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Strategies and Communities: From Alexander of Hales to Thomas Aquinas on Scripture, *theologia*, and Sacred Teaching

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Abstract: Pedagogical strategies always need to be adapted to specific communities. This study surveys the evolution of thinking about *theologia* from the time of Alexander of Hales to Thomas Aquinas. The vast *Summa Halensis*, of which Books I and III were entrusted by Alexander to John of La Rochelle, draws on ideas developed from a wide range of authorities, including *De spiritu et anima*, circulated as by Augustine, but in fact a Cistercian treatise which sought to combine Augustinian and Boethian ideas. Although notoriously prolix, the *Summa Halensis* introduces some key ideas about reason and human nature, subsequently picked up by Thomas, such as that grace does not destroy nature, but perfects it. Thomas would also expand upon its opening discussion of *doctrina theologiae* as a science or kind of knowledge. By 1259, Thomas was no longer having to prove himself to Parisian theologians. In the *Summa contra Gentiles*, he experimented with a Boethian pedagogical strategy, based more on reason than authority, avoiding the term *theologia*. It was of limited practical value, however. By 1265, Thomas decided to combine these different strategies in a final *Summa*. Although described by William of Tocco in 1317 as a *Summa theologiae*, this work was more often referred to simply as Thomas's *Summa*. Here, it is argued that he defines *sacra doctrina* not as a set of propositions, but as the sacred teaching transmitted by both the Old and New Testaments. Thomas connects the Dionysian notion of *theologia*, as discourse about God, to sacred teaching understood as a science or form of knowledge that has both speculative and practical dimensions. By referring to teaching as sacred, he offered a more expansive understanding of what Augustine had called *doctrina Christiana*, one that could be pursued through reason, Scripture, and the Fathers and concerned God, humanity, and the world.

Keywords: Alexander of Hales, scholasticism, theology, Thomas Aquinas, University of Paris

> A river gushing out of the springs of Paradise, namely overflowing in the understanding of the Scriptures through the mouth of brother Alexander, from your order, of treasured memory has poured out over the earth bringing to light treasures of knowledge and saving wisdom.[1]

[1] Pope Alexander IV, [28 July 1256], ed. H. Denifle, *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis* [*CUP*], 4 vols., Delalain, Paris 1889–1901, no. 286, 1, pp. 328–329: "De fontibus Paradisi flumen egrediens

1. Introduction

On 28 July 1256, Pope Alexander IV used this image of a river flowing from Paradise (Eccles. 24:40) to commend the teaching of the English Franciscan theologian, Alexander of Hales, who had died almost eleven years earlier, on 21 August 1245. The pope urged William of Melito (d. before 1260), Alexander's successor at the Franciscan studium in Paris, who had returned from a spell in Cambridge (1255–1257), to complete the then unfinished *Summa fratris Alexandri* (not called a *Summa theologica* until early printed editions; hereinafter: *Halensis*).[2] William, a prolific biblical exegete, was not a philosophical theologian in the manner of Alexander, but had focused on the liturgy and sacraments in his teaching.[3] Yet in the same letter the pope politely hints at a serious problem with *Halensis*. Not only had it been left incomplete at Alexander's death, but it was prolix, more suited for advanced students than the wider faithful.[4] Such was Alexander's repu-

[cf. Eccles. 14:40], exuberans videlicet sacrarum intelligentia scripturarum, per os recolende memorie fratris Alexandri ordinis tui temporibus nostris. Largo profluxit lotitio impetus super terram, in lucem manifestius editis thesauris scientie ac sapientie salutaris." I am indebted to Adriano Oliva for discussions of many points addressed in this paper.

2 *Summa fratris Alexandri* (subsequently referred to as *Halensis*), published in 4 vols. (I, II.1–2, III) as *Doctoris irrefragabilis Alexandri de Hales Ordinis minoris Summa theologica*, ed. PP. Collegii S. Bonaventurae, Quaracchi 1924–1948, but with Book IV, completed in the years 1257–1260, as yet without a critical edition. While *theologica* was added to *Summa* from the earliest printed editions in the 15th century, the adjective is not included in manuscripts of the work; see R. Saccenti, *The Reception of the Summa Halensis in the Manuscript Tradition until 1450*, in: *The Legacy of Early Franciscan Thought*, ed. L. Schumacher, De Gruyter, Berlin 2021, pp. 353–372, esp. pp. 368–370, https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110684827-020.

3 Most of William of Melito's scriptural glosses are unpublished. His edited writing includes B. Pergamo, *De quaestionibus ineditis fratris O. Rigaudi, fratris Guillelmi de Meliona ex Cod. Vat. lat. 782 circa naturam theologiae deque earum relatione ad Summam theologicam fr. Alexandri Halensis*, "Archivum Franciscanum Historicum" 1936, Vol. 29, pp. 3–54, 308–365; H. Dausend, *Das Opusculum super missam des Fr. Wilhelm von Melitona und die entsprechenden Stellen in der Summa theologica Alexanders von Hales*, in: *Aus der Geisteswelt des Mittelalters*, Aschendorff, Münster 1935, pp. 554–577, reprinted in: "Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale" 1937, Vol. 9, pp. 23–55; William of Melito, *Quaestiones de Sacramentis*, 2 vols., eds. C. Piana, G. Gál, Quaracchi, 1961.

4 *CUP*, 1, p. 328: "Idem siquidem frater […] et laboriosi operis sanctum aggrediendo propositum super questionibus theologicis utiliorem utique quam prolixam molitus est *Summam* profectibus in lege domini studere volentium compendiosius profuturam […] Prolixitatem quippe, si quam in eadem *Summa* lector delicatus abhorret, studiosis nobis in ea sic reddit continua partium suarum utilitas brevem […] et ad satietatem anime insufficientia universa que scripta sunt, nisi […] principii sui finem moles tanti operis sortiatur."

tation that, according to John of Garland, many senior ecclesiastics came from the Council at Lyons to attend his funeral.[5]

My argument is that the achievement of Thomas Aquinas in discussing both *theologia* and *sacra doctrina*, translated here as sacred teaching, evolves in response to their treatment by Alexander of Hales and his disciples. Much has been written on Thomas's understanding of these concepts.[6] As Thomas puts it in his introduction to *De trinitate* of Boethius, *theologia* can refer to consideration of divine matters both as the principles (rather than the subject) of that science or way of knowing which philosophers call metaphysics, but it can also refer to the subject of that science, namely, the *theologia* passed on in Scripture.[7] He makes a similar point the *prima pars* of his final *Summa,* when he says that the *theologia* which pertains to sacred teaching is quite different in genus from that which belongs to philosophy.[8] Here, he also makes this point in relation to *sacra doctrina* that, like any science, it can refer both to core principles, necessarily speculative in character, as well as to its subject matter, namely, sacred teaching.[9]

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5 John of Garland, *Carmen de mysteriis ecclesiae*, ed. E. Könsgen, Brill, Leiden 2004, p. 60: "Floret Alexandro locus hic, dedit Anglia florem, / Cuius Parisius celo transmisit odorem."

6 See, e.g., Michel Corbin, *Le chemin de la théologie chez Thomas d'Aquin*, Beauchesne, Paris 1974; Mark D. Jordan, *Theology as Speculative and Practical in Thomas Aquinas*, in: *Knowledge and the Sciences in Medieval Philosophy: Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Medieval Philosophy (SIEPM)*, Vol. 3, eds. R. Työrinoja, A.-I. Lehtinen, D. Follesdal, Martin Luther Agricola Society, Helsinki 1990, pp. 430–439; Mikołaj Olszewski, *O praktycznej bądź teoretycznej naturze teologii. Metateologia scholastyczna 1200–1350*, Universitas, Kraków 2002, pp. 106–116.

7 Thomas Aquinas, *In librum Boethii De trinitate*, q. 5, art. 4, ed. B. Decker, Brill, Leiden 1959, p. 195: "Sic ergo theologia sive scientia divina est duplex. Una, in qua considerantur res divinae non tamquam subiectum scientiae, sed tamquam principia subiecti, et talis est theologia, quam philosophi prosequuntur, quae alio nomine metaphysica dicitur. Alia vero, quae ipsas res divinas considerat propter se ipsas ut subiectum scientiae et haec est theologia, quae in sacra Scriptura traditur."

8 *Summa theologiae* [*ST*], ed. Leonina, in: *Opera omnia*, Vols. 4 (1888), 8 (1895), 9 (1897), 10 (1899), 11 (1903), 12 (1905); Vol. 2.1, ed. Marietti, 1948. *ST* I, art. 1, resp. ad arg. 2: "Unde theologia quae ad sacram doctrinam pertinet, differt secundum genus ab illa theologia quae pars philosophiae ponitur." There are numerous discussions of the meaning of *sacra doctrina* and its relationship to *theologia*. See, e.g., *Sacra doctrina and sacra scriptura* in P.E. Persson, *Sacra doctrina: Reason and Revelation in Aquinas*, Oxford University Press, Oxford [1957] 1970, pp. 70–90. Its relationship to Scripture is emphasized by B. Casey, *Judging according to Wisdom: Sacra doctrina in the Summa theologiae*, "New Blackfriars" 2017, Vol. 98, pp. 582–598, https://doi.org/10.1111/nbfr.12153.

9 *ST* I, q. 1, art. 1, corp.: "Sed sciendum est quod duplex est scientiarum genus. Quaedam enim sunt, quae procedunt ex principiis notis lumine naturali intellectus, sicut arithmetica, geometria, et huiusmodi. […] Unde sicut musica credit principia tradita sibi ab arithmetico, ita doctrina

This differentiation between *theologia* in its metaphysical dimension from its manifestation as *sacra doctrina*, transmitted by Scripture, party accessible through metaphysics that not everyone agreed with, reflects an intellectualist interpretation of *theologia* that not everyone accepted, even within the University. While the Joachites regarded it as the teaching of Scripture, the disciples of Alexander of Hales considered it a science, suitable for study at the University, although acquired more by divine grace than mental effort. Adriano Oliva argues in favour of *theologia* and *sacra doctrina* being synonyms, against a contrary position that they are distinct.[10] Yet Oliva observes that apparently contradictory views could be held by the same individual. Thus Richard Rufus argued in his commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, delivered in Oxford c. 1251 (before Thomas's *Scriptum*) that *theologia* was different from Scripture, yet, some years later, held that its subject matter was founded in Scripture.[11] It must be asked why Thomas evolved from examining whether *theologia* was a science in his *Scriptum* and commentary on Boethius to asking whether *sacra doctrina* was a science in his final *Summa*.[12] The problem with *theologia* was that it had two meanings, one concerned with speculative first principles, the other with the whole gamut of sacred teaching preserved in Scripture. While profoundly shaped by the speculative and poetic character of Dionysian discourse about God, Thomas was also fascinated by Aristotelian interest in theoretical principles working themselves out in practice.

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sacra credit principia revelata sibi a Deo. Ad primum ergo dicendum quod principia cuiuslibet scientiae vel sunt nota per se, vel reducuntur ad notitiam superioris scientiae. Et talia sunt principia sacrae doctrinae, ut dictum est."

10 A. Oliva, *Quelques elements de la doctrina theologiae selon Thomas d'Aquin*, in: *What Is "Theology" in the Middle Ages? Religious Cultures of Europe (12th–15th Centuries) as Reflected in Their Self-Understanding*, ed. M. Olszewski, Aschendorff, Münster 2007, pp. 167–193, https://doi.org/10.15581/007.17.10007. He argues against the emphasis on differentiation held by J. Weisheipl, *The Meaning of "Sacra doctrina" in the "Summa theologiae" I, q. 1*, "The Thomist" 1974, Vol. 38, pp. 49–80, and A. Patfoort, *"Sacra doctrina": théologie et unité de la "I Pars"*, "Angelicum" 1985, Vol. 62, pp. 306–319.

