to its parts and so the idea could not really be the divine essence. Having eliminated all the conclusions, he concludes that an idea is not really the same as the divine essence.[56]

As Adams points out, this criticism does not seem fair. Henry's definition of idea includes both the divine essence and the relation, which seems to allow him to say, "that an idea is a sort of aggregate of one of whose components—viz., the divine essence—is real, and one of whose components is not real but a being of reason."[57] Henry would then argue that all of the divine ideas are identical and really the same, yet distinct from each other in virtue of the different rational beings of which they are also composed. Adams then chastises defenders of the common opinion because it is misleading to speak of the divine ideas as being *in* God if they mean what she has just said.[58] With the exception of the prevailing opinion of Henry's essential being, I am inclined to think that Adam's reply is correct. The common view of Henry, which posits a sort of intelligible world of essences existing in some way independently of God's being, could not be interpreted as Adams allows, but Ockham would have more fierce opposition for that position. For Bonaventure, Thomas, and Henry, divine ideas are not the divine essence itself, but the divine essence considered as imitable (or expressive). Divine ideas are not many of themselves. They are only considered as many insofar as God knows himself to be imitable in many ways. What prevents the many relations of possible creatures known by God from being ontologically one with him?

I think that what really underlies Ockham's criticism is that he thinks it is entirely superfluous to posit such rational relations in the first place. He thinks that our intellect can

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[56] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.481:2–482:6). Cf. Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1038–39.
[57] Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1039.
[58] Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1039–40.

understand things other than itself without such respects caused by an action of reason. Therefore, for the same reason the divine intellect will be able to understand all things other than it without any rational respects. Again, the created artificer, without any respect of reason, can have distinct cognition of many and produce distinct things. Therefore, all the more will the uncreated artificer be able to cognize more things distinctly and so produce them in *esse* without any rational respect.[59] Moreover, the divine intellect would be greatly cheapened because of these rational respects. If the divine intellect understood something other than itself as an informing object, then his act of understanding would be cheapened. Therefore, if the divine essence alone were not a sufficient for moving his intellect to understand all other things, then he would require something else, like rational respects, and so be cheapened. Again, as Olivi and Scotus had previously argued, the rational respect presupposes intellection of the creature and so follows upon the intellection of the creature and is irrelevant for a discussion of divine knowledge of things other than himself.[60]

As far as Ockham is concerned, this problem is easy to solve, but language has made it more difficult. Many authors speak of the divine essence as representing all things other than himself, but such language has fooled them into thinking that they need some sort of relation to account for the representation. As a result, Ockham thinks we should discard this phrase and simply say that the divine essence understands all things other than himself.[61] Such relations are not required because whenever *a* is not distinguished in any way whatsoever from *b*, that which is not required for *a* is not required for *b* either. But cognition of the divine essence is in no way distinguished from the cognition of a creature. Such a rational relation is not required for cognition of the divine essence. Therefore, it is not required for cognition of a creature either.[62]

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[59] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.483:16–20 and 484:16–21). Cf. *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 4 (OTh IV.469:7–13).
[60] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.483:20–484:5).
[61] *Ord.* I, d. 34, q. 4, ad 1 (OTh IV.477:19–21).
[62] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 4 (OTh IV.465:14–20). As Maurer points out, Ockham's razor of economy is clearly operative in these rejections even though he does not appeal to it explicitly ("The Role of Divine Ideas," 371).

ii. Ockham's Theory. Turning to his own position, Ockham argues that the term "idea" is a connotative or relative term. An idea does not merely signify one thing, but is necessarily the idea of something ideal or ideated. It signifies one thing, and connotes something else. Since it is connotative, it does not have real quiddity (*quid rei*), and so can only be given a descriptive or nominal definition: "an idea is something cognized by an effective intellectual principle, looking to which the active principle can produce something in real being (*esse reale*)."[63] This description, he says, is completely drawn from Augustine's articulation in *De diversis quaestionibus LXXIII*, q. 46. Ideas are (1) known by the Creator, (2) in his mind, (3) as that to which he looks to create.[64]

Ockham also adds the authority of Seneca to his account. This addition is not surprising since the same authority appears in the text from Henry that Ockham just criticized. In his *Epistle to Lucilius*, Seneca proposes a fifth cause in addition to the four essential causes of Aristotle. This fifth cause is "the exemplar that Plato calls an 'idea.' For it is this looking to which the artificer effects that which he deigned to carry out."[65] Seneca further argues that it does not matter whether the exemplar is extramental or in the mind of the artificer. Ockham disagrees with this latter point, but agrees that ideas are certain known exemplars, the knowledge of which allows the knower to produce the things in *esse reale*.[66]

Having determined the description of the term "idea," Ockham argues that this description does not fit the divine essence, nor some rational respect, but the creature itself. All of the authors in this study agree with Augustine that there are many ideas. But the divine essence is one and in no way capable of being many. Therefore, it is not an idea. His reply to Henry above is sufficient to rule

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[63] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh 486:2–4): "idea est aliquid cognitum a principio effectivo intellectuali ad quod ipsum activum aspiciens potest aliquid in esse reali producere." Cf. *Summa logicae* I, c. 28 (OPh I.90:1–3): "Descriptiva autem definitio est mixta ex substantialibus et accidentalibus. Verbi gratia 'homo est animal rationale, erecte ambulativum, latas habens ungues.'"

[64] Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46 (PL 40.30), esp.: "Has autem rationes ubi esse arbitrandum est nisi in ipsa mente Creatoris? Non enim extra se quidquam positum intuebatur, ut secundum id consitueret quod constituebat."

[65] Seneca, *Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales*, epist. 45 (ed. Gummere, I.448).

[66] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.486:19–487:3).

out the possibility that the divine essence is really one, but many in reason according as it can be compared to diverse creatures. Either the ideas are in the divine mind subjectively or objectively. They cannot be present subjectively because then there would be many subjectively, which is manifestly contrary to divine simplicity. Therefore, they are only there objectively. But the divine essence does not exist only objectively. Therefore, it is not an idea.[67]

Not only is an idea not the divine essence, Ockham argues that a divine idea is not a respect either. If it were a respect, it would be a real respect or a rational respect. It cannot be a real respect because, as everyone agrees, there is no real relation of God to a creature. It cannot be a rational respect either because nothing that is implied by the term "idea" is of God to a creature. A rational respect cannot be an exemplar of a creature just as a rational being (*ens rationis*) cannot be the exemplar of a real being (*ens realis*).[68]

The only available option remaining is that ideas be the creatures themselves. It turns out that creatures satisfy all of the aspects of the description of the term "idea." A creature is known by an intellectual agent, and God looks to it in order to produce rationally. Regardless of how much God cognize his essence, if he did not cognize what is producible, then he would produce ignorantly and not rationally, i.e., he would not produce by means of ideas. Ideas ought to be posited proportionally in both the artificer and in God. If the artificer cognizes something similar to the artifact that he is going to produce, then that thing is his exemplar and idea. The producible thing itself is truly the idea and exemplar of the artificer. Therefore, since God foreknows the producible creature itself, that creature will be an idea.[69] Aristotle was right to criticize Plato for positing ideas as some really existing things, but Plato was right to say that the divine ideas are not the divine essence,

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[67] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.487:4–488:7).

[68] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.488:8–14).

[69] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.488:15–489:8). As Maurer notes, "Ockham denies that God knows future contingent truths through ideas; these he knows through his own essence or knowledge" ("The Role of Divine Ideas," 372n30). Cf. *Ord.* I, d. 38, q. 1 (OTh IV.583:20–587:19)

but rather something other known by God, which were exemplars and to which God looked in producing.[70]

The clarification that ideas are the creatures themselves allows Ockham to make some precisions on his original description of ideas. Just as one house can truly be called the idea and exemplar of another house because some artificer, by knowing the one house, can fabricate another like it, in the same way, if the house in particular were foreknown by the artificer and he could produce the same house in virtue of that knowledge, the foreknown house would be its exemplar and idea, looking to which the artificer could produce the house in *esse reale*. Thus, an idea signifies the very creature as predicable directly (*in recto*) and also signifies the divine cognition or cognizing indirectly (*in obliquo*). As a result, the term "idea" is predicable of the creature itself, but not God's cognizing or cognition because neither cognition nor cognizing is an idea just as it is not an exemplar.[71]

c. The Necessity of Positing Ideas

After determining that ideas signify creatures as producible, Ockham turns to the question of the necessity of positing them. Against his predecessors' theories, Ockham insists that ideas must not be posited as *rationes cognoscendi* of the creatures different from the creatures themselves nor are they certain likenesses representing the creatures to the divine intellect. He is forced to make this claim because he has eliminated the possibility of divine ideas being the divine essence itself. If divine ideas are the divine essence understood in a certain relation to a possible creature, then the divine idea has to be distinct from the creature because, as Bonaventure noted, God and creatures are not identical.[72] On this position, the identity of creature and idea results in pantheism. Since

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[70] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.489:17–490:4), esp.: "Hoc 20 idem etiam imponit Philosophus Platoni quod ponat ideas esse quasdam res distinctas realitcr, sicut ipsa producta sunt distincta specie. Igitur intentio sua fuit, non quod divina essentia esset idea, sed quod aliqua alia cognita a Dea, quae essent exem plaria et ad quae Deus aspiceret in producendo."

[71] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.490:5–20).

[72] Bonaventure, *De scientia Christi*, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, V.8b).

Ockham has declared that divine ideas cannot be the divine essence, divine ideas cannot be different than the creatures because other than the divine essence, which is in every way its cognition, there is nothing else that can be the *ratio cognoscendi* of creatures. Therefore, there cannot be many *rationes cognoscendi* of creatures.[73]

As evidence of his claim, Ockham asks what could be meant by "*ratio cognoscendi* of a creature." He identifies four possible options, none of which is satisfactory. Either it means (1) that which is in some way the cause of the cognition of a creature, as it were, moving the divine intellect, (2) the very cognition by which a creature is cognized, (3) something that, as it were, receives the very cognition of the creature, or (4) something necessarily requisite for cognizing creatures. It cannot be (1) because the divine intellect is not mobile and so cannot be effected or caused. It cannot be (2) because God's cognition is the same with respect to all creatures, and can in no way be made many. It is only many in the things known, not in cognition. It cannot be (3) because the divine intellect is not receptive of cognition. The divine intellect is its very cognition formally and in every way on the part of the thing (*ex parte rei*). Finally, it cannot be (4) because if ideas differed from creatures, then they would only be *entia rationis*. Everyone agrees that other than God and creatures nothing can be posited as an *ens reale*. But no *ens rationis* is necessarily required to cognize an *ens reale* (or vice versa).[74]

Ideas must be posited precisely as they are certain exemplars looking to which the divine intellect produces creatures. The authority of Augustine, who argues that God works rationally, is evidence of this claim. In order to work rationally, nothing but a productive and operative power and an exemplar to which the worker looks in working is required. Ideas are not the productive power or creative of the producing. Therefore, they are the very exemplars and thus are to be

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[73] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.490:21–491:2).
[74] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.491:3–492:12).

posited as exemplars.[75] It is not clear how Ockham can be entitled to this claim. We have seen that Ockham says that the ideas are simply creatures. But if divine ideas are to function as exemplars, then they must be logically prior to the divine act of creation. They cannot be logically prior as real beings (*entia realia*), nor can they be the divine essence for the reasons Ockham has given. So what are these non-real exemplars? It would appear that creatures as known by God have a sort of non-stipulable ontological status.

The ontological status of divine ideas will be treated in the next section. For now, it is clear that when it is asked whether God knows all things other than himself through ideas, the answer can only be affirmative if we understand ideas as a terminating object just as we say that we will in heaven see God through his essence because the very divine essence will be seen in itself. If we mean that they are some motive cause, an intellective potency, or some middle object standing between God and creatures, then God does not understand things other than himself through ideas. Ideas do not move the divine intellect; they are not the intellect itself, or an intervening object. Ideas are the very things cognized by God.[76]

d. The Existence of Things in God

There are a number of consequences that follow from Ockham's position on divine ideas. Of the seven consequences that Ockham considers, the first concerns the existence of divine ideas in God, and the other six concern the scope of divine ideas. The consequences for the scope of divine ideas will be treated below. If divine ideas are creatures as known to be an exemplar, then it follows that ideas are not in God subjectively and really, but only are in him objectively as certain

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[75] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.492:13–493:2).

[76] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.493:22–494:14). Ockham is particularly critical of anyone who would put ideas between God and creatures: ". . . creaturae non sunt sic Deo nee in cognitione Dei quasi quaedam media inter Deum et cognitionem Dei et las creaturas ex a productas, quasi primo sit Deus vel cognitio Dei, deinde sint quaedam aliquo modo distincta, eadem men realiter cum Deo, et postea creaturae distincae realiter a Deo, sicut multi imaginantur" (*Summa logicae* III-4, c. 6 [OPh I.780:255–59]). Cf. Maurer, "The Role of Divine Ideas," 374.

things cognized by him because they are very things producible by God.[77] This position raises certain difficulties for Ockham. Whatever is eternal is really in God because otherwise something other than God would be eternal. But Augustine argues that ideas are eternal. Therefore, they have to be in God.[78] Ockham responds to this objection in *Ordinatio* I, d. 35, q. 5, and then offers his own thoughts on the existence of things in God in *Ordinatio* I, d. 36, q. un. This section will treat these two responses in turn.

