The Relation of Biblical Interpretation to the Studies of Other Arts: The Synthesis of Philosophical, Theological, and Mystical Languages in Bonaventure's *The Reduction of Arts to Theology*

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ABSTRACT

Critics have been studying Bonaventure's inheritance in *The Reduction of Arts to Theology* from philosophers in the scholastic, Aristotelian tradition, from theologians in the Neoplatonic, Augustinian tradition, or from mystics who focus more on faith than on learning. Some believe that he represents a certain tradition, and some believe that he is developing a new philosophical system. Most acknowledge that Bonaventure juggles with various traditions, but few focus on how he synthesizes them.

This paper studies the two-part structure of the work and the languages used in each section. It explores how Bonaventure starts this treatise like a logician, classifying different arts, becomes to a rhetorical theologian in the middle, and finally provides a metaphysical basis for the rhetorical figures used, making them typological figures and suggesting that the faith in God is what finally enables biblical study and the other arts to work together in effecting a mystical relation between God and man.

In short, this paper argues that Bonaventure synthesizes different traditions to strike a balance between biblical study and those of other arts. It also argues that Bonaventure believes that this balance can help readers form a mystical circle with God.

聖經詮釋和其它學科之關係：
聖伯納文都之《溯諸藝於神學》中哲學、神學及神秘主義語言之融合

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摘　要

評論家常以爲聖伯納文都（Bonaventure）在《溯諸藝於神學》（*De reductione artium ad theologiam*）中，依循經院哲學的傳統，把聖經研究當作最深奧、最接近眞理的一門學科。可是也有評論家指出聖伯納文都其實是採取了神祕主義或奧古斯丁以降的神學傳統，把研讀聖經當作研究其他所有學科的根本。到底聖伯納文都是根據那個傳統將學科分成諸類呢？

本論文將從這些傳統慣用之語言模式來回答這個問題。本論文認爲聖伯納文都先採取了亞理斯多德影響下經院哲學論文中的語言，再融合入奧古斯丁以降的神學論文中之修辭學傳統及神祕主義論文中的語言。其論文先似提供學子一個合乎邏輯常理的學習進度表，然後藉由討論聖經研究和其他學科研究之類似性，說服讀者以聖經爲研究作爲研究其他所有學科的根本。最後聖伯納文都指出這類似性是由神藉作者所賜，故此類比可使讀者在研究任何學科時都可透過受神啓的作者與神合一。簡言之，本論文認爲聖伯納文都透過結合經院哲學、神學與神祕主義的語言，精確呈現聖經研究和其他學科研究互相依附的關係。而聖伯納文都更藉融合各個傳統中之語言來描寫一個基督徒如何可在研究中經歷神祕經驗中由神而人、由人而神之互動。

關鍵詞：聖伯納文都，亞里斯多德主義，新柏拉圖主義，奧古斯丁，類比，原形，經院哲學，修辭學，聖經，聖經詮釋

The Relation of Biblical Interpretation to the Studies of Other Arts:
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Critics have been studying Bonaventure's inheritance from three traditions. They argue whether he is mainly a philosopher who tries to establish a pedagogical plan with the language used in the scholastic, Aristotelian tradition, a theologian like Augustine and other Neoplatonists who understands the world through various theological topics, or a mystic like Pseudo-Dionysius, who finds mystical power by understanding the metaphysical basis behind the images found in the Bible. Some critics argue that Bonaventure forms his own philosophical system. Gilson, for example, believes that Bonaventure "did *not* set out upon a way that would have led to Christian Aristotelianism" (3, sic) not because he did not have a chance to read more Aristotle's works but because he wrote at a time when "Aristotelianism was a doctrine whose content, importance, and want of harmony with Christianity were not unrealized" (4). Quinn, for another example, argues that "No one of those sources is fundamental by itself to the synthesis of St. Bonaventure, who uses them according as they conform, or can be conformed, to his own philosophical principles" (843). The author of *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, in contrast, carefully rejects any description of Bonaventure that overlooks "his labours in the field of Scholasticism" because that kind of suggestions "is opposed to the explicit utterance of several pontiffs and eminent scholars, is incompatible with Bonaventure's acknowledged reputation in the Schools, and is excluded by an intelligent perusal of his works" ("St. Bonaventure"). The author thinks that Bonaventure is a mystic "only in so far as every subject he treats of is made ultimately to converge upon God." Whether critics focus on Bonaventure's project of forming a new philosophical system or his participation in a developing philosophical system, they have to acknowledge that

Bonaventure did juggle with various traditions for two reasons. First, the mainstream philosophical system, scholasticism, as we know it today, was still being shaped. That is, Thomas Aquinas was still working on his *Summa Theologia* when Bonaventure wrote most of his biblical commentaries, scholastic treatises, or lectures. Second, both trained at the university of Paris, the center of scholastic philosophy, and bound to the Franciscan Order, whose founder was a famous mystic, Bonaventure himself probably felt comfortable adopting both. Therefore, an effort to separate any of his works from or to position them in any specific tradition known at his time is a difficult task.