11 A. Oliva, *Quelques elements*, op. cit., p. 170, contrasting Richard Rufus: "Cum hec summa [magistri] non sit ipsa theologia, nec aliqua pars eius. Est enim divina scriptura in se integra, absque hac et omni alia summa" (Oxford, Balliol College MS 62, fol. 6va, lines 11–15 from bottom), with a later report of his teaching (Vatican, BAV, Vat. lat. 12993, fol. 4rb, lines 18–19): "Postea queritur quid sit subiectum theologie siue huius operis, quod idem est."

12 Thomas Aquinas, *Scriptum super IV libros Sententiarum* [*In Sent.*], in: *Opera omnia*, Vols. 6, 7.1, 7.2 (1948), reimpr. ed. Parmensis, Vol. 6 (1856) and Vol. 7 (1858), Prol. Magistri, art. 1, q. 3–5; *ST* I, q. 2, art. 2–3.

My paper is structured into four parts, beginning with what I call the official strategy of the Faculty of Theology, based around analysis of questions raised in Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, whose four-book structure is emulated in the *Summa Halensis*. I then look at three stages in Thomas's thinking. The first is through his *Scriptum* on the *Sentences* (c. 1253–1255?), in which he sought to prove his competence to the Parisian theologians.[13] The second deals with the *Summa contra Gentiles* and Thomas's choice of a very different strategy, arguing from reason rather than authority in its first three books. He prepared for it through commentary on *De trinitate* of Boethius.[14] The last stage is evident in the work known as the *Summa theologiae*. Yet, as Jean-Pierre Torrell briefly observes, there is no evidence that this was Thomas's original title.[15] I argue that Thomas saw his final *Summa* as a synthesis of *sacra doctrina*, or the sacred teaching transmitted by Old and New Testaments. Translating this phrase into English as "sacred doctrine" does not necessarily imply an abstract proposition, but teaching that can be transmitted in many different ways.[16] Rendering *sacra doctrina* as "theology" obscures the significance of Thomas's shift in preferred terminology between that of the *Scriptum* to the final *Summa*.

Thomas arrived in Paris at a time of great tension between various groups with competing strategies towards communicating the message of Scripture. While the official policy was to use Lombard's *Sentences*, secular theologians were opposed to the desire of both Franciscans and Dominicans to expand their teaching at the University. By 1256 both Bonaventure and Thomas had completed their commentaries on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, but had not yet been allowed to teach at the University. A quite different, more prophetic strategy was followed by Gerard of Borgo San Donnino (d. 1276) in his Joachite *Introducto-*

13 Aquinas, *In Sent*.

14 *Summa contra Gentiles* [*SCG*], ed. Leonina, in: *Opera omnia*, Vols. 13–15 (Rome: 1918, 1926, 1930; ed. Marietti 1961).

15 J.-P. Torrell, *Initiation à saint Thomas d'Aquin. Sa personne et son œuvre*, Cerf, Paris 2015, p. 195, n. 17; Brian Davies acknowledges that *Summa theologiae* may not be its original title, but considers the title fully appropriate.

16 The phrase *De sacra doctrina* in *ST* Ia., 1.1, is rendered as "The nature and extent of sacred doctrine" in *Summa theologica: First Complete American Edition*, Benziger Brothers, New York [1920] 1947, p. 1; it is widely repeated in anthologies, e.g., in *Aquinas on Nature and Grace: Selections from the Summa theologica of Thomas Aquinas*, ed. A.M. Fairweather, Westminster Press, Philadelphia 1954, pp. 35–49. The opening question is rendered as "On what sort of teaching Christian theology is and what it covers" in *Summa theologiae*, trans. T. Gilby, Vol. 1, Blackfriars, London 1964, p. 5.

rium in Evangelium Aeternum, condemned by the pope in October 1255.[17] The pope had also condemned William of Saint-Amour and his supporters for their blanket opposition to all mendicant teachers, whether scholastic or Joachite.[18] So great was hostility during these years that Thomas was physically attacked by the bedel of the Picard nation, when preaching in Paris on Palm Sunday 1259 (according to a papal sentence of excommunication).[19] This tension between mendicants and seculars would continue for more than a decade, as attested by the career of Gerard of Abbeville (d. 1272), a canon of Amiens in Picardy, who came to Paris c. 1259. Gerard remained critical of the mendicant cause, giving his vast library, inherited from Richard de Fournival (d. 1260), chancellor of Amiens, to the newly established College of the Sorbonne, for the benefit of poor theological students, who did not belong to any of the mendicant orders.[20] Gerard thus continued a tradition previously asserted by William of Saint-Amour.

2. Lombard's *Sentences*, Alexander of Hales, and the *Summa Halensis*

When Thomas arrived in Paris to study under Albert, Alexander's edition of the *Sentences* had been adopted by both secular and mendicant theologians as normative within the Faculty of Theology.[21] While the *Sentences* had been studied in Paris since the later 12th century, Alexander established an important precedent

17 *CUP* no. 257, 1, p. 297.

18 *CUP* nos. 275 and 282, 1, pp. 314–315 and 324–326.

19 *CUP* no. 342, 1, p. 391, issued 26 June 1259: "Preterea Guillotum bedellum scolarium nationis Picardorum pro eo, quod sue saluitis immemor in dominica de Ramis Palmarum proximo preterita predicante dilecto filio fratre Thomas de Aquino ejusdem Ordinis Predicatorum quondam labellum famosum. […] in conspectus cleri et populi tunc ibidem existentium in tui et ipsorum fratrum injuriam publicare presumpsit, excommunicatum presentibus magistris et scolaribus studeas nuntiare." On the broader context of this episode, see J.-P. Torrell, *Séculiers et mendiants ou Thomas d'Aquin au naturel*, "Revue des sciences religieuses" 1993, Vol. 67, No. 2, pp. 19–40, esp. p. 19.

20 On Gerard's debt to traditional theology, see C. Schabel, *The Early Career of Gerard of Abbeville*, "Vivarium" 2017, Vol. 55, pp. 340–359, with comments on Gerard and Thomas on pp. 353–354. Schabel provides a valuable review of the important work of Stephen M. Metzger, *Gerard of Abbeville, Secular Master, on Knowledge, Wisdom, and Contemplation*, Brill, Leiden 2017.

21 Peter Lombard, *Magistri Petri Lombardi Parisiensis episcopi Sententiae in IV libros distinctae* [*Sent.*], 2 vols. ed. I. Brady, Grottaferrata, Rome 1971–1981.

by grouping the multiple chapters of each of its four books into a more manageable number of thematic distinctions, making it easier to focus on core issues.[22] But in following the *Sentences*, Alexander inherited a problem created by its organization into four books: the first on God, the second on creation and original sin, the third on Christ, and the fourth on the sacraments. As Thomas would realize, this structure scatters ethical discussion into separate places: original sin in Book II, virtues and grace in Book III, and penance in Book IV. This limited the capacity of Lombard's commentators to respond to the flowering of commentaries on Aristotle's *Ethics* from the 1230s on.[23]

In his early *Glossa* on the *Sentences*, from the 1220s, Alexander refers quite frequently to the authority of Aristotle, including the *Metaphysics* and *Ethics*, but not that of Avicenna. His importance, however, lies in his introducing a range of other authors, mentioned either only briefly or not at all by Peter Lombard, like Dionysius the Areopagite, Boethius, Saint Anselm and Richard of Saint Victor.[24] Alexander also composed before becoming a Franciscan (c. 1236) the *Quaestiones disputatae*, structured as a *summa* on the pattern of the *Sentences*.[25] His major project, however, was the *Summa* on which he and John of La Rochelle worked between 1236 and their deaths in 1245 (John on 6 February, Alexander on 21 August). Roger Bacon (c. 1220–c. 1292) was notoriously dismissive of Alexander, blaming him for making Lombard's *Sentences* the foundation of Christian teaching rather than Scripture, and as being ignorant of natural philosophy and

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22 See Brady's introduction, to *Sent*., pp. 143*–144*.

23 See various studies of I. Zavattero: *Le bonheur parfait dans les premiers commentaires latins de l'Éthique à Nicomaque*, "Revue de théologie et philosophie" 2007, Vol. 139, pp. 311–327; *Le début de la réception de l'Éthique à Nicomaque à Paris. Maîtres ès arts et théologiens en comparaison*, "Annuaire de l'Ecole pratique des hautes-études" 2019, Vol. 126, pp. 295–304; *L'azione della voluntas nei commenti parigini del xiii secolo all' Ethica Nicomachea*, "Medioevo" 2024, Vol. 49, pp. 89–120.

24 Alexander of Hales, *Glossa in quatuor libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi* [*Glossa in Sent.*], 4 vols., Quaracchi, Florence 1951–1957. Introduced by V. Doucet, *A New Source of the Summa fratris Alexandri: The Commentary on the Sentences of Alexander of Hales*, "Franciscan Studies" 1946, Vol. 6, pp. 403–417.

25 Alexander of Hales, *Quaestiones disputatae "antequam esset frater"* [*Quaestiones*], 3 vols., Quaracchi, Florence 1960; see, e.g., A.A. Young, *Accessus ad Alexandrum: The "Praefatio" to the "Postilla in Johannis Evangelium" of Alexander of Hales (1186?–1245)*, "Mediaeval Studies" 1990, Vol. 52, pp. 1–23; Aleksander Horowski, *Tractatus magistri Alexandri de significationibus et expositione sacrarum scripturarum. Introduzione ed edizione critica*, "Collectanea Franciscana" 2009, Vol. 79, Nos. 1–2, pp. 5–44; Alexander of Hales, *On the Signification and Exposition of the Holy Scriptures*, trans. A. Gies, Franciscan Institute, Ashland 2018.

metaphysics, knowledge of which had exploded since the 1230s.[26] Bacon was particularly caustic about the *Summa*, which he described as "heavier than a horse." He reported that it was attributed to Alexander out of reverence, but was in fact written by others.[27] In recent years, however, this dismissive attitude has been challenged by Lydia Schumacher and others in a series of publications about early Franciscan theology in Paris.[28] I suggest that their research indirectly provides a background for re-evaluating the achievement of Thomas Aquinas.

Theologia and *sacra doctrina* or sacred teaching, terms so important to Thomas, were hardly ever used in patristic teaching.[29] Augustine never spoke of *sacra doctrina*, preferring to describe his teaching as *doctrina Christiana* or *doctrina fidei*, the teaching of faith.[30] This latter phrase would continue to be used by many

[26] R. Bacon, *Opus minus*, in: *Opera quædam hactenus inedita*, Vol. 1, ed. J.S. Brewer, Longman, London 1859, p. 326: "Et si ipse eam fecisset vel magnam partem, tamen non legit naturalia nec metaphysica nec audivit ea, quia non fuerunt libri principales harum scientiarum nec commentarii translati quando rexit in artibus. […] Unde, ut breviter dicam, ipse ignoravit has scientias nunc vulgatas, scilicet naturalem philosophiam et metaphysicam, in quibus est tota gloria studii modernorum." See also R. Bacon, *Opus minus*, op. cit., p. 328: "Quartum peccatum est quod praefertur una sententia magistralis textui facultatis theologiae, scilicet liber Sententiarum."

[27] Ibid., p. 326: "et adscripserunt ei magnam Summam illam, quae est plus quam pondus unius equi, quam ipse non fecit sed alii. Et tamen propter reverentiam fuit adscripta et vocatur Summa fratris Alexandri."