The objection based on Augustine is a real difficulty for Ockham because it threatens divine simplicity. If, as Augustine says, divine ideas are eternal, then either they are in God subjectively or not. If they are not in God subjectively, then something other than God is eternal, and God would be in potency to know them. But, as we saw above, if divine ideas are in God subjectively, then God's supreme simplicity would be violated. In response to this problem, Ockham draws a distinction between the divine essence and the divine intellect. Ideas are not really in God subjectively, but only objectively. All creatures were in God from eternity because God knew them from eternity. As evidence of this point, Ockham says that Augustine always says that divine ideas are in divine intelligence, not in the essence. Ideas are not really in God except as cognized, and not as real existence.[79]

Ockham further argues that the objection is based on a misreading of Augustine's text. "Eternal" can be taken in two ways. In one way, properly for what truly and properly and really is actually existing eternally. In another way for that which is eternally and immutably understood or cognized, and this is to take "eternal" improperly and in an extended way. Ideas are not eternal in the first, proper way, but they are eternal in the second, improper way.[80] Ockham insists on this

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[77] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.493:5–7).

[78] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.494:18–495:1). Cf. Augustine, *De div. qq. 83*, q. 46 (PL 40.30): "Sunt namque ideae principales quaedam formae, vel rationes rerum stabiles atque incommutabiles, quae ipsae formatae non sunt, ac per hoc aeternae ac semper eodem modo sese habentes."

[79] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.497:15–20).

[80] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.498:3–8).

interpretation of Augustine several times, but in each case it is a misinterpretation of Augustine.[81] Augustine clearly means to say that God's ideas are just as eternal as he is, and that they do exist in him. In this respect, thinkers like Bonaventure, Thomas, and Henry are more faithful to Augustine because they posit that divine ideas are identical to the divine essence. In order to make his system work, Ockham has to say that something in the divine intellect is not identical to the divine essence. Divine ideas are included in the simple knowledge that God has when he knows, but they are not in God except objectively.

Articulated in this way, it is unclear how Ockham can accept this solution. It appears that he has driven a wedge between the divine essence and the divine intellect in the name of divine simplicity. If divine ideas are in the divine intellect, but not in the divine essence, then it seems like God's essence and intellect are not simply one. There would be no contradiction if he admitted that the divine ideas were also in the divine essence as, for instance, Thomas does. Ockham's theory appears to be in trouble. Ideas have objective existence, but this existence is not in the divine essence. So what is this objective existence?

Ockham's answer to this question remains constant throughout his career in one way, and develops in another. Ockham consistently argues that creatures were really nothing in themselves from eternity.[82] The fact that he says that ideas exist objectively might lead us to believe that they have some sort of intelligible being (like they do for Thomas) or diminished being (as they do for Scotus in the *Lectura* and *Ordinatio*), but for Ockham objective existence is nothing. In fact, Ockham claims in *In IV Sent.*, q. 9 that all creatable things are pure nothing prior to their creation.[83]

Ockham is consistent in his claim that ideas are nothing or pure nothing prior, but what he means when say this seems to undergo some development as his career progressed. In the *Ordinatio*,

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[81] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.498:9–10, 500:2–4, and 501:1–2). Cf. Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1056–57.
[82] *Ord.* I, d. 36, q. un, ad oppositum (OTh IV.524): "ab aeterno nihil fuit in se reale."
[83] *In IV Sent.*, q. 9 (OTh VII.178:11). Cf. Maurer, "The Role of Divine Ideas," 374.

in which he still holds the *ficta* model of cognition, Ockham argues that the entire being of a *fictum* is its being known.[84] God's act of thinking has real existence and is identical to his essence, but that which he thinks has only objective existence.[85] Since God necessarily knows everything that he knows, he necessarily conceives every creature and so has a plurality of ideas. Yet, nothing necessarily exists *in re* as a result of this conceiving. As Adams notes, "since objective existence is a mind-dependent existence, the ideas depend for their necessary objective existence on the divine act of thought."[86] The only existence that they could have is mental existence, and this existence is nothing.

By the time Ockham wrote his fourth *Quodlibet*, however, he had rejected the *ficta* theory of knowledge. He argues that when God understands other things, he would understand such fictitious beings (*ficta*). And so from eternity there was a coordination of as many fictitious beings as there can be diverse intelligible things whose existence was so necessary that God could not destroy them, which seems false.[87] Since God necessarily knows what he knows, if divine ideas have some sort of objective being, then they have it necessarily; "thus, even if their objective existence is dependent upon God's thought, it is independent of His will—which Ockham had come to regard as too close to Platonism for comfort!"[88] Not only does such a theory seems to restrict God's omnipotence, it would still be easy to misinterpret Ockham as ascribing some sort of real existence to objective being. As a result, he rejects the *fictum* theory and objective being in favor of the *intellectio* theory, which says that nothing more than the act of understanding is required.[89] Since on this theory a

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[84] *Ord.* I, d. 2, q. 8 (OTh II.273:20–21): "igitur tantum habent esse obiectuvum, ita quod eorum esse est eorum cognosci."

[85] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.500). Cf. Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1057.

[86] Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1058

[87] *Quodlibet* IV, q. 35 (OTh IX.473:92–96). Cf. Maurer, "The Role of Divine Ideas," 375; Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1058.

[88] Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1058.

[89] For more on Ockham's *ficta* and *intellectio* theories, see Pasnau, *Theories of Cognition*, 277–89. Cf. the very concise treatment by Timothy B. Noone, "William of Ockham," in *A Companion to Philosophy in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jorge J.E. Gracia and Timothy B. Noone (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing Co., 2003), 704–06.

divine idea is nothing other than God's act of understanding, it is easy to see that it is nothing in itself.

It is important to clarify what Ockham means by the term "nothing" because the word is taken in several ways. (1) In one way, it is taken syncategorematically, and so is one, universal, negative sign including the term it can distribute, i.e., including "being." Thus, we say "nothing runs," "nothing is intelligent." In each case, "nothing" stands for each and every individual. (2) In another way, it is taken categorematically for something that is said to be a nothing (*unum nihil*). This second way can be understood in two ways. (a) In the first way, "nothing" means and is called that which does not really exist nor has any real existence. In this way, we must say that an angel was nothing from eternity because it had no real existence; nothing was in existence from eternity except God alone. (b) In the second way, "nothing" means not only that it has no existence, but even that real existence is repugnant to it. In this way, we say that a chimera is nothing but, man was not nothing from eternity because there was no repugnance to him existing in the nature of things.[90]

Having distinguished these ways of understanding the term "nothing," Ockham specifies that divine ideas are nothing in the sense of (2a) but not in the second of (2b).[91] Divine ideas are the creatures that God could make actually exist, but has not made. They did not exist, but there was nothing contradictory about God knowing them. There are no ideas of chimera. God has ideas only of those things that are possible.

The secondary literature is divided about whether God has ideas of non-existing possibles. Adams argues that Ockham would have rejected such ideas. Once he accepted the *intellectio*-theory of cognition, he rebuked the *ficta*-theory as fabricating "a little world of other objective entities."[92] As a result, "he should have found unreduced, unactualized possibles even stranger. . . . For assuming

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[90] *Ord.* I, d. 36, q. un. (OTh IV.547:6–19).
[91] *Ord.* I, d. 36, q. un. (OTh IV.547:21–23).
[92] *Quodlibet* III, q. 4 (OTh IX.218:98–219:99): "unus parvus mundus alius entium obiectivorum."

that possibles are necessarily possible, it would follow that possibles have this 'occult' status eternally and necessarily and independently of both the divine will and the divine intellect."[93] Not wishing to admit any sort of occult status to non-existing possibles, Ockham would have reduced them to the divine act of thinking them. A.S. McGrade has challenged this reading, arguing that perhaps "Ockham's real possibles might be thought of as 'beyond being'" like Plato's Idea of the Good.[94] This interpretation of Plato coheres well with the Pegis's interpretation at the beginning of the paper.

Both readings seem plausible because they uphold some of Ockham's closely held principles. On one hand, if God necessarily has unactualized possibles, he would not be able to destroy the possibility of these non-existing possibles. To save God's omnipotence, Ockham would want to reject non-existing possibles. On the other hand, if he only has ideas of things that will actually exist at some time, then God would appear to be constrained to create this world exactly as it is. He would have no other possibilities, and so the divine will would not be free to choose what to create.[95] Thus, to save God's omnipotence, Ockham would want to admit non-existing possibiles. It seems like either interpretation does damage to divine omnipotence.

In the end, I think McGrade's interpretation should be preferred. Ockham defines an idea as "something cognized from an effective intellectual principle looking to which that active principle can produce something in real being (*esse reale*)."[96] The active principle *can* produce the idea in real being, but nothing requires that that active principle produce it. Non-existing possibles are nothing

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[93] Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1060–61. Cf. Marilyn McCord Adams, "Ockham's Nominalism and Unreal Entities," *The Philosophical Review* 86 (1977): 174.

[94] A.S. McGrade, "Plenty of Nothing: Ockham's Commitment to Real Possibles," *Franciscan Studies* 45 (1985): 156.

[95] It would seem possible that God would still be free not to create. On the condition that he chooses to create, however, he would seem to be constrained to create the world just as it is.

[96] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh 486:2–4): "idea est aliquid cognitum a principio effectivo intellectuali ad quod ipsum activum aspiciens potest aliquid in esse reali producere." Cf. *Summa logicae* I, c. 28 (OPh I.90:1–3): "Descriptiva autem definitio est mixta ex substantialibus et accidentalibus. Verbi gratia 'homo est animal rationale, erecte ambulativum, latas habens ungues.'"

since they do not exist in real being, but it does not follow from their nothingness that they are merely "the really existent divine act of thinking them."[97] A divine idea implies the divine act of cognition indirectly; a divine idea implies the creature itself directly, regardless of whether the divine will chooses to create that creature.[98] Ockham has not prepared us to interpret divine ideas as exemplars that are actualized at some time in the way that Thomas did. In fact, as we will see in the section on the scope of divine ideas, Ockham says that God has distinct ideas of everything that he can make. Since he can make an infinite number of distinct things, God has an infinite number of ideas.[99] But the existence of an actual infinite is impossible. Therefore, God has ideas that he does not make. If this interpretation of non-existing possibles compromises divine omnipotence, it at least does so in a way that is more acceptable than the alternative. The God who can choose whether to create any particular possible being but not destroy the possibility of those possible beings is more powerful than the God whose creative choices are predetermined.

3. The Scope of Divine Ideas

Ockham's treatment of the scope of divine ideas is incredibly concise. God has distinct ideas of all things that he could make, just as the things are distinct among themselves. The scope of divine ideas, then, is limited by what can have real existence. Anything that God could create separately has its own idea. Matter, form, and universally all the essential and integral parts of all things have distinct ideas because it is possible for God to make each of them exist separately.[100]

Although God has ideas of all of these essential and integral parts, they are not God's primary ideas. Ockham is convinced that ideas are primarily of singulars, and not of species because only singulars exist extramentally. Genus, difference, species, and all other universals do not have

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[97] Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1061.
[98] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.490:15–17).
[99] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.493:7–9 and 19–21).
[100] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.493:7–11).

ideas because they do not exist extramentally. They could be said to have ideas only in the sense that they are certain things existing subjectively in the soul and are only common to extramental things by predication. There is a way in which God can be said to have an idea of each of the concepts in our mind. These concepts are actually singular, but they are intentionally universal, so God has an idea of a universal in an extended and inappropriate sense. The extension of the scope of divine ideas ends there, however. There are absolutely no ideas of negations, privations, evil, guilt, and the like. These are not distinct things from other things and so there are no ideas of them.[101]

The restriction of divine ideas to singulars in no way restricts God to a finite number of ideas. An infinite number of things are producible by him, so he has an infinite number of ideas.[102] To restrict divine ideas to a finite number is to restrict God's omnipotence. God is not to be restricted. Since Ockham's theory of divine ideas does not rely on varying degrees or grades of imitation of the divine essence, he avoids Henry's concern altogether. Henry was concerned that an infinite number grades of imitation of the divine essence would have to include a perfect and infinite imitation. It is impossible for a creature to have such an imitation, so Henry concludes that God has only a finite number of ideas. Henry's concern is a paralogism to Ockham. Ockham's only concern is how many things could God make. Since God's possibilities are endless, so are his ideas.