It is even more difficult to position his *The Reduction of Arts to Theology* among various philosophical systems because of its two-part structure. In the first part (sections 1-7), Bonaventure classifies and defines different kinds of lights that illuminate different kinds of arts, with the knowledge of Sacred Scripture as the end of all arts (7, 29)[1]; in the second (sections 8-26), he talks about the medium, the effect, and the exercise of each art in order to explain the three senses of Sacred Scripture—the allegorical, the moral, and the anagogical. At the first glance, it seems that Bonaventure, like a lot of medieval philosophers, is forming a logical, pedagogical plan that starts with the studies of various arts and ends in the study of Scripture. Upon further perusal, the first part that ends in a discussion of the study of Scripture also begins, like many medieval theological treatises, with a biblical verse and a theological question about the origin of human understanding. Upon further perusal, the second part that claims to talk about "how the other illuminations of knowledge are to be brought back to the light of Sacred Scripture" (8, 29) actually follows a section that defines the three senses of Scripture—with the focus on Christ as the mediator—and uses them as its structural principle, suggesting both an analogy between biblical studies and the studies of other arts that theologians underline to show the beauty of the creation and a mystical, metaphysical basis behind all arts that mystics resort to when trying to unite themselves with God. When this structural complexity is taken into consideration, it seems too simplistic to say that in *Reduction*, "It is theology that provides the necessary lens whereby humanity learns of their place and meaning in life" (Patten) without further exploring what kind of theologians

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[1]   The first number indicates the section number, and the second, the page number.

Bonaventure is in this book, although that may very well be a statement Bonaventure agrees with.   Using theology as the "lens" may mean using theological topics as the organizing principle of other arts as well as creating a mystical link between everyday activities and a divine reality.   Some critics are more sensitive about Bonaventure's complex synthesis of philosophical, theological, and mystical languages needs to be dealt with in detail.   Healy, for one, points out that "St. Bonaventure goes back to Aristotle for his definition of *ars* as the *habitus cum ratione factivus. . .* , but in the title and body of the treatise, it carries a much wider signification" (15).   She also points out that "The *reductio* is not a one-way process. Everything perfect travels in circles; the end of all things must in some way get back to their beginning" (119).   It is this circle that gives this treatise a two-part structure and confuses critics who want to talk about Bonaventure as simply a philosopher, a theologian, or a mystic.   If Bonaventure is proposing a logical way to classify existent arts at his time like Aristotle, there wouldn't be a circle that makes the end of all arts, the knowledge of Sacred Scripture, the source of all arts as well.   If Bonaventure is framing the existent arts at his time with theology like an Augustinian theologian, he would have begun his discussion with important theological topics like the creation, the fall, or the redemption.   Why does he not use, like a proper Augustinian theologian, the attributes of the Father of Lights as his organizing principle after he begins his treatise with a discussion of the source of all lights and persuade the readers to accept his explanation of human understanding through the analogical resemblance of biblical studies to those of other arts?   What is the relation of theology, or, in Bonaventure's own terms, of the reading of the Bible to the studying of other arts?   In forming this two-part structure, does Bonaventure want to propose a logical, pedagogical plan that prepares his students for biblical studies, to teach his readers how Sacred Scripture should be interpreted through his interpretation of various biblical verses, or to share a mystical experience, in which a biblical image, light, mystically unites Christian readers with God? This paper aims at sorting out different traditions adopted in the treatise and the way they are synthesized by studying the languages used in it in comparison to the languages used in other traditions.   This paper will also focus on languages used to interpret the Bible in various traditions since the art of biblical interpretation is treated as the model and end of other arts in

Reduction.