[28] L. Schumacher, *Early Franciscan Theology: Between Authority and Innovation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2019; L. Schumacher, ed.: *The Summa Halensis: Sources and Context*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2020; *The Summa Halensis: Doctrines and Debates*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2020; *The Legacy of Early Franciscan Thought*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2021; L. Schumacher, O.V. Bychkov, eds., *A Reader in Early Franciscan Theology: The Summa Halensis*, Fordham University Press, New York 2023; L. Schumacher, *Human Nature in Early Franciscan Thought: Philosophical Background and Theological Significance*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2023, https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009201131.

[29] *Sacra doctrina* is mentioned just once, by Cassiodorus, *Expositio psalmorum*, Ps. 10, ed. M. Adriaen, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina* [*CCSL* 97], Brepols, Turnhout 1958, l. 154: "significans sacrae doctrinae plenitudinem hanc complecti numeri quantitatem," and three times by Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Iob* 23.25, ed. M. Adriaen, *CCSL* 143B (1985), p. 1182; "doctrinae sacrae escas offerre"; *Homiliae in evangelia*, 1 *Hom*. 20.3.156, ed. R. Etaix, *CCSL* 141 (1999), p. 156: "sacrae doctrinae eloquio."

[30] Augustine is the first Latin Father to make frequent reference to *doctrina Christiana* (or *Christiana doctrina*), not just in the treatise of that name, but in his letters, *Ep*. 82.10, 118.138.18, 177; 11, 137.20, 138.15 (*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* [*CSEL*] 31A, p. 103; 31B, pp. 120, 285, 288; 44, p. 675), *De civitate Dei* 13.16 and 18.51 (*CSEL* 48, pp. 398, 648), as well as in many of his manuals and polemical treatises. He speaks of *doctrina fidei* in *Quaestiones evangeliorum*, 2.40., ed. A. Mutzenbecher, *CCSL* 44B (1980), l. 52; *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus* 9.1, ed. R. Willems, *CCSL* 36 (1954), l. 19; *De fide et operibus* 7.11, ed. J. Zycha, *CSEL* 41 (1900), p. 46; *De catechizandis rudibus* 1, ed. Bauer, *CCSL* 46, l. 2.

authors, including Alexander of Hales, Albert, and Thomas himself.[31] Augustine similarly avoided referring to his teaching as *theologia*, a term that achieved wide currency in the West only in the later 12th century through the translation into Latin of treatises attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite. In *De caelesti hierarchia*, *theologia* is explained as poetic, metaphorical language reformulating Scripture, to speak about the divine "not without art."[32]

In the early 1120s, when Abelard renamed his treatise on the Trinity as *Theologia christiana* (subsequently shortening it to *Theologia*), about the three divine attributes of power, wisdom, and goodness, glimpsed by prophets and philosophers alike, some, like Bernard of Clairvaux, were shocked. Abelard reserved *theologia* for speaking about God, not his benefits. Hugh of Saint Victor was similarly restrictive, using *theologia* only within his commentary *Super Ierarchiam Dionisii*, not elsewhere. Peter Lombard in his *Sentences* largely ignores Dionysius and the term *theologia*.[33] In one of his few references to *theologi*, he explains that the "speculation of theologians" must always attend to the form of Scripture.[34] Lombard opens his *Sentences* by repeating the Augustinian saying that "all teaching is about things or signs."[35] By the 1170s, however, the term *theologia* was beginning to achieve wider currency, not just in relation to God, but to the virtues of faith, hope and love (as distinct from the cardinal virtues). Peter the Chanter (d. 1197)

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31 Albert refers to *doctrina fidei* six times in his *Sentences* commentary; Thomas uses it twenty-two times in his *Scriptum* on the *Sentences*, six times in the *SCG*, but ten times in the *ST*.

32 Dionysius, *De caelesti hierarchia*, ed. Ph. Chevallier et al., in: *Dionysiaca*, Desclée Brower, Bruges 1937, p. 743: "Etenim non sine arte theologia poeticis sanctis formationibus in non figuralibus mentibus usa est, nostram, ut dictum est, mentem respiciens, et familiarem ipsi et connaturalem sursumactionem prouidens, et ad ipsam reformans sursumactiuas sanctas scripturas."

33 Lombard, *Sent*. II, d. 9.1, d. 10.2 (1, pp. 371, 377–378), quoting Dionysius from a brief reference by Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in evangelia* 2, hom. 34.12, op. cit., p. 312.

34 Lombard, *Sent*. I, d. 32, c. 4.3, 1 (1, p. 237): "a veritate longinqua, cunctisque in theologia peritis patientia, abicimus." See also *Sent*. I, d. 1, c. 2 (1, p. 55): "Cumque his intenderit theologorum speculatio studiosa atque modesta, divinam scripturam, formam praescriptam in doctrina, tenere adverted." Lombard mentions Dionysius without access to his writings in *Sent*. II, d. 1.9.1–10.3 (1, pp. 371–372); the only other reference to *theologi* is III, d. 35, c. 1.3 (2, p. 198): "Distinctio sapientiae et scientiae secundum theologos."

35 Lombard, *Sent*. I, d. 1, c. 1.1 (1, p. 55); I, d. 1, c. 1.1 (1, p. 55): "Omni doctrina vel de rebus vel de signis," citing Augustine, *De doctrina christiana* 1.2.2, ed. J. Martin, *CSEL* 80 (1962), p. 9. Mark Clark argues that an earlier version of the *Sentences*, perhaps from the late 1140s, is preserved in a manuscript given to Lincoln Cathedral (MS 230) by Robert de Chesnay. Unfortunately, it begins only in I, d. 11, c. 1 (c. 37 of the earlier version), presumably through loss of earlier folios; see M. Clark, *An Early Version of Peter Lombard's Lectures on the Sentences*, "Traditio" 2019, Vol. 74, pp. 223–247.

may touch on his expansion of *theologia* as having two meanings, one about divine matters, the other about vices and virtues.[36] By 1209, Parisian masters were referring to themselves as theologians rather than as masters of the sacred page, and their Faculty as of Theology rather than of Scripture.[37] Alexander of Hales, perhaps following Innocent III, a student of Peter the Chanter, was influential in speaking of theological virtues within his *Glossa* on the *Sentences*, but also *Quaestiones disputatae*.[38] This encouraged common perception that *theologia* referred not just to the Godhead, but to the demands of a moral life, as distinct from those virtues taught by classical tradition.

While dwelling much on theological virtues, Alexander limits his use of *theologia* in his *Glossa*. He relates largely to the discussion by Dionysius, in whose thought he was particularly interested.[39] He expands, however, on the Dionysian idea of *ductiva* as what brings us back to God.[40] By contrast, *theologia*, not mentioned at all in the *Quaestiones disputatae*, is given pride of place as a science in the opening of the first book of *Halensis*, which Victorin Doucet convincingly demonstrated was not by Alexander, but by his younger colleague at the Franciscan studium, John of

[36] Petrus the Chanter illustrates this in *Distinctiones Abel*, ed. S.A. Barney, *CCCM* 288A (2004), letter T 17: "Theologia duplex est Superior siue celestis, que diuinorum noticiam spondet, que habet sua expedimenta, idest articulos fidei, et sua impedimenta, scilicet hereses. Hec speculatur ad electionem, ut inferior ad fugam; non enim fugimus malum nisi prius cognitum. Inferior siue subcelestis, que morum informationem docet. Et quedam speculatur ad fugam, ut uicia, et quedam ad electionem, ut uirtutes."

[37] In 1207, Innocent III uses both terms, but effectively acknowledges the authority of *theologia*; *CUP* no. 5 (1, p. 65): "ad quam pro sacre pagine disciplina celebris recurs habetur theologorum, sit copia magistrorum […] inhibemus ut Parisius magistrorum theologie numerus octonarium non transcendat."

[38] Innocent III, a former student of Peter the Chanter, invokes the distinction in various works: *Mysteriorum evangelicae legis et sacramenti eucharistiae libri VI* 2, 50, *PL* 217, col. 828; *Sermones*, *Sermo* 1 and *Sermo* 5, *PL* 217, cols. 600 and 615.

[39] William of Auxerre cites Augustine 1,447 times in his *Summa aurea*, compared to Dionysius (119 times or 8% of references to Augustine) and John of Damascus (103 times, or 7% of references to Augustine). Alexander, in his *Glossa*, cites Augustine 4,708 times, but Dionysius 114 times (11% of references to Augustine) and John of Damascus 196 times (18%). On their introduction in the late 12th century, see M.-D. Chenu, *L'entrée de la théologie grecque* and *Orientale lumen*, in: *La théologie au douzième siècle*, Vrin, Paris 1966, pp. 274–288, 289–308.

[40] Alexander refers to *ductiva* on nine occasions in his *Sentences* commentary, six times in his *Quaestiones disputatae "antequam esset frater"*. It occurs four times in *Halensis*, Book I, and once in Book II. The opening section of *Halensis* is translated by Oleg Bychok, but as by Alexander in *Alexander of Hales, The Sum of Theology*, "Franciscan Studies" 2008, Vol. 66, pp. 63–74.

La Rochelle (c. 1200–1245).[41] John may have studied under Philip the Chancellor (d. 1236) and William of Auxerre (d. 1231), as well as Alexander before becoming a Franciscan *lector*. He wrote much about the powers of the soul and moral questions before putting aside his own ambitions to work on Alexander's *Summa*.[42] He provided one of the earliest known definitions of *theologia* as *scientia de Deo*, a phrase repeated by Albert in his *Sentences* commentary.[43]

While Doucet argued that Books I and III of *Halensis* were by John of La Rochelle, he claimed that also its large second book (in two parts) about creation and original sin was by another disciple, whom he calls *Considerans*, who drew on or modified Alexander's previous writings.[44] Following this hypothesis, Schumacher refers to the authors of *Halensis* simply as "the Summists."[45] Yet the fact that *Halensis* was left incomplete at Alexander's death in August 1245 suggests that Alexander was himself responsible for much of the second book, itself in two parts, and was himself both drawing on and modifying his earlier writings.

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41 V. Doucet, *The History of the Problem of the Authenticity of the Summa*, "Franciscan Studies" 1947, Vol. 7, No. 1, pp. 26–41, No. 2, 274–312.

42 John of La Rochelle, *Tractatus de divisione multiplici potentiarum animae*, ed. P. Michaud-Quentin, Vrin, Paris 1964; *Summa de anima*, eds. I. Brady, J.G. Bougerol, Vrin, Paris 1995; J.D. Rasolofoarimanana, ed., *Etude et édition des sermons de l'avent de Jean de La Rochelle OMin († 3 février 1245), œuvres inédites*, "Archivum Franciscanum Historicum" 2005, Vol. 98, pp. 41–149; *Summa de divinis nominibus; Summa de articulis fidei*, ed. R. Saccenti, Quaracchi, Rome 2022. Saccenti observes that notes added to the recently discovered Paris, BnF lat, 3245, containing early Franciscan texts, put together probably in the first half of the 1230s, include theological notes perhaps from the teaching of John of La Rochelle in Paris in the years 1233–1235; R. Saccenti, *Etudier la théologie à Paris: les notes du f. 68v*, in: *Le Manuscrit franciscain retrouvé*, eds. N. Bériou, J. Dalarun, D. Poirel, CNRS, Paris 2021, pp. 169–180, esp. p. 171.

43 *Halensis* I, tract. introd., q. 1, c. 1.1 (p. 2): "Hinc est quod Theologia, quae est scientia de Deo, qui est causa causarum, sui gratia est." Cf. Albert, *Commentarii in libros Sententiarum I–IV* [*In Sent*.], in: *Opera omnia*, Vols. 25–26, Vivès, Paris 1893–1894, d.1A, art. 2 (ed. Borgnet, 25, p. 16): "Praeterea, Theologia dicitur a θεός quod est Deus, et λόγος, sermo: ergo ipsa est primo de Deo: et sermo scientiae est de suo subjecto: ergo videtur quod ipsa sit sciientia, de Deo ut de subject." Drawing on Dionysius, William of Auxerre distinguishes between mystical theology as about God and symbolic theology as about creatures, *Summa aurea* 4.1, ed. Ribaillier, in: *Spicilegium Bonaventurianum*, Vols. 16–19, Grottaferrata, Paris 1980–1985, p. 40, but never describes *theologia* as a *scientia* as such.