4. Recapitulation and Conclusions

From the explication above, it is clear that Ockham's theory of divine ideas continues and advances certain trends found in his immediate predecessors, but it also departs so radically from his predecessors that his theory of divine ideas also amounts to a denial of divine ideas. Like Peter Auriol, Ockham finds any claim to a primary and secondary consideration in God repugnant. It is contrary to God's supreme simplicity to claim that he has a complex consideration of his essence.

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[101] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.493:12–19).
[102] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.493:19–21).

Authors like Thomas, Henry, and Scotus argue that God's secondary consideration of his essence is only a *quasi*-consideration that is, in Scotus's case, only formally distinct from the primary consideration, but such consideration will not do. For Ockham, there is no such thing as a distinction less than a real distinction. To say that God has two considerations is to say that God has two really distinct acts. Two really distinct acts cannot be one simply. Therefore, to posit a secondary consideration of the divine essence is to render God complex. Ockham resolves this difficulty by an analogy to our knowledge. Just as nothing prevents us from knowing a proposition, which involves several terms, by one, simple act of cognition, so too God can understand both himself and creatures in one, simple act of cognition. There is no need to appeal to several quasi-distinct considerations.

Ockham also continues the trend of identifying divine ideas with the creatures themselves. This trend, begun by Scotus, begins with the realization that the claim that divine ideas are certain relations entails that God knows a relation prior to the *relatum*. Since that priority of knowledge is not how relations work, God must know the creature directly before any relation. Ockham, however, advances this claim in two ways. In the first way, he advances the claim by arguing that the creature as known is not one with the divine essence. If divine ideas were one with the divine essence, then they could not be distinguished from it at all. If they were distinguishable, then the divine essence would have to be really distinct and complex. Thus, there could only be one divine idea. But since no one (including Ockham) wants to argue that there is only one idea, divine ideas cannot be the divine essence. In the second way, he advances the claim that divine ideas are the creatures by arguing that no relation is necessary at all for divine ideas. Scotus argues that God can know creatures directly, but the *ratio* of an idea is not complete until God understands the rational

relation that exists between the creature and him.[103] Ockham insists that such relations are unnecessary. The created artisan does not need any sort of rational respect in order to know or produce his artifacts. If the created artisan does not need them, how much less would the uncreated and infinite artisan not need them?[104] Moreover, God's act of understanding would be cheapened if he needed something other than himself to understand. As a result, Ockham claims that ideas are the creatures as known, but they are not in the divine essence. Yet, he does not seem to be entitled to this claim. How can Ockham claim that divine ideas are exemplars without any sort of relation between God and creatures (whether on God's part or on creatures' part)? An exemplar is a measure. Ockham leaves unexplained what it could mean for something to be a measure without any sort of relation to the measured.

Ockham also continues Scotus's claim that divine ideas are nothing in themselves. This claim is Ockham's way of saving his theory from a possible internal inconsistency. If divine ideas are in the divine intellect, but not in the divine essence, then it might appear that Ockham has introduced some complexity into God. How could the divine essence and the divine intellect be one if there are things in the divine intellect that are not in the divine essence? This problem is only apparent, however, because of a certain ambiguity in the term "in." If divine ideas were in the divine intellect subjectively, then there would indeed be things in God that were not the divine essence and God would be complex. Divine ideas are only in the divine intellect objectively, and so add nothing that could introduce complexity into God's supreme simplicity. Divine ideas have no real existence; they only have the possibility of being created.

Despite these points of continuity with his predecessors, Ockham's theory of divine ideas is so different from his predecessors that it amounts to a rejection of divine ideas. According to his

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[103] Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 64 (ed. Noone, 422:6–9): "Sic igitur patet quod non nego ibi relationes esse rationis ad creaturas sed dio quod non sunt necessariae ad intellectionem Dei circa creaturas."

[104] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.483:16–20 and 484:16–21). Cf. *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 4 (OTh IV.469:7–13).

descriptive definition, "an idea is something cognized from an effective intellectual principle looking to which that active principle can produce something in real being (*esse reale*)."[105] At a superficial glance, this definition is not all that different from the definitions offered by Ockham's predecessors. If the definition is read in light of the above conclusions, however, several important differences emerge. Although Ockham says that an idea is cognized, it is cognized from looking at something else. In this sense, "one house can truly be called an idea and exemplar of another house."[106] The first house is an idea of the second because the second does not come to be unless the builder knows the first house and wills to build it. Ockham has to allow this situation because he cannot allow divine ideas to be in the divine essence. He cannot allow, as Thomas does, God to "discover" ideas in himself. Aristotle was right to criticize Plato for positing ideas as some really existing things, but Plato was right to say that the divine ideas are not the divine essence, but rather something other known by God, which were exemplars and to which God looked in producing.[107] But these exemplars are superfluous. They do not make God know, nor are they God. Ockham has to say that divine ideas are nothing because they are not God. If they were something, i.e., if they had any existence whatsoever, then something would not be God.

The objection raised from Augustine is more devastating than Ockham admits. Augustine says that divine ideas are in God's mind because they are one with God. For Augustine, to say that God knows ideas means that he has them, that they are God because everything in God is one. For Ockham to say that God has knowledge alone of ideas is really to reject that God has ideas. In fact, he admits as much: "God does not need anything else because he requires nothing to act. And therefore, God does not need ideas in order to act, nor are the ideas, properly speaking, required for

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[105] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.486:2–4): "idea est aliquid cognitum a principio effectivo intellectuali ad quod ipsum activum aspiciens potest aliquid in esse reali producere." Cf. *Summa logicae* I, c. 28 (OPh I.90:1–3): "Descriptiva autem definitio est mixta ex substantialibus et accidentalibus. Verbi gratia 'homo est animal rationale, erecte ambulativum, latas habens ungues.'"

[106] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.490:8).

[107] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.489:17–490:4).

God to act. Only cognition of the ideas, which is God himself in every way, is required. And from the fact that God is God, God cognizes all."[108] God does not have ideas because the divine essence is not the exemplar of creatures. The knowledge of the creature itself in God's mind is the creature's exemplar. If the divine essence were the exemplar of things, then Ockham's nominalist metaphysics would only permit there to be only one idea; "Like all Platonists, Ockham required ideas that are other than the artist who fashioned the world, and which are different from each other. Without this otherness, and consequent plurality, the world would not be intelligible to God."[109] The ideas cannot be "in" God in any real sense because they would really distinguish the divine essence on Ockham's system. Since they are not really in God, Ockham has to reduce them to nothingness because for him "a being is a thing (*res*), and what is not a being is no-thing (*nihil*)."[110] Since they cannot be things, they must be nothing.

Ockham's theory of divine ideas is a theory of nothingness. Divine ideas are in the mind of God, but they are nothing and God has absolutely no relation to them. He cannot be rationally related to them because God does not have such relations. He cannot be really related to them because then they would add to the personal relations in the Trinity. Ockham speaks of divine ideas, but readily admits that God does not need them to act. Gilson's critique of Thomas is better made against Ockham.[111] He includes divine ideas as a nod to the venerable tradition of Augustine, but undermines the very need for them by banishing them from God. Ironically, the fact that he seems so desperate to show that he is not contradicting Augustine's theory is evidence of his infidelity to Augustine. God knows all things simply because he is God. Ockham does not need to appeal to

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[108] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.506:18–23).

[109] Maurer, "The Role of Divine Ideas," 380.

[110] Maurer, "The Role of Divine Ideas," 380.

[111] Gilson, *Introduction à la philosophie chrétienne*, 173–74: "Pourtant, il est à peine exagéré de dire qu'au fond, tout ce que Saint Thomas a dit des Idées était dans son espirit une concession de plus faite du language d'une philosophie qui n'était pas vraiment la sienne. C'était aussi, n'en doutons-pas, la reconnaissance de l'auctorité théologique de Saint Augustin."

ideas to make his system work. In fact, the appeal to ideas only seems to complicate Ockham's theory of divine knowledge. Out of fidelity to his so-called razor, then, Ockham should have omitted any discussion of ideas.

CHAPTER V

A. RECAPITULATION

Despite the great number of differences that appear in the various articulations of divine ideas from ca. 1250 AD to ca. 1325 AD, there are several fundamental points on which all of the authors agree. The first and most important of these points is that the divine essence is the only principle and source of divine knowledge. God does not learn from anyone or anything external to him. All divine knowledge is a form of self-knowledge. Every author rejects the theory of divine knowledge and production that is found in Plato's *Timaeus*, often by name. Plato's theory of a demiurge who looks out to the eternal Forms and patterns the universe off of what he sees is unanimously rejected. The authors reject the theory because they judge it contrary to Sacred Scripture and to reason. God is perfect; he is pure act. Pure act is always complete in itself. Any being that receives (or even could receive) is in potency and so is incomplete. Even if there were no time at which God did not know the external Forms after which he creates the world, he would still be potency because he would need them to explain his knowledge of things other than himself. External Forms, then cannot explain God's knowledge. Everything about God must be able to be explained without any reference to anything other than himself. God alone can be the source of his own knowledge, which ensures that God does not begin to know anything *de novo*. The divine essence does not act as a source or principle of divine knowledge such that God passes from a state of not-knowing to a state of knowing. He knows everything that he knows from eternity. Scholastic authors are quickly divided about how to explain how God knows things other than himself as a result of knowing his own essence, but they do agree on this most fundamental point.

The second point on which all of the authors agree is that there are many divine ideas, which plurality is not contrary to divine simplicity. The need to articulate a system that is not contrary to this tenet is the source of much of the disagreement about divine ideas. Most of the changes and

developments that occur in theories of divine idea can be traced back to an author's concern that his predecessors might have abandoned God's supreme simplicity. This concern is most apparent in Ockham's theory. He has such a strict understanding of divine simplicity that any sort of relation in God (other than those constituting the Trinity) is abhorrent. It is perhaps ironic that the doctrine of divine simplicity is the source of so much multiplicity and complexity, but it shows both the seriousness with which the medieval authors took the doctrine, and the difficulties inherent in explaining how a plurality of ideas can cohere with a simple essence.

The third point to consider is that divine ideas explain God's production of a world. God has to have some sort of an intellectual principle to account for his ability to produce such a diverse and complementary order. Without divine ideas, God would not know what he is making when he is making it. The world would be more a product of chance or fate than a product of divine love. The goodness of the world would not be an eternally known plan brought about by the loving act of divine will. It would be a happy accident at best. Either God would be foolishly willing and producing things about which he had no knowledge, or creation would be the necessary result of some divine emanation. Neither of these options is acceptable because they destroy the possibility of divine providence. God could not reward or punish any creature or action except by an arbitrary decision that had nothing to do with the goodness or badness of the creature or its actions. Any such decision could be accidentally just at best.

The fourth major point of agreement follows from the first and third points of agreement. All of the authors argue (at least implicitly) that divine ideas establish the intelligibility of the world. God does not learn the essence of fox from created foxes. Rather, the essence of fox is what it is because God knows it. Each creature expresses divine goodness in a particular way, and does so because God knew that a creature could exist in just such a way. The created cosmos is intelligible as a result of the divine ideas. A thing is what it is because God knew it.

As an addendum to the fourth point, it should be noted that all of the authors agree that God necessarily has ideas. Bonaventure expresses this position well when he says that "although *actual* production of a creature be voluntary, yet the *potency* of producing and *knowledge* is necessary."[1] Divine ideas necessarily result from divine self-knowledge because God knows all possible creatures; he knows every possible way that he could will to create. All of the authors in the study agree that divine ideas are not established by the divine will. God does not have ideas because he wills to have them. He has ideas because he knows his essence.[2]

The fifth major point of agreement follows the second and third points of agreement. The scope of the divine ideas must extend as far as is necessary for God to know and produce every creature distinctly. No one is of the opinion that ideas should be posited beyond what is necessary, but there is little agreement about what is necessary for God to know and produce every creature distinctly. As a result, the theories range from the Bonaventurean and Scotistic infinite number of ideas extending to every possible creature and intelligible aspect of a creature to the Henrician finite number of ideas extending only to the most specific species. These differences are motivated more by concerns about participation and the principle of individuation than they are about divine ideas themselves, but for every author the scope of divine ideas should be posited only to the extent that distinct divine cognition requires. None of the authors offers an argument for why there should only be as many divine ideas as are necessary for distinct cognition.[3] Henry comes the closest to such an

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[1] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 27, p. 2, a. un., q. 2, ad 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.486a).

[2] Thomas Aquinas's position is partially at odds with this statement. Since he thinks that divine ideas are, strictly speaking, exemplars, he does include the action of the divine will in the character of an idea. Yet, he does not think that the divine will establishes the possibility of such-and-such a creature or establish that such-and-such way of imitating the divine essence comes to be by the action of the divine will. A divine idea in the sense of an exemplar is the result of God willing a divine idea in the sense of a *ratio*. Aquinas thinks that the divine will completes the character of an idea by adding an intention to produce, but this action occurs upon a *ratio* that the divine intellect has already established. It does not establish the *ratio*.