　　Many critics study first the authors Bonaventure explicitly refers to as his authority in order to understand what tradition Bonaventure adopts, but this method can be misleading sometimes.　For example, critics who read only the first section may have a reason to argue that Bonaventure "helps provide reasonable biblical and philosophical support that theology is the rubric under which all life activities enjoy their existence" (Patten) because Bonaventure starts his treatise by alluding to the Bible, by talking about "*the Father of Lights*" and his "generous flow of the manifold rays" (1, 21).　But how do critics explain Bonaventure's allusion in the very next section to Hugh of St. Victor, Bonaventure's authority for the seven divisions of mechanical arts and the master of medieval pedagogical plan?　Does the second allusion indicate that Bonaventure starts his treatise also with the scholastic tradition in mind?　A more detailed comparison between Hugh and Bonaventure can show that Bonaventure obviously cares less about a logical, pedagogical plan than Hugh.　First, Hugh divides his treatise clearly into two parts: "In the first part, [*Didascalicon*] instructs the reader of the arts, in the second, the reader of the Sacred Scripture" (44). Bonaventure, in contrast, studies all four arts in both parts.　Second, Hugh begins his treatise with a discussion about the origin of all arts—he includes Plato, Pythagoras, and Varro as his authorities as he traces the origin of all arts to a natural urge to pursue wisdom or philosophy (46-48). Bonaventure, in contrast, talks about the Bible in the first section as his source of authority.　In other words, while Hugh starts his treatise by alluding to classical authorities and organizes various arts under the umbrella of philosophy, Bonaventure believes that arts are gifts or illuminations from God, and he does not use philosophy as the key term.

　　However, Bonaventure's departure from Hugh means neither that his main concern in the first part is the attributes or works of the Father nor that he is going to understand various arts in the first part through a mystical image in the Bible, the Father of Lights.　In fact, when Bonaventure really starts his discussion of arts from the simplest kind, the mechanical art, he does not propose that the mechanical art is analogous or has any relation to theology.　He alludes to the verse only to prove that all arts are illuminations from God; he uses neither a theological system to classify different kinds of arts nor this verse to define them.　Here he rather sees a

relation between the mechanical arts and philosophy. For Hugh, "The mechanical sciences are the seven handmaids which Mercury received in dowry from Philosophy" (75); for Bonaventure, the mechanical arts are "of a lower nature than philosophical knowledge" (2, 21). Bonaventure here may even appear rather like a teacher, more mindful of a logical, pedagogical plan: he chooses to start his treatise with a discussion of a less precious gift from God and reserve the study of the Bible, the most precious gift, for the last section while Hugh starts with the theoretical and ends with the mechanical sciences. What really separates Bonaventure from Hugh's scholastic tradition is his choice of language. The latter spends more time defining each division and listing the subdivisions for each science, like a proper Aristotelian. The former focuses more on the purposes of the seven mechanical arts—they are "intended for man's *consolation* or for his comfort" (2, 21). Bonaventure, in short, is a half-way Aristotelian and a half-way Augustinian in his presentation of the mechanical art. He uses neither theological topics, nor biblical images, nor philosophy as the organizing principle. On the one hand, he alludes to the Bible only before, not in, his description of the mechanical arts. The biblical allusion here only serves to set the tone, to ensure his readers that this treatise is not purely a philosophical treatise, not to explain theological topics. Neither does he frame his treatise with biblical images in the beginning as he does in a mystical treatise of a similar topic, *The Soul's Journey into God*[2]. On the other, when he alludes to a classical figure in this section, he, unlike Hugh, alludes to an authority on poetics, Horace, rather than to a philosopher. Neither does he adopt Aristotle's language in defining the mechanical art. In short, Bonaventure starts his discussion from an art of the mundane world, too lowly to be called a branch of philosophy but precious enough to be

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[2] In the beginning of the treatise, Bonaventure clearly states that "The six wings of the Seraph, therefore, symbolize the six steps of illumination that begin from creatures and lead up to God, whom no one rightly enters except through the Crucified" (55). Here the tradition of mysticism is more dominant, although both treatises claim that God is the end of all illuminations. That is, in *The Soul's Journey to God*, Bonaventure is more emphatic about the mystical power of biblical images and the role of piety in the final success of the journey that ends in God. In it, he argues that "no one is in any way disposed for divine contemplation that leads to mystical ecstasy unless like Daniel he is a *man of desires* (Dan. 9: 23)" and that "Such desires are enkindled in us in two ways: by an outcry of prayer that makes us *call aloud in the groaning of our heart* (Ps. 37: 9) and by the flash of insight by which the mind turns most directly and intently toward the rays of light" (55).

called a divine gift and complex enough to be discussed in a semi-Aristotelian, philosophical manner.