44 V. Doucet, "Prolegomena," preceding his edition of *Halensis*, Book III (1948). On John of La Rochelle, see I.P. Bejczy, *John of La Rochelle*, in: *Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy: Philosophy between 500 and 1500*, ed H. Lalgerlund, Springer, Dordrecht 2011, pp. 629–631, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4020-9729-4_273, and the introduction of J.-G. Bougerol, of John of La Rochelle, *Summa de anima*, op. cit.

45 L. Schumacher, *Early Franciscan Theology*, op. cit., pp. 7–8.

All the first three books of *Halensis* are organized in a complex, uniform way, involving part, inquiry, treatise, section, as well as distinctions and questions. As the pope observed in 1256, this is not a system for beginners. Its complexity recalls the complaint made by Thomas in the Prologue to his own *Summa* about other syntheses having excessive multiplication of unnecessary questions, which conceal rather than illuminate the underlying teaching of Scripture.[46]

The second book of *Halensis*, divided into two parts, about creation and original sin, is similar to its first and third books in incorporating many references to Avicenna, not mentioned in Alexander's glosses on the *Sentences* or his *Quaestiones*. Whether Alexander himself developed this interest through John of La Rochelle is not certain.[47] Yet even in his early writings, Alexander does provide original insights. As Magdalena Bieniak observes, he expands in his *Quaestiones* on a comment inspired by Saint Bernard, which he had previously made in his *Glossa*, about the soul having an innate aptitude for being united with its body, namely, its *unibilitas*.[48] This neologism, much used in all three books of *Halensis*, resurfaces extensively in the commentaries of Bonaventure and Albert.[49] Thomas also uses it a good deal in his *Scriptum*, but much less subsequently.[50]

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46 *ST* I, Prol.: "Consideravimus namque huius doctrinae novitios, in his quae a diversis conscripta sunt, plurimum impediri, partim quidem propter multiplicationem inutilium quaestionum, articularum et argumentorum; partim etiam quia ea quae sunt necessaria talibus ad sciendum, non traduntur secundum ordinem disciplinae, sed secundum quod requirebat librorum expositio, vel secundum quod se praebebat occasio disputandi; partim quidem quia eorundem frequens repetitio et fastidium et confusionem generabat in animis auditorum."

47 There are 30 references to Avicenna in *Halensis* II.1 (28 in Inq. 4), but 5 and 3 in *Halensis* I and III respectively; see L. Schumacher, *Cognitive Powers: The Summa Halensis*, in: *Human Nature in Early Franciscan Thought*, op. cit., pp. 205–227.

48 M. Bieniak, *The Soul-Body Union in the Summa Halensis*, in: *The Legacy of Early Franciscan Thought*, ed. L. Schumacher, De Gruyter, Berlin, Boston 2021, pp. 37–48, esp. pp. 44–45, 48, https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110684827-003; cf. Bernard of Clairvaux, *De consideratione libri* 5.18, in: *Sancti Bernardi opera*, Vol. 3, eds. J. Leclercq, H.-M. Rochais, Editiones Cistercienses, Rome 1963, p. 482: "Et est nativa, qua anima et caro unus nascitur homo." Alexander uses *unibilitas* just once in his *Glossa in Sent*. III (MS L), d. 5, num. 36 (p. 68): "qua habuit anima potentia unibilitatis," but eleven times in *Quaestiones*.

49 *Unibilitas* occurs five times in the second book and fourteen times in the third book of *Halensis*. It occurs sixteen times in the commentary of Bonaventure on the *Sentences* (*Commentaria in quattuor libros Sententiarum Magistri Petri Lombardi* [*In Sent.*], in: *Opera omnia*, Vols. 1–4, ed. PP. Collegii a S. Bonaventura, Rome 1882–1889), thirteen times in that of Albert, *In Sent*.

50 *Unibilitas* occurs twelve times in the *Scriptum*, including Thomas, *In Sent*. II, d. 3, q. 1, art. 6, arg. and resp. ad arg. 3; *In Sent*. III, d. 2, q. 1 (four times), d. 5, q. 3, art. 2 (four times), d. 21, q. 1, art. 1. It also occurs just once in *Quodlibeta* IX, q. 2, art. resp. 3 (p. 180) and once in *ST* III, q. 29, art. 1, resp. ad arg. 1.

Alexander also formulates in his *Quaestiones* an axiom, subsequently much associated with Thomas Aquinas, namely, that "grace does not destroy nature, but perfects it."[51] This theme also recurs in both the second and third books of *Halensis*.[52] Again, this is an axiom subsequently repeated by Bonaventure, Albert the Great, and Aquinas.[53] Alexander subtly transforms Augustine's emphasis on fallen human nature, by relating it to Dionysian teaching, mediated through Hugh of Saint Victor, about the soul being perfected, after purgation and illumination, by grace.[54] Such discourse fitted into Avicenna's account of the soul as the perfection of the body. In the early 1240s, when Albert the Great produced his own commentary on the *Sentences*, he was clearly aware of such discussions among Alexander's disciples, even if he wanted to go much further in his awareness of the writings of both Dionysius and Aristotle.

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51 Alexander of Hales, *Quaestiones*, q. 5, disp. 2, membrum 3.36 (2, p. 1171): "Quod enim naturae est, *non solvitur* adveniente fide, sed magis perficitur, *quia gratia consummat naturam*."

52 *Halensis* II.1, inq. 2, tract. 3, sec. 2, q. 2, tit. 1, d. 2 (2, p. 223): "Quod videtur per hoc quod gratia *et gloria perficiunt et consummant naturam; ergo non destruunt actum naturalem* in angelis vel quantum ad cognitionem vel quantum ad affectionem"; *Halensis* III.2, inq. 3, tract. 2.1, q. 2, tit. 4, c. 4, art. 1 (3.2, p. 516): "Item, perfectio gratiae non destruit quod est naturae, sed perficit." Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *In Sent*. III, d. 23.2, art. 3, resp. ad 1: "Ad secundum dicendum, quod scientia et intellectus habent certitudinem per id quod ad cognitionem pertinet, scilicet evidentiam ejus cui assentitur; fides autem habet certitudinem ab eo quod est extra genus cognitionis, in genere affectionis existens; et ideo scientia et intellectus est sicut in subjecto in eo a quo habet certitudinem, non autem fides."

53 Bonaventure, *In Sent*. II, d. 9 (p. 239): "gratia desursum veniens naturam conservat, naturam decorat, naturam consummate"; Albertus, *In Sent*. III, d. 29a, art. 5 (p. 550): "Gratia ejus non destruit, sed perficit naturam: cum igitur natura ante gratiam plus diligat se quam Deum, videtur etiam quod post gratiam faciet idem." Albert, *In Sent*. III, d. 31d, art. 12 (p. 592): "Item, Gratia non destruit naturam, sed elevat: cum igitur hoc sit naturale, videtur quod maneat in patria"; Thomas, *In Sent*. II, d. 9, q. 1, art. 8, arg.: "Praeterea, quantumcumque intellectus perficiatur lumine gratiae vel gloriae, semper oportet quod intelligat sub lumine naturali: quia gratia non tollit naturam sed perficit"; *In librum Boethii De trinitate*, q. 2, art. 3, corp. (p. 94): "Responsio. Dicendum quod dona gratiarum hoc modo naturae adduntur quod eam non tollunt, sed magis perficiunt; unde et lumen fidei, quod nobis gratis infunditur, non destruit lumen naturalis"; *ST* I, q. 1, art. 2, resp. ad 2: "Cum enim gratia non tollat naturam, sed perficiat, oportet quod naturalis ratio subserviat fidei; sicut et naturalis inclinatio voluntatis obsequitur caritati."

54 Hugh of Saint Victor, *Super Ierarchiam Dionisii* 4.3.2, ed. D. Poirel, *CCCM* 178 (2015), p. 507: "Nunc demonstrare uult quia bonum quod in creatura, siue purgata, siue illuminata, siue perfecta, constat per gratiam, in ipso creatore a quo est subsistit per naturam; cuius 'divina beatitudo' et munda est sine purgatione, et lucens sine illuminatione, et perfecta sine susceptione." See also *Super Ierarchiam Dionisii* 7.7.2 (p. 577): "Triplex est gratia quam duobus modis exercent, accipiendo et impertiendo: primum est purgatio ad puritatem, deinde illuminatio ad veritatem, deinde perfectio ad bonitatem."

3. Thomas Aquinas and His *Scriptum* on the *Sentences*

Thomas's discussion of *theologia* as a science in relation to the opening of his *Scriptum* on the *Sentences* was indebted not just to Albert's commentary, but to the opening of *Halensis.* In 2006, Oliva provided important commentary on Thomas's discussion, including a new critical edition of this prologue.[55] In a subsequent paper reviewing discussions about the rationality of faith in the first half of the 13th century, Oliva suggests that Thomas's ideas about the certitude of faith according to both intellect and affect build on themes in the opening of *Halensis*.[56] The fact that these themes are developed in both its first and third books suggests that John of La Rochelle may be their true inspiration.[57] Oliva also observes the significance of *Halensis* introducing *doctrina sacra* as a synonym for *doctrina theologiae*, when discussing its relationship to other *scientiae* or forms of knowledge.[58] Boyd Coolman makes similar points about parallels between

[55] A. Oliva, *Les débuts de l'enseignement de Thomas d'Aquin et sa conception de la sacra doctrina*, Beauchesne, Paris 2006, with discussion of previous treatments on pp. 255–268, and a critical edition on pp. 303–340. One key additional passage in art. 3 is 2.2 B (pp. 323–324), which concludes: "Est ergo theologia scientia quasi subalternate diuine scientie a qua accipit principia sua."

[56] A. Oliva, *Les discussions sur les principes de la théologie comme science pendant la première moitié du XIIIe siècle*, in: *Connaître Dieu. Métamorphoses de la théologie comme science dans les religions monotheists*, eds. O. Boulnois, S. Hermann De Franceschi, Ph. Hoffmann, Brepols, Turnhout 2024, pp. 247–278. See also L. Amorós, *Teologia como ciencia practica en la escneia îranciscana en los tiempos que preceden a Escoto*, "Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen age" 1934, Vol. 9, pp. 261–304, with texts of Rigaud on pp. 276–277.

[57] *Halensis* I, tract. introd., q. 1, c. 4, art. 2, num. 5 (1, p. 9): "Respondeo: Est certitudo speculationis et est certitudo experientiae; praeterea, est certitudo secundum intellectum et est certitudo secundum affectum; item, est certitudo quoad animum spiritualem et est certitudo quoad animum animalem. Dico ergo quod modus theologicus est certior certitudine experientiae, certitudine quoad affectum, quae est per modum gustus, in Psalmo: Quam dulcia faucibus meis eloquia tua etc., quamvis non certior quoad speculationem intellectus, quae est per modum visus." See also *Halensis* III, pars 1, tract. 3, q. 2, c. 2, num. 117 (4, p. 165): "Cum ergo constat quod imperfectionem habuit ex parte affectivae sensibilis, secundum quam habuit tristitiam et timorem, ergo et ex parte cognitivae sensibilis habuit imperfectionem. – Item, simili ratione videtur quod in parte rationali habuerit imperfectionem quantum ad cognitionem, cum etiam in parte rationali habuerit imperfectionem quantum ad affectivam." This theme of affective knowledge is particularly pronounced in *Halensis* III, parts 2 and 3.