[3] Thomas argues that a multiplicity of exemplars for an individual is unfitting because such a multiplicity would prevent creatures from being one. He makes this point in *In I Met.*, lect. 15, n. 234–35 (ed. Marietti, 81) and *De sub. sep.*, c. 11 (ed. Leonine, 40.61–62), but he never makes this point explicitly in a discussion of the divine ideas.

argument when he states that an infinite number of divine ideas, each signifying a distinct grade of imitation of the divine essence, would result in a creature that infinitely participated in the divine essence. This argument has a certain merit, but does not get to the heart of the question at hand. It is one thing to deny that any creature can imitate God infinitely, but it is another thing to say that God only has as many ideas as are necessary for him to cognize and to produce creatures distinctly. It seems clear that the authors did not want to posit more ideas than are required for God to cognize and to produce creatures distinctly because to posit more ideas would be to posit something superfluous in God.

B. SCHEMA OF THEORIES OF DIVINE IDEAS

Although there is broad agreement about some of the fundamental principles of divine ideas, the authors disagree sharply about how to implement them. In what follows, I will try to make a systematic appraisal of the various branches theories of divine ideas. This appraisal will follow the divisions between the status and scope of divine ideas that have been used throughout the study.

1. The Status of Divine Ideas

As is clear from the foregoing chapters, the status of divine ideas concerns the ontological reality of divine ideas. This portion of the inquiry asks what a divine idea is and what it means to say that God has them.

a. Divine Ideas as the Term of Divine Understanding

It seems fitting to begin the discussion of divine ideas with the question of what it means to say that divine ideas are the term or object of divine understanding. The title of this investigation is intentionally vague because I think that there are two interconnected primary divisions in the theories of divine ideas that have been treated in this study. These two divisions concern whether divine ideas are a secondary consideration of the divine essence and whether they are relations or the creatures themselves. As we will see, those who hold that divine ideas are a secondary consideration hold that divine ideas are relations, and those who deny that ideas are a secondary consideration also insist that they are the creatures themselves, not relations. Scotus is the lone exception to this claim since he holds that divine ideas are a secondary consideration and the creatures themselves.

As for the first primary division, there are two main positions. The first position, which was espoused by all of the earlier authors through Scotus, is that divine ideas are a secondary consideration of the divine intellect. The second position, which was espoused especially by Auriol and Ockham, is that divine ideas are connotations of the divine essence rather than secondary considerations. The rational for the first position is that when God knows his essence, he primarily

knows himself. This position was expressed most clearly by Henry of Ghent: "Something can be the object of the intellect in two ways: in one way primarily, in another way secondarily. The primary object is nothing but the object informing the act of understanding, and this is nothing other than the divine essence itself."[1] Since the divine essence is what is informs the divine intellect, what God primarily knows is that essence. He first knows his essence insofar as it is an essence.

Although most of the authors are content to make the distinction between the primary object of the divine intellect (i.e., God himself) and the secondary object of the divine intellect (i.e., things other than God), Henry argues that the secondary object can be known either as it is a thing or as it is an image. Insofar as his essence is a thing, God knows things other than himself as identical to his essence. Insofar as his essence is understood as an image, God knows things other than himself truly because he knows the creature as it is in itself, not merely as it is in his essence. His example of the statue of Hercules is helpful. Insofar as the statue is considered as a thing, it is considered as metal, lifeless, etc. These things are all true of the statue, but they are not true of Hercules himself. Hercules himself is only known in the statue when the statue is considered as a sign and *ratio* of something else, namely Hercules.[2]

Henry's further specification of the secondary object as thing and as image entails that divine ideas are a certain imitation and likeness by which the divine essence is imitated by other things.[3] On this point, he agrees with the theories already articulated by Bonaventure, Aquinas and the theories that will be articulated by Matthew of Aquasparta, Richard of Mediavilla, and James of Viterbo. An idea is the divine essence considered as imitated (or imitable) in a certain way. When the divine intellect knows the divine essence, it "expresses," "discovers," and "thinks out" the ways that the

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[1] Henry, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 27:37–39).
[2] Henry, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 27–28).
[3] Henry, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 28:72–74).

divine essence can be imitated.[4] It is not the sort of imitation that would make the divine essence and an idea agree according to some third thing, but rather an imitation of one to another in which the likeness itself is like.[5] In such an imitation, the idea is other than the creature and measures the creature.[6]

The emphasis on divine ideas as likenesses and the imitability leads these authors to argue that divine ideas are rational respects. An idea is not the creature itself, but the possible real relation that God knows a creature could have to him.[7] They are rational respects that cause the real relation an actually existing creature has to God.[8] The respect has to be a rational one because if divine ideas were real relations, then they would be contrary to divine simplicity, and they make God dependent upon his knowledge of creatures.[9]

Although Scotus agrees that divine ideas are a certain secondary consideration of the divine essence and that the divine intellect is related to possible creatures as measure to measured, he breaks company with Bonaventure, Thomas, and Henry over imitation. Following a line of thinking begun by Peter John Olivi, Scotus argues that his predecessors' attempts to distinguish divine ideas according as the divine essence is imitable by a creature fail "because imitation is not a specific difference of this or that being."[10] Just as someone could know that all colors more or less imitate color yet not know the absolute specific differences of those colors, so too God could know that he is perfectly imitable in diverse ways, but not know the absolute specific differences of these

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[4] See, *inter alia*, Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.601b). Thomas, *De veritate* q. 3, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.104:165-167). Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 2 (ed. Venezia, I.111ra).

[5] Bonaventure, *De scientia Christi*, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, V.8b–9a). Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.99:183-196). Matthew, *De productione rerum*, q. 2 (ed. Gàl, 40–41). Richard, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 2 (ed. Venezia, I.110vb). James, *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (ed. Ypma, 65:107–108).

[6] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 4.199a). Cf. Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 1, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.9:83–84): "intellectus enim practicus causat res, unde est mensura rerum quae per ipsum."

[7] Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2, ad 3 (ed. Mandonnet, I.843).

[8] Henry, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1 (ed. Macken, 7:1–7).

[9] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, a. 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.202).

[10] Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 22 (ed. Noone, 403:3). Cf. Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 158rb–158va).

imitations. The only way Scotus thinks such a theory could succeed is if the foundations of the imitations were known. But to know the foundations of the imitations is to know the essence of the creature before the imitation. Since the imitations were posited in order to explain how God could know the essences, Scotus turns his predecessors' argument on its head. For Scotus, a theory that relies on imitation cannot succeed at explaining God's knowledge of creatures because it has to assume that he already knows the creatures. The theory has to assume what it was meant to prove.

Since he rejects his predecessors' theory of diverse imitations of the divine essence as a means of knowing creatures, Scotus argues that God knows creatures directly. An idea is "not some relation but the cognized object in the divine mind."[11] Such creatures are present objectively in the divine intellect, which for Scotus means that the creature as known has no relation to God nor dependence upon him. A divine idea is not merely creature as known, however. The character of an idea is not complete until God compares himself to the creature as known and then knows the resulting rational relation that he has to the creature. The character of a divine idea includes rational relations of God to possible creatures, but these rational relations are not required for God to know the creature.[12]

This position with regard to relations seems to place Scotus in an intermediate position. On the one hand, he denies that relations are necessary for God to know creatures. This position makes his position like those who argue that divine ideas are the creatures themselves as known. On the other hand, Scotus insists that a relation is still required to complete the character of an idea. A divine idea is a relation, but not the relation that makes God know creatures. Instead, it is the relation that results from God knowing the creature. The fact that a relation is included in the character of divine ideas puts his idea in line with his predecessors. Scotus has important and

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[11] Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 57 (ed. Noone, 419:19–20).

[12] Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 64 (ed. Noone, 421–422). Cf. Durandus, *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 3 (ed. Venice, 1020:94–1022:148).

irreconcilable differences with his predecessors about the character of divine ideas, but he agrees that they are certain relations that follow from a secondary consideration of the divine intellect.

These positions differ sharply from the positions of Auriol and Ockham, who argue that there can be no secondary consideration of the divine essence. Auriol argues that to posit a secondary consideration of the divine essence is to consider one and the same thing as if it were two things. The divine essence does not produce another present thing other than the very eminent presence of all things. He uses the example of a mirror to explain his point more clearly. When an image reflects in a mirror there are not two presences: the thing in the image and the "presence" of the thing in the mirror. Similarly, there is no other presence of creatures in the divine essence than the divine essence itself. There is no distinct represented being or some distinct rational relation mediating between God and creature because there are no extremes to be mediated.[13] Ockham adds to that to speak of primary and secondary is to invoke a certain priority and posteriority. But intellection is entirely indistinct in itself, which means that nothing is prior or posterior to another. Since we can understand an entire proposition (and therefore many terms) in a single, indistinct act, what is to prevent God from understanding each and every thing, whether himself or a creature, in one indistinct act?[14]

God does not require two distinct considerations to account for his knowledge of himself and things other than himself. Things other than God are included in his knowledge of his own essence as certain connotations. Thus, Auriol and Ockham claim that an idea is a connotative term.[15] The use of the term "connotative" has its roots in Bonaventure, but its use here is foreign to Bonaventure's use.[16] They agree that ideas are always ideas *of* something, but Auriol and Ockham do

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[13] Auriol, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 3, a. 2 (ed. Paladini, 10:515–24).

[14] Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 4 (OTh IV.469:7–13).

[15] Ockam, *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh 486:2–4). Cf. Auriol, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 6:291–307).

[16] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 3, ad 3 (ed. Quaracchi, 608b).

not think, with Bonaventure, that a divine idea connotes a likeness of the thing. Auriol thinks that an idea bespeaks the divine essence or divinity directly and the creature itself indirectly and obliquely.[17] Ockham takes this line of thinking one step further, arguing that an idea signifies the very creature as predicable directly (*in recto*) and also signifies the divine cognition or cognizing indirectly (*in obliquo*).[18]

Since there is only one simple consideration of the divine essence, there is no need to appeal to relations to connect, as it were, God's knowledge of things other than himself to the divine essence. They are only grammatically distinct. When God knows things other than himself, he knows them directly. This approach simplifies the account of both the object of divine knowledge and the account of divine ideas. Divine ideas are not the divine essence or any relation to the divine essence. Any attempt to make the divine essence or a relation to the divine essence fails because it will either result in denying the multiplicity of divine ideas, or an idea will be an aggregate that is contrary to divine simplicity.[19]

From the above discussion, it is clear that there is a correlation between positing divine knowledge of things other than God as secondary objects and positing the character of ideas as a respect. Similarly, there is a correlation between positing divine knowledge of things other than God as connotations, and positing the character of divine ideas as the creatures themselves. Those who argue that God has a primary and secondary consideration of his essence are more disposed to argue that divine ideas as creatures as they can be formed to the likeness of the divine essence. Even Scotus, who argues that God knows creatures directly, insists that God does not know the creature *as formable* until he understands the rational relation that he has to the creature.[20] Divine ideas are legitimate objects of divine cognition in their own right, not merely as a means to knowing other

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[17] Auriol, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 6:291–307). Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.488:15–489:8).

[18] Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.490:5–20).

[19] Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.481:2–482:6). Cf. Adams, *William Ockham*, II.1038–39.

[20] Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, n. 57 (ed. Noone, 419:16–17–19): "idea est ratio aeterna in mente divina secundum aliquid formabile secundum propriam rationem eius."

things, but the knowledge of a creature is not a divine idea until God knows the way in which that creature is compared to the divine essence.[21]

The second group denies that a relation of divine ideas to the divine essence is included in the character of an idea. God only looks to the creature itself to create. He does not also look to his essence to see how the creature is related to him. God can know a creature as formable simply by knowing the creature itself. Any possible relation that a creature could have to God or that God could have to the creature is positively excluded. To include such relations is both unnecessary and dangerous because it risks positing some sort of complexity in God.

b. Divine Ideas as Speculative or Practical

Closely related to the question of divine ideas as the term of divine understanding is the question whether divine ideas are principles of speculative or practical cognition? This question is necessitated by the fact that almost all of the authors hold that divine ideas are both principles of cognition and principles of production.[22] The question of speculative or practical cognition in God has to avoid two extremes. On the one hand, divine ideas have to be articulated in such a way that God produces creatures intelligently. If God has divine ideas, but they play no role in creation, then they would be posited in vain. On the other hand, divine ideas cannot be so involved in creation that they force God to will or limit his possibilities when willing. Despite certain linguistic differences, all of the authors in the study try to articulate a middle position between these two extremes by arguing that divine ideas are somewhat speculative and somewhat practical. That each of the authors argues to the same position is best shown by examining the two authors who seem most opposed: Thomas and Henry. Thomas argues that divine ideas are strictly speaking principles of practical cognition.

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[21] See Noone, "Scotus on Divine Ideas," 371–72.

[22] Scotus is the only exception. For Scotus, divine ideas are logically posterior to God's knowledge of creatures. God does not need ideas to know creatures, but he does need them to create creatures.

Henry argues that divine ideas are only principles of speculative cognition. Yet, I think a closer look will show that their positions can be reconciled.