Bonaventure starts his description of sense perception, a more complex art, more like a theologian: here he explicitly alludes to Augustine as his source. However, instead of adopting Augustine's discussion about how the physical senses create mental pictures but still rely on the truth bestowed by God to make a sound judgment (*Confessions* 257), Bonaventure relates the five senses to the five substances—air, vapor, fluid, earth, and the fifth essence (3, 23-25). Instead of adopting Augustine's theory of the created light that becomes light by "fixing its gaze upon [God] and clinging to [God], the Light which shone upon it" (*Confessions* 313), Bonaventure focuses here totally on an abstract definition of the sense of sight: "If the light or brightness which makes possible the discernment of things corporeal exists in a *high degree of its own property* and in a certain purity, it is the sense of *sight*" (3, 23). The difference between Bonaventure and his authority, Augustine, shows that Bonaventure is not quite ready to frame the knowledge of sense perception like an Augustinian theologian. In this section, he does refer to an Augustinian theology more explicitly, but he also adopts at the same time a more Aristotelian terminology.

In his discussion of the most complex human art, the art of philosophical knowledge, Bonaventure finally adopts a more purely philosophical language familiar to Aristotelians. Here he subdivides philosophy into three kinds—the rational, the natural, and the moral—and subdivides each kind into three kinds of arts (4, 25-27)[3], and his divisions for the natural and the moral philosophy follow Aristotle's divisions for the same (Healy 87, 89). However, in putting moral philosophy and natural philosophy in the same category, Bonaventure doesn't seem to care much about the difference between theoretical sciences and practical sciences, a division emphasized by both Aristotle (*Metaphysics* 1681) and Hugh (62). Neither does Bonaventure treat theoretical/natural philosophy as a more important art than logical/rational philosophy and practical/moral philosophy like Hugh, who spends seventeen chapters defining theoretical philosophy,

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[3] They are grammar, logic, and rhetoric under rational philosophy, physics proper, mathematics, and metaphysics under natural philosophy, and ethics (ways of living for individuals), economics (ways of living for family members), and politics (ways of living in the state) under moral philosophy.

one chapter, practical philosophy, and three chapters, logical philosophy. In short, Bonaventure uses an Aristotelian language but spends similar amount of time discussing the three divisions of philosophy. In addition, the three divisions are called philosophical knowledge because they all involve an inquiry "into inner and hidden causes through principles of learning and natural truth, which are inherent in man" (4, 25), not because they can be described in Aristotelian terms or are defined by Aristotle as philosophy.   Bonaventure's art of philosophical knowledge, therefore, needs to be illuminated by the inner light, not just the external or lower light of senses. It is an art that invites our fuller participation since it is an inquiry upon ourselves.   Bonaventure adopts complex philosophical jargons here, then, not to show how wholeheartedly he accepts Aristotle's philosophical system, but to show how an inquiry upon ourselves is complex enough to be called philosophical art and subdivided as such.   To conclude, in the first part, Bonaventure classifies the three lights—the external, lower, and inner lights—and three arts—the mechanical art, the art of sense perception, and the art of philosophical knowledge—by moving from a lower form to a higher form of knowledge, by using more and more a philosophical, Aristotelian language to subdivide each art, and by inviting more and more strongly the participation of those who want to be illuminated.

As a result, when Bonaventure proceeds to define the fourth light, the light of Sacred Scripture, which "illumines the mind for the understanding of *saving truth*" (5, 27), we naturally expect him to honor the Bible as the most precious gift/light from God and the most complex subject to study and to demand his readers to take more pains to participate in the study, and so he does.   However, he does not follow any classical figures or use a more Aristotelian language here to define the fourth art as we may also expect. There is neither any philosophical jargon in Bonaventure's discussion of the study of Sacred Scripture nor even a suggestion that this art is of a higher nature than philosophy, as opposed to the mechanical art, which is "of a lower nature than philosophical knowledge" (2, 21).   The fourth art is of a totally different category, more difficult and complex perhaps, but neither more accessible through an Aristotelian language nor subject to human exploration.   On the one hand, the language used to describe it, the theory

of the four senses[4], is a common sense among biblical commentators. Theologians at the time define the literal sense as "that first signification whereby words signify things" and point out that "That signification whereby things signified by words have themselves also a signification is called the spiritual interpretation" (Aquinas Pt1, Q1.10). These four senses definitely have very little to do with an Aristotelian, scholastic tradition, which focuses more on the literal. On the other, by placing the knowledge of Sacred Scripture at the end and defining it as a knowledge "beyond reason" (5, 27), Bonaventure suggests that here at the end of one's pursuit for knowledge, one has to wait for God's grace, since saving truth "is not acquired by human research" (5, 27). If the study of Sacred Scripture demands our participation, it is of a different kind; it involves a willingness to receive light passively rather than the active human effort to understand the natures of various lights.