[58] *Halensis* I, tract introd., q. 1, c. 2.1 (1, p. 3): "Consequenter quaeritur de distinctione doctrinae sacrae ab aliis scientiis. Quaeritur ergo si doctrina Theologiae sit sicut una aliarum scientiarum, vel comprehendat ipsas, vel comprehendatur in illis ut alicui parti Philosophiae supponatur. Ad quod obicitur sic: [Eccli. 1:1] Omnis sapientia a Domino Deo est; ergo omnis sapientia seu

Halensis and Thomas's *Summa*.[59] The fact that Alexander never discusses *theologia* in his *Quaestiones* reinforces the originality of John of La Rochelle's opening discussion in *Halensis*, even though he is teaching in Alexander's name. Here it is argued that theology is a science because it deals with the causes of things, and is "about the substance of God, effecting through Christ the work of human repair."[60]

The phrase *sacra doctrina*, rare in patristic tradition and first used by Thomas at the opening of his *Scriptum*, occurs quite frequently at the opening of *Halensis* as *doctrina sacra*, as a shortening of the relatively unusual phrase *doctrina sacrae Scripturae*. Albert uses this phrase twice at the opening of his *Sentences* commentary, without shortening it to *doctrina sacra*.[61] Whereas the Church Fathers tended to describe Scripture as "holy," it was increasingly common by the 13th century to refer to *sacrae Scripturae* in the plural, with *sacrae* more often placed before the noun.[62] Speaking of *doctrina* was a way of identifying the importance of the teaching of Scripture, rather than the text itself.

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scientia est theologica vel divina, quia theologica scientia non est aliud quam scientia divina. 2. Item, theologica sive divina scientia aut dicitur divina quia a Deo: et tunc omnis alia scientia est divina; aut dicitur divina quia est de Deo: et secundum hoc Philosophia Prima est divina et theologica, quia est de Deo; erit igitur sacra Scriptura scientia sicut aliae vel sicut Prima Philosophia." See also *Halensis* I, tract. introd., c. 4, a. 2 (1, p. 9): "Respondeo: Est certitudo speculationis et est certitudo experientiae; praeterea, est certitudo secundum intellectum et est certitudo secundum affectum; item, est certitudo quoad animum spiritualem et est certitudo quoad animum animalem." This recurs in *Halensis* III, pars 3, inq. 2, tract. 1, membrum 5, c. 2, num. 678 (4, p. 1077): "Notandum tamen est quod est certitudo fidei respectu rerum gloriae secundum affectum ut habeantur, et secundum hoc est fides substantia rerum sperandarum; et est certitudo secundum intellectum ut videantur, et secundum hoc est argumentum non apparentium."

59 B.T. Coolman, *On the Subject-Matter of Theology in the Summa Halensis and St. Thomas Aquinas*, "The Thomist" 2015, Vol. 79, No. 3, pp. 439–466.

60 *Halensis* I, tract. introd., q. 1, c. 4, art. 4, num. 7 (1, p. 13): "Ex praedictis manifestum est quod doctrina Theologiae est de substantia Dei efficiente per Christum opus reparationis humanae."

61 The phrase *doctrina sacra* occurs in *Halensis* I, tract. introd., q. 1, c. 1.1, c. 2.2 (1, pp. 2–5), and *doctrina sacrae Scripturae* in II.2, inq. 3, tract. 8, tit. 3, c. 7, num. 756 (3, p. 746). Cf. Albert, *In Sent*. I, d. 1A, art. 6 (25, pp. 20–21).

62 Using the database provided by the Library of Latin texts to compare references to *Scriptura sacra* (or *sacra Scriptura* in singular or plural forms) to mentions of *Scriptura sancta* (or *sancta Scriptura* in singular and plural forms), it emerges that *sacra* is preferred in only 7% of references in the patristic period, compared to 22% among the later Fathers (6th–8th centuries), 45% in the 9th century, 71% in the 11th century, 64% in the 12th century, but 91% in the 13th century, with references to holy Scripture in proportionate decline. In 13th-century writings, only 15% place *sacra* or *sacrae* after the noun, compared to 35% in the 12th century.

While *Halensis* makes passing reference to *doctrina sacra* in its opening discussion, the phrase is not used by either Albert or Bonaventure in their commentaries on the *Sentences*. Rather, their focus is on *theologia*, which in the Dionysian corpus is understood as discourse about God, as presented in Scripture, but using poetic expressions "not without art." Hugh of Saint Victor frequently explains *theologia* in his commentary *Super Ierarchiam Dionisii* as "that is divine Scripture" – as if he is deliberately countering Abelard's much more philosophical understanding of the term.[63] In the *praelocutio* to his commentary on Book II, Bonaventure emphasizes his respect for the views of his teachers, especially "of our master and father of good memory, brother Alexander," even though (as Matthew Beckmann has argued) he differed with his teacher on aspects of Christ's nature.[64] Bonaventure understood *theologia* as about both God and creation, as taught by *Halensis*.[65] In his *Breviloquium*, Bonaventure refined this argument by saying that *sacra doctrina*, as taught by Scripture, was the same as *theologia*, and thus concerned about God, creation, and redemption.[66] In his *Itinerarium*, he

63 Hugh of Saint Victor, *Super Ierarchiam Dionisii*, 3.2.1, p. 321: "Etenim valde artificialiter vel prudenter sive considerate 'usa est Theologia,' id est divina Scriptura, 'poeticis sacris formationibus,' id est descriptionibus formarum vel figurarum ad sacra vel sancta representanda propositarum; formationibus 'poeticis,' id est excogitatis vel adinventis ratione et compositis pro similitudine misticae traditionis, 'in non figuratis intellectibus,' id est spiritibus sine figura corporali vel forma in sua simplicitate consistentibus significandis." Hugh repeats the phrase "Theologia, id est divina Scriptura" in *Super Ierarchiam Dionisii* at 5.4.2 and 5.4.3 (pp. 523 and 526), 7.7.4 (p. 601), 9.9.2 (p. 631), and 9.11.1 (p. 653). At p. 523: "Ita, ait, sicut 'Theologia,' id est sacra Scriptura, testatur, manifestationes divinae 'nobis per angelos donatae sunt.'"

64 Bonaventure, *In Sent*. II, Praelocutio (2, p. 1): "Et quemadmodum in primo libro sententiis adhaesi et communibus opinionibus magistrorum, et potissime magistri et patris nostri bonae memoriae fratris Alexandri, sic in consequentibus libris ab eorum vestigiis non recedam"; M.T. Beckmann, *Bonaventure and Alexander: Friend or Foe?*, in: *"Non enim fuerat Evangelii surdus auditor…" (1 Celano 22): Essays in Honor of Michael W. Blastic, O.F.M., on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*, eds. M. Cusato, S.J. McMichael, Brill, Leiden 2020, pp. 382–395, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004432499_020.

65 Bonaventure, *In Sent*. I, d. 6 (p. 43): "Et est ista divisio satis conveniens huic scientiae, quia cum theologia sit de Creatore et de creaturis, utile est, ut theologus doceat, quomodo homo per alias res tendat in Deum."

66 Bonaventure, *Breviloquium*, in: *Opera omnia*, Vol. 5, ed. PP. Collegii a S. Bonaventura, Rome 1891, Prol.: "Magnus doctor gentium et praedicator veritatis divino repletus spiritu tanquam vas electum et sanctificatum in hoc verbo aperit sacrae scripturae quae theologia dicitur, ortum progressum et statum insinuans ortum scripturae attendi"; Prol. 6: "In principio intelligendum est quod sacra doctrina videlicet theologia quae principaliter agit de primo principio scilicet de Deo trino et uno de septem agit in universe, scilicet primo de trinitate Dei, secundo de creatura mundi, tertio de corruptela peccati, quarto de incarnatione verbi, quinto de gratia Spiritus Sancti, sexto de medicina sacramentali et septimo de statu finalis iudicii."

goes further in arguing that, at the highest level, affective knowledge is superior to what was purely rational.[67] Thomas builds on these ideas in his *Scriptum* on the *Sentences*, but develops a more intellectual understanding of *theologia* as both metaphysics and sacred teaching.[68]

Thomas introduces the *Sentences* with the same image about rivers flowing from Paradise as Pope Alexander had used in his 1256 letter to describe the teaching of Alexander of Hales, inspired by Ecclesiasticus 24:40, "I, wisdom, have poured out rivers" (*Ego sapientia effudi flumina*). This verse had rarely attracted attention, except by John Gallus in comments on the *Angelica Hierarchia*.[69] The verse offered more opportunity than that chosen by both Alexander and John of La Rochelle (Exodus 3:14: "I am who I am") to begin their discussions.[70] It expanded on the verse chosen by Albert to open in his *Sentences* commentary (Eccles. 24:5): "I came out of the most high, the first-born before all creatures."[71] Thomas could also be responding to the verse Bonaventure had chosen to explain the content of the four books of the *Sentences*: (Job 28:11): "He pondered on the depths of the rivers and brought hidden things into the light."[72] Thomas took this theme further when introducing Lombard's third book, with Ecclesiastes 1:7: "The rivers return to the place from where they come." Thomas goes further than Bonaventure in interpreting the rivers as the eternal procession of the Son, manifested through creation and Scripture.[73] The fact that the pope's 1256 letter begins with exactly the same image of a river flowing from Paradise as Thomas used in

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67 A. Oliva, *Les discussions*…, op. cit., p. 21. See Bonaventure, *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*, in: *Opera omnia*, Vol. 5, ed. PP. Collegii a S. Bonaventura, Rome 1891, c. 4.3 (l. 21): "Ad exercitium contemplationis secundum hunc quartum gradum quem nemo capit nisi qui accipit quia magis est in experientia affectuali quam in consideratione rationali."

68 Thomas, *In Sent*. II, d. 24, q. 1, art. 3, sed contra: "Sed contra, per virtutes affectivas et apprehensivas sufficienter dividuntur vires intellectivae partis." See also d. 39, q. 2, art. 1, sed contra: "Praeterea, sicut pars intellectiva perficitur in veri cognitione, ita pars affectiva perficitur in voluntate boni."

69 Thomas, Prol. Magistri: "Ego sapientia effudi flumina… mei fructum" (ed. Oliva, p. 303); Thomas Gallus, *Explanatio in libros Dionysii, super angelica hierarchia* II, ed. D.A. Lawell, *CCCM* 223 (2011), p. 258 and p. 531, also c. 7 (p. 599), c. 13 (p. 657), and c. 15 (p. 710).

70 Alexander, *Glossa in Sent*. I, *introitus* 1 (1, p. 2); *Halensis*, Prol. (1, p. xlvii).

71 Albert, *In Sent*., Praef. (25, p. 1), cites the Vulgate form of Eccles. 24:5: "Ego ex ore Altissimi prodivi primogenita ante omnem creaturam."

72 Bonaventure, *In Sent*. I, Proemium (1, col. 2).

73 Thomas, *In Sent*. I, Prol. (ed. Oliva, p. 305): "Ista flumina olim occulta et quodammodo confusa erant, tum in similitudinibus creaturarum, tum etiam in aenigmatibus Scripturarum, ita ut vix aliqui sapientes Trinitatis mysterium fide tenerent."

the opening of his *Scriptum* raises a question as to whether the pope (or his secretary) was indirectly influenced by Thomas's commentary.