There are two aspects of this question that need to be considered. The first concerns what it means for knowledge to be speculative or practical. The second concerns the question of *fiendum*. As for the first, as Aristotle says, the diversity of speculative and practical knowledge arises from three factors: from the part of the objects, from the part of the mode of cognizing, and from the part of the end.[23] Knowledge is speculative if it seeks truth, cannot produce its object, or cognizes its object scientifically. Knowledge is practical if it seeks an act or operation, can produce its object, and cognizes its object consultatively. Everyone agrees that God's knowledge is speculative on the part of the end when it comes to knowing himself. God could not make himself, nor could he change himself, so his knowledge could be in no way practical. But God does not only know himself. Henry is right to claim that God only knows things through himself as the principle of that cognition, but the object of his knowledge is not simply himself. God also knows all of the things that he could create. And since he knows them as somehow like himself, he also knows them as good and knows their creation as good. Since God knows that he could produce things other than himself, his knowledge cannot be purely speculative. God's knowledge of himself has to be distinguished from his knowledge of creatures. If his knowledge were no distinguished, then God could not know creatures as producible by him. He would have to know them only as possible.

The second aspect concerns a creatures having to come to be (*fiendum*). After the condemnations of 1270, there was a heightened concern over intellectualism, i.e., the doctrine that the intellect's judgment about a certain action can coerce the will into choosing it. This concern was especially acute with regard to the divine intellect and will. All of the authors are especially

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[23] Aristotle, *EN*, VI, c. 2, 1138b35–1139a16 (AL 26.1.3.253:5–23), and Aristotle, *De anima*, III, c. 10, 433a14–15 (ed. Leonine, 45.1.244). Cf. Henry, *Summa*, a, 36, q. 4 (ed. Wilson, 106:21–107:36).

concerned to safeguard the freedom of the divine will. No act of the divine intellect does can or should coerce the divine will to act, which is important because God's intellect is a purely natural power. He necessarily has the knowledge and ideas that he has, but he does not necessarily create or create in any particular way. To avoid this conclusion, Henry argues that God is indifferently related to everything that he knows. He does not determine whether any particular object of knowledge will ever come to be.[24] Knowledge, Henry says, has a twofold end: the end of the knowledge itself, and the end of the knower. Only the end of the knowledge itself can be called speculative or practical for Henry. The end of the knower has no effect on whether the knowledge itself is speculative or practical. The fact that a knower chooses to put geometry to a practical use, or chooses not to act on his knowledge of ethics does not change the fact that geometry is speculative and ethics is practical.[25] Since the end of the knowledge of a possible creature does not include *fiendum* (lest the divine will be coerced), divine ideas have to be principles of speculative cognition. His knowledge could only be practical accidentally.[26]

This argument is very strong. Divine ideas are logically prior to the divine will's election to make any of the creatures known or available through them. So of themselves they have to be indifferent to God's choice to make them at some time or not. Yet, the divine intellect is not ignorant of what the divine will chooses to create. A divine idea does not inherently have *fiendum* or *non-fiendum*, but these do, as it were, accrue to it accidentally once the divine will has willed. This accidental accrual is what makes Aquinas's position compatible with Henry's. Aquinas thinks that divine ideas are practical because they include the intention of an agent.[27] The intention completes the notion of an idea because ideas are primarily exemplars. Both theories are acceptable because

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[24] Henry, *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4 (ed. Wilson, 110:01–18). Cf. Averroes, *In III De anima*, c. 46 (ed. Crawford 514:15): "pars speculative nihil considerat de rebus operativis."

[25] Henry, *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4, ad 2 (ed. Wilson, 115:34–117:59).

[26] Henry, *Summa*, a. 36, q. 4, ad 2 (ed. Wilson, 118:93–120:40). Henry quotes almost verbatim Thomas, *ST* I, q. 14, a. 16 (ed. Leonine, IV.196b–197a). Cf. Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 51 (ed. Noone, 442:15–18).

[27] Thomas, *De veritate* q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leon., 22.1.99:196-100:223).

they both ensure that divine ideas play a role in divine cognition and production, and they both preserve the freedom of the divine will. The difference between them is a difference in emphasis. Since he emphasizes the productive role of the divine ideas, Thomas focuses the way in which ideas are accidentally practical. Since Henry emphasizes the cognitive role of divine ideas, he focuses on the way in which they are speculative.

Divine ideas have to be speculative, but they cannot be speculative in the same way that God's knowledge of himself is speculative. They have to have the potential to become principles of practical cognition. They become principles of practical cognition when the divine will elects to create them at some point in time. God knows what he has willed, so he knows which of his ideas are *fiendum* and which are *non-fiendum* because of his will. Divine ideas do not have this quality, as it were, on their own, but it accrues to them accidentally because of the action of the divine will.[28] This position is held by all of the authors.

c. The Unity and Plurality of Divine Ideas

The question of the unity and plurality of divine ideas is the source of great controversy in theories of divine ideas. As I noted above, every author agrees that God has only one principle and source of knowledge, his essence. By knowing this principle God also knows every possible creature distinctly. Distinct knowledge of every possible creature would be impossible if God only had a single idea, so he has to have many ideas. This plurality gets articulated in five distinct ways. The first way, which is characteristic of earlier writers, argues that divine ideas are rational relations. This way argues that God knows creatures by means of ideas. The second way says that ideas are rational relations but argues that creatures are the objects known themselves, not the means of knowing. The third way states that divine ideas are the divine act of understanding. There are many ideas because an infinite act of knowing has a respect to an infinite number of intelligibles. The fourth and fifth

[28] See Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 52 (ed. Noone, 442:19–26).

ways argues that divine ideas are many because God knows many creatures. Contrary to the first two views, proponents of the fourth and fifth ways argue that God knows creatures directly. These ways are distinguished by whether direct knowledge of creatures completes the notion of an idea. The fourth way argues that the plurality of ideas is a further result of God knowing creatures, but the fifth way states that divine ideas are simply the creatures themselves as known.

The first way, characterized by calling divine ideas *rationes cognoscendi*, is found in Bonaventure, Thomas, Henry, Matthew, Richard, and Raymundus. Divine ideas are the divine essence as known. The divine essence itself is one, but the ways that divine truth can be expressed and imitated are many because there is nothing to limit or constrict the supreme expression of divine truth.[29] The truth that expresses, which is only the divine intellect, is only one both in reality and in reason. The expression, however, can be considered either as that which is being expressed, or that to which it is being expressed. The former is truth itself, and so is always one. The latter, however, holds on the part of possible creatures. Even in God, one possible creature is distinct from another, and so ideas are many.[30] There are many divine ideas because God establishes the distinctions in creatures by means of them. If there were no distinction between divine ideas, there would be no distinction in creatures. The fullness of intelligibility that we find in creatures could not exist unless it were already established in the divine mind. This plurality of ideas, as noted above, has to be present according to a likeness because if creatures were truly present in God according to truth (or according to nature), then a theory of divine ideas would amount to pantheism.[31] The perfection of the divine intellect does not remove the need for a likeness in the intellect. All knowledge requires a likeness. Perfection removes the need for an *external* likeness, not the need for a likeness at all.[32]

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[29] Bonaventure, *De scientia Christi*, q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, V.13b).
[30] Bonaventure, *De scientia Christi*, q. 3 (ed. Quaracchi, V.14).
[31] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.600b).
[32] Bonaventure, *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, ad 7 (ed. Quaracchi, V.9b).

On this earliest model, then, there is a certain parallel between the divine ideas and the intelligible species of a created artist. Just as the form of art in the artist is the exemplar or idea of the artifact so too is the form of the creature in the divine mind an exemplar or idea of the creature.[33] The divine intellect thinks up or discovers the way in which the divine essence can be imitated, and so yields a plurality and diversity that cannot be reduced to some real diversity in the divine essence, but rather one that discovers the truth of the thing that is intelligible in diverse ways.[34] Divine ideas are parallel to created intelligible species in these ways because they make something else known, and are the measure of the things that are made to their likeness.

Moreover, like intelligible species, which self-effacingly make the thing known, divine ideas make the creatures known. Divine ideas are the real relations that God knows a creature could have to him. God does not know creatures or their essences directly. Instead, he knows the relation they could bear to him. Henry says it best when he defines a divine idea as a respect of imitability from a consideration of the intellect on the divine essence itself.[35] God does not have direct, epistemological access to creatures. What he knows directly is the possible relation that the creature can have to him. These authors do not think that God's lack of direct access to creatures is a problem because what God is knowing is his essence. Since creatures are imitations of the divine essence, when God knows his essence, he can perfectly know creatures. In fact, it is only because he knows his essence perfectly that the distinction of ideal notions is even possible.[36] The distinction between creatures is caused by God knowing the possible imitations of his essence.

The second way, characterized by saying that divine ideas are the *obiecta cognita*, is found in James of Viterbo. James argues that an idea is called an exemplar because the concept of the thing is,

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[33] Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 1 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.100:217–18).

[34] Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 2, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.105:244–259).

[35] Henry, *Quodlibet*, IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 28:72–81). Cf. Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2, ad 2 (ed. Mandonnet, I.842).

[36] Thomas, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, q. 2, a. 2, ad 3 (ed. Mandonnet, 843).

in a certain way, the thing itself.[37] Every idea bespeaks an actual respect to a creature.[38] Since it refers to the thing that imitates it, an idea is that which is, or the quiddity of the *ideatum*. A quiddity is the very essence as it is signified through a definition. Since a definition signifies a concept of the intellect, a quiddity bespeaks the essence of a thing as conceived. In the case of divine ideas, the quiddity is a causal quiddity, not an essential quiddity, because divine ideas are that which God knows he could create, not things already created that he comes to know.[39]

God knows his essence in two ways. In one way, he knows it as it is an essence, and in another way, he knows it as potency and cause. He knows possible creatures as identical to him in the first sense, and distinguished from him in the second sense. Things, before they exists in act and in their natures, are in God's knowledge both as they are not other than him, and as they are distinct from him. So if God cognizes creatures before they exist as they are other and distinct from him, then they are understood as the object cognized, which has to be something. For that which in no way exists and is entirely nothing is not understood. Therefore, a creature, even before it exists in effect, is something as an *obiectum cognitum*.[40] When God cognizes creatures through his essence as it is a cause, his essence is both the object cognized, and the *ratio cognoscendi* of the effect, i.e., the creature. That which is always a *ratio cognoscendi* as a cause requires that something else be cognized since it has to be the cause *of something*. Since nothing causes itself, nothing is the *ratio cognoscendi* of itself as cause. Thus, if God cognizes his essence as cause, then something other than the divine essence is the *obiectum cognitum*. The only available option is a creature, so a creature has to be divine idea and the *obiectum cognitum*.[41]

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[37] James, *Quodlibet* III, q. 15 (ed. Ypma, 195:17–196:52). Cf. James, *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (ed. Ypma, 65:107–108).
[38] James, *Quodlibet* III, q. 15 (ed. Ypma, 197:53–64).
[39] James, *Quodlibet* III, q. 15 (ed. Ypma, 197:78–198:102). Cf. James, *Quodlibet* III, q. 15 (ed. Ypma, 197:72–77).
[40] James, *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (ed. Ypma, 64:63–69).
[41] James, *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (ed. Ypma, 64–65).

This way of understanding divine ideas marks an important step in the progression of theories of divine ideas. If divine ideas are the *obiecta cognita* of the divine intellect, not merely a means of cognizing other things, then it follows that creatures will be known directly. James's theory of divine ideas is closely related to the first way of understanding them because it holds that ideas are a secondary consideration of the divine intellect, and holds that divine ideas are the divine essence. The divine essence is still explicitly the *ratio cognoscendi* of creatures, but what God knows by means of his essence is the creatures themselves (or at least their quiddities), and not a certain relation.

The third way, characterized by saying that divine ideas are the very divine act of understanding, is found in Peter John Olivi and Petrus de Trabibus. This way is important for the progression of theories of divine ideas more for its critique than for its positive contributions. Olivi argues that positing that divine ideas as relations is fundamentally flawed. It makes it necessary for God to know a relation at least logically before he knows the terms of the relation. Bonaventure *et al.* hold that God knows himself, then he knows the possible relations that creatures can have to him. He knows the creatures themselves through the relations. But, Olivi argues, this is not how relations work. Relations only arise when the terms of the relation are known or obtain. God has to know both himself and the creature before he knows any relation of imitability; he has to know the creature by something other than a relation of imitability.[42] The very language that we use to speak of the relation seems to indicate Olivi's position. We say that God can know the relation that a creature can have to him. Olivi argues that this very expression shows that God knows the creature prior to the relation. God does not just know relations, he knows relations *of creatures*. Olivi's predecessors have quietly been assuming what the divine idea was posited to prove.

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[42] Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 158rb–158va). Cf. Peter John Olivi, *In II Sent.*, q. 55 (ed. Jansen, II.346) and Peter John Olivi, *Quodlibet* III, q. 2 (ed. Defraia, 174).