In addition, at the end of the first part, Bonaventure not only describes the study of Sacred Scripture as the most precious gift from God and a subject for the most learned, but also explicitly emphasizes the importance of returning to God in one's pursuit for knowledge. He argues that the circle has to end in God through the study of Sacred Scripture: "just as all those creations had their origin in one light, so too are all these branches of knowledge ordained for the knowledge of Sacred Scripture, and especially true is this of the *anagogical* knowledge through which the illumination is reflected back to God whence it came" (7, 29). Here he uses a language used by theologians, categorizing various arts with theological knowledge about the origin of human understanding, although he has not turned to the language of a mystic like Pseudo-Dionysius, who always emphasizes the human participation in the mystical experience in responding to God's grace and who believes that "With a love matching the illuminations granted [the mystics]" and "With our minds made prudent and holy, we offer worship to that which lies hidden beyond thought and beyond being" (*The Divine Names* 50). In short, the definition of the fourth light and the tradition alluded to in the section somewhat disrupt our expectation built up by the structure of the first part of the treatise, diverting our attention from philosophy to a theological tradition adopted by theologians and biblical

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4   The four senses are the literal, the allegorical (typological), the moral (tropological), and the anagogical senses.

commentators. In other words, while the first part of the treatise starts as a pedagogical plan that leads to a more scholastic, Aristotelian tradition, it ends with a more theological tradition that focuses exclusively on various senses of the Bible rather than a set of theological issues arranged logically.

The beginning of the second part further explains the structure of the first. Here Bonaventure not only explains why the study of Sacred Scripture comes at the end—because his treatise aims at showing us "how the other illuminations of knowledge are to be brought back to the light of Sacred Scripture (8, 29). Here he also, as many Augustinian theologians do, turns from a philosopher, whose main task is to present each branch of knowledge logically with definitions and classification, to a rhetorician whose job is to persuade by figurative language, to call for our appreciation of God's works by an analogy between the biblical studies and the studies of other arts. Here Bonaventure not only clearly talks about his classification of arts as a circle that ends in anagogical knowledge (7, 29). Here he also believes that similitude, exemplar, and image[5] are the key tools if we want to understand "the eternal generation and Incarnation of Christ," to live by "the pattern of human life," and to enjoy "the union of the soul with God" (5, 27) through learning the media, exercises, and effects of sense perception and the mechanical art.

By underlining the rhetorical figures that link biblical studies and other arts, Bonaventure is not here so much talking about how "the light in Creation outside of us is seeing God in visible Creation" or how "He is in creatures by His essence, power, and presence" (Raymond). Here he is rather talking about the similarity between how similitude works as the media or helps the production of sense perception and the mechanical art and how it works in helping us to understand the allegorical sense of the Bible. On the one hand, "a sense object can stimulate a cognitive faculty only through the medium of a similitude which proceeds from the object as an offspring from its parents, and this by generation, by reality, or by

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[5] According to the famous rhetorician in the Middle Ages, Geoffrey of Vinsauf, similitude is a figure of thought that allows the author to "draw forth a point of resemblance" "from an object basically dissimilar" (Vinsauf 61). Coincidentally or not, Vinsauf also groups the figure similitude with exemplar and image, although the three figures are not the same. Exemplar means "some statement [a definite authority] has made or some deed [a definite authority] has performed," and image is "a comparison of one thing with a similar thing by means of an appropriate image" (61).

exemplarity, for every sense" (8, 29), and "the work of art proceeds from the artificer according to a similitude existing in his mind" (12, 33).   On the other hand, "from the mind of the Most High, Who is knowable by the interior senses of our mind, from all eternity there emanated a Similitude, an Image, and an Offspring" (8, 31), and "no creature has proceeded from the Most High Creator except through the Eternal Word. . . , by which Word He produced creatures bearing not only the nature of His *vestige* but also His *image* so that through knowledge they might become like unto Him" (12, 33).   Here, in short, by describing how similitude works similarly in biblical studies and other arts, Bonaventure as an Augustinian theologian teaches us how to understand the nature of Christ as described in the Bible through our experience in learning other arts, through an analogy, while providing us with the three senses of the Bible as a way to classify arts into different kinds.   That is, Bonaventure as an Augustinian explains the similar roles of similitude in both "the eternal generation and Incarnation of Christ" and the productions of an artifact and of a sense perception and insists that this mutual illuminations between biblical studies and other arts and the analogy between them help us understand and appreciate the Incarnation of Christ.