Thomas mentions *sacra doctrina* just three times in the first book of his *Scriptum*, to explain its necessity and subject matter, considering whether it was speculative or active, or both. He opens his discussion of the Prologue by declaring that "this science is called theology, as if talk about God."[74] Yet this is not clear-cut, because Hugh of Saint Victor sees *theologia* as also about restoration and divine matters (*circa divina*), in teaching about how things begin and end in God.[75] Having introduced a phrase (*sacra doctrina*) mentioned just briefly in *Halensis*, Thomas then mentions *theologia* some 14 times, again imitating *Halensis* in discussing whether it is a science. He echoes *Halensis* in wrongly attributing to Augustine a definition of *theologia* as knowledge of things which pertain to human salvation.[76] Thomas repeats the arguments of John of La Rochelle about *theologia* as a science, raising the argument that its character as metaphysics is very different from the way Scripture speaks about specific issues, employing various strategies, including metaphor and parables, argument, and moral instruction. Yet he insists in the *Scriptum* that *theologia* is able to encompass both theory and practice, expanding on an argument previously raised in *Halensis*.[77]

Both Alexander and John of La Rochelle had drawn extensively on the treatise *De spiritu et anima* attributed to Augustine, but in fact by a Cistercian author (Alcher of Clairvaux, I argue), who sought to combine Augustine's analysis of fallen human nature with the Boethian notion that the soul acquired knowledge initially

74 Thomas, *In Sent*. I, Prol., q. 1, art. 7, sed contra: "Sed in hac scientia fit sermo de Deo, dicitur enim theologia, quasi sermo de Deo."

75 Thomas, *In Sent*. I, Prol.: "et quia rationem suam non subjiciunt sacrae doctrinae; quod notatur ibi, nec doctrinae stadium impendunt"; Prol., q. 1: "Ad evidentiam hujus sacrae doctrinae, quae in hoc libro traditur, quaeruntur quinque"; d. 2: "Cum enim, ut supra dictum est, in prooem., sacrae doctrinae intentio sit circa divina; […] consideratio hujus doctrinae erit de rebus, secundum quod exeunt a Deo ut a principio, et secundum quod referuntur in ipsum ut in finem."

76 Thomas, *In Sent*. I, Prol., q. 1, art. 3, sed contra 1 (ed. Oliva, p. 319): "Theologia est scientia de rebus quae ad salutem hominis pertinent." Cf. *Halensis* I, tract. introd., q. 1, c. 1, num. 1 (1, p. 2): "Item, Augustinus, XIV De Trinitate: Theologia est scientia quae est in rebus quae ad salutem hominis pertinent; ergo est scientia."

77 Thomas, *In Sent*., Prol. Magistri, q. 1, art. 2 (ed. Oliva, p. 315): "Set in sacra Scriptura permixtim in eodem libro quandoque determinator de moribus, quandoque de creaturis, quandoque de creatore, sicut patet fere in omnibus libris." See also q. 1, art. 5, corp. (ed. Oliva, p. 330): "Et ideo oportet modum huius scientie quandoque esse argumentatiuum, tum per auctoritates, tum etiam per rationes et similitudines."

through the senses, then imagination, reason, intellect, and finally intelligence.[78] In his *Sentences* commentary, from the early 1240s, Albert the Great would mock this work as "not by Augustine, but by a certain Cistercian, William, who said many false things."[79] While Thomas is more diplomatic than Albert in his *Scriptum*, not identifying its author by name, Thomas is certainly critical of *De spiritu et anima*. In his later *Quaestiones disputatae*, Thomas was more explicit in repeating Albert's comments.[80] Thomas was also powerfully influenced by what Albert had to say in his commentary on the entire Dionysian corpus in the later 1240s. In this perspective, *theologia* was discourse about God, which could never be taken literally, but could employ poetry rather than argument to make its point.[81]

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[78] Ps.-Augustine, *De spiritu et anima* [*DSA*], *PL* 40, cols. 779–825, esp. *De spiritu et anima* 4, *PL* 40, col. 782, drawing on Boethius, *Philosophiae consolatio* 5, prosa 4.26. The *DSA* was translated into English by E. Leiva and B. Ward, within *Three Treatises on Man: A Cistercian Anthropology*, eds. B. McGinn, Cistercian Publications, Kalamazoo, MI, 1977, pp. 177–282; see C. Mews, *Debating the Authority of Pseudo-Augustine's De spiritu et anima*, "Przegląd Tomistyczny" 2018, Vol. 24, pp. 321–348, and *The Early Diffusion of the De spiritu et anima and Cistercian Reflection on the Powers of the Soul*, "Viator" 2019, Vol. 49, pp. 297–330. Alexander cites it in his *Sentences* commentary much more often as *De anima et spiritu* [*DAS*] than as *De spiritu et anima* [*DSA*], the form preferred by John of La Rochelle in his own writing. In *Halensis* II, the sequence *DAS* occurs 64 times against 5 times for *DSA*. In Books I and III, however, *DAS* occurs 10 times, against 1 for *DSA* and in Book III, 17 times for *DAS* against 3 for *DSA*. This points to Alexander's preferred wording having dominant influence throughout *Halensis*.

[79] Albert, *In Sent*. I, d. 8, a. 25 (pp. 257b–258a): "quod non est Augustini, sed cujusdam Guillelmi Cisterciensis qui multa falsa dixit"; Thomas, *In Sent*. IV, d. 44, q. 3, a. 3, qc. 2, ad 1: "Ad primum ergo dicendum, quod liber ille negatur a quibusdam esse Augustini; dicitur enim fuisse cujusdam Cisterciensis, qui eum ex dictis Augustini compilavit, et quaedam de suo addidit; unde quod ibi scribitur, pro auctoritate habendum non est"; *Quaestiones de anima*, a. 12, ad. 1, ed. B.C. Bazan, Cerf, Paris 1996, p. 110: "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod liber iste De spiritu et anima non est Augustini, set dicitur cuiusdam Cisterciensis fuisse; nec est multum curandum de hiis que in eo dicuntur." Albert, *In Sent*. I, d. 8F, art. 25 (25, p. 257). See also d.10A, art. 2 (25, p. 312). Albert makes nine other references to this work as by Augustine, suggesting that Albert could have added these doubts after the initial redaction of his commentary.

[80] Thomas, *In Sent*. III, d. 29, q. 1, art. 3; d. 34, q. 3, art. 1; d. 44, q. 3, art. 3; and *In Sent*. IV, d. 49, q. 2, art. 7, arg. He is more explicit in *Quaestio disputata de spiritualibus creaturis*, ed. Marietti, Turin 1953 [*Quaestiones disputatae*, Vol. 2], art. 11 (p. 413): "Ad secundum dicendum quod liber de spiritu et anima est apocryphus, cum enim auctor ignoretur, et sunt ibi multa vel falsa vel improprie dicta: quia ille qui librum composuit, non intellexit dicta sanctorum, a quibus accipere conatus fuit"; *Quaestiones disputatae de anima*, ed. B.C. Bazan, Cerf, Paris 1996, q. 12 (p. 110): "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod liber iste De spiritu et anima non est Augustini, set dicitur cuiusdam Cisterciensis fuisse; nec est multum curandum de hiis que in eo dicuntur."

[81] Thomas, *In Sent*. I, Prol., q. 1.5: "Ad destructionem autem errorum non proceditur nisi per sensum litteralem, eo quod alii sensus sunt per similitudines accepti et ex similitudinariis locutionibus

Poetic imagery in Scripture had been mentioned in *Halensis*, but explained as a consequence of the weakness of human understanding.[82]

4. An Experimental Strategy: Boethius and the *Summa contra Gentiles*

Once Thomas was officially allowed to teach in the Faculty of Theology, he started to think about alternative ways of teaching. He deepened his arguments from reason by producing the first commentaries on *De trinitate* and *De hebdomadibus* of Boethius since those of the mid-12th century.[83] Whereas these texts, and occasionally the commentaries of Gilbert of Poitiers, had been cited in *Halensis*, the contrary opinions of Bernard of Clairvaux were often given more weight.[84] Albert speaks much more positively than Alexander about Gilbert on Boethius.[85] Thomas recognizes that there are different ways of arguing. While Ambrose and Hilary argued from authority, Augustine from reason and authority, Thomas (on the model of Saint Anselm) says he will follow Boethius in arguing from reason.[86]

non potest sumi argumentatio; unde et Dionysius dicit (in epistola ad Titum, in princip.) quod symbolica theologia non est argumentativa."

82 *Halensis* I, tract. introd., q. 1, c. 4, art. 1, num. 4 (1, p. 8): "Ex quibus verbis B. Dionysii patet quod ratio quare sacra Scriptura valde artificialiter secundum modum poeticum tradatur, potest esse necessitas intellectus nostri, qui deficit in comprehensione divinorum; secunda est dignitas veritatis quae debet celari hominibus malis."

83 Peter Lombard makes a single reference to Boethius in *Sent*. I, d. 8, c. 1.1 (1, pp. 101–102). On the Prologue of the commentary on the *De trinitate*, see J.-P. Torrell, *Philosophie et théologie d'après le Prologue de Thomas d'Aquin sur le Super Boethii De trinitate*, "Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale" 1999, Vol. 10, pp. 299–353, and A. Oliva, *La contemplation des philosophes selon Thomas d'Aquin*, "Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques" 2012, Vol. 96, pp. 585–662, referred to by J.-P. Torrell in *Initiation à saint Thomas d'Aquin*, op. cit., p. 294, n. 12.

84 The Library of Latin Texts reports 51 references to Boethius in Alexander's *Glossa in Sent*. I (at least half explicitly to *De trinitate*), and 298 in *Halensis* I. There are 75 references to Anselm in the first book of the *Glossa*, with 174 in the first book of *Halensis*. William of Auxerre has 64 references to Boethius in the four books of his *Summa aurea*, but just 15 to Anselm.

85 Most allusions to Gilbert occur in Albert, *In Sent*. I, d. 33E, art. 5, and d. 34c, art. 1 (26, pp. 147–152). Thomas refers to Gilbert in *ST* I, q. 28, art. 2: "Respondeo dicendum quod circa hoc dicitur Gilbertus Porretanus errasse, sed errorem suum postmodum in Remensi Concilio revocasse. Dixit enim quod relationes in divinis sunt assistentes, sive extrinsecus affixae."

86 Thomas, *In librum Boethii De trinitate*, Prol. 5 (p. 47): "Modus autem de Trinitate tractandi duplex est, ut dicit Augustinus in I de Trinitate, scilicet per auctoritates et per rationes, quem

In his Boethius commentary, Thomas expands on his earlier argument about *theologia* as a science to which other sciences are subject. He understands *theologia* here in a Boethian sense as that which is speculative and about God, or in philosophical terms, metaphysics.[87] His primary focus, however, is on *sacra doctrina*, which he explains as different from philosophy in being based on faith rather than reason. Thomas is aware that *theologia* can be used in two ways, one about God alone as metaphysics, the other as the teaching transmitted by Scripture.[88] For Thomas, these terms are not synonyms, even if *theologia* is sometimes used in this broader way. Strictly speaking, *theologia* relates to knowledge of God rather than to his working within creation and history. While recognizing that many might consider it heretical for *sacra doctrina* to employ philosophical arguments, he argues that just as *sacra doctrina* is based on the light of faith, so philosophy is based on the natural light of reason, and cannot be opposed to faith, even if it is lacking in the insights of faith.[89] Thomas prefers the phrase sacred teaching to *theologia* because it embraces salvation history as a whole. Whereas *doctrina fidei* implies teaching uniquely from Christian revelation, *sacra doctrina* identifies teaching as sacred, whether Jewish, Christian or simply human (as embodied by Job, from the Land of Moab) and accessible through reason.

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utrumque modum Augustinus complexus est, ut ipsemet dicit. Quidam vero sanctorum patrum, ut Ambrosius et Hilarius, alterum tantum modum prosecuti sunt, scilicet per auctoritates. Boethius vero elegit prosequi per alium modum, scilicet per rationes, praesupponens hoc quod ab aliis per auctoritates fuerat prosecutum."