Olivi's and Petrus's own theory is based on the fact that for God intellect, the thing understood, and the act of intellection are one in the same. As he is his actual understanding of this or that thing, he is the idea or reason of that thing, as singularly as it was entirely determined to it.[43] The divine ideas are God's very act of understanding. Insofar as God is the actual understanding of this or that creature, he may be said to have an idea of things and exemplars. The comparison to the artisan is misleading. God and the artificer are alike in acting by art, but in the uncreated agent, there is not a natural form by which he exists and an artificial or knowable form by which he knows, just as neither are nature and knowledge other in him except according to reason because his form is his knowledge.[44] Earlier authors have not seen that the analogy breaks down precisely where they need it to succeed.

The fourth way, characterized by saying that divine ideas are the rational relations logically dependent upon God's direct knowledge of creatures, is found in John Duns Scotus. In some ways, this way is the result of combining insights from the second and third ways. Like the second way, the fourth way holds that God knows the creatures directly. Like the third way, the fourth way holds that certain rational relations follow upon the direct knowledge of creatures. For Scotus, God has many ideas because he knows many creatures. Each possible creature is subject to a unique comparison to the divine essence. These comparisons yield unique rational relations from the divine essence to possible creatures. When God knows these unique relations the character of an idea is complete. Divine ideas are many because God has many rational relations, but instead of being means of knowing the creatures, these relations are the result of God knowing creatures. The novelty in Scotus's argument comes not from the claim that God eternally knows rational relations by comparing himself to created intelligibles, but by declaring that God knows the creature directly.[45]

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[43] Peter John Olivi, *In I Sent.*, q. 6, ad 16 (MS VAT Borgh. 358, f. 158ra).
[44] Petrus de Trabibus, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1 (MS Assisi 154, f. 93rb).
[45] Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 26–28 (ed. Noone, 404:8–26).

The fifth way, characterized by saying that divine ideas are the creatures themselves as connotative notions, is found in Peter Auriol and William of Ockham. This position makes quick work of the question of the plurality. As Auriol puts it, God's perfection requires that he have distinct cognition. The distinct cognition of one thing does not yield distinct cognition of something else. The idea of a rose expresses a different concept from the idea of man because of the thing that is connotated. Since God is full of these connotations, he must have many ideas.[46] Ockham does not spend much time on the question of a plurality of ideas. He does say that God knows many creatures, but when it comes to a plurality, he seems content to say that everyone agrees that God has more than one.[47]

d. The Existence of Things in God

Turning to the existence of things in God, there appear to be three positions taken by the authors. The first position is that divine ideas have *esse divinum* and that possible creatures have *esse cognitum*. The second position is that divine ideas have *esse essentiae* that is really distinguished from the divine essence. The third position is that divine ideas are nothing in themselves and have only *esse obiectivum*.

The first position is held by all of the earlier authors. Divine ideas have a presence of likeness and causal potency in their intellectual cause. Since they are one with the divine essence, they are eternal like God.[48] The ideas are the divine essence because they do not share in the same mode of existence as the creatures that imitate them. Just as the form of a house is immaterial and intelligible in the mind of a builder, but exists materially and sensibly in the extramental house, so too the divine ideas have divine existence in the mind of God, even though the proper nature only

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[46] Auriol, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 1 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 7:331–52).
[47] Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.487:4–488:7).
[48] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 1, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.620b-621a).

enjoys a creaturely existence.[49] This uncreated existence is distinct from the existence that things have in their proper natures, and is in fact a truer way of existence. Everything that exists in God is God himself, and so everything enjoys uncreated life; the likenesses of things existing in the mind share in the divine life, even if they do not live in their proper genera.[50]

The second position, which argues for an essential being or diminished being distinct from divine being, is attributed to Henry of Ghent. As I argued in Chapter II, I do not think that Henry actually held the position, but it was so universally attributed to him that it deserves to be counted as a major position in the time period. The position develops from a certain interpretation of Henry's claim that there are three modes of consideration and three modes of being.[51] An essence can be considered in singulars, in the intellect, or absolutely. The absolute consideration of an essence is prior to its consideration in singulars or in the intellect, and it has its own distinct type of existence, essential being (*esse essentiae*). An essence has essential being because God is its formal exemplar.[52] It follows from essential being that an essence absolutely considered is a *res a ratitudine*, i.e., a thing naturally suited to exist.[53] Divine ideas are produced in essential being by the divine intellect's knowledge of itself as imitable. Essential being is a rational relation on God's part, "but conversely, that of the creature to him is a real relation (*secundum rem*)."[54] Everything that exists is either God or a creature. Divine ideas, it seems, have to be the latter and they have to be really related to God. Since the only real relations in God are the divine persons, then the real relations that divine ideas have to

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[49] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 18, a. 4, ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 4.230a). Cf. Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 2, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.623b).

[50] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 2, q. 2, fm. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.625a). Cf. Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 4, a. 5 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.134:66–77).

[51] Cf. Paulus, 83.

[52] Henry, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 30:30–31:32).

[53] Henry, *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 27:71–28:87). Cf. Henry, *Quodlibet* V, q. 2 (ed. Badius 154rD).

[54] Henry, *Quodlibet* V, q. 4 (ed. Badius, 158vO): "ut relatio secundum huiusmodi respectum Dei ad creaturas sit secundum rationem tantum; e converso, creaturae ad ipsum sit secundum rem."

God entail that divine ideas have some sort of creaturely existence independent of God.[55] Just as our intellect gives cognitive being to the things that it knows, so too God gives being to divine being. And just as cognitive being we bestow upon essences in the intellect is diminished from the true being that it has outside of the soul, so too is essential being diminished.[56]

This position is dangerous for two reasons. First, it makes creation necessary. Creatures are created by the divine intellect insofar as it is necessarily the formal exemplar of divine ideas. The divine will's act of love plays no role in creation. Second, the position tacitly denies *creatio ex nihilo*.[57] When God produces creatures in singular, extramental existence, he produces them according to the likeness of divine ideas. Since divine ideas already exist, God would not be creating out of nothing, but out of already existing essences.

As a result of these dangers, authors begin to posit that creatures are nothing in themselves. There is some disagreement about what it means to say that creatures are nothing. Scotus argues creatures are nothing, but have *esse obiectivum*. Divine ideas have *esse obiectivum* because they self-effacingly make the *object* present to the divine intellect. The object "shines forth again in the species": "'once again' because it is the cognizable rather than the real presence of the object; and it 'shines forth' because the object transparently discloses itself in the act of thinking."[58] Divine ideas have *esse obiectivum* because they are present intentionally, making the object known. Yet, Scotus does not think that this presence entails any being or existence whatsoever. When God understands some possible creature (like a stone), the stone is not related to him at all; the stone is really nothing (*nihil*

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[55] *Quodlibet* IX, q. 1, ad 1 (ed. Macken, 14:78–85). Cf. *Summa*, a. 53, q. 4 (ed. Badius, II.64rC–D); *Summa*, a. 55, q. 5, ad 2 (ed. Badius, II.109vD). Henry does not even allow that relations like the equality of the persons be real relations. See *Summa*, a. 55, q. 6 (ed. Badius, II.110vK).

[56] See Paulus, 89: "il faut bien que le créable devienne quelque chose de pensable, de reel, un *aliquid per essentiam*: il acquiert, en ce processus, un *esse essentiae*." Cf. Gómez Caffarena, *Ser participado*, 32. Maurer, "*Ens Diminutum*," 220.

[57] Giles of Rome, Godfrey of Fontaines and James of Viterbo are the first to level this criticism against Henry. For Giles, see *De esse et essentia*, q. 12 (ed. Venice, 17va). For Godfrey, see *Quodlibet* II, q. 2 (PB I.53–68); *Quodlibet* VII, q. 3 (PB II.285–87); *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (PB III.189–208). For James, see *Quodlibet* I, q. 5 (ed. Ypma, 63). Cf. Hocedez, 360; Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Godfrey of Fontaines*, 130–45.

[58] King, "Duns Scotus on Mental Content," 76–77.

est secundum rem).[59] The term *esse* in *esse obiectivum* is misleading. Scotus does not intend for *esse* to signify any sort of existence. Instead, it signifies that something is non-contradictory and therefore intelligible. It is a way of explaining the sort of representational content that objects of divine cognition signify.

Ockham's theory of the existence of things in God is distinguished from Scotus's because Ockham denies that divine ideas have any sort of *esse obiectivum* in his mature thought. A theory of *esse obiectivum* results in "a little world of other objective entities."[60] Divine ideas are in God objectively, but they have no existence. They are present only as known, but they are really nothing in themselves from eternity.[61] Ockham is clear that by "nothing" he means that an idea has no real existence whatsoever, but existence is not repugnant to it. Man was nothing from eternity, but he could (and in fact was) created.[62] Since divine ideas are nothing, they cannot be in God except as known. Divine ideas are in the divine intellect, but not in the divine essence. If they were in the divine essence, then they would be in God subjectively. This subjective presence would threaten divine simplicity.

2. The Scope of Divine Ideas

An inquiry into the scope of divine ideas seeks to determine to what divine ideas extend. Everyone agrees that God has to have many ideas because he could not have distinct cognition of every creature (actual and possible) if he had only one idea. Granted that he needs more than one idea to have distinct cognition of every possible creature, how many ideas does he need? Does he need an infinite number, or a finite number? Does he need ideas of every possible individual or only

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[59] *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 54 (ed. Noone 418:16–17): "lapis in esse cognito tantum nihil est secundum rem." Cf. *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 64 (ed. Noone 421:25–422:3): "in secundo instanti quo Deus intelligit lapidem et constituitur in esse cognito non refertur lapis ad Deum nec dependet, quia sic adhuc nihil est in re et in omni illo sive in toto instanti intelligit Deus lapidem sine omni dependentia lapidis ad ipsum."

[60] Ockham, *Quodlibet* III, q. 4 (OTh IX.218:98–219:99): "unus parvus mundus alius entium obiectivorum."

[61] Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 36, q. un, ad oppositum (OTh IV.524). Cf. Ockham, *In IV Sent.*, q. 9 (OTh VII.178:11).

[62] Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 36, q. un. (OTh IV.547:6–19).

of species or genera? Does he have an idea of evil? In short, does he have an idea of every possible object of cognition, or not?

a. Singulars, Species, and Genera

There are three main position with regard to divine ideas of singulars, species, and genera. The first position says that God has ideas of all three. The second position argues that God has ideas of the lowest species, but he does not have ideas of singulars or genera. The third position holds that God only has ideas of singulars.

The first position is espoused most prominently by Bonaventure and Scotus. Bonaventure insists that because a divine idea is an expression of truth, there is a divine idea for anything that could be expressed by divine truth. Both universals and singulars are expressions of divine truth, so there are ideas of both.[63] Scotus adds to this argument, that God can do anything that we can do. But we can compare every individual or part of an individual to God's essence. Therefore, God can also compare his essence to every individual or part of an individual, which includes the individual's species and genus.[64]

The second position is held by Henry of Ghent and Godfrey of Fontaines. God only needs ideas of natural things that are *secundum se* and *ad se ipsas* essentially. Only quiddities and specific essences of *species specialissimae* fall into this category, so God only has ideas of *species specialissimae*. Genus and difference do not differ from the species except by the notion of incomplete and complete, so God can have distinct cognition of genera and differentiae simply by knowing species. Singulars add nothing essential to the species.[65] Individuation occurs by a double negation, and so

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[63] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, a. un., q. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, I.610a).

[64] Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 49 (ed. Noone 441–42). Auriol also claims that God has ideas of primary intentions like man and animal because they are connotated as distinct things as if something extramental were intuited. See Auriol, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 2 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 10:505–524).

[65] Henry, *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 8:8–9).

individuals do not add anything formally distinct from the species.[66] Knowledge comes through form, so no distinct form is required to know a singular.

The third position is held by Ockham. For Ockham, the scope of divine ideas is limited by what can have real existence. Everything that exists is singular. Therefore, there are only ideas of singulars. God can be said to have an idea of each of the concepts of our mind, and so there is a way in which God can be said to have ideas of genera and species. But even these concepts of our mind are singular. Therefore, God has an idea of a universal only in an extended and inappropriate sense.[67]

Thomas Aquinas ascribes to both the third position and the first position because of the distinction that he makes between the strict sense and the broad sense of divine ideas. In the strict sense of exemplar, only those things that are made have ideas. Genera and species have a true foundation in singulars, but they are not really distinguished in the singular, so there are no divine ideas of them strictly speaking.[68] In the broad sense of *ratio*, there are divine ideas of everything that can be intellectually distinguished. The consideration of Socrates *qua* singular is distinct from the consideration of Socrates *qua* man, so God has distinct *rationes* for each.[69] Thus, he holds that strictly speaking there are only ideas of individuals, but broadly speaking there are ideas of each and every distinct aspect of everything.

b. Accidents

Not all of the authors consider the question of divine ideas of accidents, but those who do come to one of three positions. (1) They argue that there are divine ideas of all accidents. (2) They argue that there are divine ideas of some accidents. (3) They argue that there are no divine ideas of accidents. The first position is held by Scotus, and Ockham. Scotus thinks that God has ideas of all

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[66] Henry, *Quodlibet* IX, q. 2 (ed. Macken, 33:91–92). Cf. Godfrey, *Quodlibet* II, q. 2 (PB I.53–68).