    This turning from a more philosophical to a more rhetorical language used by Augustinian theologians seems surprising to many critics.   Some even see this use of rhetorical language a logical mistake.   However, Bonaventure does not seem to worry about any logical fallacy.   Using the language of an Augustinian theologian here, he knows that even Aristotle himself believes that a good rhetorician depends not only on "the personal character of the speaker" and "the proof . . . provided by the words of the speech itself" but also on putting the audience into a certain frame of mind (Aristotle 2155).   That is, a good rhetorician knows that in addition to making arguments with logic, using figurative language to excite the good intention of the readers is still the key.   In this rhetorical tradition adopted by famous theologians and biblical commentators like Augustine, poets and scholars often claimed that "If any man that es clerk, / Can fynde any errour in this werk, / I pray hym he do me that favour, / That he wille amende that errour" (Rolle 258)[6].   In this tradition, if an author is found to make any

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[6]   Translation in modern English: "If any man who is learned can find any error in this work, I pray that this man may do me a favor, that he is willing to amend the error" (my translation).

mistake or is insufficient in his expression, the reader is supposed to know that his or her intention is pious and virtuous and incline oneself to piety and virtues regardless of the mistake or insufficient expression.   Under this rhetorical formula, Bonaventure's similitude works not only by the linguistic skills of the author but also by the good intention of the readers, which leads them to find the intended lessons, regardless of the lack of logic.   Under this rhetorical formula, Bonaventure's logical mistake can be overlooked because he is teaching us to understand, obey, and love God through rhetoric, not logic.   Under this formula, Bonaventure's focus is on whether he can persuade his readers to pursue virtues and shun vices when he discusses the similarity of the exercise of sense perception and the similarity of the effect of the mechanical art to the pattern of human life—the moral sense of the Bible—not on whether the study of the Bible comes first or last.

In other words, in the second part of the treatise, with his focus turned from defining logically various arts to persuade his readers through rhetorical figures to be pious, Bonaventure turns his pedagogical plan in a more or less Aristotelian tradition into a theological or religious treatise in an Augustinian tradition, illustrating God's majestic order as revealed in the study of biblical interpretation as well as in those of other arts.   It is therefore fitting for Bonaventure to believe here, as Augustine in his famous *On Christian Doctrine*, that readers of the Bible should understand that "whatever appears in the divine Word that does not literally pertain to virtuous behavior or to the truth of faith you must take to be figurative" and that the interpretations of the Bible need always aim at "nourishing and supporting charity and in conquering and extirpating cupidity" (Augustine 88).   Augustine's theological language, then, exempts Bonaventure from being blamed for his lack of a logical structure because logic is not even the guiding principle in this tradition.

Then does Bonaventure finally settle for a rhetorical language used in the tradition of Augustinian theology?   Are the words similitude, exemplar, and image only names for rhetorical figures?   Even in the context of this treatise alone, the words similitude, exemplar, and image are rhetorical figures with a metaphysical basis.   In the first part of the treatise, God is called "efficient, formal or exemplary, and final causality" (4, 25) and "the *Beginning*, the *End*, and the *Exemplar*" (4, 27).   In the second part, Christ is called a similitude and an image (8, 31).   Critics also point out that

Bonaventure "does not stop at the fact that God is the exemplar cause of all things" (Cullen 40), a statement familiar to any Christian Aristotelian. Critics believe that a metaphysician like Bonaventure "must also consider the *medium* of all things, the Exemplar of all things—the Word" (Cullen 40). Bowman further argues that in Bonaventure's metaphysics, "The ascending order of signs in the created uni/verse reaches its pinnacle in Jesus Christ," who "combines in himself the perfection of the material world, the world of man's intellect, and since he is Incarnate Word, the eternal reasons themselves" (187-88). Similitude, exemplar, and image in Bonaventure's treatise, in short, are not only rhetorical figures that nudge his readers into ignoring his logical mistake or only means to help them appreciate God's order and live virtuous lives but also stand for a metaphysical principle found in the Creator and therefore in the creation. What's more, similitude, exemplar, and image are names for a metaphysical principle, through which we are enabled not only to understand but also to obey and love the former.