87 Thomas, *In librum Boethii De trinitate*, q. 2, art. 3, resp. ad arg. 7 (p. 97): "Et similiter theologia, cum omnes aliae scientiae sint huic quasi famulantes et praeambulae in via generationis, quamvis sint dignitate posteriores, potest uti principiis omnium aliarum scientiarum." See also c. 2, q. 5, art. 1 (p. 163): "Deinde ostendit de quibus sit tertia, scilicet divina: theologia, id est tertia pars speculativae, quae dicitur divina vel metaphysica vel philosophia prima, est sine motu, in quo convenit cum mathematica et differt a naturali, abstracta, scilicet a materia, atque inseparabilis, per quae duo differt a mathematica." See also q. 5, art. 1 (p. 166): "De quibus omnibus est theologia, id est scientia divina, quia praecipuum in ea cognitorum est Deus, quae alio nomine dicitur metaphysica, id est trans physicam, quia post physicam discenda occurrit nobis, quibus ex sensibilibus oportet in insensibilia devenire."

88 Ibid., q. 5, art. 4 (p. 195): "Sic ergo theologia sive scientia divina est duplex. Una, in qua considerantur res divinae non tamquam subiectum scientiae, sed tamquam principia subiecti, et talis est theologia, quam philosophi prosequuntur, quae alio nomine metaphysica dicitur. Alia vero, quae ipsas res divinas considerat propter se ipsas ut subiectum scientiae et haec est theologia, quae in sacra Scriptura traditur."

89 Ibid., q. 2, art. 3 (p. 30): "Sicut autem sacra doctrina fundatur supra lumen fidei, ita philosophia fundatur supra lumen naturale rationis; unde impossibile est quod ea, quae sunt philosophiae, sint contraria his quae sunt fidei, sed deficiunt ab eis."

Thomas takes Boethian ways of arguing much further in the work we know as *Summa contra Gentiles*. William of Tocco refers to it not as a *Summa*, but as "a book titled *Against the gentiles*, eloquent in style and deep in novelty and subtlety of reasoning, in which he showed in a wonderful way what he had from his own genius and what he had obtained by prayers in rapture of the mind in God."[90] Its first three books provide arguments about God and creation from reason alone, while only the fourth book offers arguments from revelation, about the Trinity and Christ. William was not wrong in identifying the novelty of a work that is very different from conventional *Summae*. Thomas was no longer writing for the Faculty of Theology. The reason he gives for writing, namely, to assist missionaries in finding arguments to convert non-Christians, seems unrealistic.[91] Perhaps it is more likely that he was writing for himself in an effort to escape the straightjacket imposed by the Parisian Faculty of Theology. He wanted to see if he could find arguments from reason for the core teachings presented in Scripture. Thomas avoids discussion of *theologia* in the *Contra Gentiles*. His only mention of the term occurs in a single reference to the *Mystica theologia* of Dionysius.[92] While Thomas never rejected the teaching of Augustine about Scripture, he became aware that there were other ways of understanding the message of Scripture, above all of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels. Thomas was always aware that the teaching of *theologia* rested on Scripture.

Thomas's goal was to promote the truth of Catholic faith, countering errors by reason, Yet the *Contra Gentiles* is not so much a manual, as a book for advanced readers. There are just three references to *sacra doctrina*, the first coming relatively late in Book I, when referring to the teaching of both Isaiah and Saint Paul

[90] *CUP* no. 530 (1, p. 646): "Summa fratris Thome contra Gentiles." Cf. William of Tocco, *Historia sancti Thomae de Aquino*, ed. C. Le Brun-Gouanvic, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto 1996, 18, p. 130: "Scripsit etiam librum qui intitulatur Contra gentiles, stilo disertum et rationum nouitate et subtilitate profundum, in quo miro modo ostendit quod ex proprio ingenio habuit et quod raptu mentis in Deum orationibus impetrauit."

[91] *SCG* 1.7; see the introduction by Gauthier to *Somme contre les Gentils*, trans. R. Gauthier, Flammarion, Paris 1979.

[92] *SCG* 3.49: "ut Dionysius dicit, in libro de mystica theologia." A rare patristic authority whom Thomas cites is a passage of Hilary (taken from Peter Lombard, but never used in *Halensis*) about piously pursuing the infinite; Hilary, *De trinitate* 2.10, ed. P. Smulders, *CCSL* 62–62A (1979–1980), cited in Lombard, *Sent*. I, d. 33, c. 2, art. 1 (1, p. 241), cited in *SCG* 1.8, also in *In librum Boethii De trinitate*, q. 2, art. 1, resp. 7 (p. 84) and *Quaestiones disputatae de veritate*, ed. Marietti, Turin 1953 [*Quaestiones disputatae*, Vol. 1], q. 5, art. 2, resp. ad 7.

about God as above all things.[93] The second is in Book III, a reference to various scriptural passages that might be falsely construed as supporting irrational notions about humans as independent of God.[94] The third is in Book IV, referring to gnostic claims that the Son of God took his beginning from Mary, as not in accord with sacred teaching.[95] The *Contra Gentiles* is structured quite differently from the *Sentences*. Its first book is about God and his attributes, the second about creation, especially of human nature as body and soul, and the third is about the moral choices facing humanity, divine law, providence, and grace. Each book is divided into chapters rather than questions, suggesting that it is more for reading than classroom discussion.

In the fourth book of *Contra Gentiles*, Thomas draws on the authority of Scripture to present a survey of sacred teaching, namely, the Trinity, the Incarnation, the sacraments and eternal life, presented through the authority of both reason and Scripture, but without any significant citation of the Fathers. Yet even here, we see a significant shift in his choice of authorities. There are some 37 specific references to Augustine in the *Contra Gentiles*, but 43 to Dionysius. Thomas's attention to Dionysius in the *Contra Gentiles* is quite remarkable, as offering a philosophical guide to sacred teaching. Writing outside the polarizing constraints of the University of Paris enabled him to think how far he could go with arguments from reason. At the same time, Thomas was starting to create a massive treasury of patristic authorities, many from previously unknown Greek Fathers, in the *Catena aurea*. As Piotr Roszak argues, the comments of the Fathers on Scripture are central to Thomas's understanding of revelation.[96] The process of arguing from reason alone in the *Contra Gentiles* made him appreciate their contribution even more.

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93 *SCG* 1.26, per. 8: "Hunc etiam errorem sacra doctrina repellit, dum confitetur Deum excelsum et elevatum, ut dicitur Isaiae [6:1] et eum super omnia esse, ut Rom. [9:5] habetur."

94 *SCG* 3.90, per. 8: "Videntur autem quaedam in sacra doctrina secundum praedictam sententiam sonare." Thomas cites passages from Eccles. 15:14 and 17 and Deut. 30:15.

95 *SCG* 4.6, per. 1: "Cum autem doctrinae sacrae non congruat quod filius Dei a Maria initium sumpserit, ut Photinus dicebat."

96 P. Roszak, *How Is the Patristic Method Shaping Sacra Doctrina in Aquinas?*, in: *Reading the Church Fathers with St. Thomas Aquinas: Historical and Systematical Perspectives*, eds. P. Roszak, J. Vijgen, Brepols, Turnhout 2021, pp. 107–129.

5. Thomas's Final *Summa*

We come now to the third and perhaps most productive stage in Thomas's intellectual evolution, his decision, c. 1265, to revise his pedagogical strategy yet again. This took place just as he started to teach at a new studium in Rome. We know from Ptolemy of Lucca that he started to revisit the *Sentences*, before committing himself to a new *Summa*.[97] The problem with Lombard's structure, however, was that it separated out ethical discussion into distinct sections on sin (in Book II) and on the gifts of the Holy Spirit (in Book III). While Leonard Boyle argued that Thomas wrote the *Summa* for Dominican novices to provide a more accessible synthesis of sacred teaching than offered by existing manuals, the *Summa* also had a wider goal and audience.[98] He wanted to provide an alternative synthesis to that proposed in *Halensis*. Having experimented with arguing purely from reason in the first three books of the *Contra Gentiles*, he realized that to make his *Summa* accessible, he needed to combine arguments from reason with those of Scripture and the Fathers. To do so, he decided to abandon the four-part structure established by Lombard's *Sentences* in favour of a tripartite structure.[99] The *prima pars* combines discussion of God and creation, normally discussed in separate books. This meant that the *secunda pars* could focus much more fully on human behaviour, involving the emotions as much as vices and virtues and the role of grace, before considering Christ and redemption. Astonishingly, Thomas managed to complete the *secunda pars*, entirely about the human condition (in two parts, covering general principles and specific moral questions), during the years when he had returned to Paris, between late 1268 and early 1272. Thomas was no longer having to prove himself to the Faculty of Theology. He devised a strategy for educating novices, but he was also addressing others, building a bridge between students of arts and of theology. These were years of intense

[97] Much has been written about whether notes attributed to Thomas in an English MS are authentically of his teaching; see *Lectura Romana in primum Sententiarum Petri Lombardi Thomas Aquinas*, eds. L.E. Boyle, J.F. Boyle, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto 2006; see the discussion of J.-P. Torrell, *Initiation à saint Thomas d'Aquin*, op. cit., pp. 73–77.

[98] L.E. Boyle, *The Setting of the Summa theologiae of Saint Thomas*, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto 1982, pp. 19–45, reprinted in Boyle, *Facing History: A Different Thomas Aquinas*, Brepols, Louvain-la-Neuve 2000, pp. 65–92.

[99] Much has been written on these themes: see M. Jordan, *Structure*, in: *The Cambridge Companion to the Summa Theologiae*, eds. P. McCosker, D. Turner, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2016, pp. 34–61, esp. p. 37, https://doi.org/10.1017/CCO9781139034159.004.

polarization between different factions. There were those, like Siger of Brabant, who were committed to establishing a philosophical system based on Aristotle as interpreted by Averroes. Yet Thomas also had to address a doctrinaire bishop, Stephen Tempier, whose strategy was to prohibit any kind of erroneous teaching. Thomas realized that he needed a strategy that argued not just from reason, but from the authority of Scripture and a much wider range of Greek and Latin Church Fathers than previously known.

Thomas's last great masterpiece has long been known as the *Summa theologiae*, following the wording of William of Tocco.[100] In 1286, a *librarius* describes its first book as *prima pars super theologiam*.[101] Yet in the Franciscan *correctoria* taking issue with certain of Thomas's ideas, the work is always referred to just as his *Summa*.[102] The very limited number of references to *theologia* in the *Summa* all relate principally to discourse about God, rather than salvation history.[103] In describing it as a *Summa* "of theology," William of Tocco was using the *theologia* in its common popular use, rather than *sacra doctrina*, the phrase increasingly used by Thomas, to refer to issues discussed in Scripture. At the same time as writing the *prima pars*, Thomas produced his own commentary on the Dionysian corpus. In his *Summa*, Thomas was anxious to not to lose the more mystical and contemplative conception of *theologia* provided by Dionysius, just as he was producing a new set of commentaries on Aristotle. Thomas may have preferred *sacra doctrina* to *doctrina Christiana* to acknowledge the teaching of the entire body of sacred Scripture, not just the New Testament.

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[100] William of Tocco, *Historia sancti Thomae de Aquino* 18, p. 129: "Nam preter opus quod fecit super quatuor libros Sententiarum, *Summam fecit theologiae*, quam in tribus distinxit libris, materias quatuor librorum aliter ordinans." But see Ptolemy of Lucca, *Historia ecclesiastica nova* XXIII.11, ed. O. Clavuot, Hahn, Hannover 2009, p. 591: "Hic doctor tempore huius pontifices scripsit ultimam partem Summe, que Sacramentalis dicitur."