[67] Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.493:12–19). Cf. Auriol, *In I Sent.*, d. 35, p. 4, a. 3 (ed. Friedman, 23:1146–50).

[68] Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 8, ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.116:74–84).

[69] Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 8, ad 2 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.116:74–84).

accidents because anything that can be made in itself or in another is a distinctly cognizable accident for the divine intellect. It is a mark of perfection to know everything that is distinctly cognizable. Therefore, God, who is all perfect, has distinct cognition (and therefore ideas) of all substances and their accidents.[70] Ockham argues to the same point by means of divine power. God has distinct ideas of anything that he could create separately. God could make any accident whatsoever exist separately. Therefore, he has distinct ideas of all accidents.[71]

Thomas and Henry argue that God has divine ideas of some accidents, but they do so in different ways. Thomas argues that God only has ideas of separable accidents because proper accidents are never really separated from their subject. Never being separated, proper accidents are produced in being by one operation with their subjects, and so they are included in the idea of their subject. Separable accidents, however, are produced in being by a different act than the one that produces the subject, and so there has to an idea of them in God.[72]

Henry also restricts the scope of divine ideas of accidents, but he restricts them even more than Thomas. The nine traditional categories of accidents, he thinks, can all be reduced to quantity and quality. Within these two categories, there are only divine ideas for the *species specialissimae*. Just as the genera and differentiae of substances are incomplete so too the genera and differentiae of accidents are incomplete. Similarly, singulars are not formally distinct from their species. In both cases, the species is sufficient for distinct cognition. Thus, God only needs ideas of the *species specialissimae*. According to Henry, God has ideas of scarlet and crimson, but not of red or this red.[73]

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[70] Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, nn. 47–49 (ed. Noone, 441:8–442:8).

[71] *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.493:7–11).

[72] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, q. 3, ad 4 (ed. Leonine, 4.204). Doolan points out that while Thomas does not state it explicitly in this text, we can rightly infer that God has distinct ideas for all accidents insofar as the word "idea" is taken in the broad sense of likeness or *ratio* (*Aquinas on Divine Ideas*, 137). This inference is consistent with his claim in q. 15, a. 2 that there are a plurality of divine ideas insofar as God knows himself to be imitated in a variety of ways. Since every accident imitates the divine essence in a distinct way, there ought to be distinct divine idea for every accident.

[73] Henry, *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 6:74–8:2).

As I noted in Chapter II, I think Henry would accept Thomas's distinction between ideas of separable accidents and ideas of proper accidents, but he does not make this argument explicitly.

Auriol is the only author that advocates for the third position, namely, that there are no divine ideas of accidents. His criterion for distinguishing ideas is distinct connotation. Anything that can be distinctly connotated has its own idea. Accidents are inseparable from their substances, so there are no distinct ideas for them.[74]

c. Evil

The question whether God has a divine ideas of evil is difficult to answer. Each of the authors in this study agrees that God knows evil and prime matter. But since God is not the cause of evil, it is not clear how he could have an idea of it. The most prevalent way of dealing with this question is to say that God has an idea of evil things through his ideas of good things, of which the evil things are privations.[75] As Auriol points out, evil cannot be understood without some created good because evil is a twofold privation. It is the privation of some good with regard to some good subject.[76] Evil disagrees and deviates from the good. Since it is impossible to know disagreement without first knowing agreement, God, who knows every way that creatures can agree with his art, has an idea of evil through the good that is deprived.[77] Each of the authors who hold this position are very careful to say that God does not have an idea of evil directly. Since God creates according to his ideas, if he had an idea of evil, then he would be the cause of evil. Each author wants to avoid that conclusion, and so argues that God has an idea of evil in the sense of knowing how creatures fall short of the ideal.

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[74] Auriol, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, a. 2 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 10:505–524).

[75] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 1, conclusion (ed. Quaracchi, I.627b). Thomas, *De veritate*, q. 3, a. 4, ad 7 (ed. Leonine, 22.1.111:124–130). Auriol, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 13:661–86).

[76] Auriol, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, p. 2, q. 2, a. 2 (ed. Friedman, Nielson, Schabel, 13:661–86).

[77] Durandus, *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 36, q. 1 (ed. Venice, 1010:127–1011:141).

Ockham is the only author in the study to reject an idea of evil. Evil, guilt, and other negations and privations are not distinct things. They only follow upon other things. Since God only has ideas of whatever God could make separately, he emphatically rejects that God has an idea of evil or any other privation.[78]

d. Prime Matter

The last question that is generally considered by the authors of this period is whether God has an idea of prime matter. Some of the authors only ask about prime matter, but others expand the topic to include any imperfect, i.e., incomplete being, or the integral principles of substances. There are two positions on whether God has an idea of matter. Some say that God does have an idea of prime matter. Some say that he does not.

Bonaventure, Henry, Scotus, and Ockham all argue that God has a divine idea of prime matter. Bonaventure and Scotus argue that God has such an idea because God can consider imperfect things insofar as they have a certain degree of perfection. Insofar as they are imperfect, they do not assimilate to God and do not have ideas. But insofar as they are certain things, God has ideas of them. Since, as Bonaventure says, even a minimal assimilation is sufficient for exemplarity, so God has an idea of them.[79] Henry argues that God has a distinct idea of form and matter as integral parts of a composition. Prime matter, he says, is not makeable of itself outside of a composition, but it is other than the idea of the form, through which it is makeable in composition. There is only one idea of matter, and it is naturally suited to be joined in the unity of every material singular.[80] Ockham's position on the matter is the most radical. Whereas his predecessors do not think that prime matter can exist on its own, Ockham thinks that God has the power to create

[78] Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.493:12–19).
[79] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 36, a. 3, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, I.629b).
[80] Henry, *Quodlibet* VII, qq. 1–2 (ed. Wilson, 20:97–21:3).

matter separate from any form. Since God has a distinct idea for anything that he could create separately, he has an idea of matter.

Thomas and Auriol both argue that God does not have an idea of matter. Auriol deals with the matter swiftly. Form and matter are not separable from each other, but related as act and able-to-be-actuated. God only has ideas of separable things, so he does not have an idea of form or matter. Thomas's position is a little more nuanced. He argues that God cannot have an idea of matter distinct from the form or the composite because an idea, strictly speaking, must be producible in being. Since, Thomas argues, prime matter cannot exist without form, God does not have a form of it. In fact, God does not have an idea of form either; he only has an idea of the composite. This denial extends to both the strict sense of exemplar and the loose sense of *ratio*. Prime matter does not have *esse*, nor is it cognizable. God could only have a distinct idea of prime matter if it could be distinctly cognized. Since it is not cognizable, God could not have a distinct idea of it even in the broad sense of *ratio*.[81]

e. The Number of Divine Ideas

From the earlier considerations of divine ideas, it should be clear that there are three positions with regard to the number of ideas: (1) they are infinite in number in every way, (2) they are finite in number, (3) they are infinite in one way and finite in another. Bonaventure and Scotus are the biggest proponents of the first position. God's treasury of ideas is as full as possible. God has, as it were, divine ideas for an infinite number of infinities. God knows and could potentially make an infinite number of singulars of every species. He knows and could potentially make an infinite number of species. He has distinct ideas for every thing and every aspect of every thing that he could make. Scotus adds a strong argument from infinity. An intellect that comprehends a more perfect being also comprehends less perfect and equal beings. But the infinity of the divine essence

[81] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3, ad 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.204).

is more perfect than the infinity of ideas. But the infinity of his essence, which is the cause of the other infinity, can perfectly comprehend the very nature of infinity. Therefore, it will comprehend every other infinity all the more. And if ideas are the objects cognized, then there will be an infinite number of ideas in his mind because everyone agrees that God comprehends an infinite number of objects.[82]

Auriol and Ockham agree with Bonaventure and Scotus that the number of the divine ideas is infinite, but they do not subscribe the plenitude of infinities that Bonaventure and Scotus defend. For these two authors, divine ideas are the creatures themselves as known. Since God could make an infinite number of creatures, he has an infinite number of ideas.[83] To say otherwise would be a restriction of God's supreme omnipotence.

Henry, Richard, and Durandus defend that God could not have an infinite number of ideas. For Henry, divine ideas are rational respects of imitability known by the divine intellect. There are many ideas because God can be imitated in diverse ways. Each imitation is a distinct and unrepeatable grade of imitation. Each grade has a distinct degree of perfection. Thus, an infinite number of divine ideas would entail an infinite number of degrees of perfection. An infinite number of degrees of perfection would entail that some creature was of infinite perfection. But no creature can imitate God perfectly, so God could not have an infinite number of divine ideas.[84]

Between these two theories is the theory of Thomas. In his mature work, Thomas restricts divine ideas in the strict sense to things that God has actually willed to create at some time in history. On a strictly philosophical level, this claim does not restrict the number of divine ideas because Thomas thinks that the world could have been created from eternity. If the world existed

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[82] Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 3–4, n. 68 (ed. Noone, 447:2–11).

[83] Ockham, *Ord.* I, d. 35, q. 5 (OTh IV.493:19–21).

[84] Henry, *Quodlibet* V, q. 3, ad 1 (ed. Badius, 156vT). Cf. Durandus, *In I Sent. (C)*, d. 44, q. 2 (ed. Venice, 1205:114–1206:138).

from eternity, then an infinite number of creatures would have come to be, from which it follows that the number of divine ideas would be infinite. Thomas's true position, however, is that the world was created *ex nihilo* in time and that the entire duration of the world has been and will be finite. In that finite time, only a finite number of creatures will come to be. Therefore, God only has a finite number of divine ideas.[85]

Despite this restriction, Thomas also holds that God has an infinite number of divine ideas. He only has a finite number in the strict sense of exemplar, but he has an infinite number of ideas in the sense of *ratio*. God does not actually create an infinite number of creatures, but he knows that he could, and so he has an infinite number of divine ideas as cognitive principles.

[85] Thomas, *ST* I, q. 15, a. 3 (ed. Leonine, 4.204).

C. REMARKS ON THE BEST THEORIES

Having examined the various theories of divine ideas laid out historically and systematically, some remarks on the strength of the theories is in order. A theory of divine idea is the nexus of several important logical, metaphysical, and epistemological topics. The viability of any given theory depends on the strength of the position taken in each of these topics individually and the degree to which they cohere as a whole. The purpose of this study is more to provide some of the preparatory work necessary for such a comprehensive appraisal. As a result, a complete judgment about the best theory is beyond the scope of this work. Nevertheless, it seems appropriate to offer some preliminary judgments about what I think the best theory of divine ideas is.

It seems to me that the strongest theories are those articulated by Bonaventure and Scotus. Their theories are not compatible, but I think that the metaphysical systems that inform each of the theories are sufficiently different that neither theory can rule out the other simply at the level of divine ideas. Scotus is very critical of theories of divine ideas like Bonaventure's that define divine ideas as *rationes cognoscendi*. I think that these criticisms are very strong and are sufficient to show certain weaknesses in the theories of Thomas and Henry, but I think that Bonaventure's semiotic metaphysics escapes the criticism. Scotus's argument about knowing the *relata* prior to knowing the relation is particularly strong, but it does not touch Bonaventure's theory. Bonaventure actually argues a similar point in the *Itinerarium*: "No one knows that something is more assimilated to another unless he cognize that other. For I do not know that this [man] is like Peter unless I know or cognize Peter."[1] It is not sufficient to know the relation and one of the *relata*. I need to know that to which the relation refers. Importantly, Bonaventure offers this argument in the midst of an argument for knowledge of the highest good. A judgment about what is better requires knowledge of the best because better and worse are judged based on the degree of assimilation to the best. So

[1] Bonaventure, *Itinerarium*, c. 3, n. 4 (ed. Quaracchi, V.302b–303a).

the *relatum* that Bonaventure insists on us knowing is the best. The relation cannot be known without recourse to the perfect exemplar.

We must always make recourse to the best because everything other than the first and best is in flux and instable. Everything other than the exemplar is in flux and instable.[2] Everything else is unstable because they are created *ex nihilo* and composed of form and matter. No creature is its own *esse*, and so subject to possibility and flux.[3] They are not their own *esse* because they are created *ex nihilo*: "every creature has vanity and a mixture with non-*esse*, since it is from nothing, and only God entirely lacks this mixture."[4] Creatures are in flux, but the conjunction of form and matter gives each substance its stability in being.[5] Form, Bonaventure says, gives the act of existence to substances, and matter gives the stability of existing *per se*.[6] Form and matter bestow stability, but this stability is a fragile stability.