By giving a metaphysical basis to his rhetorical figures, Bonaventure mixes the tradition of Augustinian theology and the mystical tradition. That is, using different rhetorical figures as names of God and Christ, he inscribes, like a mystic, mystical power to certain names of God that unite us with God with the help of images in this world. He is here following mystics like Pseudo-Dionysius, who in a treatise, *The Divine Names*, uses different names of God to praise God and his creation, sees the metaphysical principle in the creation, and believes that "the songs of praise and the names for it are fittingly derived from the sum total of creation" (56) and that the contemplation upon this principle renders us "ready for a sight of God" (57). Bonaventure finds likewise names from the creation—from other arts—to remind his readers "how wonderful is the contemplation of the five spiritual senses in the light of their conformity to the senses of the body" (10, 31) and how much, if we think about the fruit of the mechanical art, "*praise, benefit,* or *delight*" (14, 35) can be found in "*the union of the soul with God*" (14, 33). Although he does not list all the biblical sources for his names of God and Christ like Pseudo-Dionysius (*The Divine Names* 55-56), here he at least shares the means and goal of all mystics. He is using a rhetorical language that has a metaphysical basis to call for a contemplation of and union with God.

In the next section that looks at the relation between philosophical knowledge and the study of Sacred Scripture, Bonaventure tilts even more toward the mystical tradition. As mystics whose mystic experience depends on God's participation and Christ's mediation, here Bonaventure also relies less on the readers to overlook his lack of logical definitions and highlights the intervention of a supernatural being who gives all readers a sure chance to learn the relation between the study of Sacred Scripture and all other arts by coming to the world Himself. Here Bonaventure speaks like later mystics, like, for example, Eckhart, who believes that "that union with God which Adam enjoyed before the fell . . . / is fulfilled in Christ" and that "if He is exalted in our knowledge, He will draw us unto Himself" (13-14). First, in Bonaventure's discussion of the three elements of speech, "the *person speaking*, the *delivery* of the speech, and its final purpose or its effect upon the *hearer*" (15, 35), he shifts his focus from the hearer or the speech to the author by talking more about the purpose and effect of the speech rather than the role of the hearer. Then, in addition to drawing again on the authority of Augustine and pointing out that a teacher's job is "to *express*, to *instruct*, and to *persuade*" (18, 37), Bonaventure claims that in achieving the purpose of speech, "there is required a union with Him who is 'the brightness of his glory and the image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power'" (18, 37). In other words, he claims that an author who wants to give an effective instruction must understand the anagogical sense of Sacred Scripture, "by which we are taught how to be united to God" (5, 27). The author, in short, needs to have a mystical experience and works in union with Christ so that the supernatural intervention can work through him or her. Here, readers are given a less active role: they can understand the text because the author has already read Sacred Scripture, interpreted it anagogically, and thus had a mystical experience before he writes it down. In short, Bonaventure claims that readers can have a mystical understanding because and only because the author first has a mystical union with God, through which he or she understands Sacred Scriptural instruction and experiences how rhetorical figures can work mystically because of the metaphysical basis behind them.

Thus, similitude, together with exemplar and image, becomes here a powerful rhetorical tool because the scriptural knowledge and mystical experience of the author add a mystical power to his or her rhetorical figures.

Bonaventure here shares a mystic's belief in the mystical power of language. Here he believes that with a qualified author, language can have mystical power and rhetorical figures are not just decorative, as Pseudo-Dionysius believes that "We use whatever appropriate symbols we can for the things of God" and that "With theses analogies we are raised upward toward the truth of the mind's vision" (*The Divine Names* 53).   Here the relation between the art of speech and the study of Sacred Scripture is not only rhetorical: human language here works not only in analogy to God's words but also in "the same procedure" (16, 35) as the Eternal Word, while sense perception and spiritual sense work only "In like manner" (9, 31) and the artificer and God produce the artifice also only "In like manner" (12, 33).

Secondly, Bonaventure follows the mystical tradition and claims that Christ is the only mediator through which we can be united with God mystically.   While Bonaventure does not ask his readers to enter the studies of arts through "the Crucified" in the beginning of this treatise as he does in *The Soul's Journey to God*, he now follows other mystics in showing how Christ comes to this world in flesh as the only mediator so that we, who can only understand God through our senses, can know God intimately (16, 35). In addition, here he also follows other mystics in paralleling the role of Christ to the role of Sacred Scripture.   Pseudo-Dionysius, for example, describes Christ in his *The Celestial Hierarchy* as "the Light of the Father" we should call upon and Sacred Scripture as "the paternally transmitted enlightenment" we should "raise our eyes to" (145).   Here Bonaventure also quotes more from the Bible as his authority.   For example, he quotes from the Bible to prove how Christ can be perceived with senses while dwelling with God (16, 35).   Likewise, when he compares the reception of the human words to "the begetting of the Eternal Word" (16, 35), he again quotes various biblical verses underlying the mystical power of the Word/word that unites us with God.