[101] *CUP* no. 530 (1, p. 646), under the heading *Haec sunt scripta fratris Thome de Aquino*, "Summa fratris Thome de Aquino super theologiam, continent in primo libro." The work has always been edited under the title *Summa theologiae*, ed. Marietti.

[102] *Correctorium corruptorii "Quare"*, ed. P. Glorieux, in: *Les premières polémiques Thomistes*, Vol. 1, Le Saulchoir, Kain 1927, p. 3; *Correctorium corruptorii "Sciendum"*, ed. P. Glorieux, Vol. 2, Vrin, Paris 1956, p. 29; a Franciscan ruling from 1282 about the *summa fratris Thome*; and R.A. Gauthier, *Les "Articuli in quibus frater Thomas melius in Summa quam in Scriptis"*, "Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale" 1952, Vol. 19, pp. 271–326, with edition of the text on pp. 300–326.

[103] *ST* I.1, resp. ad arg. 2: "Unde theologia quae ad sacram doctrinam pertinet, differt secundum genus ab illa theologia quae pars philosophiae ponitur."

Thomas uses the term *theologia* on just 12 occasions within the *Summa*, mostly as titles of works by Dionysius. By contrast he refers to *sacra doctrina* 50 times, mostly in the opening of the *prima pars*, expanding greatly on the three references to *sacra doctrina* in the *Scriptum* on the *Sentences*. There Thomas was following the opening of *Halensis* (more precisely John of La Rochelle) in focusing on whether or not *theologia* is a science. In the final *Summa*, Thomas is aware that *theologia* can have two meanings, one referring to metaphysics, the other to sacred teaching. This potential ambiguity in the meaning of *theologia*, reinforced by the practice at the University of placing discussion of all doctrine and scriptural exegesis under the label of *theologia*, could be misleading. While he recognized that *theologia* could have two senses, *sacra doctrina* did not suffer from this ambiguity. While not opposed to each other in his mind, one focuses more on speculation and contemplation of divinity, the other on the full range of Christian teaching, from the Godhead to practice of the Christian life. In the *Summa*, he continues to speak of theological virtues (faith, hope and love), but tends to reserve *theologia* for what he sees as its original meaning, *sermo de Deo.* Thomas picked up the notion of *sacra doctrina* perhaps from a brief reference to *doctrina sacra* (not a phrase used by Albert) in *Halensis*. In his *Scriptum* on the *Sentences*, written for the Faculty of Theology, Thomas imitated *Halensis* in arguing that *theologia* was a science. In his final *Summa*, however, Thomas became more consistent in arguing that *sacra doctrina* was the science on which other sciences depended, even though some might argue that it was not a science in itself.[104] Near the beginning of the *secunda secundae* he mentions that *theologia* is a science, "as discussed at the beginning of the work," as if reverting to his earlier terminology.[105] His few other references to *theologia* in the *Summa* are to its mythical and civil versions, as spoken about by Augustine, not to Christian teaching.[106] In the *tertia pars*, he mentions *theologia* briefly in relation to the persons of the Trinity, not their role in creation.[107] Thomas's core insight into the integral unity of *theologia* and sacred teaching had not changed from the time of the *Summa*. His increasing reference here to *sacra doctrina*, however, suggests that he preferred to *reserve theologia* for *sermo de Deo*, as discussed with such acuity by Dionysius.

[104] *ST* I, q. 1, art. 1, arg. 2: "Unde theologia quae ad sacram doctrinam pertinet, differt secundum genus ab illa theologia quae pars philosophiae ponitur. Ad secundum sic proceditur. Videtur quod sacra doctrina non sit scientia."

[105] *ST* I, q. 1, art. 5, resp. ad 7: "Unde etiam theologia scientia est, ut in principio operis dictum est."

[106] *ST* II.2, q. 94, art. 1.

[107] *ST* III, q. 2, art. 6, resp. ad 1; III, q. 3, art. 4, sed contra.

Thomas's larger theme in the *Summa* about the nature of all sacred teaching picks up on the message of the opening of *Halensis* (as formulated by John of La Rochelle) that sacred teaching is a science or way of knowing that proceeds from God, developing it with greater nuance.[108] It is theocentric in the sense of explaining how all creation refers back to God as its ultimate beginning or goal.[109] But Thomas's *Summa* is more careful than *Halensis* in avoiding a tendency initially developed by Hugh of Saint Victor in identifying *theologia* with Scripture. Thomas's understanding of *theologia* involved much greater awareness of philosophical reflection. Thomas explains how everything goes back to a divine origin in how it is ordered.[110] The distinctive feature of sacred teaching is that, although a science, it employs a range of strategies, not just argument.[111] Scripture can use other tools, including metaphor and poetry (as attested by Saint Paul when teaching in Athens) to communicate its message.[112] Thomas refers to sacred teaching as what was transmitted by sacred Scripture, emphasizing his concern with its message rather than with its specific formulation. Popular use of *theologia* as knowledge about various Christian teachings implicitly uses the word in an un-Dionysian way, as a positive form of knowledge about Christian matters. In the *Contra Gentiles* he had avoided the issue by never mentioning *theologia* at all. In his last *Summa*, Thomas wanted to keep to its strict meaning, as defined by Dionysius, while presenting his subject as sacred teaching, presented through both reason and revelation. The common ground of both *theologia* and sacred teaching was Scripture.[113]

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[108] *ST* I, q. 1, art. 2, corp.: "Et hoc modo sacra doctrina est scientia, quia procedit ex principiis notis lumine superioris scientiae, quae scilicet est scientia Dei et beatorum."

[109] *ST* I, q. 1, art. 3, resp. ad arg.: "Ad primum ergo dicendum quod sacra doctrina non determinat de Deo et de creaturis ex aequo, sed de Deo principaliter, et de creaturis secundum quod referuntur ad Deum, ut ad principium vel finem. Unde unitas scientiae non impeditur."

[110] *ST* I, q. 1, art. 7, resp. ad arg. 2: "Ad secundum dicendum quod omnia alia quae determinantur in sacra doctrina, comprehenduntur sub Deo, non ut partes vel species vel accidentia, sed ut ordinata aliqualiter ad ipsum."

[111] *ST* I, q. 1, art. 8, resp. ad arg. 2: "Utitur tamen sacra doctrina etiam ratione humana, non quidem ad probandum fidem, quia per hoc tolleretur meritum fidei; sed ad manifestandum aliqua alia quae traduntur in hac doctrina."

[112] *ST* I, q. 1, art. 8, resp. ad arg. 2: "Et inde est quod etiam auctoritatibus philosophorum sacra doctrina utitur, ubi per rationem naturalem veritatem cognoscere potuerunt; sicut Paulus, actuum xvii, inducit verbum Arati, dicens, sicut et quidam poetarum vestrorum dixerunt, genus Dei sumus."

[113] Ryan Miller argues that Thomas's understanding here is Platonic, without focusing on *sacra doctrina* as founded on Scripture; see R. Millers, *Aquinas' Science of Sacra Doctrina as a Platonic* Technê, "Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia" 2023, Vol. 79, No. 1, pp. 633–656.

6. Conclusion

Let us review four major points evident within the evolving ideas of Thomas Aquinas about *theologia* and *sacra doctrina* in relation to his predecessors. Firstly, we should recognize the contribution of Alexander of Hales to shaping the pedagogical strategy of the University as based around the sentences of Peter Lombard as organized into four books, about God, creation and original sin, Christ and the virtues, and the sacraments. We should also recognize the contribution of Alexander's younger colleague, John of La Rochelle, in shaping the *Summa Halensis*, in particular in its opening discussion of *doctrina sacra* as a synonym of *theologia*, a science to which other sciences are subject. While Alexander and John went beyond William of Auxerre in introducing new voices, above all Dionysius and John of Damascus, the dominant voice was that of Augustine. *Halensis* articulated some key insights picked up by Bonaventure, Albert and Thomas, such as that grace did not destroy nature but perfected it. The problem was that such core insights were sometimes obscured by a mass of analytic detail.

Secondly, in his *Scriptum* on the *Sentences*, written after he had been exposed to the commentaries of Albert the Great on both Peter Lombard and Dionysius, Thomas introduces the still unusual phrase *sacra doctrina*, but gives more attention to *theologia* as a science, a term that he recognizes is ambiguous. His discourse and strategy is shaped by his need to respond to arguments about *theologia*, as presented in *Halensis*.

Thirdly, in the *Contra Gentiles*, Thomas experiments with a very different strategy, established by Boethius, of arguing not from authority, but from reason as fully coherent with the teachings of faith. He was no longer needing to prove himself to the Faculty of Theology, but was writing for himself, to see how far he could go in understanding themes of Scripture from the perspective of reason. He did so without mentioning the term *theologia*. For all its originality, however, the *Contra Gentiles* was not a *summa* in the conventional sense of the word.

Finally, we looked at Thomas's unfinished masterpiece, referred to by its critics as his *Summa*. While William of Tocco described it as a *Summa theologiae*, there is no evidence that Thomas intended this to be its title. Aware of the ambiguity of the term *theologia*, he uses *theologia* much less than in the *Scriptum*, keeping more to its strict meaning as defined by Dionysius, namely, as poetic discourse about the divine. Aristotle, however, provided him with a way of see-

ing how Platonic abstractions could be realized in practice. He expanded on a point he had already raised more briefly in his *Scriptum*: *sacra doctrina*, sacred teaching, provided a more expansive way of describing Scripture's message about God's relationship to creation than Augustine's *doctrina Christiana*. Thomas was addressing not just novices in his order but all who wanted to understand the relationship between scriptural ways of knowing mediated by faith and other ways, taught through the various disciplines belonging to the pursuit of philosophy. He returned to arguing from both philosophical reason and patristic authority, but with a much greater focus on the makeup of the human person, their emotions, vices and virtues, than allowed for by Peter Lombard. The *Summa* offered a much more positive strategy to communicating the message of Scripture than any episcopal list of heretical teachings to be condemned.

Paradoxically, Thomas's achievement in his final *Summa* was not necessarily the version of his thought which attracted the greatest influence. A small illustration of this is revealed by the *Thomasina* of William of Peter of Godin, a commentary on the *Sentences* produced c. 1300, in which there is no mention at all of *sacra doctrina*. Instead, Godin only refers to *sacra theologia*, a conflation of the two synonyms.[114] This commentary reveals that Thomas's final *Summa* was widely admired, but not all of its innovations fully appreciated.

Bibliography

Abbreviations

CCCM *Corpus Christianorum. Continuatio Mediaevalis*, Brepols, Turnhout 1957–.

CCSL *Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina*, Brepols, Turnhout 1954–.

[114] William of Peter of Godin, *Thomasina*, 2 vols., eds. M. Olszewski, M. Socała, Instytut Tomistyczny, Poznań, Warszawa 2024, Prol., q. 1 (1, p. 3): "Quaeritur de sacra theologia utrum sit scientia." See also art. 3 (1, p. 5): "Quantum ad tertium (principale sciendum est quod est tertia opinio et vera venerabilis doctoris Thomas, qui dicit quod sacra theologia est scientia subalterna scientiae Dei et beatorum." While the editors note that this passage is from *ST* I, art. 2, corp., significant changes are made from the wording of Thomas: "Et hoc modo sacra doctrina est scientia, quia procedit ex principiis notis lumine superioris scientiae, quae scilicet est scientia Dei et beatorum."

CSEL *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, Tempsky, Vienna 1866–.

CUP Denifle H., Chatelaine E., eds., *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, 4 vols., Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2014 [Delalain, Paris 1889–1901].

PL *Patrologia Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, Garnier, Paris 1844–.

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