Not only can creatures not account for their own existence, they cannot even be defined merely of themselves. Created things are only parts of a whole, and so a full definition always requires recourse to the whole, which for Bonaventure means an ascent to being.[7] All of creation is a vestige of God: All creatures "are vestiges, images, and mirrors proposed to us to contuit God and divinely given signs."[8] Creation is populated by substances, but substances are not completely independent things that enter into relation with other completely independent things. Substances are inherently signs of their transcendent source.[9] The further we investigate creatures, the more we are

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[2] Bonaventure, *Dominica III adventus*, Sermo 14 (ed. Quaracchi, IX.73a): "Omnis enim veritas praeter primam semper est in fluxu usque ad illam." Cf. Bissen, *L'exemplarisme divin*, 170.

[3] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 37, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1 (ed. Quaracchi, I.639a).

[4] Bonaventure, *In I Sent.*, d. 8, p. 1, a. 1, q. 1, arg. 5 (ed. Quaracchi, I.150b).

[5] Cullen, "Semiotic Metaphysics," 271.

[6] Bonaventure, *In II Sent.*, d. 3, p. 1, q. 2 (ed. Quaracchi, II.97b): "Metaphysicus considerat naturam omnis creaturae et maxime substantiae per se entis, in qua est considerare et actum essendi, et hunc dat forma; et stabilitatem per se existendi, et hanc dat et praestat illud cui innititur forma; hoc est materia."

[7] Cullen, "Semiotic Metaphysics," 228. Cullen is careful to note that this ascent is not merely an ascent of the mind. The reception of a likeness is always accompanied by delight at the proportion of the likeness. This delight occurs in the affect, so every ascent is an ascent of both the mind and the heart.

[8] Bonaventure, *Itinerarium*, c. 2, n. 11 (ed. Quaracchi, V.302b).

[9] Cullen, "Semiotic Metaphysics," 323.

directed to God. All of creation, as Augustine says, cries out "We are not your God," but "he made us."[10] No creature can be fully understood unless it is understood as a sign, and "[t]his is why exemplarism is at the heart of metaphysics" for Bonaventure.[11] Divine exemplars, i.e., the divine ideas that cover items God wills to create, are not merely some remote guarantor of intelligibility. The metaphysical core of every creature points back to God as to a signifier.

I think this semiotic metaphysics can adequately support Bonaventure's theory of divine ideas. If the deepest metaphysical structure of every creature is a sign, then Scotus's criticism that a relation cannot be known before the *relata* does not hold. Bonaventure claims that divine ideas are likenesses, *rationes cognoscendi* making creatures known. These likenesses are not the true essences and quiddities of things since they are not other than God, but the likenesses are in every way prior to the true essences and quiddities of things. If, at its core, a creature is a sign of its divine exemplar, then the exemplar has to precede the thing. A sign *qua* sign is established by its being related to what it signifies. But the *ratio* of a creatures is a sign that signifies its divine idea. Therefore, the *ratio* of a creature is established by the divine idea that establishes it. God cannot know the creature before he establishes the signification of the creature. To say, as Scotus does, that God knows a creature directly before he knows the relation his essence has to that creature, is to say that God has an imperfect knowledge of a creature followed by a perfect knowledge. Perfect knowledge of creatures demands knowledge of the exemplar. If God does not know the likeness of the creature expressed by divine truth first, then his knowledge would pass from incomplete to complete.

In his *De scientia Christi*, Bonaventure faces the objection that the union of knower and known is immediate and undivided, so there is no need for a likeness. But God is intimate to each and every created thing. Therefore, there is no need of some likeness in his cognition.[12] In his

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[10] Augustine, *Conf.*, X, c. 6, n. 9 (PL 32.783).
[11] Cullen, "Semiotic Metaphysics," 324.
[12] Bonaventure, *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, arg. 11 (ed. Quaracchi, 8a).

response, Bonaventure argues that the union between knower and known is twofold. It may either be according to the order of being, conserving, and causing, or it may be according to the order of knowing. In the order of causing, there is an immediate conjunction when the cause immediately produces and cause and sustains the effect. In the order of knowing there is an immediate conjunction when the knower knows the knowable thing either through the essence of the knower or through the essence of the thing known. In such a case there is no need for an intermediate likeness that differs from both of the extremes. Nevertheless, the essence itself, insofar as it is a *ratio cognoscendi*, still possesses the character of a likeness. And in this way we posit a likeness in divine cognition, that is not other than the essence of the knower.[13]

The divine essence has the character of a likeness insofar as it is a principle of knowing. It points to things other than itself. The things to which it points are in turn signs of the divine essence and they cannot truly be understood without the divine essence. It would be contradictory for God to know the creature before he knows what the creature is at its core. At its core a creature is a likeness of the divine essence. So, to say God knows a creature by means of a likeness rather than by its true essence and quiddity is to say that God knows what each creature is at its deepest level of its being. There is no contradiction between God knowing the creature through the likeness which is its divine idea because creatures are likenesses. There is no creaturely essence prior to the likeness that could be known.

Bonaventure's semiotic metaphysics allows him to escape Scotus's criticism, but without this metaphysical system Scotus's criticisms are quite devastating. If the core of every creature is not semiotic, then there is in fact an essence that God could know prior to its relation to him being known. If essences are not fundamentally signs, then each essence has to be intelligible of itself. Being intelligible of itself, it can be known independent of its ground of intelligibility. Therefore, it is

[13] Bonaventure, *De scientia Christi*, q. 2, ad 11 (ed. Quaracchi, 10b).

possible for God to know the creature and its essence prior to knowing what makes it intelligible. The creature is intelligible because of the relation it bears to God, but knowledge of that relation is not necessary for knowing the creature itself. Therefore, God ought not be said to know the creature through a relation. He should instead be said to know the relation because of his knowledge of the creature.

In this case, a strong theory of *esse obiectivum* seems a more adequate explanation of divine ideas because *esse obiectivum* has the character of a sign, pointing to something other than itself.[14] The creature in *esse obiectivum* is nothing but an essence making the creature known to God. Since the creaturely essence is not inherently a sign, no relation to or from God is entailed. The knowledge is immediate and requires nothing other than the knower and the thing known. As a result, the stone in cognitive being is really nothing (*nihil est secundum rem*).[15] It is nothing in reality, but since the notion of the is non-contradictory, it is intelligible and not, as Ockham says, a pure nothing.[16] *Esse obiectivum*, then, is a strong way to account for the sort of representational content that the objects of divine cognition signify. The essence still signifies, but it does not inherently signify the divine essence. Since it does not inherently signify the divine essence, it can be known independent of a relation or likeness.

These remarks should be sufficient to show that the success of a theory of divine ideas depends highly upon the metaphysical theory that supports it. If the essences of things are fundamentally signs and imitations of God, then a divine idea can and should be a likeness of the creature's essence rather than the creature's essence itself. In this case, the creature is better and more truly known as a likeness than itself. Since God knows in the most perfect way, he should

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[14] See Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 3, q. 4, n. 105 (ed. Wolter and Bychov, 213).

[15] Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 54 (ed. Noone 418:16–17): "lapis in esse cognito tantum nihil est secundum rem." Cf. Scotus, *Rep. Par. I-A*, d. 36, qq. 1–2, nn. 64 (ed. Noone 421:25–422:3): "in secundo instanti quo Deus intelligit lapidem et constituitur in esse cognito non refertur lapis ad Deum nec dependet, quia sic adhuc nihil est in re et in omni illo sive in toto instanti intelligit Deus lapidem sine omni dependentia lapidis ad ipsum."

[16] Ockham, *In IV Sent.*, q. 9 (OTh VII.178:11). Cf. Maurer, "The Role of Divine Ideas," 374.

know creatures through their likenesses. Divine ideas should be *rationes cognoscendi*. If the essences of things are intelligible of themselves and do not necessarily point to God, then a divine idea should be posterior to God's knowledge of the creature itself. Divine ideas still entail the rational relations that follow upon God's comparison of the creature to his essence, but this relation cannot explain God's knowledge of the creature in the first place.

D. CONCLUSIONS

A theory of divine ideas was the standard Scholastic solution to the question "How does God know and produce the world?" Such a theory was deemed sufficient only if it upheld the dignity of God's perfect and distinct cognition of each and every thing that he could create, and if it upheld the dignity of God's supreme simplicity. How can the one and simple God know many creatures, both actual and possible? Reflection on divine ideas exploded between the years 1250 AD and 1325 AD. The internal cause for their reflection was frequent declarations from Sacred Scripture that God knows all things, even down to the hairs on our head, and exercises provident care over each and every thing that exists. The proximate, external cause was the advent of Averroes's *Long Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics*. He argues that God's perfection as pure act can only result in an indeterminate knowledge of things other than himself.

The theories explored in this study show a sort of arc of the importance of divine ideas. At the beginning of the period, divine ideas are indispensable. Without divine ideas, we could not account for God's ability to know or produce the world, nor our ability to know anything with absolute certainty. Bonaventure, Thomas Aquinas, and Henry of Ghent all posited divine ideas as respects of imitability or expression according to which God knows his essence to be imitable. There are many of them because there are many ways of imitating God. God has to have these ideas because he knows himself perfectly and because every effect has to preexist in its cause in some way.

This way of articulating ideas came into question when James of Viterbo asked why the divine essence itself was not the one *ratio cognoscendi* of creatures with the essences of the creatures being many *obiecta cognita*. The *ratio cognoscendi* theory came under more fire as Peter John Olivi added the criticism that the theory demanded that God know a relation before knowing the *relata*. Since that is not how relations work, Olivi posited that the theory had to be scrapped and replaced with a theory that posited divine ideas as God's very act of understanding. Common to all of these theories

was the conviction that a divine idea was ontologically identical to the divine essence. Divine ideas are the divine essence, but point toward possible creatures.

Raymundus Rigaldus's reflection on divine ideas continues the trend established by his predecessors. Divine ideas are divine exemplars that flow from the fount of expressive truth that is the divine essence. Divine ideas are the result of the divine intellect shining back upon itself in a secondary reflection. Although they are really one in God, there are many divine ideas according to reason because God has to have distinct cognition of each of the ways that his essence is imitable. Divine ideas are many down to the level of singulars because each singular has a distinct *esse* that cannot be known distinctly by means of anything but a proper and distinct idea in God.

By the time of John Duns Scotus, divine ideas were still considered necessary to account for God's ability to create the world, but they were not necessary for God to know the world. God can know creatures distinctly prior to any comparison of the creature to the divine essence. The comparison produces the rational relation from God to the creatures, the knowledge of which completes the character of a divine idea, but the creature can be known directly. Moreover, rather than saying that divine ideas are the divine essence, Scotus argues that the creature is really nothing in itself. There is still a relation to the divine essence, but nothingness has crept into the theory.

Durandus of Saint-Pourçain weakens reflection on divine ideas by arguing that they can only be in God imperfectly. If a divine idea is an imitation of the divine essence, then divine ideas can only be as perfect as creatures' ability to imitate the divine essence. Creatures can only imitate the divine essence imperfectly, so divine ideas can only be in God imperfectly. And since divine ideas are the creatures themselves as known for Durandus, they are not identical with God's essence. If they are not part of the essence and introduce some manner of imperfection into God, then it does not seem appropriate that they be posited in God at all. Durandus appears to hold a theory merely out of reverence to Augustine and Aquinas.

Peter Auriol and William of Ockham posit divine ideas, but their theories seem to destroy the very thing they uphold. Divine ideas are not ontologically one with the divine essence, nor are they a secondary consideration of the divine intellect. Instead, divine ideas are defined as connotations of the divine essence. Ockham banishes divine ideas from the divine essence. To include them in the divine essence would be to destroy God's simplicity. Divine ideas are only in the mind of God. The only reasoning needed to account for God's knowledge of things other than God is his simple understanding of the divine essence. Just as we can understand many terms in a single proposition, so too God can understand all possible creatures in one act of understanding his essence. Since divine ideas are in no way one with the divine essence, they have to be pure nothing.

Ockham's position bears no resemblance to the theory of Augustine, who insisted that divine ideas be one with God. As a result, despite the fact that Auriol and Ockham use the term "divine ideas," they have for all intents and purposes destroyed the theory. Divine ideas are too Platonic for Ockham's system in particular. God does not need any special idea to know creatures and his ability to create them. He has this knowledge directly. The changes in metaphysics, logic, and epistemology have change a theory of divine ideas from absolutely essential to a useless appendage preserved out of reverence to tradition.

The necessity of positing divine ideas and the way in which they are posited relies a great deal on the metaphysical system underlying the theory. Later theories claim to have the framework that allows God to know and produce creatures without positing relations of imitability or any relations at all. Imitability, they argue, cannot account for God's ability to know distinctly. Moreover, rational relations cannot account for the existence of a real being. As a result of the way that theories of divine ideas are intertwined with so many other metaphysical, logical, and epistemological theories, the strength of any given theory of divine ideas cannot be judged independent of these other aspects of an author's thought.

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