After Bonaventure explains, like a mystic, how the students of human speech is granted a mystical power, he then further illustrates how the students of other philosophical knowledge get the same mystical power, in a similar way, with Christ as the mediator.   When he observes that "the natural tendency in matter is so ordained toward intellectual causes that the generation is in no way perfect unless that rational soul be united to the material body" (20, 37), he is reminded that "Christ is the one in whom

matter / is fully spiritualized in union with God" and therefore "the fullest realization of the most noble potency of Creation which brings the created order to its completion" (Delio, "The Franciscan Doctrine of Christ" 13-14). Here the creation mystically enables us to know God because "all natural philosophy . . . predicates the Word of God begotten and become Incarnate" (20, 39).   In short, toward the end of the treatise, Bonaventure describes the creation in a language that is "regularly figurative, laden with mystical comparisons" between the principle of the creation and that of its Creator (Gilson 185) to remind his readers "to be more conscious of this analogy, to know that one is a resemblance in virtue of one's most profound metaphysical constituents" (Gilson 198).   That is, toward the end of the treatise, with Christ as the mediator, both the language of the authors who have mystical experiences and the creation flowing from God mystically become the sure means to know God.

This does not mean, however, that Bonaventure has totally abandoned an Aristotelian, scholastic language in the first part of the treatise and an Augustinian, rhetorical language in the first two sections of the second part for a more mystical language.   This does not mean, either, that Bonaventure totally replaces a classifying project in a scholastic tradition and a religious treatise in an Augustinian tradition with a description of and a pathway to a mystical experience.   In the second part of the treatise, Bonaventure synthesizes all three traditions by repeating the terms that define and classify the various arts in the first part, by depending more on rhetorical figures of speech than on definitions to illustrate the relation between the study of the Bible and those of the other arts, and by providing the rhetorical figures with a metaphysical basis.

By gradually synthesizing the philosophical, theological, and mystical languages, Bonaventure forms his interpretive circle with the two-part structure of the treatise as a way to connect the logical classification of all arts to a mystical experience.   On the one hand, he claims we can understand Sacred Scripture by studying all branches of knowledge because they have both rhetorical and mystical power that enables us to know God as revealed in Sacred Scripture.   In this sense, the study of Sacred Scripture, together with the mystical union with God, is the end of all arts.   In this sense, it is fitting for Bonaventure to turn from an Aristotelian language to a rhetorical, mystical language because the final end of all arts, after all, is a

mystical union with God.   On the other, Bonaventure believes that a presentation of various arts and their classification can help us understand Sacred Scripture and be united with God successfully only when its author has already interpreted Sacred Scripture anagogically and is empowered by God in a mystical experience.   That is, Bonaventure insists that "Without Christian revelation the philosopher is unable to reduce reality to a first principle" (Delio, "Bonaventure's Metaphysics of the Good" 229): for him, a philosophical project needs to be initiated by God, the one who bestows us Sacred Scripture and mystical experiences.   In this sense, it is through the author's interpretation of the Bible and God's participation and Christ's mediation in a mystical experience of the author that the readers understand the natures of all arts.   In this sense, the studies of various arts begin with the study of the Bible, through the interpretation of which authors experience mystical unions with God and thus acquire the language that has a mystical power.   In this sense, Bonaventure not only shifts to a mystical language at the end of his treatise but also uses it to frame the languages of the Scholastic and the Augustinian traditions.

At whatever point we start our intellectual journey in the circle, Bonaventure shows that in the end, the interpretation of Sacred Scripture is both the basis and end of the studies of all arts. He points out that we need to study all arts with the interpretive circle in mind, so that "faith may be strengthened, *God may be honored*, character may be formed, and consolation may be derived from union of the Spouse with His beloved, a union which takes place through charity, to the attainment of which the whole purpose of Sacred Scripture, and consequently, every illumination descending from above, is directed" (26, 41).   In short, Bonaventure explains in this treatise how students of all arts, if they keep the mystical circle in mind, will not only understand Sacred Scripture but also, sooner or later, participate in a mystical experience.

Using the languages of mystics, Bonaventure sees no contradiction between attempting a seemingly logical classification of all arts and giving them the theological frame through rhetorical figures that carry a mystical power.   As modern readers, we may not be faithful enough to either ignore his inconsistent use of languages or to participate in his mystical experience, but maybe we owe it to him to appreciate the surprising synthesis of scholastic, Augustinian, and mystical languages by presenting definitions

with rhetorical figures that have a metaphysical basis described in the Bible and founded on Christ.

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